

I regret that we are moving so slowly through the Book of Revelation, but overturning false things, poorly thought out, unbiblical perspectives is more difficult than it appears to be. It would actually be a pretty easy matter to speak the truth, to teach what is true and do it in a straightforward fashion if I did not have to overturn, pull down, uproot, overthrow, and destroy false and often quite silly notions. I understand that when we were children, we acted as children, we thought as children, and we understood as children; but when we become mature, it is necessary to update our understanding.<sup>1</sup>

When I was a little kid, I remember in the schoolyard—you know, I am talking about being 5 or 6 years of age—a group of us would hold hands in recess on the playground, and we would sing the song, “Ring around the rosie, pocket full of posies; ashes, ashes, we all fall down,” and we would just fall down. It was fun as a child to do that. Our focus was on all falling down. Later on, as an adult, I actually thought about what we were singing. I did a little bit of research and found out it was an English child’s rhyme from the time of the Black Plague. It was certain rings that appeared on people’s skin who had been infected—ring around the rosie. And people were suffering immensely, so they had posies, or collections of herbs and flowers—there were so many people dying and unburied corpses in houses that you needed to have like an air freshener, so a pocket full of posies was your personal air freshener right below your nose to kind of distract from the stench of decaying flesh. Ashes, Ashes—many people, their bodies had to be incinerated. And so many people were dying that “we all fell down” celebrated that concept. When we are children, a macabre poem has a measure of delight to it; when we are adults, the grim reality ought to seep into our consciousness.

We have had these poorly formed notions of the Book of Revelation from generations past that did not represent a mature church, because the church was not mature at the time nor was God calling her at that time to maturity. But He is doing so now. Do you know how I know that? That is what He is saying. That is why I say what I say. When we are children, we act like children; but

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All Scripture quotations are from the NKJV Bible, unless otherwise noted.

<sup>1</sup> See 1 Corinthians 13:11: “When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

when we become adults, we ought to put away childish things. And if we refuse to put away childish things when for the time we ought to be teachers, and insist on the milk of the word, then we are described as carnal or immature, incapable of bearing weight and certainly excused from the grave and important task of representing the Lord.<sup>2</sup>

I am amazed at how entrenched doctrines are, to the point where it is the doctrines that are blinding the minds of people so that they can neither hear nor see. If you have agreed to these very, very unfounded in Scripture notions of biblical prophecy, particularly the end of the age—you notice, I am not presenting you with a bunch of charts and arrows and news clippings; I am deconstructing the Scriptures in the same manner in which I deconstruct themes around which doctrines are formed in the Scriptures.

I was thinking the other day, in fact, when I first got started, when I got the assignment from the Lord to unpack the Book of Revelation, I have to tell you that I did not consider it a task to which my feet eagerly went. I did not rush to this task because, as I stood afar and thought about it, I realized that this was obviously beyond my pay grade. But I know that when the Lord tells me to do something, if I will but agree, He will give me the anointing, He will give me the grace to move through it. As I have done so, I realized how well prepared I was for this, but not because I had repeatedly studied the Book of Revelation. Though I had read it many times, I had not studied it. I studied portions of it, but not in its entirety to see the overarch and to place it within its proper context of all prophetic Scriptures, coming at the end, summarizing all prophetic Scriptures.

So, I thought that it was not really a good thing for an apostle to be deep diving into the main prophetic Scripture in all the Bible. But the Lord reminded me: the Book of Revelation was not written by a prophet; it was written by an apostle, and it required apostolic insight to interpret. What we have done is we have left it to prophets, who are typically not known for the discipline of study. It is easy to fire off some word from God, as is commonplace for modern prophets. Many

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<sup>2</sup> See Hebrews 5:12-14: “For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need *someone* to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

of the Old Testament prophets, like Daniel, said that he had read the word of another prophet, Jeremiah. He said, “I learned from the word of the prophet Jeremiah that the captivity of Israel would last seventy years.”<sup>3</sup> We have prophecy today largely unconnected from the Scriptures, and that is why it has become the Wild, Wild West—the wild frontier of dueling prophecies. Now I have great respect for the prophetic, but I have contempt for false prophets, because it is not a neutral proposition. They are leading the people astray by false prophecy. But the Book of Revelation requires “men of understanding,”<sup>4</sup> and that is not a condition we typically associate with the modern-day prophetic movement. God is dethroning it, decapitating it, and bringing up in the place thereof, real prophets and prophetesses. Now some of the old guard have been faithful to God, but the majority of them were disclosed in recent political events.

