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Commentary — From the Margins *Before Abraham Was*

The Jews answered him, “Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?” Jesus answered, “I do not have a demon, but I honor my Father, and you dishonor me. Yet I do not seek my own glory; there is One who seeks it, and he is the judge. *Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word* [τὸν ἐμὸν λόγον], *he will never see death.*” The Jews said to him, “Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, as did the prophets, yet you say, ‘If anyone keeps my word, he will never taste death.’ Are you greater than our father Abraham, who died? And the prophets died! Who do you make yourself out to be?” Jesus answered, “If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ But you have not known him. I know him. If I were to say that I do not know him, I would be a liar like you, but I do know him and I keep his word. *Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see my day. He saw it and was glad.*” So the Jews said to him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and have you seen Abraham?” Jesus said to them, “*Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.*” So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and went out of the temple. (John 8:48–59 emphasis added)

Did Jesus tell the truth when He said, *If anyone keeps my word* [message], *he will never see death*? Were the objections to what Jesus said valid? What about Jesus saying, “‘Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word [*the word of me—τὸν λόγον μου*] and believes Him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life’” (John 5:24)? Is it not “appointed for man to die once, and after that come judgment” (Heb 9:27)? Are there human beings who will never die, and men who never come under judgment? According to Jesus, hearing His word, His message, the compilation of His spoken words will cause the person to pass from death to life and never die, never come under judgment.

The biblical *literalist* is immediately in trouble: the person who says that he or she believes exactly what the Bible says and that anyone who adds-to or takes away from the literal words of Scripture is condemned to hell must necessarily believe that beloved family members who have died never really heard Jesus’

words or believed those words. This biblical *literalist*, when face with his or her own death, must of necessity question whether he or she kept Jesus' word. For if the *literalist* had kept Jesus' word, why is the *literalist* facing death?

Somewhere along the way, the biblical *literalist* will be compelled to say that a passage cannot be taken literally but is figurative: usually the *literalist* will claim that it is the [non-existent] immortal soul that never sees death and passes from death to life, with "death" being separation from God ... death is for most biblical *literalists* not "death" or the absence-of-life, but eternal life either on earth or in hell. But life anywhere is not *death*, the literal absence of life. Rather, life is "life," an absolute, and death is "death," also an absolute, with "death" excluding the possibility of being "alive" in any location.

Biblical *literalists* lie to themselves; for the Bible cannot be read literally and be believed—the Bible was not written to be taken literally, a statement intended to provoke the ire of *literalists*. For the Bible is not either a book about general philosophical principles or a scientific manual. It is an abbreviated history of Israel, with this historical but metaphorical record serving as visible and verifiable linguistic icons for a spiritual creation for which no human words exist. The Bible is an extended parable in which the glorified Christ Jesus teaches Christians as the man Jesus of Nazareth taught mocking Pharisees when he told them a Cynic after-death-fortune-reversal tale, with Him in the position of being their master and they positioned as Greek boys (see Luke 16:19–31) ... endtime Christians will not listen to Jesus but will be offended by Him. Rather, they will listen to "Christian" theologians as the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem in the days of Jeremiah listened to false prophets:

Then the word of the Lord came to Jeremiah: "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Go and say to the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, Will you not receive instruction and listen to my words? declares the Lord. The command that Jonadab the son of Rechab gave to his sons, to drink no wine, has been kept, and they drink none to this day, for they have obeyed their father's command. I have spoken to you persistently, but you have not listened to me. I have sent to you all my servants the prophets, sending them persistently, saying, 'Turn now every one of you from his evil way, and amend your deeds, and do not go after other gods to serve them, and then you shall dwell in the land that I gave to you and your fathers.' But you did not incline your ear or listen to me. The sons of Jonadab the son of Rechab have kept the command that their father gave them, but this people has not obeyed me. Therefore, thus says the Lord, the God of hosts, the God of Israel: Behold, I am bringing upon Judah and all the inhabitants of Jerusalem all the disaster that I have pronounced against them, because I have spoken to them and they have not listened, I have called to them and they have not answered." (Jer 35:12–17)

Christ Jesus left with His disciples His word, a message uttered in words that came from the Father, and Christians have not listened to the Lord; therefore, the

Most High God will strip away the garment of grace and deliver the Church, collectively and individually, into the hand of the Adversary for the destruction of the flesh. But nothing can separate Christians from the love of Christ so when the Son of Man is revealed [disrobed] (Luke 17:30), every Christian will be filled-with and empowered-by the breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ]. Every Christian will be liberated from indwelling sin and death. Every Christian will “live” if the Christian doesn’t return to sin; i.e., to manifested unbelief. And this filling-with and empowering-by the breath of God is the Second Passover liberation of Israel.

