



Micah 6-7

Tape #7362
Micah 6-7
By Chuck Smith

God's love. The Bible speaks of His longsuffering, His patience, and here are a people who have totally bailed. They're in a state of rebellion against God, and still, the reference is to, "My people". But God is saying...

What have I done unto thee? wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me (6:3).

"Come, name your cause. What is it?" What is it that God has done that you're upset with Him? That you're disappointed with Him? That you have turned your back on Him? So God is calling for them to, to lay out their cause.

For [He tells them what He has done.] I brought thee up out of the land of Egypt, I redeemed you when you were servants (6:4);

Now when a person was a slave, or a person was sold as a slave on the auction block, to purchase a slave, and then to set him free was to redeem them. This was a very common practice. If, if say one of your family members was in debt, under the law they could be sold for the debt that they owed, until they had served a sufficient time to be equal with the debts that they owed. So a person who was in debt, could not pay his debt, he could be forced then, to be sold as a slave, for the period of time that would equate with the amount of money that he owed. And thus if you had say, a son, a daughter who owed money, they could not pay it, they were brought to the slave box, you could then go and purchase them. You were their "kinsman redeemer". The money then would go to pay the debt, you could free them. God is saying, "You were slaves in Egypt, but I redeemed you from that bondage that you experienced, and that you knew in Egypt".

Now in the Bible there is what is known as typology, where the things of the old testament, became a type of things in the new testament. There are studies in what they call types, and shadows. This is a type of Jesus, this is a type of His redemption, this is a type of the resurrection. Or this is a shadow of things to come. This was an event that was foreshadowing another event in the future. Types and shadows. And, in the types and shadows, the children of Israel, their experience in Egypt as slaves, under this horrible bondage, the tyrannical reign of the Egyptians over them, where they were mistreated, where they were beaten, where they were enslaved, is a type of the life in sin, in bondage to sin. Their coming out, of course, the, the lamb that was slain for their first, uh, to save the first born, was we know, a type of Jesus, who was slain in order that we would not die.

But their coming then into the Red sea, was a type of baptism, Paul tells us, in I Corinthians, ten. Their coming through the wilderness was a type of that Christian experience, where we haven't yet entered into the fulness of the Spirit, and we are sort of, having come out of the bondage of sin, we are still in this sort of state in between, where there's still sort of a drawing to the world, but also a drawing to that new life that is ours in Christ. The walking still with the power of the flesh still manifesting itself, and yet longing for this new life of the Spirit in the Lord. This is where we begin to experience the work of God.

There was, you might say, a legitimate wilderness experience. To get from Egypt to the promised land, there was a wilderness in between. They had to pass through. But under normal circumstances, they could've made the trip in a month. So you have a legitimate one month wilderness experience, but they had a forty year illegitimate, God didn't intend that they live the rest of their lives in the wilderness! God wanted them to come into the land, this rich land that He had promised them. That was God's desire for them. But they came to Kadesh-Barnea, the entrance to the land, and when the spies brought back their discouraging reports, they were filled with fear. They said, "We can't do it!", and, and so, God said, "Alright. Because you did not believe and trust me to fulfill my word, because you said that your children will be preys to these people, you will remain, and wander in the wilderness, until this whole generation dies off. Your children which you said will be destroyed, they'll go in, they'll possess the land".

So that illegitimate wilderness experience unfortunately, is where many Christians still are. You've come out of the bondage of sin. You've come out of Egypt, you've been baptized, but your whole Christian experience, is, is not one of real overflowing joy. It's not one of real victory in the Lord. But it's sort of just an endurance.

Now when they came to the Jordan river, and here is where typology gets twisted from some of our hymns. We used to hear this song, "Swing low, sweet chariot, coming for to carry me home. I looked over Jordan, what did I see, a band of angels coming after me! Coming for to carry me home! Swing low, sweet chariot!", and the idea was that Jordan was death. The Beulah land, or the land of Canaan was heaven. "Oh Beulah land, sweet Beulah land upon the highest mount I stand, and look away across the sea, where mansions are prepared for me. I view the shining glory shore, my heaven, my home for ever more." So it was thought in hymnology to be heaven. You know, and Jordan is death, crossing over Jordan you know, low over Jordan! "I won't have to cross Jordan alone. Jesus died for my sins to atone, through the darkness I see, He'll be waiting for me. I won't have to cross Jordan alone." So through the hymnology, Jordan came to represent death, and entering into Canaan land, into heaven.

