

21 Jeremiah 21- 23

The book of Jeremiah covers material in general in time order as the prophecies pertaining to Judah developed, but not in the same precise time order that we do have in general in Ezekiel.

And we will note from time to time that the story material of the Gentiles as in Ezekiel is reserved to a separate section from the material pertaining to Judah.

In the material beginning with chapter 21, where we will start today, we have that part of a book devoted to prophecy which will begin the background, the setting of the time.

We would understand that in any prophecy there is often the need to give background material for those who read material much later.

You need to know the personalities involved and to some extent the sequence events of the time.

Now the book of Jeremiah pertains to material at the end of the seventh century in the beginning of the sixth century BC.

We are dealing with the house of Judah and not really until you come to the book of Ezekiel do you get the strong impact that the material given here is the special type for the future.

Or to put it in another way, the fall of Samaria at the hands of the Assyrians was not so much a type of events for the future as the fall of Jerusalem at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar was chosen to be.

In chapter 21, and there may be something to pass around here for signature, we have a message that came to Jeremiah from the Lord when Zedekiah was king.

And a number of individuals were sent to Jeremiah, inquire, I pray thee of the Lord for us, said the king, for Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon makes war against us.

And we want to know what God will do for us on an occasion like this.

Now what is remarkable first of all is to recognize that often when problems arise those who have not listened before will ask the person whom they did not want to listen to.

That is, they asked Jeremiah because they did know that Jeremiah was in contact with the Creator.

So Jeremiah tells them what God says.

And here we have a prophecy that we don't, and some of this material is relatively clear as stated, and we don't have to read it in detail, and other things simply are obscure from the Hebrew, and some things should have special comment.

I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands, wherewith you fight against the king of Babylon and the Chaldeans that besiege you outside the walls of Jerusalem.

Now gather them into the midst of this city, that is the people under siege.

God says, I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand, and the reason of course is that the children of Judah had sinned, to the point where there was no turning back.

That is, the nature of their sin was not like a people who didn't know better, but people who did know better, and the damage that does to human beings is far greater, let's say, than the damage

that strange customs in New Guinea might do to the natives whom we still would think of as near-head hunters or cannibals in some of the far valleys.

They don't know any different, but when you know better, this is when the problem arises.

I'll deliver Zedekiah the king, his servants, the people, such as are left to the city, from pestilence, from the sword, into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar.

Of course, there are those who died from both the ongoing warfare and disease.

Now, what is remarkable here is that God tells Jeremiah to name the king himself as indicted.

That of course put Jeremiah in jeopardy, but it would indicate that perhaps when this work nears its conclusion, as far as we are asked to do a job that indeed we will be in a situation where we will have to tell rulers what decision God has made.

Under this people you shall say, verse 8, I have set before you the way of life, the way of death.

Now, what is here, of course, is made clear.

The way of death at this moment was to resist the king, the way of life in terms of survival.

That's what he's addressing, not salvation.

The way of life is to fall away to the Chaldeans that beseech you.

He lives, and his life shall be to him for a prey, for the Chaldeans themselves were not attempting to obliterate the city.

Nebuchadnezzar was smart enough to know it paid to have Jews saved for the good of the Chaldean Empire.

This kind of thing, of course, would be regarded as treachery, but they had asked the prophet.

We haven't reached a point in time ourselves where we have to face this question as to what God's decision is at any one time.

We know from other prophecies, of course, the time will come when a bugle call to go forth to war will be sounded figuratively, but no one will move.

It will be simply too late.

What alternatives this nation may be offered in the future, what the situation will be, we don't know.

But in Jeremiah's case anyway, we have the implication that he was asked what will happen.

He told what would happen.

He pointed out that the best way was to come to some compromise and not to go to war.

It would have been much better simply to have surrendered.

Under the house of the king of Judah, verse 11, hear this word from the Lord, O house of David, you are told to execute justice, deliver the spoiled from the hand of the oppressor, lest my fury go forth so that it would not be quenched.

Here's a reference to a fire that no fire department can put out.

The responsibility, of course, of administering government was in the house of David, and they apparently had failed to execute justice, had not delivered people from those who were oppressing others and were themselves involved in evil deeds.

