

Chapter 12

Trouble With The Elders

BIBLE

Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spoke to all the assembly of the people, saying:¹
“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves.”²

“It is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.”³

“Thus says the Lord Yahweh, Woe to the foolish prophets, who follow their own spirit, and have seen nothing!⁴
Behold, these are the wicked. Being always at ease, they increase in riches.”⁵

“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as Christ’s apostles.”⁶ The harp, lyre, tambourine, and flute, with wine, are at their feasts; but they don’t respect the work of Yahweh, neither have they considered the operation of his hands.”⁷

COMMENTARY

¹ **Jeremiah 26:17**

² **Matthew 7:15** David J. Stewart: “The Beatles deceitfully came to America as decent looking young men, but then led a generation of America’s youth to become hippies, drug addicts, rebels, sexual degenerates and God-haters.”

³ **Ecclesiastes 7:5**

⁴ **Ezekiel 13:3** [*The “foolish prophets” are the Beatles*]

⁵ **Psalms 73:12**

⁶ **2 Corinthians 11:13**

⁷ **Isaiah 5:12** The Sixties was a decade of great social change. The innovative music that the Beatles and their peers created helped to inspire a spirit of rebellion from young people. Musicians became spokespersons for a whole new way of thinking. “We were all on this ship- a ship going to discover the New World, and the Beatles were in the crow’s nest,” John recalled. Not everyone was on board however. Many of the “elders,” including parents, teachers, government leaders, and religious authorities, condemned what they saw as excess and felt that society was headed in the wrong direction. They urged a return to more traditional values.

“Though they say, ‘As Yahweh lives;’ surely they swear falsely.⁸ Many will follow their immoral ways, and as a result, the way of the truth will be maligned.⁹

“It will happen in that day, that the prophets will each be ashamed of his vision, when he prophesies; neither will they wear a hairy mantle to deceive.¹⁰

“Now therefore, behold, Yahweh has put a lying spirit in the mouth of these your prophets; and Yahweh has spoken evil concerning you.¹¹

“To what then will I liken the people of this generation? What are they like?¹² They are all grievous rebels, going about with slanders; they are brass and iron: they all of them deal corruptly.¹³

“There is a generation that curses their father, and doesn’t bless their mother.¹⁴ For it is a rebellious people, lying children, children who will not hear the law of Yahweh.¹⁵

“There is a generation that is pure in their own eyes, yet are not washed from their filthiness.¹⁶ These are wells without water, clouds driven by a storm; for whom the blackness of darkness has been reserved forever.¹⁷

⁸ **Jeremiah 5:2**

⁹ **2 Peter 2:2**

¹⁰ **Zechariah 13:4** [*“The prophets” are the Beatles*]

¹¹ **2 Chronicles 18:22**

¹² **Luke 7:31** The Beatles, all born between 1940 and 1943, were like cool, older brothers to the “baby boomer” generation, generally defined as including anyone born between 1946 and 1964. They helped to foster the boomers growing irreverence and distrust of authority.

¹³ **Jeremiah 6:28**

¹⁴ **Proverbs 30:11** The baby boomer generation was named *Time*’s “Man Of The Year” in 1966.

¹⁵ **Deuteronomy 32:5** Camille Piglia: “My generation of the Sixties, with all our great ideals, destroyed liberalism, because of our excesses.”

¹⁶ **Proverbs 30:12** David Farber: “Many protesters in the Sixties shouted and claimed the right to speak for all. They often revealed contempt for working people.” (*The Sixties: From Memory to History*, 1994)

¹⁷ **2 Peter 2:17** William Rusher: “The young have always had, and probably will always have, a natural hankering for a less demanding, more accommodating world - a world in which the charms of irresponsibility are not so harshly penalized.” (*Natl. Review*)

“These have one mind, and they give their power and authority to the beast.¹⁸ If a man walking in a spirit of falsehood lies: ‘I will prophesy to you of wine and of strong drink’; he would be the prophet of this people.¹⁹

