

Jehovah's Will for Israel's Repentance

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The word of God this evening from Hosea 5. Hosea 5.

1 Hear ye this, O priests; and hearken, ye house of Israel; and give ye ear, O house of the king; for judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mizpah, and a net spread upon Tabor. 2 And the revolvers are profound to make slaughter, though I have been a rebuker of them all. 3 I know Ephraim, and Israel is not hid from me: for now, O Ephraim, thou committest whoredom, and Israel is defiled. 4 They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God: for the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them, and they have not known the LORD. 5 And the pride of Israel doth testify to his face: therefore shall Israel and Ephraim fall in their iniquity; Judah also shall fall with them. 6 They shall go with their flocks and with their herds to seek the LORD; but they shall not find him; he hath withdrawn himself from them. 7 They have dealt treacherously against the LORD: for they have begotten strange children: now shall a month devour them with their portions. 8 Blow ye the cornet in Gibeah, and the trumpet in Ramah: cry aloud at Bethaven, after thee, O Benjamin. 9 Ephraim shall be desolate in the day of rebuke: among the tribes of Israel have I made known that which shall surely be. 10 The princes of Judah were like them that remove the bound: therefore I will pour out my wrath upon them like water. 11 Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because he willingly walked after the commandment. 12 Therefore will I be unto Ephraim as a moth, and to the house of Judah as rottenness.

What follows is our text for this evening.

13 When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound. 14 For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him. 15 I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early.

Thus far the reading of the holy and divine scripture.

We consider as our text tonight in those last three verses. "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah saw his wound, then went Ephraim to the Assyrian, and sent to king Jareb: yet could he not heal you, nor cure you of your wound. For I will be unto Ephraim as a lion, and as a young lion to the house of Judah: I, even I, will tear and go away; I will take away, and none shall rescue him. I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me early."

Beloved in the Lord Jesus Christ, the text is in many respects terrible. The text is the announcement and pronouncement by the prophet to the house of Israel and Judah that God will be like a lion to them, so that like a lion comes on an antelope or on a sheep and leaps on it and tears it, so God will leap upon Israel, he will tear, he will take away and he will go away and none shall deliver them. The idea is none shall deliver them out of my hand. That text is a terrible text. Terrible not only for the reprobate of the nation, it was terrible for the reprobate of the nation because the reprobate of the nation would be destroyed by that tearing but also in many respects for the people of God of the nation. It's a terrible thing when God has to deal with his people like a lion so that he comes on them on account of their sin, but you must see in that text the gospel. The gospel in that text is, "They will seek me early." That is the gospel of the text because that is not Jehovah's merely impotent wish, that is not Jehovah's impotent hope, that is Jehovah's powerful and ineffectual will for the repentance of his people.

In the text in context, Israel's situation is hopeless from the point of view of Israel and God expresses that hopelessness clearly in the text. You must understand that hopelessness is not merely the greatness of Israel's sin. The hopelessness of the church's salvation is not the greatness of the church's sin. It's true, the church's sin is great but God expresses that hopelessness when he says, "They will not frame their doings to seek the Lord for the spirit of whoredom is in the midst of them." When he says they won't frame their doings to seek the Lord, he's talking about their life. In all of their life they will not seek God. They will not draw near to him. They will not turn from their sins. And they will not because they cannot.

They will not frame their doings to seek the Lord for the spirit of whoredom is in the midst of them. Israel was in the grip of a terrible spirit and that spirit held Israel in bondage so that like a woman who is in bondage to the lust of her flesh so that she will not frame her doings to stay at home and to be faithful to her husband. Why not? Because she's in the grips of sin. That's the church's misery. The church's misery is that by nature she is in the power of the spirit of whoredom and it's important that you recognize that word spirit. She is in the grip of another spirit. Man, you can never explain a man merely by that man. Man is always the product of a spirit and the spirit that held Israel in its grip was the spirit of whoredom so that Israel could not frame their doings to seek the Lord. That's man's misery. Man's misery is not only that he will not repent. That's true, man will not repent. Man's misery is much more profound. Man cannot. He cannot turn to God. God can rush on that man like a terrible lion. He can tear that man and bring that man's life down to nothing. And man will not repent because he cannot repent and that

points out that the salvation of Israel and the repentance of Israel is of God alone. This alone explains why Israel repented.

