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THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ISRAEL AND JUDAH
PROMISE AND PROPHECY TO THE NORTHERN KINGDOM, ISRAEL
(Hosea 1)

A Bible Study by Dr. Gene Scott

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VF 519

Hosea 1:1. "The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea, the son of Beerli, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel."

Why is it spelled out like that? Because there were two kingdoms: Judah and Israel. God knew it, and they have remained distinct all the way to the last days when, as we saw last Sunday in Ezekiel 37, God said to Ezekiel, "Take two sticks. On one stick write House of Judah; on the other stick write House of Israel. Put them together as one stick, and when they ask you what does this mean, tell them Judah and Israel shall become one again, with one king of the seed of David." And that hasn't happened yet.

Right after that the 38th and 39th chapters of Ezekiel open where the Biblical geography defines a land presently occupied by the nation of Russia, and a people that will come down as a flood over the new state Israel, formed out of many people, which is after the joining together of the sticks. That is why I have said the Lebanon crisis is not going to bring Russia down, there won't be any holocaust, and no nuclear weapons are going to go off, and that's the way it is.

Two houses. In this chapter God clearly recognizes the distinction between these two. "The word of the Lord that came unto Hosea, the son of Beerli, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah."

He prophesied through four successive kings that ruled in Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel. There's just one there. He prophesied while both kingdoms existed.

Verse 2: "The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea. And the Lord said to Hosea, Go, take unto thee a wife of whoredoms."

Fundamentalists don't preach this chapter. They can't say the word. It's right there in the "inerrant" Word of God.

Now, again, this is necessary foundation for those that haven't heard it to enable me to preach on through the book of Revelation. You cannot understand last day events if you do not understand this distinction between the house of Judah and the house of Israel; that the promise of the birthright, which contains the basket of promises to Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, went to the sons of Joseph; and all that went to Judah was the crown, the sceptre, and the rod of government. The birthright promise is of multitudes like the stars and the sand, a commonwealth or community of nations, multiple kings existing at the same time, pushing the nations to the end of the world, possessing the gates of their enemies, never defeated in major war -- that's the promise to the house of Israel. It never was given to Judah.

The Jews did not come into existence Biblically until these two houses were separated and the house of Israel joined with Assyria in a united war against Judah. In Deuteronomy, for the first time there is a reference to the citizens of the kingdom of Judah being called Jews, while under

assault from Israel and Assyria. The kingdom of Judah included Benjamin and Levi, but because of the dominant promises to Judah, it was named the house of Judah. Abraham wasn't a Jew; neither Isaac, nor Jacob, nor even Judah were viewed as Jews. They were Hebrews, as the Israelites were Hebrews. Not until the kingdom separated at the death of Solomon in the year of Rehoboam's ascension did Jews come into existence under Jeroboam, a ruler of the house of Joseph.

When Jacob adopted the two sons of Joseph (who were half Egyptian going out the gate), he said, "They shall bear my name." He elevated Ephraim above Manassah, gave the birthright to Ephraim, said Manassah would become a great nation, and that's why Samaria, the house of Israel, and Ephraim became synonymous terms. As Judah became the dominant figure in the southern kingdom because of the promise of the sceptre and the rod, the right to rule, Ephraim became the dominant figure in the house of Israel; and because it was said of Joseph's sons that they would bear Jacob's name (whose name became Israel), they became known as the house of Israel.

The "children of Israel" is generic. It includes both Judah and Israel. The "house of Israel," the "kingdom of Israel," "Samaria," or "Ephraim," is a distinct kingdom. Hosea was called as a prophet to Israel.

Many mysteries in scripture are resolved when you understand these two kingdoms. Why do we have I and II Kings and I and II Chronicles? I and II Kings was written from the northern kingdom, the ten tribes' perspective. That's why you find in I and II Kings so much attention to Elijah and Elisha, which you won't find in I and II Chronicles of the Old Testament. It's like Canada and the United States. We love to refer to ourselves as Americans. Well, Canadians are Americans; Mexico is in the Americas; North, Central, and South America are all Americans. Canada, as the northern kingdom, so to speak, would write the history of North America a little differently than the United States would write it or Mexico would write it.

Well, I and II Kings is writing the history of the period from the perspective of the house of Israel, the northern kingdom. Remember where Elijah's haunts were? Gilead, Jezreel. Jezreel is the valley around the south of the Sea of Galilee. Gilead is that mountain escarpment that peeks out and looks down on Haifa Bay in the north of Palestine, even north of Samaria, which is the hills to the south. Then you go into the hills of Judea and you come to the southern part of the kingdom. Elijah and Elisha's haunts were in the northern kingdom. If you read I and II Chronicles, there is relatively very little said, by comparison, about one of the greatest prophets that ever lived, Elijah.