But, in reality, Jordan represents the leaving of the wilderness, and coming into the promised land. It is the death to the old life, to the old nature, it's where I reckon that old man to be dead, and I begin to live a life in the Spirit, which is that life of richness, and that life of blessing. You see when they came into the land, they still had battles. When you get to heaven, you're not gonna have any more battles. They even knew defeat when they came to Ai, you're not gonna know defeat when you get to heaven. So it is a, it is a type of this life in Christ, where the Lord said to Joshua, "Every place you put your foot, I have given to you as a possession". It was going in and taking that which God had promised.

So, in our walk in life in the Spirit, every place you put your foot, God's given it. God has given us exceeding rich and precious promises that by these, we are partakers of the divine nature. But I have to go in and take it. I have to lay claim to it. So often when there is that area of the flesh, that God is dealing with, and as that area of the flesh is manifested, I recognize that this is a part of the old nature, this is a part of the old life, this is the fleshly nature, and I reckon this to be dead! I don't have to be subject to this any longer! And, I set my foot, I lay claim. "Every place you put your foot", God said, "I have given it to you." So we are growing, we are developing.

The interesting, forty years wandering in the wilderness didn't give them one acre of ground. There are some people who have been living a Christian life for forty years, and they haven't gained one acre of ground. They're in the stage, same stage of spiritual infancy that they were when they started. They came in, but they didn't go beyond that. They haven't grown. But when they came into the land, every place they put their foot was theirs. God gave it to them.

Now, the unfortunate thing is that they never took all that God gave them. They never did possess the whole land, and I think that is an unfortunate thing too. As Christians I think that there is so much more for all of us to attain, to achieve, to receive from the Lord, that we sometimes get sort of, "Well, I'm satisfied. This is good, I'm you know, happy, healthy, and not too wise, but I'm happy you know, I'm satisfied". A spiritual complacency, where I'm not pressing on any further. That's always a sad place, when a person becomes spiritually complacent, satisfied, content. "Well, you know I'm saved and walking with the Lord." That's fine, but Paul has said, "Pressing towards the mark". Pressing on, taking more of, of this territory that God has promised to us, and this life of victory in the Spirit.

So God is saying, "I brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of this bondage, I redeemed you out of the house of the slaves."

and I sent before thee Moses, and Aaron, and Miriam. O my people, [He says] remember now what Balak the king of Moab consulted, and what Balaam the son of Beor answered (6:4-5),

Now Balak had sought to hire Balaam to curse them. Balaam said, "I cannot curse them whom God hath blessed. There is no divination or enchantment that I can use against them, because they are the people of God". So where the kingdom had been cursed, in reality, Balaam blessed. He blessed them so greatly, talking about the glory of Jacob, and the glory of the star that would rise, the Messiah, and all. But the king became angry with the prophet. But God said, "I did that. The king wanted you cursed, but I blessed you".

and then from Shittim unto Gilgal (6:5);

Now Shittim, or the Acacia grove, was the last place that they had camped before they came into the promised land. That was the last place on the other side of Jordan. Between Shittim and Gilgal was the Jordan River. Gilgal was the first encampment when they came into the land. But between the two was the Jordan river, and you remember the story of how God stopped the Jordan river, at the flood season, so that they were able to cross the Jordan, the whole group of them. Because God stopped the Jordan River. They picked up the twelve stones, and put a pile of stones on the side of the Jordan river near Gilgal, so that in time to come, when the children would say, "Daddy what's that pile of stones?", the daddies could say, "We came to the Jordan river, it was overflowing its banks, it was flood tide, but God stopped the Jordan river, so that we could cross over into the land that He had promised".

So, God is rehearsing for them, that which He had done for them. "Remember these things that I have done." Remember He is saying, "Name your case against me. What do you have against me? What have I done that you, you've turned against me. Testify against me." God is now testifying for Himself, that which He has done for them. Now the people respond...

How shall we come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, and with calves of a year old? [It was thought that those little calves of year old were the most prized sacrifices unto the Lord.] Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn child for my transgression, the fruit [or the rest of the children] for the sin of my soul (6:6-7)?

"What does God want? What sacrifice can I bring? A little yearling? Or, should I bring thousands of rams? Or millions of gallons of oil?" That was used in the burnt offering sacrifices. "Or even shall I offer my firstborn child? O the rest of my children to the Lord?" These are not the things that God was wanting. This was the question, this was what I should offer to the Lord.

