



Isaiah 15-17

Tape #7249
Isaiah 15-17
By Chuck Smith

Shall we turn in our Bible to Isaiah chapter fifteen, as he deals with the burden of Moab. Now at this point it would be extremely helpful to have a Bible atlas, and to look at Moab on the bible atlas. Because he's going to be throwing in a lot of foreign names that won't mean anything to you, unless you could see them on a map and realize where they are in Moab. But let me try to help you a little bit. The area and the cities that he will be describing are for the most part, directly east of the Dead sea. The Nebo, and all are on the northern end of the Dead sea. Some of these cities are actually at the southern tip, and below the southern tip of the Dead sea. The river Arnon actually comes in right about the middle of the dead sea, all on the east side. So if you can, and if you have any idea of Bible maps, and geography, the land of Moab that it will be addressed here, is that which is directly east of the Dead sea, and then, slightly to the south of the Dead sea.

Now this was written about 704 BC. Two years after it was written Sargon, the king of Assyria attacked Arabia, and in his attack of Arabia, he had to pass through Moab, the area that we'll be reading about tonight. It seems that as he came through Moab, he devastated it, went on, and attacked Arabia, and then as they were coming back from their victory over Arabia, again they gave Moab just another beating, for good. So it, it's like a wave moving back and forth, the destruction that he's going to be pronouncing here upon Moab, that will be coming upon them. We know from secular history, and the records of the Assyrians, that Sargon, the king of Assyria in the year 702, made this invasion of Arabia. No doubt, this is what Isaiah is referring to in this prophecy that he writes in the year 704 BC. So it is a prophecy against Moab.

Because in the night of Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence; because in the night Kir of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence (15:1);

Two of the cities of Moab, and again, you need a map to know where they are. But they were besieged at night by the Assyrians, and destroyed.

He is gone up to Bajith, and to Dibon, the high places, to weep: Moab shall howl over Nebo, [A major city on the north side just directly east of the northern portion of the Dead sea.] and over Medeba: [Up in the same area.] and all their heads shall be baldness, and every beard cut off (15:2).

Now in Israel whenever there was a death in the family, in order to show grief, they would shave their heads, and their beards. Then for a period of time, they would not shave. They would let their beards grow, and let their hair grow. Then at the end of the period of mourning, they would again cut it off, and offer it as a offering unto God. But the shaved head, and the chopped, or cropped beards, was a sign of grief and of mourning over the dead. Thus, the sign of the mourning that would be taking place in Moab because of this invasion by the Assyrians, and by the many people and cities that would be destroyed.

In the streets they shall gird themselves with sackcloth (15:3):

Another sign of great mourning. You wear this itchy sackcloth, which they think is probably made of camel hide worn backwards. A camel is a very sticky kind of a, bristly fur on it, and would be very uncomfortable indeed!

on the tops of their houses, and in their streets, every one shall howl (15:3),

Now in that culture there is that wailing for the dead. A pastor was telling me just the other day of his first funeral, and it so happened that he was called to do this funeral, and the people were mid-eastern people. When he finished the ceremony, he said they all started wailing, and he said he wasn't really ready for that. It's sort of, uh, he said, "Lord! What a way to initiate me in doing funerals! You know, my first one, and had all of this wailing!" But, it again is a cultural thing, and in the Middle East they often, even to the present day, upon the burial of the body, and you've seen it on television, as they like to take the pictures of that to sort of grip our hearts here in the west. You see them wailing over their dead.

So their streets, they will be wearing sackcloth, the tops of their houses and in their streets, every one shall wail.

weeping abundantly. [Or overcome with grief.] And Heshbon shall cry, and Elealeh: and their voice shall be heard even unto Jahaz (15:3-4):

Now Heshbon is up on the northern part, and Jahaz is in the central part. So the wailing will be so loud he said, up there, that thirty miles away they'll hear them in Jahaz.

therefore the armed soldiers of Moab shall cry out; [In dismay, in fear, the men of war will be frightened, and fleeing.] his life shall be grievous unto him (15:4).

So the prophet Isaiah expresses his own grief for the destruction that is gonna come upon Moab. Isaiah says...

