

# (Through the Bible) Ezekiel 16-20

by Chuck Smith

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*Chuck Smith's sermon on Ezekiel 16-20 emphasizes God's love for His people and the consequences of their unfaithfulness through idolatry.*

**Duration:** 1:23:14

**Scripture:** Exodus 15:26, Isaiah 52:9, Isaiah 66:8, Ezekiel 16:6, Ezekiel 20:24, Matthew 6:33, Ephesians 2:1-2

**Topics:** "National Decline", "Spiritual Redemption"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the decline of the United States as a nation that once acknowledged and depended on God. He highlights how the nation has turned its back on God, with people prioritizing idol worship and pleasure-seeking on the Lord's Day. The speaker draws parallels between the nation of Israel and the relationship between Jesus Christ and His church, emphasizing how God's work can transform and redeem a polluted and aimless life. The sermon also addresses the story of Lot and the sinful behavior in Sodom and Gomorrah, using it as an example of the consequences of a corrupt and immoral society.

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## Transcript

So we turn in our Bibles at this time to the 16th chapter of Ezekiel, the prophecy of Ezekiel, chapter 16. Ezekiel declares, again the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations. So God is speaking out against Jerusalem, but of course a city is always made up of inhabitants.

A city as itself is not good or evil, it all depends on what the people are that live within that city. So it is against those who are inhabiting Jerusalem that God speaks and say, Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem, Thy birth and thy nativity is in the land of Canaan. Thy father was an Amorite and thy mother a Hittite.

Now before the children of Israel came to dwell in the land, the first inhabitants of the land of Palestine were the Hittites and then also the Amorites. And so Jerusalem, or first of all rather the Amorites followed by the Hittites, but thy father was a Amorite, thy mother a Hittite, referring to the nations that inhabited the land prior to the coming in of Abraham. And as for thy nativity, in the day in which you were born, thy navel was not cut, neither was thou washed in water to supple thee.

Thou was not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. Evidently in those days when a child was born, of course the first thing you do is you wash the child. And then evidently they salted the child.

This no doubt would be to kill bacteria, because salt is a tremendous antiseptic as far as killing bacteria. We were out in a group that were exploring for the lost Virgin Guadalupe mine, and we were blasting away some boulders. And one of the fellows that was with us, working with us, got hit by a piece of rock that had cut off from the boulder when we were blasting it out, and cut his hand.

And the old miner that was with us reached in and got out a little pack of salt and poured it all over. Of course, the guy winced like everything. But he said, I never go out without my bag of salt.

He said, it's, you know, the great antiseptic and it'll cause it to heal faster and it'll keep it from any infection from setting up. And so they no doubt in those days salted the baby as an antiseptic to kill the bacteria that might be upon the child. So speaks about salting it and then swaddling it, wrapping it up in these blanket kind of thing to swaddle the baby.

But when Jerusalem was born, none of this was done. The umbilical cord was not cut. You were not washed in water.

You were not salted nor swaddled. No, I pitied you to do any of these things to you to have compassion upon thee, but thou was cast out in the open field to the loathing of thy person in the day when thou was born. And when I passed by thee and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou was in thy blood live, yea, I said unto thee, when thou was in thy blood live.

So God is saying that you were an outcast. And there was no one to care for you, but I came by and I saw you polluted there in your blood. And I said, and he lived now verse six, interestingly enough, from old times was used as a verse to stop hemorrhaging or stop the flow of blood.

It is a verse that people have used for years. When someone is bleeding to stop the bleeding, they would quote this verse. Now, I don't think the verse does it, but their faith to believe that God is going to do it does stop the bleeding.

But people for years have used this almost as a charm kind of a thing to stop bleeding. But of course it's out of context. God is talking about when he first saw the nation of Israel, Jerusalem, the people of Jerusalem, called them unto himself.

I've caused thee then to multiply as the bud of the field and now has increased. You've become great. You become an excellent ornament.

Your breasts are fashioned and your hair is grown. Whereas you were naked and bare. Now, when I passed by thee and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love.

And so I spread my blanket over thee and covered thy nakedness. Yea, I swear unto thee and entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and you became mine. So as the nation developed, the time came for love and God came to the nation to receive the love, entered into a covenant, married them in that sense, entering into that covenant relationship where God claimed them as his own, as his bride.

And I washed thee with water. Yea, I thoroughly washed away thy blood from thee. And I anointed thee with oil and I clothed thee also with broidered work and shod thee with badger skins.

And I girded thee about with fine linen and I covered thee with silk. And I decked thee also with ornaments. I put bracelets upon thy hands, a chain on thy neck.

I put a jewel in thy forehead and earrings in thine ears and a beautiful crown upon your head. And thus was thou decked with gold and silver, and thy raiment was of fine linen and silk and brodered work. And thou didst eat fine flour and honey and oil, and thou wast exceeding beautiful, and thou didst prosper into a kingdom.

And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comeliness, which I put upon thee, saith the Lord. Now God speaks of his work for the nation Israel and that work of God's spirit in making them great, making them beautiful, making them desirable, perfect in beauty. Now, this is all a foreshadowing of the relationship of Jesus Christ to his church.

How that when the Lord first came to us, we were polluted because of our sins. As Paul writes in Ephesians 2, and you hath he made alive who were dead in your trespasses and sins, who in times past you walked according to the course of this world. The word walk there is meandered, which means you were walking without any purpose or direction.

You were meandering through life. Your life was aimless before the Lord met you. As you meandered according to the course of this world, the word course comes from the Greek word weathervane.

Whichever way the world was flowing, that's the way you were going. Flowing in that way of the world, you know, just the fashions of the world. And you were by nature, Paul said, the children of wrath because you were obeying the lust of your flesh, the lust of your mind.

And thus we were when Christ came, but he washed us. Now you are clean, Jesus said, through the words that I have spoken unto you. The washing of the regeneration of the word of God, the washing of our lives through the blood of Jesus Christ.

I washed you from your pollution. And then the Lord said, I anointed thee with oil. And so he anointed our life with the Holy Spirit.

