

February 19th, 2012

The Future of Egypt

Isaiah 19:1-25

Ryan Habbena

Sovereign Lord, we magnify Your Holy name. We thank You for Your grace and mercy that You have poured out on us in Your beloved Son. Father we come before You knowing that You are indeed well pleased with us, not because of anything in us ourselves, but because You have given us the life of Your Son Jesus. And we are well pleasing in Your sight because He is well pleasing in Your sight. Lord we thank you that we stand shielded by His intercession and that forever He will be granting to us His righteousness. Father we pray that you would stir in us the desire to work out our salvation in fear and trembling. Lord we do confess we fall so far short in so many areas but we know You are working in us. And Father we pray that you would sanctify us and make us useful to You that we might store up treasure in Heaven and act in love in edifying the church and preaching the Gospel. We love you so much and we thank you for your Son. In His precious name we pray, Amen.

Egypt and Syria, both of these countries have dominated the headlines of international news over the last year. We have read of uprising, of coups, of civil war, and all of these things have been common place in that region. In fact we were over in Israel during the time of the Egypt uprising when Mubarek was being ousted and removed (Spring 2011) and there is so much upheaval in that area of the world right now. And in between Syria and Egypt there is a very very small sliver of a country, Israel, and they are sandwiched in between these two very hostile nations. Now the truth is that these countries have a history, actually a long detailed history. They have a present as we see right now, and we know through the Scriptures they have a future, and the futures of these countries are prophesized in the Book of Isaiah. And today we are going to read primarily about Egypt, about what these Scriptures declare regarding Egypt.

So we have the privilege today of reading history before it happens. And there are many exciting things in this text (Isaiah 19:1-25) which will number one declare to us the authenticity

of the Scriptures but also stir us to be watching for the return of the King, because His return is drawing near and the fact is we are involved. So before we dive into our text in Isaiah, let us be reminded of not only the context of Isaiah but why Isaiah (Book of Isaiah) is important for the church of Jesus of Nazareth to read and to heed.

First off we know that in the Book of Isaiah, Isaiah has been declaring many matters regarding the nations that surround Israel. We have already read in Isaiah, prophecies to Babylon, to Moab, to Assyria, to Philistia, to Kush, and now he is going to direct the oracle or a prophecy to Egypt. And these are neighbors of Israel and indeed they're representative of the nations of which we are a part of. So why is it important for us as the church of Jesus Christ to read, understand, and heed Isaiah? Well first off we do well to remember 2 Timothy 3 where Paul declares that, "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

So often, especially in regards to what we know of as the Old Testament, we see these things as something very foreign and something that we are very detached from. But the truth is, first and foremost this is our history. Yes it is indeed Israel's history but we know from the Scriptures, from the very beginning of the New Testament, Matthew 1:1, the Messiah is rooted in Israel's history. Jesus is the son David and the son of Abraham. Furthermore, through belief in Jesus of Nazareth, we become grafted into these promises given to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And this is richly described by Paul in Romans 11 (Romans 11:11-24). So this is indeed our history and we are called to learn from this history, so that we might avoid the mistakes of the past and live godly lives. But also what was much is declared in Isaiah and the prophets and indeed all of the Scriptures has yet to be fulfilled. Therefore we are very much reading our future and we do not know when many of these things are going to unfold on the scene of human history, but they may be on our watch.

And today we are going to see some very interesting dynamics regarding the land of Egypt which is something that may cause you to wonder where we are at in the timeline of salvation history as far as how close we are to the approaching of the return of Jesus of Nazareth. So that is where we are at in Isaiah, he is giving us a tour of Israel's neighbors that border him, Babylon, Moab, Assyria, Philistia, Kush, and now Egypt.

So if you have your Scriptures, please turn with me now to Isaiah 19. Isaiah 19, beginning with Isaiah 19:1, “An oracle concerning Egypt. Behold, the LORD is riding on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt; and the idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence, and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them” (Isaiah 19:1 ESV). So we see this is an oracle concerning Egypt. So an oracle is a prophesy given, a prophesy directed at this nation regarding what is going to occur in the future. And the first thing that is declared is that the Lord is coming and we read imagery here that if we read the end times text in the New Testament, we should be quite familiar with. “The LORD is coming riding on a swift cloud and comes to Egypt”. Now this is speaking to the Lord coming in judgment. And “riding on a swift cloud” is warfare imagery. This is the Lord riding on a swift cloud in what is called in the Old Testament as the “Shekinah Glory”, (see Exodus 14:20; 40:34-38; Leviticus 9:23, 24; Numbers 14:10; 16:19, 16:42) the Shekinah Glory of God, coming to this land of Egypt and the idols of Egypt will tremble at His presence and the heart of the Egyptians will melt within them.