And when God can no longer use those who administer His government from the top, He can no longer use the people as a whole.

And He simply has to change things till they learn a lesson.

Here we have a few awkward expressions in verse 13 that would be best perceived by reading a commentary, and I would choose this evening to point up that sometimes there are references like inhabitant of the valley and the rock of the plain, references here that would be obscure unless one were to go to the Hebrew, because we simply don't word it in such fashion.

Now, certainly a reference is here to the role of the house of David in Judah, ruling from Jerusalem, and that ultimately they were going to be punished, no matter whether they had their protection in the fortifications on the hill of Jerusalem or their cities to defend the countryside and the plains around, that God would punish them, kindle a fire in her forest, devour all that is around about her.

These forests are references to people, because forests populate the surface of the land as people do.

And now in chapter 22, the story continues without a break.

Go to the house of the king, the God says to the prophet, and speak there this word and say, O you king of Judah, who sits upon the throne of David, you your servants your people, execute justice and righteousness and deliver the spoil out of the hand of the oppressor, do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.

Now, of course, you have here a kind of authoritarian form of government, you did not have our democratic form.

Now, there are two kinds of shedding of blood when those who administer justice shed the blood of the innocent, and when those who don't administer justice as today allow the blood of the innocent to be shed while we defend the criminal.

We pay the money collected in taxes to administer the courtroom situation.

Our society does nothing to assist in the burial of the dead, the victim.

We do nothing in terms of using public monies of this nature to take care of those who were dependent on the person who was slain, but that's the way our society operates.

We do have a group of people today who are becoming aware of the problem, but we have also another group that is entrenched that regards civil rights of the criminal of greater merit and concern than the rights of the victim to be free of this.

Probably this section here is as good as any description we could have of the state of the problem.

I grant there are verses which speak of idolatry, there are verses which speak of Sabbath breaking, but in reality idolatry and Sabbath breaking are essentially spiritually perceived matters.

We cannot deny the fact that a society ought to know better in the matters we have just read.

We don't find justice regularly executed.

We do find oppressive landlords and bosses and not to mention, of course, the role of organized crime today.

We allow wrong and violence to occur.

We have not dealt fairly with the stranger.

You see, if we had, in this nation, dealt with the stranger as we deal with ourselves, we would have terminated slavery at the ports of entry, and we wouldn't have the problem we had today because people wouldn't have wasted their time loading on board the black slaves because they couldn't sell them at the other end.

But that is now too late to turn around.

South Africa has to face the same thing.

We do not deal fairly with the stranger.

When we put people in the sweatshops, especially Latin women, who try to earn a living as best they can, we have one such place within walking distance of our campus.

I do not know what the rigors of the situation are there.

It may be very different, but I would only say that it is typical to find in places that we have in Southern California women who are paid far less than the minimum wage because they have no recourse.

They are strangers who have fled this side of the border to have some kind of employment and cannot identify themselves and have to work for whatever they are offered.

And of course we have problems in taking care of individuals whose parents are lost, especially as a result of crime.

Innocent blood is shed every day in all the major cities.

More deaths occur in any major city of the United States than in any other nation of the world for civil criminal reasons.

We are not talking of a police state where there are political reasons.

There are more crimes committed in the city of Los Angeles each day than there are in all of Germany or Italy of this nation, the whole nation.

In fact, there are probably more crimes committed in Pasadena than the whole of the People's Republic of China day for day of this nature.

That's the shocking thing to contemplate, but that's the reality.

We're not talking about political problems.

We're talking about the fact that some societies stop one thing and create the political problem, on the other hand, whereas in this society we guarantee you political rights and a private burial because of what happened last night on the streets, you know, that kind of thing.

If you do this and we really change our society, then there shall enter in by the gates of this house king sitting on the throne of David, riding in the chariots and on horses, he and his servants and his people.

But if you will not hear these words, God said, it's all over.

What had happened to Gilead when the Assyrians invaded will now, of course, happen to the children of Judah.

Many nations shall pass by this city and shall say everyone to his neighbor, what has the Lord done to this place? And they shall answer, well, because they've forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God and worshiped other gods and served them.

