



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 63:1 – 64:12

"The Advent in Judgment "

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of the study of the Scriptures, and we are grateful to Thee for the Prophet Isaiah who has marvelously given us anticipations of the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ. We know, Lord, as we read this prophecy that there are many things yet that were given to Israel in the Old Testament under forms that made it difficult for them to know the certainty of the identification of the figures who would play the major part in the repetitive program. But we thank Thee for the way in which the facts of that program are clear throughout the Scriptures.

And while we as students of the Old Testament might not know that the Lord Yahweh is Jesus who was born of the virgin Mary, still as we read the Old Testament and read it knowing the ultimate fulfillment of those Old Testament facts. We are grateful that we can since reading the prophecy the magnificent unfolding of what Christ has done for us. We are grateful and therefore. Give us understanding tonight as we read Isaiah 63 and 64. May our thoughts be thoughts that are given us by the Holy Spirit and may they glorify our triune God. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

[Message] Now, tonight we are turning to two short chapters; Isaiah chapter 63 and Isaiah chapter 64, actually only 31 verses in the two chapters. And our subject is "The Advent in Judgment".

About fifteen or so years ago Nikita Khrushchev, the Russian Prime Minister, is reported to have said, "We will bury you." He made that comment when he was speaking in Poland. And as a result of the fact that he made it in a semi-informal kind of circumstance it was debated afterwards. And in fact, Khrushchev himself said that he didn't really mean it the way that it had been taken, that he did not really think that he and Russia were going to actually dig the graves of the United States but he simply meant that their philosophy of life would triumph over our philosophy of life.

Well, some who knew Russian made a study of the matter and they pointed out that there were actually two verbs for burying that were used in Russian. And one of the verbs was the verb *zorynyit* and the other was the verb *zakopat*. And I'm not sure that this is exactly the way to pronounce these Russian words, but the literal meaning of *zakopat*, *zimnyul* was "to bury literally in the ground". Khrushchev claimed that he used the word *zorynyit*, which has both a literal and figurative meaning in Russian. Well what Khrushchev really meant by it, of course, we may never know. But the facts are that Nikita Khrushchev himself is now both *zorynyit* and the other word. And so far as burying is concerned it's not Khrushchev himself who will do it.

In our passage the Old Testament, counterpart to Revelation chapter 19 verses 11 through 21, we learn who is going to be the final undertaker. And not surprisingly to us it's not *Necada Khrushchev* who is now as I say *zorynyit*, but it is our Lord. And one reading Isaiah 63 notices immediately as he reads it, if he's familiar with book of Revelation, that what we do have here is something that is the Old Testament counterpart of Revelation chapter 19 and verse 11 through verse 21. For example, in verses 2 and 3 of Isaiah 63 we read,

"Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel and thine garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment."

Then when you turn over to Revelation chapter 19 and verse 13, which is the account of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus you read in this symbolic description of it in Revelation 19 and verse 13, "And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood and his name is called the word of God." And then in verse 3 and in verse 6 of Isaiah chapter 63 we have the word "fury", "trample them in my fury," in verse 3, and then, "make them drunk in my fury," in verse 6. And then when you turn to Revelation and you turn to the fourteenth chapter for a moment and verse 20, I believe it is, we read these words, "And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horses bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." So the idea of a winepress is associated with the Second Advent of our Lord. And then in verse 15 of chapter 19 we read, "And out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations, and shall rule them with a rod of iron. And he treaded the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of almighty God."

So what we do have here then is in Isaiah 63 something of an Old Testament counterpart of the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. The prophet looks forward again to the future and he looks into the time of the tribulation, the time of the antichrist, the time of the advent to the earth. In chapter 62 and verse 11 we read, "Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, Say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh." So his thoughts are now on the future and events associated with the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. And the individual who is looked upon as the one who exercises the judgment is someone who comes from Edom. So he's looking to the east.

