

Sermon Notes from the Church's Ministry Among Jewish People

Passion Sunday, Fifth Sunday in Lent – Year B

RCL Readings – Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51:1-12 or 119:9-16; Hebrews 5:5-10; John 12:20-33

ACNA Readings – Jeremiah 31:31-34; Psalm 51[:10-15]; Hebrews [4:14-16], 5:1-10; John 12:20-33, [34-36]

Seasonal Introduction. Traditionally, Lent is a season of 6 weeks of preparation bringing us to the celebration of Jesus' resurrection.^{1 2} The early church felt that the celebration of the resurrection was something believers should diligently prepare for. Lent is a time of intention to deliberately walk deeper with the Lord in spiritual discipline involving prayer, acts of charity and fasting.

Common Theme. We arrive at the penultimate week of Lent, Passion Sunday, with Holy Week and Easter right around the corner. Our readings continue to prepare us for the trial and execution of Jesus. The death of the Messiah presents a theological paradox for many in the first century. The paradox is Jesus is about to repair Creation through His own broken body. His individual sacrifice and death will result in resurrection and life on a universal scale, the mystery of the Cross will indeed repair the world.

Jeremiah 31:31-34. The Scriptures contain several covenants that describe God entering into formal relationships with humans. Many of those covenants detail the promises of the Lord to rescue and restore His people Israel. However, there are also several covenants that have universal application and are not only for Israel, such as the covenant made with Noah and the

¹ The practice of communal fasting leading up to the Great Easter Vigil and Easter was common, as new believers (who had sometimes studied for a year or more in preparation) prepared themselves for baptism during Easter and their new communities joined them in the final days of preparation through fasting.

² While the early church did not immediately practice fasting for forty days before Easter, the practice of a forty day fast had fully developed by the 4th century. This came out of the examples in Scripture, most prominently Jesus' forty days in the wilderness as He approached His time of ministry. Moses' forty days on Mount Sinai and Elijah's journey to Mount Sinai are two additional forty day fasts.

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animals and their descendents found in Genesis 9:8-17.^{3 4} The New Covenant is to be made with Israel, the people whom God had redeemed from Egypt, and reflects a national return to the Lord.⁵ The prophecy also comprises an individual blessing with the Law being personalized within the hearts and minds of everyone. This is also precisely what Moses desired, “These words that I command you today shall be on your heart.” (Deut 6:6) The Torah was not to simply be written on tablets of stone.^{6 7} The New Covenant involves inward transformation with the

³ The Noachic Covenant is an unconditional promise from the Lord not to destroy the earth again with a flood. The rainbow is a sign of the covenant for God, not Man, that He will look at and be reminded of His promise. This covenant is not only for humans but also for the animals. Some scholars also include God's promise, spoken in Genesis 8:21-22, and man's responsibility (Genesis 9:1-7) as part of the Noachic Covenant due to its proximity even though it is not explicitly included in the covenant.

⁴ There are some suggestions that there was a prior covenant made with Adam called the Adamic Covenant that preceded the Noachic Covenant. However, the Hebrew text of God's dealings with Adam and Eve in the opening chapters of Genesis does not include the word covenant at all. God does make certain statements and promises to Adam, Eve, and the Serpent, but a promise is not the same thing as a covenant. When the almighty, unchanging God makes a promise or even gives a simple statement, it may appear to be very similar to a covenant but God has only made covenants at specific times with specific people. (continues on the following page)

Covenants do remind us (and God) that the Lord of all creation is not aloof from His creation but that He is intimately involved with the world that He made. The prophets also proclaim that God has not finished making covenants. Hosea 2:18 tells us that at some time in the future God will once again enter into a covenant with the animals and, here in Jeremiah 31, that God will make a New Covenant with Israel. Note that in the context of the passage the initial recipients of the New Covenant are the Jewish nation.

⁵ Supersessionism or Replacement Theology is a very poor Christian theological opinion that suggests that God has superseded the nation of Israel with the Christian Church. The assertion is that the New Covenant supersedes the Mosaic Covenant and involves cancellation or abrogation of the Lord's promises to the Jewish people. The truth is that Jeremiah and the New Testament teach plainly and directly that God has not concluded His dealings and promises with Israel or the Gentiles.

