

“The Sure Demise of God’s People”
Who’s the Boss? – A series on the Kings
2 Chronicles 36

Introduction: Take your Bibles and turn to 2 Chronicles 36, 2 Chronicles 36.

We come to the final chapter in our study of the Kings of Israel this morning. The question we have seen throughout our study is “Who’s the boss?” Those kings who would bow the knee to God as the only Sovereign over His people were kings who prospered and brought great blessing to God’s people. But, the majority of the kings went their own way and did their own thing. They worshiped other gods and they defied the clear Word of the Lord. And so we have known that this Day of Judgment and exile has been coming for quite some time. We have seen the 10 northern tribes of Israel already fall into destruction and exile, and we have been expecting that the curtain would soon drop on the nation of Judah as well. We have known that they deserve it and we have been astonished by the longsuffering and patience of Jehovah God. Most recently we have been astonished by the brave reforms of a boy king by the name of Josiah. But now, this morning we must consider the rather mundane nature of the ongoing evil of Josiah’s descendants. In the last chapter of 2 Chronicles we are given the details of 4 kings. Three of them are sons of Josiah, and one of them is a grandson. The first king, Jehoahaz – a son of Josiah – reigned for 3 months, then there was Jehoiakim – another son of Josiah’s - who reigned for 11 years, and then his son Jehoiachin – which would be Josiah’s grandson - reigned for 3 months, and then finally Zedekiah – another son of Josiah’s - reigned for 11 years. There is nothing all too positive here. The nation of Judah is on life support for these final 23 years and finally under the reign of Zedekiah the nation is carried off into complete exile. We will break up our study this morning by considering the march to exile, the reason for exile and the hope in exile. Let’s begin by reading 2 Chronicles 36.

I. The March to Exile

- a. You will remember that this exile of Judah has been on the table since the reign of Ahaz over 100 years before this time, and then this threat of exile was made all the more direct during the wicked reign of Manasseh. But this exile was held at bay by a few righteous kings who had lives of submission to God and humble dependence upon Him. But now, we have in rapid succession, 4 kings who all do evil in the sight of the Lord. And so, the exile that has been promised and prophesied will have come by the end of the 4th king. The account of these 4 kings in the book of 2 Kings has a little bit more detail, but the Chronicler definitely has an agenda to tell their stories quickly to get to the main event – exile!
- b. The Chronicler’s telling of the march to exile is kind of like tearing a band aid off quickly. Rather than go slow and give the blow by blow account of every hair pulled and every skin cell ripped out of its happy existence, the Chronicler goes with the yank method in order to get all of the pain over with quickly.
- c. And yet, even in this rapid fire re-telling of the march to exile, there is a pattern for all four of these kings that I want you to notice.
 - i. They are evil in the sight of God
 1. We are not given all of the details of the wickedness of each king, because frankly it is all pretty colorless. They did evil and it all pretty much looked the same. We know the routine by now. They didn’t listen to the prophets. They hardened their hearts against God. They stiffened their necks. They worshiped other gods.

Hence, they were evil. This is true of all four of these kings. Now, in our text in 2 Chronicles we are not told the Jehoahaz is wicked, but in 2 Kings that is made abundantly clear. All four of them are straining away from God.