“These are they who cause divisions, and are sensual, not having the Spirit,²⁰ whose end is destruction, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who think about earthly things.²¹

“For some of these are people who creep into houses, and take captive gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts.²² For they eat the bread of wickedness, and drink the wine of violence.²³

“Their wine is the poison of serpents, The cruel venom of asps.²⁴ The wild donkeys stand on the bare heights, they pant for air like jackals; their eyes fail, because there is no herbage.²⁵

“Yet in the same way, these also in their dreaming defile the flesh, despise authority, and slander celestial beings,²⁶ being filled with all unrighteousness, sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, malice; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil habits; secret slanderers,²⁷ backbiters, hateful to God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents.²⁸

¹⁸ **Revelation 17:13** Robert Bork: “Every new generation constitutes a wave of savages who must be civilized by their families, schools, and churches. An exceptionally large generation can swamp the institutions responsible for teaching traditions and standards... The baby boomers were a generation so large that they formed their own culture rather than being assimilated into the existing one.” (*Slouching Towards Gomorrah*, 1996)

¹⁹ **Micah 2:11**

²⁰ **Jude 1:19** Jack Newfield, from an article in *Nation* (1967): “The hippies will not change America because change means pain, and the hippie subculture is rooted in the pleasure principle.”

²¹ **Philippians 3:19**

²² **2 Timothy 3:6** Craig Shirley: “So many of the libertine attitudes about abortion, illicit behavior, homosexuality, and drug use find their seeds in the sixties.”

²³ **Proverbs 4:17**

²⁴ **Deuteronomy 32:33** Gary Bauer: “[The decade] was a disaster for our core social values. The growing embrace of moral relativism led to increasing rates of out of wedlock births, marital break-ups, venereal disease, etc.”

²⁵ **Jeremiah 14:6**

²⁶ **Jude 1:8**

²⁷ **Romans 1:29**

²⁸ **Romans 1:30**

“There is a generation, oh how lofty are their eyes! Their eyelids are lifted up.”²⁹

“When they tell you, ‘Consult with those who have familiar spirits and with the wizards, who chirp and who mutter,’ shouldn’t a people consult with their God? Should they consult the dead on behalf of the living?”³⁰

“Cut off your hair, [Jerusalem], and cast it away, and take up a lamentation on the bare heights; for Yahweh has rejected and forsaken the generation of his wrath.”³¹

“Wake up, you drunkards, and weep! Wail, all you drinkers of wine, because of the sweet wine; for it is cut off from your mouth.”³²

“Because you have burned incense, and because you have sinned against Yahweh, and have not obeyed the voice of Yahweh, nor walked in his law, nor in his statutes, nor in his testimonies; therefore this evil has happened to you, as it is this day.”³³

“Isn’t your wickedness great? Neither is there any end to your iniquities?”³⁴

The apostles and the elders were gathered together to see about this matter.”³⁵

²⁹ **Proverbs 30:13** Richard Rovere, *NY Times* (1969) “It has been an awful decade...a slum of a decade.”

³⁰ **Isaiah 8:19** Different kinds of alternative religions and spiritual practices began to flourish in the Sixties, which posed a threat to the traditional church and it’s teachings.

³¹ **Jeremiah 7:29** Ralph Gleason, from a 1968 article in *Ramparts*: “At no time in American history has youth possessed the strength it possesses now. Trained by music and linked by music, it has the power for good to change the world.”

³² **Joel 1:5** David Chalmers: “The 1960’s was particularly marked to the extent by which this strategy [of raising people’s consciousness to effect social change] emerged as the chosen path.” (*And The Crooked Places Made Straight*, 1991)

³³ **Jeremiah 44:23**

³⁴ **Job 22:5** Henry Steele Commager: “America was born of revolt, flourished in dissent, became great through experimentation.”

³⁵ **Acts 15:6** Abbie Hoffman: “Sure we were young. We were arrogant. We were ridiculous. There were excesses. We were brash. We were foolish. We had factional fights. But we were right.”