And in fact, if you want to read Christian literature, as it is commonly called, you will discover that the world as we know it regards the Jews as having wandered because of sin.

All the Gentiles know that the reason the Jew lost his homeland for centuries is because of sin.

And interestingly, of course, most Gentiles have not lost their homelands.

They didn't know any better.

They still live where they used to.

While they sometimes moved their borders.

But the Jews knew so much more than they should.

Then they acted on that God had to deal with them that way as a warning.

So we move along.

We are here introduced also to the tragedy of Shalom, the son of Josiah, who remained king for about three months when the Egyptians passed through the land in 609 BC to attack the new conquerors of the Assyrian Empire, Nebuchadnezzar's father and the army.

He went out of Jerusalem.

He went down to Egypt and in the place where they led him captive, he shall die.

His other name was Jehoahaz, and he will never see this land again.

What happened to Shalom, who was the son of Josiah, will also happen to each of the other sons of Josiah, one way or another, whether he be Jehoiah, Kim, or whether he be Zedekiah.

Then he describes the role of government, the one who builds his house by unrighteousness, his chambers by injustice.

It implies that the government abused its privileges.

Now we don't have, let's say, kings.

We have in this country, of course some of his light lands have kings, those who descend from the Ten Tribes, but we have a government in which we could say bureaucracy functions often in this fashion.

Our bureaucracy has risen much faster than the service has rendered.

These men who are bureaucrats take advantage of situations, as the kings then did.

He uses his neighbor's service without wages.

Of course we require wages, and then we tax them, there are different ways of doing it, but in that day they just simply compelled people to volunteer service.

Now we have them work for the money, and then we tax them, it's a different form, but the result is the same.

We work upwards of four months out of a year just for the governments within this country, and some lands are more than six months, as in Scandinavia.

And if you thought that when you worked three months in the Middle Ages you had it bad, when you worked for the Lord of the Manor, you should consider the situation today.

So we are dealing here with abuse of power, and the remarkable thing is we're not dealing with what we think of our, let's say, spiritual things that make the Church of God different from others, but we're dealing with the fundamental responsibility of a society, whereas the king should have judged the cause of the poor and needy, and all would have been well.

This is not the way it worked out.

And he says, when you do this, is this not to know me, verse 16 says the Lord, that a nation comes to know more of God when a nation loves its citizens, or to put it another way.

When you love your neighbor as yourself, you come to know something of God.

For the simple reason, that's the way God expresses himself in his law, and you come to know the mind of God when you begin to do what that law says is defined in such simple terms.

But we have the shedding of innocent blood, we have covetousness, we have oppression, and violence of no end.

I don't recommend the People magazine.

I sometimes pick it up because it's in our News Bureau area.

I don't know whether we subscribe to it or not, but I did pick up one, and I was appalled at a Hollywood, well, that's wrong, at a film family in which the father and a daughter and the father's wife are involved in drugs, and the daughters, and I guess the family situation consumed \$1 million cash to satiate a sequence of drugs like cocaine and heroin, and you take then cocaine to balance the heroin, heroin, the cocaine, and in a year's time a million dollars was consumed that went down the drain, and there's no tax on these people who are collecting that money.

All that money goes out of tax circulation in terms of this being illegitimate.

These are not the things that are reported.

And so we all have to bear then a tax burden commensurate with this tremendous amount of money that goes into organized and disorganized crime.

But all of this violence that we see springing up in our society today is not just, you know, the traditional problems.

One of the newest problems is to pay for your habits.

And of course it is justice, poetic justice, that we, as is speaking of Britain in this case or the Western world, not the United States, but it could just as well have been.

We imposed on China a policy whereby they were forced to keep their ports open.

In the days of Gladstone, you remember he pointed up the evils of this but could not stop it.

In the last century, the 1840s, the opium wars, we required China to keep its ports open so that British shipping, among other things, could sell their opium.

When the Chinese had, in fact, entered into a policy of eradicating its usage.

And now, of course, we're finding that our ports are open and we're reaping the consequences of, in the first place, imposing it on a people who did not want it and who were willing to make it a national policy to stop it.

