

11815U

GLENLOCK BIBLE SCHOOL - 2002

EZEKIEL THE MAN OF SIGN

Speaker: Bro. John Martin

Study 4: The Man of Sign

Reading: Ezekiel 4 & 5:1-4

Thank you brother Russell and good evening brethren and sisters and young people.

I don't know about you, but just watching that sports' day today, I thought it was absolutely thrilling. You know, the children there today entering into that, with the spirit they did, was really great, b&s, and you know, we may come here and study the Word as adults, and be thrilled with the Word, but you know, it's a wonderful thing that we can create an atmosphere where our children can play together and laugh together and grow up in this atmosphere, to be solidified with those friendships they have in the truth. You know, you cannot under estimate, b&s, the affect of other parents' children upon your children. I mean, Vern and I have had 7 children, God be thanked that they're all in the truth, there's no way in the wide world that we could have got them there on our own. That's not pseudo humility it's a fact of life! and it's your children (that is our generation) it's your children that helped our children, and I was absolutely tickled pink to see those children out there today entering into the day with the spirit that they did, I think it was one of the best days I've seen here at Glenlock; but that's just my impression!

The other thing, did you notice? when brother David Hallwen and myself were in that tug of war, we won! We decided as old fellows that it was enough, and we were replaced by two young strong men, and they lost. I hope you noticed that!

At any rate, we've been talking about Ezekiel, and now, b&s, we're going to come to another stage that must have been very, very perplexing and trying for Ezekiel. Because you see, Yahweh was a great pains, wasn't He? to tell him that he has a personal responsibility; it's almost as if God is saying to Ezekiel through that section that we were dealing with this morning, 'look Ezekiel, it's secondary to Me, and to the people, what your attitude is! I want to make sure that your attitude is right'. He kept saying to him, 'Son of man you do this', Son of man you do that! but above all else, 'Son of man you must be a faithful watchman; and if you're not a faithful watchman, I'm going to require the blood of these people from you; you'll answer for it if these people are not warned'. Now Yahweh's not finished with him! there's going to be a big change, b&s, in the tone, and Yahweh knows it!

Now you look at this! In chapter 3 verse 22, now you read this carefully, 'And the hand of Yahweh was there upon me' (where was he?) he was there sitting where they sat at Tel Abib, and the hand of Yahweh comes upon him and said to him, '**Arise**, go forth into the plain, I want to talk with you there'. Now that's most unusual because every time that Ezekiel moves in these chapters, it is always in the Spirit chariot lifting him up; and he says, 'oh, this is the one I saw at the river Chebar, oh, this is the one I saw at the river Chebar'. Now he's got to go out into that plain, and he has **to go out on his own**. Yahweh said, 'get up Ezekiel from where you are, I want to meet you out there on the plain; go out there'. Even the word 'plain' is interesting, interesting in this respect, b&s, that you know, it's the word in the Hebrew 'biqah' (1237) and you've probably heard of the Biqah valley in Syria (I don't believe that's the valley he's talking about here) but it's interesting because this is where they get this name from, the Biqah valley in Syria. If you look at a map of the land you'll see at the top, these mountains on a slant on the top of the map above Lebanon, and you'll see that the Lebanese range and the Anti-Lebanese range run for over a 100 kilometres in a straight line. 8,000 or 9,000 feet above sea level and this vast plain runs between them, and they call it the Bekaa Valley because 'biqah' literally means 'between two mountain ranges' (1237), and I've just mentioned it as a point of interest as far as that word is concerned. But that's where he had to go!

Yahweh says, 'I will speak to you there!' and Ezekiel would think, 'what an unusual thing! but if you turn up to Hosea 2, this is what God was going to do, you see, you've got further information for Ezekiel. In Hosea 2, a different context entirely but the same sentiments here where the prophet speaking of wayward Israel as symbolized here by Gomer, the wife of Hosea, he says in chapter 2 verse 14, 'Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak (to her heart) as the margin says'. So after all the instructions that he's been given, the Spirit of Yahweh comes upon him, and He says, 'I want you to come out here and I want to talk with you, as if He hasn't done a lot of talking to him'.

Now look what He was to tell him, b&s, when he came out into that plain. You come back to Ezekiel 3, so he gets out there, you see, and what does he find? He says in verse 23, 'I arose and went forth into the valley or plain; and behold, the glory of Yahweh **stood there**; it was already there and he recognizes it, this is that glory which I saw by the river of Chebar: and I fell on my face'. So he fell on his face again, but he goes out there and he finds Yahweh standing waiting for him! Now you never read that before, it's always that that Spirit is on the move! the wheels going or the wings or whatever, and Ezekiel's picked up and taken here and there, but now he's got to make his own way up there and lo and behold, there's the glory of Yahweh out of the chariot, standing waiting for him. 'I want to talk with you' and this is what he's told! (I'll just put it altogether and then I'll explain it to you).

'Ezekiel, you know what I've said about you being a watchman and the responsibility of that, and what would happen if you don't warn the people? I want you to go home, lock

yourself in your house; I'm going to strike you dumb and tie you up with one arm loose, and dare you not to warn the people!' Can you imagine the impact upon Ezekiel? I've got to go home, lock myself in the house, I'm going to lose the power of speech, Yahweh's going to tie me up with one arm loose, and if I don't warn the people, their blood is going to be upon my head. B&S, never, ever complain again! I'm guilty of this, I really felt bad about this, when I read that I thought, 'you know, never again should I ever lift my voice in complaint to my God to say, I've got all this work to do in the truth, why does this happen to me? why have I got sicknesses and why can't I sleep at night? when God knows that I've got all this work to do! why oh why? and I keep saying, why! Fancy being told, you don't warn those people and you'll pay for it; now get home and lock yourself in the house, I'm going to strike you dumb, tie you up with one arm loose. You would wonder what on earth struck you? Now you read it with me!

