



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

6420 Churchill Way | Dallas, Texas | 75230 | t 972.239.5371 | believerschapeldallas.org

The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Micah 7:8-20

"The Covenant God: No One Like Him"

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] The subject for tonight as we turn to last twelve or thirteen verses of the Prophecy of Micah is "The Covenant God: No One Like Him." And we're turning to Micah chapter 7, and looking at verse 8, through verse 20. You'll notice as you look at the immediately preceding verse, the 7th verse, the prophet has just said, "Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me." I'd like for you to notice particularly the expression, "I will look unto the Lord."

When I was Boswell just recently around the table of the family with whom I was staying, we read the Bible several times a day usually. Or at least we had time of prayer four or five times a day. And we specifically read the Bible, and one of the things that we read was the English Bible. And Esther Meyer, who is an elderly former school teacher, would bring the Bible out, and I would read the Bible and she gave me an English Bible that had been given to her by her sister. And as I opened up the first page of the Bible that was given to me, the text that her sister had put in the opening dedication of it to Esther was the text, "I will look unto the Lord," from Micah chapter 7 and verse 7, which of course was the last text that we looked at in our last study. And then Margaret, the sister who is now with the Lord, connected with that Hebrews chapter 12, and verse 2, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." I think whenever I look at

Micah chapter 7, and verse 7, I will think of the dedication on that Bible that was given to her sister by Margaret Meyer.

Now, the prophet has just said this, and he has said that he will wait for the God of his salvation. And he is very confident that his God will hear him. In other words, a world of no trust, for he has just pointed out in the preceding verses that there is no trust in Israel. Listen to some of the things that he has said. He said,

"The good man," in verse 2, "is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among men: they all lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net. That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he uttereth his mischievous desire: so they wrap it up. The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; now shall be their perplexity. Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide: keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom. (In other words, there is no trust, no trust in a friend, no trust in a guide. In fact, the prophet advises husbands not to trust their wives and wives not to trust their husbands.) For the son dishonoureth the father, the daughter riseth up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; a man's enemies are the men of his own house."

Now, in a situation in which there was no trust, the God of the covenant was there in the thought of the Prophet Micah. And in the words that he speaks now, it is quite obvious that while in the world in which he was living there was no trust, still the God of the covenant was there. And the God of the covenant being there was one who would vindicate him in his stand of trust in the Lord.

A few weeks ago I came across something that was written by a Bible teacher whose writings I have read off and on for about thirty years. This man was a Southern

Baptist evangelist and Bible teacher, and a very gifted writer. And he has written a little article called "The Menace of Moderatism." He says, "The greatest peril we face today is not extremism, serious as that is, but moderatism. By moderatism I do not mean moderation. The Scriptures teach moderation, temperance that avoids excess. But moderatism is something else. The moderatist works both sides of the street. He may sip wine at the Lord's Table on Sunday morning and take his cocktail on Sunday night. He makes sacred things common and dignifies the profane. He slaps God on the back in cheap familiarity with the big buddy upstairs. He is the product of this age of world conformity, a peaceful co-existence with sin that glorifies the great general average. He pulls down the high and builds up the low to one common level."

"In World War I Theodore Roosevelt blasted German Americans who had divided loyalties. He called them hyphenated Americans and said 'American is not a polyglot boarding house.' Moderatists would make the church a polyglot boarding house filled with hyphenated Christians. Roosevelt said, 'If a man is an American and something else, he's not an American.' That could be said of a Christian. Billy Sunday used to say of the worldly Christians, 'You might as well talk about a heavenly devil.' James tells us that the friend of the world is the enemy of God. Our Lord said, 'He that is not with me is against me, and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.' A man who is faithful to his wife part of the time is not faithful at all. A man who is partly faithful to his family or his county, or his church is a traitor. A divided loyalty is not loyalty at all. For Jesus Christ it is all or nothing."

"Moderatism would split devotion and be both moderately righteous and moderately evil. There is such a thing as extremism, and true moderation avoids extremes. But a true New Testament Christian would be called an extremist today. They were so called in the early church. Our Lord was accused of being beside himself, and so was Paul. True moderation is what the moderatists call extreme. We are subnormal, or so sub-normal that we call the normal abnormal."