You will go to church for years and, except for a verse taken out of context, seldom hear any preaching on Amos, on Hosea, on Zephaniah, on Obadiah, on Jonah (the whale gets more attention than anything else). These are prophets assigned specifically to prophesy to this northern kingdom. But the church world has succumbed to the temptation to reduce the children of Israel and all the promises to this little band of Judah, some 55,000+ who came back after Babylon, who have become the dispersed throughout the world (as their kingdom was destroyed by the Romans), and which can be numbered in less than five million in the world today. Therefore the church traditionally has caused all the promises of God to flow to this point in time where Ezra and Nehemiah and the Jews come back from Babylon. They succumb to the Hellenization of the Seleucid kings and Judas leads the Maccabean rebellion and sets up the independent Jewish state at the time of the formation of the Pharisees or separatists. He appoints a ruler who is the antecedent of Herod in the days of Jesus. That little kingdom is destroyed in 70 A.D. by Rome's armies and they are scattered through the world. And the church tries to take the promises of God and put them there.

The facts are that the promises in Genesis 48 and 49 and in the Chronicles are given to Joseph's sons; only two things retained by Judah, the sceptre (kingship), and the right to make the laws. That's all. That's all they got. And when the bondage in Babylon came about, it was primarily the citizens of Jerusalem that were carried into bondage. After 70 years of bondage there were approximately 650,000 in Babylon when Cyrus gave his decree and only about 55,000 responded and came back to Jerusalem. They were followed by another few thousand that came later with Nehemiah and in a second wave under Ezra, and that small band that returned from Babylon, as I already said, became the Jewish nation under the Maccabees that, in 70 A.D., after the death of Christ, was destroyed and dispersed throughout the whole world.

More than a hundred years before that bondage in Babylon, Assyria -- the kingdom based in Nineveh that Jonah prophesied against, that the book of Obadiah is written against -- that kingdom came in 721 B.C. and conquered the whole northern kingdom, including Samaria, the capital that had been formed under the sixth king, Omri (pronounced like Khoumeni with a harsh aspirant). The Assyrians called the people "Bet" (Assyrian for "son of") "Omri," or Kumri, and carried them away into Assyria, resettling them south of the Caspian Sea between Assyria and the Medes, who are the modern Iranians.

In addition, these same Assyrians, for another hundred years after 721, fought and conquered all of Judea until only the city of Jerusalem, under Hezekiah and later under Zedekiah, was under siege. In one of their campaigns, the Assyrians carried into captivity more than 200,000 Jews out of Judah, in addition to the millions they took out of the northern kingdom, Israel. We have a population, by various estimates, of somewhere between three and five million that are carried away from this ten-tribe kingdom (plus those outside of Jerusalem conquered in Judea) and settled as a new buffer state between Iran and Assyria. That, as we have been teaching, is the body of people that carry the promises of Abraham through Ephraim and Manassah, the sons of Joseph, except for the right to be king and to make the laws.

I am a historic churchman, always have been -- even my enemies can't quarrel with my Bible preaching. I know what the Bible says about Abraham's promises. I know there is one promise given to Abraham through Judah's seed (not seeds) of the blessing that will come to all nations through the greater son of David, which is Christ. But the national promises of population, power, community of nations, pushing the enemies to the ends of the earth, possessing the gates of their enemies, never being conquered -- those did not go to the Jew. Those promises went to this house of Israel.

They are carried into bondage east of Assyria. When Professor Rawlinson hung his scaffolding down on the Behistun rock and began to translate that giant equivalent of the Rosetta stone in Middle Eastern languages, he discovered what these people were being called. They were being called "Saki," "Sakasuni," "sons of Isaac." They were being called "Scuthians," "Scythians," from the word that is absolutely Hebrew for Feast of Succoth or Feast of Scuths, Feast of Booths, Feast of the Tabernacles. The names were based upon the requirement that they move into "scuths," temporary structures, to commemorate God's care of them while they lived in booths or "succoths" or "scuths" during their wandering for 40 years in the wilderness before coming into the Promised Land.

