

# Progress of Redemption #03

by David Shirley

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*God's plan of redemption is revealed through the story of the Northern Kingdom's rise and fall.*

**Duration:** 57:44

**Scripture:** 1 Kings 6:7, 1 Kings 7:1, 1 Kings 12:24-25, 1 Kings 13:1, 1 Kings 14:21, 2 Chronicles 36:17

**Topics:** "Redemption"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the story of Solomon in the book of 1 Kings. He highlights how Solomon's disobedience to God's commands led to the decline and division of the nation of Israel. Solomon's accumulation of wealth, horses, and foreign wives went against God's instructions given in Deuteronomy. As a result, God became angry with Solomon and raised up adversaries against him. However, God showed mercy and spared Solomon's kingdom during his lifetime for the sake of his father David, but promised to take it away from his son. The sermon emphasizes the importance of obedience to God's commands and the consequences of sin.

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## Transcript

Progress of Redemption Act II, 1 Kings chapter 11 through 2 Chronicles 36. Father, we do thank you for the splendor and the glory of your name, your kingdom, that will never pass away, particularly as we look today at how you scattered the nation and because of the sin in the people and in the leadership, the decline, the division, the dispersion of your people, and finally, the destruction that sin brings upon any people. We thank you, Lord, that you could work in the leaders of our nation that they might turn to you.

We know it's not too late, and we ask you that you would work on all those in authority, Lord, that we would be a nation that turned to you. With all of our heart, you might use us. Be with us today as we look into your word, we pray in Jesus' name, amen.

Well, Solomon, in all of his glory and all of his splendor, made a great mistake. He married idolatrous women, 700 wives, 300 concubines. 1 Kings 11, 9 through 13 says, the Lord was angry with Solomon because his heart was turned away from the Lord, the God of Israel, who had appeared to him twice and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods, but he did not observe what the Lord had commanded.

So the Lord said to Solomon, because you've done this and you've not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I've commanded you, I will surely tear the kingdom from you and will give it to your servant.

Nevertheless, I will not do it in your days for the sake of your father, David, but I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However, I will not tear away all the kingdom, but I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of my servant, David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, which I have chosen.

You know, who's doing this? This is God. God is at work here. It says in verse 14 that the Lord raised up an adversary to Solomon.

Hadad, the Edomite, he was of the royal line in Edom. So God is working. And again, there was a Now, when the man Jeroboam was a valiant warrior and Solomon saw that the young man was industrious, he appointed him over all the forced labor of the house of Joseph.

And it came about at that time when Jeroboam went out of Jerusalem, the prophet Ahijah found him on the road and Ahijah took hold of the new cloak, which was on him and tore it into 12 pieces. And he said to Jeroboam, Take for yourself 10 pieces, for thus says the Lord, the God of Israel, Behold, I will tear the kingdom out of the hand of Solomon and give you 10 tribes. But he will have one tribe for the sake of my servant, David, and for the sake of Jerusalem, the city which I've chosen from all the tribes of Israel, because they have, you know, forsaken me.

And they, you know, worshiped all these false gods. In verse 34, God continues, Nevertheless, I will not take the whole kingdom out of his hand, but I'll make him ruler all the days of his life for the sake of my servant, David, whom I chose to observe my commandments and my statutes. But I will take the kingdom from his son's hand and give it to you, even 10 tribes.

But to his son, I will give one tribe that my servant David may have a lamp always before me in Jerusalem, the city where I have chosen for myself to put my name. And I'll take you and you shall reign over whatever you desire and you shall be king over Israel. Then it will be that if you listen to all that I command you and walk in my ways and do what is right in my sight by observing my statutes and my commandments, as my servant David did, then I will be with you and build you an enduring house, as I built for David, and I'll give Israel to you.

Thus, I will afflict the descendants of David for this, but not always. Solomon sought, therefore, to put Jeroboam to death, but Jeroboam arose and fled to Egypt, to Shishak, king of Egypt, and he was in Egypt until the death of Solomon. Now, we need to remember that in chapter 5, verses 13 through 16, it tells of all the forced labor that Solomon was putting on the people.

