

THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL

Part 5

The Babylonian Captivity of the House of Judah

By Dave Ramey

In the study dealing with the Lost Ten Tribes of Israel, we covered some very important key verses from God's Word, that let us know there was a separation of Israel into two distinct Kingdoms. We further were given knowledge of the captivity of the 'house of Israel', being those ten tribes who resided in the northern territories of Israel, and specifically who replaced them and became known as the Samaritans of Jesus' time and later. Consider the following verses, as we ask a Word of Wisdom from our Father in Jesus' Precious Name, Amen.

II Kings 17:21-23

21 For He rent Israel from the house of David; and they made Jeroboam the son of Nebat king: and Jeroboam drove Israel from following the LORD, and made them sin a great sin.

22 For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them;

23 Until the LORD removed Israel out of His sight, as He had said by all His servants the prophets. So was Israel carried away out of their own land to Assyria unto this day.

God is talking about the 'house of Judah' with the phrase '*house of David*', and '*Israel*' in these verses only apply to the 'house of Israel', or the Ten Tribes in the north of Israel. We also know from the previous studies in Scripture that Jeroboam was the king over the 'house of Israel' or 'house of Joseph', Ephraim, Samaria, etc. We know this '*Israel*' as it appears here marks the Ten Tribes because of the separation and context of the subject in these verses. Why might this be important? You'll find this subtle distinction using the word '*Israel*' in other Books of The Word, and you should be aware of their usage according to the subject flow. This is why pulling single verses out of God's Word only in order to teach by, does not give the full Message of His Word, and if The Word is not 'rightly divided' into subject and object, it will create confusion. As with this verse 21, your other marker is the 'house of David' within the same verse as 'Israel', letting you know to mark that difference. The word 'Israel' can also apply to the 'house of Judah', but usually there are no other 'markers' in the same verse when that happens. Many pass over this point, mainly I believe, because they have not been properly taught in The Word. But if you have been with me in this Lost Tribe study, these 'markers' dealing with the two 'houses' should jump out at you when you read them in The Word now, and this will help give you a fullness that was previously missing in your understanding of The Word.

II Kings 17:19-20

19 Also Judah kept not the commandments of the LORD their God, but walked in the statutes of Israel which they made.

20 And the LORD rejected all the seed of Israel, and afflicted them, and delivered them into the hand of spoilers, until He had cast them out of His sight.

As the 'house of Israel' forgot The Lord and His Commandments, following the idol worship set up by Jeroboam in Beth-el and Dan, so also did the 'house of Judah' eventually follow in the same abominations. For this reason, God cast all of His People out of His sight, out of the whole land of Israel. Who might the word 'spoilers' apply to? '*Spoilers*' in this verse refer to one particular spoiler, that is Satan. It is plural here because the followers of Satan were the ones who took Israel away out of their

land. The Ten Tribes went first, then the three tribes in Judea making up the ‘house of Judah’ went into captivity to Babylon for seventy years, as prophesied by God through Jeremiah.

Jer 3:6 The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, “Hast thou seen *that* which backsliding Israel hath done? *She* is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot.

7 And I said after she had done all these *things*, ‘Turn thou unto Me.’ But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw *it*.

As the ‘house of Israel’ had played the ‘harlot’, with the false worship Jeroboam king of Samaria set up in the north, so also did the ‘house of Judah’ likewise. Ezekiel 23 labels the two ‘houses’ of Israel as two sister harlots, one named *Aholah* (ten tribes), and the other *Aholibah* (house of Judah). That’s what is meant here in Jeremiah 3 with this analogy.

Jer 3:8 And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.

This makes God a ‘divorcee’. Divorce is like a murder in the family, so this is why Satan’s children have made it so easy for getting a divorce based on silly behavior in many family situations. Don’t misunderstand me, for some divorces are justified. But it’s all too easy after a couple get married, and not long after, our court systems allow them to divorce on shaky reasons, and not according to God’s Law.

