

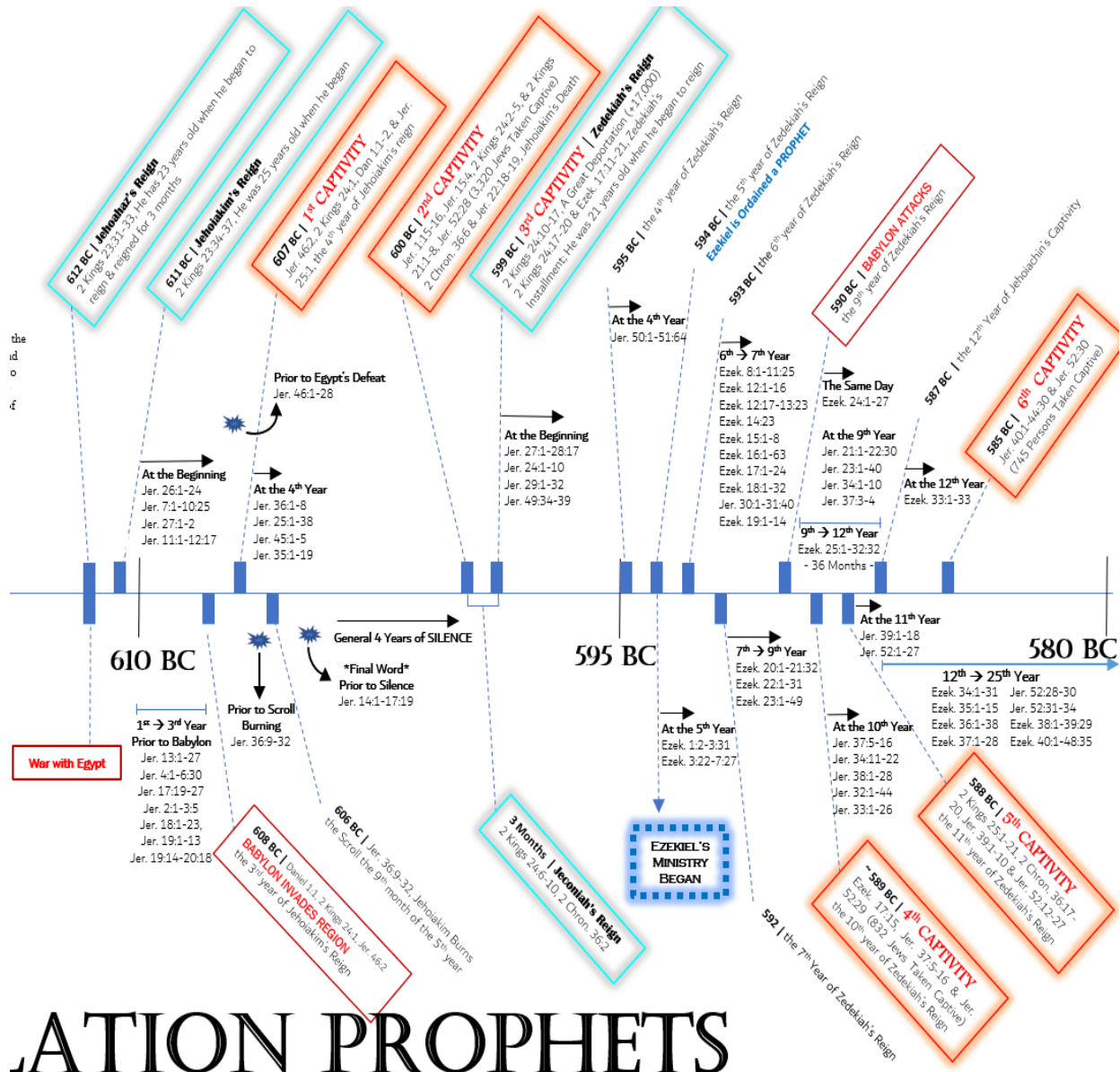
## Table of Contents

A Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel .....	3
EZEKIEL 1:2-3:21 .....	3
The Good Figs Weren't Good.....	4
The Installment of an Onsite Prophet to Rescue the Good Figs .....	5
EZEKIEL 3:22-7:27 .....	6
The Violent Condition of the Good Figs.....	6
A Vain Trust in Covenantal Idealism via Misapplied Promises .....	7
The Defilement of the Sanctuary.....	8
An Amendment of Grace to the Repertoire of Damnation .....	9
EZEKIEL 8:1-11:25 .....	12
The Primary Provocation.....	13
The Spiritual Status of the Evil Figs .....	14
All the Residue of the Remnant of Israel being Totally Annihilated!.....	14
The Glory of God Arising, Moving, Identifying, & Killing! .....	15
The Visible Church Abandoned by the Invisible God .....	18
EZEKIEL 12:1-16.....	23
Zedekiah's Captivity & Blindness Foretold.....	23
EZEKIEL 12:17-13:23.....	24
The Divine Confirmation of the Tribulation Prophets! .....	25
Time Has Run Out! .....	25
The Day of the LORD: Having Departed, God Returns for War! .....	27
National Insecurity Resulting from Unconditional Eternal Security Preachers .....	28
EZEKIEL 14:1-23.....	34
Insincere Seekers & the Deception of God .....	34
EZEKIEL 15:1-8 .....	35
The Worthwhile Burning of the Unworthy People .....	35
EZEKIEL 16:1-63.....	37
The Abominableness of Condemned Jerusalem.....	37
EZEKIEL 17:1-24 .....	44
Zedekiah Rebelled as a Tributary to Babylon .....	44
EZEKIEL 18:1-32.....	45

The Evil Figs Didn't Believe They Were Evil! .....	45
Father-to-Child Visitation and Recompense .....	47
Vindicating the Scriptural Emphasis of Guilt.....	51
In a Situation of Annihilation Every Person is Individually Judged by God .....	56
Attempted & Hardly Thwarted Events of Total Annihilation.....	58
The Truly Converted Status of the Israelite People in the Wilderness & the Ideals Theretofore .....	63
The People's Proneness to Rebellion Throughout Redemptive History.....	66
EZEKIEL 19:1-14 .....	70
EZEKIEL 20:1-21:32 .....	70
The Dire Necessity of Judgment in a Tribulation Period.....	70
The Church: it's God & it's Law .....	71
The Wilderness Experience of the Tribulation Period .....	73
Refuting Popular Commentators .....	80
EZEKIEL 22:1-31.....	100
EZEKIEL 23:1-49.....	100
EZEKIEL 24:1-27 .....	100
EZEKIEL 25:1-32:32   PROPHECIES AGAINST HEATHEN NATIONS .....	100
Ezekiel 25:1-7 .....	102
Ezekiel 25:8-11 .....	102
Ezekiel 25:12-14 .....	102
Ezekiel 25:15-17 .....	102
Ezekiel 26:1-28:19 .....	102
Ezekiel 28:20-26 .....	102
Ezekiel 29:1-32:32 .....	102
EZEKIEL 33:1-33.....	102
EZEKIEL 34:1-31.....	103
EZEKIEL 35:1-15 .....	103
EZEKIEL 36:1-38 .....	103
EZEKIEL 37:1-28.....	103
EZEKIEL 38:1-39:29 .....	103
Jerusalem's Destruction via Babylon (≈588 B.C) → ONWARD.....	104
Jerusalem's Destruction via Rome (70 A.D.) → ONWARD.....	108
EZEKIEL 40:1-48:35 .....	113

# A Commentary on the Book of Ezekiel

EZEKIEL 1:2-3:21



# ATION PROPHETS

At the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign (Ezek. 1:2), Ezekiel was ordained a Prophet and the essence of his ministry was revealed. My reader, this was a timely ordination! For, fearfully, the **Good Figs** still weren't **good**! Can you believe it? These individuals, the **Good Figs**, had been digressing even further into sin the past 5 years of Zedekiah's reign. Contextually, this is a very important observation and essential to understanding the Tribulation Period and the Tribulation Prophets.

## The Good Figs Weren't Good

You see, my reader, after 3 Babylonian Captivities had already been suffered by the Jews who were the occupants of the Kingdom of Judah, and, also, a good 11 years into the Tribulation Period, Zedekiah came to power by the appointment of Babylon. Furthermore, at the beginning of Zedekiah's reign (5 years before Ezekiel's ordination) Jeremiah prophesied of **Good Figs** and **Vile Figs** (Good Figs: Jer. 24:5-7, 29:4-15; Evil Figs: Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19). This was the first time the two populations were so clearly segregated thus: the *hopeful* and the *hopeless!* Right on time, God wanted a vessel to bear His Name and speak His Word among the Jews in Captivity at Babylon, the location of the **Good Figs**, while Jeremiah continued to abide in Jerusalem to prophesy to the **Evil Figs**. This was the God's Master Plan: In glorious concert one with another, Ezekiel and Jeremiah shouldered the immense burden of the hour – a time when, from differing locations amidst differing populations of Jews with contrary destinies, their prophesying was interactive with and directed toward both peoples and events happening in both places! They were Tribulation Prophets who prophesied amidst the Great Falling Away of their time.

At the onset of Ezekiel's ministry, and telling of the reasons for his ordination, the impenitent conduct of the **Good Figs** as they existed then and the method employed to bring them to repentance was pointedly emphasized. Let this sink down into your ears, my reader! Ezekiel was raised up to combat the deception which was whelming to devour the basket of **Good Figs!** Oh, how long had they been romanced by lies! How hardly would they divorce the erroneous doctrines they held so dear, namely Unconditional Eternal Security! May the LORD rebuke it.

Ezekiel, being carried away in the **3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity** (Ezek. 1:2), was commissioned as a Prophet to *the people of the Captivities*, the **Good Figs**, but, my reader... they weren't **good** yet! The people identified by God as the **Good Figs** were in such a deplorable estate that the LORD called them "impudent", "stiffhearted", "rebellious", and "hardhearted" (Ezek. 2:3-4, 7, 3:7). This was not an easy situation. These people were so wretched and stouthearted, Ezekiel was commanded by God, "And thou, son of man, *be not afraid* of them, *neither be afraid* of their words, though **briers** and **thorns** be with thee, and thou dwell among **scorpions**: *be not afraid* of their words, *nor be dismayed* at their looks, though they be a **rebellious House**" (Ezek. 2:6). Being so late in the Tribulation Period, one might wonder why Ezekiel was raised up! With only 6 years left until the last major Captivity of Judah would take place (the **5<sup>th</sup> Captivity**), what was his purpose?

My reader, Ezekiel was sent to the **Good Figs** (who weren't **good**) to be a voice for the impending judgments which would make them **good!** Ezekiel was there to be an onsite Prophet to teach them to **Embrace Tribulation**. You see, God's eyes were fastened upon *every single soul* of the children of Israel and Judah in the Captivities, and especially those in Babylon who were identified by God as the **Good Figs**; the LORD was looking for men and women who – *through tribulation* – would repent and do righteousness. Without tribulation, no one would! The good man had perished from the earth and the faithful failed from among the children of men, but God was able to make **bad** men **good** again (Ps. 12:1)! God's prerogative was Church Purity through tribulation. God's purpose in punishment was an eventual regathering of the people so that He might assume immediate sovereignty over them once again. Therefore, the LORD's eyes were upon the wicked of the Church to execute increasing increments of judgment until they died *to* their wickedness or died *in* their wickedness, one or the other! The LORD would not let wicked Israelites live for the regathering so as to incorporate them back into the Church, no! This would contradict the entire purpose of the Tribulation Period.

You see, before the regathering there needed to be a scattering. Before the restoration there needed to be a tribulation; and this tribulation was a purifying, refining, and annihilating fire. The objects of annihilation were proven thus through the tribulation; therefore, they were unredeemable men. The objects of refinement were proven thus through the tribulation; therefore, they were redeemable men. And the two categories of men, the **Evil Figs** and the **Good Figs**, were segregated by the sovereign selection of God in their various appointments of circumstance and situation, suffering and tribulation, ending in life or death. All this, for a 70-year period. Despite the long duration of time passing, the meticulous design was steadfast and God's intimate oversight was impeccable. It was a hand-selected and hand-made tribulation conducted by God. The hands of Omnipotent Sovereignty *searched*, *tried*, and *proved* every man, woman, and child for the 70-year period, to the end: the regathered Church would be entirely clean (Isa. 52:1, Zech. 14:21, Ezek. 36:29, 33), without defilement (Ezek. 11:18, 37:23, 43:7), utterly loyal (Ezek. 14:11), and without idols (Zech. 13:2, Ezek. 20:37-42, 36:25, Hos. 14:8), thence

to live forever in the Holy Land (Amos 9:11-15, Jer. 31:40)! Furthermore, in this, [the Glory of God](#) would return to the Church, the fame of God would astound the World, and the purposes and promises of God would be fulfilled (For more information, see: [The Church Defined, Recalled, and Revived](#) and or Chapters 1, 2, 3, & 4, of [The Church Realized](#)).

### The Installment of an Onsite Prophet to Rescue the Good Figs

Herein, the ministry of Ezekiel finds significance. The purpose of his prophesying was focused and precise! Firstly, he was sent to the rescue of the **Good Figs** which were presently impenitent and deceived by false prophets. To do so, and secondarily, Ezekiel needed to derail the crash-course of the people both near and far (in the Land of Babylon and in the Land of Judah), thus he needed to convince the people through prophecy that *the Kingdom of Judah* would irreparably fall, *the Temple* would be destroyed, *the City of Jerusalem* would be burned and eventually become uninhabited, and, for the fulfillment of these unaccomplished events of prophecy, further **Captivities** were inevitable (the **4<sup>th</sup>**, **5<sup>th</sup>**, and **6<sup>th</sup>** **Captivities**).

#### *The Majesty of the Lord in Tribulatory Judgments of Life & Death*

Resistance was not only futile, but deadly! In the midst of it all, God was looking to and fro for any wicked Israelite who *would not* repent, and God appointed him to **die**; God was looking to and fro for any wicked Israelite who *would* repent, and God appointed him to **live**; God was looking for any righteous Israelite who *would not* keep the way of righteousness, and God appointed him to **die**; God was looking for any righteous Israelite who *would* keep the way of righteousness, and God appointed him to **live** unto the eventual regathering of the Church or the bequeathing of his legacy to another righteous generation. The ever-present *searching* and *sifting* hands of God controlled every **sword**, fastened every **chain**, selected every **captive**, ordered every **scattering**, starved everyone **famished**, and slew everyone sick by **pestilence**! He, the LORD, gathered every army, timed every success or failure, enriched or impoverished every strategy, breached or bolstered every wall, and lit or extinguished every fire! And, in the glory of it all, He ordained Prophets to tell the story. He ordained Prophets that He might get all the glory! Herein Ezekiel's ministry finds significance, my reader.

In the plainest terms, this plan was revealed in relationship to Ezekiel's ministry at his ordination in Ezekiel 3:17-21. Furthermore, at pivotal moments in the Tribulation Period, the LORD reiterated the majestic plan of Ezekiel's ministry in Ezekiel 18:1-32 and Ezekiel 33:1-20. By way of introduction, my reader, behold the God-to-Prophet relationship in the midst of the Tribulation Period – a period defined by the pounding blows of an Angry God, and, meanwhile, the aggravated and blasphemously impenitent multitudes, therefore the whole population of the Church must be **immersed in the fires** of tribulation! Then, and only then, a remnant of righteous persons would arise to give glory to God and bear witness to the nations! With this in mind, the man Ezekiel was sitting astonished by the River Chebar for 7 days, and then...

“And it came to pass at the end of seven days, that the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, I have made thee a **Watchman** unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me. When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul. Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity, and I lay a stumblingblock before him, he shall die: because thou hast not given him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered; but his blood will I require at thine hand. Nevertheless if thou warn the righteous man, that the righteous sin not, and he doth not sin, he shall surely live, because he is warned; also thou hast delivered thy soul.” – Ezek. 3:16-21

You see, my reader? God's warnings through the Prophets of the Tribulation (delivered to righteous and wicked men) were of the utmost importance and urgency! They were perfectly synchronized with the judgments of God and successfully communicated to every ear in need of the message, or else there's blood-guiltiness. They were messengers in the midst of an annihilating redemption process called, the Great Tribulation, and *every message* meant **life** or **death** to someone! God was looking, ever looking – seeing this man turn here, and that man turn there, the one to **life** and the other to **death**! At last, the righteous would be forced to declare that the LORD was sovereign over the seeming chaos of death on every

side! Amidst the **sword, famine, pestilence,** and **wild beasts,** the LORD was trustworthy and true to His word to grant **life** to the righteous and **death** to the wicked, no exceptions! What He promised He performed! As it was written and sung by righteous men of old, when they worshipfully declared,

“I will say of the LORD, He is *my refuge* and *my fortress*: my God; *in him will I trust*. Surely *he shall deliver thee* from **the snare** of the fowler, and from **the noisome pestilence**. *He shall cover thee* with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy *shield* and *buckler*. Thou *shalt not be afraid* for the **terror** by night; nor for the **arrow** that flieth by day; Nor for the **pestilence** that walketh in darkness; nor for the **destruction** that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall **fall** at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but *it shall not come nigh thee*. Only *with thine eyes shalt thou behold* and *see* the reward of **the wicked**. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is *my refuge*, even the most High, *thy habitation*; *There shall no evil* befall thee, *neither shall any plague* come nigh thy dwelling. For *he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways*. They shall *bear thee up* in their hands, lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. *Thou shalt tread upon the lion* and **adder**: **the young lion** and **the dragon** *shalt thou trample under feet*. Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore *will I deliver him*: *I will set him on high*, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and *I will answer him*: *I will be with him in trouble*; *I will deliver him, and honour him*. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation.” – Psalm 91:1-16

The above description demonstrates the verity of the promise, “Thou shalt surely **live**” (Ezek. 3:21). To survive and live in the midst of a divinely orchestrated hurricane of death is, and cannot be anything but, a divine wonder! The description of Psalm 91:1-16 was a living reality for those who believed the word of God through Ezekiel, “Thou shalt surely **live**” (Ezek. 3:21). Psalm 91:1-16 was not poetry, but reality! Can you see it?

The voice of God during the Tribulation Period was so active with prophecies so numerous, 100 Chapters of inspired scripture are concentrated on a 22-year period (52 by Jeremiah and 48 by Ezekiel)! And this, understandably so, because the LORD was pushing every man of the populous to humanities’ limit – to their wits end, and then... – and this, by increasing increments of judgment, with intermittent pleas that men would choose life and live, because, meanwhile, horrific illustrations of foreboding evils were prophesied to come and signaled by lively demonstrations from Spirit-filled Tribulation Prophets. How astonishing the sight! How alarming the sound! They were voices for *present-tense situations* befalling helplessly doomed men except they heard the voice of God and lived. Through the Tribulation Prophets and the tribulation, God would be known as the LORD by all! ...whether by **life** or by **death**.

## EZEKIEL 3:22-7:27

**At the 5<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign** (individual prophecies/events/instructions within the same year: Ezek. 1:2-3:14, 3:16-22, 3:23-27, 4:1-17, 5:1-17, 6:1-14, 7:1-27; time change: Ezek. 8:1), soon after Ezekiel’s ordination as a Prophet, the first series of prophetic messages were received and delivered with all speed as a rescue attempt for the **Good Figs**. God was intent upon the conversion or restoration of the **Good Figs**, and nothing would stand in His way. Contextually, though, the situation was far from friendly to the God of Jeremiah and Ezekiel; the **Evil Figs** were deceiving the **Good Figs** even though they were so radically removed from one another! In this order, let us understand: *firstly*, the violent condition of the **Good Figs**, *secondarily*, a vain trust in Covenantal Idealism via misapplied promises, *thirdly*, the defilement of the Sanctuary, and, *fourthly*, an amendment of grace to the repertoire of damnation.

### The Violent Condition of the Good Figs

Firstly, the shockingly violent condition of the Good Figs hinders Ezekiel’s liberality of preaching. In the same time period Jeremiah was going to and fro among the Evil Figs as a reprover, but Ezekiel couldn’t behave thus among the Good Figs.

Lo, and behold, the Israelites (the **Good Figs**) were so dangerously rebellious that Ezekiel was forbidden to speak with the liberality that other Prophets enjoyed; namely, to be “a reprover” among the people. This status, “a reprover”, implied the ability to speak, repeat, expound, and rebuke the people as much as the occasion would demand. Not so with Ezekiel! The LORD said to him, “I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, that thou shalt be dumb” (Ezek. 3:26). This did not render him unable to speak at all. Rather, it was an inability to speak the word of God whenever he wanted or even needed to, lest he became an untimely martyr before the violence of this rebellious House. Implicit of avoiding the throes of strong contention, Ezekiel prophesied, “He that heareth, let him hear; and he that forbeareth, let him forbear: for they are a rebellious House” (Ezek. 3:27). [Notably, “the House of Israel” is frequently used in the Book of Ezekiel to reference the entire population of the Jews (from the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah), probably because Jews from both locations were Captive together in Babylon even though most Jews from the Kingdom of Israel were dispersed elsewhere, but as for the demonstration of Ezekiel in Chapter 4 this is not the case. In other cases, “the house of Israel” and “Israel” are used in reference to the remnant of Jews which were in the Kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem.]

### A Vain Trust in Covenantal Idealism via Misapplied Promises

Secondarily, the vain hope and deceptive trust of the people was directly targeted by God – namely, their trust in the City of Jerusalem & the Kingdom of Judah via Covenantal Ideals (misapplied promises). Hence, the LORD was prophetically unveiling the progressive judgments before they were manifest to confront the doomsday people to give God the glory. With this end goal in mind, that the people would give glory to God, the horrors of unthinkable depravity amidst suffering was foretold so that when it happens they would remember the LORD (Ezek. 5:9). [Note: to understand Covenantal Idealism as it relates to the promises of God and Biblical History, see “[The Truly Converted Status of Israelite People in the Wilderness & the Ideals Theretofore](#)”.]

The first demonstration Ezekiel was commanded to do directly involved the eventual siege and consequential destruction of Jerusalem, a fate that the false Prophets in Chaldea and Judah denied. The people were so ignorant of their sins, the Prophet Ezekiel was made to lie on his left and on his right side for 390 and 40 days each, and every day represented a year of sin for both Israel and Judah (Ezek. 4:1-6). This long exercise forced the conscience to consider longstanding iniquity. Directly thereafter, “the siege of Jerusalem” was prophetically demonstrated (Ezek. 4:7-17). The details of the siege that Ezekiel was made to embody revealed the *meticulous involvement* of the LORD in *numbering* and *directing* every soul to his or her appointment of **death** or **life**. First of all, **famine** was addressed in the most terrifying description of suffering and humiliation! In a siege, this is perhaps the first experience of foreboding evils to come. Why? Because it was the dwindling of daily necessities which are essential to life!

“Moreover he said unto me, son of man, behold, I will **break** the staff of bread in **Jerusalem**: and they shall eat bread *by weight*, and with **care**; and they shall drink water *by measure*, and with **astonishment**: That they may want bread and water, and be **astoried one with another**, and **consume away for their iniquity**.” – Ezek. 4:16-17

There’s more. Immediately after this word, the LORD said, “And thou, son of man...” (Ezek. 5:1). The whole population of **Evil Figs** was separated into *three parts*, minus a few in number, to show exactly how the LORD was planning the inescapable judgment and death of **the whole population**, one by one (Ezek. 5:2-4). Remember, my reader, these are the **Evil Figs** (Evil Figs: Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19)! The crosshairs of judgment were fixed upon “**the whole remnant**” of the **Evil Figs** (Ezek. 5:10)! The LORD had set Jerusalem in the gallery of nations and roared upon her, saying, “Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee *in the sight of the nations*” (Ezek. 5:5-8; Note: the seniority of Judah’s wickedness in comparison to the foreign Nations of the world will be proven in full by the detail provided in [Ezekiel 16:1-63](#))! When the LORD said, “I will do in thee” (Ezek. 5:9-10), He meant: “the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds.” My reader, do you think this is too harsh? Do you think that the LORD shouldn’t have taken personal responsibility for this immense degree of human suffering, saying, “I will do in thee” (Ezek. 5:9)? *What saith the scripture?*

## The Defilement of the Sanctuary

Thirdly, the primary provocation that infuriated God was identified. Unspeakable wrath was thereby justified! And, dare we commit this provocation in its New Testament form? My reader, think of it... because judgment was compromised by Church Officers, God would do the judgment and NONE WOULD ESCAPE.

My reader, it is a fearful thing when God's wrath "*is kindled but a little*" (Ps. 2:12). Indeed! ...but, it is absolutely paralyzing when and if the anger of the LORD is *kindled greatly* against His people, the Church (Num. 11:1, 10, Deut. 32:22, Ps. 78:21, 59, Isa. 5:25, Jer. 17:4)! Reflecting upon this, the psalmist penned, "*Thou, even Thou, art to be feared: and who may stand in Thy sight when once Thou art angry?*" (Ps. 76:7)! Howbeit, 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians live obnoxiously ignorant of these potentials in this our day; such things are no longer possible in the New Covenant, they fancy! Objecting to such like heretical fantasies and filthy dreams among them that speak false peace to themselves and others, Paul asked: "...*what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols?*" (2 Cor. 6:16). The Prophet Ezekiel has an answer for us.

"Surely, **because** thou hast **defiled My Sanctuary** with all thy *detestable things*, and with all thine *abominations*, **therefore** will I also diminish thee; neither shall Mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity." - Ezek. 5:11

The LORD offered a solemn explanation for the greatness of His wrath and the cataclysmic vengeance which follows, saying, "Surely, **because...**", and, "**therefore...** *neither shall MINE EYE SPARE, neither will I have ANY PITY*" (Ezek. 5:11). Think of it, my reader! Could a holy prophet catch a glimpse of God's face at such a time, be astonished at this: he would see the Almighty's eyes burning with pitiless anger and vengeance! He would see the Almighty moving into position to strike the stronghold of apostasy, Jerusalem! This, indeed, is "*a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries*" (Heb. 10:27)! This, indeed, is why the writer of Hebrews alarmingly declared: "*It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God*" (Heb. 10:31)! Evidently, the inspired writer had the ancient and presently relevant God of Israel in mind in a New Testament scenario. He plainly stated, "*For we know HIM that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge His people*" (Heb. 10:30; Isa. 63:4, 10; Deut. 32:35-36). Herein these scriptures find relevance, when Ezekiel prophesied, "Surely, **because** thou hast **defiled My Sanctuary** with all thy *detestable things*, and with all thine *abominations*" (Ezek. 5:11).

So, my reader, can you answer the apostle Paul's question that he posed to the Christians of the Gentile Church Age? With unquestionable implications, he asked: "...*what agreement hath the Temple of God with idols?*" (2 Cor. 6:16). Even so, we, being fully conscious of the *fearfulness* of God's *vengeance* upon *His people* in the Old Testament for the defiling crimes that they committed against the Temple and Sanctuary of God, we can give an answer. What was the primary provocation that infuriated God? The **defilement of the Sanctuary**! Yes. Even so, in New Testament scenarios, Paul warned: "*If any man defile the Temple of God, him shall God destroy*" (1 Cor. 3:17; 2 Cor. 6:14-7:1)! ...and should we be surprised!? No. [If you are surprised, my reader, I plead with you to take the time to study the doctrines of **holiness** and **cleanliness** associated with "**The Temple, Tabernacle, House, & Sanctuary of God**" in the Old Testament and "**The Temple, Tabernacle, House, & Sanctuary of God**" in the New Testament, and how these truths relate to the mandate of **New Testament Separatism**.]

Upon clarifying the foremost warrant for God's pitiless wrath and unsparing eye, in Ezekiel 5:11, further clarifications were made to the people. The **Evil Figs** didn't understand **good** and **evil**; thus, clarification was needed. They were **no-good** followers of false prophets, a people made to doubt God's wrath, deny God's justice, and refuse God's mercy. God was unmistakable about His intentions, saying,

"A *third part* of thee shall die with **the pestilence**, and with **famine** shall they be consumed in the midst of thee: and a *third part* shall fall by **the sword** round about thee; and I will **scatter** a *third part* into *all the winds*, and I will draw out a **sword** after them. Thus shall mine anger be accomplished, and I will cause my fury to rest upon them, and I will be comforted: and **they shall know that I the LORD have spoken it in my zeal, when I have accomplished my fury in them**. Moreover I will make thee **waste**, and a **reproach** among the nations that are round about thee, in the sight of



all that pass by. So it shall be a **reproach** and a **taunt**, an instruction and an **astonishment** *unto the nations that are round about thee*, when I shall execute judgments in thee in anger and in fury and in furious rebukes. I the LORD have spoken it. When I shall send upon them the **evil arrows** of **famine**, which shall be for their **destruction**, and which I will send to **destroy** you: and I will increase the **famine** upon you, and will break your staff of bread: So will I send upon you **famine** and **evil beasts**, and they shall **bereave thee**; and **pestilence** and **blood** shall pass through thee; and I will bring the **sword** upon thee. I the LORD have spoken it.” – Ezek. 5:12-17

After scouring *the City of Jerusalem* with **inescapable judgments**, the LORD turned to *the Countryside* and *Mountains*, and said to Ezekiel, “Son of man, set thy face toward *the Mountains* of Israel, and prophesy against them...” (Ezek. 6:2). Speaking in reference to the “*mountains*”, the “*hills*”, the “*rivers*”, and the “*valleys*”, the LORD said: “Behold, I, even I, will bring a **sword** upon you, and I will destroy...and **I will cast down your slain men before your idols**” (Ezek. 6:3-4). To what end? God said, “In **ALL** your dwellingplaces *the Cities* shall be **laid waste**...and the slain shall fall in the midst of you, and **ye shall know that I am the LORD**” (Ezek. 6:6-7). When God spoke of the destruction and or scattering of “the whole remnant” of the Jews in the Land of Judah (Ezek. 5:10), He meant it! So, how is it that they will know that the God of Ezekiel and Jeremiah is the LORD (Ezek. 5:13, 6:6-7, 10)?

They’ll know it to be so when the offensive and unprecedented judgment comes to pass, in that, God said: “I will make the Cities of Judah a **desolation without inhabitant**” (Jer. 34:22). EVERY PERSON MATTERED TO GOD. A total desolation is determined upon *the Land*, the mainstay of the **Evil Figs**, but for the first time we learn that there will *not* be a total annihilation accomplished upon *the people*. Remember, though, the total desolation of the Land was a notoriously offensive prophecy to the Covenantal Idealism of the people who didn’t think they were going to be treated any different than the generations of backsliders which went before them. The prophecy was nigh-unfounded in all the happenings of Biblical Church History, thus depravity took an occasion. Ah, but the judgment was nevertheless prophesied in abundance (Jer. 2:15, 4:1-4, 4:7, 7:33, 9:11-12, 26:9, 33:10, 34:22, 44:2, Ezek. 6:14, 14:14-16, 15:8)! Let it be known, therefore, my reader: by the fulfillment of THIS JUDGMENT (which would be utterly shocking to the backsliders!) the people would know that the God of Jeremiah and Ezekiel is the LORD. Lo, and behold, their idols did not save them from the judgment! Their trust in idols was directly targeted, the placement of the slain roundabout the idolatrous shrines was a loud announcement (Ezek. 6:3-4), and the scarcely surviving remnant was made to reckon with the noisome reality.

### An Amendment of Grace to the Repertoire of Damnation

Fourthly, and unexpectedly, an amendment was added to the repertoire of damnation constituted for the **Evil Figs**.

Shockingly, in this series of prophecies the very first allowance of mercy was granted to select individual persons from the doomed population of **Evil Figs** (formerly dubbed, the hopeless). The amendment is intentionally inserted into the Divine Protocol because some **Evil Figs** will be made **good** after all – literally, AFTER ALL! Even in the ferocity of these judgments upon **Evil Figs**, the LORD promised that a “remnant” would live to tell the story (Ezek. 6:8-10). The story needed to be told. This is an unprecedented announcement and certainly contradictory to the former plan of total annihilation (Evil Figs: Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19), therefore it is understood to be an amendment. Graciously, and for the LORD’s names sake (*to tell the story!*), repentance would be wrought in the hearts of a small number and, thus, vindictory praises would be heard on their lips as they are driven on from country to country! Be amazed at the ingenuity of God, my reader! The LORD said,

“Yet will I leave a **remnant**, that ye may have **some that shall escape the sword among the nations**, when ye shall be **scattered** through the countries. And **they that escape of you shall remember Me among the nations whither they shall be carried captives**, because I am broken with their whorish heart, which hath departed from Me, and with their eyes, which go a whoring after their idols: and they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations. And **they shall know that I am the LORD**, and that I have not said in vain that I would do this **evil** unto them.” – Ezek. 6:8-10

Can you imagine it? To be one of those few men and women who *escaped* the *inescapable* judgment of God! You – passing through great tribulation – hand-selected by God to be a voice which gives testimony to the truth and vindicates God’s righteous judgments! Oh, but this confession was *the final product* of the fires, not *the beginning product*! Tribulation would *eventually* birth this kind of repentance, in the latter end! As of yet, none were repenting! Even at the prophetic delivery of this foreboding disaster, none repented! The **Evil Figs** were very **E-V-I-L**. So, because none were repenting, God Almighty was *smiting with His hands* and *stamping with His feet* while uttering judgments and furious rebukes! Fearfully, it was written,

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; *Smite with thine hand*, and *stamp with thy foot*, and say, Alas for all the evil abominations of the house of Israel! for they shall fall by **the sword**, by **the famine**, and by **the pestilence**. He that is far off shall die of the **pestilence**; and he that is near shall fall by **the sword**; and he that remaineth and is besieged shall die by the **famine**: thus will I accomplish my fury upon them. **Then shall ye know that I am the LORD**, when their slain men shall be among their idols round about their altars, upon every high hill, in all the tops of the mountains, and under every green tree, and under every thick oak, the place where they did offer sweet savour to all their idols. So will I stretch out my hand upon them, and make the land desolate, yea, more desolate than the wilderness toward Diblath, in all their habitations: and **they shall know that I am the LORD.**” – Ezek. 6:11-14

After thus and thus was spoken, what more could be said? My reader, the people of Judah were still deluded to think that they were the privileged escapees, though impenitent they be! Or, worse, they thought that the judgment of God would not come upon all the Land (“*the four corners of the Land*” – Ezek. 7:2) and all the people (“*the whole multitude*” – Ezek. 7:13). Ah, these fanciful escapees were in fact inescapably targeted by unfailing Omnipotence! The LORD was careful to verbally correct these odious imaginations, addressing each: “O thou that dwellest in the Land” (Ezek. 7:7), “all the multitude thereof” (Ezek. 7:12), “the whole multitude” (Ezek. 7:13), those that are “without” and “within”, those “in the field”, those “in the City” (Ezek. 7:15), and those “that escape of them” on “the Mountains” and “the Valleys” (Ezek. 7:16). The LORD was careful to specify, “all of them” and “every one” (Ezek. 7:16), “all hands”, “all knees”, “all faces”, and “all their heads” (Ezek. 7:17-18)! What? God said, “they shall seek peace and there shall be none” (Ezek. 7:25). This is DREADFUL.

What peace would they seek, you wonder? This unpeaceful people will be seeking the peace erroneously offered to them by lying prophets! Namely, “a *vision* of the Prophet”, “*the law*” from “the Priest”, and the “*counsel* from the Ancients” (Ezek. 7:26)! ...those are the soul-murdering Peace-Preachers! The *vision*, *law*, and *counsel* of these men do amount to a false peace! And, what of the rest of the so-called rulers? What shall become of them? The *King’s* happiness would be turned to mourning, the *Prince’s* riches into desolation (Ezek. 7:27), and as for all *the nominal people*, God said, “none of them shall remain, nor of their multitude, nor of any of theirs” (Ezek. 7:11)! The people were brought to nothing so that in the midst of it all, and afterwards, God said: “**ye shall know that I am the LORD that smiteth**” (Ezek. 7:9)! How fearful! Read it and weep, my reader...

“...the vision is touching **the whole multitude thereof, which shall not return; neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life**. They have blown the trumpet, even to make all ready; but **none goeth to the battle: for my wrath is upon all the multitude thereof**. **The sword** is *without*, and **the pestilence** and **the famine** *within*: he that is *in the field* shall die with **the sword**; and he that is *in the city*, **famine** and **pestilence** shall devour him. But *they that escape* of them shall escape, and shall be *on the mountains* like doves of *the valleys*, *all of them* **mourning**, *every one* for his iniquity. *All hands* shall be **feeble**, and *all knees* shall be **weak** as water. They shall also gird themselves with **sackcloth**, and **horror** shall cover them; and **shame** shall be upon *all faces*, and **baldness** upon all their heads.” – Ezek. 7:13-18

“Destruction cometh” (Ezek. 7:25), the LORD said! He meant it. These are words of truth and soberness (“*be reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come*” – Acts 24:25). Even so, the Prophet Ezekiel, far North from the Prophet Jeremiah, joined the battle for truth and withstood the rebellious multitudes who were only and always enamored with deception. God help such men prosper in this our day! Oh, that the 21<sup>st</sup> century rebels would bemoan themselves like in Jeremiah and Ezekiel’s day, “all of them mourning, every one for his iniquity” (Ezek. 7:16). This was a glorious work and a **good** one, effectually wrought upon an otherwise **good-less** and **evil** people.

Take careful note, my reader. The progress of Tribulatory Judgment in correlation with *newfound* or *future* repentances in the **Good** or **Evil Figs** is the focal point of our study. Upon understanding this, the ingenious method of redemption via the Tribulation is clarified; and upon see this, all men are rightly taught to Embrace Tribulation and vindicate God's judgment. Remember, "judgment must begin at the House of God" (1 Pet. 4:17-18). In this series of Ezekiel's prophesying we observe the result of God's handiwork in judgment against great resistance. Resistance proves futile while embracing proves invaluable. In review, we can see that neither the Jews in Babylon nor the Jews in the Land of Judah knew that the God of Jeremiah and Ezekiel was the LORD, but *they would be made to know it* (Ezekiel 5:13, 6:10, 13, 14, 7:4, 9, 27)! The convincing proof that persuades all is conveyed in the main thrust of the prophetic messages. God said that *the whole remnant* and *the entirety of the Land of Judah* would become **desolate** and **without inhabitant**, warning that it was impossible to hide. So, when it all comes true...

"they shall know that I the LORD have spoken it in My zeal, when..." - Ezek. 5:13

"ye shall know that I am the LORD" - Ezek. 6:7

"they shall know that I am the LORD..." - Ezek. 6:10

"then shall ye know that I am the LORD, when..." - Ezek. 6:13

"they shall know that I am the LORD" - Ezek. 6:14

"ye shall know that I am the LORD" - Ezek. 7:4

"ye shall know that I am the LORD that smiteth" - Ezek. 7:9

"they shall know that I am the LORD" - Ezek. 7:27

Of course, the conversion of the **Good Figs** had been of utmost importance to God; and now we see the unlikely conversion of the **Evil Figs** as well! The elect escapees from Judah, the **Evil Figs**, scattered into the winds, were prophetically described thus: "they shall lothe themselves for the evils which they have committed in all their abominations" (Ezek. 6:9), "all of them mourning every one for his iniquity" (Ezek. 7:16), and, furthermore, "neither shall any strengthen himself in the iniquity of his life" (Ezek. 7:13), for, "they shall seek peace, and there shall be none...the Law shall perish from the Priest, and counsel from the Ancients" (Ezek. 7:25-27). *"The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the LORD trieth the hearts"* (Prov. 17:3). GOD KNOWS HOW TO PURIFY A HEART FROM CONTAMINATING EVILS.

God knows how to make an **Evil Fig** become **good**! And, thereby, God would make the presently **evil** "**Good Figs**" become **good**! They, the **Evil Figs**, didn't believe in a total annihilation of the Land and Cities of Judah (because of Covenantal Idealism via misapplied promises; Ezek. 5:10-15), they certainly denied that they would eat their friends and family member's flesh for food (because of self-righteous Phariseeism; Ezek. 5:9-10), they were depicted to be steadfast in impenitence even after judgment came upon the Cities of Judah (those who escaped to the *Mountains, hills, rivers, and valleys* thought they would inhabit the Land and reckon Covenantal Ideals; Ezek. 6:1-7), in such and such ways and more they would try to strengthen themselves in their iniquities as the judgments incrementally persisted... but they would fail to do so in the latter end (Ezek. 7:13-18, 25-27)! Therefore, at last, the devastated survivors of a radically decreased multitude will finally lose faith in idolatry and shun False Judaism! They will become repentant inasmuch that when they are scattered into all nations, they are prophetically depicted as ones giving glory to God by vindicating divine justice (Ezek. 6:8-10)! Furthermore, because the **Evil Figs** were deceiving the **Good Figs**, Ezekiel was moved to prophesy of the progressive and eventually dismantled status of Covenantal Idealism and Unconditional Eternal Security, the erroneous faith of the **Evil Figs**. This would, in turn, redirect the eyes of the **Good Figs** away from the **Evil Figs**. This would, at last, turn their gaze upon the God of Israel! This was their only hope.

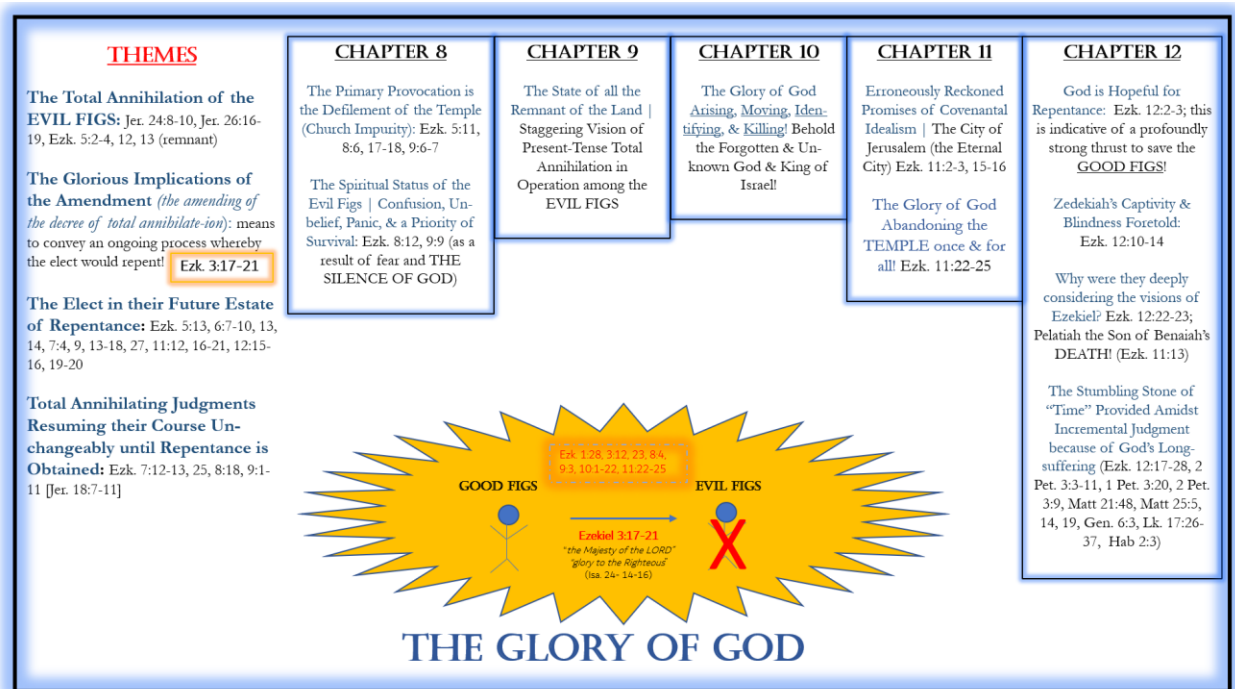
The precise determination of an *All Israelite Manhunt* would go unnoticed by those who have not been made to marvel at the difficulty (the **generational controversy**) of God dwelling among redeemed man in peace. When **the rules** whereby this friendship is secured are unlearned and unknown, the acts of divine enmity as a result of Church Impurity seem insignificant. Hence, **the prophetic denunciations** of the Major and Minor Prophets *appear* uncalculated, repetitive, and general. God defined justice by Law in **the dominion of His Kingdom**, the Church. Thereby, through the Law, we see that excommunication was an insufficient punishment for sinners in the Church (the Israelite Nation). According to God's judgment this **deserved death** and within God's domain of rule **this judgment was inescapable**. In ideal scenarios where

the Law was upheld, God always did and always would hunt down everyone who was **worthy of death**. Therefore, to no surprise, God hunted every Israelite Backslider outside the borders of Israel during the Tribulation Period.

I repeat, even when the borders of the Israelite nation were dissolved and the sovereignty of the nation collapsed from a human perspective, God was still the Sovereign Exacter of justice in pursuit of unjust men. God hunted everyone down outside of the borders of Israel because He authored a Sinner-Killing & Sinner-Saving contraption of judgment that utilized the heathen as God’s weapons of destruction and chastisement. They, the heathen, **became the means** whereby God would accomplish the end goal of salvation via Church Purity with a stubbornly impure people. Through the Captivities, the Borders of Israel no longer represented the domain in which the righteous standards of justice and judgment were demanded and enforced. Despite the deportation, God had a case to settle with the lawless people and they couldn’t escape it. God abandoned the material government of the Church (**the Glory of God departed**) and dissolved the spiritual fortitude of the borders, and in so doing God drew out the people yonder to be engulfed by the divinely chosen purifying contraption, the Tribulation. Even though the Borders of Israel dissolved, the Israelite People were still targeted in every country whither they were carried captive... until, at last, Church Purity was restored. Whether in Israelite Land or beyond, if you were an Israelite in the Tribulation Period you needed to repent or else you would die. Period. No matter the country of one’s deportation, **God enforced the constituted** judgment of Israelite Law in preparation for the people’s regathering within the Land of Israel.

The promises of God are committed to the Church in good hopes by a Covenant-keeping God (Isa. 63:8). However, the promises of God must be reckoned by the Church amidst Church Purity. This is the reckoning of Covenantal Idealism by those who are Covenant-keepers. This is when the visible Church is the holy abode and spiritual dominion of the Invisible God. The Church Officers of the Tribulation Period commit the folly of reckoning the promises of God to the Church amidst Church Impurity! This is the reckoning of Covenantal Idealism by those who are Covenant Breakers. *It is not that Covenantal Idealism is erroneous, rather it is idealistic!* However, when the visible Church is abandoned by the Invisible God, the reckoning of Covenantal Idealism is sheer godlessness (see [Ezekiel 8:1-11:25](#)).

## EZEKIEL 8:1-11:25



**At the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign** (Ezek. 8:1), Ezekiel is arrested by the Spirit of Prophecy! And let it suffice the reader to know that there is no other Prophet in all of Biblical Church History that so clearly and intentionally illustrates the earth-changing event: *the Glory of God departing from the Church!* The stoutest men on earth would be breath-taken with astonishment if only they could understand the meaning of it all! But, as Daniel lamented of the all-too-often estate of things, one must confess: “to us belongeth confusion of face” (Dan. 9:7-8), and, “yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand Thy truth” (Dan. 9:13)! May it never be of us, dear saints! We, above others, stand in need of understanding and truth because we may be that fateful generation upon whom the end of the World is come (1 Cor. 10:11)! Therefore, may God open up our minds to understand the scriptures (“*Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures*” – *Luke 24:45*).

The 8<sup>th</sup> Chapter of Ezekiel details the **defilement of the Temple** (Church Impurity: Ezek. 5:11, 8:6, 17-18, 9:6-7) in a momentous and unforgettable way. My reader, *the Glory of the LORD* was manifest and present before the eyes of Ezekiel as the Prophet was conducted throughout the Temple to behold the abominations therein! However, before we look at this astounding account, one may wonder why Ezekiel's ministry was so focused upon the **Evil Figs** if in fact he was the onsite Prophet on behalf of the **Good Figs**? My reader, God was willing to demonstrate the power and magnitude of His wrath upon the **Evil Figs** so as to win the heart of the **Good Figs**! Can you argue with Him about it? “*What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction*” (Rom. 9:22)?

My reader, because the eyes of the **Good Figs** were upon the **Evil Figs**, and because the **Good Figs** adored the doctrine and practice of the **Evil Figs**, or, in other words, because the **Good Figs** desired the lot and livelihood of the **Evil Figs** – the gaze of the LORD's angry countenance was turned upon the **Evil Figs** to do them harm! The full magnitude of God's infuriated jealousy targeted this population of people! I say again, to liberate the heart of the **Good Figs**, the **Evil Figs** became the target of Ezekiel's prophecies and the subject of God's unimaginable fury. In so doing, if the LORD won the heart of the **Good Figs** it would result in their embracement of the judgment of God via their Captivity in Babylon. Compelling them to appreciate the judgment of God via the Babylonian Captivity, the LORD proceeded to prophesy of the woeful future of the **Evil Figs** with meticulous detail that is undeniably miraculous. Then, once the astounding details of the prophecies were fulfilled according to the prophesying of the Tribulation Prophets, the **Good Figs** would be forced to acknowledge the Author of it all (“*Remember this, and shew yourselves men: bring it again to mind, O ye transgressors. Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it.*” – Isa. 46:8-11).

## The Primary Provocation

The primary provocation that infuriated God to judge the Church and thereafter Babylon (& Spiritual Babylon via the End of the World): The **defilement of the House of God** (Church Impurity: Ezek. 5:11, 8:6, 17-18, 9:6-7)

The Elders of Judah who were a part of the Captivity in Babylon came and sat before Ezekiel to inquire of the LORD by him. Upon this happening, it was written, “the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me” (Ezek. 8:1). Immediately, Ezekiel was taken in the visions of God to Jerusalem, “to the door of the inner Gate that looketh toward the North, where sat the seat of the Image of jealousy...”, and, also, *the Glory of the LORD* that appeared to Ezekiel “in the plain” became manifest once again (Ezek. 8:2-4)! Nothing of the human will to prophesy was working in the man, Ezekiel. He was arrested by the *glory and power* of God! Literally speaking, he was *taken up* in spirit and *conducted* from the Land of Chaldea to the City of Jerusalem! ...and, for what? Thenceforth, Ezekiel was conducted by the LORD into a step-by-step uncovering of the *lesser and greater abominations* of the people (Ezek. 8:5-6, 13, 15, 17) so that, at last, as Ezekiel would soon see, **the Glory of the LORD** was departing from the House of the LORD (Ezek. 8:6, 10:18-22, 11:22-25). TREMBLE AT THIS, MY READER! The LORD appealed to Ezekiel's conscience in the very beginning of the Divine Tutorial, saying, “Son of man, seest thou what they do? Even the great abominations that the House of Israel committeth here, **that I should go far off from My Sanctuary**” (Ezek. 8:6)? My reader, do you understand the implications of such a threat?

Namely, when **the Glory of God** *departs from the Church*? You better not live your Christian Life ignorant of this! [For more information, see [“The Glory of God Departing & Returning to the Church”](#).]

## The Spiritual Status of the Evil Figs

After being nearly annihilated by Assyria, becoming the servants of Egypt, and then meanwhile suffering 3 Captivities in becoming the servants of Babylon, the Jews who remained in Judah (the **Evil Figs**) were unrighteously exasperated from faith to think and feel, “The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth” (Ezek. 8:12). The people (the **Evil Figs**) were confused, unbelieving, and panicking. They were depravedly-bent on surviving in conditions which God declared as inescapably fatal. At the very thought of the God of Ezekiel and Jeremiah they were afraid for manifold reasons. To summarize, they were experiencing *worldly fear* and *confusion* because God was silent to them on an individual basis. Ah! ...but this feeling of silence persisted only because when God did speak to the people through the Prophets, they didn’t listen! “*Therefore it is come to pass, that as he cried, and they would not hear; so they cried, and I would not hear, saith the LORD of hosts*” (Zech. 7:13; Prov. 1:23-33, Jer. 11:11, 14:12, Ezek. 8:18, Micah 3:4). The embattled Prophet Jeremiah had already striven against this depressed condition of the fallen people when they responded to God’s appeals of restoration and salvation, by saying, “There is no hope... we will every one do the imagination of his evil heart” (Jer. 18:12). Also, because the people were spiteful of the LORD’s judgment, they wanted to believe that it was hopeless to serve the LORD in the outdated, non-progressive, non-evolving ways represented by the preaching of Jeremiah and Ezekiel.

The House of Israel was directly involved in what was happening in House of the LORD in Judah, namely because “all the idols of the House of Israel” were found therein. Furthermore, the highest court of rule, called the Sanhedrin, was here represented with “seventy men of the ancients of the House of Israel” (Ezek. 8:10-11). However, it is important to note that in the Book of Ezekiel, the term, “the House of Israel”, was used more generally and inclusively compared to how it was used in the Book of Jeremiah, which means that this reference often includes both the Houses of Israel and Judah as a whole, even though the people of Judah in Jerusalem were in direct view concerning the subject matter of the prophecy. Speaking of actual men that were living in Jerusalem, Ezekiel recognized one of these seventy ancients, “Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan” by name, and the LORD informed the Prophet concerning the heart of apostasy at work:

“...they say, “The LORD seeth us not; the LORD hath forsaken the earth” (Ezek. 8:12).

Do you see the abomination, my reader? The House of Judah did not learn from the judgment which came upon the House of Israel (Ezek. 16:1-63), and, instead, Judah gathered all the abominations of the House of Israel and brought them into the House of the LORD in Jerusalem (Ezek. 8:17). In response to this, the LORD stated: “Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and **though they cry in Mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them**” (Ezek. 8:18)! At this final word, the tutorial of abominations was complete (Ezek. 8:1-18) – the sin was found to be wrath-inciting, Glory-repelling, and Temple-abandoning in its abominableness! Hence, the following scene...

### All the Residue of the Remnant of Israel being Totally Annihilated!

*a staggering vision of the present-tense total annihilation in operation among the Evil Figs*

“He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have charge over the city to draw near, even every man with his destroying weapon in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a slaughter weapon in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a writer's inkhorn by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar.” – Ezek. 9:1-2

In Ezekiel 9:1-10:22, as follows, the ministers of divine judgment drew near: “them that have charge over the City” (Ezek. 9:1). For what? It was written that they drew near, “every man with his **destroying weapon** in his hand” (Ezek. 9:1). The weapon in each hand was “a **slaughter weapon**” to “**slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women**” (Ezek. 9:2, 6). *The Glory of the LORD* dictated commandments to the angels (Ezek. 9:3-11), and they went forth in this order: First, the Land was searched for any righteous men... and they were marked (Ezek. 9:4). Second, the angels with weapons of slaughter followed behind and slew without pity, beginning at the House of God (Ezek. 9:5-7). As the Courts of the LORD were being filled with the slain and being defiled thereby, and, afterwards, the people of the City were being

slaughtered one by one, it became apparent to Ezekiel that he was **the only one left alive!** “I was left”, Ezekiel said! One must remember that the people who remained in Judah and Jerusalem were called **Evil Figs**, a condemned people whose population must suffer a total annihilation (Evil Figs: Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19). So, will God indeed destroy “**all the residue**” of Israel that remained in the Kingdom of Judah? YES. This prophetic vision was only confirming the declarations of justice already decreed by God but not yet manifest. Therefore, the prophetic vision concluded by emphasizing the already declared pronouncement.

