



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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The Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Various

John Bunyan Conference, Lecture 12

TRANSCRIPT

[Introduction of Dr. Johnson] I appreciate Dr. Johnson's ministry. I appreciate his fellowship. We love having him and Martha with us. He's better when she is here.

[Laughter] She's just what he needs. We love their company. I've loved their fellowship. We appreciate his ministry. And one more time, Dr. Johnson would you come preach for us?

[Johnson Lecture] Some truths are truths, and some truths are axioms, and it's surely an axiom that I'm in better shape when Martha's with me, I acknowledge that.

[Laughter] Thank you for marrying me. [Laughter]

I have been thinking about just exactly what I should preach on this morning. I intended to preach on parts of the Book of Hosea. And that's what I'll try to do, but Hosea is a remarkable prophecy and one of my favorites, and I have in the past given somewhat lengthy series of messages on Hosea. I haven't in recent months, but I thought this time we would take a two or three of the passages from Hosea. I would recommend that you read this book, ponder it, and study it, because it is a remarkable prophecy of the Lord, a very small one. You know the well known expression, *multum in parvo*, that's the way it's properly pronounced in Latin, *multum in parvo*, much in little. And

that's exactly what Hosea is, a *multum in parvo*. V in Latin was always pronounced like a w in English, so if you want a person to know you did take Latin you don't say multum in parvo, [Laughter] cause he'll know you didn't take Latin in school, but multum in parvo, you will impress those [Laughter] who took some Latin too, even though that's all you know by now. [Laughter]

Now I thought about speaking on the text in chapter 7 and verse 9 in which he writes a text, it's applicable to a lot of us, whence where he says, "Aliens have devoured his strength, but he does not know it; yes gray hairs are here and there on him, yet he does not know it." Now that's a great text to apply to all of us, because when the gray hair comes it's an obvious reference to the fact of failure, physically, and it reminds us of the fact that it's so easy for us as Christians to have spiritual gray hairs, the degeneration has come and we have not noticed it. And that's a fearful thing. It's something that I know at many times in the past, I've been by my bedside, I like to get down by my bed to pray, by my bedside and thought about the possibilities that might be taking place in my life of decay and departure from the things of the Lord and the freshness of the early days of knowing him, of studying his word, has gone. And so "gray hairs are here and there among him and yet he does not know it." That's something we all should think about. I'm thankful to Hosea for that.

There's another thing that Hosea writes that I thought about, and particularly for all of us. In chapter 8 and verse 14 the prophet writes, "For Israel has forgotten his Maker, and has built temples; Judah also has multiplied fortified cities; but I will send fire upon his cities, and it shall devour his palaces." Israel has forgotten his Maker. Forget God, so easy to forget God. I find myself doing that still, from time to time. And I go along day or two and I remember I have not gotten down by the side of my bed in order to have a conversation with him, over the word of God, I may have been reading the word of God, but it's rote. It's the kind of thing you do without thinking about it, without desiring deep down in your heart a deeper fellowship with the Lord. Forgetting God, so

easy to do, so easy to do now I think it's easier to do than it was fifty years ago, when in the insurance business, I came to know him whom to know is life eternal, through the preaching of Donald Grey Barnhouse, long before I ever went to theological seminary and spent thirty-five years in such a place.

But anyway, I thought about those things, I even went over my notes on them, because I brought some of the sermon notes up with me. And finally I decided I would turn to the great *multum in parvo* of Hosea, and it's chapter 3. And in chapter 3 we have Hosea's, not his only word, but his clearest and simplest word about the future of Israel.

Now I know in a Calvinistic conference there are lots of people who do not believe in a future for the nation Israel, I do. And I think I understand the doctrine of sovereign grace about as well as the average Christian, since it was the issue that led to my departure from my own theological seminary where I had taught for thirty years. And I thought very deeply about that, because I loved the institution, I loved the people at the institution, and nevertheless since they insisted that one of their teachers should not teach sovereign grace, the doctrine of Calvinism, consistent Calvinism, then it was necessary for me to leave. We left, I think, on good relations. We just left over difference of opinion. So I know what it is to have truth impinge upon your life and transform it.

