

Prophecy/Mystery Combined #7 - Israel's Disobedience and Obedience

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Preacher: Marvin Wiseman

- [0 : 00] We've got so much to be thankful for. And this wonderful hymn that we just sang is one of 6,000 hymns that Charles Wesley had written.
- He's the brother of John, largely responsible for the great English awakening in the 1700s. And he came to the United States early on right after he was short.
- Well, I've got to tell you this little story, okay. John Wesley was ordained into the Anglican Church in the 1700s in Great Britain at a time when the country was in such low a state, spiritually, morally, and every other way.
- To tell you how bad it was, in the Church of England, to be ordained as a clergyman in the Church of England, which is synonymous with the Anglican Church and the Episcopal Church pretty much, to be ordained in them, you didn't even have to be a believer.
- Didn't even have to be regenerated or have a testimony. And he didn't. But nonetheless, he was ordained because that was a respectful kind of office to hold in those days.
- [1 : 20] And he came to the United States with the intent of converting the Indians, the American Indians. And he labored primarily in the colony of Georgia, one of the original 13 colonies.
- If I'm not mistaken, I think it was Governor Oglethorpe that was the first governor of that colony. And he met with abject failure. He had absolutely no success at all.
- And he was terribly discouraged. So he returned to England with the intent of resigning his ordination and finding some productive way of life.
- And all depressed, as it were, a friend of his invited him to attend service with him at Aldersgate Street Church in London.
- And he reluctantly agreed to do so. And when they were there, the man who was speaking began his message by reading Martin Luther's preface to the Book of Romans.
- [2 : 31] And John Wesley said, As I sat there and listened, my heart was strangely warmed.
- And from that moment on, that's when he dated his conversion to Christ. And he said, Who would have thought that I, who had gone to America to convert the Indians, had not been converted myself?
- And of course, the rest is history, because John Wesley met with tremendous success as he began preaching. And they ended up being called, let's see, what was the name they called them?
- It was a derogatory, they called them the Holy Ones. And it was intended to be a derogatory term. And it was a term labeled them by those who were not so holy.
- And they called them the Holy Ones. But John Wesley began preaching, and his brother Charles began writing his hymns. And another man by the name of George Whitefield came on the scene.
- [3 : 40] And they were largely responsible for the great awakening that happened in Europe that later would be transferred to the United States.

And it's quite a remarkable story. And because of their evangelical nature, which probably wasn't even a term in use then, as the Holy Ones, they were frequently made fun of.

But do you know what? The common people heard them gladly, because they had a message of hope, of salvation, of redemption in Christ. And the official clergy of Great Britain, of England, would not allow them into their pulpits because of the message they preached.

They considered that to be below them. And out of nowhere else to preach, John Wesley said, well, we will preach in the fields.

And they ended up standing in the back of a wagon used as a pulpit to give them some elevation above the crowd.

[4 : 44] And people came and came and came. And they ended up on occasion preaching to 10,000 people out in an open field with no amplification of any kind.

And hundreds and hundreds of people came to faith in Christ. And then when Wesley returned to Georgia, as he often did, he had something to say that he didn't have the first time.

And his ministry was tremendously successful. He was generally regarded as the father of the Methodist Church because what would become the Methodist Church had at one time been part of the Church of England.

And when he came and preached everywhere he went on horseback, of course, that was the way to travel then. And it was said that when John Wesley died, his sole possessions that were passed on to whomever received him consisted of a well-worn saddle, a badly used mess kit, a bent pewter spoon, and the Methodist Church.

What a story. What a story. And we are the beneficiary of the hymns his brother has written, so many of them in our hymnal, and we enjoy them so much.

[6 : 08] Well, let us have a word of prayer. Father, we rejoice over the history and the memory of men like John and Charles Wesley and George Whitefield, others who provided some spiritual underpinnings for this nation and for Europe as a whole.

We are grateful for their memory, and we want to see their principles and their truths undergo a mighty revival even here in the United States. And what a wonderful thing it would be to see a nation that once had the fear of God upon it, having strayed and ignored spiritual truths, trying to limit God or remove him from our public places, from our schools, and we simply have no one to appeal to but you for a return of these things and for an appreciation of America to see what it is that they've walked away from and to once again embrace it.