"They will, they will seek me early." That follows out of what he said previously in the chapter. "I know Ephraim. I know Ephraim in all his misery. I know Ephraim in all his sin. I know Ephraim in the depth of his misery, in the bondage that he is to sin. I know Ephraim and I love him and because I love him, he will seek me early." That's the word of the text.

"Jehovah's Will for Israel's Repentance." Let's consider that, first of all, the idea of this; secondly, the work, Jehovah's work in this; and finally, the power in Jehovah's will for Israel's repentance.

Jehovah God was judging the nation of Israel and the nation of Judah and Jehovah's will for Israel's repentance in that judgment, Jehovah's will for Israel's repentance was a will of Jehovah in his judgment upon Israel. Jehovah's will for Israel's repentance in that judgment contrasts with the destructive folly of the nation of Israel in the face of that judgment. Jehovah God was judging Israel for his departure from him. If we can think of Israel as a poxed old hag who had never been faithful in her marriage all of her life long, all of her illicit sexual liaisons were coming back home to her. That was the judgment of God upon Israel, in all of her illicit sexual liaisons Israel had contracted a terrible disease. That disease was God's judgment upon Israel. God's judgment upon Israel did not begin when Jehovah God tore at Israel as a lion. God's judgment on Israel was in that disease.

And God here also mentions Judah. Judah saw his wound. You must understand that God is speaking of those two parts of the nations really as one. Both of those nations were terribly sick with an incurable disease and if we make a distinction between what God says there, Israel's disease and Judah's wound, then you can think of it this way, think of them as one person, the nation of Israel. When God says Israel has a disease, he's talking about the deep-seated cause of all of Israel's trouble. And when he says Judah has a wound, he's talking about the manifestation of that disease on the outside. That disease of Israel did not remain hidden. That disease of Israel broke out into all kinds of festering wounds and abscesses, that blood pus, so that it was unmistakable that Israel was diseased.

There were all kinds of signs of that, that Israel had a terrible disease. There were the rulers and leaders who were nets and snares and who were profound to make slaughter. That's the disease of the nation. Those rulers were a curse on that nation. Those rulers were for the destruction of that nation. There were the judges who called good evil and evil good. There were the princes who judged for a reward. The nation festered with evil in the homes and in the public worship and wherever they were in that nation. It was obvious that that nation was sick. Like the language of Isaiah 1. "Why should ye be stricken any more? ye will revolt more and more: the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrifying sores: they have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire:

your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers."

When you looked around in the nation of Israel with even the most superficial and cursory view, you could say that nation is sick, and that's true of the church that God judges too. You can look around with the most cursory view and you can say that church is terribly sick. It's in the grip of a disease and that disease is the deep-seated root of all of these wickedness that we see. Isn't that true? You could look at our mother and you could say she is diseased. You could point to this thing and you could point to that thing and you could point to that thing and say there is a deep-seated disease out of which all these things come. And you can say that right now about our own churches. They are sick. They're sick with a terrible disease. Look around even with the most cursory of views and you can see that they are sick and the point of the prophet isn't to enumerate all of those evidences of the sickness, he could do that, I could do that too about our own churches just like I could do it about our mother. In our mother there were evidences of the sickness. You couldn't get a sound article printed. There was animosity among the ministers. There was strife in the congregation. There was a plague of abuse of all different kinds: spousal abuse, child abuse, and sexual abuse. Those are all symptoms of the disease and you can see that in our own churches. This is a disease. It has its manifestation. Friends hate each other. There's open mockery of the authority of the elders. There's open ridicule of the preaching of the word. Ridicule. There is rank-sism in the churches so that the churches are stirred up. Why is that? They're diseased.

And what was the deep root? What was the root of Israel's disease? She had departed from the Lord. That was her disease. That was the cause of all of her misery. She had departed from the Lord. She had played the harlot with God, her husband. She had acted treacherously against the Lord and that disease set in. Her disease was her false doctrine. Her disease was her idolatry with its train of moral corruptions and injustices and wickedness that flourished in the nation. When the church loses the truth, with the loss of that truth goes all ethics, all morality. If you lose the truth, you have nothing in the church and that was Israel and they were sick.