My heart shall cry out for Moab; [He is prophesying of the judgment and the destruction that is coming, but his own heart weeps for them, for the things that they're going to experience.] his fugitives [or refugees] shall flee unto Zoar, an heifer of three years old: for by the mounting up of Luhith with weeping shall they go it up; for in the way of Horonaim they shall raise up a cry of destruction (15:5).

So the whole land, and as Isaiah saith, it's like floods just passing back and forth through the land. Thus the cry of destruction, just waves, after waves.

For the waters of Nimrim shall be desolate (15:6):

Now Nimrim is at the southern end of the Dead sea. A, a stream that came into the Dead sea. But evidently the Assyrians stopped up the springs and this was a normal tactic of the Assyrians, to stop up the water flows. So the stream of Nimrim is desolate. It ceases.

and thus the grass is withered away, the grass fails, there is no green thing. [An area that was verdant, and lush is now dry.] Therefore the abundance they have gotten, and that which they have laid up, they have carried away to the brook of the willows. For the cry is gone round about the borders of Moab; [Just all around, back and forth.] the howling thereof unto Eglaim, and the howling thereof unto Beerelim, For the waters of Dimon shall be full of blood: and I will bring more upon Dimon, lions upon him that escape of Moab, and upon the remnant of the land (15:6-9).

The land will be so desolate it'll be taken over by wild animals, their streams turn to blood, horrible destruction coming upon Moab.

Chapter 16

Now in chapter sixteen it's a continuation of this pronounced destruction on Moab.

Send ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion (16:1).

Now Moab was captured by king David, and they began to pay tribute unto Israel in David's day. In Solomon, it actually tells us how that each year they paid a tribute to Solomon of over a hundred thousand sheep. This was continued for a time. When the kingdom was divided, the northern kingdom, Israel, continued to collect this tribute of sheep from Moab. However, later Moab rebelled against the taxation, and rebelled against Israel, and did not pay the tribute. Now it is being suggested by the prophet, that again, they pay the tribute. That they would send the land, the lamb, to the ruler of the land from Sela. Sela is the Hebrew word Petra, so from the rock, to the wilderness unto the mount of the daughter of Zion. So pay tribute unto Zion.

For it shall be, that, as a wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon (16:2).

The stream that comes into the Dead sea, or the river that comes in right about the middle of the Dead sea, coming out of Moab.

Now, at this point, and it is interesting, at this point, Isaiah makes a whole transition and switch. Right in the middle of talking about this destruction on Moab. He now switches scenes, he switches years. That which he's talking about is gonna happen within the next three years. But now he sort of switches and prophecy is interesting that way, for in the middle of this which is going to be taking place immediately, there is yet a prophetic utterance concerning the future.

To give you a little background to what he is prophesying, and at this point it is still yet future, it hasn't happened yet, but as we go on into the New Testament, we get a little foresight, and a little more insight to

what is going to be taking place.

In the twenty fourth chapter of Matthew, when the disciples were asking Jesus what would be the signs of His coming, and the end of the age, Jesus told them that when they saw the death, the abomination of desolation that was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place, then flee to the wilderness. Remember that passage? He said, "If you're on the housetop, don't even stop in your house to get your jacket. If you're out in the field, don't even return to your house. Get out of there as quickly as you can. Flee to the wilderness."

Now, he would, that was referring to the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet. So you have to go back to Daniel the prophet, and in the ninth chapter we read of the abomination that causes the desolation. Without giving you the background, and letting you go back and fill in the details of the background.

Out of the federation of European states, that will form the final world governing empire, there will arise a blasphemous leader, who blasphemes the God of heaven. He will have the economic power of the combined states of Western Europe. He will be the most powerful man on the face of the earth. He will have demonic powers, by which he will work wonders and signs in the eyes of the people. This man is known in the scriptures as, the beast, he is known as the man of sin, he is known as the son of perdition, and also known as the Antichrist. He will come to Israel, and make a covenant with Israel, a seven year type of a treaty. With this, or in this covenant with Israel, will no doubt be included the permission for them to rebuild their temple.

Now in Israel today, the faithful at the temple mount foundation, have banded together to rebuild the temple. I mean that, that's their goal, that's the whole of their existence, is the rebuilding of the temple. They have already begun to make the robes for the priests. They've begun to make the furnishings for the offerings in the temple. There is a plan, and a desire to rebuild the temple.