I want to dig in deeper and show you more of why it is necessary to deeply study the Scriptures. When you do, it is not study that opens the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit does, but you must supply the willingness to do whatever God requires of you to understand. That is a discipline more commonly associated with true apostles. We have got an overabundant crop of false apostles, just like we have an overabundant crop of false prophets in the present time, but the word and the Spirit attest to who is authentic. When what is said is not true, whether by apostle or prophet, they ought to repent if they have a chance at being reclaimed. If they will not repent, God will discard them, for He is no respecter of persons.<sup>5</sup> He will not be represented by unprepared, unclean, and often filthy vessels.

Now, let’s get into this further. Like I said, I am apologizing nearly for taking thirty minutes to explain one verse of Scripture, but it is necessary if we are going to gain understanding. And it is not just knowing about stuff. This is about how our path is to be lighted. His word, the revealed

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<sup>3</sup> See Daniel 9:2: “in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books the number of the years *specified* by the word of the LORD through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem.”

<sup>4</sup> See 1 Chronicles 12:32a KJV: “And of the children of Issachar, *which were men* that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do;”

<sup>5</sup> See Acts 10:34 KJV: “Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:”

word, is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path.<sup>6</sup> And if it does not function like that, then we will stumble in darkness and these times will overtake us in our condition of ignorance. So this is not just some nice thing to do, this is imperative. This is the work that is required of the mature.

I know that there are a lot of people hearing these things who will quickly turn their noses at it because it assaults their established positions. Keep your positions, I say. If you will not change, keep your positions, continue to stumble around. You will be no more than a guesser, and after enough foolish guesses, you will be revealed as a fool. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear. I am concerned about the people of God who actually care about the truth, not about this false notion of brotherhood and camaraderie, when nobody corrects each other and the common herd, like a bunch of wildebeests in full on stampede, go over the cliff when they follow each other to their destruction. If you cannot be turned, you will be destroyed—not because I have anything to do with it. I am stating the obvious.

But to those who desire to know, let's look at this passage now, verse 9, because it says,

*If anyone has an ear, let him hear (Revelation 13:9 NKJV).*

It is as stark as that. Now what is it that he wants you to hear? What particular warning is intended here? Pay attention to the words because they are not what you think. We have read this Scripture before many times, and people hear something different than what it actually says. It says,

*He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints (Revelation 13:10).*

Do you know how we usually read this? Against the background of “the gates of hell coming against us.”<sup>7</sup> Again, gates do not go anywhere; they do not attack anybody. But in the same spirit of folly, of blinded perspectives, we hear in this Scripture that in these times, if you have been

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<sup>6</sup> See Psalm 119:105: “Your word *is* a lamp to my feet And a light to my path.”

<sup>7</sup> See Matthew 16:18: “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

appointed to be taken captive, which is to say you will be taken to prison for your faith, then you will go to prison; if you have been appointed to die for your faith, then you will die. That is how we have heard it.

I want to read it again. “He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity.” What is that saying to you? It is saying somebody has been leading others into captivity, and his judgment is, he now will be taken into captivity. Let me read it again. It is like peeling the old coatings off the floor to expose the beauty of the wood. We have read this forever to say that there will come a time when true believers have been appointed to be taken into captivity or taken to prison for their faith, so they are the ones who are going to be taken to prison for their faith; and it has been appointed that certain ones will die for their faith, so those are the ones who will die for their faith. And that calls for patience and faith of the saints. That is how we have read it. In fact, I daresay that is how you read it until this moment, when I am showing you that is wrong. It is not what it says.

It says, “He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity.” In other words, these are people who made captives of others, and their judgment is that they will be judged by the same measure they poured out: they will be taken into captivity if they have been taking people into captivity. Similarly, “he who kills with the sword”—so this is not an innocent person; this is a person who has already been known for killing with the sword—“must be killed with the sword.” That is the last part. It says, if that is what you are doing, this is what is going to happen to you in these times.

Will it surprise you to find out that this is actually a quote? Will it surprise you to find out that these words are a quote—that John is quoting somebody? Do you know who he is quoting? He is quoting the prophet Jeremiah. The reference is Jeremiah 15:3. Come with me to it. We will read it together. Jeremiah, chapter 15, I will start at verse 1: “The Lord said to me...”—Jeremiah is speaking; this is the weeping prophet, Jeremiah, known for prophesying the coming Babylonian captivity—a type and shadow of this beast of Revelation, chapter 13. In fact, the beast that typifies Babylonian captivity is the lion in the prophecy of Daniel, in Daniel, chapter 7—a lion, a bear, and a leopard, three predatory kingdoms affecting the world, and in specifics, Babylon affecting Israel. The weeping prophet Jeremiah speaks for God, and God is saying, “I intend to bring the judgments that I have delayed, and I will not delay the judgments anymore.” These judgments are going to

take the form of Babylonian captivity for ancient Israel. Here, Jeremiah the prophet, from chapter 15, beginning at verse 1.

