

Fundamentals of Belief
#16D: Jeremiah's Commission

Edited Sermon Transcript
Jon W. Brisby; 2-16-2002

This afternoon, brethren, we are going to continue in this series on the Fundamentals of Belief of the Church of God, The Eternal, with fundamental number sixteen. We've already had three sermons, and this will be number four. By way of rehearsal of the material that we've covered, I'll read fundamental sixteen again—even the very words that Mr. Armstrong originally wrote so many years ago at the beginning of the Radio Church of God. Here's how fundamental number sixteen reads:

We believe the PROMISES were made to Abraham and his "seed," Christ, and that the Covenants (including the New Covenant), and the promises pertain alone to ISRAEL. That our white, English-speaking peoples of today are enjoying the national phases of the promises—that of MATERIAL blessings—called the "Birthright," which was handed down thru the sons of Joseph, Ephraim and Manasseh, whose descendants we are; but that the "Scepter"—the promise of kings, and the SPIRITUAL phase of the promises, including Christ and salvation thru Him—was given to and shall not depart from Judah of whom are the race we know today as the Jews. We believe eternal life is God's gift resting upon the promises made to Abraham and his "seed," Christ, designating this earth (made new), not heaven, as our eternal home and reward. That salvation is thru Christ alone, and not inherited thru the Birthright (right of birth) and that salvation is freely open to Gentiles, who, thru Christ, become Abraham's children and are adopted into the family of Israel and become heirs according to the promises.

We've already covered a number of the initial aspects—the promise of salvation for all mankind through Jesus Christ and the fact that the promises that were given

through Abraham were twofold. There were the promises of race as well as the promises of grace. We've spent a lot of time covering the promises of race. Why are we doing that? Because it is the most misunderstood aspect of the Abrahamic covenant that God gave.

If you will remember, there are many who have had their faith destroyed because they have looked to the modern-day Jews for the fulfillment of all of the promises that God made to Abraham. Because they never saw those fulfillments, then they assume that the Bible was not accurate or that God lied or has failed to fulfill His promise. The significance of what we have been going through, most importantly, brethren, is that it provides an absolute certification of the validity of that which we accept in the Holy Scriptures, and the fact that God has fulfilled, and is still fulfilling, everything that He promised to Abraham. We can have confidence that this is the Creator God who sustains and keeps us all, and that He is fulfilling everything that He has placed within His Word. He bound Himself inexorably; and it is, and has been, fulfilled.

So we have gone through and described that covenant with Abraham that was reconfirmed with Isaac and Jacob—Jacob whose name was changed to Israel—and then the promises that were made to the sons of Israel, and the fact that those original promises to Abraham were divided into promises between the sons of Joseph and the descendants of Judah. The Scepter, the throne, was going to go through the descendants of Judah and would not depart from a descendant of Judah. But the physical promises of wealth and national preeminence were going to be given through Ephraim and Manasseh who were the adopted sons of Jacob. Remember, Jacob, who became Israel, actually adopted Joseph's sons and made them his own so that they were to receive an inheritance equal with his direct sons.

So we've gone through to see how that line of kings was established through the descendants of Judah. We saw that Saul was the first human king. Remember, who was the first king of Israel? None other than God Himself. But then, when the people demanded a human king, He gave them what they wanted. Saul, who was a Benjamite, could not have been the fulfillment of those promises that God gave—that the throne would stay and remain with a descendant of Judah.

David was raised up as the king through whom God would fulfill His promise. We saw that Davidic covenant last time. We also saw the division of the nation of Israel into two separate nations. Why? Because of the sins of Solomon. Solomon departed and forsook God in his old age. Because of that, God rent that kingdom away from the

descendants of Solomon, except for that small portion that became known as the house of Judah. Why? Because God had to fulfill His covenant promise with David—that a descendant of David would continue to rule over that house.

