

In 23:17 the word translated "then" in the New American Standard Bible is exactly the same word that is translated "and" at the beginning of verses 17 and 18. It is entirely possible that the last half of verse 17 looks forward to a time much later than the first half of the verse, but it is slightly more natural to take it as describing what will happen immediately after God allows the city to be rebuilt.

In Chapter 18 the "land of whirring wings" may refer to a part of Ethiopia itself or to a country farther south. This region is often mentioned on Egyptian monuments from an earlier time.

As you can see from the above, I like to withhold judgment where the evidence is not clear, and to speak positively only where the meaning of a verse is clear in its context, or where it can be inferred with considerable certainty from other passages.

Every time we go through the Bible we find new problems that were previously unknown to us. The next time we go through it we may find answers to many of these problems but we will also become aware of others that we had not realized before. God's Word is infinite and no man can expect to reach the end of its study. If we are too ready to jump to conclusions with insufficient evidence we may fail to see important truths that would otherwise become known to us as we continue to study God's Word.

LETTER 47

GOD'S COMMAND OR GOD'S PERMISSION IN HOSEA 1:2

The Bible is a book of infinite wisdom. We can accept everything it clearly teaches as being true and entirely free from error. This is one of the great central teachings of our Faith.