



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Isaiah 9:8 – 10: 34

“The Destruction of the World's Kingdom”

TRANSCRIPT

[Prayer] We pray that he may illumine our minds and that as we attempt to interpret, that we may use the faculties which Thou hast given to us. But above all, may our faculties be subject to Thee. And may as our study progresses, we come to a deeper understanding of the God, whose we are and whom we serve, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

[Message] This section of the prophecy of Isaiah chapter 9, verse 8 through chapter 10, verse 34, is a very vivid illustration of one of the great New Testament passages, Romans chapter 11 and verse 29. And in that passage, you remember the apostle states that the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, not to be repented of. What he means by that is that when God gives his gifts as he gave to Israel and when he calls as he called Israel, he calls forever. He does not go back upon his promises. And consequently, all of the promises of God which have been given to that nation and to us are promises that are inviolable. He is unchangeable in his being and his promises also are unchangeable and he will fulfill them.

Now, of course he will fulfill them, because he is God. And he will fulfill them in order that we might see him to be what he is, "A faithful God." There is also, of course,

revealed in these promises, "The love of God for us." And that means that if we are the objects of God's promises, no matter how far we may drift from him, the door is always open for return and the same is true of the Nation Israel today. That is why of course, I could never really be anti-Semitic. Though there are some Semitics that I would like to be anti-towards. But I can never really basically be that because you see if I am, ultimately, theologically, it is a matter of the promises of God. And I must believe those promises which have been given to them.

Some time ago, I read the story of a young author who is trying to make a name for himself. And he had composed a short story and it fell to his luck by chance to meet a very, very respected old author. And the old author considered to listen to his story which he had written. And so he found himself shortly afterwards in the study of the old author and he was reading his manuscript to him and it was an ordinary story. It was the story of a young man; I guess it was a story like the gloom and guts authors that we have today writing.

It was the story of a young man who left his mother and went to the big city, New York City in this case, to make his living. He had lived in a little village in Pennsylvania. And as he left in the story, as he read his story to the old author, his mother said to him something like this, "Now, son remember that no matter what happens, no matter how you may fare in New York City, no matter if you are a great success or if you are a great failure, I want you to know that our home is always open to you. And furthermore, the light will always be on in this house, so that you can find your way back."

And so he told the story as you might have already guessed of how a young man went to New York City and he wasted his substance in riotous living like Jesus' parable. And finally, having committed some crimes, he found his way into prison and ultimately, he got out of prison and decided he was going to make his way back home. And so finally, when he came to the little Pennsylvania town and reached the top of the hill to look down upon the house, the author as he was reading his manuscript said, "And the

light was not shining." The old author at that point leaped to his feet and said, "You young devil put that light back!"

Well, that really of course is true to the Bible. Put that light back. Because when God gives us his promises, he does not go back upon them. And if he has promised us for example, life through Jesus Christ, he never goes back on those promises. That means that if we have put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, we have that life too. He cannot go back on his promises. And it means if you have heard that promise over and over and over again in your life but you have not acted upon it to this point, you may act upon it now and you will have that life that God promises through Jesus Christ.

But it also means something with regard to Israel, because you see God gave Israel great promises. All you have to do is open the Old Testament and read in Genesis chapter 12 and so many of the chapters of the Old Testament how he has given them promises of a glorious future. And I want you to know that the light is on in the mansions in heaven for the nation, if they will return to him. And Scripture tells us that they shall return.

Now, in this passage that we are looking at, we see this beautifully illustrated and in order to really grasp what we are dealing with, I put a simple little outline on the board of the major features of God's program. This of course, is not a complicated diagram of God's program of the ages. We all have seen complicated diagrams. I have drawn up some of myself. But I just want you to notice one or two things so that you can read Isaiah with some understanding. Over here, I have simply noted the Abrahamic promises. This is Genesis chapter 12 in the Bible. It is the foundational chapter for the promises of God.

Now, of course, back here, we did not have room on our blackboard. It will be wonderful when we can have a blackboard that we can put all of this on and you can see it. We do not have to waste time to put it on the board and you can see it all. But anyway, back here is the creation and here is Genesis 12 and the promises that were

given to Abraham. Then you remember at the history of Israel at Sinai, God gave them the law. Now, he gave them the law in three parts, we are not interested in that. But simply, that Israel was under the law from Mount Sinai to the time of the cross. For it was then, remember, that the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to bottom. God signifying by that, that the Mosaic Law, with all of its ceremonies, was done away.