"The outstanding moderatist of the New Testament was Gamaliel. When the apostles were on trial, he took to the middle of the road. I once thought that his speech was sober and level-headed. Actually he was an appeaser who turned the meeting into a Munich. He was a Chamberlain without an umbrella. He was the apostle of compromise, neither for nor against. He made a false comparison, suggested a false criterion, and arrived at a false conclusion. Paul started out as an opposer and ended as an apostle. He was never an appeaser. You could always tell which side of the fence he was on. He never sat on the fence with Gamaliel, who was more interested in keeping things quiet in Jerusalem than standing for Jesus Christ."

"The great moderatist of Luther's day was Erasmus. It was said that he could shade down 'yes' until it sounded like 'no' and burnish up 'no' until it almost passed for 'yes.' He lived as though our Lord had said, 'Let your yea be nay and your nay yea.' 'The people of academic culture, of speculative disengagement and serene intellectual indifference, sided with Erasmus. The moderates throughout Europe, the gentlemen of courts, the semi-skeptical intelligences of the universities, told the golden-mouthed apostle of compromise that he was right. The heart of Christianity beat with Luther instead.' It is well with the fortunes that the Reformation did not lie with Erasmus. It was a blessed thing that the issues of the American Revolution were not settled by the olive branch men who were trying to avoid the extremism of the embroiled fifty-six who signed the Declaration of Independence."

"Joseph Parker said of Charles H. Spurgeon, 'The only colors Mr. Spurgeon knew were black and white. In all things he was definite. You were in or out, up or down, alive or dead.' As for middle zones, grated lines, light compounded with shadow in the graceful exercise of give and take, he only looked upon them as heterodox and as implacable enemies of the Metropolitan Tabernacle. Definitely Mr. Spurgeon was not moderatism, in the downgrade controversy; he was no doubt labeled as an extremist by all who traveled the middle of the road. How we need a revival of his extremism today."

Well, he goes on to say a few other things but the point that I wanted to make was simply this, that it was obvious that Micah would have stood with these men who may have been called extremists in their day. But who nevertheless were individuals who were not moderatists.

Israel in the day of Micah faced the constant threat of invasion. One thinks of Israel today. Israel today surrounded by implacable enemies. Well, in Micah's day she was surrounded by implacable enemies then. There were Assyrians and Babylonians in the north. There were the Egyptians on the south, and even the Edomites who were right on their border, who often played the part of the enemies. And so consequently it was a dangerous situation in which the Israelites found themselves. You can learn thing form Micah, and that is that he was convinced of the impossibility of the frustration of the purposes of God. And in spite of the difficulties of his day, he knew that the purposes of God regarding the nation would ultimately come to pass. He was what we would call a person who believed in the sovereign grace of God. He believed that the things that God said as promises were unconditional promises dependent finally on the sovereign power of the Lord God.

Now, it seems to me that Micah, just from that standpoint, would be a great help to us in our spiritual life. Today, strength and comfort lies in the faith that is able by the grace of God to look up and discover the sufficiency of heaven. That is what Micah's faith was like. He was able to look out and see the dangers and the catastrophes and the troubles and the trials that faced the people of his day. He certainly saw their sins and their failures, and the fact that they were coming under the judgment of God, but nevertheless in those circumstances, his faith looked up to the Lord God, and in seeing the Lord God, Yahweh, he saw the sufficiency of his and the needs of the nation itself.

Now, in these last twelve verses, or thirteen verses there are four movements and we just want to touch them as briefly as we can in about thirty-five minutes. So I'm just going to call them part one, part two, part three, and part four. Part one contains a hymn

of hope. It's found in verse 8 through verse 10. Some of you in the audience are going to have before you the American Standard Version. You will notice that there are some differences between the Authorized Version that I am reading and the American Standard Version, not all of the corrections of the American Standard Version are necessarily correct. They are the opinions and the viewpoints of a certain group of translators. It is my conviction that there are a few of these readings in the Authorized Version where it differs from the New American Standard Version that are correct. So you'll notice the difference. I'm not going to have time to deal with all of the minute points. We are going to have to deal simply with the major thought of these four movements; the first, the hymn of hope. Let me read now verse 8 through verse 10.

"Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness. Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the LORD thy God? Mine eyes shall behold her: now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets."

The times of Micah, I say, were dark days. Those times may be dark, but Micah faces them with the confidence of a song, because this is a song. It's a lament, but it also is a lament in the form of a song. The speaker is Zion, or Jerusalem. Now you can tell that from the 10th verse, "Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, where is the Lord thy God?" Now, that little pronoun, "thy" is feminine in the Hebrew text. And so the fact that it is feminine in the Hebrew text indicates that the author has personified Jerusalem, or Zion as a feminine. So when we read here, "Rejoice not against me," he's talking as if Zion is speaking. So Jerusalem

speaks. Jerusalem speaks in the midst of difficulties and trials. "Do not rejoice against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him," that is true. I know that I suffer because I have sinned. "Until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: but then he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." So you can see that while Israel or Zion or Jerusalem acknowledges that she sits in darkness, because of the judgment of God upon her sin, nevertheless she sees the light, because she has come to the conviction that her troubles and her trials are the result of her failure to trust in the Lord God.

The hope is expressed in verse 8, when the prophet writes, "The Lord shall be a light unto me." He explains that is Zion speaks explaining why she is in darkness. It is because she has sinned. Now, you can see from this that this is not the condition of the nation today. The nation today does not regard itself as a sinful nation. In this sense, Israel today is not what Israel is to be. Israel today is a very self-righteous nation. Israel today is a very proud. Mr. Begin, for example, is the essence of the nation today, and if anyone is a proud man, he is a proud man. There are many things about Mr. Begin that I admire. I admire the way that he says that he is going to do a certain thing and then does it. I rather like that. I don't know why. I guess I'm not a moderatist, and therefore I appreciate that. And I do appreciate the general political righteousness of the nation in the present situation. I don't approve necessarily of everything that they do, but there are many things about them that I do personally approve of. I am speaking of myself; this has no relationship to what you may think about them. But the point I want to make is this, the nation, even though you may agree with some of their politics and some of their positions, the nation is a proud nation, which has never to this point acknowledged the fact that they are guilty of the crucifixion of the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do not make Israel the sole guilty entity, because the Gentiles are guilty as well. But from the standpoint of the prophet when he speaks giving the words of Zion and

Jerusalem, and writes, "I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against him." You can see that he speaks for the nation as having come to the understanding of the fact that they are guilty before the Lord God. They know that the distress is the effect of the indignation of God. They see that they are suffering because of their sin. So confessing her just sentence, they believe that that will lead to a new kind of exodus, from darkness to light.

Now, we know the history Israel is today a history of walking in darkness for two thousand years, approximately. In fact, a little more than that if you will go all the way to the apostasy that led to the captivity, but at least in the day of the Lord Jesus Christ when the Lord Jesus cried out, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, having been crucified by the Jews and the Gentiles. For nine hundred years darkness has fallen upon the nation Israel. The Apostle Paul writes in 2 Corinthians chapter 3 that when the Scriptures in the synagogues in his day, the veil that Moses put over his face still rests upon the face of those who read the Scriptures in the synagogue. That veil still rests upon them today, but in the future, that veil shall be taken away when the nation comes to the realization that their judgment, their scattering to the four corners of the earth is directly related to their relationship to the Lord God. Then things will happen.

The prophet further presents the nation as saying, "I shall behold his righteousness." I wish it were possible to go back to the Book of Isaiah and look up some of the passages in which the prophet speaks about the righteousness of God. Usually when the prophet in Isaiah speaks about the righteousness of God, he talks about the acts of God, which he performs in righteousness, for his people. That is the things are his acts that lead to the vindication of his divine election. Now, we know from the Scriptures that God elected Abraham. He also made an election of individual Israelites when he said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." He separated in Abraham's seed, separated those who were elect from those who were none elect.