Verse 24, 'Then the Spirit entered into me, and set me upon my feet, and spake with me, and said unto me, Go, shut thyself within thine house. Verse 26, 'And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, verse 25 says, 'they shall put bands upon thee', b&s, the RSV leaves out the 'they' because it's not there and the original says, 'I WILL DO IT! So Yahweh told him, 'I will put cords upon you, I will place them upon you' and in chapter 4 verse 8, b&s, He says, 'I will lay bands upon you', it was God that tied him up. But in verse 7 it says, 'Therefore thou shalt set thy face toward the siege of Jerusalem, and thine arm shall be uncovered' (I'll give you one arm to do it.) So he had only one arm, b&s, to carry out that commission, which if he didn't it would cost him his life. Now why on earth, would God do that? You think, 'what on earth is He on about?' and then when he gets the reason, it's almost exactly the opposite of what he got told before! you listen to what the reason is.

The reason is given, b&s, in verse 26, He says, I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, and thou shalt **not be to them**, a reprovor. For they are **rebellious** toward Me'. Ezekiel would shake his head and wonder what on earth is going on here! I'm told to warn these people, now I'm told I'm going to be dumb because you are not going to be a reprovor of them. You think, well, what do I do? But Yahweh said this, 'You'll be able to open your mouth, verse 27, when I tell you to open your mouth'. You know, b&s, if we all could learn that lesson, we might get into the kingdom of God. It is not our prerogative to run around cursing and denouncing people; but if people get in the way of the Word of God it's their own fault. It's like Michael the archangel before the Satan in Zechariah, who Peter said didn't use railing words of accusation, but just stood there and said, 'let Yahweh rebuke thee'. So you see the point? So Ezekiel, b&s, God was not going to let Ezekiel's feelings run away with him; and it was going to be a question, b&s, that I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and whom I don't want to have mercy on, I will not have mercy upon them. Ezekiel, I will say to you and you will tell them when I say to speak, other than that, you're not going to say a word. You go home and lock yourself up, you're not going to be able to speak; I'm going to tie you up and leave you as one heap'. Now that's why He took him out into the wilderness to tell him that. That would have absolutely floored me! I would have been floored, goodness me, how on earth am I going to do this? But that's how He left him. Now that's

absolutely incredible, that is incredible!

You know, his tongue was going to cleave to the roof of his mouth. I want you to turn to Psalm 137, b&s, and this is about Ezekiel's people, 'By the rivers of Babylon (that's where he was) there we sat down (and I sat where they sat) yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing Yahweh's song in a strange land? If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy.' And I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth, as he sat among them by the waters of Babylon, and they expressed, b&s, all those platitudes; and Ezekiel is the son of man, and he represented them, and the fact that his tongue was stuck to the roof of his mouth, was a standing testimony that despite the platitudes, **they are going to forget Jerusalem**. That's going to be brought home to Ezekiel in a most tragic way.

But, b&s, it begs the question as to why Yahweh would not let him be a reprover of those people? not only because of the fact, I believe, that it was going to be Yahweh's condemnation and not man's. You turn to Isaiah 6, you see, it had got to this point in history, and Isaiah 6 in the context of the seraphim said this, and it had come to this, b&s, Verse 9 of Isaiah 6 the prophet is told, 'Go and tell this people (go and tell them what?) Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, **lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their heart, and convert, and I will heal them**'. Lest they convert, that's how far it had gotten, b&s, there's where Yahweh's patience had run out with His people! Go and tell them, they can hear all day and all night, but they won't understand! Go and tell them, they can search with a magnifying glass from Genesis to Malachi, they will never see! Go and tell them that! I've had enough! and those words of Isaiah 6 are quoted in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Romans 11, and Paul's last words to the Jews in Rome, and when many believed and some believed not, Acts says, Paul spoke one word, the last word, 'go and tell this people'. And when God had exhausted His patience with them, b&s, do what they will, they'd never understand and never see! That's the condition the people had got to in the days of Ezekiel, not the good figs, but all the rest of them, b&s. There was that little group of good figs which God acknowledged when they went into captivity, 10,000 of them but that didn't exclude people like Daniel, and Jeremiah who were not among that group, but apart from the few individuals and that little group of good figs, God had got to the point with them, b&s, that He said, 'I don't want you to do that! Yet Ezekiel, in a sense you must warn them, but they will know that there's been a prophet among them'. You know, he'd been battling to understand that, b&s, and we would be battling to understand it, it would almost be opposite to what he was told, in a sense, but it's not! So Yahweh brings him out in the desert to tell him that, that he might **truly understand it**.

You know, b&s, he was going to be dumb till his wife died; now I want you to think about this, in Ezekiel 24 we're told that! In Ezekiel 24 verse 24, God said to Israel, 'Thus Ezekiel is unto you as a sign; (he's a man of sign) according to all that he hath done so shall ye do: and when this cometh, ye shall **know that I'm the Lord Yahweh**'. Then He turns to Ezekiel, 'Also, thou son of man, shall it not be in the day when I take from them their strength, the joy of their glory, and **the desire of their eyes**, and that whereupon they set their minds, their sons and their daughters,, That he that escapeth in that day shall be caused to hear it with their ears. In that day shall thy mouth be opened to him which is escaped, and thou shalt speak, and be no more dumb: and thou shalt be a sign unto them; and they shall know that I am Yahweh'. So he was told, b&s, that he would lose his wife, because God said, 'I will profane the sanctuary, I will take away the desire of their eyes, and you know, he was to lose the desire of his eyes. He was going to lose it, b&s, you see, he was told back in verse 15, 'The word of Yahweh came unto me, saying, Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke: yet thou shalt neither mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down'. **Don't cry, don't make any mourning for the dead, don't do anything**; the signs that you're in mourning, don't do this, don't do that! 'So I spake unto the people in the morning: and at even my wife died;' B&S, that man was 37 years of age, and you might say, 'well, that wasn't all that bad; perhaps, you know, she was just another woman! b&s, Almighty God's testimony was, from heaven above, that He can see men's hearts, He knows how they think, He knows their loves, and He said concerning that woman, 'that she constituted the **desire of his eyes**', and there's no mention of any other woman! Only woman in the world for whom he had eyes! there was nobody, no other woman but that one! and God says, He's going to take her just like that! in a stroke, in a flash, and he was 37 years of age. God said, 'don't you dare mourn'. He's going to get his voice back when she dies and when Jerusalem fell. He lost his voice, now she died that morning, but he was going to get his voice back, after Jerusalem fell, so he's dumb for those years, those few years before Jerusalem fell, because he's already lost his wife and can't do anything; he can't mourn, he can't go and cry, he can't go and show anyone he's sorry, and the man's heart is breaking, it's just smashed to pieces.