In chapter 9, verses 15 through 19, again, the taxes and the building that were there. And again, in chapter 11, verses 1 through 8 and verse 13, and the people resented all this building that was going on that Solomon was doing, and a lot of it for the foreign women and because of the horses and the things that he was accumulating to himself that he shouldn't have done. But, while the people were growing in their resentment to Solomon taxing them and putting people on shifts to work for him and do all this building because they had to take time out from their families and their businesses to provide all this work.

Well, Jeroboam's gone. He's out of the scene until Solomon dies, but now Solomon is dead. And then in 1 Kings 12, we read, Then Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king.

And it came about when Jeroboam, the son of Nebat, heard of it. He was still in Egypt where he had fled from the presence of King Solomon. And they sent and called him.

Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and they spoke to Rehoboam saying, Your father, Solomon, made our yoke hard. Therefore, lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke which he put on us and will serve you. Then he said to them, Well, tell you what, depart for three days, then return to me.

So the people departed. Obviously, Rehoboam wanted to get some counsel. And King Rehoboam consulted with the elders who'd served his father, Solomon, while he was still alive, saying, How do you counsel me to answer this people? Then they spoke to him saying, If you will be a servant to this people today and will serve them, grant them their petition and speak good words to them, then they will be your servants forever.

But he forsook the counsel of the elders, which they had given him and consulted with the young men who grew up with him and served him. So he said to them, What counsel do you give that we may answer this people who've spoken to me saying, Lighten the yoke which your father put on us? The young men who grew up with him spoke saying, Thus you shall say to this people who spoke to you saying, Your father made our yoke heavy. Now you make it lighter for us, but you shall speak to them.

My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. Whereas my father loaded you with a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I'll discipline you with scorpions.

Then Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had directed, saying, Return to me on the third day. And the king answered the people harshly, for he forsook the advice of the elders, which they'd given him. And he spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, saying, My father made your yoke heavy, but I'll add to your yoke.

My father disciplined you with whips, but I'll discipline you with scorpions. So the king did not listen to the people, for it was a turn of events from the Lord that he might establish his word, which the Lord spoke through Ahijah, the Shillomite, to Jeroboam, the son of Nebat. So again, you see, who's doing this? It is God that's working.

The heart of the king is in the hand of the Lord, and he turns it withersoever he will, like the watercourses. And this whole thing is being orchestrated. It's come about as a turn of events, and it's from the Lord.

Well, verse 16 says, When all Israel saw that the king did not listen to them, the people answered the king and said, What portion do we have in David? We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse. To your tent. So Israel, now look after your own house, David.

In other words, do it by yourself. So Israel departed to their tents. And verse 19 says, So Israel has been in rebellion against the house of David to this day.

Well, here is the division. It has been a united kingdom under Saul and under David and under Solomon. There's only been one kingdom with one monarch, one ruler, and during David's time, particularly a theocracy, and that he was a man after God's heart.

And yet now, after about 120 years of a united front, as God had said through Solomon's son, the kingdom is divided, and the ten tribes go with Jeroboam to the north, called Israel, make Samaria their capital. And Rehoboam stays by himself, except for, of course, the tribe of Benjamin with him, because Rehoboam was from the tribe of Judah. And we see the beginning of the division, and the division is accomplished in verse 19, where it says, Israel's been in rebellion against the house of David this day.

And it came about when all Israel heard that Jeroboam had returned, that they sent and called him to the assembly and made him king over all Israel. None but the tribe of Judah followed the house of David. Now, when Rehoboam had come to Jerusalem, he assembled all the house of Judah and the tribe of Benjamin, 180,000 chosen men who were warriors to fight against the house of Israel to restore the kingdom to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon.

But the word of the Lord came to Shemaiah, the man of God, saying, speak to Rehoboam, the son of Solomon, king of Judah, and to all the house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, saying, thus says the Lord, you must not go up and fight against your relatives, the sons of Israel. Return every man to his house, for this thing has come from me. So they listened to the word of the Lord and returned and went their way according to the word of the Lord.

