

Intro_

The kingdom of Israel was a strong kingdom with exploits of wars and the conquering of other nations led by the Lord's servant and king of Israel, David. His kingdom could not be conquered because the Lord was with him. Yet where David succeeded, his fidelity causing God to establish an everlasting covenant, his son Solomon failed; his heart turned away from God by the love of women and the Lord vowed that the kingdom would be divided. After the death of Solomon the kingdom was divided into the north and the south. Throughout the years and under the reign of different kings, both kingdoms turned from the Lord and embraced idolatry. Ezekiel writes about the captivity of all of Israel, the northern and southern kingdoms alike. Ezekiel 19 is a lamentation (a sorrowful writing) for the princes of Israel because of the captivity that had come upon them. [Ezekiel 19](#).

In this lamentation, Ezekiel is mourning the fall of the once great nation and kingdom of Israel. However this is not the full interpretation. The voice of the Father always cries out to us in the NT somewhere, somehow and His dealings with OT Israel are forever a foreshadowing of what is to occur in the Church. Thus, we look to this lamentation to help us understand how it applies to us, the Church of Christ, the Lord's NT people.

The Princes of Israel

The doctrine (also the church) has nourished and converted the church's leaders into mighty rulers in the religious realm. We see them in this vision as young lions that devour men. The preachers of the Church of Christ embodied these young lions that ruled in the assembly and in the religious realm men of fearless character because they trusted the powerful doctrine they preached by which they subdued all under their feet. The language in Ezekiel reveals that these men learned to catch the prey, because they knew the faults of false Christianity and the weaknesses of other religious sects. They were skilled in the Word and therefore, experts in capture the minds and hearts of men through strong persuasion.

The doctrine extends authority to introduce action as with a rod or scepter. And should contention ever arise, Judah would prevail. Judah, Shiloh, always rises up from the prey, this has always been characteristic of the Church of Christ. [Gen 49:8-12](#). Yet, Ezekiel laments over these princes who strangely, now find themselves captives. They are entangled in nets, brought down in chains. From this captivity they were not loosed.

The Apostasy

Lament O Israel! The princes of Israel have been overcome. The nations here represent the church and its rulers in the state of unbelief as well as worldly doctrines personified. When the rulers of the church overstep their authority the Lord allows the world (confusion) to take the doctrine and its ruler's captive. What was the snare that entrapped them? The contention over the order of authority found in 1Cor 11 and more specifically over one aspect of the order found in the covering. The doctrinal question

that became their snare was the following...*“is it comely that a woman to pray unto God uncovered?”*

How did church rulers overstep their authority? They trusted in their own and attempted to take the Seat of the Lord for themselves by introducing human opinion as law, by equating necessary inference with direct commandment and approved example. **2Thess 2:3-4** *“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.”* They forgot who brings kings and princes to rule.

Pro 8:15 *“By me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth.”*

Ecc 10:16 *“Woe to thee, O land, when thy king is a child, and thy princes eat in the morning! Blessed art thou, O land, when thy king is the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!”*

In addition to attempting to usurp the Lord’s authority, they persecuted the upright man because they would not dare have their authority and counsel defied.

Psa 119:161 *“Princes have persecuted me without a cause: but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.”*

Isa 59:15 *“Yea, truth faileth; and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey: and the LORD saw it, and it displeased him that there was no judgment.”*

The Captivity

Lament O Israel! For the Lord took captive the mighty lions, the princes of Israel. The Lord has plucked up the once strong vine with strong rods for the scepters. Jude writes that they have become *“trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots;”* **Jude 1:12**. The captivity is upon Israel:

Job 12:19 *“He leadeth princes away spoiled, and overthroweth the mighty.”*

Psa 107:40 *“He poureth contempt upon princes, and causeth them to wander in the wilderness, where there is no way.”*

Nah 2:13 *“Behold, I am against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.”*

In Ezekiel 19 we see the church as a figurative mother; a lioness and a mother vine. The figure of a mother is used elsewhere in reference to the church as well as the gospel or doctrine. **Judges 5:28-31**. Of all of the strong men that the Lord raised up throughout generations to perform the work of the man in the church, they have all failed to introduce righteousness over the authority issue. Every lion that set the world in fear for its prowess is caught up and cannot rise from the prey. Every strong branch from the towering tree is withered and hollowed. There is no scepter to rule in favor of God. **Isa 59:16a** *“And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor:”*

Lion of the tribe of Judah

Lament O Israel! Lament, heaven and earth because your princes have been taken captive! None can escape, except a small remnant. Balaam prophesied from in **Numbers 23:24** over spiritual Israel saying *“Behold, the people shall rise up as a great lion, and lift up himself as a young lion: he shall not lie down until he eat of the prey, and drink the blood of the slain.”* **Micah 5:7-8** *“And the remnant of Jacob shall be in the midst of many people as a dew*

from the LORD, as the showers upon the grass, that tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the sons of men. And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep: who, if he go through, both treadeth down, and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver."

Who can deliver Israel and what present entity represents the remnant that was delivered? [Rev 5:1-10](#). Where everyone else failed, the *Lion of the tribe of Judah*, the Christ, the Word in the form of a faithful handmaid and elect, upheld the commandment, which ushered in Judgement due to the church's transgression. As Deborah arose as a mother in Israel, to deliver them so did the Lord's Elect. [Judge 5:7](#) *"The inhabitants of the villages ceased, they ceased in Israel, until that I Deborah arose, that I arose a mother in Israel."* [Is 59:15-21](#).

The NT remnant is represented in a woman with her children in the truth, and whom the elder praises by name. By lifting up the standard of love through obedience, she overcame and received a crown, the title, "Elect."

Conclusion_

Rejoice O Israel! Rejoice in the Lord, because He has delivered us from captivity, and from the hand of wicked men. He has established His kingdom with us. [Psalms 149](#).

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