

# Psalm 78 - Part 2

by Art Katz

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*The sermon emphasizes the dangers of demanding attitudes towards God and the importance of faith and gratitude in our relationship with Him.*

**Duration:** 47:51

**Scripture:** Leviticus 26:40

**Topics:** "Expositional"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by highlighting the indictment against the nation for not knowing or understanding God. He emphasizes that this indictment still stands today and has not been acknowledged or rectified. The speaker then discusses how despite witnessing God's wonders and judgment, the people still sinned and did not believe. The sermon draws a parallel between the people of Israel and our own present condition, urging listeners to be cautious and learn from their attitude. The speaker emphasizes the importance of acknowledging our own sin and the sin of our ancestors in order to restore the covenant with God.

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## Transcript

We need to be conscious of how much the spirit of demand is operative in the church, consciously or unconsciously, and that's how we evaluate its ministers and dismiss them in our hearts because they don't meet our expectation. If you want to read a statement of definitive church, read Bonhoeffer in Life Together where he says it's a privilege just to be in fellowship with the saints as sinners being saved by God. It's a privilege to hear the word of God coming from another brother, not preaching, just in counsel or just in conversation is a grace.

So he is so foundationally grateful, making no demand and receiving whatever issues, however humble from another saint as being greatest privilege and our distinction as saints in the church. What an attitude. Think of us as Americans demanding, having certain criteria that we think ought to be met and being justified and being disappointed if it's not.

And in fact, we're guilty of exactly what we're now going to read about the Israel who could not believe that God could set a table in the wilderness. It may be that there are some of us in this room that don't believe that God can set a table in this wilderness. And we're just as ungrateful for this table as they were for their table because we are exactly identified with Israel in their sin and we need to see that.

Let's read this. They demanded the food that they craved. They spoke against God saying, can God spread a table in the wilderness? Isn't that interesting, the language here? They're raising a question, but the psalmist inspired by the Spirit says they spoke against God.

How do you speak against God by raising a question? Well, because the question is shot through with attitudes contrary to God. It's raising the question of whether he in fact is God and that he's able under conditions that you think inhospitable to establish a table in the wilderness. Can he feed 2 million in the wilderness? Can he feed us in this wilderness at this table? Are we speaking against God even to raise the question in our hearts or to find fault with the table that he's spreading because we demand another kind? We came all this way and we want a payoff in a way that is more gratifying for what we crave.

Are you guys following me? Hey, this is not a little piece of academia here. This is a perfect analogy to our own present condition in this place, in this wilderness, at this table and we need to be instructed by their attitude because more than we know, our own might be very much like it. Nothing has changed.

This is the human condition that faults God by even raising the question, can God put a table in the wilderness? I have an advantage of longer life and coming the product of an earlier civilization where unlike the children of this generation, we were not asked what would we like to eat? We just ate what was put before us and we were grateful for it. When we went for a haircut, we didn't tell the barber, I like it this way or that way. We sat down on a chair, we got a haircut.

This generation, kids are already conscious of their, what do you call it? Their coiffure and tell the barber exactly how they want it because they are children who have been accustomed to being asked, what do you want to eat? So that encourages demand, not only of men but of God and that is an offense and that we are consciously performing it. It's in keeping with the whole tenor of our society and our life. They tested God in their heart by demanding the food that they craved rather than just being grateful, whatever pleased the Lord to give.

It says elsewhere they ate angel's bread. It was good enough for angels, it's not good enough for you. You want variety? What, there was no ketchup available? We're spoiled so much more than we know and bring that spoiled disposition into the church and into our attitudes at the church that makes us little different from the Israel before us.

So verse 20, having spoken against God, saying can God spread a table in the wilderness? Is he really capable? Even though he struck the rock so that water gushed out and torrents overflowed, can he also give bread and provide meat for his people? If he can do the one, can he not do the other? That they said it even though they experienced the one and could not believe for the other. Therefore when the Lord heard, he was full of rage. Talk about the wrath of God.