So the coming of the Lord on the cloud is going to cause the people of Egypt to faint from here, that’s what melt or hearts melting is speaking of really them fainting from fear. And their idols will literally be trembling at His presence. Now one thing I do well to recall is that this country (Egypt) has a very rich history with the Lord of Hosts, with YHWH. Remember the famous and infamous event that is world renown and that is the Exodus. And that all had to do what the Lord of Hosts did to Egypt in order to bring out His people of that land and that His name would be proclaimed in all the earth. So this people in this land have a long-standing history with the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. And many of these matters are in the backdrop here as we progress through this text in Isaiah. So as we come from the out-set this is concerning Egypt’s future. And the first matter brought about is the Lord is coming to judge. But as we will progress through this text, we will see Egypt has a history but there is a ray of hope that is piercing through this rather dark tunnel of history for the people of Egypt.

Let’s proceed now through Isaiah 19:2-4 “And I will stir up Egyptians against Egyptians, and they will fight, each against another and each against his neighbor, city against city, kingdom against kingdom; and the spirit of the Egyptians within them will be emptied out, and I will confound their counsel; and they will inquire of the idols and the sorcerers, and the mediums and the necromancers; and I will give over the Egyptians into the hand of a hard master, and a fierce king will rule over them, declares the Lord GOD of Hosts.” (Isaiah 19:2-4 ESV)

So we see the Lord of Hosts, the Sovereign Lord over the Egyptians, and even within their people it is Him who is going to stir up strife within them. So one prophecy here is that the Egyptians, by the hand and the doing of the Lord, are going to be turned against each other, so Isaiah is prophesying that there is a coming time when Egypt is going to be shaken and there will be great enmity and personal conflict within this country. There will be civil disobedience, civil war, city against city, kingdom against kingdom, and neighbor against neighbor.

Now what's very interesting is if you have been following what has been going on over the last year in Egypt, these things are transpiring right now. We know full because our country has interest over there so it makes news over here as well, but Egypt is one that is a mess right now and there is great conflict within the country of Egypt. Now we must be careful because we cannot say with certainty that this a specific fulfillment of what Isaiah has prophesized here. But nor can we say it isn't. As we will progress here, what occurs in Egypt at this time is followed by many matters and many events. So if anything what this event should do is cause us to be on the alert and watching. And for those of you that know me I am very hesitant to apply current events to prophesy unless there is hard evidence and it's reflected by the text, this one we should keep our eye on.

Egypt is being stirred up and right now there is strife and enmity within that country. And the next thing that we see is because of this the country is going to be strained and their going pursue, idols, sorcerers, and mediums (Isaiah 19:3). And in the midst of this the Egyptians are going to be given over to a hand of a hard master and a fierce king will rule over them, declares the Lord of hosts. (Isaiah 19:4). Now it's possible and I think this is within the realm of a fulfillment here that this is speaking of the rising of the anti-Christ (see 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12). A hard master is going to come and a fierce king is going to come and rule over them. The reason why I think this fits with the anti-Christ is because of what we are going to read. These matters here are tied to the second coming of Christ and we'll see that as we progress here. So this may not be speaking of what is exactly going on right here before our eyes as we see it right now, but it may, which is why Jesus Himself commands us when He outlines the events that lead to the end of the age, "be on the alert", "watch" (Matthew 24:42-44, Matthew 25:12-13), learn the Parable of the Fig Tree (Matthew 24:32-35)

So we see things a fierce king is going to ruler over (Isaiah 19:4), and I think the context supports this as either the person we know of as the anti-Christ or one of his cohorts. So we will have to wait and see how that plays out on the scene of human history. Now as we continue we see that is context of this strife is going to have very dire consequences for the land of Egypt.