“And it came to pass, while they were slaying them, and **I was left**, that I fell upon my face, and cried, and said, Ah Lord GOD! wilt thou destroy **all the residue of Israel** in thy pouring out of thy fury upon Jerusalem? Then said He unto me, The iniquity of *the House of Israel* and *Judah* is exceeding great, and the Land is full of blood, and the City full of perverseness: for they say, The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not. And as for me also, Mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity, but I will recompense their way upon their head. And, behold, the man clothed with linen, which had the inkhorn by his side, reported the matter, saying, I have done as thou hast commanded me.” – Ezekiel 9:8-11

Then, because further revelation concerning the judgments of God was necessary, the scene changed. What necessitous thing happened? Well, just as the hidden deeds of darkness were revealed in the abominableness of their near-proximity to the Temple (in Ezekiel Chapter 8), so also, the LORD, who is *the Glory of the House of God* and the Person of the people’s profanation, even He is descriptively unveiled for the blinded people to see! As it were, the LORD said to the Prophet Ezekiel, first: Behold, the abominations of the people that they commit in the House of God! Then, the LORD said to the people of Jerusalem who were committing the abominations, second: Behold, the Glorious GOD whom you disregard as imminent and profane at present! Ezekiel knew *the Glory of God*, but he didn’t know the abominations of the people. The people knew their abominations, but they didn’t know *the Glory of God!* God showed them. Little did they know, the Temple (which the people chose to fill with idols) was filled with “*the brightness of the LORD’s Glory*” (Ezek. 10:4)! Had they known it, they wouldn’t have filled the Temple with idols! They wouldn’t have ventured into the Temple to worship lifeless idols if they knew Living God was present! This vision of Ezekiel was a terrifying awakening to the backwards people, who said, “The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not” (Ezek. 8:12, 9:9)! Behold, the LORD saw!

### The Glory of God Arising, Moving, Identifying, & Killing!

*behold the forgotten and unknown God & King of Israel*

This was one continuous vision, my reader! Even so, as the sound of the Cherubim’s wings roared like the noise of many waters amidst *the Cloud of God’s Glorious Presence* in the Temple, one of the angels took fiery coals and scattered them over the City of Jerusalem as a depiction of further judgment (Ezek. 10:2, Rev. 8:5). God lives. God sees. God judges! And, as a further manifestation of this, the LORD *left* the House and went to the East Gate, and Ezekiel followed (Ezek. 10:18-22, 11:1). The Glory of God was *moving*, but... where was it going? The Glory of God *arose* and *moved* to *identify* and *kill!* Behold, the forgotten and unknown God & KING OF ISRAEL! If no man arises to the judgment, God does! As the prophetic scene changed with God *moving* from the Temple to the East Gate, Twenty-Five Princes of power and influence were brought into view (Ezek. 11:1), and of the twenty-five two were most prominent (Jaazaniah the son of Azur and Pelatiah the son of Benaiah). God said to Ezekiel, speaking of the Princes,

“Son of man, these are the men that **devise mischief**, and **give wicked counsel in this city**: Which say, **It is not near; let us build houses: this city is the caldron, and we be the flesh.**” – Ezek. 11:2-3

The Princes said to the people, “It is not near...”. What isn’t? **The Day of Judgment** wherein Jeremiah’s and Ezekiel’s prophecies would be fulfilled; namely, **the breaching of the Walls of Jerusalem**, the destruction of the Temple, and the burning of the City, as a start. Concerning this! ...the Princes said, “It is not near”. Thereby they enticed the people to covetousness, saying, “Let us build Houses”. They said, proverbially, “This City is the caldron, and we be the flesh”, which meant to them that they were in a secure place (Note: “**National Insecurity Resulting from Unconditional Eternal Security Preachers**”). Oh, how many fantastic words have been employed in the preaching of false security! Fearfully, though, God had some choice words for the deceived people.

## *The Majesty of the Lord in Tribulatory Judgments of Life & Death*

The LORD denied their perception of security by saying repeatedly, “I will bring you forth out of the midst of it”, “I will bring you out of the midst thereof”, “I will judge you in the border of Israel”, “I will judge you in the border of Israel” (Ezek. 11:7, 9, 10, 11). In other words, God told them directly: “Ye have feared **the sword**; and I will bring a **sword** upon you...” (Ezek. 11:8). “This City shall not be your caldron” (Ezek. 11:11). Ah, but the LORD spoke differently than the tidings heard from false prophets! “*For He taught them as one having authority, and not as the Scribes*” (Matt. 7:29). Indeed! “*God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with diverse miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will*” (Heb. 2:4)! Hence, the historical account reads,

“...it came to pass, when I [Ezekiel] prophesied, that Pelatiah the son of Benaiah died. Then fell I down upon my face, and cried with a loud voice, and said, Ah Lord GOD! **wilt thou make a full end of the remnant of Israel**” (Ezek. 11:13)?

Will God make “a full end” of the **Evil Figs** (Evil Figs: Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19)!? Yes. My reader, what you need to understand very clearly is this: like the staggering vision depicted (recorded in Ezekiel 9:1-11), a **present-tense operation** of total annihilation was *in motion* among the **Evil Figs**. This was the prophetically pronounced status of “all the residue of the remnant of Israel” (Ezek. 9:8, 13)! A full end was determined and declared, my reader. It was “*surely*” promised (“*thou shalt surely die*” – Ezek. 3:18), truly, but the pronouncement could be altered in the right conditions (Jer. 18:7-11). The possibility of a surviving remnant was prophetically declared impossible until an **amendment** was made to the pronouncement in Ezekiel 6:8-10 (for the first time), but the operation of total annihilation already *in motion* was unwaveringly annihilating the whole population unless the conditions of peace were met (Lk. 14:31-33).

The momentous intention of a total annihilation was indisputably emphasized in this series of prophecies given and delivered by Ezekiel in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah (Ezek. 8:1-11:25), and for good reason. Lo and behold, the residue of the **Evil Figs** *had not, would not, and could not* repent *unless* the swinging blade of an unwavering annihilation splattered blood upon their faces! The residue of the **Evil Figs** *had not, would not, and could not* repent *unless* they encountered physical circumstances comparable to the slaughtering weapons of holy angels who would not turn away from a total annihilation of men, women, and children, old and young (Ezek. 9:5-6)! The residue of the **Evil Figs** *had not, would not, and could not* repent *unless* they knew their present calamity was powered by Sovereignty, to wit: Omniscience and Omnipotence commanded angels to execute the sentence! And, they, the surviving **Evil Figs** amidst the exercise, were forced to watch their comrades in “the faith” suffer death on the right hand and the left – the ammunition of annihilation whizzing past their own mortal bodies by a hair’s breadth! – and, they, knowing that the strike of death did hardly pass them by, knowing that time was short until one’s own destruction was manifested in real time (according to the heavenly vision of holy angels with slaughtering weapons going to and fro, sparing none!)! Behold, the few-in-number **Evil Figs** would finally come to grips with the shocking truth of a sure visitation of death, a total annihilation! Being forcibly convinced of this, I say! Being overwhelmed by death’s imminent visitation, I mean! Feeling, as it were, the eyes of holy angels fastened upon them! Seeing, as it were, the angelic slaughtering weapons reared for the strike! **THEY REPENT.**

“Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God **trieth** the hearts and reins. My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart. God **judgeth** the righteous, and God is **angry** with the wicked every day. If he turn not, He will *whe*l His **sword**; He hath *ben*t His **bow**, and *made it* **ready**. He hath also *prepared for him* **the instruments of death**; He *ordaineth* His **arrows** against the persecutors.” – Psalm 7:9-13 [Psalm 90:3]

Ah, the Divine Goodness of this Tribulation! The wondrous ingenuity exercised by Omniscience! The perfectly calculated chaos of engulfing calamities! The refining and purifying qualities of this divinely lit furnace! For, it was these scenarios of sure and certain death that exacted the results! It was when the Evil Figs were utterly surrounded, they surrendered! It was when wrath was demonstrably reared to slay the surrounded rebels, the impenitent repented! These are the exacted results, my reader! Behold, the fearless became terrified, the proud denounced lies, the cold-hearted cried – Godward their



countenances did fly! Ah, this glorious working of an otherwise unobtainable redemption! Behold, my reader! The *hopelessly Evil Figs* became **good!** “*Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires...*” (Isa. 24:15).

### *The Mysteries of Redemption in the Great Tribulation*

Please, my reader... take time to thoroughly understand what I am seeking to expound concerning *the mysteries of redemption in the Great Tribulation*. For good reason, the Lord said: “*Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the Furnace of Affliction*” (Isa. 48:10).

**The Total Annihilation of the Evil Figs:** Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19, Ezek. 5:2-4, 12

**The Amendment:** Ezek. 5:13

**The Glorious Implications of the Amendment** (*the amending of the decree of total annihilation already set in motion*): Ezek. 3:17-21 [Ezek. 18:1-32, Ezek. 33:1-20] – God means to convey the ongoing process whereby the presently impenitent elect would be forced to repent through experiencing the motions of Tribulatory Judgment!

**The Penitent Elect in their Future Estate of Repentance** (*after and through the Tribulation, not without it!*): Ezek. 5:13, 6:7-10, 13, 14, 7:4, 9, 13-18, 27, 11:12, 16-21, 12:15-16, 19-20 – God means to convey that the people had not, would not, and could not repent at present but they would in the future!

**The Totally Annihilation Judgments Resuming their Courses and Fulfilling their Objectives Unchangeably UNLESS Repentance Found:** Ezek. 7:12-13, 25, 8:18, 9:1-11 [Jer. 18:7-11, Ezek. 3:17-21, 18:1-32, 33:1-20] – God means to convey a sudden reversal of the annihilating judgments at the day repentance was found and the reversal of divine safeguard the day repentance was lost!

Do you believe it, my reader? There was no other way to make the **Evil Figs** good again. The objectives of total annihilation did *unwaveringly* and *unchangeably* pursue the **death** of impenitent Church Members unless repentance was found. In the day repentance was found, however, the Jew would be spared from his appointment of death!

“**in the day** of his transgression” – Ezek. 33:12

“**in the day** that he turneth from his wickedness” – Ezek. 33:12

**In the very moment** repentance was found, in fact, the thrusting blades turned from their fatal mark, the falling arrows were blown by a gust of wind to fall beside the intended criminal, the walking pestilence passed by the designated household, and, finally, the famine withdrew from consuming the intended subject. But... when and if the newly found penitent man turned back to sin, **in the day** that the man does this, the totally annihilating judgments would resume their courses to fulfill their former objectives according to God’s decree. This divine scheme, one of annihilation and redemption, vindicates **God’s declaration** of total annihilation and allows for **God’s repentance** (via the amendment of mercy) on an individual basis – person by person and situation by situation. All were thoroughly striven with in hopes that they would repent before the final visitation of death!

Of course, the Almighty conducted the examinations. Hence, the surety of God’s declaration to slay all impenitent Church Members was unquestionably clear to all (“*when I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt **surely** die...*” – Ezek. 33:14), but, shockingly, the surety of God’s repentance over the penitent *at the moment* they turned from wickedness was also valid (*if he turn...he shall **surely** live, he shall not die*” – Ezek. 33:14-15). Also, if God said to the righteous, “*he shall **surely** live*” (Ezek. 33:13), if the righteous man turned from his righteousness and committed iniquity – the operation of total annihilation would resume its former course so that “*he [the backslidden righteous man] shall even die thereby*” (Ezek. 33:18). You see? This scheme allows God to bring the manslaying blades very *close* and *incrementally closer* if haply wicked men would repent **in the days** of their near annihilation – the exercise would continue in real time: today, tomorrow, and on the next day, as it were, and for as many days as the longsuffering of God did afford! – and, meanwhile, the plea of God was steadfast: “*...why will ye die, O House of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye*”

(Ezek. 18:31-32)! If the wicked man repented, the Lord would suddenly divert all the instruments of death to miss the targeted man, to wit: the man's life would be miraculously preserved as he is conducted through the deadly storm of total annihilation (Psalm 91:1-16)!

## The Visible Church Abandoned by the Invisible God

### *Erroneously Reckoning the Promises of Covenantal Idealism*

#### *the City of Jerusalem as the Eternal City (Ezek. 11:2-3, 15-16)*

The LORD testified to Ezekiel concerning how twisted and backwards the people of Judah and Jerusalem were. They, being **Evil Figs**, were hopelessly lost and doomed to a total annihilation! Meanwhile, they, being **Evil Figs**, thought that everyone else but themselves were **Evil Figs**! Speaking to the Jews who were taken Captive from Judah in former Babylonian Captivities, they said, "Get you far from the LORD: unto us is the Land given in possession" (Ezek. 11:15). The LORD explained the matter to Ezekiel, saying,

"Son of man, thy brethren, even thy brethren, the men of thy kindred, and *all the House of Israel wholly* [the entire population of Jews taken in the Captivities], are they unto whom **the inhabitants of Jerusalem** [the residue of the remnant of Israel in Judah] have said, **Get you far from the LORD: unto us is this land given in possession.** Therefore say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Although I have cast them far off among the heathen, and although I have scattered them among the countries, yet will I be to them as a little sanctuary in the countries where they shall come." – Ezek. 11:15-16

The **Evil Figs** said to the **Good Figs**, in other words, "You are **evil** and we are **good**!" Which means, in other words, "You needed to be purged so we could inherit the Land and be saved!" "You were hand-selected for damnation and we were hand-selected for salvation!" Shockingly, it was the EXACT OPPOSITE (Good Figs: Jer. 24:5-7, 29:4-15). You see, my reader? It happened as Isaiah said, "Woe unto them that call **evil good**, and **good evil**; that put **darkness** for **light**, and **light** for **darkness**; that put **bitter** for **sweet**, and **sweet** for **bitter**! Woe unto them that are wise *in their own eyes*, and prudent *in their own sight*" (Isa. 5:20-21)!

Deceptively, the Jews who were destined by God to a hopeless destruction as **Evil Figs** (the present occupants of the Land of Judah) were proclaiming that, on the contrary, damnation had befallen the dispersed Jews. Meanwhile, as the **Evil Figs** accused the Jews who were destined by God to a hopeful future of salvation as **Good Figs**; they reckoned upon Covenantal norms and biblical promises of pastime Church History thinking that they were applicable to the present situation ("*can ye not discern the signs of the times?*" – Matt. 16:3). The **Evil Figs** didn't know that God had left the Temple, relinquished control of Jerusalem, and joined the Army of Babylon for war! Foolishly, the **Evil Figs** claimed *Unconditional Eternal Security*! Church Members should rethink their security when the Visible Church is being abandoned by the Invisible God! Sadly, though, the doctrines of the Visible Church were erroneously reckoned as the Jews thought upon God's *longsuffering* and *abundant working* among backsliders for many centuries leading up to the Tribulation Period. Please, let me explain further.

### *God's Longsuffering & Abundant Working Among Backsliders*

The Kings, Priests, and Prophets of the Tribulation period knew that they were practicing idolatry and they steadfastly continued in wickedness, but they were crafty to scripturally defend themselves and erroneously inspire hope while condemning the harsh and hopeless message of the Tribulation Prophets, so they thought. They believed for hope when the situation was hopeless! More specifically, though, they believed for Jerusalem's indestructible eternity when total destruction was imminent. They supported their false hopes by misinterpreting their time (hoping for pastime norms). My reader, consider the following evidences of pastime situations: God's *longsuffering* & *abundant working* among backsliders.

After the Kingdom of Israel split on account of Solomon's sin and, consequentially, causes of destruction and woe were manifest in the two Kingdoms, God's hesitancy to bring upon them what was justly deserved is evident. The reasons for this hesitancy are very specific and identifiable. Starting with Rehoboam, for example: even while Rehoboam made Judah sin above "all that their fathers had done" by filling the Land with idolatry, sodomy, and a multitude of other abominations

(1 Kings 14:22-24), in the annals of Biblical Church History we read that a certain aspect of the Davidic promise was *unconditionally* verified. Amidst rampant idolatry and wrath-inciting wickedness, it was said of Jerusalem that it was “the City which the LORD did choose out of all the tribes of Israel, to put His Name there” (1 Kings 14:21), which meant that God would not destroy it at this time even though it was lawfully meet to do so. Purposefully, this was the reason 1 Kings 14:21 was written. I repeat, God was intent upon communicating why He preserved the City from destruction even though the people’s lawlessness did merit its destruction. This promise proved profoundly durable amidst scores of woeful backslidings!

For example, consider King Abijah. Abijah reigned after Rehoboam and he too merited for Judah lamentation, mourning, and woe on account of all his wickedness, but the LORD was very careful to sustain certain promises that granted physical life and security to the Visible Church even despite their wretchedness. Behold, my reader, Abijah’s wickedness and God’s promises... and the emphatic victor of the pastime situation!

“And [Abijah] walked in all the sins of his father [Rehoboam], which he had done before him: and his heart was *not perfect* with the LORD his God, as the heart of David his father. **Nevertheless for David’s sake did the LORD his God give him a Lamp in Jerusalem, to set up his son after him, and to establish Jerusalem: Because David did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aside from any thing that He commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite**” - 1 Kings 15:3-5

Take careful note of the placement of the word, “**Nevertheless**”. As a result of the innumerable transgressions committed by Rehoboam and Abijah (and their associated generations) the City and people deserved to be destroyed! Ah! ...but the text says, “**Nevertheless...**”. Nevertheless, God *didn’t* destroy them! Not for Rehoboam’s righteousness and despite Rehoboam’s wickedness, and not for Abijah’s righteousness and despite Abijah’s wickedness, physical life and security were sustained! You see, God was intent upon performing the promise He gave to David. This would appear to promote a doctrine of *Unconditional Eternal Security*, doesn’t it? Hence, despite the people’s wickedness, certain promises were *unconditionally* performed on behalf of David, promises that had to do with the City of Jerusalem being eternal, impregnable, and beautified according to the promises of the Davidic Covenant. Make no mistake about it, my reader! These promises, and the antagonizing iniquities of backsliders that did threaten to overthrow the promises of God, were plainly addressed in [the Davidic Covenant](#) (2 Sam. 7:12-16, 1 Chron. 17:10-14, Psalm 89:19-37).

“I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and **I will establish his kingdom. He shall build an house for My name, and I will stablish the throne of his kingdom for ever.** *I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But My mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.* And **thine House and thy Kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever**” - 2 Sam. 7:12-16

“Furthermore I tell thee that the LORD will build thee an House. And it shall come to pass, when thy days be expired that thou must go to be with thy fathers, that I will raise up thy seed after thee, which shall be of thy sons; and **I will establish his Kingdom. He shall build Me an house, and I will stablish his throne for ever.** *I will be his Father, and he shall be My son: and I will not take My mercy away from him, as I took it from him that was before thee: But I will settle him in Mine house and in My kingdom for ever: and his throne shall be established for evermore” - 1 Chronicles 17:10-14*

Three promises can be accounted of in this Covenant. Concerning David’s seed, God said, (#1) “I will establish his Kingdom,” (#2) “He shall build an House for My Name,” and (#3) “I will stablish the Throne of his Kingdom for ever.” These three promises are emboldened above. Take note of what God said following these promises in the italicized text. Steadfast mercy, unfailing faithfulness, and persevering grace were promised to the seed of David – a covenanted relationship unlike what happened to Saul who became a castaway. When Saul sinned, God took away mercy from him and so went the Kingdom, but with Solomon, God said that this would not happen to him even if he sins! If Solomon sinned, God said that He would “*be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But My mercy shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee.*” On the basis of this Fatherly relationship, it was therefore *reasonable* to believe the following PROMISE to be

inevitable, irreversible, unconditional, and without question, unalterable: “And **thine House and thy Kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy Throne shall be established for ever.**” Right? My reader, do you think this promise could be breached even though the content of the promise itself appears to be *unconditional* and *unalterable*? The content of [the Davidic Covenant](#) speaks volumes in defense of God’s *hesitancy* to destroy Jerusalem. Indeed, but we must not mistake God’s *hesitancy* for an *absolute unwillingness* to destroy Jerusalem. Therefore, also, we must not mistakenly reckon upon pastime possibilities of mercy while abiding in the present-tense Day of Wrath (the Evil Day: Prov. 16:4, Ps. 92:5-8; the Day of Visitation: Jer. 5:29, 6:15, 8:5-12, 9:9, 10:15, 14:10, 23:12, Hos. 9:7)!

With all things considered, God would not let the Tabernacle of David fall until His *longsuffering had run out* (Amos 9:11-12). God would not cause to perish the “Vineyard” which His “right hand [had] planted, and the Branch that [He] made strong for [Himself]”, until His *longsuffering had run out* (Ps. 80:14-19). Furthermore, God would not cast off the “favour”, “mercy”, “promise”, and “grace” of the Abrahamic Covenant (“the days of old” and “the years of ancient times”) until His *longsuffering had run out* (Ps. 77:3-9). As a profound example of this, even after the Kingdom of Israel was overcome by Assyria (*the wrath of God*) and dispersed among the nations, things were notably different with the Kingdom of Judah because “[God] rent Israel from the House of David” since the days of Jeroboam and Rehoboam (2 Kings 17:21-22). This rending was to preserve salvation in Judah; this was God’s good intention! As you can see, God’s promises were committed to the House of David so that from David onward, theretofore, God was committed to establishing Jerusalem with *indestructible eternity* and *unconditional durability* so that therein life and security would flourish.

Speaking of this, furthermore, when the Son of Jehoshaphat (Jehoram by name), began to reign in Judah and walk in the way of the Kings of Israel, it was emphatically stated: “Yet the LORD *would not* destroy Judah for David His servant’s sake, as He promised to give him **always** a Light, and to his children” (2 Kings 8:19). The promise was being *unconditionally* fulfilled through the abundance of God’s *longsuffering*, you see? Jehoram’s sin merited the destruction of the Kingdom of Judah, but God *unconditionally* preserved it according to what “He promised”. Hence, from generation to generation, the LORD was very *liberal* to *work wonders* among the people even while they were *abiding steadfast in wickedness* and meriting for themselves the woefulness experienced in the Tribulation Period. This served as a stumbling stone to the Jews of the Tribulation Period, no doubt. The false Prophets were hereby thinking upon Biblical Church History so that in the crookedness of their evil desires they would denounce the Tribulation Prophets as harsh and unbiblical. Indeed, from generation to generation God wasn’t willing to destroy Judah and Jerusalem according to the promises of the Davidic Covenant, but then Jeremiah and Ezekiel came in the way of righteousness proclaiming the contrary by declaring its utter desolation (Jer. 2:15, 4:1-4, 4:7, 7:33, 9:11-12, 26:9, 33:10, 34:22, 44:2, Ezek. 6:14, 14:14-16, 15:8)!

Remember, though, the declaration of Jerusalem’s destruction and or its scarce survival therefrom was far from irrelevant in the pages of Biblical Church History, but the declaration of such *without changeability* was nonexistent. To understand this, one must consider the ministry of Prophets via intercession to *alter* the woeful thing spoken by the LORD (Ps. 78:38, 106:23, 43-45, Jer. 18:7-11). Think of how this would be misunderstood by eye-blinded false Prophets, my reader! As we have seen thus far, despite Rehoboam’s, Abijah’s, and Jehoram’s wickedness, God *unconditionally* preserved the City of Jerusalem and the Kingdom of Judah, and looking even closer we see an *abundant working* of *wonders* because of true Prophets and their successful intercession! (For more information, see [“Intercessory Attempts Denied”](#) & [“Jeremiah Backslid”](#).)

Rehoboam, though a backslider, found enough grace in the eyes of the LORD for the performance of the Davidic promise (“*They have humbled themselves; therefore I will not destroy them... My wrath shall not be poured out upon Jerusalem...*” – 2 Chron. 12:7) even though he was steadfast in impenitence and rebellion (“*And he did evil, because he prepared not his heart to seek the LORD*” – 2 Chron. 12:14). This means that Rehoboam’s humiliation unto the LORD was a *short-of-salvation* humiliation, which means that his iniquity was unceasingly, meritoriously, and justly beckoning damnation and destruction – a destruction the LORD was *unconditionally* unwilling to do at that time on David’s behalf. So, when the LORD *should have* destroyed Jerusalem because Abijah continued to walk in the sins of his father, Rehoboam, He stately didn’t do it for the aforementioned reasons (1 Kings 15:3-5).

Abijah too, a no-good backslider like his father, demonstrated profound understanding in the Covenant of God when he went to battle against Jeroboam (2 Chron. 13:3-22). God *worked wonderfully* and *abundantly* among the backslidden generation amidst whatever *short-lived* righteousness and or longstanding *short-of-perfection* righteousness they had (“*they relied upon the LORD God of their fathers*” – 2 Chron. 13:18). The Prophet Iddo told the story (2 Chron. 13:22)! Reigning after them, and on the contrary, Asa and Jehoshaphat “did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD” unto perfection (1 Kings 15:11, 14, 22:43); and, meanwhile, during Jehoshaphat’s reign, God *wrought wonderfully* amidst the rampant and unprecedented folly of Ahab, the King of Israel. An astounding degree of *longsuffering* was demonstrated in the life of Ahab, the King of Israel! Even though Ahab was more wicked than any King before him (1 Kings 16:30-34), he was a recipient of *profound blessings* on account of Elijah’s *intercessory ministry*.

Ahab was not even worthy to live! He should have suffered the fate of the Prophets of Baal whom he sanctioned (1 Kings 18:40)! Yet, on the contrary, Ahab had a non-violent audience with Elijah (1 Kings 18:42-46). Furthermore, he was granted victory against Benhadad of Syria, to wit, God said: “thou shalt know that I am the LORD” (1 Kings 20:13), as the LORD himself directed the strategy of the battle on his behalf. Then, Ahab was graciously warned of Syria’s return (1 Kings 20:22). Upon Syria’s return, he was directed unto victory via prophecy in the battle, to wit, God said: “ye shall know that I am the LORD” (1 Kings 20:28). And when Ahab’s provocations multiplied, he was graciously informed beforehand of his death on account of sparing Benhadad (1 Kings 20:35-43). Furthermore, after the sins of Jezebel against Naboth led to his murder and the robbery of his Vineyard, Elijah visited Ahab to communicate the manner of Ahab’s death and the annihilation of his House, to wit: Ahab humbled himself and found mercy from God so that the woeful pronouncement was not brought to pass in his day (1 Kings 21:21-29)! Amidst the rule of a King whose wickedness was unsurpassed and unceasing, a man who never ceased to serve Baal, the LORD was pleased to *work wonders* with *abundance* and *dispense blessings* with *astounding liberality*!

Therefore, do you see how the Kings, Priests, and Prophets of the Tribulation Period would have erroneously compared themselves to Ahab’s situation by thinking that they deserved audience with Prophets who were *successful intercessors* and, thus, they would be granted many chances to repent according to the *longsuffering* of God and the *abundant working* of His glory that provided such things and more to King Ahab and others? Ahab was a recipient of Elijah’s *intercessory success* and a beneficiary of both Elijah and other Prophets when they visited and directed him into God’s blessings that he didn’t deserve, but the Kings of the Tribulation Period were told that *intercession* was UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE. How unacceptable would such a word be to the ears of such hypocrites? Namely, that there would be no escaping the utter destruction of Judah and Jerusalem despite Jeremiah’s attempts to intercede (Jer. 15:1), when even King Ahab found mercy from God! Furthermore, amidst all the steadfastness of Jeremiah and Ezekiel’s prophesying, God provided spaced to repent in that He executed *incremental judgments* that *increased* over time according to God’s pursuit of the elect. Time was provided and the prophetic words of utter desolation were *slowed* because of God’s *longsuffering*. So, the people were remembering how the Prophet Micah prophesied of the utter destruction of Jerusalem (Micah 3:12, Jer. 26:17-20) and, yet, it never came to pass! The City of Jerusalem did at this time history, once again, prove indestructible according to the promises of the Davidic Covenant (“*For I will defend this City to save it for Mine own sake, and for My servant David’s sake.*” – Isa. 37:35). Indeed, the David Covenant was held in remembrance before God as in the former times and so intercession prevailed, but the false prophets were ignorant of this one thing: *how scarcely it prevailed!* In other words, time was running out! The pastime acts of redemption that hardly came to pass are, in the future, harder to come to pass. Sadly, false prophets don’t understand the scarcity of salvation via God’s judgment upon the Church (1 Pet. 4:17-18). Consequentially, when Hezekiah was a recipient of Isaiah’s *successful intercession* (2 Chron. 32:20) on the basis of the promises made to David, at least in part (Isa. 37:35), meaning that he and the City of Jerusalem were threatened by the very same words of utter destruction spoken by Jeremiah, the self-righteous false prophets of Jeremiah’s day took it all for granted and were in no rush to repent!

The false Prophets were emboldened to think of all these men and the abundant working of God among them, how often Jerusalem should have been destroyed but wasn’t. They thought, I can live like Rehoboam and Abijah and find mercy with God so as to inherit the blessing of life and security in Jerusalem, but they didn’t understand the provocation of the *short-lived* righteousness and/or the *short-of-perfection* righteousness in these men’s lives – that it was only a matter of time before

God's longsuffering demonstrated in these pastime situations would run out if these iniquities continued from generation to generation. They thought, I can commit the idolatry of King Ahab with *unrelenting persistence* and God will be *longsuffering* and *abundant* in *blessing* through the Prophets they erroneously deemed as *successful intercessors*, though they were false Prophets. They thought that God would have mercy in their time like He had mercy on these pastime situations! ...but they were not discerning that these provocations gain *momentum* and *God's longsuffering runs out!* They were not discerning the unmerited provision of these former *wondrous workings*, and how such things *would not and cannot continue!* They were seeking to reckon upon undeserved Covenantal Blessings in a time when God was reckoning with the deserved Covenantal Curses that He restrained in former days!

God would not allow the generations of men to continue downward in their courses of degeneration. Hence, God chose the last generation, the generation of visitation... and they stood in disbelief! They were thinking about all these other generations that God seemed to choose as the last generation, but lo and behold they weren't the last (i.e. Hezekiah's & Josiah's Generation)! Ah, but on this wise the false Prophets of the Tribulation Period failed to discern the *time* and *season* in which they lived, therefore their reckoning of the promises of salvation was an unacceptable profanation! You see, the deception which seized the **Evil Figs** was quite alluring and extremely popular, as it is today. But, oh! How contrary to the truth these men were! How strong the deception! How prevalent the evil! How vile the Figs! And they did it all in the name of *Unconditional Eternal Security*. The LORD directly confronted their vain hopes in Davidic promises, but to no avail (Jer. 17:24-27, 21:12, 22:2-5, 29:16-18)! The false Prophets claimed *intercessory powers* they did not possess, they reckoned Covenantal Promises that were *inapplicable*, and they cited Biblical Church History in an *unbiblical* way! Even so, the false Prophets of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will misunderstand God's provision of *time* and or the *incremental judgments* of God's longsuffering; they will mistakenly reckon upon God's *abundant working* of *wonders* amidst backslidden generations to wit they will denounce the presence of God's wrath in the generation of its arrival (The Stumbling Stone of Time: Ezek. 12:17-28, 2 Pet. 3:3-11, 1 Pet. 3:20 2 Pet. 3:9, Matt. 24:48, Matt. 25:5, 14, 19, Gen. 6:3, Lk. 17:26-37, Hab. 2:3). When all things are manifest, be sure of this! ...it will look something like the Tribulation Period of old. (For more information on this subject, see "[Time Has Run Out!](#)".)

Through reckoning the Covenantal Ideals associated with the Land of Israel and the City of Jerusalem (the Visible Church), the **Evil Figs** will preach the condemnation of the **Good Figs**. This was and will be the false repudiation of the **Good Figs** (Ezek. 11:15) whom God has promised to save (Ezek. 11:16-21)! The doctrines of the Visible Church were and will be erroneously reckoned – the Davidic Throne in the City of Jerusalem (the Lamp of David), the seed of Abraham and the Promised Land – and so, through God's longsuffering and abundant working among backsliders for many centuries, the people will be garnishing the sepulchers of the righteous (they will be falsely supported by arguments from Church History)! "*Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, And say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them which killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?*" (Matt. 23:29-33)

### *The Majesty of the Lord in Tribulatory Judgments of Life & Death*

The LORD declared the truth against the lie by speaking good toward the Captivities and evil toward the homeland. Very specifically, the LORD said He would *be with* **the people of the Captivities** whithersoever they had been driven; and through this, the LORD would later regather them and save them (Ezek. 11:16-21). But, speaking evil of **the homeland population**, the LORD said He would *depart from* them and recompense them (Ezek. 11:21-25). At this time, also, Ezekiel looked-on as *the Glory of the LORD* "went up from the midst of the City and stood upon the Mountain which is on the east side of the City" (Ezek. 11:23). Fearfully, the LORD would not return peaceably to the people of Jerusalem... He departed that He might soon return: not to repossess the Temple, no! But as an Adversary He would come in the Day of Visitation (Isa. 63:13-15)! Emphasizing this earlier in the prophetic oration (Ezek. 8:1-11:25), remember, Petaliah the son of Benaiah dropped dead and Ezekiel cried out, "Ah Lord GOD! Wilt Thou made **a full end of the remnant of Israel!**" (Ezek. 11:13)! As for the remnant of the **Evil Figs**, He would; excepting the few-in-number remnant allowed by God to live by an amendment.

Remember, though, if allowed to live this could mean only ONE THING: true repentance and actual righteousness. As I formerly explained, Ezekiel's ministry largely dealt with the status and fate of the Evil Figs for the sake of the Good Figs (to turn the heart of the Good Figs back to God). Therefore remember, my reader, the rules of life and death in Ezekiel's prophetic ministry were made plain from the very beginning: the wicked would die and the righteous would live, PERIOD. Those wicked persons to whom God said, "Thou shalt surely die", it was certain that they would die *unless* they turned from their wickedness because of the prophetic warnings ("to save his life" – Ezek. 3:18). God had certainly determined to kill them and *surely* promised to do so, EXCEPT THEY REPENT. Also, those *righteous persons* to whom God had *surely* promised goodness, life, and eventual restoration, it was certain that they would live *unless* they turned from righteousness and committed iniquity ("he shall die in his sin" – Ezek. 3:20). If the righteous man doesn't sin, God promised, "he shall *surely* live" (Ezek. 3:21), and given the circumstances of wrath and the imminence of death on every side, this was a miracle! Only a divine shielding could safely conduct a soul through the annihilating Tribulation! With prophetic detail a Tribulation Psalm was written to illustrate this wondrous happening, my reader! Depicting the provisional safeguard of an otherwise inescapable storm of wrath, the psalmist scribed the inspired words in the context of the Great Tribulation: "He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust: His truth shall be thy shield and buckler" (Ps. 91:4)! Hence the climactic end of the Tribulation Period, my reader! – it was effectual to annihilate all wicked persons from the Church so as to restore her to God's Glory in the beauties of holiness! There is nothing more important to God than this.

[Note: to understand Covenantal Idealism as it relates to the promises of God and Biblical History, see ["The Truly Converted Status of Israelite People in the Wilderness & the Ideals Theretofore"](#).]

## EZEKIEL 12:1-16

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign; time references: 8:1 & 20:1), Ezekiel was compelled into another prophetic demonstration and this time, once again, concerning the Prince and people of Judah, the **Evil Figs** (Ezek. 12:12-16). As thoroughly addressed heretofore, however, the **Evil Figs** were a prophetic target in an effort to win the heart of the **Good Figs** (Ezek. 12:2-3)! And, shockingly, God was *hopeful* for the **Good Figs** to come to repentance based upon what He was presently directing Ezekiel to do by the Spirit of Prophecy! This should give us some pause. This is an unprecedented and rare statement of *hopefulness* in the heart of God on behalf of the **Good Figs** who were, at present, still yet, far from **good** ("*it may be they will consider, though they be a rebellious House*" – Ezek. 12:3)! This *hopefulness* on behalf of the wicked and impenitent **Good Figs** was both sincere fully informed. This hopefulness indicates a profoundly strong thrust to save the **Good Figs** through Ezekiel's prophecy! This was Divine Thinking in Divine Sincerity, a thoughtfulness that is far from the pretentious or erroneous like the uninformed hopefulness of human kind.

Ezekiel was no longer in his house where he was inquired of by the Elders of Israel in the former prophecy (Ezek. 8:1). Ezekiel was commanded to physically demonstrate a new prophecy by removing himself from his place to another place in the sight of the people in Captivity, the **Good Figs** (Ezek. 12:1-3). "I have set thee for a sign unto the House of Israel", God said, "as they that go forth into Captivity", and when the people (the **Good Figs**) saw what Ezekiel did, they asked him, "What doest thou?" (Ezek. 12:4, 6, 9). Can you imagine the Jews looking on as Ezekiel theatrically rehearsed the matter before them? A compelling prophecy was unfolding that would no doubt bring the 70-year Captivity to marvel!

### Zedekiah's Captivity & Blindness Foretold

It was here prophesied that Zedekiah would be brought to Babylon blind (Ezek. 12:12-13)! For, at present, all the eyes of both the **Good** and **Evil Figs** were fixated on the man, Zedekiah, the King of Judah, in hopes that they would be safely led through the presently calamities unto their desired haven. "*Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch*" (Matt. 15:14). This prophecy directly targeted the lies of false prophets located in Babylon and Judah. The false prophets in Babylon (Jer. 29:15) and those in Judah (Jer. 27:14-17, 28:1-17) were proclaiming the same message: a short Captivity, a soon return to Judah, a restoration of what was robbed from the Temple, and the

like. To them, this erroneously meant, a soon restoration of salvation. Fearfully, though, it was a soon restoration of hopeless damnation! If fulfilled, it would be the reassignment of **Good Figs** to suffer the fate of **Evil Figs**!

The false prophets and the whole population of general reprobates dwelling in the Land of Judah denounced the prophecies of Ezekiel and Jeremiah, abhorring judgment and refusing to suffer it. They taught the people of the Captivities to dis-embrace their 70-year chastisement which was for their **good**. Remember, my reader, to lead the Jews away from *the Land Babylon* unto *the Land of Judah*, the false prophets did thereby force upon them the destiny of **Evil Figs** and rob from them the destiny of **Good Figs** (Good Figs: Jer. 24:5-7, 29:4-15; Evil Figs: Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19). In the face of God's ETERNAL FURY, the reprobate Church Members held-fast to Unconditional Eternal Security! Little did they know they were robbers and murders, the advocates of eternal insecurity! They were unwittingly employed by the devil and equipped with alluring heresies to erroneously reckon Covenantal Ideals to the soul-robbery and eternal insecurity of both themselves and them that hear them. They spiritually led away captive, in shackles of deception, those whose actual bondage and real captivity ensured the hope of everlasting freedom! Oh, Lord, have mercy!

How could this happen? Remember, my reader, the people were inclined to deception because of the superstitious relationship they had to the furniture of redemption ("*The Temple of the LORD*" & "*The Law of the LORD*" – Jer. 7:4, 8:8) instead of the Person of Redemption ("*Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire? yet my people have forgotten me days without number.*" – Jer. 2:32). Thus, meanwhile, as long as *the Temple* was still standing and *the Law* was still being handled and read, and such like things, the people claimed *Unconditional Eternal Security* in the Kingdom of God located in Judah. They reckoned *the promises* of the Kingdom of God while living in defiance of the KING! Fearfully, though, the LORD was abandoning *the Temple* (Ezek. 11:22-25)! Their confidence was unfounded! The LORD left *the Temple* so as to assemble with the Army of Babylon for the conquering of Jerusalem, and this would result in the Captivity of the Prince and the people (Ezek. 12:10-16), and what else? The LORD clarified the means He would use to perpetuate and memorialize His glory in it all! And, shockingly, the utility employed involved the redemption of a few **Evil Figs**! As formerly addressed at length, and here referenced again: an amendment was made for the reprobate population of **Evil Figs** in that, the LORD said, "I will leave a few men of them". It was written,

"And I will **scatter** toward every wind all that are about him to help him, and all his bands; and **I will draw out the sword after them**. And *they shall know that I am the LORD*, when I shall **scatter** them among the nations, and **disperse** them in the countries. But I will leave **a few men** of them from **the sword**, from **the famine**, and from **the pestilence; that they may declare all their abominations among the heathen whither they come; and they shall know that I am the LORD.**" – Ezek. 12:14-16

Praise the LORD for this provision! It was for His Name's sake, not the people's. His mercy endureth forever and His Name unto every generation! The LORD will announce the motives for this amendment later, saying, "I have wrought with you for My Name's sake" (Ezek. 20:44). Glory to God!

## EZEKIEL 12:17-13:23

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign; time references: 8:1 & 20:1*), Ezekiel was commanded to do another demonstration. After targeting the vain admiration of the people toward the Prince of Judah (Ezek. 12:1-16), and, behold, the Prince was led away captive to Babylon as a blind man (Ezekiel demonstrated), the LORD provided a prophetic demonstration to reveal the soon-to-be experience of "the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the Land of Israel" (Ezek. 12:19): the **Evil Figs**. The renowned Unconditional Eternal Security loyalists, who abode in the Kingdom of Judah, refused to admit that there was breach in National Security. Think of it! The targets of God's eternal fury were believers in an unbreach-able security! The no-security people did only and always meditate on God's mercy! Furthermore, in the same event or in a sequence of events with short periods in between them, three prophecies were given: "And the word of the LORD came unto me..." (Ezek. 12:21, 26, 13:1).



These three prophecies were delivered as in a lively exchange between God and the false prophets – an active combat for the souls of the people! – a verbal contention in which the LORD was directly responding to the false proverbs of the people (Ezek. 12:21-23), the flattering divinations of the false prophets (Ezek. 12:21-25), and the collective interpretation of the people of Israel concerning the word of the LORD through Ezekiel (Ezek. 12:26-28). Finally, the LORD delivered a comprehensive rebuke of the whole operation of damnation to overthrow the dominion of false prophets (Ezek. 13:1-23).

### The Divine Confirmation of the Tribulation Prophets!

Notably, also, the **Evil Figs** were deeply considering the visions of Ezekiel according to Ezekiel 12:22. One must ask the question: Why? What impacted the **Evil Figs** so tremendously that they would consider the visions of Ezekiel? “*God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with diverse miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to His own will*” (Heb. 2:4). Remember, my reader! Since the ascension of Zedekiah to the throne of Judah, the Prophets Jeremiah and Ezekiel have been unstoppably present and abundant in prophesying, unhindered by the imposing confinements that normally result from persecution. All the prophetic activity of these two Ministers was unabated by the tumult of persecution as usual because at the onset of Jeremiah’s reappearance into public ministry, lo, and behold! The renowned false prophet *Hananiah* died a notorious death (Jer. 27:1-28:17, 24:1-10)! Even so, Jerusalem was stilled. Shortly thereafter, though, the false prophets of the Land of Babylon were stirred to oppose the work of God until, lo and behold! *Ahab* and *Zedekiah* were roasted in the fire and *Shemaiah* and his seed were cursed (Jer. 29:1-32)! Even so, the Jews of Babylon were stilled. Furthermore, also, Jeremiah was enlarged to prophesy with astounding detail on how the totality of Babylon would be utterly and shockingly destroyed at the completion of the Tribulation Period (Jer. 50:1-51:64). Hence, as Ezekiel’s prophesying waxed manifold in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah, even the **Evil Figs** were reflective of the matter, saying, in essence: “the visions are not for a long time off” (a paraphrase of Ezek. 12:22-23). How hardly could the **Evil Figs** say that the visions of Ezekiel wouldn’t come to pass at all! Strenuously, adding affliction to the body and the mind, the vile conscience of the **Evil Figs** could hardly make the admission! For, think of it, the last time Ezekiel waxed prophetic he was carried in spirit from Babylon to Jerusalem to behold the secret conspiracies of the **Evil Figs** and how that, amidst the madness, meanwhile, *the Glory of God* slew the man Pelatiah who was chief among the transgressors (Ezek. 11:13)! From the distant Land of Babylon and with indisputable timeliness that could only be divine, the people were staggered with amazement at the death of Pelatiah. Ah, see how the Tribulation Prophet interpreted the matter! Even so, the hardest hearts were soft with reflection at the next time the wind blew upon the Prophet Ezekiel, even despite the erroneous conclusion (Ezek. 12:22-23). Be still, my reader. GOD ANSWERS.

### Time Has Run Out!

#### *The Days are at Hand, the Effect of Every Vision*

The prophetic sequence began with the LORD saying to Ezekiel, “Son of man, eat thy bread with quaking, and drink thy water with trembling and with carefulness” (Ezek. 12:18). This, the prophet did... literally. He was compelled to do it under the compulsion of the Spirit; it was not an act. Prophetic revelations had power to possess the emotions and force the human perception of Prophets to *feel, think, and see* what the soon-to-be reality is for others. The subjects of their prophecy were made to look upon a Spirit-enflamed eyewitness who bore witness. Even so, Ezekiel was literally quaking and trembling! He was filled with carefulness and anxious concern! ...why? God said of the people of Jerusalem and Israel,

“They shall eat their bread with **carefulness**, and drink their water with **astonishment**; that her Land may be **desolate** from all that is therein, because of the violence of all them that dwell therein. And the Cities that are inhabited shall be laid **waste**, and the Land shall be **desolate**; and ye shall know that I am the LORD.” – Ezek. 12:19-20

The people should have been terrified and astonished at such a word, but they weren’t. They were deluded by false prophets, thinking, “The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth” (Ezek. 12:22). The LORD hearkened and heard it! Literally. He responded, saying, “I will make this proverb to cease, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel; but say unto them, The days are at hand, and the effect of every vision” (Ezek. 12:23)! Fearfully, the LORD confirmed the effect of every vision, saying, “For I am the LORD: I will speak, and the word that I shall speak shall come to pass; it shall

be no more prolonged: for in your days, O rebellious House, will I say the word, and will perform it, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezek. 12:25)! In other words, the Kingdom of God was at hand! Or, the KING was at hand! Which means that the KING would not suffer Himself to be disregarded by the people any longer like in past generations. No, the LORD was asserting immediate sovereignty in this generation to *speak* and to *do*, to *hear* what they *think* and *say*, and to RESPOND. Thereby, He would take preeminence! He said, “ye shall know that I am the LORD” (Ezek. 12:20)! End of story.

But, oh! How deceitful and ruinous were the schemes of Lucifer! Deceptively, how numerous were the visions of false prophets! By diabolical design, the visions multiplied in number to inundate the people and make them scornful, thinking, “The days are prolonged, and every vision faileth” (Ezek. 12:22), or, “The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not” (Ezek. 9:9). Satan intended to reduce the people into this kind of stupor, a fearless irrelevance to God’s imminent existence: namely, that He was *feeling*, *thinking*, *speaking*, and *doing* all things in RESPONSE to how the people were *feeling*, *thinking*, *speaking*, and *doing*! Being made to deny this fact, the people were impulsively responding to the voice of God by *thinking* and *feeling* that the present situation was just like other times in past generations, and, thus, as always, the prophetic vision would fail. In so many words, the deception preached: “*Unconditional Eternal Security* never fails!” They would just continue to live on the same way as before, so they thought. “All things continue as they were from the beginning”, so they said (2 Pet. 3:4). Fearfully, though, they stood just 5 years from Judgment Day (the **5<sup>th</sup> Captivity**).

“Son of man, behold, they of the house of Israel say, The vision that he seeth is for **many days to come**, and he prophesieth of the **times that are far off**. Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; There shall none of my words be **prolonged any more**, but the word which I have spoken **shall be done**, saith the Lord GOD.” – Ezek. 12:27-28

Look upon this pastime scene long and hard, my reader. It behooves us, “upon whom the ends of the World are come”, to learn from the examples of pastime (1 Cor. 10:11). We are commanded to do this through Paul, who affirmed, “Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition...” (1 Cor. 10:11); a desperately needed affirmation! For, just like every **Tribulation Period** of *Biblical Church History*, this deception will blind the backslidden Church of the Last Days (2 Pet. 3:4-11, Matt. 24:48, 25:5, 14, 19, Gen. 6:3, 1 Pet. 3:20, Lk. 17:26-37, Hab. 2:3). May God help us, dear reader! Over 2,000 years have passed since the 1<sup>st</sup> coming of the Lord, and are we ready for the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming?

After centuries and millennia have passed without the judgments of God being manifest (2 Pet. 3:8), the Church of the Last Days will be exasperated to think, “every vision faileth” (Ezek. 12:22). The Continuationist and the Cessationist will disagree in doctrine and walk united in practice, thinking, “My Lord delayeth His coming” (Matt. 24:48), as if He wasn’t already in the very midst (Matt. 18:20, Rev. 1:12-13, 2:1). They will persecute the Tribulation Prophets and denounce the word of judgment in the name of *Unconditional Eternal Security*, saying, “every vision faileth” (Ezek. 12:22). So much the contrary, though, the Thief approaches (Rev. 3:3)! The surprising robbery of every man’s undying soul from its refuge of false security is imminent! ...and what will the LORD say in response to such words, “every vision faileth” (Ezek. 12:22)? As an example, the LORD said to Ezekiel’s Generation, “it [the vision] shall be *no more* prolonged” (Ezek. 12:25)!

Why was it prolonged in the first place, you wonder? According to scripture, it was God’s “longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Pet. 3:9), just like “the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah” (1 Pet. 3:20). In other words, grace *stalled* judgment in hopes to bring backsliders to repentance. Remember, though, in Ezekiel’s day the backslidden Church stood just 5 years away from Judgment Day (the **5<sup>th</sup> Captivity**)! They fell amidst a present-tense Great Falling Away, thinking they stood! They lived in a day ripe for judgment, thinking of former years! They reckoned pastime outcomes, being out of time! Many stories came from him whose head was hoary, all irrelevant! God said that He would bring judgment in their lifetime (“*in your days*” – Ezek. 12:25)! What is the modern-day rendition?

The factually correct and historically astute multitude will *unwisely* conclude, and say, “Many of the most recent generations of Christians thought that they were the Last Generation before the coming of the LORD”. Tragically, though, thereby they will denounce “*the historically unadvised*” Tribulation Prophets to their own destruction! They will think that the Great

Tribulation will be *prolonged* to another generation just like it happened to former generations who heard similar prognostications. What is happening, and why? (For more information on this subject, see “[Intercessory Attempts Denied](#)”, “[Jeremiah Backslid](#)”, “[God’s Longsuffering & Abundant Working Among Backsliders](#)” & “[Vindicating the Scriptural Emphasis of Guilt](#)”.) The people will depreciate, misunderstand, and misrepresent the provision of time that God does graciously provide as judgment tarries, not knowing that God can suddenly assert judgment at any time like a Mighty Man awaking from slumber (Ps. 74:11, 44:23, 78:65-66, Isa. 64:12, 1 Thess. 5:3, Lk. 17:27-29, Lk. 21:34-35, Rev. 18:8). Therefore, what should be thankfully regarded as God’s longsuffering, the people will scorn as slackness and failure (2 Pet. 3:9). They did this, and we will do this, even when we stand just 5 years from the Great Tribulation which will preclude the End of the World! ...we will do this if we, like them, are made to believe that *the KING* and *the Kingdom of God* are not at hand in this our day! What saith the KING? Are you in His Kingdom? Do you hear His active voice? Or, do you stand without? Kings rule Kingdoms, you know. “...let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing.” (Php. 3:16).

## The Day of the LORD: Having Departed, God Returns for War!

So, here’s the question: Do you hear what the Spirit is saying to the Churches of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (Rev. 3:22)? Or, is God irrelevant to you? Do you believe that He *bears* what you *think* and *say*, and *retaliates*? HE DOES. For example, we have been solemnly warned to regard a present-tense voice which speaks to the Church today, not yesterday. It was written, “Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts” (Heb. 4:7)! Is God practically irrelevant to you, my reader? Perhaps you have shut him out of your Church! Perhaps that’s why you don’t hear His voice. “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me” (Rev. 3:20), the resurrected, ascended, and living Lord Jesus said! This gracious door-knocking should not go unanswered by backslidden Churches! Jesus of Nazareth was at the door, my reader! It is better to dine with Christ in friendly communion than to meet Him at the point of a sword! Let all backslidden Churches take heed to the warning, when Christ said: “Repent; or else **I will come** unto thee **quickly**, and will FIGHT against them with **the sword of My Mouth**” (Rev. 2:16, Hos. 6:5)! Yes, God can and will fight against the Churches of the New Testament, just like He fought against the Nation and People of Israel and Judah in the Old Testament. When and if the LORD departs from the Church, it is for war! Let me explain.

Fearfully, God *can*, *has*, and *will* abandon New Testament Churches like as He abandoned the Temple in the Old Testament; albeit, most do not understand the implications. Historically speaking, *the Glory of God* could, would, and did depart from Israel, but how does this doctrine coexist with the threatening of God via “the days of visitation” (the visitation: Jer. 5:29, 6:15, 8:5-12, 9:9, 10:15, 14:10, 23:12, Hos. 9:7)? When God spoke of His reaction to Israelite apostasy in this regard, saying, “that I should *go far off* from My Sanctuary” (Ezek. 8:6), or like Jeremiah expressed under prophetic utterance, “lest My soul *depart* from thee” (Jer. 6:7-8), or when the Lord lamented, saying, “Oh...that I might *leave* My people and *go* from them” (Jer. 9:1-3), or when God would finally fulfill the pronouncement, “I have *left* Mine heritage” (Jer. 12:7-12), how then does the Lord threaten the people of Israel regarding their day of visitation when, namely – HE COMES! – and, yet, His arrival was expressing the execution of damnation and not the restoration of salvation? You see, my reader, God joined heathen armies and wielded the barbarian peoples (the *Assyrians* and the *Babylonians*) as hand-held weapons in His Almighty hands (like an axe) to destroy the Temple, People, Nation, and Land of Israel and Judah (Isa. 10:5-15, Jer. 34:21-22)!

People today will claim, “It can’t happen to the Church of the New Testament!” Quoting the promise, “...upon this Rock I will build My Church; and the Gates of Hell shall not prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18). Right? Of the aforementioned, this much is true: The Gates of Hell cannot prevail against a Church when Jesus is IN THE CHURCH! But, what about when Jesus is forced out the door? Remember what the Lord Jesus said to the Church of Laodicea, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock...” (Rev. 3:20). Are you in disbelief? Also, do you remember when the Lord Jesus said to the Church of Ephesus, “Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else **I will come unto thee quickly**, and **will remove thy Candlestick out of his place**, except thou repent” (Rev. 2:5). Apparently, Church Members *can* do something to offend the Living Christ and make Him leave (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). The Candlestick cannot prevail against the High Priest who dresses it, but the High Priest can take away the Candlestick so as to allow the encroachment of darkness. Also, from another angle, the Devil’s Darkness cannot prevail against the Light of Christ, but

Jesus can remove the Light of Christ (the Candlestick) from a Church *because of* prevalent deeds of darkness. Even so, the Gates of Hell cannot prevail against *the* Church Universal or *the* Church Inter-Generational and Eternal, but the Gates of Hell can and will prevail against *a* Church that Jesus abandons! Jesus is GOD. New Testament Church Members, here's your warning: "Be not highminded, but fear..." (Rom. 11:20)! "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off" (Rom. 11:22).

Who was cut off? The Jews of the 1<sup>st</sup> century just like the Jews of pastime centuries. Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Hosea, Amos, and Zechariah, for example, spoke of the cessation of the legal identity which was inherent with the special and immediate presence of God, meaning that, when *the Glory of God* departed the legal identity was lost, and each prophet was careful to declare that the reason *the Glory of God* departed was because the charges of conduct which demanded holiness and cleanliness were defied... therefore because the legal identity of the people was forfeited and God departed, when God visited the people again it was for damnation instead of salvation, for the fury of war instead of the friendliness of family, because the Israelites became God's enemies instead of God's Family. [For more information, see "[The Glory of God Departing & Returning to the Church](#)".]

### National Insecurity Resulting from Unconditional Eternal Security Preachers

With all this in mind, let us turn our attention to Ezekiel 13:1-23. Ezekiel prophesies against the false prophets who were ignorant of "the Day of the LORD", and what was it? It was a day of "battle" (Ezek. 13:5). Speaking directly to the false prophets, God said,

"Ye have not gone up into the **gaps**, neither made up the **hedge** for the house of Israel to stand in *the battle* in the Day of the LORD." – Ezek. 13:5

"Because, even because they have seduced my people, saying, Peace; and there was **no peace**; and one built up a **wall**, and, lo, others **daubed it with untempered mortar**:" – Ezek. 13:10

Can the Armies of Babylon prevail against the Gates of Jerusalem, the Church? No real peace means no real security, my reader. The murderous deception that was ministered by the false prophets was herein depicted in the scenery of war, and for good reason. Notice that God spoke of a day of "battle" and an unprepared wall ("*daubed it with untempered mortar*" – Ezek. 13:10). This meant that the people were unfortified by the wall that they believed was fortifying. Their trust was misplaced and erroneously applied to the unprotected gates and walls of the Church! The false prophets deceived them, you see. The peace-preaching of false prophets taught the people that the gates and walls of the Church were war-worthy and impregnable, even though the breaches were filled with untempered mortar. This was a fitting illustration for the endangered people. This was a true witness. As noted before, the LORD left the Church to assemble and join the armies of heathen men for war against Judah and Jerusalem, and, behold, the walls were unfortified! This we know, but further commentary on Jewish Law pertaining to victory or loss at war is necessary to understand the depth of what is being criticized in Ezekiel 13:5 and Ezekiel 13:9-16. Please, let me explain.

