



FEED MY SHEEP

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The Royal Seed taken to the *new* land of Judah *The Story of Joseph, Part 42*

(Special note: There was no October issue of FMS due to the death of my wife, Roxanne, on September 5, 2013 — Dr. Bruggeman)

We are in the process of discussing this most astounding and far-reaching prophecy:

Genesis 49:10 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him *shall* the gathering of the people *be*.

How did our Father secretly fulfill the prophecy that the scepter would not depart from Judah, when it *appears* that this prophecy failed? We left off last time by stating that we need to explore the circumstances surrounding the demise of the kingdom in the reign of Zedekiah. For that, we turn to the book of Jeremiah.

The good king Josiah was on the throne when Jeremiah began his ministry. Over the course of the next 22 years Jeremiah saw the accession and then demise of four more kings of Judah. First was Shallum, also known as Jehoahaz. He was a son of Josiah. He reigned three months and then never returned from a battle. His brother, Johoiakim took over and ruled for 11 years. He had an ignominious end and was succeeded by his son, Jehoiachin, also known as Coniah. Now listen to this pronouncement of his impending doom.

Jeremiah 22:24 *As I live, saith the LORD, though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence;*

He reigned only three months because it was at this time that Nebuchadnezzar's armies came in and captured him and his whole family and took them to Babylon. But Nebuchadnezzar then took Coniah's uncle, Mattaniah, who was also a son of Josiah, and made him

a vassal king of Judah. He also changed Mattaniah's name to Zedekiah.

2 Kings 24:17 *And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.*

18 *Zedekiah was twenty and one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And his mother's name was Hamutal, the daughter of Jeremiah of Libnah.*

If this was the same Jeremiah the prophet, then that makes King Zedekiah the grandson of Jeremiah! Because his daughter, Hamutal, was the wife of the good king Josiah. Bishop J. H. Allen holds to that opinion in his book, *Judah's Scepter and Joseph's Birthright*. I don't know that one can prove it one way or another. Merely because Jeremiah 1:1 states that Jeremiah was from Anathoth in the land of Benjamin does not mean that he lived there his entire life. He very well could have moved to Libnah.

We will see shortly that Jeremiah lived the latter years of his life a long, long way from Anathoth in the land of Benjamin. Regardless of whether it is the same Jeremiah or not, the manner in which Father preserved the Judah monarchy does not hinge on that being the case. It would merely mean that Jeremiah had the right connections that gave him access to the palace and *that* is how God arranged for him to do his latter work of building and planting. (With those words, we are referring to God's commission to Jeremiah in Jeremiah 1:10: See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.)

All during this time of the reigns of the latter four

kings, Jeremiah had succeeded in making himself very unpopular with the patriot community. That was because he was telling people that God said they should submit to Babylonian bondage. The latter four kings were wicked and finally after 11 years of vassalage, King Zedekiah decided to rebel against Nebuchadnezzar. Bad move, Zeddy! However, it was right in harmony with God's plan, which called for a 70-year captivity for Judah. So the Babylonians besieged Jerusalem. Zeddy tried to hightail it into the countryside...

Jeremiah 39: 5 But the Chaldeans' army pursued after them, and overtook Zedekiah in the plains of Jericho: and when they had taken him, they brought him up to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon to Riblah in the land of Hamath, where he gave judgment upon him.

6 Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah in Riblah before his eyes: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah.

7 Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.

Pretty nasty business, this "root out, pull down, destroy, and throw down" activity. Imagine that: the last thing Zedekiah saw with his eyes was the murder of his sons. That is the image he carries with him the rest of his life, because his own eyes are plucked out. He remains in the prison in Babylon until the day of his death. And that concludes the negative side of Jeremiah's commission. It appears that the scepter of Judah has died along with King Zedekiah in the Babylonian dungeon. But wait! What was it that Jeremiah was supposed to build? What was it he was supposed to plant? When you go out into your garden or into your orchard, what do you plant? A seed or a seedling tree, right?

Why did Nebuchadnezzar kill Zedekiah's sons and all the nobles of Judah? There is only one primary reason why that is ever done. It is to exterminate the monarchy of one's enemy by killing everyone who could possibly have a right to inherit the throne: sons, brothers, uncles, nephews, grandsons, and so forth. But what the Babylonians didn't know was that in Israel—in this case, the Judah portion of Israel—that the girls could inherit the throne! When there was no male heir, the daughters were eligible.