And then the Lord goes on to declare, I clothed thee with brodered work, not just throwing an old gunny sack at you and saying, you know, dress up. Brodered work speaks of care. It speaks of skill.

And so God took so much care and so much skill to clothe us with the righteousness, which is of Jesus Christ through faith. I shod thee with badger skins, or I gave you shoes of badger skins. Now the badger of the scripture, what that Hebrew word is today, we don't know.

The King James translators guessed badger, but it was a soft leather that was usually dyed purple and was the favorite of the young girls for their slippers. And they were, because soft leather, they were worn for parties and for luxuries, really not for hard labor or hard work out in the fields. Sandals were more the dress for that, but these were luxurious leather slippers.

And I girded thee about with fine linen in Revelation 19 verse six, he speaks about in the bride hath made herself ready and she was adorned in fine linen, pure and clean. And the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints. That righteousness that is ours is that which God has imputed to us through our faith in Jesus Christ.

I am clothed tonight, not in my own righteousness. I do not dare to stand before God pleading my own goodness before him. And I don't care how moral, how honest, how sincere, and how good a person you are.

You're a fool if you seek to stand before God in your own goodness and in your own righteousness. You know, there are so many people that are just sort of good natured people. Like you have dogs that are good natured and dogs that are bad natured.

There's some dogs that are just mean. You don't want to be around them. There's some people that are just mean.

You don't want to be around them. They have peptic type of dispositions, like their stomach is constantly upset or something. They're always growling, always on edge.

And that person, as far as standing before God, is no worse off than the person who has by nature a very pleasant disposition, who's easygoing and calm. You know, we have phlegmatic and we have different types of temperaments, and none of them really have any acceptance before God. The only way I can be accepted before God is to be clothed in that linen, pure and clean, which he has given to me, the righteousness which is of Christ through faith.

Now, the difficulty is when a person does have more of a problem with his disposition, he is usually more conscious and aware of his need for help. And he usually is coming to the Lord more readily. He's a sinner, he knows he's a sinner, and he knows he needs help, and he comes to the Lord quite readily.

Whereas that person who is morally good, he's honest, you know, has all of these qualities, so often that person does not feel a need of coming to Jesus Christ, and thus is oftentimes much further from the Lord than the person who has a naturally miserable disposition, which of course is a very interesting thing. A lot of good men go to hell, and a lot of bad men go to heaven, because when you have that kind of a nature, you know, oh God, I need help, and you're coming to God for help. And the only way any of us could ever stand before God, surely not in our own righteousness, because our righteousness is as filthy rags in the eyes of God.

So God takes, washes, anoints with oil, clothes, and then he said in verse 11, I deck thee also with ornaments. Put bracelets on thy hands, a chain on your neck, a jewel in your forehead, and earrings in your ears, and a beautiful tiara crown upon your head. I see these as the fruit of the Spirit, whose adorning, Peter said, let it not be the outward adorning by the wearing of fancy clothes, and the putting on of jewelry, and the fixing up of your hair, but that inward adornment of that meek and quiet spirit, which in the eyes of the Lord is all very, very valuable.

And he speaks about the true beauty is not outward, but inward. The true beauty of a person is in the character of their lives, and the fruit of the Spirit, as God places this glorious jewels of meekness, temperance, long-suffering, goodness, love, joy, peace. And then God said, I've given you to eat the fine flour, and honey, and oil, and you were exceedingly beautiful, and you prospered into a kingdom.

And your fame, your renown, went forth among the heathen for thy beauty. Throughout the world they were talking of the beauty of the nation, of the people. The Queen of Sheba came from the south to see and to hear, and when she had been there with Solomon, she said, Oh, I heard, but I did not believe, but now I have seen, and it was not told to me half of the glory of your kingdom.

I blessed you, I honored you, I prospered you, you became famous, became renowned throughout among the heathen, they all heard of your beauty. For the Lord declared, for it was perfect, that is your beauty, through my comeliness, which I have put on thee, saith the Lord. And so God works in us his work of the Spirit, and as God works in us by his Spirit, the purpose is to conform us into the image of Christ.

And as God works in us by his Spirit, and as we are changed into the image of Christ, God looks at us and says, Oh, you're perfectly beautiful. God sees you in Christ, and in Christ there is no condemnation for those that are in Christ Jesus. God sees you complete in Christ, he sees you perfected in Christ, and he declares that you are perfect in beauty.

Now, after all of this, God now charges them, but you did trust in your own beauty, and you played the harlot because of your renown, and you poured out your fornications on everyone that passed by, his it was. That is, they turned away from God, and they began to worship every god of all of the people that were round about. God said, You are mine, I'm the one that made this covenant with you.

I purchased you, I'm the one that saved you. You were nothing, you were perishing, you were cast out, but I'm the one that rescued you and saved you, and put my beauty on you, and now you've prostituted yourselves, and you've turned after every god, played the harlot, poured out your fornications on everyone that passed by, his it was. And of thy garments, you did take and you decked your high places with diverse colors, and you played the harlot thereupon.

The like thing shall not come, neither shall it be so, for thou hast also taken thy fair jewels of my gold and my silver, which I had given thee, and you made unto yourself images of men, and you did commit whoredom with them. I prospered you, I gave you gold and silver. What did you do? You used it to make little images and idols, and you began to worship the gold and silver that I have blessed you with and prospered you with.

How tragic it is when a person's life has been blessed of God, and then they turn away from God, and they begin to worship the gold and the silver that God has given to them, the possessions that God has given to them. And you took your brodered garments, and you covered them, and you have set my oil and my incense before them, and my meat also, which I gave thee, the fine flour, the oil, the honey with which I fed you. You have even set it before these little images as a sweet savor, and thus it was, saith the Lord God.

You've taken those things that I have given, and you've profaned them. Moreover, thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom you have borne unto me, and these have you sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, that thou hast slain my children and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them? And in all thy abominations and thy whoredoms thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth when you were naked and bare, and you were polluted in your own blood.