- ii. God sends a foreign power against them
 - 1. Because of their wickedness God sends a foreign power against them. The fact that God sent these foreign powers is clearer in the account given in 2 Kings, but notice in our text that each king has to deal with a foreign power that is mightier than they. So, Jehoahaz is deposed by the Pharaoh of Egypt, and his brother Jehoiakim is defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, and then his son Jehoiachin is carried off to Babylon in exile, and then finally, another son of Josiah, Zedekiah is defeated by Nebuchadnezzar.
- iii. The foreign power carries them away to personal exile
 - 1. Each of these kings is then carried off into personal exile. These personal forays into the complete bondage of a foreign power are but foreshadows of the national exile that is soon to come. It is almost as if God in his mercy is giving the nation a living parable through the fate of their own kings that this is what is coming their way if they continue in rebellion against Him.
- iv. The foreign power plunders the wealth
 - 1. And as part of this personal, and eventually the national, exile, each foreign power takes its turn to plunder some of the wealth of the land. So, Neco levies a tax on the land that Jehoiakim puts on the people to pay. Then Nebuchadnezzar plunders the Temple every time he deposes a king, until finally the whole Temple is stripped of anything valuable.
 - 2. All of this to say that the nation of Judah is in a sad spot in this chapter. As you look at the condition of the nation you see one king after another falling to a foreign power, being carried away into exile, all while the nation's wealth and Temple are raided. Judah is on life support!
- d. And how is it that they got here? Well, most certainly this march to exile can be attributed to the overt wickedness of their kings. In 2 Chronicles 36 there is just a little bit said about the two kings that only reigned for 3 months, but there is much more said about Jehoiakim and Zedekiah who both reigned for 11 years. It is in these 2 kings that we see the epitome of what has been wrong with Judah and its leaders for hundreds of years.
 - i. Jehoiakim was a man who was filled with arrogance and obstinacy when it came to the word and the ways of the Lord. We know from parallel accounts in Jeremiah that Jehoiakim built himself a swanky palace and refused to pay those who worked on the building, all the while he was taxing the people to pay the heavy tribute that Neco King of Egypt had placed on him. As if that wasn't enough he burnt the scroll of Jeremiah's prophecy one piece at a time, and he had no problem with chasing after and putting to death any prophets that he particularly didn't like. In other words, he was the boss, and that was just how it was going to be. He was in charge and he was going to use his position of power to serve himself.
 - ii. And then there was Zedekiah. He was placed on the throne by Nebuchadnezzar as a vassal king and his track record is spelled out a bit more clearly in our text. Verses 11-14 in particular make clear the character of this king. It wasn't any one incident or any especially grievous moment of his life, but rather it was his overall obstinacy that was the

problem. These verses say that he did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet. He rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, who according to Jeremiah had clearly been sent by the Lord, which simply means that Zedekiah resisted the Lord in this point as well. The text also makes clear that he stiffened his neck against the Lord and hardened his heart against turning to the Lord. So, Zedekiah is a hard-hearted, stiff-necked, and proud opponent of God. His lack of humility before the Word of the Lord and his unwillingness to turn to the Lord go directly against what 2 Chronicles 7:14 calls the people of Israel to do in the midst of their trial and trouble. His hard heartedness reminds us of the notorious Pharaoh who wouldn't let God's people go out of Egypt, and his stiffened neck against the Lord reminds us of the generation of Israelites that wandered in the wilderness and died without seeing the Promised Land because of their rebellious and unbelieving hearts. Most certainly, the character of these two kings put the march to exile on the fast track.

- e. But this march to exile must not only be put on the shoulders of the kings. In fact, the text is explicit to point us to the wide spread spiritual decline in the nation. Verses 14-16 says that: *Read 36:14-16.*
 - i. It was not just the king's heart problem that lands them in exile as a nation by the end of this chapter. No, they all were exceedingly unfaithful by following after all of the abominations of the nations around them. In other words, they deposed God from being the One Sovereign Lord of all and they worshiped other gods of their choosing that were suited to their own particular liking. Not only this, but they mocked God's Word and made fun of his prophets, and all of this ends with the sure wrath of the Lord being brought upon His very own people.
 - ii. And this wrath is brought with great fury upon the nation. They find themselves completely ravaged and ruined by the powerful onslaught of the Babylonian Empire. There had been tremors before the earthquake. The end of Jehoiachin's reign - some 10 years before - had ended with Nebuchadnezzar flexing his muscles and deporting a great number of the choicest officials and richest citizens of Jerusalem. It was during this 1st Deportation that the likes of Daniel and his three friends were carried off to Babylon. But at that time the city was not destroyed and a vassal king named Zedekiah was put on guard over the suffering nation of Judah. But the hard heartedness and disbelief of the people only grew and so now the wrath of God brings the full ruin of Judah and Jerusalem. The way that verses 17-20 describe it, there is nothing left in Jerusalem. All that is valuable is removed. All that are strong and mighty are either killed or carried into exile. All the buildings that were mighty structures were torched, including the Temple of the Lord and all the major houses of the city. All of the vessels of the Temple are carried off as loot, and in 2 Kings we are told that everything that was made out of gold, silver, and bronze was taken apart and transported to Babylon. The wall of Jerusalem was broken down and therefore the city became virtually uninhabitable because it was unprotected. In other words, Jerusalem was completely ruined and now lay in desolation, and her people are forced to leave as they march to exile in Babylon.
 - iii. This is the condition of Judah and Jerusalem that has been talked about many times over in the text of Scripture. For hundreds of years God's people have been told that this would happen if they continued to rebel against God. As Paul House says in his commentary on 2 Kings as he talks about the exile of the nation:

- I. “This event is the most devastating punishment Moses can use to threaten people who desperately seek a home of their own (Deut 27-28). It is what Israel barely avoids in Judges, what Samuel warns the people about in 1 Samuel 12, and what Solomon fears in 1 Kgs 8:22-61. Isaiah predicts the exile (Isa 39:1-8), as do Jeremiah (Jer. 7:1-15), Ezekiel (Ezek 20:1-49), Amos (Amos 2:4-5; 6:1-7), Micah (Mic 3:12), Habakkuk (Hab 1:5-11), and Zephaniah (Zeph 1:4-13). Jeremiah and Ezekiel live during the exile, while Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi live in its aftermath. Clearly, it is one of *the* defining events in the Old Testament story.”
(House, *The New American Commentary: 2 Kings*, pg. 404)
- iv. And indeed it is one of the defining moments of the Old Testament story. It stands as a mountain peak event in a range of other events like the calling out of Abraham, the march into the Promised Land, and the giving of the Law of God to His people. You see, God has called his nation out from among others through one man, Abraham. He led them out of Egypt and miraculously placed them in the land that He had promised to them. He made clear to them what kind of people they are to be if they are going to be called by His Name. He gave them the Law that showed them how they are to live in a way that truly worships and honors Him. But, within a generation of a giving of the Law they find themselves living in rampant disobedience that has ebbed and flowed until this final chapter. The exile promised in Deuteronomy is fulfilled in 2 Chronicles. The exile that was so often at the heart of the fears of the godly in this nation is now a reality. And so here we are – the end of the road for the nation of Judah in the promised land of God. The city is destroyed the people have left. Exile has begun.

II. The Reason for Exile

- a. Why did this happen? Why must the wrath of God bring such destruction to His very own people? Well, the first answer is simply because he said that this would happen.
 - i. 2 Kgs 24:2 – The text tells us that God sent Chaldean, Aramaean, Moabite, and Ammonite raiders against Judah to destroy it according to the word he had spoken by His very own prophets.
 - ii. 2 Kgs 24:13 – We are told that Nebuchadnezzar carried off all the treasures of the house of the Lord and of the king’s house and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold for the Temple that Solomon had made, and then the text says this, “as the Lord had foretold.”
 - iii. 2 Chr 36:21 – Tells us that the nation was carried into exile to fulfill the words spoken by the prophet Jeremiah that the land would enjoy the Sabbaths that the people had refused to observe in their rebellion.
 - iv. And so we know that this exile came because God had said that it would. These few examples are just the verses in these direct passages that make this clear. If we had time we could look at the prophets and we could look back to the many words from the Lord earlier in Judah’s history that proclaimed this day of exile was coming. God had said it, and it was going to be done.
- b. But certainly this is an insufficient answer for your heart. Why would God say this? Why would he promise and then bring about the exile of his people. Now at this point you are wondering why I am even asking the question because it seems pretty obvious doesn’t it? It’s like asking a 4 year old if they want some chocolate. You already know the answer, but you ask anyway.
- c. The obvious answer here is sin. They are sent off into exile and the land of Judah and Jerusalem is laid desolate because of their sin, right? Well, this answer is only partially right. You see sin

doesn't bring exile, but a lack of repentance does. Look with me at verse 15. In response to years of rebellious sin what does God do? Well, in compassion he sent messengers – prophets – to them to call them to turn from their evil ways, to humble themselves, and to return to the Lord. We have seen this compassion and mercy on display over and over again in our study of the Kings. We have been awed by the patience of God as it seems he is on the brink of calling into question his righteousness and justice as he delays in punishing his people time and again. But now here we see the fury of His wrath brought upon his people, and this does not happen because they sinned, but because they refused to reconcile with God.

