

BABYLON, THE BEAST AND THE CHURCH– PART 16

Darryl Henson

1/17/04 Tape #775

We have been studying various aspects of the prophesies of the end-time for some weeks, actually months now. I want to hurry through some of it today and start coming to some conclusions, conclusions that may very well effect us. I think very much will affect us. What response does God expect of us?

I want to break off from where I was in Isaiah last week and consider Jeremiah a little bit today. I don't want to go through Jeremiah verse by verse. Well, I want to, but for sake of time I am going to summarize some things. The Book of Jeremiah has to do with, at its opening, destruction that was quickly going to come upon Israel as a result of national and personal sins. Jeremiah is an end-time book and it has to do with Israel today, both physical and spiritual and our national and church sins including our personal sins. The warning here was that they would be destroyed and taken into captivity. We know from several places in Jeremiah that it talks about the latter days. So, it is a latter day prophecy. It didn't have to do with just then.

The situation is little different today than it was when Jeremiah was first written. Different in this sense, Jerusalem was about to be destroyed and they were about to go into the captivity of Babylon. Jeremiah discusses that it will be a long captivity; they will be there for 70 years. He tells them they are going to be there, there is no way of getting out of there, so settle down, build houses, plant gardens do those thing you would normally do because it is a long captivity. When Ezekiel wrote 120

years more or less later, he talked of a time when the captivity was almost over and that they were not to settle down and build houses. It might be an apparent contradiction if you read Jeremiah and he says it is a long captivity, build houses, then Ezekiel comes along and says don't build houses because it is short. What you are dealing with are two different time frames. You are dealing with the beginning of a captivity or the end of it depending on which you are reading at the time. We are in the situation where we have been in the clutches of Babylon for about 70 years as a church. We have already gone through a long time. We have had houses. We have set up a society. We have lived within the Babylonian system. I think that in this series we saw come pretty clear-cut evidence that the United States along with Britain represent modern Babylon. It is about to be now destroyed. So, it is not like the beginning of Jeremiah where the captivity was about to occur and then did occur. Jeremiah prophesied in Chapter 25 they would be there 70 years. We are not approaching the end of the Book of Jeremiah in terms of our captivity and the system going down. Because at the end of 70 years, Daniel in Babylon recognized, by counting, and by what Jeremiah had written previously that the 70 years of subservience to Babylon were about up. It was time for them to be released. As we get toward the end of Jeremiah we begin to see scriptures about getting of Babylon. We will examine some of those today. I will not go thorough, as I said, the rest of the book because that story is about a nation about to go into captivity. In this case,

Babylon is about to go into captivity and God's people are close to being released.

I want to go for a moment to Ezekiel 23. We saw some hints several sermons in Jeremiah 50-52, right in that neighborhood, that perhaps what some of what will come down on America is an inside job. Part of it will come from Assyria and the coalition of nations against us, but part of it because of betrayal from within. There are a couple of hints there in that section of Jeremiah. I want to show you another one. This one is in Ezekiel 23. This is the analogy of two women, the daughters of one mother, Aholah and Aholibah, which represented Israel and Judah the two separations of the tribes of Israel. He goes through and talks about how we have committed whoredoms with the Assyrians, the Chaldeans, that they have been our lovers, that they were the ones we have looked to for affection and "good boy" and instant gratification, religion, society and culture. We have intermingled with the nations, the gentiles of this world. We have become utterly and totally a Babylonian system and culture. God hates that. He calls it spiritual adultery. He calls it idolatry, where we worship things and materialism and gratification and entertainment. We do not seek God except through lip service. So, he talks in Verse 12 how we doted upon the Assyrian, we doted upon the Chaldeans in Verse 14, the Babylonians came into our bed of love in Verse 17, so we have made bed partners with Satan's society. We have lived in it. We have been part of it. We are still far too much part of it. This is a prophecy about the end time, about Israel and what is going to happen to Israel. These two women represent or

are types of, codes words of, Israel and Judah. Notice in Verse 22,

"There, O Aholibah, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will raise up thy lovers against thee, from whom thy mind is alienated, and I will bring them against thee on every side;

23 The Babylonians, and all the Chaldeans, Pekod, and Shoa, and Koa, and all the Assyrians with them: all of them desirable young men, captains and rulers, great lords and renowned, all of them riding upon horses.

24 And they shall come against thee with chariots, wagons, and wheels, and with an assembly of people, which shall set against thee buckler and shield and helmet round about: and I will set judgment before them, and they shall judge thee according to their judgments." (Ezekiel 23:22-24)

Notice who he says will come against us. A cruel and fierce people, the Babylonians and the Assyrians. We read a lot of scriptures in Isaiah showing that the Assyrian and a coalition of other peoples coming with them would destroy us, but here he lumps it together with the Babylonians. We are in Babylonian system. We are ruled by a Babylonian government from Washington, D.C., if I am correct in saying that American and Britain are the leaders of Babylon and represent Babylon not just as a society and a culture because Satan is truly the king of Babylon as it says in Isaiah 14. But, in the end-time prophecies there is one specific entity, which the Bible defines as Babylon, which will be destroyed by the Beast. She rides the Beast at first, but then the Beast destroys her. America today is riding and controlling the UN and various other bodies and is part and parcel with them behind the scenes to

rule the world. I believe that our own government is working behind the scenes to betray the American, Israelite and British people. That is why they are making pens here and there to hold people. It is why they are threatening that if the terrorist level goes up to red martial law will be instituted. You will not be able to move and if you cannot take care of yourself they will put you in prison camps to take care of you. This ties it together with that thought. It will come from within and from without.

