

The Jewish Final Solution to the World's Problem - Abraham: His Idolatrous Past

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[0 : 00] Paul and Silvanus and Timothy, to the Church of the Thessalonians, in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, grace to you and peace.

We give thanks to God always for all of you, making mention of you in our prayers, constantly bearing in mind your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father, knowing, brethren, be loved by God, his choice of you.

For our gospel did not come to you in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit, and with full conviction, just as you know what kind of men we proved to be among you for your sake.

You also became imitators of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit.

So that you became an example to all the believers in Macedonia and in Achaia. For the word of the Lord has sounded forth from you, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith toward God has gone forth, so that you have no need to say anything.

[1 : 43] For they themselves report about us what kind of reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead.

That is Jesus, who rescues us from the wrath to come. I am particularly concerned with verse 9.

For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God.

Turning to God from idols. That's the kind of an expression that we don't hear very much about today at all. In fact, hardly ever. But it is a reality, and it is one with which most of us are pretty much out of touch.

We're going to be looking at the world of idolatry and demonism and that which accompanies it, and the fact of its reality, its nature, its intent, and its end.

[3 : 12] In the book of Job, very early on, I think it's even in the very first chapter, the plan of Satan in the life of Job is pretty much set, and God gives Satan permission to test Job with any kind of adversity that he chooses, but he would not allow him to take Job's life.

And of course, the entirety of the test was to determine whether or not God, who had given everything to Job, would still be worshipped if this same God took everything or allowed everything to be taken from him.

And of course, you know how the story turns out. And Job has forever become cemented in humanity as the example of patience and endurance and trust.

And perhaps it could all be wrapped up in that one summarizing statement that Job made, which would be wonderful if we could all have the same attitude.

Though he slay me, yet will I trust him. That's the ultimate expression of trust in God. And I had a little note this morning from Steve Kreider that fit in very well with this message.

[4 : 40] And a portion of it says, Sometimes God allows Satan to turn Job's life upside down. We should not disconnect God's wisdom seen in the world around us from the wisdom with which he works in our lives.

It's a very good and insightful statement, and I appreciate it. We are going to be talking about Abraham. And let me preface the message, if I may, with a few remarks, because this is all part and parcel of one grand package that we are putting together that is going to involve a number of sessions.

I don't know for how many months we will be engaged in this study, but it will be extensive. And I'm satisfied that we will do our best to cover the bases that we can. We are talking about the position and the prominence of the state of Israel and the person of the Jew in God's final program.

And we are calling this the Jewish solution to the world's final problem. It is axiomatic as you search throughout the scriptures to discover that the seed of Abraham constitute the key pivotal people through whom God is going to work his will in this world, beginning with redemption as it was realized through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, for the most part, much of Jewry, especially modern-day Jewry, does not even recognize this. I think it is safe to say that evangelical Christians believe, probably believe, far more positive things about Israel and the Jew than what the Jew believes about himself.

[6 : 38] And I'm sure that that is due in part to the horrendous, and I mean utterly horrendous, experience that the Jew, as an ethnic people have undergone since the time of Egypt when they were persecuted by Pharaoh.

And it has been a kind of unrelenting persecution for literally thousands of years, and it would not be safe to say that it was culminated in the Holocaust because that is not true.

It was manifested in a startling, new, stunning way in the Holocaust. But the consummation of this persecution is yet to be realized, and that will be reserved for the Great Tribulation period when the Holocaust that took the lives of six million Jewish people just because they were Jews.

But that will be minimized against the backdrop of what the Jew has yet to face in the Tribulation period that will be seven years in duration of which our Lord spoke in Matthew 24 and 25.

So what we are going to see is, at least this morning in beginning sketches, is the beginning of this Judaism that is going to be so strategic that God is going to use in such dramatic ways.

[8 : 10] And I want to give you the roots of it because they are completely unexpected. The roots of Judaism is found in this man Abraham, and Abraham's roots are not in the worship of the one true God at all, but Abraham's roots were in idolatry and paganism.

And we will be able to see that, I think, in crystal clear fashion this morning. As indicated in your bulletin, the world of Abraham was steeped in idolatry, and Abraham was no exception.

Coming out of polytheism, which of course means the worship of multiple gods or many gods, into monotheism, or the worship of one God, it will be an outstanding characteristic of the Hebrews, that is, the one God worship.

And it still is. Today, we consider key issues that mark the Jewish people and their place in history. Week by week, you will begin to understand more and more why the Jew and the nation of Israel play such an important part in the coming big wrap-up.