No one else in the world for whom he had eyes, and God says, 'Son of man, I'm going to tell you, when Jerusalem falls, these people will not mourn; and they said they would! If we forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, and when it happened, b&s, there's no sign of mourning among them. Why? what was the difference? Verse 22, 'You shall do as I have done; ye shall not cover your lips, nor eat the bread of men. You tires shall be upon your heads, and your shoes upon your feet: you won't have any signs of mourning, ye shall not weep', why? 'But ye shall pine away for your iniquities, and **mourn one towards another**. Jerusalem fell and all they felt sorry for was **each other**. They never gave Jerusalem a second thought, they went around, b&s, with their lips to tell everybody it was their chief joy. Oh I know, that Psalm 137, there would have been many faithful people who sang that song and meant it, they would be among the good figs and the few exceptions that were there. But this crowd that are running around and saying to Ezekiel, because God had left that crowd in Jerusalem, they're God's people and made a big show about that, that when the city

fell they were so full of self pity, that all that they could do was to mourn for each other and never gave Jerusalem a second thought! Poor old Ezekiel has to go around with all his tears bottled up inside, and he had loved her with all his heart, and he can't let go because that's what those people have got to see. And here's a man with a genuine sorrow, buried deep inside of him, b&s, carrying that weight, staggering around with it, day after day, to show those people that all that they are concerned about is **self pity**, and will mourn for each other because they're pining away in their iniquity. I tell you, b&s, there are powerful lessons in this story. We're all full of self pity, we're all human, this is so human and we don't think, b&s, of the tragedies and the heartaches that we cause, grieving the Holy Spirit of our heavenly Father, as Peter says. We don't think of that! Full of self pity! you know, b&s, we should live above that, we really should have our hearts where we're not; we were going to be, and forget self pity which we envelope ourselves with, and commiserate with each other, and not a thought sometimes for all the harm, for all the heartache, and for all the evil that we may spread by our attitude. Never a thought for that! and poor old Ezekiel, walking around tragically with a broken heart, trying to show that he's really not concerned about his wife's death, because God says I want to show these people, that as you will do it, they will do it; and he's not doing it because he wants to do it, b&s, he's doing it because he wants to show what a blatant lot of hypocrites they really are!

When the city fell, it was too late! his mouth was opened and it was too late, b&s, for him to tell any one about the coming tragedy. 'I've got to warn them plenty of times by the Word of Yahweh', but Ezekiel's own personal warning couldn't be given until it was too late! Chapter 33 verse 21, 'And it came to pass in the 12th year of our captivity, in the 10th month, in the 5th day of the month, that one that had escaped out of Jerusalem came unto me, saying, the city is smitten. Now the hand of Yahweh was upon me in the evening, before he that was escaped came; and had opened my mouth, until he came to me in the morning; and my mouth was opened, and I was no more dumb. Verse 24, 'Son of man, they that inhabit those wastes of the land of Israel speak, saying, Abraham was one, and he inherited the land: but we are many; the land is given us for an inheritance'. That's what they were saying and right up to the time they were saying that, and he couldn't tell them what he thought, and when the boy came and said, the city is burnt; he opened his mouth and said, I knew that was going to happen! They thought because they were many and Abraham was only one, that they had a better inheritance than Abraham; and the city is ashes!

Now, b&s, I want now to present to you, one of the most startling contrasts in the bible. I want to show you the outcome of it! which is very much related to this! I want you to think about two priests: now concentrate (it's no good having overheads at Glenlock because not all the audience could see them, so you've got to concentrate). I want you to think about Ezekiel the priest and I want you to think about John the Baptist's father, Zacharias the priest. Okay? one of them is here and the other is in Luke. Now Ezekiel was struck dumb because the people wouldn't believe him (now you need to follow this very carefully, it's fascinating). Zacharias was struck dumb because he wouldn't believe Gabriel. Okay? Ezekiel couldn't tell the people of the coming destruction of Jerusalem,

and Zacharias couldn't tell the people the good tidings that Gabriel brought to him. Ezekiel was dumb until the city fell, and Zacharias was dumb until John the Baptist was born. Ezekiel made signs to the people and Zacharias had the people make signs to him. The contrast is 100%.

Now let me show you what happened when Zacharias got his voice back. Keep your hand in Ezekiel, and come with me to Luke 1, you will see, b&s, how far the example of Ezekiel penetrated, it's having an effect on us at this camp, you just watch this. So here we are in Luke 1, so when the boy was born and they wanted to have him named, and Zacharias couldn't speak, it says in verse 62, 'they made signs to his father (as Ezekiel had made signs to them). In verse 63, Zacharias asked for a writing table and wrote saying, 'his name **is John** (he didn't say his name would be John) because it was named before, wasn't it? and he now **acknowledged that God was right, and that grace had come into the world**. The great herald of the grace of God had come into the world, John, whose name means '**the grace of God**' (2491) and John the apostle tells us, 'we got grace for grace'. As John the Baptist proceeded the One who was to bring the grace of God to the whole world, and now Zacharias **can see clearly** what God was on about, and he believes, and he writes that his name is is John. Verse 64, 'And his mouth was opened immediately', and let me show you what came out of his mouth. Verse 67, 'And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying, Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for He hath visited and redeemed His people, And hath raised up (now notice this) **a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David**'. B&S, that's a quotation from Psalm 132 and Ezekiel 29 verse 21, have a look at what it says! Ezekiel 29 verse 21, 'In that day will I cause the horn of the house of Israel to bud forth (this is what he quoted) and I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them; and they shall know that I am Yahweh'.

His mouth was opened immediately and out came that verse, and the perfect contrast is now parallel! He's no longer an unbeliever! but it's one of the most incredible contrasts in the bible, deliberately written there for our learning! 'I will give thee the opening of the mouth in the midst of them' and out came that verse. Isn't that incredible? so you see, b&s, how the purpose of God works, what He does to people who believe and disbelieve, and how that perfect contrast could be overcome by a man who then overcame his unbelief, saw the point and went straight to that verse, because it said, 'I will give you the opening of the mouth in the midst of them', and he raised up a horn of salvation. Marvellous contrast and a wonderful thing to see the affect of Ezekiel upon the thinking of Zacharias, as we've seen the affect upon it here, as we learn about him in Glenlock.