“And the waters of the sea will be dried up, and the river will be dry and parched, and its canals will become foul, and the branches of Egypt's Nile will diminish and dry up, reeds and rushes will rot away. There will be bare places by the Nile, on the brink of the Nile, and all that is sown by the Nile will be parched, will be driven away, and will be no more. The fishermen will mourn and lament, all who cast a hook in the Nile; and they will languish who spread nets on the water. The workers in combed flax will be in despair, and the weavers of white cotton. Those who are the pillars of the land will be crushed, and all who work for pay will be grieved. (Isaiah 19:5-10 ESV)

So this is connected to what we just read, and the land is going to become desolate and unproductive because of what is going on at this time. So we have the waters dried up (Isaiah 19:5) and we know full well when a water supply goes away a land is in great danger of going into famine and desolation. And we take, especially where we live, we live in the land of ten thousand lakes (Minnesota), and we have an abundance of water and resources for us, but so many places in the world are so in need of a water supply and good rains that if they don't get them their country and their cities and their way of life is threatened. And that is what is going to happen in Egypt at this time, is even those who are pillars of the land, the rich and powerful will be crushed, and even those who work for pay will be grieved (Isaiah 19:10).

So in light of this they will be turning to wicked idolatry and there is desolation. Now the Lord proceeds to speak about the foolishness of those who rule in Egypt. In verses 11-15, “The princes of Zoan are utterly foolish; the wisest counselors of Pharaoh give stupid counsel. How can you say to Pharaoh, ‘I am a son of the wise, a son of ancient kings’? Where then are your wise men? Let them tell you that they might know what the LORD of Hosts has purposed against Egypt. The princes of Zoan have become fools, and the princes of Memphis are deluded; those who are the cornerstones of her tribes have made Egypt stagger. The LORD has mingled within her a spirit of confusion, and they will make Egypt stagger in all its deeds,

as a drunken man staggers in his vomit. And there will be nothing for Egypt that head or tail, palm branch or reed, may do.” (Isaiah 19:11-15 ESV)

So first off let me define these cities which may be unfamiliar to us. Both Zoan and Memphis were seats of power at this time. And these are really representative of cities in Egypt where there would be seats of power and the Lord is declaring because of their refusal to submit to Him and instead going after the idols, their counselors are just going to leave Egypt into ruin. So Zoan and Memphis were both seats of power at this time and we see here that those were cornerstones of her tribes have made Egypt stagger (Isaiah 19:13). So the leadership in Egypt is going to lead Egypt into ruins because the Lord has confused their counsel. And this is the Lord’s doing and the dynamic that we see here is a terrifying one. That if the hand of the Lord is against you, there is no escape. He has all of creation at His disposal as the ancient people of Egypt know full well. At the time of Exodus, what’s very interesting about the plagues (Exodus 7-12), is each plague was intended to be really a slap in the face to one of Egypt’s “gods”, which was worshipping the creation rather the Creator. So the hand of the Lord is going to against Egypt and there is no escape!

And not only that He is able to move the hearts of kings and leaders where He wishes as we also saw in ancient Egypt did we not with Pharaoh. We know that he hardened Pharaoh’s heart in order to display His glories in Egypt in delivering His people out of the land (see Exodus 7:3-5, Exodus 14:4).

So we have these confused counselors, now we get some very specific prophetic words regarding this time. And in Isaiah 19:16-17 it starts of with, “In that day the Egyptians will be like women, and tremble with fear before the hand that the LORD of hosts shakes over them. And the land of Judah will become a terror to the Egyptians. Everyone to whom it is mentioned will fear because of the purpose that the LORD of hosts has purposed against them. (Isaiah 19:16-17 ESV)

So “in that day”, is a term or a phrase in the Scriptures that speak of a coming time in the future, a prophesy, and in that day it says the “Egyptians will become like women” (Isaiah 19:16). Now why does he say like women? Well the women in the time Isaiah’s writing were

untrained in war and they were also unarmed. Therefore they were powerless when it came to a time when an invading army would come in with horses that were trained, and had weapons. So in that sense the Egyptians will be powerless in war and they will tremble with fear before the hand of the Lord of Hosts. And even Judah is going to become a terror to the Egyptians (Isaiah 19:17). Again why are they going to be terrified? Well first and foremost I think they know the history of the Lord of Hosts and His power and thus they're going to tremble at the Lord and His power and their God and there might be other ways that this prophesy finds its way into fulfillment. But we know that the land of Judah, even the mentioning of it is going to make Egypt tremble. And I think primarily it's because they know who's the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So the Lord of Hosts is going to strike them with fear, so up till now it's been extremely bad news for the land of Egypt and for the people of Egypt as well. But there is very good news for the people of Egypt as well and we will see this as we proceed here that a remnant rises up out of this desolation and they are going to honor the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