So He didn't rend the entire kingdom away from Solomon's son, Rehoboam. No, Judah, the smaller tribe of Benjamin, and then ultimately the attachment of many of the Levites, became part of the house of Judah. The majority of Israel, who retained the official name of Israel—the house of Israel to the north—was under Jeroboam. The northern ten tribes were then taken into captivity by the Assyrians because of their idolatry, and they were lost from view. David's dynasty had continued to rule over a part of Israel—just that smaller part of the house of Judah—from the division of the kingdom under Jeroboam and Rehoboam. That throne remained in the house of Judah until Judah's final captivity in the days of Zedekiah who was the last king of Judah who sat upon that throne. The house of Israel and the house Judah each became guilty before God.

Let's notice Jeremiah 3:6:

"The [Eternal] said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding Israel hath done . . ." Now, is this prophecy concerning Israel as a whole—all twelve tribes of Israel? No, as we're going to see, Israel here is referring specifically to the house of Israel, the northern ten tribes.

. . . 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. 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.

So, here, it becomes very clear that there is a distinction between these two houses. Israel, in this case, is speaking specifically of the northern house under Jeroboam and those other dynasties of evil kings that never did obey God—those who were taken into captivity by the Assyrians and were lost from view.

". . . But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw it." As we also talked about last time, Judah continued as a country and a nation 120 years after the captivity of the northern tribes. The kingdom of Judah and all its people had an opportunity to see what happened to their kinsmen in the north. They paid the ultimate price. They were taken completely out of the land because of their sins, because of their

Baal worship and forsaking God's Law. So they had an opportunity to see it as a witness. We can look back on it and think, *Well, certainly, they would have learned their lesson. Certainly, they would have made sure that they did not make the same mistakes as the house of Israel.* Oh, for a time, there were certain faithful kings of God who did fear Him and who commenced magnificent reformations—and we're going to talk about a couple of those—but ultimately, Judah did precisely what the house of Israel did. Notice verse 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 [So Judah didn't learn the lesson at all.], but went and played the harlot also. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks. And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the [Eternal].

What was Judah doing? They were continuing to maintain certain trappings of obedience to God, but it was not sincere at all. How easily God's people fall into that very same trap. It's precisely what has happened in the last days to spiritual Israel. They continue to keep certain outward appearances of obedience to God's laws, but inwardly they have corrupted it and have perverted the very laws of God. Yes, they might continue to keep a Holy Day, or the concept of a Holy Day, but they change it and then include all kinds of pagan trappings of nations around them—those things that God hates. Here we find that Judah was guilty of precisely that. They maintained an appearance of righteousness and obedience to God's Law, yet they had perverted it; they had changed it. God did not accept it at all.

. . . Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart, but feignedly, saith the [Eternal]. And the [Eternal] said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified herself more than treacherous Judah.

What is God really saying here? Is He saying that backsliding Israel—the northern house of Israel—in self-righteousness, was seeking to justify itself more than Judah? No, actually the *Revised Standard Version* puts it more appropriately. It says, "Faithless Israel has shown herself less guilty than false Judah." Actually what God is saying, when He says "backsliding Israel hath justified herself," is that backsliding Israel to the north was actually better off compared to what Judah became guilty of later on.

The sins of the kingdom of Judah became even more repugnant in the nostrils of God than the Baal worship that Jeroboam and all of those other dynasties of the northern kingdom became guilty of. "Faithless Israel has shown herself less guilty than false Judah." So, more than 120 years after Israel was taken into captivity by the Assyrians, Judah was also taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians.

That brings us up to the next important part of this story that we've been covering. Remember, our purpose is to demonstrate how God has literally fulfilled His promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to David in that Davidic covenant. God has bound Himself in so many different ways. For a human being to make all of those promises, it would be very, very difficult to fulfill. Yet, when you see how it is laid out and how God did work out the circumstances, and every piece fitting together in a perfect puzzle, it is astounding and amazing. For anyone who has eyes to see and ears to hear, there can be no doubt that we are dealing with a purposeful, living God who is working out His perfect plan in dealing with His chosen people.

Now we come to the topic of the day, brethren, and it's that which I am entitling "Jeremiah's Commission" because we have a very important development now in the story. God is going to use the prophet Jeremiah to actually help fulfill His very promises given in these covenants. How is that going to happen? Let's turn to Jeremiah 1:4 to begin. Here we find an account of God's commission to Jeremiah, even as a very young lad. He was probably no more than age seventeen when God commissioned him to begin to speak and to proclaim the word of God and to warn the people of those things that were going to come upon them.