Most of the spread of crime today, that's bloody crime, that isn't a matter of gangland warfare, is simply a question of getting money to pay for habits and drugs.

And he's describing this tragedy of shedding innocent blood.

Therefore thus says the Lord concerning Jehoiakim, verse 18.

Now sometimes we are in the reign of one king, sometimes another, as far as the message goes, but the book is organized so that no matter to whom it was spoken, the theme is brought out here.

And because of all these things, they shall not lament for him.

And of course, Jehoiakim, like Josephus describes, you should read Josephus here.

And in fact, for the book of Jeremiah, for the fall of Babylon, you can't read anything more remarkable in Josephus' commentary.

Josephus, remember, was a priest of the family of Aaron, and in that sense he represents the only first-century representative of the Parasake school who left us a personal view of the Bible, as a man of that century might explain it to people.

He was to be buried with the burial of an ass, he was simply carried outside the city and thrown on the dump heap, the dung pile, drawn and cast forth.

These were the things that were going to happen to each of the kings.

One man, after three months, goes down to Egypt and dies in exile, never to return.

Another man will not even be buried, a third one will have his eyes put out.

These are the consequences of their behavior.

Verse 20 introduces that common term, all your lovers are destroyed.

I just emphasize the word lovers.

Then Israel is pictured in this sense as a woman and Yahweh as a man or husband.

And Israel constantly, Lord Judah, was hiring other people, relying on other people instead of the God of heaven.

That term, you should know, because the analogy is based on the marriage covenant the covenant made at Sinai.

The nation didn't listen to God's voice end to verse 21, and so you end up with all those who supported the children of Judah, will themselves end in captivity.

Their greatest supporters were the Egyptians and the Egyptians themselves were unreliable.

As a nation, they were a broken reed instead of a rod, and all whom the Jews relied on in that day would go into captivity and the most remarkable thing in the end of the 1970s.

And now the beginning of the 1980s, what would have seemed improbable before? I can't blame the Egyptians.

I think Mr. Sadat is one of the remarkable men of this time, but Mr. Sadat does not represent all Egypt, and the Egyptians are far less likely to follow in his footsteps upon his death or his departure from the presidency.

But we are relying on Egypt today as one of the cornerstones in the Middle East, and it will prove to be unreliable.

The Egyptian nation simply cannot be relied on for, let's say, stability of purpose.

Sir Armstrong has pointed up, wherever Sadat goes, there is a vehicle that is ready to take him immediately to a hospital.

Should that be necessary? Because it can never be sure when he's going to be shot.

Begin doesn't have to do that in Israel.

It's because the Egyptian people simply are not 100% behind the present ruler.

And of course there are Palestinian Arabs beside in Egypt.

And the crisis at the close, of course, of the story of Jerusalem will be so inevitable as a woman who is going to give birth to a child at the end of verse 23, that nothing they can do.

I mean, it's just coming.

As I live, says the Lord, the Konaia, that is Yakonaia, or Jehoiakim.

Now this is a son of Jehoiakim.

So let us just briefly state, Josiah had some children, Shalom was one son, Jehoiakim was another son, Mataniah, who was called Zedekiah, was another son.

Now Jehoiakim had a son named Konaia.

We sometimes call him Jehoiakim, or we sometimes call him Jehoiakim, C-H-I-N at the end instead of his father's K-I-M at the end of the word.

You should recognize the difference whether you know how to pronounce it or even hear it clearly.

They're very similar and it's often a problem, but just so you know.

Now he's listed one after the other of these people because they're all responsible for the state of the nation.

And these are the consequences that they shall reap as they have allowed the nation to reap.

Even if you were a signet on my right hand, I'd pluck you thence and cast you away.

So even the grandson of Josiah, who comes to be king, will prove not to be reliable.

It does appear later that he did come to his senses spiritually.

There is quite a bit said here of Jehoiakim's son, Konaia, or Jehoiakim.

You might like to read the rest of chapter 22.

This picture is not a vessel that you would ornate the palace tables with, but just some bedpan.

It's a vessel wherein there's no pleasure.

That is just something to be treated as ordinary.

He's to be cast out, out into another land which was Babylon.

