



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Deuteronomy 32:1-43

"Israel: His Land, His People"

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for the privilege of reading and pondering Thy word and when we reflect upon how important it is that we be submissive to it. Lord, we acknowledge our failures, and our rebellion, our unwillingness to listen to Thy voice, and we ask that, as the Old Testament prophets more than once said, "Turn us that we may be turned."

We need, Lord, the ministry of the Holy Spirit and efficacious grace in guidance, in direction regarding our paths, in enablement, in bringing us into conformity to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

And we ask, Lord, that Thou wilt give us understanding with regard to the future and the things that lie before us, because we know that the hopes that we have are sustaining hopes and give us strength and encouragement in the experiences of life.

We would pray, Lord, for everyone present here this evening in this study. May our time together help us all to respond to the truth of the word of God. We commit our forty-five minutes or so to Thee and pray Thy blessing upon us. In Jesus' name. Amen.

[Message] We're turning tonight to the 32nd chapter, not of Zechariah, which only has 14, but Deuteronomy. So turn with me to Deuteronomy chapter 32 and the subject

for tonight is, "Israel: His Land, His People." This is really the conclusion of our series of studies on "Israel as the Clue to History" and I think that it might be proper for us to turn to just such a great passage as this in which Moses outlines all of the future of Israel laying stress upon the experiences of the nation in the last days.

Israel could never say that they had not been properly warned. In fact, as one reads Deuteronomy 32, it becomes very plain that long before Israel ever entered the land, they were properly warned by Moses that their experience in the land would be negative, that they would be disobedient, that there would come a time when they would be worshipping false gods, but that overruling everything would be the ultimate love, and mercy, and judgment, one might say also, disciplinary judgment, of the Lord God, and that they could look forward to a successful conclusion of their history simply because God had attested it by his word.

We have been talking about various things that have been happening in Israel and the very things that Moses spoke about are the things that have been happening. And, of course, modern history of Israel is the most exciting and in the light of what has happened in modern times, one reads a chapter like this with renewed interest, because so many things that are happening today seem to reflect the situation that Moses speaks about here.

These events that have happened in Israel over the last, well since nineteen forty-eight, one might ask the question, "How do they tally with the prophetic word?" And when we turn to Deuteronomy 32, we have what someone has called, "The divine forecast of the whole history of the Jewish people." There is an ancient rabbinic writing called *Sifre* and in the course of it, there are some interesting things said about this chapter.

It really is a song that Moses delivered. That's what it's called if you'll look at the 30th verse of the preceding chapter, we read, "And Moses spake in the ears of all the congregation of Israel the words of this song, until they were ended." And this rabbinic

writing says concerning this writing, Deuteronomy 32, "How great is this song. In it is to be found the present, the past, the future, and the events of the age to come."

Now let me just set the scene for you, you probably know what essentially is the situation, but when we come to the end of Deuteronomy, Moses, of course, is recounting some of the experiences that Israel has had coming into the land, receiving the law, receiving the ceremonies, and now they are going to enter into the Promised Land. And so, Moses is given by God some instructions in the light of the fact that they are going to enter the land, but he is not going to be able to do it. Beginning in the 14th verse of the preceding chapter, Moses wrote,

"And the LORD said unto Moses, 'Behold, thy days approach that thou must die: call Joshua, and present yourselves in the tabernacle of the congregation, that I may give him a commission' (because, of course, Joshua was to succeed Moses). And Moses and Joshua went, and presented themselves in the tabernacle of the congregation."

Now instructions are given to Moses and to Joshua, particularly to Joshua, since he is going to be the captain of the Lord's host, and these instructions are recorded in the end of that chapter and then in Deuteronomy 32. And, furthermore, he says, the Lord does, that this song is to be a witness to them in the years to come. Notice the 19th verse of chapter 31, "Now therefore write ye this song for you, and teach it the children of Israel: put it in their mouths, that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel." So in other words, when the time comes that Israel does what the Lord has told them about ahead of time, these words will witness to them of their disobedience and rebellion.

Notice also verse 21, and notice the term "witness" again, "And it shall come to pass, when many evils and troubles are befallen them, that this song shall testify against them as a witness" and then in verse 26, "Take this book of the law, and put it in the side

of the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there for a witness against thee." So the song is a witness and it's also a forecast of the future now, of course, fully verified in the history of Israel.

