

Reforms of the Covenant

by Chuck Smith

The sermon emphasizes the importance of seeking God and turning from sin, and highlights the significance of Josiah's reforms in attempting to restore the covenant between God and the people of Judah, but ultimately, it was too late to prevent the judgment of God.

Duration: 25:05

Scripture: 2 Kings 23:12, 2 Kings 23:15, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 24:44, Luke 21:28, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, Revelation 22:20

Topics: "Covenant"

Description

In this sermon, Pastor Chuck Smith discusses the importance of worshiping and serving God as a nation. He emphasizes that when a nation turns away from God and begins to worship false gods, it weakens the moral fiber of the nation and ultimately leads to its downfall. Pastor Chuck encourages believers to stay faithful to God and to pray for deliverance from the troubles of the world. He also highlights the significance of being informed about biblical prophecy and being able to share one's faith with others.

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 mold you And His Spirit, like a dove Will descend upon your life and make you whole
Welcome to The Word for Today Featuring the Bible teaching 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 following reforms of the covenant As we pick up today's lesson in 2 Kings 23, verse 12 And now, here's Pastor Chuck Smith with today's message The altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz Which the kings of Judah had made The altars which Manasseh had made In the two courts of the house of

the Lord Which we read about during Manasseh's reign He did beat them down, broke them down from there And cast the dust of them in the Kidron Brook And the high places that were before Jerusalem Which were on the right hand of the Mount of the Corruption The Mount of Corruption was the Mount of Olives, actually That's where, first of all, Solomon had built high places for his wives For he had married many wives from other nations And they were used to worshipping on these high places And so he built them the high places over on the Mount of Olives Opposite of Ophel, there across the Kidron Valley On the southern slopes of the Mount of Olives And it became known as the Mount of Corruption And that whole area of the Mount of Olives Became an area of pagan worship All the way up to Scopus

So, the right hand of the Mount of Olives Looking across from Jerusalem, the right hand would be Then the southern slopes of the Mount of Olives Of which Solomon, the king of Israel, had built For Ashtoreth, the abomination of the Sidonians This is that grove, the Azrim of the Hebrew The Ashtoreth of the Babylonians And for Chemosh, the abomination of the Moabites And for Milcom, the abomination of the children of Ammon Did the king, he defiled all of these places Where they had worshipped these pagan gods And he broke in pieces the images He cut down the groves, the Azrim And he filled their places with the bones of men Now, bones of human were considered unclean If you would touch a bone Of a skeleton You would be ceremonially unclean You'd have to bathe And you could not go into the

temple for a day You'd have to go through a ritual bathing And then a purification rite Before you could come to worship the Lord He took these bones and put them On these places, which was really just sort of To show his disdain for them And to desecrate them Now, let's go back to 1 Kings chapter 13 Here we read Behold, there came a man of God out of Judah By the word of the Lord, that is by commandment from the Lord He came to Bethel And Jeroboam, who was the first king of Israel, the northern tribes Stood by the altar to burn incense This altar that he made in Bethel Had the golden calf, said, this is the God that brought you out of Egypt And this man of God Cried against the altar in the word of the Lord And said, O altar, altar Thus saith the Lord Behold, a child shall be born unto

the house of David Josiah by name And upon thee shall he offer The priest of the high places that burn incense upon thee And men's bones shall be burnt upon thee And he gave a sign the same day, saying This is the sign which the Lord hath spoken Behold, the altar will be torn And the ashes thereupon it shall be poured out I want you to notice this 300 years before Josiah was born This young man is prophesying at this altar in Bethel, saying To the king There shall arise a young child From the house of David Who will destroy this altar Those that worship The priests that lead the worship And he will burn bones of men upon it How could he know that?

How could he know the name Except by God I mean, this is specific prophecy that was fulfilled specifically So, God's word Man, you can be sure It will come to pass And so the altar that was in Bethel, verse 15, back to our text in 23 Which Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, had made Both that altar and the high place He broke down, burned the high place Stamped it to small powder And he burned the grove And as Josiah turned himself, he spied these sepulchres That were there in the mount He sent and took the bones out of the sepulchres And burned them upon the altar And polluted it, according to the word of the Lord Then he said What is the writing that I see there?

