

God's Unfailing Word

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the unfailing word of God, who will intervene in the last days to destroy the invading armies and sanctify himself, revealing his power and glory to the world.

Duration: 37:35

Scripture: Psalm 102:1

Topics: "Word Of God"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Brian begins by reading from Psalm 102, where the psalmist cries out to God in distress. The psalmist describes feeling alone, oppressed by enemies, and consumed by sorrow. Pastor Brian then shifts to discussing the current situation in Israel, highlighting how the nation stands alone against many nations and the pressure they face to withdraw from the Gaza Strip. He warns that this withdrawal may not bring the desired peace and could actually encourage more terrorist attacks. Pastor Brian concludes by emphasizing the importance of supporting and blessing Israel, as God has promised to intervene and destroy the armies that seek to destroy Israel.

Transcript

Let's turn in our Bibles to Psalm 102. I'll read the first, the outnumbered verses. Pastor Brian will read the even as he leads you in reading the even.

And let's stand for the reading of the Word of God. Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto Thee. Hide not Thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble.

Incline Thine ear unto me in the day when I call, answer me speedily. For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an heart. My heart is smitten and withered like grass, so that I forget to eat my bread.

By reason of the voice of my groaning, my bones cleave to my skin. I am like a pelican of the wilderness. I am like an owl of the desert.

I watch and am like a sparrow alone upon the housetop. Mine enemies reproach me all the day, and they that are mad against me are sworn against me. For I have eaten my ashes like bread and mingled my drink with weeping.

Because of Thine indignation and Thy wrath, for Thou hast lifted me up and cast me down. My days are like a shadow that declineth, and I am withered like grass. But Thou, O Lord, shall endure forever, and Thy remembrance unto all generations.

Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion, for the time to favor her, yea, the set time is come. For Thy servants take pleasure in her stones and favor the dust thereof. So the heathen shall fear the name of the Lord and all of the kings of the earth Thy glory.

When the Lord shall build up Zion, He shall appear in His glory. And He will regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer. This shall be written for the generation to come, and the people which shall be created shall praise the Lord.

For He hath looked down from the height of His sanctuary, from heaven did the Lord behold the earth. To hear the groaning of the prisoner, to loose those that are appointed to death, to declare the name of the Lord in Zion and His praise in Jerusalem. When the people are gathered together and the kingdoms to serve the Lord, He weakeneth my strength in the way, He shorteneth my days.

I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of the days. Thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast Thou laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of Thy hands.

They shall perish, but Thou shalt endure, yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment. As a vesture shalt Thou change them, and they shall be changed. But Thou art the same, and Thy years shall have no end.

The children of Thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before Thee. Let's pray. Lord, we thank You for this wonderful promise that when you build up Zion, then you will appear in Your glory.

And Lord, we see You presently building up Zion. And thus we look forward to Your appearance in glory, to establish Your kingdom here on earth. We look forward to that day when Your kingdom will come, and Your will will be done here on earth, even as it is in heaven.

Lord, we realize that that day is not far off. And so with anxious hearts, filled with anticipation, we cry, Come quickly, Lord Jesus. In His name we ask it.

Amen. You may be seated. As we move through the Bible here in Ezekiel, we've come to a real critical point, a very interesting point.

For Ezekiel has been prophesying of events that would happen in the last days before the Lord would return to establish His kingdom upon the earth. And in the 36th chapter, Ezekiel prophesies how that the land itself will be revitalized, will become very productive as far as agriculture is concerned. That has happened.

In chapter 37, he talks about how that the Jews would be returning to the land and we would become a nation once again. That has happened. As we get into chapter 38, he tells us that when they have gathered together and become a nation once again, that there will be a war to exterminate them.

That has not happened. So where we are in the prophetic picture is right between chapter 37 and 38. 36, 37 have been fulfilled.

And now we move into the future. Chapter 38, the great war that will take place along with chapter 39. Chapter 40, the building again of the temple in Jerusalem.

And we move prophetically right on out to the coming kingdom and the glory of the coming kingdom as the prince comes to rule over the world. And so here we are in between chapters 37 and 38. It makes it a very exciting time.

And of course, the prophecies are extremely interesting and exciting. And tonight, Pastor Skip will be going into these as he studies 36, or we've hit 36, 37, 38 and 39. Moving into the prophecies of this great war.

I would like to touch on some of this this morning. God tells us that he's going to raise up from the north. Gog, who is the leader of Magog, who will be joined together with many Muslim nations in an invasion of Israel in the last days.

In fact, in verse 8, he tells us, After many days, you will be visited. In the latter years, you will come into the land that has been brought back from the sword and is gathered out of many people against the mountains of Israel. He tells us who are the participants.