*Then the Lord said to me, “Even if Moses and Samuel stood before Me, My mind would not be favorable toward this people (Jeremiah 15:1a).*

God is saying, “If Moses stood in front of Me, if Samuel stood in front of Me”—two of the luminaries of the Old Testament known for their faithfulness in all of their ways. Samuel called the people to account and said, “I have coveted no man’s gold or silver; I told you what God was saying.”<sup>8</sup> Moses was the most humble man who ever lived,<sup>9</sup> faithfully representing God. “Even if those types were before Me,” God said, “I would not be favorable toward this people—toward Israel.”

*Cast them out of My sight, and let them go forth. [What that is saying is, I am done with them. Go forth where?] And it shall be, [This is the quote that we just read in Revelation, chapter 13.] if they say to you, ‘Where should we go?’ [God is telling Jeremiah what to tell them.] then you shall tell them, ‘Thus says the Lord:*

*“Such as are for death, to death;  
And such as are for the sword, to the sword;  
And such as are for the famine, to the famine;  
And such as are for the captivity, to the captivity.” ’*

*“And I will appoint over them four forms of destruction,” [What is this? Let’s read a little bit; it will answer it for us.] says the Lord: “the sword to slay, the dogs to drag, the birds of the heavens and the beasts of the earth to devour and destroy. I will hand them over to trouble, to all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, king of Judah, for what he did in Jerusalem (Jeremiah 15:1b-4, comments added in brackets).*

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<sup>8</sup> See 1 Samuel 12:1-5.

<sup>9</sup> See Numbers 12:3: “(Now the man Moses was very humble, more than all men who were on the face of the earth.)”

So God was very, very, very angry with Israel over the rule of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah, the king of Judah. You know, the Hebrews were divided in the time of Solomon's son, Rehoboam. They were divided into the northern kingdom of Israel and the southern kingdom of Judah.<sup>10</sup> Manasseh was one of the kings of Judah. Ten tribes were part of the rebellion and formed the nation of Israel amongst the Jews; two tribes, the tribes of Judah and Benjamin, remained faithful to the house of David and were the southern kingdom of Judah. At the time of Manasseh, this king of Israel, God intended to bring judgment on Israel. That judgment would happen in the reign of one of his successors, a king named Zedekiah. There was Hezekiah, there was Manasseh, there was Josiah, and then there was Zedekiah. For Zedekiah's captivity, his eyes would be put out and he would be led into captivity into Babylon.<sup>11</sup>

God's favor had appeared on Israel in the days of Hezekiah. You will remember that God caused a plague to come into the armies of Sennacherib.<sup>12</sup> Sennacherib, in the days of Hezekiah—by the way, Hezekiah ruled between the years 727 BC and 698 BC. And then he was succeeded by Manasseh, who ruled from 698 BC to 642 BC and was the longest reigning king in Judah; he reigned for 55 years.<sup>13</sup>

When we come back, I want to explain how this reference presents us with Babylonian captivity updated to the end of the age. In preparation for that, I will give you just a bit more of the history of that time, and we will then proceed to look exactly at the sins of Manasseh and how they relate to “who is to go into captivity, will go into captivity; who is to die by the sword, will die by the sword,” and who it is that he is talking about.

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<sup>10</sup> See 1 Kings 12:1-24; 2 Chronicles 10:1-19.

<sup>11</sup> See 2 Kings 25:7: “Then they killed the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, put out the eyes of Zedekiah, bound him with bronze fetters, and took him to Babylon.”

<sup>12</sup> See 2 Kings 19:35-36: “And it came to pass on a certain night that the angel of the LORD went out, and killed in the camp of the Assyrians one hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when *people* arose early in the morning, there were the corpses—all dead. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away, returned *home*, and remained at Nineveh.”

<sup>13</sup> See 2 Kings 21:1a: “Manasseh *was* twelve years old when he became king, and he reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem.”

I am Sam Soleyn. Continue with me as we unpack this ancient reference. John did not coin it out of thin air, as you can well see. The Spirit of the Lord quoted the prophet Jeremiah in the Book of Revelation more than 700 years later. I am Sam Soleyn. We will talk more soon. Bye-bye.