

(Through the Bible) Micah

by Chuck Smith

Chuck Smith's sermon on Micah emphasizes God's judgment against Israel and Judah for their sins, while also offering hope for a future restoration.

Duration: 1:24:20

Scripture: Exodus 20:2-3, Psalm 46:10, Isaiah 40:27-31, Jeremiah 6:13-14, Micah 6:6-8

Topics: "Faith And Justice", "Godly Living"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that God's requirement for us is to believe in His Son, Jesus Christ, as our Lord and Savior. The prophet in the Bible asks what he can do to please God, and the Lord answers that He desires us to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him. The preacher highlights the corrupt leadership in the city and the wickedness in the house of the wicked. He also mentions that God will work among the people with marvelous miracles, just as He did when He delivered them from Egypt. The sermon concludes by reminding us that God requires us to live a life of justice, mercy, and humility.

Transcript

So we turn now to the book of Micah, as is the very typical opening of most of the books of the prophets. The word of the Lord that came to Micah, the Moreshite, in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, the kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. So, he introduces himself, Micah, the city from which he hailed, Moreshite.

The time of his prophecy, it is about the same time that Isaiah was prophesying. He was a contemporary to Isaiah. As we go back in the history of second kings, and we look at Ahaz, he was one of the bad kings of the southern kingdom of Judah, and he did not that which was right in the sight of the Lord.

But he established high places for the worship of the false gods in Jerusalem. Hezekiah was a good king, instituted reforms when he came to the throne. Now, prophesying during this period of time would mean that he was prophesying during the time that the northern kingdom of Israel fell to the Assyrians.

The Assyrians having conquered the northern kingdom, then invaded the southern kingdom at the time of Hezekiah. And, of course, were defeated by the work of the Lord, the intervention of God. So, the time that Samaria and the northern kingdom of Israel fell.

So, his prophecy is against Samaria, and also against Jerusalem. Hear ye, or hear all ye people, hearken o'er, and all that is therein, and let the Lord God be the witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple. So, his calling unto the people now to hear God's indictment, what God is witnessing against you.

For behold, the Lord has come forth out of his place, and will come down and tread upon the high places of the earth. So, he begins to use figurative language in describing the judgments of God that are going to be coming against them. And upon the mountains shall be molten under him, the valleys shall be split, as wax before the fire, and as waters that are poured down from a steep place.

So, the mountains will be melting. And the reason for the transgression of Jacob has all of this happened. And for the sins of the house of Israel.

But what is the transgression of Jacob? Is it not centered in Samaria, where they had introduced the bow worship in the northern kingdom? Is it not the high places of worship for false gods that were established in Jerusalem under King Ahaz? Therefore, the Lord declares, I will make Samaria as a heap of the field, and as the plantings of a vineyard. And I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof. That is, the buildings will be destroyed right down to the foundations.

Now, today, as you are traveling in the middle portion of Jerusalem, leaving Shechem and heading towards Megiddo, you come to a very beautiful valley. And there is a hill in the valley that is the site of Samaria. The hills are covered with olive trees and fruit trees of all sorts.

But as you turn off of the main road and you head up towards Samaria, you first get to the gate that was once the entrance to the city during the Roman period. And then you go along a column or go along a road where there are Roman columns on either side. For the city of Samaria was rebuilt by the Romans.

But as you get up to the top of the hill, you can find the palace of Ahab and of Omri, those palaces that were once adorned with ivory furniture, those palaces which were once such a glorious spectacle for everyone. The city of Samaria was a fabulous city, set there on the hill. They thought that they were impregnable.

And yet God had prophesied the destruction of Samaria. As you stand there, you can see where they have rolled the stones down the hillside. You can see the rubble.

And even as the prophecy here goes, God uncovered the foundations and you can see what was once the foundation of the temple or of the palace of Ahab and of the palace of Omri there in Samaria. And this prophecy, of course, has been fulfilled and you can go there today and see the fulfillment of this prophecy. It's like a heap in the field.

It's destroyed, lies in ruins to the present day, the foundations of the city having been uncovered. And all of the graven images that are there will be beaten to pieces. And all of the hires thereof shall be burned with the fire.

And all of the idols thereof will I lay desolate. For she has gathered it of the hire of a harlot and they shall return to the hire of a harlot. Therefore, I will wail and howl.

I will go stripped and naked, the prophet declares, and I will make wailing like the dragons and mourning as the owls. For her wound, that is of Samaria, her illness is incurable. For it is common to Judah.

It's actually also infected the southern kingdom and they have begun the worship in the groves and in the high places. He has come to the gate of my people, even to Jerusalem, referring to the Assyrian invasion. Declare ye it not at Gath.

Now, Gath was one of the capital cities of the Philistines. And when David was lamenting over the death of Saul and Jonathan, he made the same statement, declare it not at Gath. They hated to have their enemies rejoicing over their misfortunes.

And of course, that was usually the case. The Philistines love to rejoice over the misfortunes of God's people. You remember when they brought Samson into the house of their God, Dagon.

The purpose was to make sport, to rejoice over the helplessness of Samson. And so, the idea was always don't publish it, don't tell it in Gath, lest they rejoice at the calamity of God's people. Now, here he begins to use a play on words.

And you have to really have a smattering of an understanding of Hebrew. The King James doesn't really give it to you here. But it's sort of a play on words.

And he is saying, weep not in weep town. For Ephrath means weep town. So he said, don't weep in weep town.