I was looking at some old notes of mine and in the old notes there was an article that was written in one of our periodicals some time back. And the title of the article was "Zero Hour for the Middle East". And the reference of the article is back to the time of 1969. Isn't it interesting that fifteen years later one could write the same kind of article today? It has been zero hour for the Middle East for so long that one wonders what is meant by the term zero. Well Isaiah writes of those events, and whenever it comes you can be sure that it is going to be come to pass as the prophet has written it.

Now, let's begin and first we want to look at the first six verses in which there is a dialogue carried on by the prophet between the divine Savior and someone else, or perhaps the prophet himself. He looks toward Edom, which in the Old Testament especially is associated with the hostility of the world. Babylon is associated with the tyranny of the world, but Edom is associated with the hostility of the world. And you'll remember that when the children of Israel came through Edom they encountered opposition. And so in the history of the Old Testament Edom is that ancient people that exercised a great amount of hostility toward the nation. It was in a since Israel's congenital and perpetual foe and from here came armies that conquered the land. So Edom is an enemy land. And here the prophet, against the background of Edom, looks out to the east and he sees someone coming from Edom. But this time he doesn't see any hosts that are coming to conquer the people. He sees actually a hero coming.

Notice how he writes, "Who is this that cometh from Edom with died garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength." And now this hero speaks, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." So the prophet receives an answer to his question. And then he asks another question in verse two,

"Wherefore art Thou red in thine apparel and Thy garments like him that treadeth in the winevat? (And again the answer comes.) I have trodden the winepress alone. And of the people there were none with me for I will tread them in mine anger and trample them in

my fury, and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments. And I will stain all my raiments, for the day of vengeance is in my heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help. And I wondered that there was none to uphold, therefore mine own arm bought salvation unto me and my fury. It upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger and make them drunk in my fury. And I will bring down their strength to the earth."

What a magnificent passage this is. The prophet looking out toward the east, the place of the enemy, the place of hostility, and he sees someone coming this time and he's coming with garments that are red, garments that are like garments that have used to tread the winepress of grapes. And so the evidence of blood is splattered all over them. And he asks, "Who is this that comes?" And he receives his first answer, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." So this proud and mighty figure with the scarlet garments striding along is the saving word who vindicates his truth with the sword out of his mouth; mighty to save, mighty to deliver. And incidentally there is a double meaning in that term mighty to save because, of course, the primary reference of this passage is mighty to save my people from the destruction that faces them. As we read in the New Testament and particularly in the Book of Revelation, when our Lord comes in his Second Advent the people Israel are just about to be destroyed by the enemies of the Lord. And so he comes to deliver them from the great tribulation. So he answers, "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." And he's thinking about deliverance from the evil ones; the beast, the antichrist, the false prophet; all of those forces that are array against the program of God and especially against the nation in the last days of the tribulation period. So, "I that speak in my righteousness, mighty to save." Well, of course, he is not simply mighty to save physically, but he is mighty to save spiritually too because of what he has done in the shedding of his blood on Calvary's Cross.

So the figure of the hero who comes from the east with the blood's grape juice spattered, but blood spattered in their ultimate meaning. The blood spattered garments is the one who has at Calvary made it possible for ultimate victory to come.

Now the second question is: why the stained apparel? And he answers it, "Well, I have trodden the winepress alone and of the people there was none with me." And so the nations are going to be cutoff like grapes put in the winepress, trodden underfoot by this great deliverer. What he has in mind, of course, is the final destruction of the gentile world powers that have been so often array against him down through the years. It's just what he says in Revelation chapter 19, again, and verse 11 through verse 21. And let me read just a few more verses.

In verse 16 we read,

"And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, whose sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."