That scenario happened within the Church. Most of the destruction came from where? From within. They carried us without, back to Protestantism, back to Sunday, trinity, Christmas, Easter, things Jeremiah clearly warns us about in Chapter 10, and so does Ezekiel. So, why would it be any different now? Really, even though it appeared to be from the inside those men came in from the outside and wormed their way in as wolves in sheep's clothing to destroy us. That is happening on the national scene as well. Indeed the prophesies say that not only the Assysian, but the Edomite will be involved as well, our brother Esau. We are not to despise Esau, but we are to recognize that God has prophesied that Esau will hold the upper hand over Jacob at the end for a while. Obadiah and Genesis talk about it.

I covered Chapter 24 I think at one point in the Minor Prophet series, but it draws the analogy of us being a pot on a fire that is boiling and we are put in piece by piece. We make a very hot stew. The scum of the fat in the fire comes to the top of the pot. Our sins boil to the top. What we are shows. It is

a pretty gruesome story, but God says that is what we are. Then as you go on through the Chapter it talks about how Ezekiel could not get the word out. No one would listen and even his wife died. God said don't even mourn, just go on about your business, and get the word out. He says all this is going to happen. In Verse 26 he says,

“That he that escapeth in that day shall come unto thee, to cause thee to hear it with thine ears?

27 In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am the LORD.” (Ezekiel 24:26-27)

People will not listen today. When all this happens and we have been meat in the pot, there will come a time that those who escape will be ready to listen to God. What a horrible thing is going to occur.

Turn to one scripture in Revelation in terms of this being partially an inside job, to know that we will be betrayed from within.

“And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.” (Revelation 17:5)

We saw in Ezekiel 16 God reckons Israel as a harlot and calls her a mother of harlots. Notice Verse 6,

“And I saw the woman...”

This woman who I believe is the United States particularly and Britain as well.

“drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.” (Revelation 17:6)

Does this indicate that if our government is indeed Babylonian that they will turn on the Israelite people and will martyr true Christians? I believe it is going to happen within this country. The Beast will continue that because Satan hates all Christians. But, I believe it will start right here in our own country. I believe this is an indication of that.

What do these prophecies mean to us and what is the timing of this destruction that is to come? Let's notice a couple of things in Isaiah 13 so we understand this at the end-time and it is soon to come upon our people and upon us if we are a part of it. Chapter 13 is a burden to Babylon and it talks about the destruction of Babylon in this Chapter. Verse 6 gives you the timing. It wasn't something that occurred in Daniel's day when Darius the Mede came and destroyed ancient Babylon. Notice Verse 6,

“Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty.”

Verse 9,

“Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and he shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it.”

“For the stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light: the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine.

11 And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the arrogancy of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.

12 I will make a man more precious than fine gold; even a man than the golden wedge of Ophir.”

In other words, rare.

“13 Therefore I will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the LORD of hosts, and in the day of his fierce anger.”

Verse 19,

“And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah.”

So, the prophecies against Babylon are for the end-time. Let's confirm that with what is most assuredly an end-time book, Revelation 18. Verse 2,

“And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed

fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.” (Revelation 18:2-3)

Wine represents wealth and the ability to do what you wish to do. That is what American and Britain have done. We have been through all of these scriptures, but lets understand that Revelation was not written about ancient Babylon. It is written about modern Babylon. This is a now prophecy. All these prophecies are now prophecies. They don't have to do with what happened back then. That is an historical record. They have to do with today.

With that preface, lets go to Jeremiah 50. I want to show you here even though we went through Chapters 50, 51 and 52 in an earlier sermon in this series, I want to go through now and begin to summarize and put some things together here today and let us see what God truly expects of us. I read before in Jeremiah 49:39,

“But it shall come to pass in the latter days, that I will bring again the captivity of Elam, saith the LORD.”

He is showing these prophecies whether they be to Elam, Babylon or whomever are for the latter days. With that in mind He opens Chapter 50.

“The word that the LORD spake against Babylon and against the land of the Chaldeans by Jeremiah the prophet.” (Jeremiah 50:1)

This is what Jeremiah writes about the end-time Babylon in the latter days. Verse 2,

“Declare ye among the nations, and publish, and set up a standard; publish, and conceal not: say, Babylon is taken, Bel is confounded, Merodach is broken in pieces; her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces.

3 For out of the north there cometh up a nation against her, which shall make her land desolate, and none shall dwell therein: they shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast.”

She is going to be taken and out of the north will come destruction against her as we covered before. She was considered the land of the north because her physical geographical location was north and east of the Holy Land, but then so was Assyria. It is further north up the Tigres River. He is going to make her land desolate. We have seen a lot of scriptures indicating that first of all that Israel is going to be made desolate at the end and Babylon will be made desolate at the end. I think we have seen that Babylon has taken over Israel. It is completely a Babylonian, Satanic culture that we live in. It has to be destroyed. That has to come out of Israel. Israel has to be destroyed and punished because we went to Babylon and accepted the Babylonian religion and culture. There are many prophecies in Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel about Israel being destroyed. We have become as gentiles as it says in Ezekiel 16, you might as well be gentiles. You look like them, you act like them. If it walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it is a duck. You are Babylonians. That is what you like to me. What we look like to God is all important isn't it?