So on one of the sepulchres there was this little tablet With an inscription on it And the men of the city told him It is the sepulchre of the man of God Which came from Judah And proclaimed these things that you have done against the altar of Bethel That's where that young prophet was buried Who came up and prophesied these things And it's the inscription over his sepulchre there And he said, let him alone Don't let any man move his bones So they let his bones alone With the bones of the prophet that had come out of Samaria And deceived him into coming back And all of the houses also of the high places That were in the cities of Samaria Which the kings of Israel had made to provoke the Lord to anger Josiah took away and did to them According to all of the acts that he had done in Bethel

And he slew all of the priests of the high places That were there upon the altars Just as was prophesied by this young man And he burned men's bones upon them And he returned to Jerusalem Now, during this period of history In which Josiah was reigning The Scythians had begun massive invasions And the Assyrians were attacked By both the Babylonians who began to rise in power And by the Medians So that

the Assyrians who had made Judah and Israel Well, they conquered Israel Sort of made Judah a vassal state And were controlling over the territory of Israel Were having their own problems at home And thus they could not exercise the control Over Samaria any longer And so Josiah took advantage of the fact That in the area of Assyria There were wars going on between the Assyrians The Medians and

the Babylonians And of course the Scythians also Were invading the area And so because of all of the turmoil up there Assyria had to let go of her hold On all of these little provinces Josiah just sort of had a free reign In his territory He was just able to move on up into Samaria Into Bethel which was a part of the area of Samaria And actually sort of bring it back under his reign For a time Until later of course the Babylonians came down And they were the ones that conquered over Judah The king commanded all of the people saying Keep the Passover of the Lord Your God As it is written in the book of the covenant In the law It was told that they were to have this Passover feast Present themselves before the Lord Surely there was not held such a Passover From the days of the judges that

judged Israel Nor in all of the days of the kings of Israel Nor in the kings of Judah I mean this was the bash to end all bashes I mean they never In their history had a Passover With as many lambs and so forth sacrificed And with its greatest celebration As was ordered by Josiah But in the 18th year Of King Josiah Where in this Passover was held to the Lord in Jerusalem Moreover the workers With familiar spirits Those that had been into satanic worship Those that had been into witchcraft The wizards And the images and the idols And all of the abominations that were spied in the land of Judah And in Jerusalem did Josiah put away That he might perform the words of the law Which was written in the book That Hilkiyah the priest found in the house of the Lord And like unto him There was no

king before him That turned to the Lord with all of his heart And with all of his soul And with all of his might According to all of the law of Moses Neither after him arose there any like him He really had a tremendous heart towards God Serving God with singleness of heart And ordering these spiritual reforms Notwithstanding In spite of this It was too late The Lord turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath Wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah Because of all of the provocations That Manasseh had provoked him And so Manasseh took them too deep, too far There was no turning back And the Lord said I will remove Judah also out of my sight As I have removed Israel And will cast off this city Jerusalem Which I have chosen And the house of which I said My name shall be there

It's going to come Jerusalem Judah The temple It's all going to be destroyed Now the rest of the acts of Josiah And all that he did Are they not written in the chronicles of the kings of Israel?

Yes they are and we'll get Josiah again when we get into 2 Chronicles And in fact we get a few more details in Chronicles than what we have here Now during his days Pharaoh Necho The king of Egypt came up against the king of Assyria To the river Euphrates He was trying to take advantage of the fact that Assyria was being attacked in all directions But Josiah went out to meet Pharaoh Necho And he was killed in battle Up near Megiddo And his servants carried him in a chariot From Megiddo Brought the corpse back to Jerusalem And they buried him in his own sepulcher And the people of the land took Jehoiahaz the son of Josiah And anointed him and made him king in his father's stead And Jehoiahaz was 23 years old When he began to reign He reigned only for 3 months in Jerusalem His mother's name

was Hematal the daughter of Jeremiah Of Libna And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord According to all that his fathers had done Here the tremendous spiritual reformation But as I told you it was only surfaced with the people Josiah's heart was in it But with the people it was only surfaced As is