Take a look at Isaiah, chapter one, beginning with about verse ten. "Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom. Give ear unto the law of our God, you people of Gomorrah. To what purpose", and this is spiritual Sodom, and spiritual Gomorrah that He's talking to. The children of Israel, who were as Sodom and Gomorrah. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me, saith the Lord. I am full of burnt offerings and rams, and the fat of dead beasts. I delight not in the blood of the bullocks, or the lambs, or the he goats. When you come to appear before me, who has required this at your hand, to tread my courts?" "Who's forced you to do this?" "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and the sabbaths, the calling of the assemblies, I cannot away with;" or, "Get rid of them!" "It is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I'm weary to bear them. And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide my eyes from you: yea, when you make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Wash, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease doing evil. Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as will. If you be willing and obedient, you will eat of the good of the land."

You remember when Saul was king in Israel, and the nation had become strong. When the children of Israel had first come out of Egypt, the Amaleks had attacked them. They had attacked from the rear of the camp, where the elderly people, the stragglers, those that were sick, they attacked from that cowardly position. So Moses stood on the mount and watched the battle. As long as he held up his arms, Israel prevailed. But his arms fell down, the Amaleks prevailed, until there was two fellows on either side, holding up his arms. God gave the victory unto Israel. But the Lord said to Moses, "I'm, I've got a cause against these Amaleks. When you come into the land, and become strong, you're to come on down and wipe them out, for this dastardly attack".

Now, again in typology, interestingly enough, Amalek is a type of the flesh, the life of the flesh, the old man, the old nature. So that when Israel was now settled, they were now strong, God sent Samuel to Saul, and said, "He wants you to go down and settle that score against Amalek. Utterly wipe them out. Don't leave

anything alive. Animals, nothing. Utterly slay everything". That's really God's order towards the flesh. Don't leave any remnant of it. Don't leave any place for Satan to have a foothold in your life. Bring it to the cross, reckon the old man to be dead, don't make a treaty with your flesh, a co-existence, to live in peace. "You don't bother me, I won't bother you", you know. But God wants it to be brought completely to the cross. "That we might live, and walk after the Spirit, and give no place to the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof", the scripture tells us.

But Saul went down, and God gave him the victory over the Amalekites. However, he saw some of the cattle and some of the sheep, that seemed to be good stock, decided to bring that back. He also brought back the king Agag. And, when Saul came back, Samuel went out to meet him. Samuel now was old, his eyes were covered with cataracts, he couldn't see, but he still had strong spiritual discernment, and he could hear. So as he met Saul, Saul said, "As the Lord liveth, I've done everything that God told me to do!" He said, "As the Lord liveth if you've done everything that God has told you to do, how come I can hear the sheep and the cattle?" He said, "Oh they were so good, so wonderful, I thought I would bring them back so that we could sacrifice them to the Lord!"

You know, I think these spiritual excuses are some of the most damnable of all of all excuses. "Oh I just thought we'd bring it. We'll sacrifice it." He said, "To obey is better than to sacrifice, and to hearken better than the fat of rams". He rebuked him, he said, "Rebellion is of the sin of witchcraft, and because you have rejected God from ruling over you, God has rejected you from ruling over His people". The old prophet turned to walk away, and Saul grabbed his coat, but the prophet kept walking. His coat ripped, and he turned and he said, "So God is gonna rip the kingdom out of your hands, and give it to another who will obey and please Him".

So, interestingly enough, you remember the story of Esther, and the endeavor to destroy all of the Jews by that wicked man Haman. Who was so intense, because Mordecai wouldn't bow to him, and he had the king sign a decree, that on a certain day, every Jew in the whole kingdom would be killed. Interestingly enough, he was an Amalekite. A type of the flesh. If you don't bring it to the cross and get rid of it, it'll come back to haunt you. It'll come back to destroy. The flesh life, you cannot give place to the flesh, to live any longer therein.

So, here the people are saying, "Well what does God want? Sacrifices?", and the answer is, He has shown you. You don't need to ask what does God want. He has shown you what He wants.

He's shown you, O man what is good; and what does the Lord require, [You're not to bring rivers of oil, not to bring thousands of rams, not to bring the firstling, or your children or whatever]. but just do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God (6:8).

That's what God desires. Just be fair. Do justly, and love mercy. Don't be wanting always to get even, and to take advantage, but just walk humbly with God. But, that's exactly what they were not doing!