Gog is the chief prince of the land of Magog. If you will look in history, the early historians identified Magog as that vast area that was north of the Caucasus Mountains. The people were known then as Scythians, and they are the ancient people of Russia.

So, Russia, the northern quarters coming out of the north, Gog, their chief prince, will be joined with Persia, which is modern day Iran, Ethiopia, Libya, Gomer, the modern Balkan states, and Togarmah, the modern day Turkey. It should be noted that all of these nations, with the exception of Russia, are Muslim nations. And much of the southern provinces of Russia are Muslim provinces, 90% Muslim in the southern part of Russia.

The results of this war will be God's divine intervention in destroying these invading armies that will be coming against Israel. Beginning with verse 18, it speaks of the destruction. It shall come to pass at the same time when Gog, that is the leader of Russia, shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord God, that my fury will come in my face, for in my jealousy and in my fire of my wrath have I spoken.

Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel, so that the fish of the sea, the fowls of the heaven, the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all men that are upon the face of the earth shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, the steep places shall fall, every wall shall fall to the ground. I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord God. Every man's sword shall be against his brother, and I will plead against him with pestilence, with blood, and I will rain upon him, and upon his hordes, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.

It speaks of a great earthquake, a earthquake that will shake the whole world. There's an interesting prophecy in the New Testament where God said, once again I will shake the earth, until everything that can be shaken will be shaken, and only that which cannot be shaken shall be left. Every man's sword, the Lord said, will be against his brother.

It's wrong to think that the Muslim presents a united front. They fight among themselves. Look at Iraq today.

It is Muslim against Muslim. It is the Sunnis against the Shiites. They are blowing up their own people.

And so it is. Of course, we just had it the last couple of weeks down in the Palestinian Authority area of Gaza where the Hamas were fighting against the police of the Palestinian and blowing up each other. To see that they would be turning against each other is not really far-fetched.

It's interesting that this has happened in the history of the nation of Israel, where a group of nations came against them to invade them, and by their combining their forces were an overwhelming force that Israel could not naturally defeat. But God caused these nations to turn against each other and destroy each other and not really touch Israel. We find it written in 2 Chronicles chapter 20.

It came to pass that the children of Moab and the children of Amman and others with them came against King Jehoshaphat to battle. Then some came and told Jehoshaphat saying, There is coming a great multitude against you from beyond the Dead Sea. And behold, they are in En Gedi.

And Jehoshaphat feared he sought the Lord. He proclaimed the people fast throughout all of Judah. And Judah gathered themselves together to ask Jehovah to help.

So Jehoshaphat stood with the congregation of Judah and Jerusalem. They're in the house of the Lord before the new court. And he said, Oh, Jehovah God, the God of our fathers.

Are you not the God in heaven? Do you not rule over the kingdoms of the heathen? And in your hand is not their power and might so that no one is able to stand against you? Are you not our God who drove out the inhabitants of the land before your people Israel and gave it to the descendants of Abraham? Did you not promise that if evil came upon us such as the sword or judgment or pestilence or famine, that if we would stand before this house in your presence and cry unto you in our affliction, then you would hear and help. Now behold, the children of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, whom you would not let Israel invade when they came out of the land of Egypt, but they turned from them and destroyed them not. Look how they are rewarding us.

They're coming to cast us out of your possession, which you have given to us to inherit. Oh God, will you not judge them? For we have no might against this great company that come against us, nor do we know what to do, but we look to you. And all Judah stood before Jehovah with their little ones, their wives and their children.

And then the spirit of the Lord came in the middle of the congregation, spoke to them through Jehaziel the priest. And he said, hearken all Judah, you inhabitants of Jerusalem and you King Jehoshaphat, thus says Jehovah to you. Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multitude, for the battle is not yours, but God's.

Tomorrow, go down against them. You will find them at the end of the brook before the wilderness of Jebreel. And you will not need to fight in this battle.

Just set yourselves and stand still and see the salvation of the Jehovah. Oh, Judah and Jerusalem, fear not, nor be dismayed. Tomorrow, go out against them, for Jehovah will be with you.

So they rose early in the morning. They went forth into the wilderness of Tekoa and they went with Jehoshaphat. He stood and said, hear me.

Oh, Judah, believe in the Lord, your God, and so shall you be established. Believe his prophets. You will prosper.

And when he had consulted with the people, he appointed singers unto Jehovah that should praise the beauty of holiness as they went out before the army and to say, praise Jehovah for his mercy endures forever. And when they began to sing and to praise Jehovah, he set an ambush against the children of Ammon and Moab and Mount Seir, which had come against Judah. And they were smitten for the children of Ammon and Moab stood up against the inhabitants of Mount Seir to utterly slay and destroy them.