If you’ll remember that ‘adultery’ is a valid reason for divorce in God’s Law, hence God is here showing us how He put away his ‘wife’ the ‘house of Judah’ whom He had swaddled, clothed with fine linen, and adorned with precious jewels, all in the sense of cherishing a lovely ‘wife’. You’ll find this analogy given in Ezekiel 16, and I suggest you read it, for it is some of the most beautiful Words of God expressing His Love for the place He has chosen to dwell in the eternity. It will help you in understanding the symbols in God’s Word dealing with ‘*The Bridegroom*’ as Christ, and ‘spiritual adultery’ by playing the ‘*harlot*’ in following false worship. Babylon is the cause and root of this spiritual harlotry system that is threaded through many of the world’s religions, yes, even in many so-called Christian Churches which have and are playing the ‘harlot’ by not teaching our Father’s Word, but man’s traditions instead.

Jer 3:9 And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks.

This ‘*adultery with stones*’ is with building false altars upon the high mountains, etc. The word ‘*stocks*’ is ‘*ets*’ in the Hebrew, meaning a ‘*tree*’, but comes from the Hebrew root ‘*atsah*’ meaning ‘*to close the eyes*’ (Strong’s nos. 6086;6095). I hope you remember that Satan promised that Eve’s eyes would be opened in Genesis, but in the Hebrew, Adam and Eve’s eyes were closed after their sin, meaning they didn’t become ‘as gods’, which Satan had promised. Nothing has changed today in modern times, these abominations are abundant today just as much back in Jeremiah’s day.

Jer 3:10 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto Me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the LORD.

11 And the LORD said unto me, “The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.”

The word '*feignedly*' is '*sheqer*' in the Hebrew meaning '*to sham*' (Strong's no. 8267). So they would look so religious, and appear outwardly spiritual, but it was all a big 'sham'. God knows when we try to fool Him. Nothing slips by His notice. How's it today folks? Is this playing Church and appearing so holy on the outside still going on today in Christ's Churches? Not all, but enough. That's why you should choose the Church you go to wisely, much as you would be careful about which Doctor you went to for your flesh body's healing. In both cases, the Truth should be your goal when choosing.

Judah is cast out

I spent some time documenting how the 'house of Judah' was responsible for the same abominations as her 'elder sister' the 'house of Israel'. You'll discover many more verses in God's Word describing this scenario. The idea of false worship and turning away from our Father begins in Genesis and ends with the Book of Revelation. And it applies to all nations, not just Judah and Joseph. Some in our Christian Churches teach that it's all the 'Jews' fault, and that is a lie that Satan loves to push, because he must hide his followers who have crept into both 'Houses'. Many times our brother Judah is wrongly blamed for acts that were committed by the Kenites who also call themselves 'Jews', for the word 'Jew' as used in God's Word, especially in The New Testament Greek means someone from the Tribe of Judah, **or**... someone who lives in Judea and not of the Israelite bloodline. So both 'houses' had a little prodding by the Kenite or 'false Jew' in following the abomination of false worship, but still, there's no excuse, especially today, for God has given us His Word to follow. The only way to be deceived is to not listen to God and follow the world instead, being insincere and immature, believing on man's religious systems instead of Christ.

II Kings 23:27 And the LORD said, I will remove Judah also out of My sight, as I have removed Israel, and will cast off this city Jerusalem which I have chosen, and the house of which I said, "My name shall be there."

God chose Jerusalem to be His dwelling place on earth. There are many places in Scripture to confirm this, here's a few: Deut.12:11; I Kings 8:43; I Kings 11:36. He also chose Judah to rule over His House. When Christ returns for the second Advent, both 'houses' will be gathered together again, and God's House in Jerusalem will be purged of all the dross that was allowed to creep into It. No one is going anywhere up in the clouds to live in the eternity, for heaven is wherever God is. Christ will be King of kings and Lord of lords upon this earth. This subject dealing with the two 'houses' and the putting back of God's Kingdom upon this earth with Its Holy stay in Jerusalem is one reason why many Christian Churches don't really get into these parts of The Old Testament. It destroys the idea of being 'raptured' up in the clouds, living in a heaven in the air and not on this earth which God said He created to be inhabited (Isaiah 45:18), and is where He will dwell in the eternity (Ezekiel 48:35).