About three weeks ago, there was quite a bloody incident in Jerusalem, because of this faithful of the temple mount foundation. For on the last day of the feast of tabernacles, or Succoth, they were planning to go to the temple mount, and place a stone on the temple mount, which was to be a symbolic act of the first stone of the rebuilt temple. It was to be a symbolic act, by which they were declaring, or seeking to make a declaration to the world, that the temple mount is sacred to the Jews, and they have a right to build a temple there, that they might worship God. It is just as sacred and holy to the Jews, as it is to the Moslems. These people of the faithful to the temple mount foundation, were planning this demonstration on Succoh. The last day of the feast, which is the great day of that feast, as we read in John, and Jesus stood and cried on that day, saying, "If any man thirst come to me and drink".

Now the Arabs, or the Moslems, had received word that this group was going to come to the temple mount, place that stone in a symbolic gesture, and pray for the temple to be rebuilt. Thus they armed themselves with piles of stones and bricks, on the temple mount, waiting for them to come, intending to drive them off with their stones and bricks. The police stopped this group, and their march, several blocks away from the temple mount. They did not allow them to proceed. They forcibly prohibited them to make this declaration, because there was an order of the court in Israel that was an injunction against this demonstration. Because they knew that it would create tensions and problems. So the group was stopped by the police.

In the meantime, there at the western wall, where the Jews assemble for prayer, some twenty to thirty thousand Jews had gathered there to pray on this holy day. As the prayers were being finished, and the Jews started to leave that area, the Moslems on top, with their piles of rocks and bricks, not having any one to throw at, decided to throw at the people who were leaving the prayer, those people down below.

So there came this rain of stones over the top, and several Jewish people were injured, and needed to be hospitalized, who were struck by these stones, and bricks. There were thirty police on the temple mount. There usually is a police detachment up there, there's actually a little police station up there, in order to keep order, because they realize that it is a place that is filled with tension. So the police fired tear gas at these young fellows, throwing the rocks on the Jews, and then over the musiem, the little loud speakers that are all over Jerusalem, where they call the Moslems to prayer, five times a day, over these musiem, they began to

call the Moslems from all over Jerusalem, to come to the temple mount to a, for a holy war against the Jews. To kill the Jews who were trying to profane the temple mount. So the Moslems began to gather from around Jerusalem, towards the temple mount, and thus the big confrontation.

Those on the temple mount then began to throw stones at the police, who had fired the tear gas. So the police responded with rubber bullets, and many of them were injured as the result of being struck by the rubber bullets. But they set fire to the police station, and continued to stone them, and then the police opened with live ammunition. This is the thing that the UN is looking into and all of this. The police then responded with their light ammunition. Nineteen Arabs were killed. A hundred and fifty were injured, and the riot was put down. Immediately the UN called for a condemnation of Israel, and the U.S. backed the condemnation.

Interesting that about the same time over a hundred and fifty were killed over in India, as the Moslems and the Hindus were into it over there. But I didn't hear anything about a UN resolution to censor India you know, because of the put down of the riots there. But, as it you know, be that as it is, there is tension.

The Jews do want to rebuild their temple. According to the Bible, the temple will be rebuilt. No doubt, this covenant that the Antichrist makes with the Jews, at the beginning of the last seven year period, will include in that covenant or treaty, the permission to rebuild the temple mount.

Now the big naughty issue of it is that right in the center of the temple mount, there stands the dome of the Rock Mosque, and how can you rebuild the temple when the dome of the Rock Mosque stands in the center of the temple mount area? Three hundred and twenty two feet north of the dome of the Rock Mosque, there is a little flat bedrock area called the dome of the Tablets, which is directly in from the east gate.

Many of the scholars believe that this is the sight of the holy of holies for Solomon's temple. A man by the name of Dr. Asher Kauffman has probably done more research on this subject than any man alive. After all of his years of research, he is absolutely convinced that this dome of the Tablets, is indeed the place of the holy of holies of Solomon's temple. Which would mean that the Jews could build again their temple, over the sight of Solomon's temple, and not have to touch the dome of the Rock Mosque. The whole issue could be settled by just building a wall north of the dome of the Rock Mosque, leaving the whole southern end of the temple mount for the Moslems to have their holy place of worship. Now Al Aqsa, and the dome of the Rock, and they would have that whole southern end for their place of worship, and the northern end, which is about fifteen acres could be given to the Jews, for the rebuilding of their temple.