Now this again is speaking of the future. (Isaiah 19:18-22 ESV) "In that day there will be five cities in the land of Egypt that speak the language of Canaan and swear allegiance to the LORD of hosts. One of these will be called the City of Destruction. In that day there will be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar to the LORD at its border. It will be a sign and a witness to the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt. When they cry to the LORD because of oppressors, He will send them a Savior and Defender, and deliver them. And the LORD will make Himself known to the Egyptians, and the Egyptians will know the LORD in that day and worship with sacrifice and offering, and they will make vows to the LORD and perform them. And the LORD will strike Egypt, striking and healing, and they will return to the LORD, and He will listen to their pleas for mercy and heal them."

Now this is something that surely has not occurred yet. We are looking forward to the fulfillment here and in that day, and this is speaking of the Day of the Lord and its results. And we see very clearly here "when they cry to the LORD because of oppressors, He will send them a Savior and Defender, and deliver them (Isaiah 19:20). Thus we see, I think this "Savior and Defender" is best read as the coming King. He is going to send them, and there is going to be 5 cities in Egypt (Isaiah 19:18). One will be called the City of Destruction which is just probably a reminder of what has transpired that the Lord destroyed, but also He is one that

heals. There will be an altar and a pillar (Isaiah 19:19). Now within the Scriptures often times pillars were erected as signs of remembrance as something that was done. A mighty working of God's power and we see that throughout the Old Testament. And this altar and pillar is going to most likely be erected in order to remember the great act of God in delivering them from this fierce king (Isaiah 19:4).

And He is going to answer their cry, so this is speaking of a remnant here that is going to come to the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in Egypt. So I think most of these dynamics are speaking of what is going to happen in the Day of the Lord and extending into the Millennium (Revelation 20:1-6). And I think this is extremely exciting stuff. Because we know that the Lord watches over His Word and brings it to fulfillment. We've seen so much of that fulfilled already as we read our New Testament, we see how Jesus fulfilled so many words of prophesy and His first coming. But there is so much left to be fulfilled and here we are reading things that are coming and it is not hard at all for us to imagine how these things could advance fairly quickly within our historical context. So a remnant is going to arise out of the desolation of Israel or rather Egypt and they will honor the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Isaiah 19:21).

And this brings us to a very powerful passage that concludes this chapter, in Isaiah 19:23-25, "In that day there will be a highway from Egypt to Assyria, and Assyria will come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians will worship with the Assyrians. In that day Israel will be the third with Egypt and Assyria, a blessing in the midst of the earth, whom the LORD of hosts has blessed, saying, "Blessed be Egypt My people, and Assyria the work of My hands, and Israel My inheritance." (Isaiah 19:23-25 ESV)

So the Lord has promised that there is going to be a highway of harmony that goes from Egypt all the way up to Assyria (Isaiah 19:23). Now if you can imagine Assyria would have been historically just north and east of modern day Syria. So this highway would go from Egypt through Jerusalem up past where Damascus is now and will have fallen by then-we looked at that earlier and go up to Assyria which has Ninevah as its capital, a highway that where you can go back and forth with no problem. Now here's what's interesting, I want you to imagine walking that highway would be like right now, going from Egypt to Assyria. Well number one you couldn't do it, with not probably without dying. Because crossing those borders, either of them, you are going to be shot and killed. Really you would be hard pressed to find a harder of

land of terrain to pass through in the world at this point in time because of the strife that is on the border of Egypt to the south and Syria to the north.

But here we see what the Lord of Hosts has purposed (Isaiah 19:17). He is going to come and purge the world and bless the land. So rather than this strip of land really being a curse to the nations because of how much strife and problems it causes, this is going to be a highway of harmony and blessing to the nations. And we see here the Lord is going to redeem people from the north and from the south in that day (the Day of the Lord). Israel, Jerusalem, the New Jerusalem is going to be in the center, in the midst, and you are going to be able to travel back and forth in that day because all these countries, and indeed all the world, is going to be required as we will see in a bit to submit and show honor to the King of Kings in Jerusalem. And we know that even earlier in Isaiah 2 we read that. In Isaiah 2 (Isaiah 2:2) that Jerusalem is going to be raised up and be the highest of all the mountains and the nations will flow to Jerusalem where the King of Kings, Jesus of Nazareth is reigning.