But the biblical *literalist* cannot find a second Passover liberation of Israel mentioned in Scripture. Nor can this same *literalist* find Christians being called Israel—

Paul writes, “For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. But a Jew is one inwardly, and circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter. His praise is not from man but from God” (Rom 2:28–29).

Is a Jew of Israel? If no one is a Jew who is merely circumcised in the flesh, then no one within rabbinical Judaism is a Jew as far as Paul is concerned. If Christians are circumcised of heart when by faith they keep the commandments, their hearts having been cleansed by faith, then circumcised-of-heart Christians are Jews, and by extension, are Israel. So the biblical *literalist* either doesn’t know or understand what Paul wrote, or the *literalist* is intentionally dishonest with Scripture. Motives aren’t always apparent; so giving *literalists* the benefit of doubt, it is reasonable to conclude that biblical *literalists* don’t understand Scripture and should not to be trusted to teach the principles of God to anyone. Rather, they are in need of being taught the basic concept underlying biblical exegesis, that of natural Israel forming the left hand enantiomer of the Christian Church. Ancient Israel visibly reveals as the Church’s mirror image those things that the Church does in secret.

Was the Lord justified in bringing destruction upon first the house of Israel, then upon the House of Judah and the people of Jerusalem?

Therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: Because you have not obeyed my words, behold, I will send for all the tribes of the north, declares the Lord, and for Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, my servant, and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all these surrounding nations. I will devote them to destruction, and make them a horror, a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. Moreover, I will banish from them the voice of mirth and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the grinding of the millstones and the light of the lamp. This whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. Then after seventy years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Chaldeans, for their iniquity, declares the Lord, making the land an everlasting waste. I will bring upon that land all the words that I have uttered against it, everything written

in this book, which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. For many nations and great kings shall make slaves even of them, and I will recompense them according to their deeds and the work of their hands.” (Jer 25:8–14)

Will the Lord be justified in delivering the Christian Church into the hand of the Adversary, the spiritual king of Babylon (Isa 14:4)? Have Christians walked as Jesus walked, thereby being a fractal image of Christ Jesus?

If Christians truly walked as Jesus walked, no Christian would keep Sunday as the Sabbath—

John writes,

My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. *And by this we know that we have come to know him, if we keep his commandments. Whoever says “I know him” but does not keep his commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps his word, in him truly the love of God is perfected. By this we may know that we are in him: whoever says he abides in him ought to walk in the same way in which he walked.* (1 John 2:1–6 emphasis added)

Paul expresses the concept that those who say they are of Christ ought to walk as Jesus walked when he says,

“I urge you, then, be imitators of me” (1 Cor 4:16);

“Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” (1 Cor 11:1);

“Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children” (Eph 5:1);

“Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us” (Phil 3:17);

“And you became imitators of us and of the Lord” (1 Thess 1:6);

“For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea” (1 Thess 2:14);

“Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God. Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (Heb 13:7–8);

“Neither against the law of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor against Caesar have I [Paul] committed any offense” (Acts 25:8).

No Christian can walk as Jesus walked or imitate Paul as he imitated Jesus and attempt to bodily enter into God’s presence on the first day of the week—and that is what Sabbath observance represents, bodily entering into God’s rest, with *God’s rest* being a euphemistic expression for God’s presence.

Every Sunday-observing Christian—without exception—fails in his or her first responsibility: to walk as Jesus walked. Therefore, how can Christians within the greater Church say that they are not like the inhabitants of Jerusalem were?