Does modern-day Israel, we hear about daily, figure in? Of course. Dramatically? Strategically so. And before we go to some pertinent Scripture texts, I want to pose some questions for you, and also some propositions before we actually get into the content of the verses.

[9 : 55] So bear with me, if you will, please, and I would trust that the attention that you give will prepare you for the Scripture verses that are coming.

Nothing has so consistently characterized the Jewish people and the nation of Israel, ancient and modern, as the concept of monotheism.

Polytheism has been the order of the day from the earliest beginnings to the very present. Maybe I should qualify that a little bit instead of saying from the earliest beginnings because from the earliest beginnings, it was recognized by those early created beings and those of the first families and the first few generations after Adam and Eve that there was a pronounced monotheism.

There was a recognition and a worship of the one true God. But it was only after, with the passing of time, that they began to slip into polytheism and the worship of other deities, which of course is referred to as idolatry.

This is a very, very old thing going all the way back to Genesis. And we are going to explore the seeds of idolatry, the rationale for idolatry, the demonism that is connected with it, and how it is operative even today as we speak.

[11 : 24] And what makes it so difficult to put a handle on so many of these things is because those who are the agents of idolatry, the demonic spirits, are just that.

They are spirit beings. In the same fashion that angels that are unfallen are spirit beings, and we do not really understand a great deal about the angelic sphere, except to say that there are those angels that are fallen, and as best as I can understand, they have become the demonic faction.

And there are angels that remain unfallen. They are angels that have kept their first estate. They are created beings. They are not humans. They are not like humans.

But they are able to assume a physical identity that makes them appear as humans. And this is demonstrated a number of times in the scriptures, especially in the Old Testament, and in connection with the resurrection of our Lord, and also with the appearance of the angel Gabriel to Mary and to Zacharias and so on.

So, we are talking about a sphere that is very difficult for us to get a handle on. And apart from the revelation that we are given in scripture, we would know precious little, if anything, about these spirit beings called angels or demons.

[12 : 43] So, in addition to the worship of many deities, all of which are false, with the exception of the one true deity, God, there is a tireless, ongoing effort to corrupt the knowledge and the worship of that one true God.

It is going on today in an intense way as Islam is making dramatic and aggressive moves all throughout the world.

This is nothing more than a satanically inspired religion that is attempting to impact the entire world, which it eventually hopes to conquer and control.

That's the goal of Islam. And if you know anything about it or have read the Koran, you will note that those who are talking today about the establishment of a caliphate, this is precisely what they have in mind.

And they have already made it very clear. Your options are conversion to Islam or subservience to Islam, whereby you will pay for maintaining your life, or death.

[13 : 56] Take your choice. And there are many people who have already been victims and recipients of that kind of thinking with this ISIS movement that is going across Iraq right now.

And our country is beginning to engage them, at least insofar as airstrikes are concerned. We do not know what the outcome of this will be. We don't know whether it will be adequate and able to decimate the enemy, or whether it will be too little, too late.

That remains to be seen. What, of course, is behind this activity, and what is the objective, becomes obvious as you look at the scriptures, it is none other than the arch enemy of this one true God, Satan himself.

His plan and purpose is to thrust, to thwart, and defeat the program and objectives of God in any way he can. And we will see how he has engaged his efforts in that historically at instances in the past where his fingerprints are all over everything that takes place.

Notable exceptions will be given later. Historically, presently, and in the prophetic future, Satan and his minions are actively engaged in the affairs of men.

[15 : 17] He has a seat in the UN, and he occupies an unelected seat in our houses of Congress. This game plan of Satan's is to confuse and confound men in their thinking, planning, and decisions.

And is it ever working? Satan is the consummate, unpaid lobbyist in the halls of Congress and the Oval Office.

He is the chief promulgator of confusion, conflict, and death. Scripture describes him as a murderer from the beginning and a liar in whom there is no truth.

His objective is one, that is, to destroy, to destroy, to destroy. One of his names in the Revelation is Apollyon, which literally means in the Greek, the destroyer.

He is the antithesis of everything that God is. Where God is good, he is evil. Where God is light, he is darkness. He is the opposite all the way through.

[16 : 40] And he works his nefarious schemes under cover of darkness and as a spirit being because no one can point to him, no one can point to his minions and say, ha ha, there's a demon, there he goes, see, he's up to something.