The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and to the man of wisdom: hear ye the rod, who hath appointed it. Are there yet the treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked (6:9-10),

Those ill gotten gains. In the house of the wicked, the treasures, the money that they had gotten by stealing, by extortion, by cheating, by dishonest practices in business. Treasures of wickedness in the house of the wicked.

and the scant measure that is abominable (6:20)?

They, went, they would have a cup, that wasn't a full cup. So he filled a cup, but it wasn't really a full cup. It used to be that the United States government had the bureau, the United Bureau of Standards, Weights, and Measures. They would go around testing the gas pumps all the time to make sure that a gallon was a gallon. They used to come into the market, when we used to use the scales in the market, and they would have little pound weights, and half pound weights, two pound weights, five pound weights, and they would put them on the scales to make sure that when it said five pounds, that it was exactly five pounds. Then they would put the seal on the scales, and they would sign it, "The Standard Weights and Measures", to make sure there was a standardizing of, of weights. That a pound was always a pound. That a gallon was always a gallon. A quart was always a quart.

So, we realize that if you don't have a nationalized standard, you might be thinking you're buying a

gallon of gas, and your car gets twenty miles to the gallon, but you're only getting three quarters of a gallon of gas. Though the pump says a gallon. So it was necessary to standardize the weights and measures, to make sure that we maintain the standards. But they weren't doing that. They were giving a scant measure.

There was a case in England, where a baker took a farmer to court with a complaint, that the farmer when he first started selling butter to the baker, was giving him a full pound of butter. But according to the baker, as of late, the farmer was not giving him a full pound of butter, but something like twelve ounces instead of a pound. So he had brought his complaint to the courts. The poor farmer, in his response to the complaint said, "Judge I don't have any real scales, except the balanced scales. That's all I have". So he said, "What I have done is just take his pound loaf of bread, and put it on one side of the scale, and measured the pound of butter by his bread". The case was dismissed.

But here they, they, and, and they had these bags with false weights. When they were selling something, they would use the heavier weights, when they were buying something, they would use the lighter weights. So God is complaining about their crooked practices. "The scant measure", He said, "it's abominable, cheating people!"

Shall I count them pure who are using wicked balances, and with a bag full of deceitful weights? [Heavier, lighter weights.] For the rich men thereof are full of violence (6:11-12),

Now this is the result of a society that's turned its back upon God, upon the moral principals that God has established in the scriptures. These kids just coming from Russia, one of the big complaints over there, even as Russia is trying to recover from the devastating effect of communism, though we are giving them all kinds of economic support, the big problem is the graft, and the corruption that, you try to send them aid, but those that are receiving it are ripping it off. They are then charging extra for it.

They seem to have no conscience, because they have been an atheistic society for so long, that cheating is just a way of life! Stealing is a way of life, deceitfulness is a way of life! Without a moral base, without integrity, without honor, without honesty, then your whole society breaks down. You can't trust what the person has said. He may look you right in the face and say, "I just bought this for twenty five dollars", when he only paid fifteen cents for it! So your whole system breaks down, if there isn't a moral standard among the people, where you are taught to be honest. You are taught to be honorable, you're taught to have integrity, you're taught to keep your word. In a lot of these nations that's the big problem. A person's word doesn't mean anything! They will look you square in the, in the eye. They'll shake your hand, they'll put their hand on a bible and swear, "I'll do it!"

I met the former minister of agriculture in Israel, and he was telling me how that he went to Iran under contract, to set up this huge, modern dairy. He had this signed contract with this Iranian official, one of the government officials, to set up this huge dairy over there. He spent several months in getting this modern dairy set up for Iran, which was gonna revolutionize their whole dairy industry. When he got it all set up, he went in for payment, and he said, "The thing is all set ready to go, I'd like my money now". The fellow said, "What money?", you know. He said, "Well I have this contract with you", and the fellow says, "Let me see it", and he tore it up. Says, "You don't have any contract". He said, "What can you do?", he said, "I just had to go home, back to Israel". But he said, "I knew the mind of these people", he said, "That's why you people shouldn't deal with them. You don't know the way they think". He said, "I know the way they think".