He says Babylon is going to be made desolate in the first 3 verses. Verse 4,

“In those days, and in that time, saith the LORD, the children of Israel shall come, they and the children of Judah together, going and weeping: they shall go, and seek the LORD their God.

5 They shall ask the way to Zion with their faces thitherward, saying, Come, and let us join ourselves to the LORD in a perpetual covenant that shall not be forgotten.” (Jeremiah 50:4-5)

There is a time when I believe both the Church, before Christ returns, will try to go to Zion and there will be a time when God’s Kingdom is set up and the heavenly Jerusalem, Zion is here that physical Israel, coming out of captivity, will also seek Zion. I believe it will be a little different Zion. Maybe we will get into that at another time. Verse 6,

“My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray, they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill, they have forgotten their restingplace.”

In terms of spiritual Israel, we have gone from a big government, a big organization, from mountain to hill, down to little bitty groups. Verse 7,

“All that found them have devoured them: and their adversaries said, We offend not, because they have sinned against the LORD, the habitation of justice, even the LORD, the hope of their fathers.”

In other words, we get exactly what we deserve.

Now, He gives some specific instruction here.

“Remove out of the midst of Babylon, and go forth out of the land of the Chaldeans, and be as the he goats before the flocks.” (Jeremiah 50:8)

He tells us, GET OUT. Many would interpret that as only a spiritual and emotional removal. I do not and I will show you some scriptures to indicate that. There comes a time to quit being a sheep and be as the he goat before the flock. I have on a little emblem here, a tie tack, a goat, a gold goat. I could have worn a sheep, but I thought maybe I had better wear a goat pin. There comes a time when you have to tell stubborn people God’s message whether it is popular or liked or not.

GO OUT OF THE MIDST OF BABYLON. Verse 9,

“For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country: and they shall set themselves in array against her; from thence she shall be taken: their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man; none shall return in vain.

10 And Chaldea shall be a spoil: all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the LORD.”

That to me is a physical captivity. The captivities that God speaks of for the end-time people of Israel are physical. When Ezekiel 5 speaks of one-third dying in war of the sword, one-third in famine and pestilence and one-third being taken into captivity, it is a physical captivity. Our nation is going to be destroyed and taken captive physically. If we are in the

middle of it, what will happen to us? Revelation 18:4 says, "COME OUT OF HER MY PEOPLE that you be not partakers of her sins and her plagues". We come out spiritually, yes, that we be not partakers of her sins, but we come out physically to that we be not partakers of her plagues. Those plagues will be physical plagues. We will see friends, neighbors and relatives die and we may die with them. Let's notice in connection with this Chapter 51:6,

"Flee out of the midst of Babylon, and deliver every man his soul: be not cut off in her iniquity; for this is the time of the LORD's vengeance; he will render unto her a recompence."

We have already in this series that it is an end-time prophecy as the next few verses show and how she will fall and that the nations have all drunk of the wine of her wrath. Notice Verse 10,

"The LORD hath brought forth our righteousness: come, and let us declare in Zion the work of the LORD our God."

There is a time to come to Zion. When? When we flee out of Babylon. What does that mean? It says virtually the same thing in Verse 28 or Chapter 50.

"The voice of them that flee and escape out of the land of Babylon, to declare in Zion the vengeance of the LORD our God, the vengeance of his temple."

Not just physical Israel, but the vengeance of God's temple, His Church. So, this is referring to the spiritual Israelite today getting out of Babylon

before she falls and before the vengeance of those who destroy our countries.

What is the midst of Babylon? I think there has been some confusion on that. We are going to see in another scripture later on that we are also to go to Babylon. Those who consider America itself the midst of Babylon don't know what to do with that one that says, go even to Babylon because they have defined America as the midst of Babylon. Let's see if God might define it a little differently. Let's put those other scriptures together with this before we are done.

Let's go to Ezekiel 17. This is the Chapter right after the infamous Chapter 16 where God says you look like gentiles to me and calls us the Great Harlot the Great Whore. So, in God's definition Israel and Judah are the Great Whore at the end time. Now let's notice Ezekiel 17 remembering that Herbert Armstrong told us the Bible is written to the Church and that all these prophecies have to do with the end-time Church. Remember Revelation shows that physical Israel is not even a part except for being destroyed of the stage that is set in the Book of Revelation. Every chapter has to do with the Church and the Church against the world. Physical Israel is destroyed in terms Babylon coming down. It is between the Church and the world. That's where the confrontation will be.

Ultimately, the two witnesses against the Beast, the False Prophet and the world. They will bring plagues as they please. They will terrify the Assyrian with those plagues and be hated of all people. It is the Church and

the world, it is not physical Israel. Physical Israel is going into captivity.

With that background, let's understand Chapter 17 of Ezekiel. I did go through this in the Minor Prophet series. Many of you might remember it, but I think it is important to understand here particularly in terms of this sermon and what the midst of Babylon is.