Darius makes it clear that within 50 years -- which is 50 years before Judah is carried to Babylon -- they became mercenaries, working with the Medes. They were planted on that border to be a buffer between Assyria and the Medes or the Iranians. Instead, they joined as mercenaries with the Medes and broke the back of the Assyrian kingdom. Then the Medes couldn't take advantage of it because Cyrus had welded the wandering

Persian tribes by the Gulf into a unity and was now pressing northward on the southern edge of the Medes. By conquering them, he then united them to become the Medo-Persian Empire, of which the Persian was the latest and rose up and became stronger, because the Medes were strong before the Persians. But then the Persians get strong and conquer the Medes. Meanwhile, because of the breakdown of the Assyrian Empire, and with the Persians busy with the Medes at the southern extremities of the river valley, the Chaldeans moved into the vacuum and formed the Babylonian Empire more southerly down the river. So that whole Anatolian and Armenian plateau became a running ground for the house of Israel that had turned into marauding bands in the area, Scythians or Scuths, living in their booths, moving everything wherever they went.

The last reference to them in respected literature is in II Esdras, that used to be a part of the King James before the Puritans kicked it out. There are a lot of things the Puritans have kicked out. I'm not against everything the Puritans are against. How many of you know that?

How many of you didn't know until you heard it from me that the Apocryphal books of Maccabees were in the King James until the Puritans took them out? Interestingly enough, if you've got a Bible like mine, you go to Psalm 83, and they didn't clean up all the references in the margin. They should have been more careful. They slowly cleaned these things up as time went on, but in the central margin they point out a quotation that they are cross-referencing with the Maccabees. I was reading my old torn-up Bible this morning, and it was so funny to have them reference in the center column, where all the cross-references are, the II Maccabees. The taking away of the Apocryphal books is relatively recent, through the Puritan Roundhead Rebellion in England, and then finally it was taken out of the Bibles by the American and British Bible Societies. But this Bible I have with me now, by the time they printed it, some Puritan must have got to them in the Baptist headquarters and they took it out.

The last reference, as I was saying, is in II Maccabees, to this people of the house of Israel. It says that on invitation to go back to Palestine they took council among themselves and decided not to, and with much noise and thunderings because of the multitude, the figure being in the millions -- not 50,000 -- they passed through the headwaters of the Euphrates River. Do you know where the headwaters of the Euphrates River are? The Caucasus Mountains. They passed through the headwaters of the Euphrates River, through the Caucasus Mountains, and disappear from history.

Now, we're talking about a short time after 721 B.C. They disappear. They're gone. They carry with themselves the promise of God. The promise carriers didn't go to Babylon, except for those with the promise of king and lawmaking. Disappearing from history, moving to the eastern border of Assyria and then through the Caucasus Mountains goes this basket that carries the promises of God. They become lost -- and the church has bought that for years.

As I was saying, I'm the only historic churchman with the guts to say what every historic churchman should say. If God lost this basket of promises, He can't save face with this little band that came back from Babylon. They don't qualify. That's why Ingersoll mocked Christianity; that's why Tom Paine, on analysis, lost his faith. He was smart enough and intelligent enough to see that what God promised through Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob simply has not been fulfilled in the Jew, the church, or in Christ. Therefore, be honest. If the promises of God required fulfillment through Judah, the Jew, and the church and Christ, God is a liar and we might as well move out of this building.

Why does the historic churchman steer clear of it? Well, number one, it takes a lot of historic knowledge and a lot of hard work. You can't play golf on Monday and borrow somebody else's sermon and deal with the

subject. It takes some hard study in archaeology, etymology, the course of languages, the course of peoples, the course of culture. That's hard work. And, number two, because the devil knows God's Word and his fundamental purpose in life is to thwart it -- which is why he wants "Forever O Lord Thy Word Is Settled In Heaven" to crumble quickly. And I have to say this: How can a church that believes in God's Word stand itself if it doesn't exhaust every avenue to see that this church stands? That's why we're doing what we're doing. Satan has always been in the business of making God's Word of no effect. If he can't stop it by direct opposition, he will try to becloud it or twist it or caricature it in any way he can to turn people off on it.

So the time of God's decree of negative judgment, promised in Leviticus to His people if they disobeyed Him, had to pass. God had to keep these people hidden by His own decree during this 2520-year time period (which is a subject we will yet have to preach on). God had to keep them hidden from the world, hidden from themselves in their own understanding of who they were, like a prince who has been raised by someone else and doesn't know his inheritance. God, having those purposes by His own decree of judgment, still must keep His promise to these people when that time of judgment ran; and Satan knew exactly when it ran. He knew that at that time God would allow the elements to be uncovered that could reveal who these people were in their lostness, and he made sure he had his "nuts" on the scene to so caricature this valuable truth which illustrates God's power to keep His Word, that the whole church world, that ought to be proclaiming His Word, would turn off on it. And that's exactly what he did with the British Israelite cult theory.