Jeremiah 1:4:

Then the word of the [Eternal] came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations [plural].

What nations were these that Jeremiah was ordained to become a prophet for? Certainly not the nations of the world. Well, then, what plural nations are we speaking of? None other than those nations that we've already been addressing—the house of Judah and the house of Israel. Jeremiah had a commission that involved both of those houses that were part of the overall nation of Israel.

"Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child." Yes, he was probably just a teenager, probably frightened to death at the idea that God was singling him out for this incredibly important responsibility.

But the [Eternal] said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the [Eternal].

It took a lot of faith on Jeremiah's part to step out and do what God said—to go to these great men, nobles, and kings, and to give them a message, especially when it was a message they did not want to hear. Jeremiah told them the words of God, which were a condemnation of their idolatry and their rejection of their Maker.

Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the [Eternal]. Then the [Eternal] put forth his hand, And touched my mouth. And the [Eternal] said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

And now the commission. Notice verse 10. Here is precisely what God was going to give to Jeremiah to do over the course of a significant part of his life.

See, I have this day set thee over the nations [speaking of that house of Israel and the house of Judah] and over the kingdoms [To do what?], to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, [and] to build, and to plant.

There were two different aspects of this special commission to Jeremiah. The first part of it was going to be to tear down and to destroy. The second part was going to be to build and to plant. Well, what could we be speaking of here? What was God going to have Jeremiah tear down? And what was He going to have him rebuild or plant? It is very commonly understood by anybody who has studied the scripture, and most of your commentators recognize the fact that what it was that Jeremiah was to tear down and destroy was going to be wrenching the very throne out of the house of Judah. God gave Jeremiah that commission. It is well known that Jeremiah was used in warning Judah of their impending captivity, and the pulling down, or the overthrowing, of the throne of David in the kingdom of Judah.

As we've already seen, that throne of David was promised to continue until the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. Christ is not coming to a vacant throne. Christ is going to return in power and glory as King of Kings and Lord of Lords, and He is going to assume an existing throne—not a vacant, extinct throne—which means that someone is still sitting on that throne even today at this very moment. That throne has not been destroyed, because it was the promise of God. Where is it, and how has that throne moved since the time that it was taken away from the house of Judah? The Bible is very clear that the very last king who ruled over the house of Judah and sat on the throne of David was Zedekiah. We're going to see some aspects of that time in just a moment. What happened to that throne after Zedekiah? Where did it go? Did it cease, or did God fulfill His promise?

It was through Jeremiah that God fulfilled that promise. Yes, that throne was overthrown out of the hands of the Jews, and Jeremiah was the instrument through which that throne was taken out of Judah. But remember, there is a threefold promise that God is managing through all of these twists and turns. What is it that God has to fulfill because it is part of these promises that He has given to the patriarchs? One, that throne would not disappear. Someone has got to sit upon it. Not only that, it had to be a descendant of David. Turn with me to Jeremiah 33:17 in quick review. That throne had to rule over Israelites—some portion of God's people, not an entire nation. Obviously, that nation has been splintered. But it was prophesied, and God promised that someone of the house of David—a descendant of David—would reign on that throne over at least some small portion of Israelites, even all the way down to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ.

Jeremiah 33:17:

"For thus saith the [Eternal]; David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel." This tells us very clearly that the throne was not going to continue ruling over the house of Judah; but ultimately, that throne was going to be transferred over those who were of the northern ten tribes. That throne was going to be transferred into the house of Israel. How could that be, because it was the house of Israel that was lost from sight? Most people in the world believe that those people either totally disappeared and are nonexistent, or else they ultimately came back together in a conglomeration with the house of Judah and are part of those that call themselves Jews today. We know that's not true.