pointed out when you get to Jeremiah That it was just with the people Not a genuine real move towards God And thus they're able to lapse back immediately At the death of Josiah Here comes along his son Jehoiachaz And the people lapse immediately Back into the old practices And so Pharaoh Necho Captured him Put him in bands At Ribla In the land of Hamath That he might not reign in Jerusalem And he put the land to tribute And so he conquered over the land And taxed them 100 talents

of silver and a talent of gold And Pharaoh Necho made Eliakim The son of Josiah The king In the place of In the room of Josiah's father And turned his name to Jehoiakim And so we have four kings after Josiah Short reigns We're at the end of the rope The nation is just about to go over the falls It's just about through God is withdrawn His hand of blessing His hand of protection And now they must face the judgment of God For their sins And in Jeremiah You'll follow the reigns of these kings And the declension downward As Jeremiah Was the instrument That God used to Oversee the death of the nation That surely must have been one of the most Difficult Jobs any prophet was called to do To prophesy to the nation During its Final days To watch it die And still the people persisting in their evil

ways Not turning from their wickedness So Jehoiakim Gave the silver and the gold to Pharaoh But he taxed the land to give the money According to the commandment of Pharaoh And he exacted the silver and the gold From the people of the land To everyone according to his taxation To give it to the Pharaoh Necho And Jehoiakim was 25 years old When he began to reign He reigned 11 years in Jerusalem And his mother's name was Zebuda And the daughter of Padaia And of Ruma You got to get that In there And he did that which was evil In the sight of the Lord As you'll really read in Jeremiah According to all that his fathers had done So Corruption sets in again As the nation is taking now The final plunge To its destruction Tragic Always tragic When you see A nation Forsaking God For righteousness

exalts a nation But sin is a reproach to any people And again through Jeremiah As God was crying out Against Judah He said check Look at history Is there any nation That actually forsakes Its gods And yet those nations Don't serve a true God But at least they're faithful to them Nations don't change their gods And yet People turning against the true and the living God Forsaking the true and the living God Sort of unthinkable but yet That was the case But the tragedy Is that if a nation Will worship God and serve God That nation will be blessed beyond measure There is such a potential for greatness For strength For people to live together in Prosperity and in abundance The potential is there But the wasted potential Because it seems that in the time of prosperity In the time of strength Is

when they feel independent of God And they begin to turn from God And forsake God And pleasure becomes their God Or power becomes their God Or sex becomes their God Or materialism becomes their God And with the worship of the false gods Comes the weakening of the moral fiber of the nation And the ultimate downfall And overthrow That is what concerns me about the United States We are a nation with perhaps the greatest potential of any nation It was God Who blessed Who made us strong The dependence of our forefathers upon God Looking to God for guidance and for direction And you've already read slurring remarks in the liberal press Concerning the unfitness of a man who would dare to Look to God for guidance God help us, we've gone a long way down However I have great hope Not for the United

States But for the child of God Those individuals who have put their trust in Him Because though I am convinced that the judgment of God is going to fall I am also convinced that God is just And if God would spare Sodom and Gomorrah for ten righteous Then He will spare the United States for those righteous that are here You are the salt of the earth You are the ones that are preserving America even now From

the wrath and the judgment of God falling When the Lord came to Sodom, what did He find?

Not ten righteous He found one righteous man Lot What did he do? He took him out Before he brought judgment And I believe the Lord is going to take us out Before He brings His judgment And that is why I'm looking For the return of Jesus Christ for His church I don't want to leave Without my family I don't want my grandkids to have to grow up in this pagan society We're going down so rapidly Like Hezekiah can say, well, great, it's not going to happen in my lifetime No, I can't buy that one Because I'm interested in my grandkids And in my children And so I say, Lord, come quickly Take us home And let's get it on with that eternal kingdom wherein dwelleth righteousness Where we will live as you intended man to live Living in love In peace As God wants us to live So Lord, hasten the day When you take out your church We'll return with more of our study of 2 Kings in our next lesson As we follow The First Captives Taken to Babylon 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 that special friend or loved one You can do so by simply contacting

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