Now, of course, the people of Israel had turned to all of these pagan gods, but worst of all, they began to follow the practice of the pagans of the land in offering their own children as sacrifices unto the pagan gods, burning them in the fire, casting them into the fire, or putting them in the arms of the little outstretched iron gods of Bel that were heated in the fire till they were red-hot, and then they would place their babies in those red-hot arms and burn them as an offering unto the gods. And here are God's people committing this horrible sacrilege. And so God's indictment against them.

No wonder God destroyed them. No wonder God allowed Nebuchadnezzar to drive them out of the land. They had forgotten the condition that they were in when God first came to them.

You haven't remembered how you were naked and had nothing. It came to pass after all the wickedness, woe, woe unto thee, saith the Lord God, that thou hast also built unto thee an eminent place, and you've made a high place in every street. The high places were the places of pagan worship, where all every kind of licentious practice went on in their worship of these pagan gods.

Thou hast built thy high place at the head of every way, and you have made thy beauty to be abhorred, and you have opened thy feet to everyone that passed by and multiplied thy whoredoms. Thou hast also committed fornication with the Egyptians, thy neighbors, great of flesh, and hast increased thy whoredoms to provoke me to anger. Behold, therefore, I have stretched out my hand over thee, and I've diminished thine ordinary food and delivered thee unto the will of them that hate thee and the daughters of the Philistines, which are ashamed of thy lewd way.

So God said, I began to turn you over to your enemies, because you have played the whore also with the Assyrians, because you were insatiable. Yea, thou hast played the harlot with them, and yet you couldn't be satisfied. Thou hast moreover multiplied thy fornication in the land of Canaan unto Chaldea, and yet thou was not satisfied herewith.

How weak is thine heart, saith the Lord God, seeing thou doest all these things the work of an imperious, whorish woman, and in that thou buildest thine eminent place in the head of every way or every street, and you make your high place in every street, and you've not been as the harlot in that thou hast scornest hired. You're even worse than a prostitute. You've scorned the payment.

But as a wife that commits adultery, which takes strangers instead of her husband, they give gifts to all whores, but you have given gifts to all of your lovers, and you've hired them that they may come unto thee on every side for thy whoredom. So, Israel had so turned away from the worship of God, and the worship in their worshiping of these false gods that God is just speaking here of the horrible relationship that they would forsake God who had done so much for them. You say, oh, but could a people really do that? Well, I ask you to look at the United States today, a nation that in its beginning understood its dependency upon God, a nation that was framed with a constitution guaranteeing the freedom of worship of the people, freedom to worship, a nation that placed upon its coins in God we trust, a nation that placed within its national anthem the recognition of God, and in its pledge to the flag acknowledged it to be one nation under God.

But look how the nation today has turned its back upon God. On the Lord's day, it has become a day where people go out and worship their idols as they run up and down a line field throwing balls to the cries and the cheers of their devoted followers, a day for pleasure, a day for seeking after the flesh, a day of attempting to satiate the flesh in pleasure. How far we have fallen when Superman replaces the word of God on television on Sunday mornings.

How tragic that a nation turns from the God who made them great, the God who made them strong, the God who clothed them, fed them, made them prosperous, and they forget their beginnings. They forget it was God who made us strong. They forget how that God watched over the early colonists, and they begin to attribute this strength to such foolish things as free enterprise, the democratic system.

America, America, God shed his grace on thee, but you've turned your back on God, even as did Israel. We did not have the wisdom to learn from history, and the Christians by their inactivity have allowed these things to be. We're soon going to be electing school boards and other officials in our community.

How many of you have really planned to vote? Probably not very many. Did you know that there are some outstanding Christians that are running for the school boards? That if all of the Christians got out and voted for those Christians that are running for these offices, they could be elected to these offices, and we could actually perhaps help guide the curriculum of our schools. There is a Dr. Peterson, there is a George Rhoda, both of them outstanding born-again Christians running for school board.

Now every Christian ought to be out voting. I'm not going to tell you who to vote for, that's illegal. I'll just tell you there's a couple Christians.

So God speaks about Israel, their folly, and about the judgment that is going to come. He was first, their lover. He created them, took them when they were nothing, made them great, made them beautiful, and they turned against him.

Verse 34, and the contrary is in thee from other women in thy whoredoms, whereas none follows thee to commit whoredoms, and in that you give a reward, and no reward is given to thee, therefore you are contrary. Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God, because thy filthiness was poured out, and thy nakedness discovered through thy whoredoms with thy lovers, and with the idols of thy abominations, and the blood of thy children, which thou didst give to them.

Behold, therefore, I will gather all thy lovers with whom thou hast taken pleasure, and all of them that thou hast loved, with all of them that thou hast hated, and I will gather them round about against thee, and will discover thy nakedness unto them, that they may see all thy nakedness, and I will judge thee as a woman that has broken wedlock and shed blood, and those that have shed blood are judged, and I will give thee blood in fury and jealousy. And I will also give thee into their hand, and they shall throw down thine eminent place, and shall break down thy high places, and they shall strip thee also of thy clothes, and shall take thy fair jewels, and leave thee naked and bare. And 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 any more.

So will I make my fury toward thee to rest, and my jealousy shall depart from me, and I will be quiet, and will be no more angry, because thou hast not remembered the days of thy youth, but you've fretted me in all of these things. Behold, therefore, I also will recompense thy way upon thy head, saith the Lord God, and thou shalt not commit this lewdness above all thine abominations. Behold, everyone that uses proverbs shall use this proverb against thee, saying, As the mother, so is her daughter.

Thou art thy mother's daughter, that loatheth her husband and her children, and thou art the sister of thy sisters, which loath their husbands and their children. Your mother was a Hittite, your father was an Amorite, and thine elder sister is Samaria. She and her daughters that dwell in thy left hand, and thy younger sister that dwells at thy right hand in the south is Sodom and her daughters.

Yet hast thou not walked after their ways, nor done after their abominations, but as if that were a very little thing, thou hast corrupted more than they in all of your ways. You've been worse than Samaria and worse than Sodom. As I live, saith the Lord God, Sodom thy sister hath not done, she nor her daughters, as thou

has done thou and thy daughters.

Behold, this was the iniquity of thy sister Sodom. What was the sin of Sodom? The Lord in looking at it looks behind it, and he said it was pride. It was fullness of bread, prosperity.