So, how did God fulfill His promises? There's a lot for God to manage through this process to fulfill all that He promised to the patriarchs. That throne has got to continue to exist. It has to rule over Israelites somewhere in the world, even down to the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. It has to be a descendant of David who sits on that throne, even though it's a throne that has been moved and is reigning over some aspect of the lost ten tribes of Israel. Guess what? It's a Jew that sits on the throne. Have you stopped to think about that? It's a descendant of David that sits upon that throne—a Jew. How did God fulfill that promise? At the same time, do not forget the most important aspect of the covenant with Abraham, which is that one seed, Christ. All of the peoples of the world were going to be blessed through that one seed, and Christ also had to be a descendant of David. He had to be a Jew of the house of Judah.

So we have all of these events that we're getting ready to go through, beginning with the overthrow of the house of Judah. It's going to destroy everything. The throne is going to be ripped away from Judah. As we're going to see, the king and his sons are going to be killed and slaughtered. Who's going to be left through whom God can fulfill His promises? Someone has got to continue down in the physical lineage of David so that Christ can be born as a descendant of David. At the same time, a descendant of David has to reign on the throne, which is going to be ripped away from Judah and moved somewhere, wherever that house of Israel is. That's a lot to keep track of. How did God do it? That's hopefully what we're going to see. After Nebuchadnezzar's domination of the house of Judah and the death of Zedekiah, that throne never ruled again over the Jews. It never did.

Christ also did not assume that throne at His first coming, which is what some people have tried to conclude—not that the throne has to exist somewhere today in modern times, but "No, see, Christ assumed the throne," they'll tell you, "when He came." Did Christ ever assume a throne and become a king at His first coming? Not at all. In fact, His disciples thought He was coming as the Messiah to fulfill the prophecies of the very end time. They thought He was coming to take possession of the kingdom. He told them, "No, that's not what I'm here for." They had to come to understand that He was coming to die for the sins of the world and to make that way open for the building of the Church, spiritual Israel.

Christ never assumed a throne at His first coming. Even if He had, where is the link between Zedekiah and 600 years before the coming of Jesus Christ? No Jew from the house of Judah continued on that throne over the house of Judah during that 600-year gap between Zedekiah and the coming of Christ. Christ didn't even sit on that

throne once He came. Where is it today? If God fulfilled His promise, there are answers to all of these questions.

The house of Israel lost its identity completely and began to think of itself as Gentile, and so they still do today. Most of them don't consider themselves Israelites. There are some that certainly understand it. There are a lot of writings about the identity of the lost house of Israel, so it's not a secret; but the majority certainly consider themselves Gentile. Therefore, if that throne was replanted somewhere among the house of Israel, its identity is also hidden from the world, for the most part.

What was Jeremiah's commission? What was this tearing down and this rebuilding that Jeremiah was commissioned to do by God? Jeremiah was going to be an instrument through which that throne was going to be ripped away from the house of Judah, and the second part of Jeremiah's commission was that the throne had to be replanted somewhere else. Jeremiah is key in the fulfillment of God's purpose and of these promises.

Let's look at the tearing down, the first part of Jeremiah's commission. First, a very brief history of some of the final kings of Judah because it helps to put these things in perspective. I know these names of the kings can make it very difficult to keep up with who's who in the story. It is something that I think is very worthwhile to go back and study because it's really a fascinating historical study for those of you that like it.

Josiah was the last faithful king. If you remember, there were two kings of the final kings who made great reformations and turned the hearts of the people back to God during their reigns. Hezekiah was one, and Josiah was the other. Josiah was the last faithful king of Judah. He was a young boy when he ascended to the throne. He was actually raised and counseled by the high priest who was a faithful servant of God, and he embraced the laws of God. He rooted idolatry out of the kingdom and turned the hearts of the people back to God during his reign. Josiah was blessed of God; and even though the house of Judah was already under the domination of a foreign king, they were still autonomous. Josiah was having to pay tribute to a foreign nation, yet he was still being blessed by God and they were kept as a people. Then Josiah is killed with an arrow when the king of Egypt comes up to battle against him. Josiah is mortally wounded. The people of Judah then put one of Josiah's sons on the throne.