Or not Ephrath. Ephrath is dust town. And so he said, in dust town, roll in the dust.

Weep not in weep town, in dust town, roll in the dust. Sapphire means beautiful. But here is a change and that which is beautiful shall be stripped naked.

And shall be ashamed because of her nakedness. The inhabitant of Zanon, which means March, came not forth or did not march forth. So the inhabitants of March did not march in the morning of Beth Israel.

He shall receive of you his standing. For the inhabitant of Meroth, and Meroth is bitterness, waited carefully for good. But evil came down from the Lord to the gate of Jerusalem.

The Assyrian invasion again. O thou inhabitant of Lachish. Now, Lachish is horse town.

Bind the chariot to the swift horses. She is the beginning of the sin to the daughter of Zion. Lachish was one of the fortified cities.

It was taken in the Assyrian invasion. But Jerusalem was not taken by the Assyrians, for God intervened. For the transgressions of Israel were found in thee.

Therefore, shalt thou give presence to Moresheth Gath, the houses of Achzib. Now, Achzib is lies, so be a lie to the kings of Israel. So the house of lies will be a lie to the kings of Israel.

So here, Micah makes quite a play on words through these particular passages. Yet the Lord said, will I bring an heir unto the O inhabitant of Moresheth. He shall come unto Abdullah, the glory of Israel.

And then he speaks of the mourning. That is the shaving of their heads that they did when they mourned. And then they would shave their heads and for a period of time, let their hair grow.

And then they'd shave all the hair that grew over a 30 day period. And they'd take an offering to the Lord. They'd burn it as an offering unto the Lord.

And it was a sign of mourning. They do this to the present day. If there's a death in the family, then they don't shave for 30 days.

And so you see many times a person in Israel. Of course, a lot of them just have beards, a lot of the rabbis. But we've had friends.

We go over there and they'll have beards. And the reason being, there's been a death in the family. So they shave and then they let their hair grow for 30 days and offer it.

And it's a sign of their mourning. So make thee bald, pull thee for the delicate children, which, of course, the children have been slain. Enlarge thy baldness as an eagle, for they are gone into the captivity from thee.

So the children are slain. Those that are not slain have been carried away captive. And so a time of mourning for them.

Now, God is giving here his continued indictment against Israel. And he said, Woe to them that devise iniquity and work evil upon their beds. For when the morning is light, they practice it because it had been in the power of their hands.

So those who were abusing their positions of power. For they covet fields and take them by violence. And he was probably thinking here of the vineyard of Naboth, which earlier King Ahab was just, you know, so doleful and all.

And his wife said, What's the matter, honey? What's wrong with you? No, I want the field of Naboth and he won't sell it to me. No, I want that field. She says, Well, don't worry, I'll take care of it for you.

And she got some vain fellows who brought a false charge against Naboth and the people stoned him to death. And she said, Hey, he's dead. Go take his field.

And so wicked Jezebel in her taking by violence that which belongs. And so using their, abusing really their power or using their power for their own enrichment and their own gain. They covet fields.

Ahab coveted the field of Naboth. Then through the cunning of his wife Jezebel, they took it by violence. And houses, they take them away so that they oppress a man in his house, even a man and his heritage.

So notice, here are the sins. One, covetousness. Two, violence.

And three, oppression. These things were common in Samaria and that is why the judgment of God came against Samaria and God allowed. The Assyrians to carry them away captive.

Therefore, thus saith the Lord, against this family do I devise an evil from which you will not escape. Neither shall you go haughtily, for the time is evil. In that day, one will take up a parable against you and a lamentation with a doleful lamentation.

A lamentation was a song of sorrow, but this is especially sorrowful, the doleful lamentation. And they will say, we are utterly spoiled. He has changed the portion of my people.

How hath he removed it from me? Turning away, he hath divided our fields. Therefore, thou shalt have none that casts a chord by lot in the congregation of the Lord. The temple worship will cease.

There will be none to take their turn, which of course, they determined by the casting of lots in the temple of the Lord. Now, they were saying to the prophets of God, don't prophesy. But yet the false prophets continued their drive.

And that is pretty much more literally than what you find in your King James. They shall not prophesy to them that they shall not take shame. O thou, in other words, don't prophesy in creating the shame in the people.

O thou that are named the house of Jacob. Is the spirit of the Lord troubled or angry? Are these his doings? Do not my words do good to them that walk uprightly? But even of late, my people is risen up as an enemy. Now, notice that even though all of this sin exists and they've risen up against God, God still maintains them as my people.

O love that will not let me go. I rest myself in thee. Even of late, God said, my people is risen up as an enemy.

You pull off the robe with the garment from them that pass by securely as men adverse from war. The women of my people have you cast out from their pleasant houses and from their children have you taken away my glory forever. Arise ye and depart for this is not your rest because it is polluted.

It shall destroy you even with the sword destruction. If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie saying, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink, then you will make him the prophet to the people. They didn't want to hear God's word.

They told Micah, hey, don't prophesy to us. And yet, if a fellow would come along and I'll sing to you of good days of wine and strong drink and all, then they say, hey, you're our prophet. We want to hear you.

Men haven't changed much. They don't want to hear really of the judgment of God that is to be meted out against a sinful generation. They want to hear all is well.

All's going to be good. Don't worry. It's all going to work out.

Cheer up. Keep your head up. Think positively because we're going to come through on top and be like, oh, tell me more, tell me more.