- d. This exile is significant in that God's chosen people are removed from God's chosen land. The land that was known for God's visible presence on Earth in His Temple in Jerusalem now lay desolate and destroyed and the people are carried off to another land because the people themselves refused to repent of their sins. Their lack of repentance brought upon them separation from God. Instead of continuing to enjoy the blessing of the Land he had promised they are uprooted and displaced and separated from God because they have separated themselves from God by refusing to be reconciled to Him.
- e. Notice the parallel nature of the unrepentance of Judah and the judgment of God. After describing the heart condition of the majority of the nation in verses 12-16 the writer says that the wrath of the Lord rose up against his people, until there was no remedy. In other words, their persistent and unchanging rejection of God and mockery of His prophets and His Word brought them to a point where forgiveness and healing were no longer available. What in the world had made the God who describes himself as slow to anger and ready to forgive be a God who cannot turn away from the wrath that he has determined? Well – the unrepentant hearts of his people. Notice that the severity of judgment is linked with the severity of their unrepentant spirits. God did not bring his wrathful judgment upon them at the moment of their very first sin. No, He patiently and compassionately endured and brought His prophets to speak the truth to His people to call them back to Yahweh God, and yet they persisted in their sin. And then he sent more and more and then he saw them mock his prophets and disdain his word and this continued until it became obvious that the only thing that could answer their rebellion was complete exile. You see, exile was not the reaction of a hot-tempered and over reactive God, but rather it was the cool and calm response of a gracious and compassionate God. When it became obvious to all people everywhere that there was no possibility of repentance from the people of Judah – when it was clear that they would never turn back to God – when all people of all time could read the account and see for themselves that God had indeed exhausted every option of mercy – then it was at that point that God sent them into exile. The severity of their rejection of God brought the severity of the judgment of God. You see, their sin did not demand exile, for if it had they would have been in exile much sooner. But rather, their lack of repentance sent them to exile, and in this we see the compassion of God exhausted and the forgiveness of God taken off the table, and the chosen people of God's mercy run out of the Promised Land and God's Temple and city completely destroyed. What a sad and sorrowful picture.
- f. But the account is not just here to tell us what happened so that we can know our history, or simply to cause us sorrow as we gaze on the pain of the situation, but rather the account is here to point us to a universal reality. You see, in this exile we have a foreshadowing of the fate of all unrepentant sinners. What we see in physical and earthly realities in this text are but a foretaste of what awaits the sinner for all of eternity if they refuse to repent of sin and worship the one true God. What these people of Judah experienced in these moments of time point us to the

universal and eternal reality that awaits all unrepentant sinners – the righteous wrath of God. Romans 2:4-5 make this clear:

- i. ⁴ Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? ⁵ But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed. (Rom 2:4-5 ESV)
- g. As confirmed by John 3:
 - i. ³⁶ Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him. (John 3:36 ESV)
- h. So the obvious and immediate application of this text this morning is to the unrepentant sinner. Can't you see in the text that it is a dangerous place to be – the state of unrepentance? What does that look like you say – to be unrepentant? Well, it looks like an unfaithfulness to God where we forget him and replace him and serve an idol of our heart for what we perceive to be our own gain. It is a heart that when it is confronted with the Word of God by the Spirit of God it stiffens up and hardens against this Word. It refuses to humble itself and it refuses to give up whatever sin it is that is being protected. It refuses to turn to the Lord and it insists on getting its own way and doing its own thing. It is a heart that may ask for God's forgiveness, but never turns from the sin that it seeks forgiveness for. It is a heart that presumes upon God's mercy and makes light of the severity of its sin.
- i. You see we all have sinful hearts, but a sinful heart and an unrepentant heart are two different things. They are closely related, but they are distinct. You can't be unrepentant without being sinful, but just because you are sinful does not mean that you have to be unrepentant. And so the warning from the text is to the unrepentant heart. Turn to the Lord. Heed his compassionate work in your soul and turn to Him! This is the call of the text to you this morning. It is a sad representation of an exiled people to point you away from that future exile which awaits all who refuse a compassionate God.