Now, at that point, Jesus was dead. He was buried. He was raised from the dead, and remember, he ascended to heaven. After his 40 days of post resurrection ministry, when he taught the apostles how to understand the Old Testament. They did not understand, but he taught them. And he ascended. And then 10 days later, on the day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came and the believers in him were united together in the one body of Christ, the church.

Now, I did not put anything here because, you see, in the Old Testament, the church is never referred to. As a matter of fact, if we were to look simply at the Old Testament, in the light of what we should say, God from the human standpoint, would have wished to happen, it would be at this time that The Great Tribulation period would occur, we should move all of these, over here, like this, The Great Tribulation period of the future, when the nations are judged and when those unbelieving Jews are judged who reject the Savior.

That tribulation period should have occurred immediately after the coming of the spirit upon the believers who had been united by that spirit and then after that 70th week, that seven-year period of time shortened by reason of the terrors of the tribulation period. This by the way is all referred to in the Old Testament that period of judgment, Daniel chapter 9 verses 24 through 27 as the chronological passage, many of the other chapters speak of the judgments of them, the one we are going to look at tonight as something about the tribulation in it and that period is to be followed by the kingdom of God upon the earth.

Now, if I say Israel had responded as a nation, had responded as a nation to Jesus Christ, we should presumed and we are only presuming remember, the Gentiles who did not believe Pilate, Herod, others and we Gentiles were involved in the death of Christ, too. You see, Israel is not the only nation that was guilty of deicide, the slaying of God. They are and they cannot escape it. They are trying their best to escape it today. They are so hopeful that Protestants and Catholics will decide that they have not really crucified one who is God, but they cannot escape it nor can we. We Gentiles, for we are guilty too.

But if Israel had responded as a nation, some in the nation were unbelieving and the Gentiles would have crucified Jesus Christ and then those who have responded would go out preaching the word and after the conclusion of the tribulation period, the kingdom would have come and there would have been no church at all. And that is the way the Old Testament looks at the program of God, nothing about the church. And so, if I say if we could, in fact, I have seen diagrams like these in which this is drawn over here and then moved back and so if you can just imagine all of these brought right over here to Pentecost, then the tribulation, then the kingdom with no intervening time, you have the picture that is found in the Old Testament. Now, of course there were indications in the Old Testament that Israel would not accept the Savior. But the issue had to be left open on the human side and so it was.

Now, we know of course that what happened was that Israel rejected the law and therefore, it was necessary for Israel to be turned off into discipline. And so the nations are the recipients of promises. The nation is now in discipline because of its rejection of Jesus Christ, set off at 70 AD, when the destruction of Jerusalem takes place and Israel now is wandering throughout the earth under the discipline of God. In the meantime, on the Day of Pentecost now we know there came into existence the church.

Now, the church I say is not the subject of Old Testament prophecy. It is something that arises out of the situation that Israel rejected the Lord. And now, they

have gone into discipline and God is waiting and waiting and waiting. The light is on but he is waiting, waiting until Israel finally responds to him.

Now, if you think for one moment he is waiting, so that you might get saved, that is true but that is not the primary reason he is waiting. He is really waiting for Israel to turn. For you see, the promises that we have are Israel's promises. You do not like it? You do not like to hear that? But it is true. And all you have to do is read Romans chapter 11 in which the apostle refers to the olive tree and points out, "It is there, olive tree, into which we have been grafted."

Now, we do not have tonight to talk about all of the implications of these and I want to assure you that I am not trying to say that the church of Jesus Christ inherits all of the promises of Israel and therefore the church is Israel. That is obviously not true. The church and Israel are distinct. But we do stand on the basis of the New Covenant that has been made by God with Israel and we stand in that Covenant by grace, by God's grace.

And so now, this time period, indeterminate because we do not know. Whenever Israel is out of the land and discipline, they are under the hand of God and God is waiting until they respond. And in the New Testament, this time is left indeterminate and we do not know how long the church shall be allowed to continue upon the earth in the present circumstances.