Consider the word that came to Jeremiah from the Lord:

A conspiracy exists among the men of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem. They have turned back to the iniquities of their forefathers, who refused to hear my words. They have gone after other gods to serve them. The house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken my covenant that I made with their fathers. Therefore, *thus says the Lord, Behold, I am bringing disaster upon them that they cannot escape. Though they cry to me, I will not listen to them.* Then the cities of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem will go and cry to the gods to whom they make offerings, but they cannot save them in the time of their trouble. For *your gods have become as many as your cities, O Judah, and as many as the streets of Jerusalem are the altars you have set up to shame, altars to make offerings to Baal.* / *Therefore do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer on their behalf, for I will not listen when they call to me in the time of their trouble. What right has my beloved in my house, when she has done many vile deeds? Can even sacrificial flesh avert your doom? Can you then exult? The Lord once called you ‘a green olive tree, beautiful with good fruit.’ But with the roar of a great tempest he will set fire to it, and its branches will be consumed. The Lord of hosts, who planted you, has decreed disaster against you, because of the evil that the house of Israel and the house of Judah have done, provoking me to anger by making offerings to Baal.* (11:9–17 emphasis added)

Instead of Israel today having as many gods as Judah had cities, Christians worship as many demons as there are Christian sects and denominations ... Paul wrote, “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one spirit” (1 Cor 12:12–13). And if the Body of Christ is one body, not many differing bodies that are unable to get along with each other because each teaches its own false gospel, then greater Christendom does not and cannot represent this one body.

In John’s vision, after a third part of humankind is killed a second time, leaving only one of three people alive three and a half years into the Affliction and Endurance, the survivors “did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons” (Rev 9:20) ... Christians will not willingly or even unwillingly cease worshiping demons: they are so convinced of the *rightness* of their idolatry that they cannot even entertain the idea that God intends them harm and not good when they are liberated from indwelling sin and death.

Hear the word that came to Jeremiah, “Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. Do not trust in these deceptive words: ‘This is the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord’” (7:3–4) ... Paul writes, “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys

God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and you are that temple” (1 Cor 3:16–17).

Christians should not trust in their *Christianness* to save them: in claiming to be the temple of God, Christians trust deceptive words. Most Christians sincerely believe that God will accept them just the way they are—and this when they continue to openly thumb their noses at Christ Jesus by assembling on the day after the Sabbath [τῇ μιᾷ τῶν σαββάτων].

Consider what the Lord told the people of Jerusalem:

For if you truly amend your ways and your deeds, if you truly execute justice one with another, if you do not oppress the sojourner, the fatherless, or the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and *if you do not go after other gods to your own harm*, then I will let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your fathers forever. / Behold, you trust in deceptive words to no avail. Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, “We are delivered!”—only to go on doing all these abominations? Has this house, which is called by my name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, I myself have seen it, declares the Lord. Go now to my place that was in Shiloh, where I made my name dwell at first, and see what I did to it because of the evil of my people Israel. And now, because you have done all these things, declares the Lord, and when I spoke to you persistently you did not listen, and when I called you, you did not answer, therefore I will do to the house that is called by my name, and in which you trust, and to the place that I gave to you and to your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. And I will cast you out of my sight, as I cast out all your kinsmen, all the offspring of Ephraim. (Jer 7:8–15)

Consider now how Jeremiah was told to respond to the people:

As for you, do not pray for this people, or lift up a cry or prayer for them, and do not intercede with me, for I will not hear you. Do you not see what they are doing in the cities of Judah and in the streets of Jerusalem? The children gather wood, the fathers kindle fire, and the women knead dough, to make cakes for the queen of heaven. And they pour out drink offerings to other gods, to provoke me to anger. Is it I whom they provoke? declares the Lord. Is it not themselves, to their own shame? Therefore thus says the Lord God: behold, my anger and my wrath will be poured out on this place, upon man and beast, upon the trees of the field and the fruit of the ground; it will burn and not be quenched. (7:16–20 emphasis added)

Cakes baked for the queen of heaven are hot-cross buns—

The one whom the Lord called to speak His words to the people of Jerusalem (i.e., Jeremiah) is repeatedly commanded not to pray for the people. But when

King Zedekiah sent men to the prophet to *inquire of the Lord* for the people because the king of Babylon was making war against Jerusalem, Jeremiah said to them,

Thus you shall say to Zedekiah, “Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: Behold, I will turn back the weapons of war that are in your hands and with which you are fighting against the king of Babylon and against the Chaldeans who are besieging you outside the walls. And I will bring them together into the midst of this city. I myself will fight against you with outstretched hand and strong arm, in anger and in fury and in great wrath. And I will strike down the inhabitants of this city, both man and beast. They shall die of a great pestilence. Afterward, declares the Lord, I will give Zedekiah king of Judah and his servants and the people in this city who survive the pestilence, sword, and famine into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of their enemies, into the hand of those who seek their lives. He shall strike them down with the edge of the sword. He shall not pity them or spare them or have compassion.” (21:4–7)