So poor Ezekiel has one arm loose; we come back to him now, b&s, to see what he's going to do with that arm. He's got to warn the people, yes, he's got to do it in the Word of Yahweh, in the way that Yahweh wants it done. He's not going to be a reprover of them, b&s, Yahweh will do that and He'll do it in His own way and in His own terms. There'll be some people believing and there'll be some people that won't! and He'll be the determiner of that, and that's why Ezekiel's in the situation that he's in, dumb, in his house and tied up, and all he can do is lie there and try the best that he possibly can, to

carry out his commission. So God tells him how to do it! 'Son of man, chapter 4 verse 1, 'take a tile (that would be a clay tablet) 'lay it before thee' (and he puts it down but he's only got one arm) now you've got to draw on it (that's why he's got his arm free) 'and draw the city of Jerusalem' (evidently, b&s, Ezekiel had some skill in this respect because he has to draw something that they can easily see, because he can't talk). He was to inscribe on this clay tablet a picture of the city, with the battering rams coming up, and he'd draw the platforms that the soldier would build to scale the walls. Then he was told in verse 3, he had to get an iron pan (probably from his kitchen) and he had to put it between him and the city of Jerusalem, and he had to set his face against it; (so he'd press his face against it to show he had fierce determination to push that city over, and people are watching him do this) because he was trying to tell them that there was a man like him who had a voice and in Luke 19, when Jesus rode into that city, He said, 'I'll come and Jerusalem will be encompassed, they will lay siege against you, they will bring battering rams against you, and Jesus had a voice, and He was right there telling the people exactly what Ezekiel many years earlier was trying to show as a sign). Just as surely as the Babylonians overthrew that city, so the Romans would do likewise, and the language of the Lord in Luke 19, is almost the vocal counterpart to this sign. It was the vocal counterpart of what he is doing here! because both of them could see, that the purpose of God was, that the Babylonians and the Romans were the people of the Prince. They were the armies of heaven, b&s, sent to execute God's judgment upon those guilty people.

Now God said, 'You're to lie, verse 4, on your left side and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it; according to the number of the days that thou shalt lie upon it thou shalt bear their iniquity. For He said, 'I have laid upon thee the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, 390 days'. Then He was to give him another 40 days for Judah, in verse 6, making a total of 430 days on his side. B&S, this has always been a difficulty, fitting this into the history of Israel and I'm going to apologize because I haven't solved the problem! It's very difficult because there just wasn't 430 days, it didn't happen, for the time in which this all happened was less than 14 months, and it was all over. You had to take out the time that went before all this was told him, you had to take out the 7 days that he sat astonished with the elders, and at the most, it leaves you about 413 days; so he didn't have 430 days. It's pretty evident that it wasn't intended to be exactly that number, evidently b&s, there was something symbolic about that! and I'm actually going to suggest something to you, I'm not going to be pedantic and say I know the answer, I don't know! But brother Thomas, I think, made a good suggestion in his works, he said that, 'from the laying of the foundation of the temple in the 4th year of Solomon until its destruction was a period of 430 years. And it was! and 390 days for Israel and 40 days for Judah, was 430 days; and brother Thomas said, that the building of that foundation of Solomon's temple until its destruction was exactly 430 years, and he's right, and it could well be, b&s, that the period was symbolic of that. It begs the question as to why you have 390 for Israel and 40 for Judah? perhaps the suggestion of one other commentator was that, because Israel, of course, had never had any good kings and Judah had some, so they were disproportionate in the iniquity he had to lie on his side for. That might well have been the case! I can only make these

suggestions to you. The other suggestion, b&s, is that it was 430 years from the call of Abraham to Israel's deliverance from Egypt, Paul makes that point in Galatians and Exodus 12 makes that point; could well be, therefore, b&s, a warning to those who were saying, 'we're the seed of Abraham', but for a long period of time before they were taken out of captivity into Egypt and were led in the Promised Land, because Abraham never possessed it; and they went into captivity, didn't they? b&s, into Egypt and were slaves there in Egypt. The whole period was 430 years, and maybe Ezekiel was being told this again, and represents in totality, the iniquity of that nation. I don't know! they are the suggestions that I put before you, that have been put forward by certain brethren that I've read.

It's interesting, b&s, that in verse 6 it says, 'And when thou hast accomplished them, lie again on thy right side, and thou shalt bear the iniquity of the house of Judah 40 days; I have appointed each day for a year'. Now if you come back to Numbers 14, it would appear to be taken from here. Numbers 14 verse 34, and what do we find here? an expression very much like that; That Israel wandered in the wilderness, after the number of days in which he searched the Land, even 40 days, each day for a year, that you shall bear your iniquities, even 40 years, and ye shall know My breach of promise (changing of purpose)'. So a day for a year so that they might **bear their iniquity**; that's the language of Ezekiel 4. So once again, b&s, there might be a reflection on Israel's desolation in that wilderness because of their iniquity; I don't know, but whatever it is, it's very difficult to fit those numbers 390 and 40 into any specific period of history. There's been a lot of ingenious suggestions but a lot of them don't hold water. I think perhaps brother Thomas is nearer the mark when he says that it's 430 years from the laying of the foundation of the temple, b&s, until its destruction.

Whatever it was, b&s, Ezekiel is there, laying down very, very uncomfortable. I don't know how you go in bed, a lot of people don't have any problems, I toss and turn all night; and there's no way that I could lay on my one side for 40 seconds let alone 40 days. I'd go through the roof, I could not do that! I have deep sympathy with Ezekiel! Now, b&s, while he's doing all this, from verse 9, he's got to take a starvation diet: okay, he's got to get a starvation diet. Now that starvation diet, we learn in verse 9, consisted of 6 grains, just 6: and they go from the very best to the very worst. Because of the fact that he's depicting a siege of great, great deprivation of food, he can put them all into one vessel, they'll fit in one vessel, 6 different grains. Now you do not, in times of plenty, mix the best with the worst, or the worst with the best. You just don't do that! If you've got plenty of the best, you don't worry about the worst, and if you've got them all in various forms, and sufficient, you don't go and ruin the good grain with the bad; but when you've got nothing hardly, you're going to take all of them together and mix the very worst with the very best. Use 6 of them! Then the 20 shekels a day so forth, and 200 grams of water (which it works out to) was an absolute starvation diet. Some of the sisters would be delighted, you'd lose a lot of weight; I tell you, you wouldn't live very long! and he's got to do this!