God's mysterious love for Israel has often been described as a marital relationship with God being the husband and Israel being the wife, in contrast to simply being a suzerain - vassal arrangement. The prophets of Israel at times even described this marriage in erotic terms (e.g. Hosea 2, Ezekiel 16). Israel, in her unfaithfulness, took many husbands/lovers but God never took another wife and remained loyal to his people even in an age when polygamy was common. The God who hates divorce (Mal 2:16) may punish his people but he never rejects them. When this union falls apart and comes to a point of dissolution, when it seems it is no longer humanly possible to restore the covenant, is when God always takes the initiative and renews his commitment to Israel—often resulting in Israel's renewed commitment to God.

⁶ The law of God was always to be on the heart—neither Jeremiah 31:31 or Deuteronomy 6:6 are a one-time allusion to this truth. Both Deuteronomy 11:18 and 32:46 also speak of the Torah on the hearts of the children of Israel. The Psalmists and Isaiah also refer to the Law of God being in the heart of the righteous (Psalm 37:31, 40:8, and 119:11; Isaiah 51:7).

⁷ It should be noted that the Torah is not, itself, a covenant. There are several covenants within the Torah, including the Noachic, Abrahamic, and the Mosaic Covenant.

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Torah being where it was always meant to be, on hearts and minds.⁸ God takes His place as the God of Israel (which He always was) and Israel remains His people (which they continue to be, as shown by Jeremiah 31:35-37). No one is replaced and nothing is abrogated as the signs of the sun, moon and stars remain in the sky.

Another promise of the Lord is the forgiveness of sins in connection with the New Covenant. What is not stated is how forgiveness would be achieved—simply that God will forgive them. Sacrifices are not mentioned and there is no obvious connection to the blood of a redeemer. The New Covenant does not envision a realm of sinlessness, rather, God is continuously and intimately involved with His creation through the action of forgiveness.

Despite the New Covenant having the house of Israel and Judah as the initial recipients, this does not preclude an exclusion of the nations. The people who departed from Egypt during the Exodus included a 'mixed multitude', meaning that redemption always included both Jews and Gentiles and that a mixture of both peoples were at Mt Sinai. Gentiles have always been part of the plan of God. The calling of Israel was to be a light to the nations and the Abrahamic Covenant was for the descendants of Abraham to be a blessing to all peoples. With that background context the Gentiles become part of the New Covenant as 'grafted in' members of the body of Messiah (Romans 11) through faith in the Messiah.

Psalm 51:1-12. Up there with Psalm 23, this is possibly one of the best known Psalms of David. These words of contrition have been used in liturgies of repentance in both Christian and Jewish prayers for centuries. Psalm 51 provides a clear context to David's cry of repentance; "To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the Prophet went to him, after he had gone in to

⁸ This reaffirms the statement by Jesus in Matthew 5 where He says, "I have not come to abolish [the Law]" because if the Law is indeed abolished then God has nothing to actually put on our hearts. That would render both Jeremiah 31 and Matthew 5 superfluous.

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Bathsheba.”⁹ These events in David's life were not hidden sins but public and well known, particularly after Nathan the prophet exposed David's guilt. In this psalm of repentance David does not ask for understanding, nor attempt to make excuses or give contextual reasons for his sinful actions.¹⁰ Instead, he opens with the humble request for mercy.¹¹ The root of the word is רַחַם *rechem* which is the Hebrew word for womb.¹²

“I know my transgressions” is an acknowledgment that David has indeed sinned and that he has a problem, “blot out my transgressions” is a clear proclamation of the need and desire for those sins to be erased. In turning away from sin, David seeks more than forgiveness—he seeks a restored relationship with God. David requested that God “restore to me the joy of Your salvation” and that God would not remove the Holy Spirit from him. We should note that David would not remain passive during the process, instead he too will play a part in the journey of restoration.

What will David do? David vows that he will teach other sinners the ways of God. David will teach them of God's mercy, kindness and willingness to forgive. David will share his own experiences and bring God's redemption to others. The action of repentance can also be a witness to those around us. Personal repentance can have an effect on our community. David will experience the mercies of God in multiple forms. His sins will be forgiven, his transgressions

⁹ Some Psalters don't include the superscription at all while most English translations do not include what is, in the Hebrew, the first verse of the Psalm but start from verse two—rather, they write verse one as almost a heading for the Psalm. This has set a bad precedent as often the superscription is not preached or ignored entirely. However, when the Canon was declared, the superscriptions were part of the Psalms.