What is it that the biblical *literalist* truly cannot understand? Is it that the Lord changes not, but is the same today as He was in the days of the kings of Israel and Judah? The writer of Hebrews says, “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever” (13:8). Does the *literalist* not understand that he or she cannot presume to teach in Christ’s name when he or she has not been called to teach? Does the *literalist* not understand that ancient Israel’s transgression of the commandments that caused the Lord to bring the king of Babylon against Jerusalem has become, for those circumcised of heart, simply unbelief? Does the *literalist* not understand that unbelief is insidious, masking itself within the reasonable expectation that every Christian prove all things and hold to those things that are true—when the Christian uses him or herself as the standard for proving what is true, the person has set him or herself up to be deceived.

Again turning to Jeremiah and the word of knowledge he received:

The sin of Judah is written with a pen of iron; with a point of diamond it is engraved on the tablet of their heart, and on the horns of their altars, while their children remember their altars and their Asherim, beside every green tree and on the high hills, on the mountains in the open country. Your wealth and all your treasures I will give for spoil as the price of your high places for sin throughout all your territory. You shall loosen your hand from your heritage that I gave to you, and I will make you serve your enemies in a land that you do not know, for in my anger a fire is kindled that shall burn forever. ... / The heart is deceitful above all things, / and desperately sick; / who can understand it? (17:1–4, 9)

The sins of Christians, Sabbatarian and those of the greater Church, have been written on their hearts where the commandments of God should have been

written. These Christians have either believed Moses or they have not believed Moses, but before 2002, none of them had heard the words of Jesus. Therefore, they have served—and they continue to serve—the present prince of this world, the spiritual king of Babylon, or they have died spiritually; for Jeremiah was commanded to tell the people of Jerusalem,

And to this people you shall say: “Thus says the Lord: Behold, *I set before you the way of life and the way of death. He who stays in this city shall die by the sword, by famine, and by pestilence, but he who goes out and surrenders to the Chaldeans who are besieging you shall live and shall have his life as a prize of war.* For I have set my face against this city for harm and not for good, declares the Lord: it shall be given into the hand of the king of Babylon, and he shall burn it with fire.” (21:8–10 emphasis added)

On the plains of Moab, Moses spoke the words of the Lord to the children of Israel:

See, I have set before you today life and good, death and evil. *If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you today, by loving the Lord your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his rules, then you shall live and multiply, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land that you are entering to take possession of it. But if your heart turns away, and you will not hear, but are drawn away to worship other gods and serve them, I declare to you today, that you shall surely perish. You shall not live long in the land that you are going over the Jordan to enter and possess. I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse. Therefore choose life, that you and your offspring may live, loving the Lord your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him, for he is your life and length of days, that you may dwell in the land that the Lord swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them.*” (Deut 30:15–20 emphasis added)

The nation of Israel numbered in the census of the second year perished in the wilderness because of unbelief. Entering into God’s rest, the geographical representation of the Sabbath and of heaven, had been offered to the nation that perished when the twelve spies returned from the Promised Land, but the nation that perished chose to believe the ten rather than the two [Joshua and Caleb]. And Christians, following their Second Passover liberation, will choose to believe the ten (before three are uprooted) leading Christian theologians who support the man of perdition. Therefore, the nation that perished was denied another chance to enter into God’s rest: it was the children of Israel that entered the Promised Land after they had life and death placed before them and they chose life; they chose to keep the commandments and walk in the ways of the Lord; they chose to walk as the Lord walked, the reasonable expectation of every Christian.

But when these children of Israel continued to worship idols—and had continued worshiping idols from the time Israel entered into God’s rest—the Lord again set life or death before them, with Jeremiah this time mediating the terms: if the people of Jerusalem surrendered to the king of Babylon and became his slaves, they would live. But if the people stayed in Jerusalem, they would perish because of their unbelief. ... By becoming slaves to the king of Babylon, the people of Jerusalem would have their unbelief, their sin, “covered” by their servitude to Nebuchadnezzar, the physical type [left hand enantiomer] of the spiritual king of Babylon, the old servant, Satan the devil.