At the present time, the church has been in existence for 1900 years. How many more? It will be an existence, we do not know. We know that the church age will conclude with the rapture of the church. The true believers shall go up to meet the Lord in the air; that is something revealed in the New Testament, not revealed in the Old. We shall go, the remainder of the church, by the way if you are member of a local church, but you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, you shall go through the tribulation. You shall enter it, at least. So the tribulation shall come. There is a sense then in which we can say the church is to go through the tribulation for those who do not believe. Then there shall

follow the tribulation period and Jesus Christ shall come back to the earth the second time and establish his kingdom. This of course was to happen according to prophecy.

Now, with this in mind, we are going to look at Isaiah because you see Isaiah does not write about this. He writes about this and he writes about this. But he does not write about this because that had not yet been revealed to him. So when he talks about the future and judgment, he is talking usually ultimately about this period of time. He may refer to some local judgments during the Old Testament period. He may refer to the captivity and the restoration but he will often be referring to the final exhibition of Israel's unbelief and their scattering to the four corners of the earth and discipline and he will refer to the tribulation that is to come and the kingdom that will follow that.

Now then, I have wanted to do this for a long time. We may do it again because, you see, you cannot understand the prophets if you do not understand something like this. So now let us look in our passage in Isaiah chapter 9 and verse 8. Let me remind you that the first seven chapters of the prophecy of Isaiah have to do with his public ministry but beginning with the 8th chapter, the apostle--the prophet, is primarily given truth that pertains to him and to his disciples and to his sons.

So it is private ministry from chapter 8 through chapter 27. And you will remember that in chapters 8 through 12, which is the Book of Immanuel, Isaiah was given a sign. He was told in the 18th verse of chapter 8, "Behold, I and the children whom the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts who dwelleth in Mount Zion." In other words, Isaiah's sons and Isaiah are signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts who dwelleth in Mount Zion.

Now, I want to put the names of the sons and Isaiah's name on the board and show you how this section is built around the names of Isaiah's sons and Isaiah himself. He has said that these two sons and he are signs for Israel. Now, the first son's name that we are going to mention was Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz. I never cease to marvel at that name. I am surprised, of course, that somebody has not picked that name out for their

child in this present dispensation. But, apparently, that was too much for them. Then the second name was Shearjashub. Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz and remember we said Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz meant "speed-spoil-hurry-pray." Shearjashub means "a remnant shall return." Shearjashub, and the third name is the name of Isaiah himself, Isaiah, which means the salvation of Jehovah.

Now, it is remarkable and of course, an evidence of the inspiration of Scripture that these names help us to understand the rest of this Book of Immanuel. For Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, speed-spoil-hurry-pray, which you see, tells the story of divine judgment upon the nation and particularly upon Judah. That is the name of chapter 9 verse 8 through chapter 10 verse 4.

Then there is a little parenthesis in which Isaiah discusses Assyria as the rod of the Lord, chapter 10 verse 5 through 19, I think is the verse. Let me see. chapter 10 verse 5 through 19, right. Then, in chapter 10 verse 20 through verse 34, Shearjashub, "a remnant shall return" becomes the theme; and in order to see this, when you look at the 20th verse, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the remnant of Israel, and such as have escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again lean upon him who smote them but shall lean upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth."

The remnant shall return, do you know what that is? Shearjashub. In other words, this name which was given to Isaiah's child, his first child, was designed to give a message to Israel. A remnant shall return. Then the second child that was given to Isaiah, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, that was designed to teach Isaiah that there was going to be divine discipline before the remnant returned.

And finally, Isaiah's name, chapter 11 verse 1 through chapter 12 verse 6, Isaiah means the salvation of Jehovah. And in those verses, chapter 11 and chapter 12, Isaiah sets forth the salvation that will enable the remnant to return. Notice how the 11th chapter begins, "And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots, and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the spirit of

wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; and he shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of the ears. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth, and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth."

Was that our Lord's first coming? No, he did not do that. He shall do that at the kingdom herein. See, if I had the right kind of blackboard, we would have that still on the board and you could see it but we do not. But remember, the kingdom. That is what he is talking about. So, when he talks about Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, speed-spoil-hurry-prey, and discipline, he is talking primarily about that tribulation period. And when he talks about the remnant shall return, he is also talking about that time and then, when he talks about the salvation of the Lord, responsible for it, he is talking ultimately about the kingdom of our Lord, his second coming as the salvation of God to bring deliverance to the remnant and to inaugurate his kingdom. So, those three names: Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, Shearjashub, and Isaiah are the keys to the last section of the Book of Emmanuel.