There have been historical scholars who believe the superscriptions were added much later than the writing of the Psalms (many of these same scholars did not believe in the supernatural, God-breathed nature of the Bible). However, by the time the LXX was written, the superscriptions were already part of the writings and likely had been for quite some time, if not from the time of the original writing. Sometimes the superscription is very simple, “Of David” (Psalm 25 etc.) and sometimes the superscription includes context that has no readily available meaning to us, “To the choirmaster: according to *The Doe of the Dawn*. A Psalm of David.” However, many times the superscription gives us such a depth of context that the Psalm may have meant very little to us without it, such as Psalm 88. While the superscription may appear in the same font as modern headings, it is part of the Canon of Scripture and should be read and included in both our preparation and service of worship.

¹⁰ While Saul appears to follow the direction of the laws regarding a King in Deuteronomy 17:14-20 better than David, when he was confronted by God and the prophets, he continuously made excuses. God's rejection of Saul and acceptance of David may seem unjustified at times, but David's willingness to repent, take responsibility for his sins, and his earnest desire to turn to God are some of the largest distinctions between the two men.

¹¹ The word mercy is רַחֲמִים (*rechemim*) and it is always in the plural form. This may highlight that the compassion of the Lord comes in multiple forms of mercies.

¹² The strong connection of compassion and love that exists between mother and child is the basis of understanding the nature of Biblical mercy.

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blotted out and not remembered, the Holy Spirit will not be taken away but remain with him and David will return the loving kindness he has received to teach and share it with others.

Psalm 119:9-16.¹³ This psalm refers to the Scriptures so many times that almost every verse mentions the Torah, the commandments, or the Word of the Lord. In some form or another, the Scriptures are mentioned in 171 of the 176 verses, including all 8 verses in *Bet*. While Psalm 51 focuses on repentance from sin, Psalm 119:9-16 focuses on prevention of sin. “How can a young man keep his way pure?” Psalm 119 focuses on devotion and loyalty to God and His instructions. We must trust God and His Word but also, as verse 5 states, we must be steadfast in keeping God’s statutes. The psalmist encourages us to place the Word of God on our lips so that our mouths will speak and teach the way of the Lord. What comes out of our mouths is important, thus we should keep the word of God close to our lips.

Hebraic Context. Melchizedek is an interesting and mysterious character in the Scriptures. His name means ‘My king is righteousness’ מֶלְכִּי־צְדָקָה.¹⁴ From the short encounter he has with Abram we know he is the king of Shalem, which is traditionally identified with Jerusalem.¹⁵ Melchizedek is a king-priest, two offices which are usually separated in the *Torah*, of El Elyon. Scholars are divided as to which deity is being referred to when we first encounter the term here. But Abram uses the form El Elyon in conjunction with El YHVH almost immediately in Genesis 14:22 in his conversation with the king of Sodom. Abram seems to understand that Elyon and YHVH are the same being and has no problem with describing God this way. Elyon is later used heavily in the Psalms (22 times) and always in reference to the God of Israel, oftentimes directly connected to YHVH. Melchizedek appears in the Scriptures without a genealogical backstory, there is no account of his birth, nor of his death. He thus takes on an immediate timeless nature and provides the basis for exegetical material when discussing or interpreting other mysterious or timeless passages. His very name meaning king and righteousness only adds to the attractiveness of exegetical use. The Dead Sea sect made use of this ambiguity to pair the coming messianic redeemer as Melchizedek and to define him as God (*Elohim*).¹⁶

¹³ Psalm 119 has an unknown author but is the longest Psalm and has the form of an abecedarian acrostic poem. Psalm 119:9-16 starts with the second Hebrew letter, *bet*.

¹⁴ For a strictly literal translation, it could simply mean “my king is Tzedek”. This kind of composite name would sometimes refer to the name of a deity, lord, or king.

¹⁵ Geographically, Jerusalem would be a detour on Abraham’s path from the north to the Dead Sea as he returns his nephew and the spoils of war. Shalem is never strictly spoken of as Jerusalem although Psalm 72:2, in its Hebraic poetry, equates *Shalem* with *Zion*. Genesis 33:18, for instance, is a bit unclear if Jacob stopped at a place called Shalem, a city under the hegemony of Shechem, or came peacefully to the city of Shechem (although most people assume it is the latter as there is a lot of interaction between Jacob and his children and Shechem in the following passages).