A fire was kindled against Jacob. His anger mounted against Israel because they had no faith in God and did not trust his saving power. That ties right in with the gospel, the revelation of the righteousness of God, saving to them that believe from faith to faith.

They had no faith. Is the Lord justified in being full of rage? A fire was kindled against Jacob and it may not be manifested until 1939 to 1945, but it will surely be manifested. It was kindled then, but it's manifested now.

God is not under obligation to bring retribution exactly on the heels of the sin. He can delay the judgment, maybe even waiting for an acknowledgement and repentance to forestall it. But if it doesn't come, the fire that has been incited will fall.

Got the picture? He's under no obligation to make cause and effect simultaneous. He can withhold the effect and in fact he's patient and forbearing to do, hoping and waiting for some recognition of the sin that had kindled his wrath. When it doesn't come, it will fall in the moment of his choosing and it will fall grievously as fire.

How much are we storing up in the wrath of God by conduct and attitudes that he's not immediately judging, but when he does it will come down in one fell swoop grievously and that we have every reason to be careful of walking before him daily knowing that if fire fell on Israel much later than the reason for it, it can fall upon us also. That we must not allow a wrath to be stored up against ourselves that will come at a moment when we least expect it, but it will come. It will come as surely as it came for Israel, it will come for us.

How much more than knowing the terror of sin, this is what Paul is talking about, I persuade men. I know the history of my people. How much more than should we be careful and judicious in our present walk and with the things that we allow ourselves and attitudes that will one day be visited upon us in the moment of his choosing when that wrath is full and if not being carried into eternity itself.

So therefore when the Lord heard he was full of rage, fire was kindled against Jacob, his anger mounted against Israel because they had no faith in God. They could not believe that he could prepare a table in the wilderness and did not trust his saving power after already demonstrating his saving power in so remarkable a way. Shall he fail with food if he has succeeded with water? Is the one more difficult than the other? With man it's impossible but with God nothing is impossible.

A lack of faith is not just the absence of some helpful facility, it's a statement of sin that refuses to believe God even in the face of his already demonstrated grace. My Lord, that which is not of faith is sin and have we brought that attitude here? Can God establish a table in this wilderness? It won't be with the food that you crave, it will be with what he sets before us who knows our need and is able to fulfill it. Don't be like those Russian ministers who stayed in the basement that would never come up to the service because the first message was not according to their craving.

They want the church growth and how to succeed and here's this jerk coming with a message about Paul's attitude toward widows and slaves and their carcasses may be left in the wilderness. They'll never come through to Zion for that attitude of contempt and that they weren't happy with the table that God was setting. We need to be grateful saints for whatever we get.

You know that? We're deserving of nothing. God is not under obligation in any way to please us. Whatever we get, we ought to be grateful.

For us to say I've heard that before, but you didn't hear it quite this way and if you did hear it before, God evidently thinks you need to hear it again. So our attitudes stink and no better than Israel and we're invited to repent just by reviewing their history and seeing our own attitudes as being so much like their own and it kindled God's wrath. A fire was kindled against Jacob in his anger that mounted against Israel because they had no faith.

How absolute that word is, no faith, not just inadequate faith, did not trust his saving power, which is to cast aspersions not on God's impotence or inability, but upon his character. Got the idea? You hear the difference? He had already demonstrated his power in water gushing from a rock, but then raising a question whether he's equally able to set a table is raising aspersions against his character and who are we snoot noses to hold God in contempt if he doesn't meet our standard, which is to say if we were God, we would do much better. I don't have a word for this.

This is effrontery, this is impotence, this is contempt, this is, what's the word that came up in the reviews yesterday, last night? Presumption. Who are you to think that you can best God, that you're more righteous than he, more moral, more able, more generous, that if you were setting the table you would do this, this and this and you're better than God? It's a marvel that the stroke of God doesn't fall and blot us out entirely. It did fall or we would have been blotted out.

