



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Micah 4:1-5

"Jehovah Supreme from His Temple in Zion"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] Returning tonight to Micah chapter 4 and one of the great prophecies in the Book of Micah, one that is very, very similar to one in the prophecy of Isaiah, not totally surprising since the two prophets prophesied at the same general time and also to some of the same people. The subject for tonight as we look at Micah 4:1-5 is "Yahweh Supreme from His Temple in Zion."

One might think as you read through the third chapter, which has just preceded this chapter, that God's last word might be judgment for the children of Israel because that prophecy in which he sought to analyze the spiritual condition of the nation led up to the pronouncement of judgment upon the leaders. In the 11th verse of chapter 3, the prophet wrote, "Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe, Her priests instruct for a price And her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the Lord saying, "Is not the Lord in our midst? Calamity will not come upon us."

The hypocrisy of the leaders of the nation is obvious from that statement. And then Micah concludes the third chapter by saying, "Therefore, on account of you Zion will be plowed as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins, And the mountain of the temple will become high places of a forest."

Now you notice the word temple in the New American Standard Bible is literally the Hebrew word house. "And the mountain of the house will become the high places of a forest." But it is a reference to the temple in Jerusalem. So one might think as you finish the third chapter that God's last word was judgment.

Well, it is not God's last word. That is clear as we read on in the prophecy of Micah, but it is the pathway to the salvation of the Nation Israel. And the pathway of the salvation of the nation Israel through judgment is very similar to the pathway that we must pass on the way to our salvation because it is essential for us to come to recognize that the divine judgment ought to fall upon us. And it is through the divine judgment falling upon Jesus Christ our representative that we are freed from judgment and thus able to enter into the possession of salvation.

So the same thing that happens in the person's sphere is something that will happen in principle in the sphere of the nation Israel. And therefore, judgment is significant. It is the pathway to salvation.

However, in the light of the great promises that God had given to Israel, if we had been pondering them, and if we had been in Israel in Micah's day, we might have wondered: Well what about those ancient promises that God has given to us? He did say that he would be in our midst. And our hypocritical leaders, who have departed from the word of God, at least are correct in this, that the Scriptures do say that the Lord will be in our midst.

What, they of course had overlooked is that individually when we depart from the word of God we may expect judgment. But God had promised a beautiful and glorious ethnic future for the nation Israel. And so from the standpoint of the nation, the promises were sure to be fulfilled. From the standpoint of individuals, it is essential that they respond in faith in order to participate in that which is sure to come for the nation.

That is true of Israel today. Individual Israelites are just as individual Gentiles; they are responsible to respond to the message of the cross. If they do, they become

members of the church of Jesus Christ and therefore blessed with the fulfillment of the ancient promises made to the people of God. But if an Israelite does not respond, he's just like a Gentile who does not respond; he does not enter into the blessings that are set out in Scripture for the nation Israel. But in spite of individual disobedience, the national promises still hold. And so Israel has a glorious future.

Paul asks the question in Romans chapter 3 after pointing out that there is really no difference between Jew and Gentile. Knowing that that has raised a question no doubt with his readers, he then asks the question himself, "Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision?" One might be inclined to think nothing since we all stand individually on the same ground.

But ethnically and nationally Israel's promises are still true. And so the apostle after the cross, the Christian church is in existence, he speaks from the standpoint that we live in, he answers his own question by saying, "What advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles (or promises) of God." So Israel has glorious promises with reference to the future as a nation.

Therefore, if someone in Micah's day had pondered what the prophet was saying, "Zion shall be plowed as a field, Jerusalem will become a heap or ruins," he would have known, had he pondered those promises correctly, that while Jerusalem does face a time of chastisement and a time of judgment, that's not the end for Jerusalem. Jerusalem has a glorious future.