And then ultimately when Jesus Christ died on the cross at Calvary, the righteousness took place by which his election was vindicated. That is, he chose Abraham and his seed, and then accomplished the atoning work through the Messiah, also of the seed of Abraham, by which his promises concerning Abraham and his seed might be accomplished. The Apostle Paul explains it most fully in Romans chapter 3 when he talks about the justification that Jesus Christ has accomplished. It is by virtue of the shedding of the blood by that great righteous act that we are justified, that we stand before God righteous and forgiven in the family of God. And with all of the other blessings that have to do with the righteous activity of God. The saving work of Jesus Christ is his righteous act. Read Isaiah read Isaiah chapter 43, Isaiah chapter 45, Isaiah chapter 46, and Isaiah chapter 51. Great stress is laid on the righteousness of God in delivering his elect people. That righteousness is what he accomplished when Jesus Christ bore our sins. And through that God justified those whom he had elected. He gave them faith, brought them to the knowledge of their sins, and caused them to stand in the righteousness of God.

Now, one thing that impresses me about the nation here, in the language of Micah, is that they don't complain. They don't complain, "Now why has this happened to me? What have I done that has caused me to sit in the darkness for so long?" In the midst of the catastrophes, in the midst of the difficulties, in the midst of the trials they have come to see that the real problem is not circumstances. It is not the enemy. It is they themselves. They are the problem. Now, so often when things happen to us, we look around and say, "Why has this happened to me?" We often complain to others. We complain to our wife. We complain to our husband. We complain to our family. We complain to our friends. Why has this happened to me? I guess the greatest complainer of all could have been the Lord Jesus. He took his complaints to the Lord. "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" He did not lose his trust. He said, "My God, my God," not O God, O God, by "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" In the

midst of the greatest of all the catastrophes and the least justifiable of all, he turned to the Lord. That's like Micah, "Therefore I will look to the Lord."

They have come to understand that the problem is really with themselves. Now, in the 10th verse Micah confidentially expands and points out the things that will take place in the future. "Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the LORD thy God?" One thing about the community now, since they've come to the conviction of their sins, and the conviction that they are the principle problem, they are not only conscious of being sinners, but they are also conscious of having been sinned against as well. You see, God in history, often appoints wicked agents to do his duty of judgment against his people. Have you noticed that in reading the Bible? Have you noticed as you've read the Bible that, the Old Testament for example, that he said he would use the wicked Babylonians in order to chastise his elect people. But always the wicked Babylonians or the wicked Assyrians go beyond the commission of the Lord, and the result is that those who are the instruments of God in the disciplining of his people are themselves the ultimate objects of divine judgment because in their sin they overstep their commission from the Lord. Israel knows that now.

"Then she that is mine enemy, the one who said, where is the LORD thy God? Shame is going to cover her, mine eyes shall behold her: now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets." He knows that God is going to plead the cause of his elect people, and the enemy, they are going to see the deliverance that God will perform for his people. Now, I really think that is going to be one of the great experiences in all history, when the non-elect see the deliverance of the elect in the future. Put in another way, when the nations of the earth, in their rebellion against the Lord God, see the hand of the mercy of God upon the nation Israel.

Wesley, in one of the hymns that we often sing, Larry likes it, "And Can it Be" has a stanza like this, "Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night. Thine eye diffused a quickening ray, I woke the dungeon flamed with light. My chains

fell off, my heart was free, I rose went forth and followed Thee." Wesley talks about being in darkness and then seeing the light. Well, Israel was in darkness, is in darkness historically, speaks as if she has been in darkness for generations, but now the light is coming.

Well, the second part of the section is found in verse 11, through verse 13, and it's a song of salvation. A new voice breaks in the prophet's unfolding of the truths, and this is the voice of the Lord God. Listen to verse 11 through verse 13, "In the day that thy walls are to be built, in that day shall," now the word decree in the Authorized Version is probably to better rendered frontier. "In that day shall the frontier or frontiers be far removed. In that day also he shall come even to thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain. Notwithstanding the earth," not the land, "the earth shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings." This is the divine answer to verse 8, 9, and 10. And the Lord God speaks and he speaks about the restoration of the nation. He says, "Rehabilitation is imminent."

And one of the interesting things about verse 11 is the use of the term, "walls." Now, you wouldn't notice this if you didn't know a little something about Hebrew, which is what I know a little something about Hebrew. I don't know everything about Hebrew, but I do know a little something about it. In that 11th verse when we read, "In the day that thy walls are to be built," this is a reference, of course, to the rehabilitation and restoration of the nation, and also, particularly of the city of Jerusalem according to the prophecies of the Old Testament.