By Law, when God illustrated the scenario of war, as long as the people weren't backslidden the LORD assured them that He *promised* to sustain Israelite protection and defense against all enemies that would invade. With the blessing of Deuteronomy 28:7 and Leviticus 26:6-8, inevitable victory against invaders was reality. In other words, this was the Church against whom the Gates of Hell could not prevail (Matt. 16:18)! Jerusalem's gates and walls were un-breach-able and impregnable! In Old Testament terminology, it was written,

"The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways." – Deut. 28:7

"And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land. And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before

you by the sword. And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.” – Lev. 26:6-8

These promises proved to be real surety in the face of impossible circumstances; in real wars, shockwaves of Israelite victories gripped the nations with fear! The ripple effect went worldwide, and the nations esteemed the Israelite God as a God of war, but who knew it more? Those smitten by the Presence of God or those empowered to smite standing in the Presence of God? None knew it more than the darling ransom of God, Israel by name! Every Israelite learned to herald and hope in the good confession: “The LORD is a Man of war: the LORD is His Name” (Ex. 15:3). Therefore, though the Israelites did cleave their hands to swords and spears, and so make ready for the battle charge, they never shouted the courageous hoorah until the sacrifice was made! Nay, though the army was arrayed and at attention, every man’s valiance was stayed until the ark of God entered the camp! The military acclamation of the Israelite army was: “The LORD saveth not with sword and spear: for the battle is the LORD’S” (1 Sam. 17:47)! Hands may have cleaved to swords, but hearts only to the Lord.

As it is with the weaponry of “hand to hand” combat, so it is in the case of Israel’s walls and fortified Cities. Normally, high walls and fortified Cities were built for protection and the vantage point against invaders at war; but in Israel God was the vantage point. Therefore, if Israel built fortified Cities of high walls and towers, they may have looked down from the height of the walls and towers, indeed, but their hearts looked up to the LORD! They were not out of reach of the enemy, except by the hiding place of God’s Presence. “My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from Him” (Ps. 62:5), they prayed! “Thou art my Hiding Place and my shield: I hope in Thy word” (Ps. 119:114), “for Thou hast been a shelter for me, and a strong tower from the enemy” (Ps. 61:3); “my fortress...my buckler...and my high tower” (Ps. 18:1), they confessed!

Fortresses of war may have been the pride of heathen nations, maybe so. Thereby the heathen peoples were emboldened to boast against other nations and devour the defenseless at will, but Israelites painfully disdained this pride and re-attributed all success at war to the glory of God. The Israelites were not proud, blood-thirsty, warmongers, no! The psalmists of Israel gloried in humility instead of pride! They gloried in what the heathen accused as vulnerability at war and irresponsibility in strategy. And, yet, “Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy presence from the pride of man” (Ps. 31:20), the psalmist declared! Every Israelite knew that “the Name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe” (Prov. 18:10), HALLELUJAH!

Watchmen stood awake until daybreak and the alarm of war made ready the soldiers for war, but the prophets’ preaching kept men from vain hopes deceiving. They preached, “Thus saith the LORD; Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, whose heart departeth from the LORD” (Jer. 17:5). You see, this was a different alarm than the sound of the battle horn. The prophets alarmed men to the watchful eye of their Maker. They declared the LORD as the supreme matter of war. If men could wake up to God, then He will awake for them at a time of war. Thus, it was written, “Except the LORD keep the City, the watchman waketh but in vain” (Psalm 127:1). Indeed! But, let us also understand, the sleepless LORD who kept and sustained the walls of Israelite Cities could also break down the physical barriers of fortification. Speaking of this, God said,

“So will I break down the **wall** that ye have **daubed** with **untempered mortar**, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall **fall**, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.” – Ezek. 13:14

According to Ezekiel 13:14, it was not the wall that protected Israel. God did. He was angry and broke down the wall! And before He physically destroyed the wall (the inordinate trust of the people) He rebuked false prophets, saying, “Ye have not gone up into the **gaps**, neither made up the **hedge** for the House of Israel to stand in the *battle* in the Day of the LORD” (Ezek. 13:5). The LORD referred to the **gaps** or **hedges** in a wall, but what wall was the jobsite of Prophets? Prophets were neither masons nor carpenters and were likely unknowledgeable of how to build a wall. Nevertheless, this was the subject of description in Ezekiel 13:1-23 directed to false Prophets. Furthermore, it is evident that the physical walls of protection circling fortified Cities were representative of **spiritual barriers** provided by the *promises* of God. When the Israelites were unbeatable because they were blessed by the power of God, this meant that the spiritual walls of Israel

were impregnable, unbreakable, and un-breach-able. In the words of the people, this meant: “We have a strong City; salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks” (Isa. 26:1)!

The walls of the City were sustained by God’s hand, my reader (“*the Glory shall be a defense*” – Isa. 4:5)! “God is known in [the Cities] palaces for a refuge” (Ps. 48:3)! The walls were protected and sustained by a *spiritual barrier* via the promises of God (Ps. 5:12)! Therefore, if the promises of God were breached and invading aliens did attack, they would breach the walls of inept fortification and conquer. When the physical wall was without a spiritual wall, the physical would crumble. The invader’s victory through the breached physical walls was only a physical manifestation of the wrath of God which already breached the Israelite promises of salvation (*the spiritual barrier*). My reader, do you remember how Satan was rendered powerless to harm Job because of the *spiritual barrier* or **hedge** that God had put around him? Satan said to God, speaking of Job, “Hast not Thou made an **hedge** about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath *on every side*?” (Job 1:10)? And, do you remember how this *spiritual barrier* was eventually taken away by God, so that, suddenly, the Sabaeans and the Chaldeans successfully invaded Job’s property, robbed him, and slew his servants (Job 1:15, 17)? This is a perfect parallel to the status of invincibility and vulnerability pertaining to Israel and Judah as a Nation and People, the Church. Speaking of the vitality of this spiritual barrier in a time of God’s wrath against His people, it was written,

“Therefore He said that He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen **stood before** Him in the **breach [gap]**, *to turn away His wrath*, lest He should destroy them” - Psalm 106:23

Prophets were not builders of physical walls, were they (Ezek. 13:5)? So, what was Moses doing and what did the false prophets of Ezekiel’s day fail to do? The Prophets were employed to look after the well-being of *spiritual barriers* by knowing the conditions to and the breach-ability of the promises of God (“*ye shall know My breach of promise*” – Num. 13:34), and in so doing they made sure the *spiritual hedge* of Israel was intact. When God was angry, like in Psalm 106:23, the people would move from a status of security to insecurity. In other words, the spiritual barrier of protection would be proportionately breached according to the sins committed by the people and the divine wrath that was consequentially kindled. In real-time, it wouldn’t be long before an invading host would arrive to breach the physical walls of the Cities of Israel and Judah, the Church. For an example of God’s anger via physical manifestations, the LORD said,

“And I will set My face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.” – Lev. 26:17

“And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of My Covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your Cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.” – Lev. 26:25

Albeit, before the physical manifestation of wrath did ever arrive so that the physical walls of Israelite Cities would be breached, the LORD would reveal the matter to the Prophets. They would see the *spiritual barrier* of God’s protection breached, like Moses in Psalm 106:23, and if that Prophet stood in the **breach** to turn away God’s wrath and availed, then the City was saved and the physical manifestation of their destruction never arrived! In this context, it was said of Moses, “Moses His chosen stood before Him in the **breach [gap]**, to turn away His wrath...” (Ps. 106:23). Thus, if enemy nations conspired against Israel or Judah, saying, “let us go up against Judah, and vex it, and let us make a breach therein for us, and set a king in the midst of it,” “it [should] not stand, neither [should] it come to pass” unless God inspired them to bring it to pass by breaching the *spiritual hedge* (Isa. 7:6).

You see, my reader? Are you comprehending the spiritual-to-physical transition of things? And, in the progress of time, do you see how the **Prophet’s Intercession** (gap-filling, breach-amending, hedge-building) is a nation-saving employment? Think of it, my reader! The Prophets heard the alarm of war (Jer. 4:21) from the trumpet of watchmen long before the invaders were spotted on the horizon! As if they heard it in real-time during the actual event, the Prophet’s heard the sounding alarm of invading armies long before the day came. They heard it as a spiritual revelation; they saw it as a vision; they were overcome and outwitted by it as a revelation in the Spirit of God! It was as if they were “caught up” (2 Cor. 12:4), and they could say, “so the Spirit lifted me up, and took me away, and I went in bitterness, in the heat of my spirit; but the hand of the LORD was strong upon me” (Ezek. 3:14), “whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell:

God knoweth” (2 Cor. 12:3). They felt future realities at present! They experienced them. As if they were in the death-grip of a Giant Man, they were overcome by them! Foregoing the judgment of God upon the backslidden people, the Prophet’s emotions were alarmed by the wrath of God, their ears by the noises of war, and their eyes by the travailing multitudes in pain under the suffering to come! It was then that these prophets did take upon themselves the holy and exhausting endeavor to wrestle the wrath of God, if haply, they would be granted grace and holy boldness to rise and stand against it, which is what it means to intercede. Before the actual manifestation of the wrath of God through invading armies that made war against Israel, the threat of overthrow and death was spiritually alive and real. Sadly, though, it was often unseen and unheard except by true Prophets who were ridiculed and rejected.

At times like these, the Prophets were the only hope. The Prophets who stood in the breach “stood between the dead and the living,” pressed, as it were, in conflicts of eternity, even as Aaron was when he “stood between the dead and the living” as the plague of wrath broke forth upon Israel at the events surrounding the gainsaying of Korah (Numbers 16:46-48). Can you imagine it? Moses and Aaron frantically casting their holy bodies upon the ground! Having fallen upon their faces they dared not look up, and they pled and cried petitions of mercy! Moses and Aaron interceded against God’s wrath set, at present, to fully annihilate Israel (Num. 16:45). Crying and pleading, the face of Moses lifted from the ground and gave a brisk command to Aaron: “Take a censer, and put fire therein from off the altar, and put on incense, and go quickly unto the congregation, and make an atonement for them: for there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun” (Num. 16:46)! Aaron, leaping from his knees to his feet with his priestly gown covered in dust, sprinted with all his might across the camp of Israel toward the Tabernacle. Like running through the chaos of modern warfare, Aaron ran in full stride across the camp, and, meanwhile, the plague was breaking forth upon the people like airborne artillery falling from the sky! As Aaron’s chest was heaving for air, he prepared the censer of incense. Making it ready, he then “ran into the midst of the congregation; and, behold, the plague [had] begun among the people... and he stood between the dead and the living; and the plague was stayed” (Num. 16:47-48). HOW FEARFUL!

My reader, what an astonishing scene! ...do you see how time-sensitive intercession is? At the time that Aaron took to run to and fro to prepare the intercession, let me ask you: how many thousands dead stacked upon thousands? How many died before Aaron had the time to stand right before the dead like a *spiritual wall* of protection from the plague, and thus, at the moment of his intercession the plague of wrath was shielded. That sober stand of Aaron, how fearful! As it is in physical war, so it was in divine plagues of wrath---every second counts! Is this how seriously you take intercession, dear Christian? Aaron, hasting for the intercessory stand, took a good while... and how precious were those passing seconds for the living and the dead on that day! During the plague, though it was eventually stayed, in the elapse of time thereto “fourteen thousand and seven hundred” Israelites died (Num. 16:49). Real intercession stands to reflect and turn back real forces of wrath! Even so, all intercessors stand for the noble cause of mercy and life. Many generations after Aaron, for example, the Prophets still wrestled against spiritual forces of wrath. The wrath of God was equally as dangerous but not as immediately manifest. The wrath of God was soon-to-be manifest, not as plagues but as invading armies. Therefore, these Prophets, like Aaron, were engaged in the time-press of urgency because souls hung in the balance! Likewise, as Aaron, the people were being slain before their very eyes! Before the Prophets’ eyes was the same gripping scenery of Israelite slaughter as thousands fell and tens of thousands lifted their weeping cries to heaven. What do I mean? Such visions seized the prophets in heart-wrenching agony, my reader! And, that, long before the actual event arrived. The Prophets didn’t only hear the sound of the trumpet and the alarm of war (yet to come), but voices of men and women weeping like an aerial view of nationwide devastation (Jer. 3:21, 4:15)! How would you respond if you suddenly saw and heard such things as prophetic revelation blasted upon your human frame? Jeremiah said,

“For I have heard a voice as of a woman in travail, and the anguish as of her that bringeth forth her first child, the voice of the daughter of Zion, that bewaileth herself, that spreadeth her hands, saying, Woe is me now! For my soul is wearied because of murderers” - Jer. 4:31

The howling agony of the future they did see in their now! They heard it beforehand so that the prophesying of its coming would electrify their prophetic cries to a sleepy nation in need of alarm! Millions slumbering on the brink of woe would be disturbed to behold a man in agony, a Prophet! Can a man such as this be altogether ignored? Can the waters of emotion be altogether unstirred when they behold a man in the agony of the message and murder to come? Howling and crying,

holy men would pierce the hearts of unholy men, for sure! Channels only, can you imagine the Prophets living out the animation of such prophetic words, like,

“Howl ye; for the day of the LORD is at hand; it shall come as a destruction from the Almighty. Therefore shall all hands be faint, and every man’s heart shall melt: And they shall be afraid: pangs and sorrows shall take hold of them; they shall be in pain as a woman that travaileth: they shall be amazed one at another; their faces shall be as flames.” - Isa. 13:6-8

My reader, before the nationwide face of Israel was as flames – terror-stricken with amazement! – they did behold a Prophet enflamed, amazed, speechless, weeping, and rent asunder! Have mercy LORD! The Prophets, arising time and time again to go from gate to gate, they preached and pled: “Thus saith the LORD!” It was a breaking burden! Thus, it was declared,

“The burden of the desert of the sea. As whirlwinds in the south pass through; so it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land. A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam: besiege, O Media; all the sighing thereof have I made to cease. Therefore are my loins filled with pain: pangs have taken hold upon me, as the pangs of a woman that travaileth: I was bowed down at the hearing of it; I was dismayed at the seeing of it. My heart panted, fearfulness affrighted me: the night of my pleasure hath He turned into fear unto me.” - Isa. 21:1-4

Can you imagine it? What if you were a Prophet who dwelt in Israel, just going about your daily business... or, perhaps you were in the middle a sweet hour of prayer, and suddenly! You heard the trumpet-blast of the watchman’s horn sounding its citywide alarm in your ears! Then, after the trumpet’s sound did blast you into heart-pounding attention! After, I say, the fear of annihilation and death gripped your soul! Then, in this state of emotional grip under the sensation of God, the very words of the LORD forcefully pounded into your heart with spiritual power and authority! My reader, this is the reason why the Prophets trembled. Being impacted by the message they did sigh and cry. They were dwelling in the spiritual reality of what would soon blast upon a condemned people! Suddenly, they too would be made to tremble! But, alas, if they had been made to tremble with the Prophet they might have escaped the hour of wrath and judgment. If only they had spiritual ears to hear! Nevertheless, agony would seize the people the very moment they heard the actual trumpet of the watchman sound from their city wall. The Prophets did see and hear things like this to amplify the message preached. Their bodily image made real the words so that the people could see what danger they were in at that very moment, if haply they might understand that personal and national security were breached because the promises were, at present, being breached! This is the experience of a true Prophet under the alarm of wrath, but false prophets preached the seductions of peace to a people in need of repentance. False prophets candy-coat poison by preaching the sweetness of the promises of God to a people disqualified from them. Their ministry was like a silent bite of a venomous serpent while walking through the pricks of a thorny swamp. Like life-threatening venom moving through the veins of the body, so are false prophets through the City streets. “The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and My people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?” (Jer. 5:31)?

False prophets did see and hear false messages of peace, my reader. They were deaf to the alarms of God. Their theology of *Unconditional Eternal Security* forbade wrath and breaches, and if there was a breach in the wall of God’s promised protection for Israel, they would neither have the courage or selfless care to stand in the gap and build it up again so that the wrath of God would not enter the City. “Ye have not gone up into the gaps,” God said, “neither made up the hedge for the house of Israel to stand in the battle in the day of the LORD” (Ezek. 13:5). Intercession is city-saving, and at the hour of wrath, the mercy of God looks for a man to stand in the breach! It was written, “And I sought for a man among them, that should make up the **hedge** [the *spiritual wall*], and stand in the **gap** before Me for the land, that I should not destroy it: but I found none. Therefore have I poured out Mine indignation upon them; I have consumed them with the fire of My wrath: their own way have I recompensed upon their heads, saith the Lord GOD” (Ezek. 22:30-31). False prophets wear the clothes of an intercessor, but it was a lying vanity; their garments were neither rent nor dusty, neither ashy nor worn. God said of them, they did NOT stand in the breach! They did NOT build up the spiritual wall!



“Ye have not gone up into the **gaps**, neither made up the **hedge** for the house of Israel to stand in *the battle* in the Day of the LORD.” – Ezek. 13:5

“And My hand shall be upon the prophets that see vanity, and that divine lies... because, even because they have seduced My people, saying, Peace; and there was **no peace**; and one built up a **wall**, and, lo, others **daubed it** with **untempered mortar**” – Ezek. 13:9-10

“And her prophets have **daubed** them with **untempered mortar**, seeing vanity, and divining **lies** unto them, saying, Thus saith the Lord GOD, when the LORD hath not spoken” - Ezek. 22:28

The false prophets did, however, deceptively build-up the *spiritual wall* and fill the breaches with untempered mortar! They promised the peace of an intact *spiritual hedge* over the people, but it was a counterfeit trust. Do you see it? The true Prophets preached and applied the promises of God in their rightful places, thus the people’s perception of the *spiritual barrier* was accurate. They gave true warnings in their rightful places, ensuring the performance of the promises. False Prophets, on the other hand, fantasized that they were building the *spiritual wall* and ensuring its blessing by misapplied promises. Their intercessory-standing and gap-building was a deception. They preached misapplied promises to a disqualified people, thinking all was well. As builders, they had an improper ratio of water and limestone. As Prophets, they had an improper understanding of security and vulnerability (goodness and severity). In other words, they were building the wall and filling the breach with a false promise. They bolstered the confidence of the people by putting their trust in untempered mortar! False promises of peace gave the perception that the wall of God’s protection was standing firm, but they failed to turn away the wrath of God in the midst of a spiritual dilemma like the crumbling of an untempered wall! Therefore, the wrath of God came and the actual walls of the defended Cities were breached. At last, the Cities were taken and the people were ravaged with destruction. Speaking of this, the LORD said,

“Say unto them which daub it with untempered mortar, that it shall fall: there shall be an overflowing shower; and ye, O great hailstones, shall fall; and a stormy wind shall rend it. Lo, when the wall is fallen, shall it not be said unto you, Where is the daubing wherewith ye have daubed it? Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; I will even rend it with a stormy wind in my fury; and there shall be an overflowing shower in Mine anger, and great hailstones in my fury to consume it. So will I break down the wall that ye have daubed with untempered mortar, and bring it down to the ground, so that the foundation thereof shall be discovered, and it shall fall, and ye shall be consumed in the midst thereof: and ye shall know that I am the LORD. Thus will I accomplish my wrath upon the wall, and upon them that have daubed it with untempered mortar, and will say unto you, The wall is no more, neither they that daubed it; To wit, the prophets of Israel which prophesy concerning Jerusalem, and which see visions of peace for her, and there is no peace, saith the Lord GOD.” - Ezek. 13:11-16

“Therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant.” - Isa 30:13

A breach in an actual City wall meant sure destruction for the City. Even more so, the breaches of God’s promises meant destruction for all. The breach of the *spiritual barrier* of God’s protection meant disaster! The entire Civilization, literally, and every aspect of Israelite livelihood was supported by the promises of God, remember that! The promises of God were the true defenders of Israel against alien foes! If the promises were broken (“*ye shall know My breach of promise*” – Num. 13:34), so was the wall. The false prophets spoke “peace” – they promised the people the security of salvation while they were rebellious, disqualified, and impenitent. In principle, the false prophets believed the promises of salvation were unconditional and un-breach-able. They were believers in Unconditional Eternal Security. Using another metaphorical term, for example, God spoke on this wise: tearing down His oath-bound protection and blessing, He said, “And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my Vineyard: I will take away the **hedge** thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the **wall** thereof, and it shall be trodden down” (Isaiah 5:5). A generation given over to such breaches of promise (resulting in the utter loss of security) were made to cry to God the lamentation, “Why hast Thou then broken down her **hedges**, so that all they which pass by the way do pluck her” (Psalm 80:12)? “Thou hast broken down all his **hedges**; Thou hast brought his **strong holds** to ruin” (Psalm 89:40)! It was for good reason, my reader. The LORD answered Ezekiel’s generation, and said,

“Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad, whom I have not made sad; and strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way, by promising him life: Therefore ye shall see no more vanity, nor divine divinations: for I will deliver my people out of your hand: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.” – Ezek. 13:22-23

This was the false Prophet’s handiwork of horror in plain language, no metaphors involved. Their sin-excusing preaching took the form of elaborate visions and illustrations, like the true Prophets, and this was the end result: they “strengthened the hands of the wicked, that he should not return from his wicked way” (Ezek. 13:22-23). Even so, the LORD said, “Thy prophets have seen vain and foolish things for thee: and they have not discovered thine iniquity, to turn away thy Captivity; but have seen for thee false burdens and causes of banishment” (Lam. 2:14). This was the conclusion of the whole matter, my reader. The Church, with walls impregnable and armies undefeatable, was rendered vulnerable and insecure at the instant *the Glory of God* departed. False Prophets, with deceptions innumerable and diabolical love inexhaustible, wooed the sin-sick people to the irreversible threshold.

## EZEKIEL 14:1-23

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign; time references: see 8:1 & 20:1*), the Elders of Israel gathered to inquire of Ezekiel for the second time (Ezek. 14:1).

### Insincere Seekers & the Deception of God

This time, fearfully, the word of the LORD was fiercely opposed to the inquirers (the **Good Figs**). With disdain, far beyond former times, the LORD rhetorically questioned and emphatically denounced the whole affair, saying,

“Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their heart, and put the stumblingblock of their iniquity before their face: **should I be enquired of at all by them?** Therefore speak unto them, and say unto them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Every man of the house of Israel that setteth up his idols in his heart, and putteth the stumblingblock of his iniquity before his face, and cometh to the prophet; **I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols;** *That I may take the house of Israel in their own heart,* because they are all estranged from me through their idols.” – Ezek. 14:3-5

The people of Israel in Babylon and in Judah were relentlessly enticed by the fantasies of false Prophets. Time and time again they and their followers were found to be deceived, thus disillusionment progressed. The sheer magnitude of deception and the perpetuity of its onslaught amidst [the Great Falling Away](#) was alluring “believers” in the LORD to be practical atheists, as formerly noted (“*The LORD hath forsaken the earth, and the LORD seeth not.*” – Ezek. 9:9). In an attempt to rouse the lulled hearts of the people and contradict the widespread disillusionment, the LORD testified to the operation of His hands in the midst of it all, declaring,

“I the LORD will answer him” - Ezek. 14:4

“I the LORD will answer him by Myself” - Ezek. 14:7

“I will set My face against that man” - Ezek. 14:8

“I the LORD have deceived that Prophet” - Ezek. 14:9

What do these threats mean? What end goal is hereby accomplished? The LORD invariably decreed deceptions to arrest every impenitent Israelite who came to the Prophets for inquiry, promising, “I the LORD will answer him” (Ezek. 14:4, 7). They came for a word from the LORD, so they feigned. God answered! By means of God-sent deceptions the LORD tactfully orchestrated (“*I will set My face against that man*” – Ezek. 14:8) and notoriously displayed (“*I...will make him a sign*

*and a proverb*” – Ezek. 14:8) the death of “every one of the House of Israel” who was impenitent and insincere. “I will cut him off from the midst of My people; and **ye shall know that I am the LORD**”, God said (Ezek. 14:8)! And for what end goal? For the establishment of Church Purity, of course. Herein, the Lord exercised **ultimate, sovereign, and transcendent rule of Israel via the heart by spiritual judgments**. In other words, the Lord was utilizing strong delusions (**the Deception of God**) for the enforcement of justice and judgment to the establishment of Church Purity. Remember, though, these divine mechanisms are a last resort utility used to target men who have **become an abomination** to the Lord, a source of incurable pollution! Speaking of this, the LORD’s stated purpose was:

“That the house of Israel may **go no more astray** from Me, **neither be polluted any more** with all their transgressions; but **that they may be My people, and I may be their God**, saith the Lord GOD.” – Ezek. 14:11

The false Prophets claimed intercessory powers they did not possess (Jer. 27:18). They preached fantasies of life and peace in a day of death and destruction for the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Therefore, the LORD had a controversy with the so-called intercessors, on this wise: pointing to the four judgments divinely orchestrated to annihilate the inhabitants of Jerusalem (“**the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence**” – Ezek. 14:21), the LORD testified, “Though these three men, **Noah, Daniel, and Job**, were in it...”, intercession was impossible (Ezek. 14:13-14, 15-16, 17-18, 19-20)! Amidst the merciless swords of barbaric manslayers, the slow death of an irresistible famine, the poisonous breath of unforeseeable pestilences, and the human-hunting wild animals gone mad with hunger, the LORD operated a person-specific and person-targeted annihilation until at last, in the latter end, the narrowly escaping remnant (hand-selected for survival to tell the story) found repentance and gave glory to God! To live through the stormy tempest that will nearly annihilate the population of **Evil Figs** was nothing short of a miracle! This was the performance of life-securing promises recorded in Ezekiel 3:18-21, assuring the penitent: “he shall surely live” (Ezek. 3:21). Testifying to what would happen to these survivors, the LORD said,

“Yet, behold, therein shall be left a **remnant** that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters: behold, they shall come forth unto you, and **ye shall see their way and their doings**: and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it. And they shall comfort you, **when ye see their ways and their doings**: and **ye shall know that I have not done without cause** all that I have done in it, saith the Lord GOD.” – Ezek. 14:22-23

This is a gracious amendment to the hopelessly damned basket of **Evil Figs**, my reader. By right of sovereign election and for the preservation of God’s own Name, He did it. “And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, *What doest Thou?*” (Dan. 4:35).

## EZEKIEL 15:1-8

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign; time references: see 8:1 & 20:1*), the LORD was compelled to condescend to the offended people in hopes they would justify God in the fires of tribulation (“*wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires?*” – Isa. 24:15), instead of blaspheming, for neither they nor their people deserved to survive the City of Jerusalem’s fiery destruction (Ezek. 14:22-23). In reference to the fact that a very small remnant was spared, Jeremiah said, “It is of the LORD’S mercies that we are not **consumed**, because His compassions fail not” (Lam. 3:22; **Sovereign Mercy**).

### The Worthwhile Burning of the Unworthy People

The former prophecy (Ezek. 14:1-23) was no doubt offensive to the sin-diseased people, so the LORD reckoned with them further, pleading: firstly, a parable which justified the **worthiness** of burning all **worthless** objects/souls (“*Is it meet for any work?*” – Ezek. 15:2-6), which meant, in turn, the dedication of *the inhabitants of Jerusalem* to the fire (Ezek. 15:6). The parable elaborated upon the **worthwhile** burning of the **worthlessness** people, that they were **worthless** *before* and *after* the

fire by the nature of their despicable persons (Ezek. 15:5). **Worthlessness** here rendered is, in other words, **unworthiness**. The question, “*Is it meet [worthy] for any work?*” (Ezek. 15:4), proves that the people were **unworthy** of the Kingdom of God (God’s work!). This frightening parable, depicting the **worthwhile** burning of **unworthy** people, should compel all saints to study and understand **the Doctrine of Worthiness** according to the scriptures. My reader, *are you worthy of the Kingdom of God (1 Thess. 2:11-12, 2 Thess. 1:5)?*

The whole compass of the Apostle Paul’s ministry finds significance in **the Doctrine of Worthiness**. Speaking to the Christians of Thessalonica, Paul said: “As ye know how we *exhorted* and *comforted* and *charged* every one of you, as a father doth his children, that ye would walk **worthy** of God, Who hath **called** you unto His Kingdom and glory” (1 Thess. 2:11-12). All forms of ministerial communication and verbal influence (*exhorting, comforting, and charging*) were mustered and employed in hopes that the Christians of Thessalonica would be **worthy!** Or, as Paul phrased it, “that ye may be **counted worthy** of the Kingdom of God” (2 Thess. 1:5). This unknown and unpreached doctrine, **the Doctrine of Worthiness**, was the end goal and chief aim of Paul’s preaching every time he preached! And, should we be surprised (“*I have written to him the great things of My Law, but they were counted as a strange thing.*” – Hos. 8:12)?

**Worthiness** is the response of saving faith, and since faith must be kept *initially, presently and progressively, and finally*, so also **worthiness** is spoken of as an attribute of *initial salvation* (Matt. 10:37-39, 22:8), *present progressive salvation* (1 Thess. 2:11-12, Eph. 4:1), and *final salvation* (2 Thess. 1:5, 11, Rev. 3:4, Luke 20:35-36, 21:36). The call to **worthiness** is a call to *live in* and *walk in* the Presence of God, to be conformed to what God is BY DEED. We are called unto the fellowship of God’s Son in this saving union of oneness, and when that fellowship or communion with Him is broken in our personal relationship to God’s Presence that dwells in us, then the following experiences of the gospel, also described as our calling, are not experienced, hence we are to be blamed instead of being judged “blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 1:8), and we will not be recognized by God as His sons (2 Cor. 6:18-7:1). What we are by nature, we must become by DEED, and this is **worthiness**. This is Paul’s continual burden for the Church of God. Your eternity will be decided upon in the language, “if you will **be accounted worthy**” (Lk. 20:35, 21:36). All those who enter Paradise will enter because their life-relationship to the Gospel call was “**worthy**”, in God’s estimation (Rev. 3:4).

Behavior “as dear children” (Eph. 5:1) of God, is, behavior “as obedient children” (1 Pet. 1:14), and at Judgment Day they will be the “sons of God without rebuke” (Php. 2:17). Living otherwise, men will be called “the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:1). Their eternal fate resides like the solemn warning: “Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience (Eph. 5:6, Col. 3:6). Such persons are living in a manner which does not represent the calling to be holy, or as Paul said, “called to be saints” (1 Cor. 1:2, Rom. 1:7), therefore they are living in a way which does not “**becometh** saints” (Eph. 5:3), and that is to say that they are not living in a way which is **worthy** of the name saint (“holy one”), and likewise they are not living in a way “as **becometh** the gospel” call (Php. 1:27). **Becometh** is a synonym to **worthiness**. These verses I have cited are in various places throughout scripture, and they address different nature-to-deed call of **worthiness**, but what you need to see is that God must “account” you “**worthy**” to be called “the children of God”, and when you see this, then you will understand all the argumentation which we shall soon cite and examine.

How serious is **the Doctrine of Worthiness**? Hear God through the prophet Ezekiel! Transitioning from parabolic terms to plain speech, the LORD declared that there would be an inescapable fire to devour all *the present-tense inhabitants of Jerusalem* (whether they abode in the City or went elsewhere; Ezek. 15:7) because of their **unworthiness!** So, the surviving escapees would be made to give glory to an inescapable LORD (“*ye shall know that I am the LORD*” – Ezek. 15:7). The escapees escaped an inescapable LORD, worshipping! How can it be? **Sovereign Mercy**. Nevertheless, and at last, the indisputable (though highly contested) final estate of the Land of Judah and Jerusalem at the conclusion of the Tribulation would be known by all (“*I will make the Land desolate*” – Ezek. 15:8).

The primary object of illustration in the parable chosen by the LORD was a Vine Tree. He said, “Behold, it is cast into *the fire* for fuel” (Ezek. 15:4). The authorial intent of application made by the LORD was said to be, “As the Vine Tree among the Trees of the Forest, which I have given to *the fire* for fuel, so will I give *the inhabitants of Jerusalem*” (Ezek. 15:6). This fire

of tribulation was so inescapable by all the present-tense inhabitants of Jerusalem that, it did not matter if they escaped the City and went elsewhere or not, the LORD promised: “I will set My face against them [the inhabitants of Jerusalem]” (Ezek. 15:7). This fixation of God’s face had a direct goal, which was,

“And I will set my face against them; **they shall go out from one fire, and another fire shall devour them**; and ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I set My face against them.” – Ezek. 15:7

The fire was inescapable no matter the location of the people! “They shall go out from *one fire*, and *another fire* shall DEVOUR THEM”, God said, to the end that the remnant *plucked out of the fire* would give Him the glory (“*a brand plucked from the fire*” – Zech. 3:2)! How sparse would this company of people be, my reader, seeing that all the inhabitants of Jerusalem were identified by God as **Evil Figs** (Evil Figs: Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19)? “*For the LORD shall judge His people, and repent Himself for his servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left*” (Deut. 32:36).

## EZEKIEL 16:1-63

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign; time references: see 8:1 & 20:1*), God said to Ezekiel, “Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations” (Ezek. 16:2). By way of the former prophetic analogy, the Vine Tree, the people understood their utter *worthlessness* and *unworthiness*, but they still didn’t know their *abominableness*.

### The Abominableness of Condemned Jerusalem

*“the latter end is worse with them than the beginning”* – 2 Pet. 2:20

In order to show them how *abominable* their condition was the people needed to remember from whence they came (Ezek. 16:3-7), whither they went (Ezek. 16:8-14), and where they have come (Ezek. 16:15-59). The Israelite people of old were worthless (Ezek. 16:3-7), then they became worthy (Ezek. 16:8-14), and then they turned worthless again (Ezek. 16:15-59). She who was, wasn’t, and was once again worthless is finally found to be thrice as worthless! In other words, she who was unloved and detested by all, became the beloved of God, but being unsatisfied with this she sought out many lovers! She who was legally unacceptable and polluted, and later chosen and preserved by God, being unthankful for this she sought out the legally unacceptable and polluted families of the earth to join with and do worse than them!

### *Jerusalem’s Father & Mother Before Salvation*

Starting from the very beginning, speaking of the people’s worthlessness of old, the LORD described their first estate by bearing witness to the identity of their Father and Mother, and worse.

“And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of *the land of Canaan*; thy **Father** was *an Amorite*, and thy **Mother** *an Hittite*. And as for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood...” – Ezek. 16:3-6

She was born a native Canaanite whose *Father* was an **Amorite** and *Mother* a **Hittite**. Furthermore, she, being so detestable (“*to the lothing of thy person*”), was cast out from the day of her birth: uncared for, unwashed, unsalted, unswaddled, unpitied, polluted in blood, and in the open field.

### *Jerusalem Adopted, Raised, & Beautified as a Bride*

They were without strength, godliness, righteousness, goodness, and love! They were sinners (Rom. 5:6-8). God found them and chose them at such a time (“*while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us*” – Rom. 5:8)! He said,

“Now when I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread My skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness: yea, I swore unto thee, and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord GOD, and thou becamest Mine.” – Ezek. 16:8

In God’s perspective, this meant: “I thoroughly washed”, “I anointed”, “I clothed”, “I girded”, “I covered”, “I decked”, “I put”, “I put”, until... God said, “thou wast exceedingly beautiful and thou didst prosper into a Kingdom” (Ezek. 16:9-13)! Jerusalem was not always as worthless as a Vine Tree, my reader. She was “exceedingly beautiful” (Ezek. 16:13) and “perfect through [God’s] comeliness” (Ezek. 16:14)! Hence, to be lifted up from the lowest point *unto* the highest point and, then, to fall... how perilous is that fall? In understanding this, the people would be compelled to remember their abominations in that, namely: they have marred the most valuable, disgraced the highest status, dishonored the highest dignity, profaned the most holy, and violated the most innocent – GOD’s COMELINESS (Ezek. 16:14).

The LORD took everything personal, saying: “My gold”, “My silver”, “Mine oil”, “Mine incense”, “My meat”, “thy sons and thy daughters whom thou hast borne unto Me”, because all these things came from God and were meant to be used in worship to God (Ezek. 16:15-20). What was given to them by God, they prostituted! They used God’s beauty, for adultery! The people were unable to recognize what came from God and belonged to God because they forgot their former estate. God said, “And in all thine abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, when thou wast naked and bare, and wast polluted in thy blood” (Ezek. 16:22). They forgot from whence they came (Ezek. 16:3-7) ...and so, naturally, whither they went was without the acknowledgement of God (Ezek. 16:8-14); had they remembered from whence they came they would have been loyal to God whither they went. Instead, the LORD said, “thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and playedst the harlot because of thy renown...”, as if it was theirs to begin with (Ezek. 16:15).

### *Jerusalem’s Adultery & Harlotry*

Oh, this awful course! “And it came to pass *after all thy wickedness*, (**woe, woe** unto thee! Saith the Lord GOD);...” (Ezek. 16:23). It was a wicked and woeful course! They waxed worse and worse for the same original cause, God said: “thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth...” (Ezek. 16:22, 43). Even so, whither they went (Ezek. 16:15-59) would prove to be the most abominable. They became a harlot... and worse! The LORD identified the partners of His wife’s infidelity by naming names: “the Egyptians”, “the Philistines”, “the Assyrians”, “Chaldea” (Ezek. 16:26, 27, 28, 29). Her fornications were spread abroad and that, without hire! [Note: Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah did either lust after or join inordinately with Egypt at the first, and, apparently, after being reduced to poverty through a God-sent famine (Ezek. 16:27), Judah sought after all the rest of these adulterous lovers out of enjoyment rather than necessity.]

“Thou...hast not been as an harlot, in that thou scornest hire; But as a wife that committeth adultery, which taketh strangers instead of her Husband!” – Ezek. 16:31-32

She didn’t do it for pay. She did it for pleasure! God Almighty was infuriated with jealousy, and said, “I will judge thee as women that break wedlock” (Ezek. 16:38)! In revenge, her jealous Husband (the Sovereign) turned the hearts of her lovers in whom she has taken pleasure so that they hated her and gathered together against her. At last, she would be reduced down to her *former estate* as at the first when God found her.

### *God's Jealously & Jerusalem's Destruction*

She who was detested and forsaken by all, “naked and bare” (Ezek. 16:7), would be so again! God said, “they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare” (Ezek. 16:39)! God’s wrath would not be pacified, until,

“They shall also **bring up a company against thee**, and they shall **stone thee with stones**, and **thrust thee through with their swords**. And they shall **burn thine houses with fire**, and **execute judgments upon thee** *in the sight of many women*: and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more. So will I make my **fury** toward thee to rest, and my **jealousy** shall depart from thee, and I will be **quiet**, and will be no more **angry**. Because *thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth*, but hast fretted me in all these things; behold, therefore I also will recompense thy way upon thine head, saith the Lord GOD: and thou shalt not commit this lewdness above all thine abominations.” – Ezek. 16:40-43

This being the case, that utter destruction was thereby determined (“*I will make the Land desolate*” – Ezek. 15:8), the LORD expounded how this would be used as the remedy of the problem. The coming destruction was not the problem, it was the solution! The Great Tribulation was ethically necessary and to be embraced by the people. This “no-repentance people” would come to repentance by embracing tribulation (Ezek. 16:52, 54, 61, 63)! As it has been proven in the former Chapters (long before the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign), these people were no longer God’s Family or God’s People for the most part. Do you remember when the Prophet Jeremiah identified the people with the title, “Evil Family” (Jer. 8:3)? It’s been 17 to 18 years since then and things have only gotten worse. From the beginning of Jehoiakim’s reign to the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign, things have only gotten worse. Hence, through the prophet Ezekiel, the Family Members of this “Evil Family” were named and thereby greater depth of meaning was offered: the *Mother* was a **Hittite**, the *Father* was an **Amorite**, the *Elder Sister* was **Samaria**, and the *Younger Sister* was **Sodom** (Ezek. 16:44-46). What’s the point?

### *Jerusalem's Latter End is Worse than her Sisters*

The significance of both the *Mother* and *Father* was already established in the larger part of this prophecy heretofore (Ezek. 16:22, 43). Therefore, in closing, the LORD detailed the identity of the *Sisters*, their judgment and restoration, and the shocking estate of Jerusalem in relationship to her *Sisters*, saying,

“**Sodom** thy *Sister* hath not done...as thou hast done” – Ezek. 16:48

“Neither hath **Samaria** committed half of thy sins” – Ezek. 16:51

Can you believe it? That **Jerusalem** was more wicked than these two Cities, **Sodom** and **Samaria**! The LORD said of **Jerusalem** in relationship to her *Sisters*, “Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations: but, as if that were a very little thing, thou wast corrupted more than they in all thy ways” (Ezek. 16:47). They were Family Members whose relationship made them live and act like one another (“*As is the Mother, so is her Daughter*” – Ezek. 16:44). In other words, they were a-kin to the customs of abomination and the culture of alienation. Ah, but **Jerusalem** did worse than her *Sisters*!

### *the Hittites & the Amorites*

It would be bad enough that Jerusalem returned to the kinship customs of her *Mother* and *Father*, the **Hittites** and **Amorites**. These two nations (among others) were given to Israel through the Covenant of Abraham (Gen. 15:18-21). The possession of this Land was granted to Abraham for good reason, though, because they were a people FULL of iniquity (Gen. 15:16), they were more wicked than all other nations (Deut. 9:4-5), and, being made ripe for judgment (Lev. 18:24-30, 20:22-27, Deut. 18:9-14), Israel was sent to WAR! The means by which this Covenant-gift was obtained by Israel wasn’t friendly, my reader. Being sent to war, Israel was commanded to show *no mercy* and take *no prisoners*! This was not just any war. God angrily demanded the *total annihilation* of these wretched nations and their animals, my reader! This included men, women,

and children, the elderly and infants (Deut. 20:16-18)! God was so repulsed, every living soul that populated these nations was intolerably wicked in His sight! Take it all in, my reader (Ex. 23:20-33, 34:11-14, Lev. 18:24-30, 20:22-27, Num. 33:51-56, Deut. 7:1-6, 16-19, 23-26, 12:1-4, 29-32, 18:9-14, 20:16-18, 23:1-17, Josh. 23:2-16, Judges 2:2-3). Once again, it could have been said (in reference to these nations), “it repented the LORD that He had made man on the Earth, and it grieved Him at His heart” (Gen. 6:6). God was intent upon eradicating from the Land of Israel every person, tradition, and custom of all Gentile peoples, that He might, in turn, preserve Israel as a holy and set-apart people unto Himself (“*I am the LORD your God, which have separated you from other people*” -Lev. 20:24). [For more information, see [The Land of Israel & Judah, The Kingdom of God, The City of Jerusalem, & Mount Zion.](#)] Therefore, with all things considered, it was no small error that Jerusalem forgot the days of her youth in that she was saved from the wretched and miserable estate that she inherited from her *Mother* and *Father* at birth (Ezek. 16:3-7, 22, 43).

### *The Greater Condemnation in Relationship to Sodom and Samaria*

“*the greater condemnation*” – James 3:1

Despite all the aforementioned, the half had not been told! Fearfully, it was a “very little thing” (Ezek. 16:47) to Jerusalem that she walked in all the abominations of her *Mother, Father, Elder Sister, and Younger Sister!* Remember, God said to them: “thou was corrupted *more than they* in all thy ways” (Ezek. 16:47), “*more than they*” (Ezek. 16:51), so that they were, at last, “*more abominable than they*” (Ezek. 16:52), how fearful! In full, the LORD was saying of Jerusalem in comparison to Samaria,

“Neither hath Samaria committed *half of thy sins*; but thou hast multiplied thine abominations *more than they*, and hast *justified* thy sisters in all thine abominations which thou hast done. Thou also, which hast judged thy sisters, bear thine own shame for thy sins that thou hast committed *more abominable than they*: they are *more righteous* than thou: yea, be thou confounded also, and bear thy shame, in that thou hast *justified* thy sisters.” – Ezek. 16:51-52

How is this possible? Of all the Kings of Judah prior to the Tribulation Period, only Jehoram, Ahaziah, Athaliah, Ahaz, and Manasseh walked in the ways of the Kings of Israel, and Israel’s sins were far more numerous with her idolatry more abundant. Therefore, how could Judah be considered *more wicked* than Israel? How exactly did Judah’s wickedness *exceed* Israel’s when Israel ventured further and abode longer in greater iniquities than Judah from generation to generation? How could it be said that Judah had *justified* Israel? Take, for example, the history of Israel leading up to the Assyrian Captivity that was unable to fully conquer Judah because of the righteousness that was abiding therein.

Historically, from the time of King Omri onward (1 Kings 16:23-24), Samaria became the capital City of the Nation of Israel politically speaking. Then, after Omri, wicked King Ahab built a Temple for Baal in the City making it the capital of religiously popular idolatry (1 Kings 16:32-33). Notably, this idolatry was different than the widely accepted calf worship that was erroneously directed to the God of Israel, a religion that was invented by Jeroboam the son of Nebat and adopted by every following generation until the desolation of Israel as a Nation. Despite many acts of divine chastisement, the wars with Syria being one instance (1 Kings 20:1, 2 Kings 6-7), the people of Israel continued in rebellion until there was no other option left except utter destruction and worldwide dispersion. God sent the Assyrians (2 Kings 18:9-10, Isaiah 10:5-19)! Furthermore, in reference to Judah being righteously defended and preserved by God while Israel wasn’t, and justly so, when Assyria vanquished Israel they nearly wiped out the whole nation of Judah as well even despite the righteous reforms made under Hezekiah during that time! But... from the last remaining defended City of Judah, the City of Jerusalem, King Hezekiah and the Prophet Isaiah kept the faith and cried out to God! Shockingly, the LORD defended them by sending angels to slay 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in one night (Isa. 37:36-38)! God put a difference between Israel and Judah, and justly so! My reader, think of all the righteous Kings that ascended the throne of Judah, while Israel had none.

In fact, Judah’s *superior standing in righteousness* was directly related to her *superior standing in wickedness* in the latter end. Matthew Henry, taking note of this, identified an important parallel that sheds light on Judah’s latter estate of unprecedented woefulness.



“Jerusalem was more polite, and therefore sinned with more wit, more art and ingenuity, than Sodom and Samaria could. Jerusalem had more wealth and power, and its government was more absolute and arbitrary, and therefore had the more opportunity of oppressing the poor, and shedding malignant influences around her, than Sodom and Samaria had. Jerusalem had the temple, and the ark, and the priesthood, and kings of the house of David; and therefore the wickedness of that holy city, that was so dignified, so near, so dear to God, was more provoking to him than the wickedness of Sodom and Samaria, that had not Jerusalem's privileges and means of grace. Sodom has *not done as thou hast done*, Eze. 16:48. This agrees with what Christ says. Mat. 11:24, *It shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment than for thee.*” – Matthew Henry

Judah had Jerusalem and Mount Zion, the beloved City and Mountain of God. Judah had the Temple and the Ark, the earthly House and Throne of God. Judah had a lineage of Kings via the seed of David, the children to whom God was oath-bound to establish forevermore. Judah had the Aaronic Priesthood and the Levitical Officers, employees of true religion for the prosperity of real salvation via the judgments and statutes of God. All of this, in comparison to the dismal estate of Israel, was a staggering contrast with profound moral implications.

Israel was spiritually bankrupt and Godforsaken, literally, while Judah was spiritually enriched and God-possessed. In other words, the immorality that was commonplace among *Samaritans* and *Sodomites* was hard-to-be-achieved in the Moral Sanctuary of God in *Judah*. An act of rebellion from this place of spiritual prosperity necessitated the squandering of imperishable riches. An act of rebellion from the royalty of a superior holiness necessitated the hard-to-be-accomplished profanation of all that is holy in direct defiance of Him who was hard-to-be-withstood, the Most Holy God. An act of rebellion from this region wherein shined an abundance of Divine Light necessitated a stubborn and steadfast resistance of the emanating virtue, hence the human will must have been profoundly more stubborn than nominal sinners of any sort in any other Nation in the World at that time. An act of rebellion from this morally heightened condition necessitated a far greater immorality than all the commonplace depravity committed by *Samaria* and *Sodom*, Judah's Sisters. On this wise, Judah's superior standing in righteousness directly related to her superior standing in wickedness in the latter end. The defiance of a greater manifestation of salvation meant a greater damnation because it was a greater wickedness. My reader, this moral protocol of justice is evident in the earthly ministry of Jesus Christ when He identified the 1<sup>st</sup> century Cities of *Chorazin*, *Bethsaida*, and *Capernaum* as guilty of greater wickedness than *Tyre*, *Sidon*, and *Sodom*. Furthermore, speaking in reference to *all* the 1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish *Cities* that would reject the Disciples of Christ who were sent as messengers thereunto, the Lord affirmed that their wickedness exceeded that of *Sodom* and *Gomorraha*!

“Then began He to upbraid the Cities wherein most of His mighty works were done, because they repented not: Woe unto thee, *Chorazin!* woe unto thee, *Bethsaida!* for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in *Tyre* and *Sidon*, **they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.** But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for *Tyre* and *Sidon* at **the Day of Judgment**, than for you. And thou, *Capernaum*, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in *Sodom*, **it would have remained until this day.** But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of *Sodom* in **the Day of Judgment**, than for thee.” – Matt. 11:20-24

“And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when ye depart out of that House or City, shake off the dust of your feet. Verily I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for the Land of *Sodom* and *Gomorraha* in **the Day of Judgment**, than for that City.” - Matt. 10:14-15

The moral protocol of justice – used by the Prophet Ezekiel for the identification of Judah's woefulness – was employed by Jesus Christ in His earthly ministry wherein, like Judah of old, the 1<sup>st</sup> century Cities that rejected Christ were placed in a morally superior position above *Tyre*, *Sidon*, *Sodom*, and *Gomorraha*, hence the greater condemnation. They were being visited by God the Son and His messengers, being exercised by the power and virtue of their ministries, therefore upon rejecting the Moral One who walked in their midst performing wonders, let us understand: they became more guilty than *Sodom* and *Gomorraha* in God's estimation! Rightly so, because the accumulation of wickedness necessary to commit that one act of rejection was far greater than the innumerable acts of wickedness committed by *Sodom* and *Gomorraha* from

generation to generation. See, my reader? The Lord testified that the *Sodomites* were **more tender-hearted** than those 1<sup>st</sup> century Jews who rejected Christ! Vice versa, this means that the 1<sup>st</sup> century Jews were **more hard-hearted** than the *Sodomites* of old! In other words, Sodom would have repented if Christ did in her what was done in *Capernaum*! Thus, while it appears that *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* were more wicked than 1<sup>st</sup> century *Capernaum* and other like *Cities*, for indeed *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* did commit far more numerous acts of wickedness in a more devilish society of normalized immorality, yet the reality was the contrary because of the wickedness necessary on the Jews part to reject so great a manifestation of salvation via God the Son. The amassed wickedness necessary to commit that one single act – the rejection of God the Son! – was comparable to the hard-to-be-committed acts of rebellion committed by Judah of old.

As formerly noted, Judah of old was enriched by the *Temple*, She was ingratiated by the blessing of *righteous Kings* in the line of David, and She was endowed by an abundance of God's oversight and direction via *the Prophets*, and thus when She rebelled in less frequent acts of wickedness and with lesser forms of perversion than Samaria and Sodom, *so it seemed*, the moral protocol interprets the fewer acts of wickedness as the greatest form of perversion possible, and righteously so! These influences – the *Temple*, *righteous Kings*, and God-sent *Prophets* – weighed in the balances of morality exactly like the ministry of Jesus Christ altered the moral situation of 1<sup>st</sup> century Jewish *Cities*. In reference to the aforementioned endowments, lo and behold: Jesus was greater than *the Temple* (Matt. 12:6), greater than *King Solomon* (Matt. 12:42), and greater than *the Prophet Jonah* (Matt. 12:41)! Hence, we must interpret the criminal acts of every *City* as they relate to the aforementioned endowments. Remember, this is because the magnitude of a crime committed is situational and circumstantial to the value and royalty of the place and people involved. This can be illustrated by the criminal act of thievery, for example; the penalty fluctuates with the value of the object or the royalty of the person stolen. Value and royalty changes criminality because it is a greater evil to steal or harm those things or persons which are the most precious and irreplaceable. In the specific case of 1<sup>st</sup> century Judaism considered within the scope of human history as a whole, the greatest of sins are those committed against the greatest manifestation of God. Therefore if, in 1<sup>st</sup> century Judaism, the greatest manifestation of God ever to exist was beheld and rejected – One greater than *Jonas*, *Solomon*, and *the Temple* – then the Jews were, consequentially, the greatest sinners ever to exist!

**Because** all cleanness is determined by humanity's relationship to the Cleansing Man, when and if they reject Jesus Christ they are thereby reduced into a state of utter uncleanness beyond any woeful denouncement expressed to any Unclean Land or people throughout all of human history ("*It shall be more tolerable for the Land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the Day of Judgment, than for that city.*"-Matt.10:15, Lk.10:12).

**Because** Jesus Christ is the embodiment of the Moral and Ceremonial Law, when and if anyone rejects Him they are committing a crime which is equivalent to rejecting the counsel of *every Law* in the Old Testament ("*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me. And ye will not come to Me, that ye might have life.*"-John5:38-39).

**Because** Jesus Christ is the embodiment of all prophecy and promise – the Prophet of prophets – when and if Israel rejects Him they are committing a crime of unlawful bloodshed which is equivalent to slaying all the prophets which have existed from the foundation of the world ("*That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the Temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.*"-Lk.11:50-51, 13:34)!

If so great a guilt was reckoned – unthinkable in magnitude! – it was for so great a crime committed, a single act of bloodshed, far outweighing the blood of all the Prophets from the foundation of the world! This one abomination, a single act, was more abominable than all the abominations ever committed! Therefore, if such and such was spoken in regards to the 1<sup>st</sup> century Jews rejecting God-Incarnate, what can be said of the Old Testament Jews of the Kingdom of Judah who rejected the manifestation of the pre-Incarnate Christ through the endowments granted to her? Very specifically, God reckoned with Judah based upon what She did to His **judgments** and **statutes** (the virtues that proceeded from the *Temple*, *righteous Kings*, and God-sent *Prophets*) just as God reckoned with the 1<sup>st</sup> century Jews based upon what they did to Jesus Christ. Her rejection of God's **judgments** and **statutes** necessitated the amassing of wickedness that far outweighed the criminal activity of other Countries. All other Nations, knowing Judah's privileged position of royalty and holiness, watched

as “She hath *changed [God’s] judgments into wickedness more than the Nations, and [God’s] statutes more than the Countries that are round about Her*” (Ezek. 5:6), and in God’s estimation this was a greater evil than *all the abominations* of the Nations that were round about Judah.