So given these things, given this rather profound and exciting text, I want to take three points for us to draw from. And the first point is Do Not Trust in Political Power. Human history is chalked full of human beings gravitating towards political power. The reason is we believe we can achieve security and assurance by aligning ourselves with the powerful in this world. And in our own context we certainly can see how political power breeds corruption. We must always remember that our allegiance first and foremost is to the King of Kings and not to trust in political power or trust in man.

In fact in Psalm 2 we read of the Psalmist here declaring, “Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, “Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.” He who sits in the Heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision. Then He will speak to them in His wrath, and terrify them in His fury, saying, “As for me, I have set My King on Zion, My Holy Hill.” (Psalm 2:1-6 ESV)

The nations are going to rage. They have been, they are doing, and they will against the Lord of Hosts. That’s why it is so important for us to keep our eyes fixed on the Author and Finisher of our Faith (Hebrews 12:2). Because if we place our trust in man and political power we know

eventually it will be put down and destroyed. There is one King and one Ruler. Now certainly we are called to submit to the governing authorities (Romans 13:1-5) but don't trust in them, trust in the King. Now brothers and sisters every generation is tested in this manner, in every area, trust in man or trust in the Lord of Hosts. Our calling as people of the King, as those of us that are pilgrims marching towards the Kingdom of God, trust in the King. Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness (Matthew 6:33) and do not trust in political power.

Secondly, our calling is to Pray for Our Spiritual Siblings in Strife. We read about hardship in our text today and even now as we look to the lands of Syria, to the land of Egypt, we know that in those regions as well as scattered across the world God has His elect, God has His remnant even as we speak and they are being persecuted. We forget this so often because we live in a land that is very light on persecution, which indeed we should be thankful for. But it gives us more accountability because we have more opportunity, and the question is are we using it? There is strife, suffering, and persecution and really all of these things are promised to pilgrims.

And in Hebrews 13:1-3, we read our calling regarding our brothers and sisters across the world right now already under harsh rulers, we must remember to pray for them and this is commanded in the Scriptures in Hebrews 13, "Let brotherly love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unaware. Remember those who are in prison, as though in prison with them, and those who are mistreated, since you also are in the Body. (Hebrews 13:1-3 ESV)

These people that are suffering across the world now are our family members. We just have not met them face to face yet, we are going to spend eternity with them. And thus right now part of our calling as the people of God is to remember those in prisons. Now this here isn't speaking of remembering those who are in prison for murder, this is speaking of those who are in prison for their faith, remembering those since you are in the Body (Hebrews 13:3), speaking of the Body of Christ. So this is our duty to remember these things and to pray for our Spiritual siblings and may we all together remind ourselves to do this as it pleases our Father and indeed stores up treasure for God's people in Heaven (Matthew 6:20).

Finally as we look at this text our calling and our privilege is, We are to Take Heart. The truth is a new world is coming. As believers in the King, we know that He is returning. He is going to come riding on the clouds (Isaiah 19:1) and with power and glory He is going to purge the world with fire and then renew this earth where righteousness dwells (2 Peter 3:13). And there are several places in the Scriptures that speak of this new world, this new creation, and one of them is in the minor prophets in Zechariah, and Egypt, and it's interesting because Egypt is mentioned here but this is related to what we read today but also tells us about this new time that is coming. A new world is coming by which we have great hope!

In Zechariah 12 (correction Zechariah 14), this is speaking of what's going to happen after the Day of the Lord when He comes, destroys the nations, purges Israel, restores her, cleanses the land, and sets up the New Jerusalem. "So that everyone that survives of all the nations that have come up against Jerusalem should go up year after year to worship King, the Lord of Hosts, to keep the Feast of Booths (that's also called the Feast of Tabernacles). And if the family of Egypt does not go up and worship the King, then on them there shall be no rain; there shall be the plague with which the LORD afflicts the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths. This shall be the punishment to Egypt and the punishment to all the nations that do not go up to keep the Feast of Booths." (Zechariah 14:16-19)

So this is going to be a time when the Lord requires all the nations to come to Jerusalem to bring honor to the Lord of Hosts. Now Jesus is going to be physically reigning in Jerusalem at this time. And thus this is for the good for the nations and if there is any family of the earth that does not come up, He's not going to send rain on their land (Zechariah 14:17). Now again, let me ask you has this happened, is there anything in history that reflects this at all? And the truth is no! This is coming. This is a new world that is coming.

