

Psalm 78 - Part 1

by Art Katz

The sermon emphasizes the importance of Israel's history as a revelation of the human condition and a warning to us of the consequences of failing to follow God.

Duration: 1:12:28

Scripture: Exodus 14:21-22, Psalm 78:1-7, Psalm 106:6, Matthew 14:13-21

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the importance of understanding and witnessing the wonders and mighty deeds that God has done for Israel. He emphasizes the need to recognize and appreciate God's grace and mercy, as well as the consequences of not keeping and cherishing it. The speaker also highlights the significance of the cross and the absurdity of worshiping an invisible God, urging believers to make a choice to accept or reject Jesus. Additionally, the speaker mentions the future suffering of Israel and how it will serve as a judgment for the nations.

Transcript

A thought that comes to me in conjunction with our reading from Psalm 78 today, that these things are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the age have come. Israel is our textbook. Israel is the expositor of the human condition.

The Jew is man writ large. Their history, their failing, their apostasy, is such an open textbook and revelation not only of the Jewish condition but of the human condition. So it behooves us to be instructed and to see that we are they, that we are capable of and exhibit even some of the same sins for which Israel was guilty.

That's why it's in the book. These things are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the age have come. The things that refer to Israel are not just for antiquarian interest.

They're not just little historical asides. They are the most pointed and profound instruction for us upon whom the ends of the age have come. Israel herself is a sacrifice for the church.

Her failings and her agonizing and her judgments are for our benefit. So let's read the psalm with that kind of understanding. The subtitle in my edition here is God's Goodness and Israel's Ingratitude.

And then it says a maskil of Asaph. A maskil is something designed for the instruction of others. Something like wisdom.

Whether he himself is the author or was given this by David and then transposed it, we're not told. But some of the deepest psalms are given with the name Asaph, whoever he was. But the remarkable thing is you can't tell where David leaves off and Asaph begins.

There's such a congruence and a harmony of mind and thought and heart in both men that we're still reading the psalms of David. It's Davidic. So give ear, O my people, to my teaching.

Here it's not the psalmist speaking, God himself directly. And often we see in the psalms the Lord will insert himself after a statement by the psalmist, a lament, a cry. Then all of a sudden, bang, God himself is speaking.

This psalm begins with God, which is unusual. Give ear, O my people, to my teaching. Incline your ears to the words of my mouth.

I will open my mouth in a parable. I will utter dark sayings from of old. Things that we have heard and known.

That our ancestors have told us. So it looks like verse 3 now is no longer the Lord speaking, but the psalmist in behalf of Israel hearing him and acknowledging. We will not hide them from their children.

We will tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord and his might and the wonders that he has done. He established a decree in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which he commanded our ancestors to teach to their children. That the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and rise up and tell them to their children.

So that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God. And that they should not be like their ancestors, a stubborn and rebellious generation. A generation whose heart was not steadfast, whose spirit was not faithful to God.

Any comment thus far about the means by which successive generations are instructed by those who have preceded them. And can bring the testimony of God out of the reality of their known experience. So that it fits the next generation to tell theirs.

And in that kind of continuum, Israel grows up in the environment of its own history as it reflects upon the deeds of God. And if that fails, if that communication fails, if fathers are not faithful to communicate to sons, then the whole heritage is lost. And the new generation grows up in a spiritual vacuum in which their history is lost to them and its value.

And therefore they will find themselves repeating the sins of their fathers. For they had not been instructed of the consequence of past sin by the failure to transmit it mouth to mouth, generation to generation. You get a sense of the economy of God.

This is before electronics and tapes and everything is personal. Communication is the soul of the matter. So that the reality of what Israel has passed through, which is unique.

No other nation has been subject to such dealings as this people. No other nation has had a God appear to them, wreathed in fire at Sinai. And gave them his law by the writing of his own finger.

And has carried them through 40 years in the wilderness as we will read on. And provided for them manna every day and sustained them. Gave them a Moses and an Aaron.

I mean Israel's history, what shall we say? Do we sufficiently appreciate it? And do we see it not just as another people with whom we have some kind of faint connection, but as being one with ourselves? This is our Israel. We who are far off have been brought nigh into the commonwealth of Israel. This is our history.

And that's why Paul in 1 Corinthians, as I mentioned so many times, speaking to Greeks. About the episode of Israel passing through the Red Sea. He says, even as our fathers were baptized unto Moses, both in the sea and in the cloud.

How can you say to Greeks, our fathers? Because Paul sees perfectly that they have been made sons of Abraham by faith in Christ Jesus. And that this is their inheritance. And that it's perfectly legitimate to allude to the fathers of Israel as being their fathers.

Maybe we would not be suffering identity loss if we were grounded in this reality. That we have an ancestry. We have a history.

We have the patriarchs. We have the prophets. We have the psalmist.

And we're not even Jewish. You don't have to be Jewish to have it. You have earned to be sons of Abraham through faith.

But you need to have it. You need to have an ancestry. You need to have a history.

Or else how shall your future be made clear? It's an unbroken continuum. And we're caught up in the very gist of it. And being called to participate in bringing it to its climax.

It's the history of Israel. Which is redemptive history. Which is the, what's the German word? The Weltanschauung.

The world history. The world revelation of the redemptive work of God. We don't have a word for it in English.

Redemptive history. But they have a word for it in German. Weltanschauung.

Is redemptive history. The history of God through his people from its inception to its climax. We don't have that sense as the church.

That's why we're a bunch of rolling stones and drifters and atoms and individualists who don't have a connection. There's no coherence because we've not seen ourselves as being integral to that past and connected to that future. Because we've not read the Psalms.

Or we've read it at a distance, so to speak, as not pertaining to us. You know that when they have the Passover, they have the four sons. The foolish son, the wise son, the wicked son.

So what's the wise son? The wise son says, this happened to us in Egypt. We put the blood on the door or something like that. What is the wicked son? The wicked son, well, the foolish son says, I don't know.