God brought the 'spoiler' Nebuchadnezzar upon His chosen city Jerusalem (house of Judah) to do all these things written in this verse of II Kings 23:27. Again why? For turning away from Him.

Jer 25:11-13

11 And this whole land shall be a desolation, *and* an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

12 And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, *that* I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the LORD, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make *it* perpetual desolations.

13 And I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, *even* all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations.

The Book of Jeremiah is where you'll find the first Message God gave through His prophet Jeremiah to the 'house of Judah' concerning the Babylon captivity of 'seventy years'. This is historical; it actually happened, but...it is also a blueprint for the last 'one world government' system, called again Babylon which is virtually upon us today. Notice the last verse with '*which Jeremiah hath prophesied against all the nations*'. This applies to today also. If one studies this Book of Jeremiah along with Revelation, many of today's alignments of the nations against Jerusalem will be revealed in Scripture. The main difference in the 'seventy years' of Judah's captivity and for us today is for a symbol of the 'seven years' tribulation our Lord gave us in The New Testament, and of course Daniel. That time for us was shortened to '3 1/2' years, and then to 'five months', for the sake of the elect (see Matt.24; Mark 13; Luke 21; and Rev.9; also see the Book of Daniel).

Jer 7:11-15

11 Is this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your eyes? Behold, even I have seen *it*, saith the LORD.

12 But go ye now unto My place which *was* in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My People Israel.

13 And now, because ye have done all these works, saith the LORD, and I spake unto you, rising up early and speaking, but ye heard not; and I called *you*, but ye answered not;

14 Therefore will I do unto *this* house, which is called by My name, wherein *ye* trust, and unto the place which I gave to you and to your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh.

15 And I will cast *you* out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brethren, *even* the whole seed of Ephraim.' ‘

There should be no doubt that God is speaking to the 'house of Judah' only, here in these verses. '*Shiloh*' is another symbolic name for Christ, and was the city in northern Israel which first housed the Tabernacle worship when the Israelites came to Canaan. It is important to also note that the city Bethel was very close to this city Shiloh also. Bethel was the dwelling place of the 'Jacob's Pillar' stone brought from the wilderness sojourn to Canaan, and one center of 'golden calf' worship that Jeroboam (first king over the 'house of Israel') set up after the twelve tribes split into two kingdoms.

Jer 52:27

27 And the king of Babylon smote *them*, and put them to death in Riblah in the land of Hamath. Thus Judah was carried away captive out of his own land.

You'll find this same verse in II Kings 25:21, and also another record of these events when the King of Babylon took Judah into captivity to Babylon all there in II Kings 25. The Book of Jeremiah is very important for understanding the Babylon captivity of the 'house of Judah', and the details leading up to the Babylon captivity, including the carrying away of Judah, are all given there.

Judah returns to Jerusalem

Ezra 2:1 Now these *are* the children of the Province that went up out of the captivity, of those which had been carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away unto Babylon, and came again unto Jerusalem and Judah, every one unto his city; God promised that Babylon would become a waste and desolation after the seventy year captivity of Judah, and that's exactly what happened. Persia (under Cyrus, King of Persia) and the Medes conquered Babylon and it became the Medo-Persian Empire. The Book of Ezra records all those of the 'house of Judah' who returned to Jerusalem. This was according to God's Promise that He would give to David and Jerusalem '*one tribe*', being Judah, but also includes Benjamin and Levi, and the few who left Jeroboam's false 'golden calf' worship in northern Israel. Recorded there in Ezra are the names of all the families of the 'house of Judah' who returned

and...the names of the families who returned with them who were not Israelites at all. The number that returned from the 'house of Judah' is a mere approx. 42,000. The majority of those people returning were Gentiles of the Canaanites and various nations.

Ezra 1:1-5

- 1 Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah might be fulfilled, the LORD 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,
- 2 Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth; and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem, which is in Judah.
- 3 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 the LORD God of Israel, (He is the God,) which *is* in Jerusalem.
- 4 And whosoever remaineth in any place where *he* sojourneth, let the men of his place help him with silver, and with gold, and with goods, and with beasts, besides the freewill offering for the house of God that is in Jerusalem.
- 5 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which *is* in Jerusalem.