“Thus saith the Lord GOD; This is Jerusalem: I have set it in the midst of the Nations and Countries that are round about her. And she hath *changed My judgments into wickedness more than the Nations, and My statutes more than the Countries that are round about her*: for they have **refused** my judgments and my statutes, they have **not walked** in them. Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Because ye multiplied more than the nations that are round about you, and have **not walked** in my statutes, neither have kept my judgments, *neither have done according to the judgments of the nations that are round about you*; Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, am against thee, and will execute judgments in the midst of thee in the sight of the nations. And I will do in thee that which I have not done, and whereunto I will not do any more the like, *because of all thine abominations*. Therefore the fathers shall eat the sons in the midst of thee, and the sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments in thee, and **the whole remnant** of thee will I scatter into all the winds.” – Ezek. 5:5-10

As you can see, my reader, parallelism resounds. The moral protocol of justice is harmonious. Thereby, *Judah* was more wicked than her Sisters, *Samaria* and *Sodom*. Judah’s man-to-God relationship via the Covenant changed everything. Therefore, God took personally what Judah did to the Covenant (a Covenant which contained judgments to obey, statutes to keep, and oaths to fulfill) and responded likewise, saying: “I will even deal with thee as thou hast done, which hast despised the oath in breaking the Covenant” (Ezek. 16:59; see “[The Righteous Judgment of God](#)”). Ah, these Jews! The inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, the **Evil Figs!** They were worse off than *Sodomites*, spiritually speaking, and they were preaching *Unconditional Eternal Security!*

“The Captivity of **the wicked Jews**, and their ruin, shall be as irrevocable as that of Sodom and Samaria. In this sense, as a threatening, most interpreters take Ezek. 16:53, Ezek. 16:55. “*When I shall bring again the captivity of Sodom and Samaria, and when they shall return to their former estate, then I will bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them, and as it were for their sakes, and under their shadow and protection, because they are more righteous than thou, and then thou shalt return to thy former estate,*” But Sodom and Samaria were never brought back, nor ever returned to their former estate, and therefore let not Jerusalem expect it, that is, those who now remained there, whom God would *deliver to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt*, Jer. 24:9, Jer. 24:10. Sooner shall the Sodomites arise out of the salt sea, and the Samaritans return out of the land of Assyria, than they enjoy their peace and prosperity again; for, to their shame be it spoken, it is *a comfort* to those of the ten tribes, who are dispersed and in captivity, to see those of the two tribes who had been as bad as they, or worse, in like manner dispersed and in captivity; and therefore they shall live and die, shall stand and fall, together. The bad ones of both shall perish together; the good ones of both shall return together. Note, Those who do as the worst of sinners do must expect to fare as they fare. Let my enemy be as the wicked.” – Matthew Henry

Shockingly, spiritual status of Judah as *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* was not new (Jer. 23:14). The backsliding Church was deserving of a total annihilation long ago, as Isaiah and Hosea declared, saying,

“We should have been as **Sodom**, and we should have been like unto **Gomorrah**” - Isa. 1:9

“How shall I give thee up, **Ephraim**? how shall I deliver thee, **Israel**? how shall I make thee as **Admah**? how shall I set thee as **Zeboim**? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together. I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy **Ephraim**: for I am God, and not man; the Holy One in the midst of thee: and I will not enter into the city.” – Hos. 11:8-9

Why weren’t the Jews totally annihilated? Hosea told the story! **Admah** and **Zeboim** were neighboring Cities to *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, my reader. They, like *Sodom* and *Gomorrah*, were reduced to ashes via a total annihilation (Jude 1:7)! Ah, but She who was worse than *Sodom* and *Gomorrah* didn’t suffer this fate and herein lies a great mystery (Lam. 3:22-23, Neh. 9:30-31)! Is this just? The Prophet Ezekiel will labor to unveil this mystery of *injustice* in Ezekiel Chapter 20 in unprecedented

detail. The truth be told, even though Judah was worse than Sodom and Gomorrah and deserving of a more fiery fate than they, the LORD explained: “I have wrought with you for My Name’s sake, *not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings*” (Ezek. 20:44). [For more information, see: [Chapter 8: The Near Annihilation of God’s People](#), [Chapter 9: “I Am Weary With Repenting”](#), & [Chapter 10: “Mercy On Whom I Will Have Mercy”](#).]

## EZEKIEL 17:1-24

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign; time references: see 8:1 & 20:1*), Ezekiel was given a time-sensitive message to the events unfolding in Jerusalem; mind you, these are events Ezekiel knows nothing about except by the inspiration of God because he is in the Land of Chaldea!

### Zedekiah Rebelled as a Tributary to Babylon

It was revealed to Ezekiel that Zedekiah rebelled as a tributary to Babylon despite the covenant and oath he swore to the King of Babylon (Ezek. 17:13). Zedekiah did this with hopes to be in league with Egypt who would supply him with horses and a great army, given the fact that the tributary money meant for Babylon was used to hire Egypt. In response to Zedekiah’s plan, the LORD asked: “Shall he prosper? Shall he escape that doeth such things? Or shall he break the covenant, and be delivered” (Ezek. 17:15)? Notably, this is the same question delivered to the second of three Vines addressed in the prophecy, the LORD saying, “Shall it prosper” (Ezek. 17:9-10)?

A parable was put forth of two great eagles whose plantings became two vines (Ezek. 17:3-6, 7-8), and then a third planting which became a goodly tree (Ezek. 17:22-24). The first two plantings are illustrated and then an interpretation was given (Ezek. 17:11-21), with the third planting following. According to the interpretation, the first planting of “the highest branch of cedar” (which became a vine) was by the King of Babylon, the great eagle, who took the King and the Princes of Judah to Babylon in 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity (Ezek. 17:12-14). Notably, this vine (in contrast to the second vine) will prosper (as God has already testified in Jer. 29:4-7)! It was God’s will that the Jews of the Kingdom of Judah were taken to Babylon (the Good Figs) as a chastisement with a promise of a future restoration (Ezek. 17:22-24).

However, the Jews located in the Kingdom of Judah (the **Evil Figs**) rebelled against Babylon *at the time of this prophecy* (approximately the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign) in hopes to become a prosperous people and Kingdom through the nourishment of Egypt (Ezek. 17:7-8, 15, 17). Being in covenant with Egypt (the planting of the second vine), Judah hoped to be supplied with horses and much people for a mighty army (Ezek. 17:15, 17). Remember, though, to break with Babylon and join with Egypt, Zedekiah had to break the covenant he made with the King of Babylon (Ezek. 18:15-19). God took this personally, and rightfully so! This rebellion was not an offence against a mere man, the King of Babylon. It was rebellion against God who raised up the King of Babylon as a chastisement to His people (Jer. 25:9, 27:6, 43:10). The morality of *Unconditional Eternal Security* believers knows no bounds! In response to this, the LORD said, “I will bring him to Babylon and will plead with him there for his trespass that he hath trespassed against Me” (Ezek. 17:20). As for the rest, all the fugitives of this “rebellious house” of Judah remaining in Jerusalem will be slain by “**the sword**” or “scattered toward all winds”, and the LORD said, “**ye shall know that I the LORD have spoken it**” (Ezek. 17:21).

Notably, the vine which represented the **Good Figs** would live and prosper (at least temporarily)! And, the vine which represented the **Evil Figs** would be uprooted and destroyed! They were, in other words, a Good Vine and an Evil Vine. Fearfully, though, through *Unconditional Eternal Security* the Jews in Jerusalem were claiming the promises of pastime in hopes that they could be reckoned for the present. In every other occasion, except the Great Tribulation, the promises of pastime were authoritatively God’s revealed will for the residue of Jews in Jerusalem... but not now! This was unseen time despite the “discerning eye” of false prophets who only and always preach the promises of God. Jesus said to the generation of the Great Tribulation in His day, “Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not discern this time” (Lk. 12:56)?

Having declared that the Jews (the Good Vine) with Babylon would prosper and the Jews with Egypt would be uprooted (the Evil Vine), the LORD illustrated the latter end: namely, the Jews returning to “the Mountain of the height of Israel” to become a “goodly cedar”, not merely a vine, “and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell” (Ezek. 17:24). Much of Ezekiel’s ministry has been a rescue attempt of the impenitent and wicked **Good Figs**, here called the Good Vine, and the LORD says that they will return to the Land of Israel in restoration and glory, but how? Will the LORD take the Jews of the Captivity (taken from the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivities) as a whole and bring them to Zion (the Good Vine or **Good Figs** in their entirety)? No.

The LORD promised to take only the elect of Babylon in the same way he took the elect from Judah and Jerusalem in the former 3 Captivities, saying, “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...” (Ezek. 17:22). Looking carefully, this is the same language used to describe the relocation and planting of the Jews in Babylon via the Captivities (Ezek. 17:3-6). Therefore, not all the Jews in Babylon would accompany the restoration that God promised to perform... only the hand-selected bunch would be. This people, above all others, will inherit the blessing God had intended for the **Good Figs**. This is a selected residue of the whole population of Jews who would be in Babylon, from Babylon-to-Israel just as they were hand-selected of old from Judah-to-Babylon. Triumphantly, the LORD said, “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 spoken and have done it” (Ezek. 17:24). Shocking.

Note: *In response to this rebellion, Babylon would come and attack in approx. two years’ time and, after a long siege lasting approx. 2 years, she would be successfully overthrown in approx. 4 years’ time.*

## EZEKIEL 18:1-32

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign; time references: see 8:1 & 20:1*), the LORD moves Ezekiel to confront the baseless theological conviction of the Jews who refused the prophecies of the Tribulation Prophets, Jeremiah and Ezekiel, and thus refused to embrace Babylon. At this point in time, with approximately two years remaining until Babylon would attack and four years until Jerusalem would fall, King Zedekiah claims *Unconditional Eternal Security*. He and those with him in Jerusalem and Judah, the **Evil Figs**, *didn’t believe they were evil!* They protested the truth by means of a *parable* – a seeming biblical and legitimate *parable*. Of course, this *parable* debated the spiritual status and eternal fate of the Jews who did and would suffer death via Babylon. Likewise, and necessarily so, they misinterpreted Church History and misunderstood the former times when a Near Annihilation befell the People of God, the Jews. Albeit, God was intent upon convincing them otherwise with undeniable clarity.

### The Evil Figs Didn’t Believe They Were Evil!

#### *A Parable Debating the Spiritual Status & Eternal Fate of Those Who Did, Do, and Would Die*

The Jews of Jerusalem & Judah, the **Evil Figs**, didn’t believe they were evil! For this reason, the following proverb was noised abroad, “The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge” (Ezek. 18:2). This meant, in other words, “The fathers have sinned, and the children are punished for it.” As formerly noted, the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem accused the Captives of Babylon (the **Good Figs**) to be sinners and hailed themselves as the righteous, and as if this wasn’t depraved enough, the demented people devised further heresies. Namely, while undergoing fierce judgments of **famine, pestilence, wild beasts**, and the **sword** (in various measures theretofore) the Jews were put to the perplexing exercise of enumerating the dead bodies of supposedly “eternally secure” and “righteous” Jews on every side; thus, the baffled people needed a justification for it all! According to God’s Book, the righteous don’t perish in this manner... hence, the heresy-devout people claimed that they were being punished for the sins of their fathers and not

their own sins, and this erroneously meant that the enumerating dead bodies were nevertheless “eternally secure” and “righteous” before God.

You see, my reader? This proverb proved to be a real problem (“*The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge*” - Ezek. 18:2). Testifying to this, both Ezekiel and Jeremiah addressed it. This mouthful of rebellion was so popular that God combatted its influence in Babylon and in Judah through the Prophets on location, Ezekiel and Jeremiah. Remember, the proverb was popular because the Jews of Judah and Jerusalem claimed the security of the righteous, God’s favor and blessing, and the LORD sternly answered them by calling them sinners, by affirming, “the soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezek. 18:4). In other words, the LORD was saying, “The fathers and the sons have eaten and are eating sour grapes, and therefore they are suffering death”. In the direct language of Jeremiah 31:29-30 (which was likely inspired at the same time as Ezekiel 18), the LORD said,

“In those days they shall say no more, The fathers have eaten a sour grape, and the children's teeth are set on edge. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eateth the sour grape, his teeth shall be set on edge.” – Jer. 31:29-30

To prove that these deaths suffered in Jerusalem and Judah were because the men and women were evil, the LORD *specified the conduct* of the just and the unjust, the righteous and the wicked, and in so doing He testified to the consciences of the people who knew they fit the description of the wicked. Directly contesting the scenario promoted by the manmade proverb, the LORD described the conduct of each individual Jew who would not die (Ezek. 18:5-9, 14-17) and the conduct of those who would die (Ezek. 18:10-13, 18), regardless of the conduct of their fathers or their sons. The people answered God, saying, “Why? Doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?” (Ezek. 18:19). And to this, the LORD plainly responded, “The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son” (Ezek. 18:20). With further clarifications and pleas, the LORD reaffirmed His point in Ezekiel 18:19-32. Considering the increasing onslaught of death and destruction which had been and would be suffered by the inhabitants of Judah and Jerusalem, the LORD reaffirmed the heart issue, saying, “Have I any pleasure at all that **the wicked** should die? Saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from *his ways*, and live?” (Ezek. 18:23, 32). Therefore, those who had died already or would die in the future suffered thus on the grounds of their own sin.

For the first time, and as an extension to Ezekiel 3:17-21, LORD detailed a true caricature of righteous men to dissolve all doubts (Ezek. 18:5-9). The matter was highly contested! The people were in no condition to “discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not” (Mal. 3:18). Graciously, though, the God of Israel explained with detail what a man would do “*if a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right...*” (Ezek. 18:5-9). This widely accepted heretical proverb would have been unacceptable to all Israelites, had they eyes to see the flagrant, continuous, a popularized disobedience to God’s word on every side. Nevertheless, heresy finding an inroad, the sin-demented people fell-a-prey to various **doctrinal arguments** which *appeared* to vindicate their perception of God’s judgment. “*They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate*” (Titus 1:16). What **doctrinal arguments**, you wonder? My reader, the popularity of this heretical proverb can be partway understood by the various instances of Biblical Church History and Scriptural Testimony which *appear* to prove that children, at sundry times, did indeed perish because of the iniquities of their fathers. However, before venturing into a thorough examination of this matter, let me say this: whether or not any children suffered death on account of the sins of their fathers proves to be a complex matter (by “a complex matter”, I mean that this matter contains unsolvable complexities to backslidden generations to whom belongs confusion of face [Dan. 9:7-8, 13], the 21<sup>st</sup> century included!), but, nevertheless, all complexities and seeming contradictions are simplified and resolved when all scripture is held in high regard and taken with infallibility, as it is in truth. I repeat, when this ethic of faith is upheld... the controversy dissolves.

My reader, if scripture seems confusing to us we have need to humble ourselves before God. We should behave as Daniel stated (Dan. 9:7-8, 13), we should be humbled by what Paul warned (1 Cor. 1:26-29, 3:18-21), and we should be astonished at what Jesus praised (Matt. 11:25-26) because wisdom is a precious gift from God most commonly withheld from the noble intellectuals of every generation (James 1:5-6)! Therefore, my reader, before moving forward let us introspectively consider the humility of Daniel the Prophet, let us be convinced of the dogmatic affirmations of the Apostle Paul, let us

stand in wonder at the praise and adoration of Jesus Christ, and, at last, let us behold the alien origin of all wisdom: HEAVEN.

“O Lord, righteousness belongeth unto thee, but unto us confusion of faces, as at this day; to the men of Judah, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and unto all Israel, that are near, and that are far off, through all the countries whither thou hast driven them, because of their trespass that they have trespassed against thee. O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee...As it is written in the law of Moses, all this evil is come upon us: yet made we not our prayer before the LORD our God, that we might turn from our iniquities, and understand thy truth.” – Dan. 9:7-8, 13

“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence.” – 1 Cor. 1:26-29

“Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men...” – 1 Cor. 3:18-21

“At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight.” – Matt. 11:25-26

If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed.” – James 1:5-6

With knees that do not merely kiss the floor with momentary prayers and useless religious nuances, let us move forward. The hard-to-be-answered proverb speaks on, questioning: *Do children suffer death on account of the sins of their fathers?*

### Father-to-Child Visitation and Recompense

It is true that God both *visits* and *recompenses* the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of the children, as it is clearly stated in Exodus 20:5-6, 34:6-8, Num. 14:17-19, & Jeremiah 32:18, and many historical instances of Biblical Church History do convey this reality.

“Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, **visiting** the iniquity of **the fathers upon the children** *unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me*; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments.” – Exodus 20:5-6

“And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; **visiting** the iniquity of **the fathers upon the children**, *and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation*. And Moses made haste, and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshipped.” – Ex. 34:6-8

“And now, I beseech thee, let the power of my Lord be great, according as Thou hast spoken, saying, The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, **visiting** the iniquity of **the fathers upon the children** *unto the third and fourth generation*. Pardon, I beseech thee, the iniquity of

this people according unto the greatness of thy mercy, and as thou hast forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now.” – Num. 14:17-19

“Thou shewest lovingkindness unto thousands, and recompensest the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them: the Great, the Mighty God, the LORD of hosts, is his name” – Jer. 32:18

Perhaps the most notable example of God punishing children for the iniquity of their fathers, in respect to the Tribulation Period wherein Ezekiel and Jeremiah addressed the manmade proverb (“*The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children’s teeth are set on edge*” - Ezek. 18:2), is found in 2 Kings 23:26-27, 24:3-4, Jeremiah 15:4, & Lamentations 5:7.

“And like unto him was there no King before him [Josiah], that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him. Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of **all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal**. And the LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the House of which I said, My name shall be there.” – 2 Kings 23:25-27

“Surely at the commandment of the LORD came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, **for the sins of Manasseh**, according to all that he did; And also for the innocent blood that he shed: for he filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the LORD would not pardon.” – 2 Kings 24:3-4

“And I will cause them to be removed into all Kingdoms of the earth, **because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah King of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.**” – Jer. 15:4

“Our **fathers** have sinned, and are not; and **we have borne their iniquities.**” – Lam. 5:7

The message is indisputably clear that, indeed, the children were punished for the iniquities of their fathers, their father Manasseh most of all. Albeit, in unison with the LORD’s denouncement of the people’s heretical proverb, it was written of old,

“The **fathers** shall not be put to death for the **children**, neither shall the **children** be put to death for the **fathers**: every man shall be put to death for his own sin.” – Deut. 24:16

“Now it came to pass, when the kingdom was established to him, that he slew his servants that had killed the king his father. But he slew not their **children**, but did as it is written in the law in the book of Moses, where the LORD commanded, saying, The **fathers** shall not die for the **children**, neither shall the **children** die for the **fathers**, but every man shall die for his own sin.” – 2 Chron. 25:3-4

Therefore, what is the conclusion of the whole matter? Clearly, the Lord *visits* and *recompenses* the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children, as stated in Exodus 20:5-6, 34:6-8, Num. 14:7-9, & Jeremiah 32:18, as demonstrated in the Tribulation Period by 2 Kings 23:26-27, 24:3-4, Jeremiah 15:4, & Lamentations 5:7, but this *visitation* or *recompense* is limited in its penal intensity in that the children *will not die* for the iniquity of their parents (Deut. 24:16, 2 Chron. 25:3-4). This restriction of judgment is clearly stated in scripture and upheld by God, no doubt, even though things may *appear* differently in many cases of Biblical Church History.

### *Seeming Contradictions*

In many instances, it *appears* that children were put to death for the iniquity of their fathers, for example: in the case of Korah and Dathan’s sins, their whole families (women and children) were swallowed alive into hell by the earth (Num. 16:26-32); in the case of Achan’s sins, his whole family (women and children) were stoned to death and then burnt in fire (Josh. 7:24-26); in the case of King Saul’s sins, seven of his sons were slain whose lives were far removed from Saul’s



former crimes (2 Sam. 21:9, 14); in the case of Israelite Cities which were given over to idolatry, the children of their families were not permitted to survive (Deut. 13:1-18); in the case of non-Israelite peoples and nations, like the Amalekites, every generation (including women and children) was doomed to suffer a total annihilation (Ex. 17:13-16, 1 Sam. 15:2-3, 18); and, at last, in the case of the Canaanite nations, their children were not permitted to survive the judgment of total annihilation because of the sins of their fathers (Deut. 20:16-18, Gen. 15:16). With these instances of Biblical Church History duly considered, my reader, let us anticipate the reconciliation that truth will bring.

This much we know, just as it was formerly proven by scripture: God does not *fatally* punish a wicked people nationally or collectively *in the sense* that any righteous individual person in the midst thereof would suffer the death of the wicked. In other words, God will not destroy the righteous with the wicked (Gen. 18:23)! Speaking of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah in the days of Abraham, it was affirmed that if only ten righteous persons were found in the City, the LORD said, "I will not destroy it for ten's sake" (Gen. 18:32). Elaborating further, and this time speaking of the City of Jerusalem (which was deserving of the same fate as Sodom and Gomorrah in all their wickedness - Isa. 1:9), the LORD said He would pardon the City if Jeremiah the Prophet could find *one man* who was executing judgment and seeking the truth (Jer. 5:1)! Shockingly, here we see the number reduced to "a man" – ONE MAN! – and, like God was conversing with Abraham concerning the righteousness of His judgments, God would spare the City of Jerusalem for just *one* righteous man's sake! If we look carefully, though, we can see this principle exhibited in the events of Lot's escape from Sodom and Gomorrah.

What I mean is, even though Abraham's intercessory prayers never inquired concerning the circumstance where only *one* righteous man was in a City that was wholly given over to wickedness and doomed to destruction, we see the Holy Angels bidding Lot, saying, "for I cannot do any thing till *thou* be come tither" (Gen. 19:22). And, where did Lot need to go? Read the historical narrative carefully and you can see how the Cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were temporarily spared for righteous Lot's sake (while he lingered in the midst). Furthermore, also, we can see that the City of Zoar was permanently spared for righteous Lot's sake (Gen. 19:23). We know that Lot's sons in law and daughters were wicked, and so was his wife, and that all of this is a clear testimony of God's willingness to spare a City and people on account of *one* righteous man (Gen. 19:29)! Fearfully, though, what happens when righteous men are taken away (Isa. 57:1)? As Matthew Henry noted, "It is a sign that God intends war when He calls home His ambassadors." These instances of Biblical Church History and more convey God's loyalty to every single individual righteous person, despite the wretched circumstances of their situation or surroundings.

To be a citizen of the City of Sodom and Gomorrah is a wretched circumstance indeed! But, imagine if you were the son or daughter of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. This is a wretched circumstance of like caliber, truly! And, in this case, God provides further confirmation to prove that He unchangeably cares for every individual person's life no matter their City or Family. This means that when children were killed and the warrant for their death was verbally identified to be their father's sin, the *unspoken truth* is that the children were dying for their own iniquities nevertheless. For example, consider the judgment of God upon Jeroboam the son of Nebat and his House, when the Lord said,

"Therefore, behold, I will bring evil upon **the House of Jeroboam**, and will *cut off* from Jeroboam him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, and will *take away* the remnant of **the House of Jeroboam**, as a man taketh away dung, **till it be all gone**. Him that dieth of Jeroboam in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat: for the LORD hath spoken it. Arise thou therefore, get thee to thine own House: and when thy feet enter into the city, the child shall die. And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him: for **he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam.**" – 1 Kings 14:10-13

As you can see, if the Lord found any good thing in any of the children of Jeroboam - as individuals before God they would have been spared. Even though their family had been collectively doomed to annihilation, as Sodom and Gomorrah or any other like Nation or City throughout Biblical Church History, the individuals therein who were found to be righteous *would not* and *could not* perish with the wicked according to God's righteous judgment. Evidently, the Lord found no good thing at all in any of the other children of Jeroboam – besides one! – thus all the rest suffered under the

pronouncement made against Jeroboam. Even so, the same principle exists *everywhere* it wasn't immediately spoken for. Consider, then, two other examples of a Jeroboam-like pronouncement of annihilation, but this time without any clarification of individual responsibility held in the balance concerning the death of the children. The LORD said to the House of Baasha and the House of Ahab,

“Forasmuch as I exalted thee out of the dust, and made thee prince over my people Israel; and thou hast walked in the way of Jeroboam, and hast made my people Israel to sin, to provoke me to anger with their sins; Behold, I will take away the posterity of Baasha, and the posterity of his house; and will make thy house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat. Him that dieth of Baasha in the city shall the dogs eat; and him that dieth of his in the fields shall the fowls of the air eat.” – 1 Kings 16:2-4

“Behold, I will bring evil upon thee, and will take away thy posterity, and will cut off from Ahab him that pisseth against the wall, and him that is shut up and left in Israel, And will make thine house like the house of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and like the house of Baasha the son of Ahijah, for the provocation wherewith thou hast provoked me to anger, and made Israel to sin. And of Jezebel also spake the LORD, saying, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. Him that dieth of Ahab in the city the dogs shall eat; and him that dieth in the field shall the fowls of the air eat. But there was none like unto Ahab, which did sell himself to work wickedness in the sight of the LORD, whom Jezebel his wife stirred up. And he did very abominably in following idols, according to all things as did the Amorites, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel. And it came to pass, when Ahab heard those words, that he rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his flesh, and fasted, and lay in sackcloth, and went softly. And the word of the LORD came to Elijah the Tishbite, saying, Seest thou how Ahab humbleth himself before me? because he humbleth himself before me, I will not bring the evil in his days: but in his son's days will I bring the evil upon his house.” – 1 Kings 21:21-29

All the children of these two wicked men, Baasha and Ahab, were killed by God for one primary and expressly stated purpose: the sins of their fathers. Nevertheless, we know what is unspoken for immediately is universally true according to God's righteousness, and *the emphasis of the father's responsibility* holds a sincere meaning as well. Apparently, this is the case (*in one sense*), that the children were dying for the sins of their fathers just like God said of the sins of Manasseh in Jeremiah 15:4 and Lamentations 5:7, when it was written,

“And I will cause them to be removed into all Kingdoms of the earth, **because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah King of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem.**” – Jer. 15:4

“Our **fathers** have sinned, and are not; and **we have borne their iniquities.**” – Lam. 5:7

Despite *the emphasis* that inspired scripture gives (namely, in reference to *the sins of the fathers*), we know that the children could not die for the sins of their fathers while they themselves were innocent of those sins (according to Scriptural Precedent). Therefore, we must conclude that these children *walked in* the sins of their fathers and thus, justly so, they died *in* the sins of their fathers. In this very specific sense, they died *because of* the sins of their fathers – for they *followed them* into the same sin and THEY ALL DIED TOGETHER. If this were not the case and, haply, God found a righteous person among the lineage (like as was demonstrated in the House of Jeroboam), not all would have died! The unspoken truth (exemplified by precedent in the House of Jeroboam) is relevant and universally applied to all Families and Houses and all Cities and Nations who come under God's judgment of annihilation. Because the operation of judgment is clarified, namely that the LORD would not kill the children for the iniquities of their fathers, we know that the children did indeed die for their own iniquities in that they followed in this sins of their fathers; hence the scriptural emphasis upon the father's sins.

---

When God speaks in a later century concerning a judgment of annihilation and this judgment provides the clarification of every individual's responsibility before God, this judgment is uniform with all the former unclarified judgments of annihilation that took place in earlier

centuries. Despite the lack of verbal clarification, I say, the rules of the judgment remain the same. That which was unspoken and unclarified in the past, but spoken for in the future, is the reality and actuality of the past, present, and future. This is because God's judgments are consistent with all righteousness and, notably, the revelation process of all righteousness has been progressive from century to century; even so, according to the unsearchable wisdom of God, we know that this progressively revealed righteousness in God depicted in Inspired Scripture is one unanimous and uniform testimony.

---

According to this infallible uniformity of God's honesty and truthfulness in righteousness, we see the transcending clarification of God's judgment: that it was according to each individual child's sin that each one died. The children did not suffer death *for* the sins of their fathers unless, verily, they *walked in* the sins of their fathers; for then, and only then, would they die *in* and *for* the sins of their fathers. Just as this is true for Jeroboam's House, we reckon it to be true for Baasha and Ahab's House (notably, even though no righteous child was found). Likewise, just as this was true for Jeroboam's House, we reckon it to be true in the formerly mentioned "*problematic cases*", namely, the Families of Korah, Dathan, Achan, and Saul, the idolatrous Cities of Israel, and the non-Israelite Peoples and Nations including the Canaanite Nations. Do you remember the formerly mentioned list of *seeming contradictions* to God's affirmation when He responded to the Tribulation Generation through the Prophet Ezekiel, saying, "The soul that sinneth, *it shall die*. The son *shall not* bear the iniquity of the father, *neither shall* the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him" (Ezek. 18:20). The list was, as follows:

"in the case of Korah and Dathan's sins, their whole families (women and children) were swallowed alive into hell by the earth (Num. 16:26-32); in the case of Achan's sins, his whole family (women and children) were stoned to death and then burnt in fire (Josh. 7:24-26); in the case of King Saul's sins, seven of his sons were slain whose lives were far removed from Saul's former crimes (2 Sam. 21:9, 14); in the case of Israelite Cities which were given over to idolatry, the children of their families were not permitted to survive (Deut. 13:1-18); in the case of non-Israelite peoples and nations, like the Amalekites, every generation (including women and children) was doomed to suffer a total annihilation (Ex. 17:13-16, 1 Sam. 15:2-3, 18); and, at last, in the case of the Canaanite nations, their children were not permitted to survive the judgment of total annihilation because of the sins of their fathers (Deut. 20:16-18, Gen. 15:16)."

You see, this list must be interpreted within the rules of God's righteous judgment depicted since Abraham, who said, "Shall not the judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25). Indeed. Therefore, at sundry times and diverse situations, over and over, and most notably in the House of Jeroboam, this point of God's righteousness was proven true and faithful. The children of these Families, Cities, Nations, and Peoples *did not* die for the sins of their fathers, this we know, nevertheless these testimonies do beg the question... *Why does scripture emphasize the sins of the fathers insomuch that the stroke of annihilation almost invariably included every single individual child, and, also, the doctrinal explanation provided rarely clarified a standing chance for any child to escape the annihilation by means of being righteous before God?*

### Vindicating the Scriptural Emphasis of Guilt

***Why does scripture emphasize the sins of the fathers insomuch that the stroke of annihilation almost invariably included every single individual child, and, also, the doctrinal explanation provided rarely clarified a standing chance for any child to escape the annihilation by means of being righteous before God?***

Fearfully, there is a nigh-invariable course of depravity which runs in cyclical revolutions from generation to generation! Namely, that **the sons follow in the sins of their fathers from generation to generation**. This truth is clearly conveyed through the generations of Kings over Israel and Judah.

Concerning the line of Kings over Judah,

**Rehoboam** caused Judah to do “evil in the sight of the LORD...*above all that their fathers had done*” (1 Kings 14:22). **Abijah** “walked in all *the sins of his father, which he had done before him*: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, **as the heart of David his father**” (1 Kings. 15:3). Notably, Abijah’s sermon shows a profound understanding of the knowledge of God, albeit he was wicked like his father Rehoboam (2 Chron. 13:3-19). **Asa** broke the cycle and “did that which was right in the eyes of the LORD, **as did David his father**...But the high places were not removed: nevertheless, Asa’s heart was perfect with the LORD all his days” (1 Kings 15:11, 14). **Jehoshaphat** “walked in all *the ways of Asa his father*; he turned not aside from it, doing that which was right in the eyes of the LORD” (1 Kings 22:43). **Jehoram** “walked in the way of the Kings of Israel, as did the House of Ahab: *for the daughter of Ahab was his wife*: and he did evil in the sight of the LORD” (2 Kings 8:18). **Ahaziah** “walked in the way of the House of Ahab, and did evil in the sight of the LORD, as did the House of Ahab: *for he was the son in law of the House of Ahab*” (2 Kings 8:27). **Athaliah**, a Queen, “destroyed all the seed royal” after the death of Ahaziah and reigned until Joash, the only remaining son of Ahaziah, grew to be of age where the Kingdom was restored to the proper line (2 Kings 11:1-18). **Joash** (Jehoahaz) “did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all his days *wherein Jehoida the Priest instructed him*. But the high places were not taken away: the people still sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places” (2 Kings 12:2-3). Fearfully, Joash rebelled against the LORD after the death of Jehoida the Priest... thus in the latter end he was a wicked King. **Amaziah** “did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, *yet not like David his father: he did according to all things as Joash his father did*. Howbeit the high places were not taken away: as yet the people did sacrifice and burnt incense on the high places” (2 Kings 14:3-4, 2 Chron. 25:2). **Azariah** (Uzziah) “did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, *according to all that his father Amaziah had done*; Save that the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burnt incense still on the high places. And the LORD smote the King, so that he was a leper unto the day of his death...” (2 Kings 15:3-5). **Jotham** “did that which was right in the sight of the LORD: he did *according to all that his father Uzziah had done*. Howbeit the high places were not removed: the people sacrificed and burned incense still in the high places...” (2 Kings 15:34-35). **Ahaz** “did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD his God, like David his father. But he walked in *the way of the Kings of Israel*, yea, and made his son to pass through the fire, according to the abominations of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel. And he sacrificed and burnt incense in the high places, and on the hills, and under every green tree” (2 Kings 16:2-4). Also, Ahaz made a league with Assyria and copied their idolatrous altar, and he reformed the priesthood around it! What an abomination. **Hezekiah** “did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, *according to all that David his father did*. He removed the high places, and brake the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made: for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan. He trusted in the LORD God of Israel; so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor any that were before him. For he clave to the LORD, and departed not from following him, but kept his commandments, which the LORD commanded Moses. And the LORD was with him; and he prospered whithersoever he went forth: and he rebelled against the king of Assyria, and served him not” (2 Kings 18:3-7). **Manasseh** “did evil in the sight of the LORD, *after the abominations of the heathen*, whom the LORD cast out before the children of Israel...Manasseh *seduced them to do more evil than did the nations* whom the LORD destroyed before the children of Israel...moreover Manasseh shed innocent blood very much, till he had filled Jerusalem from one end to another; beside his sin wherewith he made Judah to sin, in doing that which was evil in the sight of the LORD” (2 Kings 21:2-16). Shockingly, though, after Manasseh was chastened by God and imprisoned, he humbled himself to the LORD and besought Him only; and, graciously, the Lord restored him to the Kingdom and Manasseh lived out his last days converted unto God and walking in obedience. **Amon** “did that which is evil in the sight of the LORD, *as his father Manasseh did*...he forsook the LORD God of his fathers, and walked not in the way of the LORD” (2 Kings 21:20-22). **Josiah** “did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, and *walked in all the way of David his father*, and turned not aside to the right hand or to the left” (2 Kings 22:2). “And like unto him was there no King before him [Josiah], that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him. Notwithstanding the LORD turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath, wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of **all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal**. And the LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of my sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I

have chosen, and the House of which I said, My name shall be there” (2 Kings 23:25-27). **Jehoahaz** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, *according to all that his fathers had done*” (2 Kings 23:32). **Jehoiakim** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, *according to all that his fathers had done*” (2 Kings 23:37). **Jeconiah** (Jehoiachin) “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, *according to all that his father had done*” (2 Kings 24:9). **Zedekiah** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, *according to all that Jehoiaikim had done*” (2 Kings 24:19).

As can be clearly seen in the list above, and here rehearsed in summary, Rehoboam rose beyond the crest of rebellion of his predecessor and father, King Solomon, exemplifying the unquenchable thirst of depravity at the first. Abijah, secondarily, being encumbered by a guiltier conscience than his father, only continued in the status quo “sins of his father” and not beyond. Asa, though, on the contrary, and very early on in the line of Kings, broke the cycle of depravity and did “as David his father” had done; thanks be to God. Jehoshaphat, also, following in his train, did as “Asa his father” had done... but, fearfully, demonstrative of a residue of status quo superstition, neither Asa or Jehoshaphat removed the unlawful patriarchal high places; this confirms just how erroneously revered the pastime and present status quo is to all people, including 21<sup>st</sup> century Christians. This is due cause for sober reflection and introspection lest we, like the Corinthians, are woefully indicted in the word: “but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise” (2 Cor. 10:12).

Suddenly, and tragically, after this short-lived revival of righteousness, Jehoram swerved into an unprecedented course from all the Kings of Judah before him by following in the way of the Kings of Israel! Why? For similar reasons... it was because he was influenced by the daughter of Ahab, his wife. He couldn’t resist the pastime Family Values. Predictably, Ahaziah his son, also, followed in the ways of his father Jehoram, for he was influenced by his father in law Ahab, and did likewise. Athaliah, though, as an off-shoot, was notoriously self-seeking and murderous. After her unexpected and bloody reign, Joash, the only son of Ahaziah, was able to stand upon the truth as long as he was positively influenced by Jehoida the Priest, a righteous man, ...but, fearfully, after Jehoida’s death Joash caved under the pressures of status quo and widely accepted apostasy. A vicious cycle takes its revolutions!

Take note of this carefully: saving faith is exemplified by walking in the ways of David, and nothing short (compare 2 Kings 14:3-4 & 2 Chron. 25:2; see a definitive explanation of “perfection” in the paragraph below). “Almost Christians” are still not Christians, and all is lost for such! “Incomplete Christians” are not real Christians in the sight of God! Thus... Amaziah, caught in the cycle, did what his father Joash did but not what David had done with a perfect heart. Azariah, likewise, did what his father Amaziah did but not what David had done with a perfect heart. Jotham, likewise, did what his father Azariah did but not what David had done with a perfect heart. Then Ahaz, radically swerving from the cycle of depravity in motion among the Kings of Judah, fell a-lusting after the cycle of depravity ravaging the Kings of Israel instead! He, veering from one was sucked into the other like the gravitational pull of orbiting planets! Fearful. God Himself, and none other, must be our center of gravity.

Then, at last, Hezekiah broke the cycle of depravity in motion among the Kings of Judah and returned to the Lord “according to all that David his father did”, hallelujah! This is saving faith. But after him, sadly, Manasseh rebelled more than they all! Perhaps acclimated thereto by the wretched example of Ahaz. Then, at last, on the verge of God’s judgment upon the Kingdom of Judah, Josiah arose! And scarcely so, mind you, nevertheless a revival of righteousness after the ways of David took place gloriously. Then all righteousness and glory was suddenly lost as depravity resumed its course in an ever-increasing stride via the former generational cycle picking up where it left off. Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jeconiah, and Zedekiah, the sons and grandson of Josiah, were all sucked into the unquenchable force until God’s judgment came and Jerusalem was made desolate.

How relevant is **The Doctrine of Perfection**? In reference to the aforementioned generations of Kings, for example, when the scripture stated of Amaziah, “he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, **but not with a perfect heart**” (2 Chron. 25:2), this meant, in other words, “he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, **yet not like David his father...**” (2 Kings 14:3). So, what is **perfection**? Apparently, David was **perfect**... right? My reader, let us understand this vital doctrine, even if the language of it is foreign or distasteful to our “Christian Vocabulary”! Don’t let those heretics

who preach “sinless perfection” cause you to reject anyone who renders a correct teaching on the matter of biblical perfection. I beg you, please! A correct view of biblical history would prove to us its utter necessity!

*When that which is “right in the sight of the LORD” is incompletely defined  
and far short of what is perfectly righteous, will you discern it?*

**Amaziah**, caught in the cycle, did what his father **Joash** did but not what **David** had done with *a perfect heart* (2 Kings 14:3-4, 2 Chron. 25:2). **Azariah** (Uzziah), likewise, did what his father **Amaziah** did but not what **David** had done with *a perfect heart* (2 Kings 15:3-5). **Jotham**, likewise, did what his father **Azariah** (Uzziah) did but not what **David** had done with *a perfect heart* (2 Kings 15:34-35).

Biblical history describes the lives, generations, and centuries of God’s work of salvation in terms of *personal* and *corporate perfection*. Oh, will you hear it!? Depending on whether or not they obtained biblical “**perfection**”, this determined their destiny of heaven or hell! The scripture explicitly states that Job (Job 1:1, 8, 2:3, 8:20), Noah (Gen. 6:9), Abraham (Gen. 17:1-2), Joshua (Deut. 18:13), David (Psalm 101), Solomon (1 Kings 11:4, with his repentance, which is in Ecclesiastes), Asa (2 Chron. 15:17), and Hezekiah (2 Kings 20:3) went to heaven because they were **perfect**. As for all other heaven-bound men, even though it was not explicitly mentioned that they were “perfect”, they nevertheless followed the ways of those who were called “perfect”. The scripture, likewise, does explicitly state that Abijam (1 Kings 15:3) and Amaziah (2 Chron. 25:2) went to hell because of a single indictment – that they were NOT **perfect**. Furthermore, every major vocation is taught the saving expression of their office and duties by the term **perfection**. Kings (Psalm 101), Priests (Lev. 22:21), Judges (2 Chron. 19:9), Warriors (Ps. 18:32), and all, were taught what it is to be perfect in the execution of their office, and depending on whether or not they were perfect, they went to heaven or hell. All other men and women of every generation were taught perfection in the principle of its meaning, *even though the very word is not explicitly used*. Let it therefore alarm us, if, haply, we don’t understand what biblical perfection is! For, how shall we escape the declension of Amaziah, Azariah, and Jotham - who did “right in the sight of the LORD” as their fathers had done - but not as David had done with a perfect heart! How susceptible are we to doing what is widely accepted and venerated as “right in the sight of the LORD”, and, at last, we lose our souls! How vulnerable are we to adopt a status quo righteousness as we have been taught and instructed by our fathers (a righteousness supported by scripture but far short of perfection), so that all our faith and practice *as we know it* amasses to an unpardonable violation of **The Doctrine of Perfection** before the Judgment Seat of Christ!

Did not our Lord say, “And that which fell among thorns are they, which, when they have heard, go forth, and are choked with cares and riches and pleasure of this life, and bring no fruit *to perfection*” (Lk. 8:14)? Here, in this text, a “perfect repentance” is exactly what God is expecting and demanding! And because John the Baptist understood this doctrine he commanded the 1st century Jews, “Bring forth therefore **fruits worthy of repentance**, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father...” (Lk. 3:8). If John the Baptist were here today he would preach this to the Christians of this century! The only difference is, Christians don’t say, “We have Abraham to our father”, rather they say, “We have God as our Father and we are eternally secure”. This statement may be true, notwithstanding Christ was burdened for the perfection of God’s children when He said, “Be watchful, and strength the things which remain, that are ready to die: **for I have not found thy works perfect before God**” (Rev. 3:2)! Here, in this text, a perfect repentance is God’s expectation, and without it Christ warned that He would blot their name out of the Book of Life (see Rev. 3:5)! What does this mean? The text is very clear: without perfection, Christ told saints they were eternally insecure! [For an exhaustive study of The Doctrine of Perfection, see: “A Partial Completion of the Gospel – Present Progressive Salvation Explained” (chapter 19), “**Perfection**” (chapter 19, section 2), “**Blameless**” (chapter 19, section 3), “**Holiness & Sanctification**” (chapter 19, section 4), “**Without Spot & Blemish**” (chapter 19, section 5), “The New Testament Gospel Call to Worthiness” (Chapter 22).]

Concerning the line of Kings over Israel,

In the case of **Jeroboam**, the first King of Israel – who authored a new religion of Counterfeit Judaism (1 Kings 12:25-

33) – it was written that “this thing became sin unto the House of Jeroboam” (1 Kings 13:34). The children followed, yes, and so did the nation from generation to generation! Describing this, Jeroboam’s sin was said to be: “his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin” (1 Kings 16:26). **Nadab** “did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of his father, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin” (1 Kings 15:26). **Baasha** “did evil in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin” (1 Kings 15:34). Elah, like Baasha, “made Israel to sin” and walked in the same ways (1 Kings 16:13). **Zimri** “sinned in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, to make Israel to sin” (1 Kings 16:19). **Omri** “wrought evil in the eyes of the LORD, and did worse than all that were before him. For he walked in all the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, and in his sin wherewith he made Israel to sin, to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger with their vanities” (1 Kings 16:25-26). **Ahab** “did evil in the sight of the LORD above all that were before him. And it came to pass, as if it had been a light thing for him to walk in the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, that he took to wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal King of the Zidonians, and went and served Baal, and worshipped him. And he reared up an altar for Baal in the house of Baal, which he had built in Samaria. And Ahab made a grove; and Ahab did more to provoke the LORD God of Israel to anger than all the Kings of Israel that were before him” (1 Kings 16:30-33). **Ahaziah** “walked in the way of his father, and in the way of his mother, and in the way of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin” (1 Kings 22:52). **Jehoram** “wrought evil in the sight of the LORD; but not like his father, and like his mother: for he put away the image of Baal that his father had made. Nevertheless he cleaved unto the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom” (2 Kings 3:2-3). **Jehu** “destroyed Baal out of Israel. Howbeit from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin, Jehu departed not from after them, to wit, the golden calves that were in Bethel, and that were in Dan. And the LORD said unto Jehu, Because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in mine heart, thy children of the fourth generation shall sit on the throne of Israel. But Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart: for he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam, which made Israel to sin” (2 Kings 10:28-31). **Jehoahaz** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, and followed the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, which made Israel to sin; he departed not therefrom. And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel, and He delivered them into the hand of Hazael King of Syria, and into the hand of Benhadad the son of Hazael, all their days. And Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and the LORD hearkened unto him: for He saw the oppression of Israel, because the King of Syria oppressed them. (And the LORD gave Israel a Saviour, so that they went out from under the hand of the Syrians: and the children of Israel dwelt in their tents, as beforetime. Nevertheless they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam, who made Israel to sin, but walked therein: and there remained the grove also in Samaria.)” (2 Kings 13:2-6). **Jehoash** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD; he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel sin: but he walked therein” (2 Kings 13:11). **Jeroboam** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin” (2 Kings 14:24). **Zachariah**, the last of the sons of Jehu, “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, as his fathers had done: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin” (2 Kings 15:9). **Shallum** (reigned a month). **Menahem** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not all his days from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin” (2 Kings 15:18). **Pekahiah** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin” (2 Kings 15:24). **Pekah** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin” (2 Kings 15:28). **Hoshea** “did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the Kings of Israel that were before him” (2 Kings 17:2). Finally, it was *in the days of Hoshea* that **the Assyrian Captivity** took place. “And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until he had cast them out of his sight. For he rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drave Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin. For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them; Until the LORD removed Israel out of his sight, as he had said by all his servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day” (2 Kings 17:20-23).

As it can be clearly seen in the list above, and here rehearsed in summary, Jeroboam began as the first King of Israel and

he, having authored a system of Counterfeit Judaism through two golden calves, became the most notable example of the near-unbreakable cycle of depravity set in motion from generation to generation among the Kings of Israel. In reference to Jeroboam's sins which passed – fathers-to-children – from generation to generation, and momentarily among the Kings of Judah, Jeroboam's name and actions were mentioned over and over again because he was the foremost owner of responsibility. As many as there were Kings of Israel, the name or actions of Jeroboam the son of Nebat were explicitly mentioned. Do you think God is trying to tell us something with this explicit and person-specific account of Church History? For, surely, the same cycle of depravity is still in motion today! Do you know the men and methods who bear utmost responsibility, or are you blindly following in their train? Think of it, my reader! There was not one single King of Israel who was able to break free from the evil cycle of depravity which accelerated in its revolutions from generation to generation, until judgment came. God have mercy!

With all these examples in mind, and the following, the precise language and scriptural emphasis of God is justified in that, verily, the children *followed in* and *died in* the sins of their fathers. Responsibility is pointedly attributed to the fathers because they authored new dimensions of depravity, as the heroes of hell, and in so doing they set a precedent to follow which unleashed an unquenchable cycle of depravity upon their children which, according to history, was nigh-inescapable! God have mercy. In as much as the stroke of annihilation invariably passed from Fathers to children throughout Biblical Church History, the dominance of cyclical generational depravity is demonstrated. Graciously, the LORD is warning us of man's vulnerability to this cycle of normalized wickedness so that we, like they, do not follow in the sins of our fathers. (For more information on this subject, see: "[God's Longsuffering & Abundant Working Among Backsliders](#)" & "[Time Has Run Out!](#)")

For another example, consider Adam the first. Even with Adam the first, the father of all sinners, of whom it was said, "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin" (Rom. 5:12), and, "in Adam all die" (1 Cor. 15:22), we can see a just emphasis on Adam's guilt but also a righteous clarification of guilt in all of Adam's children. Adam's guilt was emphatically stated, and justly so, but take heed to the qualification which demonstrates unanimity to the aforementioned proofs: the qualification of Romans 5:12 is, "and so death passed upon all men, *for that all have sinned.*" As a thematic whole, look upon the whole passage of scriptures.

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, *for that all have sinned.* (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come." – Romans 5:12-14

Emphatic guilt was attributed to the father, the precedent-setter, the depravity-unleasher, Adam the first, but had not Adam's children sinned as individuals before God then, verily, physical death *would not* have passed upon all men ("*so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned?*"). This point is thoroughly proven at various times throughout Biblical Church History, like the aforementioned citations of scripture have already proven, but for conscience's sake, and in admiration of how comprehensive scriptural testimony does prove the right, consider the following.

### In a Situation of Annihilation Every Person is Individually Judged by God

*Additional instances where God's righteous judgments of annihilation were interrupted from the pronounced course of justice because, evidently, every individual person (man, woman, or child, Israelite or non-Israelite) is judged by God.*

The Gibeonites, for example, who were included among the nations of the Promised Land wherein, by decree, everything that breathed had to be totally annihilated (Deut. 20:16-18), escaped the stroke of God's pronouncement by a cunningly devised plan. Surrender was not an option, neither was conversion, because of the fullness of the Gibeonite's iniquities in the sight of God (Gen. 15:16). I repeat, there was no divinely provided means of mercy because these nations were more wicked than any other nation in the world (Deut. 20:16-18, Deut. 9:4-5, Lev. 18:24-30, 20:22-27, Deut. 18:9-14), and yet... the Gibeonites found mercy! How? They disguised themselves to be from a distant nation for fear of the God of Israel, and in so doing they tricked the Israelites to make a league with them (Josh. 9). Their faith is evident, and no different than



Rahab's, when the Gibeonites said:

“From a very far country thy servants are come because of the Name of the LORD thy God: for we have heard the fame of Him, and all that He did in Egypt, and all that He did to the two Kings of the Amorites, that were beyond Jordan, to Sihon King of Heshbon, and to Og King of Bashan, which was at Ashtaroth...we are your servants: therefore now make ye a league with us.” - Josh. 9:9-11

The Gibeonites spoke to Joshua at another time, saying, “it was certainly told thy servants, how that the LORD thy God commanded his servant Moses to give you all the Land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the Land from before you, therefore we were sore afraid of our lives because of you, and have done this thing” (Josh. 9:24). Because the Israelites were unable to break their oath of league with the Gibeonites, and by provision via the sovereignty of God, this nation of people found mercy to surrender and convert to Judaism (but they were justly required to be servants to the Israelites from generation to generation because of their wicked sins which God meant to punish them for).

Now consider this carefully, my reader. The words of the Gibeonites were no different than the words of Rahab, a citizen of the condemned City, Jericho, which was a part of the Promised Land as well. Jericho was targeted by the very same pronouncements of total annihilation, but Rahab and her family found escape and sanctuary according to the sovereign provision of God! How? She betrayed her countrymen for fear of the Israelites the same way the Gibeonites did, only without deceiving the Israelites. Instead, she cunningly deceived the citizens of Jericho. Rahab's faith is evident in her confession when she received the two Israelite spies, saying,

“I know that the LORD hath given you the Land, and that your terror is fallen upon us, and that all the inhabitants of the Land faint because of you. For we have heard how the LORD dried up the water of the Red Sea for you, when ye came out of Egypt; and what ye did unto the two Kings of the Amorites, that were on the other side of Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom ye utterly destroyed. And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more courage in any man, because of you: for the LORD your God, He is God in heaven above, and in earth beneath.” – Josh. 9:9-11

This is Rahab, the mother of Jesus (Matt. 1:5)! This is Rahab, the famed and justified believer of the doomed City, Jericho, of whom it was spoken to affirm her exemplary faith-found-righteousness: “Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way?” (James 2:25). Hallelujah! God spared the righteous.

Evidently, and mysteriously, the sovereignty of God provided a means to escape the pronouncement of total annihilation when and if anyone fit the description; namely, the one described by the LORD when speaking of the son of Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, saying, “in him is there found some good thing toward the LORD God of Israel in the House of Jerohoam” (1 Kings 14:13). Indeed, some good thing toward the LORD was found in Rahab and the Gibeonites! In these cases God's righteous judgment of annihilation was interrupted from its pronounced course to slay, and justly so. Even though depth of explanation was not provided, the unspoken commentary is not open to human imagination. God did, does, and will always do exactly as He has testified and exemplified in and of Himself, and He is the Unchangeable Good. “*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*” Indeed.

Therefore, in other places, like that of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), thorough examination is exemplified. Notably, Sapphira *did not* die for the sins of Ananias, her husband. She was questioned as an individual separate from Ananias to ensure there was personal guilt committed in the matter. With these words, Peter examined Sapphira after her husband had already died (and she knew nothing of it):

“Tell me whether ye sold the Land for so much? And she said, Yes, for so much. Then Peter said unto her, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of them which have buried thy husband are at the door, and shall carry thee out. Then fell she down straightway at his feet, and yielded up the ghost...” - Acts

This demonstration of morality concerning each individual's right to due process was first written in the Law. God authored the Law, and by nature He effortlessly keeps it. The Law is His mind, the thought-process of His justice and judgment, the desires of His heart and soul. The Law is the perfect expression of God's Moral Personality. So, what does the Law teach? In reference to rumor of a crime *worthy of death*, the Law stated, "And it be told thee, and thou hast heard of it, and enquired diligently, and, behold, it be true, and the thing certain, that such abomination is wrought in Israel: Then...they die" (Deut. 17:4-5). Certainly, God did not break His own Laws nor did He function contrary to His own Moral Personality when, throughout the centuries, He pronounced and executed various decrees of total annihilation upon Families, Cities, and Nations. "*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*" (Gen. 18:25)? Indeed, He shall, even with "*all the earth*" and not just the Nation of Israel!

"He is the Rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment:  
a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He." – Deut. 32:4

With all things considered, we know that when the **wives** and or **children** of Korah, Dathan, Achan, Saul, the hypothetical or actual idolatrous Israelite Cities, and the various unpardonable non-Israelites Cities and Nations (Num. 16:26-32, Josh, 7:24-26, 2 Sam. 21:9, 14, Deut. 13:1-18, Ex. 17:13-16, 1 Sam. 15:2-3, 18, Deut. 20:16-18, Gen. 15:16) were **individually judged** by God and found guilty for the death that they suffered. We know that the judgment of total annihilation did not lack a meticulous examination of each and every individual, person by person, till all were found guilty. We know that God would have either *pardoned* the targeted City or Nation, or *extracted* the righteous individual from the target, and in the case of all the infant children that died in these scenarios, God knows what they would have done had they grown to age, and therefore their suffering of death was justly made possible by the use of divine foresight. Therefore, all in all, the LORD God of Israel was and is just and right, calculated and caring, and His mercy is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him!

## Attempted & Hardly Thwarted Events of Total Annihilation

### *The Doctrine of Collective Judgment Refuted*

Heretofore we have weighed this matter from one of two necessary angles. Firstly, we have looked at actual events where total annihilation was taking place among Israelite and non-Israelite peoples. From that angle, we have seen the just due process (moral protocol) by which God judges each individual person. Secondly, we need to look at the attempted and hardly thwarted events of total annihilation which took place among the Israelites.

- 1) Actual Events Where Total Annihilation Transpired (Israelite and Non-Israelite)
- 2) Attempted & Hardly Thwarted Events of Total Annihilation (Israelite)

In the cases of attempted and hardly thwarted events of total annihilation taking place among Israelites, it *appears* that Israel was **collectively judged** unto death *on account of one man's sins*. However, when the doctrine of **Sovereign Mercy** is properly understood in these circumstances of hardly thwarted annihilation, the controversy dissolves. By **Sovereign Mercy**, I mean, the fact that Israel did **collectively and individually** deserved to suffer a total annihilation despite the occasions provided by the various instances of wrath breaking forth *on account of one man's sins*. We must not slander God's *attempts* to totally annihilate His people by assuming that the *desires* of His heart lack the justice and due process demonstrated in the former examples of *actual* total annihilation. The *attempted* and *actual* events of total annihilation abide by the same rules of moral protocol.

### *Vindicating the Scriptural Emphasis of One Man's Sins*

*one guilty man providing an occasion of judgment for other guilty men*

Take, for example, when David cried out to God in humble objection to an annihilating plague that was taking place in his day, saying, "Lo, **I have sinned**, and **I have done wickedly**: *but these sheep, what have they done?*" (2 Sam. 24:17). My reader, this was after God had slain 70,000 men of Israel dead and David was left alive and untouched. David was under the

impression that he, and he alone, was guilty of the sin for which God was angry, thus he beckoned the judgement of God to come upon himself, saying, “Let Thine hand, I pray Thee, be against me, and against my father’s house” (2 Sam. 24:17). Was David’s objection righteous?