As the whole thing's going down the tube. And so they don't want to hear the truth. And God is rebuking them that they will not listen to his truth.

They would rather hear a lie than the truth. But the Lord is talking now of a remnant that he's going to work with. I will surely assemble, oh, Jacob, all of thee.

I will surely gather the remnant of Israel and I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock in the midst of their full. They shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker has come up before them.

They have broken up and have passed through the gate and are gone out by it. And their king shall pass before them and the Lord on the head of them. Now the Lord speaks of the coming judgment that is going to come against those that have gone into captivity.

And I said here, I pray you, oh, heads of Jacob, ye princes of the house of Israel. Is it not for you to know judgment who hate the good and love the evil, who pluck off their skin from off of them and their flesh from off their bones, who also eat the flesh of my people and flay their skin from off them and they break their bones and chop them in pieces as for the pot and the flesh within the cauldron. Then shall they cry unto the Lord, but he will not hear them.

He will even hide his face from them at that time as they have behaved themselves ill in their doings. For thus saith the Lord concerning the prophets that make my people err, that bite with their teeth and cry, peace. And he that put it not into their mouths, they even prepare war against him.

So God is speaking out against the people now because of their evil deeds, the judgments of God that are going to come, though they don't want to hear of it, but it must come. Their prophets are saying unto them peace, but by that they are causing the people to err. Therefore, night shall be unto you and you shall not have a vision and it shall be dark unto you that you will not divine and the sun will go down over the prophets and the day shall be dark over them.

Then shall the seers of the prophets be ashamed and the diviners will be confused. Yea, they shall all cover their lips for there is no answer of God. God is not going to speak to them any longer.

The voice of God will be silent. And of course, such became the case for 400 years until John the Baptist came in the wilderness. But truly the Lord said, I am full of power by the Spirit of the Lord and of judgment and of might to declare unto Jacob his transgression to Israel his sin.

Hear this, I pray you, you heads of the house of Jacob and the princes of the house of Israel that abhor judgment and pervert all equity. They build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity. For the heads of the people are taking bribes and the priests are teaching for hire and the prophets are divining for money.

Yet will they lean upon the Lord and say, is not the Lord among us? No evil can come upon us. So here was a corrupted leadership, both municipal and spiritual. The heads of the people, the judges of the people, the city councilmen were taking bribes, the county supervisors.

The ministry had become a profession. Professional ministers teaching for hire and the prophets divining for money. And yet saying, hey, the Lord is with us, no evil is going to come.

Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field and Jerusalem shall become a heap and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest. Jerusalem became a heap. At the present time, Professor Shiloh is digging through the heap that was Jerusalem at the time that Micah prophesied.

For though Jerusalem was spared from the Assyrians, the Babylonians later came and Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem, ravaged the city, broke down the temple, the walls of Jerusalem, destroyed the houses. And even now, interesting excavations are being made in what they call the hill of Ophel, which is just above the pool of Siloam. And it's that hill that goes from the Gihon Springs and Siloam where Hezekiah tunneled underneath.

Above that, the hill that goes on up, which is actually what they call Ophel, the city of David, but continues on up to the Temple Mount. So it would be a part of the Mount Moriah. As they are uncovering now the rubble of these houses where the people lived at the time that Micah was prophesying.

These very houses in which the people were living then are being uncovered today by the archaeologists. And the interesting thing that as they are uncovering these houses, they are finding just multitudes of little idols, false gods that the people were worshipping. And they've come across a collection of little idols like you can't believe.

They've made quite a display of them. Where these people, just as the prophets were warning them, had turned to idolatry and because of that idolatry, they were going to be destroyed. Now the prophets were saying, oh, everything's alright, you know, it's not God with us.

But God was ready to bring His judgment. But in the last days, or in the later days, and so we move on out into yet the future. This has not yet happened.

Oh, far from it. But it's going to happen. And I'm convinced it's going to happen in the near future.

But in the last days it shall come to pass that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established in the top of the mountains and it shall be exalted above the hills and people shall flow unto it. God is going to establish His throne upon the earth. And the mountain of the house of the Lord is going to be established.

And many nations shall come and say, come, let us go to the mountain of the Lord and to the house of the God of Jacob. And He will teach us of His ways and we will walk in His paths for the law shall go forth of Zion and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He's talking now about the kingdom age.

When Jesus comes and reigns again and God shall give to Him the throne of David. And He will order it and establish it in righteousness and in judgment from henceforth even forever. And the nations will be going up to Jerusalem.

For out of Zion will come the law of the Lord. They'll say, come, let's go to Jerusalem. And let's sit at the feet of Jesus and just learn for a while.

Hey, those are the days when I'm really wanting to take the tours to Israel. When the Lord is there sitting on the throne reigning in Zion. Won't that be exciting? And thank God we won't have to go on these old 747 jumbo jets.

God will have a whole new mode of transportation for us. And we'll go and when we arrive, Jesus will be there teaching us the ways of the Father. And we can sit at the feet of Jesus and just learn for the law will go forth out of Zion.

Oh, that's glorious to me. What an anticipation. And He will judge among many people.

He will rebuke the strong nations afar off. And they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. And nation shall not lift up a sword against nation.

Neither shall they learn war anymore. Now, I get rather upset when many times politicians make reference to this verse and intimate if you'll just vote for them, they will bring in this age. It will not be brought in by any politician.

It is not going to come until Jesus, the Prince of Peace, comes and reigns in righteousness. This is not something that man will ever be able to affect. In fact, we're doing just the opposite right now.