Now what I'd like to do is read through these 43 verses of the song and make a few comments as we go along, and I'll give you a little outline so you can, if you're interested in taking a few notes, you can. If you're not interested, just sit back and read the passage with me and note the few points that I will call to your attention. It begins with what might be called an exordium, a beginning, and in verse 1 through verse 3, we have it. And you'll notice as we read it that it's a solemn call of two ultimate witnesses to the revelation that is to come and notice the two witnesses, "Give ear o ye heavens and I will speak and hear o earth the words of my mouth."

You might ask, "Why did he call upon heaven and earth to witness to what he is going to say?" Well, because heaven and earth will be there during the whole course of the history of Israel. The Israelites will come on the scene and they will die off and new Israelites will succeed them, but there will be two testimonies to what has happened to the nation that were there in the beginning and that will be there in the end, the heavens and the earth. And so, the Lord calls upon them to witness to what he is saying, "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distill as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb and the showers upon the grass."

Now that expression "my doctrine" really means in Moses' case "that which I have received." In other words, Moses is giving truth that the Lord God has given to him. After all, everything begins with God's truth. And so, he begins with, "My doctrine", that is that which I have received. That's the meaning of the Hebrew word that's why I'm giving this exposition of it, this expression "my doctrine" means "that which I have received." In fact, it's derived from a term that means to take or to receive in Hebrew. So it's something that we derive from the Lord God. It's something that we receive. All doctrine is like that that's why it's so important. It's received from us from the Lord God.

Great stress in the word of God on biblical doctrine and in the Old Testament as well as in the New, it is preeminent, Jesus talks about what he has received from the Father is what he gives. The apostles speak about what they have been taught by the Lord God and receive from him, they communicate.

Even the Lord Jesus announces in the Upper Room Discourse that the Holy Spirit when he comes will take of things from our Lord and deliver them to us. So even the Holy Spirit receives from Christ the things that he teaches the apostles and others. So "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass" and, of course, in the kind of environment in which these people were living to have some rain, to even have some heavy dew, was absolutely essential to life. So doctrine is essential to life. He begins with that laying stress upon it. The 3rd verse is the end of the exordium, "Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God."

Now remember, Moses was told that Yahweh in heaven was Yahweh. He's the one who really received an exposition of God as Yahweh as the Living One, as the covenant keeping God. Now, of course, this God was active beforehand, but it's Moses who is given the exposition of God in heaven as Yahweh, as the one who lives, as the one who makes covenants with the people of God. That's what he's alluding to when he says, "Behold I will publish the name of Yahweh." It's the Lord in that sense. "Ascribe ye greatness unto our God." So his character, as it is revealed in his name Yahweh, covenant keeping God, is the foundation upon which this great chapter is built. The Living One will keep his covenant, will keep his world.

You know, that's a tremendous encouragement, isn't it? Suppose you had a God who was changeable? How would you like to have a mutable God instead of an immutable God? Many people have such a god. They do not know that our God is an immutable God. And so, they constantly worry, because of things that happen in their lives, if God really is true to his word. Circumstances make them really doubt that he

keeps his word. People will say, "Why did this happen to me?" "Why does it happen to me?" "Why am I singled out for this?" Whereas if we realize that God is an immutable God and true always to his promises, there's a sense in which we might ask the question "Why?", but we ask it in faith not in doubt. So that's the exordium. It's a great exordium.

Now the theme is given in verse 4 through 6 and you'll notice it's God's perfection in his work and in his ways. In fact, he is called the Rock, solid, strong, reliable, immovable, and unchangeable Rock. Who would spurn a person like that? Well, every one of us. Notice verse 4 through verse 6,

"He is the Rock (Now if you read that in the Hebrew text, the first word is just "THE ROCK"; very unusual, *Tsuwr!* THE ROCK!), his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he. They have corrupted themselves; their spot is not the spot of his children: they are a perverse and crooked generation. Do ye thus requite the LORD, O foolish people and unwise? Is not he Thy father that hath bought thee? Hath he not made thee, and established thee?"

