

The Desire of All Nations

by Chuck Smith

Chuck Smith's sermon emphasizes the need for believers to prioritize God's work and prepare for the prophetic events leading to Christ's return.

Duration: 36:27

Scripture: Isaiah 26:9, Matthew 24:21, Hebrews 12:26, Revelation 6:12

Topics: "Kingdom Priorities", "Second Coming"

Description

This sermon focuses on the importance of aligning our priorities with God's kingdom, as seen in the book of Haggai where the people had lost focus and were urged to put God first. It delves into the prophesied cataclysmic events that will precede the second coming of Jesus, emphasizing the need to be spiritually prepared and ready for His return. The message highlights the significance of seeking God's righteousness above personal interests and the impending judgments that will lead people to turn back to God.

Transcript

Let's turn in our Bibles now to the 102nd Psalm. I'll read the first, the outnumbered verses. Pastor Brian will lead the congregation in the reading of the even-numbered verses as we read Psalm 102.

Shall we stand as we read the word? Hear my prayer, O Lord. 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.

My bones are burned as an hearth. 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 as a sparrow alone on the housetop.

Mine enemies reproach me all the day, and they that are mad against me are sworn against me. For I have eaten 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, shalt endure forever in 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 lose 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 weakened my strength in the way, he shortened my days. I said, O my God, take me not away in the midst of my days.

Thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shall 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.

Thy years shall have no end. The children of thy servants shall continue, and their seed shall be established before thee. Let's pray.

Father, we look here at the promise that when you build up Zion that you will appear in your glory. And as we watch the nation of Israel born and being developed before our very eyes, we realize that you are building up Zion. And so we look forward to that wonderful day when you appear in your glory to establish your kingdom here on earth.

Lord, we do pray for thy kingdom to come, for thy will to be done here on earth, even as it is in heaven. And so, Lord, we ask that you would speak to us today. Let the word of God dwell in our hearts richly.

Minister to us, Lord, of things that are coming to pass so that we will be ready and prepared. So that when you do come to establish your kingdom, then we will appear with you in glory for that great day and that great time. In Jesus name we ask.

Amen. You may be seated. Holidays are over.

We get started again moving through the Bible. We're just about through with the Old Testament. We have the book of Haggai this week.

Next week we start the prophecies of Zechariah and then moving on into Malachi. Short little book and then on into the New Testament, the gospel according to Matthew. So exciting as we come to the end of the Old Testament and we begin to move through the New Testament in just a very short time.

But today the book of Haggai. Haggai is the first of the three prophets who prophesied after the Babylonian captivity. All of the other prophecies were before Babylon conquered and during the time of

Babylon's reign.

Ezekiel, Daniel, both of them were prophets in Babylon. But now we come to the post period of captivity and the three prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Basically Haggai is interested and is prophesying to the people concerning the fact that they had become discouraged and had stopped their endeavor of rebuilding the temple.

They had started out with great vim and excitement, but the task was far greater than what they anticipated. They had become discouraged and their attention turned from doing the work of God in rebuilding the temple to the fixing up of their own homes. The priorities had changed.

Their own interest began to exceed their interest in the things of the Lord. This so oftentimes happens. We start out our journey with the Lord with all kinds of excitement and anticipation and we then get sort of bogged down and our own priorities begin to exceed our desires to serve the Lord.

Such was the case with Israel. And so Haggai was calling to their attention the fact that things weren't going well even though they were doing a lot of work for their own houses and all. Their checkbook didn't last from payday to payday.

It seemed like their pockets had holes in them. Money was passing right through them. Though they were giving a lot of effort for self, yet they really had nothing to show for what they were doing.

And so his exhortation, get your priorities straight again. Put the Lord first, the things of the Lord first. As Jesus said, seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things will be added unto you.

And so there in chapter two, verse six, Haggai said, for thus saith the Lord of hosts. Yet once, it is in a little while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land. And I will shake all of the nations and the desire of all nations shall come.

