

Why Jerusalem Fell III

In this installment, we will attempt to define the characteristics of the transgressions of Judah, and why they brought about the destruction of Jerusalem at the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, the “hammer of the whole earth.”

Rebellious (KJV – filthy, i.e., *to be* (causatively make) *bitter* (or unpleasant); (figuratively) *to rebel* (or resist; causatively *to provoke*): (Zeph. 3:1)

In I Samuel 15, Israel’s first physical king, Saul the son of Kish, was instructed to carry out the judgment of Jehovah upon the Amalekites. In so doing, an accountability was measured out against Amalek for their transgressions, saying, “I have marked that which Amalek did to Israel, how he set himself against him in the way, when he came up out of Egypt. Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass:” (Vs. 1-5) this judgment was Justice served. When Saul failed to execute Jehovah’s judgment this exchange took place between the prophet and the king: “And Samuel came to Saul; and Saul said unto him, Blessed be thou of Jehovah: I have performed the commandment of Jehovah. And Samuel said, What meaneth then this bleating of the sheep in mine ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” i.e., if Saul had followed the commands of the Lord there would be no sheep to “bleat.” Saul then attempts to blame the people, saying, “They have brought them from the Amalekites: for the people spared the best of the sheep and of the oxen, to sacrifice unto Jehovah thy God; and the rest we have utterly destroyed” (Vs. 13-15).

Samuel then convicts Saul of his error, saying, “Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as idolatry and teraphim. Because thou hast rejected the word of Jehovah, he hath also rejected thee from being king” (Vs. 22-23). Rebellion is therefore an act of rejecting the word (commands) of Jehovah (1 Samuel 15).

2) Polluted (the idea of *freeing*, that is, *repudiating*); *to soil* or (figuratively) *desecrate*): 3:1

Isaiah commented on the pollution of the earth, saying, “The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant” (Isa. 24:5). And Jeremiah, who prophesied during the time of Josiah, said, “Lift up thine eyes unto the bare heights, and see; where hast thou not been lain with? By the ways hast thou sat for them, as an Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness” (Jeremiah 3:2). Leviticus 18 speaks of those things which defile the man, and the land.

In our next installment, we will consider the transgression of “Oppressing.”