Now, let us look at them hurriedly. The first sign, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, chapter 9 verse 8 through chapter 10 verse 4, speed-spoil-hurry-pray, the sign of the approaching judgment upon Judah because of Judah's faithlessness. Now, four strophes set forth Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, speed-spoil-hurry-pray. And I want you to notice these four strophes are all set forth in poetic fashion and they each end with a little refrain.

Watch chapter 9 verse 8 through 12. Look at the last words of verse 12, "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." Notice verse 17, "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still. Notice the end of verse 21, "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." verse 4 of chapter 10, last sentence, "For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." In other words, God is engaged in judgment. He is engaged

in discipline. And his hand is stretched out still in discipline and in judgment. Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, one section for each section of his name. Maher, shalal, hash and baz.

Now, let us just very quickly read these sections and I want you to notice the thing that is singled out for judgment in Israel. Let us begin now with chapter 9 verse 8 and read through verse 12, "The Lord sent a word into Jacob and it hath lighted upon Israel. And all the people shall know, even Ephraim and the inhabitant of Samaria, that say in the pride and stoutness of heart, the bricks are fallen down, but we will build with hewn stone."

Now this of course displeases God very much that when he disciplines, men do not turn to him, but say, "That's all right, we can take it." We rebel. They do not look inward. For perhaps some divine reason while they are suffering, they just say in their own strength, we will build something better. "The sycamores are cut down but we will change them into cedars. Therefore, the Lord shall setup the adversaries of Rezin against him," probably the Assyrians, "and join his enemies together; the Syrians before and the Philistines behind, and they shall devour Israel with open mouth. For all these, his anger is not turned away but his hand is stretched out still."

So in this strophe, God says you are going to suffer the loss of territory and you are going to suffer it because of the presence of pride. That always displeases God, the pride of men. Because you see, the pride of men is that part of us, naturally, which usurps God in our lives. There is nothing worse in the sight of God than a proud man.

Much worse in the sight of God to be a proud man than it is to be a thief. That is why Jacob, who was a schemer and a thief and a crooked man, is nevertheless, in God's eyes, a man of much greater stature than Esau. Because with all of his crookedness and with all of his thievery, he was a man of faith. Whereas Esau was the proud, profane man. The man who leaves God out of his thoughts. I think I would have loved to have been with Esau. He was much more company. Jacob, however, was the man of faith. And frequently, the man of faith in the early stages of his life, is a very disagreeable kind

of person to be with. But Jacob finally reaches tremendous stature in the end because of the grace of God that worked in his life.

That means Christians, if you are wonderful loving, kind, the very epitome of what a Christian should be, have a little patience with the rest of us. You see, we are just beginning our pathway towards maturity. So really, exercise some patience, with us.

Let us look at the second strophe, and here war and defeat because of the stubbornness of their heart. Verse 13, "For the people turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of hosts." By the way, whenever anything happens to you, do you, first of all, look towards God and say, "Lord, am I to be exorcised by this?" That is the first response. Am I to be exorcised by this? Is it because of something that I have done, that this has befallen me?

"Therefore, the Lord will cut off from Israel head and tail, branch and rush in one day. The ancient and honorable, he is the head; and the prophet who teacheth lies, he is the tail." Troubling, isn't it? To know the prophet's the tail. "For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed. Therefore, the Lord shall have no joy in their young men, neither shall he have mercy on their fatherless and widows: for every one is a hypocrite and an evildoer, and every mouth speaketh folly. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." In other words, war and defeat because of the stubbornness of their hearts.

Now, I think the principle that is found here is a principle that applies first of all to Israel. The prophets are teaching lies. The leaders are misleading the people. But the people are following the leaders. And they are being destroyed by them. And consequently God's judgment comes. And this principle which was seen in ancient times, and will be seen in the future too, is a principle that applies in the church of Jesus Christ today. For you see today, we have ecclesiastical leaders too. And we have ecclesiastical leaders who are living in unbelief. And who, furthermore, are doing everything that they possibly can to prevent the truth of God from progressing.