And I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. This house which is in disrepair and all the temple of God, God declares that he's going to come and dwell within it. The desire of nations shall come.

But before they come, there are going to be great catastrophes that will take place. As God promised, he was going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. In the last year, we have had the opportunity to observe the awesome power of the forces of nature.

The tsunami that struck Asia as a result of the earthquake. The hurricanes that have devastated great portions of Mississippi and Texas and Louisiana. Still in the minds of many of us were the powerful eruptions of Mount St. Helens there in Washington in May of 1980.

One thousand three hundred and fourteen feet of the top of that mountain disappeared before the volcanic eruption. Mount St. Helens was nine thousand six hundred and seventy seven feet high today in your atlas. It's listed at eight thousand three hundred and sixty three feet.

The top thirteen hundred feet blown away. Twenty four square miles gone. The top of Mount St. Helens, the awesome power and force of nature.

But of course, what happened with Mount St. Helens was only a small microcosm of what happened to Krakatoa there in Indonesia back in 1883. When it erupted, the sound of that explosion was heard three

thousand miles away. That would be like an explosion taking place in New York that we would hear here in California.

Over thirty five thousand people perished as a result of the hundred and thirty five foot tidal wave that went forth from the eruption of Krakatoa. The sunsets around the world and the skies were filled with ash for over three years. They colored the sunsets with a brilliant reds.

Throughout history, many of the civilizations of the past were destroyed by earthquakes. When you travel through the ruins of the ancient cities and you see the devastation that was caused by earthquakes, once great cities, great civilizations destroyed by the power of nature. Here in California, we are being told that the big one is coming and we're being warned about the fact that the San Andres fault that runs almost the length of the state where the tectonic plates of the earth are crossing over the top of another.

And they say that about every hundred years, the pressure builds up so great and there becomes that sort of an adjustment to that pressure as it sort of snaps and that it then sends these waves rolling along the earth and under the earth and of the great devastation that happens when these adjustments are made. 1906 was the last great adjustment. They say it happens about every hundred years.

Here we are, 2006. But these, like San Andres and many of the, here in Southern California, we have many faults. And whenever we have an earthquake, the question is, which fault was it or whose fault was it? That, you know, we have the Newport fault.

We have so many different faults here that those are localized kind of earthquakes. Oh yes, they can do a lot of damage, but they're localized. God's word speaks of a coming day in which there are going, there's going to be a shaking of the entire world, not just a localized earthquake with the tectonic plates of the earth in a particular area, but the combination really of cataclysmic upheavals that will be greater than anything the world has ever seen before.

Devastating results. Listen to just a few of the predictions in the Bible, Isaiah 219. And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, into the caves of the earth for the fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he arises to shake terribly the earth.

In that day, man shall cast away his idols of silver and gold, which he has worshiped, and they will flee to the clefts of the rocks and into the tops of the ragged rocks for the fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty, when he rises to shake terribly the earth. Isaiah 13, 13. Therefore, God said, I will shake the heavens and the earth, and it will be removed from her place in the wrath of the Lord of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.

Isaiah 24, 18. And it shall come to pass that he who flees from the noise shall fall into the pit. He that comes up out of the pit shall be taken in the snare, for the windows from on high are open.

The foundations of the earth shall shake. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage, and the transgression shall be heavy upon it, and it shall fall and not rise again. The prophet Joel in 316 said, The Lord also shall roar out of Zion.

He will utter his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth shall shake. But the Lord will be the hope of his people and the strength of the children of Israel. Hebrews 12, 25 tells us, See that you refuse not him that speaks.

For if they escape not who refused him that spoke on earth, how much more shall we not escape if we turn away from him that speaks from heaven, whose voice then shook the earth? But now he promised, saying, Yet once more I'm going to shake not the earth only, but also the heaven. This word yet once more signifies the removing of those things that are shaken as things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. Everything that can be shaken will be shaken.