We have no idea what it would take to bring something like that about, but we know that you are able where we are not. So we look to you for direction and wisdom. We think of the pandemic that is upon us and the new year and whatever it may hold, and we are grateful that you're sufficient even for that.

For ourselves this morning and the truth before us, we pray that you'll give us understanding for the text and the appreciation of it, the implications thereof in Christ's name. Amen. Well, I still have a few announcements that I haven't covered, but I want to make sure I mention this.

There are a number of things back there for youngsters, and they are all freebies, so you parents and grandparents might want to consider these as stocking stuffers.

[7 : 52] There are just a few of them back there on the table where the books are, and this is the world's greatest Christmas activity book for kids, and here's a nativity sticker book, and stickers didn't even exist when I was a kid, but they've become pretty popular now.

So there's some of those back there, and the Beginner's Bible, the very first Christmas. So they make great stocking stuffers, so feel free to avail yourself of any. There's just a few back there, but you're certainly welcome to them.

And our daily bread for December, January, and February is available now, and it's out at the literature rack, at the bulletin board rack.

And ordinarily, I wouldn't be elaborating on these announcements like this so much, but we are doing this in an effort to make the people who are unable to be with us because of the pandemic to, and they'll be listening in to get a little more full service than they would if I was just delivering the message.

So we'll include them as well in our announcements. And you'll note that the message for today will deal with Israel's disobedience and obedience, and it includes a careful but obvious distinction to be made regarding the nation Israel.

[9 : 14] One cannot see opposites greater than that of disobedience and obedience. Disobedience is where Israel is at the present, as well as for most of their past.

Thanks be to God, that will change. Their obedience is the subject of prophecy, while disobedience is the subject of mystery. Fascinating content.

And that will deal with item number six in this little pamphlet that we've distributed and ask you to kind of keep in your Bible. It will be number six, and under prophecy, it is the Gentiles are to be blessed through Israel's instrumentality.

And that will be found in Genesis 22, 17 and 18, and Zechariah 8, 13. And then across from that, the counterpart is item number six under mystery, where the Gentiles will be blessed through Israel's obstinacy, as recorded in Acts 13, 44 through 46, and Romans 11, 28 through verses 32.

So it isn't likely that we'll get to both of those today, but we'll get to at least one of them, and I'm sure you will appreciate the content. Also, on the bulletin board, there is a copy of an address for YouTube, and I would encourage you this afternoon when you go home, crank up your computer and zero in on this.

[10 : 49] It's posted on the bulletin board, and there are several copies that are just thumbtacked up there, so tear one off and take it home with you. And this afternoon, I would recommend that you watch this.

It's about an hour long, but it is worth every minute, because it contains a lot of really penetrating, insightful information, featuring this man, Conrad Black, and someone I've never heard of, but I've got quite respect for his insight that he has into this feature.

And he's talking about, the great Trump war will continue regardless of election outcome. It's very insightful and recommended.

So the YouTube address is listed there on the bulletin board. Just take a copy with you and plug into that, and you will appreciate the content. The man's got a great deal of insight.

It's a penetrating analysis, and I think you will really appreciate it. I know I did. It's about an hour long, but like I said, it's worth every minute of it. And then I want to mention something about Laney Ward.

[11 : 56] Most of you probably do not know Laney, but I know many of you know Laney's parents. That's Dale and Bobby Ward. And I well remember, it was probably, 20 or 22 years ago, when my first wife, Barbara, and I drove down to Cincinnati, the Children's Hospital, and we had received word that Dale and Bobby Ward's little daughter was critical, and they were told that she just might not make it.

So we drove down there and spent some time with them and prayed for little Laney. And the Lord was good, and she made a remarkable recovery.

And now she is graduating, and now she is graduating, cum laude, from Kent State, Stark. That's Stark County, Ohio, Kent State.

and I remember we saw her a number of years ago in a play that she was involved in, Tecumseh High School, and she did a most remarkable job.

I mean, she's a talented actress, and it was just remarkable how she pulled off the part that she had for that. And now, here she is, the young lady is graduating from college, and that's just amazing.

[13 : 24] So if you would be so kind as to send her a congratulation card, I know she would appreciate that. And as the insert says in your bulletin, if you could get it there before December 19, and even though you don't know her, I'm sure it would be encouraging to her and just tell her that you attend Grace and that the pastor was talking a little bit about the crisis she had as a newborn.