Now, there are three sons of Josiah that you want to keep in mind. You may want to write these down in order to keep it clear. Jehoahaz was the youngest of the sons of

Josiah that the people put on the throne after Josiah's death. This son only lasted for three months because, remember, Josiah was killed in this battle with the Egyptians, and Judah lost that battle. So the king of Egypt basically had won against Judah and could do what he wanted. Well, three months later, he took captive the son of Josiah, who was now the new king, and hauled him off to Egypt. Whether or not that was just to enforce his authority because he was the conquering king, we don't know. But Jehoahaz lasted three months and was taken off to Egypt. The king of Egypt then put in his place one of the older sons of Josiah, and his name was Jehoiakim. So here is another son of Josiah who is now on that throne of David. Was he a good king? No. He was a very evil man, full of idolatry and corruption, who didn't fear God at all. He reigned over Judah for eleven years.

In the meantime, you've got Judah as a pawn between these great world powers—Egypt, and the Babylonians with Nebuchadnezzar. During the reign of Jehoiakim, Nebuchadnezzar comes down and battles against Egypt and wins. All of a sudden, because Judah was a subject nation to Egypt and because Egypt fell to the Babylonians, now automatically the Jews became subject to the Babylonians. So Jehoiakim basically is a vassal king under Nebuchadnezzar. At some point he decides that, in his nationalistic fervor, he is going to rise up and become independent from Nebuchadnezzar, not realizing that God is the One who subjugated His people to these foreign powers.

Even if it's a curse, if it is from God, we cannot fight it. Here, in fact, God had told them that, because of the sins of the nation, He was going to put them through this subjugation. But the way for them to come out of it and do the best, would have been to accept what God had placed upon them—to live under that curse—and God would have still blessed them. But as men always do, they can't follow God's orders. They decide that they know better. They want to be an independent nation. They don't want to change. They don't want to go back to obeying God. They want to continue doing what they have been doing in violation of God's Law, and they still want all of the good things—independence as a nation, the benefits and the blessings.

So Jehoiakim was going to rise up and rebel against Nebuchadnezzar. He says, "I'm not going to pay tribute to you anymore. We're going to keep all of our own wealth; we're going to be our own independent nation like God intended." What happened? Well, God wasn't behind that. Nebuchadnezzar swept down and basically took Jehoiakim as a captive and had him killed. Then what happened? Nebuchadnezzar placed a son of Jehoiakim upon the throne of David, and his name was Jehoiachin.

Nebuchadnezzar changed his name to Jeconiah, if you can keep that straight. That's what these pagan kings often did. Once they subjected a people, they would change the name of the king they conquered in order to show their power and authority. So, in fact, you will see that many of Jeremiah's prophecies actually call him Jeconiah, but it is the same—this son of Jehoiakim, whose name was Jehoiachin.

How long did Jehoiachin last on the throne? Three months. He was just as evil as his father and his uncles who had been on the throne. He lasted three months. Nebuchadnezzar got rid of him because he also wanted to rebel. He thought he was going to be able to lead this nationalistic movement. It didn't work. Three months later, Nebuchadnezzar got rid of him and placed Zedekiah in his stead. Who was Zedekiah? Zedekiah was one of the other three sons of Josiah. This was actually Jehoiachin's uncle. So, first you had the youngest son of Josiah on the throne. Three months later, he's gone, and you have one of the older sons of Josiah on the throne. He is removed, and Jehoiakim's son—Josiah's grandson—is on the throne. Now he's gone after three months, and Nebuchadnezzar puts that third son of Josiah, named Zedekiah, on the throne. I hope that hasn't totally confused you. Zedekiah, then, was the last king of Judah—the last one to sit upon the throne of David in the kingdom of Judah. Let's read that account in Jeremiah 39:1. You're going to find out, when I get through this, why I've laid this out. Hopefully, it'll become clear to you.

In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it.

Now, Nebuchadnezzar was the one that had put Zedekiah on the throne after he had deposed his nephew. So why is Zedekiah under siege? Because Zedekiah did exactly what the others did. He rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar. God said, through Jeremiah, "Serve the king of Babylon and don't rebel. I'll take care of you." Bear with the curse, and God promised to take care of them. No, in their nationalistic fervor, they were going to get their own independence. Zedekiah didn't do this for the first several years. He was a good king—not good in terms of obeying God's Law, because he was a very evil man just like the rest of them. But at least he behaved himself and didn't try and rebel against the Babylonians. Somewhere around the ninth year, he decided he'd had enough; he got full of himself, and now he rebels against Nebuchadnezzar. So Nebuchadnezzar sends his armies down to take care of the problem.