It would *appear* so at first glance. However, diligent study proves that David’s sin was an occasion through which God channeled pent-up wrath against the sin of the people of Israel. Clarification of this was provided in 2 Samuel 24:1, the inspired writer narrating, “And the anger of the LORD was kindled *against* Israel, and he *moved* David against them to say, Go, number Israel and Judah.” David’s sin was an occasion through which God judged each and every *guilty* individual of Israel and Judah. In other words, the anger of the LORD was kindled against Israel **corporately** because of *unjudged* and *unpurged* **individuals** who were presumptuously sinning (Num. 15:30-31). Or, in other words, there were many *roots of bitterness* that had sprung up and defiled multitudes of people... and God would suffer it no longer (Deut. 29:18-21, Heb. 12:15). Do you believe it? “*Every plant, which My Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up*” (Matt. 15:13)! Why else do you think 70,000 men were slaughtered in the occasion of David’s sin, my reader? Take, for example, when the Levite blade was commissioned to slaughter men who were a defilement to the Church in the Wilderness (Acts 7:38) – the impenitent idolaters were targeted by the LORD in this fashion: the Levites were commanded by God, “go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor” (Ex. 32:27). In this manner the **collective** was searched and the guilty **individuals** were slain, right? Yes, of course. Should we imagine that the angel’s blade is less specific?

“And David lifted up his eyes, and saw *the angel of the LORD* stand between the earth and the heaven, having a **drawn sword** in his hand stretched over Jerusalem.” – 1 Chron. 21:16

Hereby, through the angel’s sword, “the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men” (1 Chron. 21:14). My reader, do you think that the angel carelessly and randomly struck people with his sword? The angels with slaughtering weapons in Ezekiel’s vision wouldn’t dare slay a righteous man even among the population of **Evil Figs** in the condemned City of Jerusalem (Ezek. 9:1-11)! The Almighty commanded the angels: “*come not near any man upon whom is the mark*” (Ezek. 9:6)! Behold, the precision! The exactitude! The slaughtering weapons of angels came not near any righteous man in the woeful City! Even so, did not the LORD say, in another place, “*Yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth*” (Amos 9:9-10)? And in another place, it was written, “*He will thoroughly purge His floor and gather the wheat into His Garner*” (Luke 3:17)! Exactly. Therefore, likewise, in David’s situation, the sword of the angel was finding sinners out (Num. 32:23)! The slaughtering of 70,000 men was not only less than what Israel deserved, but it was on Israel’s behalf! Justly so, there needed to be person-specific purging of guilty **individuals** so that, as it was written, “all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously” (Deut. 17:13). Even so, comprehensibly, no matter the plague in operation throughout Biblical Church History, the moral protocol is the same. If any man survived the plague of Baal-peor, recorded in Numbers 25:1-9 (wherein 24,000 Israelites died), or if any man survived the plague occasioned through David’s numbering of the people, recorded in 2 Samuel 24:1-25 (wherein 70,000 Israelites died), the identity of the survivors according to moral protocol will always be, as it was written: “*But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God are **alive** every one of you this day*” (Deut. 4:3-4). My reader, think of it! No plague would have come nigh the dwelling of those individuals who were abiding under the shadow of the Almighty! For, it was written,

“Thou shalt not be afraid...for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see **the reward of the wicked**. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.” – Psalm 91:5-10

Amidst the seeming ungovernable chaos of a roaming pestilence and wasting destruction, lo, and behold: GOD IS MAJESTICALLY SOVEREIGN! It was “the angel that destroyed the people” (2 Sam. 24:16), wielding a plague, hence the plague was sovereignly dispensed to each and every guilty man in Israel. “*Behold and see the reward of the wicked*” (Ps. 91:8)! The angel of the LORD did not unjustly strike a righteous man in Israel, contradicting God’s word! Rather, he rewarded

the wicked - individual by individual - in accordance with moral protocol. The judgment of God functioned according to what was written, “For **the upright** shall dwell in the Land, and **the perfect** shall remain in it. But **the wicked** shall be cut off from the earth, and **the transgressors** shall be rooted out of it” (Prov. 2:21-22; for more information, see: [Chapter #16](#) of the [Church Realized](#)).

This fearful judgment against Israel, occasioned by David’s sin (one man’s sin), was but one of many like-situations which need to be considered comprehensively to understand the doctrine of [Sovereign Mercy](#). In David’s situation, the annihilation was *in progress* and came nowhere near a total annihilation, but in other instances the LORD clearly demonstrated His righteous willingness to totally annihilate His people; and, seeing that only those who were guilty of capital wickedness became the objects of God’s fury unto annihilation and death, all the people of Israel must have been thus reckoned by God in these various instances, with none exempted, as it is with every instance of attempted total annihilation! Such a proposal may be frustrating to you, dear reader, or even heretical, erroneously so called, but it is dogmatically proven in scripture as objective truth essential to understanding the doctrine of [Sovereign Mercy](#).

In fact, there were six different out-breaks of total annihilation that took place among the people of Israel in the Exodus Generation. In four of these six occasions the inspired text explicitly states God’s objective to totally annihilate His people (Ex. 32:10, Num. 14:11-12, 16:21-22, 16:45). Also, because the other two occasions of wrath are encased in the same situational context, it is clear that they too were out-breaks of totally annihilating wrath thwarted from their course by Moses’ intercession via prayer and judgment (Num. 11:1-3, 11:33-35). This is why scripture affirms that Israel would have been destroyed, namely by totally annihilating wrath, had not Moses stood in the gap via intercession (“*Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.*” – Ps. 106:23). Focusing on this thread of events throughout Biblical Church History, events which I call [The Near Annihilation of God’s People](#), Moses’ intercession amidst the scarcity of salvation is central - Exodus 32:10-14, Ex. 33:11-34:9, Deut. 9:6-29 (Ex. 17:8-16); Psalm 106:23 (Num. 11:1-3, 33-35, 12:13); Numbers 14:11-21; Num. 16:21-22; Num. 16:45-50. Amidst annihilating wrath the bewildered people were made to reckon with the harm which comes from the sins of one or more Israelites, and *occasioned thereby*, the judgment of others whom God could no longer endure because of their *individual guilt* before Him, and as for those who were justly doomed to annihilation and scarcely escaped it, they reckoned the fate of their comrades to be their just desert and humbly adored God for [Sovereign Mercy](#) as they repented of all known sin! Notably, the recipients of [Sovereign Mercy](#) *did not continue in the wickedness* that merited annihilation as their just desert. Being exercised by God’s judgment of the Church, the scarcely saved individuals were *brought to repentance* (1 Pet. 4:17-18)!

“For *the time is come* that **judgment** must begin at the **House of God**: and if it first *begin at us*, what shall the end be of them that obey not the Gospel of God? And if the righteous *scarcely be saved*, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?” – 1  
Pet. 4:17-18

Do you see the divine remedy, my reader? Do you see the working of elect-redemption through a scarce escape of annihilating judgments upon the Church (1 Pet. 4:17-18, 1 Cor. 11:31-32)? Judgment begins at the Church so that an elect remnant, scarcely escaping, would be wrought upon unto salvation *through it!* Very literally, scripture means what it says. Even so, in an outbreak of totally annihilating wrath (before God repented of His just intention to totally annihilate) the totally guilty multitude experienced a progressive manslaughter without remission... however, as the divinely selected targets amidst the guilty multitude were being slain and the bodies were enumerating, the scarcely escaping survivors were chastened therewith unto repentance. They, of like-guiltiness as their fallen comrades, repented amidst the annihilation so that at last, when [Sovereign Mercy](#) was undeservedly shown, the spared individuals were those who clave unto God at last and were thereby loosed from the guilt of their former backslidings. These in-the-moment repentances unto life were carefully referenced by God in context of the annihilating plagues that were destined to totally wipe out the **Evil Figs** in the Land of Judah, confirming the moral protocol. “The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him *in the day* of his **transgression**: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby *in the day* that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness *in the day* that he **sinneth**” (Ezek. 33:12). As you can see, *in the very day* of tribulation amidst the annihilating plague, therein did backslidden Church Members (righteous men who

were in “*the day of [their] transgression[s]*”) turn to God at last and in so doing they lived! This is certainly what is meant by Moses, when he said: “But ye that did *cleave unto the LORD your God* are **alive** every one of you this day” (Deut. 4:4)!

Moses referenced the annihilating wrath of God at the event of Baalpeor in Deut. 4:3, confirming that God aimed to and successfully slew all wicked and impenitent persons who would not cease from following Baalpeor (“*the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you*” – Deut. 4:3). Only the righteous remained alive universally and consistently according to God’s promises of old (Deut. 28:45-47, Num. 15:30-31) and God’s promises anew in the Tribulation Period (Ezek. 3:17-21, 18:1-32, 33:1-20, Jer. 18:7-11). “*But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live*” (Ezek. 18:21-22). Hence, as the wrath of God slew impenitent righteous persons in the days of their transgression (their backslidings into wickedness), those who survived it were the selfsame people who were not condemned by it because of their newly obtained or longstanding repentance from sin and faith toward God. Therefore, when the LORD said, “Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense”, in the same context as the saying, “The Lord shall judge His people”, He was describing the annihilating wrath that comes upon “them who draw back unto perdition” (Heb. 10:30, 39). Remember, only those with whom God was not well-pleased perished in the wilderness (1 Cor. 10:5-6): *the lustful* (1 Cor. 10:6), *the idolaters* (1 Cor. 10:7), *the fornicators* (1 Cor. 10:8), *the tempters* (1 Cor. 10:9), *the murmurers* (1 Cor. 10:10), and *such like men*. Thus, watching men die proved to be an effectual chastisement upon backsliders to bring them to repentance.

The chastening of the Captivities is a more intensified expression of what formerly happened to the Exodus Generation, when nearly all of that generation died in reprobating wrath. In the Exodus Generation *and* the Captivities, all that “did cleave unto the LORD” were enabled to remain alive (Deut. 4:4). Those that did remain alive were, primarily, the children of the Exodus Generation, and they were instructed as to what their eyes had seen - that it was, namely, “the **chastisement** of the LORD your God”. They saw, Moses said, “the **chastisement** of the LORD your God, His greatness, His mighty hand, and His stretched out arm...and what He did unto you in the wilderness, until ye came into this place; and what He did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and the son of Reuben: how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that was in their possessions, in the midst of all Israel: ...your eyes have seen all the great acts of the LORD which He did” (Deut. 11:1-7), and this example is pointedly applied to the NT children of God with a fearful warning: “Now all these things happened unto them **for ensamples**: that are written **for our admonition**, upon whom the ends of the world are come. **Wherefore** let him that thinketh he standeth **take heed lest he fall**” (1 Cor. 10:11-12). With this in mind, do you think Paul was defining biblical chastening, as mentioned in 1 Corinthians 11:31-32, with a different understanding than the previous chapter’s awful annals (recounted in 1 Corinthians 10:1-12, stemming from what Deut. 11:2 called “chastisement”). It is understandable, then, why Paul declared chastening to be a means for redemption, and it is – just that – for those who survive it, but it is condemnation for those who die in it. “*When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall be die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die*” (Ezek. 18:26-28). While watching men die, being chastened therewith, let us avoid dying like unto their example! See, those Christian Corinthians who were in damnable sin (“*damnation*” – 1 Cor. 11:29) died in their iniquities (hence, the people came “*together unto condemnation*” – 1 Cor. 11:34), while those people who were alive unto that day were being chastened so that they should not be condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11:31-32). While watching men fall, being chastened therewith, let us take heed lest we fall and so become like unto them! [For more information, see: “[How is Repentance Wrought in Regenerate Children of God?](#)”.]

Therefore, let it be duly noted and emphatically defended that, in the situations of attempted and hardly thwarted acts of total annihilation among Israel (the Church), the recipients of **Sovereign Mercy** *did not continue in the wickedness* that merited annihilation as their just desert. Being exercised by God’s judgment of the Church, the scarcely saved individuals were *brought to repentance through it* (1 Pet. 4:17-18, 1 Cor. 11:31-32)! With all scripture taken into proper consideration, this is the conclusion of the matter. There are passages which would *seem* to teach and even emphasize otherwise, but when the Prophets gave commentary to the events which took place in these questionable instances, I say again, **Sovereign Mercy** is

realized. For example, on several different occasions, emphasizing what *appears* to be **collective** judgment irrespective of each person's **individual** status of innocence or guilt before God, the following exclamatory statements were made and correlating events were narrated:

"...shall **one man sin**, and wilt Thou be wroth with all the congregation?" – Numbers 16:22

"Behold, we die, we perish, **we all perish**...shall we be consumed with dying" – Numbers 17:13

"...and it will be, seeing ye rebel to day against the LORD, that to morrow **He will be wroth with the whole congregation of Israel.**" – Josh. 22:16-20

"...behold, one of the children of Israel came and brought until his brethren a Midianitish woman... And... Phinehas... went after **the man** of Israel into the tent, and thrust both of them through..." – Num. 25:1-13

"And Joshua said, **Why hast thou troubled us?** The LORD shall trouble thee this day. And all Israel stoned him with stones, and burned them with fire, after they had stoned them with stones" – Joshua 7:25

Emphatic guilt was indeed placed upon the man (or men) who immediately provoked the out-break of wrath! Nevertheless, with all scripture considered, we know that this *seemingly* **collective** judgment was **individually** specific and precise like in the instance of David numbering the people (2 Sam. 24:17, 2 Sam. 24:1). The Lord had an account to settle with others in Israel besides the "one man" who is foremost in view. The others who perished with the "one man" were not miscellaneous casualties. For, no one would ever suffer the death penalty at random! Therefore, dogmatically, justice begged for a total annihilation of Israel time and time again throughout the pages of Biblical Church History (Ex. 32:10, Num. 14:11-12, 16:21-22, 16:45, Ezek. 20:1-44). These details are essential to understanding both [The Near Annihilation of God's People](#) and [Sovereign Mercy](#), and here, in Ezekiel 18:2 & Jeremiah 31:29-30, they prove essential to understanding the erroneous manmade proverb in comparison to the truth of God's righteous judgment that is on the contrary. Furthermore, in Ezekiel 20:1-44, the LORD would soon make a full address of this most glorious doctrine, [Sovereign Mercy](#), by rehearsing *the almost happenings* of total annihilation suffered by Israel so as to convince them of their wickedness in that they justly deserved it, and do deserve it, even though grace prevented it.

This is no new argument, my reader. Far from it! As you may have observed already in your own studies of the Bible, my reader, the LORD had been notating the perversity of the Israelite people's proneness to rebellion throughout redemptive history by saying such statements like those found in Deuteronomy 9:7-12, 9:24, 31:27, 1 Samuel 8:7-8, Jeremiah 7:25-26, 22:21, 32:30-31, & Ezra 9:7. To prove that these passages reference the frequency of rebellious instances (such that truly converted people commit during repeated backslidings) rather than a continuous state of rebellion (such that unconverted people commit without intermission), one must be fully acquainted with the condition of the Israelite People, the Church, in the stages of redemption from *the Wilderness* unto *the Civilization* and onward. Furthermore, one must understand the powers that are employed by God to make such sweeping denouncements (denouncements that are intentionally regardless of the people's genuine conversion and real righteousness). Through memory-omitting powers God is able to forget the righteousness of backsliders and accuse them as if it was altogether nonexistent and unworthy to be mentioned ("*his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered*" – Ezek. 3:20; "*all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned*" – Ezek. 18:24). Hence, in the aforementioned passages of controversy, the scripture rightly accused the people by declaring that they had been "rebellious against the LORD from the day that [Moses] knew [them]" (Deut. 9:7-12, 24); that "all the works which they had done since the day that [God] brought them up out of Egypt even unto [Samuel's day]", the people had forsaken God and committed idolatry (1 Sam. 8:7-8); that the people had "only done evil before [God] from their youth" and "only provoked [God] to anger with the work of their hands" unto Jeremiah's day (Jer. 32:30-31). Upon revisiting the controverted passages (Deuteronomy 9:7-12, 9:24, 31:27, 1 Samuel 8:7-8, Jeremiah 7:25-26, 22:21, 32:30-31, & Ezra 9:7) with God's memory-omitting powers in mind, the actual meaning is both apparent and perfectly united with the real situation – the provocative situation of sinning saints resulting in a scarcity of salvation amidst God's judgment upon the Church – hence, the totality of Biblical Church History surveys the Near Annihilation of God's People and,

meanwhile, the triumphant and undeserved administration of Sovereign Mercy! “For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy” (Rom. 9:15-16).

## The Truly Converted Status of the Israelite People in the Wilderness & the Ideals Theretofore

### *The Status of the Church before Backsliders*

In terms of believing **the Gospel** that was preached via the Passover – a ceremony that was explicitly named in identification with salvation through Christ (1 Cor. 5:7), a ceremony of blood-redemption that was impossible to experience unless it is done “through faith” (Heb. 11:28) – the people did thereby become the beloved sons and daughters of God (Hos. 11:1).

In terms of believing **the Gospel** of the Spirit’s Baptist via the Red Sea Crossing – an emersion under water that was explicitly named as a work of *salvation* through *belief* (Ps. 106:8-12), an emersion that was assayed by the Egyptians and because of unbelief they drowned (Heb. 11:29), an emersion under water that was cited as an evidence of saving communion with Christ via being baptized by the Spirit (1 Cor. 10:1-2, 12:13), an act of God that was named as salvation and redemption, the people saying: “He is become my salvation” (Ex. 15:1-2, 13) – the people were thereby prepared to gather before God as the Church in the Wilderness (Acts 7:38).

In terms of believing **the Gospel** of the Imperishable Life of Christ via the Manna which rained from heaven – the eating of the food was explicitly named a spiritual experience with Christ (“*spiritual meat*” – 1 Cor. 10:3), a food that was in conjunction with the work of the Spirit in their midst (Neh. 9:20), a food that was explicitly named in identification with salvation through Christ (John 6:32-33, 35) – the people did thereby continue in saving communion with the pre-Incarnate Christ.

In terms of **the Gospel** of the Unfailing Living Waters of Christ via the Water from the Rock – the drinking was explicitly named a spiritual experience with Christ (1 Cor. 10:4), a drinking that was harmonious with the status of salvation (Isa. 48:21, Jer. 2:13, Isa. 41:18, Rev. 21:6), a water that was directly named as a status of the salvation experience through Christ (John 4:10, 13-14) and in the indwelling of the Holy Ghost (John 7:38) – the people did thereby continue in saving communion with the pre-Incarnate Christ.

In terms of spiritually **becoming the Church** of God through the work of salvation – this was their official title (Acts 7:38) because of their communion with God (Ex. 19:17, Amos 4:12), their spiritual adoption to God (Ex. 6:7-8), their spiritual identity in God (Ex. 19:4-5, 1 Pet. 2:9), and their present-tense standing in the sanctuary of God (Psalm 114:1-7). By all means, therefore, they were **saved!** This was the explicit term that inspired scripture uses to describe their experience (Ps. 106:8, 10, Jude 1:5), a salvation through belief (Ps. 106:12), a salvation that was an adoption and a redemption (Ex. 15:1-2, 13), a salvation by the presence of God who is called their Savior (Isa. 63:7-14), a salvation as the Bride of Christ in the beauties of holiness and love (Jer. 2:2-3), a salvation where they became the Lord’s portion, people, and inheritance insomuch that there was no strange God among them (Duet. 32:7-14). By all the aforementioned references and more, their **saving spiritual relationship** with Christ is indisputably proven in that, through Christ, they experienced a continuous spiritual sustenance as a result of their hungering and thirsting after righteousness (1 Cor. 10:3, John 6:35, 1 Cor. 10:4), and notably this was accomplished in relationship with Christ and the Spirit of God (1 Cor. 10:9, 1 Pet. 1:11, Heb. 11:19, Haggai 2:5, Lev. 26:12, Deut. 23:14, Isa. 63:14) insomuch that Christ was said to be among them and “in them” (2 Cor. 6:16). For more information, see: “[Israel’s Seed in the Exodus Generation](#)”.

### *Were all the People of the Exodus Generation Saved?*

The answer to this question has everything to do with the doctrine of *perfected holiness* which is (“*perfecting holiness*” – 2 Cor. 7:1), in other words, *congregational acceptance* before God (“*I will receive you*” – 2 Cor. 6:17-18). Eternally consequential matters of the utmost importance depend upon the *perfection of holiness* and *congregational acceptance* (namely, the [Departure & Return of the Glory of God to the Church](#)). To be brief, though, permit me to ask the reader what is meant by the words, “all His saints”, “they sat down”, and “every one”, in Deuteronomy 33:2? What is meant by the words, “the holy place”, “Thou

hast led captivity captive”, and “received gifts for men”, in Psalm 68:7-19 (see also Heb. 12:21-23)? In conjunction to Psalm 68:7-19, what is meant by the words, “of all”, “through all”, “in you all”, and “every one of us”, in correlation with the phrase, “Wherefore He saith...He led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men”, in Ephesians 4:4-12? The answer to these questions will undoubtedly confirm what is meant by the words, “I will dwell in them, and walk in them”, in 2 Corinthians 6:16, in conjunction with the words, “all baptized”, “all eat”, and “all drink”, in 1 Corinthians 10:1-4, revealing exactly what God meant when He said that the Exodus Generation went unto God into the Wilderness in “the love of [their] espousals”, being “holiness unto the LORD” and a “wholly right seed”, in Jeremiah 2:1-3 & 21. [For a detailed explanation of these things, see: “[In Retrospect from Abraham to the Exodus Generation](#)”.]

### *The Judgment of the Church in Situations of Backsliding*

*Who was overthrown amidst the Church of the Wilderness and why?  
How does this correlate with the Church of the Civilization?*

Remember, only those with whom God was not well-pleased perished in the wilderness (1 Cor. 10:5-6): *the lustful* (1 Cor. 10:6), *the idolaters* (1 Cor. 10:7), *the fornicators* (1 Cor. 10:8), *the tempters* (1 Cor. 10:9), *the murmurers* (1 Cor. 10:10), and *such like men*. The Judgments that “the Glory of God” executed by divine plague to the vanquishing of idolaters (Ex. 32:25-29), complainers (Num. 11:1-3), lustful men (Num. 11:33-35), rebels (Num. 14:26-35), proud men (Num. 16-17), and such like, were the same judgments that were in operation from thenceforth in every generation of Israel that was keeping God’s instituted rules of holiness. In the Wilderness, only those who didn’t continue to savingly believe in God suffered death at the judgment of God (1 Cor. 10:5, Jude 1:5, Hebrews 4:1 [see the wider context in Hebrews 3:7-4:11])! Even so, approaching the prospect of inheriting the Promised Land so as to become the Church in the Civilization, only those who were not perfect (seeking and serving God with wholeness of heart) were to be slain (they were forbidden inheritance in the Promised Land: Num. 32:12, 14:24, Deut. 1:36, Heb. 4:1, Prov. 2:21, Deut. 4:1-10, Num. 15:22-31). Hereby, the doctrine of inheriting and inhabiting the Promised Land unfolds! Hereby, the Church transitioned from the Wilderness to the Civilization. Can you believe it, my reader? Every of-age individual in the Church of the Promised Land must be righteous and holy (Prov. 5:21, 19:16)! Even so, Solomon told the story of Church Purity: namely the vanquishing of [unlawful sex-offenders](#), [thieves](#), [covetous persons](#), those who didn’t [love God](#), those who didn’t [love the Brethren](#), those who didn’t [bridle the tongue](#) (Theme 2, Ch. 7), and more. Every Household in this Holy Land needed to be HOLY, my reader (Prov. 12:7, 14:11, 15:25, 27, 21:12)! Therefore, through the aforementioned course of the Church and God’s dealing with backsliders, what should we expect of the transition of the Church from the Wilderness to the Civilization? Through the aforementioned events the doctrine of inheriting/inhabiting the Promised Land became manifest, so should we be surprised about the following elaborations provided to the doctrine? It is the same Church but in different locations, hence the rules of holiness are harmonious. [For more information on the judgment of the Church, see: “[2-Stage, Populous Distinct, Chronology of Judgment](#)”.]

### *The Church of the Civilization*

**What was the status of the entire population of the Land by Doctrinal Rule?** According to Doctrinal Rule, the people who populated [The Land of Israel & Judah](#) were exclusively: “[the upright](#)”, “[the perfect](#)” (Prov. 2:21), those who put their “[trust](#)” in the LORD (Isa. 57:13), “[the faithful](#)”, “[he that walketh in a perfect way](#)” (Ps. 101:4-8), and those who were “[clean](#)” (Isa. 52:11). The people who were eradicated from the Land of Israel & Judah via the Death Penalty were: [false prophets](#) (Ezek. 13:9), [rebellious Israelites](#) (Hos. 9:3), “[the wicked](#)” (Nah. 1:5, Ps. 101:8), “[the transgressors](#)” (Prov. 2:22), “[the rebels](#)” (Ezek. 20:38-40), unconverted and forbidden “[strangers](#)” (Hos. 7:8-9, Isa. 1:7), “[a froward heart](#)”, “[whoso privily slandereth his neighbor](#)”, “[him that hath an high look and a proud heart](#)”, “[he that worketh deceit](#)”, “[he that telleth lies](#)”, “[wicked doers](#)” (Ps. 101:4-8), “[the uncircumcised](#)”, and “[the unclean](#)” (Isa. 52:1). The same rich and peculiar identity of the people is demonstrated a-new in each of the aforementioned titles or places of the Promised Land.

**What was the status of the entire population of the Kingdom by Doctrinal Rule?** From a different angle of emphasis, the identity of the Church in **the Old Testament** is revealed by the term, [The Kingdom of God](#), which was in fact *The Land of Israel & Judah*, and, as you will soon see, the people who dwelt therein were exclusive from the very beginning according to Doctrinal Rule. The Land of Israel & Judah became a settlement of the Israelite people BECAUSE God was KING:



of a people, a territory, by Law, through Government, by war through battles in which God commanded and fought! The commissioning of the battle by the KING reveals the exclusivity of the Church in The Kingdom of God: “thou shalt save alive NOTHING that breatheth: but thou shalt UTTERLY destroy them”, “thou shalt consume ALL the people which the LORD thy God shall deliver thee; thine eye shall have NO PITY upon them... (Deut. 20:16-17, 7:16). In other words, God was saying that the native inhabitants of the Promised Land were **exceedingly great sinners** (Lev. 18:24-30, 20:22-27, Deut. 9:1-5), and because the Promised Land had been chosen by the KING as His Dominion, the Church, sinners had to be eradicated from the domain. There were **no sinners** allowed in the Church – *in the places* or *among the people* where the Church gathered before God – according to the Dominion of the KING. If Israel allowed the native inhabitants to live and, thus, they were allowed to settle within the Promised Land at the same time as the conquering Israelites, the result was a **mixture** of saints and sinners in the Church --- a thing which God forbade at the pain of death! The KING said, “it will surely be a **snare** unto [the Church]” (Ex. 23:33, 34:12, Deut. 7:16, 25, 12:30, Num. 33:55, Judges 2:3). To be “**snared**” meant that they would eventually “perish” on account of this inordinate mixture (Josh. 23:13, Deut. 7:4, 20:18, Ex. 23:33, Deut. 7:26). The settlement of the Israelites in the Land of Israel and Judah was, in fact, the settlement of the Church; and because this settlement would be accomplished by war to the establishment of a Kingdom, Church Purity was demanded in the language of war (Ex. 23:23-24, 31-33, Ex. 34:11-17, Num. 33:51-56, Deut. 7:1-6, 16-21, 25-26, Deut. 12:1-4, 29-32, Deut. 18:9-14, 20:16-18, Josh. 23:1-16). Even so, on the contrary, Church Impurity was expressed in the following words and the like: “Judah...*could not drive out*” (Judges 1:19, 21, 27-28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 34). God’s warnings proved true and, indeed, the remnant of sinners who mixed in the Church did utterly destroy the Church, according to scriptures (Judges 2:1-15). Therefore this people, the Church, must be **sanctified, holy, and sinner-free**... or else God would forsake them (Josh. 7:11-13). All sinners, **Canaanite Sinners** or **Israelite-turned-Canaanite Sinners** must be killed and thereby expelled from the Church, The Kingdom of God (Deut. 13:8-9, 11, Deut. 13:5, 17:7, 12, 1 Cor. 5:13, Deut. 18:10, 13, 2 Cor. 6:17, 7:1, Deut. 29:18, Heb. 12:15, Hos. 7:2, 4, 7-10, 1 Cor. 5:2, 6-7, Ps. 106:34-39). The unholy and sinful chaos which ruled within once-born mankind worldwide – it was **unwelcome** in Israel. The passions and persons of hell were given *their boundary point*---stopping at the borders of Israelite settlements which encompassed the entirety of the Promised Land (Isa. 26:1-2, 60:18-19). My reader, Israel was sanctified to God as a “**peculiar**” and “**separated**” people (Ex. 19:5, Deut. 14:2, Lev. 20:24-25) above all other peoples on the face of the earth! Like the crest of earth was appointed by God and fixed with immovable fortitude before the whelming and untamable sea, the borders of Israel were appointed to withstand the untamable chaos of depravity that it would pass no further (Zech. 2:5, Isa. 4:5, 60:18-19, Psalm 48). As God “gave to the sea His decree, that the waters should not pass His commandment: when He appointed **the foundations** of the earth” (Prov. 8:29), even so, likewise, God gave **sin** and **sinners** His decree that they should not pass into the camps, settlements, cities, or Lands of Israel – when He appointed **the foundations** of *The Kingdom of God* amidst the people of Israel (Isa. 26:1-2, 60:18-19). That which was expelled *without* would die if it was found *within*. Therefore if, in an overarching sense, the Church was known to be holiness unto the LORD according to the rules of the location, *The Land of Israel & Judah*, and by the rules which were consistent with the title, *The Kingdom of God*, then surely the more specified regions within these wider areas are holiness unto the LORD in like manner of exclusivity!

**What was the status of the entire population of the City of Jerusalem according to Doctrinal Rule?** Even so, narrowing our focus of study, the Empire City of the Kingdom of God - **The City of Jerusalem** - was known by Doctrinal Rule in Old Testament Israel as: “the City of our God”, “the City of the Great King”, and “the City of the LORD of hosts” (Ps. 48:1, 2, 8)! And because the Presence of God was valuable to the people of Israel and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the people determined to “cut off all **the wicked doers** from **the City** of the LORD” (Ps. 101:8) so as to secure the presence of God (Ps. 101:2). With all scripture heretofore considered, applied, and fulfilled, the inhabitants of **The City of Jerusalem** were not “**the wicked doers**” (Ps. 101:8), “**the adversary**”, or “**the enemy**” (Lam. 4:12). By no means! On the contrary, every citizen was a saint, every sinner they did morally hate (Deut. 23:1-8, Num. 15:30-31), and judgment was the filter of the populous who passed through **the Gates** (Isa. 26:8, Ps. 48:11, Zech. 8:16-19)! This **City** was a place in which “**the heathen**” would NOT come except in the case when the unholy sons of Adam broke through the boundaries which God had ordained by Law that none should trespass (Ps. 79:1, Isa. 26:1-2, 60:18-19). The **walls** and **Gates** of this **City** were not meant as mere barricades of defense in times of war, oh no! They were meant to be of old what they will invincibly and everlastingly become in the Consummation: **The Walls** and **Gates of SALVATION** (Isa. 26:1-2, 60:18-19, Rev. 21:22-22:5, Rev. 22:11-15)!

**What was the status of the entire population of Mount Zion by Doctrinal Rule?** Finally, and with all things considered, what exclusivity of Doctrinal Rule shall we expect existed in what was known in the Old Testament as, **Mount Zion**? **Mount Zion** was called the Mountain that God “loved” (Ps. 78:68), and what was so lovable about it? According to the Doctrinal Rules exhaustively covered in the Chapter, the inhabitants and visitors of **Mount Zion** were exclusively: speaking in the present tense of that time, “**He that putteth his trust in [the LORD]**” (Isa. 57:13), he that has “**clean hands**” and a “**pure heart**” who has not “**lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sword deceitfully**” (Ps. 23:4), He that “**walketh uprightly**” and “**worketh righteousness**” (Ps. 15:2), that “**speaketh truth in his heart**” and “**backbiteth not with his tongue**” (Ps. 15:2-3), He that does not do “**evil to his neighbour**” (Ps. 15:3), He who hates “**a vile person**” and “**honoureth them that fear the LORD**” (Ps. 15:4), “**He that sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not**” (Ps. 15:4), “**He that putteth not out his money to usury nor taketh reward against the innocent**” (Ps. 15:5), even these people, and none other, did “**receive the blessing from the LORD**” which was “**righteousness from the God**” (Ps. 24:5), which was, furthermore, the privilege to circuit **Mount Zion** and especially appear before God Almighty! Therefore was **Zion** remembered by God to be, metaphorically speaking, **pure silver** and **un-mixed wine** (Isa. 1:22). This means that **The City of Jerusalem** and **Mount Zion** was a “**faithful City**” which was “**full of judgment**” so that “**righteousness lodged in it**” (Isa. 1:21), before the silver became dross and the wine was mixed with water (Isa. 1:22), and after **Mount Zion** was **defiled**, God said: “I will turn My hand upon thee, and **purely purge away thy dross**, and **take away all thy tin**” (Isa. 1:25-26). This metaphorical **purging** and **taking away** was, in other words, the destruction of “**the transgressors**”, “**the sinners**”, and “**they that forsake the LORD**” (Isa. 1:27-28). Naming names, we know who the people of the Church at Old Testament **Mount Zion** were.

**What was the status of every Assembly and Congregation within the aforementioned places of the Civilization?** In reference to *the Assemblies* of the Church in the Old Testament, this meant: every individual’s name who attended the assembly was **written in the Book of Life**; and, this being the case, this population of people were identified as “**the upright**” and “**the saints**” (Ps. 89:7) who were assembled in separation from “**the mockers**” (Jer. 15:17); and to be in separation from “**the mockers**” meant, in principle, the assembly was exclusive to “**holy**” and “**clean**” people and, therefore, “**profane**” and “**unclean**” people were excluded (Ezek. 44:23-24). In reference to *the Congregations* of the Church in the Old Testament, this meant: they were “**the congregation[s] of God**” (Neh. 13:1-3) that were bound by one supreme “**ordinance**” (Deut. 33:4-5, Num. 15:15) which necessitated that every individual in the congregation was **holy** (Num. 16:3, Lev. 19:2), “**righteous**” (Ps. 1:5), **saintly** (Ps. 89:5, 149:1), and **belonging to God** (Ps. 68:10, 74:2); hence, this congregated people was separated from all the **accursed things** and **people** who brought contempt upon the congregation (Josh. 7:13, Ezra 10:11-14). Therefore, all those whom God spoke of and named in various ways throughout scripture, saying, for example, “**A... shall not enter** into the congregation” (Deut. 23:1-8), were expelled – and this list of names included: “**the adversary**”, “**the heathen**” (Lam. 1:10), “**the ungodly**”, “**sinners**” (Ps. 1:5, Num. 15:30-31), “**evil doers**” (Ps. 26:5), “**the dead**” (Prov. 21:16), “**vain persons**”, “**dissemblers**”, and “**the wicked**” (Ps. 26:4-8, 12).

## The People’s Proneness to Rebellion Throughout Redemptive History

Apparently, because of the thorough and exhaustive detail that proves the genuine conversion and real righteousness of the people of Israel (accounted in the previous section), we are well-advised to conclude that God employed “memory-omitting” powers to make the statements found in Deuteronomy 9:7-12, 9:24, 31:27, 1 Samuel 8:7-8, Jeremiah 7:25-26, 22:21, 32:30-31, & Ezra 9:7 (denouncements that are intentionally regardless of the people’s genuine conversion and real righteousness). With irrefutable detail scripture confirmed the people’s genuine conversion and real righteousness all throughout time, notwithstanding their proneness to rebellion throughout redemptive history. Two primary points being communicated by the divine argumentation are, as follows:

- I. These passages reference the frequency of rebellious instances (such that truly converted people commit during repeated backslidings) rather than a continuous state of rebellion (such that unconverted people commit without intermission).
- II. The people’s proneness to rebellion throughout redemptive history was thus spoken – through the employment of memory-omitting powers – to emphasize the provocative nature of the people’s frequent backslidings, to wit: the people would comprehend how hardly they escaped the wrath of God as their just desert and that, shockingly,

their near annihilation (instead of a total annihilation) was only possible through the justice-shattering intervention of Sovereign Mercy!

My reader, it is not a mistake that Ezekiel 18:1-32 is one of the few places in all of scripture where God makes a specific reference to the employment of “memory-omitting” powers. Hereby, because the content of the Chapter brings into view the vast and ongoing redemptive history of the Israelite people, the use of God’s “memory-omitting” powers is underscored as a reckoning point to dissolve any outstanding controversies both then and now. Remember, the argument was plain and necessarily repetitive in response to the confounded people. Clarity, as I say, as is demonstrated in Ezekiel 18:20-24.

“The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him. But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should return from his ways, and live? But when the righteous turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die.” – Ezek. 18:20-24

In the wider context, God’s “memory-omitting” powers are used for the salvation of sinners (by way of forgiveness) and the damnation of the righteousness (by way of unforgiveness) to un-regenerated and regenerated men alike. Therefore here, God’s “sin-forgetting” powers are exactly like His “righteousness-forgetting” powers. The promise, “I will remember no more”, in Heb. 8:12, is exactly like the promise, “his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered him”, in Ezek. 3:20 & Ezek. 18:24. I say again, God operates in “memory-omitting” powers for regenerate and unregenerate men, in account of sin and righteousness committed (with continuance without repentance), just as it is written (see Ezek. 18:21-24 [specifically verses 22 & 24], and see Ezek. 3:20, Heb. 8:12, 10:17)? God is able to forget sins and then remember them again, truly! And God is able to forget righteousness and remember it again, likewise! Should not this “memory-omitting” power be held in balance with the promise, “their sins and iniquities will I remember no more” (Heb. 10:17), especially because there is a subsequent warning given; namely, the remembrance of sins which were formerly forgotten (of blood-bought saints [Heb. 10:19] who were thereby, “sanctified” through blood-sprinkling, then becoming disqualified from atoning mercies which were provided by the “sacrifice” of Christ (Heb. 10:26-29 [compare Heb. 10:26-28 with Numbers 15:28-31, compare Heb. 10:29 with Num. 15:31 & Ezek. 3:20]). You see, my reader, men perished and will perish in the Old Covenant and New Covenant alike because, God executed justice in “memory-omitting”, atonement-mercy disqualifying, and promise-breaching powers! The Condescension of God makes possible such repentances; the Lord going back on what He thought and said (see Jer. 18:7-11 or Ezek. 33:12-20 as a brief example). Even so, take a closer look at the controverted passages and remember the clarity provided by Ezekiel 18:20-24 (the fact that **real righteousness** was *lost* and then *forgotten*, and for others, on the contrary, **real sin** was *lost* and then *forgotten*). With these things in mind, the meaning of the following passages is clear.

“Remember, and forget not, how thou provokedst the LORD thy God to wrath in the Wilderness: **from the day that thou didst depart out of the land of Egypt, until ye came unto this place, ye have been rebellious against the LORD.** Also in Horeb ye provoked the LORD to wrath, so that the LORD was angry with you to have destroyed you. When I was gone up into the mount to receive the tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant which the LORD made with you, then I abode in the mount forty days and forty nights, I neither did eat bread nor drink water: And the LORD delivered unto me two tables of stone written with the finger of God; and on them was written according to all the words, which the LORD spake with you in the mount out of the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly. And it came to pass at the end of forty days and forty nights, that the LORD gave me the two tables of stone, even the tables of the covenant. And the LORD said unto me, Arise, get thee down quickly from hence; for thy people which thou hast brought forth out of Egypt have corrupted themselves; they are quickly turned aside out

of the way which I commanded them; they have made them a molten image... **Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you.**” – Deut. 9:7-12, 24

**“For I know thy rebellion, and thy stiff neck: behold, while I am yet alive with you this day, ye have been rebellious against the LORD; and how much more after my death?”** - Deut. 31:27

“And the LORD said unto Samuel, Hearken unto the voice of the people in all that they say unto thee: for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them. **According to all the works which they have done since the day that I brought them up out of Egypt even unto this day, wherewith they have forsaken me, and served other gods, so do they also unto thee.**” - 1 Samuel 8:7-8

**“Since the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day I have even sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them: Yet they hearkened not unto me, nor inclined their ear, but hardened their neck: they did worse than their fathers.”** - Jeremiah 7:25-26

“I spake unto thee in thy prosperity; but thou saidst, I will not hear. **This hath been thy manner from thy youth, that thou obeyedst not My voice.**” - Jeremiah 22:21

“For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have **only done evil before me from their youth: for the children of Israel have only provoked me to anger with the work of their hands**, saith the LORD. For this city hath been to me as a provocation of mine anger and of my fury **from the day that they built it even unto this day**; that I should remove it from before My face, **Because of all the evil** of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me to anger, they, their kings, their princes, their priests, and their prophets, and the men of Judah, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem.” - Jeremiah 32:30-31 [Isa. 1:2, 21-22, Jer. 2:1-2, 2:21]

**“Since the days of our fathers have we been in a great trespass unto this day**; and for our iniquities have we, our kings, and our priests, been delivered into the hand of the kings of the lands, to the sword, to captivity, and to a spoil, and to confusion of face, as it is this day.” - Ezra 9:7

My reader, there is no reason to be disturbed by these various statements notating the frequency of Israelite rebellion from *the very beginning*. These statements are absolutely consistent with the doctrine of [Sovereign Mercy](#) and needful for highminded Christians or Jews to be convinced of their many abominations that they have committed against the LORD insomuch that He thought to totally annihilate them many times, and only by intercession were they scarcely saved therefrom. The truth is, the people didn't deserve to persevere in God's plan of salvation. Rather, they deserved to be destroyed time and time again. Only through [Sovereign Mercy](#) did they continue onward as God's covenanted people.

Through “memory-omitting” powers God is able to forget the righteousness of backsliders and accuse them as if it was altogether nonexistent and unworthy to be mentioned (“*his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered*” – Ezek. 3:20; “*all his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned*” – Ezek. 18:24). Hence, in the aforementioned passages of controversy, the scripture rightly accused the people by declaring that they had been “rebellious against the LORD from the day that [Moses] knew [them]” (Deut. 9:7-12, 24); that “all the works which they had done since the day that [God] brought them up out of Egypt even unto [Samuel's day]”, the people had forsaken God and committed idolatry (1 Sam. 8:7-8); that the people had “only done evil before [God] from their youth” and “only provoked [God] to anger with the work of their hands” unto Jeremiah's day (Jer. 32:30-31). Upon revisiting the controverted passages with God's “memory-omitting” powers in mind, the actual meaning is both apparent and perfectly united with the real situation – the provocative situation of sinning saints resulting in a scarcity of salvation amidst God's judgment upon the Church – hence, the totality of Biblical Church History surveys the Near Annihilation of God's People and, meanwhile, the triumphant and undeserved administration of Sovereign Mercy (“*For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy*” - Rom. 9:15-16)!

In Jeremiah and Ezekiel's day, at last, a horrifying transition took place, to wit: Moses' and Samuel's intercessory powers were no longer viable (Jer. 15:1), the intercessor Jeremiah was thus denied, and the people were terrifyingly forsaken by God like never before! ...ah, but **Sovereign Mercy** made appeals in Ezekiel 18:1-32, promises to grant life and salvation to the penitent **Evil Figs** who stood amidst the storms of wrath that whelmed to destroy them! The intercessory righteousness of Job, Noah, and Daniel could not prevail anyone but themselves (Ezek. 14:12-23), but God had a plan of redemption still yet! So, in reference to the **Evil Figs** to whom Ezekiel prophesied in Ezekiel 18:1-32, let me ask you:

What is *slow* about how God is, "slow to anger" (Ps. 103:8, Neh. 9:17)? What is the cause by which we can understand His *slowness*? What is so *plentiful* about how "plenteous in mercy" God is (Ps. 103:8)? What is so *manifold* about God when He was praised and thanked for the attribute called, "manifold mercies" (Neh. 9:19, 27)? Hereby, in studying the *plenteousness* and *manifold* numbers of God's mercy, how would this affect our understanding of "the riches of [God's] glory on vessels of mercy", in the mercies of predestinating election? What is the *greatness* of mercy when it was said that God is, "so great in His mercy" (Ps. 103:11)? What is the *greatness* of God's faithfulness when it was said, "great is Thy faithfulness" (Lam. 3:23)? What is *pitiiful* about God's pity toward His saints when it was said, "as a father pitieth His children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear Him" (Ps. 103:13)? What is so praise-worthy about God's tender Fatherhood to you, His child? What is so exclamatory when it was stated that God, "delighteth in mercy", in relationship to the remnant's salvation from the damning anger of the Almighty (Micah 7:18-19)? What is so magnificent about *the changelessness* of God, how the Lord said, "I change not" (Mal. 3:6)? When you consider the *great mercies* of God, how that He is "a gracious and merciful God" (Neh. 9:31, 17), what is it that you are pondering exactly? With what *readiness* is God "ready to pardon" (Neh. 9:17)?

Understandably so, the fact that a near-annihilating wrath came upon God's people, the **Evil Figs**, rather than a total annihilation, is slowness to anger, little wrath, and a little displeasure, comparatively to what God thought, intended, wanted, said, or could have done in the cause of pure, undefiled, unrestrained justice. If a remnant is spared, then, lo, we have much to be thankful for! **Sovereign Mercy** found and preserved repentant men who were directly targeted and unjustly overpassed while their comrades fell dead on every side! Unjustly so, I say, because the LORD will soon elaborate upon this point, saying: "And ye shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name's sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 20:44).

Furthermore, consider the activity of **Sovereign Mercy** in reference to the **Good Figs**. The spiritual blessings associated with the physical location of Babylon, the place the **Good Figs** were forced into (while remaining in heart as **Evil Figs**), was a dissolvment of the Church as they knew it to be according to Covenantal Ideals via misapplied promises. Then, in Babylon, while longing to be in Jerusalem with the **Evil Figs**, the Jews found themselves in audience unto Ezekiel the Prophet so that, at last, the by the exercise, the **Good Figs** would become good after all! Salvation, life, and safety in the local Church of Babylon was an unthinkable transition from where they once were, doctrinally speaking. This was a local Church that they declared impossible and decried as nonexistent – the local Church that thrived amidst impossible circumstances in the **Evil Figs**' perspective! And, remember, the location itself was the place wherein **Sovereign Mercy** was to be reckoned upon, a location that the evil-obsessed **Good Figs** didn't want to go! Therefore, the **Good Figs**, like the elect among the **Evil Figs**, were vessels of mercy BECAUSE, while they committed the same sins as those who fell under the wrath of God, they did not *continuously* and *steadfastly* commit those sins – they repented at last so that, in the sequence of time (through the exercise of Tribulation), the totally annihilating wrath that targeted them overpassed them, hardly missing them, and they became the vessels of **Sovereign Mercy**. Undoubtedly, this is what we are made to learn by Ezekiel 18:1-32. God's within-time and in-the-moment repentance over the otherwise doomed population of **Evil Figs** (doomed to suffer a total annihilation) is a clarion revelation of just how God administered **Sovereign Mercy** throughout all of redemptive history. Vessels that were, as the rest, committed to annihilation and cast into the fiery furnace of wrath, did on the morrow, however, REPENT! The Almighty, also, intent upon the annihilation of all while gazing into the burning furnace of wrath and destruction, heard the despairing cries of the penitent and at last, REPENTED! Suddenly, at once, God reached His hand into the fiery furnace and plucked out the penitent vessels from the Tribulatory Flames! Even so, it was written: "*is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?*" – Zech. 3:2 ["I have overthrown some of you, as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and ye were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning..."] – Amos 4:11] Still alive, scarcely though, the elect vessels went

abroad into the Nations declaring *the Majesty of the LORD* and vindicating the righteousness of the notoriously offensive Great Tribulation (Isa. 24:13-15)!

For a closer and more detailed survey of how God brought the elect from among the **Evil Figs** to repentance, see [Jeremiah 30:1-31:40](#). This portion of prophecy was given to Jeremiah synchronically at the same time as Ezekiel received Ezekiel 18:1-32. Remember, the **Evil Figs** were murmuring, saying, “Why? Doth not the son bear the iniquity of the father?” (Ezek. 18:19), because meanwhile people were dying on every side and the people didn’t believe any of these individuals were wicked. Remember, this is why the LORD detailed the character of a righteous and just man in the Land of Israel (Ezek. 18:5-9). Ah, but they will be convinced of sin at last through and not without what Jeremiah prophetically calls, “**Jacob’s Trouble**”. “*Alas! For the Day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob’s Trouble; but he shall be saved out of it*” (Jer. 30:7).

## EZEKIEL 19:1-14

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign; time references: see 8:1 & 20:1*)... a parabolic lamentation for the Princes of Israel.

## EZEKIEL 20:1-21:32

**At the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah** (*sometime between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year; time references: see 20:1 & 24:1*), once again, “certain of the elders of Israel came to enquire of the LORD and sat before [Ezekiel]” (Ezek. 20:1). Fearfully, and not unlike the fury of God displayed in [Ezekiel 14:1-23](#) (see “[Insincere Seekers & the Deception of God](#)”), God answered the inquirers by saying: “*Are ye come to enquire of Me? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I will not be enquired of by you*” (Ezek. 20:3). Forthwith, however, the voice of Omnipotence spoke further, and questioned: “*Wilt thou **judge** them, son of man, wilt thou **judge** them*” (Ezek. 20:4)? The God of Israel is both disturbed and disgusted, and means to find some relief in the charge given to Ezekiel: **JUDGMENT**. “*Do not ye **judge** them that are within?*” (1 Cor. 5:12).

### The Dire Necessity of Judgment in a Tribulation Period

*Interpreting Church History from the Beginning to the End by the Uncompromised Standards of Salvation, Backsliding, & Restoration according to Holy Scripture*

*“...I am the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, **judgment**, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these things I delight, saith the LORD.” – Jer. 9:24*

The inquirers were a wearisome burden to God inasmuch that they knew not that He, the LORD, loves judgment (Mal. 2:17, Prov. 15:9, Amos 5:24); and, of course, right-standing saints understood the reason why (Ezek. 18:8-9, 17, 30, Prov. 29:27, Jer. 22:15-16). So... what is God’s affectionate desire? Judgment. Through whom? Ezekiel. To what end? “*Cause them to know the abominations of their fathers*” (Ezek. 20:4), God said. This was a kind gesture from God because [preventative judgment](#) aimed to prevent [the finality of judgment](#), the Death Penalty (Ezek. 18:21-23, 30-32). My reader, the **Good Figs** and the **Evil Figs** were on a crash-course with death if something didn’t change! Therefore, Ezekiel’s charge was a hard task. For, as long as the spiritual tempest of God’s wrath did engulf the people (inasmuch that the day was turned to darkness and the people were rendered vision-less; see Micah 3:6-7), it would take nothing less than the power of God to cause the people to *know their abominations*. Micah testified to the enormity of such a task, saying, “*...truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of **judgment**, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin*” (Micah 3:8); and,

surely, it would take nothing less for Ezekiel to successfully bear witness! Wondrously, though, the LORD empowered Ezekiel to do the judgement.

The utterance that followed was Ezekiel 20:5-44. The powers of prophetic utterance were employed to unveil the true nature of things past and present. Firstly, the people were made to know “*the abominations of their fathers*” (Ezek. 20:4) so that, secondarily, and as a result, the present-day Jews would know *their own abominations*. They were like their fathers, you see? This is the all-too-often course of things (“*Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers.*” – Matt. 23:32). Comprehensively, I mean, as was covered in Ezekiel 18:1-32, this is the all-too-often course of things in Biblical Church History; namely, that the sons walk in the sins of their fathers (see “[Vindicating the Scriptural Emphasis of Guilt](#)”). Therefore, if the Jews of the Tribulation Period were going to see their own sinfulness as an abomination in the sight of God, they must see “*the abominations of their fathers*” (Ezek. 20:4).

## The Church: it’s God & it’s Law

### *The Original & Definitive Wilderness Experience of the Exodus Generation*

Who is meant by the statement, “*their fathers*”? Who else but *the Exodus Generation*? Who, of *their fathers* in every generation past, could be more relevant than the Exodus Generation? They, foremost of all, were chosen by God and set-forth as an example for every generation to come (“*a chosen generation*” – Ex. 19:5-6, 1 Pet. 2:9).

Historically speaking, and from the beginning, Holy Scripture uses unprecedented detail to illustrate the genuine conversion of [Israel’s seed in the Exodus Generation](#) (Ezek. 20:5-17). In other words, this generation became [The Church Defined at the Sinai Experience](#) (“*the Church in the Wilderness*” – Acts 7:38). How was this a Church, you wonder? There, at Sinai, the doctrine of God’s *in-dwelling* and *among-dwelling* presence was unveiled via the Mosaic Covenant (see “[The Sinai Experience: The Decent of God’s Immediate Presence](#)”); bearing witness of this profound event around which all the Law found purpose and meaning, the Lord said: “*I am the LORD that sanctify them*” (Ezek. 20:12). On this wise, on behalf of God’s immediate presence, the Law finds significance (“*And I gave them My statutes, and shewed them My judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them.*” – Ezek. 20:11; see “[A Law to Regulate the People, Place, & Environment among which God Dwells](#)”). In other words, there would be no need for a **Law** (Ezek. 20:11, 13, 16, 21, 24) except that God dwelt *within* and *among* His people, the Israelites (“*I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*” – 2 Cor. 6:16).

Hardly abated **controversy** resulted from this shocking, nigh-impossible, and earth-changing event, when God’s *indwelling* and *among-dwelling* presence ingratiated His people, the Church. What’s so controversial? The abominations of the people! Pointing to the ancient beginning of this **controversy**, the LORD said: “*then I said, I will pour out My FURY upon them, to accomplish My ANGER against them...*” (Ezek. 20:8, 13, 15, 21, 23, 25-26). What a staggering threat to so privileged an ancient people, the Exodus Generation! ...ah, but the Jews of the Tribulation Period lived profoundly irrelevant to this controversy and much more (Isa. 6:9-10)! Even though all of Biblical Church History details the fallout of **the controversy** that first began with the Exodus Generation, the Last Days people were oblivious (see “[Becoming “God’s People”, The Controversy](#)”)! “*Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not*” (Isa. 6:9). Can you believe it? Nevertheless, venturing onward from generation-to-generation from the Exodus Generation, *the Wilderness People* are set-forth as a divine illustration that cannot be ignored! ...that dare not be ignored!

Wherewithal shall the obnoxiously ignorant Tribulation Jews come to understand the abominableness of their abominations? Hear the Prophet Ezekiel! ONE THING: by knowing *the abominations of their fathers*, the Exodus Generation (Ezek. 20:5-44). Any generation thereafter that wasn’t **reprobated**, like as the Exodus Generation was reprobated (Num. 14:34), they learned from the example of *their fathers*, the Exodus Generation. Without knowing *the abominations of their fathers* (Ezek. 20:4), they couldn’t possibly understand **the implications** involved in that Israel became “God’s People” from the Exodus Generation onward (see “[Israel as “God’s People”, the Implications](#)”). Therefore, in every generation thereafter they looked back at *their fathers*, the Exodus Generation, as **the Church Defined**, and they called to memory **the operation of Glory** that flourished therein, and thereby they sought for its **revival** in their present generations (Ezek. 20:35-38; see

“The Church Defined, Recalled, & Revived”).