I have a good friend. He is an evangelist, an accredited evangelist in a certain domination. He used to be in some classes that I held at the University Christian Fellowship 20 or more years ago in Southern Methodist University when I used to work on the campus there. And this young man is a fine preacher. He has had a very successful ministry. Now, he is not a pastor but an evangelist.

A few years ago, he came to town very troubled and asked to eat lunch with me and he told me this story. He said I have just gone to a new community in West Texas. He said I went into my church and shortly afterwards I had a meeting with the local superintendent of our work in that community. And he told me, and I forgot to ask him, "Did you know what kind of person you were? But he said, he told me. He said there is another church in this community, which is a fundamentalist church. They preach the fundamentals and he said that this leader of the church told him, "I am going to rid that church of everyone of those," as he said, "those fundamentalists." "I am going to rid that church of everyone of those fundamentalists, if it means that we have to reduce that church to 10 people in the membership."

And my friend was very much disturbed because you see he was going to one of the other churches in that same community and it so happen that was the doctrine that he believed too. And so it is possible you see, for a man who is outwardly, a man of the church to be an apostate from the faith. Just as in ancient times so today, and do not think for one moment that it is not possible. And it is also possible for individuals in the church who are not preachers too. It is possible to be a member of a church, your family has been a member of it and so on, but instead of helping the work of God now, because of unbelief you are actually fighting it and resisting it.

I had a very good friend in Birmingham whose husband was a nonbeliever. They were members of the church. But he was a nonbeliever. Whenever she spoke to him about the things of the Lord, he was very much disturbed. Finally, he reached the place where, whenever she would talk about the things of the Lord, he would rush upstairs and

groan, and moan audibly. You could hear him all over the house, groaning, and moaning audibly, and also, occasionally, cursing our Lord Jesus Christ. Very interesting, that man on this deathbed turned to her and said, "Patty, the only person who can help now is your Jesus." But you see, it is possible for us to fight the truth as individuals do. That means the judgment of God.

Strophe three, verse 18, "For wickedness" -- by the way, this word wickedness is the word in Hebrew which means rebellion -- let us translate it that way, it is a very contemporary word, isn't it? "For rebellion burneth as the fire: it shall devour the briers and thorns, and shall kindle in the thickets of the forest, and they shall mount up like the lifting up of smoke. Through the wrath Lord of Hosts is the land darkened and the people shall be as the fuel of the fire: no man shall spare his brother. And he shall snatch on the right hand and be hungry; and he shall eat on the left hand, and they shall not be satisfied."

It is almost as if he was describing some events during the time of the French Revolution and also the Russian Revolution too, except this is far worse. They were just little anticipations of what is going to happen during the time of The Great Tribulation period when men are really set against men as never before. "They shall eat every man, the flesh of his own arm: Manasseh, Ephraim; and Ephraim, Manasseh: and they together shall be against Judah. For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still." Internal anarchy because of rebellion, panic-kind of wickedness, sins spreading like a mania.

Now in some measure, this was fulfilled during the days of Ahaz in Isaiah and that produced the final judgment that for Judah meant the captivity. But I think the language goes far beyond this. And goes on to the time in the future when there shall be this tremendous out breaking of rebellion in the earth, rebellion against God so that when the judgments of God fall upon men during the time of The Great Tribulation, the Book of

Revelation states explicitly that those men who suffer those judgments do not desire repentance. They want to hide from God but they do not want to turn to him.

You know we have some terrible things going on in this country. I do not know whether any of you know anything about Herbert Marcuse's philosophy. But Professor Marcuse is a German, he grew up in Germany during the days of Hitler and left during the Hitler regime and went to Switzerland as so many Germans did. He is now professor of political philosophy at the University of California at San Diego. He is the man behind the new left in the United States. He is the man behind the rioters and those who are rebelling at, for example, Columbia. He was the man behind those who are rebelling in Paris, at the Sorbonne, his philosophy.