Note particularly the last verse. These are those who returned from the Babylonian captivity that were commissioned to rebuild God's House (Temple) after the King of Babylon had destroyed It. Nothing is here said of the other Tribes of Israel, specifically the Lost Ten Tribes of the 'house of Israel'. And you will not find where those majority of the Ten Tribes returned to the land of Israel anywhere in God's Word. The two 'houses' are still to this day apart, and will not be joined back together until Shiloh (Christ) returns (Gen.49:10). You will find some of the 'house of Judah' with children's names such as 'Manasseh', and even the 'gate of Ephraim', but you won't find written that the northern ten tribes returned with Judah. In my opinion, that's how many err saying that all twelve tribes returned to the land of Israel and are all there today. The '*army of Samaria*' is mentioned in Nehemiah 4, another Book detailing the events in Jerusalem after the Babylon captivity, but those Samaritans were the ones brought into the northern lands from the nations after the 'house of Israel' were carried captive by the King of Assyria (see II Kings 17:23-24).

Ezra 1:8-11 gives the items such as the Temple vessels, etc., which the 'house of Judah' brought back to Jerusalem with them from the Babylon captivity. The 'Ark of The Covenant' is not mentioned there. The Ark of The Covenant is no more given as to Its location again in The Word, until Revelation 11:19, where It is in heaven. So more than likely, all the searches for it in past history and today, are in vain.

This verse 5 of Ezra 1 tells us which tribes of Israel returned to Jerusalem, that is: Judah, Benjamin, and Levite. So why are '*the priests*' separately named here as a group? Besides Ezra and Nehemiah being important records of which tribes returned, a major Message from our Father in these two Books are how His People broke His Commandments concerning taking wives of the Canaanites and various nations. The Levites and Temple service peoples were especially to be of bloodline purity but were not. Because of these acts of allowing those of the Canaanites to creep into God's House, it made possible the false priest system which was instrumental in the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

Ezra 2:61-64

- 61 And of the children of the priests: the children of Habaiah, the children of Koz, the children of Barzillai; which took a wife of the daughters of Barzillai the Gileadite, and was called after their name:
- 62 These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.

Here's who this group of *'priests'* were as written back in Ezra 1:5. They were of the nations that had mixed in with Judah's Holy Stay in Jerusalem, for they returned from Babylon with the 'house of Judah'. Ezra 9 confronts this situation, as Ezra tries to do something about it when he is finally told of the mixing with the nations. The People promised to put away their foreign wives and children, but between both Books of the captivity return, Ezra and Nehemiah, it wasn't fully carried out and the nations have mixed with the 'house of Judah' to this day. This is the greatest Lesson from God in those two Books.

It's important to realize that God commanded especially Judah to remain bloodline pure, because that lineage was to be the bloodline of Christ Jesus. The Levites and sons of Aaron were in care of God's House of worship and they were to be Holy and pure in His Presence, so this is not to put down the Gentile as being base, for God loves all of His children (see Exod.28). The 'house of Judah' and the 'house of Israel' have a special Mission upon this earth, and that's why God chose them above all other peoples. Never allow someone to call you a racist with this teaching, for they lack true understanding in our Father's Word or purposefully attempt to divide God's Plan and destroy it. They will not succeed in it and will only hurt themselves, much as Jesus told Saul about 'kicking against the pricks' (Acts 9). Also be careful how you present this Truth dealing with these *Nethinims* (priests of the nations and temple servants) returning with our brother Judah after the Babylon captivity. It's also important to understand that these nations are not bad people; only that these acts allowing a particular people to creep into God's House along with these non-Israelites.

Ezra 2:63 And the Tirshatha said unto them, that they should not eat of the most holy things, till there stood up a priest with Urim and with Thummim.

64 **The whole congregation together was forty and two thousand three hundred and threescore,**

65 Beside their servants and their maids, of *whom there were* seven thousand three hundred thirty and seven: and *there were* among them two hundred singing men and singing women.

This documents the number of those returning, as the full names of each family are given in Ezra. The second stage of the return to Jerusalem by the 'house of Judah', and the rebuilding of the wall of the Temple is covered in the Book of Nehemiah.

Peace be with you in Christ Jesus,
Dave Ramey