Now I don't, I'm not making any apology for being a premillennialist. I think if you read the Book of Revelation and you come simply to chapter 20, although the whole of the Bible is filled with it, in the promises of the Old Testament, of a future for Israel; the description of the land as it shall be, the description of the transformation in the people, it's all over the Old Testament. The issue of a millennium, the thousand years, is found in one place, in Revelation chapter 20. It's rather interesting though, that in Revelation chapter 20 the thousand years is mentioned five or six times. And furthermore, and this is most important, it's mentioned not only in the vision but then in the verse that is the interpretation of the vision, and the thousand years is retained. It's not as if there is a

vision and in it a thousand years and now in the interpretation it's not there. You might say, "Well, thousand years is part of the vision only" but it's in the interpretation as well.

Now, I know this is a nasty thing to say, if there are amillennialists, or postmillennialists in the audience, but how many times must it be said that there is a thousand year period of time that we expect in the future. Now all of our Calvinism doesn't depend upon that. As a matter of fact, all of our premillennialism doesn't depend on that, but nevertheless it's there. I want you to know exactly how I feel about it. And it does not affect my friendship with others. As a matter of fact, I have the closest of friendship, the closest with those who believe in sovereign grace. So we can discuss things with one another and disagree on some of the points of Scripture. But sovereign grace, now that's my life blood, you know, so with amillennialists, with postmillennialists, if they believe in sovereign grace we are the closest of believers in Christ in my opinion.

Now I want to hit you over the head with one last comment, [Laughter] because there's no person who believes in sovereign grace that doesn't respect Charles Haddon Spurgeon. Now I'm not going to say that he was a premillennialist, some have said that, and there are some passages in his word that might suggest that he was a premillennialist, but I'm going to read you one on the passage that I want to say a few words about, which makes it very evident that he believed in a future for the nation Israel. Listen to what he says, this is his sermon entitled "The Silken Fetter" and the text is Hosea chapter 3 and verse 5, where the prophet writes these words, "Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." He begins his message on "The Silken Fetter" by saying, "This, the whole verse, runs thus, "Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. And shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." A brief word" Mr. Spurgeon says, "may suffice upon the prophecy. I think that no reader of holy Scripture can doubt but that the seed of Abraham, however long they may be in blindness, will at the last obey the Messiah, Jesus the Son of David,

and in those days the goodness of God to them will be so extraordinary that they shall fear and wonder at it, constrained by gratitude they will be numbered among the most earnest servants of the Lord. May the Lord hasten so blessed a consummation in his own time. Oh that the happy days would dawn when Israel's son shall acknowledge Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews, to be the Messiah that was promised to old. The expression, 'Fear the Lord and his goodness' much impressed me and I have therefore ventured to take it from its connection that we may meditate upon it." His messages on the Lord fear the Lord and his goodness.

Now enough of that. Hosea, God's prophet, has been called to love a woman who would prove unfaithful to him. Nothing could produce more pain in a man's heart. Hosea had done so, and she had done so, that is, been unfaithful to him. Thus, there was a marriage, separation, and now is to come reconciliation. And why is all of this on Hosea's mind? Well I presume that Hosea knew what the Spirit was forcing him to say, but it's obvious from the reading of the Old Testament, and I think also from the reading of Hosea, that the reason that he went through this experience is not that he might be punished, not that he may be forced to face things that were especially bad because of something that he's done. This is prophetic pedagogy, to symbolize Yahweh's relationship to Israel and the prophet Hosea must, in his own experience, have an experience that is similar to the experience of the Lord God in his relationship to his beloved people whom he called out of Egypt, the nation Israel.