Illustratively, as Ezekiel was made to prophetically detail, the Exodus Generation suffered under the wrath of God because of the frequency of their rebellion despite their genuine conversion (Ezek. 20:8, 13, 15, 21, 23, 25-26). These events are, in other words, “[Attempted and Hardly Thwarted Events of Total Annihilation](#)”. Ezekiel was forced to overview these historical instances of near annihilation because of the present circumstance of near annihilation in the Tribulation Period. Most people did die and would die in the fires of Tribulation, and they needed to understand *the justice* of it all. In Ezekiel 18:1-32, the Lord spoke at length regarding *the sinfulness* of those who suffered death and *the righteousness* of those who were allowed to live; however, without a full realization of the people’s near annihilation despite their genuine conversion, the Tribulation Jews of Ezekiel’s time would think that God is slack concerning His promise of death to the wicked. For this reason, and to properly contextualize the content of Ezekiel 18:1-32, the relevance of what Ezekiel is pointing to in Ezekiel 20:8, 13, 15, 21, 23, 25-26 was categorically addressed in the following order: “[Attempted and Hardly Thwarted Events of Total Annihilation](#)”, “[The Truly Converted Status of the Israelite People in the Wilderness & the Ideals Theretofore](#)”, & “[The People’s Proneness to Rebellion Throughout Redemptive History](#)”. Furthermore, and of equal relevance, further explanation was provided in the synchronized prophecy given in Jeremiah 30:1-31:40 (see “[The Doctrine of the Wilderness According to Hosea](#)”). Therefore, let the emphasis be noted by the reader: God took the freshly redeemed people He was provoked to destroy “*into the Wilderness*” (Ezek. 20:10). This is *that Wilderness*, the one that the Prophet Ezekiel spoke of in reference to the present-tense situation that was befalling the Tribulation Jews, saying, “I will bring you *into the Wilderness* of the people, and *there* will I **plead** with you face to face” (Ezek. 20:35), and, again, emphasizing another aspect of *the Wilderness* experience, the Prophet Hosea said, “behold, I will allure her, and bring her *into the Wilderness*, and **speak comfortably** unto her” (Hos. 2:14). This is *that Wilderness*, and the people therein: the place, people, and generation that are spoken of in Holy Scripture with more frequency than any other generation of all time (1 Cor. 9:27-10:12, Heb. 3:1-4:11, Jude 1:5).

The *Wilderness Experience* was a purifying experience because therein, *in the Wilderness*, the people were given [the Moral Law which was a regulator of Church Purity](#), and even if the people neglected the statutory cause of Church Purity then God did [suddenly and gloriously intervene](#) to execute the omission through [the appearance of His GLORY](#) and the administering of manslaying plagues (Leviticus 9:23-10:3, Numbers 12:4-10, 14:10-35, 16:19-40, 16:42-50, 20:2-13)! As Ezekiel pointed out, the successful performance of the Law was the only means of survival (“*which if a man do, he shall live in them*” – Ezek. 20:11), but the Israelite citizens were supposed co-labor with God for the enforcement of the rule of Law (see “[The Prerogative for and Performance of Church Purity](#)”).

This means that the Israelites were [morally regenerated](#), morally obedient, and morally accountable, hence [the Moral Law was the definitive ingredient](#) of their accountability one with another. Therefore, of course, they were able to [do the Law and live](#) thereby (“*which if a man do, he shall live in them*” – Ezek. 20:11)! Very specifically, the [salvation experience](#) of the Church, the [lifestyles and relationships](#) of Church Members, and the holy violence whereby all true Israelites were [seekers after the LORD](#), did all exist as a result of [the Moral Law](#) in that it was a [Tutor Depicting God’s Personality](#) (see [Point #1](#), [Point #2](#), [Point #3](#), & [Point #4](#)). With all of these salvific realities active in the Land of Israel, [the grounds and enforcement of the Moral Law via “The Death Penalty”](#) became key. Only then would [the Moral Law](#) function as a regulator of [Church Purity](#), and only then will we be enabled to comprehend [the Old Testament and New Testament Warnings in Perfect Alignment](#). Therefore, in the context of Ezekiel’s references to [the Law](#) (Ezek. 20:11, 13, 16, 21, 24) and the normal and ordinary redemptive relationship that right-standing Israelites had with the Law in Biblical History (Deut. 4:1-4, 8:1), it was commonly understood that redeemed individuals were *able* to obey and keep the Law so as to [accomplished it in full](#) by GRACE through FAITH, not turning aside from *any* of the commandments of the Lord (“*in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live*” – Ezek. 18:22, 24, 33:12-13; 1 Kings 15:4-5, Lk. 1:6; Note: this did not mean sinless perfection).

It was James who coined the statement, “faith without works is dead” ([Jas. 2:20, 26](#)), and he was very specific about what deeds we should **fulfill** as true Christians just like God was work-specific in what He expected from the Tribulation Jews in Ezekiel 18:5-9. James knows that upon the condition that men love God and love their neighbor, the whole Law will be *fulfilled* (not in *sinless perfection* but by *unmerited justification and consequential empowerment*). Those two things upon which



hangs all the Law ([Matt. 22:40](#)), James preached! He does not deny them. Nor did Jesus deny them in reference to the [6 Moral Commandments](#) that He quoted in the longest and most famous sermon that He preached, [the Sermon on the Mount](#). The Moral Law was and is not irrelevant to the saintly standing of Jews or Christians, far from it! According to James and the other inspired writers, this standard was to be **fulfilled** (Rom. 8:4, 2:13, 6:12, 6:16, 13:8, 15:18, Gal. 5:7, 24, 6:7-9; for more information, see [Legalism: Law, Grace, and Works](#)).

Ezekiel's concept of the Law is largely disputed today ("*which if a man do, he shall **live** in them*" – Ezek. 20:11), I know, but the popular misconceptions which argue otherwise are easily disproven by a thorough study of the Law according to the Book of Romans and other Epistles (see "[The Law in the Book of Romans](#)" & "[The Moral Law is a Tutor Depicting God's Personality](#)"). It is vital that you understand this, my reader! Namely, that the Moral Law was the darling obsession of the redeemed because it, the Moral Law, was an accurate depiction of [God's Personality](#), the Moral One! Why else do you think the psalmists would enthusiastically sing, "*O how love I Thy Law! it is my meditation all the day*" (Ps. 119:97)? To depart from the Moral Law was to depart from the Moral One! Even so, to depart from the Moral Law meant [moral degeneration](#), and this was disallowed in Israel because no *willful sinners* were allowed in the Church (Num. 15:30-31). In other words, all of-age Israelites [were whole-hearted seekers](#) after the Lord... or else! If this weren't the case, why else do you think the Lord was so infuriated when the Israelites didn't keep and do the Law (Ezek. 20:8, 13, 15, 21, 23, 25-26)? King's rule their people by the rule of law, don't they? Jealously asserting this rule over His wayward people, God said: "I WILL RULE OVER YOU" (Ezek. 20:33). What is meant by this pronouncement is exceedingly profound and shocking!

### The Wilderness Experience of the Tribulation Period

What is so profoundly significant about the Exodus Generation? They were saved (1 Cor. 10:1-2), they were rebellious (1 Cor. 10:5-12), and they became a generation of general reprobates who were appointed to die *in the Wilderness* (specifically speaking, the 600,000 men of war from every tribe except Levi; Num. 14:22-35, Ps. 95:7-11, Heb. 3:1-4:11) – and, thereby, through *the operation of God's Glory in the Wilderness*, Church Purity was restored! Or, to quote Ezekiel's phraseology used to describe this instance – thereby, through *the pleading of God in the Wilderness of the Land of Egypt*, the Lord *purged out* from among them all rebels (Ezek. 20:38)!

"As I live, saith the Lord GOD, surely with **a mighty hand**, and with **a stretched out arm**, and with **fury poured out**, WILL I RULE OVER YOU: And I will bring you out from the people, and will gather you out of the countries wherein ye are scattered, with **a mighty hand**, and with **a stretched out arm**, and with **fury poured out**. And I will bring you *into the Wilderness* of the people, and *there* will I *plead with you* face to face. **Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the Wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD**. And I will cause you to pass under **the rod**, and I will bring you into **the bond of the covenant**: And I will **purge out from among you the rebels**, and **them that transgress against me**: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and **they shall not enter** into the land of Israel: and *ye shall know that I am the LORD.*" - Ezek. 20:33-38

The significance of the *Wilderness Experience* cannot be understood properly except it be studied from the beginning to the end. For, as we have duly noted so far, through the Exodus Generation the LORD [defined what a Church is](#) in truth and in righteousness so that thenceforth it stands as an example to all generations. Therefore, to long for the *Wilderness Experience* is to long for [the Glory of God to return to the Church](#)! My reader, look carefully at the following verses that convey the operation of *the Glory of God* amidst the Church *in the Wilderness*.

A DEVOURING FIRE SLAYING MEN: **Leviticus 9:23-10:3** --- "**THE GLORY OF THE LORD** appeared unto all the people...and there went out fire from the LORD, and devoured them, and they died before the LORD. Then Moses said unto Aaron, This is it that the LORD spake, saying, I will be **sanctified** in them that **come nigh** Me, and before all the people I WILL BE GLORIFIED..."

THE SMITING OF LEPROSY: **Numbers 12:4-10** --- "**THE LORD CAME DOWN in the pillar of the cloud**, and stood in the door of the Tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth...And the anger of the LORD

was kindled against them; and He departed. And **the cloud** departed from off the Tabernacle; and, behold, Miriam became leprous...”

THE DEATH SENTENCE FOR 600,000 CHURCH MEMBERS: **Numbers 14:10-35** --- “all the congregation bade stone them with stones. And **THE GLORY OF THE LORD** appeared in the Tabernacle of the congregation before all the children of Israel. And the LORD said unto Moses...I will smite them with pestilence... [their] carcasses, they shall fall in this wilderness”

EARTH-SWALLOWING AND FIRE-DEVOURING JUDGMENTS UPON HUNDREDS: **Numbers 16:19-40, 42** --- “Korah gathered all the congregation against them unto the door of the Tabernacle of the congregation: and **THE GLORY OF THE LORD** appeared unto all the congregation... [so to] consume them... [and later] the ground clave asunder that was under them: and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods...they perished from among the congregation...and there came out a fire from the LORD and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense...”

A TEMPESTUOUS PLAGUE WHIRLING ABOUT AN ANGRY GOD SLAYING THOUSANDS: **Numbers 16:42-50** --- “they looked toward the Tabernacle of the congregation: and, behold, **the cloud** covered it, and **THE GLORY OF THE LORD** appeared...And Moses said unto Aaron...there is wrath gone out from the LORD; the plague is begun...now they that died in the plague were fourteen thousand and seven hundred...”

A MIRACLE OF PROVISION AND MERCY: **Numbers 20:2-13** --- “they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron...and **THE GLORY OF THE LORD** appeared unto them...and Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also...”

**The Glory of the LORD** was the central *reason* for the Church and the central *focus* of the Church (Exodus 16:7, 16:10, 24:10, 24:16, 40:34, 40:38, Leviticus 9:6, 1 Kings 8:10-11, 2 Chron. 6:41-7:3, Ezekiel 11:22-25), but when **the rules of purity and holiness** were defied and meanwhile the Church Officers didn't do judgment to restore Church Purity, the Glory of the LORD was an insurmountable problem for the backsliders of the Church (Leviticus 9:23-10:3, Numbers 12:4-10, 14:10-35, 16:19-40, 16:42-50, 20:2-13). A *pure God* demanded a *pure Church*; a *holy God* demanded a *holy People*; a *moral God* demanded a *moral People*, otherwise **the rules of their relationship** were made void so that a terrifyingly dangerous estrangement ensued (see “**The Glory of God Departing & Returning to the Church**”). “*Judgment must begin at the House of God*” (1 Pet. 4:17). This means real-time JUDGMENT upon the Church that will be accomplished in this life, not the next! The reasons for this should be obvious, my reader. Immorality must be judged by the Moral One!

Through the Exodus Generation we understand both the *Wilderness Experience* and its effect upon the people who experience the operation of God's Glory therein, the Church. *The Wilderness* is not what's important. Rather, what God did to “the Church in *the Wilderness*” is of importance (Acts 7:38). *The Wilderness* alone, without the Church, is of no value or significance. However, in *the Wilderness*, the LORD met *with*, *dwelt among*, and *taught* the people **a methodical relationship to the Glory of God**. What's methodical about the relationship is that there are inexcusable rules of conduct that must be kept, without which the relationship is impossible. Hereby, through the ordained methods, *the Glory of God* would **appear** and  **dwell among** the people of God, the Church (“*And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commanded that ye should do: and the Glory of the LORD shall appear unto you.*” – Lev. 9:6). Also, because the Exodus Generation and their *Wilderness Experience* is the chosen generation through whom God authored and exemplified the methods of holy matrimony in the God-to-man relationship, the Exodus Generation is **the Church Defined** (Jer. 2:1-2). However, passing the threshold of the River Jordan into the Promised Land we see a cessation of *the Glory of God* in operation via the Pillar of Cloud by day and the Pillar of Fire by night (see “**the Church in the Civilization**”). Notably, also, God's sudden and **shockingly apparent intervention** to restore Church Purity via divine plague became far more infrequent. Something very special and peculiar happened among the Church *in the Wilderness*! Speaking of this peculiarity, the Lord said to the Tribulation Jews: “*Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the Wilderness of the Land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD*” (Ezek. 20:36).

Despite this peculiarity, though, one must understand the transition period from the Wilderness to the Civilization of the Promised Land; I say this because, what was disallowed by divine plague in *the Wilderness* should have been disallowed by Church Officers **co-laboring with God** for the enforcement of the Law in the Civilization. You see, God gave the Law to the people in *the Wilderness*. Then, by God's own power He executed the rules of the Law amidst uprisings of rebellion and the like. Hence, after the threshold of Jordan was crossed, God expected the Law to be upheld and kept by the Israelites ("He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" – Micah 6:8). He had thoroughly proven to the people that the Ark was the seat of the Glory of God, even though the Pillar of Fire and the Pillar of Cloud was no longer visibly present; in other words, **THE GLORY OF ISRAEL WAS STILL THERE - GOD HIMSELF!** Therefore, the people had all the means to successfully execute the Law amidst the people via **God's empowerment** ("Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel, thou that leadest Joseph like a flock; thou that dwellest between the cherubims, shine forth." – Ps. 80:1). God instituted a Law to be upheld by **divinely empowered Church Officers**, a Church Law that was exemplified and upheld by God and then committed to the people... or else. Or else what?

When **judgment lingered** because of corruption among Church Officers amidst generational backslidings and then, contrary to the Exodus Generation's Wilderness Experience, *the Glory of God* didn't suddenly and shockingly manifest to enforce the unexecuted judgment to abate the growing influence of wickedness, the people were confounded. In wonder and amazement, they inquired of God, saying, "Will the Lord cast off for ever? And will He be favourable no more?", and such like things (Ps. 77:5-12). God delivered His people over to the assigned chastisements outlined in Leviticus Ch. 26, this is true (and these punishments were suddenly manifest accordingly), but the sheer power and unstoppable authority that was expressed and asserted *in the Wilderness* when a tumult of backsliding was underway did not happen any longer in the Church of the Civilization (*not until the Tribulation Period!*). My reader, look with wide-open eyes upon the peculiar pronouncement, "Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the Wilderness of the Land of Egypt, so will I plead with you, saith the Lord GOD" (Ezek. 20:36). This is the assertion of unstoppable authority unto the restoration of Church Purity! So, as judgment lingered and God didn't arise to the judgment in the generations following the Exodus Generation, thereby **corruption progressed** from generation to generation. This, in turn, allowed for the perversion of the righteous standards that were definitively set forth in **the Church Defined**, the Church *in the Wilderness*. This allowed the people to invent relative and compromised standards of righteousness that tolerated Church Impurity, and the people believed that God's judgment wouldn't **suddenly awake**. This being the case, most people forgot about the operation of the Glory of God that once flourished of old *in the Wilderness!* Meanwhile, however, don't forget this! A small remnant can be heard praying and crying out to God,

*"We have heard with our ears, O God, our fathers have told us, what work Thou didst **in their days, in the times of old**" - Psalm 44:1*

*"I remember **the days of old**" – Psalm 143:5*

*"I remember **Thy judgments of old**" – Psalm 119:49-53*

*"Look Thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, **as Thou usest to do unto those that love thy name**" – Psalm 119:132*

*"Turn Thou us unto Thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; **renew our days as of old**" - Lam 5:21*

*"Have respect unto **the Covenant**: for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. O let not the oppressed return ashamed: let the poor and needy praise thy name. Arise, O God, plead **Thine own cause**: remember how the foolish man reproacheth thee daily. Forget not the voice of thine enemies: the tumult of those that rise up against thee increaseth continually." – Ps. 74:20-23*

*"Turn Thyself again... heal the **breaches**" – Psalm 60*

*"Will He reserve His anger for ever? Will He keep it to the end?" - Jer. 3:4-5*

Hence, by Ezekiel's time, *the Glory of God* departed from the Temple! I say again, *the Glory of God* departed from the Church! And, what is worse is that the people didn't even recognize it (see "**The Visible Church Abandoned by the Invisible God**")!

They became utterly hardened in sin and confident in the modernized Judaism that had developed over time. Long ago, “Judaism” departed from the old paths and ancient truths that defined her from the beginning. God’s wife turned adulterous and worse: HARLOTRY! Understandably so, therefore, God departed from the “Judaism” that had departed from Him. “Judaism” redefined itself. “Judaism” was without Jehovah, so they didn’t notice when He left! Even so it shall be, and is, for the “Christianity” that is without Christ! The late Leonard Ravenhill made mention of this atrocity by giving reference to a confession made by the modernized pastors of this generation. "He said, 'I want to tell you that if God withdrew the Holy Spirit from my church today, it would function tomorrow the same way *we wouldn't even know He'd gone...*'". GOD HAVE MERCY! This commonplace confession bears witness of a Christianity without Christ! The Glory of God has departed from the 21<sup>st</sup> century Church in the Gentile Church Age!

In many ways, *the Wilderness Doctrine* (the return of the Glory of God) is elaborated upon and enunciated in reference to the reviving of God’s Glory amidst a fallen and backslidden Church (otherwise God would have used the normal means of Church Officers to co-labor in the operation of Glory in [the OT](#) and [the NT](#)). Hence, my reader, observe the newly enunciated descriptions of the newly revived operation of Glory in the Tribulation Period (what God was doing by Himself and alone, no man working with Him) by reviewing Hosea’s *Doctrine of the Wilderness* in comparison to Jeremiah and Ezekiel’s.

### *The Doctrine of the Wilderness According to Hosea*

My reader, what do you think about when you read the verse, “Therefore, behold, **I will allure her** [Israel], and bring her into the *Wilderness*, and **speak comfortably unto her**” (Hos. 2:14)? This *Wilderness* experience sounds delightful, doesn’t it? It certainly doesn’t sound like a Tribulation Period of unspeakable suffering, right? Indeed. It is for this reason that most people never reconcile Hosea 2:14 with Hosea 2:3-4 and Hosea 2:15.

Hosea 2:3-4

“Lest I strip her [Israel] **naked**, and **set her as in the day that she was born**, and make her as a *Wilderness*, and set her like a *Dry Land*, and slay her with thirst. And **I will not have mercy** upon her *children*; for they be the *children* of whoredoms.”

Hosea 2:14-15

“Therefore, behold, **I will allure her** [Israel], and bring her into the *Wilderness*, and **speak comfortably unto her**. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and *the Valley of Achor* for a **door of hope**: and **she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth**, and **as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt**.”

Contextually, Hosea 2:14 and Hosea 2:3 are talking about the same *Wilderness* experience. This means that the **merciless stripping** and **slaying** of Israel in the *Wilderness* whereby the **children of whoredoms** do **perish** (*setting her as in the day she was born*), according to Hosea 2:3-4, is the exact same experience wherein the Lord **allures** Israel into the *Wilderness* and speaks **comfortably** to her inasmuch that she **sings** in the *Wilderness* (*as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came out of the Land of Egypt*), according to Hosea 2:14-15. Hosea testified that, indeed, Israel would be given **vineyards** and she would see the fulfillment of all she **hoped** for and **sung** about in the *Wilderness*! So, how does a seemingly **hopeless pronouncement** of a *Wilderness Tribulation* (Hos. 2:3-4) become the very means of **hope, comfort, and singing**? The same way the seemingly **hopeless pronouncement**, “Thou shalt surely die” (Ezek. 33:14), leads once-born and backslidden evildoers to repent and as a result they inherit the promise, “He shall surely live” (Ezek. 33:15-16). Only an undeserving escapee of a divine and Inescapable Manhunt knows the rejoicing that sovereign mercy allows when the promise is fulfilled, “He shall surely live!” Even so, Ezekiel’s prophesying has been and will continue to be a detailed commentary on how *the Manslaying Wilderness*, the *Tribulation* (Hos. 2:3-4), was the backslidden Churches’ only “*door of hope*” as Hosea testified (Hos. 2:14-15). Ezekiel’s prophesying on the subject has been informatively unrivaled up to the time of the reception of Jeremiah 30:1-31:40 by the Prophet Jeremiah. Therefore, *to those who have ears to hear*, it is an indisputably clear how “*the Valley of Achor*” (the slaughtering of the troublers of the Church) is Israel and Judah’s only hope of salvation (Hos. 2:3-4, 14-15, Amos 9:8-10 & Ezek. 3:17-21, 18:1-32, 33:1-20)! Nevertheless, according to the providence of God, Ezekiel will wax all the more exact and complementary to expound the mysteries that unveil *the Glory of God* in the Tribulation Period in the coming days (from the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah onward).

- the Wilderness* – Hosea 2:3, 14 → The *Wilderness* experience is explicitly cited in reference to God’s dealing with Judah in Ezekiel 19:12-14 via **parabolic language** (East Wind: Ezek. 17:10, Land Desolate: Ezek. 15:8) and in Ezekiel 20:35-38 via an **interpretation** of the parable.
- the Sword* – Amos 9:8-10 → The *Devouring Sword* experience is explicitly cited in reference to God’s dealing with Judah all throughout the prophesying of both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, but as a qualification in reference to those who will survive *the Sword* Ezekiel 12:14-16 and Ezekiel 17:21 are explicit, and this is the same message echoed by Jeremiah in Jeremiah 31:2 (a timely clarification of Ezekiel 21:1-7).
- the Fire* – Amos 2:5, 5:6 → The *Devouring Fire* experience is explicitly cited in reference to God’s dealing with Judah in Ezekiel 15:1-8, 19:14, 20:46-49, & 22:17-22 via **parabolic language**, and Ezekiel 21:1-7 (speaking of *the sword*) is an **interpretation** to the parabolic language in general but above all its interpretation clarifies the parable spoken in Ezekiel 20:46-49.

What is the *Wilderness* experience? It is the same as the *Devouring Sword* and *Fire* of God. All three are terms used to describe the overarching *Tribulation* experience via the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivities. Now, it is important to note that there are other uses for the word *Wilderness* which relate to and branch off from the primary *Wilderness* experience (*the Tribulation*) wherein God would save both Israel and Judah. These variant uses of the word describe the suffering and woe that extend from the overarching operation of salvation via the *Wilderness*. For example, through the Babylonian Captivity the Kingdom of Judah and the City of Jerusalem would become an actual *Wilderness*, literally speaking (Jer. 4:23-26, 22:6, 51:43); and, also, the False Prophets turned the Kingdom of Judah, the Church (God’s “*Vineyard*” and “*Pleasant Portion*”), into a *Wilderness*, spiritually speaking (Jer. 12:10, Amos 8:11-13), but neither of these two uses of the term depict the overarching operation that God called the *Wilderness* in so many other places.

In the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah (approximately one year from this point in time) Ezekiel will deliver a very pointed and clarifying message pertaining to the *Wilderness* doctrine in Ezekiel 20:1-49 (see “*Wilderness*” in Ezek. 20:35-36). From the latter half of the 6<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign and onward the message is increasingly consistent and intentionally clarifying! Even so, Ezekiel 18:1-32, Jeremiah 30:1-31:40, Hosea 2:3-15, and Ezekiel 20:1-21:7 are profoundly complementary and vitally connected one to another, and of course Ezekiel speaks of the destroying, purifying, and salvific *Wilderness* of the Tribulation Period as one which is like “*the Wilderness of the Land of Egypt*” (Ezek. 20:36). This point, and the Exodus Generation in general, has and will continue to be ideologically foundational to comprehending the Tribulation Period because they were the generation that God took into the *Wilderness* at the first – and therein, in the *Wilderness*, they became **the Church Defined** for every generation thereafter. No doubt, this is why the **Exodus Generation** was repeatedly referenced by the Tribulation Prophets of Israel who prophesied of the Assyrian Captivity (Hos. 2:3-15, 9:10, 11:1-4, 13:1, 4-6; Amos 2:9-12, 3:1-2, 5:21-27). No doubt, this is why the **Exodus Generation** will be the primary subject whereby Ezekiel will definitively establish the doctrine of the *Wilderness* in the Tribulation Period of Judah via the Babylonian Captivity in Ezekiel 20:1-21:7, just as Hosea did for Israel (Hos. 2:3-15). Very specifically, though, this means that the **stripping** of Judah and the reducing of her status to the time when she was born (which was, namely, her *Wilderness* experience when *she came out of the Land of Egypt* according to Hosea 2:3-15) was an inspired reference-point for further elaboration. Ezekiel, a student of Hosea’s prophecies, was inspired to elaborate the details of the operation and thus we see several chapters dedicated to what was briefly mentioned by Hosea (the destructive / salvific *Wilderness* experience is cited in reference to God’s dealing with Judah in Ezek. 16:7, 37-39, 20:35-38). Therefore, and moreover, just as Israel was an adulteress and a harlot in the sight of God (as seen in Hosea 1:2-3, 3:1-3 [Hos. 4:15-19 appeals to Judah]), Judah was likewise depicted in Ezekiel Ch. 16 & 23.

The **Exodus Generation** references are interpreted in Ezekiel 20:1-21:32 because the **Exodus Generation** is used as an example of a time when the wrath of God executed the divine sentences of the Law via the operation of *the Glory of God* manifesting among the people. In other words, this was a time when *the Glory of God* was in operation for the fulfillment of Church Purity, and the Tribulation Period is likewise. Let it be known to the reader that herein lies the meaning and point of Jeremiah 30:20-31:2 and very specifically Jeremiah 31:2 (“*The people which were left of the sword found grace in the Wilderness...*”). Remember the details just as Jeremiah told the story, my reader. The **bruises** and **wounds** were **incurable**, meaning that intercession was unable to stop the near annihilation of the people resulting in **the end** of both Kingdoms and the **desolation** of both Lands (see “**Jacob’s Trouble**”). This was the unchangeable. In other words, they must be drawn into the *Wilderness!* However, God promised that – *through it!* – He would **heal** the people’s unhealable **wounds** and **restore** their **health** by saving, forgiving, and regathering them into the Land as one Nation under David their King. Therefore, as an interpretation to this, we see that the divine utility of the Tribulation was so that all the wicked persons from among God’s people would be slain and thereby they wouldn’t defile the Church any longer. The fulness of the prophecies that Jeremiah uttered would not come to pass until this intent, the purging of all wicked persons from the Church, was totally accomplished (Jer. 30:20-31:2). Therefore, at last, let us understand the full intent of Jeremiah’s clarification, that those individuals who found **grace** (through the repentance of their wickedness) are the very same ones who did scarcely escape **the sword** and thus they were effectually exercised by the *Wilderness* unto repentance (Jer. 31:2).

### *A Near Annihilation & the Purging of all Rebels & Transgressors*

*“And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against Me: I will bring them forth out of the Country where they sojourn, and they shall not enter into the Land of Israel: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.” – Ezek. 20:38*

As was clearly demonstrated in the earlier scripture citations that bore witness of the Glory of God in the Wilderness executing judgment for the restoration of Church Purity (Leviticus 9:23-10:3, Numbers 12:4-10, 14:10-35, 16:19-40, 16:42-50, 20:2-13), we saw the definitive immediacy of God’s stand-alone-activity to do what needed to be done! Hereby, it is evident that judgment began at the House of God, the Church. Hereby, it is clear that these are peculiar standards of righteousness and holiness that God requires of His people, the Church (**nonarbitrary standards**).

If the swords which hunted all **idolaters** to kill (Ex. 32:25-29, 1 Cor. 10:6) were commissioned to pass through the World like they passed through the Church encamped at Sinai, behold! All the ungodly and sinful heathen peoples of the World would perish under the blades of Levites, NONE REMAINING!

If “the fire of the LORD” which broke-forth within the Church, all Israelite **complainers** to burn and consume (Num. 11:1-3, 1 Cor. 10:10), did break-forth upon the World with the same infuriation, behold! The fire of the LORD would drink-up the great deep and devour every nation, tribe, and tongue IN EXISTENCE (Amos 7:4-6)!

If the plague of the LORD which did poison the sustenance of the Church, every **lusting** Israelite to kill (Num. 11:33-35, 1 Cor. 10:5-6), did also plague the sustenance of the World for every lusting worldling to slay, behold! Carcasses would fill the World with the stench of rotting flesh because NONE WOULD REMAIN ALIVE to bury their dead! Among the Church, “they buried the people that lusted” (Num. 11:34, 1 Cor. 10:5-6); not so among the World!

All of this is to say, in other words: If every **rebel** of the World was **in the hands of an angry God** *like as* the LORD did execute vengeance upon the rebels of His people *first of all* (Heb. 10:30-31), then on the day that 600,000 Israelites were reprobated by oath (Num. 14:26-35, Heb. 4:1) the multiplied millions of worldlings that existed in the World would have been wasted! This would mean THE END OF THE WORLD, my reader!

And, again, if every **puffed up** and **proud-speaking** worldling did utter their words **in the ears of the Living God**, *by near proximity*, I mean (Num. 14:28, 2 Kings 19:28), *like as* the LORD *heard* and *responded* to every **proud speech** of backsliding Israelites (Num. 16-17), behold! Like the earth swallowed down Korah, Dathan, and Abiram quick into

hell, and like a fire did break-forth and consume the 250 princes that did challenge the LORD, EVERY MAN of the World would be both swallowed and everlastingly burned by the unquenchable fires of hell!

Upon the execution of such standards of righteous judgment, the Church cried out: “Behold, we die, we perish, WE ALL PERISH” (Num. 17:12)! But it wasn’t true, my reader. They lived. At the enforcement of judgment which begins with the Church (“*judgment must begin at the House of God*” – 1 Pet. 4:17), indeed, a small remnant was and is spared alive, but when this judgment is enforced upon *the World* NONE LIVE! The aforementioned historical events wherein the LORD executed judgment within the Church do illustrate this, certainly, but the LORD did fashion an exemplary judgment upon the Church, firstly, and a turnaround judgment upon the World, secondarily, which serve as a paramount example above all others. What was this judgment upon the Church? It was the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivities – *the Wilderness Experience!*

As far as Old Testament is concerned (since the days of Noah), the wrath of God was never so invigorated in all of Church History except at these two points and the 70-year period that ensued. Forerunning these two judgments, the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivities, the hottest infuriation of wrath was threatened on at least 4 separate occasions (Ex. 32:7-10, Num. 14:11-12, 16:21-22, 45). Remember, the significance of these almost annihilations was detailed by the prophet Ezekiel in Ezekiel 20:1-32, and for good cause. For, a detailed study of Israel’s close encounters with the wrath of God as it pursued a total annihilation of them, and then, finally, when the Captivities came upon them, did reveal *The Doctrine of Election in Sovereign Mercy* granted undeservedly to the Church (“*And ye shall know that I am the LORD, when I have wrought with you for my name’s sake, not according to your wicked ways, nor according to your corrupt doings, O ye house of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.*” – Ezek. 20:44, Isa. 1:9, Neh. 9:31, Lam. 3:22; for exhaustive proof of this, see: “[The Near Annihilation of God’s People](#)”, “[I Am Weary With Repenting](#)”, and “[Mercy On Whom I Will Have Mercy](#)”). This progression of wrath is very important because, even though GOD sincerely attempted and justly pursued a total annihilation of Israel, the Church, He could not do it! God repented. It was written,

“For **the LORD shall judge His people**, and *repent* Himself for His servants, when He seeth that their power is gone, and there is none shut up, or left.” – Deut. 32:36

“For **the Day of vengeance** is in Mine heart...therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and He fought against them.” – Isaiah 63:4, 10 [Heb. 10:30-31]

Even though Israel’s wickedness infuriated justice to require a total annihilation of them, wrath was restrained! And in the process of executing a near annihilation of the Church, *firstly*, through the Assyrian and Babylonian Captivities (using “the World” to judge the Church), the LORD accomplished a *secondary* turnaround judgment upon the World which executed a total annihilation! That judgment which was first attempted upon the Church, and restrained, was afterward executed upon the World without restraint! This is the essence of what Peter recalls, by saying, “For the time is come that **judgment must begin at the House of God**: and if it *first begin* at us, what shall *the end* be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if *the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear*” (1 Pet. 4:17-18)? The question is rhetorically asked because Biblical Church History has already given an exhaustive and indisputable answer (for more information, see: “[2-Stage, Populous Distinct, Chronology of Judgment](#)”). So, where did the ungodly and sinful Assyrians and Babylonians appear at last? Speaking of this, Jeremiah prophesied in the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah, saying: “For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: **though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee**: but I will correct thee *in measure*, and will not leave thee *altogether unpunished*” (Jer. 30:11).

You see, before the regathering there needed to be a scattering. Before the restoration there needed to be a tribulation; and this tribulation was a purifying, refining, and annihilating fire. The objects of annihilation were proven thus through the fires of tribulation in that they didn’t out-live the fires; therefore, they were unredeemable men. The objects of refinement were proven thus through the fire of tribulation in that they out-lived the fires; therefore, they were redeemable men. And the two categories of men, the **Evil Figs** and the **Good Figs**, were segregated by the sovereign selection of God in their various appointments of circumstance and situation, suffering and tribulation, ending in life or death. All this, for

a 70-year period. Despite the long duration of time passing, the meticulous design was steadfast and God's intimate oversight was impeccable. It was a hand-selected and hand-made tribulation conducted by God. The hands of Omnipotent Sovereignty *sought, tried, and proved* every man, woman, and child for the 70-year period, to the end: the regathered Church would be entirely clean (Isa. 52:1, Zech. 14:21, Ezek. 36:29, 33), without defilement (Ezek. 11:18, 37:23, 43:7), utterly loyal (Ezek. 14:11), and without idols (Zech. 13:2, Ezek. 20:37-42, 36:25, Hos. 14:8), thence to live forever in the Holy Land (Amos 9:11-15, Jer. 31:40)!

## Refuting Popular Commentators

### *The Spawning of Damnable Heresies to Overthrow the Faith of Tribulation Saints*

Remember, Jeremiah 30:1-31:40 & Ezekiel 18:1-32 were synchronistically given by God and delivered to the Tribulation Jews as a relevant interpretation of their present experience (see “[The Doctrine of the Wilderness According to Hosea](#)”); and, of course, Jeremiah's description of the **survivors** of the *Wilderness Experience* provides vital details to properly interpret Ezekiel's description. The Lord, through Jeremiah, spoke of the **survivors** of the *Wilderness Experience*, saying: “The people which are **left of the sword** found grace *in the Wilderness*; even Israel, when I went to cause him to **rest**” (Jer. 31:2). Why is this important? After Ezekiel clearly detailed *the Wilderness Doctrine* of the Tribulation Period (Ezek. 20:33-44) using the Exodus Generation as an example (Ezek. 20:5-32), he waxed metaphorical to elaborate further in Ezekiel 20:45-49. Upon doing so, and because of the intensity of what was prophesied, the exact meaning of the metaphor became a point of controversy (Ezek. 20:49). Hence, after some time passed, Ezekiel was compelled to provide the interpretation of the prophetic metaphor in Ezekiel 21:1-7.

#### **Ezekiel 20:45-49**

“Moreover the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward the south, and drop thy word toward the south, and prophesy against the forest of the south field; And say to the forest of the south, Hear the word of the LORD; Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I will kindle a fire in thee, and it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree: the flaming flame shall not be quenched, and all faces from the south to the north shall be burned therein. And all flesh shall see that I the LORD have kindled it: it shall not be quenched. Then said I, Ah Lord GOD! they say of me, Doth he not speak parables?”

→ **The Parable**

#### **Ezekiel 21:1-7**

“And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward Jerusalem, and drop thy word toward the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel, And say to the land of Israel, Thus saith the LORD; Behold, I am against thee, and will draw forth my sword out of his sheath, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked. Seeing then that I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked, therefore shall my sword go forth out of his sheath against all flesh from the south to the north: That all flesh may know that I the LORD have drawn forth my sword out of his sheath: it shall not return any more. Sigh therefore, thou son of man, with the breaking of thy loins; and with bitterness sigh before their eyes. And it shall be, when they say unto thee, Wherefore sighest thou? that thou shalt answer, For the tidings; because it cometh: and every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water: behold, it cometh, and shall

→ **The Interpretation**



be brought to pass, saith the Lord GOD.”

What’s the point of controversy? Whether or not **the fire** will “devour every **green tree** [in the forest of the south], and every **dry tree**” (Ezek. 20:47), that’s the controversy. God gave the interpretation in plain speech to settle the controversy: the forest of the south is the Land of Israel and its holy places (Ezek. 21:2), the unquenchable and all-devouring fire is the sword of the Almighty that is irreversibly drawn against all flesh (Ezek. 21:3-5), the doomed-to-burn green trees are **the righteous** while the doomed-to-burn dry trees are **the wicked** (Ezek. 21:3-5), and the actual experience of *burning* is in the described experience, “*every heart shall melt, and all hands shall be feeble, and every spirit shall faint, and all knees shall be weak as water*” (Ezek. 21:7). Speaking more specifically, in plain terms, the controverted issue resides in the unique word-choice of this prophetic woe in that, God said: “*I will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked*” (Ezek. 21:4).

### Ordinary, Natural, Common, & General?

Tragically, some unadvised yet popular Commentators have been sorely misled on the meaning of this pronouncement. This, in turn, has popularized a catastrophically dangerous heresy that is crafted to subvert and destroy Tribulation Saints amidst the Great Tribulation that is to come. The Commentators erroneously conclude...

“The sword in like manner shall cut off the righteous and the wicked. Good and bad were **involved in the common calamities of the nation**; *the righteous* were **cut off** from *the land of Israel* when they were sent captives in Babylon, though perhaps **few** or **none** of them were **cut off** from **the land of the living**...” – Matthew Henry

“The righteous - It is no unusual thing, that **in publick calamities**, those who are indeed righteous should be involved with others.” – John Wesley

“Now, among the two latter classes there might be *many righteous as well as wicked*. And when all the provisions were consumed, so that there was no more bread in the city, during the siege by Nebuchadnezzar, **the righteous must have suffered as well as the wicked**; *for they could not be preserved alive, but by miracle, when there was no bread*; nor was their perishing for want any loss to them, because the Lord would take them straight to his glory. And however men in general are unwilling to die, yet there is no instance, nor can there be, of any man’s complaint that he got to heaven too soon... The righteous were not cut off for the crimes of the wicked, (see chap. 18), nor were these crimes visited upon them, yet several of them shared **in the common calamity**, but none perished. Those that were removed by a violent death, (**and I believe we shall find few such**), got a speedier entrance into eternal glory.” – Adam Clarke

Do you see how these respectable Commentators are describing the Great Tribulation of the Babylonian Captivities? My reader, do you know the holocaustal consequences of such a belief? My reader, things are not as these men of stature would have you to believe! Fitting words for this situation are those that were once spoken to the respectable but misled apostle Peter, when the Jesus said to him, “Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offence unto Me” (Matt. 16:23)! Shockingly, **the Majesty of the LORD** (Isa. 24:13-16, 26:8-10) within *the meticulous details* of the Tribulation in *all its forms* is not the **glory** of these Commentators. Ah, but it must be! ...for, *this*, and nothing besides, will be the glory of the righteous amidst the fires of the Great Tribulation! Grievously, though, these Commentators are ignorant of the Gospel Message of the Tribulation Period (Rev. 14:6-7). Can you believe it? Therefore, to them, *the calamities* of the Church amidst the Tribulation Period are secularized.

**Matthew Henry:** Notice that Henry characterizes the Jewish calamities to be like “the common calamities of the nation”, one might say, as if the “holy Nation” of Israel is comparable to the commonalities of all other nations!

**John Wesley:** Notice that Wesley characterizes the Jewish calamities as “publick calamities”, one might say, as if the saintly population of Israel’s Citizens are subject to *things as usual* among the public of heathen nations!

**Adam Clarke:** Notice that Clarke characterizes the Jewish calamities to be the sharing of “the common calamity”, as if this people or their calamities could possibly be called common in respect to the happenings of all other nations and peoples, as if the people and their calamities aren’t utterly uncommon in every way possible!

Surely the Lord Jesus is displeased with this unbiblical, offensive, and dangerous nonsense! I cannot help but remember the words, “*Have ye never read...?*”, and imagine the Lord’s countenance at such a time (Mark 2:25, Matt. 21:16). These words were spoken at a time when Jesus was combatting dangerous heresies that, in His description, were like venomous serpents sinking their fangs into the helpless souls of Jewish society (Matt. 12:34, 22:33). Even so, in this case, I find it shockingly abnormal that these Commentators would interpret Israelite normality like the normalized societal experiences of heathen nations. Have they never read of the peculiarities of the Israelite Nation, a Holy Nation, and how that even the Land itself is holy unto God? How much more the societal happenings of the Civilization?

One of the primary purposes of God’s Glory in redemption is to **put a difference** between *the People of God* and *the Peoples of Men*. Namely, that *God’s People* would be a **separated** people from all other *peoples* in that they dwell in union with God (see “[Rules of the Union](#)”). I marvel that this momentous feat could be forgotten or ignored by Popular Commentators. For, indeed, it was hardly accomplished (see “[Becoming God’s People, the Controversy](#)”)! And, the hard-to-be accomplished status, being accomplished, only reinforces the inestimable difference between *the Kingdom of God* and *the Kingdoms of Men* (see “[Israel as God’s People, the Implications](#)”). Truly! ...how can this **hard**-to-be accomplished status be so **easily** ignored by Popular Commentators?

Well, the Gentiles are disadvantaged. We, being such, are prone to conjecture based upon our own experiences (it’s called worldly wisdom); thus, in the case of so called *public calamities*, the nominal “common sense” heathenistic perspective prevails its imposing presence upon the text of Holy Scripture. However, neither the *public* nor the *politics* of the Israelite People is comparable to the Heathen Peoples of the World. The probabilities of the one are irrelevant to the other, and vice versa, because in Israelite society GOD is the probable cause. Exemplifying this, my reader, have you ever wondered why *the Book of Proverbs* is not proverbial for you and I in heathen societies and governments? Have you ever wondered where all the ultimatums of *blessing* and *curse* are in this our day? Can you imagine it, my reader? Actually living in a civilization where all the proverbs of *the Book of Proverbs* were so pervasively and unmistakably present in Israel that to them, shockingly, **the Glory of God** depicted in the proverbs was but *common sense* knowledge held in remembrance by all Israelites!

The fact that God was KING in Israel through all the meticulous ways presented in *the Book of Proverbs* was just common sense among God’s People. That’s what a proverb is, you know: common sense. Proverbs are statements of reasonably acquired wisdom that prove true in the common life experiences of all men. Only for Israelites, those things which are *common among* this **uncommon people** bear witness to the sheer magnitude of **God’s Glory** which was in operation. Solomon’s inspired oration of **Divinely Empowered Civil Justice** (contained in *the Book of Proverbs*) was written with divine genius as a testimony to all nations and peoples how that in Israel, “God is known” ([Ps. 48:3](#))! The entirety of this **uncommon people** – a “**Holy Nation**” ([Ex. 19:6](#), [1 Pet. 2:9](#)) – was made to fear God because they were utterly *encompassed* and *enveloped* by the activity and actuality of GOD as KING.

In other words, the Israelites Government was **Divinely Empowered** to accomplish purely miraculous feats. Hereby, the whole population of Israel came under an intense **awareness of God’s imminent judgment** upon any **uncleanness** and **impurity** existing in the Land of Israel, the Church. Gloriously, Solomon details the judgments of God pursuing the objectives of **Church Purity** to the **vanquishing** of **unlawful sex**, **thievery**, and **covetousness**, while establishing a **love for God**, a **love for the Brethren**, and a **bridling of the tongue**. Thus, the proverbial commonality of the citizenry of this Civilization is radically different from all other earthly civilizations (Deut. 4:5-8). Right? For, indeed, there is no such thing as an Israelite citizen, “commonly speaking”. The uncommon commonality between all Israelite **citizens** is that they were **saints**, according to doctrinal rule. Wrongfully so, however, some distinguish between Israelite **citizens** and Israelite **saints**. The divine commands for holiness were for **all the people**, not just the politicians ([Lev. 20:22-27](#)). Thus, Israelite

Government wasn't like our governments. Israelite citizenship does not operate like our Gentile citizenship. The Israelite nation was not as Gentile nations (Deut. 14:2).

In Israel, there was an inseparable mingling of **state** and **citizen** affairs. This means that unlike any other nation, state and citizen affairs were *not secular but religious*. Matters of state were matters of religion! The branches of society and civilization in Israel (every congregation held anywhere with any vocation in all of Israel) were, more specifically, branches of Church Ministry. Yes! And the congregants therein were Church Ministers! Therefore in Israel, the government and its citizens, along with the soldiers of war (Deut. 23:9-14, 28:7), the ingathering harvesters of the farm (Ex. 23:16, 34:22, Deut. 28:4-6, 10-13), the marital compatibility of individuals (Neh. 13:1-3), and all things that appertain to financial and economic prosperity (Deut. 28:4-6, 10-13), or likewise, family relationships and fruitfulness (Deut. 28:4-6, 10-13)... all persons of every vocation, or, "the children of Israel" as a people, had to be **separated** from all other peoples (exempting lawful converts from strange peoples). If Israel *as a people* did mingle with uncleanness --- men would "DIE"! Religious rites were gospel messages preached by shadows, therefore Israel's participation (**inwardly and outwardly**) was necessary for conversion and present progressive holiness (which is saving union with God's Spirit), thus all Israelites were to be *Israelites indeed* (inwardly and outwardly), or in other words, all **citizens** were to be converted, twice-born, **saints** (Lev. 15:31).

Israel was bound by Laws which demanded all of Israel's participation in religious ceremonies. Ceremonies could not be neglected by any of the population. They were not a matter of personal choice or leisure, as if it was a mere privilege. Ceremonial practices were not dependent upon civilian preferences, no! The religious ceremonies of Israel were a matter of *life and death* (Deut. 30:15-20)! Pause and think about that, my reader. Whoever did not keep **the Passover** was not *passed over* (which means, the destroying angel of God's wrath did not *pass them by*, but rather, pursued and fell upon them with the death sentence), for it is written: "**that soul shall be cut off from Israel**" (Ex. 12:15). **The Day of Atonement** was a wrath-absorbing escape for "all the people of the congregation" (Lev. 16:33), thus anyone who did not observe it was "**cut off from among his people**" (Lev. 23:29). **The Sabbath** was observed by all and neglected by none, for upon its neglect it was written, "whosoever doeth any work therein, **that soul shall be cut off from among his people**" (Ex. 31:14). **Circumcision**, neglected by any man, "**that soul shall be cut off from his people**" (Gen. 17:14). Israel was a clean nation, a clean people, and when **Unclean Laws** were defied by individual Israelites (Lev. 15:31) or Levitical officers, the penalty was DEATH: "**that soul shall be cut off from My Presence**, I am the LORD" (Lev. 22:3). Any Israelite of any tribe, if they **Defile the Tabernacle** of God by their uncleanness they would die (Lev. 15:31).

As you can see, either Israel was *separated from their uncleanness* or they were *separated from their God*, and if God did abide in their midst, He required the death of unclean persons, and if the nation did abide in uncleanness, the whole nation would be destroyed by a plethora of curses and heathen armies which God would raise up against them. Anyone excluded from **Religious Services** was **cut off** from among the people, the simplest example to reference being: Ceremonial **Sacrifices** (Num. 15:30-31, Heb. 10:28)! Some assume that those who were "**cut off**" from among God's people were **excommunicated** rather than **put to death** (JFB), but this is not true! To be "**cut off**" from the people of Israel was, by God's definition, the *death penalty* (Num. 4:18, Lev. 20:1-8, 18, 23:29, Ex. 31:14, see also the presumptuous sinners of Num. 15:30-31 in context with the Sabbath breaker in Num. 15:32-36, in comparison with Heb. 10:28; see also Chapter 5). Furthermore, unlike heathen nations, the punishments involving **the death penalty** were civilian affairs. Though our heathen nation, my reader, enforces the death penalty upon transgressors by political rather than civil powers, in Israel this was a civil matter. *All the people* were involved in and obligated to conduct the execution, rather than a mere state or national officer. Israel DID NOT operate like our heathen nation because in Israel... God is KING.

Of course, backsliding was possible and well accounted for in Biblical Church History. However, according to Solomon, the perfection of **holiness** was achievable because **Civil Justice was Effective to Save**. This means that when the backsliders of Israel, the Church, were engaged by the chastisements and judgments of Civil Justice, they were recovered! God's *imminent judgment* against sinning saints (**evildoers**) was ideally accomplished through **Civil Justice via the Government** of Israel, and it was EFFECTIVE! Solomon told the story, my reader. For example, when fellow Israelites did **backslide** from the bridling of the tongue... behold, they were **recovered**! Not only this, but, **dishonesty** and **slothfulness** were effectually **purged**, **thievery** was **forsaken** by all, **covetousness** via **oppressing the poor** was **disdained and avoided** by all, **fighting**

ceased to exist, and, all the while, **scorners** were **made to fear** and **fools** did **become wise**! How did it happen? **THE GLORY OF GOD** did effectively operate the material **Government** of Israel for the enforcement of **Civil Justice**! For, after all, in Israel God was KING. Melodious sounds and worshipful utterances were heard from the windows of them that kept the Home, the same which were echoed by the city-street travelers who tended to their day's business: "Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in **the City of our God, in the Mountain of His Holiness**" (Ps. 48:1)! Let the Gentiles marvel and wag their heads in wonder! In Israel, God was KING! But what about all the **sin** and **wickedness** which is noticeably pervasive in various generations of Israelite Church History, you wonder? There were times of apostasy, this is true... and in such times these glories were not in operation (Rom. 9:6). Nevertheless, there were select generations which did experience the glories which Solomon memorialized in *the Book of Proverbs*! How did "**the times**" change, and why? A story well told by Solomon, my reader. According to *the Book of Proverbs*, when there were **times** when **civil justice was ineffective to save** the **backsliders** of Israel, there was a backup plan. Ultimately, when all else fails... BABYLON is the backup plan.

### *The Doctrine of the Majesty of the LORD*

I repeat, BABYLON is God's backup plan. Babylon doesn't replace God or usurp His Majesty. Babylon is subservient to God's Majesty! Thus, God is meticulously involved in whatever befalls the Jews through Babylon. Literally. Thus, in the case of Babylon, or in any other case, it is nonsensical and violently unbiblical to expect the **societal experiences** of *heathen* and *Israelite* peoples to be in concert one with another. For, don't these two peoples, and their societies, have stark and inestimable differences? Isn't there something about them, or someone, which makes the two contrastingly distinct and diametrically opposed? GOD. Yes, GOD HIMSELF! He is the inestimable difference: namely His **immediate presence** and the transcending manifestation of His rule via the blessings and curses (according to the Covenant) that universally affect every aspect of Israelite life.

The heathen peoples, however, do not have any divine light from God, nor an inspired Law, and neither do they have God Himself as their *indwelling and among-dwelling* KING (Deut. 4:6-8, Eph. 2:12)! Therefore, neither **the wicked** nor **the righteous** within the borders of Judah were in a "common situation" as the heathen public of other nations would naturally expect; there was a supernatural difference at hand! Naming names, the former were forbidden within the borders of the Kingdom and, meanwhile, God promised to separate the former from the latter no matter the cost lest they all descend into hell together! Startling though it may be, my reader, follow the hyperlinks and observe God's honest truth:

All the **Assemblies** or **Congregations** of the Israelite People, in any place or for any purpose within **the Land of Israel**, or anywhere in **the Kingdom of God**, especially within **the City of Jerusalem** & upon **Mount Zion**, or anywhere of closer proximity to **the Temple of God**, were required by Law to be entirely populated by righteous and godly persons.

In the case of Babylon, the LORD pursued the same objectives even though the borders of the Kingdom were dissolved, and national sovereignty was compromised from a human perspective. Undeniably, this is the expressed purpose of the Tribulation Period! However, like Peter was obnoxiously ignorant of the need for and glory of Christ's betrayal and crucifixion (Matt. 16:22-23), Matthew Henry, John Wesley, and Adam Clarke are obnoxiously ignorant of the need for and glory of the Tribulation Period. For, herein, *through* the Tribulation and not without it, or *through* Babylon and not without it, God will restore what the rule of Law had always required (hence the promise, "**I will purge out from among you all the rebels, and them that transgress against Me**" – Ezek. 20:33-44). Indeed, with all heathen nations or peoples, or societies, the calamities which befall them are **arbitrary** even though it is a just and due penalty of death (an **arbitrary** assertion of the moral protocol). However, with Israel & Judah, the Church, the calamities aren't arbitrary; they are **standard in protocol** according to God's demand of righteousness and holiness in the Land (a **constant & unchanging** assertion of moral protocol). Interpreters that are ignorant of this will be unperceptive of the mystery of **God's Majesty** in, through, and over Babylon.

Being utterly blind to the warrant for and purpose of *the Tribulation*, the scriptures are wrested. Being utterly blind to what a Church is and how the Kingdom of God operated in the Old Testament, they assume that when death and suffering

befell the people of God during the Babylonian Captivities, it is like what happens in heathen nations when “public calamities” befall people in general. In other words, it is a punishment of the Nation and not individual persons. What is, in actuality - a glorious Masterpiece of Majestic Sovereignty - they reckon to be a sad result of disorderly and unfortunate circumstances. You see, my reader? The proponents of the popular interpretation are ignorant of God’s prerogative with every Jew in the Land of Judah ([God’s Prerogative for & Performance of Church Purity](#)). Therefore, what God employed as an *Inescapable Manhunt* they misunderstand as the sad inclusion of righteous persons in “public calamities” that are due to a wicked society and nation.

My reader, God will purge *the people* without sparing *the place*. God will purge *the Church* and spare the righteous while unsparingly destroying *the City of Jerusalem* and *the Temple of God*. Heretofore, this has been the expressed message of the Tribulation Prophets, Jeremiah & Ezekiel. Thus, it is glaringly apparent that Popular Commentators did not follow Jeremiah and Ezekiel’s prophesying heretofore, from the reign of Jehoahaz until the present, which was the 7<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah’s reign, otherwise they would know the following.

**Metaphorical Terms:** “*fire...it shall devour every green tree in thee, and every dry tree*” – Ezek. 20:47

**The Interpretation:** “*my sword...will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked*” – Ezek. 21:3

**The Meaning:** The term “*cut off*” conveys the removal of all the Jewish inhabitants whether by **death** or **captivity**, but it does not and cannot exclusively mean death because then, contrary to scripture, this would mean the death of the righteous.

Firstly, it should be duly noted that the prophecy is directed toward Jerusalem and the Kingdom of Judah in general, which we know to be the habitation of the **Evil Figs**. The word of the Lord to Ezekiel was very clear in both metaphorical terms and plain speech. Ezekiel was directed by God to turn unto the City and Land of the **Evil Figs** in the words: “set thy face toward the south...toward the south, and prophesy against the Forest of the South Field” (Ezek. 20:46), and, “set thy face toward Jerusalem...toward the holy places, and prophesy against the Land of Israel” (Ezek. 21:2). Hence, the noun, “thee”, in the phrase, “my sword...will cut off from *thee* the righteous and the wicked” (Ezek. 21:3), is the City and Land of Jerusalem and Judah. Understandably, there are two ways to “*cut off*” people from the Land via **the sword: death & captivity**. Both of these experiences happen at the point of a sword; and, of course, the Lord’s sword (“**My sword**”) is *the Babylonian Army* (for more information, see: “[The Day of the LORD: Having Departed, God Returns for War!](#)”). Once again, and I repeat, it is hereby impossible to conjecture that the *cutting off* of the righteous and the wicked is signifying *the death* of **the righteous** and **the wicked**, as it may appear to some. This interpretation is contrary to the immediate context of Ezekiel 20:45-21:7, as has been demonstrated in the aforementioned, and it is contrary to the greater context of Ezekiel 20:1-21:7.