From Ezekiel, chapter forty two, it would appear that that is, and will be the solution, because Ezekiel in visions, saw the new temple. He measured the temple and the courts, and he measured a wall five hundred reeds that was there to separate the holy place, from the profane, in Ezekiel's words. Or, the new area of the temple from the dome of the Rock Mosque.

When John in the book of Revelation, chapter eleven saw the new temple, and was given a ruler to measure it, he was ordered to measure the temple and the courts, but he, the Lord said, "Don't measure the outer court, it's been given to the Gentiles". So if you were here, and by the grace of God, I hope you're not. But if you were here, in that period, when the Antichrist is revealed, and they begin to reveal the temple, I am certain that you will find that the solution that they will come up with that will satisfy both Jews, and Arabs, satisfy? Well, they'll agree to it. I don't think they'll either one, be satisfied. It'll, it'll still be tense between them. But it'll be, the suggestion that a wall be built, north of the dome of the Rock Mosque, and that full area north of that be given to the Jews, to the rebuilding of their temple. They will rebuild it over the sight of Solomon's temple, and the outer court will not be a part of it, because that's where the dome of the Rock Mosque is. It'll be separated with a wall. So Revelation eleven, Revelation, or Ezekiel forty two.

Now, after three and a half years, when the Jews have reinstituted their sacrifices, and their daily prayers, there on the temple, then the Antichrist will come to Jerusalem. He will go into the temple, into the holy of holies of this rebuilt temple. That's what Jesus is talking about. "When you see the abomination of desolation, that was spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place."

Daniel tells us in chapter nine that, "The prince of the people that shall come will make a covenant with Israel, but in the middle of the seven year period, he'll break that covenant, and he will create the abomination that will cause the desolation." The desolation is the great tribulation. He will create the final abomination that will bring on the wrath and the judgment of God, the desolation. As the great tribulation

period will begin. So Jesus said, “When you see that happen, when he comes”, and Daniel tells us further in chapter twelve that, “He’ll cause the daily prayers and oblations to cease.” Jesus said, “When you see that happen then flee out of Jerusalem, and don’t bother going to your house to get a jacket. Get out of there as quickly as you can. Because”, He said, “there shall be then a time of great tribulation, such as the world has never seen before or will ever see again.”

Now in the book of Revelation again, chapter twelve, John sees in a vision, this woman, “clothed with the sun and the moon, and the twelve stars, or the nation of Israel. She is in travail, ready to bring forth the man child. When it is born, Satan tries to destroy it, but he’s taken up into heaven.” When Satan sees that he has been thwarted by that, “he turns to make war against the remnant of the woman’s seed. But they are given wings of an eagle, where they are to be born to a wilderness place that God has prepared for them, where they will be nourished and taken care of for three and a half years.”

So Israel, the people, the Jews will be forced to flee. When the Antichrist stops the temple worship, they will realize this man is not their Messiah, they will think he is the Messiah to begin with, they’ll realize then that he is not the Messiah. They will, they will flee, and God will give them wings of an angel to bear them to the wilderness where God has prepared a place for them, where He will preserve them for the last three and a half years, which will be the great tribulation period.

So Isaiah now, in the midst of this prophecy against Moab, because Moab is to be an instrument of God in the preservation of the people in this last three and a half years, of the great tribulation period, he said...

Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; [That is, those of the Jews that are fleeing.] do not betray those that wander. Let my outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; [So God is saying, and of course it’s Jordan today.] be thou a covering to them from the face of the spoiler [Or the Antichrist] : for the extortioner [Another word for the Antichrist] is at an end, and the spoiler will cease, and the oppressors are consumed out of the land. [So shelter them, keep them until the spoiler is destroyed.] And in mercy (16:3-5)

And what’s gonna happen when the Antichrist is destroyed? At that time, Jesus is going to set up the kingdom. Jesus will come and establish God’s kingdom upon the earth. Your prayers, “Thy kingdom come, thy will be done”, will be fulfilled at that point. So the fifth verse has to do with the establishing of the kingdom of God, through Jesus. “And in mercy”...

shall the throne be established: and he shall sit upon it in truth in the tabernacle of David, judging, and seeking judgment, and hastening righteousness (16:5).