He said, "I set it all up, but I didn't teach them how to run it". He said, "I got a call, and the fellow said, You haven't finished your job. We don't know how to run it!", he said, "Sorry, I'm through!", he said, "But you've got a contract with us!", he said, "Oh no, I don't have a contract, you tore it up". Fellow said, "Oh I tore it up because it wasn't for enough. You really should've had more". He said, "Bring me the money to my home here in Israel, and I will come back, and teach you how to run it". So he made them actually bring the money, the certified checks and all, right to his home, and then he went back and taught them how to run the thing. But he said, "If you don't know the way they deal, you're, you're in big trouble!", and he said, "For the westerners to go in and try and deal, you don't understand their mindsets!", and we're learning very fast. Because, integrity is, is sort of going by the boards with honesty and honor. It's sad, because the result is a breakdown in the society. This is what had happened to Israel. There was a deceitfulness. There was the cheating, these different weights. It results in violence. The mob type of rule.

and the inhabitants have spoken lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. [“They lie to you, they deceive you.”] Therefore [Because of this, God said.] I will make thee sick in smiting thee, in making the desolate because of your sins (6:12-13).

“Because of these things, you’re gonna become desolate.” And, every and any nation, that loses the moral base, is destined to be sick and desolate.

Thus you will eat, but you will not be satisfied; in thy casting down shall be in the midst of thee; and thou shalt take hold, but you shall not deliver; and that which thou hast delivered you will give up to the sword (12:14).

“You’re gonna lose everything. The land is going to become desolate.”

Thou shalt sow, but you won’t reap; [“Someone else will reap what you have sown.”] you shall tread the olives, but you will not anoint yourself with the oil; and with the sweet wine, but you will not drink it. For the statutes of Omri are kept (12:15-16),

Now Omri was one of the most wicked kings of the northern kingdom. It tells us that he was wicked above all the others. He had established different statutes for the people. He had led them in the worship of Baal, and they had forsaken the statutes of God. They were living by these more liberal statutes. Much as what is happening in the United States today. We have forsaken basically, the law of God upon which our nation was founded. We are beginning to initiate more and more liberal statutes that are corrupting the nation, and taking us down the tubes.

the works of the house of Ahab, [That wicked king.] you walk in their counsels; that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof a hissing: [That is, people despising and hissing at them.] therefore ye shall bear the reproach of the people (6:16).

Chapter 7

Woe is me! [The prophet declares.] for I am as when they have gathered the summer fruits, as the grape gleanings of the vintage: there is no cluster to eat: my soul desired the firstripe fruit. [Desolation has begun to set in, nothing there to eat.] The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none that is upright among men (7:1-2):

This dishonest, cheating ways has infiltrated through the entire society. No more honorable men, no more honest men. Everybody is corrupt. “The good man is perished.”

they all of them lie in wait for blood; they hunt every man his brother with a net (7:2).

No respect, no honor. The family life is broken down.

That they may do evil with both hands earnestly, the prince asketh, and the judge asketh for a reward; and the great man, he utters his mischievous desires: so they wrap it up (7:3).

Bribery. Government officials bribed. The prince asks for a reward. You have to go in to the government offices with special little gifts. The same with the judges, they can be bought off.

The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge: [In other words, you can’t get around them without getting hurt.] the day of thy watchmen and thy visitation cometh; and now shall there be perplexity (7:4).

The nation is gonna be perplexed. They’re gonna have problems they’re not gonna be able to solve, or to deal with. Just as we are perplexed as to what to do with the gangs, what to do about drive by shootings. We are perplexed as to what to do about the drug situation. We’re perplexed as to what to do about so many things, because the moral base has eroded. “The best of them are like a briar or a thorn.” That’s the best of them! When you get to the worst of them, you’re really in trouble.

Trust ye not in a friend, [You can’t even trust in a friend anymore!] you can’t put confidence in a guide: keep the doors of your mouth from her that lies in your bosom. [Even your wife may turn against you!] For the son dishonors the father, the daughter rises up against her mother, the daughter in law against her mother in law; and a man’s enemies are the men of his own house (7:5-6).

A total disorder within the nation. The family has broken down completely. The last faction of strength within a nation.

Therefore [He said, “Because of this”,] I will look unto the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation:

and my God will hear me (7:7).

“My only hope is in the Lord, because the whole system is so corrupt! Things have gotten so bad, the only hope is in the Lord! I’ll look to the Lord, because there seems to be no answer any place else! I will look to the Lord!”

Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: because when I fall, I shall rise; because when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me (7:8).

The wonderful thing about walking with the Lord, I may fall, but I will rise! It may be darkness, but the Lord will be a light to me! You are to be a light in this dark world. I’ve often said, there is really no sin in falling. Every body does! The sin is lying there. Get up, start over again!