Can we appreciate that more? The stroke did fall, it could not be withheld. Why? To withhold the stroke is for God to impugn his own holiness, to say that well it doesn't really matter, that's man, you have to make allowances. That stroke had to fall and it did fall.

I'm the only one who could bear it. That should have rightly come upon us. He was bruised for our iniquity.

Of course Jacob denotes a certain character of usurping, of heavy handedness, of proud arrogance, of displacing another and that character lurks and remains until Jacob does become Israel. So it's probably appropriate that the word Jacob is given here because what Israel is exhibiting is not Israel. It's not yet the Israel of God, though they have that name.

They're really exhibiting their intrinsic Jacob character still. So it's altogether appropriate that he uses that word there, though in the very next statement he uses Israel as well. They did not trust his saving power, yet he commanded the skies above and opened the doors of heaven.

It rained down on them manna to eat. He gave them the grain of heaven. Mortals ate of the bread of angels.

He sent them food in abundance. He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens and by his power he let out the south wind. He rained flesh upon them like dust, winged birds like the sand of the seas.

He let them fall within their camp all around their dwellings and they ate and were all filled and for he gave them what they craved. Isn't that a remarkable provision that God could command these birds to fall around and about the encampments of Israel and give them meat. What they craved he gave them, but while the food was still in their mouths the anger of God rose against them and he killed the strongest of them and laid low the flower of Israel.

Can you love a God like this? While the meat was in their mouth the plague struck. Gave them leanness in their souls and actually killed the strongest of them and laid low the flower of Israel. What a judgment.

How serious was the offense that required a judgment that stripped Israel of its cream, of its finest young men and future heroes of the faith were taken. So grievous was the sin that kindled God's wrath that it required this judgment. The question is, is it as serious for us as it was for him? How grievous was the offense that they murmured and raised a question about his character and his saving power which is to strike at the heart of God as God and to say that you're not really God.

Not really deserving respect and worship and that God said, oh when you take an attitude like that and your attitude was not born in a day. You have been nurturing it day by day growing in sullenness, growing in resentment, growing in unbelief and sarcasm and criticism until now it's come to full flower and this is the judgment. It may well be that they were reprimanded even at the earlier stages by Moses, by Aaron or by the wise and older men in their midst and they didn't hearken and so when their cup of iniquity was full just like the Canaanites before them, God's judgment fell as death.

The wages of sin is death and it fell not upon their weakest and the frailest but their best. The strongest of them he laid low the flower of Israel. So who of us is safe dear Saint? Especially among the flower of Israel, the best candidates in the church today, the most impressive young candidates to really make a mark in the Christian world.

If God's judgment fell upon their best we need to tremble that we will not be spared and maybe all the more because to whom much was given much was required and they failed. Remember the statement in the holocaust book that we have every reason to regard calamity as the judgment of God as a first consideration. Before an accident or a catastrophe in nature or in history is examined or explained in any other way the first and rightful consideration should be is this a judgment of God and for what reason might it have been given.

After you have exhausted that question before God then you're free to consider that it might have been mere mishap or chance or some other explanation but your first obligation rightfully as a saint is always to look at catastrophe as the hand of God in judgment raising the question what would have justified it and after you have exhausted that then you can consider other alternatives but I don't think you'll need to if you make that your first consideration.

We ought to have a perpetual gratitude that we have been saved from the wrath of God and always living in that gratitude with that consciousness deserving of nothing the fact that we have been extricated from judgment and live and have possibility in future is pure gravy, pure gift and that the only response is thankfulness but that's so little to be seen that the first response seeing these birds falling about their camp should have been for them to go down on their faces with a cry of forgiveness Lord we thought you could not set a table in the wilderness but look what you have performed before we even touch it we go down in gratitude and ask you forgiveness for murmuring against you as if you were not able or as if you didn't care to give but instead of that repentant response they