The ruin of Jerusalem and their present disobedience as a nation cannot negate the covenantal pledges that God has given in the Abrahamic promises which were renewed to Isaac and to Jacob. They cannot be annulled because God has given his word that they will be fulfilled. And remember our great biblical principle: the God of the Bible cannot be frustrated insofar as his purposes are concerned. He will fulfill all his

purposes. So, when we come to the fourth chapter, we come realizing that Jerusalem becoming a heap of ruins is not the final account of the future of Israel.

Now you'll notice as we read these five verses of chapter 4, that there is a careful linking of future blessing with the present prophecies of disaster. For example, in chapter 3 and verse 1, he had said, "And I said, "Hear now, heads of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know justice?" And then in verse 9, " Now hear this, heads of the house of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel, Who abhor justice." And then in verse 11, "Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe."

So here we have human judges referred to by Micah in the 3rd chapter. And notice in the 4th chapter in verses 1 through 5, when he talks about the glorious future of the nation Israel, he will say that it will be Yahweh who will be the judge of his people, and consequently he will execute decisions and judgments righteously.

Notice the 3rd verse of chapter 4, "And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war."

So in the third chapter, he has castigated the judges of Jerusalem in his day. In the fourth chapter, as he looks into the distant future, he sees that there will be an unfailingly righteous judge, and that righteous judge is Yahweh.

Now in the third chapter he also attacked the human teachers or priests because it was the priest's duty to teach the word of God. And in verse 11 of chapter 3 we read, "Her leaders pronounce judgment for a bribe, Her priests instruct for a price." So he talks about the failures of the human teachers.

But in the 4th chapter, playing upon that same idea, he says in the 2nd verse of the 4th chapter,

"Many nations will come and say, 'Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord To the house of the God of Jacob, That He may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths.' For from Zion shall go forth the law, Even the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

So in the third chapter he attacks the priests, the teachers, but in the fourth chapter, as he looks into the future and the kingdom of God upon the earth, he says it is Yahweh who will do the teaching and therefore that teaching will be teaching that is in the truth.

And finally in the 5th verse of the 3rd chapter, he attacked the prophets, "Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets Who lead my people astray; When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, "Peace," But against him who puts nothing in their mouths They declare holy war." So he attacked the prophets.

But in the 4th chapter at the end of the 2nd verse, when he talks about divine revelation, "For from Zion will go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem," and also in the 4th verse, "Each of them will sit under his vine And under his fig tree, With no one to make them afraid, For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken." What he says is that the prophet's duty of speaking to the current situation is something that the Lord God will do.

Prophets gave divine revelation. In the day of the kingdom the divine revelation will be given by the Lord God himself. So the heads of the nation are going to give way for a new head. And so Micah, you see, has constructed these verses very carefully playing upon the themes of chapter 3.

Now with that in mind, let's look at chapter 4, verse 1 through verse 5. Now, I've read some of it, but let's read through it again.

"And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it. And many nations will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war. And each of them will sit under his vine And under his fig tree, With no one to make them afraid, For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken. Though all the peoples walk Each in the name of his god, As for us, we will walk In the name of the Lord our God forever and ever."

In this section of five verses there are really two stanzas that belong together according to the prophetic scheme and the poetic structure of these verses. And the first stanza takes us through the first verse and through the second verse to that last line, "And that we may walk in His paths." And then the next stanza begins, "For from Zion will go forth the law," and takes us through the fourth verse. And then the fifth verse is a final concluding statement made by the prophet in which the two stanzas are summed up or in which a conclusion is reached as a result of what has just preceded.

But in the first stanza, the 1st verse through verse 2 up to the words, "For from Zion will go forth the law," we have Jerusalem as the center of the world. Now if we had a lot of time, what I would like to do at this point would be to turn back to the prophecy of Isaiah and read some of the great chapters that are there, particularly chapters 59, 60, 61, 62, because all of these chapters are expansions of the things that Micah speaks about right here. Let's just read one of the chapters. I think it would be good for us.

Let's take the longest one, chapter 60, and as we turn back to Micah, I want you to bear in mind some of the things that we read here in Isaiah. Chapter 60 of the prophecy of Isaiah reads this way.