Wow. Now, if this happened in your church and there was such a division, what counsel would you give? We tend to treat symptoms rather than causes. And God says this is something God's doing for his purpose.

And so the division takes place just as it was prophesied. Now, we need to remember that this is taking place as a punishment for the apostasy of Solomon. And so the sentence of the father is visited to the next generation and is to be a lesson to Judah as well.

Now, in verse 25, we see that Jeroboam, as he went north with the ten tribes of Israel, he built Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and he lived there. And he went out from there and built Penuel. And Jeroboam said in his heart, now the kingdom will return to the house of David.

If this people go up to offer sacrifices in the house of the Lord in Jerusalem, then the heart of this people will return to their Lord, even to Rehoboam, King of Judah, and they'll kill me and return to Rehoboam, King of Judah. So just his fear, his paranoia about this thing, thinking the people would leave him if they went down to sacrifice, he devised a plan. So the king consulted, and he made two golden calves.

And he said to them, it's too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Behold your God, O Israel, that brought you up from the land of Egypt. And he set one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.

Now, this thing became a sin for the people went to worship before the one as far as Dan. So these worship centers that he set up were very convenient. We know something in our day of the altars of convenience.

And it's really sad to see the results of what takes place here, because of the 19 kings of the northern kingdom, every one of them followed the golden calf worship, because the calf came to stand as a symbol of Israel's independence, you know, from Judah. And some of the kings even served Baal, though Baal worship was pretty much exterminated by Elijah after Jezebel introduced it. But not even one of the 19 kings of the northern kingdom made a great attempt to bring the people back to God.

And verse 31 says that Jeroboam made houses on the high places and made priests from among all the people who were not of the sons of Levi. And Jeroboam instituted a feast in the eighth month, on the 15th day of the month, like the feast which is in Judah. And he went up to the altar, thus he did in Bethel, sacrifice unto the calves which he'd made.

And he stationed in Bethel the priests of the high places which he'd made. And then he went up to the altar which he'd made in Bethel on the 15th day of the eighth month, even in the month which he had

devised in his own heart. And he instituted a feast for the sons of Israel and went up to the altar to burn incense.

And the reason that, you know, they have these high places is so they'll be visible, so they'll be seen, you know, to elevate self basically. Reminds me of what Jesus said in Matthew 23:5 about, beware that your works be seen of men, that you do it for that reason. We need to take a look at some of the pictures and advertisements of holy men today, see if they're not high places in and of themselves.

Now it's not to say that the southern kingdom was very righteous and lily white by any means. But even though many of the southern kingdoms, kings did not serve the Lord, there were times when tremendous reformations took place in Judah. But still, in spite of them, Judah would keep sinking lower and lower into bell worship and into other Canaanite religions until there was no remedy for them either.

And so God now is going to predict concerning Israel, the 10 tribes in the north, that they're going to be removed and they're going to be scattered. And in first Kings 14 verses 7 through 16, we read the prediction of God. Go say to Jeroboam, thus says the Lord God of Israel, because I exalted you from among the people and made you leader over my people Israel and tore the kingdom away from the house of David and gave it to you.

Yet you've not been like my servant David who kept my commandments and who followed me with all of his heart to do only that which was right in my sight. You remember that God had promised him that if he was like David, that God would bless him. But we just read he wasn't like that.

Verse 9 says you also have done more evil than all who were before you and have gone and made for yourself other gods and molten images to provoke me to anger and have cast me behind your back. Therefore behold, I am bringing calamity on the house of Jeroboam and will cut off from Jeroboam every male person both bond and free in Israel and I'll make a clean sweep of the house of Jeroboam as one sweeps away dung until it's all gone. Anyone belonging to Jeroboam who dies in the city, the dogs will eat and he who dies in the field the birds of the heavens will eat.