Now the passage is Hosea chapter 3 verse 1 through verse 5 and I'm going to read it again and I'd like for you to listen carefully to it and then we'll look at a few points within it,

"Then the Lord said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel, (what an attack upon the nation, love someone who is committing adultery just like the children of

Israel) who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans." (those raisin cakes were means of worship at the feasts of the pagans) So (Hosea says) I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and a half homers of barley. (To let you know how little that is, it was a price of a slave, and barley was the least expensive of all the grain) So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver. And I said to her, "You shall stay with me many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man—so, too, will I be toward you." (in other words, the Lord God will not himself have anyone in Israel's place) For the children of Israel (a long time ago in reading the Bible to pay attention to the connectives, if you want to study the Bible and become expert in the knowledge of the Scriptures one of the things you have to pay attention to is the "for's" the "therefore's" the "because's" on this account various other connectives that connect the sentences of the word of God together that give you the kind of clues that enable you to put one statement with another in proper understanding, so) I said to her, "You shall stay with me for many days; you shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man-so, too, will I be toward you." For (because, *ki* is the Hebrew expression, *ki*, for) the children of Israel shall abide many days (well he's just said many days hasn't he? You shall stay with me many days) the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, (do they have such today? No they don't. They have Netanyahu, but he's not a prince and he's not a king, and he's likely to not be there too long either, the history of Israel would indicate) without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, (no sacrifices in Israel today in accordance with the Mosaic Code) without ephod or teraphim.(no priests who are Aaronic priests) Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They shall fear the Lord and his goodness (that is have respect for the Lord and the good things that he has in his word and purpose for them) in the latter days."

Hosea had been called, as God's prophet, to love a woman who would prove unfaithful to him. Perhaps in all of the literature as George Robinson, who has written a book on all of the minor prophets, perhaps in all the world's literature there is no record of human love like that of Hosea. That's the reason of course, why Hosea was given that kind of experience. So it gave him an ability to convey the anguish of a rejected God in an unparalleled way. He could say, "I have gone through something of the experience of the Lord God himself. I know what anguish is, not like the anguish of him of course, but I know what anguish is. My wife, whom I loved, has been unfaithful to me." Adultery, spiritual adultery, is Israel's sin. He knew it from the fact that he knew the experience of suffering from adultery. So I wouldn't be surprised if there's no record of human love like that of Hosea. It gave him the ability to write what God wished him to write.

Hosea has been called the mini-singer among the prophets. They were the German lyric poets, like the minstrels of the 12th to 14th Century, and mini was the word for love, so they were the love singers and Hosea is a kind of mini singer. Chapter 3 records the command to love Gomer again. Gomer was the name of his wife. And how many words are in it? Eighty-one words, that's all. So in eighty-one words a multum parvo surely, picturing for us the complete picture of Israel's national history. If you want more details, when you leave this and leave this morning's study, go back to your cabin and read Romans chapter 11, verse 1 through verse 36. They fit together in remarkable ways.

Now we'll look at a few other things before we close our time here in this wonderful time that we've, Martha and I've, had in your midst. But in verse 1 we have the Lord's prescription and it has to do with Israel's past, "Then the Lord said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans." So again, again, love a woman who is loved by a lover. That must have been a tough task. He knew how unfaithful she was. No man enjoys being the object of

adultery. But "Go again, Hosea, and love the woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like my love for you, like Israel who took, who looked to other gods and loved the raisin cakes of the pagans." So, again, loved by her husband, actually the Hebrew text reads something like this, "Beloved of a paramour, and commits adultery." So, it was a startling command. Let me put it very simply for you, "Hosea, go marry a whore." That's what it is. Seems, it seems startling to say that's the word of God, but that's what it is, "Go marry a whore" and you know her name. Even as the Lord loves.

Now how does the Lord love, conditionally? No, unconditionally. The prophecies are unconditional prophecies. Now he's talking about of course, the beginning prophecy in Genesis chapter 12, the prophecy of the Abrahamic covenant. And in Genesis chapter 12 these are the things we read, "And now the Lord had said to Abram, Get out of your country from your family and from your father's house to a land that I will show you." Notice it's a land that would be shown him. Never forget that the promises of the Old Testament, beginning with the Abrahamic covenant, have to do with a land, a specific land. This is an unconditional prophecy. It has to do with a land.

