

“In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him. Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria as he had done year by year; therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.” 2 Kgs. 17:1-4.

In her “Handbook of Ancient History in Bible Light,” Dorothy Ruth Miller says of this incident that Pharaoh So was king of the Twenty-Fifth Dynasty of the powerful Egyptians, and that “*king Hoshea behaved ‘like a silly dove without heart,’ that his intrigue in seeking to form an alliance with So came to the ears of Shalmaneser; who immediately invaded the land and besieged the capital, Samaria. The siege began in 724 B.C. and lasted three years.*” But, Beloved, whatever the historians say, we know who shapes the affairs of all mankind, we have a more sure word of prophecy whereunto we do well to take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place. See, **2 Pet. 1:19.**

In the providence of God it was time to punish the Jewish rebels of the ten northern tribes. Samaria fell in 721 B.C. and with it the kingdom of Israel. The flower of the nation – at least, those who survived the three-year siege – were deported to Mesopotamia and Babylonia, many were sold into slavery, and what few were left were administered as an Assyrian province. The Ten Lost Tribes of Israel were indeed lost. The transplanting of a conquered people was henceforth a customary practice of Assyrian kings. It was done not only to prevent conspiracy and revolt, but that the conquered people might become more completely amalgamated with the other peoples of the empire through the breaking of old ties with home, country, and religion. Now hear how the Holy Ghost reports this winding up of nations, using apostate Israel, as the most ungrateful of all nations of the world; to wit:

“In the ninth year of Hoshea, the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. FOR SO IT WAS, that the Children of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods, and walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the Lord cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.”(2 Kgs. 17:6-8)

This chapter of divinely-inspired historical accounts relates the long-awaited captivity of the ten tribes of Israel, and how it came about, the cause of it, their idolatry, which they persisted in, notwithstanding the repeated remonstrances made against it – all of which would be most suitably applicable to the world in which we live at the present hour.

Beloved. Let us be thankful – very, very thankful, to our heavenly Father, that He has called us to this glorious ministry at this final hour of this doomed world’s history. I tell you, Beloved, the final day came and God slammed the door shut to Noah’s ark. The last day dawned, and the angels hustled Lot and his daughters out of Sodom just in time to miss the fiery holocaust from God out of Heaven. Now hear the words of Christ: “*As it was in the days of Noah...*” “*As it was in the days of Lot...*” so shall it be at the end of the World. Even so, many of the prophets of God warned of the destruction of Samaria (721 B.C., 10 tribes) and Jerusalem (605 B.C., 2 tribes), and in due time, both cities and nations were destroyed – exactly as prognosticated by a small army of God’s prophets, servants, seers, and messengers.

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Even so, the Lord God has promised that He will stay in close touch with His servants; to wit: **“Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.” Amos 3:7.** And, to His servant, Abraham; to wit: **“And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?” Gen. 18:17.** I tell you, Beloved, it is the subject of high drama in poetry and prose and hymn and song. How will it go with me? With you? With all mankind? The Great Judgment Day! And how will I spend eternity, after the Great Judgment Day is over?

God’s power is heavily implicated in all matters involved with the Judgment Day. And, says Methodist preacher, William Elbert Munsey (1833-1877) – *“That power sooner or later will be exercised. The last day will come. The sun unwheeled will drag along the jarring heavens and refuse to shine. The stars will hide their faces, and the moon will roll up in the heavens red as blood, and hang her crimson livery upon the wing of the night. Earth will tremble upon her axis, and huge mountains of woe will drift and lodge upon her heart. A mighty angel with a face like the sun, clothed with clouds, and crowned with a rainbow, and shod with wings of fire, will cleave the heavens in his lightning track, and descending with his right foot upon the troubled sea, and his left foot upon the quaking earth, lift his hand to Heaven, and swear by the Judge of the quick and the dead that time should be no longer. Old time, the father of centuries and the tomb-builder of generations, will drop his broken scythe and break his glass, careen and fall, a giant in ruins. The trump of God will then sound. Its resonant thunders will then roll through all the lengths and breadths of death’s vast empire, its old walls and arches crammed with buried millions will fall in crashing ruins. The dingy king will drop his sceptre ringing in fragments upon the damp pavements of the grave, and fly howling from his tottering throne down, down to Erebus. The antiquated dead will start into life from their ashy urns and funeral pyres. Pyramids of granite and crypts of marble will be rent in twain to let the rising bodies come. Mummies will fling off the trappings of centuries, and pour from their vaulted chambers. Inquisitions will rock upon their foundations, and revived dead will stream from their dungeons. Abbeys, cathedrals, grottoes, and caverns will be vocal with life. Wanderers will shake off their winding sheets of sand, and rise from the face of the desert. Human bones will break away from their coral fastenings; as mermaids draped in dripping weeds will mourn the evacuation of all their caves; and old ocean will heave and swell with teeming millions.”*

“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.”
(Rev. 20:13-15)

*“The battlefields of the ancient world: Troy and Thermopylae, Talavera and Marengo, Austerlitz and Waterloo, Marathon and Missolonghi, the battlefields of Europe, Asia, Africa and America, down to WWs-1&2, Korea, Vietnam, and the modern battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan; etc.; all will reproduce their armies, and crowd the world with revived legions. Indian maidens will leap from the dust of our streets, and our houses overturning will let their chiefs to judgment. Abraham and Sarah will shake off the dust of Machpelah’s cave and arise, hand in hand, to claim their reward. And David will come with harp in hand, singing the songs of Moses and the Lamb. Our village church yards and family burial grounds will be deserted. All will come; patriarchs, prophets, Jews and Gentiles, Christians and heathens, bond and free, rich and poor – fathers, mothers, children, sisters, brothers, husbands, wives – all from Adam down will come forth. And all the saved all around the world, all together, will hail this, redemption’s Grand Consummation, with one proud anthem, whose choral thunders, rolling along all the paths of space, will shake the universe with its bursting chorus: **‘O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the***

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victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.’ 1 Cor. 15:55-58.”