I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him (7:9),

God is righteous, he is not trying to justify himself, but he is justifying God. “I will bear this indignation. I, I have sinned. I’m guilty!”

until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness (7:9).

“This is not the end. God’s truth will triumph. God’s kingdom shall be established. Righteousness shall cover the earth, as the water covers the sea.” The prophet said...

Then she that is mine enemy shall see it, and shame shall cover her which said unto me, Where is the Lord your God? my eyes shall behold her: now shall she be trodden down as the mire [Or the mud] in the streets (7:10).

The psalmist said, “That they say unto me, Where is now your God?”, he said, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us give glory, but unto thy name. He talks about how the heathen say unto them, “Where is now your God?”. You know, it’s interesting that when trouble comes your way, there are so many really who are upset with you for your faith in God, when trouble comes, they always are there to say, “Well, where’s your God now?” This is the kind of taunt that the prophet was going through. “Where is your God now? Look what’s happened. Look what’s happening to you! Where is your God?” But the psalmist answers, “Our God is in the heaven!” “Where is God?” “He’s in the heavens, and He’s done whatsoever He has pleased. He’s in control!” I may not understand what He’s doing. Here was the prophet, “He will bring me forth to the light.”

I know the end result is gonna be good! He may take me through some dark places, but He’s gonna bring me out into the light, and I will behold His righteousness. I will one day see the plan, the whole plan, of God, and I’ll say, “Right!”, or as my granddaughter, “Yes!” When you see the full picture, when you get the last chapter.

Our problem is that we are so often judging the situation as it looks right now. It’s bleak, it seems hopeless, I can’t understand why I’m going through these trials, there’s nothing good that can possibly come out of this!” You know, and you get all upset over the current circumstances because you can’t see your way out. But as God begins His work, and He begins to work the way out, then you look back and say, “Wasn’t that marvelous! Look what He did! Can you believe!”, you know. “The Lord is so good!” Now you’ve got the finals, “I will see His righteousness”. I may go through some dark places, but when I come into the light, I will see what God’s intent, and purpose was in these things, and I will rejoice.

Now, if you were really walking by faith, you’ll rejoice even when it’s dark. That’s why the scripture said, “Rejoice in tribulation”, because God is in control. If He has allowed tribulation, it is for a good purpose, because all things are working together for good, to those who love God, and are called according to His purpose. It’s sad when a person gets in the dark place, and he doesn’t see the whole story, and he gives up. He walks away. He doesn’t allow God to complete the work that He has begun. Sad. “I will see God’s judgment upon my enemies, those that have mocked me, and made fun of me.”

In the day that the walls are to be built, in the day shall the decree be far removed. In that day also he shall come even to thee from Assyria, from the fortified cities, from the fortress even to the river, and from the sea to the sea, and from the mountain to the mountain. And notwithstanding the land shall be desolate because of them that dwell therein, for the fruit of their doings (7:11-13).

God’s judgment will come from Assyria, and from these other nations, they will invade the land. This is allowed by God because of the fruit of their doings. They are reaping what they have sown.

So feed thy people with thy rod, [The prophet prays] the flock of thine [in, of thine] heritage which dwells solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old (7:14).

Great areas for cattle, and grazing and all, Bashan, and Gilead, Carmel. They're known for their lushness. "Lord let them return and experience the richness, the lushness."

According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt [God said] will I show unto him marvelous things (7:15).

Like God manifested His presence, His power to them in the wilderness. In coming out of Egypt, His judgment against the Egyptians, the parting of the Red sea. "According to those days", like unto those days, where God worked so mightily. He will work again.

And the nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf (7:6).

Those nations that seek to come against Israel, they'll be amazed at the power of this little nation! Small little nation, and yet with the power of God, it'll be an amazement to their enemies.

And their enemies shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the Lord our God, and shall fear because of thee (7:17).

In the book of Revelation, during the great tribulation period, we are told that they will hide in the caves, and they'll cry unto the rocks and the mountains and say, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of the Lamb. For the day of His wrath has come, and who shall be able to stand? Fear!" Jesus talking of these last days of the great tribulation said that, "Men's hearts will fail them for the fear of the things that are coming to pass upon the earth". As God again reveals His power before the nations of the world. That awesome power of God as He again, sort of steps in the picture. It's as though God is just sort of stepped back for awhile, and just sort of let men go. As they are going down deeper, and deeper into the quagmire of sin, wickedness. Sometimes getting, "God when are you gonna stop this? How long are you gonna let this go on? How long will you allow the wicked to rule? How long will you allow these things to happen? How long will you allow a nation to be flooded with pornography? How long will you allow the abortions to continue? God when are you gonna stop this? How long are you gonna let them pollute the minds of our children?" Passing out condoms in the grade schools. "Lord, how long?"