He's told that there wouldn't be any windows of opportunity for him to go out the back

and get some wood! It's very hard to get wood through a window, it's a bit of a pane, actually! What he'd have to do, b&s, is to bake that food with excreta from mankind; sorry to upset your supper. A dreadful thought, isn't it? I mean, poor old Ezekiel, (when brother Paul read that so well, it came out so well, you could see the disgust in those words) 'haven't eaten anything unholy, ugh! human excreta, let's face it!' So God was gracious and gave him cow's dung, that he might get those people to see, b&s, that they were not heading back to Jerusalem in times of plenty! They were not going to go back and they were going to get scattered and they're going to live in extremity, in deep extremity.

Then he was told in chapter 5 verse 1, he's got to get a barber's razor (that wouldn't frighten me) but he's got to get a barber's razor; but here, b&s, the word 'sharp knife', actually the word is a 'sword' (2719) and he's going to do a lot of shaving with that sword. Now you come over to Isaiah 7, and you won't be left in doubt about this symbology (keep your hand in Ezekiel) but in Isaiah 7, b&s, here's where God is going to tell him what's going to happen, in verse 20 speaking of the captivity of Assyria, 'In the same day, shall Yahweh shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, He'll shave the head and the hair of the feet, and will consume the beard'. What a barber! and Yahweh says, 'I'll hire him; he's a ripper and he'll go through you, the hairs on your feet, the beard gone, where are the rest?' What He was telling Israel was that He was going to **bare them**, absolutely strip them bare with Assyria. Now He said to Ezekiel, 'you get hold of a sharp sword like a barber's razor and you shave yourself, Ezekiel. Now you imagine him doing all this, then catching the hair and he weighs it; what would hair weigh? It wouldn't have a weight! but Absalom used to weigh his hair every year when he would cut his hair, but he had a bit of growth on his back, but imagine Ezekiel weighing this, the balances would hardly move! but Yahweh's trying to tell him He isn't going to miss one hair. No one's going to get missed, so he's got to weigh this up.

Then he's got to divide it; and he's got to divide it into 3 parts; and they watch him and they see him weighing this stuff; imagine this, what the heck is this all about? They look at him and all his hair's gone, and he's got his scales out, and they move almost infinitesimally. Then he very carefully made 3 little piles, then he'd take just a few little strands and stick them up in his clothes again and try to keep them together there (one hand). Yahweh says, 'Look, this is going to happen to Israel, verse 2, 'thou shalt burn with fire one of those piles, and you shall burn with fire a 1/3 part in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are fulfilled'. So he'd knock over the walls of Jerusalem, scratch out what he'd drawn there and put a little pile here and he'd get something to ignite it, and up it would go in flames. Then He says, 'thou shalt take a 1/3 part and smite about it with an knife', so he put a 1/3 part around the city and then he would bang around it with the knife, and scattered it; then he'd get a 1/3 part and hold it in the wind and the wind would waft it away. And the message, b&s, was that Israel **would be destroyed in that city, some people would run outside and the Babylonians would cut them to ribbons, and the rest would be dragged off in chains and scattered about in the world**. What about the little few that are left? So then they'd look at this

and he'd be trying to point out to them what was going to happen.

Son of man, if you don't warn those people, their blood will be upon your head; he's using that arm of power; he's doing the best he possibly can, with limited resources; he's a very, very frightful man! We've got everything at our command, we've got good homes and in these days we've got plenty of money and don't tell me you're poor, that's just a plain lie! We haven't got people we call poor! if you think you're poor, go to the Philippines! You're not poor, we've got motor cars that actually run on petrol, air conditioning, some of us have got 2 motor cars, some of us have got 3 or 4. We call on each other to support the work of the truth, and we say we're going to put on an effort over in the north or the south of Adelaide, and the cry comes from either direction, 'it's too far!' We need to be tied up, dumped into our houses, with one arm free, and Almighty God saying to us, 'unless you do your bit for the truth, I'll call you in question for it, and it'll cost you your life!' There's Ezekiel cutting his hair, bound up and so on, doing his absolute utmost to warn that disobedient people of the coming tragedy, and knowing that he's going to lose his own wife, and doing everything with his limited resources to get that message through to the people.

Now what about these little ones who were left? Well, you read Jeremiah 39, God left a few hairs in the Land! Now there was just a few of them left there, and when Rabshakeh, Nebuchadnezzar's general carried away the people into captivity, we come to Jeremiah 39 and we read about these little few that were left. In verse 10, 'But Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard left of the poor of the people, which had nothing, in the land of Judah, and gave them vineyards and fields at the same time. Verse 14, 'Even they sent, and took Jeremiah out of the court of the prison, and committed him unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, **to carry him home that he might dwell among his people**'. Carry him home, carry him home, poor old Jeremiah, the Babylonians would know about him; they had their intelligence people, they were in perfect knowledge of what was going on inside that city. They knew that Jeremiah was preaching submission to Babylon, they saw Jeremiah as their ally; but he was not an ally of Babylon, but they thought this guy is encouraging the people to give up, he's a good guy, he's quite okay! And they let him go and said, you can come with us, we'll look after you, you're a great fellow, you told everyone to do the right thing! oh, they said, if you want to stay with this crowd, it's fine by us! So he decided to stay and they carried him home, think about it! think about what he'd been through! they **carried him, b&s**, Gedaliah did, who was left governor of the Land with a few poor miserable folk (those little hairs that he'd tucked into his clothes). But in the sign, Ezekiel was told to take those out of his clothing and cast them away. That's exactly what happened!