Whether the Pentecostals know it or not, that's exactly what happened when the revival swept the world at the turn of the century from springs like Azusa Street here in Los Angeles, the Bible School in Topeka, Kansas, services held by a one-eyed preacher down in Houston, Texas. I know their history -- and the excesses. Because of a prophecy of a "latter rain" outpouring, Satan made sure he found enough nuts from Chile to Los Angeles, from Stockholm to China, that would take the reality of a final day outpouring of God's Spirit and twist it into a nutty stream, until even now the General Council of the Assemblies of God is accepted only perfunctorily into the ecclesiastical community, simply because they're so big. Secretly, the Baptists behind the scenes still can't stand them. I don't care what the Assemblies may think of themselves -- "We be the greatest" -- and God has blessed them greatly. That is to be admired. They still have not achieved full statehood in the opinion, secretly expressed, of the broad evangelical Christian community. They are just too big to fight with anymore. (We're getting that way, too.)

I am a very young man. These gray hairs are mileage. But I can remember when the Baptists preached messages that talking in tongues was from the devil. (Some of them still believe that -- they just don't preach it anymore. They've got too many of them in their congregation.) The excesses should have been corrected and it's about time that somebody tells all of them what Paul said. He would rather speak one word understood in the congregation than a thousand words in the unknown tongue, and the modern charismatics need to read and reread the corrective passages in Corinthians.

But the point I'm making is that everybody recognizes, with all the excesses, there was at the core a genuine working of God's Spirit that has produced its own contribution to the revitalization of the modern church. But Satan almost aborted it with the nuts. And he still has a few nuts around trying to do it.

Likewise, when the 1800s rolled on the scene and the time span of hiddenness had passed, God's Word required an unveiling of these people to get the times ready for the working out of those events that are the last day events. And there was on the scene Richard Brothers and others who

formed the British Israelite cult. This nut gave himself a Hebrew name, told the king of England to turn his throne over to him at a certain date, and got quite properly committed to an insane asylum. The British Israelite cult developed a superiority like the "identity people" of today and returned to legalism, which totally defeats the message of grace and is totally alien to the gospel which we preach. But because they grabbed the concept of the ancient history of the British kingdom, which had its basis in truth, now no respected churchman dares discuss it.

It's like in the days when God would come and do with the preacher what Paul had done to him. Paul said, "I thank my God I speak in tongues more than you all." Well, he had to tell them. If he were doing it all the time openly, he wouldn't have had to tell them. But it was something private in his life. They were putting him down for not doing it, while they displayed foolishly; and finally he said, "I do it more than you all." My spirit prays when I pray that way and I'm communicating to God.

There was a day when, if God came down and stood in front of a preacher in the person or manifestation of an angel, and gave him the same experience the disciples had on the day of Pentecost, they'd have to keep it secret or they'd be kicked out of their denomination.

Likewise, for too long this truth of the lost tribes has been the domain of the nuts and it's time someone with brains and credentials and historic churchmanship rescues it from the nut package. And that's what I'm going to do. These people have never been lost, can't be lost, or God's a liar, because they carried the promises of God.

All that was introduction -- now the text: "The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea."

You'd think that people would get this message, because God got pretty dramatic in it. First word. Can you see somebody graduating from BIOLA, called to preach the gospel, waiting to hear a word from the Lord? "Go out to Sunset Strip." God can get away with what we can't get away with. And this was the first word Hosea got from God. He didn't even get warmed up. "The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea." Go marry a whore and have kids by her.

Verse 3: "So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim; which conceived, and bare him a son.

"And the Lord said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel."

Do you notice the wording in that fourth verse? "Will cause to cease the house of Israel?" No. "The kingdom of the house of Israel."