And brothers and sisters this is such good news. We know this is coming and the exciting motivating portion of this prophesy is that if you believe in Jesus of Nazareth, you are a constituent of the New Jerusalem. That is your City. That is your home. So the question is how can I enter this Kingdom, this City? And the truth is the time is coming and the truth is you can know are a citizen today, the truth is even before the time of Abraham, even right after the flood, humanity was all gathered together at a place called Babel (Genesis 11:1-9), and the Lord, they were counseling together and as we saw the Lord do proclaim that what He was

going to do to Egypt, He did to the people at Babel, He confused their languages and spread them abroad (Genesis 11:9). They wanted to make a name for themselves, the Lord frustrated that and in the very next chapter (Genesis 12) He chose one man, Abraham, and chose him and said "I will make your name great" (Genesis 12:2), the Lord's player. And thus the promise was given to Abraham that in him and his seed the nations of the earth will be blessed (Genesis 12:3). Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the 12 tribes in Egypt and then delivered taken, taken to the Promised Land. In the midst of that Promised Land there arose a monarchy and to King David it was promised that One was going to come and would sit on the throne of his Kingdom forever (2 Samuel 7:12-13).

And thus we arrive at the first verses of the New Testament, Jesus of Nazareth, is the son of Abraham, and the son of David (Matthew 1:1). The Good News arrived. He was true God and true man. The Word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1:14) and the Word was with God and was God. True God and true man, and He lived the perfect sinless life to be the Lamb of God, to march to the Cross of Calvary to atone for our sins. And thus He went willingly to the Cross, taking our sins upon Himself and giving us His righteousness (see 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 5:17). Three days later, death could not hold Him, He was raised eternally from the dead, raised forevermore, and He sent His angel to John (Book of Revelation) to declare what is going to come to pass and as we get to the end of our Scriptures in Revelation, Jesus declares "Behold I am all making all things new" (Revelation 21:5).

The call is to repent of your sins and believe in the Gospel, the Good News to believe in the person and work of Jesus of Nazareth and you will be saved from your sins and you will be made a constituent of His Kingdom and a citizen of the New Jerusalem. You will be sealed in His power and His grace. Therefore if you have not trusted in Jesus of Nazareth, the call has reached you today to repent and believe in the King. And if you repent and believe you have eternal life, starting now and extending into the ages of eternity. Brothers and sisters this is the Good News, "Behold He is coming and is making all things new" (Revelation 21:5) and we are in the midst of the unfolding of this glorious story of salvation history. So as we await the return of our Savior let us live to please our King as we anxiously await His return.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father we see Your Word and Lord it causes us to tremble, we wonder if things keep unfolding we will be able to stand before You. And Lord whatever is before us both

as a church, as the people of God, as individuals, we pray that You would give us strength to endure all that is about to come to pass and to stand before Your Son. Lord, we love Him. And Lord we see the high calling that You have given to us as those that bear His name. Father, we love you. We ask You that we would not love with mere words, but that we would love You with deeds and truth which entails loving You and loving our brothers and sisters and our neighbor. Lord change us, we come before Your feet bowing, confessing You as the Sovereign One. You're in Heaven, You dwell in a high and lofty place and You do according to Your will. But Lord what a privilege we have that not only have You made us Your slaves which is a wondrously privileged position, you made us Your sons, Your children, and we know You will take care of us. Father we pray for our Spiritual siblings across the world who are suffering right now who are in dirty prisons, who are being tortured, and yes even being put to death. These things are hidden from our eyes Lord, but we know they go on. We pray for them Lord that you would strengthen them and that they would continue to stand boldly for Your Gospel. And Lord we rejoice that their boldness and that they are willing to endure such hostility for Your Name knowing that they have a better life, a better Resurrection coming. Father help us stand if such a time of strife and tribulation would ever reach us. Lord we love You and we thank You Father for Your Son. In His precious Name we pray, Amen.

**Sermon By**

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