No one ever told me. Okay, you're forgiven. But the wicked son knows and says, this has nothing to do with me.

I'm not related to that. That's what makes him wicked. He will not acknowledge his connectedness to the past of his own people.

And God calls that wicked. So this has given us in Scripture, not just for a passing curiosity, but to remind us again of how integral our own present life is. With Israel's past.

And that we need to benefit from that past because we're just as prone to succumbing to the same error and sins as they. And they have suffered severe judgment and they are yet to suffer severe judgment. But when we say they, we're not speaking about some distant people with whom we have but scant interest, but our own.

These are our brethren. What does Jesus say in Matthew 24, is it? The least of these my brethren. They're still his brethren, even though they have been reduced in the world through persecution.

They've been made least, but their identification has not changed. They're still his brethren. And Psalm 102, which I've spoken from time to time over the years, you need to get the tape of that.

Here's a sublime psalm showing that the set time to favor Zion has come for the deliverer to come out of Zion and to take their transgression from them, even independent of their repentance. When my servants have pity upon their stones and compassion upon their dust. God waits for something, not from Israel.

Israel is a dead duck, a gone goose. Israel's over the edge. Israel's lost in apostasy.

They're incapable of response. They're dry bones. What is he waiting for? Something from a mysterious entity alluded to in Psalm 102 as my servants.

Certainly it's not Israel. If Israel were the servants, they would not be suffering these calamities. Who are the servants? What distinguishes them? They have compassion on Israel's stones and pity upon her dust.

That's more than just interest in antiquity. That's identification with Israel in her most abject fallenness and judgment. When indeed Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, and all of the cities of Israel will be reduced to stone and stubble.

And the world will be gloating over that because of that Gentile hatred and resentment of God's chosen people. And relishing the fact that they're now catching it and they deserve it. Finishing the job that Hitler started.

The only thing wrong with Hitler, he didn't finish it. But there'll be a small presence in the earth that rather than gloat and delight in Israel's distress, will be compassionately identified with her in her stones and in her dust. How do we come to a place like that? That kind of identification is what God is waiting for for the set time to favor Zion.

The issue is not Israel. The issue is the church. That comes to a place of identification that cannot be naturally explained.

Why should any Gentile have this identification with a fallen apostate sinful nation now rightfully experiencing its judgment? Only because they're identified and in union with a God who while we were yet

sinner, died for us. That's exactly the same. There's a certain remarkable parallel.

That just as the world is sifted by the devastation that came upon Jesus. What do you make of him? Who do you say that he is? This mangled man. You can't pass this by in neutrality.

You can't make this a matter of indifference. It's too stark. It requires something from us either an acceptance or a rejection.

The same thing will be true of Israel when it will be battered into that condition. Isaiah 53 is as perfect a picture of Israel's future condition as it was of Jesus at the cross. And therefore the nations will have an opportunity to see the cross reiterated in Israel's own suffering before their very eyes.

God says I'll not do this in a corner but before the face of all nations. Because it will judge them. What do you do with the least of these people? How do you respond to them? What does Paul say in Romans 11? What's the capstone of the church? What's its high water mark? That it can extend mercy.

That they will receive mercy. And they will need it in that last hour. But to extend it in that last hour will require everything from him who gives it.

Because he's putting his own head on the block. And putting his own life and that of his family at risk. To extend mercy to a people who are being pursued the world over.

Got the idea? So this is a whole very great subject. But reading this psalm and considering it will help to fit us. So look at the grace that has come to Israel.

The glorious deeds of the Lord in verse 4. And his might and the wonders that he has done. How shall we know God as God? If we have not understood nor seen him. In the wonders that he has done for Israel.

And the might that he has displayed. Where else since that time has God turned a red sea to dry land? Part of the seas. Where else has he fed multitudes? There is over 2 million people with Moses in the wilderness.

Talk about logistics. I trembled with fear when God brought us from Plainfield, New Jersey. Out here and had to within months we had 55 people living in this place.

In makeshift housing and without adequate insulation. And we were living in poverty. We didn't let the world know our need.

The Lord forbade it. We had to live by faith and trust. And well I could believe Lord for my own family.

You've shown yourself faithful when I left the teaching profession. And gave up the security of medical insurance. And annual benefits and increments.

And all the kinds of things that fall to a teacher. And left that to become a missionary to the Jews at 100 bucks a week. And wondered how would my family survive on 100 bucks a week.

And the Lord was ample in everything. But then to go from that testimony to this place. Not just my family but 55 souls.

Pregnant women, children. And how are they to be provided for. And we were here for 10 years.

And no one ever died for want of nourishment. Although we came close. Inga's frustration was that she could not cook.

In the grand style to which she is disposed. And that if we had guests she was embarrassed that she couldn't put before them. Wonderful illustrious meals.

We couldn't afford it. So she was continually chafed by having to live under those conditions. And that tension was made manifest throughout the body.

As one of the factors with which we had to live. We were tested for 10 years. And the just shall live by their faith.

And this was during the prosperity period in the church. When the glass cathedrals were going up everywhere. And multi-million dollar extravaganzas.

Our tongues are hanging out for elementary things like food, shelter, insulation, protection from the weather. But the Lord was faithful. Then you go on to the next faith and the next requirement.

From faith to faith as it is written. The just shall live by their faith. The mistake was leaving Plainfield, New Jersey.

Believing that you heard God at the head of the road. Who said end time teaching sent the community refuge. And you had to give up an entire lifestyle.

And its comforts. Jewish charismatic darling that you were. With two Volvo's.

Old but still good. And the 17 room house that Inger loved dearly. And come out to Nowheresville.

To begin with. For the thing for which you are now receiving the benefit. So where do we have the knowledge of God who can provide? What is the basis for our confidence when he calls us.

In tremulous uncertainty to a next step. For which we don't see how he can meet it. It's because we know.

From the testimony of Israel. That this is a God who is mighty. In power and in glorious deeds.

If we don't know it from here we don't know it. And that church. That has just come to church with its new testament.

