

## **Captivity & Exile**

**The Period of Kingdoms: Israel and Judah.**

**In 922 BCE, the Kingdom of Israel was divided. Judah, the southern Kingdom, had Jerusalem as its capital and was led by Rehoboam. It was populated by the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, and Simeon (and some of tribe of Levi). Simeon and Judah later merged, and Simeon lost its separate identity.**

**Jeroboam led the revolt of the northern tribes, and established the Kingdom of Israel, consisting of nine tribes: Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, Dan, Menasseh, Ephraim, Reuben and Gad (and some of Levi), with Samaria as its capital.**

**In 721 BCE, the Assyrians, under Shalmaneser, and then under Sargon, conquered Israel (the northern Kingdom), destroyed its capital Samaria, and sent many of the Israelites into exile and captivity.**

**The ruling class of the northern kingdom (perhaps a small portion of the overall population) were deported to other lands in the Assyrian empire and a new nobility was imported by the Assyrians.**

**This chapter will cover the four empire that Israel served. Having a clear understanding of the captivity the prophecy will be easier to comprehend.**

**History & Destruction**

**Of the Hebrew Israelites :**

**YHWH chose the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel) to be his chosen people, a holy nation. He brought them out of slavery in Egypt where they were oppressed so hard their cry reached up to high heaven (Exod. 1). They were to be an example to all the other nations, but they never lived up to their part of the agreement (Covenant). Instead, the Hebrew Israelites (12 Tribes of Israel) chose to be like the other nations.**

**They drifted away from YHWH and served and worshipped all of the false gods set up by the surrounding nations. For this, YHWH allowed them to be oppressed by the other nations. The book of Judges makes somber reading. It ends on this sad note: “Everyone did that which was right in his own eyes” (Jdg. 21:25).**

**It seems they had already begun to live up to the words of YHWH when he told Moses:**

**“Behold, you shall sleep with your fathers, and this people will rise up and go a whoring after the gods of the strangers of the land, whither they go to be among them, and will forsake me and break my covenant which I have made with them.**

**Then my anger shall be kindled against them, and I will hide my face from them, and they shall be devoured, and many evils and troubles shall befall them; so that they will say in that day, Are not these evils come upon us because our God is not among us? And I will surely hide my face in that day for all the evils which they shall have wrought in that they are turned to other gods.” (Deut. 31:16-19)**

**Time and time again YHWH sends deliverers to save his people from their oppressions. But their repentance was always short-lived because they really didn't have the heart to serve the true and living YHWH in truth and in righteousness.**

**Under the leaderships of King David and his son Solomon, the nation of Israel feared very well and was established as a major power in the ancient**

**world. David was even said to be “A man after YHWH’s own heart.” He did what was right in the sight of YHWH and instructed the people in the way of righteousness. Under the reign of Solomon’s son Rehoboam, the Kingdom of Israel was split into two separate kingdoms — the Northern kingdom of Samaria, known as the House of Israel — and the Southern Kingdom of Jerusalem, known as the House of Judah. This was the beginning of the end of the ancient Hebrew Israelite nation.**

**By the time of the Messiah in the first Century A.D., many evils had fell the Children of Israel just as YHWH had foretold. They had undergone several major captivities in foreign lands that included the deportation of the House of Israel by the Assyrians in 721 B.C; and the 70-year captivity of the House of Judah by the Babylonians in 607 B.C. During the reign of Cyrus The Great of the Medo-Persian empire in 539 B.C., Judah was allowed to return to Jerusalem and rebuild their city.**

**By the Rivers Of Babylon: The chief of the priests, and the people transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen; and polluted the house of YHWH which he had hallowed in Jerusalem. And YHWH Elohim of their fathers sent to them by his messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because he had compassion on his people, and on his dwelling place; But they mocked the messengers of Elohim, and despised his words and misused his prophets until the wrath of YHWH arose against his people til there was no remedy.**

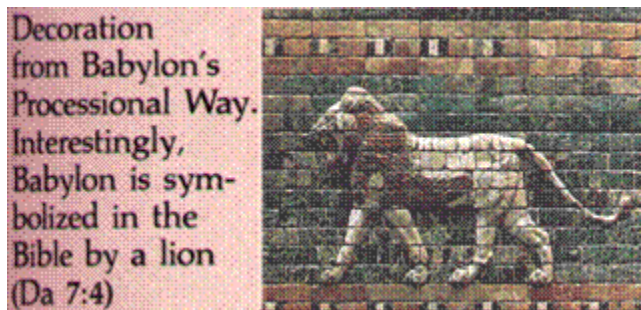
**Therefore, YHWH brought upon them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or maiden, old man, or him that stooped for age; he gave them all into his hand.**

**And all the vessels of the house of Elohim, great and small, and the treasures of the house of YHWH, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon; and they burnt the house of Elohim, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.**

**And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him (Nebuchadnezzar) and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia; to fulfill the word of YHWH by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths; for as long as she lay desolate she kept Sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years (70 years).” (II Chr. 36:14-21, Jer. 25:9-11)**