The abundance of idleness was in her and her daughters, and neither did she strengthen the hand of the poor and the needy. So this is God's indictment against Sodom. The reason why Sodom was judged, pride, prosperity, idleness, and no concern for the poor and the needy.

Now these conditions of pride and prosperity and idleness of time, men began to look for things to fill in their idle time. And in looking for things to fill their idle time, they began to indulge themselves and their flesh. And having run the gamut of kinky flesh and not finding any satisfaction, only a greater lust, they began to burn in their lust for each other.

And that horrible condition in which we find Sodom when the angels of the Lord came and were staying in the house of Lot and the men of the city began to knock on the door saying, open unto us and send out those men that came into your house that we may know them. And Lot went to the door and said, go away. Don't do this evil unto these men.

Behold, I have a couple of daughters that are virgins. I'll turn them over to you, but don't do this evil to these men. And they said, you're a stranger.

You come to live with us and now are you going to judge us? And they were going to grab him. And the angel said to Lot, stand back. And they smote the men with blindness so that they wearied themselves of trying to find the door.

And they said, get out of here. But you see, behind this scene, there was the pride, there was the prosperity, there was the idleness of time. Now, these are the conditions that produced this blatant demonstration of these homosexual men.

It was because of this kind of an environment they felt the bravado to parade publicly. When the conditions of a nation become so corrupt and immoral that men of this character feel a forwardness in expressing themselves publicly and begin to parade in public demonstrations, you know that you are at the end of the rope. The next thing is judgment.

And as I see the things that are happening in the United States, San Francisco, Hollywood, Washington DC, I realize that the cup of God's indignation is about to overflow. And America will be judged of God. God said they were haughty.

They committed abomination before me. Therefore, I took them away as I saw fit, as I saw good. Neither hath Samaria committed half of your sins, but you have multiplied your abominations more than they.

And you have justified your sisters in all your abominations, which you have done. And that's, of course, the whole thing, the rationale, the justification. Well, you know, every man has a freedom to express himself however he desires, and no one has the right to dictate their moral standards on other people.

Thou also which has judged thy sisters bear thy own shame, for thy sins that you have committed are more abominable than they, and they are more righteous than you. Yea, be thou confounded also and bear thy shame, and that you have justified your sisters. When I shall bring again their captivity, the

captivity of Sodom and her daughters, and the captivity of Samaria and her daughters, then will I bring again the captivity of thy captives in the midst of them.

That thou mayest bear thine own shame, and mayest be confounded in all that you have done, in that you are a comfort unto them. When your sister Sodom and her daughters shall return to their former estate, and Samaria to her daughters shall return to their former estate, then thou and thy daughters shall return to your former estate, for thy sister Sodom was not mentioned by thy mouth in the day of thy pride. Before thy wickedness was discovered, as at the time of thy reproach of the daughters of Syria, and all of those that are round about her, the daughters of the Philistines, which despise thee round about, thou hast borne thy lewdness and thy abominations, saith the Lord.

For thus saith the Lord God, I will even deal with thee as thou hast done, which has despised the oath in breaking the covenant. God made a covenant with them, you are mine. They broke the covenant, and they gave themselves over to every God and idol and abomination.

And so God speaks of them that they have despised the oath in breaking the covenant. Now, God here, of course, speaks of the day of restoration, even of Sodom and of Samaria. That day is coming.

I do not believe the day is far off. As we go further in Ezekiel, we are going to find that there is an earthquake that is going to take place in Jerusalem that is going to create a new valley and is going to unlock an underground river, a spring, that will begin to flow from Jerusalem down to the Dead Sea with such a supply of water that when it comes into the Dead Sea, the waters of the Dead Sea will be healed, and there will be all manner of fish and all there in the Dead Sea, and Ein Gedi will be a place where they will be drying their fishing nets. And the area of the Dead Sea will no doubt become a verdant, beautiful valley again.

Sodom shall be inhabited as Samaria, and of course, as Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the Lord said, I will remember my covenant with you. You've broken it, but I'm going to remember it in the days of thy youth.

I will establish unto thee an everlasting covenant. And so God is, for all that they have done, God is not utterly destroyed, not utterly rejected, but he is going to take them back again and establish a everlasting covenant with them through Jesus Christ. Then thou shalt remember thy ways and be ashamed when you shall receive thy sisters, thine elder and thy younger, and I will give them unto thee for daughters, but not by thy covenant.

And I will establish my covenant with thee, and thou shalt know that I am the Lord, that thou mayest remember and be confounded and never open thy mouth anymore because of thy shame when I am pacified toward thee for all that thou hast done, saith the Lord God. Now in chapter 17, he speaks a parable of a great eagle. And this is where some of these harebrained people begin to spiritualize and try to read the United States into prophecy, because there is an eagle on the top of the flag.

And thus, because he uses an eagle in a parable, that must refer to the United States, you know, and they start twisting and spiritualizing to try to make this fit the United States. But if you'll just read the beginning, there's no way that you can twist it. And the word of the Lord came unto me saying, Son of man, put forth a riddle and speak a parable unto who? The house of Israel, not to the United States, but to the house of Israel.

But people get all into the spiritualizing of scriptures, and they fail to read this part. And they get down into the eagle and snapping the twig from Lebanon, and they start making all of these spiritual types of analogies, and it just gets off the wall. And say, Thus saith the Lord God, a great eagle with great wings, long wing, full of feathers, which had various colors, came unto Lebanon and took the highest branch of the cedar.

Now, this greatest eagle is Nebuchadnezzar. The highest branch of the cedar would be the house of David, the king who was Jehoiakim at this particular time, and cropped off the top of the young twigs and carried it to the land of traffic and set it in the city of merchants as the king was taken as a captive to Babylon. He took also the seed of the land and planted it in the fruitful field.

That is, he took the son, Zedekiah, and he made him the king, entering into a covenant, swearing by God you'll be faithful to him and so forth. Zedekiah made a pledge to Nebuchadnezzar to rule the people as a vassal state to Babylon, and he swore by God his allegiance to Nebuchadnezzar. But, of course, he rebelled against it.