Now remember in the preceding chapter he has just said that the redeemer is going to come and he's going to turn away transgression in Jacob and God's covenant is going to be with them and they're going to have the forgiveness of sins. Now chapter 60 and verse 1,

"Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the Lord has risen upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the earth And deep darkness the peoples; But the Lord will rise upon you And His glory will appear upon you. And nations will come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising. Lift up your eyes round about and see; They all gather together, they come to you. Your sons will come from afar, And your daughters will be carried in the arms. Then you will see and be radiant, And your heart will thrill and rejoice; Because the abundance of the sea will be turned to you, The wealth of the nations will come to you. A multitude of camels will cover you, The young camels of Midian and Ephah; All those from Sheba will come; They will bring gold and frankincense, And will bear good news of the praises of the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar will be gathered together to you, The rams of Nebaioth will minister to you; They will go up with acceptance on My altar, And I shall glorify My glorious house. (Now his glorious house of course a reference to the temple) Who are these who fly like a cloud And like the doves to their lattices? Surely the coast lands will wait for Me; And the ships of Tarshish will come first, To bring your sons from afar, Their silver and their gold with them, For the name of the Lord your God, And for the Holy One of Israel because He has glorified you. And foreigners will build up your walls, And their kings will minister to you; For in My wrath I struck you, And in My favor I have had compassion on you. And your gates will open continually; They will not be closed day or night, So that men may

bring to you the wealth of the nations, With their kings led in procession. For the nation and the kingdom which will not serve you will perish, And the nations will be utterly ruined. The glory of Lebanon will come to you, The juniper, the box tree and the cypress together, To beautify the place of My sanctuary; And I shall make the place of My feet glorious. The sons of those who afflicted you will come bowing to you, And all those who despised you will bow themselves at the soles of your feet; And they will call you the city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas you have been forsaken and hated With no one passing through, I will make you an everlasting pride, A joy from generation to generation. You will also suck the milk of nations And suck the breast of kings; Then you will know that I, the Lord, am your Savior And your Redeemer, the Mighty One of Jacob. Instead of bronze I will bring gold, And instead of iron I will bring silver, And instead of wood, bronze, And instead of stones, iron. And I will make peace your administrators And righteousness your overseers. Violence will not be heard again in your land, Nor devastation or destruction within your borders; But you will call your walls salvation, and your gates praise. No longer will you have the sun for light by day, Nor for brightness will the moon give you light; But you will have the Lord for an everlasting light, And your God for your glory. Your sun will set no more, Neither will your moon wane; For you will have the Lord for an everlasting light, And the days of your mourning will be finished. Then all your people will be righteous; They will possess the land forever, The branch of My planting, The work of My hands, That I may be glorified. The smallest one will become a clan, And the least one a mighty nation. I, the Lord, will hasten it in its time."

One wonders when you turn to Micah chapter 4, after reading just previously those comments concerning judgment "Jerusalem will become a heap of ruins," what is it that allows the prophet to begin the fourth chapter by saying, "And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief

of the mountains raised above the hills, And the nations of the earth streaming into it."

How would we answer that question?

Well, there is one answer to the question that is most significant. And that question of course pertains to the saving work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is by virtue of the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus that we are able to move from judgment pronounced upon Judah and Israel into blessing pronounced upon Jerusalem and Judah and Israel. The saving work of the crucified one is the foundation of these blessings that the prophet unfolds in chapter 4.

Now he speaks first about the exaltation of Yahweh's Zion. He says, "The mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains."

Now you can see from this reference here to "the house of the Lord," twice he uses the expression, at least twice. "The house of the God of Jacob." he says in verse 2. What is the house of Yahweh? What is the house of the God of Jacob? Well, it is the temple. That is the house of the God of Jacob.

Now if this is a reference to the last days, as the opening words suggest, what does that presuppose? Well, that presupposes that the temple of Yahweh is going to be rebuilt in the land before the coming of the temple of God upon the earth. "It will come about in the last days that the mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains." So presupposed is the rebuilding of the temple in the city of Jerusalem.