When the house of Israel and the house of Judah split, Jeroboam was a ruler in the household of Solomon of the house of Joseph. He went out one day all dressed up in new clothes and a prophet met him by the way and tore his clothes off of him. I want to emphasize this, because it isn't God's fault the truth has been lost. He picked some of the "risque-est" and most dramatic ways to portray this truth, until no one should have forgotten it. That's one of the most stunning performances by a prophet in scripture. Here's this young Jeroboam going out for a walk, all dressed up in new clothes. A prophet meets him. Rip, rip, rip, rip, rip! Rips his clothes off, leaves him standing there naked as a jaybird! Tears his clothes into parts, hands back ten and keeps two. Says, "This is what I'm going to do to the kingdom of Solomon and the kingdom of David, and I'm going to give you ten and leave one with Rehoboam, and you're going to be ruler over the others." Here this kid stands naked, holding these ten pieces of clothes with that prophecy.

By the way, considering the fact that the devil thinks we've got three weeks to go, let's put it in context. This job God's got here with this

church isn't nearly as complicated as the one He outlined for Himself with Jeroboam standing there naked as a jaybird and ten pieces of clothes in his hand, and the prophet saying, "You're going to rule over ten-twelfths of David's kingdom, naked little boy!"

"What have I got to do it with?"

God has an ability to do what no one else can do. Jeroboam wouldn't be my candidate for a king. Against Solomon with his 700 wives and a kingdom that stretches from the Euphrates to Egypt? And here I am naked and ten little rags? God's got a pretty easy task the next three weeks, I think. He's got us and all of this.

Sure enough, Jeroboam, a descendant of Ephraim, becomes the ruler, and God says to him, I will make your kingdom and establish it like David's kingdom if you'll do thus and so. He didn't do thus and so and now God is no longer bound to protect the kingdom, but He is bound by the basket of scriptures to protect the people and carry them forward. So the prophecy is not a destruction of the house of Israel, but rather will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel; because the kingship had been promised to Judah, and once Jeroboam broke the covenants of the special promise given to him, God no longer had any honor at stake in preserving the kingdom. But all the promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, passed to the sons of Joseph, He had to keep for the people.

He said, "Go have a kid with this whore. Call his name Jezreel. I'll cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel."

What does Jezreel mean? The names are the prophecy. Jezreel means "scattered." What God is saying is, "I must find a graphic way to let these people know what their idolatry really represents." Their idolatry represents one of the most despicable things in human relationships that can occur. There is nothing that will hurt as deeply as the breakdown of the marriage relationship through unfaithfulness. God, in trying to get His point across, is going to stoop dramatically and, like a drama on the stage of history, make His prophet play the part of God and a prostitute the part of the house of Israel, in order that they might see through understanding eyes and felt emotions how grave is the sin of their unfaithfulness to the God that led them to this land. He will stoop to this kind of dramatic portrayal.

So Hosea, ordered to be Godlike, goes and marries this prostitute, has a kid, names that kid Jezreel, which means "scattered." Scattered -- because I and Israel, our descendants, are going to be typified by the name of this son. They are going to be scattered, and the kingdom will cease.

But, lest you think this is to all the children of Israel, he says:

Verse 6: "And she conceived again, and bare a daughter. And God said unto him, Call her name Lo-ruhamah; for I will no more have mercy upon the house of Israel; but I will utterly take them away.

"But I will have mercy upon the house of Judah..." (they are not one and the same) "...and will save them by the Lord their God, and will not save them by the bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, by horses, nor by horsemen." (Which He is going to do in their history).

This verse makes clear that the prophecy that is flowing from this typified union between God and His people as a marriage is a lesson in drama to the house of Israel, not to the house of Judah. He separates the house of Judah and says, "I will have mercy on them." This message is to typify the destiny of those that are carriers of the promise. They are to be scattered, and the second child makes it clear that their characteristic will be, "not having God's mercy."

Therefore you don't look for this people in a record that we have throughout the rest of the book, of God delivering power under Ezra and Nehemiah and the promises of God of mercy to these people. Rather you look for them to have the characteristic of being so cut off in their performance that you won't see God doing merciful acts for them. There will be no record to which we look and get inspiration of faith because God is giving them merciful acts in times of trouble. They are scattered and not the recipients of mercy.

Verse 8: "...She conceived and bare a son.

"Then said God, Call his name Lo-ammi: for ye are not my people."

"Ruhamah" means "I will have mercy." "Lo" in front of it reverses it -- "will not have mercy." "Ammi" means "my people." "Lo-ammi," "not my people."

The characteristic being portrayed in this drama is that God will scatter the descendants of this marriage between God and Israel because she is a whore, prostituting her faith and faithfulness to God in idol worship, which has gone on since Jeroboam's day.