We are beating our plowshares into swords, so to speak. What this says to me is that in the kingdom age, the military budgets, which are boy, almost bankrupting us here in the United States today. The military budgets will be diverted to agricultural development.

Now, this past year, the nations of the world spent approximately one trillion dollars for weapons, for armament, for defense. One trillion dollars. Imagine if we had spent one trillion dollars this past year to develop agriculture.

You would not have thousands of people starving to death in Cambodia. Other thousands more in the deserts of Odin. Nor would you have them starving in Ethiopia.

There would be enough for everybody and you wouldn't be paying a dollar for a loaf of bread. If we would put this much money in feeding the world. You see how twisted man's values become when he's governed by his greed and by his lust rather than by the Lord? Because it is necessary for us to arm ourselves, to defend ourselves from being subdued by the enemies, there has been a misappropriation of funds.

And money that could go for the betterment of mankind is being spent to destroy mankind. How twisted are the values of sinful man. More money in the budget to destroy than to aid and to help.

Now, I'm not arguing with Reagan's budget. I feel that the defense budget is necessary because I know what Russia has done and is doing. And if we're going to survive, we've got to be strong.

But it's tragic that we live in a world where there are those who are greedy for more power and more control, who have to be stopped and will only stop through the threat of force of arms. It's a sad world that you live in. It's a world that is preparing for war.

A world that is coming to another gigantic conflict like our minds cannot imagine or conceive. As nation will rise against nation and kingdom against kingdom. But there's light at the end of the tunnel.

After the next major world war, men will realize, hey, there's no prophet and there's no future in this. And Jesus will come as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And we will have one ruler over the whole earth.

And he will establish his throne in Jerusalem on Mount Zion. And then, and only then, will they beat their swords into plowshares and their swords into pruning hooks. And they will not learn war anymore.

They'll begin then to divert the resources towards the betterment of mankind, towards agricultural development, towards just a better overall life for everyone. In that day, they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree. And no one will make them afraid.

You can send your children to the store to get a bottle of milk and not worry about them being molested or accosted. You can take a walk in the evening along the beach and not worrying about someone assaulting you. They will live in safety.

They will live in peace. No one will make you afraid. You'll not have to lock your doors at night.

You'll not have to put the chains up and off. You can live in safety and in peace. Not be afraid.

For the mouth of the Lord of hosts has spoken it. That day is surely going to come. God has declared it.

For all the people will walk everyone in the name of His God. And we will walk in the name of Yahweh, our God, forever and ever. Literally, all of the peoples do now walk in the names of their God, but then they will walk in the name of Yahweh in that day.

In that day, saith the Lord, will I assemble her that halted and will gather her that is driven out and her that I have afflicted. In other words, here is God prophesying now the regathering of the Jews, people of Israel. Those that have halted, those that were driven out, those who have been afflicted.

And I will make her that halted a remnant and her that was cast far off a strong nation and the Lord shall reign over them in Mount Zion from henceforth even forever. Now, of course, that's also what Isaiah said. He shall sit upon the throne of David to order it and to establish it in righteousness and in justice from henceforth even forever.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform it. And thou, O tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion, the kingdom shall come to the daughters of Jerusalem. Now, why do you cry out aloud? Is there no king in thee? Is your counselor perished? For pangs have taken thee as a woman in travail.

Before this comes, Israel is yet to have a period of great sorrow. They are going to be in travail. But when Zion travails, then shall she bring forth.

Then will Christ come when the Zion or the Jews really begin to cry out for their Redeemer, for their Savior. And when Zion travailed, then she brought forth, the scripture said. So he speaks here also of the woman in travail.

Now, Jesus said to the Jews, Look, you're not going to see me again until you say, Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. The Lord has gone on up to be with the Father. He's not going to come back until they really travail and say, Oh, blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Be in pain and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, for like a woman in travail, for now shalt thou go forth out of the city, and thou shalt dwell in the field. They're going to actually be driven out into the wilderness, where God will nourish them for times, time and a half time, or three and a half years. And thou shalt go even as far as Babylon, which is Iraq, and there shalt thou be delivered, and there the Lord shall redeem thee from the hand of thine enemies.

And now the kingdom is to be set up, now also many nations are gathered against thee. And they say, Let her be defiled, and let her eye look upon Zion. There will be many who will be looking at Jerusalem with a covetous eye, but they know not the thoughts of the Lord.

Now today, this is actually what is happening. So many nations, the Arab nations especially, looking at Israel, looking at Jerusalem, calling for a holy war against Israel. And these very things are happening right now.

Many nations gathered against her. I think Israel has that unfortunate distinction of being probably the most isolated nation on the face of the earth. Almost every nation is gathered against her.

Even as Zechariah prophesied, though the whole world be gathered together against. If she didn't have the Lord on her side, she'd really be in big trouble. They know not the thoughts of the Lord.

They're all looking at Jerusalem, saying, Oh, we'll make Jerusalem the international city. They don't know the thoughts of the Lord, and neither do they understand his counsel. For he shall gather them as the sheaves on the threshing floor.

Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make thine horn iron. The horn is always a symbol of power, and I'll make your power as iron. And I will make thy hoofs brass.

I'll use you for judgment against these nations. And thou shalt beat in pieces many people, and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord. You're going to spoil them.