She was just barely a few months old at the time, and it really looked bleak for her. But she made it, and she's really making something of her life as well.

So she would appreciate your encouragement, I'm sure. Tuesday morning, men's Bible class continues to meet right here at 8 o'clock, and we are going to begin a new study, and it will be conducted more along a conversation kind of way, and we're going to have more input from the fellows who are here because the subject matter lends itself to that.

I think you'll find it to be very, very stimulating and of great interest. So keep that in mind, and if you're able to make it, all men and boys are welcome. You don't need reservations. Just show up at 8 o'clock, and we usually dismiss at 9 o'clock, and we have ourselves a great time, a great time of fellowship and inspiration from the word.

Now I would ask you to turn to, if you would, it's got absolutely nothing to do with our study, except that it does in a way, it involves Israel, and there's some material from the Psalms that we'll be looking at later, and it's in your bulletin, but now I'd ask you to turn in your Bible to Psalm 83.

[15 : 12] I just want to point out a couple of things because Israel figures so prominently in God's plan and program, and much more so than a lot of people can imagine.

Matter of fact, Israel figures a lot more prominently in the plan and program of God than what even many Jewish people understand, but the Bible makes it very, very clear, and just as an aside interest item, but still connected with Israel, I'd like you to look at Psalm 83, and we were reading this just this morning, I think, in our devotions, and it's just so timely that it came out now, so I'm going to share it with you and just make a few comments about it, even though it's not directly related to our study.

Psalm 83, O God, do not remain quiet, do not be silent, and O God, do not be still. For behold, thine enemies make an uproar, and those who hate thee have exalted themselves.

They make shrewd plans against thy people, and it probably shouldn't even need to be said, but I'm going to say it here.

Thy people here, it's not speaking of you or of me, it's speaking of those in context, it's speaking of Israel, God's people Israel.

[16 : 39] They make shrewd plans against thy people, and conspire together against thy treasured ones, and that's once again Israel, they are the treasured ones.

They have said, and I was just amazed at this verse. I'll tell you why. They have said, come and let us wipe them out as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more.

And I thought, I wonder if those in the Arab population that surround Israel now have any idea that the very statements they have made are found in Psalm 83.

I mean, word for word, I can remember Yasser Arafat, who is now passed on, and he was the chairman at the time of the PLO, the Palestinian Liberation Organization.

I can remember him using these exact words. We want to wipe out Israel so that the name will not be remembered anymore. They'll be driven into the sea. And you know, this is a burden, a thing that goes back thousands of years.

[17 : 59] It started way back with Isaac and Ishmael and Jacob and Esau, and it is perpetuated down through these thousands of years.

Let the name of Israel be remembered no more, for they have conspired together with one mind. Against thee do they make a covenant. The tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites.

There is Ishmael. Moab and the Hagrites. Now, Moab is in the ancient land. This is where Ruth was from, from the land of Moab. Moab is in present day Jordan.

And the capital of Jordan is Ammon. A-M-M-A-N. And that's a takeoff on the name Ammon, who was one of the sons that was born to Lot and his wife when they had fled from Sodom and Gomorrah and took shelter there and ended up in an incestuous relationship.

And the children born of them was Ammon and Moab. and that became, he became the father of the Moabites and Ammon became those situated in Transjordan, the capital of which is named after him, one of those sons.

[19 : 34] And the Hagrites, Jebel and Ammon and Amalek, Philistia with the inhabitants of Tyre. See, he's naming all of the nations that surround Israel geographically.

Israel, Assyria, also has joined with them, they have become a help to who? To the children of Lot. Now you gotta remember, Lot was Abraham's nephew.

Remember? And when they divided up and Abraham, they said, this land is not big enough for us and we've got too many cattle and too many herdsmen we need to divide it up.

And he told his nephew, Lot, you look out upon the plain and you take whatever territory you want, it's your choice, and I'll take what's left. And Lot made his choice and then Abraham took what was left and the drama goes on.

So, verse 9 is deal with them as with Midian and so on and these are ancient, ancient enemies and it is the belief of some and I happen to be among them that these people are going to play very prominent roles in the future of Israel and that is something that we may even see in our lifetime.