greedily devoured the new provision and while the meat was in their teeth God slew them probably for the want of this kind of acknowledgement and repentant gratitude because of a demanding attitude that we deserve sinful nation oh sinful nation wicked from the top of your head to the soles of your feet you're shot through with corruption and sores that need to be bound up and mollified the ass knows its owner and the donkey its master's crib but my people do not know do not understand the very first statement of Isaiah such an indictment against this nation and it's an indictment that stands to this day it's not been acknowledged nor rectified and the only way it can be rectified is by that blood let's try and complete this in the time that remains so we've got a lot of text left that in

verse 32 in spite of all this they still sinned in spite of all this they still sinned my God Lord what you're breaking our brains here and they did not believe in his wonders and despite of his judgment that was visible they still sinned did not believe so he made the days vanish like a breath and their years in terror when he killed them they sought for him and repented and sought God earnestly they remembered that

God was their rock the most high God their Redeemer but they flattered him with their mouths but they lied to him with their tongues their heart was not steadfast toward him they were not true to his covenant and we had the earliest examination of righteousness his covenant faithfulness so this is the epitome of unrighteousness which is the issue of the heart that was not

steadfast toward him they were not true to his covenant yet he being compassionate forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them often he restrained his anger and did not stir up all his wrath he remembered that they were but flesh a wind that passes and does not come again how often they rebelled against him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert they tested God again and again they provoked the Holy One of Israel they did not keep in mind his power or the day when he redeemed them from the foe when he displayed his signs in Egypt as miracles in the fields of Zion he turned their rivers to blood the Egyptians so they could not drink of their streams he set among them swarms of flies which devoured them and frogs which destroyed them he gave their crops to the caterpillar the

fruit of their labor to the whole locust he destroyed their vines with hail their sycamores with frost he gave over their cattle to the hail and their flock to thunderbolts he had let loose on them his fierce anger wrath indignation and distress a company of destroying angels he made a path for his anger he did not spare them from death but he gave their lives over to the plague he struck all the firstborn in Egypt the first issue of their strength in the tents of Ham then he let out his people like sheep and guided them in the wilderness like a flock he led them in safety so that they were not afraid but the sea overwhelmed their enemies and he brought them to his holy hill to the mountain that his right hand had won he drove out nations before them he apportioned for them a possession

and settled the tribes of Israel in their tents yet they tested the most high god and rebelled against him they did not observe his decrees but turned away and were faithless like their ancestors the sins of the fathers coming upon the sons they twisted like a treacherous bow for they provoked him to anger with their high places they moved him to jealousy with their idols when God heard he was full of wrath and he utterly rejected Israel he abandoned his dwelling at Shiloh the tent where he dwelt among mortals and delivered his power to captivity his glory to the hand of the foe remember that in the time of Eli that the box that contained the ark of God was captured by the Philistines and his sons were killed and Eli falls over dead he gave his people to the sword and vented his wrath on

his heritage fire devoured their young men and their girls had no marriage song their priests fell by the sword and their widows made no lamentation then the Lord awoke us from sleep like a warrior shouting because of wine he put his adversaries to rout he put them to everlasting disgrace he rejected the tent of Joseph he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim but he chose the tribe of Judah Mount Zion which he loves he built a sanctuary like the high heavens like the earth which he has founded forever he chose his servant David and took him from the sheepfolds from tending the nursing ewes he brought him to be the shepherd of his people Jacob of Israel his inheritance with upright heart he tended them and guided them with a skillful hand what a remarkable survey of the whole history of

Israel up to the time of the advent of David himself verse 67 he rejected the tent of Joseph and did not choose the tribe of Ephraim meant that northern Israel from these tribes were cast into into exile they were defeated and wiped out these are the lost tribes of Israel and God gave Judah the inheritance one or two tribes around Jerusalem but all 10 tribes descended from Joseph and Ephraim were cast into captivity and utterly destroyed by the Assyrians in 710 720 BC in 586 BC Judah then catches it because God says that your sins are like your sister instead of receiving the example of being chastised by what I've done with the

northern tribes you have committed adultery and idolatry of like kind and so upon you comes not a judgment through the Assyrians but through the Babylonians and