So that everlasting kingdom will be established at that time. So that’s a little insight into what is yet future. That which is not happened, as yet, but will happen in the last seven year cycle, that’s to be accomplished on the nation of Israel. For there are seventy, sevens determined upon the nation of Israel, and upon Jerusalem. Sixty nine were fulfilled, there is one that is yet future, and it will be when the Antichrist takes control over the United Nations of Europe, and makes the covenant with Israel, and the ole clock starts ticking off, once again, your last seven years, before the establishing of God’s kingdom upon the earth.

Now he comes right back now to the present, to Moab. The pride of Moab in those days.

We have heard of the pride of Moab; very proud: even his haughtiness, and his pride, and his wrath: but his lies shall not be so. Therefore shall Moab howl [The pride will turn into howling.] for Moab, and every one shall howl: [There’s that wailing again.] for the foundations of Kirharaseth shall ye mourn; surely they are stricken (16:6-7).

Again the Assyrians wiping back and forth through the land, hitting the major cities, and even the fields.

Now it is interesting that it was the practice of the Assyrians to destroy the orchards, and the crops. No reason, just devilishness. Part of the cruelty of the Assyrian. So...

The fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of Sibmah: and the lords of the heathen have broken down the principal plants thereof, and they are come even to Jazer, and they’ve wandered through the wilderness: her branches are stretched out, they are gone over the sea. [That is, the Dead sea.] Therefore I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of Sibmah: I will water thee with my tears, O Heshbon, and Elealeh: for the shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is falling (16:8-9).

So again, Isaiah speaks of his own grief. Wailing and weeping over the destruction that is come upon

this beautiful area of Moab, known for its glorious vineyards, and for the grapes, and the raisins, and so forth, that came from that area. The summer fruits. The harvest is destroyed. Verse ten...

And gladness is taken away, the joy of the plentiful field; and in the vineyards there will be no singing (16:’0),

And of course, the vineyards were, it’s sort of traditional, out in the vineyards, the singing. That’s where the Italians have become such great singers, out in their vineyards. The trampling of the grapes was always done with a, it was done by people, they have these big vats, and they would take off their shoes, and all, and then barefooted they’d trample the grapes to get the juice out of them. So you might think of that next time you, drink wine! We do it more scientifically today. But they still do that in some parts of the world. Great, great time, I mean it’s just a time of festivities as they’re trampling the grapes, and making the wine.

so the treaders shall tread out no wine [The treaders of those who are barefooted jumping on the grapes.] in their presses; for I have made their vintage shouting to cease. [All of the excitement and joy that went on with the pressing of the grapes at the time of harvest.] Wherefore [And of course, Isaiah is saying] my bowels shall sound like a harp for Moab, [“Within I’m just torn up for Moab, the groaning, deep, you know groaning within.] and my inward parts for Kirheres. [The city of Moab that is destroyed.] It shall come to pass, that when it is seen that Moab is weary on the high place, that she shall come to his sanctuary to pray; but shall not prevail (16:10-12).

Moab will turn to their gods. But the judgment is decreed, and even their prayers at this time will not avail.

This is the word that the Lord has spoken concerning Moab, since that time (16:13).

So it’s possible that Isaiah is referring, and quoting here from an earlier prophecy. But then he adds to this...

But now the Lord hath spoken, saying, Within three years, as the years of a hireling (16:14),

Now when a person was sold to a slave, as a slave, he really wouldn’t measure the time in years. He would always tell you the number of days. Slavery was an obnoxious thing, an abhorrent thing, and so they would know with exactness the very day that they were to be set free. So they would always tell you, “in so many days, I’m gonna be set free”. So the Lord has spoken, “Within the three years”, exactness, “as the years of a hireling.”

and all the glory of Moab shall be contemned, with all of that great multitude; and the remnant [Those that are left] will be very small and feeble (16:14).