And has relegated the old testament to the dustbin. As being passe. Has lost an entire inheritance.

A legacy about God himself as God. And his most conspicuous givingness of himself. To an entire nation.

We have to resuscitate. Bring that legacy back to the church. Or it's not the church.

And the Psalms. And the prophets. And the law.

And the books of Moses help us. So we will tell to the coming generation. The glorious deeds of the Lord.

And his might. And the wonders that he has done. And in the face of that.

To become apostate. Is all the more heinous a sin. And then in verse 5. He established a decree in Jacob.

According to the law in Israel. Which he commanded our ancestors. To teach to their children.

Next generation might know them. Children yet unborn. Rise up and tell them to their children.

So that they should set their hope in God. What can we say about present Israel today? Is there hope set in God? That's a rhetorical question. Doesn't even require a reply.

Clearly and evidently not. There's no faith. No expectancy.

No confidence. No trust. Not even any looking or expectation.

That God can be their hope. When they most desperately need it. Have you ever seen a nation be brought.

To more excruciating impasse. Where it itself is ousting. And compelling its own people.

Out from their homes after 22 years. What an irony. When men are trying to devise strategies.

By which they can survive. In an untenable condition. Surrounded by enemies.

And whose threat everyday is more prominent. And an indefensible nation. No mountain ranges.

Nothing to stop missiles. Nothing to stop things. That would take only minutes to come.

From any of their neighbors. That could devastate the entire nation. Atomically or gas, vapors, disease.

Any way in which they would seek to exterminate. And they have that intention. To exterminate.

So what a pitiful dilemma. For a nation that started out with such expectancy. To show the world what a Jewish nation is.

And has not made that demonstration. Where is their hope in God. Where are they calling upon him even now.

In their distress. They have turned from their own legacy. And don't know it.

And don't believe the God. Who has previously done glorious deeds. And shown his might and wonders.

Because they did not rise up. To tell their children. So that they in verse 7 should set their hope in God.

And not forget the works of God. Remembrance is precious. And life saving.

But keep his commandments. That they should not be like their ancestors. A stubborn and rebellious generation.

A generation whose heart was not steadfast. And whose spirit was not faithful to God. That's tragic.

And if the nation who had received the law. And seen these great wonders and deeds. Could come to that condition.

Of being unfaithful. And not maintaining a proper heart. And a right spirit.

That is faithful to God. Of what then are we capable. If you're not asking that question.

You're not reading the Psalms right. If they could come to a condition like this. After seeing the mighty wonders and the great deeds of God.

And the giving of the law. And his great salvation. That they can come to a heart condition like this.

That is rebellious. Of what are we capable. This should humble us.

And I believe that's the essential reason. Why God is having us consider this text. We're still too proud.

We're still too haughty. We're still too bumptious. In our own attitudes and self-congratulation.

About our spirituality. Because we've not seen what we're capable of. In the failings of Israel.

We need to identify with these failings. This is not Jewish failing. This is human failing.

This is man. God could be lavish in his demonstration. As he was with this nation.

And still be rejected. If they were capable. To what degree then are we.

So we ought to be in a repentant frame. Not waiting to prove that we're just as capable. But acknowledging.

That there but for the grace of God go we. We're human all too human. God could be gracious.

I see it here. How shall I say this. Has there been a Sunday.

Since my return from New York. Or overseas. In which the Lord has not conspicuously spoken.

Sunday by Sunday by Sunday by Sunday. In appropriateness that only he. In his own authority and power could convey.

Yet who remembers it. Who remembers even last Sunday. Let alone the Sunday before the Sunday before the Sunday before.

It's forgotten. It's dismissed from memory. And as if it had not taken place.

We're not a people who remember. And acknowledge the glorious deeds of God. And if you'll not do that.

You're making yourself by such a process a candidate. For having a wicked heart. That lacks gratitude.

And has not remained steadfast. And whose spirit is not faithful to God. Same phenomenon.

I'm not saying that my Sunday messages. Are equal to what God showed through Moses at Sinai. But they were appropriate and given of the same God.

But are we acknowledging that? Are we grateful for that? Do we see that? Are we quick to forget or never have acknowledged? If so then we're moving toward this kind of condition. So what do you think it means? They did not prepare their hearts? What does that mean? We mustn't let that pass. Because we need that instruction for ourselves.

What does it mean to prepare your heart? I've never quite heard a phrase like that. They didn't prepare their hearts. Or maybe to put it the cat's edition.

They were not careful to keep their hearts. Or watch over their heart. Or their heart attitudes.

Because it's a process of erosion. You don't become apostate in a day. It begins with a faint disposition.

That is not observed or acknowledged. And allowed as if it's legitimate. Already you're critical.

Already you're haughty. And then it hardens and becomes deeper and deeper. Until finally you are in a place in which you're outside the faith.

Sin is not just a thing. It's conceived in a moment. But it needs to be identified in that moment.

And dealt with at its inception. So I think what the Lord is saying. They didn't watch their hearts.

They weren't aware that you can lose something. However precious it was. And it's being received as given.

If you don't keep it. If you don't rehearse it. If you're not jealous over it.

If you're not grateful. If you don't bring it to remembrance. Then something will harden.

Step by step until you find yourself in this condition. Where you become rebellious and disloyal. And oppose the God who demonstrated his love so remarkably.

We talked about the scandal of the cross. The absurdity and the foolishness of the gospel. But to praise an invisible God.

And to give him homage. And recognition and honor. To worship a God who is invisible.

Must appear to the world as sheer insanity. That how do you come to this? You must be hyped up and freaky. To sing choruses and hymns.

And raise your hands in praise. And have tears trickle down your face. An acknowledgment of who? See that very praise and worship.

Is the statement of God. This is his demonstration. Though invisible to an unbelieving world.

So our praise and worship. Is not just something euphoric. For our own good feeling.

It's the testimony of God himself. So not to praise him sincerely. But just to come into a musical environment.