Well, as I said, old Jeremiah had really ticked off the patriot community in Judah, so that in the reign of Zedekiah, he had been nearly killed and had been thrown in a slime pit—probably a cesspool—within the palace prison. Only Zedekiah's pity kept him from perishing in such a fate. But Zeddy kept him in the palace prison nonetheless. So that when the Babylonian armies burned the city and slaughtered many, that

one of the safest places to be was in the prison.

The Babylonians had apparently heard of Jeremiah because when they released him, they told him he was free to go wherever he wished. So Jeremiah went to a city called Mizpah and decided to live there with the poorest of the poor, whom the Babylonians had not deported to Babylon with the middle and upper classes of Judahites.

Nebuchadnezzar had also appointed a man named Gedaliah to be the governor over the land, and since Jerusalem had been destroyed, Gedaliah chose Mizpah to be the provincial capital of the land of Judah. Gedaliah was a decent man. He was the grandson of the man who had been the scribe to the good king Josiah. And even though he was not of the royal seed, he apparently had enough education to qualify him as a suitable governor on behalf of Nebuchadnezzar.

His advice to the remaining people was the same as Jeremiah's had been to the whole nation before they were deported: serve Babylon and you will have peace and rest. However, there was trouble brewing because a fellow by the name of Ishmael had fled to the land of Ammon before the Babylonians came. He conspired with the king of Ammon to assassinate Governor Gedaliah and then Ishmael planned to take his place. It just so happened that Ishmael was of the royal seed and so he clearly thought he could kill any rivals to obtain the right to rule. Even though Gedaliah was warned by a man named Johanan of the impending assassination, Gedaliah didn't believe it, thus...

2 Kings 25:25 But it came to pass in the seventh month, that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, the son of Elishama, of the seed royal, came, and ten men with him, and smote Gedaliah, that he died, and the Jews and the Chaldees that were with him at Mizpah.

Well, how do you think that is going to affect King Nebuchadnezzar?

Jeremiah 41:10 Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king's daughters, and all the people that remained in Mizpah, whom Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had committed to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam: and Ishmael the son of Nethaniah carried them away captive, and departed to go over to the Ammonites.

There they are: the king's *daughters*. Zedekiah had three daughters. But now before Ishmael could even catch his breath, it says...

11 But when Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, heard of all the evil that Ishmael the son of Nethaniah had done,

12 Then they took all the men, and went to fight with Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and found him by the great waters that *are* in Gibeon.

13 Now it came to pass, *that* when all the people which *were* with Ishmael saw Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces that *were* with him, then they were glad.

14 So all the people that Ishmael had carried away captive from Mizpah cast about and returned, and went unto Johanan the son of Kareah.

15 But Ishmael the son of Nethaniah escaped from Johanan with eight men, and went to the Ammonites.

However, once back in Mizpah, Johanan begins to get weak in the knees, fearing that when King Nebzy hears about this, he will send an army to slaughter them all. So they come to Jeremiah and ask him to seek the Lord's will on this. They tell Jeremiah that they are thinking that perhaps the best course of action would be to flee down to Egypt.

But, Johanan promises that whatever the Lord tells them to do, they will do it. So Jeremiah consults the Lord. And Yahweh tells Jeremiah to advise them *not* to go down to Egypt, that they will be perfectly safe there in Mizpah. And, in fact, that if they do go down to Egypt, that they will all perish by the sword and by famine. Yahweh also tells Jeremiah that Johanan was lying; that he had already made up his mind to go to Egypt no matter what God said.

Jeremiah 43:5 But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah;

6 *Even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters, and every person that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had left with Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, and Jeremiah the prophet, and Baruch the son of Neriah.*

7 So they came into the land of Egypt: for they obeyed not the voice of the LORD: thus came they *even* to Tahpanhes.

Baruch was Jeremiah's scribe and so he goes wherever Jeremiah goes. And they had all been forced to go to Egypt with Johanan. Once in Egypt, Jeremiah is given to prophesy again, telling them that they are all going to perish in Egypt, *except...*

Jeremiah 44: 28 Yet a small number that escape the sword shall return out of the land of Egypt into the land of Judah, and all the remnant of Judah, that are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall know whose words shall stand, mine, or theirs.

Now as we survey the situation in Egypt, we find a remnant of Judah, who comprise a few from the very lowest classes, along with their leader, Johanan. And out of this remnant is a very small number who will escape Egypt, as it says, *into the land of Judah*. Who is in this very small number? They consist of Jeremiah, Baruch, and the king's daughters (note that is plural; daughters), and perhaps there were several other unnamed servants.