No, no. We do not see these beings. They are spirit beings, they are immaterial, but they nonetheless have a very objective existence. And I am fully aware what I am saying right now. I realize that this entire concept that I am presenting is a huge stretch for today's sophisticated enlightened crowd to even take seriously.

I am well aware of that. Their refusal to do so is also part and parcel of the deception they are fed on a consistent basis.

It is satanic, demonic, influence, influence, influence. It affects and impacts people's thinking and actions.

[17 : 50] we do not know how he does this. We do not know how demons are able to operate in individual human lives and influence and impact their thinking.

We do know that man in and of himself reasons and thinks with a warp logic. And in addition to that, Paul reminds us in 2 Corinthians that Satan is the god of this age and he blinds the minds of those who believe not.

So we have got satanic involvement in addition to man's fallen nature blinding him with that. So man has got two strikes against him and it is only the adequacy of the gospel which is the power of God that is able to overcome that.

Because man in his reasoning and thinking will not come to right conclusions regarding important matters. And don't we see this repeatedly? In our government, don't we see this repeatedly?

Don't we see it repeatedly in all governments, all human governments throughout the world? The U.S. is no exception. All governments and seats of power are subject to satanic influence, bad decisions, decisions that will end up being destructive and costly and often result in the death of who knows how many millions and millions of people.

[19 : 21] And we have seen this down through the ages. You not only need to only look at history, you don't need to look even at ancient history. You can look at very recent history. Do you realize that the 20th century, the 20th century, which by far and away was the most enlightened, the most advanced, the most progressive, the most accomplished, the most inventive, the most technological of all centuries preceding combined, resulted in man's killing of his fellow human beings in numbers that were never imagined in the centuries before.

power. What do you attribute that to? I know it's attributed to the evil nature of man and the lust for power with the Hitlers and the Mussolinis and the Stalins, and that certainly is part of it.

But in the unseen recesses, there is that influence egging on, inspiring, energizing, and influencing. And it is all for nefarious evil purposes because he wants to destroy, destroy, destroy, kill and maim, cut off people's heads, willingly succumb people, make people succumb to starvation and thirst, like we're seeing right now on the news with the 40,000 to 50,000 people who are fleeing in front of the ISIS campaign.

I am not suggesting that Satan is calling all of the shots in our Congress or in the Oval Office.

I am emphatically insisting, not merely suggesting, that he wants to, is attempting to, and he works 24-7 to influence all that he can.

[21 : 30] He does this through his minions as unseen, unheard, demonic horde of fallen spiritual beings. They are ageless, they are indestructible, at least to us, and they are everywhere.

There is, at this very moment, an enormous cosmic war taking place between God and the unseen forces of evil.

This evil is pervasive in all false religions and philosophies worldwide, and from the very first demonstration that converted Lucifer into Satan before the world was created, he made his first appearance in the garden when he successfully orchestrated man's rebellion against divine authority with Adam and Eve.

He and his minions remain steadfastly on the job. They are presently marching with Isis in ancient Babylon.

Babylon mentioned scores of times in the Bible, Old and New Testament, which of course is modern Iraq.

[22 : 54] did you know that Babylon, modern Iraq, is the birthplace of idolatry? And it's very possible that it is ancient Babylon that was the site of what the Bible refers to as the Garden of Eden.

And it was Babylon where Nimrod and Samarus held forth, and where the Tower of Babel was constructed there in ancient Babylon.

How fitting that much of what is taking place right now has that kind of history. The carnage and brutality of Isis is fueled by none other than Satan himself.

Kill, kill, kill. And if it is done in the name of religion, so much the better. Islam is nothing more than one more false religion that is idolatrous at its very core, all of the while insisting that there is one God, Allah.

And it just saddens me and sickens me to see people in positions of authority and influence on television and radio and in the print media make statements like this.

[24 : 27] We all worship the same God. They call him Allah. We call him Jesus or God or Jehovah. But we all worship the same God. Nothing could be further from the truth.

That is an enormous lie in and of itself. There is virtually no similarity between Islam and biblical Christianity. None.

None. And if you ever hear anybody utter that kind of assininity, would you please do them a favor and say, my dear friend, I beg to differ with you.

There is nothing in common between Christianity and Islam. They are as different as night and day. They do not worship the same God.

And if you don't think that's true, ask any Muslim. He ought to be able to tell you. A Christian is probably so out of it, he wouldn't know the difference.

[25 : 23] He might even be the one making the statement. Islam, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism in its corrupted form, and I want to qualify this, Judaism in its corrupted form is idolatrous.

