

With less than twenty (20) years left in the life – the existence – of the kingdom of the Jews, Judah's last two kings spend their time trying to outdo more than four hundred (400) years of royal blasphemy and folly. Their names are Jehoiakim (reigned next to the eleven last years); and Zedekiah (reigned during the eleven last years). We should be very attentive to the remarkable events characterizing the reigns of these two evil tyrants who made the lives of God's holy prophets – (including Jeremiah) – miserable. They lived during the last days of the last days, days constituting the run-up to Israel's doom; just as we are living and preaching to the whole world during the last days of the last days constituting the run-up to the final doom of the Adamic Race. Remember, Beloved, that after Jehoiakim had been king only four years, he so outraged the Lord God by such acts of desecration and blasphemy in burning the Word of God in fire on the hearth, as to call down the wrath of God in the most blood-chilling fashion; to wit:

“Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah; They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah my brother! or, Ah sister! They shall not lament for him, saying, Ah lord! or, Ah his glory! HE SHALL BE BURIED WITH THE BURIAL OF AN ASS, DRAWN AND CAST FORTH BEYOND THE GATES OF JERUSALEM.”(Jer. 22:18,19)

I submit that this instance of divine punishment was fully justified by king Jehoiakim's blatant blasphemy; and that such instances of blasphemy and God's punishment therefore abound in today's run-up to Doom; to wit: *“And they went in to the king into the court, but they laid up the roll in the chamber of Elishama the scribe, and told all the words in the ears of the king. So the king sent Jehudi to fetch the roll; and he took it out of Elishama the scribe's chamber. And Jehudi read it in the ears of the king, and in the ears of all the princes which stood beside the king. Now the king sat in the winterhouse in the ninth month; and there was a fire on the hearth burning before him. And it came to pass, that when Jehudi had read three or four leaves, he cut it with the penknife, and cast it into the fire that was on the hearth, until all the roll was consumed in the fire that was on the hearth.”* Jer. 36:20-23.

Beloved, does not such cheap, tacky conduct in high places – surpassing mere profanity and blasphemy – abound today? It has ceased to be breathtaking, it is so commonplace. And the various responses by those who were then and there around the king to witness his utter desecration of the word of God should be studied carefully; to wit:

“Yet they were not afraid, nor rent their garments, neither the king nor any of his servants that heard all these words. Nevertheless Elnathan and Delaiah and Gemariah had made intercession to the king that he would not burn the roll; BUT HE WOULD NOT HEAR THEM.”(Jer. 36:24,25)

“In those days Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came up, and Jehoiakim became his servant three years; and then he turned and rebelled against him. And the Lord sent against him bands of the Chaldees, and bands of the Syrians, and bands of the Moabites, and bands of the children of Ammon, and sent them against Judah to destroy it, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by his servants the prophets. Surely at the commandment of the Lord came this upon Judah, to remove them out of his sight, for the sins of Mannaseh, according to all that he did.”(2 Kgs. 24:1-3)

Beloved, do you faintly hear the crackling of the fire on the evil king Jehoiakim's hearth in his fancy winterhouse, as he blasphemously burned the Word of God? Here's worse and more of it; to wit: *“Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon”* (2 Chron. 36:6), from which he never returned; to wit:

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“Weep ye not for the dead, neither bemoan him; but weep sore for him that goeth away; for he shall return no more, nor see his native country. For thus saith the Lord touching Shallum the son of Josiah king of Judah, which reigned instead of Josiah his father, which went forth out of this place; He shall not return thither any more. But he shall die in the place whither they have led him captive, and shall see this land no more. ...Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah ...they shall not lament for him ...He shall be buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.” Jer. 22:10-19; all pursuant to the warnings and threats from God in condign vengeance and retaliation for Jehoiakim’s affront to the Godhead in arrogantly burning the written Word of God.

The Fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians (c. 600 B.C.) was a singularly horrendous historic event. It presaged the End of the World. The historic episodes that occurred just before the Babylonian Captivity may be studied in Bible light, which things, in a special way, are divinely calculated to keep God’s Elect in a perpetual state of supernatural HOPE; 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. Now the God of patience and consolation (i.e., comfort) 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)

The way it works is, that God’s Elect are divinely enabled to discern the signs of the times, and to rightly divide the word of truth; and are thereby brought to the realization that we are living and preaching in the last of the last days. This, in turn, brings strong patience or longsuffering and comfort (called the patience and comfort generated by the Scriptures), the end product to which is precious, life-reviving, HOPE – ***“FOR WE ARE SAVED BY HOPE; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.” Rom. 8:24,25.***

Beloved, in connection with the Bible doctrine of the gift of supernatural HOPE, which is bestowed upon each of God’s Elect along with all the other gifts (or donations, such as faith, love, wisdom, etc.; called the donatives of Christ from **Eph. 4:8** – ***“Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men”*** [i.e., HIS men, God’s Elect]). I say, in connection with the Bible doctrine of SUPERNATURAL HOPE, as the word HOPE appears and is used twice in the beautiful passage of Scripture cited at – **Heb. 6:17-20** – I say, I have never seen that beautiful 4-verse passage of Scripture expounded to my complete satisfaction. You may find my exegesis to be helpful. Here is the full King James text, for ready reference; to wit:

“Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the HOPE set before us; Which HOPE we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”(Heb. 6:17-20)

“Wherein God, willing” – (the sovereign will of God is the main-spring of all things whatsoever; or, put another way, All things whatsoever arise from and depend upon the Divine appointment - **Eph. 1:11** - In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; But I perceive that somewhat more is intended here than that God wills all things; Yea, I will rejoice over them to do them good, and I will plant them in this land assuredly with my whole heart and with my whole soul; **Jer. 32:41**; a determinate act and purpose of the will of God is here intended; as when the