Well, way back earlier in the career of Jeremiah, when Yahweh was revealing to him the utter destruction of the kingdom of Judah and the city of Jerusalem, Jeremiah began to lament and say stuff like "I should never have born, o woe is me..." and so forth. At that point, Father assures Jeremiah with this prophecy concerning Jeremiah's personal future.

Jeremiah 15:11 The LORD said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant; verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee *well* in the time of evil and in the time of affliction.

14 And I will make *thee* to pass with thine enemies into a land which thou knowest not.

I now quote from *Judah's Sceptre and Joseph's Birthright*:

"Note the expression 'thy remnant,' i.e., Jeremiah's, for it is he who must build and plant that royal seed. Understand also that Jeremiah and his little remnant were well acquainted with Egypt, and since it was well known to them it could not have been their final destination. Hence, this escaping royal remnant must journey back to Judea and then—whither? 'Into an unknown land!' Why?"

And then Bishop Allen quotes Isaiah 37, saying: "For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of Mount Zion (on which were the royal dwellings). The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah (royal line) shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward."

And so where is that land unknown to Jeremiah where he is supposed to plant the royal seed and build the royal house anew? The answer is in God's Word.

You see, they were not only coming from the land of Judah, but they were also going to the land of Judah. A land of Judah which was not in Palestine. Then where was it? It was a land which the Bible describes as the isles north and west. The Hebrew did not have a single word for northwest, so they just said north and west. And if you take a map and draw a line northwest from the old Promised Land, you will arrive at the British isles.

At this point in our explanation of how God is fulfilling the prophecy of the scepter not departing from Judah, we need to go way back to the birth of Judah's twin sons, Pharez and Zarah.

Genesis 38: 26 And Judah acknowledged them, and said, She hath been more righteous than I; because that I gave her not to Shelah my son. And he knew her again no more.

27 And it came to pass in the time of her travail, that, behold, twins were in her womb.

28 And it came to pass, when she travailed, that the one put out his hand: and the midwife took and bound upon his hand a scarlet thread, saying, This came out first.

29 And it came to pass, as he drew back his hand, that, behold, his brother came out: and she said, How hast thou broken forth? this breach be upon thee: therefore his name was called Pharez.

30 And afterward came out his brother, that had the scarlet thread upon his hand: and his name was called Zarah.

I call the reader's attention to the fact that the one son was called Pharez because he interrupted the birth of his twin. Zarah had his hand out; then a breach occurred—not as we understand a breach birth today, but meaning that the birth of one was broken into or interrupted by the birth of the other. And then, for some reason which can only be Divine inspiration on the part of the midwife, she uttered the prophecy “this breach be upon thee, Pharez.” Which the Zarah branch of Judah always took to mean that at some point in history, that the scepter would have a breach, it would be interrupted, and at that point, it would transfer from Pharez to them, to the branch of the scarlet thread or the red hand branch. *(To be continued.)*

*Judah's Sceptre
and Joseph's Birthright*
by Bishop J. H. Allen

This is a classic work from 1902 which continues to thrill modern readers. Many are introduced to their own biblical identity for the first time through this exciting book which traces the royal family of Judah

and the many nations of Israel (the “Lost Tribes”) through history.

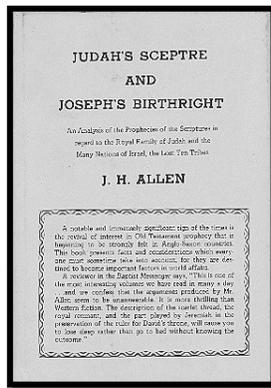
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The prophet Ezekiel was a contemporary of Jeremiah. And while Jeremiah prophesied mostly to Judah and slightly to cast-off, ten-tribed Israel; with Ezekiel, it was just the opposite. He prophesied mostly to cast-off Israel, and only slightly to the Judahites.

But we find in Ezekiel 21 a very enigmatic prophecy. If you took the time to read the whole context, you would find that it is a prophecy against the Judah kingdom, and its last king, Zedekiah, in particular. In the prophecy, it is predicted that Babylon will come and remove the crown from Zedekiah, who is referred to as a profane and wicked prince of Israel.

Remember, all Judahites are Israelites, but all Israelites are not Judahites. Therefore, when it says “prince of Israel,” this is not referring to the northern kingdom—they had already been gone over a hundred and thirty years by this time—it is obviously aimed at Zedekiah. Let's read it in

Ezekiel 21: 25 And thou,



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