I know there are people who say if it's not repeated in the New Testament then we can kind of cast it aside. But as a matter of fact, in the reading of the Scriptures please remember that the promises of the Old Testament are still promises, they're still promises. The rule is not if it's not in the New Testament it's no longer valid, the rule is that they are still valid unless in the New Testament we are told they're not valid. Please remember that, because that's important. And there isn't anything in the New Testament that suggests that the promises of the Abrahamic covenant are still, they're still valid. We've got things so backward by the fact that we have an Old Testament and the New Testament and things have been made of that that are not true to the word of God.

But here it is, "to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those

who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Now, you can see that this is unconditional. I just, this seems so unnecessary, but it has to be done for us because we are sometimes so hard to penetrate our minds. Notice the words, verse 2, "I will make you a great nation. I will bless you. I will make your name great (that goes with the previous "will") you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you. I will curse you who curses you. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." Seven times he sets forth what is certain to come to pass. This is an unconditional promise.

Now, over, later, in chapter 15 Abram's worried because he hadn't seen any immediate evidence of the reception of the promise yet, and so he finally says to the Lord,

"Look, (you think, that seems so like our language doesn't it, "Look Lord" [Laughter] but that's what we read here) Look, you have given me no offspring, indeed one born in my house is my heir. (and what he means of course is, "You nevertheless, you said that in me all the families shall be blessed. So I'm looking for an offspring, but I don't have any) And behold, the word of the Lord came to him saying, This one shall not be your heir, but one who has come from your own body shall be your heir. (so his steward, worked in his home, is not his heir, his own seed shall come from him) And he said to Abram, So shall your descendants be. (so shall your seed be from Abram, a descendant of Abraham, physical descendant from Abraham. This of course is our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, as far as his human nature is concerned) So he brought him outside and he said, Look now toward heaven and count the stars if you're able to number them. And he said to him, So shall your seed be. And he believed in the Lord. (this is the word of the narrator, he enters at this point and makes a comment on what took place) So he believed in the Lord. Abraham believed in the Lord and the Lord accounted it to him for righteousness. Then he said to him, I am the Lord who brought you out of Ur the Chaldees to give you

this land to inherit it. (and here's Abram again, so human) Lord God how shall I know that I shall inherit it? (he's just told him. He says, "How shall I know?" He's looking for even more, he wants to be absolutely certain. But listen we can be absolutely certain if we just believe his word, that's all, we don't need anything else, his word is true, but nevertheless the Lord is very gracious, and so) he said to Abram, Bring me a three year old heifer, a three year old female goat, a three year old ram, a turtle dove, and a young pigeon. Then he brought all these to him and cut them in two down the middle and placed each place opposite the other, but he did not cut the birds in two. (so you can see Abram there, the animals are taken, they're divided, there's a pathway down in the midst of the animals, one bird on one side and one on the other, but the other animals cut as sacrifices. And so, when the vultures came Abram's waiting. He's waiting for something to happen. And so) the vultures came and Abram drove them away (and waited. So he waited you can imagine, he must've waited a few hours, in the mean time probably wondering what is going to happen, and then finally) when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram; (it really was a kind of a supernatural sleep. You go all the way back to Genesis chapter 2 and verse 21 to find something similar) a deep sleep fell upon Abram; and behold, horror and great darkness fell upon him.(because this prophecy is not going to be fulfilled sweetly) a horror and a great darkness fell upon him. Then he said to Abram: "Know certainly that your seed (now this seed of course is not simply Abram's what we would say Jewish seed, Israel's seed, but the prophecy said "In you shall all the nations of the earth be blessed" so it covers Jews and Gentiles) your descendants will be strangers in a land that is not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years. (incidentally that's why we have in the church of Jesus Christ Jews and Gentiles, seed of Abraham, as Paul puts it in Galatians chapter 3) And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; and afterward they shall come out with great possessions. Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. But in the fourth generation they shall come here, for the

iniquity of the Amorites is not yet filled. (now, notice carefully verse 17) And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold, there appeared (now here are the pieces of the animals over against one another, Abram is waiting) there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between the pieces. (that was the sign of the accomplishment of a covenant, you can find similar things in the history of the eastern world. So here the animals, in pieces, Abram standing over, he's been sleeping, but he sees, as Moses writes) there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between these pieces."