In fact, he and Mao and Marx have been linked together as a kind of triad. Marx, giving the theory, Marcuse, the philosophy of terror of today; and Mao, the one who is applying it. But Marcuse 's philosophy is really a philosophy of terror. And I want to tell you if the United States ever falls into the hands of the young men who are instigated and moved by him and his philosophy, not one of you in this room are going to be free. Unless you turn tail from what you believe. You know where you going to be? In prison, that is where you are going to be. And you are not going to be able to say a word because he believes in the stopping of the mouths of all who are from center to right politically. That is right. And do not think for one moment that these things that are moving among us are not serious, they are. And when you read about Rudy Deutchki and Bendit-Cohn and others, they are disciples of Marcuse and his philosophy. And he is a jovial, kindly looking fellow, 70 years of age with white hair. Just looks like a little devil.

You know this country has lost what it used to have – it's character. A few years ago, Nelson Bell, who is the father-in-law of Billy Graham, wrote something on character in *Christianity Today* which I thought was very good. And in the course of it, he described an incident that occurred when he was just a medical student in Richmond. He

said when he was working in one of the missions in the [black] area of the city, he had occasion to be acquainted with a case that took place in court. A young Negro boy was hauled into court and was accused of stealing a box. And the judge spoke to the little boy and he said, "Did you steal this box?" And the little boy said, "No, I did not steal it. That would be sin." And the judge looked at the little boy somewhat amused at that reason and he said, "Young man, what is sin?" He said, "Sin is any want of conformity unto or transgression of the law." And he had got that from the catechism.

Well that interested the judge so much that he investigated and discovered of course that the young man was not guilty. But you see he had been taught the truth. And because he had been taught the truth, he had some character. And because he had some character, while he could sin, the likelihood of it is much less. But we are coming to the place today where in the United States...how many of you have learned the catechism? Would you raise your hand? How many of you studied the catechism? You see, there are 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and I can pick you out. I know exactly who you are because I know your background. And I am not going to talk about your age because the chances are if you went back to Sunday school now you would not be taught in your own Sunday school. And now perhaps in yours you would.

But I want to tell you that in general, it is not true anymore. You are not taught those things anymore. So when we read these things in the word of God there are great principles found here. And now the fourth strophe chapter 10 verse 1 through verse 4,

"Woe unto them that decree unrighteous decrees, and that write grievousness which they have prescribed; To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless! To turn aside the needy from judgment, and to take away the right from the poor of my people, that widows may be their prey, and that they may rob the fatherless! And what will you do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall

come from far? To whom will ye flee for help? And where will you leave your glory?
Without me they shall bow down under the prisoners and they shall fall under the slain.
For all this his anger is not turned away, but his hand is stretched out still."

Captivity, because of the corruption of judges, did you notice that? The corruption of the judges, do I have to say anything about that? I do not have to say anything about that, regardless of where we stand politically today. If you stand on one I would call a little to the left, I think you still would agree that there is some question about the law of our land today. Some question about the court too. And if you stand on the right, you will say there is a great question about the law, the court of our land today. And it goes right to the top as we know. And I do not want to pass judgment on Earl Warren and the rest of the men on the Supreme Court. I think we can, at least say this there is serious question about the integrity of our courts today. And at least we should say that it is of great concern to a lot of people in the United States.

But it is not impossible for our courts to be corrupt. And it is not impossible for the highest court in the land to be corrupt. And I think we have some good evidence that individuals in our courts are corrupt. And when they are corrupt they cannot see, and when they cannot see, the laws of the land are going to come out practiced in crooked manner. And that is what happened in Israel, that is what we will expect. Discipline fails and judgment remains, and so God if he has one message to give to Israel it is this, Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz, speed-spoil-hurry-prey, you are in for it. And I wonder if we are not in for it too.

Now there is a parenthesis here. And God has something to say about Assyria because you see, he has not forgotten his promises. Remember he is going to judge the people to whom he has given these great promises of Messianic redemption. And he is going to use the Assyrian to judge them. It is just as if God were to say to us today, now there are lots of Christians in America, by the way I do not believe that America has ever

been a Christian nation, not from the beginning has it ever been a Christian nation in the biblical sense.

Oh, there were strong influences for Christianity, but it has never really been a Christian nation. You study your history and you will discover that that is true. But in any rate, there have been strong influences for Christianity in the United States, and there is no question about that today the greatest body of Christians is in the United States, so far as numbers are concerned. Insofar as their contributions to the missions, program of God, the money and the interest and the zeal rests more in the United States than any other nation in the world. That I believe is one reason why we have been spared, but we have been spared.