Now that of course is something that is a very, very difficult thing for us to think about now, because that is the most critical part of a critical land and a critical city to this very day.

Just recently in Time magazine, well just a month or so ago, one of the lead articles, in fact the lead article was devoted again to the city of Jerusalem and the tensions that exist in the land and in the city. And the critical area in the city of course is the temple area. That city which is sacred to three great religions, Christianity, Judaism and

Mohammadism is a critical city in itself. But that area is the most critical of all of the areas in that land.

But this prophecy states that the house of the Lord is going to be lifted up above the mountains there, and so, presupposed is the rebuilding of that temple. How it shall be accomplished, of course, we do not know. The Scriptures do not give us such details as that. All we know is that it will come to pass.

Now, he begins by saying, "And it will come about in the last days." This expression in the Hebrew *'achariyth yowm* is an expression that occurs about thirteen times in the Old Testament. And in almost all, many students say in every case, it is a reference to the Messianic days that just precede our Lord's second coming. And I think of course that that is the reference of the temporal expression here.

He says, "The mountain of the house of the Lord will be established as the chief of the mountains."

Now naturally we ask the question, Does that mean that the temple area will be raised up in a geographical sense? That is, will there be something transpired in the structure of the earth that will raise the temple mount above all of the other places of the earth?

Well I don't think that is necessary. We know there is to be a great earthquake and tremendous geographical changes taking place in the land at the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. They are detailed for us in the 14th chapter of the Book of Zechariah. But it's not necessary, it seems to me, to take it in that sense. I think probably the prophet means that the house of the Lord, the temple will become the most significant headquarters of a national entity in the whole of the world.

Aben Ezra, one of the Jewish interpreters speaking about this said, "It is well known that the house of the temple is not high, the meaning then is that its fame shall go forth and there return to it from all quarters persons with offerings, (remember Isaiah 60) so that it shall be as if it were on the top of all the hills so that all the inhabitants of the

earth should see it." One thing is certain; it is the picture of the exaltation of Yahweh's Mount Zion.

Now, the aspirations of the nations are spoken of in the beginning of the second verse. We read at right at the end of verse 1, "And the peoples will stream to it." And then we read, "And many nations will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord And to the house of the God of Jacob, That he may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths."

So, to use terms that the religions of the world use, the mecca of the future is not the mecca of today. The mecca of the future will be the city of Jerusalem. We have a little proverb and we say 'All roads lead to Rome!' Or in this country we might say all roads lead to New York, or all roads to Washington, or all roads leads to Waxahachie or something like that. But in the future, all roads will lead to Jerusalem.

And it certainly is a glad day when men seek the Lord and without hindrances from false teachers, because in Micah's day they were hindered by the false teachers from seeking the Lord because many taught things that were false concerning him. It is going to be a wonderful day when men have the desire to know the Lord, when all over the world the nations throng into the city of Jerusalem that they might learn the teaching of the God of Jacob. And no false teachers around, no Arminians around. No Arminians around, no false teachers around to lead us astray from the teaching of the pure grace of our great God.

Now, in the second stanza the prophet expatiates on the theme of Jerusalem the city of peace. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem," we are told in Psalm 122 in verse 6. Well, that prayer has not been answered to this present day, but there is going to come an answer to the prayer given by the Lord.

And we read now in verse 2b through chapter 4 of the things that are going to happen. "For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations."

The peace that the prophets proclaimed was a false peace. Remember in verse 5, the prophet had said of chapter 3, "The Lord said concerning the prophets Who lead my people astray; When they have something to bite with their teeth, They cry, "Peace." So, when they are fed properly, when they are given the money to prophesy and to teach, they prophesy in ways that would please those who pay them. They give them things that they want to hear. They prophesy exactly what they would like to hear. And if the subjects are displeasing to them, they change their subjects. They preach the things that are pleasing to them. And one of the things that is always pleasing is peace. National peace, personal peace, everything is going to be wonderful. So they prophesy in that way. Well, for the peace of the false prophets which does not come, rather the catastrophe of the destruction of Jerusalem came from the Lord God.