Jerusalem is destroyed and millions are wiped out and cast into exile so what a tragic history that Israel itself the nation does not profit from its own example seeing what God did with the northern tribes the southern tribes instead of being chastened in time are just as sinful as their kinsmen before them but all of that is in one verse he rejected the tents of Joseph this is understatement but we must not miss it he did not choose the tribe of Ephraim he chose the tribe of Judah Mount Zion which he loves built a sanctuary and then chose his servant David and made him to be the king over this surviving remnant which not long after David and through Solomon thereafter then that Judah falls again into the sins of Israel and is judged but with upright heart he tended them and guided them

with a merciful hand because David is so much the statement of the God who appointed him tending the nursing hues that was a preparation for tending Israel so this is a remarkable overlay of the whole history of Israel until that time both of judgment and of mercy isn't it interesting that the psalm ends on the high note it doesn't end with the statement of judgment it ends with God's honoring of Zion and establishing his kingdom through David but we know tragically what has followed since did you read that part about the idols and the thing that they performed that when they moved him to jealousy with the idols in 58 with their high places what are the high places the places for Canaanite idolatry worshiping trees because they are the symbol of the fertility what's the phallic symbol

penis it's a whole fertility worship that includes temple prostitutes both male and female and doing that on the high hills in the face of God who had called them to be a holy people and separated unto himself is there a word for such a history as this how God is rubbed raw by a people who are so privileged to receive the law and the deliverance out of Egypt faithfulness through the wilderness into the land of promise prepared for them flown with milk and honey and then as they were fattened they grew sleek and rebelled against the rock so the doctrine of total depravity that there's no man good nor not one is not some exaggerated or extreme notion that was cooked up in some theologians head the evidence the testimony both of Israel and even of the church quite confirms that truth total

depravity required a total answer from someone who was untouched by it and was without sin to be a once and for all sacrifice to bring an expiation of these of this historic guilt in which we are all included whether or not we lived at that time or a participant just by virtue of being human Adam sons of Adam guilty and capable of all this that required all that I don't know how a modern Jew would read this but even the orthodox who read it don't read it but chant it and the issue of chanting is not comprehension but dutifully getting through a certain measure of scripture so I remember being at an orthodox service in Saint Paul the Hasidim the Lubavitcher and they were reading in Jeremiah was the selection from the prophets on that Shabbat that spoke about devastation and destruction and

ruin and I'm looking around and these guys are chanting like they're reading abracadabra and finally I was so incensed that I turned to the guy closest to me and I said do you realize what you're reading and he looked at me like where are you coming from Mars what are you talking about am I supposed to comprehend this I'm not the object is not comprehension the object is recital I'm doing my duty I'm getting through I'm chanting inflecting rising my voice rises and falls according to the prescribed rhythm for those verses but the content or comprehension let alone repentance so utterly blind and that spirit of religion it's like Catholicism in Latin is orthodoxy in Hebrew so we need to know that and the people whom we're called to confront they have no consciousness of their own sin

either of their ancestors or their own because the sin of their ancestors is their own that's why in Leviticus 26 I think in one of the last chapters God says when you will acknowledge the sins of your fathers as your own and your own sin then I will restore the covenant that I have made then I will circumcise your heart that you might love the Lord your God he's waiting for an acknowledgement that the sins of our fathers are our own sins and until that acknowledgement comes we stand under the indictment and the judgment that can yet fall and will in God's chosen moment and can only be withheld by the provision already made there is no or little or no sin consciousness among Jews even orthodox certainly it's going to require a profound sin consciousness in ourselves and that we don't come

to them with a haughty superiority as if we have seen the light and they're still in darkness we come to them with a brokenness that we are guilty with you we have shared your condition exactly our only difference is that by the mercy of God he has expiated that sin and we want to let you know that your God has made that provision and you've missed it and in fact I think in that same section of scripture about the stupor it talks about that their table has been made a snare unto them so still the issue of gratification lust appetite as being an obstruction to the communication of God the table itself is a snare to say that God is not able or uninterested is to impose a limitation this is the greatest insult because God is infinite in his possibilities with men it's impossible but with God

