The Jews After AD 70

Dr. James Overton, Ph.D.
EconoTeque SA, Board Member

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ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY

- The Assyrian captivity (or Assyrian exile) is the period in Jewish history during which Israelites of the Northern Kingdom of Israel were captives in Assyria, and deported to upper Mesopotamia, today modern Syria and Iraq.
- The Northern Kingdom of Israel was conquered by the Assyrian monarchs: Tiglath-Pileser III and Shalmaneser V.
- The captivity began in approximately 734-732 BC.
- Later Assyrian kings Sargon II and his son, Sennacherib, finished the demise of Israel's northern ten-tribe kingdom.
- In 724 BC, nearly ten years after the initial deportations, the capital city of the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Samaria, was finally taken by Sargon II.
- The Assyrians brought Gentiles to live in the land of Israel.

ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY

- The tribes exiled by Assyria later became known as the Ten Lost Tribes of Israel.
- Unlike the Kingdom of Judah, which was able to return from its Babylonian Captivity, the ten tribes of the Northern Kingdom never had a foreign edict granting them permission to return to Israel and rebuild their homeland.

CAUSE OF ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY

- The Kingdom of Northern Israel's fall to Assyria was due to its lack of faithfulness to God.
- The people of the ten tribes of the north went to Bethel and Dan, in northern Israel, to worship two golden calves instead of God in the Temple at Jerusalem.
  - Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves *of* gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

1Kings 12:28

CAUSE OF ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY

- Every king that came after Jeroboam, did evil in the sight of the Lord and did not depart from his sins.
- So, Israel continued to sin against the Lord.
- Only Jehu did what was right in the sight of the Lord, when he killed all the members the house of Ahab and all the worshipers of Baal, as God had commanded him, but then he himself did not turn away from the idolatry of Jeroboam.
- God sent the following prophets to the Northern Kingdom: Elijah, Elisha, Amos and Hosea.
- They warned the kings to repent from their idolatry or face destruction by the Assyrians.
- Isaiah and Micah prophesied about the Northern Kingdom’s fate.

CAUSE OF ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY

- Their kings, their local governors, their priests, and their prophets had sinned without repentance.
- So, God sent His four terrible Judgments: the sword, the famine, the pestilence and the beast, which was Assyria.
- The Assyrian army conquered the Kingdom of Israel and led the people captive to Assyria.
  - For the children of Israel walked in all the sins of Jeroboam which he did; they departed not from them;
  - 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.

2 Kings 17:22-23

CAUSE OF ASSYRIAN CAPTIVITY

- In the ninth year of Hoshea the king of Assyria took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria, and placed them in Halah and in Habor *by* the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes.
- For *so* it was, that the children of Israel had sinned against the LORD their God, which had brought them up out of the land of Egypt, from under the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt, and had feared other gods,
- And walked in the statutes of the heathen, whom the LORD cast out from before the children of Israel, and of the kings of Israel, which they had made.

2 Kings 17:6-8

BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

- The Babylonian captivity is the period in Jewish history during which the Kingdom of Judah was captive in Babylon.
- In the late 7th century BC, the Kingdom of Judah was a vassal state of the Assyrian empire.
- In the last decades of that century, Assyria was overthrown by Babylon, an Assyrian province.
- Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, plundered Jerusalem and its Temple and took king Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah), his court and other prominent citizens (including the prophet Ezekiel) back to Babylon.
- Jehoiakim's uncle Zedekiah was appointed king in his place.

BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

- Despite God's warnings and call to repentance through His prophet Jeremiah, Zedekiah revolted against Babylon, to which Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, returned and besieged Jerusalem, exhausted it by sword, famine, and plague, resulting in the city's destruction in 586 BC.
  - And now therefore thus saith the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning this city, whereof ye say, It shall be delivered into the hand of the king of Babylon by the sword, and by the famine, and by the pestilence;

    Jerimiah 32:36

BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

- Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city wall and the Temple, along with the houses of the most prominent citizens.
- King Zedekiah was blinded and taken to Babylon with many others to live out the remainder of his life.
- Judah became a Babylonian province, called Yehud Medinata (Judah Province), putting an end to the independent Kingdom of Judah.

The Kingdom of Southern Judah became a Babylon captive due to their lack of faithfulness to God.

BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY

- The kings sinned and led the people into sin and idolatry.
- Legend has that as a reward for Spain’s help, Nebuchadnezzar transported Jews to Spain as slaves to serve the needs of the Spanish conquerors.
- These Jews were Kohanim, members of the priestly class, as well as members of the royal family of David.

JEWS RETURN TO ISRAEL

- After the fall of Babylon to the Persian king Cyrus the Great in 538 BC, exiled Jews began to return to the land of Judah.
- King Cyrus the Great ended the exile of the Jewish people in 537 BC, the year after he conquered Babylonia, issuing a decree and granting them permission to return to the land of Israel and rebuild the Temple (Second Temple 521-516 BC) under Zerubbabel.
- The ten Northern Tribes exiled by Assyria never received a decree to return to their land, only the two Southern Tribes of Judah (Judahites, Benjamites and a few Levites) received such a decree.

SIEGE OF JERUSALEM IN 70 CE

- The Roman victors dealt out punishment to the defeated Jews.
- It is estimated by the ancient historians Tacitus (l. c. 56 - c. 118 CE) and Flavius Josephus (36-100 CE) that there were about 600,000 to 1,100,000 Jewish people killed in the siege.
- Jewish males aged 17 and older were either put in hard labor camps or made to be gladiators.
- Women and children were sold into slavery.

JERUSALEM SIEGE IMPACT

- During and after the siege of Jerusalem, many Jews and Israelites were forced to flee to the following African countries:
  - Ethiopia
  - Egypt,
  - Somalia,
  - Sierra Leone,
  - Liberia,
  - Senegal,
  - Ghana,
  - Nigeria.

JERUSALEM SIEGE IMPACT

- During and after the siege of Jerusalem, many Jews and Israelites were forced to flee to the following African countries:
  - Côte d'Ivoire,
  - Kenya,
  - South Africa,
  - Zimbabwe,
  - Malawi,
  - Tanzania,
  - Timbuktu,
  - Cameroon.