But it is just as if God were to say, "I love America so much, that I want to apply the Fatherly discipline to them and I am going to use Russia to do it." And Russia says, not knowing God, "I'm going to go down over to the United States and I'm going to vent my wrath upon them and take spoil." And it cares not for God. And so God would have something to say to Russia, something far worse and that which he has to say to the USA. That is only an illustration because you see, we are talking about Judah or Israel and the Assyrian and notice.

First the Divine intention in verse 5, "O Assyria the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation, I will send him against an hypocritical nation and against the people of my wrath while I command him to take the spoil and to take the prey." There it is, speed-spoil-haste and prey. But it is not in his heart to take the prey and to tread them down like mire of the streets. That is God's intentions. He is going to take the Assyrian and he is going to use Teglath-Phalazar to come down into Judah and Israel and to apply divine discipline to them. And ultimately Israel shall be carried captive into captivity and Judah too, a century later.

By the way, you know what this means? This means that God controls the nations. This means that the nations are in the hand of the Lord as the rivers of water.

Everything is in his hands. He directs the Kremlin, he directs the White House, wherever, Number 10 Downing Street. Wherever men meet to plot the destiny of a nation, God meets over them. I know it is an old-fashioned doctrine to talk about the providence of God, but I believe it. And I think that when we get to heaven, we are going to have one of the most interesting things we are going to see is the diagrams on the board in which God plots out how his providence has been working down through the years.

Albert Camus, humanists, and others like him say life is absurd, it is utterly meaningless. But they have forgotten God in human history. He controls it. Daniel puts it so beautifully in the 4th chapter. You know, in the 32nd verse and also in verse 35, he states in that 4th chapter and 32nd verse, "And they shall drive thee from men and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of the field Nebuchadnezzar, they shall make thee to eat grass like oxen, and seven times shall pass over thee until thy know that the most high ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever he will." Verse 35, "And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doeth according to his will and the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand or say unto him, 'What doeth thou?'" Because he controls everything.

You know there are three kinds of thinking today, which are secularistic and they are very popular. One of them is scientific. The world is locked up within natural processes. Everything can be understood as a closed system of cause and effect. And amazingly, intelligent people believe that. I say amazing because there is no scientific evidence for it whatsoever.

And then the second one, motif of secularism: religion is the projection of a man's desire for some fatherly image. Religion is simply the projection of a man's human subjectivity. Tafoya Bach said that, "It was simply an egotistic wish projection, we wanted something and so we've manufactured it," and that is religion.

And then there is the catastrophic. We have been through such terrible things in the 20th Century, there could not possibly be any meaning in life, and we must follow a

nihilistic philosophy, there is just nothing of any meaning whatsoever. And consequently, the idea of providence, ah, that is old fashioned. But the Assyrian is called "the rod of my anger."

Now then, notice how the Assyrian thinks. I will just read one verse here because we have to hurry. Verse 7, "How be it, he meaneth not so." He does not realize that he is the rod of God's anger. "He doesn't treat it that way. Neither doth his hearth think so. But it is in his heart to destroy and cut off nations not of you." Oh I must read this section that follows because it is tremendous, and the thoughts that God puts in to the heart of this Assyrian king. He says "Are not my princes altogether kings, is not Calno like Carchemish? Is not Hamath like Arpad? Is not Samaria like Damascus?" I have taken all of these cities, what about these next ones that face me? I'll take them just like the rest. "As my army have found the kingdoms of the idols and whose carved images did excel them of Jerusalem and Samaria." In other words, I have already taken temples which had images that were much nicer than the images we will find in the temple in Jerusalem. "Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do the Jerusalem and her idols?"

And God has a little thing to say in the 12th verse, "Wherefore it shall come to pass that when the Lord has performed this whole work upon mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the King of Assyria and the glory of his high looks. For he saith, By my strength or by the strength of my hand I have done it?" Can't you just see Khrushchev raising his old shoe and pounding it on the table, you know. "By my wisdom, for I am prudent." Khrushchev--you know what he said when he was shown all of the things in the United States? He said, what we need is machines, machines, and machines. That is what we have got too, machines. "And I have removed the bounds of the people and I have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man. And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there

was none that moved a wing or opened a mouth or peeped." Is it not that a beautiful description of how people react to the Assyrian?