He's the Rock, *Tsuwr*. This is the first time that God is called The Rock in Scripture and all of those later terms are related to it. And, of course, a rock suggests his reliability, his solidity, his strength. He's immovable, he's unchangeable. He's the kind of person that you can rest yourself on for time and for eternity. And later on, you know, David will say, "He's my Rock, the rock of my salvation, my refuge" and so on. All of those things grow out of reflection upon these words that are given here.

Mr. Spurgeon, in one of his writings commenting upon the fact that the Lord is called the Rock and our salvation says, "Tell me anything that departs from this and it will be a heresy." And he's talking about the statement, "He only is my Rock and my salvation"; "Tell me anything that departs from this and it will be heresy." "Tell me a heresy and I will find its essence right here that it is departed from this great and fundamental and rocky truth. He only is my Rock and my salvation."

Every kind of salvation by works of any kind, now I know what you expect me to say, so I'm gonna say it, including salvation through free will, all of those things err right at this point, "He only is my rock and my salvation." Spurgeon's right, "Tell me a heresy, its essence will be here. Tell me anything that departs from this and it will be a heresy." He only is my rock and my salvation. So when Moses says, "He's the rock. His work is perfect", why do we need anything else? Why do we not rely upon him?

He says, "Is he not thy father?" That's a rather interesting statement you might think, therefore, that Moses is speaking of God as the individual Father of individual Israelites. The chances are he's talking about the nation as a whole and he's talking about him as the originator of them in divine election and divine sustenance. That seems to follow from the statement, "O foolish people and unwise, is he not thy Father that hath bought thee. Hath he not made thee? Hath he not established thee?" In other words, there had never been an Israel were it not for the Lord God's election and maintenance of them.

Now the third point of this song extols the goodness of God, verse 7 through verse 14, and Moses is requested to look back over the past for a moment and he talks about that goodness, "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. (Now isn't that unfair? Why should he do that? Why did he not do it according to the number of the Americans? Why did he not do it according to the number of the Egyptians or the number of the Assyrians or the Chinese? Well, God is a sovereign God. He has a right to do what He, the Creator, wishes to do. So he has set the bounds of the peoples according to the number of the children of Israel) For the LORD's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he

instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. (Do you remember that? We talked about that just a few weeks ago in Zechariah. The apple of the eye, the pupil of the eye, the little man of the eye, this is. You know when I look in your eye and you look in my eye, and you look at my pupil and you see a small reflection of yourself? What a beautiful figure that is. The Lord God says that Israel is the apple of his eye. So when he looks in, he sees a little reflection of himself. That's how important Israel was to him. He saw a little reflection of himself. Israel is the apple of his eye.) As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him. He made him ride on the high places of the earth, that he might eat the increase of the fields; and he made him to suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; Butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape."

By the way, that's probably the source of the use of wine at the Lord's Table. It's the blood of the grape. And so, the use of wine as representative of the blood of our Lord probably goes back to this magnificent treatment of God's goodness to them and so Moses and those that he is to teach this. For God said, "Teach Israelites this song." They're invited to trace his hand in their election through the wilderness wanderings. Those words in the Hebrew text are what are called pictorial presents and he describes how he cared for them as they went through the wilderness as the apple of his eye.

Now how would you think the people would respond to a great God like this? Would you think that they would be submissive to him? Well, you've read the Bible enough to know what to expect, haven't you? And you do find exactly what you expect. Verse 15 through verse 18, look at the perversity; this is the fourth part of the song, the perversity of Israel towards God. Now he has already suggested this by verses 5 and 6 when he calls them a foolish and unwise people, but now he expands it, expands upon it,

"Jeshurun grew fat, and kicked (And became like *Nabal*; *Nabal* that word means foolish. And so they became Nabals; listen, verse 15) Jeshurun waxed fat and kicked: thou art waxen fat, thou art grown thick, thou art covered with fatness; then he forsook God which made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation (that's the word related to the word *Nabal*; counted foolish, counted like foolish *Nabal*. You know the story of *Nabal* that unfolds later on in the word: *Nabal*, foolish, count it foolish, the Rock of his salvation. Think of that). They provoked him to jealousy with strange gods, with abominations provoked they him to anger. They sacrificed unto devils, not to God; to gods whom they knew not, to new gods that came newly up, whom your fathers feared not. Of the Rock that begat thee thou art unmindful, and hast forgotten God that formed thee."

