

## Prophets 18

in the context as having been fulfilled as a figure for the nations which over-ran the area. Now I believe we have entirely satisfactory evidence then for interpreting Verse 41 literally, 42 figuratively, 43 literally, but you see the great mass of the material is literal, the facts is literal, the the foundation is literal, but in the midst of the context we have figures of speech introduced figures of speech which make the meaning sometimes more precise and always more beautifully expressed. To my mind figures of speech are like salt. You put a little salt over your dish and it makes it far more tasty, more appetizing, more healthful, but if you want to take a bucket of salt and pour it over the food you utterly ruin the food, and when somebody takes a chapter or a book or a passage in the Scripture and says, "Oh, that's just figurative speech," and tries to that every word in it must be taken figuratively or says that Revelation is a symbolic book, everything in it is a symbol for something else, they reduce it to that which can have no binding value for the reader, because he can't prove what anything in it means. It's just a mass of uncertainties, and you destroy its authority and its value and I do not believe the Lord wishes us to deal in that way with any portion of His Word. I believe He wishes us to see the beautiful figures of speech scattered here and there through the Word and interpret them correctly in the light of context but never to assume that a whole passage or a whole book is simply figurative--some people misuse the word spiritual by calling that spiritualization, taking something as completely figurative and meaning something utterly different from that which the words would suggest. It isn't spiritualization, it certainly is not a word which could properly be used in such a sense as this but it is so used by many people. The talk about the spiritualization of prophecy by which they mean the interpretation of it as if it were all simply figurative and you have no idea what any of it meant except as you twist it and change it around to something utterly different from that which anybody would naturally suppose it to refer to. That, I believe, is utterly wrong. But the answer to this problem, "What is figurative and what is literal?" cannot be given by giving two simple rules and saying, "Apply these