There is a real attainment of peace in the last days. "He will judge between many peoples. He will render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they rain for war." So the peace of the future is the peace that Yahweh himself gives.

In verse 2 right at the end he says, "For from Zion will go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem." That is the source of divine revelation. In the preceding verse the prophet has spoken about that which was in a sense, he talks about everybody coming into Jerusalem. And so that's more like centripetal force, everything moving in that way.

Well, here it's everything moving out from Jerusalem as the headquarters of the nations with the Lord God upon the throne. And he's going to execute judgment among the peoples. He will be the final arbiter of peace.

Jerusalem will be the home of the true (well we do have such a thing don't we, a world court). The true world court will not be in Geneva or in Brussels or in one of the other great cities of the present world. The true world court will be in Jerusalem. And there things will be settled through Yahweh who sits upon his throne.

And furthermore, when the decisions are rendered, the media will not turn to the republicans or the democrats and give the opposite side giving them an opportunity to quibble over decisions that are made by the high authorities. And that in itself is enough of a relief for us to say, Hallelujah when we think about the kingdom of God upon the earth. We're not going to be told, Now what do others say about this? But when things come from Jerusalem, that's the final word. He is the arbiter of peace.

And there we shall have a true START Zion. A true strategic arms limitation that actually can be believed because they're going to hammer their swords into plowshares at the orders of the king upon the throne, and their spears into pruning hooks. And finally we will have a situation in which there will be peace upon the earth.

You know, it is of course one of the great signs of the inspiration of the word of God that men still, still believe that men may make agreements and keep them. Isn't that an amazing thing? The Bible all along has said men are sinners; men will not stick to their word, only God will stick to his word. And now for thousands of years, men have been making agreements and breaking agreements. And men still are blind to the nature of men, and so when someone talks about salt I and salt II and now President Reagan has come up with START, their hope rises in the hearts of some people that men will actually adhere to the agreements that they make.

The war to end all wars has been fought over and over and over again, but there will be one final war that will end all wars. And that war is described in the 19th chapter of the Book of Revelation when the one sitting upon the white horse comes and overthrows his enemies and establishes a peace upon the earth that will be a true peace upon the earth.

Back in February I was riding down from Chicago. And usually I have about thirty minutes in the airport when I arrive from Trinity Seminary before I catch the plane, and I try to go over and buy the *New York Times*. I'm making that public confession. I go over and buy the *New York Times*, and I'll tell you why I buy the *New York Times*. I do like to know what my enemies are saying. And so I get on the plane and I read the *New York Times* for two hours.

And I must say, and I've always known this; I've been told this, and I do believe it. They do have sources of information that other newspapers of second quality do not have. You will find things in the *New York Times* you do not find elsewhere. It is an excellent paper. Its editorial page always angers me and so I read it with my fists clenched. But nevertheless I read it. And when I was coming down the other day, they also have articles about outstanding men who die all over the world. And particularly in the United States.

And I was coming down, I say, just a few months ago, it was actually, I have the time here, because I have the article clipped out; it was the fifth of February of this year. And there was a long article concerning the death of Stringfellow Barr who was a well-known educator, president of one of the colleges, the St. John's College in Annapolis Maryland, and particularly known as the one who edited the One Hundred Great Books.

Well, Mr. Barr died and they have a lengthy article about him. But one of the things that said about him had to do with one of the quotations attributed to him. And this is what he said. And I was amazed to read that he is the one who said it because he was the president of the Foundation for World Government from 1948 until 1958. He taught at the New York College of Arts and Sciences, of Rutgers University also for ten or twelve years. But this is what he said, "To trust any league, alliance, association or treaty among sovereign nations, to outlaw the production or use of atomic bombs, is to trust swamps to cease producing mosquitoes."