Can that be true of Israel? Let's make it personal. Can that be true of you? Can it be true that you actually have turned away from the God who has redeemed you? Is it possible? Well, it is possible. That's why when Barnabas went to Antioch; he exhorted them that they would cleave unto the Lord their God.

If you think as a Christian believer that there is no need for you to get down upon your knees and ask God to keep you from forgetting him and fleeing and turning from him, and going after the strange gods, you don't yet understand the wickedness that lies in the heart of redeemed people. The same principle is there. Ask a David, ask a Demas, ask a Peter, and down through the years. Look at the history of the saints. Take an F. B. Meyer who for eight years, he admitted later, long after he had been a very effective preacher, turned away from the Lord God and never even mentioned in a serious way the ministry of the Lord God to him. This is something that happens to believing Christians.

I was in Portland recently in that city that more than one person a graduate of Dallas Theological Seminary is not interested at all in the things of the Lord today. That

happens to believing men. This song was to warn Israel, but let's let it be a warning to us too.

Now the judgments come. They are disciplinary judgments on the nation as a whole and in verse 19 through verse 25; this is the fifth division, the judgments upon Israel. Perversity on Israel's part leads to the hiding of the face of the Lord God and that's the greatest calamity that could happen to us, "The sword without and the terror within", my, what a terrible thing it is. Listen to what Moses is told to teach Israel so this wouldn't happen to them so far as the Lord God's concern is concerned,

"And when the LORD saw it, he abhorred them, because of the provoking of his sons, and of his daughters. And he said, 'I will hide my face from them, I will see what their end shall be: for they are a very perverse generation, children in whom is no faith. They have moved me to jealousy by that which is not God; (He's talking about the idols that they were worshipping.) they have provoked me to anger with their vanities (their idols): and I will move them to jealousy with those which are not a people; and I will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation. (Do you know who the foolish nation is? Gentiles. The Apostle Paul in Romans 10 and 11 refers to this very text. It was important for Paul and he's explaining why Israel is in rejection; why the Gentiles are pouring into relationship with the Lord God. It's God making Israel jealous. Verse 22,) For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell, and shall consume the earth with her increase, and set on fire the foundations of the mountains. I will heap mischief upon them; I will spend mine arrows upon them. They shall be burnt with hunger, and devoured with burning heat, and with bitter destruction: and I will also send the teeth of beasts upon them, with the poison of serpents of the dust. The sword without, and terror within, shall destroy both the young man and the virgin, the suckling also with the man of gray hairs!'"

About fifteen years ago, Rabbi Richard Rubenstein, who's been very prominent in Jewish things over the past generation, at a convocation of students at Emory University in Atlanta said, "God is the holy nothingness," and mind you this is a descendant of these people. Rabbi Rubenstein also argued that, "If God is regarded as the source of hope then we should give up hope." Human existence, he described, as ultimately hopeless and meaningless. "Jews in particular (he said) cannot believe in the Lord God of history, for how can one explain such a god in relation to Auschwitz and the degrading slaughter of six million Jews?"

In other words, the Rabbi's still blind. All of the things that God has said he would do, he has done. But now they are using those very things which were designed to show them his concern and disciplinary judgment that they might return to him, they are using now as illustrations of why there is no God. He goes on to say, "Though the Christians might interpret the horror of Auschwitz as a final sign to the Jews to convert and accept Jesus Christ as the Savior of Israel, the Jews (he said) still await the Messiah and redemption." Indeed, Rubenstein does not see the possibility of a Messianic kingdom on earth, but only when all of the creation and men are returned to God in an ecstasy of nothingness. That's part of the result of the disciplinary judgment of God. It's terrible to think about.