[20 : 48] That's entirely possible. So, just keep that in mind if you will and now would you take your psalm sheet that is found in your bulletin and it deals with Psalm 78 and you'll note that this is from the New King James Version and what I would like to reveal to you and that it comes out in just stark relief regarding the nation of Israel and the struggle that they have had in connection with being obedient to the Lord and that's been something that they have had a problem with from their very inception.

They go through a cycle of responsive behavior and fellowship with the Lord and then they slide into idolatry and sin and God sends along something to chasten them and punish them and then they repent and they cry out to God for deliverance and God delivers them and he sustains them and raises them up and restores them and everything is great until the next generation and then they fall into the same old problem and they go through and repeat the cycle and that's been the history of Israel from the time they were brought into existence when the time they came out of Egypt they started that even back then and I want you to look at this if you would notice Psalm 78 down at the bottom and this by the way is taken from the New King James Version I think it speaks a little more clearly than does some of the King James statements Psalm 78 he has done he has established a testimony in

Jacob and these are all positive these are all things that God has done for Israel he has established a testimony in Jacob and of course when he uses that term Jacob he is not talking about the man the individual he is talking about Israel which is a synonym for Jacob and that is exactly what he is talking and appointed a law in Israel and this is the repetition it is the way that the Jewish people write which he commanded our fathers that they should make them known to their children that the generation to come might know them the children who would be born that they may arise and declare them to their children that they may set their hope in God and not forget the works of God but keep his commandments all positive stuff but here comes a negative and that they may not be like their fathers a stubborn and rebellious generation a generation that did not set its heart aright and whose spirit was not faithful to God the children of Ephraim and that's one of the major tribes of Israel being armed and carrying bows turned back in the day of battle they did not keep the covenant of God they refused to walk in his law and forgot his works and his wonders that he had shown them now what we're going to see is a lesson in extreme human ingratitude there wasn't a nation on the face of the earth that had more justification for being grateful thankful to God for what he had done and unto whom much is given of him shall much be required and what that does is it makes their disobedience and their rebellion all the more serious because nobody had more light than they did no one had more of a connection in fact the only ones who did have a connection with the almighty was Israel and yet they respond in disobedience in fact

I looked up the word stiff necked in my concordance and found it means just exactly what I thought it meant a head a neck that is so stiff that it will not allow the head that is attached to it to turn in other words there is no turning no repentance no movement just a concentrated stability of stubbornness and ingratitude and this is reflected in the whole history of the nation of Israel and we have instances of it of individuals in Israel from the Old Testament clear up through the New and it is a remarkable thing but here is what I really want you to maintain sight of and this is very very important it is imperative that you understand that the negatives and the lack of gratitude that we are going to see consistently reflected in Israel is not limited to the Jewish people the problem is this ingratitude is systemic to humanity to fallen humanity we have the seeds of ingratitude and an unthankful spirit embedded in our

DNA it's part of our fallenness yeah God does this and he does that but what have you done for me lately this kind of thing and it is never enough and men never tend to be satisfied with what God has provided but the carping and the criticism and the belly aching and the rejection all over this just goes on and what that is it's a picture of humanity and Israel is a microcosm of humanity and what this means by way of principle is we all have these seeds in us and let me tell you something just because you are a believer and you know something about gratitude and thankfulness that the world knows not of does not mean that you are not capable of sliding into a period of ingratitude and disobedience yourself as long as the flesh is with us and it will be until you're pushing up daisies the flesh is going to be with you we have that lurking capability and you know as well as

[28 : 08] I do you know this I know you know this intellectually that no one in the world has a greater cause or reason for profound thanksgiving to God for everything than the believer in Jesus Christ and you can only imagine how much it must grieve the spirit of God when believers who have so much for which to be thankful are guilty of carping criticism questioning doubting rejecting disobeying and so on and you know we're all capable of that we're all capable of that it's so easy well remember Job and what all he went through it was it was terrible loss of everything lost his children lost his animals lost his livestock lost his health sitting on that pile of ashes scraping himself with that piece of broken pottery and his wife came up to him one day and she'd had enough you know when a mate suffers great pain and difficulty the one who is married to them suffers right along with them sometimes in an even more profound way than the one that's suffering and