Well, I don't know of course his faith but if he had known anything about the Scriptures, well, that that he said was certainly in harmony with what the Scriptures say. Because the Scriptures say that men do not keep their word. And that true peace, true disarmament will only come when the Messianic king the Lord Jesus Christ comes.

Now, he describes the freedom of the peace in verse 4. "And each of them will sit under his vine And under his fig tree."

I know you'll be happy to know that my fig tree has risen from the dead. I talked to you about my fig tree because I was having something to say about Nathaniel, remember, and Jesus said, "I saw you when you were under the fig tree." And I commented upon the fact that the fig tree was the place, the ancient place, that was known as the proper place to meditate on the word of God. And I mentioned just humorously to you that I had a fig tree that I planted in the back yard last year.

Well, it wasn't but about a week or ten days after that that I noticed that my fig tree was not responding when the warm weather came. And in fact, it looked as if it was dead. And I really had practically given up on it until just two or three weeks ago. And now, instead of one fig tree, I have two because the whole thing died in the top but from the roots there have come up two shoots. Of course, they're only about two feet high now, and it's difficult to get under them [Laughter] in order to meditate on the word of God. But I'm looking forward to sitting under my own fig tree and meditating on the word of God during the kingdom of God upon the earth.

The most significant thing about this of course is the freedom from fear that we finally have. But of course this can only be fulfilled by the prior condition of the opening lines of this chapter. And of course, the prior condition is submission to Yahweh, Israel's God, because that is implicit in this whole account. All of these blessings that he unfolds here are blessing that proceed out of the fact that the day is coming when men are going to submit to the God of Israel or Yahweh.

And finally in verse 5, Micah now thinking of the present, says, "Though all the peoples walk Each in the name of his God." So he reverts to the present time when nations following their own gods.

Well think of today. There are nations today that follow the Pope. There are nations today that follow the gods of liberalism. There are nations today that follow the gods of atheism. There are nations today that follow very weakly, but nevertheless, follow the true God of the Bible at least outwardly. But the time is coming when there are going to be individuals who "will walk in the name of the Lord our God forever and ever."

Micah looked out around him and he saw peoples walking each in the name of his God." But he said, "As for us, we will walk In the name of the Yahweh our God forever and ever."

You know this is the true moral appeal of prophecy. Occasionally you will have individuals, particularly those of amillennial or post millennial, particularly amillennial viewpoints, who will say, Those people who always talk about the sensational prophecies of the future overlook the primary purpose of the prophetic word which is to bring men to submission to the truth of God morally, to change our lives. Well I agree with that. I think that it is important that we respond not simply to the things that seem sensational or fantastic to us, but that we are to respond to the prophetic word by having it change our lives.

Now when Peter in his second epistle and in the 11th and 12th verses of the chapter, after detailing some of the things of the future, when he wants to talk about the moral appeal, he says,

"Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of

God, on account of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat!"

So Peter, speaking about the future and the things that would transpire on the earth, said in the light of that: What kind of people ought we to be? That is a true application of the prophetic word.

John says in 1 John chapter 4, "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world." I'm reading the, I should be reading the 3rd chapter, I'm sorry, instead of reading the 4th,

"See how great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now are we the children of God, and it has not yet appeared what we shall be. We know that if He should appear, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure."

So prophecy is to have a purifying effect upon him. May his prophetic word, as we think about the glorious future and reflect on the fact that this God of the Scriptures always keeps his word, may it have its moral personal purifying effect upon us.

Let's bow together in prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we are grateful to Thee for these prophecies of the glorious future of the nation Israel, of the nations of the earth, particularly of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah of Israel and the Messiah of us. We look forward to that day when he shall be glorified, when he shall be known as he is: Redeemer and Lord, when men shall bow

before the law of the Lord, the word of God as it goes forth from the city of peace that up to now has been in pieces. We look forward to that day because we know that it will be a time of great glory for our triune God. In the meantime, Lord, enable us to purify ourselves by the Spirit just as he is pure. For Jesus' sake. Amen.