This term, "thy walls" is an expression that was used of the barriers around vineyards. Now, what is interesting about it, and what is striking about it is in the Old Testament, in more than one place, for example Isaiah chapter 5, just to use one outstanding place, Psalm 80 in another outstanding place, Israel is likened to the Lord's vineyard. Do you remember that? Israel is the vineyard of the Lord, which he has

planted. Why, here he says, "In the day that thy walls are to be built, in that day the frontier shall be far removed. In that day also he," by the way, that expression is literally he, but the reference is undoubtedly to they, that is individuals of nations, from the nations, I should say, who return to the city. And so it's perfectly all right to translate it they, if we understand "he" in the collective sense. He's referring to the Jews who have been scattered to the four corners of the earth. But in the 12th verse he says, "In that day, he or they, shall come even to thee from Assyria, and from the fortified cities, and from the fortress even to the river, and from sea to sea, and from mountain to mountain." In other words, there will be a great regathering of the nation from all over the face of the earth; wherever you go there are Jews. Go to Scotland, like I've just been in Scotland, there are lots of Jews there. Go to England, there are lots of Jews in England. Go to Switzerland, there are lots of Jews in Switzerland. Go to Greece, there are Jews in Greece. Go to Egypt, there are Jews in Egypt.

Wherever you go, there are Jews, because God has sent them. He's disciplining the nation. He's chastised them for these years as scattered them as part of the discipline set forth in the Old Testament for the breaking of the Mosaic covenant. But they are going to be regathered, and they are going to be regathered from the four corners of the earth. And the reference here is, no doubt, ultimately to the Second Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Lord Jesus expounds it in Matthew chapter 24 and 25.

Now, Israel is to be regathered, but the rest of the earth is to be devastated. Look at verse 13, "Notwithstanding the earth shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings." The rest of the earth becomes a devastated waste land. Israel looks that way today, until, of course, the modern Israelis came and now have made the desert blossom to some extent. It was a desolate waste land. Mark Twain writes about it in the 19th Century, what a desolate place it was. Anyone who studies the history of Jerusalem would understand that, the land, that's what it was just a desolate place. But God's principles are always carried out. As one of the commentators puts it,

deficits in the moral balance sheet are repaid. And so Israel shall blossom as a rose. The desert shall come to light. We shall see the beauty of the land as the Lord God becomes the husbandman of the land. But the rest of the earth shall bear the judgment of the second coming of the Lord Jesus and the judgment that takes place at that time. One of the commentators also said, "This oracle here is the counterpart of the Christian doctrine of the last judgment." Well, it is part of the judgments of God, the judgment of the Gentiles.

Now, the third part of this great prophecy is found in verse 14 through 17, and what the prophet here, speaking for the nation, does is to make a request for a repeat performance of some of the great things of the past. Again, Jerusalem speaks, Zion speaks, and incidentally, they speak in the spirit of 2 Samuel chapter 7, verse 25 where we read that God is called upon to "do as you have said." I like that statement, "Do as you have said." People often wonder, we are asked to pray, we are asked to get down on our knees, we are asked constantly by the Apostle Paul to pray, we are exhorted to pray. What shall I pray about? Why not pray the prayers of the Bible? Why not pray the great things of the word of God. He will do as he has said. All of those promises of the Bible are excellent prayers. Have you ever thought about turning the promises of the word of God into prayers for yourself? Do you get down on your knees? And do you offer up to the Lord some of those great promises in the word of God? Don't you know that he will do as he has said? And when you pray the promises that the faithful God makes to you, you can be sure that he will bring them to pass.