“And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

2 Son of man, put forth a riddle, and speak a parable unto the house of Israel;” (Ezekiel 17:1-2)

So, this is doubly hard to understand. It is both a riddle and a parable. Why did Christ speak in parables? He did it to make the meaning seem simple. He used simple agricultural parables, the Protestants tell you. But, that is not what Christ said, He said, I speak in parables so they can't understand. So, this being both a riddle and a parable makes it hard to understand. I don't think anybody could have really understood it until these times we are facing today and what we have seen in spiritual Israel today. All right here it is:

“And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; A great eagle with great wings, longwinged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar:” (Ezekiel 17:3)

We are talking about a great leader, a great eagle. In other words, this would be a major sized bird. We are not talking about a sparrow here; we are talking about long wings. A leader of a lot of people, not stripped nearly naked,

it has a lot of people involved. All races of men are involved with this eagle. All the colors on earth. The Cedar of Lebanon is something we had on the campus in Pasadena that Mr. Armstrong was very pleased with. I might say proud of, he spoke very often of the Cedars of Lebanon on the Pasadena campus. I think they were there and had been planted there as a symbol, frankly, by who ever planted them before we ever had the campus. This Cedar of Lebanon probably represented the Worldwide Church of God in its earlier years. It represented the best time there was in the end-time history of the Church. The Church here is represented as a tree as it is in Zechariah 11, with trees being cut down and shepherds cut off.

“He cropped off the top of his young twigs, and carried it into a land of traffick; he set it in a city of merchants.” (Ezekiel 17:4)

While it was still young, Herbert Armstrong, took the Church while it was very small in Oregon, young and tender and barely getting started, and moved it to Los Angeles, a land of traffic and a city of merchants.

“He took also of the seed of the land, and planted it in a fruitful field;”

What are the seed in the parables in the New Testament? Seed is sown on stony, some on good ground, some on thorns etc. Seed represents people. So, he took the people of the land and planted them in a fruitful field. That could be the campus in Pasadena.

“he placed it by great waters, and set it as a willow tree.”

That is a lot of good word and doctrine and set it as a willow tree. A willow tree puts down its roots in good water and thrives where there is a lot of water. Remember Psalm 137; we hung our harps on the willow trees.

“And it grew, and became a spreading vine of low stature,”

God refers to the Church in Isaiah 5 as a vine. Christ refers to it in John 15 as a vine. We are the branches. It is referred to in Jeremiah 3 as a vine that produced the wrong kind of fruit. So, it became a spreading vine of low stature. It spread all over the world, but was of low stature. It had not great fame around the world, did it?

“whose branches turned toward him,”

Where did the branches of Worldwide turn? To Herbert Armstrong, we all looked to Herbert Armstrong didn't we?

“and the roots thereof were under him:”

I was rooted in Herbert Armstrong, the man. Now, it was built by Christ through that man, but as a physical entity or leader we looked to Herbert Armstrong. That is where our roots were.

“so it became a vine, and brought forth branches, and shot forth sprigs.”

It had branch offices through the world and little congregations, sprigs, around the country and around the world.

“There was also another great eagle with great wings and many feathers:”

Joseph Tkach followed Herbert Armstrong and he was also a leader over this entire Church.

“and, behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him,”

For the most part when he came into power the Church turned their roots to him and it remained that way for some years until it began to turn away.

“and shot forth her branches toward him,”

All the offices, all the congregations around the world began to turn toward Joseph Tkach.

“that he might water it by the furrows of her plantation.” (Ezekiel 17:5-7)

So, he was continuing to water that plantation, which had been planted before he ever came on the scene.

“It was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, and that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine.”

Herbert Armstrong planted it by good waters, good doctrine, and good truth. So, it had every opportunity. In Isaiah 5, God says, I hedged it about, I gave it everything is needed, I took care of it. What happened? Verse 9,

“Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit

thereof, that it wither? it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring, even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof.”

Is this thing that was planted properly and was supposed to be watered and fed by another man going to prosper? Joseph Tkach pulled up the roots of good doctrine planted by Herbert Armstrong. The fruit of the Spirit began to depart and the fruit of Satan’s spirit, through the trinity began to flourish and it withered. No great army came in against Worldwide Church of God. It shrank and withered from within by a work of a few men who took it back to paganism and Protestantism. Verse 10,

“Yea, behold, being planted, shall it prosper? shall it not utterly wither, when the east wind toucheth it? it shall wither in the furrows where it grew.” (Ezekiel 7:8-10)

Joseph Tkach came from Chicago, from the East and ultimately from the Ukraine way East. So, an east wind blew on it. It didn’t move, it withered right there in Pasadena, Big Sandy, London wherever else.

“Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying,

12 Say now to the rebellious house, Know ye not what these things mean? tell them, Behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and hath taken the king thereof, and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon;”

Most people in the Church rebelled against good word, good doctrine, good waters, and our roots and

went into Protestantism without all its false doctrines. Do you understand what has happened? The king of Babylon has come to Jerusalem. What is the code word for the Church, Hebrews 12: 22-23? Jerusalem and Zion. The Protestant world pulled them back and Joseph Tkach, Sr. led them there. Right back to Babylon. I think Zechariah 5 fits very nicely here. Where the two unclean birds took the harvest in the basket, its mouth was shut and it was carried back and set on its base in Babylon. Not God’s base, but Babylon’s base. Every doctrine they now believe is Babylonian. The Nature of God, the Trinity, Sabbath, Clean and Unclean, came from Babylon and is gone back to Babylon.

“And hath taken of the king’s seed, and made a covenant with him, and hath taken an oath of him: he hath also taken the mighty of the land:”

Joseph Tkach made a covenant, took of the king’s seed, Herbert Armstrong representing the king in this case, took an oath that he would lead us in the right direction and he took many of the mighty of the land, the evangelists, the leaders along with him.