For the Lord has spoken. Now you arise go to your house when your feet enter the city the child will die and all Israel shall mourn for him and bury him for he alone of Jeroboam's family shall come to the grave because in him something good was found toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam. Wow.

Seemingly an apparent contradiction here. You know we tend to think death is the ultimate pain and we think that life on earth is better than life in heaven but that's not God's view and God's view of death is totally different than ours. We shouldn't fear it obviously but here is a son maybe if he lived he'd have been tortured he'd have been mutilated by the Assyrians who were going to come and take over.

Tremendously feared people and God says that it's going to be a blessing that this child actually dies and in verse 14 he continues moreover the Lord will raise up for himself the king over Israel who shall cut off the house of Jeroboam this day and from now on for the Lord will strike Israel as a reed is shaken in the water and he will uproot Israel from this good land which he gave to their fathers and will scatter them beyond the Euphrates river because they've made their ashram provoking the Lord to anger and he will give up Israel on account of the sins of Jeroboam which he committed and with which he made Israel to sin. Then Jeroboam's wife arose and departed and came to Tirzah and as she was entering the threshold of the house the child died and all Israel buried him and mourned for him according to the word of the Lord which he spoke through his servant Hija the prophet. So God has predicted in 1st Kings 14 that Israel will

be removed and scattered and now in 2nd Kings chapter 17 we see that this is accomplished beginning in verse 6 in the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria captured Samaria and carried Israel away into exile to Assyria and settled them in Hela and Hebor on the river Gozan and in the cities of the Medes.

Now this came about because the sons of Israel had sinned against the Lord their God who had brought them up from the land of Egypt from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt and they had feared other gods and walked in the customs of the nations whom the Lord had driven out before the sons of Israel and in the customs of the kings of Israel which they had introduced and the sons of Israel did things secretly which were not right against the Lord their God. Moreover they built for themselves high places in all their towns from watchtower to fortified city and they set for themselves sacred pillars and asheram on every high hill and under every green tree and there they burned incense on all the high places as the nations did which the Lord had carried away to exile before them and they did evil things provoking the Lord. They served idols concerning which the Lord had said to them you shall not do this thing yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah through all his prophets and every seer saying turn from your evil ways and keep my commandments my statutes according to all the law which I commanded your fathers and which I sent to you through my servants the prophets.

However they did not listen but stiffened their neck like their fathers who did not believe in the Lord their God and they rejected his statutes and his covenant which he made with their fathers and his warnings with which he warned them and they followed vanity and became vain and went after the nations which surrounded them concerning which the Lord had commanded them not to do like them and they forsook all the commandments of the Lord their God and made for themselves molten images even two calves and made an asherah and worshiped all the host of heaven and served Baal. Then they made their sons and their daughters pass through the fire and practiced divination and enchantments and sold themselves to do evil in the sight of the Lord provoking him. So the Lord was very angry with Israel and removed him from his sight none was left except the tribe of Judah and so here in 2nd Kings 17 we see that the prediction that was given in 1st Kings 14 is now accomplished and Assyria in 722 BC under the sovereign rulership of God over the earth came and totally removed God's people from before God's face because they provoked him so much.

Now Hosea was king he reigned nine years he paid tribute to the king of Assyria but also made an alliance with Egypt in secret and the Assyrians came and Samaria fell. We'll come back later and put on top of this what the prophets Hosea Isaiah and Micah said at this time.

Now we didn't read it but in chapter 15 and verse 30 we read that Hosea the king brought tribute to the king of Assyria it's recorded in chapter 17 and verse 3 after he slew Micah and there's an inscription of Tiglath-Pileser that says Micah their king they had overthrown I placed Hosea over them and from him I received 10 talents of gold and 1000 talents of silver and so God used the Assyrian empire as his instrument of discipline and they have actually found in the Assyrian remains the annals of 10 Hebrew kings Omri and Ahab, Jehu, Menahem, Pekah, Hosea, Isaiah, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh which confirms many of the biblical accounts that we have here in the bible in some of the accounts that have been found of the Assyrians they were so cruel that they would take their prisoners and skin