III. The Hope in Exile

- a. This sad story of exile does not end in total sorrow however. In fact, you could say from the text that this end in Judah is only the beginning of some great things that God is going to do. The nation itself cannot see that as they march their way along the dirt roads leading to Babylon, but looking back we can see the glimmers of hope in the text. Glimmers that point us to the reality of God's work to redeem even in the midst of exile. So, we are told in verses 22-23 that the word of the Lord was to be fulfilled by a pagan emperor. *Read vs. 22-23*
- b. Between verses 20 and 22 there lay many years of sorrow filled exile. We are given clues about the nature and state of these years in other passages of Scripture, but for the most part the land remains desolate and in particular the city of Jerusalem remains in ruins. And yet God is at work. God is at work to use a pagan emperor to issue an authoritative decree to rebuild the Temple in Jerusalem. This is an important segue into the book of Ezra which follows right after the book of 2 Chronicles and begins with this same decree by Cyrus and then goes on to detail the struggle of the returning remnant to rebuild the Temple. But more than a segue, this is in the text to point the returning exiles, and us, to hope. Hope in a God who in the face of the unrepentant sin of His people is still at work to bring beauty from the ashes so as to bring glory to His Name.
- c. You see, verses 22-23 don't happen because of the righteousness of God's people or because of their unbelievable ability to keep His Law. No, actually they have quite proven that they are

incapable of that. They have proven that they are total Law breakers – and unrepentant ones at that. This glimmer of hope is not found in their repentance or in their seeking for the Lord in the midst of their exile, but rather this hope is found in the life giving power of the work of God to move even through the most surprising means to accomplish his foreordained purposes. He had purposed to have a Temple in Jerusalem with a people who knew Him and loved Him and worshiped Him alone. And through this exile, as we read in Jeremiah's prophecy, God was drawing true worshipers to himself and preparing them for the restoration to the land that was coming after the exile. In fact, Jeremiah makes clear in chapter 24 of his prophecy that those who were deported in the first deportation will be like good figs that God will bring back to the land and build them up and make his people and they will return to Him with their whole hearts. But these who are being deported with Zedekiah will be like bad figs that are of no use and will become a reproach wherever they go. You see, even in exile God is at work to establish a people for His name and to rebuild His Temple – his physical representation on Earth. And this can only be done by the power of God through the speaking of His word. There is hope here in a God who will not be thwarted, even by the most unrepentant of sinners.

- d. And then in 2 Kings we have another glimmer of hope. We are told that Jehoiachin was freed from prison. Jehoiachin was the son of Jehoiakim whose reign in Jerusalem only lasted 3 months before Nebuchadnezzar returned to Jerusalem and had him deposed and taken into captivity in Babylon. Well, apparently Jehoiachin outlived Nebuchadnezzar and Nebuchadnezzar's son freed him from prison. And so we read this in 2 Kings 25:
 - i. ²⁷ And in the thirty-seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, graciously freed Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison. ²⁸ And he spoke kindly to him and gave him a seat above the seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon. ²⁹ So Jehoiachin put off his prison garments. And every day of his life he dined regularly at the king's table, ³⁰ and for his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, according to his daily needs, as long as he lived. (2Ki 25:27-30 ESV)
- e. Now at first glance this kind of smacks of eating a fine dinner on the deck of the Titanic while she sinks in the North Atlantic. I mean who really cares if Jehoiachin outlives Nebuchadnezzar and can live out some of his final days in some sort of royal decency in Babylon? It doesn't really matter does it? I mean, at the end of 2 Kings the picture is not too bright for God's people, and honestly it doesn't improve much from here on out. There are still years of exile to live out, and then there will be bands of pilgrims who will return to the land and start the restoration process, but the next several hundred years will roll on without a king to sit on the throne of David ruling over all Israel. The nation never finds itself in international prominence again like during the days of David or Solomon or Hezekiah or Josiah. The Biblical books written during this post-exilic time do not paint a pretty picture either. Books like Nehemiah and Malachi tell us the story of a difficult existence in the Promised Land for God's people. So, what does it matter really that Jehoiachin gets let out of prison and finishes of his days in royal favor? Well, if this were the only text about Jehoiachin that we had then it really wouldn't matter. But way back in 2 Samuel 7 it is made clear to David that God promised to build him a dynasty and this dynasty meant that one of his descendants would eventually sit on his throne ruling over his people for all of eternity. This means that David's descendants must continue on until that king is born. But here we are in exile and it looks pretty bleak that any of David's descendants are going to make it out alive. But then we are given hope that Jehoiachin has been released from prison and is allowed to prosper and thrive in Babylon. This gives us hope that maybe his whole