**The House of Israel was colonized by the Assyrians, but the House of Judah survived for more than a century later until it fell in 587 BC to the Babylonian ruler, Nebuchadnezzar. For 70 years, Jerusalem would enjoy her holy Sabbaths, and for the first time in mass, the children of Judah would go into captivity (II Chron. 36:5-20, Jer. 25: )! This was the beginning of the end for the royal house of Judah.**

**They produced no more kings of the lineage of David, until the Messiah, the Prince, the son of YHWH, the Lion of the tribe of Judah who will instruct the people in the way of righteousness. Under the reign of Solomon’s son Rehoboam, the Kingdom of Israel was split into two separate kingdoms — the Northern kingdom of Samaria, known as the House of Israel — and the Southern Kingdom of Jerusalem, known as the House of Judah. This was the beginning of the end of the ancient Hebrew Israelite nation.**



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**the Medo-Persian empire in 539 B.C., Judah was allowed to return to Jerusalem to rebuild their city and temple to YHWH.**

#### **Medo-Persian Empire:**

**The history of the Jews (so-called Negro) continues as the first European empire emerges on the world scene. In 607 B.C., the once prosperous land of our forefathers was made "a desolate waste, without an inhabitant, "as our people were led away to exile in Babylon for 70 years. (Jer. 9:11; II Chr. 36:15-21; ban. 9: 1-2).**

**The God of our fathers through his loving kindness towards us, however, would not leave His people in exile forever. He foretold that they would build houses in Babylon, marry and be given in marriage, and that they would serve the King of Babylon for 70 years, after which He would deliver a faithful remnant.**

**(Jer. 29:4-14).**

**Right at the end of the 70 year captivity, the seemingly impregnable city of Babylon fell to the invading armies of the Medes and the Persians (today known as the Russians & Iranians). In 539 B.C. King Cyrus of Persia made a decree during his first year as ruler opening the way for the Jewish exiles to return to Jerusalem and to rebuild YHWH's temple (Isa. 44:28-45:1-4,13; II Ch. 36:22-23).**

**“ Now in the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia, that the word of YHWH by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, YHWH stirred up the spirit of Cyrus King of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also In writing saying, "Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, YHWH Elohim of heaven has given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and he has charged me to build him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.**

**Who Is there among you of all his people? His God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem which is in Judah, and build the house of YHWH Elohim of Israel (he is the God) which is in Jerusalem." (Ezra 1:1-3)**



**Cyrus Cylinder Which States the policy of Cyrus to return captives to their homelands and to aid in restoration of their temple.**

**Medo-Persia, referred to in the Bible symbolically as a bear (Dan. 7:5) served YHWH's purpose in letting the Jews go free. Of course today, Russia is still referred to as a bear! However, only a remnant of the Jews (so-called Negro) returned to Jerusalem. The rest chose to remain in the cities of Babylon (today the land of Iran & Iraq).**

**The book of Ezra records, "the whole congregation together was 42,360, besides their servants... " returned to the land of their fathers (Ezra 2:64-65). The building of the Temple took many decades and the work was halted several times by neighboring nations who did not want to see the city of Jerusalem and the temple of YHWH rebuilt. King Darius of Media, later honored Cyrus' decree (Ezra 6:1-11), and in 455 B.C., Nehemiah traveled from the Persian capital of Shushan to rebuild Jerusalem's walls (Neh. 2:5-11). Our people actually faired very well under the Medo-Persian Empire — until the reign of Ahasu-erus, (Xerxes I) King of Persia.**

**The book of Esther reveals that the Jews were set up to be destroyed during his reign. King Ahasuerus was eventually wed to a Jewish maiden named Esther. At the behest of her cousin, Mordecai, Esther never revealed to the King that she was of the Jewish nation. In the 12th year of Ahasuerus, his prime minister, Haman, planned the**

**Annihilation of all the Jews in the 127 Provinces of His empire and received the official authorization of the King to carry out his plan [Esther 3:7-13). Acting on the information and advice of Mordecai, Esther revealed to the King the wicked intent of Haman's plot and that she herself was a Jew. As a**

result, Haman and all his family were hanged (Est. 4:7-7:1-10), and the Jews were able to defend themselves against his genocidal plot.

We do not commemorate today by what is known as "the feast of Purim." All praises be to the Most High YHWH, who delivered our people out of the hands of those who persecuted us during the Medo-Persian Empire, just as he will deliver us out of his hands of the Americans!

**Grecian Empire: Judah under reign:** Since 539 BC, the so-called Negro (the Jews) has been ruled over by Gentile nations (the Europeans Japheth's seed, Gen. 10:2-5). This is the period known as the "Times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). Between the Old and New Testaments of the Bible there is a 300 year gap in time. That is the time that the Greeks ruled over our people (the Jews) in Jerusalem.