Mrs. Job had come to the place of where she'd had enough and she told her husband she said why don't you just curse God and die and get it over with that was a bitter woman you know she was angry and bitter where is God when you need him why is he allowing this to happen to us what did we do to deserve this all the rest of it and Job bless his heart still had his spiritual marbles about him and he said you speak like a foolish woman shall not we who have received good from the Lord receive adversity as well woman remind yourself it is the Lord that has given and the Lord has taken away blessed to be the name of the Lord and through all of his pain and heartache and disappointment and false accusation by his so-called miserable friends

Job's final words of conclusion was something that I wish could be embedded in the hearts and minds of every believer beginning with myself and that is this though he slay me yet will I trust him that's what God wants more than anything he wants to be believed and oh yes we will lapse into our periods of unbelief and lack of faith and questioning and doubting and why me why this why now what did I do to deserve this that's part of the human condition is just being human and intellectually intellectually you know better but emotionally is where it hurts that's where it hurts and that's what we have to struggle with yes

I know but and it's there's there's a bridge between the intellectual knowing and the emotional knowing that sometimes is hard to bridge and yet it's important that we do and what we need to do is get our emotions in line with our intellect so that your intellect takes precedent over your emotions and what you know matters so much more than what you feel do you get that that is so important and I have found it necessary many times sometimes standing at a casket where one is receiving people who are paying their last respects to the deceased and sometimes you just have to say now now is the time for you to remember what you already know and I have yet to get a response from anyone other than a smile and saying yes pastor

I know I know well back to psalm 78 if you would please in verse 12 of psalm 78 look at what God did for the Israelites marvelous things he did in the sight of their fathers in the land of Egypt in the field of Zohan he divided the sea and caused them to pass through and he made the water stand up like a heap in the daytime also he led them with the cloud and all the night with a light of fire he split the rocks in the wilderness and gave them drink in abundance like the depths he also brought streams out of the rock and caused waters to run down like rivers wow we can only love and serve and worship a God like that but look at the response verse 17 but they sinned even more against him by rebelling against the most high in the wilderness and they tested

[34 : 32] God in their heart by asking for the food of their fancy asking for the food of their fancy God's not running a restaurant you know I mean all he's doing is providing provision to keep these people alive but they're asking for the food of their fancy yes they spoke against God they said can God prepare a table in the wilderness behold he struck the rock so that waters gushed out and the streams overflowed can he give bread also can he provide meat for his people all this doubting and questioning and worrying and wondering and criticism it's unthinkable that we mere mortals could have the chutzpah the brass to criticize the almighty isn't that you talk about arrogance arrogance therefore verse 21 the lord heard this and was furious well I guess so a fire was kindled against

Jacob and again understand he's not talking about an individual man this Jacob out of whom all of these people came been dead and buried for centuries but it's Israel the nation you know Jacob's name was changed to Israel and it's talking about Israel the nation fire was kindled against Israel the nation Jacob and anger also came up against Israel now it makes it sound like they're two different ones what is it this is Hebrew poetry it is the way of expressing where they say the same thing and they utilize two different receptive individuals or entities that he's talking about but they are one and the same and they're just given a different name and it's a Hebrew poetic thing for the sake of emphasis anger also came up against Israel because they did not believe in God and did not trust in his salvation yet he had commanded the clouds above and opened the doors of heaven had rained down manna on them to eat and given them the bread of heaven food to the full and

I don't know what that was other than the manna it was some kind of a I know it wouldn't keep and it was a daily supply and if you tried to hoard it it would rot overnight so it did you no good and the whole idea of it was for perpetual dependence upon the Lord and they thought oh this is wonderful this is wonderful and next thing you know they were saying our souls loathe this light bread I'm sick and tired of this stuff and they started complaining about it he caused an east wind to blow in the heavens and by his power he brought in the south wind he also rained meat on them like the dust feathered fowl like the sand of the seas he had quail a huge flock of quail do you know how many people we're talking about here we're talking about a restaurant in the wilderness that would accommodate a couple of million people and there's this huge huge amount of quail comes flying over they didn't have any way of bringing the quail down so

God brought them down brought the quail down so that they were flying no more than three or four feet above the ground so that they could catch them and butcher them right there and have them be how's that for take out I mean that is as convenient as it could be and would you not would you not you would think be inclined to remember those things wouldn't they make an indelible impression upon you if you saw that red sea the waters come up and stayed on either side and a path made down the middle so would you ever forget that could you not think in the future that no matter what would come into your life the God who was able to do that can do anything and if he isn't doing what I think I need at the moment it's not because he's unaware and it's not because he's unable it's because he knows what's best for me even though it's this negative that