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eternal destiny of mankind is involved; What if God, willing to show his wrath; that is, purposing or determining to do so; **Rom. 9:22**; Wherefore, "**God willing**" here, is, God in sovereign grace, and from especial love, freely purposing and joyfully determining within Himself to do the thing expressed, all to the relief and comfort of all God's Elect) – "**more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath.**" The apostle has been pointing to our spiritual father, Abraham, as to how we, too, must through faith and patience show the same diligence to the full assurance of HOPE unto the end; remember, we are saved by HOPE; and that such HOPE must be supernatural HOPE, and as such must be fed and nourished regularly and supernaturally by the manifest promises and oaths of God, first made and revealed - again, supernaturally - to Abraham. To wit:

***"And the angel of the Lord called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, And said, By myself have I sworn, saith the Lord, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son; That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gates of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice."*(Gen. 22:15-18)**

For when God made promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no greater, He swore by Himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. **Heb. 6:13-17**. That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon THE HOPE SET BEFORE US. Immutable means not subject to change; that cannot be altered. The two immutable things are 1) God's Promise of salvation to us; and, 2) God's Oath of salvation to us.

Beloved, it would be blasphemy had not our Father authorized it. It is all divine and supernatural. The blessed HOPE was miraculously "**SET BEFORE US.**" The First Big Miracle. "**Which HOPE WE HAVE.**" The Second Big Miracle. Involving as it does the depraved human nature at enmity against God, without hope and without God in the world. Two verses from two favored hymns tells the story better than I ever could; to wit: "*Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night; thine eye diffused a quickning ray; I woke; the dungeon blazed with light; my chains fell off; my heart was free; I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.*" No. 2: "*Why was I made to hear His voice, and enter while there's room? when others make a wretched choice, and rather starve than come. 'Twas the same love that spread the feast, that sweetly forced us in; else we would still refuse to taste, and perish in our sin.*"

Beloved. We are hastening on to the Time of the Restitution of All Things. And this sermon is dedicated to the proposition that these days that we find ourselves living in are probably the absolute last of the absolute last days. And, further, that if we carefully and prayerfully study the Bible and current events, we will find helpful instances of people and episodes that adumbrate and presage those glorious final days that lie just ahead for us. At the outset I said that we should be very attentive to the remarkable events which did characterize the wicked reigns of the last two evil Jewish tyrants – (Jehoiakim and Zedekiah) – who made the lives of God's holy prophets – (including Jeremiah) – miserable.

Jehoiakim burned the Book of God, page by page, and ordered the ignominious arrest on several occasions of Jeremiah, FOR DOING NOTHING BUT PREACHING GOD'S WORD ! (Beloved. I pause here to say that in my opinion there is no greater sin or crime than arresting, or participating in any way in arresting, anyone, for preaching God's Word. Period. What do God, the holy angels, the spirits of just men made perfect, and God's Elect think?).

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Jehoiakim was twenty and five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem; and he did that which was evil IN THE SIGHT OF THE LORD HIS GOD. Against him came up Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and bound him in fetters, to carry him to Babylon, where, ignominiously, he died, and was *“buried with the burial of an ass, drawn and cast forth beyond the gates of Jerusalem.”* Jer. 22:19.

“Now the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations which he did, AND THAT WHICH WAS FOUND IN HIM, behold, they are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah.” (2 Chron. 36:8)

The last king of Judah, Zedekiah, wound up the affairs of the Kingdom of the Jews. He was 21 years old when he began to reign, and reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. *“He did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord, AND HUMBLED NOT HIMSELF BEFORE JEREMIAH THE PROPHET SPEAKING FROM THE MOUTH OF THE LORD.”* 2 Chron. 36:12.

“But neither he, nor his servants, nor the people of the land, did hearken unto the words of the Lord, which he spake by the prophet Jeremiah.” (Jer. 37:2)

Beloved. Just look about you. I submit that no man ever lived who did more evil in the sight of God – all things considered – than Barack Obama. And, he certainly has not humbled himself before WBC speaking from the mouth of the Lord. Yo! Mr. President! God is talking to you. Do you think He is kidding? And I cannot say it better than the Holy Ghost; to wit: But neither Obama, nor his servants (3.5 mil. Fed. bureaucrats), nor the people of the land (USA) did hearken unto the words of the Lord, which He spake by Westboro Baptist Church. By the foregoing criteria, we may be closer to the End of the World now than Zedekiah and his gang of thugs were when he presided over the utter destruction of the kingdom of the Jews in 585 BC.

“Moreover all the chief of the priests, and the people, transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of the Lord which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place; But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy. Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldees, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; he gave them all into his hand. And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.”
(2 Chron. 36:14-19)

See here the tender care of God for his servant Jeremiah in the midst of carnage; to wit: *“So Jeremiah abode in the court of the prison until the day that Jerusalem was taken; and he was there when Jerusalem was taken. Now Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon gave charge concerning Jeremiah to Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard, saying, Take him, and look well to him, and do him no harm; but do unto him, even as he shall say unto thee.”* Jer. 38:28; and 39:11,12.

Now see the end of wicked king Zedekiah who kept Jeremiah in jail and the stocks and the ‘cabins most of his 11-year reign, despite Jeremiah’s kindness to him; to wit: *“Then the king of Babylon”* – (by contrast) – *“slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes; also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. Moreover he put out Zedekiah’s eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon. And the Chaldeans burned the king’s house, and the houses of the people, with fire, and brake down the walls of Jerusalem.”* Jer. 39:6-8.

I love you. Amen.