them alive and some of them they would cut off their hands their feet their noses their ears and they you know would pull out their tongues and they would mound up these huge mounds of human skulls and everything they did was to create terror you know for other people in the future they ruled by fear and normally it was their policy when they would conquer another people they would try to destroy their sense

of nationalism by scattering them and dispersing them and God used them to disperse and scatter Israel as he had prophesied it's always been interesting to me that when you see this happening you think way back to when did this when did the problem first start developing and it it began way back with Solomon in first kings chapter six where it says that he was seven years in building

the house of God but chapter seven verse one says no Solomon was building his own house 13 years and he finished all his house and things really haven't changed that much since Solomon where we spend our time that's where our hearts are and where we spend our time which is our most precious commodity is what we worship and so it all began back when Solomon's decline of the worship of God and putting God first and spending time on God and in God's house Solomon spends more time on his own house and it was from there and after that in chapter 10 the first kings we start seeing him collect horses and collect wealth and then in chapter 11 he starts taking on foreign wives and all this had been given as a warning back in Deuteronomy chapter 17 and verses 14 through 20 400 years earlier where

it says when you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you and you possess it live in it and you say I'll set a king over me like all the nations who are around me you shall surely set a king over you whom the Lord your God chooses one from among your countrymen you shall set a king over yourselves you may not put a foreigner over yourselves who is not your countryman moreover he shall not multiply horses for himself nor shall he cause the people to return to Egypt to multiply horses since the Lord has said to you you shall never again return that way neither shall he multiply wives for himself lest his heart turn away nor shall he greatly increase silver and gold for himself these are the things that begin reading that Solomon did and he did them for himself uh everything he did

the multiplying the horses was for himself the multiplying of the wives was for himself the multiplying the silver and the gold was for himself and that's why i say the problem began actually in first king six when he just started putting more time on himself than on God and God's work and God's kingdom and this was prophesied way back in Deuteronomy chapter 17 and verse 18 says now it shall come about when he sits on the throne of his kingdom he shall write for himself a copy of this law on a scroll in the presence of the Levitical priests and it shall be with him and he shall read it all the days of his life that he may learn to fear the Lord his God by carefully observing all the words of this law and these statues that his heart may not be lifted up above his countrymen and that he

may not turn aside from the commandment to the right or to the left in order that he and his sons may continue long in his kingdom in the midst of Israel wow what if kings were to write their own copy in their own handwriting and then spend their life meditating on the word of God and particularly those parts that were prophesied concerning them specifically things that God knew that the only way he could cleanse this way the only way that he could win the victory was by meditating on the word of God and that the word of God would keep Solomon from sin but it looks like sin kept Solomon from the word of God and so now the kingdom that was once united but after Solomon's death has been divided of that northern part of the division they've been scattered by Assyria and so all that remains

is a single kingdom Judah and you would think that Judah would see all this and repent and return to the Lord and remember the prophecies of God the commands of God and obey God but what we see again in 2nd King 17 and verse 19 it says also Judah did not keep the commandments of the Lord their God but walked in the customs which Israel had introduced and the Lord rejected all the descendants of Israel and afflicted them and gave them into the hand of plunderers until he had cast them out of his sight when he had torn Israel from the house of David they made Jeroboam the son king and Jeroboam drove Israel

away from following the Lord and made them commit a great sin and the sons of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did they did not depart from them until the Lord removed

Israel from his sight as he spoke through all the servants the prophets so Israel was carried away and taken south from their own land to Assyria until this day now an interesting thing took place before we move on to Judah in verse 24 it says and the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon and from Katta and from Abba and from Hamath and Seraphim and settled them in the cities of Samaria in place of the sons of Israel so they possessed Samaria and lived in its cities and it came about at the beginning of their living there that they did not fear the Lord therefore the Lord sent lions among them which killed some of them so they spoke to the king of Assyria saying the nations whom you've carried away into exile in the cities of Samaria do not know the custom of the god of the land so he