It's as though the Lord has just said, "Okay go down into the depths!", and He's just letting us see how deeply men will go into sin, when He removes His hand. But the day is coming when God will once again intervene, manifest His power, and bring His judgment upon this world, because of the wickedness. Jesus said, "As it was in the days of Noah, so shall it be at the coming of the Son of man". And in the days of Noah, we read that the imaginations and the thoughts of man's heart was evil continually. We're getting close. But in the midst of all of this, we come to this marvelous verse eighteen.

Who is a God like unto thee (7:18),

No god devised by man, no Greek gods, or Roman gods, or the gods of the Amorites, or the Hittites, or the Hivites, or the Egyptians, is a god like our God. Who is a God like thee?

who pardons iniquity (7:18),

As the prophet Isaiah said, "Come now, let us reason together, though your sins are as scarlet, they can be as white as snow". He pardons iniquity to those who will call, to those who will repent. God will pardon your iniquity. It doesn't matter tonight what you have done. God will pardon your iniquity. The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, will cleanse a man from all sin. "Who is a God like thee?"

who passes by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage (7:18)?

The God who doesn't really look at our sin. As Paul, quoting from Psalm thirty two said, "Oh how blessed is the man whose sins are forgiven, whose transgressions are covered! Oh how blessed is the man to whom God doth not impute iniquity!" The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, is continually cleansing us from all sin. God's faithful remnant. "Who is a God like our God"...

who retains not his anger for ever (7:18),

He may judge, only to purge out the evil, and to preserve the good. The end result will be good, because righteousness will again be established. "Who is a God like unto thee"...

who delights in mercy (7:18).

God loves to be merciful! He loves to show mercy! He delights in it! "Who is a God like thee"...

Who will have compassion on us; [A loving God, who loves the people.] who will subdue our iniquities (7:19);

I love that! He conquers over those things that have conquered us! He subdues that iniquity in your life, that havoc that's destroying you. He, He destroys it! That power that Satan has in your life. He sets the captive free! Who is a God like that, who gives victory over the bondage of sin!

and who will cast all of our sins into the depths of the sea (7:19).

We used to sing, "Gone, gone, gone, gone, yes! My sins are gone! Now my soul is free, and in my heart the song, buried in the deepest sea! Yes, that's good enough for me! I shall live eternally! Praise God my sins are God!" Buries them in the depths of the sea, and as I said this morning, I trust mine are in the Marietta trench! Off the Philippines, the deepest part of the sea that we know. Some thirty five thousand, thirty six thousand feet deep. Like Carrington Boone, He buries them there, and He puts up a sign, "No fishing!". Who is a God like our God? Then he declares...

Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, ["You will keep your word, the promises that you have made to Jacob."] and the mercy to Abraham (7:20),

He promised to Abraham that from his seed, all the nations of the world shall be blessed. That seed being Jesus Christ.

which thou hast sworn to our fathers from the days of old (7:20).

God made this promise to Abraham, swore unto him. God will keep His promises, and His kingdom shall come, and His will shall be done, on earth even as it is in heaven. We will then sing again in a new way, "Our God reigns!"

In Psalm two, we have the son saying to, or the father saying to the son, "Ask of me, and I will give to you the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession". The kingdom of God shall come, and Jesus shall reign, and they that are His, shall live and reign with Him. That's our hope. In that day, when His kingdom comes, we shall live, and reign with Him, in His kingdom. That's His promise to us.

Father we thank You that You're an incomparable God! None to be compared unto You, O Lord! Marvelous in power, in majesty, in glory! We exalt, and praise Your wonderful name. We give thanks to You for Your plan of redemption for us, delivering us from the power of sin. From the bondage of corruption, from the darkness of this world. Drawing us into Your glorious light. For You've shed abroad upon our hearts, that marvelous light of the gospel, whereby we stand, in which we rejoice. Now Lord, bless us, and guide us through this week, and through our earthly pilgrimage, until that day when you come to establish your kingdom, to take us to be with you. To live and to reign with You forever. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.