“That the kingdom might be base, that it might not lift itself up, but that by keeping of his covenant it might stand.

15 But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him horses and much people. Shall he prosper? shall he escape that doeth such things? or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered?”

Even before Herbert Armstrong died we were headed back into sinful Protestantism. When I was there,

pasturing church in Southern California in the early 70's they tried to get me to go to Protestant colleges and get a Master's Degree. I only lacked a few credits and I could have had a Master's Degree because I had gone to some post-graduate classes in Pasadena. They were trying to get us all to do that because they wanted us to upgrade our standing with the world. I refused to go. I wasn't going to Fullers Seminary or any of the others. He sent his ambassadors to Egypt to learn the ways of sin and Protestantism. The Tkachs thought that if they went back to mainstream Protestantism it was the correct religion, just say the name of the Lord and shall be saved, instant gratification. They thought then this Church would grow like it never had before. That is what they envisioned, what they projected, what they prophesied and what happened instead? Was it going to prosper, where his projections correct? The covenant he made, really with God and certainly with Herbert Armstrong was broken.

“As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely in the place where the king dwelleth that made him king, whose oath he despised, and whose covenant he brake, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die.” (Ezekiel 17:16)

In the place where Herbert Armstrong took the Church and made this Tkach man king, in Babylon, he died. Where did he die? Los Angeles. Joseph Tkach died in the midst of Babylon, Los Angeles. What that tells me is that the cities of our country are the midst of Babylon. The country itself is not necessarily the midst of Babylon, but the middle of Babylon are those areas where Babylon and the system

have its greatest influence. Is there any greater influence of Satan's society than Los Angeles and Hollywood? So are, New York, Seattle, Miami and Houston. Babylon has a greater and stronger hold there than it does in South Dakota or Western Kansas or Northern Arizona or Southern Wyoming. I think this defines, by scripture, where the midst of Babylon is. So, when He says flee out of the midst of it, where does he tell you go. I think the inference and implication is out of the cities. Get away from the middle of this system. We are going to see other scriptures which impact this and help define it further. So, keep that as a question in your mind until we get to those.

“Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company make for him in the war, by casting up mounds, and building forts, to cut off many persons:” (Ezekiel 17:17)

After his father died, Joseph Tkach, Jr., went to the leaders of Egypt, false religion, and they were not able to deliver. Many people are being cut off from God as a result. He tells us don't go back to Egypt; don't go back to sin. That is exactly what they are doing. Verse 18,

“Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, and hath done all these things, he shall not escape.”

He shook hands, made a deal and then broke it. Verse 19,

“Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; As I live, surely mine oath that he hath despised, and my covenant that he

hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head.”

He will be on the watch when it shrivels, shrinks and dies as it goes back to Babylon.

“And I will spread my net upon him, and he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against me.

21 And all his fugitives with all his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all winds: and ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it.” (Ezekiel 17:20-21)

They are going down with Babylon and its system. They will fall by the sword and go into captivity. Those who remain will be scattered to all winds. What has happened to those who have not accepted the Babylonian religion of the Tkachs? We have been scattered to the winds. God pronounced a scattering on the Church and it has occurred and we had better realize where it came from. It was God who did it.

Then He gives a very positive prophecy.

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent:” (Ezekiel 17:22)

He tells us He will give us tender pastures. He will care for us instead of abusing and misusing us. God is going to set it on a hill that it cannot be hid. Now, we are getting back to prophecy

and away from history. But, to explain the riddle and the parable, you have to understand that.

We are between what God is about to do and what He has just done to the Church. Verse 23,

“In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.”

The two witnesses are going to stay within Israel and the Church is going to stay within Israel, which has become Babylon. We are Israelite people ruled over by Babylon. We have become Babylonish in our habits and what we do. But, God is going to plant the Church in Israel, not in Jordan, not in China, in Israel. God is going to bring a remnant from all over the world. All Churches are ultimately going to know that, I the Eternal have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree. How are the two witnesses going to come? They are going to come in sackcloth and humility not in great pride and prowess. Verse 24,

“And all the trees of the field shall know that I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the LORD have spoken and have done it.”

We had a high tree in Worldwide at one time. But God has made the dry

tree to flourish. That which has been dry, that which has not been growing, that which has not been watered for some time is going to flourish and grow in the land and heights of Israel. Christ told us we are to be a light on a hill for all the world to see. He will plant the Church on the mountains of Israel, I think both literally and physically and certainly spiritually. It will be the only light the world has until Christ returns. It will blind their eyes and they will hate it.

I want us to get the main point here for today, that the midst of Babylon is the cities of Israel. That is the setting for the end-time Church. He tells to flee from the midst of Babylon. Let's go to Revelation 18. This is an end-time setting. Verse 2,

“And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

Or demons, that is what our society has become. So-called Israel, but God says we look like gentiles to Him. Then it talks about how Israel as a Babylonian country has influenced the world. Verse 4,

“And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.”

Don't live like her, don't act like her, don't look like her. Her sins have reached to God in Heaven. We do not want to be like Babylon at all. We don't

want to eat like, walk like her, dress like her, paint up like her, whore around with the spiritual idols of this world like her, keep her holidays, her holy days. We are not to look like her and act like her in any way. We are to get away from her.