Furthermore, this interpretation is contrary to the most recent prophecies of the Tribulation Prophets in the 6<sup>th</sup> & 7<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah. For example, Jeremiah was compelled to identify the survivors of the Babylonian sieges in the terms, “The people which were left of **the sword** found grace *in the Wilderness*; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest” (Jer. 31:2; Ezek. 6:8). Jeremiah prophesied Jeremiah 30:1-31:40 in continuity to what Ezekiel began in Ezekiel 3:22-7:27, 8:1-11:25, 12:1-16, 12:17-13:23, 14:1-23, 15:1-8, 16:1-63, 17:1-24 (*starting from the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah*) and, notably, Ezekiel’s message culminated in clarity concerning the controverted issues at hand in Ezekiel 18:1-32. [Note: *all the prophecies of Ezekiel from Ezekiel 8:1 to Ezekiel 19:14 took place starting from the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 6<sup>th</sup> month of the 6<sup>th</sup> year and onward, one by one, unto any time prior to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year (see Ezek. 8:1 & Ezek. 20:1). In approximately 1 year, Ezekiel received and delivered 9 prophecies while Jeremiah received and delivered only 1 prophecy.*] Ezekiel’s culminating argumentation in Ezekiel 18:1-32 did directly confront the underlying theology of the notorious heretics, **the Evil Figs**, by proving that **in a situation of annihilation every person is individually judged by God**. In other words, so as to preclude the easily misunderstood details of Ezekiel 20:45-21:7, **the doctrine of collective judgment** was thoroughly refuted. Furthermore, what Jeremiah gave reference to in Jeremiah 31:2, speaking of **the Wilderness Experience**, Ezekiel

elaborated upon in Ezekiel 20:33-44. All of this is, of course, a contextual framework that objectively interprets Ezekiel 20:45-21:7 contrary to the popular opinion of respectable Commentators.

Shockingly, these Commentators are utterly ignorant of the point and purpose of the Tribulation Period in general. The common understanding of Ezekiel 20:45-21:7 is a shocking and tragic contradiction to the rest of the Book of Ezekiel. There should be no confusion about what is meant by the prophetic act, “*my sword...will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked*” (Ezek. 21:3). Why? Heretofore, the Tribulation Prophets have already abundantly prophesied concerning the final estate of the Land and Kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem, that it would be utterly desolate and without inhabitant (Jer. 2:15, 4:1-4, 4:7, 7:33, 9:11-12, 26:9, 33:10, 34:22, 44:2, Ezek. 6:14, 14:14-16, 15:8). In other words, this means that all the people (both the righteous and the wicked) would be cut off from the Land. Furthermore, profound specificity was used to describe what would become of *the entire population* of the inhabitants of Jerusalem all throughout the Babylonian sieges (Ezekiel 5:2-4, 12-13, 6:1-10, 13, 14, 7:2-3, 9, 11, 16, etc.).

Therein it was written, and specified, that two-thirds of the population of the **Evil Figs** would die in the Babylonian sieges via famine, pestilence, and the sword. Specifically speaking, it is important to note that that a “*third part*” of the people would fall/die by the sword (Ezek. 5:12). However, another third part (“*the whole remnant*” that is left of those who did not die by famine, pestilence, or the sword) would be scattered “into all the winds”, God said, warning that He would “draw out a sword after them” (Ezek. 5:13). Now this may appear to mean a total annihilation of the people, no questions asked, but a thorough study of Jeremiah and Ezekiel has proven otherwise. In other words, there was **an amendment of grace added to the repertoire of damnation** decreed upon the **Evil Figs** (Good Figs: Jer. 24:5-7, 29:4-15; Evil Figs: Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19). I must say, however, this amendment was hardly added to the repertoire because God was indeed intending to totally annihilate the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the **Evil Figs**, because *none of them were righteous!* To comprehend the fulness of this glorious mystery one must go back and study the progress of prophetic messages delivered by Jeremiah and Ezekiel leading up to this point in time (the 7<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah). An orderly guide of the most profound points of prophecy are provided below.

- “The Majesty of the Lord in Tribulatory Judgments of Life & Death” in Jeremiah 14:1-17:18
- “The Majesty of the Lord in Tribulatory Judgments of Life & Death” in Ezekiel 1:2-3:21
- “The Spiritual Status of the Evil Figs” in Ezekiel 8:1-11:25
- “All the Residue of the Remnant of Israel being Totally Annihilated!” in Ezekiel 8:1-11:25
- “The Majesty of the Lord in Tribulatory Judgments of Life & Death” in Ezekiel 8:1-11:25
- “The Mysteries of Redemption in the Great Tribulation” in Ezekiel 8:1-11:25
- “Erroneously Reckoning the Promises of Covenantal Idealism” in Ezekiel 8:1-11:25
- “The Majesty of the Lord in Tribulatory Judgments of Life & Death” in Ezekiel 8:1-11:25
- “The Evil Figs Didn’t Believe They Were Evil!” in Ezekiel 18:1-32
- “In a Situation of Annihilation Every Person is Individually Judged by God” in Ezekiel 18:1-32
- “Attempted & Hardly Thwarted Events of Total Annihilation” in Ezekiel 18:1-32

The spiritual status and eternal fate of those who suffered **death** in the Captivities is central in God’s message through the Tribulation Prophets; and, of course, this is the most controverted issue of the heretical and apostate Jews at large. Fearfully, though, the popular Commentators of today are in agreement with the false prophets of old on this point. Henry, Wesley, and Clarke are seeking to make *ambiguous, collective, and inclusively general* that which God says is *objective, individualistic, and exclusively specific*. They are inadvertently affirming the heretical propaganda of the backsliders in the Tribulation Period of old! Biblical refutations of these dangerous heresies as they existed in their ancient forms can be found in the following:

- “A Parable Debating the Spiritual Status & Eternal Fate of Those Who Did, Do, & Would Die”
- “The Doctrine of Collective Judgment Refuted”

Truly, my reader, upon a brief reading of the prophetic details that determine the happenings of *life* and *death* in the Tribulation Period, it is impossible to label the fate of each soul as *random* or *ambiguous*. There is no vacuum of nothingness

at the center of the storm, my reader! GOD IS THERE. The injuries suffered therefrom were not chaotically administered. The precious souls of mankind were not subjected to the whims of ambiguous randomness. Rather, the *blessings* of **life** and the *curses* of **death** and every injury in between suffered by every means possible were totally under the sovereign control of God (Deut. 27:9-28:68). That which appears chaotic and unguided is actually controlled and aimed! That which appears to be ambiguous and random is actually specific and individualistic! These Commentators need to fill the vacuum of nothingness with GOD, and then they will know *the Glory of God* in the Tribulation Period! Otherwise called, “**The Majesty of the LORD**” (Isa. 24:14)! B-E-H-O-L-D! This revelation makes every experience of the Tribulation *morally charged* and *incrementally punctual* in bringing the impenitent souls of hardened men into an otherwise impossible repentance whereby, at last, they acknowledge **the Majesty of the LORD**. This acknowledgement is what the Tribulation Prophets were talking about when they said, “And they shall know that I am the LORD, and I have not said in vain that I would do this evil unto them” (Ezek. 6:10).

If the Tribulation was an unguided storm of *general* wrath that was stirred, spiraled, accelerated, and flung into the Land of Judah to the *collective punishment* of the whole, then God would not have pointed the finger at the fanciful escapees and foretold the unforgettable details of their soon-to-be experiences. Furthermore, God utilized inescapable judgments of **spiritual delusion** to maneuver damned souls into the position of foreordained justice. Speaking of the inescapable judgments of **spiritual delusion**, Amos prophesied,

“Shall not the Land *tremble* for this, and every one *mourn* that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. And it shall come to pass in that **Day**, saith the Lord GOD, that **I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day**: And I will turn your feasts into *mourning*, and all your songs into *lamentation*; and I will bring up *sackcloth* upon all loins, and *baldness* upon every head; and I will make it as the *mourning* of an only son, and the end thereof as a *bitter day*. Behold, the **days** come, saith the Lord GOD, that **I will send a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it. In that Day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst.**” – Amos 8:8-13

When the prophet said, speaking in the name of God, “*I will cause the sun to go down at noon, and I will darken the earth in the clear day*” (Amos 8:9), he was speaking of God’s *curse* of **spiritual darkness** and **spiritual sleep** (for more information, see: “[Spiritual Darkness](#)” & “[The New Testament Curses of God](#)”). When the prophet said, speaking in the name of God, “*I will send a famine in the Land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD...in that Day shall the fair virgins and young men faint for thirst*” (Amos 8:11, 13), he was speaking of God’s *curse* of **spiritual famine** and **spiritual desertification** (for more information, see: “[Spiritual Famine](#)” & “[The New Testament Curses of God](#)”). These divine curses are inescapable judgments of **spiritual delusion** sent by God to maneuver the souls of men into the position of greater judgments. In Amos 5:18-20 & Amos 9:1-10, speaking directly of this maneuvering process, Amos speaks of the **spiritual darkness** of **the Day of the LORD** in that it makes possible the physical circumstances of greater judgments upon the bodies and souls of impenitent Jews. Looking upon both of the passages side-by-side, the message is clear.

“Woe unto you that desire **the Day of the LORD!** to what end is it for you? **the Day of the LORD is darkness, and not light.** *As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him. Shall not the Day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?*” – Amos 5:18-20

“I saw the Lord standing upon the altar: and he said, Smite the lintel of the door, that the posts may shake: and cut them in the head, all of them; **and I will slay the last of them with the sword: he that fleeth of them shall not flee away, and he that escapeth of them shall not be delivered.** **THOUGH THEY dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them;** **THOUGH THEY climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down:** *And* **THOUGH THEY hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence;** *and* **THOUGH THEY be hid from My sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them:** *And* **THOUGH THEY go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it**

shall slay them: and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil, and not for good. And the Lord GOD of hosts is he that toucheth the Land, and it shall melt, and all that dwell therein shall mourn: and it shall rise up wholly like a flood; and shall be drowned, as by the flood of Egypt. It is he that buildeth his stories in the heaven, and hath founded his troop in the earth; he that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name. Are ye not as children of the Ethiopians unto me, O children of Israel? saith the LORD. Have not I brought up Israel out of the land of Egypt? and the Philistines from Caphtor, and the Syrians from Kir? **Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all Nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. ALL the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.**” – Amos 9:1-10 [Isa. 24:18, 30:16-17]

You may object to the use of these scriptures from Amos by arguing that they were spoken to Israel, not Judah, and being such they reference the Assyrian Captivity. This, I know, but I have already proven how Hosea and Amos were Tribulation Prophets to Israel like Jeremiah and Ezekiel were Tribulation Prophets to Judah, and how that Jeremiah and Ezekiel give much more detail and elaboration upon the experience of the Tribulation because the remnant of the Jews throughout the generations of the Kings remained in Judah for the most part. This point was further confirmed in the introduction and elaboration of the *Wilderness Doctrine*, introduced by Hosea and elaborated upon by Ezekiel (see “[The Doctrine of the Wilderness According to Hosea](#)”); and, while studying the Tribulation Period of Judah we have observed the unchangeable constancy of God’s sovereignty in the subject title, “*The Majesty of the Lord in Tribulatory Judgments of Life & Death*”. In other words, the *Tribulation Experience* of this time period was a *Wilderness Experience*, as Hosea and Ezekiel testified – one exactly like the *Wilderness Experience* of Israel when she came out of Egypt, only this time God was using the Babylonians (the sword, famine, and pestilence that accompanies warfare and longstanding sieges) and other choice instruments (wild beasts, venomous serpents, etc.) to accomplish the same ultimate objective: Church Purity.

### The Gospel Message: The Majesty of the LORD in every detail of the Tribulation

Remember, during the *Wilderness Experience* of the Exodus Generation *the Glory of God* did suddenly appear in a pillar of Cloud or Fire to execute the neglected judgment by divine plagues to the successful restoration of Church Purity. Furthermore, remember that *the Glory of God*, as it was in operation among the Exodus Generation, is the single most coveted after experience of all generations thereafter (see “[The Church Defined, Recalled, & Revived](#)”)! Albeit, in Ezekiel’s time and among the Tribulation Jews, *the Glory of God* departed from the Church (Ezek. 8:1-11:25; see “[The Visible Church Abandoned by the Invisible God](#)”). This characteristic of the Church among the Tribulation Jews puts them in a starkly different situation as the Exodus Generation in the *Wilderness Experience*, right? And, yet, the Lord solemnly testified to the Tribulation Jews, saying:

“And I will bring you into *the Wilderness* of the people, and there will I **plead with you face to face**. *Like as I pleaded with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so will I plead with you*, saith the Lord GOD. And I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant: And I will **purge out** from *among you* **the rebels**, and **them that transgress** against Me: I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn, and **they shall not enter into the land of Israel**: and ye shall know that I am the LORD.” – Ezek. 20:35-38

The Lord, the King of the Church, would accomplish the same objective of Church Purity only by different means. The Pillar of Cloud & Fire wasn’t manifest like the 1<sup>st</sup> *Wilderness Experience*. This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Wilderness Experience*, different than the 1<sup>st</sup> but **like** unto it. The similarity is in the manner of **divine pleading** (Ezek. 20:35-36). The similarity is in the manner of **furious ruling** (Ezek. 20:33). The similarity is in the enormity by which God was confrontationally and inescapably **purging** the Church from all **rebels** by His standalone authority and unsurpassed power (Ezek. 20:37-38). In other words, this was a situation no less *miraculous* than when the Pillar of Cloud & Fire did suddenly manifest and execute inconceivable and unquestionable judgments amidst the Church in the Wilderness! This being the case, however, *the Glory of God* departed from Judah and joined the Armies of Babylon to the end that they, and all other choice instruments (Ps. 17:13-14), would



be under the control of **the Majesty of the Lord** *in every single detail* of the Tribulation! Thereby, through profoundly different means, and through the 70-year Captivity that would transpire, the Jews experienced the 2<sup>nd</sup> *Wilderness Experience*. If you can believe it, this is **the Gospel Message** of the Tribulation Period! The glorious **Gospel Message** of the Tribulation is **the Majesty of the Lord** *in every single detail* of the Tribulation, in that...

- If an arrow was drawn and shot at venture and killed a man – it struck God’s targeted man, a wicked man, whom the LORD desired to slay (1 Kings 22:20, 34; Ezek. 3:18, 18:4, 20)!
- If a wandering Lion or Bear found and killed a man, it wasn’t by chance (Lev. 26:22, Ezek. 14:15, 21, 33:27, Jer. 15:3, 1 Kings 13:24-25, 2 Kings 17:25)!
- If a fleeing Israelite evades the Armies of Babylon on the terrain of the countryside and then, he accidentally fell off a cliff and died – his foot was appointed thereto (Deut. 32:35, Ezek. 5:12-17, 6:1-7, Ps. 73:17-19, Isa. 8:15, Jer. 13:16, Ps. 91:12)!

This is just to name a few, my reader. Much more can and will be said! But, I pause, knowing that many readers will ask the question: “*What does this have to do with the Gospel Message of the Tribulation Period?*” Firstly, my reader, you must remember the primary audience whom God is addressing in Ezekiel 20:1-21:32 – namely, the no-good **Good Figs** and the generally reprobate and hopeless **Evil Figs**, but especially the **Evil Figs** because they were the inhabitants of the Kingdom of Judah and the City of Jerusalem. Secondly, to understand the *goodness* of the Good News you must understand the bad. Will God make “a full end” of the **Evil Figs** (Evil Figs: Jer. 24:8-10, 29:16-19)? Yes. That’s the bad news. Like the staggering vision that Ezekiel had seen (recorded in Ezekiel 9:1-11), a **present-tense operation** of total annihilation was *in motion* among the **Evil Figs**! This was the prophetically pronounced status of “all the residue of the remnant of Israel” (Ezek. 9:8, 13). Why? Because they were unchangeably wicked and they deserved it! Thus, for the enforcement of the bad news God had a **meticulous involvement** *in every detail*, in that...

The LORD was **watching** with every Babylonian Soldier who stood at attention to prevent all escapees (Ps. 127:1, Ezek. 21:3-4, 5:2, 12-17, 6:2-4, 6-7, 10; Joel 2:3, 11; Isa. 5:27), the LORD was **meticulously guiding** the blade of every Babylonian sword wielded on the battlefield (Ps. 17:13-14, Joel 2:4-9, Isa. 5:29-30), the LORD was **meticulously aiming** every Babylonian arrow to plunge into the flesh of those whom divine anger was targeting (1 Kings 22:20, 34; Ezek. 3:18, 18:4, 20; Isa. 5:28), the LORD was **meticulously directing** the deadly claws of pestilence which walked the countryside to ravaged the people (Ex. 12:12-13, 23, Deut. 28:35, Ex. 15:26), the LORD was **standing in judgment** over the biological resilience of every man who assayed to endure the famine but couldn’t (Jer. 42:16-17, 22, Ezek. 5:12, 6:12), and, finally, the LORD was **specifically ordering** the disorderly imagination of every violent beast to devour the flesh of whomever was divinely appointed to die (Lev. 26:22, Ezek. 14:15, 21, 33:27, Jer. 15:3, 1 Kings 13:24-25, 2 Kings 17:25)!

Hereby, a full end was determined and declared upon the **Evil Figs**, my reader. It was “*surely*” promised (“*thou shalt surely die*” – Ezek. 3:18), truly, but the pronouncement could be altered in the right conditions (Jer. 18:7-11) – that’s **the Good News**! The possibility of a surviving remnant was prophetically declared impossible until an **amendment** was made to the pronouncement in Ezekiel 6:8-10 (for the first time), but the operation of total annihilation already *in motion* was unwaveringly annihilating the whole population unless the conditions of peace were met (Lk. 14:31-33).

*“And it came to pass, when Joram saw Jehu, that he said, Is it peace, Jehu? And he answered, What peace, so long as the whoredoms of thy mother Jezebel and her witchcrafts are so many?” – 2 Kings 9:22*

Lo, and behold, the residue of the **Evil Figs** *had not, would not, and could not* repent *unless* the swinging blade of an unwavering annihilation splattered blood upon their faces! The residue of the **Evil Figs** *had not, would not, and could not* repent *unless* they encountered physical circumstances comparable to the slaughtering weapons of holy angels who would not turn away from a total annihilation of men, women, and children, young and old (Ezek. 9:5-6)! The residue of the **Evil Figs** *had not, would not, and could not* repent *unless* they knew their present calamity was powered by Sovereignty, to wit: Omniscience and Omnipotence commanded angels to execute the sentence! And, they, the surviving **Evil Figs** amidst the exercise, were forced to watch their comrades in “the faith” suffer death on the right hand and the left – the ammunition of annihilation

whizzing past their own mortal bodies by a hair's breadth! – and, they, knowing that the strike of death did hardly pass them by, knowing that time was short until one's own destruction was manifested in real time (according to the heavenly vision of holy angels with slaughtering weapons going to and fro, and sparing none!)! ...behold, the few-in-number **Evil Figs** would finally come to grips with the shocking truth of a sure visitation of death, a total annihilation! Being forcibly convinced of this, I say! Being overwhelmed by death's imminent visitation, I mean! Feeling, as it were, the eyes of holy angels fastened upon them! Seeing, as it were, the angelic slaughtering weapons reared for the strike! **THEY REPENT.**

“Oh let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end; but establish the just: for the righteous God **trieth** the hearts and reins. My defence is of God, which saveth the upright in heart. God **judgeth** the righteous, and God is **angry** with the wicked every day. If he turn not, He will *whet* His **sword**; He hath *bent* His **bow**, and *made it ready*. He hath also *prepared for him* **the instruments of death**; He *ordaineth* His **arrows** against the persecutors.” – Psalm 7:9-13 [Psalm 90:3]

Ah, the Divine Goodness of this Tribulation! The wondrous ingenuity exercised by Omniscience! The perfectly calculated chaos of engulfing calamities! The refining and purifying qualities of this divinely lit furnace (Isa. 48:10)! For, it was these scenarios of sure and certain death that exacted the results! It was when the Evil Figs were utterly surrounded, they surrendered! It was when wrath was demonstrably reared to slay the surrounded rebels, the impenitent repented! These are the exacted results, my reader! Behold, the fearless became terrified, the proud denounced lies, and the cold-hearted cried! The wayward turned Godward, the impenitent were broken-hearted, and the stiff-necked looked upward in humble acknowledgment of God on high! Ah, this glorious working of an otherwise unobtainable redemption! Behold, my reader! The *hopelessly* **Evil Figs** became **good**! “*Wherefore glorify ye the LORD in the fires...*” (Isa. 24:15).

Now, remember, this was a situation no less *miraculous* than when the Pillar of Cloud & Fire did suddenly manifest and execute inconceivable and unquestionable judgment amidst *the Church in the Wilderness*! Herein, with an equaled display of *miraculous* intervention, God's Glory departed from Judah to join the Armies of Babylon to the end that they, and all other choice instruments (Ps. 17:13-14), would be under the control of **the Majesty of the Lord** *in every single detail* of the Tribulation! Can you perceive it? Can you believe it? Or, do doubts persist? My reader, the aforementioned **Majesty of the LORD** is **the Gospel Message** of the Tribulation Period. If you are still unconvinced then I plead, hold your peace! I mean, let the doubting Thomas take a look closer! Come near. *See, experience, and handle* what the soon-to-be Tribulation Saints will experience in exact fulfillments of scripture in real time. Suffer me to repeat and elaborate...

The glorious **Gospel Message** of the Tribulation is **the Majesty of the Lord** *in every single detail* of the Tribulation, in that, if an arrow was drawn and shot at venture and killed a man – it struck God's targeted man, a wicked man, whom the LORD desired to slay (1 Kings 22:20, 34; Ezek. 3:18, 18:4, 20)! So, we've noted already. Also, if a wandering Lion or Bear found and killed a man, it wasn't by chance (Lev. 26:22, Ezek. 14:15, 21, 33:27, Jer. 15:3, 1 Kings 13:24-25, 2 Kings 17:25)! So, we've noted already. Elaborating further, however, in reference to the Lion and the Bear, if a man did *perchance* escape the one, and the other, the hope provided by the latter circumstance was an illusion of *false security* unless the man repented of his sins and glorified the LORD in the fires (Ezek. 33:12, Isa. 24:13-16). Any transient circumstance of an impenitent escapee was a divinely planned event of incremental chastisement. In pursuit of the wicked man's repentance (Ezek. 18:30-32), God intended to incrementally chastise him in hopes that he would repent and acknowledge **the Majesty of the LORD** to the praise and glory of **Sovereign Mercy** (Ezek. 20:43-44), and therefore the man escaped the Lion and the Bear *for the time*. In the end, however, if the man *continued* to be impenitent of his sins, let it be known to the reader that his steadfast impenitence resulted from an obstinate disacknowledgement of **the Majesty of the LORD** in the exercise of Tribulation; thereby, the man was rendered unable to repent and be sorry for his sins! Thereby, the man was a worshipper of *chance* and the admirer of happy *circumstances*. Thereby, the man was *in denial* of **the Gospel Message** of the Tribulation! In other words, the man was a hopeful survivor who lived in denial of the divinity involved in every detail of the divinely orchestrated Tribulation. Thus, being an abject of the Tribulation Period, he was doomed to run the course of futility “*as if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him*” (Amos 5:19). Behold, my reader, the futility of the hopeful escapee who refuses to repent and humble himself to **the Majesty of the LORD**!

“Woe unto you that desire **the Day of the LORD!** to what end is it for you? **the Day of the LORD is darkness, and not light.** *As if a man did flee from a lion, and a bear met him; or went into the house, and leaned his hand on the wall, and a serpent bit him.* **Shall not the Day of the LORD be darkness, and not light? even very dark, and no brightness in it?**” – Amos 5:18-20 [Isa. 24:18, 30:16-17]

Apparently, **spiritual darkness** was upon the man (Amos 5:18-20)! ...right? Or else, how could he be so blind to **the Majesty of the LORD** to think that he could outrun God? Evidently, the man was numb to the exercise of **God’s Majesty** as a senseless piece of *chaff* is *blown in the wind* (Ps. 35:5)! Behold, the man was sliding down a *slippery path of spiritual darkness*, thinking he’s safe (Ps. 35:6)! According to the testimony of Holy Scripture, the man was being *chased* and *persecuted* by angels at the charge of **God’s Majesty** and thereby the wicked man was deluded to his own impending doom: “*thou shalt surely die*” (Ezek. 3:18, 33:8, Ps. 35:5-6)! Ah, how manifestly clear is the testimony of Scripture! How dreadfully unimaginable is **the Majesty of the LORD** (Gen. 28:12-17)!

“Let them be *as chaff before the wind*: and let **the angel of the LORD** *chase* them. Let their way be *dark* and *slippery*: and let **the angel of the LORD** *persecute* them.” – Psalm 35:5-6

My reader, suffer me to repeat and elaborate further. We have noted before that if a fleeing Israelite evades the Armies of Babylon on the terrain of the countryside and then, he accidentally fell off a cliff and died – his foot was appointed thereto (Deut. 32:35, Ezek. 5:12-17, 6:1-7, Ps. 73:17-19, Isa. 8:15, Jer. 13:16, Ps. 91:12)! Do you agree? Are you convinced? If not, let your imagination venture onward into the realm of the impossible! Consider the manifold ways that God would catch the escapee in fulfillment of the word, “*And THOUGH THEY hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence*”, and, “*THOUGH THEY climb up to heaven, thence will I bring them down*” (Amos 9:1-10)! My reader, consider the most impossible circumstance, the most fantastic scenario: like, for example, a man hiding in *the bottom of the sea* hoping to escape the eyes of Almighty God! Or, even further, consider a man *digging into hell* in hopes that if he hides himself there, of all places, God Almighty would perhaps forget about him! The most profoundly exaggerated circumstances and scenarios as such, whatever they may be (if it were possible!), are ruled by **God’s Majesty** nevertheless, as God said: “*THOUGH THEY be hid from My sight in the bottom of the sea, thence will I command the serpent, and he shall bite them*”, and, “*THOUGH THEY dig into hell, thence shall mine hand take them*” (Amos 9:1-10)! How illustrious is the point divinely argued and irrefutably proven, my reader! Even so, let the apostate contenders against God’s Majesty be silenced. Moreover, let the unbeliever acknowledge the Majesty of the LORD in the Tribulation! For, in answering such exaggerated circumstances as these, God means to assure the doubting Thomas of the unchangeable truth: “**THE LORD REIGNETH**” (Ps. 93:1, 96:10, 97:1, 99:1)!

### Majestic, Miraculous, Celestial, & Meticulous!

Did not the LORD freely confess, “shall there be **evil** in a City, and the LORD hath not done it?” (Amos 3:6)? Likewise, speaking of the expressed purpose of God’s exercise of absolute **Majesty** in the midst of Tribulation, He said, “**I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil.** I THE LORD DO ALL THESE THINGS” (Isa. 45:7)! Indeed. Holy Scripture provides undeniable clarity on this matter, my reader. In addition to all the aforementioned, neither is a sunrise random, or a rainstorm; both are an intentional act of God’s love toward mankind every time they happen: “*for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust*” (Matt. 5:45, Jer. 10:12-13, 14:22, Ps. 135:7, Lev. 26:4, Deut. 11:14, 17, 28:12, 1 Kings 8:35-36, Isa. 5:6). Neither is a hailstorm random, or a tornado, and this includes all other forms of destructive weather as well: each and every one is an intentional act of God’s wrath toward mankind (Ps. 11:6, 148:8, 78:47-48, 105:32, 107:25, Hag. 2:17). Nothing, and I mean nothing, is left to the raw process of physiological properties! Even so, and with all these truths in due consideration, let us revisit the untruthful conclusions of the Popular Commentators. Upon being enriched by the mind of God according to the record of Holy Scripture heretofore, this begs the question: *How did the Popular Commentators so grossly misrepresent the LORD in this era of glorious redemption during the Tribulation Period?*

Henry was correct when he said that **the righteous** were cut off from the Land of Israel when they were sent captives in Babylon, but he was wrong when he conjectured the possibility of a “few” of them suffering physical death (“cut off from

the Land of the Living”). Wesley, also, was wrong to assume that the righteous could or should “be involved with [wicked persons]” in their suffering of death during the siege. Clarke, being no different, begs the question: what obstacle hinders these men from believing that none, absolutely none of the righteous would physically die with the wicked? Amazingly, Clarke confesses to the filthy and unfounded reason! While arguing that many righteous persons *must* suffer death with the wicked amidst the calamities of the siege by Babylon, he said, “the righteous *must* have suffered as well as the wicked; for they *could not* be preserved alive, **but by miracle**, when there was no bread.”

Is it too hard to believe for the **miraculous**? Perhaps, in things as usual in *heathen societies*... ah, but not so in Israel, *the Kingdom of God!* Clarke, in a failed attempt to correct himself as he remembered the content of Ezekiel Chapter 18, referenced how “the righteous were not cut off for the crimes of the wicked, (see chap. 18), nor were these crimes visited upon them, yet several of them shared in the **common calamity**, but none *perished*. Those that were removed by a *violent death*, (and I believe we shall find few such), got a speedier entrance into eternal glory.” Shockingly, and despite the failed attempt to correct himself, Clarke continued to oppose himself by affirming that a few righteous men would indeed suffer a violent death alongside the wicked in the Land of Judah and Jerusalem. How oddly contrary to the exact teaching of the entire Book of Ezekiel, my reader! How can such atrocious denials of clear and stated truth be possible? ...except, alas, these men didn’t read the account of the Tribulation in order heretofore?

“And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see.” - 2 Kings 6:17

Perhaps the Popular Commentators did read the account of the Tribulation in order, but gross misunderstandings of *the Church* in the Old Testament have had a blinding effect upon their *spiritual learning* (Ps. 119:18). By *the Church* in the Old Testament, I mean: **the Kingdom of God** in the Old Testament. By *the Kingdom of God*, I mean: **the Majesty of the LORD** in the Old Testament. My reader, the LORD is the essential and living component of the government that was active in **times of Church Purity**. Accordingly, also, and without intermission inasmuch as the LORD is still alive, He’s active in **times of Church Impurity!** Shockingly, though, in reading the Tribulation Prophets, the Commentators have lightly passed over what God did poignantly emphasize with undeniable clarity: namely, **the Majesty of the LORD** in the Tribulation Period!

Nothing, except the employment of holy angels hereunto, could more effectually communicate the message of **God’s Majesty** to mortal man. The idea that those who suffered *death* in Jerusalem (the doomed territory of the **Evil Figs**) included righteous individuals who happened to be victims of mere circumstance, being at the wrong place at the wrong time when Tribulation came, is a dangerous affront to **God’s Majesty**. Proponents of such have not heard the loud message communicated by God in that **HOLY ANGELS** were appointed to carry out the Tribulatory Judgments of the Tribulation Period!

The circumstances that the Popular Commentators have casually deemed to be *earthly* and *general* were, so much the rather, **fascinatingly celestial** and **divinely meticulous** with each and every individual! In other words, the circumstances of the Tribulation Period are shockingly unlike a mere physiologically process of earthly elements that is detached from divinity and released into a region to the *common affliction* of the **collective**, for this is incapable of **selective punishment** and **individual specificity**. Even so, according to the vision that seized the eyes balls of the Prophet Ezekiel, the case and point of **God’s Majesty** in the Tribulation was objectively interpreted! It was written,

“He cried also in mine ears with a loud voice, saying, Cause them that have *charge over the City* to draw near, even every man with his **destroying weapon** in his hand. And, behold, six men came from the way of the higher gate, which lieth toward the north, and every man a **slaughter weapon** in his hand; and one man among them was clothed with linen, with a **writer’s inkhorn** by his side: and they went in, and stood beside the brasen altar. And *the Glory of the God of Israel* was gone up from the cherub, whereupon He was, to the threshold of the House. And He called to the man clothed with linen, which had **the writer’s inkhorn** by his side; And the LORD said unto him, **Go through the midst of the city, through the midst of Jerusalem, and SET A MARK UPON THE FOREHEADS OF THE MEN THAT SIGH AND THAT CRY FOR ALL THE ABOMINATIONS THAT BE DONE IN THE MIDST THEREOF**. And to the others he said in mine hearing, **Go ye after him through the city, and smite: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: Slay utterly old and**

**young, both maids, and little children, and women: BUT COME NOT NEAR ANY MAN UPON WHOM IS THE MARK; and begin at My Sanctuary.** Then they began at the ancient men which were before the house.” – Ezek. 9:1-6 [Rev. 7:2-3, 9:1-5]

My reader, do you see anything **fascinatingly celestial** and **divinely meticulous** about Ezekiel’s vision? Put yourself in Ezekiel’s shoes and behold what he saw! As before the skyline of the City of Jerusalem, LOOK, SEE, HEAR, and UNDERSTAND: the inerrant, infallible, impartial, and divinely organized Tribulatory Judgments that administered deathblows upon the wicked, and only the wicked, by the hands of angels in the unequalled grip of Almighty God (“*He had in His right hand seven stars*” – Rev. 1:16)! Simply put, before the *slaughtering* there was a *searching*! And, if you will understand the *slaughtering* you must first understand the *searching*.

There was a command to, “Go”, first, and then there was a secondary command to, “Go ye after him” (Ezek. 9:4, 5). Through the instrumentality of the celestial, God’s judicial mercy was *searching for, finding, and marking* every **righteous individual** that was among the **collective**. Thereby, all righteous men were exempt from the unsparing slaughter that was due to the wicked. Notice the man “which had the writer’s inkhorn by his side”, of whom it was commanded, “Go through the midst of the City, through the midst of Jerusalem, and SET A MARK UPON THE FOREHEADS OF THE MEN THAT SIGH AND THAT CRY FOR ALL THE ABOMINATIONS THAT BE DONE IN THE MIDST THEREOF” (Ezek. 9:4). This angel did the marking. Notice the other angels who went after him into the City, of whom it was commanded, “SMITE: let not your eye spare, neither have ye pity: slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women: BUT COME NOT NEAR ANY MAN UPON WHOM IS THE MARK; and begin at My Sanctuary” (Ezek. 9:5-6). These angels did the smiting. What is the unmistakable point of emphasis?

**“SET A MARK UPON THE FOREHEADS OF THE MEN THAT SIGH AND THAT CRY FOR ALL THE ABOMINATIONS THAT BE DONE IN THE MIDST THEREOF”** - Ezek. 9:4

**“BUT COME NOT NEAR ANY MAN UPON WHOM IS THE MARK”** – Ezek. 9:6

“And I saw another angel ascending from the east, **HAVING THE SEAL OF THE LIVING GOD**: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, **Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, TILL WE HAVE SEALED THE SERVANTS OF OUR GOD IN THEIR FOREHEADS.**” – Rev. 7:2-3

“And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit. And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power. **AND IT WAS COMMANDED THEM THAT THEY SHOULD NOT HURT THE GRASS OF THE EARTH, NEITHER ANY GREEN THING, NEITHER ANY TREE; BUT ONLY THOSE MEN WHICH HAVE NOT THE SEAL OF GOD IN THEIR FOREHEADS.** And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment was as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.” – Rev. 9:1-5

Hereby, through a **MARKING** or **SEALING** of individuals from among the collective, all righteous persons were spared the otherwise inescapable fate of being hunted and slain by angels. Now is the time to reconsider your understanding of the Tribulation Experience, my reader, if you haven’t done so already! For, the prophetic vision of Ezekiel 9:1-11 is the most accurate depiction of reality! Even if Ezekiel never saw the vision so that *the invisible* was never disclosed to mere mortals, it doesn’t change reality. These HOLY ANGELS had “*charge over the City*” of Jerusalem (Ezek. 9:1), and that’s the unchangeable. Before them, “THE WATCHERS” (Dan. 4:17, 23), that the most powerful man in the world (Nebuchadnezzar) was made to tremble in fear around this same time period! Hereby, we, on an introductory level, are enabled to understand how that the *earthly* is subservient to the *heavenly* and therefore it must be interpreted in the right order: the *seen* by the *unseen* and the *terrestrial* by the *celestial*! Take the words of the Prophet Daniel as a statement of fact, my reader: “THE HEAVENS DO RULE” (Dan. 4:25-26). Any other concept of earthly life is utter madness and unrealistic fantasy (John 19:11)! Do you agree?

Or, sadly, is Ezekiel's vision still obscure to you? "*Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*" (John 3:3). Herein, by Ezekiel's vision in Ezekiel 9:1-11, we behold the majestic operation of **the Kingdom of God** in the Tribulation Period and it is **fascinatingly celestial** and **divinely meticulous!** "*He doeth according to His will in the Army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth*" (Dan. 4:35)! Nevertheless, the abjects of the future Tribulation will object to the clarity of Ezekiel's vision by claiming obscurity. Ah, but the meaning of the vision is far from broad and unrealistic! To those of the contrary opinion, suffer me to pose a question that could be of aid:

What earthly affliction was suffered by the unmarked individuals who were doomed to fall under the marksmanship of the angels slaughtering weapons?

Considering the facts, it is unrealistic to allow this question to go unanswered. Dare you let your imagination wander into the realms of depraved fantasy with regard to earthly events and human experience? Dare you divorce your learning of human experience as something irrelevant to the fact that, "THE HEAVENS DO RULE" (Dan. 4:25-26)? To answer the original question, one we must consult the whole of scripture. Notably, the **slaughtering weapons** in the hands of the angels in Ezekiel's vision (Ezek. 9:1-11) are like the **sword** in the hand of the angel in Joshua's vision (Josh. 5:13-15), in Balaam's vision (Num. 22:31), and in David's vision (1 Chron. 21:8-30). So, what happens to a man when and if he is struck by one of these celestial weapons? In reference to David's vision, and to David's astonishment, at the blade of the angel's sword 70,000 MEN of Israel were killed.

"And David lifted up his eyes, and saw *the angel of the LORD* stand between the earth and the heaven, having a **drawn sword** in his hand stretched over Jerusalem." – 1 Chron. 21:16

Hereby, through the angel's **sword**, "the LORD sent pestilence upon Israel: and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men" (1 Chron. 21:14). Pointedly, and to provide further clarification, it was explained to the reader what act of the angel would instantly put to rest the onslaught of manslaying justice: namely, it was when "*the LORD commanded the angel; and he put up his sword again into the sheath thereof*" (1 Chron. 21:27). So, my reader, did the angel **smite** the people? Or, did God **smite** the people? Describing the same event, it was written, "*God was displeased with this thing; therefore He smote Israel*" (1 Chron. 21:87). Evidently, God-through-angels **smote** the people! This is an understandable element of **God's Majesty**, is it not? So, with this in consideration, what shall we make of the statement made in Ezekiel's time, when God said: "*ye shall know that I am the LORD that smiteth*" (Ezek. 7:9)? Dramatic illustrations were provided concerning what God would do personally, and this did not mean that He would act exclusively. It was written,

"I Myself will **fight** against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath. And I will **smite** the inhabitants of this City, both man and beast: they shall die of great pestilence" - Jer. 21:5-6

Evidently, according to the vision of Ezekiel (Ezek. 9:1-11), God-through-angels smote the people in the aforementioned manners and more. Jeremiah was describing what Ezekiel was seeing, you know. To the praise of the glory of **God's Majesty**, the Lord uses *armies of angels* to rule over the lower world! God means to bring all of mankind to humbly alongside the King of Babylon, "*He doeth according to His will in the Army of Heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth*" (Dan. 4:35)! Yea, and as further testimony of this, it was written,

"The LORD hath prepared His THRONE in the Heavens; and His Kingdom RULETH over all. Bless the LORD, ye his **angels**, *that excel in strength, that do His commandments, barking unto the voice of His word.* Bless ye the LORD, all ye His **hosts**; ye **ministers** of His, *that do His pleasure.* Bless the LORD, all His works in all places of His DOMINION: bless the LORD, O my soul." – Psalm 103:19-22

Evidently, through Holy Scripture, the Almighty discloses the *invisible infrastructure* of a **MAJESTIC RULERSHIP** over mankind with unmistakable clarity. Hereby, God leaves no place for obscurity. Hereby, God expects all future abjects of the Tribulation to humble themselves and repent of their scorning of God's Kingship. Surely, the LORD will even provide

unmistakable examples, like the humiliation of Nebuchadnezzar, giving the common peoples of the world a chance to behold the means of **God's Majesty** whereby "THE HEAVENS DO RULE" (Dan. 4:25-26)! At such a time in the not-distant-future, the Tribulation Saints of the end of the world will do exploits like unto the renown and excellent Jew of old, Daniel (1 Cor. 10:11, Dan. 11:32). We, in the courts of Kings, will do like unto Daniel in the courts of Babylon during the Age-Ending Revival (Matt. 10:17-20)! "*Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.*" (Ps. 2:10).

Now, in the case of David's vision (1 Chron. 21:8-30), when an individual was smitten by **the sword** of the angel he or she was seized by a deadly plague. The wielding and thrusting of **the sword** did inflict the people thus. In Ezekiel's time (Ezek. 9:1-11), however, if the **slaughtering weapons** of the angels smote a man or woman, then the diverse means of tribulation and or death befell the individuals (depending on if the angels struck a death-blow or not). The various means of affliction and or death were foretold by God so that there would be no mistaking the marksmanship of the angels who went about their courses in City of Jerusalem. How else shall we understand the wherewithal that God fulfilled the terrifying illustration that Ezekiel prophesied of, when the LORD said: "*Behold, I am against thee, and will draw forth My **sword** out of his **sheath**, and will cut off from thee the righteous and the wicked...that all flesh may know that I the LORD have drawn forth My **sword** out of his **sheath**: it shall not **return** any more*" (Ezek. 21:3-5). God-through-angels will accomplish this judgment in real-time according to what was prophetically detailed beforehand.

"He that abideth in this City shall **die** by the **sword**, and by the **famine**, and by the **pestilence**: but he that goeth out, and falleth to the Chaldeans that besiege you, he shall **live**, and his life shall be unto him for a prey." – Jer. 21:9 [Jer. 15:2-3, 38:2]

"The **sword** is without, and the **pestilence** and the **famine** within: he that is in the field shall **die** with the **sword**; and he that is in the city, **famine** and **pestilence** shall devour him." – Ezek. 7:15

"For thus saith the Lord GOD; How much more when I send my four sore *judgments* upon Jerusalem, the **sword**, and the **famine**, and the **noisome beast**, and the **pestilence**, to cut off from it man and beast?" – Ezek. 14:21

When the angels of Ezekiel's vision conducted the slaughtering of the City of Jerusalem, it was in stages of incremental progress in hopes that the people would repent; therefore, the Lord used **6 Captivities** to do what He could have done in **1 Captivity**. At the wielding of the sword of angels – GOD'S SWORD! – God-through-angels inflicted the people with **miraculous** and **celestial weaponry** whereby, with every maneuvering of the weapon and every stroke of the angel's swing, **the supernatural** wielded **the natural** in diverse and incremental calamities, namely: the BABYLONIAN SWORD, the PESTILENCE, the FAMINE, and the MANSLAYING BEAST to name a few. Behold, **the Majesty of the LORD** in the Tribulation! Look, and marvel in the beholding of it: God-through-angels wielding weapons that were vested with the powers of divine anger! Omnipotence and Omniscience controlling the power and precision of every **natural** and **earthly** utility of the tribulation, suffering, and death! Gloriously, and most notably, this included the maneuvering hands of sword-fighting sinners! Can you believe it?

*"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they **look** not unto THE HOLY ONE OF ISRAEL, neither **seek** THE LORD!"* – Isa. 31:1

Look, and understand! Behold, **the Majesty of the LORD**! Not only did God-through-angels conduct the Tribulation --- even further, it could be said, God-through-angels-through-babylonians conducted the Tribulation. In greater detail, I mean, God-through-angel-swords fought the Babylonian battles, to wit: God-through-angel-swords guided the maneuvering of Babylonian **swords** in the sieges of Jerusalem. Or, God-through-angel **weapons** guided the maneuvering of Babylonian **weaponry** in the sieges of Jerusalem. For, if it were not so, why did David reckon the wicked of his generation to be God's sword ("*which is Thy **sword***" – Ps. 17:13-14)? Or, why did God speak of the Assyrians, calling them, "the **rod** of Mine anger" (Isa. 10:5)? Even beyond this, the LORD affirmed: "the **staff** in their hand is MINE INDIGNATION" (Isa. 10:5)! My reader, do you think that the Almighty was trying to make a largely contested point to the abjects of the Tribulation Period in the making of these statements and the like (Deut. 32:28, Dan. 4:25-26)?

*“Shall the **axe** boast itself against Him that **heweth** therewith? or shall the **saw** magnify itself against Him that **shaketh** it? as if the **rod** should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the **staff** should lift up itself, as if it were no wood.” – Isa. 10:15*

Surely, the wielding of God’s sword would not be *unspecific* and *morally irrelevant*. Surely, the death of the Jews would not be an *arbitrary* annihilation that was *unlawfully motivated*. So, also, in the use of all of God’s instruments (whether angels, men, animals, natural disasters, or plagues) there existed an unchanging MORAL PROTOCOL. Take, for example, the lawful use of the Levite blade that God commissioned to slaughter the men who were a defilement to *the Church in the Wilderness* (Ex. 32:27, Num. 15:30-31, Acts 7:38). The impenitent idolaters were targeted by the LORD in this fashion: the Levites were commanded by God, “go *in* and *out* from *gate* to *gate* throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor” (Ex. 32:27). In this manner the **collective** was *searched* and the guilty **individuals** were slain, right? Yes, of course. The LORD affirmed to Moses THE MORAL PROTOCOL, when He said, “*Whosoever hath sinned against Me, him will I blot out of My Book*” (Ex. 32:33). Even so, should we imagine that a holy angel’s blade would be less specific than a Levite’s blade?

What about the **destroying weapon** in the angel’s hand on the fateful night of Israel’s liberation from Egypt? This angel *passed through* the Land in a thorough *searching* for anyone who was due to die according to the moral protocol, did he not? The answer is, yes, inasmuch as the angel was under the influence of **God’s Majesty!** Depicting this, God said, “**I will pass through...and will smite** all the firstborn in the Land of Egypt” (Ex. 12:12), just like in former instances, and the God-through-angel actuality of the happening was revealed with clarity in a later verse, stating:

“For the LORD will *pass through* to **smite** the Egyptians; and when *He seeth* the blood upon the lintel, and on the two side posts, the LORD will *pass over* the door, and *will not suffer the destroyer to come in unto your houses to smite you.*” – Ex. 12:23

Herein, the God-through-angel relationship is illustrated. While exercising the righteous demands of MORAL PROTOCOL (Heb. 11:28), the LORD *searched* the Land and *passed over* the righteous so that He slew none of them, to wit: He would not *suffer the destroyer to enter into their homes to smite them!* Who is “**the destroyer**”, you wonder (Ex. 12:23)? This is the angel who no doubt had a “**destroying weapon in his hand**”, like in Ezekiel’s vision (Ezek. 9:1). Furthermore, this very same angel, or one like him, was “**the destroyer**” of the backsliders of *the Church in the Wilderness* on several occasions (1 Cor. 10:10, 1 Pet. 4:17-18). Further testifying of this, Paul warned the New Testament Church, saying: “*Neither murmured, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer*” (1 Cor. 10:10). Over and over, we see how God appointed “**wicked**” people to a progressively deadly form of angel-inflicted-“**destruction**” (1 Cor. 5:5, 13, Ps. 90:3) in hopes that they would repent and return to God in righteousness and true holiness! Even so, who do you think the angel in David’s vision was *searching* for when he “stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to **destroy** it” (2 Sam. 24:16)?

It was written that David “saw the angel that **smote** the people”, and he had a “**sword**” (2 Sam. 24:17, 1 Chron. 21:16) ...but *who* was the angel smiting? It was not a general punishment of the collective, no! This has already been thoroughly disproven. So much the rather, the angel was *searching* and *slaying* all individuals from among the collective who had committed wickedness worthy of death (1 John 5:16). So, in this case, the **sword** was the angels **destroying weapon** and therewith, having it unsheathed, he was *searching, finding, and striking* wicked individuals at angelic speeds of glory. Before too long... 70,000 men died “from Dan even to Beer-sheba” (2 Sam. 24:15)! At this, when the LORD’s wrath was pacified to wit He would **smite** the people no more (“*the LORD repented*”), He “*said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: STAY NOW THINE HAND*” (2 Sam. 24:16). Notice how God said to the angel, “STAY NOW THINE HAND” (2 Sam. 24:16) - what a terrifying sight this must have been (1 Chron. 21:30)! David was afraid even though, as always, *before* and *after* God repented of the *in-motion*-annihilation, the Lord operated according to the moral protocol (Ezek. 9:4, Ezek. 9:6, Rev. 7:2-3, Rev. 9:1-5).

Think of it, my reader! Do you think that the angel *carelessly* and *randomly* struck people with his sword? The angels with slaughtering weapons in Ezekiel’s vision wouldn’t dare slay a **righteous man** even among the population of **Evil Figs** in



the condemned City of Jerusalem (Ezek. 9:1-11)! The Almighty commanded the angels, “*come not near any man upon whom is the mark*” (Ezek. 9:6), remember? Behold, the precision! The exactitude! The slaughtering weapons of angels came not near any **righteous man** in the woeful City! Even so, did not the LORD say in another place, “*Yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth*” (Amos 9:9-10)! And, in another place it was written, “*He will thoroughly purge His floor and gather the wheat into His Garner*” (Luke 3:17)! DIVINE EXACTITUDE. Therefore, likewise, in David’s situation, the sword of the angel was *finding sinners out* from among the collective (Num. 32:23)! The slaughtering of 70,000 men was not only less than what Israel deserved, but it was on Israel’s behalf! Justly so, there needed to be a person-specific purging of guilty **individuals** so that, as it was written, “all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously” (Deut. 17:13).

This being the case, though, why did the LORD repent (2 Sam. 24:16)? What pacified the wrath of God? Why didn’t the angel continue destroying the people? To understand this, one must study and comprehend “[The Judgment of the Church in Situations of Backsliding](#)”. If your foundational understanding of the Church is right, you will see the resounding parallelism in every stage of redemption in Biblical Church History. For example, you will see that the wicked, and only the wicked, were slain in *the Church of the Wilderness*. Likewise, and with resounding parallelism (according to Covenantal Ideals), you will see how only the wicked perished in *the Church in the Civilization*. However, there’s no need to wax exhaustive in our explanation because Ezekiel got straight to the point! In speaking of the point and purpose of “*pleading*” with the Church in the Wilderness, God said: “*And I will purge out from among you the rebels, and them that transgress against Me*” (Ezek. 20:38). Likewise, in David’s vision, what can be said of those who were slain in comparison to the survivors?

In all circumstances wherein an annihilation of the Church is underway, any targeted survivors were of like-guiltiness as their slain comrades, but they repented amidst the annihilation so that at last, when [Sovereign Mercy](#) was undeservedly shown, the spared individuals were those who *clave unto God* at last and were thereby loosed from the guilt of their former backslidings. These *in-the-moment* repentances unto life were carefully referenced by God in context of the annihilating plagues that were destined to totally wipe out the **Evil Figs** in the Land of Judah, confirming the moral protocol. “The righteousness of the righteous shall not deliver him *in the day* of his **transgression**: as for the wickedness of the wicked, he shall not fall thereby *in the day* that he turneth from his wickedness; neither shall the righteous be able to live for his righteousness *in the day* that he **sineth**” (Ezek. 33:12). As you can see, *in the very day* of Tribulation amidst the annihilating plague – executed by the destroying weapons of angels – therein did backslidden Church Members (righteous men who were in “*the day* of [their] **transgression[s]**”) turn to God at last and in so doing they lived! This is certainly what is meant by Moses, when he said: “But ye that did *clave unto the LORD your God* are **alive** every one of you this day” (Deut. 4:4)!

Moses referenced the annihilating wrath of God at the event of Baalpeor in Deut. 4:3, confirming that God aimed to and successfully slew all wicked and impenitent persons who would not cease from following Baalpeor (“*the LORD thy God hath destroyed them from among you*” – Deut. 4:3). Only the righteous remained alive universally and consistently according to God’s promises of old (Deut. 28:45-47, Num. 15:30-31) and God’s promises anew in the Tribulation Period (Ezek. 3:17-21, 18:1-32, 33:1-20, Jer. 18:7-11). “*But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live*” (Ezek. 18:21-22). Hence, as the wrath of God slew impenitent righteous persons in the days of their transgression (their backslidings into wickedness), those who survived it were the selfsame people who were not condemned by it because of their newly obtained or longstanding repentance from sin and faith toward God. Therefore, when the LORD said, “Vengeance belongeth unto Me, I will recompense”, in the same context as the saying, “The Lord shall judge His people”, He was describing the annihilating wrath that comes upon “them who draw back unto **perdition**” (Heb. 10:30, 39). Remember, only those with whom God was not well-pleased perished in the wilderness (1 Cor. 10:5-6): *the lustful* (1 Cor. 10:6), *the idolaters* (1 Cor. 10:7), *the fornicators* (1 Cor. 10:8), *the tempters* (1 Cor. 10:9), *the murmurers* (1 Cor. 10:10), and *such like men*. Thus, watching men die proved to be an effectual chastisement upon backsliders to bring them to repentance.

The chastening of the Captivities was a more intensified expression of what formerly happened to the Exodus Generation, when nearly all of that generation died in reprobating wrath. In the Exodus Generation *and* the Captivities (*the Wilderness Experience #1 & the Wilderness Experience #2*) all that “did *clave unto the LORD*” were enabled to remain **alive** (Deut. 4:4)!

And speaking of *the Wilderness Experience #1*, those who remained alive were, primarily, the children of the Exodus Generation, and when they were instructed as to what their eyes had seen as a divine tutorial - it was, namely, “*the chastisement of the LORD your God*”. Moses said that this generation was made to see...

“...the **chastisement** of the LORD your God, His greatness, His mighty hand, and His stretched out arm...and what He did unto you *in the Wilderness*, until ye came into this place; and what He did unto Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and the son of Reuben: how the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their households, and their tents, and all the substance that was in their possessions, in the midst of all Israel:...your eyes have seen all the great acts of the LORD which He did” - [Deut. 11:1-7](#)

My reader, this example is pointedly applied to the New Testament children of God with a fearful warning! Furthermore, there is a time reference given in this warning wherein, foremost of all times, the saints will be recipients of this kind of judgment (that which was exemplified in *the Wilderness Experience #1*). It was written,

“Now all these things happened unto them **for ensamples**: that are written **for our admonition**, upon whom the ends of the world are come. **Wherefore** let him that thinketh he standeth **take heed lest he fall.**” - 1 Cor. 10:11-12

With this in mind, do you think Paul was defining biblical chastening, as mentioned in [1 Corinthians 11:31-32](#), with a different understanding than the previous chapter’s awful annals (recounted in [1 Corinthians 10:1-12](#), stemming from what [Deut. 11:2](#) called “chastisement”). It is understandable, then, why Paul declared chastening to be a means for redemption, and it is – just that – for those who survive it, but it is condemnation for those who die in it. “*When a righteous man turneth away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and dieth in them; for his iniquity that he hath done shall he die. Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive. Because he considereth, and turneth away from all his transgressions that he hath committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die* (Ezek. 18:26-28). While watching men die, being chastened therewith, let us avoid dying like unto their example! See, those Christian Corinthians who were in damnable sin (“*damnation*” – 1 Cor. 11:29) died in their iniquities (hence, the people came “*together unto condemnation*” – 1 Cor. 11:34), while those people who were alive unto that day were being chastened so that they should not be condemned with the world (1 Cor. 11:31-32). While watching men fall, being chastened therewith, let us take heed lest we fall and so become like unto them! [For more information, see: “[How is Repentance Wrought in Regenerate Children of God?](#)”.]