Chapter 43 of Jeremiah! Some idiot went and killed Gedaliah **and** some of the Babylonians that were left there to supervise the people that were left. Fear shot through that little core of people that were left in Jerusalem. They said, 'wow, the Babylonians will come down on us now like a ton of bricks' and Jeremiah said, 'they won't, they won't! Oh, yes they will, they definitely will! Verse 4 of Jeremiah 43, 'So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people

obeyed not the voice of Yahweh to dwell in the land of Judah. But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; Even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah. So **they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of Yahweh**, thus they came even to Tahpanhes'. Tragic! So the little few hairs that were left in the Land - poof, and they're gone! Imagine trying to tell the people with one hand that story, pointing to them every time he would do something with the hair and then trying to portray the tragic ending.

The people didn't have the brains to recognize their position! But Gedaliah did! That man had left those few hairs, b&s, **with the whole Land**, and they were poor; they were the poorest people in Israel and he left them with all the Land. He left them with vineyards and orchards and farmland, they could have lived a glorious life; but there are idiots in the truth, who will be up to mischief no matter whatever it is; and this chap went and killed Gedaliah and shot off to the other side of Jordan and killed some of the Chaldeans, and away they went, and those few little hairs got strewn in the wind.

So when we return to Ezekiel 5, Yahweh begins to indict Jerusalem; I'm only going to deal with a couple of verses here, then we're going straight over to chapter 8, because there's a long section here on the indictment upon Jerusalem, and our purpose this weekend is to study Ezekiel, as a character. But let's just have a look at these verses. Now the meaning of all this is set before the people so that they might get the point. So verse 5 says of Ezekiel 5, 'Thus saith the Lord GOD; **This is Jerusalem** (no question of what Ezekiel's doing) this is Jerusalem, because there were people saying, that could never be Jerusalem. When the Lord said, 'there shall not be left one stone upon another, there would be those 4 brethren, the two sets of brothers on the Mount of Olives that would say to themselves, 'that could never happen to the city of Jerusalem!' God said, **this is Jerusalem**, with no question, b&s, as to who that applied to. Then God said this, 'whom I have set in the **midst** of the nations'. Now there's a very important point in that statement, because you see, that word 'midst' (8432) (it's the same in the Hebrew but has a greater emphasis upon it) it's **the centre**. Jerusalem is the **centre** of all nations. This is Jerusalem, says God, and I set that in the centre of all the nations. Now in Ezekiel 38 verse 12, the margin says **it's the navel, the navel** (2872) of all the world. The land is the navel of all the world, and that's the cord, isn't it? b&s, that connected the mother and child; and Israel is the navel of the world. Now what's God saying? Isaiah 11 and 19 makes the point, that the then known world consisted of **Egypt, Israel and Assyria** (both those chapters make the point that that was the then known world) and God makes the point that they constituted the **3 thirds of the world**. Israel was in the middle, and the point He's making, b&s, is this, a point He made right back in Deuteronomy, that He called Israel out of Egypt to put them in the centre of the world, that they like a mother should nurture their children and be an example to everyone all around them, what the truth was all about! and God put them

in the centre of the world to do that! It's likely, if you'll just permit me to just have the liberty to paraphrase that verse, what He's saying to Ezekiel here and to the people , 'Thus saith the Lord God, this is Jerusalem I'm talking about and this is the city that I have deliberately chosen right in the centre of the world; so that all people of the world might look here and say, you're a wise and understanding people and you must have a marvellous God; tell us about Him!' This is Jerusalem, it's incredible, isn't it? b&s.

He goes on to say, 'And **she** has changed my judgments into wickedness **more than** the nations, and My statutes more than the countries that are round about her: for they have refused My judgments and My statutes,, they have not walked in them'. They were there, b&s, not to change the statutes at all, but to show the nations what the truth was all about. We might say to ourselves, this is the brotherhood of Christ, and God, b&s, has called us out of the world (not out of it physically but spiritually, mentally and morally) but has left us right in the middle of this world, so when the people look at you as mother and father, and they look at your children, they say, 'You know, those Christadelphians are a remarkable group of people'. Only today, a man came down that river in a canoe, he's been paddling for days down the Murray, he's probably in his 30's, pulled into the bank and met a brother and said, 'look, what's all this about?' The brother told him the camp was here, and he said, 'can I stop in?' the brother said, 'there's a bit of a grassy place here, pull your canoe up and come in for a cup of coffee'. So they got coffee and had a long chat about the truth, and the man said to him, 'you know, only yesterday I don't know why it was, he said, I prayed to God, and it's the only time I can remember praying to God in my life. I said the Lord's prayer and I could barely remember the words; and when he was told what was going on here, he was visibly impressed. He's gone on his way paddling down the Murray, but who knows what might happen in the future? who knows? and if he saw what was going on, he said, he was over on the river bank and said, 'oh yes, I know it's a bible school, I heard you speak!' on the FM. So you see, b&s, that's what we're here for, isn't it? to make a good impression, and we never know!

Now I want to show you what Jeremiah said about this. Let's have a look at Jeremiah 2. Jeremiah said the same thing, but he said something that's quite startling! In verses 9 to 11, you listen to this, b&s, and this is what Ezekiel was told and this is what Jeremiah is saying: 'Wherefore, says God to Israel, I will yet plead with you, saith Yahweh, and with your children's children will I plead'. God was going to plead with them about something, what's He going to plead with them about? 'For pass over the isles of Chittim and see; and send unto Kedar (now Chittim was out there in the west, away off the western coast of Israel, out in the Mediterranean); then He says, send unto Kedar, (now Kedar was way over in the Saudi Arabian plateau to the east). He said, you go right out there to sea, and I'll plead with you, and go right across here into Arabia, 'and see and consider diligently. Search, you search, search it out diligently and find out this; what is it? Has any of those nations ever changed their gods? Had they which are no gods?' So let's go and have a search! You get out the history books, b&s, and have a look! You go east, west, north and south, and you'll find that the god of the Phoenicians has always been Baal; you will find that the god of the Philistines has always been Dagon; you will find

that the god of the Ammonites and Moabites has always been Molech; you will find that the Roman Catholics' god has always been the Pope. **The only people in the whole wide world who had the only living and true God, are the only ones in the whole history of mankind, that changed Him.** And He pleads with His people to go and see! and it's an incredible fact of history, that none of those nations had ever changed their god; and the only ones who ever did, were the only ones who had the only true God in the universe, and Jeremiah would tell them that weeping! So here is the problem - this is Jerusalem!