And when they had made an end of destroying the inhabitants of Mount Seir, then they turned to destroy each other. And of course, Israel was just standing there watching the battle, watching them destroy each other until they just went out afterwards and collected the spoil off of the slain bodies that were there. So it wouldn't be something new for God to cause the enemies that come against them to turn against each other, which the Bible does predict will happen when Russia seeks to lead this confederation of Muslim nations against the nation of Israel in order to destroy it.

The Lord said, I will plead against this invading army with pestilence. With blood, I will rain upon him and upon his bands and upon the many people that are with him as an overflowing rain, great hailstones, fire and brimstone. The prophet Zechariah also prophesies of this battle against Jerusalem in the last days.

In Zechariah 12, he tells us, this is the word of the Lord for Israel. Thus says Jehovah, who stretched out the heavens, laid the foundation of the earth and formed the spirit of man within him. Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all of the people about her when they shall be in siege against Judah and against Jerusalem.

In that day, I will make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people and all that burden themselves with her shall be cut in pieces. And though all of the people of the earth be gathered together against her, in that day shall Jehovah defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And he that is feeble among them in that day will be as David and the house of David shall be as God and the angel of Jehovah before them.

And it shall come to pass in that day that I will destroy all of the nations that come against Jerusalem. I will pour upon the house of David, upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace. And this is the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all of the people who have fought against Jerusalem.

Their flesh will consume away while they stand upon their feet. Their eyes shall consume away in their sockets. Their tongue shall consume away in their mouth.

The phrase, though all of the people of the earth be gathered together against them is an interesting phrase. Because as you look at the little nation of Israel today, it pretty much stands alone against all of the nations of the earth. The United States has sort of stood by Israel until lately.

Right now we are pressuring Israel to withdraw from the Gaza Strip. It's a very dangerous maneuver. It's not going to be successful.

It's not going to bring the desired peace that we are hoping that it will. It will only encourage the Hamas and the terrorists into believing that terrorism is the most effective tool that they have of gaining concessions from Israel. To them it will be interpreted as a sign of weakness.

And thus you can expect the terrorist attacks to increase after the withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. It won't end terrorism or the terrorist attacks. From 1969 to 1987 in the UN Council there were 856 resolutions.

526 of those resolutions were against the nation of Israel. Imagine, of all of the resolutions, over 50% were against Israel, one little nation. Interesting enough, since 1947 there has not been one resolution against the Arab nations.

Though they have fostered terrorism around the world, and though they have invaded Israel on three occasions attempting to destroy the nation, never a condemnation by the United Nations against the Arab states, but one after another against Israel, though the whole world be gathered against them. It is interesting that many of the large denominations of the United States have openly declared themselves opposed to Israel and have decided to boycott any of the businesses or industries that deal with the nation of Israel. The United Methodist, the Presbyterian Church of the USA, the United Church of Christ, and the Anglican Church have all made resolutions against the nation of Israel.

But God promised that he would bless Abraham and his descendants. He would bless those that would bless them, and he would curse those that would curse them. And history is replete with the cursings of God upon those nations that have turned against Israel.

Back at the early part of the last century, Britain boasted that the flag or that the sun never set upon the British Empire. The British Empire spanned the globe. In 1917, when the Ottoman Empire was driven out of control of Israel, and it became a British mandate, and the purpose was to create a nation for Israel, Britain turned against Israel and closed the borders to those who wanted to enter and became an enemy of Israel in their support of the Arab population there.

Look at Great Britain today. Diminished from the great British Empire that once existed, they can no longer say the sun never sets on the British Empire. Germany sought to exterminate the Jews, and look at the devastation that Germany experienced as a result of their treatment of the Jews.

I believe that one of the reasons why God has blessed Calvary Chapel is that we have sought to bless the nation of Israel, and that our hearts and our prayers are for them. And because of that, we are experiencing God's blessing, even as he promised to Abraham. God declared that when these Muslim nations with Russia invade Israel for the purpose of destroying Israel, that he will intervene and destroy their armies.

And when he does, he said, he would sanctify himself and be recognized by the nations, and they will come to know that he is the Lord. Surely, when this vast army comes in an invasion of Israel, the world will shake its head and say, poor little Israel, they don't have a chance. But what the people don't know is the God of Israel will at this time reveal himself again as he did in their history during the Old Testament, and that God will turn back the enemy.