In verse 30 he's even to be written childless in the following manner.

Not that he was childless, but write this man as childless, that is, that he shall not prosper in his days, because no man of his seed shall prosper sitting on the throne of David and ruling any more in Judah.

Now Zerubbabel was a son that is a descendant of Konaia.

Zerubbabel was a very responsible person, but from this time forth no one of this line, not Zerubbabel, not Jacob, I'm going down the line, not Joseph, not Jesus, in the whole lineage from Konaia after Konaia's time old, through Jesus Christ, not a one of them sat on the throne of David ruling any more in Judah.

That's the way it was to turn out.

He was childless as far as having an heir to the throne.

It stopped there, and no successor of his.

Now he had children, but as far as the royal genealogy it goes from Josiah, Jehoiachim, Konaia or Jehoiachin, and it stops, and then it goes to his uncle, Zedekiah, whose name was Mataniah, and that man of course was also removed, and then nobody sat on the throne from this line anymore, and it ended.

The line continued, there will come one, Jesus, who will sit on the throne of David, but not ruling in Judah only, only when the nations are linked together.

But God never intended any more one of the house of David.

There were later kings, there were priest kings of the house of Levi.

Chapter 23 now takes a different view altogether.

This was the view you see in 21 and 22, the responsibility of what? The responsibility of rulers who were in civil authority.

Now we come to the shepherds that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture.

I can remember, and I will name names here because it's proper, Mr. Ray, years ago.

Years ago, in the 60s, very interesting, he said, have you ever read some of these verses in Jeremiah about shepherds that are going to destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture? He said, you know, those things are going to happen, there are men already in this work who will be doing that.

I couldn't imagine such a thing, I mean, you know, who would want to be a part of this work who wouldn't do what was right? He was right, and I was wrong.

There were people like that.

We have the biblical church of God, we have the church of God of something else, we have all sorts of churches of God, and we should put quotes around them.

Here is a very important verse about shepherds and sheep.

Now what is interesting is that, generally speaking, there are two kinds of shepherds.

There are shepherds that keep the sheep, and when we discover that these shepherds are really wolves in sheep's clothing, what they are tending to are the goats, because usually you will discover, of course, that the kind of people who will support them and sponsor them are just like the goat.

But these shepherds do scatter the sheep.

I was talking with Mr. Tom Blackwell and his wife this evening just before coming here, and indeed this is exactly what happened to the brethren in Hawaii.

Many sheep were scattered because there were shepherds.

The shepherds that came pointed to Jesus.

The shepherd that was there pointed to the government of God.

Now it's very nice to point everybody to Jesus.

The question is, have you got the right Jesus? And that's what these men were not discerning.

The name of Jesus was not enough.

The shepherds will come in my name saying, I am Jesus.

I am the Christ.

And they deceive.

So the Yahweh says, against the shepherds that feed my people, now this is a national indictment.

We should listen to it ourselves, but it is a national indictment.

I thought, well, these shepherds must certainly be everybody who is outside the churches of God.

It couldn't include anybody inside.

But we do learn, when it's all over, that there are sheep and sheep.

There are those sheep that hear Jesus' voice.

There are those sheep that are naturally of his pastor because they descend from Abraham, but they're not spiritually called.

So we have shepherds of the world who have simply scattered and divided and confused people.

And then we even have some who have entered into the church of God.

So we can look at it both ways and want to be very careful about what goes on.

It is amazing that there were men who stood firm and fast in 1973 and 74, who blew out in 75 and 76.

Men who stood fast in 73 and 74 and 75 and 76 and said, they're going this way and that way, and then they blew out.

They can see the others' problems.

Now what you have to recognize, and I want to say this here, the one thing you have to learn is that another person's fault is not necessarily your problem.

Now let me make it clear.

There are people who assume that every fault of Herbert Armstrong's is your problem.

You have to do something about it.

Your faults are your problems.

We help others bear theirs.

That is, when most people find fault in others, that we have the beginning of bitterness.

How can this be God's church if? I mean, did you know what his wife did? You know, this kind of story.

And people begin to identify the church with these people like that.