nothing is impossible so to imply that God is limited or for you to limit him by your own mentality and attitude is to express the vilest of sins see that so that's that's why that's an alternative reading that gets to the heart of the matter and it's one with which we are guilty also can God provide a table in the wilderness can he meet our financial need what will we do in the last days of the economy collapses we're raising all kinds of questions and doubts and apprehensions I've had them myself even in these days I had it fought today I went to bed last night disquieted and not knowing how to continue and having to face today not trusting God and doubting that he could bring us through and maybe we've come to an impasse where as far as we can go and that this school no matter how

precious others may have been is at an end I was wrestling with questions like that you know where their source is but it was a real wrestling and a real concern that myself with all the experience of God's faithfulness for all these years can still entertain a doubt that he can succeed now with this wilderness at this time with these students in this place who is free from that kind of apprehension and anxiety and limits God unconsciously or consciously and says he's not able we need to be reminded not only with our own personal experience of God's faithfulness which is enormous but his faithfulness in history his faithfulness with Israel his faithfulness in the giving of his son his faithfulness in the giving the word the prophets the Psalms is a whole vast basis for acknowledging God's

faithfulness and we need to invoke that in our memory not just our personal experience precious though it is but the whole testimony of God in time and in history from the beginning and especially with Israel to miss God with Israel is to miss God interesting like the choice of the word Jacob that here he would use the reference to him who was the son who took the liberty of his father naked and defenseless and advantaged himself over his father and whispered to the other brothers that they should share with him in his delight and seeing the father exposed and so the Egyptians are from that line and so the judgment came upon the tents of Ham it could be I hadn't thought about it before that as God will delay his judgment though he does not forget the infraction and will recompense the

sinner at a later time that it may well be that the judgments that came in Egypt are altogether related to the infraction of Ham at the very beginning and the nakedness of his father and the delaying of that judgment

came until the Lord expressed it in judgments in Egypt why because there I'm just talking off the top of my head great question Ham has now come to the place of his greatest glory and expression as the most conspicuous and significant kingdom that then prevailed and God judged that kingdom in every aspect of their idolatry frogs were celebrated as a symbol and the river that was their life turned to blood so he brings a judgment on everything celebrated by Ham here's a one here's a might be a remarkable example that God did not forget Ham's infraction against his father Noah

but reserved and waited to bring it at a time when it was most righteous in his wisdom to perform it while at the same time it saved Israel out of Egypt and the same judgment came on the Canaanites so as to prepare the place for Israel so the judgment against the Gentiles is often the very same act by which Israel is brought into her own inheritance that the judgment for one proves the blessing for the other but the judgment may have a longer history than just the present sin of the pharaoh that the sin of the pharaoh and of Egypt is the outworking of something that had its initiation all the way back to Ham and was transmitted through the generations till it came to its fullest flower of opposing the Israel in its midst and then God judges it we need to have a much larger view of God

than what we presently know a much greater historic and even cosmic view of God in his righteous judgment and in his own privilege to determine when it shall be executed and therefore he needs to be feared and therefore Paul says knowing the terror of God that that judgment righteous can fall at any time what manner of men ought we to be and we don't know and we have separated sin from its consequence and because it has not been immediately answered in the infraction and liberty that we have taken we go on from sin to sin so what begins as first a mild flirtation and lightning did not break through to strike us then the next time we take a little bit more liberty and go from a flirtation to a kind of affair that does not eventuate an actual fornication but still God has not answered so

maybe he's approving and then we go from that to an actual adultery and we go from the adultery to an actual divorce and we set in motion and then the judgment falls I don't know what God does not immediately answer but we need to know from his treatment of Israel and of the sons of Ham that that's not for us to determine but that he will answer is unquestionable his wrath has got to find its expression for he's no longer holy so we need to be warned against the first flirtation something needs to be recognized at its inception because well I got away with this I guess it's okay then to go on to the next expression the next and the next and then the judgment falls why are Christians capable of that kind of conduct because they have not studied the history of God's dealing with Israel and