That's what corrupted it. That's why God judged them. That's why there was the Babylonian captivity. It was all because of idolatry of his own people. And we will see this in spades very shortly.

It has been stated, and I think it is a truism, that biblical Christianity does nothing more than Judaism come to fruition.

Judaism in its completion. Judaism in its finality is Christianity. And if you read the book of Acts, that's where it was going.

And the unbelief of the nation of Israel short-circuited the whole process and stopped it right there. And what we now have as Judaism is, of course, a very corrupt Judaism.

[26 : 32] And what we now have as Protestantism is a corrupt Protestantism as well. Keep them confused and thinking they are religious has to be the motto of the adversary.

So, we've already read an introductory passage in 1 Thessalonians 1.10 where Paul refers to the Thessalonians as having turned from idols to serve the living and true God.

And we need to go to some adjacent passages, then we'll get into the Old Testament. So, let's go first of all to 1 Corinthians chapter 10. 1 Corinthians chapter 10, and this is dealing with an issue of great controversy among the Corinthians.

I can't say that it's one that we have problems with today. I don't recall anyone ever asking me anything about eating meat offered to idols. But it was a common problem then, and the reason was because there were so many idols.

And when they would offer these sacrifices to idols, and by the way, who do you think ate the meat that was offered?

[27 : 50] People did. The demons to whom these things are sacrificed, they don't eat meat. They don't eat anything. eat it. It is a takeoff on the Old Testament and the legitimacy of the sacrificial system.

When people would take animals to the temple to be sacrificed, the priest would examine the animal, make sure that it was acceptable for sacrifice, and then he would lay his hands upon it and slay the animal and put it on the offering and cook it, burn it.

What happened to it then? Well, if it was a whole burnt offering, the whole thing was consumed in its entirety, all of it, just like cremation. Everything was consumed.

But if it was an ordinary offering, the animal was offered in sacrifice, but the meat was eaten by the priests and their families. It was kind of like a community kitchen, if you will.

That was how the priesthood was sustained, because the priesthood wasn't allowed to own land, they couldn't grow crops or anything like that, so they actually constituted a kind of recipients of a built-in welfare program, and the animals that they were sacrificed, the priests and their families ate the meat, and that's how they lived, and of course the grain and everything else that went with it.

[29 : 12] So when you eat meat that is offered to an idol, in the Corinthian setting here, the idea was if you partook of that, you were paying homage to that idol, you were honoring, serving the idol, offering a sacrifice to it, which of course meant that you were insulting the one true God by establishing this idol and offering sacrifice to it, so it became a very controversial thing.

And the issue was, what now do we do as Christians? Because they would offer this meat to an idol, and then take the meat and cut it up, and take it to the marketplace, and sell it in the stalls.

And it could be advertised, this meat was offered to such and such an idol, and they would name the idol, because people sometimes wanted meat to eat meat that had been offered to a particular idol, thinking that that somehow ingratiated the idol to them.

Or, this meat was offered to this island, and people could go to the marketplace and actually buy that meat. And if you were dining as a guest at the home of someone, it could very well be a topic of conversation that this meat that we are partaking of was offered to such and such an idol.

Well, do you as a Christian eat that? That became the issue. Are you somehow contributing to idolatry, if you eat that meat?

[30 : 48] Are you contaminating yourself? Are you dishonoring the Lord if you eat that meat? So, let us look, if we may, at this chapter, 1 Corinthians chapter 10, and I'll do my best, although it will be mightily tempting, to, well, let's just jump in with verse 14 for time's sake.

therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry, which is another way of saying don't have anything to do with it. I speak as to wise men, you judge what I say.

Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are one body, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread.

Look at the nation Israel. Are not those who eat the sacrifices sharing in the altar? What do I mean then? That a thing sacrificed to idols is anything?

Or that an idol is anything? No. But I say that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons.

[32 : 12] and not to God. What? Sacrifice to demons? What does that mean? That means that behind every idol that is established and named and worshipped as a god, it has no zero.

It has no objective reality. There is no such being. There is no such god. call him whatever you want. He is non-existent. He is simply contrived from the imagination of people's minds.

They are gods made up by people, contrived by people, influencing other people who then worship these things. What is really behind all of this?

Demons, demonic, influencing people, causing people to think there is some kind of mysterious intelligence involved in that idol.

And you had better honor it by offering sacrifice to it and bowing down before it because if you don't, he's going to get you. That idol, there is an idol, there is a goddess of love.