Revelation 6, 12, I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal. Lo, there was a great earthquake. The sun became black, the moon became as blood, and the stars of heaven fell to the earth even as a fig tree cast her untimely figs when she is shaken by a mighty wind.

And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together. Every mountain and island were moved out of their places. The kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the chief captains, the mighty men, and every bondman and every free man hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains.

They said to the mountain rocks, Fall on us, hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the lamb for the great day of his wrath has come. Who shall be able to stand? Revelation 16, 18, there shall come voices, thunders, lightnings. And there was a great earthquake such as was not since men were on the earth.

So mighty an earthquake and so great. The great city was divided into three parts and the cities and the nations fell and great Babylon came in remembrance before God to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, the mountains were not found, and there fell upon men great hailstones out of heaven, every stone weighing about 75 pounds.

Now the Bible is prophesying of a worldwide shaking. So if you're thinking, oh California, I better move, you know, back to the Midwest, don't think that you'll gonna escape when this one comes. This is a shaking of the whole world and also of the heavens.

Now Jesus, when he was speaking of the last days said, Matthew 24, 21, for there shall be a great tribulation such as never been since the beginning of the world up to this time, no, nor ever will be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would remain. But for the elect's sake, those days shall be shortened.

And immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened and the moon will not give her light. The stars shall fall from heaven and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken. And then shall appear the son of man in heaven.

And then shall all of the tribes of the earth mourn. And they shall see the son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. It's interesting to me, however, how whenever a great crisis seems to come, great earthquake, or as we experienced there in the southern part of the United States, these hurricanes.

When these monumental events take place, it's interesting how that men so often begin to turn to the Lord. The powers of nature, we realize how helpless we are in the face of them. And when things begin to shake, usually our hearts, we realize we can't stop it.

And so we breathe a quick prayer, Lord, watch over and protect, because we realize this is the awesome power of nature demonstrating itself. You remember that right after 9-11, our legislators there in Washington, D.C. were on the steps of the Capitol building, and they were singing, God bless America. I

did not notice, but I would suspect that even Ted Kennedy was with them.

But how quickly they seem to forget God. How quickly they go back to business as usual. Back to deciding that we need to put the commandments of God out of the public eye.

That we should not have the Ten Commandments posted in our public schools. That we should remove under God, a nation under God, from the Pledge of Allegiance. The edicts of our federal courts, liberal courts, are almost guaranteeing the demise of the United States.

Our courts tell us that we cannot teach the Ten Commandments in the public schools. And when we come to that place, we are courting disaster. The Ten Commandments tell us that we're not to kill, to lie, to cheat, to commit fornication, or to steal.

And something is drastically wrong when we cannot post these Ten Commandments in the classrooms of our public schools. Oh, we can teach the children how to have safe sex. We can teach them the use of condoms.

And we can take them to abortion clinics, should they get pregnant, without their parents needing to know or consent. But the schools must teach that man evolved, and that there is no real design, but we are just the products of accident. They've got to teach the evolutionary theory as science, and disregard the evidence for intelligent design, leading the children to the conclusion that there is really no real purpose in our existence.

We just have happened in the evolutionary cycle through billions of years. Is it any wonder that we're having so many problems in our public schools today? We've taught them that they are nothing more than animals, and now we're wringing our hands because they're acting like animals, and we don't know how to control them. How long do you suppose an amoral society can exist before there is a total breakdown of law and order, and gangs take over neighborhoods and the streets of our cities? How long do you think that God is just going to stand by and watch without intervening? How long before we cry, God help us, even so come quickly, Lord Jesus? You can be sure that these judgments that are spoken about in the Bible are going to take place here on the earth, and that many people are going to begin to quickly get a great and intense interest in God.

The prophet Isaiah wrote in 26.9, With my soul, I have desired you in the night. With my spirit within me, I seek you early. For when your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.

God allowing these things, the purpose is to turn the people unto God, to turn their hearts back to God. Jesus said to the Jews in Matthew 23.37, O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you've killed the prophets, you've stoned those which were sent unto you. Yet how often I would have gathered your children together, even as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you would not.

Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, you shall not see me again until you shall say, blessed is he that comes in the name of the Lord. So Jesus is pronouncing the judgment upon them, and he's saying, you're not going to see me again until things are so bad that you're going to say, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

As you look at Israel today, there's a real crisis. They really don't know what the future holds with Sharon being disabled, new elections coming up. There's great fear and great anxiety among the Jews, and for

good cause.

The new leader in Iran has called for the development of the nuclear weapons. He is threatening to wipe Israel off of the map and is gaining the power to do so through his missiles and the weapon systems of mass destruction that are being developed. I believe that as Israel is facing these crisis, and there seems to be no answer, no solution, that soon they will be crying, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

And I believe that Jesus will come as the prophets declare, set his foot upon the Mount of Olives, and he shall establish the kingdom of God here on earth. Note here in Haggai verse 6, for thus said the Lord of hosts, yet once in a short while, and I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land and I will shake all of the nations and the desire of all nations shall come and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. It's interesting that he relates the coming of Jesus Christ again to these great cataclysmic judgments that will just precede the coming of Christ.

In the prophecies in Matthew 24, Jesus said, and immediately after the tribulation of those days, shall they see the sign of the Son of Man coming in clouds with great glory. Haggai was dealing with people who had lost their priorities. They were putting their own interest above the interest of God, and they were suffering as the result.

He was calling them to readjust the priorities of their life, and as Jesus said, seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these other things will be added to you. Time that we look at our priorities and that we put first the kingdom of God above our own interest, above our own ambitions, above our own desires. We put the things of the Lord first in our lives, make that top priority, because the day is coming and I don't believe it will be very far off.

As we talked about these great cataclysmic judgments, I'm convinced that the church will not be here on earth when they take place. We're talking about post-church experiences. The Lord said he has not appointed the church unto wrath.

He said, pray always you'll be accounted worthy to escape these things that are going to take place upon the earth that you might be standing before the Son of Man. He said, beware lest at any time your life be overcharged with eating and drinking and the cares of this life so that that day would catch you unaware. He said, pray always you'll be accounted worthy to escape.

Is that your prayer? Is that the earnest desire of your heart that you be in such a relationship with the Lord that when he comes you will be accounted worthy to be taken with him before the great judgment of God falls upon this earth? Or are you one of those who are hoping to survive the great tribulation period by some miracle? It is so important that we be ready as Jesus said, they that were ready went in. Lord, help me to be ready is my prayer. And I pray, Lord, thy kingdom come, thy will be done here on earth even as it is in heaven.

Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. Father, we thank you that you have given ample warning as to the things that will soon be transpiring upon our earth. As we see, Lord, the beginning of sorrows, we see some of these convulsions of nature, and we realize, Lord, the devastation that can come just as you unleash a wind, or as you allow the tectonic plates of the earth to adjust.

Lord, we realize it's nothing compared to what's going to be when you bring your judgment upon the earth. Lord, we do pray that we'll be accounted worthy to escape these things that are going to happen on the earth. How we desire to be in that heavenly crowd, standing before the throne, watching as our Lord takes the scroll out of the right hand of the Father as he sits upon the throne, desiring to sing together with the saints of the worthiness of the Lamb to take the scroll and to loose the seals.

For he was slain, he's redeemed us by his blood out of all of the nations and tribes and tongues and people. Lord, we look forward to standing before the Son of Man there in heaven. And coming, Lord, with you when you come in power and great glory to establish your kingdom upon the earth.

And Lord, to live and reign with you in a new earth, an earth that is in full obedience unto you. Hasten, Lord, that day. Bring an end, Lord, to the powers of darkness that rule over our earth today.

And establish, Lord, your rule and your reign. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11018.mp3>

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/q1kFfQTBkoc.mp4>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/chuck-smith/the-desire-of-all-nations/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net