For the people of Israel, physical slavery is a representation of spiritual lifelessness: for the Israelite not offered a second breath of life, physical slavery represents a dead inner self. For the Christian, the reality of ancient Israel’s servitude to first Pharaoh then to Nebuchadnezzar is loss of the Holy Spirit [πνεῦμα ἅγιον]—

The choice placed before the Christian Church, because of its lawlessness in the 1st-Century, was either death in the lake of fire, or loss of the breath of God and indwelling eternal life. Those “Christians” who choose to “surrender” to the prince of this world and become his slaves lived while those *Christians* who choose to stay and fight against God perished physically and will perish spiritually in the lake of fire when Christ Jesus returns. And the Christian Church with which the world is familiar descends from those Christians who surrendered to the spiritual king of Babylon, thereby losing indwelling spiritual life.

At the end of the last Elijah’s first attempt to return life to the dead Body of Christ, Sabbatarian Christians were again offered the same choice: return to being the slaves of the prince of this world or perish physically and spiritually. A very few Sabbatarian Christians [a *trace*] choose a third option, one not offered to Zedekiah: righteousness.

At the end of the last Elijah’s second attempt to return life to the Church, disciples in the Sabbatarian churches of God were again offered the same choice: return to being slaves of the prince of the power of the air (i.e., return to Sunday worship) or perish spiritually by staying to fight against God. Sixty percent of the former Worldwide Church of God returned to being slaves ...

The spiritual carnage that followed Armstrong’s 1962 rejection of revelation didn’t, at first, look like the destruction of earthly Jerusalem by the king of Babylon. Rather, many people were coming to God, believing Moses who wrote of Jesus, and believing Herbert W. Armstrong who seemed to understand Scripture. A hundred thousand plus disciples became fully “invested” in the *truth* as Armstrong presented it, with none realizing that neither Armstrong nor they had heard the words of Jesus. None understood spiritual birth ... when Nicodemus came by night to Jesus to learn, Jesus said,

“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus said to him, “How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born?” Jesus answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and spirit [πνεῦματος], he cannot enter the

kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit [πνεύματος] is spirit [πνεῦμα]. Do not marvel that I said to you, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind [πνεῦμα] blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the spirit [πνεύματος].” / Nicodemus said to him, “How can these things be?” Jesus answered him, “*Are you the teacher of Israel and yet you do not understand these things?* Truly, truly, I say to you, we speak of what we know, and bear witness to what we have seen, but you do not receive our testimony. *If I have told you earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you heavenly things?*” (John 3:3–12 emphasis added)

Understanding spiritual birth—understanding that when a person receives the divine breath of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], a second breath of life, the “breath” that give life to the formerly dead inner self, the Father raises the person from the dead (John 5:21)—is an earthly thing, not a spiritual thing. And when a person doesn’t understand that the breath of God is not a personage within a triune deity, the person understands less than Nicodemus understood and in no way should be teaching anyone. When a person denies that a person has been born of God as a son of God when the person receives the spirit of God [πνεῦμα θεοῦ], the person understands no more than Nicodemus understood and this person should not attempt to teach anyone ... Herbert W. Armstrong was such a person: by Jesus’ criteria, Armstrong was unqualified as a teacher of Israel. Armstrong certainly wasn’t God’s essential endtime man.

How many Christians have, without understanding spiritual birth, set themselves up as teachers of Israel over the past 1,900 years? How about over the past 50 years? How many today understand spiritual birth, again an earthly thing according to Jesus?

The biblical *literalist* always ends up doing more harm than good, but then he or she is not alone: the Sabbatarian church is absolutely filled with disciples attempting to teach others who themselves are in need of being taught.

Paul writes,

How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed?
And how are they to believe in Him of whom they have never heard?
And how are they to hear without someone preaching?
And how are they to preach unless they are sent?
As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!”
But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?”
So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. (Rom 10:14–17)

Not everyone can accept that *faith comes from hearing, and hearing through word* [ῥήματος — no article] *of Christ*, with very few hearing Christ Jesus.

As ancient Israel was condemned to servitude in Babylon for seventy years, the Christian Church was, following the death of the Apostle John, condemned to

being spiritually lifeless until the fullness of the age brought humanity to the seven endtime years of tribulation. Those seven years are enough time for the Christian Church to rebel against God and the third part of humanity (from Zech 13:9) to be saved. So what is God doing today—right now? He isn't calling many, if any. He isn't preparing a gathering of the saints. He is waiting, watching, His face hidden from Christians and non-Christians (see Deut 32:20 for a referent text). He knows how the present reign of the prince of this world will end, and He has revealed that end to His servants, the prophets ... in the days of Jeremiah, there was one prophet in Jerusalem, and one among the captives in the land of the Chaldeans.

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