They were sick because Jehovah was chastising them. Jehovah didn't let them get away with that treachery. Jehovah didn't let them get away with that false doctrine, worshiping the image and the idol under every green tree and on every high hill and living as they pleased in their own homes and in their businesses and in their relationships with a neighbor. Jehovah was judging them and Israel and Judah knew it. It was not as though Israel and Judah said, "Where did all these things come from? We don't know where these things come from." The prophet said that Ephraim saw his sickness and Judah his wound, and the idea there is that they saw and they understood where that was coming from. They understood that that disease and those putrefying sores that were breaking out all over their body, they understood that was from Jehovah God himself, that he was judging them for their departure from him and from their false doctrine and for their wickedness.

And what did they do? Did they repent? Did they turn unto Jehovah God? Did they seek his face? Did they acknowledge their sin? No they didn't. They went to King Jareb. Jareb

is the title of the king of Assyria and that name Jareb means warrior, and that name Jareb emphasizes the physical might of Jareb and the Assyrians. That's where Israel sought relief. In the language of the day, in the picture of the day, Israel was being assaulted by its enemies on every side so that those enemies were eating up the land. They were burning up that land with fire. There was civil war in the nation so that king after king rose and fell. There was obvious wickedness among the office bearers. There was obvious wickedness in the life of the nation. And where did they go? Where did they turn? They turned to man.

King Jareb and the Assyrians stand simply for man, man as he achieves his highest state in the world, man with his power, the power of his intellect and the power of his will and the power of his might and the power of his money, they turn to man. That's where they sought deliverance. They sought deliverance from the will of man and from the intellect of man and from the wisdom of man and from the money of man. That's what man does in his misery. That's what the church by nature does in her misery too. She knows she's miserable. The church that's being judged by God, she knows she has that disease but she seeks help from man, from man and all his wisdom. Has a problem with abuse. Well, let's have a party of the world come in and tell us what our problem is. I can tell you what your problem is. You departed from God a long time ago. You have strife and animosity in the congregation. Well, let's have a church gathering, a picnic. That's not your problem, you don't have enough picnics. That's not where there's strife. You departed from God. But the church under the hand of God in her misery, she doesn't repent and God in his will, you have to understand there's two wills of God here, one will really, but it manifests itself in two forms. God says he will not heal you. That's what he says. He doesn't say that he could not heal him. When Israel turned to King Jareb with all of his power and his money and his influence and his might and his wisdom, could he protect Israel? Could he deliver? God says he will not. The church that will not turn to God but turns to man, us too by nature, individually in our own sins, being judged by the Lord our God, when we will not turn to him, God's word to us, everywhere else we turn I don't know what that is, but everywhere else we turn, God's word is, they will not heal you. They will not. God as it were, stands in the way.

What is an Assyrian going to do against God and against his will, God's will that they not be healed by that Assyrian? And such is the terrible state of the church, such is her inability to repent that God can give her a disease, God can cause that disease to break out in all kinds of festering wounds. They can know that it's from God, they can understand that it's for their destruction, and they will not repent. That's why your and my repentance cannot be first. That's why your and my repentance cannot be for the restoration of the favor of God. Cannot be. If it is, you and I and the whole church of Jesus Christ are going to perish everlastingly because in our distress, in our sin, and over against God's judgment of us, we by nature turn anywhere but God. And God's word about that is, they will not heal you. There is no remedy for man's departure from God. There is no remedy for man's sin and man's intellect and in man's wisdom and in man's education and man's social programs and in man's ideas. There's no deliverance there. They will not heal you.

This is Jehovah's will: they will seek me early. There's the source of all of Israel's salvation. There's the explanation of all of Israel's repentance. There's the explanation of the gathering of a straying sinner. There's the explanation of the sinner who under the chastisement of God all of a sudden comes to his senses. There's the source of the reformation of the church.

"They will seek me early." That's an expression of Jehovah's eternal will for Israel's repentance. When God says they will seek me early, God is not saying something like this, "I'm going to chastise them enough and when I chastise them enough, they're going to learn a lesson from that chastisement and they of themselves will turn to me." No, that's not what he means. God there is not expressing an impotent wish, "Oh, I wish that Israel would turn to me." No, God is expressing there his eternal and unchangeable will. This is the will of God for Israel. This is the will of God for Israel in Israel's misery. This is the will of God for Israel in Israel's inability to repent and Israel's unwillingness to repent.