The accomplishment of the covenant, but notice, Abram is not invited to pass through the pieces. [Amen from audience] Why? This is an unconditional covenant. [Amen from audience] He is as, Mr. Ridderbos says in his commentary on Galatians, "an astonished spectator." That's what he is, this is something God, himself has determined to fulfill by virtue of his own power and authority. [Amen from audience] That kind of covenant, unconditional covenant, is the same kind of covenant we have in the Davidic covenant. Go read the promises of the Davidic covenant, they too are covenant promises in which the "I will's" the "I will's" "I shall" belong to God, and as far as men are concerned, there's no necessary response for them. If they don't believe they set aside, so far as we can tell, the time when these things are fulfilled, their in the Lord's hands. The new covenant is the same way, read the new covenant promises and you'll see again it's "I will, I will, I will, I will." It's not "I will if you, I will if you" it's "I will." We are talking about an unconditional covenant guaranteed by the word, authority and power of the Lord God in heaven. [Amen from audience]

Now, let me briefly, kind of, because I think I'm speaking as if I have the rest of the morning. My plane doesn't leave until ten minutes to 1:00, so I have a lengthy period of time, and you all don't have anything [Laughter] to do, do you? Some of you are

looking rather sad, [Laughter] and disconsolate. But, I think that's necessary for us to realize that that lies back of this promise in this chapter.

At any rate, in verse 1 we have the Lord's prescription. It's Israel's past, "Then the Lord said to him, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by a lover and is committing adultery, just like the love of the Lord for the children of Israel, who look to other gods and love the raisin cakes of the pagans." So, Hosea is to accomplish this kind of activity in his life. He's the object lesson, and the kinds of things that Hosea writes about are most startling. It would be nice if we could spend a lot of time on it, but we cannot. You notice the utter bathos of cakes of raisins, cakes of raisins.

There's a very interesting section in C. S. Lewis that perhaps most of you read, I'll just remind it to you. You notice that four times in this opening verse Hosea's spoken in terms of love. Each pair of the occurrences placing a noble use of the word in greater, in grating proximity to a base word, pure devotion, next to gross infatuation, God's pure devotion and Hosea's gross infatuation. And as for the second paradigm, in this pathos, with God loving Israel to the uttermost while Israel gives her heart to, of all things, cakes of raisins.

I wonder how your life might stack up as a parallel, what God has done to you, for you, and what you have been doing with the life that he has given you. Might be interesting, wouldn't it? Might be interesting if we all could pass through some kind of machine which would let all of the rest of us see what was really going on in the mind and hearts of the rest of us too. I wouldn't want to be present at that. [Laughter] But, anyway, you remember what C. S. Lewis has to say about the chief devil speaking to his underling, and Screwtape, talking about some of these things. Mr. Kidner, Derek Kidner, says, "However one may try to soften the jolt of this by associating these delicacies with religious feasts or rare occasions, the incongruity of it is still outrageous. The bride it seems is only here, or anywhere else, for the cakes and ale. Screwtape, we may suppose, would have hailed this as an unusually satisfying victory for his department, for a victory

it would still have been even if the bait had had to be the world itself. But to quote that artist in temptation, an ever increasing craving, for an ever diminishing pleasure is the formula." That's Screwtape's advice to his devil. "It is more certain, it's better style to get the man's soul and give him nothing in return, that's what really gladdens our father's heart."

"Few of us, remembering the trivialities we chase, will feel ready to cast the first stone at Israel" Derek Kidner says. "So (Hosea says) I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver, and one and a half homers of barley." That's the price of a slave. As a matter of fact, it's half the price of a slave, one half the price of a slave, so he did. And then we read in verse 4, "For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim."