This is what you call divine viticulture because he is going to put the nations of the earth in the winepress and he is going to tread the winepress until the blood of the nations and their leaders spatters his own garments. Joel writes about this two in his prophecy in chapter 3 and verse 9 through verse 16. These are great verses. Maybe you haven't read them recently. Let me read them for you. Joel writes,

"Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruninghooks into spears: (This is the precise opposite of what Micah will say after this event is over.) let the weak say, I am strong. Assemble yourselves, and come, all ye nations, and gather yourselves together around about: thither cause they mighty ones to come down, O Lord. Let the nations be wakened, and come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat: for there will I sit to judge all the nations round about. Put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe: come, get you down; for the press is full, the vats overflow; for their wickedness is great. (Again, divine viticulture.) Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision. The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining. The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem; and the heavens and the earth shall shake: but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel."

So this is a magnificent account of ultimate judgment to take place at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus. It's rather strange that this passage is a favorite passage of Passion Week celebration because so often people celebrate the Passion Week at just about a time like now, near Easter. But very few of them lay any stress upon the fact that at the Second Advent the Lord Jesus is going to come in judgment. That's one of the

things we ought to emphasize at Easter time. What the really means ultimately is some of the things that the prophet is speaking about right here.

Now, having given us these two questions and the answer; well here we have in verse 7 and following, actually through chapter 64 and verse 12, the prayer of the representative of the remnant; perhaps the prayer of the prophet. Now, remember in chapter 60 through 62 Isaiah has written of the future glory of Zion and the grace of Zion's Messiah. And then in chapter 63 verse 1 through verse 6 he has written, as we've just been discussing, of his advent in power. Why not end on that high note on his advent in power? Why more? Well, for the simple reason that people are not ready yet and the people of the Lord are not ready yet. You see in chapter 59 and verse 1 and 2 the prophet had written, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened that it cannot save, neither his ear heavy that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you that he will not hear." In other words, the people of God are not ready for the salvation of the Lord. They have not come to see their sin and they have not confessed their sin before the Lord. And so there must be a time of affliction in order for them to be brought to the confession of their sin and the spiritual preparation necessary for the receiving of divine grace. And so the prophet offers a final intercessory prayer because that's needed. And he pleads, notice, the ancient mercies that the Lord has manifested to his people.

In the future when Israel responds to the Lord they are not going to plead any special mercies. They're going to plead the same old mercies that we know of as the mercies of our Lord and Savior in the saving work of Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel, and our Messiah on the cross at Calvary. Down through the centuries of eternity as long as eternity lasts, and that's forever, we will still be singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb because this is an eternal redemption that is accomplished.

Now, notice how the prayer goes. And first of all it's for past mercies. Verse 7 through verse 14. I'm going to read and just make a comment or two here are there. I think that most of this except for one thing will probably be very plain to you.

"I will mention the loving kindnesses of the Lord and the praises of the Lord according to all that the Lord hath bestowed on us. (Now you can see it's not now the mighty hero who has come from the east who speaks, but the prophet is speaking for the people of God or really for the remnant of God.) And the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies and according to the multitude of his loving kindnesses for he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie. So he was their Savior. In all their affliction he was afflicted. And the angel of present saved them. In his love and in his pity he redeemed them and he bear them and carried them all the days of old."

Now, one can see from this that what he's thinking about it the Exodus deliverance. That's the historic deliverance that is particularly meaningful for the children of Israel. And if you'll go back to Exodus chapter 32 and Exodus chapter 23, and Exodus chapter 33, and then Isaiah chapter 46 you will see that God promised them that they would have the angel of his presence as he took them through to the Promised Land. Through the Red Sea, on out the Red Sea, through the wilderness and on into the Promised Land he promised them the angel of his presence.

Now notice, if you want to look it up for yourself, Exodus chapter 23 verse 20 through verse 23, Exodus 32 verse 34. There are just a couple of the places which mention that. But notice, in all their affliction he was afflicted. In other words, the Lord Jesus was so identified with the nation Israel and all of their experiences through the wilderness that it can be said that in all their affliction he was a afflicted. He proved

himself a Savior who identified himself with his people and as their representative has accomplished their deliverance.