Those are physical plagues that are coming from a spiritual God. *If you are in the midst of Babylon and don't come out of her both spiritually and physically you will partake of her plagues.* I will show that it is a physical removal. Let's go to Zechariah 2. This is the setting of the end-time Church and the two witnesses come on the scene. Here is the instruction. In Chapter 1 He talks about how after 70 years God is going to turn and bless. This ties together with Jeremiah 25 and Daniel, because Daniel is an end-time book if there is ever such a thing in the Bible. It is sealed up until the time of the end. Daniel speaks of a 70 years. They were delivered physically from Babylon at that time when Babylon fell and Darius the Mede came in. But, it is an end-time prophecy having to do with the end-time Church. In Zechariah 2, He had just been talking about how there are those horns that shall come and destroy the Church and then carpenters will begin to put it back together.

“I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a man with a measuring line in his hand.

2 Then said I, Whither goest thou? And he said unto me, To measure Jerusalem, to see what is the breadth thereof, and what is the length thereof.” (Zechariah 2:1-2)

This is reminiscent of Revelation 11. He is to measure to see what is left of the Church. Jerusalem is the Church is

this analogy because it has to do with the end-time Church. How do you know how much is left?

“And, behold, the angel that talked with me went forth, and another angel went out to meet him,

4 And said unto him, Run, speak to this young man, saying, Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein:” (Zechariah 2:3-4)

There is to be a Jerusalem at the end, which is a series of villages without walls and a multitude of men and cattle. Now, you can spiritualize men I suppose, but it is hard to spiritualize cattle. God expects, at the end-time, in the context of the end-time Church, villages will appear and have men and cattle in them. Each man to have his own vine and fig tree. At some point, those villages will have to be protected by God.

“For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.” (Zechariah 2:5)

The setting is a gathering of God’s people into small villages somewhere. Now, let’s notice the continuing context. Verse 6,

“Ho, ho, come forth, and flee from the land of the north, saith the LORD: for I have spread you abroad as the four winds of the heaven, saith the LORD.”

Ho, ho or attention please. Babylon is often referred in scripture as the land of the north coming to destroy Jerusalem. We have seen a couple of

scriptures today in Ezekiel 23 and in Isaiah 17 to show they will come to martyr God’s Church. That ties with Matthew 24, which says then they will deliver you up afflict you and kill you. So, flee from this Babylon we are in says the Eternal. The Church is now scattered and He says, come out from the land of the north, get away from it. Verse 7,

“Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon.”

Where is most of the Church today? It is in America, Britain, Canada, Australia and the other nations of Israel. The preponderant majority is in the United States. “Deliver yourself” not God taking you to a place of safety, but deliver yourself. We are going to see that God expects something of us. I do not believe those villages without walls are the place of safety, by no stretch of the imagination. Those cities comprise the end-time Jerusalem, spiritually speaking, because physical Jerusalem in the Middle East is a big city with walls. It will be there until the end of the tribulation and the two witnesses will be killed in the streets thereof. So, this is something different; it is villages without walls. God says we are to flee from the land of the north, specifically Babylon with whom we dwell. Now, God says He is going to crop a tender twig from the top of the cedar and start a remnant Church that He will make green. Isaiah 41 says he will plant 7 trees in the wilderness and all 7 will take hold of one man, Isaiah 4. God is going to put together a remnant amongst some villages He will protect until they are destroyed and we flee to a place of safety.

“For thus saith the LORD of hosts; After the glory hath he sent me unto the nations which spoiled you: for he that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye.” (Zechariah 2:8)

What is the apple of His eye at the end? His faithful remnant, the daughters of Zion. We had Zion, Worldwide, now we have many many daughters of Zion, or lifeboats or whatever analogy you want to use. There is going to be one particular daughter of Zion God picks out, one particular leader to all the remnant will then come. It is going to be somewhere villages without walls will be set up with men and cattle. God says He will come and dwell in the midst. God is going to be involved.

There is an end-time prophecy that tells us to come out and dwell in villages without walls at the end-time. The context shows the two witnesses are about to come on the scene.

Now, let's go to Zephaniah 2. The Book of Zephaniah is in order here and each book of this group is like a chapter. It is one book really. Zephaniah is just before Haggai and Zechariah talk about the remnant of the Church coming together with Zerubbabel and Joshua, the two witnesses at the end. Now, prior, just prior to Haggai starting to come to pass there is a warning here. Let's understand the context for a moment. We are going to look at Micah in a little while. Jonah is about a coward in the end who would not do his job until God made him do it. The Book of Micah then talks about repentance and some things that need to be done. Nahum then follows Micah and talks about the

Assyrian coming and destroying us. We didn't get to this when we were talking about the Assyrian in Isaiah and for sake of time I didn't. But, it is right here in the context about the Assyrian will come against Israel and spiritual Israel. Then we have the Book of Habakkuk and Habakkuk said, how long O, Lord? The Assyrian is coming, how long and it is finally concluded, I will sit on my watch and wait until it happened. God will make us to jump and leap like a roe etc. in the last verse. Then we come to Zephaniah, after we have all taken the posture of saying, I guess I don't know how long, I'll just sit and wait until it happens. Then God gives us some clues in the Book of Zephaniah. Here He says, I am going to utterly consume all things from all the land. God gives here a degree of destruction. It is to the king of Judah, Josiah.

“I will utterly consume all things from off the land, saith the LORD.

3 I will consume man and beast; I will consume the fowls of the heaven, and the fishes of the sea, and the stumblingblocks with the wicked; and I will cut off man from off the land, saith the LORD.”