He did not honor this covenant that he had sworn by the Lord. So he took also the seed that is the eagle of the land and planted it in a fruitful field. He took Zedekiah, he placed it by the great waters and set it up as a willow tree.

And it grew and became a spreading vine of low stature, whose branches turned toward him. And the roots thereof were under him, so that it became a vine and brought forth branches and shot forth springs. But there was also another great eagle, Egypt, with great wings, the pharaoh Hophro, with great wings and many feathers.

And behold, this vine did bend her roots toward him. Zedekiah sent down to Egypt to make an alliance, to come up against the Babylonian army. And it was planted in a good soil by great waters, that it might bring forth branches, that it might bear fruit, that it might be a goodly vine.

Say thou thus saith the Lord God, shall it prosper? Shall he not pull up the roots thereof and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? And it shall wither in all the leaves of her spring, even without great power or many people to pluck it up by the roots thereof. Yea, behold, being planted, shall it prosper? Shall it not utterly wither when the east wind touches it? It shall wither in the furrows where it grew. So this alliance with Egypt will not stand, but the nation will be destroyed.

Zedekiah will be destroyed. And so it goes on to speak of his rebellion. Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Say now to the rebellious house, to Zedekiah, know ye not what these things mean? Tell them, behold, the king of Babylon is come to Jerusalem, and he has taken the king thereof and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon.

And he hath taken of the king's seed. And of course he's explaining now this parable, and it's nothing to do with the United States. This is the explanation of this eagle parable.

It's the king of Babylon who has come to Jerusalem and taken the king thereof and the princes thereof, and led them with him to Babylon. And he has taken the king's seed, and that is Zedekiah, made a covenant with him, and has taken an oath of him. He has also taken the mighty of the land, that the kingdom might be based, that it might not lift itself up, but that by the keeping of his covenant it might stand.

But he, Zedekiah, rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar in sending his ambassadors to Egypt, that other eagle, that they might give him horses and many people. Shall he prosper? Shall he escape that has done such things? And shall he break the covenant or be delivered? As I live, saith the Lord God, surely in the place where the king dwells, that made him king, whose oath he despised and whose covenant he broke, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die. And Zedekiah was indeed brought to Babylon and died there.

Neither shall Pharaoh with his mighty army and great company make for him in the war by casting up mounts and building forts to cut off many persons. Seeing he despised the oath by breaking the covenant, when, lo, he had given his hand, you know, they shook on it and all, and had done all these things, he shall not escape. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, as I live, surely my oath that he has despised and my covenant that he has broken, even it will I recompense upon his own head, and I will spread my net upon him.

And he shall be taken in my snare, and I will bring him to Babylon and will plead with him there for his trespass that he has trespassed against me. And all of his fugitives with all of his bands shall fall by the sword, and they that remain shall be scattered toward all the winds. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, and I have spoken it.

Thus saith the Lord God, I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and this is a prophecy that goes on now concerning Jesus Christ, as he was the root out of the stem of Jesse, or the rod out of the stem of Jesse. So again, the highest branch from David, the high cedar, I will set it, I will crop off the top of his young twigs, a tender one, and will plant it upon Mount Zion, the high mountain and eminent. And in the mountain of the height of Israel, Mount Zion, will I plant it, and it shall bring forth boughs and bear fruit and be a goodly cedar, and under it shall dwell all of the fowls of every wing, and the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell.

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

Now there are instructions for those who have been taken to Babylon, and Ezekiel now turns and speaks to them. The word of the Lord came unto me saying, What mean ye that you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. Now it is interesting that Ezekiel was in Babylon, and this proverb was at that time being spoken in Babylon.

They go around saying, Well, our fathers ate sour grapes, and our teeth are set on edge. In other words, we are bearing the results of our father's sins. We're suffering because of what our fathers did.

Now, Jeremiah makes mention of the fact that this same proverb was being spoken back in Jerusalem. Those people in the siege were saying, Our fathers have eaten sour grapes, and our teeth are set on edge. It's interesting how that we just don't like to take the blame for what we have done.

We always like to blame someone else. So if you're some kind of a neurotic nut, you go to a psychologist, and they'll tell you, Well, it's not you, it's your father. You see, that's your problem.

Your father ate the sour grapes. Now you're a neurotic mess, you know. Hey, you are what you are, and you might as well take responsibility for yourself.

Quit trying to blame someone else for all of your ills or all of your problems. That old business of trying to blame someone else goes back to the beginning. God said, Adam, what have you done? Oh, the woman that you gave me to be my wife, you know.

She did tempt me, and I did eat. You know, rather than accept the responsibility for what a person has done, we always like to throw it over onto someone else. We're quite irresponsible in this manner.

But God is saying, What is this proverb that these people are saying? Our fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. As I live, saith the Lord God, God's going to explode this proverb now. Ye shall not have an occasion to use this proverb any more in Israel.

Behold, all souls are mine, as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine, and the soul that sinneth, it shall die. Every man is going to be responsible to God for himself. But when I stand before God, I'm going to have to answer for only one person, me.

I'm not going to have to answer for my children or my wife as close as we are. The only one I answer to God for is me. The only one God's going to talk to me about is me.

When you stand before God, you're only going to be responsible for you, but you will be responsible for you. You're going to have to answer to God for yourself. And you can't say, Well, my dad was, you know, or my mom was or you can't throw it off.

You're going to have the soul that sinneth, it shall die. And God isn't going to punish your parents for what you are, nor is he going to punish you for what your parents were. Nor is he going to reward you for what your parents were or reward your parents for what you are as the case may be.

Each man stands before God as an individual and answers for himself. And it's time that you face up to that reality and you begin to be responsible before God, knowing that we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account for the things that we have done while we've been living in these bodies, whether they be good or evil. I will prepare yourself.

But if a man is just and does that which is lawful and right and has not eaten upon the mountains, that is these abominable feast to these pagan gods or lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, neither has defiled his neighbor's wife, neither has come near a menstruous woman and that not oppressed any, but has restored to the debtor is pledge when someone would make give you a pledge for a debt. A lot of times they just keep the pledge and has spoiled none by violence and has given his bread to the hungry and has covered the naked with the garment. He that has not given forth upon usury, neither has taken any increase that has withdrawn his hand from iniquity and has executed true judgment between man and man has walked in my statutes and have kept my judgments to deal truly.