Now we read on in verse 10,

"But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit. Therefore he was turned to be their enemy and he fought against them. Then he remembered the days of old. Moses and his people saying, Where is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within Him, that led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them to make himself an everlasting name (notice that) that led them through the deep as a horse in the wilderness that they should not stumble as a beast goeth down into the valley. The spirit of the Lord caused him to rest, so didst Thou lead Thou people to make Thyself a glorious name."

Now the reference, of course, to the vexing of his Holy Spirit is a reference to the fact that just as we read in the New Testament times the people of God do not respond to the things of God and often do resist. You know, when we say we believe in irresistible grace or effectual grace we don't mean by that that the elect never resist the work of the Holy Spirit. The facts are that all of the elect, as a general rule, can point back in their experience to a time when they resisted the work of the Lord. They resisted the Gospel preaching. They resisted the doctrine of the bondage of the will. They resist the grace of God. What we say when we believe in effectual grace is that ultimately there will come a time when God will turn the unwilling to willing. That is what effectual grace is. All men resist the preaching of the Gospel, but in the case of some God so works that there unwillingness is changed to willingness. That's what our Lord says when he says no man can come to me except the father which hath sent me draw him. No man can come except it be given him by the father. So the resistance of the people of Israel is a fact that is true of all of us. We resist naturally. And so they resisted and one can read the story of

Israel's resistance in the Book of Exodus and the Book of Numbers. It's all so plain because it tells us precisely what we are naturally. We are sinners. "They vexed his Holy Spirit."

I want you to notice something rather interesting here. In verse 10 we read, "But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit, therefore he turned to be their enemy and fought against them." Now, notice we have here a reference to the Holy Spirit and then we have reference to one who turned to be their enemy and fought against them. We read in verse 11, "Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people saying, Where is He that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? Where is He that put His Holy Spirit within Him?" Have you ever noticed this verse carefully? Look at it. "Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? Where is He that put His Holy Spirit within Him?"

Now, in verse 9 we had reference to angel of his presence. In verse 10 and 11 we have reference to the Lord God; the one who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock. And we also have reference to the Holy Spirit. Now, we do not believe that the doctrine of the trinity is taught plainly in the Old Testament. There is one passage in Isaiah 48 in which it may be taught more plainly than anything else. But one thing you can see from this is the plurality in the God-head. And in this case one can see that the idea of three divine beings is set out here in the word. So the Lord God provided for Israel, they went into the wilderness, they had the presence of the angel of the presence who was with them. God gave them every opportunity to trust in him.

I always think of the little girl who was complaining about the fact that she was fearful of the dark. And mother said, "Well, don't be afraid of the dark. God will be with you in the dark." And she said, "I don't want God. I want someone with a face." Well, they had the angel of his presence. We have the Lord Jesus Christ. We have someone whose face we can discern in the Scriptures. And if we would spend more time in the

Scriptures it would be of the greatest comfort to us in all of the experiences of life because he is with us in all of our experiences, and we can sense his face too. His face; he's with us. in fact, as Paul puts it in 2 Corinthians chapter 4 and verse 5 and verse 6, your probably have all ready had it in your minds,

"In whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not less the light of the glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the image of God should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Jesus Christ the Lord and ourselves, your servants, for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

So we have someone who has a face who's with us. Now, we go on and I want you to notice the statement in verse 11 "brought them up out of the sea". Now, what I want you to do is to take your New Testaments and turn over to Hebrews chapter 13 verse 20 and verse 21. I'd like to show you how to read the New Testament in the light of the Old Testament. Now I know, of course, you know enough to know that when the writer of the New Testament cites a passage from the Old Testament what you ought to do is to go back and read the context of that passage in the Old Testament. And looking at the context of the passage in the Old Testament and studying it carefully you'll understand why the author has used it as he has used it in the New Testament. It all makes perfectly good since. The problem with people is they don't read the Old Testament context carefully. Often they give up after looking at it a little bit and they'll say, "I don't see how that New Testament writer got that out of that." And we fail to remember they were not ordinary Bible students. They were extraordinary Bible students and they were also guided by the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

But now, notice how the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews in chapter 13 verses 20 and 21 at the conclusion of his letter gives this magnificent benediction. But I want you to observe it carefully because I'm going to try to show you where it got it.