In which we sing mindlessly. Is the very opposite of what God is desiring. We praise him on the basis of his benefits.

We know him for his faithfulness. And his mercy. So all the guys like me.

Have a greater advantage. We have a longer history. 41 years.

I'm still alive and kicking. And the Lord has kept me through so much. And the whole community.

To this day. How has he done it? It's been remarkable. So the longer your history.

The greater the volume. Of the things that need to be acknowledged. That God has done.

The more vigorous and sincere and authentic. Your praise. I don't know of any literature.
That uses the phrase. Set yourself. It's totally biblical.
David set himself to seek the Lord. Boy that speaks volumes. That requires taking a deep breath.
Clearing the decks. Earnestly preparing yourself. For the seeking of the invisible God.
The issues and how to speak. And to address. That's a certain posture.
To set yourself. I remember still lashing out. At Ariel.
When he came home from. He had to do a homework assignment. And he took out a crumpled piece of.
Loose leaf paper. What do you call that? Three hole. And it was crumpled.
And he flattened it out. And around his workplace were books. The discs there.
Video games. I said set yourself. Sweep that crud away.
Get a decent piece of paper. Sharpen your pencil. Go to the bathroom.
Drink some water. Be rested. You didn't know what I was talking about.
Because to set yourself. Is totally biblical. And antithetical to the spirit of this age.
Where you slouch your way through. And get by. In whatever condition.
In any makeshift manner. Setting yourself is totally biblical. And we have learned it from Israel.
And they have failed yet to set themselves. So what ought we to do. For whom.
These admonitions have come. Who are being fitted for the end of the age. Set yourself.
That's a real posture. You know in so doing. You are inserting.
Asserting your personhood. You are a dum-dum. You're a non-entity.
You're a piece of protoplasm. Floating about in space. That requires so many meals.
And your clothing to be washed. And space to occupy. You don't become an entity until this.
It's because of this privileged relationship. With God. That requires a setting ourselves.
And asserting of ourselves. To seek him. That our personhood is initiated.
And developed. This is not a vain God. Who is egoistic.
And wants this kind of acknowledgement. It's for our sake. That he hides himself.
Doers absconders. The hidden God. So that to see if we will seek him.
Because in the seeking. There's an assertion of ourselves. That establish ourselves.

As entities. We obtain personhood. In the seeking of God.

And if we will not obtain it there. How else should we obtain it. By how much we eat.

That's the world. Wear this. Do this.

Obtain that. Buy that. Drive this.

Live here. So that it's external. Your identity is what you possess.

What you consume. Your only value is for consumption. Which is totally opposite.

To the basis. For individuality. And true personhood in God.

Seek me. Because I'm the only object. Worthy of your consideration.

And in the seeking of me. Some benefit accrues to you. It's salutary.

It's healthy. It serves your benefit to seek me. Or else you'll give yourself to other objects.

That are less and are degrading. That's called idolatry. But set yourself.

So here's a guy. That's sending me messages. On my internet.

A brother goes. Tell me. How do I seek God? Tell me.

You seek God by seeking brother. What do you think it is? You want another method you Americans? Everything can be reduced to methods. Start seeking.

And you know what? It's utter foolishness. Have you ever tried lately? To call on the invisible God. Who's totally silent.

And has hidden himself. To see how soon you'll be discouraged. And that if you don't get a palpable return.

On your investment. In this utilitarian age. You'll stop.

If you don't get a nice feeling. Or a comforting sense of God's presence. You'll quit.

How quick we are to quit. If there's not an immediate payoff. This is the now generation.

Who will persist in seeking the Lord. Even as he withholds himself. Because he's God.

Because he doesn't have to immediately give us a payoff. This is not a utilitarian transaction. That would be commerce.

This is not commerce. This is worship. He deserves that acknowledgement that they're seeking.

For what he is in himself. Whether or not you experience any immediate benefit. You will experience ultimate benefit.

More than you know of. Of course we've often quoted now. In recent days.

The creation itself is groaning. Waiting for the manifestation of a sense of God. Their very appearing. Releases them. But also their appearing as sons. Maintains the creation. Because it picks up where Adam left off. Namely. To have dominion over creation. So creation is rejoicing. Not only for the freedom from bondage. But that it will now be rightly attended by sons. Who will take the dominion mandate. Seriously. And cultivate and nurture. The precious soil that God has given. So we need to think of that. Sons not only by their appearance. But also by their activity. Over the soil. Over their heart for God's creation. And to transform it from a wasteland. Into a flowering garden. That it was at the first. Sons will have this mentality. They'll take back again the dominion mandate. And perform it. And to the degree that we're able. Even now. We want to do this for the little plot of land that is ours. Even if you've got a little balcony. What do you call it? The plant. Tend to it. Already prefigure the kingdom that's coming. Already take first steps. Toward this eschatological climax. Where you're already tending something. With a dominion spirit. Because it's the Lord's. And it beautifies and glorifies him. But even organic nature. Dumb innate nature. Is responsive to love. Okay. So verse 9. The Ephraimites. Armed with the bow. Turned back on the day of battle. What a disgrace. They did not keep God's covenant. But refused to walk according to his law. They forgot what he had done. In verse 11. And the miracles that he had shown them. Which in the sight of their ancestors. He worked marvels in the land of Egypt. The fields of Zoan. Which is Egypt. He divided the sea and let them pass through it. He made the water stand like a heap. In the daytime he led them with a cloud. And all night long with a fiery light. He split rocks open in the wilderness. He gave them drink. Abundantly from the deep. He made streams come out of the rock. And caused waters to flow like rivers. To water two million people. And their livestock. That's no trickle. That's a gush. Of a kind that would water the greatest cities. Of our present civilization. He did in the wilderness. Out of a rock that was split. You believe that? Or is that mythology? Are these quaint myths of the past? Or is this literal history? Hey if he can do that then.

What can he do now? Can he take like a 76 year old croc. And out of it bring forth something. Of the same waters of life.