family is allowed to live and thrive in Babylon, and maybe this means then that through him the line of David can continue.

- f. Jeremiah confirms this hope in chapter 23 when he tells us of God's treatment of the sinful shepherds, or kings, and of the hope of a coming Righteous branch.
 - i. "Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!" declares the LORD. ² Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: "You have scattered my flock and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the LORD. ³ Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold, and they shall be fruitful and multiply. ⁴ I will set shepherds over them who will care for them, and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD. ⁵ "Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. ⁶ In his days Judah will be saved, and Israel will dwell securely. And this is the name by which he will be called: 'The LORD is our righteousness.' (Jer 23:1-6 ESV)
- g. God will gather his people back to himself and back to the Promised Land and a son of David, this Righteous Branch will sit on the throne and save his people and reign over them in all wisdom and justice and righteousness. And all of this hinges upon the continuance of the line of David. And so, Jehoiachin, or as Matthew's Gospel calls him, Jechoniah, and his late in life favor stands as greatly significant. For Matthew makes clear to us that the genealogy of David goes through Jechoniah to the Righteous Branch – the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - i. ¹⁰ and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, ¹¹ and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. ¹² And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, (Mat 1:10-12 ESV)
- h. And so in Jechoniah, or Jehoiachin as we know him in our text, there is great hope of God's work to someday bring the Righteous branch of David – the Son of David who is also the Son of God – Jesus of Nazareth. But you know enough of the life of this Jesus to know that he did not go and sit on the throne of David and rule and reign over his people and reestablish the nation as an international power. Rather his time on Earth was filled with pain and sorrow as he confronted the still rebellious and sinful heart of the nation. This man of sorrows who was acquainted with grief eventually laid down his life and died the most cruel and painful of human deaths on a Roman cross. Why would this Righteous Branch die? He was supposed to reign. Well, Isaiah 53 makes known that the exile of God's people in Babylon was judgment on this earth, but that it was just a foreshadow of what sin truly earned – eternal separation from God. So, Jesus laid down his life and on him was laid the iniquity of us all. It was the will of the Lord to crush him for our sakes. It was God's plan that this Righteous One would suffer the eternal exile from God in those moments on the Cross that we all have earned with our sins.
- i. You see, 2 Chronicles 36 makes known to us that we all have earned this exile from God because we all have unrepentant hearts. But the glimmers of hope in the passage point us to the One – this Jesus – who took that exile for us and died in our place so that we might be brought to God and reconciled with Him.
- j. The reality is that your sin has earned exile from God and someone will have to have that judgment placed upon them. Either you will pay it, or Jesus can stand in your place and the

work He did on the cross to bear your punishment can eternally save you from exile. Where is your faith this morning?

- k. How about you Christian? You may know that you have eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, but are you living in unrepentant sin? Be warned from this text that this is not a place you want to be. God is serious about a lack of repentance. He will be slow to anger, and he will be compassionate, but he will not just let you continue in this lack of repentance forever and defame His glory and presume upon his mercy. He will chasten you as he chastened his people of old. Return to Him today!

Let's pray!

Benediction:

¹⁴ The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.
(2Co 13:14 ESV)