And, Beloved, a considerable part of the labor that is not in vain in the Lord, ought to be laboring in the word and doctrine, and heed the advice, to *“Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. But shun profane and vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness. And their word will eat as doth a canker; of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some. Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” 2 Tim. 2:15-19.*

Notice; to wit: Two sides of the same coin or seal: Side #1: The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Side #2: Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. All who name the name of Christ ought to labor in the word and doctrine. Period. If you do not, you are denying yourself much divinely-imputed patience and long-suffering and comfort. That is one reason the dear Lord chose the written word to supplement the oral word in propagating His blessed word; to wit: *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope”* – (Note: you may now add learning and hope to the benefits to be derived from study of God’s Word.) – *“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus; that ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Rom. 15:4-6.*

And now, Beloved, there is a very interesting passage that, by its terms, applies to pastors only. But, as I perceive it, there is nothing by its terms or otherwise that would forbid its use by all; and I heartily recommend it to all; to wit:

“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, ESPECIALLY THEY WHO LABOR IN THE WORD AND DOCTRINE.”(1 Tim. 5:17)

Beloved, there is no more honorable activity that one can be engaged in on earth than to labor in the Word and Doctrine (!) Think of it. The Great God Almighty went to infinite pains to write a Book to mankind, and to keep it, supernaturally, and perfectly, in all major languages, throughout all the intervening centuries of time, with universal acceptance. E.g., It is a matter of history how Sir Walter Scott, when dying, asked his friend Lockhart to read to him; and Lockhart, looking at the twenty thousand volumes of Scott’s costly library, said, *“What book would you like?”* *“Need you ask? Said Sir Walter; there is but one.”* And so Lockhart read to him from that one Book – the Bible – the words of eternal life. The so-called “great statesman,” of early America, Daniel Webster, said: *“If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury all our glory in profound obscurity!”*

Much like Alexis de Tocqueville, the Frenchman who toured America and wrote a book about his findings in 1842. He said he found America was a great nation already, and so he sought for the explanation. He said America was not great because of her great wealth of natural resources from coast to coast, nor because of her armed might, nor because of a number of other factors, which he ruled out. Then he said he went into America’s churches, where from every pulpit there thundered righteousness and the fear of God. Then de Tocqueville said he had discovered the reason for America’s greatness; to-wit: *“America was great (in 1842), because America was good. If America ceases to be good, America will cease to be great.”* The title of his book is, "Democracy in America."

Maybe WBC should volunteer as a ghost writer and write a sequel to that famous book. Call it, "The Worm In The American Apple." Make a couple of good points; to wit: Point #1: Those hundreds of thousands of American pulpits that once thundered righteousness and the fear of God, are now occupied by demon-possessed practitioners of the black arts, and by Satan himself; to wit:

"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."
(2 Cor. 11: 13-15)

You were right, Alexis; you hit the nail right on the head, when you said if America ceased to be good, she would cease to be great. America has long since ceased to be good, but has become utterly evil – (i.e., like, spitting-in-the-face-of-God evil), and has thereby incurred the condign wrath of an angry God; and, Point #2: The amazing stubbornness of the impenitent Americans is matched only by the Jews of the Babylonian captivity who were determined to flee to Egypt rather than obey the Lord God who commanded them to remain in Babylon. Once again, Jeremiah was dispatched by the Court of Heaven to lay the Word of God upon the evil Jews – recalcitrant as always – to-wit:

"The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the Jews which dwell in the land of Egypt, which dwell at Migdol, and at Tahpanhes, and at Noph, and in the country of Pathros, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Ye have seen all the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, and upon all the cities of Judah; and, behold, this day they are a desolation, and no man dwelleth therein, Because of their wickedness which they have committed to provoke me to anger, in that they went to burn incense, and to serve other gods, whom they knew not, neither they, ye, nor your fathers. Howbeit I sent unto you all my servants the prophets, rising early and sending them, saying, Oh, do not this abominable thing that I hate. But they hearkened not, nor inclined their ear to turn from their wickedness, to burn no incense unto other gods. Wherefore my fury and mine anger was poured forth, and was kindled in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem; and they are wasted and desolate, as at this day. Therefore now thus saith the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye this great evil against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, out of Judah, to leave you none to remain; In that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?"
(Jer. 44:1-8)

Certain doom awaited the Jews – those stubborn Jews – that defied the Lord God by fleeing with their families to sojourn in Egypt to escape the Babylonians. In fact, the Lord went so far as to warn the remnant of hot-headed Jews that if they went to dwell in Egypt, He (the Lord) would make it His business to destroy them all by the sword, famine and pestilence; to wit:

"For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence."(Jer. 44:13)

Throughout the lengthy ordeal, it was Jeremiah's duty to faithfully deliver God's message to a hostile, Christ-rejecting world. Even so, it is with us.

I love you.

Amen.