This sounds like the day of the Lord to me, the end-time. This hasn't happened.

“4 I will also stretch out mine hand upon Judah, and upon all the inhabitants of Jerusalem; and I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the name of the Chemarims with the priests;”

That is Protestantism and idolatrous priests.

“5 And them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops; and them that worship and that swear by the LORD, and that swear by Malcham;”

Again, that is Protestantism and Catholicism.

“6 And them that are turned back from the LORD; and those that have not sought the LORD, nor inquired for him.”

There are a lot of people who have know the truth who are today not inquiring of God why what is happening is going on.

“Hold thy peace at the presence of the Lord GOD: for the day of the LORD is at hand: for the LORD hath prepared a sacrifice, he hath bid his guests.” (Zephaniah 1:7)

This gives you the setting of the Book of Zephaniah. It didn't have anything to do with back then. It is just prior to the return of Christ and the day of the Lord.

He says it will come upon all those who have strange apparel. That is, those who don't have on white wedding garments. Verse 8.

Then it turns to the financial system. God is going to destroy everything. Everything this culture and society stands for. Verse 10,

“And it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD, that there shall be the noise of a cry from the fish gate, and an howling from the second, and a great crashing from the hills.” Do we talk about a crash, a great stock market

crash? God uses the same terminology doesn't He? Verse 11,

“Howl, ye inhabitants of Maktesh, for all the merchant people are cut down; all they that bear silver are cut off.”

Maktesh was a market area of Jerusalem similar to Wall Street today or the market in London where its transactions go on. Both represent modern Babylon and Israel. The merchants of gold, silver and paper money, the financial system, in other words, are going to crash. Anybody with eyes to see and ears to hear can look at the circumstance today and know this cannot be too far off. Days, weeks, months, 2, 3, 4 or 5 years, it can't be very long based on what we see happening to the EURO and the dollar and other economies around the world. America is losing market shares around the world and we are supporting China, Japan and other places with our imports. All we give them back in return for all things we buy, those manufactured goods, basically is worthless government bonds. How long will they trade automobiles for worthless pieces of paper? Does that sound like a fair trade to you? It is going to crash.

“And it shall come to pass at that time, that I will search Jerusalem with candles, and punish the men that are settled on their lees: that say in their heart, The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.”

Settled on their lees is a term like the boating term, resting on their oars. Sitting in Church, warming a pew. They say that what is going on really doesn't matter.

“Therefore their goods shall become a booty, and their houses a desolation: they shall also build houses, but not inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, but not drink the wine thereof.”

We have an incredible building boom in America the last few years. Those houses are going to be taken away. We are not going to have them much longer.

“The great day of the LORD is near, it is near, and hasteth greatly, even the voice of the day of the LORD: the mighty man shall cry there bitterly.” (Zephaniah 1:12-14)

It talks about a day of the trumpet in Verse 16. Verse 18,

“Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of his jealousy: for he shall make even a speedy riddance of all them that dwell in the land.”

Some people are saying we should hedge our bets and trade our dollars in for gold. That traditionally has worked, this time it won't work. Gold may last a little longer than bills, but not a whole lot longer because the whole system is coming down and you can't eat gold.

Now, what is God's instruction to His people on the cusp of this decree coming down? A decree of destruction and the day of the Lord and a decree of a financial crash of the system in Israel. Chapter 2, He begins to give us specific instruction.

“Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired;” (Zephaniah 2:1)

The term here is as of gathering sticks. When I go into the woods to build myself a fire, I gather up sticks that I can find here, there and everywhere. I don't bring the whole woods in and build a fire. It is a gathering of sticks. God's people need to gather themselves. God puts the onus on us. “Gather yourselves together, yea, gather together, O nation not desired” desirable or shameless or unworthy, but possible given grace.

“Before the decree bring forth, before the day pass as the chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD come upon you, before the day of the LORD's anger come upon you.”

He tells His people to gather themselves together before this decree of the day of the Lord and the financial destruction actually hits. I will show you this is speaking directly to us not to Israel in general. Verse 3,

“Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger.”

Where, possible, could you find meek on the earth? Only in God's Church, the rest are proud. And those in the Church are way too proud. But, if there were a chance to find the meek of the earth it would be those who are following Jesus Christ and His example because He was the meekest who ever lived.

Who pays any attention to God's judgments on the earth today? Only the Church of God. God tells us to gather ourselves together. We are told many places to come out or her, my people. This is a physical gathering to get away from the eye of the storm that is coming. To gather ourselves like sticks before this hits. If we are meek, if we are righteous, maybe we will be hid. Now that fits perfectly with Matthew 24 and Luke 21 in which we are told to pray that we be accounted worthy to escape. We are not worthy, we are not desirable, we have not been desirable, and we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God. He says, seek meekness, seek righteousness and maybe we will be hid.

Some will be hid. But, some of us may be worthy and some of us may not. He will take one here and one there. He even says in Chapter 3, in the context here he talks about the Assyrians and how He will ultimately destroy them. Then He talks about Jerusalem, the Church and her prophets being treacherous and lighthearted and polluting the sanctuary and doing violence to the law. (Chapter 3:4) He talks of how He is angry and how He is going to tear it down. Then He says in Verse 11,

“In that day shalt thou not be ashamed for all thy doings, wherein thou hast transgressed against me: for then I will take away out of the midst of thee them that rejoice in thy pride, and thou shalt no more be haughty because of my holy mountain.”