I'm dealing with can God be trusted when you have a negative and when God doesn't fix it one of the books that we've been distributing here I can't think of the name of the lady who authored it now but it's a very penetrating book and I've got some copies left I think maybe back there or in my office and the title grabbed me because it is so pertinent to what people are dealing with today the title of the book is many of you have already read it when God doesn't fix it what do you do when God doesn't fix it verse 26 he caused an east wind to blow in the heavens and by his power he brought in the south wind rained meat on them like the dust feathered fowl like the sand of the seas he let them fall in the midst of their camp all around their dwelling so they ate and were well filled for he gave them their own desire they were not deprived of their craving but while their food was still in their mouths the wrath of

[40 : 55] God came against them and slew the stoutest of them and struck down the choice men of Israel why did he do that because of the rotten attitude that they had while they were still partaking of God's provision now how many of them were the grippers and complainers we are not told but they were dispatched in spite of all this verse 32 they still sinned and did not believe in his wondrous works and you look at this and you say I I I could not believe how could they not believe I tell you how Jeremiah tells us in 17 9 I think it is the heart is desperately wicked the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked above all things who can know it that means who can really figure out the depths and the fickleness of the human heart in other words can't be done and two what we're talking about and i want you to really understand this what we're talking about is the depths that the depravity of sin is able to take us even even if you are in christ that is the power of the flesh that's the power of the flesh not too many christians understand that and because they don't they get blindsided by it sometimes oh i wouldn't i would never believe that i was capable of doing such a thing as that you know we're capable of real let me put it this way a true born-again christian is just as capable of extreme sin and orneriness as it's an unbeliever and the reason is because of that old adamic nature martin luther had that pegged martin luther had that pegged one of his famous quotes is i fear my own heart more than the pope and all his cardinals there's a man that understood he's that's the your old nature is the enemy within that's called walking in the flesh as opposed to the spirit and the apostle paul's advice to the galatians is if you walk in the spirit that is in a state of surrender and submission to god who he is what he's done in your life why it matters etc if you are committed to that and you walk in that you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh and the opposite is axiomatic if you don't walk in the spirit that's what you'll do because there is no neutrality you're in one or the other and you can't have one foot in the flesh and one foot in the spirit you cannot have one foot in rebellion and one foot in submission you're either sold out to the lord or you're not and you know something it's because so many of god's people are not they are just saved going to heaven satisfied contented and that's it and they're not interested in what you might call the deeper christian life or really getting serious about this business of being a christian and that is the principal reason why the church of jesus christ is so impotent in today's society we don't have but a minority of

people who are really serious about the christian life they're too dominated by the flesh and it's sad because no one has more to work with or has been given more to work with than we have and yet the tendency is to ignore it and it's tragic it is tragic it's going to be a lot to answer for at the award throne of christ where paul describes this in first corinthians 3 as the award throne the the assessment the judgment seat of christ where everything will be determined to be wood hay or stubble and it will go poof and it'll be gone and it'll be nothing there all of our works are going to be tried by fire and the fire will be the all penetrating gaze of the eyes of our lord jesus and he who knows the hearts and knows the motive behind what we do not just what we do but why we do it all of that's going to be examined and if it's wood hay and stubble there are no awards given for wood hay and stubble the only thing that will abide is what's characterized as gold silver and precious stones those are the imperishables they will stand the test and they are just a metaphor for deeds done in honor and service to christ rather than self and there's going to be a great line of demarcation there it's all going to be based on our rewards and some will be saved yet so as by fire with virtually nothing to show for it oh they'll be saved and the reason the reason they'll be saved is because their faith is in jesus christ but they fumbled the ball when it came to living for him so this is quite a passage verse 32 in this they still sin did not believe in his wondrous works therefore their days he consumed in futility and their years in fear when he slew them then they sought him yeah yeah when they when they when they came down with the plague then they oh god then they then they sought him and they returned and sought earnestly for god and then they remembered that god was their rock and the most high god their redeemer nevertheless they flattered him with their mouth and they lied to him with their tongue for their heart was not steadfast with him jesus quoted one of the old testament prophets says that their their they honored god with their lips but their hearts but their hearts but their hearts but their hearts but their hearts were not when you honor god with your lips you just talk a good faith you just talk a good christianity but it isn't there's nothing there to back it up it's just words and the heart isn't with him nor were they faithful in his covenant but he being full of compassion forgave their iniquity and did not destroy them yes many a time he turned his anger away and did not stir up all his wrath and you know what that's saying that's saying god withheld his own hand and there were many times when he did not give them what they