You're going to take their spoil. Now, we read in Ezekiel 38 that as Israel has been regathered as a nation, in that time when God makes them a nation again, that he's going to put an evil thought into the leaders of Magog, which are identified historically as those north of the Crimea mountains or the present day Russia. And he will bring them out of their north quarters with all of their bands, the hordes, along with Iran and Iraq and Togarmah, the Balkan states and Gomer, the east, eastern European states, along with Libya and Ethiopia, to invade the Middle East in order that they might take the spoil, the vast oil resources of the Middle East.

But when they come into the mountains of Jerusalem, God's fury is going to, or in the mountains of Israel, God's fury is going to arise in his face, and he's going to turn them back. And the Bible says that the Israelis will not have to worry about fuel for seven years. They will burn the fuel of the invading armies for seven years.

So no worries about oil prices for them for seven years, as they just take and burn the fuel that has been brought in this invasion into the land. And it'll be a seven-year supply. So as here he said, Thou shalt beat in pieces many people, and I will consecrate their gain unto the Lord.

You'll spoil them, you'll take the gain and their substance unto the Lord of the whole earth. Now, in chapter 5, Micah leaves that scene of the future, and he comes back to an intermediate scene. Now gather thyself in troops, O daughter of troops.

He hath laid siege against us, and they shall smite the judge of Israel with a rod upon the cheek. That, of course, is a prophecy relating to Jesus Christ, and was fulfilled in Matthew 26, verse 67. He was smitten with a rod that it might be fulfilled as the prophet declared.

And this is a prophecy here in Micah. Going on to prophesy concerning the Messiah. But thou Bethlehem Euphrata, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me he that is to be the ruler in Israel, whose going forth has been from old, from everlasting.

And so the prophecy that Bethlehem would be the birthplace of the Messiah. Now, the Jews believed this for years. In fact, when the wise men came to Herod and inquired concerning the birth of the king, where is he to be born who is to be the king of the Jews? Herod inquired of the scribes there in Jerusalem, and they answered him in Bethlehem, because the prophet said, and thou Bethlehem, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee.

So they believed in that day that Bethlehem would be the birthplace of the Messiah. Now, of course, since Christ was born there, it would be impossible for that prophecy to be fulfilled again, because there is no one from the house of David left in Bethlehem. Bethlehem is now an Arab city.

No one from the house of David left in Bethlehem. So the rabbis today have made up some other kind of an interpretation of this prophecy in Micah, and they say, no, it doesn't refer to the Messiah at all. But yet, in the time of Herod, the scribes and all definitely believed it and were looking for Bethlehem to be the birthplace of the Messiah.

So I go along with the scribes and all at the time of Herod. They were closer to the truth, and surely Bethlehem became the birthplace of Christ. And since the dispersion after Titus in 70 AD, Bethlehem has not been a Jewish city and is not to the present day.

So it would be impossible now, because no one could really prove his genealogy to David anymore. So Bethlehem was to be the place from which the ruler of Israel would come, the king, whose goings forth has been from old. Now, here is the prophecy that Christ has always existed from everlasting.

That could only be said of God. The word everlasting in the Hebrew is a very interesting word. There are two words in the Hebrew that are sort of translated everlasting.

The one means the vanishing point, literally. So if you let your mind go back as far as you can, they say the universe is 10 billion years old. Can you let your mind go back 10 billion years? Can you conceive of 10 billion years? I doubt it, but at least we can accept it as a figure.

But what was before the universe came into existence? How far back can your mind take you? Our minds being finite can go back, but the further we go back, the narrower the lines get until you get to a vanishing point, and I just can't think beyond that. The vanishing point, that's one of the Hebrew words for everlasting. It's to the vanishing point, where you just can't conceive of anything further back.

This particular Hebrew word means beyond the vanishing point. In other words, your mind goes back to the vanishing point and then beyond that, whose goings forth has been from everlasting. From beyond the vanishing point, he's existed.

We read in John 1.1, In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God, and all things were made by Him. And without Him was not anything made that was made.

In the beginning, when was that? I don't know. Beyond the vanishing point. In the beginning was the Word.

The Word was with God. The Word was God. And then John tells us, And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

And the Word became flesh in Bethlehem, that the prophecy might be fulfilled. And thou Bethlehem, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come He, who is to be the ruler in Israel, whose going forth have been, he's always existed from old, even from the vanishing point and beyond. Therefore, will He give them up until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth, then the remnant of His brethren shall return to the children of Israel.

So, the Messiah was cut off. Therefore, He will just give them up. The Israel was given up in a sense by God.

And now we are living in an age in which God is dealing among the Gentiles, drawing out a body of Christ. And such will be the case until Israel again begins to travail, seeking their Messiah. Until she which travails

has brought forth, then God's grace and glory will return unto the children of Israel.

And He shall stand, and this is a prophecy concerning Christ and His relationship to Israel in the Kingdom Age. And He shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord. And in the majesty of the name of the Lord His God, and He shall abide, for now shall He be great unto the ends of the earth.

Remember when Gabriel was talking to Mary concerning the child that was to be born. He said, and He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest. And the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David.

So, all of this word of Gabriel to Mary tied together with the prophecies of the Old Testament. And this man shall be the peace. He is the peace.

In Isaiah, he prophesied for unto us a child is born unto us. His son is given and the government shall be upon his shoulders. And his name shall be called wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting father, the prince of peace.

Now, the prophet Micah says, for he is our peace. And Paul tells us that in Romans or in Ephesians, for he is our peace who has broken down the barriers that used to exist between men and has made us all one together in Him. And there is no real peace until the walls of separation are broken down between men.