Now let's just very quickly look at this, because our time is about up. Three missing things; first of all, civil polity, "You shall stay with me many days you shall not play the harlot nor shall you have a man; so too will I be toward you, for the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince" without civil polity, after Zedekiah, the king in the Old Testament, no king in their midst. This has come to pass. There is a saying, "No one of their own nation has been able to gather them together or become their king." It is true, civil polity; it's gone in the sense in which they had it.

Not only that, without "sacrifice or sacred pillar" spiritual worship, there is no spiritual worship, there is not temple, for the land is not theirs, there's not priesthood for there are no genealogies. The last that we know of in the genealogies is our Lord himself, and when he died that ends things. No sacrifice, because there's no temple in which a sacrifice may be made. Hosea's prophecy is remarkably fulfilled in detail. The once for all offering has been made by the once for all priest, after the order of Melchizedek. It's swept away. [Amen from audience]

And finally he says, "without ephod or teraphim." That is, there's no priesthood. There's no priesthood in the sense of the Mosaic priesthood, it's gone. And yet, Israel still

abides. It's a people, at Numbers chapter 23 and verse 9 states, "shall dwell alone" and that is what they have done, they have dwelt alone. They are still alone. And isn't it a remarkable thing, it's just remarkable how to precise detail the prophecy has been fulfilled to this point.

What is it in the sea, the word escapes me for the moment, that starts, it's the Gulf Stream, remember? Old men have to think hard for things to return to their minds, you've just seen a successful accomplishment in that. [Laughter] The Gulf Stream, what is characteristic of the Gulf Stream? It's in the water, it's in the gulf, it's in the Atlantic, it goes all the way in, you can when you go to Scotland as I lived in Scotland, you go over to the west side of Scotland and why is the northern part of Scotland warmer than the other side of Scotland? The Gulf Stream there. Up in an airplane, you look down you can see the distinction in the water. The Gulf Stream, specifically, is seen. That's Israel among the nations. It's the Gulf Stream among the nations.

Oh, this is, this is great. Hegel says some things about Israel that she is an "enigma, what an enigma." And Clinton, he hasn't a clue [Laughter] and the rest of our presidents, for the most part, haven't had a clue. The great men of the world haven't a clue. And there it is visible before them, if they get up in a plane, look out of, they'll see something that's remarkable in itself, and would remind them of the nation Israel among the nations. They still are on our front page, a little nation like that on our front page. Why are we concerned about that, because God is moving history along to a certain conclusion in the future. It's thrilling when you think about it. I'm sorry I may not live long enough to see it. Oh well, maybe I'll take that back, I think I'll see it from a better perspective. [Laughter] But at any rate, it's great, I look forward to it.

Now, in verse 5 the prophet writes, "Afterward," "Afterward." Now remember time to God is not like time to you and me. To me time is coming to an end, but it's not for you. And when the time comes, if the Lord does not come for you to come to the end of your time, then there will be more time. So, "Afterward however," he says. Now I

want you to notice verse 3, "You shall stay with me many days. For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king" etc. "afterward." So we have many days, we have many days, and then afterward. Makes it very plain; this is a *multum in parvo*, "Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king." Yes, David, David's greater son, our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, when the Davidic covenant shall be fulfilled, "they shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days."

So Israel's future is settled in the word of God. She cannot turn now, she cannot return now. Might read chapter 5 and verse 4, because something pertains to that. I didn't even look it up, but I have it in my notes, "they do not direct their deeds towards turning to their God, for the spirit of harlotry is in their midst, and they do not know the Lord." That's their condition today, and so consequently, the afterward has not yet come, and their David is not here of course. "They shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." Do you know what the Targum, the Targum is exposition of the word of God by Hebrew people. Do you know what it says at this point, in the Targum? It says this, "This is the King Messiah." "This is the King Messiah." "Afterward, the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David" this is King Messiah, "David their king and his goodness in the latter days."