If he can do it with a rock. Can he do it with a crusty carrot? You know. Why can we believe in the one.

And not believe for the other. Same God. And we need the same waters.

They are waters of life. And they can gush out. At his grace.

So we mustn't limit. The Holy One of Israel. As Israel of old.

That was one of their greatest sins. And reduce the great streams to a trickle. Or in fact they'll dry up.

If we don't acknowledge the source. And be grateful for it. Got that? Hey this is my continual propensity.

Always to translate. A statement about God in the past. To the present implication.

Which I don't think in any way. Is offensive to God. I believe that's the way.

That's the definitive way. In which scripture should be read and considered. If we are to obtain its value.

Got that? So very important that we believe this. Can we in our. Holy Ghost imaginations.

Picture ourselves with Israel. In the blazing heat of that wilderness. Destitute and barren.

And listening to the. Mowing of their. Their animals.

Groaning for water. With their parched tongues sticking out. Their children tugging the hem of their garments.

I'm thirsty mom dad. And there's no water. And then you watch this figure.

Whom God has called to address the rock. And boom. One tap and the thing breaks.

And out flows water. In such a gush. That sustains the life of millions.

What a God. What a phenomenal. 40 years of this.

You would think that they would be so schooled. In the reality of God. They would be impervious to sin.

They would be an ultimate. And enduring testimony to all nations. Throughout their entire history.

But no sooner do they get into the land. In fact many don't even get into the land. They're already murmuring in the wilderness.

And their cadavers lie there. That they again become apostate. And that testimony to the nations.

Does not go forth. And they've yet to repent for it. So when the Rabbi came to Phoenix.

When Isaiah was talking about the prophets. And the questions and answers. Were so puerile and shallow.

I said tell me. When have we as a nation. Ever acknowledged the lament of God.

The indictment of God. Against us as a nation. And have repented.
When in our history. Have we ever acknowledged. God's indictment of us.
And repented. We have not. We're still under the judgment.
And have not even seen it. There's not a Jew. In a hundred thousand.
That has conversed with what we're. Reviewing today. Or has taken this to heart.
But in fact the best that they can say. Is that this is just. A particular culture.
This is the way in which men. Express themselves in that generation. They saw God vividly.
As if he himself. Was actually doing these things. But we know better.
It's a confluence of tides. That the Red Sea was opened up. That they could pass over.
We're rational. We're empirical. We have to have natural explanation.
And that this is just a stylistic device. Common to that generation. But not to be taken literally.
That's the present. Condition of Jews. Which is to say the condition of the modern world.
And the condition more of the church. Than we know. Okay.
Look that over. They turned back in the day of battle. What a disgrace.
Though God is with them. They saw the enemy. And they calculated the possibilities.
And on the basis of logic rather than faith. They turned back. They refused to walk.
They didn't keep God's covenant. But refused to walk. Terrible.
Conscious willful refusal. Can there be anything more stubborn? More vain? More a statement of the human condition? Than man willfully rejecting God's commandments? Can you picture it? Are you capable of it? If they were. Refusal.
It's one thing to be forgetful. Or mindless. Or indifferent.
But conscious willful refusal against God. Who is the creator. Who has sustained you.
Through this remarkable trial in the wilderness. And then to defy him by refusing. We want to define sin.
There it is. That man is capable of that. After such demonstration of God's grace.
Is the remarkable truth. Of the depravity of mankind. This is it.
This is the heart of it. Conscious willful refusal. I will not.
They forgot what he had done. In verse 11. And the miracles that he had showed them.
In the sight of their ancestors. He had worked marvels. And then it goes through the whole litany of God's great events.

From Egypt right through the wilderness. Dividing the sea. Making the waters to stand like a heap.

Leading them by fire by a cloud. Waters in the wilderness out of a rock. Yet in verse 17.

They sinned still more against him. Rebelling against the most high in the desert. How do you.

In verse 11. How do you forget what he had done. What about the phenomenon of forgetting.

Is that just poor memory. They needed a vitamin supplement. And they would have remembered.

Or is forgetting itself. A willful activity. Can you consciously dismiss from memory.

That which you don't want to retain. Because the implications of it are undesirable. That's forgetting.

Forgetting is a conscious willful, sinful activity that refuses to remember because it does not want to receive the implications of what needs to be remembered. How guilty are we of forgetting. How much do we recognize what it is.

I'm not talking about trivials like forgetting a guy's name. Forgetting God and his benefits after such a demonstration as this. And do we need to have lived through this in order to be as guilty.

Do we ourselves have to pass through that wilderness. Have to actually see the water break forth out of rocks. Have actually to eat the manna in order to receive the benefit of this exhortation.

This is vicarious experience. Means you don't have to be there actually. But the literature invites you to identify as if you were.

So a wicked son refuses to acknowledge that this has to do with him. But a righteous son says, though I am born thousands of years after this event, I receive this as if I myself have passed through it. And that I'm guilty with my fathers in their willful refusal.

That's a righteous son. And that's the kind of son to which we are being called. This is our history saints.

Doesn't matter that we were not there. God invites us to be there in the spirit by identification of a kind that chooses to see itself as being part with this people and therefore guilty or receiving instruction that we not be guilty of their sin. Let me ask the pregnant question.

Why should you be compassionately identified with such a people as this? That you should have compassion on their stones and pity on their dust? Which is the set time for the Zion. God's waiting for something from the church. But my question is how can you be expected to have this compassionate identification with so sinful a people? Was it some kind of magic who passed a wand over us and all of a sudden we just come alive with compassion for people that have despised the world over? I'm asking the question if you can but recognize it.

Here's what I'm fishing for. The basis for our compassion will not be some kind of figment of imagination or magical wand. It will be the recognition of our sin.

Our vicarious identification with them. And therefore we are totally identified. We are capable of their apostasy and therefore we share with them in their judgment.

