

Martin Luther in the middle of his career felt that he now had the truth and he would simply present it to the Jews and they would all accept it. He presented the Gospel but most of them turned it down cold, and then Luther went into the most virulent attacks. Some have tried to picture Martin Luther as anti-Semitic, but he simply took over the general attitude of Christians of his day far more than he should in his dealings with them. God is not saying this is right, but he is saying that for a time, at least, God's mercy is being extended to the Gentiles, and instead of being called by the name of Israel (even though they are called the Israel of God) this new movement will be called by a distinct name i.e. the name Christian. The word Christian means Messianic, followers of Christ. This is a name which certainly could have been applied to the Jews. They were looking for the Messiah, but the term never was applied to them. It was applied instead to the Christians.

God rebukes the attitude which says, "We are your people; you have got to bless us." He says, "No. My people are the ones who are doing my will. They are loyal to me. They are not characterized by spiritual pride. I am going out into the highways and byways to bring in a people for my name and I will have a group of servants who are not taken from Israel. Those who claim my blessing simply because of ancestry, or simply because they think they are superior to others are going to have a sorry awakening. They are going to find that I will turn my mercy to another people, and they are going to find rebuke and misery and slaughter themselves.

Much in the prayer is true, but it needs to be balanced with proper repentance and turning away from sin. That is the thing God requires that his mercy may return on them as it has been in the past.

God declares, "I will create new heavens and a new earth . . . I will create Jerusalem to be a delight and its people a joy. I will rejoice over Jerusalem and take delight in my people; the sound of weeping and of crying will be heard in it no more." (v.17-19). Blessing is to come on Jerusalem. God will give an affirmative answer to their prayer. The former troubles will be forgotten and you will have your place restored among the nations.