Now, b&s, as I said we're going to go to Ezekiel 8, I'm only going to say a few more things to set the foundation for tomorrow's exhortation. The reason we're going to chapter 8, because as I said, the intervening section is a long denunciation of Jerusalem, that wicked city. So we come to Ezekiel 8 and we read, 'And it came to pass in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in the fifth day of the month' (now that is exactly to the day, 14 months from the day that he was called, so that doesn't constitute 430 days; any rate that's the time it was, and he is now, b&s, in his house and he receives a visit). 'As I sat in my house, the elders of Judah sat before me, and the hand of the Lord GOD fell there upon me'. And what happened was this! He's in his house, and exactly 14 months to the day, a group of the elders of Judah come to see him. We're not told here who they exactly constituted, what group? but we know this later on, there's no question, b&s, they were good figs. The elders of the good figs turned up to see him, 14 months from his calling and they want a discussion with him. Now this is wonderful, Ezekiel's such a fascinating book, I was just fascinated with this book, because you know, it's so graphic! Now I'll tell you again in a few words, and then we'll just fill in the details that happened. So he was sitting there, and these elders turn up and they had grave problems because they are the recipients of very vicious criticism and being told that they're out of the Land, therefore, you're not 'God's people; we're in Jerusalem so we must be God's people. They want to come for some consolation so they sit before Ezekiel and there they are looking at each other, and all of a sudden they see Ezekiel, his eyes widen, and he sort of looks dreamy and they see a remarkable change come over him; and he's drifted off! he's gone! I don't believe he ever moved, but God took him in a vision, and took him on a journey.

Now what happened was, I'm just telling the whole story and then we'll fill it all in for you! He took him in a vision (he never moved from where he was really, but He picked him up by a lock of his hair, that meant it was a forelock, actually). Because the hair was over his forehead, and God said that I'm going to make your head like an 'adamant stone', that's the hair He picked him up with, in vision. In other words, He's going to show him in his mind things that he's got to tell those people. He took him down to Jerusalem, lo and behold, he found himself in that chariot going down to Jerusalem, and he comes and sees all that's going on down there that's terrible, He's shown what God intends to do about it, he goes all the way back and comes out of the vision. Chapter 11 verse 24, tells us he came out of the vision, you look what it says. Verse 22 for connection, 'The cherubim lift up their wings, and so on, then verse 24, 'The spirit took me up, and brought me in a vision by the Spirit of God into Chaldea, to them of the

captivity. So the vision that I had seen went up from me. Then I **spake unto them** of the captivity all the things that Yahweh had showed me'.

So you get chapters 8, 9, 10 and 11 is Ezekiel gone in vision, and they're all sitting there waiting for Ezekiel to come round, wondering what's going on here! The elders would watch him and they could see, b&s, by the look of the man's face that he was transported; and they wait patiently, and when he came out of that trance like vision, he looked at them and gave them a wonderful message. Ah, it was so wonderful! that he encouraged them no end because of what he'd seen! That's the setting here, b&s, of this particular vision! You know he says, '14 months after his calling, I'm sitting there with the elders of Judah, and the spirit of Yahweh **fell upon him**; it was a different expression, it just came upon him, it just fell upon him. The first thing he sees is behold, the likeness as the appearance of fire; from the appearance of **his loins** (ooh, so what he's seeing is a person and he's got the appearance of fire from his loins even downward; and from his loins even upward, as the appearance of brightness, as the colour of **amber**' (and he knows it's that king upon that throne of the cherubim), because he's described as being like fire from his waist down, fire from his waist up and the colour of amber. That's the description of the **glory of Yahweh in the son of Adam, the second Adam; he knows it's the King**) and the King reaches down to him in vision, and just grabs a little bit of hair over his forehead. And God said to him, 'I will make your forehead stronger than theirs'. So He lifts him up by that and took him up between the heavens and the earth, b&s, and took him up as in a chariot; when he gets to Jerusalem he sees the chariot there (chapter 10 verse 15 says, the cherubim were there, so he came down with the cherubim). Then in verse 3 it says, 'He put forth the form of a hand', you see it's a vision because he doesn't see an hand now, he sees the **form** of a hand, so it's a visionary thing that's happening here. Took me by the fore-lock (6734-as the Hebrew is) and lifted me up between the earth and the heaven; and He brought me in the visions of God, Ezekiel 1, when he saw that thing coming out of the north, now here it is again, and he brings him in the visions of God to the door of the inner gate which looks towards the north. Everything he's going to see, b&s, is all in the north. We're going to read later on that the chariot went around and parked on the south, right opposite to where all the idolatries are going on. Everything that was going wrong was facing the north, and Ezekiel was told that out of that north would come judgment. Everything is going to happen at the northern gate, so he goes and sees this thing at the northern gate; and what was at the northern gate? he saw **the seat of the image of jealousy which provoketh to jealousy!**

Now you see, there was something there, b&s, that made God jealous. But you see, **it was sitting down**, it was **an established idolatry**; it was done in defiance of Almighty God and it was sitting down because they were saying to God, '**get lost**'. So the image of jealousy that he saw in this vision was an idolatrous image **sitting in that place**, as if saying to God, 'get out of here, I'm here for ever and a day'. It was sitting down! now look at Deuteronomy 4 verses 15 to 19, 'Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that Yahweh spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire. Lest ye corrupt yourselves and make you a graven image, the

similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female, The likeness of any beast that is on the earth, the likeness of any winged fowl that flieth in the air, and so forth. Verse 24, For Yahweh thy God is a consuming fire, even a very jealous God'. Now b&s, there are 2 reasons why Israel was never to make idolatrous objects, two basic reasons; one of them was obvious and that is **they were not to be like the heathen**, but that's not what it says here! The other reason was, because God said, **you've never seen an image of Me ever, you have no idea what I'm like in physical form. Therefore, any attempt to show Me in any physical form whatever, even if it may not be an adulterous object, is idolatry, because you've got no idea what I look like.** But they knew how He acted, Yahweh, Yahweh El, full of truth and judgment and righteousness and mercy, loving kindness; you know how I act, you've got no idea what I look like, don't you dare attempt to make any similitude, because you don't know. You know, b&s, we are told in the New Testament, that Jesus is the image of God, and we do have some objectivity in that relationship. We don't know what He looked like but they saw Him as a man, and they had a lot more objectivity than what Israel ever did, and **still you don't make images of Him**, but you imitate His character. That's what God is telling them here! and you do that, He said, because what's going to happen is, you're going to try and make an image of Me, maybe like Aaron did when he made the golden calf, (and I don't believe that Aaron made that as an idolatrous object), but in the end that's what it became. **I'm very jealous!**