This having compassion on their stones is not people looking from a distance and clucking their tongues too bad about you. It's people with them in their judgment as saying we are equally as deserving though we ourselves did not in actuality pass through that. But because we're human as you, we see ourselves as equally guilty and we're thoroughly identified with you.

That's how God saw us. He had compassion upon us while we were yet sinners and enemies. He died for us.

We need to have an attitude of a comparable kind for Israel and I'm saying this. We will not have it if we do not see ourselves as sinners. If we are proud separate from and other than them and our track record is better and we can only look upon them with some kind of disdain and contempt for having failed where we would have succeeded, we will never come to the place of compassion and identification.

Only as sinners equal in the magnitude of their sin and apostasy can we identify with them also in their judgment and have compassion upon them. Our awareness of our condition by reading and putting ourselves in that place vicariously is the very grounds for the future compassion for which God waits. It will not come to us magically.

I attended a lecture in New York in an Orthodox Jewish environment and the businessman who spoke to us said the reason that we Jews are the object of anti-Semitism is because the world hates our virtue. Because the world cannot stand our moral excellence we are the object of the world's opposition. I thought to myself, dear man, have you ever cracked a Bible? Have you ever heard the cry and lament of the prophets in which we're told that can a leopard change its spots? Can a black man lose his color? So fixed are you in your condition that until a marvelous grace comes you're condemned with your ancestors in exactly the same unchanging condition.

What are you talking about? Virtue. That the world is offended by our virtue? What virtue? Where the leaders in pornography and rap culture and films and make-believe Spielberg's dream, what do they call his business? Dreamworks. It's all vile.

It's all opposite God. Barbra Streisand all of these liberal celebrities campaigning for funds for AIDS as if what is needed is scientific attention and the disease can be rooted out that it's not God's moral condemnation of sin. So how do they boast like that? One of the reasons they boast like that is we have not made them conversant with their own history.

We've not shown them the testimony of God in Scripture. Now this is part of to the Jew first. It's not just bringing them the formula of what God has provided for Christ, but showing them first that they need what God has provided for Christ, that they are sinners.

We need to hold up a mirror that they can glimpse at themselves because they have no consciousness of sin being insulated from their own scriptures. Jews don't open the book. We're called the people of the book, but we're profoundly ignorant of its contents.

Other books, yes, we write them. Marx and Freud and you name it, but his book lies in terrible neglect. What does that betray about the church that loves the Israeli melodies and folk tunes and sings and rejoices as if Israel is already out of the wilderness and is already deserving to celebrate her final triumph without passing through yet another judgment that eclipses all past judgment? What does that say about the church that sings these ditties and creates this so-called Zion Hebrew musicality as if they have

occasion yet to celebrate? It's a statement of a disgraceful ignorance, naivety and shallowness that has turned its back on judgments of God and the clear statements of those that are yet to come.

Out of Jesus' own mouth, there's a time of trouble coming such as the nation has ever known or will again know. And if that time were not cut short, no flesh will survive but for the elect's sake. Why isn't that factored in to our worship so-called? How do we bang the tambourines as if it's all done and prepare a generation to be shocked to its core when the bottom falls out and there's no preparation or anticipation? They'll be so demoralized that they will forsake God in their disappointment and be part of the great falling away which Paul predicted would be a sign at the end.

So I personally, when I came across that in a recent time I blew the whistle. I said you guys have no right to conduct yourself like this in celebration in complete ignorance of the tragedy that has yet to be fulfilled. You're singing it before the time and the only way that such singing and carrying on is justified is if you already know and carry it as an undertone of your worship as a lament that has got to precede the victorious hymns.

This is why the Jews are such a test. Externally, they are so impressive. They are the B'nai B'rith Man of the Year Award.

They are exemplary in their conduct and their moral attitudes. They're philosophical and ethical and don't raise their voices. They're cultured and we're going to tell such a people as that, you're lost.

Your condition has not changed. You share in the sins of your fathers. Your forgetting is a willful forgetting and it's a rebellion.

You have never sought the Lord. You have no consideration for him. You are a god unto yourself.

You're guilty of the most heinous violation of the first commandment that you're a candidate for the wrath of God that's just brooding over your head waiting to fall. You're going to tell them that despite the appearance of their virtue or are you yourself going to be impressed and hold back what appears to be the most foolish contradiction of a guy that seems to have it all together. What rules you both in your observation and in your conduct? The thing which is seen or the thing which is unseen but is true according to the word of God.

If you root yourself in this word and conduct yourself according to it, you will be a pilgrim and a stranger and a sojourner in the world. You will be an oddball. You will be in the square thumb square whatchamacallit the round hole.

You'll be out of it. You'll be looked upon with not only contempt but with pity. Oh you poor misguided thing.

Because of the Bible you have these strange quaint views about sin and about judgment that contradicts what is so evidently being said before you is virtue. And you believe that word more than what is visible? That you shall not live by sight but by faith. Got that? And the Jew is the real test of by what which of these two we're living.

And how many Christians are not only impressed externally by what the Jew exhibits but secretly or otherwise covets that very thing and wants to be like them and nothing more gratifying to such Christians than to receive compliments from Jews of that kind. That's more important to them than a voice from heaven saying this is my beloved son in whom I'm well pleased. To be complimented by Jews and to

receive their plaudits I've seen Gentile Christians pant over it and are so gratified they're carried away.

It's bliss to be complimented by a Jew and they'll do anything to cultivate that kind of relationship by which they can receive that acknowledgement. 41 years in the faith and I'm still stupefied and I don't have an answer for the phenomenon I've seen throughout all my life are Christians pandering to Jews and wanting so much their acknowledgement and their compliments as if this is the high water mark of what it means to be a Christian. And in order to obtain it they'll turn themselves inside out contradict the scripture completely and agree with the Jew that what he exhibits is commendable and perfectly pleasing in God's sight independent of the need for that blood.

Betraying the gospel in order to obtain the compliments of a man that's our sin. And it's a sin against the Jew himself because it denies him the conviction that would come by being confronted with the truth of his condition. Not as he knows it, he doesn't know it.