As Mr. Norman Myers has aptly said, if you are looking for a perfect church, you will never find it because as soon as you join it, it won't be.

And with that, I think we could proceed to the next chapter even because I think that's fundamental.

Anyway, God said, I'll gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them.

Verse 3, bring them back.

So the nation is ultimately going to be brought back.

The shepherds should have guided the nation to God, and they wouldn't have entered into sin.

The shepherds allowed the sheep of the pasture to go astray, and they were driven away by, shall we say, the wolves.

So the time is coming when God is going to raise up someone of the house of David.

Verse 5, and here it's compared to a chute of eight out of the root stock, who is going to reign as king, and he shall prosper, execute justice and righteousness in the land.

In his days, Judah shall be saved, Israel shall dwell safely.

Now the Adventists would say, in his days, Judah, of course, cannot be saved except with a few, and Israel won't dwell safely on earth at all.

It will be in heaven for a thousand years.

But we won't go into that kind of thing.

We just note that we are talking here about a time when Israel and Judah will be safe from the enemy nations that beset them today.

So the time is coming when, unlike the evil listed in chapters 21 and 22, this ruler executes justice and righteousness.

Now it doesn't just execute mercy and righteousness, he executes justice because sometimes you have to be just as well as merciful.

You have to deal with certain people because they need to be dealt with.

The days will come that they will no more say, the children that were brought up out of the land of Egypt, they will be thinking of those who were brought up in the next exodus.

And you know, we're coming to this period of the exodus shortly, next month.

And so the final exodus will be so much more remarkable than the ancient exodus from Egypt.

And this exodus will be basically out of the North country, that is, out of lands north of Palestine, not out of a land south.

It won't be from the land of the south, or Egypt, that is, a geographic territory and the name, you know, that's used in Daniel, it'll be from the North country as a whole.

And there will be many, many Jews who will be coming out of the Soviet Union, who live in Central Asia today.

Now so much for the shepherds, those who would be speaking, and now there are those who have visions, that is, the prophets, verse 9.

And here he says, my heart within me is broken, my bones shake, I'm like a drunken man, like a man whom wine has overcome.

Because of the Lord and His holy words, for the land is full of adulterers, and because of swearing the land mourns, and he's just shocked to see the state of affairs, it hits him like alcohol hits a drunk.

The pastures of the wildernesses, wilderness, are dried up, and he sees the prophet and the priest, ungodly individuals.

We have a growing number of people who claim to see what is going to happen in the future, who are preaching the rapture, preaching something about the future.

Now they do their peculiar things, you hear them on radio, see them on television, but they don't understand when it will take place, and it will happen when they do not expect it.

Because they have assumed, all these prophets today have assumed what will happen before the tribulation, or before you answer the question, the tribulation won't happen until what occurs, the rapture, right? And if the rapture hasn't occurred, they think the tribulation can't come.

And when the tribulation comes, they're going to be caught in a snare, because they have waited for the rapture and it never happened.

Now they're going to be carried away all right.

I have seen unseemliness in the prophets of Samaria, and that is there was misbehavior and misconduct among these people.

Not every one in the ministry has a bad reputation in the world, some few have had, and some have been quite respectable.

Now if he had unseemliness in Samaria, what he had was horrible things in Judah.

They committed adultery, walked in lies, strengthened the hands of evil doers.

They didn't return from their wickedness, they had become like Sodom and Gomorrah.

All that I can say it is remarkable how many of the House of Judah are involved in peddling what wasn't even was published in Sodom and Gomorrah.

The House of Judah, we're not in this business, we wouldn't have the problem we do.

I'm just going to be plain.

You just see how many of that family of human beings have descended to publishing material, but not even the Sodomites and the people of Gomorrah did.

God will give them of course a gall instead of water.

They just will ultimately pine away in captivity and perish.

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Any of you some month, wait a minute, it was, well it must have been about a month ago, see the movie done in Britain, but on TV here on Channel 28, was it returned to Auschwitz? Then you see that the mother who took her son back to Auschwitz and told what it was like.

For two years she had a little pan that she'd carry around.

She ate out of it, she drank out of it, she used it as her bedpan, and there was no water to wash it.