has sent lions among them and behold they killed them because they do not know the custom of the god of the land so the king of Assyria commanded saying take there one of the priests whom you carried away into exile and let him go and live there and let him teach them and teach them the custom of the god of the land so one of the priests whom they had carried away into exile from Samaria came and lived at Bethel and taught them how they should fear the Lord what missions opportunity I guess God can open the door through any means he can use lions if necessary and of course every nation still used on God but you begin to see the origin of the Samaritans and how that happened here well back to Judah Judah is walking in the footsteps of Israel and it's getting worse and now we see how God

views it in second kings chapter 21 beginning in verse 10 now the Lord spoke through his servants the prophets saying because Manasseh king of Judah has done these abominations having done wickedly more than all the Amorites did who were before him and has also made Judah sin with his idols therefore thus says the Lord the God of Israel behold I am bringing such calamity on Jerusalem and Judah that whoever hears of it both his ears shall tingle and I will stretch over Jerusalem the line of Samaria and the plummet of the house of Ahab and I'll wipe Jerusalem as one wipes a dish wiping it and turning it upside down and I will abandon the remnant of my inheritance and deliver them into the hand of their enemies and they shall become a plunder and spoil to all their enemies because they've

done evil in my sight and have been provoking me to anger since the day their fathers came from Egypt even to this day and so while things have progressed throughout the years God reveals here that he's been watching it and basically God's been upset and he's been upset ever since the day they left Egypt and God reiterates it later when we look into Jeremiah in chapter 32 and verse 31 where God gives his view again and says indeed this city has been to me a provocation of my anger and my wrath from the day that they built it even to this day that it should be removed from before my face and you know you just see here the terrible thing about sin is it just messes up everybody's plans and particularly God's plans that it upsets God perhaps more than anybody and it wounds his heart more

than anybody and he hurts more than anybody when we sin and because God had chosen Jerusalem and he has such great plans but they've just messed everything up with their selfishness and their idolatry well God's going to use the nation Babylon second Kings 24 says that in the days of King Jehoiakim Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon came up and Jehoiakim became his servant for three years and then he turned and rebelled against him and we know from the book of Daniel that Daniel confirms the same thing and then Jehoiachin reigned in this place and Nebuchadnezzar first came up in 606 BC and he came back again he had to leave in 605 to go fight the battle of Carchemish because the Assyrians and Egyptians had joined together in an alliance to come against Babylon and so he left and went back

and fought that battle then he came back again and took more of the articles of the temple and he took no doubt Ezekiel and others he had taken Daniel Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in this first raid and came back for a second raid and finally would come again for a third raid and a final raid against Jerusalem and this is the one we read here in 2nd Kings 25 7-21 where God accomplishes and fulfills the prediction that he made in verse 7 and they slaughtered the sons of Zedekiah who was the last king of Judah before his eyes and then put out the eyes of Zedekiah and bound him with bronze fetters and brought him to Babylon now on the seventh day of the fifth month which was the 19th year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon Nebuchadnezzar the king or the captain of the guard a servant

of the king of Babylon came to Jerusalem and he burned the house of the Lord the king's house and all the houses of Jerusalem even every great house he burned with fire so all the army of the Chaldeans who were with the captain of the guard broke down the walls around Jerusalem then the rest of the people who were left in the city and the deserters who had deserted to the king of Babylon and the rest of the multitude Nebuchadnezzar and the captain of the guard carried away into exile but the captain of the guard left some of the poorest of the land to be vine dressers and plowmen now the bronze pillars which were in the house of the Lord and the stands and the bronze sea which were in the house of the Lord the Chaldeans broke in pieces and carried the bronze to Babylon they took away the

pots the shovels the snuffers the spoons and all the bronze vessels which were used in temple service the captain the guard also took away the firepans and the basins what was fine gold and what was fine silver the two pillars the one sea and the stands which Solomon had made for the house of the Lord the bronze of all these vessels was beyond weight the height of the one pillar was 18 cubits and bronze capital was only at the height of the capital was three cubits with a network of pomegranates on the capital all around all of bronze and the second pillar was like these with network and the captain of the guard took Sariah the chief priest and Zephaniah the second priest with three officers of the temple and from the city he took one official who was overseer of the men of ward five of