¹⁶ It is commonly argued that Judaism never anticipated a divine redeemer, this is actually incorrect. The theology of the late 2nd Temple period was not homogeneous in any sense, there were a variety of

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Hebrews 5:5-10. The Bible tells us very little about Melchizedek. In the short passage in Genesis 14, where Melchizedek appears, his encounter with Abram is largely without context. In Genesis 14, Abram had participated in a war against multiple kings while rescuing his nephew Lot. Following his victory, Abram was on his way to the king of Sodom and suddenly encountered the king of Salem.¹⁷ This entire encounter lasted a short 4 verses. This mysterious encounter created a wealth of speculation and interpretation during the 2nd Temple period.

Some Jewish traditions identified Melchizedek as Shem, the son of Noah.¹⁸ The Dead Sea Scrolls community understood Melchizedek to be divine and the Messiah (11Q13).¹⁹ Similarly the author of Hebrews connected the mysterious Melchizedek with the son of God (Hebrews 7:1-3). One way he did this was by placing the ministry of Jesus within the context of the order of Melchizedek and not the Levitical priesthood.²⁰

conflicting opinions on nearly all issues. One such opinion of the Dead Sea Community at Qumran concerning the coming redeemer is recorded in 11Q13 or the Melchizedek document. In the fragmentary manuscript the messianic redeemer is named Melchizedek and at the end of the scroll Melchizedek is revealed to be '*Elohim*' or God. "And your Elohim is [Melchizedek, who will save them from] the hand of Belial." Melchizedek also appears to be a judge and avenger regarding the judgements of God.

The authors of 11Q13 are also happy to reinterpret Zion in its relationship to Melchizedek and *Shalem* from Psalm 76:2, "As it is written concerning him, [who says to Zion]; your Elohim reigns. Zion is... those who uphold the Covenant, who turn from walking [in] the way of the people."

¹⁷ The Hebrew is *Shalem*, possibly referring to Jerusalem, as is *Yerushalayim*, peace/wholeness, or another city. The Greek, in Hebrews 7:1, translates the word as Σαλημ, a transliteration (*Salem*) rather than translation to peace. By this point, most traditions would state it was referring to Ἱερουσαλήμ (Jerusalem).

¹⁸ Targum Yonatan (or Targum Pseudo Yonatan, an early Aramaic translation of the Bible), Genesis 14:18 is translated, "And Melchi-zedek, who was Shem bar Noah, the king of Yerushalem..."; Babylonian Talmud tractate Nedarim 32b states, "Rabbi Zekharya said in the name of Rabbi Yishmael: The Holy One, Blessed be He, wanted the priesthood to emerge from Shem, so that his children would be priests, as it is stated: 'And Melchizedek king of Salem brought forth bread and wine; and he was priest of God the Most High'. Once Melchizedek, traditionally identified as Shem, placed the blessing of Abraham before the blessing of the Omnipresent, He had the priesthood emerge from Abraham in particular, and not from any other descendant of Shem."

¹⁹ See footnote 16

²⁰ "In the order of Melchizedek" is a quote from Psalm 110:4. From the text of Genesis we see that Melchizedek is a gentile priest of God. This can lead to many questions over what type of priesthood is his order? The writer of Hebrews declares Jesus, called by God, to be our High Priest forever. However, Jesus, who is identified with Judah, is not from the tribe of Levi. This presents a problem as the priestly line descends from Levi. Thus the need for this attachment to the order of Melchizedek—someone not in a patrilineal or matrilineal priesthood.

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Hebrews also reminds us that Jesus experienced suffering and learned obedience (5:8).²¹ Obedience is intrinsically linked with salvation and cannot be separated from it. Most of us naturally want to finish Hebrews 5:9 with the word 'believe'. However, the verse continues from 5:8 and reads "And being made perfect, He became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey Him". This season of Lent is a partaking in that suffering, but that is only part of the purpose. In our returning to the Lord, the source of our salvation, we also partake in the obedience of Jesus. Our walk with the Lord goes beyond the cross, it continues in the path of obedience.²²

John 12:20-33. Half of John's Gospel (Chapters 11-21) concerns itself with the last week of Jesus' life. Here, in chapter 12, we are coming to the end of Jesus' public ministry. Chapter 12 begins with a temporal reference of time and place in that we are told that Jesus came to Bethany, where he had raised Lazarus from the dead, and it was 6 days before the Passover.