At the time that Isaiah had written this, Moab was still in its glory. It was proud, they were very proud, and haughty. But Isaiah is prophesying that within three years, this is all going to come to pass. From one end of the nation to the other. It’s just gonna be decimated, and just a very few people will survive this horrible onslaught that will come from Assyria.

Chapter 17

He now turns his attention for a few verses, to Damascus, which is the capital of Syria. It is important to note that now this prophecy doesn’t follow in a chronological order. The prophecy we just read was written in 704, this prophecy was written some thirty years earlier. Now we, we always think in chronological order, we go you know, in that way, it’s just our mind sets. But with the, with the prophesies many times they were just collected, and put together with no thought of chronology. More or less the themes were bundled together. Thus this prophecy was written some thirty years earlier, and that could account for the change in style.

There are those Bible critics that question whether or not Isaiah was the author of chapters fifteen and sixteen. Because they say that there is a certain style that is deployed, and it is not a typical Isaiah style. Well, I’ll tell you what, if you read some of the things that I wrote thirty years ago, and you would read something that I would write today, my writing style has changed rather dramatically in thirty years. If it were analyzed by a computer, or by critics they’d probably say, “Well it wasn’t the same man that wrote both of these. You know, there’s a different style”, and all. Well, in thirty years God help you, you must’ve gained something, and your style surely could change in, in that period of time. I know that mine has.

So this was written some thirty years earlier, and he speaks of this burden of Damascus. Now this was before Damascus fell, just a, a few years before the Assyrians destroyed Damascus. That was under Tiglathpileser. Moab was destroyed by Sargon one of the later kings of Assyria. So...

The burden of Damascus. Behold, Damascus is taken away from being a city, [He is prophesying and predicting the destruction that will come upon Damascus.] and it shall be a ruinous heap. The cities of Aroer are forsaken: [It's so destroyed will they be, that,] there will be flocks that will graze upon them, [The people will be gone, and these areas that were once cities, will just be a grazing area for the flocks.] which will lie down in the cities, and there won't be anybody left to make them afraid (16:1-2).

To frighten them, to scare the flocks. The people will have been destroyed, or carried away captive, and they were both, by the Assyrians.

The fortress also shall cease from Ephraim, [And so the judgment is not only upon Damascus, but coming down now into the northern kingdom of Israel, upon Ephraim.] and on the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria: they shall be as the glory of the children of Israel, saith the Lord of hosts (17:3).

Now they are both Syria, and Israel, to be destroyed by the Assyrians. This did happen some two years after Isaiah prophesied it.

And in that day it shall come to pass, that the glory of Jacob shall be made thin, and the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean. [Destruction is going to come, the glory of Jacob's gonna be wiped out, it's gonna be hard times.] And it shall be as when the harvestman gathered the corn, and they reaped the ears with his arm; and [as it, and] it shall be as he that gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim. Yet gleanings shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof, saith the Lord God of Israel (17:4-6).

So he's saying that the destruction is going to be like just the, the little remnant after a field has been harvested. When a field was harvested, there would be just a few shocks of grain still standing, and the poor people would come and gather that. But, and the same with the olive. They would, when the olives were ripe, they would take, and shake the branches, to shake the olives down. Much like they do walnuts. Walnut season, they have these large poles with a hook on them, they shake the branches and the walnuts fall. But there's always a few walnuts left in the top of the tree. When they shake the olives, there's always at the top, where they can't really reach well with their sticks to beat them all, there's always a few olives left at the top, and on those branches that were so loaded down with olives, there's always four or five olives on each of those branches. So the Lord is saying, "There will be just a few people left. It'll be just like an olive tree that's been shaken, where there's just a few at the top, and on those branches that were once loaded down". Just four or five, as the destruction will be so thorough, and the nation will be so totally wiped out. It'll be just a very small, small remnant that will be left.

At that day shall a man look to his Maker, and his eyes will have respect to the Holy One of Israel (17:7).

I've often wondered, as I look at the world today, and as I look at the United States today, what will it take to turn our hearts back to God? I see our nation in the same path of Israel. As Jeremiah the prophet said, "They have forsaken", God said through Jeremiah, "They have forsaken me the Fountain of living waters, and they have hewn out cisterns, but they are broken cisterns that can hold no water." They've carved out these caves, but they won't hold water. I see how we have forsaken the true and the living God, the Fountain of living water. Men are trusting in philosophies. They're trusting in broken concepts that can hold no water. They, they, they can't give you life, they can't sustain you.