[33 : 32] And if you don't want to be unlucky in love, you better pay attention to her. You better offer sacrifice to her. There is a goddess of the crops, of the grain.

If you want a good harvest, you better pay homage to that idol. You better offer sacrifice to that idol. You better bow down to that idol because your crops will be ruined.

All of this is based on superstition that is energized by demonic influence and activity because demons know how people think and how they are unable to think and they know that we think with a warped reason intellect and that makes it easy to gain entry to it.

Every human person with that fallen intellect is a piece of cake for influence from demonic activity because the influence is to energize and create wrong thinking and wrong conclusions which produce wrong actions.

That shouldn't be that hard to understand because our doing comes from our thinking. Actions are caused by attitudes and as we think so we do.

[35 : 05] So the name of the game is get to the thinking. Confound, confuse, obfuscate, cause people to think things that are not true are true.

That's what error is. That's what the lie is. there has always been truth and error. And that's what this is all about.

The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. And I do not want you to become sharers in demons.

You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. you cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. Paul, under inspiration, knew full well this was a downright absolute reality.

Today, we're so sophisticated and modernized that we tend to just poo-poo it. Oh, these people, they were just so out of it. They were just a bunch of superstitious people and they believed this baloney about demons and all the rest of it.

[36 : 23] They just didn't know any better. But today, we are so much smarter than they, we know that none of that stuff is true. It's just hocus-pocus superstitious baloney, you know, Halloween stuff and Ouija boards and all the rest of that baloney.

We know there's no truth to that at all. And that works, that attitude works very well and pleases the adversary to no end.

if there's anything he doesn't want, it's to be unmasked. Although, you know, in this present generation, the likelihood with the majority of people is if you unmask the adversary for what he is, most moderns won't believe you anyway.

where and why did this stuff begin?

Well, for humans it began in Genesis chapter three, and the archenemy, Satan himself, in ways we do not profess to understand, influenced an animal that was in the world before the world fell and before animal creation fell with it, somehow influenced this serpent-like creature, and you know the temptation of Eve and that which followed.

[37 : 58] But I want you to see as briefly as possible. Let's come back to Joshua chapter 24.

24. I'm going to have to do what I said I wouldn't do, that is break up this message.

Joshua chapter 24, let me get the setting as briefly as I can. Here, the children of Israel have been in Egypt for 400 years.

They have come out of Egypt under the leadership of Moses. they spent their 40 years in the wilderness because of their disobedience. Moses has died. Joshua is now on the scene.

And now Joshua is ready to pass off the scene as well. And he is delivering a final charge to the children of Israel. And he does so in chapter 24 as it concludes.

[39 : 01] I'll not take time to read the entire chapter, but we must get into verse, let's see, verse 14.

Well, 13 is so great we'll start with verse 11. And you crossed, he's talking to the children of Israel, he says, and you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho.

Now, they're in the land. They're in the land of Canaan. And Joshua is giving his farewell message. you crossed the Jordan and came to Jericho and the citizens of Jericho fought against you and the Amorite and the Perizzite and the Canaanite and the Hittite and the Girgashite and the Hivite and the Jebusite.

You know what all of these had in common? All of them, without exception, are steeped in idolatry. They are all worshippers of many gods, multiple gods, and they give them names, they worship them, they bow down to them, all the rest of it.

And Israel, here plunked in the land, is the only nation among all of these nations that surround them, the only ones that believe there is one God, and just one God, and they are going to stand out like a sore thumb, and they're going to be a constant war with virtually all of their neighbors, and you know what the issue is going to be over more than anything else?

[40 : 19] It's that one thing, idolatry and Jehovah. And he says, I gave these into your hand, and then I sent the hornet before you, and it drove out the two kings of the Amorites from before you, but not by your sword or your bow, and I gave you a land on which you had not labored, and cities which you had not built, and you have lived in them, you are eating of vineyards and olive groves which you did not plant.

Who planted them? All of these ites that were there before the children of Israel came in, and God is handing them over to the children of Israel, and Joshua is reminding them of what God has done for them on their behalf.

And he says, his conclusion is, verse 14, now therefore, as a result of all God has done for you, now therefore, fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth, and put away the gods which your father served beyond the river.

What does that mean? That's not a good translation. translation, well, actually it's a better translation here than it is in the King James. I think the King James says the flood and river is a lot more accurate.

This is talking about the Euphrates River, and it's talking about where Abraham lived before God called him out of Ur of the Chaldees. It was beyond the river.