Of the final events of the public ministry of Jesus prior to His arrest, trial, death and resurrection, the author of John's gospel has selected three narratives. The first being Mary's anointing of Jesus at Bethany, then the triumphal entry into Jerusalem, and here the coming of some Greeks to visit Jesus. We are supplied with no background information on who these certain Greeks were. The fact that they had come up to worship at the feast, and were in the Temple precincts indicates that they were probably "God-fearers" rather than proselytes in the strict sense. Had they been true proselytes, that is, had they actually converted to Judaism then they would probably not have been referred to as Greeks any longer.²³ Many Gentiles came to worship at the major pilgrimage festivals without being Jewish proselytes (including circumcision), for

²¹ The author uses a play on words, *εμαθεν αφ ων επαθεν*, "He learned from the things He suffered." *Εμαθεν*, to learn, seems to often have an experiential nature rather than simply book learning. Jesus likely didn't have to learn what pleased God and become better at obeying God in these things, rather, as the author of Hebrews so often points out, He would have experienced, or learned, obedience in suffering even as we do.

²² Spurgeon once said about obedience; "Obedience is a trade to which a man must be apprenticed until he has learned it, for it is not to be known in any other way." Our natural inclination is not to obey God. And so, we have to not only be instructed in how to follow the Lord but also develop the habit of following and obeying God.

²³ God-fearer, *φοβούμενοι τὸν Θεόν*, was the descriptive term for Gentiles that were sympathetic or attracted to the monotheistic worldview of the Jewish people. Modern scholars consider the significant size of God-fearers in Greco Roman society as having a major role in the rapid spread of the Gospel and Christianity. While accurate numbers of God-fearers in the 1st Century are unknown, examples of the synagogue of Dura Europus indicate a potential presence of close to 40% of the congregation. The Court of the Gentiles in the Temple was the largest of the four courts of the Temple and is evidence of the large number of Gentiles that came to worship the God of Abraham.

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example, the Ethiopian eunuch in the book of Acts, who likely could not have been a proselyte if he were physically a eunuch.²⁴

This group of Greeks in John 12 had heard of Jesus, perhaps through rumour or perhaps they were familiar with some Jewish people who had personally encountered Him during His ministry. They identified the disciples of Jesus in the Temple and approached Phillip. Phillip had a Greek name, which may indicate his ability to speak Greek and thus communicate with these God-fearers.²⁵ In the past, Jesus had told his mother that “My hour had not yet come”. Interestingly, John 12 paired the approach of Gentiles with Jesus’ proclamation that His hour has now come.²⁶ Jesus spoke openly in the Temple that He would be willing to face death to bring life to the world. The challenge is proclaimed to all who would become followers of the Messiah—we must not love our lives more than we do God.

The expression ‘to hate your life’ might seem a little strong in some settings. To hate your life does not imply you have a disregard for its value nor a desire not to remain alive and instead seek martyrdom. Rather, that, in obedience to the Lord, we would of our own free will be willing to surrender ourselves to martyrdom for the sake of heaven. We should not deny the Lord, even on pain of death. Jesus reminds us that following Him is a lifestyle of service.²⁷ Following Jesus is a servant activity, not only to the Master Himself but also to the people and the world around us. As we serve the Lord we bring that little bit of healing to the broken creation and add to the light that chases away the darkness. None of this is forced slavery or servanthood, rather we are invited by the grace of the Lord to freely serve as we follow after Jesus.

John then records a third time when there was an audible heavenly voice during the ministry of Jesus. The first time was at Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan, the second at the transfiguration, and finally here in the Temple in response to Jesus’ prayer that the Father to glory His own Name.

²⁴ People with physical blemishes were forbidden from such positions as priests and levites (who worked in the Temple), and more so being able to present themselves before the Lord at the Temple. They were, however, allowed in certain parts of the Temple courts. Most likely the Ethiopian eunuch was a God-fearer and had attended the recent pilgrimage festivals while possibly also engaged in statecraft as a representative of the court of Candice.