Now the pleadings of divine mercy follow in the sixth division in verse 26 through verse 33,

"I said, I would scatter them into corners, I would make the remembrance of them to cease from among men: Were it not that I feared the wrath of the enemy, lest their adversaries should behave themselves strangely, and lest they should say, 'Our hand is high, and the LORD hath not done all this'. (You can see the Lord God's heart for the prodigal nation in verse 28) For they are a nation void of counsel, neither is there any understanding in them. O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would

consider their latter end! How should one chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight, except their Rock had sold them, and the LORD had shut them up? For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being their judges. (You know, that's an interesting thing because what he is saying is that even the Gentile people say, "Our gods are not like their God. Their God is a whole lot better than our gods." That's interesting isn't it that the Lord will say that the Gentiles acknowledge they have a better God, but the nation is not doing anything about it?) Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. (Their gods are sexy, evil, immoral, make all kinds of demands on people, but here is a God who cares for people, who will undertake for them. No wonder the Gentiles said, "Their God is better than our god.") For their vine is of the vine of Sodom, (He's talking about now the opposers) and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter: Their wine is the poison of dragons, and the cruel venom of asps."

And now we come to the climax and the seventh division and this is the apocalyptic events and we have interposition on the part of God, vindication of his nation, and atonement. The sublimity of this song is seen here and the solemnity of the song also. In fact, in this rather preliminary way, the climax of all prophecy is found right here and we'll notice it here in verse 34 through verse 43, "Is not this laid up in store with me, and sealed up among my treasures? To me belongeth vengeance and recompence."

Now, of course, you know that it's the Lord God who will exercise vengeance or do you know, you're a Bible reader, aren't you? You read the Bible don't you? In Believers Chapel, that's where everybody's supposed to read the Bible. Do you read the Bible? I'd like to have a little quiz, "To me belongeth vengeance and recompence." Is that found in the New Testament? How many of you think it is, raise your hand?

There are about a third of you think it's in the New Testament. Did you know it's in the New Testament twice? Can anyone tell me where it is?

[Comment from audience]

[Johnson] Romans 12 is one place. Now he hasn't been here over the past two or three years much and he knows, but you people in Believers Chapel, I won't tell anybody, where's the other place?

[Comment from the audience]

[Johnson] No, not Matthew 5. Don't guess again. Keep your average up there.
[Laughter] Five hundred's hitting pretty good.

[Comment from the audience]

[Johnson] I'm sorry, Edwin, I didn't...

[Comment from the audience] No, it's not in Galatians. Well, look it up afterwards.

What I'm trying to get over is the fact that the Apostle Paul and another New Testament writer knew this passage. It was very important to them. Paul, in Romans, has already, I said, cited from the 21st verse. He cites also from this verse too. They were students of these passages. Incidentally, I passed over verse 34, "Is this not laid up in store with me and sealed up among my treasures?" What he is saying there is that he is not going to be indifferent to the sins of Gentile world powers who have mistreated Israel in carrying out his disciplinary judgment. That's one of those principles we find in the Old Testament.

Anyway, "To me belongeth vengeance" and so, Anti-Semites beware. Your foot shall slide in due time. This is a word for Egypt.

[Comment from the audience]

[Johnson] Would you speak a little louder there?

[Comment from the audience]

[Johnson] What?

[Comment from the audience] Right, that's the other place where that text occurs, "To me belongeth vengeance."

But when he says here, "To me belongeth vengeance", he's talking about how he is going to treat those who have not responded properly to what he was doing with his nation Israel. They're going to suffer for their disobedience, but others who were his tools and agents in carrying out his discipline, they will suffer also. Now he goes on verse 36, "For the LORD shall judge his people."

That's one of the really misunderstood texts of the Bible and that too is cited in the New Testament in that same chapter, the 10th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews, "The Lord will judge his people." We tend to think that that means that God is going to discipline Israel. Well, he is going to discipline Israel, but that's not what this means. When it says, "The Lord will judge his people", the meaning of the Hebrew verb "judge" in this instance, as well as other instances in the Old Testament, and also in Hebrews chapter 10, is "vindicate; vindicate." That, incidentally, is a word of justice itself, vindicate,

"The Lord will vindicate his people." In other words, he's going to have compassion upon them, he's going to carry out his promises with reference to them.