He is our peace who has broken down these walls. And so, the beautiful prophecies concerning Christ. Now, when the Assyrians shall come into our land, and this is, of course, a prophecy of this last day invasion by Russia.

And when they shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise against Him seven shepherds and eight principal men. You say, who are they? I don't know. We'll find out when it happens.

And they shall waste the land of Assyria with a sword and the land of Nimrod and the entrances thereof. And thus shall He deliver us from the Assyrian when He comes into our land and when He treads within our borders. The King of the North in those last days.

Not only Russia, but probably also a reference to Armageddon. And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people. And this is probably the ministry of the hundred and forty-four thousand during the great tribulation period.

The remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as the dew from the Lord. Freshness and refreshing as showers upon the grass that tarry not for man nor wait for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest and as a young lion among the flocks of sheep, who, if he go through, he both treads down and tears in pieces and none can deliver.

For thine hand shall be lifted up upon thine adversaries and all of thine enemies shall be cut off. And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the Lord, that I will cut off thy horses out of the midst of thee and I will destroy thy chariots and I will cut off the cities of the land and throw down all thy strongholds and I will cut off the witchcraft out of thy hand and thou shalt have no more the soothsayers. Thy graven images also will I cut off and thy standing images out of the midst of thee and thou shalt no more worship the work of thy hands.

And I will pluck up your groves, that is the places of worship of the false gods, out of the midst of thee and so will I destroy thy cities. And I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon the heathen such as they have not heard. This will be the great tribulation period that we read about in Daniel and from Jesus and from the revelation of John.

The period of great tribulation, but I want you to notice something about this great tribulation. God is declaring that in the great tribulation I will execute vengeance in anger and fury upon who? The heathen. It should comfort you to know that God has not appointed us unto wrath.

The execution of God's judgment, anger and all is coming upon the heathen such as they have never experienced or dreamed. Daniel said and there shall be a time of great trouble such as never existed from the beginning. Jesus said and there shall be a time of trouble such as has never been before or will ever be again as they refer to this great tribulation period.

Now, notice that during this time the instruments that God is using are the Jews, not the church. His faithful remnant among the Jews will be God's instruments of witness upon the earth during the great tribulation. The church will have been translated and will be with the Lord in glory enjoying the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Blessed is he who is called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. Jesus said pray always that you'll escape the things that are going to come to pass upon the earth and that you will be standing before the Son of Man.

And we read in Revelation chapter 5 as there is this scroll in heaven the title deed to the earth in the right hand of the father as he sits upon the throne and the angel proclaims with a loud voice who is worthy to take this scroll and break the seals and John begins to sob because no one is found worthy in heaven and earth or even under the sea to take the scroll and loose the seals but the elder says don't weep John behold the lion of the tribe of Judah hath prevailed to take the scroll and loose the seals and John said I turned and I saw him as a lamb that had been slaughtered and he came and he took the scroll out of the right hand of him who sits upon the throne and when he did the 24 elders came forth with little golden vials that were full of odors which were the prayers of the

saints and they offered them up before the Lord and they sang a new song saying worthy is the lamb to take the scroll and loose the seals for he was slain and he has redeemed us by his blood out of all of the nations and tongues and tribes and people and he hath made us unto our God kings and priests and we will reign with him upon the earth standing before the Son of God that's where I want to be not down here as God is pouring out his anger and vengeance upon the heathen but standing with the children of God there before the throne hear ye now what the Lord says arise contend thou before the mountains and let the hills hear thy voice hear ye O mountains the Lord's controversy and ye strong foundations of the earth for the Lord has a controversy with his people and he will plead with

Israel O my people still his people after all of this what have I done unto you and listen to God's pleading with the people God says what have I done what have I done wrong what have I done against you and wherein have I wearied you go ahead and tell me witness against me give a testimony against me what have I done where have I wearied you for I brought you up out of the land of Egypt and I redeemed you out of the house of servants I took you from bondage and from slavery you were nothing but a bunch of slaves and I sent before thee Moses and Aaron and Miriam and my people remember now what Balak the king O my people remember now what Balak the king of Moab consulted and what Balaam the son of

Beor answered him from Shittim unto Gilgal that ye may know the righteousness of the Lord now

he says go back and read the prophecies of Balaam when Balak the king said and said come and curse these people and so he said build me an altar and he built an altar and as he began to look over the tents of Jacob he began to declare O how beautiful are the tents of Jacob O how glorious is their redeemer O that I might die the death of Jacob and he began to declare the glory and the king said shut up I don't want you to bless him I want you to curse him and he took him to another mountain build another altar he said now go back and read what I had to say about you read the blessings that I declared concerning you and God is saying go back and read them so you ought to go back when you get home tonight in numbers and read the prophecies of Balaam concerning Israel O my people remember now

the words that were spoken through Balaam that you may know how righteous I have been towards you wherewithal shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God shall I come before him with burnt offerings with calves of a year old how can I approach God the prophet is saying will the Lord be pleased with if I should offer a thousand rams or ten thousand of rivers of oil what can I offer to God as a sacrifice for all of God's blessings and goodness shall I give my firstborn for my transgressions the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul should I offer my own son to God what can I do what does God want of me what does God require of me and the prophet answers he has shown you O man what is good and what does the Lord require of you just to do justly to love mercy and to walk