So the prophet here has Zion speak in the spirit of "Do as thou hast said." We read in verse 14, "Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old. According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvelous things." There are different ways to render that. I don't have time to speak about some of the finer points. The truth of what I'm saying will be evident

regardless of the particular way in which the text is rendered. You can see here that again Jerusalem speaks and she addresses the Lord as their Shepherd. Listen, "Feed or shepherd thy people with thy rod." When did the shepherds use the rod? Well, they used the rod when they led the flock out of the enclosure. They used their rods when they protected the flock from the wild beasts. They used their rods when they wanted to guide their flock out on the hillsides. The shepherds in Scotland still have those crooks, and they use them in that way. And so they address the Lord as their Great Shepherd, and they say, "Shepherd Thy people with Thy rod. Give us guidance. Give us protection. Give us the care that a Shepherd gives to his flock."

Now, I think that that's an appeal to him in his royal covenantal office, for he is the Great Shepherd. The New Testament speaks of him as the Good Shepherd, one who lays down his life for the sheep. It speaks of him as the Great Shepherd, who sanctifies the flock. It speaks of him as the Chief Shepherd who is going to come and reward the elders. And so they look to him as their great covenantal head. And so they ask him to resume the deeds that he did when he led them out of the land of Egypt. "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvelous things," or show us marvelous things, like you did when you brought us out of the land of Egypt. And so, they look for restoration. They look also for vindication.

They, incidentally, have something to say here that bears on what is happening in Israel today. Did you notice here that it says here, "Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead." Do you know where Bashan and Gilead are? They are on the east side of the Jordan; they are in what is the country of Jordan today. That belonged to Israel. That was some of the finest of the pasture land. They're going to get it back. Hussein, if he's around at that time, will be as shame faced as the others about whom the prophet speaks. That's going to be theirs. They're going to have the west bank. They're going to have some of the east bank, too. That belongs to them. That was given to them by God. Do you know that Israel today is the only nation in the whole of the face of the earth that has a

proper deed to any land? Did you know that? We don't have any deed to the United States of America. What deed do we have? Well, one written in blood over the Indians' bodies. They have a deed, a divine deed. It will be theirs. So they ask Bashan and Gilead, and they're going to get it, too. I know lots of Gentiles that just makes them so mad [Laughter] to think that those Jews are going to get that. That only is a revelation, of course, of how little we understand of our sin. They don't deserve it, but we don't either. We're all lost. We're all sinners. All deserve to be under the judgment of God. He's free in distinguishing grace, to bless whom he will. That's what Paul says. He hardens whom he will. He has mercy on whom he will. This is the kind of God revealed in the Bible.

So I like this statement, "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvelous things." Now, of course, there was a tremendous manifestation of the power of the Lord God in coming out of Egypt. In fact, when you saw the movie, you saw the Red Sea parted; you of course saw only a human representation of what must have been one of the most magnificent exhibitions of divine power in the history of the human race. In fact, in Exodus chapter 15, Moses describes some of the effect of the action of the Lord God. In Exodus chapter 15 there is the song of Moses after the passage through the Red Sea. And we read in verse 15 of Exodus 15, "Then the dukes of Edom shall be amazed; the mighty men of Moab, trembling shall take hold upon them; all the inhabitants of Canaan shall melt away. Fear and dread shall fall upon them; by the greatness of thine arm they shall be as still as a stone; till thy people pass over, O LORD, till the people pass over, which thou hast purchased. Thou shalt bring them in, and plant them in the mountain of thine inheritance, in the place, O LORD, which thou hast made for thee to dwell in, in the Sanctuary, O LORD, which thy hands have established."

So Moses' song describes the sense of terror that shall take hold of the Egyptians when they have seen the mighty activity of God. Well, we read in a moment about the mighty sense of dread and fear that shall seize those in the last days. But let me say that when he says do it; do for them as you did when you brought them out of the land of Egypt. He's saying manifest for the nation the same kind of power that you manifested when you brought Israel out of the land of Egypt. As he has put it here, verse 15, "According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvelous things."

Now, I want to ask you a question. You Christians, what kind of power has God manifested in your behalf? Do you see what Israel is doing? They are looking back in the past. They are saying, "God did wonderful things for us in the past. He brought us out of Egypt. He performed mighty miracles. Moses performed a series of miracles. Then when we got before the Red Sea he parted the Red Sea. We went through that Red Sea. The waters piled up on either side. And when the Egyptians assayed to do it, they were all drowned, including Pharaoh. A magnificent thing, the prophets of the Old Testament, the teachers of the Old Testament, the Psalmists in the Old Testament pointed back to that great event. Micah said, "Do for us in the future like you did in the past." What has he done for us? Well, I'd like to suggest to you that he has done something even more wonderful. I want to read you what Paul says. In Ephesians chapter 1 in verse 15, the apostle says this,

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward

who believe, (What kind of power?) according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come."