I look at the philosophy of man today, and I look at the ideals, and I look at the whole morass of our society, and I see us, as we're beginning to bear, and see the fruit of having sown to the wind. We are starting to reap the whirlwind. We can see it in our eroding society. We ought to be absolutely up in arms over the conditions that are going on in our world today! You don't know when you go out to your car tonight, if your stereo's gonna be there! They have armed guards all over the parking lots at South Coast Plaza. We are living in a violent age, and the whole moral corruption that we are seeing, is just, is just a part of the fruit of, of teaching that there is no God. That man has evolved out of the Protozoon ooze of the billions of years past. That it is just one series of fortunate kind of accidental circumstances that has caused

you to exist.

One puzzling thing to me, concerning evolution is, how did the sexes ever get started? You know how is it in the evolution, that there was a woman and a man, and how is it that we sort of evolved, we're, we're, we're different for sure. Yet we have seemed to evolve to the same degree, but we couldn't have come along the same lines. How in the world did they survive before they were the sexes? How is it that when the sexes did evolve, that they sort of evolved parallel, and thus the same kind of accidents were happening on both sides of the fence. These mutant changes and accidental circumstances were happening on both sides. Real problem for the evolutionist, not for me. Because I believe that male and female, created He them. I think when He did it, He just showed a lot of interesting genius. And I love the, the way God created us different, and with a capacity, with a capacity to reproduce after our kind. That to me is such a marvel, such a miracle, such a glorious miracle! Reproduction. Ah, I just think it's great! Then even giving us a sex drive so we would want to reproduce. For you see without the sex drive, Adam would've gone fishing, and the story would've ended right there.

But look how we've perverted the whole thing today! Men living with men, women with women, and now the homosexuals are talking about producing laboratory children so that they can you know, create their own race. Marriage will not be necessary. Relationships between opposite sex will not be necessary. Whew! We've gone so far. I marvel that God has been patient and has allowed us to go as far as we have. But what will it take to turn us back? When are we gonna wake up, that this is a one way street to destruction?

Now here is Israel, man, there's only, you know a few berries left in the top of the tree, there's only a few left on the, on the fruitful branches, and, and, at that point they turned to God. Is it gonna take that kind of a judgment against the United States before those that are left will turn to God? What will it take? "In that day a man will look to his Maker", that is, that day in which they've just about totally been wiped out. "His eyes will have respect to the Holy One of Israel."

He will no longer look at the altars, the work of his hands, neither shall he respect that which his fingers have made, or the groves, [Which, as we've told you before was Ashtoreth, or the pornography of their days.] or the images. [He'll turn away from that kind of rot after this horrible destruction.] And in that day shall his strong cities be as a forsaken bough, an uppermost branch, which they left because of the children of Israel: and there shall be desolation. [And surely that was the case in Israel, it was completely desolate.] Because [And this is the reason why it happened, because,] you have forgotten the God of thy salvation, and you have not been mindful of the rock of your strength (17:7-10),

"You sought to rely upon yourself, and your own strength, and upon your own genius, and upon your own politicians, and you haven't been mindful that God is our strength, God is the strength of the nation." But oh how they seek to deny that today! They're seeking to rewrite our history, to eliminate God from the textbooks. But America is strong because of our founding fathers having a faith in God. Our early colleges, Yale, Harvard, and all, were, were built to train men for the ministry, and it was from these colleges where men were trained for the ministry, and born again, that they looked for the leadership for our government. Our early government was, was filled with Christian legislators who had come from Yale, and Harvard, and these colleges that were built as seminaries to train students, and train men to serve the Lord. Some served the Lord in the pulpits, and others served the Lord in the halls of Congress. But there was that spiritual tenor in the early part of our nation, and that's why we became strong and powerful.

Now go back there, and I think it's, I think it's just endemic of the whole tragic scene that the highest alcohol per capita consumption in the United States takes place in Washington D.C. Our legislation, the lobbying that goes on in the bars. "Because you have forgotten the God of your salvation. You have not been mindful of the Rock of your strength."

therefore you will plant pleasant plants, and you will set them with strange slips (17:10):

This is a reference to an interesting cult, and you can read it in history. There was this cult where the women would plant these various plants, and seek to develop them with some kind of mystic, and magical kind of background. It's a cultish thing that was going on with the women of Israel.