Second, not only will they be scattered, they will be characterized as "not recipients of mercy," and "they will not be known as my people," God says. That's why you never look for them practicing the Sabbath; you never look for them wearing a beanie and going to synagogues. They will not be recognizable by their characteristics, per se, as God's people. Yet, though scattered, not recipients of mercy, not God's people, verse 10 says:

"The number of the children of Israel shall be as the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured nor numbered...."

Well, where is there a people of that size? That's why I have said, if God's Word is true and this prophecy concerning these so-called lost tribes is true, then you've got to, by inductive reasoning, look for a population group that is only analogous to the Slavs, to the Chinese, to the black races of Africa, or to the Celts. The very requirement that in this place they are scattered, not receiving God's mercy and not known as God's people, yet the number shall be as the sand of the sea, means that we've got a vast population group somewhere in the world that is this scattered people, "not having mercy" as the trait that characterizes them, and not known as God's people. Otherwise, this verse of scripture is a lie.

Furthermore:

"And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there it shall be said unto them, Ye are the sons of the living God."

"Lo-ammi" -- where they've been scattered, not recipient of mercy, not known as God's people, numbering a vast multitude, in that place where they've been scattered to, having these qualities, it shall be said of them -- "Ye are the sons of the living God."

It is a matter of historic fact and archaeological discovery that at the exact same time zone, at the exact same time and place that Ezra says these lost tribes went through the Caucasus Mountains to come out in the area of the southern steppes of Russia north of the Black Sea, that is the exact place that the Celts appear out of nowhere. Coming across the Thracian peninsula, north of the Black Sea, Herodotus, the father of history, the Greek historian, encounters those who call themselves "Keltoi," or, in his words, the Celts. Their most important

characteristic: They live in "scuths." They carry all their belongings with them and they are nomads. They move from place to place, exactly as Darius described the Saki and the Scythians. The Celts appear exactly in the time zone, exactly in the place where three to five million of these people are last seen going. Now, as I've said, there was either the damndest collision, a war that archaeology and history has not yet identified, or the Celts are but these lost tribes coming out with a new name. Remember, it took us a little over 2500 years to discover that the sons of Israel disappeared from history and came out on the eastern side of Assyria as the sons of Omri.

Then the Celts in tribal wave after tribal wave moved across northern Europe; so the British Israelite cult has a piece of truth that they have bent into error and formed a cult. But why should we "throw the baby out with the bath water"?

Barry Fell traced this vast Celtic flow of nations to 500 B.C. in the United States with their ogham writing. Ogham writing of the Irish is the only language that coordinates exactly with the Celtic alphabet, which is the only Grecian alphabet that reads from right to left, like the Hebrews read. If the Celts, then Ephraim, clustered in the British Isles (which can be traced, and I will trace), and Manassah, the great nation, is the child that is spoken of in Isaiah (which Ephraim, the mother, the commonwealth, loses, and after that one goes over the wall other sons seek freedom and self-determination); then the United States is in scripture and God's prophetic flow did not leave out the British Empire. The British Empire is the greatest empire geographically and in longevity that ever existed in this world, and the British Empire and the United States, instead of not being a part of prophecy, have been there all along as the house of Israel, part of the prophecy that flows to the last days, making their own contributions to the 144,000 in the book of Revelation, and, as a stick, must be found and joined with Judah in the last days before the end comes.

But, more than that, the most mysterious passage in the Bible is Isaiah 18. Except for my message, I'll guarantee you you never heard one in your whole life on the 18th chapter of the book of Isaiah. You read commentaries. They'll come to the 18th chapter and find a reason to skip it. The most mysterious chapter ever known.

"Woe to the land shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia:

"That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters."

You take that passage and go other places in the Bible, the very same word translated "Woe" is translated "Ho." "Ho" is what it should read -- not "woe." "Ho to the land" -- a heralding of it -- "shadowing with wings, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: That sendeth ambassadors by sea, even in vessels of bulrushes." You could have just as easily have translated it "vessels of blotters," because the word in the original is "that which sucks up water." How do steam engines work? They suck up water and turn it into power. This prophet didn't even know what it was he was seeing. This nation couldn't be identified because it leapfrogs over the 2520 years to that powerful nation that is none other than the United States, that God is going to call His "present" in the last days. Read the last verses of the chapter and you'll find they are called His "present" in the last days. This great nation, the United States, God will look to in the last days, and the herald of Isaiah 18 is "Ho" to this great land.

Isaiah 18 is my sermon next Sunday. And that's why I think we're going to stay here in this, the Number One city to be in this land. Ho! Ho! We're going to be around a long time.