

A Psalm of Asaph

by Chuck Smith

The sermon discusses the destruction of Jerusalem and the psalmist's plea for God's mercy, highlighting the importance of obedience to God and the consequences of disobedience.

Duration: 25:04

Scripture: Psalm 79:1, Psalm 80:1, Luke 12:47-48

Topics: "Asaph"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian army. He describes the defilement of the holy temple and the suffering of the people. The psalmist cries out to God for vengeance and preservation of those appointed to die. The psalmist also calls on God to remember the reproach brought upon them by their neighbors and promises to give thanks and praise to God forever.

Transcript

Oh, let the Son of God enfold you With His Spirit and His love Let Him fill your heart and satisfy your soul
 Oh, let Him have the things that hold you And His Spirit like a dove Will descend upon your life And make you whole
 Welcome to The Word for Today The broadcast ministry of Pastor Chuck Smith Of Calvary Chapel, Costa Mesa, California
 Pastor Chuck is currently leading us On a verse-by-verse venture through the entire Bible And on today's edition of The Word for Today We'll be continuing with A Psalm of Asaph
 As we pick up in the 79th Psalm Beginning with verse 1 And now, with today's message Here's Pastor Chuck Smith
 This psalm was written At the destruction of Jerusalem Its desolation Graphic pictures Oh God, the heathen
 Are come into thine inheritance Thy holy temple have they defiled They have laid Jerusalem in heat
 The Babylonian army came About 596 Totally destroyed the city of Jerusalem The houses were just left
 Heaps of rubble The temple was raised and then Burned to the ground That glorious, beautiful temple of Solomon
 Destroyed The dead bodies of thy servants They have given to be meat to the fowls of the heaven
 And the flesh of the saints to the beast of the earth The hyenas, the jackals, the Dogs, the wild type dogs
 Devouring the bodies of the slain There was not enough people left to bury the dead Their blood they've shed
 like water round about Jerusalem None to bury them And we are become a reproach to our neighbors
 A scorn and derision to them That are round about us How long oh Lord Will you be angry forever
 Shall your jealousy burn like fire When God's people Were defeated The city of Jerusalem destroyed
 The enemies of God, the surrounding nations The Edomites, Moabites, Ammonites and all That had been sort of the perennial enemies of The Jews
 Gloated over the fact of the destruction Of the city and The destruction of the nation as such And this of course brought forth from the Psalms that

cry Lord how long Are you going to be angry?

He was desiring God's immediate Deliverance But the immediate deliverance was not to come This condition of desolation And captivity was to go on for 70 years How long oh Lord Will you be angry forever Will your jealousy burn like fire The Bible declares that God is a jealous God That he is jealous of your worshipping Other gods God looks upon his relationship with you as a marriage And if you Turn from him to try to find satisfaction And fulfillment in other gods As a marriage partner that has been Spurned and deserted So God is jealous Of those other things That have taken your devotion That have captured your heart So Lord Will your jealousy burn like fire Pour out your wrath upon the heathen And that's usually Lord you know wipe them out That have not known thee And upon the kingdoms

that have not called upon thy name Now this was a problem That God would use a heathen nation like Babylon To be his instrument of judgment Against his people Israel And in the book of Habakkuk this was the complaint of Habakkuk First of all he complained Because Israel was so bad And it was getting worse Having an insight into some of the behind the scenes Episodes that were going on in the government Habakkuk said Lord Please Don't let me know anything else Of what's going on Because I'm frustrated There is such corruption There is such evil And Lord you're not doing a thing about it The fact that God would seem to allow and tolerate the evil Was a real problem for Habakkuk And so God said to Habakkuk I am doing a work That if I should tell you Your ears would tingle He said for I am

preparing The Babylonians And I am going to be using them as my instrument of judgment And they shall come and they shall destroy this place And Habakkuk said Lord I don't understand that Because it's true that we are bad But the Babylonians are worse I mean they're the bottom of the pit And why would you use a nation that is more evil To bring your judgment upon your people He couldn't understand the workings of God Babylon the heathen nation being used As God's instrument of judgment But you see Those that know The will of God And do not according to it Are really judged by a higher standard Than those that don't know So that some Cannibalistic native in Irian Jaya Who has never heard of Jesus Christ Never known Of the love of God Grown up in that pagan culture Knowing only their pagan

customs He will have a better chance Before the judgment of God Than a person who has sat in church Who has heard the gospel Who knows the truth of God But who has not walked according to it In the twelfth chapter of Luke Jesus speaks of that servant Who had known the will of the master And yet didn't do according to it He said he would be beaten with many stripes Yet that person who did things that were deserving Of many stripes because he didn't know Will be beaten with few Unto whom much is given Much shall be required So a person when he stands before God Will be judged according to the light Of God that he has received And as Peter said concerning many It would have been better for them To have never heard of the way of truth Than having heard of it Reject it Once you have heard of

God's love And his son Jesus Christ Who because of God's love Came and took your sin And died in your place Once you know that truth And you reject it You stand in greater jeopardy And you will receive a heavier judgment Than the person who has never heard And so God often uses the heathen As his instruments of bringing judgment Upon his people I really believe That our nation Is in a parallel condition To the nation of Israel Prior to its fall to Babylon Those same things that existed in Israel They're turning their backs on God They're becoming a secular nation They're stretching out their arms To worship the gods of materialism The prayer of the psalmist is that God would pour out his wrath upon the heathen That have not known thee But that isn't really the way of God He has great

mercy towards those that don't know But he is upset He wants God to take vengeance Against Babylon Because Babylon Has devoured Jacob And they laid waste his dwelling place Because they had so utterly destroyed The land The plea is that God would not remember The former iniquities It's a plea for forgiveness God don't remember Our former iniquities Let your tender mercies Speedily help us For we are brought very low So that prayer for God's mercy Which is always my prayer I never pray for justice Unless it's on someone else Why should the heathen now say Where is their God?