That is almost like Czechoslovakia in 1968. And there was none that moved a wing or opened their mouth or peeped except they are doing a little peeping over there now, a little opening of the mouth. I should have said East Germany and old people over there. "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith?" I am the one who has used the Assyrian. "Or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? As if the rod should shake itself against those who lift it up or as if the staff should lift up him that is not wood? Therefore, shall the Lord, the Lord of hosts, send among his fat ones leanness; and under his glory he shall kindle a burning like the burning of a fire."

And notice the 17th verse for this is how he shall do it, "And the light of Israel shall be for a fire and his Holy One for a flame and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briars in one day." When God acts, there shall be sudden catastrophic judgment.

Now, one quick word, the second sign, verse 20, after this parenthesis is Shearjashub, "A remnant shall return." And here, the prophet moves on to the kingdom. Because you will notice he says in verse 20 and verse 27, "In that day." That is a characteristic expression for the day of the tribulation period and the day of the kingdom which is called in Scripture the day of the Lord, the day of the Lord.

So, he has moved on beyond the local to the final consummation of the age. For only then shall the final deliverance come. "And it shall come to pass on that day that the remnant of Israel, and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more again lean upon him who smote them; but shall lean upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God." That is our Lord. His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace. "For though thy people Israel be like the sand of the sea, yet a remnant of them shall return: the consumption decreed shall overflow with righteousness."

Now, in verse 24 as he concludes, he says, "Therefore, thus saith the Lord God of hosts, O my people that dwell in Zion, be not afraid of the Assyrian." You see, with the promises of God in our hands, there is no need to be afraid. There is no need for the United States to be afraid if they had turned to God. And when I say turn to God, I do not mean the God in general. I mean the God who is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for he is the only God.

But if our country should turn to him, there is no need for fear. But we have not turned to him. And so there is need for fear. But for Christians, there is no need for fear. No matter what may come to us if we are really trusting in him, leaning upon him to use Isaiah's words, all of our destiny is in the hands of him who controls this fear. So, do not fear the Assyrian. Do not fear that tragedy, do not fear that problem, do not fear that difficulty that faces you, turn to the mighty God.

I was telling Mary, now I may take just another minute or two. I was telling Mary at the dinner table tonight that I have discovered in the Old Testament some divine psychiatry. It is found in 32nd Psalm. It is amazing how much this is like psychiatry. Listen to it. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no doubt.

Now, there is mental health, after-healing mental health. "When I kept silence, my bones became old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me." You see David had sinned. "My moisture has turned into the drought of summer." And so David has a guilt complex. But he has a guilt complex because he is guilty, that is why. By the way, any psychiatry that seeks to suppress a guilt complex is destructive to the being of man for we are guilty. The proper attitude is not suppression of guilt. The proper attitude is recognition of guilt but guilt seen in the light of the blood of the cross.

Now, do you want to know what David psychiatric couch was? Here it is. Hopes, frustrations all dredged up and, "I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord," he is the great psychiatrist, "and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." He talks about the way of healing. He talks about a father complex. It is all right to have a father complex. It is all right. "Thou art my hiding place," verse 7. "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go." That is continuing psychiatric care. Is it not wonderful to have that?

Did you notice Lucy this morning? You know Snoopy has been having trouble lately. He has had fears, tormented by his fears. So Charlie Brown went to Lucy this morning and he asked her, he said I have a problem, actually it concerns Snoopy. He suddenly seems to be afraid to sleep outside at night. He keeps hearing noises. Do you deal in animal psychiatry? Would you try to help him? Of course, I am very broad minded, Lucy said. I will treat any patient who has a problem and a nickel. And I want you to notice here that there is continuing psychiatric care and it is free of charge. "Be ye not like the horse or like the mule that have no understanding whose mouth was be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee," hostilities, frustrations surrendered to him.

And finally verse 11, here is the truly integrated personality, sound in mind, "Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart." It is wonderful to be the object of God's psychiatry. It is all in the Bible. And we need not fear the Assyrian or anything else as long as we have before us our mighty God, the Holy One of Israel, our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I must apologize to you. I have gone seven minutes over 9 o'clock. Let us close with a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we thank Thee... [Tape ends]

“The Destruction of the World’s Kingdom” by S. Lewis Johnson
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