This is Jehovah God's will, "They will seek me early," and that word "early" means with all diligence or you can think with their whole heart. God there when he says they will seek me early, God is talking about a complete change of Israel. Israel by nature and in Israel's heart sought sin. When Israel went to the Assyrians, you understand Israel wasn't trying to get rid of sin. Israel is trying to get rid of consequences. Israel loves sin. That's what Israel was in the heart and God says, "No, they will seek me early. They will seek me diligently with all their heart. There will be a complete change of Israel." And he says about that seeking, "They will seek my face." Isn't that lovely? That's covenant.

"They will want to see me face-to-face." That's what the sinner doesn't want to see. He doesn't want to see God. He doesn't want to be anywhere near God. He would just as soon that you never mentioned God. That's what it's in his heart. He loves sin and he hates God. He turns away from God and he turns unto sin. That's the sinner.

And God says, "They will seek me early. They will seek my face." And Jehovah also says "until they acknowledge their offense." Involved in that seeking of Jehovah with all their heart is not only a delight now in Jehovah God as the God of my salvation, but it's an acknowledgment of my offense. "They will acknowledge my offense." You must understand that word "until." Don't misunderstand that word "until." A Protestant Reformed interpretation would be something like this: God's going to judge you and God's not showing you any favor, and God is only showing you wrath, and God is punishing you until you acknowledge your offense. And that's a condition. That word "until" then is a condition. God shows you no favor and he only shows you wrath until this point, until you acknowledge your offense. That makes man first.

And then no one can be saved because the spirit of whoredom is in the midst of us and we will not frame our doings to seek the Lord. What does that word "until" mean? It means this, that when the sinner finally will acknowledge his offense, he has been turned. That's what that means. When the sinner finally will say, "I have sinned," God has already laid hold on him and God has arrested him and God has turned him back to God. That's what explains that word "until."

The great mark of the sinner's repentance is the acknowledgment of sin. The sinner simply says, "I have sinned." The sinner simply says, "I am a sinner." The sinner doesn't excuse it. The sinner doesn't justify it. The sinner doesn't mitigate it. The sinner simply says, "I have sinned." And that's a confession, you must understand, not only of sin or even of sins, but of sinfulness. When God turns the sinner, the sinner doesn't bemoan the chastisement of God. The sinner doesn't say, "Your hand was too heavy." The sinner doesn't say, "You dealt with me unjustly." The sinner says, "I am a sinner and I deserve far worse." And when Jehovah says, "They will seek me early," and when he acknowledges that they will seek his face and they will acknowledge their sin, where does that come from except faith?

Why does the sinner turn? How does the sinner dare to come to God? How does the sinner stand before God and say, "I am a sinner," without fear? How can the sinner say, "God be merciful to me"? How can the sinner desire to stand in the presence of faith? Involved in Jehovah's will for the sinner's repentance is that Jehovah has willed that the sinner know Jehovah God and know Jehovah God's will for the sinner's repentance, that is, to know Jehovah God and his gracious will for that sinner's salvation. That's why the sinner repents. He doesn't repent in order to know Jehovah God. He repents because he knows Jehovah God as the God who willed his repentance, as the God therefore who willed his salvation.

That's why you and I repent. That's why the church herself repents. That's why some don't repent. He never willed it. That too is the other side of Jehovah's will. Jehovah, he said, wills Ephraim's and Judah's repentance, but they didn't all repent. In fact, the nation by and large was destroyed. Jehovah's will was not frustrated. Jehovah's will was carried out so that they did not repent. They could not repent. They would not repent because he did not will their repentance. And it's in the service of that eternal and unchangeable and powerful will of God that the tearing stands in the text. Jehovah says, "I will be unto Ephraim as a lion and as a young lion to the house of Judah. I, even though I will tear and go away. I will take away and none shall rescue him." He says, "I will go and return to my place," and the picture there is of a great big lion, a lion in his prime, as that lion rushes on his prey and he pounces on that prey and he tears that prey and he bites that prey and he destroys that prey. That's the picture, and then when he's shaken that prey, then he picks it up and he takes it away. He goes and returns to his place.