He is just. He shall surely live, saith the Lord God. Now, those are the things that you want to live by the law that you'll have to do.

Now, God has a better way of righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. If he beget a son that is a robber or a shedder of blood, and that does the like to any of these things and that does not any of those duties, but has eaten upon the mountains and defiled his neighbor's wife, oppressed the poor and needy,

has spoiled by violence, has not restored the pledge and has lifted up his eyes to idols and committed abomination and has given forth upon usury loaned with usurious interest rates and has taken increase. Shall he then live? He shall not live.

He has done all of these abominations. He shall surely die. His blood shall be upon him.

Now, lo, if he beget a son that sees all of his father's sins, which he has done and considers and does not such like that he has not eaten upon the mountains, neither has lifted up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, nor defiled his neighbor's wife. Neither is it pressed any nor withheld the pledge and so forth that he has taken of his hand of the Lord and he has not received usury nor increase and has executed my judgments, has walked to my statutes. He shall not die for the iniquity of his father.

He shall surely live. Every man answers for himself as for his father, because he cruelly oppressed, spoiled his brother by violence and did that which is not good among his people. And lo, he shall die in his iniquity.

Yet you say, why does not the son bear the iniquity of the father when the son has done that which is lawful and right and has kept all my statutes and has done them? He shall surely live. 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 of his sins that he is committed God's grace, God's mercy of the wicked will turn and keep my statutes and do that which is lawful and right. He shall surely live.

He will not die. And all his transgressions that he has committed, they shall be not 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 way and live. God is so maligned in the minds of people is as people look upon God as as some kind of a vengeful character who is just, you know, waiting to cast people into hell. Not so.

God is so patient, so long suffering, he'll do anything to keep a person out of hell. He has done everything to keep a person out. He even sent his only begotten son to bear all of our sins to make it so easy to get into heaven and to get into hell.

You have to go against the grace of God, the love of God. You have to despise his son, Jesus Christ. Turn your back upon the provisions of God.

And really, you have to, in a sense, cross over the body of Jesus Christ to get into hell because he stands in your way to block you and you've got to shove him aside. It's not easy to get to hell. You've got to fight God every step.

Conviction of God's Holy Spirit. But if you're stubborn enough and hang in there, you can make it. But when the righteous turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity and listen carefully and does according to all of the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All of his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned in the trespass that he hath trespassed and in his sin that he hath sinned in them shall he die.

Yet you say the way of the Lord is unequal. That isn't fair. God said here now, O house of Israel is not my way equal are not your ways unequal when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity and dies in them for his iniquity that he hath done, shall he die again when the wicked man turns away from his wickedness that he has committed and does that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive because he is considered and turned away from all of his transgressions that he hath committed and he shall surely live.

He shall not die. Yet say at the house of Israel, the way of the Lord is not equal. O house of Israel are not my ways equal and not your ways unequal.

Therefore, I will judge you, O house of Israel, everyone according to his way, saith the Lord God, repent and turn yourselves from all of your transgressions so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed and make you a new heart and a new spirit. For why will you 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. So God's crying to Israel, look, turn from your transgressions, turn to me and live. I don't have any pleasure in the death of the wicked turn and live.

God's pleading with him. You say, but what does that mean? If the righteous turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity and dies in his iniquity, his righteousness will not be remembered. Well, that's for you to figure out.

I think it means what it says. Moreover, take thou up a lamentation. So this is a lamentation.

And notice at the beginning, he says a lamentation at the end. He said, this is a lamentation and shall be a lamentation. Now, if I were a Bible critic, I would tell you why this wasn't a lamentation.

If I were in the school of higher criticism, one of those biblical scholars. Moreover, take up a lamentation for the princes of Israel and say, what is thy mother? She's a lioness. She laid down among the lions and she nourished her whelps among the lions.

These are the princes. Now your mother is a lioness. She laid down among the lions and she brought up one of her whelps and it became a young lion and learned to catch the prey and it devoured men.

And the nations also heard of him and he was taken in their pit caught in their trap. And they brought him with chains to the land of Egypt. That would be the prince or the King Jehoia has.

Now, when she saw that she had waited and her hope was lost, then she took another of her whelps and made him a young lion. This would be Jehoia Chin, Chin, Jehoia Chin. And he went up and down among the lions and he became a young lion and learned to catch the prey and devoured men.

And he knew their desolate palaces and he laid waste their cities and the land was desolate and the fullness thereof by the noise of his roaring. Then the nation set against him on every side from the provinces and spread their net over him and he was taken in their pit. And they put him in a ward in chains and they brought him to the king of Babylon.

And they brought him unto the prisons, the holds, and his voice should no more be heard upon the mountains of Israel. Jehoia Chin was carried away captive to Babylon. And thy mother is like a vine in thy

blood.

Planted by the water, she was fruitful, full of branches by reason of many waters. And she had a strong rods for the scepters of them that bear rule. And her stature was exalted among the thick branches.

And she appeared in her height with a multitude of her branches, but she was plucked up in fury. She was cast down to the ground. In the east wind dried up her fruit and her strong rods were broken and withered.

The fire consumed them. And now she is planted in the wilderness in a dry and a thirsty ground. And fire has gone out of a rod of her branches, which hath devoured her fruit so that she hath no strong rod to be a scepter to rule.

This is a lamentation and shall be a lamentation." It of course speaks to the end of the kings of Israel because of their being conquered. Now it came to pass in the seventh year of the fifth month, the tenth day of the month, that a certain of the elders of Israel came to inquire the Lord and they sat before me. Now this evidently was their custom.

We read earlier last week where the elders came to sit before Ezekiel to inquire the Lord. And so the Lord came into me saying, son of man, speak to the elders of Israel. Now the last time God said, you know, why should I be inquired of them? You know, these guys have idols that they've set up in their hearts and God's still not speaking to them.