humbly with your God you say well that doesn't sound so bad but look at it again God requires that you do justly have you always done the right thing have you always been fair and honest have you never cheated in a deal have you never concealed or hid a part of the truth well scratch that one off to love mercy do you really love mercy do you really love to just forgive and say oh forget it it doesn't really matter that's alright or do you love to get even do you go around saying hey I'll get even with him if it's the last thing I do you just wait I'll get even and to walk humbly with thy God six things God hates yea there are seven that are an abomination I don't really know what an abomination is but it sounds bad unto him top of the list of the things that God hates are an abomination

at the top of the list is a proud look pride goes before destruction the Lord said and a haughty spirit before a fall God hates the pride of men God wants you to walk humbly with him that's what God requires that's what God insists upon but I have failed I have not walked humbly before the Lord I have not loved mercy I have not done justly what does God want a thousand rams rivers of oil what can I give to God what does God want from me what does God require he doesn't require a thousand rams he doesn't require rivers of oil to be offered in sacrifice all he says is hey I've shown you the good way just do justly love mercy walk humbly well Lord I can't even do that what now do you require they came to Jesus and said what must we do to do the works of God and Jesus said this is the work of

God just believe on him whom he has sent alright I can handle that that I can do this is the work of God that you believe on him whom he has sent so God's actual requirement for us tonight is just to believe in his son Jesus Christ as our own Lord and Savior and by your believing in him he will come into your life he'll begin to indwell your life and he will begin to give you the power to do justly he will begin to transform your heart to where you'll love mercy and as you look upon his face there's no way you could be proud but you'll walk humbly before the Lord so God's requirements the prophet is crying out what can I do does God want me to give him my firstborn son rivers of oil whatever what does God require and the Lord answers he has shown me oh man what is good this is what God

requires the Lord's voice cries unto the city and the man of wisdom shall see thy name hear ye the rod and who hath appointed it are there not yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked doesn't God hate the scant measure that is abominable I was reading one time where a baker filed a suit against the farmer in court in England and in his suit he charged that the farmer was continually giving him less butter as he sold it to him he said when he first started out selling me butter he gave me a true pound of butter but gradually he has been giving me less and less butter for the pound until now he's only giving me about 12 ounces of butter and charging me for a pound the farmer in his own defense said to the judge sir I only have balanced scales to measure the butter and he

said I always take the baker's pound loaf of bread and put it on the scale to weigh the butter God speaks here against the scant measures that are abomination unto him and then those who have a bag full of deceitful weights now it was they used the balanced scales and they had deceitful weights they had one set of weights that they would buy with and another set that they would sell with deceitful weights bag full of deceitful weights God said I hate that dishonesty in dealing with our brothers what a violation that is to the law of God where Jesus said thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself what a violation to that law to cheat or to defraud my brother to use deceitfulness in dealing with him for the rich men are full of violence he declares the inhabitants have spoken lies their

tongues are deceitful therefore also will I make thee sick in smiting thee and in making thee desolate because of your sins for you will eat but not be satisfied and how true this is of a man who gives himself over to unbridled lust he eats but he is never satisfied and thy casting down shall be in the midst of thee and thou shalt take whole but you will not deliver and that which you delivered you will give up to the sword for you will sow but you will not reap someone else will reap the benefits of all of your efforts and work thou shalt tread the olives but they shall not anoint thee with oil and sweet wine but you will not drink it for the statutes of Omri are kept and all of the works of the house of Ahab Omri and Ahab the two wicked kings of Israel that led the people into such

abominable practices and sins but you're walking in their councils you're following after their ways that I should make thee a desolation and the inhabitants thereof a hissing therefore shall you bear the reproach of my people now a sign of great disdain was just they wanted to show just utter disdain for people they just hiss at them just like you do a cat shh and so it showed sign of total disdain and God says you will become a hissing people see you and they'll just hiss at you they'll just give you the old shh you know it's sort of an irritating thing to have a person do that to you they still do it, I've had them do it to me over there in Israel they'll hiss at you if you don't buy their merchandise you go to leave and they're angry with you they'll hiss at you they'll also spit and

that too is a sign of great disdain in the oriental customs if you want to show total disdain you spit on a person of course I guess that would show disdain here too but we're a little more cultured the prophet said woe is me for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits as the great gleanings of the vintage there's no cluster to eat my soul desires the first ripe fruit I'm desolate I really don't have anything the good man is perished out of the earth there's no upright men left they all lie in wait for blood they hunt every man his brother with a net and they that may do evil with both hands that they may do evil with both hands earnestly the prince asked and the judges take bribes the princes are asking for the judges are receiving bribes and the great man he uttered his

mischievous desire and so they wrap it up for him because of his prominence and all he gets whatever he wants just whatever his mischievous desires are wrap it up give it to him the best of them is as a briar and

the most upright is sharper than the thorn hedge the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation is coming and now will be their perplexity your day is coming you may be flouting the law of flouting the law of God now but your day is coming trust not in the friends don't put your confidence in the guides keep the doors of your mouth from her that lies at your bosom for the son will dishonor the father and the daughter will rise up against her mother and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law and a man's enemies will be those of his own house Jesus quoted that therefore I will

look unto the Lord I will wait for the God of my salvation my God will hear me the whole situation is so desperate so totally void of God's work or power or love mercy and grace and truth my only hope I will look for the Lord I will wait for the God of my salvation my God will hear me rejoice not against me oh my enemy for when I fall I shall arise when I sit in darkness the Lord will be a light unto me for I will bear the indignation of the Lord the indignation is always a reference in the Old Testament to the tribulation period that will come the great period of God's indignation upon the earth and Israel will go through it I will endure I will bear the indignation of the Lord because I have sinned against him until he pleads my cause and he executes judgment for me for he will bring me