Now we see incidental fulfillments of this, there was President Nasser of Egypt who made many, many foolish statements with regard to the nation Israel. And now, of course, he resides under the judgment of God. He will vindicate his people,

"And repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left. And he shall say, 'Where are their gods, their rock in whom they trusted, which did eat the fat of their sacrifices, and drank the wine of their drink offerings? Let them rise up and help you, and be your protection'. (Speaking cynically and sarcastically now about your gods "Let them help you.") See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me (that is no God by my side)."

This is the first time that the expression, "I am He" occurs in the Bible: "I", "I am He", the Hebrew text has. This is the boldest theophanic formula that you can find. It's built upon the name of God as Yahweh, "I", "I am He." There is no other God like him. He is the true God and he's the living God and he's a covenant keeping God. And when he says he will do something, he will do it. There'll never come a time when you will be able to stand in the presence of the Lord God and say, "There was one thing you forgot to carry out." Everything is carried out that is found in the Bible. All those magnificent expressions of the New Testament: "I AM the way the truth and the life"; "I AM the good shepherd"; "I AM the door"; "I AM the resurrection and the life." All of them are built upon this particular construction and designed to impress upon us the fact that the Lord Jesus is the covenant keeping, saving God.

Now he goes on to say, verse 39,

"I kill, and I make alive; (Notice the order: It's not, "I make alive and then kill", but it's "I kill, and then I make alive") I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand. (This is incontestable authority and the order is significant because he's going to bring death out of life.) For I lift up my hand to heaven, and I say, (Think of God swearing by heaven) 'I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me (that is with judgment). I will make mine arrows drunk with blood, and my sword shall devour flesh; and that with the blood of the slain and of the captives, from the beginning of revenges upon the enemy'."

That last expression, by the way, is very difficult. You'll notice in the New International Version, it still is rendered in such a way; it's hard to be absolutely sure of its meaning. There is a possibility there's a reference to the anti-Christ there because of the use of the term for head. It's translated "beginning" in the Authorized Version, but the Hebrew is the word *roshe* which means head. And then we conclude in verse 43 with the goal of all prophecy, the rejoicing of the nations with Israel, "Rejoice, O ye Gentiles, with his people: for he will avenge the blood of his servants, and will render vengeance to his adversaries, and will be merciful unto (Notice) his land, and his people."

That's the way it concludes: the goal of all prophecy, the rejoicing of the nations with Israel and the ground of the divine blessing, his atoning work; atoning work. That's the only way that God can bless sinful, rebellious people by his atoning work. And so even in the Old Testament, in this great song that God said, "Moses, teach it to the people of Israel. Teach it to them. Instruct them in it", we have at its foundation the atoning work of our Rock, the Lord God. Those words, "his land and his people" sum up prophecy about the Jews and the Land of Palestine.

One can see the certainty of the fulfillment of this in other prophecies through the Old Testament. Now we've just looked at Zechariah recently and you'll remember, I

hope, Zechariah 3:9, "For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day."

And then in chapter 12 and verse 10, the famous passage where he says, "I will pour upon them the spirit of grace and supplications: and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced (for atoning work), and mourn for him." And out of the mercy and grace of God, even Egypt will rejoice with the people of God then. For in Isaiah we read, "In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria even a blessing in the midst of the land." What's the condition for the fulfillment of all this? It's expressed in Leviticus 26, verse 40 through verse 42. Listen to it again, "If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me; and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity: Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the (you say it, the land) land."

The land; so the land and the people, that's right at the heart of world history today isn't it? The land and the people. We hope, of course, that God will wind up his program for the nations. And for the nations, well it would be nice if it happened in our lifetime. I look forward to seeing our Lord come from heaven and his name established as King of King and Lord of Lords. In the meantime, may God help us to be submissive to his word. We don't have anything like this especially directed to us, but it should be a lesson to us to be submissive to the word of God.

If you're here tonight and you've never believed in our Lord, we invite you to, by the grace of God, commit your life to him who has loved sinners and gave himself for

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them. Full, and free, and eternal salvation offered by the grace of him who only, alone, is the Rock of our salvation. Let's bow together in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for this magnificent chapter which the apostles and others in the early church obviously studied for they cited it. O, Lord, may we pay attention to it, this remarkable song, in which heaven and earth are called to testify to sovereign faithfulness. We give Thee thanks. In Jesus' name. Amen.