Son of man, speak to the elders of Israel, saying to them, thus saith the Lord God, are you come to inquire of me? As I live, saith the Lord God, I'll not be inquired of by you. You've come to get my advice. You've come to get my counsel.

I'm not going to counsel you. Will you judge them, son of man? Will you judge them, cause them to know the abominations of their fathers? Saying to them, thus saith the Lord God in the day when I chose Israel and lifted up my hand to the seat of the house of Jacob and made myself known unto them in the land of Egypt. Now he goes back, cause them to know their history, rehearse their history for them.

Go back to when they were in Egypt. When I lifted up my hand unto them saying, I am Jehovah, your God. In the day that I lifted up my hand unto them to bring them forth out of the land of Egypt into the land, which I had aspired for them flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all the lands.

Now you go to Israel today and you see a tremendous work of restoration. They have planted millions of trees all over the land. And as a result of the planting of all of these trees, they have been able to change the climate in Israel and creating a lot more humidity and thus a lot more rain.

And the land is again becoming a land of streams and a land of greenery as they are getting more and more rains all the time as a result of this reforestation program that they have had. And of course they've been able to, through drainage canals and planting of eucalyptus trees and all, been able to take a lot of the marshes, the areas that were just swampy and they've been able to make them very productive as far as the growing of fruit and all. The Sharon Plain that used to be nothing but marshland is now beautiful citrus orchards.

The same with the Valley of Megiddo that was marshland is now just so verdant and beautiful and green with all of the agriculture that is there. Of course, by their planting and all and bringing water down to Beersheba, they're really creating now a whole new look to this land. Now, when God first brought the

children of Israel into the land, it was a land of heavy forest, a land of beautiful streams and forests, a land that flowed with milk and honey.

They sort of sneer now because it is a rocky land and they make jokes out of the rocks. You know, like when God was creating the earth, he sent two angels out with baskets of rocks to distribute around the world. And one angel took and distributed his rocks over half the world, but the other angel was lazy and just dumped all of his rocks on Israel.

And it is true that it is a rocky land now, but it wasn't always so. When the Turks took the land, they deliberately cut down all of the forest to just denude the land. And without the trees and all, the topsoil all washed away and the land became a barren desert wilderness.

But of course, except in the valleys, it became marshlands because of all of the silt that plugged up the streams and so forth. And so it developed these marshlands plus the rocky mountains, the barren rocky mountains. Now, the Jews started planting pine trees on these rocky mountains because the pine tree roots are able to go down in the crevices and are able to, actually, as they go down and they swell, they begin to crack the rocks and break them up, creating new topsoil.

And all of the planting was done on a scientific basis. And extremely educational and valuable lessons can be learned agriculturally in going over and studying. They've really done the whole thing from a scientific base.

Because eucalyptus trees drink up so much water, they've planted eucalyptus trees in these marsh areas so that they would drink up gallons of water every day. And of course, they drained the marshes and drained the rivers and all and allowed them to flow on out again to the Mediterranean so that you don't have the marshland. And they are really restoring this land in a marvelous way.

And it's an exciting thing to see. But when God first brought them into the land out of Egypt, it was a beautiful, verdant land of forest and streams and all throughout the entire land. It was according to the word of God, one of the most beautiful places in the world.

And as you see where they are restoring and where the rain has been restored and all, there are some beautiful, beautiful areas. That Sea of Galilee and the areas around the Sea of Galilee, up at Tel Dan, one of the most beautiful places. The water in the springs and all.

It is just lovely, beautiful. And the whole countryside is being restored and as it is, it's again becoming a place of great beauty. But the land, God said, I spied out this land for them.

It was flowing with milk and honey. It was the glory of all of the lands. Then said I unto them, cast your way every man the abominations of his eyes.

That is while they were in Egypt. Don't defile yourself with the idols of Egypt, for I am Jehovah, your God. But they rebelled against me.

They would not hearken unto me. They did not every man cast away the abominations of their eyes. Neither did they forsake the idols of Egypt.

Then I said I will pour out my fury upon them to accomplish my anger against them in the midst of the land of Egypt. But I wrought for my name's sake that it should not be polluted before the heathen among whom

they were in whose sight I made myself known unto them in bringing them forth out of the land of Egypt. Wherefore, I caused them to go forth out of the land of Egypt, and I brought them into the wilderness.

And I gave them my statutes. I showed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. So God gave the statutes, the judgments, the right way to live.

Moreover, I also gave them my Sabbaths to be assigned between me and them. Now, the Sabbath was not assigned to the Gentiles. And there are people today who get on a Sabbath, they kick and wonder why we don't worship God on the Sabbath.

We do. I worship God every day. But why don't you observe the Sabbath? Because I'm not a Jew.

It's a sign between God and the Jew. You say, how can you be so sure? Because God said so. How sure can you be? Exodus 31, 12, when God gave the law of the Sabbath, Exodus 31, 17.

It is a sign of 16. Wherefore, the children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath to observe the Sabbath throughout their generations, a perpetual covenant. It is a sign between me and the children of Israel forever.

For in six days the Lord made the heaven and the earth. The seventh day he rested and he was refreshed. So it's a sign between God and Israel.

So I'm with Paul. I'm the type of man that Paul described. One man considers one day above another, that's not me.

But another man considers every day alike, that's me. I'm sort of boring to be around because as far as I'm concerned, every day is alike. Anniversary, birthday, so on.

Every day is alike. You know, people set days. Oh, you know, it's a special day.

Just another day. As far as I'm concerned, they're all the Lord's day. But the house of Israel rebelled against me in the wilderness.

They did not walk in my statutes. They despised my judgments, which if a man do, he would live in them. And my Sabbath, they greatly polluted.

Then I said I would pour out my fury upon them in the wilderness to consume them. God said to Moses, stand back and wipe them out. But I wrought for my name's sake that it should not be polluted before the heathen in whose sight I brought them out.

Now, they were, they didn't obey me in Egypt. They didn't obey me in the wilderness. Yet I lifted up my hand unto them in the wilderness, that I would not bring them into the land which I had given them, flowing with milk and honey, which is the glory of all the lands, the glorious land, because they despised my judgments and walked not in my statutes, but they polluted my Sabbath.