deserved and that's called that's called mercy when you don't get what you deserve that's mercy and there were many many occasions where god would have been completely justified in just laying them out or removing them all together but he has compassion he has mercy wonderful one we can be so glad he did and he did not stir up all his wrath he remembered that they were but flesh a breath that passes away and does not come again how often they provoked him in the wilderness and grieved him in the desert yes again and again they tempted god and limited the holy one of israel they did not remember his power the day when he redeemed them from the enemy when he worked his signs in egypt and his wonders in the field of zion turned their rivers in the blood and their streams that they could not drink he sent swarms of flies among them which devoured them and frogs which destroyed them he also gave their crops to the caterpillar and their labor to the locust he destroyed their vines with hail their sycamore trees with frost he also gave up their cattle to the hail and their flocks to fiery lightning he cast on them the fierceness of his anger wrath indignation and trouble by sending angels of destruction among them he made a path for his anger he did not spare their soul from death but gave their life over to the plague the plague the plague the virus the pandemic i am not saying i am not saying that what we are dealing with today in the covid 19 and the high death rate and infection rate i am not saying that it is the judgment of god upon an unbelieving world but i'm not about to deny it either one cannot help but just to what extent the finger of god is in this thing oh i know there's the chinese laboratories and the sloppiness or whatever that unleashed this virus and so on but there is an ultimate hand that is behind it all and you just wonder if what we are experiencing now worldwide just might not be a gracious wake-up call you know it takes a lot to get people's attention anymore gave their life over to the plague destroyed all the firstborn in egypt the first of their strength in the tents of ham it's one of noah's son this is their descendants but he made his own people go forth like sheep guided them in the wilderness like a flock and he led them on safely so that they did not fear but the sea overwhelmed their enemies this is the egyptians and he brought them to his holy border this mountain which his right hand had acquired this is mount zion he also drove out the nations before them allotted them an inheritance by survey made the tribes of israel dwell in their tents yet they tested and provoked the most high god did not keep his testimonies but turned back and acted unfaithfully like their fathers they were turned aside like a deceitful bow a deceitful bow is a crooked bow so that when you aim the arrow straight ahead it veers off one way or another it's a crooked bow can't be counted upon they provoked him to anger with their high places and moved him to jealousy with their carved

images this is the idolatry and you know that was the besetting sin of israel for which they are going to be judged sorely and he's going to bring the assyrians against the northern tribes and lead them into assyrian captivity and he's going to bring the babylonians against the southern two tribes and lead them into babylonian captivity for 70 years and jerusalem is going to be destroyed the temple's going to be leveled and the whole thing is going to be burned by fire and they'll spend 70 years in a foreign land as their punishment and why is god allowing that believe it or not god's punishment god's chastening is always designed to be corrective god doesn't get any kicks out of punishing people just to be punishing them what father doesn't punish or chasten his own child and he does so because he loves them and you would think that adversity that comes to one generation obviously through the hand of god would cause the next generation to look back on that and say hey we don't want to make the same mistake that our forefathers made let's smarten up and get our act together before god but no they would fall into the same old pit and you know why because they were a new generation and the new generation is born with the same kind of fallen adamic nature that the generation before it had and what we're telling you the upshot of all of this is that humanity humanity as a whole whatever language whatever geography whatever history humanity as a whole is a colossal failure that's not good news but it's the truth and the only thing that can ever write this ship of humanity is the infusion of the grace of god and even that does not overcome that sinful nature do you know what it's going to take it's going to take a glorified body and that's what we're going to have and i want to announce to you most wonderful news on behalf of israel and it is called the new covenant god gave them a covenant through moses way back started in the book of exodus chapter 20 where they had the law given them and it was a colossal failure a colossal failure all through israel's history it was what's what's the very first commandment thou shalt have no other gods before and what was israel's greatest sin idolatry the violation of the very first commandment think of that and the only thing that is going to come to their rescue miserable nation of israel because it belongs to the miserable humanity that we're all a part of is going to continue in that vein until until jeremiah 31 when god promises through jeremiah behold the days are coming saith the lord when i will make a new covenant with the house of israel and the house of judah not