Now in that day In those cultures A defeat of a nation Was tantamount to the defeat of their God Every nation had their own gods And every nation believed That their gods Helped them in battle And that their victory over other nations Proved the superiority Of their God over the other gods And all wars were equated With the gods that they served And thus as we read the Old Testament As we read the history of Israel It was the Lord who was Going forth in battle It was the Lord who defeated their enemies It was the Lord who gave them victory Drove out the enemies from before them And they attributed unto God The true and the living God The reason for their strength And for their victory Now when they were defeated To the enemy nations It was a sign that their God Was not strong enough To

deliver them and to help them The real reason was They had forsaken God And the gods that they were trusting in Were not strong enough to help them Because they were trusting in the flesh They were living after the flesh They had forsaken Jehovah And thus as the Lord said If you forsake me I'll forsake you But the enemy nations Not really understanding The relationship that God intended Between Himself and Israel Attributed the fall To the weakness or the inability Of their God To help them and to defend them And so He is praying that God would help us Oh God of our salvation For the glory of thy name Lord you know Not because we deserve it But just because your name Is being castigated Because of the defeat of the people Deliver us Purge away our sins For thy name's sake And so now again

He's pleading unto God On the basis of God's nature And for God's sake Do these things Not that we deserve them But Lord because people The heathen Don't understand Why should the heathen say where is their God Let Him be known among the heathen In our sight by revenging The blood of thy servants Which is shed So wanting God at this point to Bring vengeance Let the sighing of the prisoner Come before thee According to the greatness of your power Preserve those That are appointed to die Even those that have been carried to captive Many of them were Appointed for execution God preserve them, help them Render to our neighbors Sevenfold In other words give it to them Seven times worse Lord Than what's happened to us Because they've reproached Thee Oh Lord And so we your people The sheep of

your pasture Will give you thanks forever We will show forth thy praise To all generations Sad and tragic thing The psalmist to see the desolation This whole scene Is The background for the book of lamentations When Jeremiah sat there in the cave Looking over the rubble That was once the great city of Jerusalem Looking over the ashes And the rubble of the temple And there his Weeping Because of the The people's stubbornness Steadfast stubbornness In resisting God And as a result this This doom Even while there was The Babylonian Defeat and so forth Lasted over a period of years Several years Actually it was three different sieges And the first one should have been the warning And Jeremiah did warn them He said God you know Is saying to you look Don't destroy yourself But the people

wouldn't listen to Jeremiah They had false prophets that were going around saying Hey you know let's take them on You know God's going to defeat them and all And they were putting these horns on And running around and saying So you know we're going to push Babylon out of here And Jeremiah said no no

no You know don't resist them And so Jeremiah was arrested as a traitor They said he's demoralizing the people Saying don't resist the Babylonians Surrender to them so you can save yourself So you can save the city But they steadfastly refused To obey God They brought it on themselves Because of their stubborn Continued rebellion So it had to happen Psalm 80 Again after the destruction The casting away Notice that verse 13 of the previous psalm Talks about the people The sheep of thy pasture

Psalm 80 begins Give ear oh shepherd of Israel A tie between the two You that leads Joseph like a flock The sheep of your pasture You that dwell between the cherubims Shine forth The cherubim are a They are angelic beings Of the highest order of God's creation It would appear That Satan at one time Ranked with the cherubim For he is called in Ezekiel The anointed cherub that governed And it could be that in the ranking of the cherubim He was the chief among This high ranking angelic being When God told Moses to Build the tabernacle The tabernacle was a model We are told of heavenly things And in the most holy Place of the tabernacle The holy of holies That sort of inner sanctum That little 15 foot cubicle That was of gold Gold plated Acacia wood In there was the Ark of the covenant That

was covered by what is called the mercy seat And on the top of the mercy seat There was carved these two cherubim And it filled Their wings touched the walls They sort of filled this little 15 foot cubicle that represented The dwelling place of God It was where the high priest would go in To meet with God A model of heavenly things These golden cherubim on top of the mercy seat And so the psalmist Is declaring you that dwells Between the cherubim Shine forth We'll return with more of our verse by verse venture Through the Bible in our next lesson As Pastor Chuck Smith continues to guide us Through the study of the Psalms And we do hope you'll make plans to join us But right now I'd like to remind you that If you missed any part of today's message Or perhaps you'd like to order a copy For

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Box 8000 Costa Mesa, California 92628 And be sure to include the call letters Of this station with your correspondence And now on behalf of The Word for Today We'd like to thank all of you Who share in supporting this ministry With your prayers and financial support And be sure to join us again next time As Pastor Chuck Smith continues His verse by verse venture Through the Psalms That's right here On the next edition of The Word for Today And now once again Here's Pastor Chuck Smith With today's closing prayer Father we thank you again for your word And we thank you Father For the sure prophecy of Scripture Manifested again in the resurrection Of Jesus Christ from the dead How thankful we are Lord For your plan of redemption May your spirit teach us Lord Your ways That we might dwell In your tabernacles For your glory Amen In his new book Faith Pastor Chuck teaches the scriptures That will help you learn How to increase your faith To order a copy of Pastor Chuck's new book Faith And to preview a chapter for free online Visit TheWordForToday.org Or call 800-272-WORD Again that's TheWordForToday.org When you cannot see This I know Nothing This program has been sponsored by The Word for Today In Costa Mesa, California

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