Bible prophecy recorded in the book of Daniel "pointed to a dramatic" change in world events, symbolizing Greece first as a leopard with wings and four heads, and then as a he-goat with a conspicuous horn. It foretold in an unmistakable way that Greece would trample down the Medo-Persian empire (the 1st Gentile world power). It also disclosed that the power of a "conspicuous horn" would be broken and that four others would come up instead of it (Dan. 7:6, 8:1-8,19-22; 10:20-21,11:3-4).

#### **The Hellenization of the Jews**

Before his death, however, Alexander had introduced the Greek culture and language into all parts of his domain. Sadly, the Jews fell for the worldliness of the Greeks and their culture of philosophy, pleasure, sports and the arts were seductive to many. This period is known as the "hellenization of the Jews." To prepare their sons for Greek citizenship, these would-be Greeks built a gymnasium within sight of the temple in Jerusalem. Young Hellenized Jews now participated naked in abominable Greek contact sports including wrestling, and the Olympic games, which were, dedicated to their chief god, Zeus. And soon they would be forced to worship Zeus or die.

#### **The Reign of Antiochus IV**

And out of one of them came forth a little horn which waxed great ...Yea, he

**magnified himself even to the prince of the host, and by him the daily sacrifice was taken away, and the place of the sanctuary was cast down. And an host was given him against the daily sacrifice by reason of transgression, and it cast down the truth to the ground; and it practiced and prospered." (Dan 8:8-12)**

**The worst desecration in the history of the temple at Jerusalem occurred when, in a vicious attempt to defile and to stamp out the worship of YHWH, Antiochus IV [Epiphanes - known as the historical "littlehorn" in Daniel 8:8-12] dedicated the temple of YHWH to Zeus.**

**A statute of the god (which had been sculpted to look like Antiochus himself) was set up. He directed them to follow customs strange to the land...to profane Sabbaths and feasts and to defile the sanctuary by the sacrifice of pigs on the altar of burnt offering (for the Greeks, the pig was a common sacrificial animal as can be seen here on this 6th century B. C. howl). But to the Jews the offering of an "unclean" animal was an outrage.**

**A man could neither keep the Sabbath nor so much as confess himself to be a Jew... They were commanded to leave their sons uncircumcised and next, on pain of death, the entire population was summoned to eat pork. Most chose to live, and ate a morsel. But many in Israel stood firm... They chose to die rather than to be defiled by unclean food or to profane the holy covenant; and they did die" (Dan. 8:9-14).**

**(Great People of the Bible, Reader's Digest, 1974, pp. 288-289) .**

**But a family of heroes (the Maccabees) arose to save Israel who resisted and successfully defeated the Greeks. They re-dedicated the temple to YHWH (the Feast of the Dedication or Hanukkah), and their descendants ruled Israel as priest-kings until the arrival of the cruel and barbaric Romans.**

**Roman Empire: Legion devours Judah**



**Shortly before his death in 33 AD, Yahshua called Jerusalem "the killer of the prophets and stoner of those sent forth to her." He foretold what would happen to our people, the true Jews - his people:**

**The days will come upon you when your enemies will build around you a fortification with pointed stakes and keep you in on every side and shall lay you even with the ground, and your children within you; and they shall not leave in you one stone upon another" (Luke 19:43-44).**

**He also Said: "And when you shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is near...But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days, for there shall be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles (Europeans), until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled" (Luke 21:20-24).**

**It was the mighty Legions of the Roman army that YHWH used to finally destroy the mighty and the holy people, our forefathers. They were His whipping stick to beat our people into submission and to consume with fire YHWH's beautiful city Jerusalem, the land that flowed with milk and honey! Earlier, the prophet Daniel had prophesied that it would be a prince of the 4th world empire (Rome), who would destroy the city and the sanctuary (Dan. 9:26), and it happened exactly that way.**

**Titus, the Roman general who destroyed Jerusalem, was also a prince of Rome because he was the son of Vespasian, Emperor of Rome!**

**The Jews could not stomach the rule of the Romans over them and finally in 66 AD, the Jewish revolt was begun by a group | named the Zealots." After a five-month siege, Jerusalem was thoroughly destroyed and ""the temple was reduced to ruins. In his book "Antiquities of the Jews," Josephus, a Jewish historian documented] that over 1.3 million Hebrew Israelites were killed: and the rest were sold to the Africans to work in the mines. There had never been a slaughter of a people so great as had**

**been at the taking of Jerusalem in 70 AD). Josephus stated:**

**“Accordingly the multitude of those that therein perished exceeded all the destruction that either men or God ever brought upon the world. Thus was Jerusalem taken, in the second year of the reign of Vespasian; a city of great magnificance and of mighty fame among all mankind.”**

**Antiques of the Jews Chap.9 p. 587 The remnant rebel forces of our people held out at Massada, a stronghold built by Herod the Great until AD73 when they took their own lives rather than fall into Roman hands. The Blood of our ancestors poured out in the streets like running water. The jewish spirit was crushed and the remaining remnant went into captivity . Thus began the great Diaspora of our people, and since that time we have no more been considered as a nation of people - the House of Judah - YAH’s pleasant plant (Isa.5:6-8). The Curse Fulfilled!!**