like like the covenant i made before with their fathers which covenant they broke but i will put my laws within them and upon their heart and they will be obedient they will be and i'll tell you why they will be obedient because as recipients of the new covenant and this is going to come at the end of the tribulation period when christ returns as recipients of the new covenant the jewish people will not only become believers in yeshua ha-mashiach as their messiah but they will be given a new nature it will be a glorified nature it will be the same nature that you and i will have when we pass on from this life and this body into that new nature and it is a glorified body like unto that of christ when he came forth from the tomb and then these evils that beset israel and all the rest of humanity will no longer be real they will be behind us and we will not have that old nature to contend with we will just have one new glorified nature and that's described in revelation 20 and 21 and that's what we have to look forward to meanwhile what are we dealing with we are dealing with a fallen humanity and i have called it a colossal failure and it is it is and the reason it is a failure is because of sin and that started with lucifer and it went to adam and eve and it infected the entire human race no one escaped it only jesus escaped it and the only way he escaped it was by the virgin birth had he not had that he would have been born with the same nature as the rest of us but that allowed him to bypass it and this thing called humanity is an ongoing colossal failure and this is why we have one war after another one conflict after another continued corruption and it doesn't make any difference what element of the government you're talking about or what nation throughout the world corruption is always their biggest enemy it always keeps the nation from progressing and developing and being fulfilling the potential that they could is because corruption corruption corruption corruption and it comes from the human heart how many times have i told you over the last okay over the last 50 years that that mankind has demonstrated consistently in every generation from genesis 3 onward that he simply does not have the ability to govern himself with justice and equity on an ongoing basis we have periods of it we have temporary revivals where people are able to get their act together whether it's government or wherever it is but it's always temporary that old nature is always there and do you know when jesus christ died and made himself available for people to believe in him and as a result of believing in him they are not only given eternal life and forgiveness but they are given a new capacity to please the lord that they did not have before and if we could only understand if we could only understand

[61 : 10] that being pleasing to the lord is the greatest thing you can do for your own interests but we just can't get that through our thick fallen head we think my best interest is in doing what i want to do no it isn't that's part of the deception of the adversary your best interests your best thing ever is in being well pleasing to the lord that is in your best interests and when a man pleases the lord he makes even his enemies to be at peace with him what we've been talking about now is a just an ongoing kind of description of what has been the situation with the nation of israel and in this prophecy and mystery thing we see in item number six if you're looking at that that gentiles are to be blessed through israel's instrumentality and these verses we'll consider next week genesis 22 and zechariah 8 and and this is this is remarkable too because this means that this means that the good that is going to come and that can come whatever it is through humanity for humanity is going to come largely through israel that's remarkable and it's remarkable in that they are the tiniest nation in the world and then the counterpart of that in item six under the mystery the gentiles will be blessed through israel's obstinacy and actually we're experiencing that right now and israel is in a position of obstinacy and gentiles are being blessed through that it's a remarkable thing and in item seven the gentiles are blessed through israel's fall as opposed to item seven across the page the gentiles to be blessed through israel's rise the contrast is obvious and we will examine it in some more detail so thank you for your kind attention we've covered a lot of material here in psalm 78 but i think it was important for us to get this picture fixed in mind would you stand with me and we'll be dismissed our father once again we are awed at what you have been willing to provide for us by way of information and we know that whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have confidence trust reliance commitment we are so grateful that you have endowed within us a new nature that combats our old nature that allows us us to live lives that are well pleasing to you we recognize fully we all have our foibles we all have our flaws we all have our slips and slides and yet through it all you love us you've forgiven us past present future you've seated us in heavenly places in christ jesus all we want to do now is make the most of this life you've given us in honor to you in whatever way you see fit as individuals and as a congregation we pray that this is the prayer of each of us for in doing so we're not only loving and serving and worshiping you but we're also serving our own best interests we're so glad you make it work that way thank you in jesus name amen

you