forth to the light and I shall behold his righteousness and all Israel shall be saved for as the scripture declares a deliverer shall come forth out of Zion who will turn the hearts of the children to their fathers and that glorious day when Zion travails and brings forth through her prayers the return of Jesus Christ then she that is my enemy shall see it and shame shall cover her which said unto me where is Yahweh your God? mine eyes shall behold her now shall she be trodden down as the mire of the streets that is my enemies and in the day that your walls are to be built in the day shall the decree be far removed and in that day also he shall come even to thee from Assyria and from the fortified cities and from the fortress even to the river and from sea to sea and from mountain to

mountain and notwithstanding the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein for the fruit of their doings feed thy people with thy rod the flock of thine heritage which dwells solitarily in the wood and in the midst of Carmel let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old according to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I show unto him the marvelous things even as when God delivered them and preserved them and part of the Red Sea so again God is going to work among the people with marvelous miracles the nation shall see and be confounded at all their might when God destroys the invading armies of Russia he said then I will be sanctified before the nations of the world and they will know that I am God as he works even as he did in delivering them

from Egypt and they shall lay their hand upon their mouth and their ears shall be deaf they shall lick the dust like a serpent they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth during the great tribulation period they're going to cry into the rocks and the mountains and say fall on us and hide us from the face of the Lamb for the day of his wrath has come men will come crawling out of their holes now there are a lot of people today who are making survival shelters and they actually can give you instructions on how deep you should dig your hole in the ground and how much dirt you need overhead to survive the fallout the radiation and the fallout and how to make your little shelters and so forth and of course during this time when this great nuclear holocaust takes place if you

were here it would be wise maybe to have that kind of a hole to hide in but thank God we don't have to be here and if I am here during a nuclear holocaust I'm not going to run and try to hide in some hole in the ground I'm going to try and discover where the thing is going to explode I'm going to go stand right underneath of it and I prefer that to the misery and the horror of trying to live after a whole nuclear

holocaust trying to survive on an earth that has been devastated and with all of the slow death by radiation and all that's not for me but they will lick the dust like a serpent as they move out of their holes like worms on the earth imagine man reduced to a worm because of greed because of his disobedience to God because of his rebellion against God because he won't listen to

God because he has made man humanism has placed man at the top dethrone God, put man on the throne look what man on the throne is doing to the world in which you live as they have sought to take God from the throne as they sought to take God from our education as they sought to take God from our national life as they sought to replace God with man and put man on the throne declaring that man is the highest order of evolution and thus is at the top and he is the product of accidents accidental circumstances actually and is not the creation of God and responsible then to God but man is on the throne and look what that concept is bringing your world to as we are spending money for all of these weapons to just get rid of this menace who is sitting on the throne it's what it is leading the

world to and so what if we do wipe out the world with nuclear holocaust after all we came in by an accident maybe we'll go out by an accident what difference does it make, you know for who can say it is evil who can say it is wrong everything is relative so if it is important to my survival that I exterminate a whole race or segment of people who's to say it's wrong for there is no universal base of good you see this existential philosophy and this humanism gave rise to Hitler and without conscience they could sterilize people they could exterminate the Jews and the Christians because the Jews weren't the only ones that suffered Hitler's paranoia Christians also by the thousands were destroyed in the gas ovens in Germany but who's to say it is wrong if indeed existentialism is correct

that it all, you know you can starve ten million people to death in China in order to set up the new republic you can destroy millions of Russians in the Ukraine in order to establish your society and it's for the betterment of the society and the state is God Caesar is Lord man on the throne but man will bring himself to the worm he crawls out of his caves, his holes and they shall be afraid of the Lord our God and shall fear because of him who is a God, I like this who is a God like unto thee that pardons iniquity and passes by the transgression overlooks our transgressions of the remnant of his heritage he retains not his anger forever because he delights in mercy so God is going to take these people back they're still his people he still says my people and he's still going to deal

with them and restore them unto himself he will turn again and he will have compassion upon us referring to the nation of Israel he will subdue our iniquities and he will cast out their sins into the depths of the sea thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob and the mercies to Abraham which you have sworn unto our fathers God you'll keep your word which you swore to our fathers in days of old the confidence of the prophet in the word of God he'll surely do it and it will surely happen what a glorious God who is a pardoning God like thee who will overlook the transgressions and will again restore favor and glory upon his people for he delights in mercy so we pray Father we thank you for such a God that we have that you delight in mercy that you're not willing Lord that any should perish but

that all should come to repentance and thus you have dealt with us with such patience and with such long suffering and such gentleness as you Lord with cords of love have drawn us to yourself that we might know fellowship with thee that beautiful sweet communion with God oh Lord how we have benefited from our relationship with you what blessings and glory it has brought into our lives to walk with you God help us through the power of your Holy Spirit through the indwelling presence of Christ help us Lord to be all that you want us to be and to do that which is pleasing in your sight in Jesus name we pray Amen may the

Lord be with you and give you a beautiful week may he watch over you and protect and shield you from the evil that is so prevalent in this world in which we live may the

grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God just that beautiful sweet communion of the Holy Spirit rest and abide upon your heart and your life all week long as you live with him and for him

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