Therefore, let it be duly noted and emphatically defended that, in the situations of attempted and hardly thwarted acts of annihilating wrath among Israel (the Church) – executed by the *searching* and *slaying* exactitude of God-through-angels! - the recipients of [Sovereign Mercy](#) *did not continue in the wickedness* that merited annihilation as their just desert. Being exercised by God’s judgment of the Church, the scarcely saved individuals were *brought to repentance through it* and thereby God-through-angels passed them by (1 Pet. 4:17-18, 1 Cor. 11:31-32)! Thereby, in beholding wicked men and women repent of their sins... God repented! No doubt, this is what happened in David’s vision when it was written, “the LORD repented” (2 Sam. 24:16). Even so, comprehensibly, no matter the plague in operation throughout Biblical Church History, the moral protocol is the same. If any man survived the plague of Baal-peor, recorded in Numbers 25:1-9 (wherein 24,000 Israelites died), or if any man survived the plague occasioned through David’s numbering of the people, recorded in 2 Samuel 24:1-25 (wherein 70,000 Israelites died), the identity of the survivors according to moral protocol will always be, as it was written: “*But ye that did cleave unto the LORD your God are **alive every one of you this day***” (Deut. 4:3-4). My reader, think of it! No plague would have come nigh the dwelling of those individuals who were abiding under the shadow of the Almighty! For, it was written,

“Thou shalt not be afraid...for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee. Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see **the reward of the wicked**. Because thou hast made the LORD, which is my refuge, even the Most High, thy habitation; There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling.” – Psalm 91:5-10 (Hab. 2:4, 3:16-19; Nah. 1:3-7 [Isa. 64:1-2, Micah 1:3-4])

Amidst the seeming ungovernable chaos of a roaming pestilence and wasting destruction, lo, and behold: GOD IS MAJESTICALLY SOVEREIGN! It was “the angel that destroyed the people” (2 Sam. 24:16), wielding a plague, hence the plague was sovereignly dispensed to each and every guilty man in Israel. “Behold and see the reward of the wicked” (Ps. 91:8)! The angel of the LORD did not unjustly strike a righteous man in Israel, contradicting God’s word! Rather, he rewarded the wicked - individual by individual - in accordance with moral protocol. The judgment of God functioned according to what was written, “For **the upright** shall dwell in the Land, and **the perfect** shall remain in it. But **the wicked** shall be cut off from the earth, and **the transgressors** shall be rooted out of it” (Prov. 2:21-22; for more information, see: [Chapter #16 of the Church Realized](#)).

The engulfing circumstances of the Tribulation Period were majestically authored by the genius of an angry God, and for good reason: there were untold numbers of *unjudged* and *unpurged individuals* who were presumptuously sinning against God in the Land of Israel, the Church (Num. 15:30-31). To put it in metaphorical terms, “*The best of them is as a brier: the most upright is sharper than a thorn hedge*” (Micah 7:4). To put in plainer terms, “*The good man is perished out of the earth: and there is none upright among them*” (Micah 7:2). God wouldn’t tolerate this for long, my reader. Do you believe it? The Pre-Incarnate Christ rules and reigns to the end that, He said: “*Every plant, which My Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up*” (Matt. 15:13)! Even so, the moral protocol was flawlessly employed in an unprecedented display of **the Majesty of the LORD** in the Tribulation Period of Jeremiah and Ezekiel. Through the vision of Ezekiel, recorded in Ezekiel 9:1-11, God graciously unveiled the *otherworldly origins* of that which is *naturally* and *ordinarily earthly*; and all of this, to the glory of the righteous who are made to “sing for **the Majesty of the LORD**” amidst the Tribulatory Judgments of God-through-angel exactitude (Isa. 24:14-16)! To the glory of the righteous, I say, because “*none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand*” (Dan. 12:10).

“Many shall be *purified*, and made *white*, and *tried*; but **the wicked** shall do **wickedly**: and *none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand.*” – Dan. 12:10

“In that hour *Jesus rejoiced in spirit*, and said, I thank thee, O *Father, Lord of heaven and earth*, that thou hast *hid these things* from **the wise** and **prudent**, and hast revealed them unto **babes**: even so, *Father*, for so *it seemed good* in thy sight.” – Luke 10:21

Therefore, should we be surprised that the deadly famine that God brought upon the Kingdom of Judah, poised to slay a third of the population of the people, only targeted and executed the death sentence upon those individuals who were tried and found guilty before God and therefore deserving of such a fate (Jer. 42:16-17, 22, Ezek. 5:2, 12, 16-17, 6:12, 14:13, 21, Jer. 24:10, 27:8)? If all things are **Majestically in God’s hand** to do with them whatsoever He pleases, “*Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?*” (Gen. 18:25)? Therefore, it is to be expected that the devouring of a pestilence wreaking havoc on the countryside doesn’t destroy one house *as well as the other*, in a general sense, but only those houses and the select individuals therein whom God has appointed to die the death of the wicked (Ex. 12:3, 12-13, 23, 15:26 Lev. 26:25, Deut. 28:21, 35, Ps. 91:3, 6, Jer. 24:10, Ezek. 7:15, 12:16)?

So, what about the manslaying sword at war that “*devoureth one as well as another*” (2 Sam. 11:25)? Should we hearken unto backslidden David who, at the time, was utterly void of **wisdom** (Ps. 51:6)? Entrusting yourself to the outlook of an **unclean** Counselor will prove calamitous (Ps. 51:10-13). Much the rather, contrary to David’s crooked counsel, let us entrust ourselves to the outlook of God’s pure and unchangeable word concerning the outcome of war among Israelite soldiers (Lev. 26:6-8, Ps. 44:3, 6, Isa. 54:15-17, Deut. 28:22). The murderous & adulterous man, King David, cannot be trusted as a teacher until he repents and finds restoration in God (Ps. 51:13). For, at the time, he couldn’t even admit to his own personal involvement in the death of Uriah (rather, he deceptively concealed it with the saying, “*the sword devoureth one as well as another*” – 2 Sam. 11:25), and shall we expect him to speak honestly of **God’s Majesty** and Personal involvement in all things?

Perhaps the more important question should be posed toward you, my reader. What about you? Which makes more sense to you? Are you beholding **the Majesty of the LORD** *in every detail* of the Tribulation? Or, does David’s deceptive and

mischievous rhetoric make more sense to you? I am happy to tell you that no matter what happens, **God is Majestically** involved *in every detail!* Pertaining to the Jews of the Tribulation Period, this means that if a fanciful escapee of Tribulation *avoids* the Lion and *outsmarts* the Bear, *outruns* the Babylonian and *evades* every other snare --- he cannot *avoid*, *outsmart*, *outrun*, or *evade* the LORD! ...for, at last, when the hopeful escapee leans upon the wall in the shelter of a home (a refuge of false security), *there* God commands a serpent to strike and kill the man who is divinely appointed to die (Amos 5:18-20, Amos 9:1-10, Ezek. 5:16-17)!

## EZEKIEL 22:1-31

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year; time references: see 20:1 & 24:1*).

To be Continued...

## EZEKIEL 23:1-49

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 7<sup>th</sup> year to the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year; time references: see 20:1 & 24:1*).

To be Continued...

## EZEKIEL 24:1-27

**At the 9<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah** (*sometime between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year & the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year; time references: see 24:1 & 33:21*), the day that Babylon came and pitched against Jerusalem with all his hosts (2 Kings 25:1, Jer. 52:4-6). Herein, Ezekiel prophesies of the foreboding woes of the future: the fall of Jerusalem & the Destruction of the Temple in what will be the **5<sup>th</sup> Captivity!** This is a strategically timed prophecy in that hereafter Ezekiel is dumb for 18 months until all is accomplished (Ezek. 24:24-27, 33:21-22). In the meantime, until all is accomplished, Ezekiel will prophesy against Heathen Nations in [Ezekiel 25:1-32:32](#). At the 9<sup>th</sup> day of the 4<sup>th</sup> month of the 11<sup>th</sup> year, Jerusalem will be broken up because the famine prevails (2 Kings 25:2-3, Jer. 39:2). At the 7<sup>th</sup> day of the 5<sup>th</sup> month of the 11<sup>th</sup> year, the House of the LORD and the City of Jerusalem are spoiled and burnt by fire in the wrath of God through Babylon!

To be Continued...

## EZEKIEL 25:1-32:32 | PROPHECIES AGAINST HEATHEN NATIONS

**During a 36-month period** (*between the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 9<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign [Ezek. 24:1, 2 Kings 25:1] and the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year [of what would have been Zedekiah's reign] counting from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity in which Jechoiachin was taken Captive & Zedekiah was installed King*), Ezekiel prophesied against Heathen Nations until the word of the LORD concerning Jerusalem was completely fulfilled (i.e. Jerusalem was destroyed and a messenger came back to give the report to Ezekiel; Ezek. 24:25-27, 33:21-22).

Ezekiel 25-32, like Jeremiah 46-49, shifts the burden from *the Jews* to *the Gentiles*. According to the Old Testament, this is a

turning from *the Church to the Heathen*. The *Heathen Nations* were judged in respect to their ill relationship to the Church; therefore, inasmuch as the heathen nations evilly affected the people of God and hastened their declension into sin, or inasmuch as the heathen rejoiced to see God's judgment of the Church *through Babylon* and therein blasphemed, God took vengeance. Using Babylon for these prophetically stated purposes is an awesome display of [the Majesty of the LORD](#).

When speaking to the Kings of the earth and prophesying to the kingdoms of the lower world, it is only meet that the LORD refers to Himself in the address, using the title: "**the KING**, whose name is **THE LORD OF HOSTS**" (Jer. 46:18, 48:15, 51:57; Rev. 17:14). When God says what He wants to say to whom He speaks, He wants the Kings of the earth to know that it's **THE KING OF KINGS** who's speaking! When describing the fate of human armies and the outcome of earthly wars, speaking to earthly warriors, He wants the soldiers of war to know that it's **THE LORD OF HOSTS** who's speaking! When the God of Israel has a message for the heathen, the messenger running the errand is "an **ambassador**" that is "*sent unto the heathen*" (Jer. 49:14) on behalf of a transcending and heavenly Kingdom! Therefore, when the Lord counsels and purposes against the nations, transcendent and majestic over all, so do the Kings and Armies whom He chooses to use as invaders (Jer. 49:14, 20, 30). In summation, the conquests and warfare of **Babylon** against other nations were and will be "**THE WORK OF THE LORD**" (Jer. 48:10, Hab. 1:5, 11; Ezek. 29:20).

Howbeit, after all is said and done, it is important to remember that God's focus was upon *the Church* to execute in them the judgment written ([nonarbitrary judgments](#)). This *was, is, and will be* the ultimate divine purpose in [Babylon's Rise](#). Bearing witness to this, Jeremiah and Ezekiel were inspired to dedicate only 18 out of a 100 Chapters of prophecy to the judgment of *Heathen Nations* (Ezek. 25:1-32:32, 35:1-15, 38:1-39:29; Jer. 46:1-51:64, 25:15-38, 27:1-11). This means that 82 out of 100 Chapters of prophecy were dedicated to God's judgment of the Church *through* historical **Babylon**. This being the case, however, the study of these prophecies to pastime *Heathen Nations* aren't irrelevant to the Church in the *past, present, or future*. I repeat, an in-depth study is necessary! This is true in all ages, but so much the more in the New Covenant seeing that *the Gentiles* have been brought into Covenant Relationship with God!

While the study of these Chapters is important in all perspectives, and for all Covenants, let us consider the most vital meaning above all others: namely, how these things are relevant to the Last Days Doctrine as revealed in the Book of Revelation. Remember, from a historical perspective (in Old Testament terms), Ezekiel 25-32 and Jeremiah 46-49 do foretell [the rise of Babylon by war and conquest](#) at the charges of Lord Sabaoth, the God of Israel, otherwise Babylon wouldn't have been able to rise and conquer in this manner. Right? Thus, upon comprehending the divine purpose of God in the rise of historical Babylon by war and conquest, we are prepared to reckon with the rise of Spiritual Babylon in the future according to the Book of Revelation.

Specifically speaking, the same *analogous terms* used in Ezekiel 25-32 and Jeremiah 46-49 are employed in [the Trumpets of Revelation 7-9](#) for the declaring of the very same event! Namely, [the Rise of Babylon by War & Conquest](#)! All of the *analogous terms* of the 6 TRUMPETS had their fulfillment in Tribulation Period #1 via the rise of historical **Babylon** to worldwide dominance through war and conquest. Hence, the Spirit of Prophecy drew upon and comprehensively compounded all the old-time prophetic and analogous terms in the judgment of the 6 TRUMPETS of Revelation Ch. 8-10; thus, we observe the complete and entire fulfillment of the old-time prophecies via the rise of **Spiritual Babylon** to worldwide dominance through war and conquest.

What analogous terms, you wonder? Well, according to *Ezekiel* and *Jeremiah* (not excluding *Isaiah*), what happened when **hail, fire, and blood burnt up trees and grass**? In summation of the historical event(s) that took place when **hail, fire, and blood burnt up trees and grass** in Tribulation Period #1, **BABYLON ATTACKED, CONQUERED, AND DOMINATED!** Even so, what happened when **the Day of the LORD** and **the year of visitation** came upon the nations of earth? Or, what happened when God determined a **cloudy and dark day** for a people and sent **blood and pestilence** into her **streets** or upon the **mountains** or filling the **rivers**? **BABYLON ATTACKED, CONQUERED, AND DOMINATED!**

Moreover, what happened when the Lord, and not man, had a **sacrifice** to make? What happened when the Lord, not man, **unsheathed** His **sword** to make it **drunk in blood**? What happened when the Lord **brandished** His **sword** and gave it to

man to wield? What happened when the Lord made mighty men and warriors into **women in travail**, or what happened when whole nations were made into **drunkards** who were **wallowing** in their own **vomit**? Or, what happened when a **dragon** was plucked from the **waters** and cast into the **wilderness**? What happened when the Lord made waters of **rivers** or **seas** to **overflow** and **flood** lands, cities, and nations? What happened when the Lord made **waters desolate** and **dried, kindled fires**, made the **sea sorrowful, cut down trees**, caused **plagues** to **abound**, and brought the **four winds** from the **four quarters** of the heavens and the **east wind** to blow? Namely, **BABYLON ATTACKED, CONQUERED, AND DOMINATED!**

These **terms**, observable in the following Chapters and the like, serve as a guide (**a divine tutorial**) to interpret what is being foretold in THE ALARMS OF HEAVEN via THE 6 TRUMPETS. For an exhaustive address of the terms that directly correlate with THE TRUMPETS of the Book of Revelation, see [Revelation 7-9](#).

Ezekiel 25:1-7

Against the Ammonites...

Ezekiel 25:8-11

Against Moab...

Ezekiel 25:12-14

Against Edom...

Ezekiel 25:15-17

Against the Philistines...

Ezekiel 26:1-28:19

Against Tyrus & the Prince of Tyrus...

Ezekiel 28:20-26

Against Zidon...

Ezekiel 29:1-32:32

Against Pharaoh & Egypt...

To be Continued...

EZEKIEL 33:1-33

**At what would have been the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign, which we know to be the 12<sup>th</sup> year since Jeconiah's captivity & Zedekiah's installment** (*the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21*),

To be Continued...

## EZEKIEL 34:1-31

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*).

To be Continued...

## EZEKIEL 35:1-15

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*).

To be Continued...

## EZEKIEL 36:1-38

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*).

To be Continued...

## EZEKIEL 37:1-28

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*).

To be Continued...

## EZEKIEL 38:1-39:29

**Chronologically subsequent to the former prophecy and in the same timeframe** (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time reference: 33:21 & 40:1*), Ezekiel prophesies concerning Gog & Magog in one of the most baffling prophecies ever to grace the eyes of unworthy interpreters of Biblical Prophecy.

We, as recipients of *the New Testament* (which sheds light on *the Old Testament*), would do well to consult it before trying to interpret this difficult portion of *Biblical Prophecy*. Indeed. However, a correct understanding of *the Old Testament* must also shed light on *the New Testament*. Do you agree? After all, what became of the former *Covenants* in the Old Testament, and how were they altered and or matured into what we know to be *the New Covenant*? Or, what became of Old Testament *prophecy*, and how was it altered and or matured into what we know to be *the Book of Revelation*? My reader, we must understand prophecy in its *original intent*, its *progressive alteration*, and its *final fulfillment*. This complicates things. As an aid in our study of Ezekiel 38-39, I propose three guiding questions:

When will **Jerusalem** be *unconquerable & undefeatable* though attacked by **Gog's Coalition**?

How does this relate to the *conquering* of **Jerusalem** by **the Beast** who will reign worldwide?

Who or what is **Gog & Magog** and how do they relate to **the Beast / Babylon**?

A plain reading of Ezekiel 38-39, standing alone, does not render the interpretation. One must plainly understand *all* of prophecy to understand any single text's complexity and intricate unity with all other prophecies that speak of the same events. God means to confound the simpletons. The interpreter is the problematic component of the exercise. The untrustworthy interpreters of every age will assume wrongly and conjecture falsely. Isolated prophecies lodged in the unsound minds of would-be-interpreters will never produce the truth. Human intuition will bend the truth. Sheer fascination will embellish the facts. The voice of human reasoning is unreasonable and dangerous. Rather, the collective voice of divine foretelling must be allowed to speak! The voice of Holy Scripture is a trustworthy navigator amidst the tempestuous sea of human imagination. If allowed to navigate, the voice of the LORD will hush the wild imaginations of curious interpreters and grant passage to the desired haven.

## Jerusalem's Destruction via Babylon (≈588 B.C) → ONWARD

Like all other former or contemporary Tribulation Prophets, Ezekiel was prophesying of the near future from his perspective (*sometime between the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the 10<sup>th</sup> month of the 12<sup>th</sup> year & the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of the 25<sup>th</sup> year; time references: 33:21 & 40:1*), approximately 13-14 years after the City of Jerusalem was destroyed by Babylon. However, in retrospect, we have come to understand how Ezekiel was also prophesying of the distant future extending beyond the present time. However, we cannot comprehend divine foretelling that extends into the distant future until we understand how and in what way it foretold things of the ancient and recent past.

At the 9<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah, Babylon decided upon the **destruction** of *Jerusalem* according to Ezekiel 24:1-14. After 18 months, this would result in the **destruction** of *the Temple* according to Ezekiel 24:15-27. Literally, a man would escape and tell Ezekiel of the news (Ezek. 24:26-27) and until then Ezekiel would be dumb – he would not prophesy concerning Judah, the Jews, or the City of Jerusalem. Hence, Ezekiel 25-32 are prophecies to foreign nations rather than to the Jews of the Kingdom of Judah. The Babylonian Siege upon Jerusalem lasted until the 11<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of Zedekiah, which was approximately 18 months (Jer. 52:4-6). Then, after an additional 18 months totaling in 36 months, which would have been the 12<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign had he not been dethroned [it is the 12<sup>th</sup> year of the Babylonian Captivity counting from when Jehoiachin was taken (2 Kings 24:10-20)], lo and behold the sign was completed in that a messenger came to Ezekiel and gave the report of Jerusalem's destruction (Ezekiel 24:26-27, 33:21-22). This is why Ezekiel prophesied to the Jews of the Babylonian Captivity in Ezekiel 33 concerning saving faith and repentance in the ongoing Tribulation Period that would continue for a total of 70 years.

Then, with the exile of the Jews from Jerusalem complete, Ezekiel began to prophesy against *the fat shepherds* of the Jews that **scattered** the Flock of God (Ezekiel 34:1-10), and, giving the Jews of the Captivity hope, the Lord promised that He would **regather** the Flock, **restore** the Kingdom, and **set up** David as the Prince (Ezek. 34:11-31)! Likewise, the Lord foretold promised that He would **destroy** *Mount Seir* (Ezek. 35:1-15) and, on the contrary, He would **restore** *the Mountains of Israel*, **establish** *the Kingdom*, and **secure the regathered Jewish People** therein (Ezek. 36:1-38) – a miraculous feat comparable to a valley of dry bones rising to their feet and coming to life (Ezek. 37:1-28)! This brings us to Ezekiel 38.

At having boldly introduced God's purpose to **regather** *the Jews*, **restore** national *Israel*, **rebuild** *Jerusalem*, and **reconstruct** a *Jewish Temple*, one is compelled to wonder who **Gog** of the Land of **Magog** is. If Israel will be invaded by **Gog's coalition** in the future (Ezek. 38:1-7), this means that the aforementioned **regathering & restoration** will at least be *in progress* or already complete. I say that the **regathering** and **restoration** is *in progress* because, it would seem that the foretold glories described in Ezekiel 40-48, and elsewhere, are still unrealized by the time that **Gog's coalition** attacks Israel. This would make sense seeing that Ezekiel 40-48 wasn't prophesied until quite some time after Ezekiel 38-39 and, in respect to Jerusalem, 14 years after its destruction. Rightly so, one would think that adversaries would make a concerted effort to prevent the **regathering** and **restoration** of the Jews. This much we know, the consummation of this conflict between Israel & Gog's coalition, foretold in Ezekiel 38-39, will inevitably result in the foretold glories of Ezekiel 40-48.



My reader, this brings us to the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation that returned from Babylon at the completion of the 70-year Tribulation Period (Jer. 25:11-14, 29:10-14, Dan. 9:2). The aforementioned prophecies of Ezekiel are pointing to this specific generation. This point is simply unquestionable! How can I be sure? Well, observe the following parallels.

#### **The Spiritual Status of the Regathered People (Church Purity)**

“...the Land that is brought back from **the sword**, and is gathered out of many people...the Mountains of Israel, which have always been waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and **they shall dwell safely all of them.**” – Ezek. 38:8

“Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of **the sword** found grace in *the Wilderness*; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest.” – Jer. 31:2 [see [Jeremiah 30:1-31:40](#)]

#### **The Physical Vulnerability of Israel & Jerusalem (Without Walls)**

“...the Land of **unwalled villages**...them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them **dwelling without walls**, and having neither bars nor gates...the desolate places that are now inhabited...the people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the Land.” – Ezek. 38:11-12

“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: 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.” – Zech. 2:4-5

#### **The Promise of Full Restoration to this Generation (Ezekiel's Temple)**

“I lifted up mine eyes again, and looked, and behold a **Man with a Measuring Line in his hand**. 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.” – Zech. 2:1-2

“In the visions of God brought he me into the land of Israel, and set me upon a very high mountain, by which was as the frame of a city on the south. And he brought me thither, and, behold, there was a **Man**, whose appearance was like the appearance of brass, with a **Line of Flax in his hand**, and a **Measuring Reed**; and he stood in the gate. And the man said unto me, Son of man, behold with thine eyes, and hear with thine ears, and set thine heart upon all that I shall shew thee; for to the intent that I might shew them unto thee art thou brought hither: declare all that thou seest to the house of Israel.” – Ezek. 40:2-4

“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. Deliver thyself, O Zion, that dwellest with the daughter of Babylon. 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. For, behold, I will shake mine hand upon them, and they shall be a spoil to their servants: and ye shall know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me. Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD. And many nations shall be joined to the LORD in that day, and shall be my people: and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee. And the LORD shall inherit Judah his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again. Be silent, O all flesh, before the LORD: for he is raised up out of his holy habitation.” – Zech. 2:6-13

#### **The Need for & Promise of Divine Protection (the Shaking)**

“Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land,

that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them? And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great **SHAKING** in the land of Israel; So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall **SHAKE** at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground. And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother. And I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone. Thus will I magnify myself, and sanctify myself; and I will be known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the LORD.” – Ezek. 38:14-23

“According to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, so my spirit remaineth among you: fear ye not. For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is *a little while*, and I will **SHAKE** the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will **SHAKE** all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this **House** with glory, saith the LORD of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts. The *glory* of this **Latter House** shall be *greater* than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts.” – Haggai 2:5-9

“Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will **SHAKE** the heavens and the earth; And I will **overthrow** the throne of kingdoms, and I will **destroy** the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will **overthrow** the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts.” – Haggai 2:21-23

Firstly, one must understand the divine purpose of *Church Purity* during the 70-year Tribulation Period and, in so doing, realize **the spiritual status of the regathered people** in the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation. The Jews are described to be those who have been “*brought back from the sword*”, according to Ezekiel 38:8, in the same way that Jeremiah described the regathering of the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation, calling them, “*the people which were left of the sword*” (Jer. 31:2). The spiritual implications of being regathered are clearly stated and easily proven (see [Jeremiah 30:1-31:40](#), [Ezekiel 18:1-32](#), & [Ezekiel 20:1-21:32](#)).

Secondarily, seeing that the **regathering & restoration** were *in progress* and yet to be completed, one must understand how these promises and prophecies were **conditional** based upon the faith and obedience of the Jews. Full promises of restoration were *in progress* – even while Jerusalem was **physically vulnerable, without walls**, and beset by adversaries round about! – hence the relevance of God foretelling His miraculous defense of Israel by a mighty **SHAKING**! Right? Observe, my reader: Ezekiel prophetically specified the **physical vulnerability** of Israel and Jerusalem in that they will be unprotected by **walls** or **gates**, just as Zechariah describes the people’s estate in Zechariah 2:4-5. Seeing that the **regathering & restoration** was hereby still *in progress* and conflicted with many adversaries, the primary one being **Babylon**, according to Zechariah 2:7, the people needed the divine protection described in Ezekiel 38-39. Only then would the full intent of the restoration come to pass as was promised and prophesied, the climax being the building of **Ezekiel’s Temple** signaled by **the Man with a Measuring Reed** (Zech. 2:1-2, Ezek. 40:2-4) & the crowning of a **King, the Branch**, in the restored & united Kingdom (“**My Servant David**” and also the “**One Shepherd**” and “**Prince**” of God’s people - Ezek. 34:23-24; “**David My Servant** shall be **King** over them; and they shall have **One Shepherd**...”, and, “**My Servant David** shall be their **Prince** for ever” – Ezek. 37:24-25; Zech. 6:9-15).

As proven elsewhere at length, and here yet again, all of this was originally calendared to happen ([God in the Ways of Man](#)) in the **regathering** and **restoration** directly after the 70-year Babylonian Captivity (Jer. 29:10-14, 25:11-12, 27:22).

Then, with a *remnant* returning (Isa. 10:20-22), they would *seek David* their **King** like Hosea the prophet prophesied (Hos. 3:5); strikingly, the **regathering** and **restoration** happens at the same time as **the Branch** (Jer. 23:3-8, Isa. 11:1-12:6) to wit: the Lord will regather them just like he did in bringing them out of Egypt (Jer. 23:3-8, Isa. 11:16, Hag. 2:5) and dwell in the midst of them for the rebuilding of **the Temple** unto unprecedented manifestations of divine glory (Isa. 12:6, Zech. 1:16, 2:5, 10, 6:12, 8:3)! Knowing this, and hearing God speak of *Joshua the High Priest* as **the Branch** (Zech. 3:8-10, 6:9-15), the God-fearing Jews of the Restoration Generation would have been in great wonder and expectation of what was about to take place, and for obvious reasons!

Further confirming things, let it be noted that this man, **the Branch**, prophetically identified in the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation according Zechariah 3:8-10 & 6:9-15, is the same man who Ezekiel calls “**the Prince**” in Ezekiel 46. This being the case, **Ezekiel’s Temple** had to be an Old Testament structure. Right? Even so, my reader, let Ezekiel declare the operation of redemption at hand in the foretold scenario! Lo and behold, the offering of animal sacrifices for atonement was still in practice (Ezek. 40:38-43, 42:13-14) being officiated by the Aaronic Priesthood (Ezek. 40:45-46, 43:19, 44:15-16, 48:11), and **the Prince**, like any other redeemed man, was in need of atonement for his own sins committed against God (Ezek. 46:4-15); moreover, other evidences include the fact that **the Prince** has physical sons (Ezek. 46:16-18) and the Sabbath is still in observation (Ezek. 46:1, 3). However, seeing that historical Zerubbabel’s original building (that became **the House of 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Judaism**) didn’t amount to **the Latter House Glory** prophesied by Haggai, Zechariah, and Ezekiel, it is apparent that this generation *fell short* of the **promises** and **prophecies** directed to them as the Restoration Generation. The same could be said about all the other prophecies and promises that this generation fell short of (“*Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*” – Heb. 4:1-2). Hence, the prophesied **regathering and restoration** was **recasted to the Last Days** in relationship to **the Latter House of Glory** and all other coinciding manifestations of glory.

Like all authentic Covenants that existed among promised generations and peoples, this one had **conditions** (Jer. 12:15-17, Zech. 3:6-7, 6:9-15); and, at the continued disobedience of the people **the breaches** were accounted of (Hag. 2:14, Zech. 7:1-14, Neh. 13:1-31, Mal. 1-4). The scriptural parameters which prophetically outlined the moral status that God required of the regathered people were trespassed; and without this specified status of morality being achieved, the **unworthy** people were rendered *unable to fulfill the divine foretelling*. According to the prophecies, these people were supposed to be a people of no more *fear* or *weeping* (Jer. 23:4, 46:27-28, Ezek. 36:15, Isa. 30:19), no more *uncleanness* or *defilement* (Isa. 52:1, Zech. 14:21, Ezek. 36:29, 33, Ezek. 11:18, 37:23, 43:7), no more *straying from God* or *idolatry* (Ezek. 14:11, Zech. 13:2, Ezek. 20:37-42, 36:25, Hos. 14:8), and therefore there would be no more *divine anger* or *war* (Ezek. 16:42, Isa. 54:9-10, Ezek. 39:29, Hos. 13:14, 14:4, Jer. 23:4-6, Hos. 2:18, Isa. 60:18, Mic. 4:3-4, Ps. 46:9) and the people would *never again leave the Holy Land* (Amos 9:11-15, Jer. 31:40)! Did it happen? No. I repeat, Haggai 2:14, Zechariah 7:1-14, Nehemiah 13:1-31, and Malachi 1:1-4:6 do account of the decisive breaches of the Covenant according to the sins of the people and the corresponding repentances of God unto a recasting of the prophecies to be fulfilled in *the Latter Days* of a distant generation. In other words, the **breached promises** given especially to *the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation* live-on to be *eventually fulfilled* in **the Messiah** (**the only one worthy to fulfill divine foretelling**), just like the breached promises that were authentically delivered to the **Exodus Generation of the Abrahamic Covenant** and the **Generational Seed of David in the Davidic Covenant**.

What *would have* or *should have* been a full and complete fulfillment of divine foretelling in the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation was hindered because of the sin in the people. In a real sense, the primary **adversary** of the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation, **Babylon** (Zech. 2:4-5), *would have* organized **Gog’s coalition** for the invasion of Israel in an effort to thwart the glorious purposes of God being performed therein; that is, had not the people strayed from God in disobedience to the breaching of the prophetic vision. This climactic occasion never manifested in the same manner that the full prophetic scope of *the King of Israel* (**the Branch**) and *the Temple* (**Ezekiel’s Temple**) did materialize.

The prophet Zechariah bears witness to *the overpassing* of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generation with regards to the aforementioned glories. In other words, Ezekiel 38-39 was *breached, recalibrated, and recasted* to the Last Days. Zechariah, being alive amidst

this happening, was inspired to alter the former vision. For example, the physical and spiritual status of Jerusalem in Zechariah 1:17, 2:1-13, 8:4-5, & 12:6 is altogether glorious and in accordance with the soon-to-be situation foretold in Ezekiel 38-39 (all of which is in harmony with the witness of Isaiah 33:20, 44:26, Jer. 30:18-19, 24, 27, 38-40, 33:10-13, Ezek. 36:10-11, Micah 7:11), however, as formerly proven, because the Jews continued in disobedience the vision was radically altered in accordance with Zechariah 13:7-9 & 14:1-2. Evidently, after Israel falls into the hands of an Invader for yet another time, then God promises to secure Jerusalem from her cycles of constant destruction according to Zechariah 14:10-11 which is in harmony with the Ezekiel 38-39 (Revelation 20:1-10). Apparently, the divine protection foretold in Ezekiel 38 will be forfeited on account of the sins of the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation, according to Zechariah 13:7-9 & 14:1-2, and Israel will suffer another invasion and a subsequent captivity insomuch that when all is said and done two thirds of the Jews will die and only one third will remain alive.

This divine alteration to the prophetic vision (God in the Ways of Man) as a reaction to the sin of the Jews brings us to reckon with Daniel's prophecies concerning **the Beasts** with specific reference to the ongoing destruction suffered by Jerusalem and what was then 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple Judaism. This ongoing disobedience of the Jews deserved another season of divine chastisement. Even so, God rose up another adversarial **Beast** to invade Israel & Judah over the 400-year period between Malachi and Matthew (*Antiochus Epiphanes of Syria in the Greek Empire* – Daniel 8:1-27 & 10:1-12:13), an **adversary** that God didn't defend Israel from as was foretold in Ezekiel 38-39. Moreover, and because of continued disobedience, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generation of the Jews in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century experienced the same thing. Lo and behold, yet another **Beast** (*the Roman Empire* – Daniel 2:31-49, 7:7-28, 9:24-27) arose to the hurt of the Jews and, once again, God didn't defend Israel as was foretold in Ezekiel 38-39. My reader, this brings us to reckon with Jesus' prophecies regarding Jerusalem in Matthew 23:37-38, Luke 19:43-44, Matthew 24:15-31, Mark 13:14-31, & Luke 21:20-38. – all of which extend from and elaborate upon Zechariah 13:7-9, 14:1-2, & Daniel 9:26-27. Yet again, Rome (70 A.D.) was an adversary that God didn't defend Israel from as was foretold in Ezekiel 38-39. Why? Apparently, Ezekiel 38-39 will be fulfilled at a later time... but, after Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A.D. in accordance with Zechariah 13:7-9, 14:1-2, & Daniel 9:26-27, why wasn't the glory of Zechariah 14 & Ezekiel 38-39 (in accordance with Revelation 20:1-10) fulfilled in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generation? Well, one must remember that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generation of the Jews fell short of the foretold vision, just like the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation, and therefore the vision was yet again *breached, recalibrated, and recasted* to the Last Days; moreover, with the inclusion of the Gentiles in a Covenant that was originally intended for the Jews, things crescendo into a greater and more glorious complexity of divine wisdom.

So, what is the moral of the story pertaining to the interpretation of Ezekiel 38-39? Ezekiel 38-39 was written before *the fall* of the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation and, consequentially, it was *genuinely intended* for them, therefore Ezekiel's prophecy doesn't take into consideration any additional prophecies that were added by **Zechariah** or echoed by **Daniel** (pertaining to the development of a *recalibrated* and *recasted* vision of future events), and later elaborated upon by **Jesus** and harmonized by the apostle **John** (who incorporate yet another *recalibration* of the vision). In the same manner, and for the same reasons, Ezekiel 40-48 does not take into consideration (foresee or comment upon) the making of a **New Covenant**, a sinless **Prince**, an everlasting **Priesthood** after the order of **Melchisedec**, and an end to the **sacrificial system** of **animals** for atonement. Contextually, these prophecies were fundamentally *altered* with *the breach* of the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation (& the 2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generation), which means that they will be fulfilled in a *recasted* vision that will transpire in the Last Days. Consequentially, we need to rely upon the witness of Biblical Prophecy in its entirety to discover the mysterious fulfillment of these foretold events. This proves the point that things are not as simple as they appear at first reading. Hence, a plain reading of Ezekiel 38-39 can be misleading because the whole counsel of what is chronologically foretold isn't rehearsed in this text and is intentionally detailed elsewhere.

## Jerusalem's Destruction via Rome (70 A.D.) → ONWARD

For good reason, the spiritual and physical status of **Jerusalem** did not amount to the glories foretold by **Zechariah** in the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation or 2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generation. Speaking of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generation, the **destruction** of **Jerusalem** in 70 A.D. was in fulfillment of Zechariah 13:7-9 & 14:1-2. If a full and complete fulfillment of divine foretelling took place, what *should have* happened next is very plainly stated by **Zechariah** (Zech. 14:3-21), **Daniel** (Dan. 9:26-27), &

**Jesus** (Matthew 24:29-31, Mark 13:24-27, & Luke 21:25-28) – and, had all this been fulfilled then Ezekiel 38-39 would have been performed as well! All prophecies in harmony, the series of prophetic events goes in this order: the *last & final desolation of Jerusalem*, the **2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ** (which rescues Jerusalem from her repeated cycles of unceasing destruction), and **the glorification of Jerusalem** in a divine majesty that is nothing short of **the Millennial Reign**.

My reader, this final and most glorious status of the Jews in Jerusalem is the **regathering** and **restoration** foretold by Zechariah (Zechariah 1:17, 2:1-13, 8:4-5, & 12:6) and other prophets (Isaiah 33:20, 44:26, Jer. 30:18-19, 24, 27, 38-40, 33:10-13, Ezek. 36:10-11, Micah 7:11), and at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Restoration Generation of the Jews all will be accomplished! The last and final Restoration Generation will not result in another failed attempt because of the sin of the people, like that which befell the 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generations according to Zechariah 13:7-9 & 14:1-2! In part, we know this to be the case because the prophet Daniel spoke of the cessation of Jewish suffering & Jerusalem's continued desolations, clearly identifying the end thereof to be the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel 9:26-27. However, Zechariah's prophecies that described the status of the Jews and Jerusalem just prior to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ have effectively been incorporated into the prophetic vision of the future (Zechariah 13:7-9 & 14:1-2). Indeed, as of 70 A.D. **the Jews** were displaced and **Jerusalem** was effectively destroyed, and as of 70 years ago **Israel** was reborn while as of 51 years ago **Jerusalem** was recaptured by the Jews... nevertheless, all of Zechariah's prophecies still stand. The regathering and restoration that is in progress now, as of 2018, isn't the **regathering** and **restoration** that God will accomplish in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Restoration Generation of the Jews. Rather, God will purify this generation until He finds the elect.

The *originally intended* objectives declared in Ezekiel 38-39 & 40-48 were very **specific** (all of which should have coincided with the full performance of Zechariah 1:17, 2:1-13, 8:4-5, & 12:6 | Isaiah 33:20, 44:26, Jer. 30:18-19, 24, 27, 38-40, 33:10-13, Ezek. 36:10-11, Micah 7:11). However, upon the *breaching* of Ezekiel 38-39 & 40-48 resulting from the fall of the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation, the *recasted* fulfillment is very **broad** (as is often the case with *breached*, *recalibrated*, & *recasted* prophecies!). In other words, the identity of **Gog & Magog** has become one and the same as that of **the Beast** – an *exceedingly broad* and *mysteriously complex* entity that culminates in the End of the World! Sound **strange**, my reader? A thorough study of the Doctrine of the Beast, addressed at length in [Revelation 17](#), will prove the truth of the following statements regarding Gog:

The fact that Ezekiel 38 foretells a coalition of nations led by **Gog** for the invasion of Israel is indisputable; this marks the beginning of *the conflict*. The fact that the LORD will ultimately defeat **Gog** is also indisputable; this marks the end of *the conflict*. However, the times and sequences of *greater* or *lesser* progress on either side in between these points, the beginning and the end, is a subject of controversy among the would-be-interpreters. This controversy is understandable seeing that men assay to interpret the highest tier of prophecy without first learning the ancient intentions of the selfsame prophecies and the progressive *altercations* that befell the record of divine foretelling over time.

The situation post 70 A.D. was no different, my reader, as has been discussed at length heretofore in this [Commentary](#). The Book of Revelation foretells the existence of a **3<sup>rd</sup> Restoration Generation** of the Jews for the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38-39 & Ezekiel 40-48! In summation, as we have observed, to understand Ezekiel 38-39 one must be able to distinguish between the **1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation** & the **2<sup>nd</sup> Restoration Generation** of the Jews and how they both relate to Ezekiel 38-39, and thereby one is enabled to foresee the ultimate and gloriously complex fulfillment of Ezekiel 38-39 in the **3<sup>rd</sup> Restoration Generation** of the Jews. Remember, we haven't yet incorporated the entirety of Biblical Prophecy to understand the diverse and or progressive fulfillments of a breached and recasted prophecy like Ezekiel 38-39.

Therefore, to rightly interpret the fulfillment of Ezekiel 38:8-23, one must fully understand the events being foretold in Revelation 16:17-21 otherwise known as **the 7<sup>th</sup> VIAL**. Why? This is when God defends Jerusalem by **the SHAKING**. Also, to rightly interpret the fulfillment of Ezekiel 39:17-21, one must fully understand the events being foretold in Revelation 19:17-21 – an event known as **The Great Supper of Human Flesh**. Lastly, to rightly interpret Ezekiel 38-39 in the final avenue of its prophetic significance, one must fully understand the events being foretold in Revelation 20:1-10 – the only place in the Book of Revelation where **“Gog and Magog”** (Rev. 20:8) are explicitly mentioned by name, quoting

from Ezekiel 38-39. All things considered, the Last Days scenario comes into being in the following sequence of events as of 70 A.D. & ONWARD:

**70 A.D.** → the **scattering** of *the Jews*, the **overthrow** of *the Jewish State of Israel*, and the **destruction** of *the City of Jerusalem* and *the Temple*.

- (1) **A Progressive Regathering & Restoration Leading to Conflict:** This, in one sense, is a chosen generation of the Jews. They, however, will not choose the LORD until they're punished by **Babylon / the Beast**. If one considers what has transpired since 1948 to be the foretold **regathering** and **restoration** *in progress*, one must remember how the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation fell short of glory because of sin. Woefully, the Jews of this initial **regathering** aren't even saved! Nor will they be saved until God punishes **Babylon / the Beast / Gog & Magog** in the foretold manner described in **Ezekiel 38:8-23** (Rev. 16:17-21; **the 7<sup>th</sup> VIAL / the SHAKING**) & **Ezekiel 39:4, 17-21** (Rev. 19:17-21; **The Great Supper of Human Flesh**). Indeed, according to *Biblical Prophecy* there must be a Regathering of **the Jews**, the Rebirth of the **Jewish State of Israel** with **Jerusalem** as its **Capital City** and therein a rebuilt and functioning **Jewish Temple**, but *the progress* hereto will only lead to **conflict** and **suffering** as was foretold in Zechariah 13:7-9, 14:1-2, & Daniel 9:26-27 and confirmed by Christ in Matthew 23:37-38, Luke 19:43-44, Matthew 24:15-31, Mark 13:14-31, & Luke 21:20-38!

Therefore, after this initial **regathering** there must be yet another **scattering**. However, when this takes place in respect to all the events of the prophetic timeline must be carefully discerned. As of 70 years ago (1948) **the Jewish State of Israel** was *reborn*, as of 51 years ago (1967) the Israelites *recaptured* and *took control* of **the City of Jerusalem**, as of 201 days ago (December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017) **Jerusalem** was officially recognized as **Israel's Capital** by the most powerful nation in the World, the USA. One might think that only one thing remains to be accomplished: namely, the building of the **Jewish Temple**. Not so! It is true that this needs to be accomplished prior to the 3 ½ year Great Tribulation, but that's not the next event on the prophetic timeline as of 2018. The **rise of Babylon by war and conquest** for the making of a One World Government is what's next!

- (2) **The Outbreak of War Leading to the Rise of Babylon & the Final Components of Prophecy Being Fulfilled:** Babylon, **the Beast**, rises by war & conquest: **the Day of the LORD through Babylon!** As of 2018, this war will be known as World War III. The war will likely be an overflow of the conflict between *Jews* and *Muslims* with *the Temple Mount* as the focal point of controversy, or something related (see **the 6<sup>th</sup> TRUMPET & the 6<sup>th</sup> VIAL**), and thus at the conclusion of the war – the nativity of the Beast in a One World Government – the political powers of the world will be situated to *immediately* or *eventually* fulfill the foretold scenario in which the Antichrist will at once appear. From a political perspective, this means that all the nations of the earth will *eventually* be represented under the rulership of **10 Kings** (Rev. 17:12-18), and these 10 will give *immediately* or *eventually* give their power unto the Antichrist. Mark it, my reader, World War III will so radically shift the politics of the World Stage from the present estate of things, around 200 national governments, that only **10 Kings** or close to it will rule the entire world.
- (3) **The Rise of the Antichrist & the Beginning of a Peace Covenant (the Beginning of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> Week):** Immediately at the cessation of **World War III**, and, at the birth of **the Beast** in a One World Government (terrestrially speaking), the political powers of the earth *may* or *may not* fit the foretold scenario of Revelation 17:12-18. This ordering of political powers on the World Stage will *eventually* come to pass, but it is not certain *when* or *how*. For example, Babylon could take **worldwide dominion** while within the Empire there are a few more than **10 Kings** and, consequentially, the Antichrist is not yet revealed. However, I repeat, things will *eventually* shift into Revelation 17:12-18. The Antichrist, being one of the political powers, or arising from another venue, will eventually forge a *Peace Treaty / Covenant* with Israel and her adversaries (Dan. 9:27) marking the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel. Effectively, this is the beginning of the reign of the Antichrist at the helm of Babylon (Rev. 17:17). The construction of **the Jewish Temple** will likely begin at the start of the 7-year *Covenant of Peace*, contracted by the Antichrist, and it will be completed and fully functional before the passing of 3 ½ years.

- (4) **The Reign of the Antichrist (the First 3 ½ Years of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> Week), the Formation of Gog's Coalition, the Breaching of the Peace Covenant, the Igniting of the Great Tribulation, the Scattering of the Jews:** The Antichrist, whose rule began at the beginning of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel (Dan. 9:26-27) via 10 Kings within Babylon's Empire committing their power unto him, will orchestrate a turn of events for the latter 3 ½ years of his short reign on the earth ("*a thousand two hundred and threescore days*" – Rev. 11:3, "*a time, and times, and half a time*" – Rev. 12:14, "*forty and two months*" – Rev. 13:5). The Antichrist will breach the *Peace Treaty / Covenant* (Dan. 9:27) igniting the 3 ½ year Great Tribulation (Revelation 11:3-14, 13:5-10), yes, but remember that the Jews have not yet been **scattered** from Israel & Jerusalem in fulfillment of Zechariah 13:7-9, 14:1-2, Daniel 9:26-27, Matthew 23:37-38, Luke 19:43-44, Matthew 24:15-31, Mark 13:14-31, & Luke 21:20-38. The Jews of Israel & Jerusalem will not willingly submit themselves to be *killed* and taken *captiv*e by the Antichrist, hence this will require **armies**.

My reader, this brings us to **Gog's Coalition**. This is that decisive moment of futurity when **Jerusalem's** romance with the Antichrist will be suddenly turned! She, who whorishly LOVED the Antichrist for the past 3 ½ years, will be HATED by her LOVER "*until THE WORDS OF GOD shall be fulfilled*" (Rev. 17:17)! Fearfully, this turn of events marks the beginning of the "**GREAT TRIBULATION**" → a tribulation so great and unprecedented, it will be "*such as was not since the beginning of the World to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened*" (Matt. 24:21-22)! Why? This is a never-before-seen REIGN OF TERROR! ...by a never-before-seen RULER, the **MAN OF SIN** (2 Thess. 2:3)! ...all for the committing of a never-before-seen **ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION** (Matt. 24:15)! My reader, this a person whose plans were foretold by THE WORDS OF GOD long ago! "*Have ye never read...?*" (Mark 2:25, Matt. 21:16).

"...until THE WORDS OF GOD shall be fulfilled." – Rev. 17:17

The cunningly devised *Peace Treaty* (Dan. 9:26-27), a providence of the Antichrist, will officially enable the Jews to build a **Temple**... not knowing that this most celebrated *Revolutionary of Peace* is hereby plotting for war! Being perfectly contrary to *Christ* who came to save the Jews, *the Antichrist* will come to destroy the Jews! Unknowingly, the Jews will fortify his plans of **destruction** and **desolation** upon Jerusalem in the constructing and completing of a fully functional **Temple of Salvation**, so they call it! Fearfully, the **Temple** they think to build for *God* is reared for a **Man**, *the Anti-god*! The desire of their eyes (Ezek. 24:15-23) is the desire of his eyes! The **Temple**, the long-fought-for and most celebrated achievement of the Jews (granted at the clemency of the Antichrist), is the crowning achievement of a **Man** who thereby endeavors to exalt himself above all that is called God and, in turn, *slaughter, scatter, and enslave* the Jews! The Guarantor of the Temple who swore to an epoch of peace and prosperity for all, will guarantee the *annihilation & enslavement* of the Jews for the sake of all!

Suddenly, in accordance with what was foretold concerning **the Little Horn** (Daniel 7:8, 8:9), **the Prince** (Dan. 9:26-27), **the Vile Person** (Dan. 11:21), **the King of Babylon** (Isa. 13:3), and more, **the Man of Sin** will trespass **the Temple** ("*standing where it ought not*" – Mk. 13:14; 2 Thess. 2:3) "*so that he as God sitteth in the Temple of God, shewing himself that he is God*" (2 Thess. 2:4)! Doing all that was foretold and more, the **Man** will accomplish "**the transgression of desolation**" (Dan. 8:13) for "**the overspreading of abominations**" (Dan. 9:27) to "**pollute the Sanctuary**" (Dan. 11:31). Yea, "**arms shall stand on his part**" (Dan. 11:31) for this cause – and hereby Jerusalem will be "*compassed with armies*" (Lk. 21:20) – because the thing is of God in accordance with THE WORDS OF GOD, the LORD saying, "I will gather **all nations** against **Jerusalem** to battle" (Zech. 14:2). Harmoniously, seeing that **all the nations** of the earth will be ruled by **10 Kings** who will give their power unto **the Beast** for this ultimate turnaround purpose, the Spirit of Prophecy elaborated on the event through the apostle John, in the saying, "*And the Ten Horns which thou savest upon the Beast, these shall HATE the Whore, and shall make her DESOLATE and NAKED, and shall EAT her flesh, and BURN her with FIRE*" (Rev. 17:16). Why? "*For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill His will, and to agree, and give their Kingdom unto the Beast, until THE WORDS OF GOD shall be fulfilled*" (Rev. 17:17). In other words, these **10 Kings** (who committed their power to the Antichrist for the commencement of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel; Rev. 17:12-13), will collaborate in the gathering of **the armies** in

**Gog's Coalition** (Ezek. 38:1-7) for the taking of Jerusalem! I repeat, hereby **Gog & Magog / the Beast** will successfully *invade & conquer Jerusalem* in hatred for **the Jews** while the Antichrist presents himself as “god” in **the Temple!**

- (5) **The Antichrist Assumes Sovereign Control of what Used to be the Jews (the Last 3 ½ Years of Daniel's 70<sup>th</sup> Week):** What once belonged to *the Jews* will directly belong to the Antichrist, namely *the State of Israel, the City of Jerusalem, and the Jewish Temple* for 3 ½ years. Like what happened in 70 A.D., it is to be expected that the Jews will put up a fight! Like when Jerusalem was *under Rome and within the Roman Empire*, the same can be expected of Jerusalem under and within the Babylonian Empire of the future. The formerly **regathered** Jews, who survived and perhaps thrived in the perils of World War III, will be invaded and defeated by the Antichrist's Armies (**God's Coalition**) according to the description given in Zechariah 14:1-2. The Jews of Jerusalem, the Great Whore, will be hated by her *Peace Partner and Spiritual Lover*, the Antichrist, but after the final 3 ½ years of the 70<sup>th</sup> Week of Daniel are completed... lo and behold, God will defend Jerusalem by **the SHAKING** according to Zechariah 14:3-21, Ezekiel 39:17-21, & Revelation 19:17-21 (**The Great Supper of the Flesh of Men!**)
- (6) **Jesus Christ will Invade Israel (Heaven-to-Earth), Slaughter Babylon's Armies & the Antichrist, Recapture Jerusalem, Regather the Jews, & Restore Israel & Jerusalem:** My reader, THIS IS THE 3<sup>rd</sup> RESTORATION GENERATION of the JEWS. When the 3 ½ years are finished, shortly thereafter **THE 7<sup>th</sup> TRUMPET** will sound! This is an ALARM OF HEAVEN that announces **the besiegement of Babylon's World** by Heaven's Armies! However, with the *sights and sounds* of such things in plain sight: lo and behold, Babylon will neither **surrender** nor be **divided!** On the contrary, they will **gather** for war against the Lamb (**The Gathering!**)! How? Fearfully, through “**sorceries**” (Rev. 18:23) *the Antichrist & the False Prophet* will deceive all the nations of the earth (Rev. 13:7-9, 11-17, 19:20) – not in the 3 ½ year reign of terror, merely, or in the slaughtering of Jews and Christians, merely, but foremost of all in the gathering of the Armies of “THE WHOLE WORLD” to defiantly wage war against Jesus & the Armies of Heaven that are arrayed above Jerusalem in Earth's Sky (Rev. 16:12-16; Rev. 17:14, 19:19)! Upon gathering for the purpose of war, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent War will commence (**the SHAKING! & The Great Supper of the Flesh of Men!**)! Hereby, Babylon will fall (Rev. 14:8-12, 18:1-24) and, subsequently, a *final and complete regathering & restoration* of the Jews to Israel & Jerusalem will take place in the glory of the Millennial Reign of Christ! I repeat, this regathering is the 3<sup>rd</sup> Restoration Generation. Hereafter, the world of unconverted sinners will be at peace while the Devil is bound in the Bottomless Pit for a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-8).
- (7) **The Devil will be Unbound, and the Nations will be Deceived for Satan's Final Attempt to Conquer Jerusalem and Overthrow the Kingdom of God that is setup in Jerusalem:** This uprising of the nations of the earth, called **Gog & Magog** in Revelation 20:1-10 & Ezekiel 38-39, will be squelched by a post millennial reign *Baptism of Fire* from Heaven to consume them on the spot! This is proof that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Restoration Generation performed by God according to **Zechariah** (Zech. 14:3-21), **Daniel** (Dan. 9:26-27), & **Jesus** (Matthew 24:29-31, Mark 13:24-27, & Luke 21:25-28) cannot be thwarted or stopped! God will DEFEND Jerusalem! This is the Restoration Generation **regathered and restored** by God via the 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming of Christ in the aftermath of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Advent War, a time that is unlike all former restoration generations in that ALL THE JEWS will be saved to sin no more (Rom. 11:26, Isa. 59:20, Isa. 45:17, 25)! Therefore, I repeat, there's no interrupting this glorious commencement of a restored Jewish People unto God who reigns in Jerusalem! Of course, this is where the foretold scenario of **Gog's Coalition** will finally and ultimately take place and thereafter expire from prophetic existence (Ezek. 38-39, Rev. 20:1-10)! In perfect context with the original intent of Ezekiel's prophecy (foretelling an adversarial resistance rising up against the ongoing purpose of God in the 1<sup>st</sup> Restoration Generation), only this time with the 3<sup>rd</sup> Restoration Generation ...lo and behold, all is fulfilled! The adversary arises in an attempt to thwart the glorious progress of the Jews... but to no avail! ...Come, Lord Jesus! Come!



## EZEKIEL 40:1-48:35

**At the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the 1<sup>st</sup> month of what would have been the 25<sup>th</sup> year of Zedekiah's reign, which is 25 years since the 3<sup>rd</sup> Captivity in which Jeconiah was taken captive and 14 years after the City of Jerusalem was smitten** (approx. 575 BC; Ezek. 40:1), Ezekiel prophesies yet another baffling prophecy bringing consternation and trouble to the minds of would-be-interpreters throughout all ages. This prophecy, much like the former (Ezek. 38-39), and no doubt related to the former, is profoundly clear if it is approached from a Biblical & Historical perspective. Nevertheless, this approach is hard to come by for impatient handlers of the text. Therefore, Ezekiel's Temple remains infamous in how men purpose to overlook it, wagging their heads in displeasure, and it is famous in how men will at last discover its meaning in the purpose that God intended according to His good pleasure. In other words, Ezekiel 40-48 is a true masterpiece of the Father who takes pleasure in hiding and revealing the truth (Matt. 11:25-26)!

To be Continued...