You know, b&s, some times we say that jealousy is a very evil thing, is it? You know, if jealousy is misplaced, if a person is jealous beyond reason and for no reason, it's a very great evil. It can ruin households, I've seen it done, terrible things, when people have no cause for it, and yet they're jealous, that's an awful thing! But I want to tell you something, b&s, if people who are married have no form of jealousy whatever for their partner, they are not in love, they're definitely not in love. I'll tell you why, you cannot be jealous unless you're in love! A great jealousy, b&s, indicates a great love; Zechariah was told through the Word of Yahweh, 'I am jealous for Jerusalem with a great jealousy'. Why? because God had a great love for His city. Paul told the Corinthians, 'I'm jealous over you with the jealousy of God', because he had a great love for the Corinthians, and if he couldn't have cared less for them, he wouldn't have been jealous. When God took Ezekiel down there, and said, 'See that! You know, I'm terribly jealous about that!' and He was, b&s, very jealous about that! You know, it's a remarkable thing, but if you come to Deuteronomy 32, b&s, you look what He did; God responded to that provocation of jealousy, He responded to it!

In verse 20 of Deuteronomy 32, He said, 'I will hide My face from them; I will see what their end shall be, for they are a very froward generation, children in whom there is no faith. They have moved Me to jealousy with that which is not God; they have provoked Me to anger with their vanities; **I will move them to jealousy, says God, with those that are not a people, and will provoke them to anger with a foolish nation'. AND HE DID!** Now what does it say? It says they've got no faith, therefore in their no faith, they provoked Me to jealousy; but I love My people, I love them, but they went out of their way to provoke Me to jealousy. Well, He said, they provoked Me to jealousy with

their vanities, I will respond. I will provoke them to jealousy with a people who they don't think are a people, and with a nation they think stupid because they've got no faith. Now here's Jesus in the Land and here's a Roman centurion with a servant that's sick. The centurion sent messengers to the Lord and said, 'Lord, you just say a word (don't worry about coming up here) I'm a general, I'm a colonel, I know what goes on, I can say to my troops, run down there and do something, and they do it! I'm just an earthly commander, I know who you are! you've got the angels on your side; don't you bother, just send an angel up here and command them to heal my servant. And Jesus turned around to the people and said, 'did you hear that? I have not found so great faith, no, not in **all Israel**'. And the people went 'what? a Roman general? not a people, a foolish nation, 'I have not found in all Israel, faith like that! So He did provoke them to jealousy, b&s, didn't He?

Do you know, it was Manasseh that set up that seat of jealousy, in 2 Chronicles 33, you know, it was because of Manasseh's persistence in his idolatry, b&s, that it never got moved. Oh yes, they removed it physically but it never got out of the hearts of the people. Of Manasseh, son of Hezekiah it's said, in verse 6, 'He caused his children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom: he observed times, and used enchantments, and used witchcraft, and dealt with familiar spirits, and with wizards: he wrought much evil in the sight of Yahweh, to provoke Him to anger. And he set a **carved image, the idol which he had made, in the house of God**, of which God had said to David and to Solomon his son, In this house, and in Jerusalem, which I have chosen before all the tribes of Israel, will I put My name for ever'. And he put an idol in there! and there it was! perhaps not the same idol because it got cleaned out, but do you know, that Jeremiah testified that, from that day, from the days of Manasseh, despite Josiah's reformation, despite all that happened afterwards, God had from that very day, said, that is the end! Jeremiah 15 says that! From the very day that that man set those things in that Land, He said, that's Me finished, I'll never change My mind again'. So that image was really sitting there (whether it was there physically or not, it didn't matter, he had fixed that in the mind of the people, that even when they crowded in the streets of Jerusalem to celebrate Josiah's Passover, and gave lip service to the reformation, the image of jealousy, b&s, was **planted in their hearts and minds and it never moved**. So Ezekiel was taken down there to see the seat of jealousy.

Finally, when we come back to Ezekiel chapter 8, after being told about this image of jealousy which **sat** in that place, Ezekiel makes this observation, 'And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, according to the vision that I saw in the 'biqah' (1237). So Ezekiel's eyes are open, and he doesn't say it was the vision that I saw at the river Chebar, as he normally would say; or he doesn't simply say, in the visions of God, as he would otherwise say, referring back to chapter 1. He looked and he thought, yes, it's the same glory but it's got that difference about it, because it's the one I saw in the valley, in the 'biqah', when he was told by God, 'Ezekiel, I want you to make your own way out here, into the quiet place, and I want to talk to you'; and when he saw that seated image there, he's beginning to understand why it is that God said, I don't altogether want you to be a reprover of this people'. Now he's beginning to understand

why he's locked up in his house! why he's tied up with one arm loose, and he can understand God's point of view. He could see, b&s, that this was entrenched, and it was like Yahweh saying, 'go and tell this people that I've had enough; seeing you will not see, and hearing you will not hear, why he said, that's the vision I saw in the 'biqah'. Isn't that interesting? So he's suddenly beginning to see the reason for God's attitude, because he sees this entrenched iniquity! Now, b&s, we're presenting to you now, the background and foundation of our exhortation tomorrow morning, because you know, we can do this; we can have **entrenched idolatry**; I pray to God that none of us have got it, to the point where God is just allowing us to turn up here with no future. Wouldn't that be awful? wouldn't it be awful when Christ comes tomorrow, we stand at His judgment seat and He says to us, 'who are you? I don't know you! I've never known you! Wouldn't that be awful? because you see, if we got entrenched idolatry, Yahweh could have.....(tape ended.)