[41 : 45] This was the Euphrates River. And he says, your father served these gods. Now by the way, look at that verse 14, put away the gods.

How could they put away the gods if they didn't have the gods with them? How can you put away something and do away with it if you don't have it? That's the point here.

They had these gods, and Joshua knew they had these gods, because these were traveling gods. You carried these with you. They were little statuary.

They were teraphim, some of them no more than six or eight inches high. They're dug up all the time throughout the ancient lands by archaeologists who find them to this day. All kinds of deities, little stone statues.

These are the gods he's talking about. And they have them with, you know why they have them with? Superstition, stupidity, rebellion. These gods were some of these people, just like some people carry a rabbit's foot, or have a horseshoe over the door, or walk under a ladder.

[42 : 50] It's superstition. It is not based in reality. It is based only in demonic suggestion that causes people to think these things have reality to them.

It's part of the warped thinking that goes on in humanity. And if it is disagreeable in your sight to serve the Lord, choose for yourselves today whom you will serve.

What are the gods which your father served? Hmm. The gods which your fathers served, which were beyond the river.

Please understand that the word fathers means ancestors. Of whom is he speaking here? Who lived beyond the river?

Who was given the name? Hebrew, because he came from the other side of the river. Abraham. Abraham was one of the fathers.

[43 : 54] Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Abraham was an idolater, a moon worshiper. Modern day Muslims still are.

It isn't coincidental that the insignia of Islam is the crescent moon. That is not a coincidence. That has roots in reality. So, Joshua says, make up your mind. Take your pick. You going to serve the gods which your father served beyond the river?

or, as for me and my house, Joshua's speaking personally now, as for me and my family, we're going to serve the Lord.

And the people answered and said, far be it from us that we should forsake the Lord and serve other gods. Yet, that is precisely what they are going to do.

[45 : 02] Well, do we have an introduction here? Perhaps that's all we have, but it may suffice at that, I hope.

And next week, I really regret doing this, but I feel compelled to do it. And here's what we're going to have. We're going to have a special communion service next week.

It will be different from any communion service we've had in the past. Not that there will be anything different about the elements, but the message will be decidedly different.

And I want you to be thinking about something in connection with that, and we'll deal with it next week, the Lord willing, and we will be serving the Lord's table.

Here's a question that I want you to have in your mind and let this germinate, if you will. We have often said over the years that if there's anything that this country really needs that would be our salvation, or that would at least buy us some precious time, it is a real, genuine, heaven-sent revival.

[46 : 13] I don't see any signs of that happening. Not saying that it couldn't. It would be wonderful if it did, but let me ask you a question. If it did, how would you know it?

what would be the sign? What would be the telltale evidence of God really, honestly, actually, visiting his people?

How would we know that? How would we recognize it? It's a very, very simple answer, and yet it's a very profound one, and we will deal with that next week.

And then, the following week, the Lord willing, we will do our best to pick up where we have left off here this morning. In terms of human reason, I would rather continue this next Sunday and delay the communion service, but I can't do that.

I just feel compelled to do this thing next week. I really don't know why. I just trust that the Lord has laid it upon my heart and won't let go of it, so that's what it's going to be.

[47 : 17] And with that, would you stand, please? Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Father, there is no way in the world that anyone in their right mind can deny that we are a nation at risk.

We do not know how great the risk is. Perhaps it's best that we not know, but we know that you do. And we know also that as it was with Israel, so it is with us.

It may not be any other way out except the way that you provide, because we certainly cannot look to human invention or human ideas to accomplish what really needs to be done.

We see this as simply being beyond us. There are forces, even in our own government, that are working contrary to the national interests of this country.

And it appears to be rather obvious. And we don't know what can be or should be done about that. But we know that none of these things are hidden from you. And all we're saying right now is that we want to be an alert and a responsible people.

[48 : 41] We're not even sure what course of action we ought to take, but we want to know, and we're looking to you to reveal it. Thank you for truth that you provided in your word.

Were it not for that, none of these things we've considered this morning would even be possible.

We wouldn't be able to investigate them, even superficially, because we'd have no idea.

But you've provided more than ample information in your word, and we are so grateful. We

recognize this great cosmic conflict that is taking place, unbeknownst to the vast majority of the world's population, but there's no excuse for us who are enlightened by your word to not know it.

And we want to know it, and we want to know what you want us to do in regard to it. Thank you for the presence of each one here this morning. We anticipate whatever you have for us next week in Christ's name.

Amen.