the king's advisors who were found in the city and the scribe of the captain of the army who mustered the people of the land and 60 men of the people of the land who were found in the city and Nebuchadnezzar and the captain of the guard took them and brought them to the king of Babylon at Riblah then the king of Babylon struck them down and put them to death at Riblah in the land of Haman so Judah was led away into exile from its land God sent Babylon to destroy the only theocratic nation that has ever existed on the earth this is one of the most significant historical events that's ever happened and God's people are transplanted into Babylon for 70 years as second chronicles 36 21 says to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah until the land had enjoyed its Sabbath all the

days of its desolation it kept Sabbath until 70 years were complete because the people had broken God's law of the Sabbath for 490 years God finally judged and if you divide 490 by 7 every seventh year was a Sabbath you have 70 years so God exacted the 70 years that really they owed him and God gave the land rest but in spite of this great disaster we see that it ends on a note of hope and in second chronicles 36 22 and 23 it says now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia in order to fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah which you can read in Jeremiah 29 10 through 14 the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia so that he sent a proclamation throughout his kingdom and also put it in writing saying thus says Cyrus king of Persia the Lord the God of heaven has

given me all the kingdoms of the earth and he has appointed me to build him a house in Jerusalem which is in Judah whoever there is among you of all his people may the Lord his God be with him and let him go

up what a wonderful note of hope and it certainly reminds you of Psalm 122 one of the songs of ascent that they used to sing is and still I guess do as they go up to Jerusalem to worship the Lord I was glad when they said to me let us go to the house of the Lord our feet are standing within your gate so Jerusalem Jerusalem that is built as a city that's compact together to which the tribes go up even the tribes of the Lord and so Cyrus lets them go free and go up to rebuild their nation now God's promise to Solomon is still in effect and 2nd Chronicles 7 14 is true if my people who

are called by my name humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then I'll hear from heaven and I'll forgive their sin and I'll hear their their land I know that as sure as I'm standing here today that Deuteronomy 30 verses 1 through 10 are going to take place so it shall become when all these things have come upon you the blessing and the curse which I've said before you and you call them to mind and all the nations where the Lord your God has banished you and you return to the Lord your God and obey him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today you and then the Lord your God will restore you from captivity and have compassion on you and will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you if

you're outcast or at the ends of the earth from there the Lord your God will gather you and from there he'll bring you back and the Lord your God will bring you into the land which your father's possessed and you shall possess it and he will prosper you and multiply you more than your father's moreover the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants to love the Lord your God with all your heart with all your soul in order that you may live and I mean that's national conversion taking place here after a restoration to the land because they've returned to the Lord and the Lord your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you who persecuted you you know who oppressed you and you shall again obey the Lord and observe all his

commandments which I have commanded you today then the Lord your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your land in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground for the Lord will again rejoice over you for good just as he rejoiced over your fathers if you obey the Lord your God to keep his commandments and his statutes which are written in this book of the law if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul this is when the discipline will be lifted when they turn to the Lord with all their heart and soul and it's just really interesting to read in Acts chapter 3 when Peter after the day of Pentecost and after the healing of the lame beggar and he addresses the whole nation of Israel in his second sermon when

he says men of Israel why do you marvel at this because you know they were just taken back there at the the guy that was sitting at the beautiful gate was begging alms and all and he addresses them and in verse 19 Peter says repent therefore he's talking to the whole nation he's asking for a national repentance of Israel repent therefore and return that your sins may be wiped away in order that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and that he may send Jesus the Christ appointed for you whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from ancient time Peter is here talking to the Jews as the men of Israel and he's asking them to repent they certainly understood the message of the

prophets so much of it was spent on the fact that they were an unfaithful wife and that they would go through captivity but God would restore them if they repented and so Peter asked the whole nation to repent and get ready for the return of their messiah Jesus Christ and it will happen but at this point in the biblical record here at the end of second chronicles 36 um it looks like God's instrument of redemption is