That's the picture in the text and Jehovah God says that he will be that over against all of Israel's attempts to find deliverance somewhere else. Jehovah God doesn't simply say, "I'm going to be to Israel as a lion and as a young lion." He says that over against Israel's destructive folly. When Israel saw its disease and Judah saw its wound, then Judah went to King Jareb and God says, "No, he won't heal you because I will be a lion to you." Jehovah God, with all his power and with all his might, stands in the way of that destructive folly of his church. That destructive folly of his church never leads to a remedy. That destructive folly of the church never leads to its deliverance. Jehovah God stands as a lion so that all of that destructive folly cannot deliver Judah and deliver Israel and that's because of what Israel's sin was. God says their sin was an offense and when he

says that, God is laying his finger on the nature of Israel's deliverance, what the nature of that deliverance must be.

First of all, you have to understand what the nature of Israel's sins were. The nature of Israel's sins was that it was an offense and it was offense not against men, but it was an offense against the Most High Majesty of God. That's what the sinner has to acknowledge. The sinner does not only acknowledge, "I have sinned," the sinner acknowledges an offense that the offense is against God himself. And the sinner must acknowledge that there is no deliverance from that offense apart from the satisfaction of the justice of God. That's what Israel was, from a certain point of view, trying to avoid. They wanted to have deliverance without God. They wanted to have deliverance without satisfying the justice of God. But when God says they must acknowledge their offense, he's saying there is no deliverance apart from the satisfaction of my own justice.

That's why your repentance cannot be unto your forgiveness. It can't because your repentance doesn't satisfy anything. You tell me you repent, I do too, but do you every day perfectly all day long? Do you always hate sin with your whole heart and you love all righteousness? Your repentance, such as it is, is even imperfect. It can't satisfy anything. It certainly can't satisfy the justice of God. And so that that tearing of Jehovah God toward the reprobate, that tearing of Jehovah God toward the reprobate is a tearing to destruction.

There is no satisfaction for them. That was God's purpose too with that disease and with those festering wounds, and when he finally came against the nation, his purpose was their destruction. He never willed their repentance, so he came against them with a destructive tearing. But such wasn't the purpose for his elect, so that when he tore, it was unto their salvation. That's why God's chastisements, such as they are are for your profit. We probably all have had in our life an experience where the Lord had to tear us. He actually had to pounce on us and shake us. Why didn't that destroy you? Because you repented? Because you turned? Because you acknowledged your sin? That's why it didn't destroy you? It didn't destroy you because Jehovah himself and his will for your repentance satisfied his own justice. That's why his tearing doesn't destroy you. That's why his tearing is for your salvation, because he satisfied the offense.

So in that tearing you have to see the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. That's what you have to see not only in the tearing, but in all the pronouncements of destruction throughout the entire chapter where God says that Israel is going to be destroyed like a moth destroys wool. Israel is going to be cut down. Israel is going to fall in its iniquity. Israel is going to be completely swallowed up. What was that? That was the cross. And here too is the cross when God says, "I'm going to be like a lion to Israel and like a young lion, I'm going to tear and I'm going to shake and I'll take away and none will deliver out of my hand." That's the cross. Israel was there at the cross in Israel's head, Jesus Christ. Israel was there with all their offenses and all of their diseases and all of their festering sores of sin and iniquity and guilt and transgression, and God rushed on Israel like a great big lion and he shook and he tore and he took away so that Israel might be torn for Israel's salvation so that when his people depart from him, when they stray in sin and wander and when they harden themselves against all his admonitions and all his words and they keep

walking, and when he has to tear them, he doesn't destroy them. Not because they repent. Not because they seek him early. Not because they acknowledge their offense, but because he satisfied for all their sin, he satisfied for all their impenitence, he satisfied for all of their lack of love toward him and all their transgressions of his commandments and all their offenses.