My government, my presence. Ezekiel says He will purge the rebels from among us. Here He says He will take out the haughty and the proud.

“I will also leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall trust in the name of the LORD.” (Zephaniah 3:12)

The New King James here says a “meek and humble” people as a contrast to the proud and haughty that will be removed. Then it goes on down and says in Verse 14,

“Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem.

15 The LORD hath taken away thy judgments, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more.

16 In that day it shall be said to Jerusalem, Fear thou not: and to Zion, Let not thine hands be slack.”

He tells to sing and be glad and then He tells us to work and not let our hands be slack. Then Haggai begins to talk about rebuilding the temple with the remnant that are faithful, humble, meek and righteous. That is the flow of what is about to happen in this land.

Now, let's go to Micah 4. I know I am probably on the second cassette tape by now, but I don't care. If you don't like this get up and leave. Paul preached to midnight and Eutychus fell out of the balcony. I don't do this often, but I want to finish this today. I want to get this whole message in today.

Micah 4 will add to what we saw in Jeremiah 50, 51 and 52 and what we should have seen in Isaiah 48, but I forgot it. So, let's go back to Isaiah 48. We didn't get to this when we were talking about Isaiah before we broke off

in Chapter 40. Here He is talking about Jacob and Israel and how God is going to do some new things here at the end in Verse 6.

“Thou hast heard, see all this; and will not ye declare it? I have shewed thee new things from this time, even hidden things, and thou didst not know them.

7 They are created now, and not from the beginning; even before the day when thou heardest them not; lest thou shouldest say, Behold, I knew them.”

God is going to some things here that will be a surprise to us all, whatever those are. Verse 14,

“All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these things? The LORD hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans.”

Listen. Now, He is addressing Jacob, Israel here and He talks about how His arm will come down on the Chaldeans and Babylonians. In other words, we are one and the same today. Verse 15,

“I, even I, have spoken; yea, I have called him: I have brought him, and he shall make his way prosperous.

16 Come ye near unto me, hear ye this; I have not spoken in secret from the beginning; from the time that it was, there am I: and now the Lord GOD, and his Spirit, hath sent me.

17 Thus saith the LORD, thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way

that thou shouldest go.” (Isaiah 48:15-17)

I have been trying to tell you something for a long time, now listed would you, Isaiah is saying. Who is being redeemed today? Only the Church. We are the only ones being redeemed from the earth. Physical Israel will come up in the second resurrection, most of it, and be redeemed then. The only redemption that is occurring is with God’s true spiritual Jews today.

“O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:” (Isaiah 48:18)

How different is could have been for us is attitudes had been different. But, look what has happened to us. We are the flotsam and jetsam on the sea today, not in peace.

“Thy seed also had been as the sand, and the offspring of thy bowels like the gravel thereof; his name should not have been cut off nor destroyed from before me.

The Church would have flourished and grown, but instead it became a low bush of low stature even though it spread around the world and then it came apart when the wrong vine keepers took over. It would have been that way. But, the name of the Worldwide Church of God has been cut off and destroyed before God. There is the context. Now, what does it say?

“Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The

LORD hath redeemed his servant Jacob.” (Isaiah 48:19-20)

Get away from this society, its culture, its people, get away from it. Tell this; utter it even to the end of the earth. I hope this sermon gets disseminated. God tells us get out, get away from Babylon and God will redeem you.

“And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.” (Isaiah 48:21)

That is both history and I think a prophecy. God is going to take care of His people at the end. He will have to because we won't be able to take care of ourselves. He has told us to get away. He has told us to get out. He has told us to flee the midst of Babylon. Now, let's go to Micah and see if we can define more clearly how we are to gather and where we are to gather. Chapter 4, this is a prophecy for the last days.

“But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it.” (Micah 4:1)

Didn't we read that God would take a tender twig from the top and place it on a mountain? This verse fits that. Doesn't Haggai say a remnant will be stirred up by God and come to the place where God places His name and where He is?

“And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the

mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.” (Micah 4:2)

Jerusalem is the Church; the faithful remnant. They will quit fighting with one another and turn their swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Verse 4,

“But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.”

That ties with the agricultural setting we saw in Zechariah 2 of villages without walls and men and cattle there. This is going to come to pass. Now, let's us to go Verse 6.

“In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted;”

God will gather those that are lame. This verse is a perfect description of the Church today. Spiritually lame, driven away from Worldwide by false shepherds. God says, I have done this to my vineyard in Isaiah 5, Lamentations and all through the prophecies.

“And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.” (Micah 4:7)

This last turning around of His remnant people is never going to fall

away again. They will be with God all the way through the end-time troubles and be changed in a moment in the twinkling of an eye and rule with Christ forever. There will never another turning away once this remnant comes together. Let's see it.

“And thou, O tower of the flock, the strong hold of the daughter of Zion, unto thee shall it come, even the first dominion; the kingdom shall come to the daughter of Jerusalem.” (Micah 4:8)

Tower means watchman. The Church is Zion and Jerusalem. God is going to be dealing with a daughter of Zion. Proverbs 31 ties in. The fairest of them all. The first dominion, first rule, first power is going to come to the daughter of Zion whom God selects as the fairest. All the daughters will look to her. Read the Song of Solomon, which we don't have time to go through here. The first dominion, first rule, first government, first oversight of the faithful remnant. So, God is going to set His hand with a faithful remnant. It is going to be one of the daughters. Now, back to reality, Verse 9.