Now the prophet present Israel as saying, "Do for us the things that you did in the pastas in the exodus." We pray, Lord, do for us as you have done for us in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is the power that is to usward who believe. We have no lack of power, no lack of power whatsoever. The power of the resurrection works in each of the believers of the Lord Jesus Christ. The same power that raised him from the dead, works in us, and it will accomplish its task of sanctification. Struggle as much as you want, fight as much as you want to, try as best you can in your failing rebellious way to thwart the sanctifying ministry of the Holy Spirit, you will not be able to do it. I like that statement. I must confess. Do like you did in the exodus. We should say, Lord, do like you did in the resurrection.

Well, in verse 16 and 17, however, there is the defeat of the nations. These people had brazenly taunted Israel. Have you ever heard any, in modern times, any similar kinds of tauntings? Do you read the newspapers? Almost every day in the newspapers we have that, the PLO, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Egypt particularly in the days of Nasser, Iraq, Iran, all those nations that surround that little nation do nothing but taunt them. We are going to drive you into the sea. We are going to kill all of you. We are not going to stop struggling until there is no Israel. Listen, the prophet says, "The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of thee." The brazen taunters of the people of God see the intervention of

divine power at the Second Advent and they see it as a power that is so much greater than their military power that they are literally so shocked by the blast of the power of God that they no longer can hear. They are utterly confounded by the power of God, terrified, shocked, deafened by the divine blast of power, they come out of their holds humiliated, recognizing that there is no place that they can hide from the Lord God.

The Book of Revelation in the 6th chapter describes their prayers. They become praying people then when it is too late. They call out to the rocks and to the mountains, "Fall upon us and hide from the face of the Lamb of God." When he comes in his wrath, things are going to happen. You've certainly learned the inadequacy of military might. I can imagine some of them aiming their atomic bombs at the Lord God. There are so many interesting things that are going to happen in the future. I'm looking forward to it. I'm also getting a little closer to it, incidentally.

I appreciate, by the way, I want to give public thanks for all of you who sent me birthday cards including one who sent me a birthday card and gave me an extra year. [Laughter] It was nice of you to remember me, and I do appreciate it.

Well, the last part here, and it's time to stop. The last part here, part four, is a cry of confidence in the patriarchal covenant. This is a choral piece also, a choral piece of devotion, doxology. It's doxology for the noble character of a God who forgives and delights in constant love. Faithful love, loyal love. Now, a rhetorical question is usually reserved for the mighty acts of God, but here for the mighty delivering power in salvation of the Lord God. By the way, on the Day of Atonement in the service of the Jewish people, this passage is read. "Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy." We sing a hymn here often in our evening service, in the Lord's Supper, "Who is a pardoning God like thee? Who is a pardoning God like thee?" So, "Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth iniquity and passeth by the

transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delights in mercy."

Have you noticed in the Book of Micah that it begins with a display of the wrath of the Lord God coming down from heaven in wrath, and that it concludes with the display of the mercy of God? Did you notice that? Read again the first few verses of the first chapter. Look at the last few verses of this chapter. It's a magnificent challenge. "Who is a God like unto Thee?" You can put in that all of the doctrine of the attributes of God as Sam Storms made reference to Sunday morning. All of the doctrines of the attributes fall into the explanation and exposition of "Who is a God like unto thee?"

And then, in the words that follow, you can see the theology that undergirds all of the preceding verses here in this last section. "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities," Did you notice that? "He will subdue our iniquities," he will actually overcome our iniquities. What does that mean theologically? Why, it means that he will exercise effectual grace in the lives of sinners. "He will subdue our iniquities and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

I was, as you know, converted through Dr. Donald Gray Barnhouse, and Dr. Barnhouse used to have an expression that he frequently used. He often preached and in the midst of his preaching of the gospel, he specialized in gospel preaching and teaching; he'd give this as his climactic statement...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]