Now I don't know why people don't love a prophecy like this. I love this prophecy. I love what it means that this great future is to come to pass. And do you know for whom I love it? Not for Martha, although I do a little bit. I love it for the sake of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ. [Amen from audience] What a magnification of the glory of the Son of God at this time, when Israel is finally brought to their senses and better still, brought to the feet of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ, our Lord exalted by the faithfulness of our great triune God in heaven.

So for the saints, there is the theology of forgiveness. May we come tremblingly out of admiration, and adoration, and aspiration, to the one who gave himself for us, for strangers, for the enemies, the careless, the prosperous. May you out of his love for

sinner say, "Good Shepherd, carry me in Thy bosom. Mark me with the red mark of Thy blood and take me into Thy flock." [Amen from audience]

It's been a pleasure for me to be here and for Martha; I speak for her as well. It's always a pleasure, I look forward to the time we can vent our regard for the sovereign grace of God. I pray the Lord's blessing upon each one of you and for all that is done here in this conference. Will you bow with me in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father we are so thankful to Thee for the promises of the word of God and it encourages us so much Lord, to know that our Lord himself shall be exalted and glorified in this remarkable way throughout this entire globe, the praises directed to him shall resound and his glory shall be magnified then and forever. And Lord, if there should be someone in this audience who does not yet know what it is to have rested one's destiny upon the blood that was shed on Calvary's cross, we pray that at this very moment they might, by Thy grace, say within their hearts, "Lord, I thank Thee that Thou hast made it possible for me to have eternal life. I believe in Thee Lord, and ask Thee Lord to mark me out from the world about and bring me into Thy family through the blood shed at Calvary." For his name's sake. Amen. [Amen from audience]

That was fun, [Laughter] such a great passage.

[Conference leader] Well, I think we can learn some things this morning for sure. Number one, this I'm positive about, if you hear any reports that Dr. Johnson has changed his view on premillennialism, they're not true. [Laughter] [Amen from audience] He is just as convinced as he has been.

I think the second thing is, that even though he is a convinced premillennial and a dispensationalist, he's still willing to love, and worship, and fellowship with those who aren't. He made that very clear, is that right?

And then the third thing, and this kind of amazes me, that he preached this at a conference where there were amills, premills, and postmills, and the premills didn't shout and the amills didn't throw any stones. [Laughter] So that's kind of an amazing situation. Somebody told me, in fact quite a few people told me they appreciated the fact that we had a conference where we had different mixtures of people from different backgrounds, and even the color their skin, and we tried to exhibit a belief in the oneness of the body of our Lord Jesus Christ. And I think that has also been true here, as far as our views of prophecy, because they certainly are different.

Another thing I think we can learn from this is there is a lot of people, and I was one of them for a long time, when I came to understand the doctrine of grace I was thoroughly convinced that nobody could really understand and believe the doctrines of grace and be a premillennial. And then I met some who could preach the doctrines of grace more clearly than I could, and who were premillennial dispensationalists, so that kind of blew that out of the water.

And then I think the other thing we can learn, and I so much appreciated when Dr. Johnson emphasized this, is that the heart of the issue is the doctrines of grace. And the thing that binds us together is not anything other than the truth of the sovereign grace of God. I listened this morning and I can say, almost thou persuadest me. [Laughter] Almost, but.

[Comment from audience member] You have faith.

[Conference leader] You have faith. Then you will continue to pray for me.
[Laughter]

[Comment from audience member indistinct] [Laughter]

[Conference leader] Well, if in the end one of us proves to be wrong, which is going to be sure [Laughter] and we're not going to settle which one it is today, but somebody has said, "I'd rather be a disappointed amillennialist than I would a disappointed premillennialist." [Laughter] But that's just joking. [Laughter]

Now, it does seem to me that the heart of the issue is the relationship of the old and the new and our hermeneutic approach of understanding the old. And that's one of the things that we're going to be discussing next year with four messages from Douglas Moo, as to how we look at the Old Testament and its promises and what is brought over and what isn't. But anyhow, I'm glad I was here this morning, are you? [Amen from audience] And I have learned to know and love...

[RECORDING ENDS ABRUPTLY]