"Now, the God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ to whom be glory forever and ever."

Now what I'd like to suggest to you is simply this; that he obtained that benediction from Isaiah chapter 63 and the verse that begin with about verse 11.

"Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people saying, Where is He that brought them up? (Remember, brought again from the dead, brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock; the great shepherd of the sheep.) Where is He that put his Holy Spirit within Him? That lead them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name, that lead them through the deep as a horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble."

And then, of course, he winds up in verse 14, "Again, to make Thyself a glorious name."

And remember, in Hebrews chapter 13 we read at the end, "To whom be glory forever and ever." So you see what he did was he was thinking about Isaiah chapter 63 as he came near the end of his book and thinking of that passage he writes a glorious doxology built upon the deliverance of the children of Israel, how when they came to the red sea God took them with his shepherd over the flock down in to the Red Sea and through the Red Sea, protecting and keeping them from the Egyptians by the pillar of cloud above,

brought them through and out on the other side. In other words, the historical event of the deliverance from Egypt and the coming up from the Red Sea is the background of this magnificent doxology and benediction at the end of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

So into the Red Sea they descended, not to the banks alone. They went down into that sea so that on them on either side was water. It was as if they were buried. They went down between those liquid walls and between the cloudy pillar which hung over the particular passage of the sea. And, as Paul says in another place, they were baptized unto Moses and buried and baptism as in a liquid tomb. But they came out of it victoriously by the power of God. And of course, the parallel is plain. That great shepherd, far greater than Moses and Aaron, must needs go down into the tomb and there through the tomb come up in the power of resurrection. And just as Moses and Aaron, with the angel of divine presence, brought the children of Israel safely through the Red Sea and out on the other side so the Lord Jesus Christ, the representative man, has gone down into death, burial, and come out in resurrection as the representative one who stands for all the people of God. And just as the children of Israel were saved by virtue of the fact that they believed in the Lord and in Moses, so we are saved through the representative work of the Lord Jesus Christ who is our convental head.

So the Lord Jesus went into the grave to seek the lost sheep. He found it. He flung it on his shoulder. He came up from the grave. He bore all of his sheep upon his shoulders out of the grave, those sheep for whom he died. It's no wonder that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says,

"Now the God of peace", incidentally, that is eluded to back here when he says,

"As a beast goeth down into the valley, the spirit of the Lord caused him to rest. The God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant, in contrast to Moses, taking them

through the waters of the Red Sea, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ to whom be glory forever and ever."

And he calls him "our Lord Jesus". Isn't that a magnificent parallel; the children of Israel looking back at the mighty deliverance of the Red Sea with Moses and the angel of divine presence? We look at Calvary. And our great shepherd of the sheep, greater than Moses, greater than Aaron, our great shepherd of the sheep has accomplished this magnificent deliverance for us. What he did was for us and he's the great shepherd of the sheep, great shepherd of the sheep. He's not the great shepherd of the goats. He's the great shepherd of the sheep. Never forget that. Do not mingle the love that God has for all with the eternal love that he has for his sheep. Mr. Spurgeon says when comments on this, "If there is a great shepherd there must be a great flock." And it's great to be in his great flock, and we are by his grace.

Now the reference to the everlasting name, which is twice repeated here, is of course a reference to the fact that this is all done to the glory of God. Now, I want you notice that future mercies become the theme of verse 15 through chapter 64 verse 4. And we'll say even less about these verses. I want you to catch the general flow of what is said. The prophet writes,

"Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of Thy holiness, and of Thy glory. Where is Thy zeal, and Thy strength, the sounding of Thy bowels and of Thy mercies toward me? Are they restrained? Doubtless, he says to the Lord, Thou art our Father. Thou Abraham be ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not (Incidentally, Israel here is a reference to Jacob whose name came to be Israel.) And (Jacob) acknowledge us not, Thou O Lord art our Father, our redeemer. Thy name is from everlasting."