In the ninth year of Zedekiah king of Judah, in the tenth month, came Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon and all his army against Jerusalem, and they besieged it. And in the eleventh year of Zedekiah, in the fourth month, the ninth day of the month, the city was broken up.

So it took more than a year and a half because Jerusalem was an incredibly strong walled city, and basically they had to starve them out. Verse 4:

And it came to pass, that when Zedekiah the king of Judah saw them, and all the men of war, then they fled . . .

So the food has run out. If you look at all of the other accounts, you'll fill in the gaps of the story. Finally, the city is about to fall, so he takes an entourage and he flees out of the city. He tries to sneak out.

. . . then they fled, and went forth out of the city by night, by the way of the king's garden, by the gate betwixt the two walls: and he went out the way of the plain. 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. Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah . . .

What's Nebuchadnezzar doing here? He's so perturbed at these kings of Judah because they continue to rebel one after another, and finally he decides he's going to wipe out the royal family. Can God let that happen? How is God going to fulfill His promise to Abraham and David concerning the continuation of that throne and a descendant of David reigning on that throne? And not only that, but Christ has to be a descendant of David. Is God going to allow these pagan kings to wipe out the royal family? Not at all. But it certainly looks like it for a time.

Then the king of Babylon slew the sons of Zedekiah [Why? He was trying to wipe out any royal seed that might be able to take that throne.] in Riblah before his eyes [He killed his sons right there before him.]: also the king of Babylon slew all the nobles of Judah. [Anybody who he thought might have an opportunity to sit upon that throne and be of royal seed. He tried to root them all out and kill them.] Moreover he put out Zedekiah's eyes, and bound him with chains, to carry him to Babylon.

Zedekiah certainly paid for his sins. If you look at the parallel account, which is found in Jeremiah 52, the same story is retold but with a little bit more detail. Let's turn to Jeremiah 52:11, and we find this additional detail.

Then he put out the eyes of Zedekiah; and the king of Babylon bound him in chains, and carried him to Babylon, and put him in prison till the day of his death.

Zedekiah died in the Chaldean prison. So the sons of Zedekiah were killed, and Zedekiah was never a king—he never sat on that throne again. He died in prison. His sons were dead. How then did the throne of David continue? Some speculate, "Well, what about Jeconiah?" Remember Jehoiachin? What about him? He was the one that was deposed by Nebuchadnezzar after only a reign of three months. This was the nephew of Zedekiah who was on the throne before he was. He was not killed by Nebuchadnezzar. What happened to Jehoiachin whose name was changed to Jeconiah?

He had ruled Judah for only three months and then was taken captive by Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar put him in prison for 37 years, but ultimately he was restored. Well, let's read the account and see. Does that mean he was restored to the throne of David? No.

2 Kings 25:27:

"And it came to pass in the seven and thirtieth year of the captivity of Jehoiachin king of Judah . . ." He's up in Babylon as a captive. He's been in prison for 37 years.

. . . in the twelfth month, on the seven and twentieth day of the month, that Evilmerodach king of Babylon . . .

Nebuchadnezzar's reign is over, and now a new king sits on the throne of Babylon. He has a little bit more mercy and takes compassion upon this captive king of Judah who's been in prison for 37 years.

. . . Evilmerodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison.

Does this mean that he put him back on the throne of David? That's what some would like to believe, but that is not what happened.

. . . did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison; And he spake kindly to him, and set his throne above the throne of the kings that were with him in Babylon.

Does this mean the throne of David? No. Because Jeconiah, or Jehoiachin, never returned to Judah. He was still a vassal king. He was given honor by this new king of Babylon, but Jeconiah never returned to Judah. He never sat on the throne of David.

Verse 29:

And changed his prison garments: and he did eat bread continually before him all the days of his life.