He subjectively deceived every sinner is. But by the word that should have come with conviction by those who will express it in love willing to bear the backlash of indignation and anger that comes from the Jew who's got it all together and look at you where's your evidence? You're coming apart at the seams your marriage is this or that and you're still groping and fighting over this battle or another and here's a man who seems to have it more completely together than you and you're telling him that he's lost. Talk about absurdity and foolishness.

Don't be discouraged if there's no seeming response to your witness and in fact they're hostile or they yawn in your face or they laugh you off. Something has gone in to the human spirits that God will call for at some future time. How else do you understand that in that final day when they shall look upon him whom we have pierced, they break with such a profound repentance as the world has never seen.

It's because in seeing him in that same moment they are brought to the recall of every witness given them prior to that event and it hits them like a broadside. It's the conjunction of the seeing of him that validates all of the testimony that they had contemptuously refused till that moment. Comes back to them in one fell swoop and wham! Down they go in such brokenness as the world has yet to see and has never before seen.

So your witness, I'm saying all that to say this, your witness is not in vain though it's been discarded, though it's consciously derided, though it's you laugh that in your face. Something has gone in that the Lord will one day employ. But do you need to be recognized? Do you need to be gratified? Do you need to see the result and value of your present service? Or can you take refusal and rejection? You don't need validation and confirmation to serve God rightly.

Where are you? See how it tests you. Can you be faithful even though there's no validation either by man or by God and it seems like a waste thing of no consequence and it's a enterprise in futility. Faith believes.

Faith does not need recognition or acknowledgement. It doesn't need the plaudits of men. It doesn't need to be complimented.

And we need to be weaned from that necessity because we're still panting after it even now, Christianly. We need confirmation, recognition, and so we need to be weaned from that so that we can stand before the Jew the ultimate test and speak what we must without having validation or acknowledgement. And then we'll hear it in the Day of Eternity, the Lord's Appearance.

Well done, good and faithful servant. These all died, the great heroes of the faith in Hebrews 11, not having received the promise. What? And yet they saw it afar off but they served diligently and fulfilled to the uttermost their call without receiving its payment.

Do you need to have payment now? Are you the now generation that needs to be gratified now? Or can you live with a deferred compensation? You labor now but later on you'll see what I have not seen in the treasures laid up for you, the mansions reserved for you, the honor, the privilege, the dignity, the glory for which you have labored in the face of offense, rejection and all those other things that the Lord himself bore and still bears. This is sonship, you guys. This is maturity that does not need a payoff now.

It can hang in, it can hang tough, it does not need to be gratified, especially from those Jews whose compliments repent to have. We have a picture of how deep is the conversion of Paul who comes out of that Judaistic environment where men honor one another so that they cannot even hear the truth because they prefer the honor of men to the honor of God. He came out of that and came out of it in such depth that in the moment of one of his greatest sufferings in the jail cell at Philippi, in the face of seeming defeat and failure, at midnight, the darkest hour of depression before there's a glimmer of dawn, Paul is singing praises and worshiping God as if it were a privilege to suffer this failure.

He did not need even success and that even the absence of success and being treated as a criminal and stripped publicly, beaten and thrown into an inner dungeon and bound hands and feet did not discourage his praise. Talk about a man utterly saved from the necessity to be confirmed or validated by success or the approval of men. How do you come to that? And until we come to that, how shall there be apostolic work and testimony in our generation? So don't you dare whimper if God deals with you in the area where you feel you need to be confirmed and honored and flattered and you don't get what you think.

He's weaning you from that necessity. To know that you are accepted in the beloved, deeply know is the foundation of your life and service and not the compliments of men or the visible success of your service. And verse 18, they tested God in their heart by demanding the food that they craved.

Not only am I chafed by they demanded what they fancy, I'm chafed by the fact that they demanded. How dare they demand? Who are we to demand? As if God is our errand boy and we submit our order and he'll be quick to fill it? Where do we get the presumption to make any demand of God at all? Demand? Who is he? Our lackey? Running our errands? That we can demand that we have it coming and it should be according to our fancy? Hey listen guys, this is a picture of man. This is sin.

This is depravity. This is the human condition and we are guilty of it even now. Demanding either explicitly or unconsciously as if God owes us something and is under obligation to meet our fancy.

Are you guilty of that? Have you ever been guilty of that? Are you guilty of that now? In imagining the husband that you deserve or the ministry or the reward or the benefits or the housing or the material conditions of life. Any demand? Who are we to demand? Hey, we're worms. We're dust.

That he's even aware of us is a remarkable condescension of his love but that we should demand of him anything? Were you guys as much stopped in your tracks by the word demand as I am? Or you were just stopped because they demanded what they fancied? But if they had demanded say something simple you would have thought it illegitimate? Any demand against God is egregious insult to the most high. We have no claim. No basis for anything that we can make as a demand for God in our consideration.

If that has not settled, if that has not come home, we're not in the right place in God. And many of us are consciously or unconsciously I've said demanding, putting in our application, making our requisitions of what we think we deserve. Isn't it amazing that men will contradict God for their guts? That meat is of a higher priority than God himself and his honor.

As we quoted, was it last night? Paul talks about those who are the enemies of the cross and whose bellies have become their gods. My God, what are we? What are we? These protoplasmic things that crave and must have their appetites gratified over and against God himself. And as if he's the errand boy to fulfill it.

And if he doesn't, we're indignant. Get with it. You're not acting according to the program.

So we're responsible for being the inheritors of their legacy and their history as if we ourselves have walked through it. But on top of that, we have a grace that has not yet come to them that compounds our sin yet the more. To whom much is given much is required.

And we have been given much. The legacy of the Old Testament plus the legacy of the new. And yet our conduct and attitudes is not more or better or other than theirs.

Even though we're under a double obligation to have known better. And yet how many of us are convicted? How many of us have allowed this to register in our deeps as stricken men? That even though forgiven the remembrance of our ability to fall like this always lingers and is a factor that colors our entire personality. We will never be boisterous.