Divine intervention, and the whole world will recognize the power of God as he defeats their enemies, as is described here in chapters 38 and 39, which Pastor Skip will go into more detail tonight. But something even more significant in chapter 39, verse 27, the Lord declares when he has brought them again from the people, the nations gathered them out of their enemies' lands and is sanctified in them. And God declares that when he destroys this invading army, he will be sanctified in them.

And they will know that Jehovah is their God. When he has caused them to be led into captivity among the heathen, he has gathered them into their own land again, and they have left none of them anymore in other nations. He also promised, neither will I hide my face anymore from them, for I have poured out my spirit upon the house of Israel, saith the Lord God.

Right now, the Bible tells us that blindness has happened to Israel in part until the fullness of the Gentiles is come in. In other words, God's Holy Spirit is working predominantly today among the Gentile nations to gather from among the Gentiles that fullness, the fullness of the number. God knows what it is.

But blindness will happen to Israel partially until the fullness of the Gentiles is gathered in. But then God will reveal himself. He will pour out his spirit upon Israel, and they will have the blindness removed.

And they will realize that Jesus was indeed the Messiah that God had sent to them. And there will be a tremendous revival there in Israel as they acknowledge Jesus as their Messiah, the Spirit of God, opening their eyes to the truths of God. Because of this, I believe that God will have removed the Gentile bride out of the earth sometime at the beginning of this war, or during the war, or at least at the consummation of the war, when he reveals himself again, is sanctified before the world, and is recognized by the people as their God as he pours out his spirit upon them, that the Lord will rapture his church out of the earth.

We realize that we are living in perilous times. We realize that the Middle East is a powder keg that could explode at any moment, that the truces that have been established are at the best very tenuous, and that any moment you could pick up your paper and read that the Israeli defense forces have moved in might against the Palestinians because of the continued disturbances, the continued terrorism that did not cease when they made their overture by emptying the Gaza Strip of the Israelis. We realize that this could happen at any time.

And I do believe that when the Israeli defense forces move in strength and power against the Palestinians, that that will trigger the other Muslim nations surrounding Israel to this invasion that we read of here in Ezekiel chapter 38 and 39. I believe that that will be the trigger. We realize that at any morning we could go out and pick up the morning newspaper or turn on the morning news and would not be that surprised to read Israel has struck against the Palestinians with great force.

In fact, Sharon this week declared that if the terrorists continue after the Gaza withdrawal, that the IDF forces will move against the Palestinians. And he refused to elaborate on just how they would do it, but he said we will move with great force against them. Do you realize how close we are to the fulfillment of these things that we read in the scriptures? Do you realize that the Lord could come at any time for his church more than that? Are you ready? That's the important thing for as Jesus told of his coming back for his church, he said, now watch and be ready for in such an hour as you think not I'm coming.

And over and over again, he warned you to be ready. That's the big question. Are you ready? Are you ready for the Lord's return? As Jesus was talking about it in Luke's gospel, he said, now be careful.

Lest at any time you get so involved in just living, eating, drinking, and so forth with the cares of this life, that that day will catch you unprepared. Are you so caught up with just making a living and trying to get by that the spiritual part of your life has been neglected? Is it possible that you will be one of those who will not be ready and will have to face the events that we read in the book of Revelation that will come to pass once the Lord has taken his church out of this world? Think about it. Ask yourself, am I ready to meet Jesus Christ? Should he come today? And we should live, I believe, each day as though this is the day the

Lord will return.

Father, we thank you for setting the record for us so that we need not to grope in darkness. Wondering what's going on in this world in which we live? What's going on in the Middle East? What's going to happen to Israel and to the Palestinians? What's going to happen in Iraq? Lord, you've told us. It's right there, black and white.

Amazing, Lord, to realize that these things were predicted 2,500 years ago and are being fulfilled before our very eyes. Thank you, Lord, for the clear road map and that we realize that we are right there between chapters 37 and 38. The time of your return is so close.

Help us, Lord, that we might lay aside every weight, sin which doth so easily beset us. Let us run with patience this race that is set before us as we look unto Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith. In his name we pray, amen.

Shall we stand? The pastors are down here at the front to pray for you. If you're not certain that you are ready to meet the Lord, I would not want to leave this church unless I was certain of that fact, because the Lord can meet you before you get home. So I would encourage you, as we're dismissed, make your way forward.

Just come up to one of these pastors and say, you know, I'm not sure if I'm ready or not. I want to be ready. And they'll be happy to pray with you and to help you get a strong spiritual foundation footing so that as these evil days are going to get worse, you won't slip, but you'll be able to stand on the solid foundation of God's love and God's word.

So think about it. As Jesus said, watch, be ready. Question, are you watching? Are you ready? The Lord bless thee and keep thee.

The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee and be gracious unto thee. The Lord lift up the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace. God bless you.

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