He satisfied that at the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ so that he made a full end of his wrath there and there too, he earned for Israel the right to repent. There's one other thing about a reprobate, not only will he not repent, not only cannot he repent, he doesn't have the right to. You and I by nature and in our sin, it's not only about your ability to repent, it's not only about the will to repent, it's that you don't have the right to. You know what you have the right to? You have the right to be bound in your sins. You have the right to be punished for those sins all your life long and you have the right to be cast into hell-fire from God. That's what the sinner has the right to. God at the cross of Jesus Christ, when he tore Jesus Christ for our sins and made satisfaction for our sins, God established there a perfect righteousness for Israel, a righteousness that is worthy for Israel to be called out of Israel's sins. A righteousness that is worthy for Israel to be drawn into the presence of God, indeed a righteousness that is worthy for Israel to be presented without spot or wrinkle in the assembly of the elect and life eternal.

That's why too, when God's will is that you repent, you repent. That's the power of his will. That's the power of his will through the cross of Jesus Christ. Whoever God wills to repent will repent. That's how he distinguished his people in Israel. When you looked at Israel as a nation, Israel as a nation was departing. Israel was wandering far from God. Israel was acting treacherously because you looked at the nation and you'd say, "Where is God's people?" God's people were marked by that repentance. That's what Jehovah worked. He didn't work it for all Israel and therefore, because Israel didn't repent, Israel was marked out as a reprobate. That was true of the majority of the nation. They never turned. They were consumed and they were scattered all over the world, never to be gathered again. The same thing happened for the nation of Judah. The majority of the nation perished in its unbelief, in its other sins. They didn't acknowledge his face. They didn't seek him early. They didn't acknowledge their transgressions. And that nation was finally cut down after the cross of Jesus Christ, never to be a holy nation.

Was God's will frustrated? Did man by his sin, and man by his impenitence, and man by his failure to acknowledge his sin, did he frustrate the will of God? Did Israel overcome that will by Israel's own will for Israel's sins? No. That too was in God's purpose and it was in God's purpose in order that those who were not his people might be called his people. That's you and me. They were cut off that you might be grafted in who were no people and who could not say to him, "My God," so that all Israel, Israel not only from Israel and Judah, but Israel from all the nations of the world, that they might be gathered, that they would seek his face, that they would acknowledge their sin.

And you have to say that too about the church. When the church apostatizes and when many are cut off, and we see that more and more, shocking. We live in perilous times. Unless the Lord had saved us, a remnant alive, a garden in a hut of cucumbers in a besieged city, we would be like Sodom and Gomorrah. And you see many follow the

pernicious ways of false teachers. You see many that are bewitched. You see many that are heady and high-minded and lovers of their own selves and treacherous, having a form of godliness and denying the power of it. You see that and they are heedless to all warnings. They're hardened against every admonition and every rebuke. They're deaf to the calling of God. They scoff at his word and like the fool, they pass on and they will perish.

Did they frustrate the will of God? They did not. They will not repent because he did not will their repentance. That's the truth about repentance. Well, I can say to you, repent, repent, repent, and I do. You must repent. If you do not repent, you'll perish. The truth of that repentance is this, that when they repent, that was Jehovah's will, and when they do not, that too was Jehovah's will. When you listen to his word, when you turn from your sin, when you acknowledge your offenses, when you seek his face, that's of Jehovah. That's not of you. And Jehovah, Jehovah doesn't will that in order that he can bless you. Jehovah doesn't will that in order that he can forgive your sins. Jehovah doesn't will that in order that now he can shine his face on you. No, he wills it for your salvation. He wills it for your blessing and it is his blessing to you. That's the other thing about repentance. Repentance isn't unto a blessing. Repentance is a blessing. Repentance belongs to our whole grace of salvation that God willed for us and if repentance is what you must do, what you must do first, you'll never be saved.

Israel repents. Israel always repents. All of Israel repents. That's God's own word. "They will seek me early," so that elect Israel by that word is saved. And don't you see that in the context? "Come and let us return unto the Lord for he hath torn and he will heal us." That's not of man. That's of God. And that's where your repentance and my repentance and the repentance of the whole church comes from too. Otherwise, we also would pass on like the fool and perish. Amen.

Let us pray.

Our Father in heaven, we thank thee for thy holy word. Apply it to our hearts and, Lord, ever work in us by thy word and Spirit that we are daily turned out of every evil way and cause too, Lord, that we would not harden ourselves against thy admonitions and thy rebukes and thy word, but turn us daily out of every evil way. Forgive us, Lord, to all our sin. We pray this for Jesus' sake. Amen.