That may be translated differently in the Hebrew text. We won't have time to discuss it. But the since is quite similar. Isn't it interesting that he says "Doubtless Thou art our Father"? The reference is to the Lord's relationship to the nation Israel. This is not the same thing as when our Lord said, "After this manner therefore pray ye, Our Father who art in Heaven," for that's the individual sense. It's rather startling to read the Old Testament and ask yourself, "What did Israel call the Lord God? Did they not call him Father?" Do you know that we do not have any instance in the Old Testament of any individual calling God his father? The few scattered references to God as Father are addressed like this text to the nation as a whole. The nation as a whole speaks of him as Father in the since that he is the one who brought them into being as a nation and brought them out into the wilderness and ultimately into the land.

When we turn to the New Testament the Lord Jesus asks the disciples to pray in this way. Say "Our Father who are in Heaven". That was startlingly new. I imagine when our Lord finished saying that and he left the presence of some of them they said, "Did you hear what he said? He said we are to call God our Father. Whoever heard of anything like that?" And one of them said, "Well, I remember somewhere in the Old Testament where God is Father." And they may have searched the Scriptures a bit and discovered, "Well, what he's asking us to do is to say he's our personal father. That's so unique." And then when they heard the Lord Jesus pray in Gethsemane and they heard him pray elsewhere they heard him say "Abba," "Father". In other words, he had this person relationship with the Lord God and he called upon them to speak of God in that way. That's why the Apostle Paul twice in his writings says, "God has sent forth the Holy Spirit into our hearts crying Abba, Father." Abba means father, but you see the term Aba is the Aramaic term which no doubt was on the lips of our Lord. Now, they heard him say "Abba" and they never got over that fact. And so even in writing Greek they say "saying Abba", that is "Father". It was the familiar term. It was the Aramaic term that often used by a little child

speaking of his father. He called him "papa". That's really what that term means, "papa."

A familiar term, but we don't have that in the Old Testament.

Now the Lord Jesus, of course, prayed. He prayed about twenty-one times in the New Testament. Did you know that in twenty of the twenty-one times he prayed "Father"? He referred to his Father, I think, a hundred and seventy times. But in twenty-one times of his praying, in twenty of the twenty-one he said "Father". Do you know that only once did he ever address God in prayer as God? Do you remember when it was? Yes you do, some of you. You've heard me say something like this before maybe half a dozen times. He said, "My God, my God. Why hast Thou forsaken me?" on the cross. The reason the said, "My God, my God," on the cross is because the relationship there was not paternal but judicial. He was the sin sacrifice. And so as the sacrifice, as the covenantal sacrifice for the people of God bearing the eternal judgment for the people of God he says, "O God, O God. Why hast Thou forsaken me?" Now, you know that's not right. It's "My God, my God. Why hast Thou forsaken me?" He's the judicial sacrifice, but even in the coming sin for us, a curse for us, his own faith still holds. It's "My God, My God. Why hast Thou forsaken me?" The perfection of the sinless humanity of our Lord at the same time that he is the sinful, not sinful in the sense that he was sinful, that he is the sin sacrifice, the curse, for the people of God.

Well, let's read on,

"O God, why hast Thou made us to err from Thy ways and hardened our heart from Thy fear. Return for Thy servant's sake the tribes of Thine inheritance; the people of Thy holiness have possessed it but a little while. Our adversaries have trodden down Thy sanctuary. We are Thine, Thou never barest rule over them. They were not called by Thy name."

Can you not see here that he's talking about the fact that they have a special relationship to the Lord? The Gentiles have come in and they have desecrated the sanctuary of the Lord God, but he's appealing now to their relationship to them.