That's all she had.

It was quite a story.

It was all psychologically calculated to make people want to die, so you didn't have to keep them alive unnecessarily long.

They just wanted to die.

It was just that different from their previous experience.

You say, how could anybody want to die? Well, psychologically these people weren't prepared for anything like that.

And when you have wormwood to eat and gall to drink, you'll get an idea that it will simply be unfit.

And you wish you were dead.

These people speak visions out of their own hearts, verse 16, and not out of the mouth of the Lord.

Now, they claim sometimes they do have visions.

Sometimes they invent it in their own heads.

There are two colors.

There are spirits that reveal things.

There was a prophetess in the churches of God in the end of the 1840s and in the 1850s.

She did not make all these things out of her own head.

She had visions.

She was a medium because she was used to convey these visions.

That's their own term.

She was a medium.

The churches of God finally rejected her, but the Seventh-day Adventists have accepted her as a prophet.

She said, pertaining to Elder Brinkerhoff, who was one of the leaders in the churches of God after the 1860s, he said, this man who believes in the age to come, if he is right about the gospel and the millennia, which is the way we basically teach it, then all the visions I have received are wrong.

Which is also true.

Be plain.

Because she knew that what she was being used to teach was the opposite of 8,000 years in desolation, where the devil doesn't reign supreme, but he runs supreme.

Nobody does stop him.

And everybody else is up in heaven or buried and waiting for the lake of fire.

Because in their message, probation is closed when Christ returns.

In our message, probation hasn't yet begun for the world.

Judgment is not now on China.

It is not now on the Soviet Union.

Judgment is on the house of God.

You are being judged.

You don't want to go and come back a thousand years later.

But come back, you will.

Verse 19, a storm of the Lord has gone forth in fury, a whirling storm.

And it's as if God is in control of the weather in the day of the Lord, and the anger of the Lord will not return until he has executed it.

In the end of days, you will consider this, the sea and the waves roaring, men's hearts failing them for fear, like some of the Greeks with these earthquakes that happens in nearby.

And the men who have said this wouldn't happen, that the day of the Lord like this would not come.

God said, I haven't sent these men, but they ran, I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.

But if they had stood in my counsel and said what I wanted to be said, then let them cause my people to hear my words and turn them from their evil way.

But of course, that's not what they did as a whole.

The world is going to come to a time after the missing rapture, after the incomprehensible tribulation, while they're still waiting for the rapture, then comes the day of the Lord.

Now, as long as the rapture hasn't occurred, these people won't understand the tribulation.

These people won't even be prepared for the day of the Lord.

This is a remarkable thing.

They have been so hooked on the concept of the rapture, suddenly leaping out of your automobile, as you're going down the freeway without warning and being carried into the heavens.

And as long as that hasn't taken place, they do not know what this tribulation is.

They do not know what the day of the Lord is.

They're simply unprepared for it.

Am I a God near at hand and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do I not fill heaven and earth and hear God defines himself? He is showing that he is very near.

He's not only a God who's far off, he's a God who is near.

And this action is going to be his, even though it would be denied, and apparently there will be people who will think this is a kind of antichrist who will be doing these things, that we recognize as the day of the Lord.

That's because the people lied in God's name.

They said, I've dreamed, but of course it wasn't a dream from God.

In many cases, they prophesied of the deceit of their own heart, that if they wanted to believe something, they think to cause my people to forget my name.

Now I will dwell briefly on this.

Verse 27 clearly shows that it is true the house of Judah did cause the Jewish people not to want to pronounce the name Yahweh, or Yahweh.

They wanted it forgotten.

So now we have a new cult of people who came out of the churches of God around 1940.

They call themselves the sacred names, there's nothing sacred about it as Hebrew names.

They think now that the new religion is to pronounce that lost name.

And so their magazine is called the Sacred Name Reporter of one group by Jacob Omeyer from Pennsylvania.

Now we are free to use the name.

There's no prohibition on your using Hebrew, or Aramaic, or Greek, or German, or English.

Just because they thought to cause my people to forget my name does not mean that the church of God says we should forget the name.