In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in the morning thou shalt make thy seed to flourish: but the harvest shall be a heap in the day of grief and desperate sorrow. So woe to the multitude of many

people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas; [This is the invading army that is going to come, this noise of the army, like the noise of a stormy sea.] to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of the mighty waters! [An army in battle as they come charging down, the yelling, and the clanging of the spears, of the shields and so forth, and this roar that comes up from this battle.] The nations shall rush like the rushing of many waters: but God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains (17:11-13),

God is gonna deal with Assyria. Assyria's destroyed Israel, but yet God will deal with Assyria, and He'll wipe her out. It'll be like chaff in the top of the mountains, where the wind just comes and blows it away. You remember in Psalm one, where he talks about, "Blessed is the man who stands not in the way of the sinner, and sees the scornful, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord. And in His law doth he meditate day and night, be like a tree planted by the rivers of water. But the wicked are not so. They're like the chaff which the wind bloweth away." Though the, the wicked are to be blown away, like chaff on the mountain. They would usually take rocks on the top of the mountain, where there's a good breeze, nothing to hinder the breeze, and that's where they would sort of whittle the wheat. They would take the wheat, and throw it in the air, and the wind would blow the, the chaff. The, the hull, and all. It'd blow it away, and the grain would drop back on the rock. So the nation's gonna be blown away like chaff is blown away from the mountain top. So, "They'll be chased as the chaff of the mountains."

before the wind, and like the rolling thing before the whirl wind. [That is the tumbleweeds, if you've ever seen tumble weeds that are taken up in a whirlwind and all, just wiping them out.] Behold at eventide trouble; and before the morning he is no longer existing (17:13-14).

This is what happened. In the evening, the angel of the Lord went through the camp of the Assyrians, wiped out a hundred and eighty five thousand, blew them away like the chaff. Like a tumbleweed. In the morning they weren't there. In the morning the children of Israel got up and looked out at the camp of the Assyrians, and they were all dead corpses. Prophecy was fulfilled.

So this is the portion for those that spoil us, [This is what's gonna happen to Assyria.] and this will be the lot of those that have robbed us (17:14).

So God's judgment upon Assyria.

Next week, as you get into the nineteenth chapter, and God pronounces His judgment concerning Egypt, you're gonna find something very, very fascinating, for there in the nineteenth chapter, Isaiah tells us of the building of the Aswan dam. But more interesting than that, he tells you of all the ecological problems that will develop from the building of that dam. The interesting thing is that today, those ecological problems that Isaiah predicted would follow the building of the Aswan dam, have indeed taken place. We'll be talking about that as we look at Isaiah's fascinating prophecy, twenty seven hundred years ago, concerning the building of the Aswan dam, and warning them not to do it! He says, "The people who have counseled you are fools." For he tells them the ecological problems that will come about as the result of the building of the Aswan dam.

So gonna get into some fascinating prophecy next week. Again you see how amazing the word of God is! Because it speaks not only of past things, but it speaks of things that you can observe in the world around you today. Things that we have seen in our life, I've seen in my lifetime. Some of you weren't around when the Aswan dam was built, but I was. But you can see the ecological damage, that's still happening today, from the result of the building of that dam.

Then it also speaks of things that haven't happened yet. They're coming in another few months, or a year or so. You know what I mean? It's just so fascinating to have the Bible that covers such a broad range of events. As, as God said, "I know the end from the beginning." And, He's told us the end, the end of the story. We know how the story's gonna end. There's really no mystery, as far as the end of the story. We know exactly how it's gonna end. We know how the things are gonna come together. The Lord scores a field goal in the last two seconds, and we win the game. You know, so,!

Again, let us give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good. For His mercy endureth forever! May you this week, make it a point, to keep the complaining down to a minimum, and the thanksgiving up to a maximum. Let's just really give thanks to God with grateful hearts, for all of His goodness, and His blessings to us, His

children. May you thus experience the blessing of the Lord, His presence, the glory of His salvation, as you walk with Him this week.