"We are Thine. Thy never barest rule over them. They were not called by Thy name. We, Israel, we are Thy people." God always honors those who appeal to his covenant, his covenantal promises. They are appealing to his covenantal promises. They are appealing to the word of God. God must always answer his prayers, the prayers of the saints that are in harmony with the word of God. "O that Thou wouldest wrench the heavens that Thou wouldst come down, that the mountains might flow down at Thy presence as when the melting fire burneth, the fire causing the waters to boil, to make Thy name known to Thine adversaries that the nations, the gentiles, may tremble at Thy presence. (See he's thinking about the Exodus again.) When Thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, Thou camest down. The mountains flowed down with Thy presence, for the since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by either, neither hath I seen, O God, beside Thee what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him."

The apostle Paul lays those word to use in 1 Corinthians 2 when he describes the things that are for the people of God for we with Israel are the people of God. And now he makes a present appeal in verse 5 through verse 12. Our time is up. We'll just read through these.

"Thou meetest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness. Those that remember Thee in Thy ways. Behold, Thou art wroth for we have sinned (Confessing their sin they appeal for redemption. That's the place where spiritual blessing begins.) In those (his continuance) now we shall be saved. But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our

righteousness are as filthy rags, and we do fade as a leaf and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away. There is none that calleth upon Thy name that stirreth up himself to take hold of Thee." (It looks like they believe in the inability of man, too. And it looks to me as if they believe also in the bondage of the will.) For Thou hast hid Thy face from us, and has consumed us because of our iniquities. But now, O Lord, Thou art our Father. We are the clay, Thou our potter. And we are all the work of Thy hands. (They appeal to him as creator who has sovereign authority over them.) Be not wroth there is (unintelligible) O Lord, neither remember iniquity forever. Behold, see we beseech Thee. We are all Thy people."

They plead again that special covenant relationship. He's our God, we're his people. That incidentally is in all of the unconditional covenants; that Abrahamic, the Davidic, and the New Covenant all center upon the fact that we are the people of God by covenant unconditionally.

"Thy holy cities are a wilderness. Zion is a wilderness; Jerusalem a desolation. Our holy and our beautiful house, where our fathers praised Thee, is burned up with fire (They look at the captivity. He's looking at that in view in future.) And all our pleasant things are laid waste. Will Thy reframe Thyself for these things, O Lord? Will Thou hold Thy peace and afflict us very sore?"

Well, we know the answer to that. When they appeal to the covenantal relationship the Lord God cannot ignore the covenantal relationship. And just as Joseph responded to his brethren in chapter 45, finally, Joseph reaches the place where Moses says, "Then Joseph couldn't reframe himself before all them that stood by him and he cried, Cause every man to go out from me". And there stood no man with him while Joseph made himself known to his bretheren. And he wept allowed. And the Egyptians

in the house of Pharaoh heard it. So when the time comes for the nation Israel to acknowledge their sin, and when they plead the covenants that God has made with them, even God cannot refrain to bless them as a nation and to bring them into their inheritance. I'm looking forward to that day. I hope you are, too

If you're here tonight and you've never believed in the Lord Jesus you need to come to him who led Israel through the Red Sea, and who also has brought us out into salvation by virtue of his death, his burial, the Red Sea of divine judgment out into the resurrection of the promised land. Come to Christ. Believe in him. Let's bow in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are so grateful to Thee for these wonderful prophecies. Oh, if Thy people would only study the Scriptures how sturdy they would be, and how wonderful it would be to see them lean upon the promises and find them fulfilled in their lives. Lord, deliver us from indifference and lethargy, from a distaste for divine things. Give us a love for the Scriptures, a love for our Lord, a love for the things of God. And give us motivation to serve Thee acceptably. We are Thy people. We plead, Lord, Thy word to us. Sanctify us. As the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews said when he spoke of the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, "Make us perfect...

[AUDIO ENDED ABRUPTLY]