²⁵ Phillip was also from Bethsaida, which, during this period or shortly thereafter became a polis. Within El Araj, the most likely candidate for Bethsaida, a Roman bathhouse was discovered as well as general Jewish finds such as stone vessels, indicating that Bethsaida had a mixed community.

²⁶ It isn’t clear if Jesus actually goes to talk with the Gentiles or simply continues to explain to His disciples the path that they should walk as He would continue to walk even to His death. Even if Jesus did not go to the Gentiles, their request to see Him opens this dialogue and, as shown in John 12:28-29, God’s vocal declaration is heard by all those present.

²⁷ The word used ‘to serve’ is *diakonos* which is the Greek for servant or someone in close attendance and from where we get the modern English word deacon.

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After the voice from heaven, Jesus declared that His personal sacrifice—death and resurrection—will draw all peoples to Himself.²⁸

The Temple crowd now faced a dilemma in hearing Jesus' proclamation. If Jesus, whom many suspected or believed to be the Messiah, identified himself with this Son of Man who was to be taken up or taken away, how could this be reconciled with their belief that the Messiah, when he comes, would remain forever?²⁹ The son of man, as spoken of in Daniel 7, is clear—He will be given a kingdom and it will be everlasting. If Jesus was the son of man, given authority and everlasting dominion, then the natural conclusion is that He would not go away. Daniel 9:26, speaking of a messiah who would be cut off and have nothing, may not have been so commonly associated with the Son of Man.³⁰ But once again, even as we saw from His first recorded passover in John 3 (Fourth Sunday in Lent) Jesus knew how He would die,³¹ was willing to finish the race, and knew that the prize was great enough to run after.

Hebraic Perspective. *Tikkun Olam* תיקון עולם (repairing the world) is a dominant concept in modern Judaism.³² It refers to individual acts of redemption, good deeds and love that make a small portion of the world, where these acts take place, a better place. While modern applications of *tikkun olam* often only emphasize acts of social justice, the original context of *tikkun olam* was sacred. The world had become 'broken' through Adam in the Garden and it was now incumbent upon fallen humanity to seek to repair the damage.³³

²⁸ Many times, throughout Scripture, the word "all" is not completely inclusive. This declaration does not guarantee that every single man, woman, and child will follow after Jesus—that is still for those who "hates his life in this world" and truly do follow after Jesus. All people might be invited but not all will respond.

²⁹ Recall that this occurred just after the triumphal entry (which was an event full of messianic expectation). It's very possible that many present in the Temple, at this point, strongly believed that Jesus was the Messiah. Not only that, but in the following pilgrimage feast (Pentecost), thousands decided to follow Jesus after His death, resurrection, and ascension.

³⁰ When Gabriel visited Mary, he also declared that her child would be given the "Throne of his father David, and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." (Luke 1:32-33)

³¹ John seems to use the term 'lifted up' ὑψωσεν (*hypsoon*) slightly differently to the other Gospel writers and the Epistles. The context of John's nuance of ὑψωσεν is clearest in John 12:32-34 to signify the crucifixion but could also apply to His ascension and exaltation, as in other passages (such as Acts 2:33, 5:31).

³² *Tikkun Olam* came into its full modern definition in the late 19th century but had various developments throughout history, as seen in footnote 33.

³³ It was recognized that, ultimately, God was the repairer of the world. In the *Aleinu* a 3rd century (or earlier) prayer, the Jewish people have prayed for almost two millennia, "We put our hope in you, O LORD our God, to soon behold the glory of Your might in banishing idolatry from the earth, and the false gods will be utterly exterminated *to perfect the world* (ליתקן עולם) as the kingdom of the Almighty." Nonetheless, God's work should not diminish the fact that we too are called to be just (Micah 6:8).

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The fallen world needs to be and is going to be repaired! Who was going to be tasked with repairing the world? From the Scriptures the first calling was to Adam but later through the prophets the call was all Israel. Another aspect of repairing the world will be brought upon by the Lord Himself. The New Covenant will restore the broken relationship between Israel and her God. Messiah will teach and engage in the activity of bringing healing to the universe and individual acts of repentance will bring about not only the forgiveness of sins but also the restoration of relationships. Tikkun Olam is performed by everyone: God, Messiah, nation states, and individuals.