We will never be flamboyant. We will never be hot shots. We will never be superior and victorious in the way that is unbecoming because we're tempered by the continual recognition and remembrance of the truth of our condition from which we're saved and are always potentially capable yet again.

I would not be an exaggeration to say do it in remembrance of yourself. Be remembered for what reason this blood was shed and this body was broken. Your condition is abysmal.

How dare you demand? You're a demanding, ungrateful, forgetful full of ingratitude, contemptuous, disdainful, failure to obey my requirements and my mandates to the due first. You're a slipshod. You're lazy.

You don't set yourself. In every way you have reason to lament the truth of your condition and carry it with you as a permanent remembrance. So when you come to that table you come with gratitude because you're receiving again from the one life alone that is righteous.

The life of the Lord. Because the life of the flesh is in the blood and that life and its righteous blood is ours to imbibe, to enjoy, to receive, to take in and to go throughout our entire being and to bring the righteousness of God into our unrighteousness each as often as we do it. How are we coming to that table with that gratitude? We're not trembling.

To this man I will look. He was a broken and contrite spirit and who trembles at my word. We're not trembling.

I don't know what it is. I'm stupefied. I'm frustrated.

I'm at a loss for myself and for God's people. God could set before us the holiest content and we treat it as if it's an academic subject and we have sufficiently passed the test, got a good grade, and now we can go on to something else. That was the attitude, the air that I was sensing last night in the reports.

We've done our homework. We've been dutiful. We have reviewed the subject.

We've come to these conclusions but we're not affected by them. The church that severs its connection with Israel and with the Jew and refuses to see these things intended for their benefit, loses the most precious factor intended for our reality and that's the lamentable condition of church theory. It has cut itself off.

It has no consciousness, no relatedness to this people as if they're past and we have now taken over and they've missed the entire benefit God intends by that organic connectedness that needs again to be established and what we are about in our own service. So let me ask, Paul says, don't boast against the natural branches that have been broken off because if you boast, they're capable of breaking you off also. Tell me, morally speaking, what is of better value or more to be desired? The natural branch broken off or the wild branch grafted in? Who's better? Which is better? Which can boast? Is the wild branch better that was fruitless until it's grafted in or the natural branch that was broken off? The fact of the matter is neither of us can boast.

We're both destitute and unless we're connected to the root and the sap of that life we're all as dead ducks incapable of nothing. But we need to recognize that we have been grafted in through space created by their being broken off. But for what purpose? That they might be grafted in again.

Well, Lord, how can I believe for that? Well, because if he grafted you in who are unnatural, how much more can he graft then in whose tree it is? Your own grafted in, your own salvation ought to encourage you to believe for theirs. That you're not believing shows that you're not appreciating the fact of what has come to you by pure grace and total undeservedness because you are nothing but a stinking foreign alien branch that was capable of nothing but fruitlessness until he grafted you in. We lack that gratitude.

We lack that recognition. We lack that embrace with that people and with their tree. It's not our choice.

We don't want to be grafted into somebody else's tree, let alone their tree. But God in his wisdom knowing our Gentile hearts and the pride that wants to be established independent of them says no. You'll never succeed until you recognize the grace that has come to you because salvation is of the Jews.

This is their salvation history. You have no part in it as Gentiles. I had to give Peter a trance in order for him to recognize the grace that has come or he could not have believed it.

He never would have even so much a step foot in the house of Cornelius as a Gentile who's unclean and uncircumcised if I had not shown him that something has happened with the advent of my son. But how many of us today, we need a trance in order to recognize the magnitude of what God has done for those who are far off without God without hope in the world. Therefore we're ungrateful, therefore we're demanding.

So Lord, thank you for such instruction which came at such cost. Israel had to live through this. Israel had to show itself in this condition, unthankful, unholy, unrighteous, demanding again from the Most High God as if they had any right to anything.

And Lord, as we contemplate this statement of them, we see ourselves. If not in actuality, in every instance we know that if we have not experienced and duplicated their fallenness, their sin, we're entirely capable at any moment except for your grace. We are not better than they.

We are one with them, my God, in that condition. And we thank you for the mercy that has come, that has saved us from the wrath that we deserve. And so thank you, Lord, that you will one day also save a remnant of them also in your great mercy.

Lord, temper our hearts, my God. Forgive us our haughtiness. Forgive us our superiority.

Forgive us our smug complacency. Forgive us, my God, that we don't tremble. Forgive us that we don't take this in and internalize it as being the statement of the truth of ourselves.

Lord, help us. Without your help, we're goners, Lord. We're academicians.

We're just head-trip specialists who take examinations and give the right answers to get a grade. And we're not affected. We're not changed.

We're not deepened. We're not broken. How shall we be a witness to them and move them to jealousy if we are still in a condition so like their own? So, Lord, we thank you.

Oh, precious God. Mercy, Lord. Mercy.

Mercy, Lord. Oh, help us, Lord. We're so thick.

We're so dull. We're so vain. We're so petty.

We're so egoistic, my God. We do not see. We do not understand.

We do not receive. Break us up in our deeps, Lord. It's the purest mercy that you can perform for us.

Repentance is truly a gift of God. We cannot fabricate it. We know we should, but we're incapable unless you in your great mercy give us that grace.

And we're asking it, Lord. We'd rather go down on our faces than to rise to be at the head of the class. So come, my God.

Don't pass by. Don't let us deal with such material as this and come out unchanged, for our condition will then be the worst. Thank you, my God.

Help us. Help us. Help us, Lord.

And we thank you for your mercy. Thank you, Lord. That Israel suffered this to such a great degree for our sake as well as their own and we have not seen it.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you, my God. Give us a break in which we go out and just gulp air and let your truth sink in and prepare us, my God, for that great break and cry for which all the angels in heaven rejoice for so much as one on the earth who repents.

We thank you and give you praise in Jesus' name.

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