just the very song that we're considering today and therefore they are uninstructed and take liberties with the God of Israel who is God still he's not changed he's the same deity then as now only our knowledge of him is most inadequate because we have not given ourselves to the study of the thing that reveals him in scripture these things are written for our admonition upon whom the ends of the age have come remember that of Jesus it says that he was the lambs the lamb slain before from the foundations of the world the historic fulfillment came in 30 AD but the event itself in God was timelessly and eternally enacted even before the foundations of the earth were laid is that remarkable we're suffering from time sense time space sense that is altogether human and therefore we lose the

sense of God in his eternity and in his cosmic liberty of establishing the fact before the historic enactment actually takes place so that he foresaw its need and established it from the beginning is a remarkable statement that beggars imagination so when the John the Baptist sees Jesus behold the lamb of God who has come to take away the sins of the world somehow either intuitively or howsoever he recognizes this is

that provision made before the foundations of the earth were laid now coming to pass we need to fact this in we're so boxed in with our human categories and sense of time that we don't understand God as God eternally and his freedom to act and we need to give him a due respect admiration worship because he's much larger than we thought let's conclude in prayer how shall we

pray in view of what it pleased the Lord to set before us today despite my doubts and apprehensions that he was not capable of setting a table in the wilderness today thank you Lord prayer is a remarkable sacrament a remarkable privilege and he hears it so Lord what shall we say to you my God we're dust we're not one whit better than our father Israel the sons of Israel my God had we lived at that time we ourselves my God would have been completely indifferent to you while your meat was in our teeth we would have deserved your stroke and even now we are demanding and an exhibit so much my God of what was characteristic of the Israel which you judged and judged severely and rightly so we ask you we're receiving your mercy Lord we would have been blotted out this is your mercy and we have

not sufficiently appreciated your mercy my God and so help us Lord we're dense we're dull we have kept ourselves from your testimony if we looked at the Psalms at all it was with some kind of acknowledgement that this was historic it pertained to Israel not to us thank you for your mercy Lord we are so shallow how are we going to teach our Jewish kids how are we going to instruct them about sin and knowing the terror of God persuade men when we ourselves don't know that terror mercy Lord mercy Lord mercy Lord precious God Lord holy one come and work your work Lord we're so dependent God if we turn this only into head trip if we just make this academic knowledge and are not affected in our own deeps in our own subsequent life does not show forth the benefit of this kind of emphasis and

instruction which you have invoked for our good of what then are we deserving we of all people are most to be pitied our judgment will be the greater because to whom much is given much is required and you have given much so we're asking my God for the mercy to convert that much into real inward appropriation that will express itself in conduct character and life to the praise of your glory because of your grace after today Lord we shall never again boast of being the Israel of God as if we have superseded your people and are superior to them we are only the Israel of God in the sense that we share with them the same indictment the same condition needing the same mercy so forgive us my God in the vain boast that we have made as if we're made of better stuff than they when we're made of

actually the same stuff and we're equally as guilty whether we live through that time or not as our attitudes even now continue to display making demands and doubting your ability to establish a table in the wilderness thank you my God oh save us from our presumption our pride our false superiority my God we are all together deserving only of judgment and of no other consideration that it has not come is simply your remarkable grace and mercy so what shall we say to you Lord you're deserving only of praise and honor because you're righteous what you've done in your righteousness is for on our side totally undeserved but it's the statement of yourself holy God jealous for his own name and honor and has taken the pains to defend it through the death of your son that at the same time

provided our salvation thank you Lord oh precious God precious God thank you Lord for your long patience in waiting for us to come to a certain elementary understanding that should have been ours long ago and would have saved us from so much in the way in which we have deported ourselves in the church and in our own life and own friends our own conduct reckless and indifferent to the issue of sin and judgment because we were not instructed and refused to be instructed mercy Lord on the church today in that condition our own flesh and blood we pray in Jesus name

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