destroyed but God knows the end from the beginning and he's not without an answer even in this disaster and what God actually begins to do now is to use the stroke of judgment to prepare for the coming messiah we need to remember that during these 70 years of captivity in Babylon that there was only one place on the face of earth where people met God and that was Jerusalem

certainly uh Psalm 137 explains clearly that they can't sing God's song in a foreign land by the rivers of Babylon there we sat down and wept when we remembered Zion upon the willows in the midst of it we hung our harps for there our captors demanded of us songs and our tormentors mirth saying sing us one of the songs of Zion how can we sing the Lord's song in a foreign land if I forget you oh Jerusalem may my right hand forget her skill or her cunning may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not remember you if I do not exalt Jerusalem above my chief joy but you know the Lord will accomplish what concerns Israel the loving kindness of the Lord is everlasting and he doesn't forsake the work of his hands if he begins a good work he perfects it until the day of Jesus Christ now

Israel's chief sin had been idolatry and in the very period when God had asked for separation they kept political union and through marriage this idolatrous intercourse going we also today need to be reminded that God expects separation and to keep from that political union and from all the idolatry that comes because of it and I do thank the Lord that today we don't have to be in a certain church or in a certain city to sing the songs of the Lord Jesus Christ like they had to be to sing the songs you know of Jerusalem in that land but the Lord has launched worldwide evangelism and given us the great commission and given us the Holy Spirit the power to go into Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria the uttermost parts of the earth and so location is not the primary thing today but to worship God

in spirit and in truth we'll come back later hopefully and see what the prophets said during this time of the captivity the books that were written were Ezekiel and Daniel and it's interesting because during this time of the 70 years Daniel used the name El Elyon the most high God same one that Abraham refers to El Elyon in Genesis 14 when he wouldn't accept any gifts from King Chedorah Leomar because he'd sworn he'd lifted his hand to El Elyon most high God the possessor of heaven and earth and he didn't want to dishonor God because God's the ruler and Daniel certainly showed that and Daniel's from the tribe of Judah isn't that interesting that during this time of the 70 years of captivity there was a man from the tribe of Judah who basically ruled all the kingdoms that passed by you

know he might have not been the direct ruler but God brought him there and God raised him up and and king after king you find out Daniel's the guy that's really running the kingdom and I think that's interesting in light of Genesis 49 that says that there would be a ruler from the tribe of Judah until Shiloh comes and even during the captivity there was one ruling over the pagan world you might say and then Ezekiel he over 200 times uses the word Adonai which means lord or absolute ruler to know God in terms of ownership that God owns us and he has all rights to us and so we'll look at these later then let me say in closing if I may that Psalm 122 has a great parallel or application to us today as well and what it says to pray for the peace of Jerusalem they shall prosper that love thee

peace be within thy walls and prosperity within thy palaces for my brethren and my companions sakes I will now say peace be within thee because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good the psalm begins with I I was glad when they said unto me but it says let us go into the house of the Lord and the psalm ends with thy good and Jerusalem as a as a group of people Jerusalem filled with God's people thy good we are today though David's house was real and true and and God will fulfill everything to them it it also pointed forward to someone else's house and he knew chapter 3 in verse 6 it says Christ is son over

his own house whose house are we so we are the house of Christ now and we are also fitly framed together built it and compacted together built on the top and in between

and beneath and the stones you know the walls built up together and he says for my brethren and my companions sakes I'll say peace be within thee and we too can say that we're concerned for one another we think not on our own things but on the things of others and God is working today in our midst building himself a place of habitation a place where he can express his love to the world and as the world looks at Christians they ought to be able to see the peace of the house of God and they ought to be able to see how we're might be compact or fitly framed together but in love and we have concern for our companions and we're saying peace be within thee because of the house of the Lord our God I will seek thy good and it is my prayer that it would be on your heart to seek the good of the

body of the Lord Jesus Christ wherever he has placed you

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