For their heart went after their idols. Nevertheless, my eyes spared them from destroying them, and neither did I make an end of them in the wilderness. But I said unto their children in the wilderness.

So he cast the fathers out. They failed. So I spoke then to their children in the wilderness.

Walk ye not in the statutes of your fathers, neither observe their judgments, nor defile yourselves with their idols. I am Jehovah your God. Walk in my statutes, keep my judgments, and do them, and howl my Sabbath, and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am Jehovah your God.

Notwithstanding, the children rebelled against me. They walked not in my statutes, neither kept my judgments to do them, which if a man do, he shall live in them. They polluted my Sabbath, and then I said I would pour out my fury upon them to accomplish my anger against them in the wilderness.

Nevertheless, I withdrew my hand and wrought from, I withheld for my name's sake, that it should not be polluted in the sight of the heathen in whose sight I brought them forth. And I lifted up my hand unto them also in the wilderness, that I would scatter them among the heathen and disperse them through the countries. God spoke to them through Moses and said, Look, God is going to scatter you throughout all the nations.

He's going to disperse you among the nations. That's in the song that Moses taught them, so that when they were scattered, that they would be singing the song, and they'd remember. God warned them of this.

If you turn from God and all, then God will turn you over into the hands of your enemies and you'll be dispersed. Throughout among among the nations, you become a curse and a byword on the lips of all the people, because they had not executed my judgments, but had despised my statutes, have polluted my Sabbath, and their eyes were after their father's idols. Wherefore, I gave them also, I gave them also statutes that were not good.

He said, All right, verse 39, go serve everyone as idols. In other words, God says, All right, that's what you do it. So he gave them statues that were not good.

You know, just he saw that they were bent in that direction. All right, if that's what you want to do, do it. It's terrible when God gives up on a person and just turns him over to his own desires, to his own destruction.

And I polluted them in their own gifts and caused them to pass through the fire, all that opened the wound that I might make them desolate to the end that they might know that I am the Lord. Therefore, son of man, speak into the house of Israel and say to them, thus saith Jehovah God. Yet in this, your fathers have blasphemed me in that they have committed a trespass against me for when I have brought them into the land for the witch, I lifted up my hand to give it to them.

When I finally brought them in here, then they saw every high hill and all of the thick trees, the forest, and they offered their, their sacrifices. And there they presented the provocation of their offerings, which they're also, they made their sweet savor and poured out their drink offerings. So I brought them finally into the land and they saw the beauty, the hills and all, and they began to worship on every one of these hills, these false gods.

Then I said to them, what is the high place where into you go? And the name thereof is called Bama to this day, which means high place. Wherefore say to the house of Israel, thus saith Jehovah God, are you polluted after the manner of your fathers and commit ye whoredoms after their abominations? For when you offer your gifts, when you make your sons to pass through the fire, you pollute yourselves with all your idols, even unto this day. And shall I be inquired of by you or house of Israel, as I live, saith Jehovah God, I'll not be inquired by you.

So here they are sitting before properties. You can say inquire the Lord for us. And God says, Hey, is he killed? Just tell him the history and then say, should I be inquired of by you? No way.

And that which comes into your mind shall not be at all that you say, we will be as the heathen as the families of the countries to serve wood and stone. As I live, saith Jehovah 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 we'll gather you out of the countries where you have 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 Jehovah 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.

And I will bring them forth out of the country where they sojourn and they shall not enter into the land of Israel and you shall know that I'm the Lord. So God says, I will come again in that day. And of course this day is in the future, but God is going to cause it, cause him to pass under the rod to enter into the covenant.

There will be those that God will deal with, that he will bring into the land and he will bless and he will favor, but he's going to rule. They will have to make that commitment unto God. As for you, O house of Israel, thus saith Jehovah God, go ye serve everyone as idols.

Hereafter also, if you will not hearken unto me, but pollute ye my holy name no more with your gifts and with your idols. For in my holy mountain, in the mountain of the height of Israel, saith the Lord God, there shall all the house of Israel and all of them of the land serve me. There will I accept them and there will I require your offerings and the first fruits of your oblations with all your holy things.

I will accept you with your sweet savor when you bring, when I bring you out from the people. This is when Christ returns and the gathering together again of the people into the land and God will then accept them as his people. And he will be sanctified in you before the heathen.

And you shall know that I am Jehovah when I shall bring you into the land of Israel, into the country for the, which I lifted up my hand to give it to your fathers. And there shall you remember your ways and all your doings wherein you have been defiled. And you shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for all of the evils that you have committed.

It said that in Zachariah prophesies. And when they see Christ, they shall look upon him whom they have pierced and they shall mourn and wail over him as a mother wails over her only son who has been killed. Oh, when they realize what they have done, what they have missed in the rejection of their Messiah weeping, but it will be a glorious thing because it will be the weeping of repentance and it will be their restoration in their life and their glory.

And you 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. Oh, ye house of Israel sayeth Jehovah God, the Lord God.

I don't know how I hear. 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, 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 fire shall not be quenched in all faces from the South to the North shall be burned therein and all flesh shall see it that I, the Lord have kindled it and it shall not be quenched. Then said I, Oh Lord God, they say of me, does he not speak parables? They're already saying, Lord, he's speaking in parables and I tell him this and they're going to just give me a bad time. But of course, God is here speaking, uh, this parable of the force of the South field in which he is, uh, prophesying, uh, the fact that Jerusalem is to be burned.

And, and this is the end. And of course, this is the final prophecy after this prophecy, Jerusalem, the news came of Jerusalem's destruction. And so we, this is the last prophecy before, uh, the news of the destruction of Jerusalem arrived to Babylon.

And now beginning with chapter 21, uh, we get into a new set of prophecies after now that Jerusalem has fallen and those in Babylon have realized it. So may the Lord be with you and bless you and strengthen you for this week. May the anointing of God's Holy Spirit rest upon your life and through his beauty, may your life shine forth.

May God cause fullness of his spirit to rest upon you and may your life be a strong testimony and a witness to those around of the grace and the love of our Lord in Jesus name.

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