I think Mr. Armstrong has done, and we have done, a great deal to point up the name Yahweh, meaning the eternal, the everlasting, to use the name on occasion when it is appropriate.

We would be careful not to use it before Orthodox Jews, obviously, because they have a certain sensitivity.

But we would not be afraid to use the Hebrew name among ourselves, but we are not required to speak only Hebrew names when addressing God.

These people tell every man to neighbor their dreams, and apparently they got messages and claim that this name was so important a name it shouldn't be pronounced so they substituted Baal, which means master or Lord.

Well, what happened to those in that day is that they came to nothing.

Their doctrine was like straw instead of wheat, and God's word is like fire, and like a hammer that breaks rocks into pieces.

So their ideas did come to naught.

Now verse 30, I am against the prophets that steal my words from his neighbor.

That is, if God's words came to the neighbor's mind and seemed to make sense, then they take it from that person by offering some substitute, some error in its stead.

You go down to book shops, Armstrongism, or the Kingdom of the Colt, Armstrongism, or the Armstrong Empire, or something like that, these books.

And people, well, they've heard Herbert Armstrong on the radio, and they'd like to know what other ministers think about it.

So they go to the bookstore, do you have anything on Armstrong? I had to realize myself that things that I read about Job as witnesses were lies, and some things were true.

Some things about Adventists were true, and other things were lies.

And some things about us are true, especially when they quote what we write, which is our foolish habit.

And some things about us are lies.

So you really have to, let's say, listen to both sides if you want to know, don't assume that you can take all anti-Mormon literature if you want to know all about the Mormon.

I'm not telling you to, but I'm only stating this is not our purpose.

But don't assume that only the enemies have the truth about their enemies, because we know that what people say about us is not always true.

I know that things are said about the Catholic Church that are not always true.

Some things are true, some things are not.

The same of Judaism, the same of Islam.

Every group apparently has its own enemies, that's just the way it is.

And so we have here people who, when they do have some grasp of the word of God, somebody comes along and steals it from them by getting them confused.

So God says, I am against those who do such things.

God didn't send them, didn't command them, they can't profit this people at all.

I'm reading from the Jewish translation, my own rendering of it, however, because I'm not reading it verse by verse as such.

When this people are the prophet or a priest shall ask, what's the burden of the Lord? That is, what's the responsibility that God has imposed on his servants or his church? And they shall say, then you shall say to them, what burden? I will cast you off, that is, these people who claim that they had a burden.

Now it is very interesting that normally Herbert Armstrong doesn't use the term burden.

Have you ever noticed how certain Protestant groups speak about, you know, the burden of the Lord is on me? Now I take it it may be a burden, but God said he's going to cast it off.

And it didn't come from him.

It is peculiar that we don't use this term, we don't use the term Lord, Lord Jesus, Jesus.

That way.

And yet you hear it on radio, you hear it on, you see it on TV and hear it.

And this expression is very typical.

As for the prophet, the priest and the people, they say, the burden of the Lord, I will even punish that man in his house who will say so.

You shall say, thus you say everyone to his neighbor, what has the Lord answered? What's the Lord spoken? Now in one sense of the word, it does appear in part that the real role of prophets is yet to come.

We have a few in the Protestant world and we will have a great false prophet, but we today have very few prophets.

We have a lot of shepherds misguiding the sheep, but we have very few prophets in the world who are saying what is coming.

But the time is when they will.

People will want to inquire of them.

God is quite angry because they pervert what he teaches.

They don't go according to the Bible, they go according to what pops in their minds.

So he's dealing here with a conversation back and forth of how people talk.

I would say maybe this is partly true Pentecostalism or that movement.

But it is doubtful that we can say that even this is really being fulfilled because there is coming a time when there will be prophets in the church.

That's clear from the book of Joel.

We don't have functioning prophets as a whole today.

That doesn't mean that on occasion God may not have spoken individually for a specific individual matter in times past in this century, which I don't need to go into.

But this is coming.

When people don't know what to make of the future, then suddenly the devil comes forth with all this.

And all these who said these things that simply never turned out, God will bring reproach on them and shame that will never be forgotten.

That kind of thing will be written up and people will know the difference between those who went according to the Bible and those who lied.