He was kept right there in Babylon near the king. He was given favor and honor as a king, but he never reigned over Judah. He never reigned over any Israelites again. So Jeconiah did not fulfill any part of God's promise concerning the continuation of the throne of David. Then who did?

Jeremiah 22:24. Let's notice the prophecies that God gave to say that He was not going to let Jeconiah be the one through whom that throne would continue.

"As I live, saith the [Eternal], though Coniah . . ." Now, that's another form of the name Jeconiah. We're talking about this same king.

. . . though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were the signet upon my right hand, yet would I pluck thee thence.

This is a prophecy that Jeremiah gave by the inspiration of God long before it happened—that the son of Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, whose name was changed to Jeconiah, was going to be plucked off of the throne, which is exactly what happened to him. Is there any reason why the people hated Jeremiah so much? He always came with these terrible words about what was going to befall them. But it was all true because it came directly from God, yet they hated him for it.

And I will give thee into the hand of them that seek thy life, and into the hand of them whose face thou fearest, even into the hand of Nebuchadrezzar king of Babylon, and into the hand of the Chaldeans. And I will cast thee out, and thy mother that bare thee, into another country,

where ye were not born; and there shall ye die. [That's exactly what happened to him, just as God said.] But to the land whereunto they desire to return, thither shall they not return.

No, he never did return. He never did sit upon that throne of David again.

Is this man Coniah a despised broken idol? is he a vessel wherein is no pleasure? wherefore are they cast out, he and his seed, and are cast into a land which they know not? O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the [Eternal]. Thus saith the [Eternal], Write ye this man childless, a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David, and ruling any more in Judah.

God showed that this Jeconiah was not going to be the means through which a descendant of David was preserved to sit upon that throne. And we already know that Zedekiah died in prison, and his sons were killed. So how did God do it? How did He preserve a descendant of David to sit upon that throne, and where did the throne go? How did God preserve the lineage that would produce Christ who had to be a Jew?

Jeconiah and his sons were preserved by God not to sit on the throne, but to carry the lineage of David down to Christ. That's why Jeconiah was preserved and not slaughtered. He never sat on the throne again, and his sons never sat on the throne of David again, but guess what? It was through Jeconiah that God was going to preserve that lineage of David that was going to become the descendants of Jesus Christ. We don't have time to turn to it, but you can verify that in Matthew 1:12, which shows the lineage of Christ. Now, that's specifically Joseph's lineage, who wasn't really Christ's father because God was His Father. But in Joseph's lineage, you will find Jeconiah, and then his son, Salathiel, and then Zorobabel. Then, if you turn over to Luke 3, and you see the lineage of Mary, you will find that they share a common ancestor, this Salathiel. I can't go into all of it. There are a lot of technicalities and intricacies about those lines. But they did share a common ancestor in this Salathiel who was the son of Jeconiah. That was the ancestor of Christ—that common ancestor of Jesus Christ. That is how God preserved a descendant for Jesus Christ to be born from, and that is why Jesus Christ was a descendant of David—because He did preserve this other former king of Judah and his sons to bring down that lineage to Jesus Christ. But as we've already shown, God wrote in prophecy through Jeremiah long before, that one of those sons was not going to sit on the throne of David anymore.

Now, Zedekiah, Jeconiah's uncle, was the final king to sit upon that throne. His sons were killed by Nebuchadnezzar. So what happened after that? That brings us to the second part of Jeremiah's commission. Let's pick up the story and see what happens next. We've seen the tearing down—the portion of that commission that God gave to Jeremiah, even as a very young lad. He said that through Jeremiah was going to come the tearing down of that throne; and so Jeremiah was the one that prophesied and told those kings what was going to happen, and certainly it did.

What about the planting? We're talking about the planting and the rebuilding of that throne somewhere outside of the house of Judah. How did it happen? We'll just get into a part of it today.

Jeremiah 40:1:

The word that came to Jeremiah from the [Eternal], after that Nebuzaradan the captain of the guard had let him go from Ramah, when he had taken him being bound in chains among all that were carried away captive of Jerusalem and Judah, which were carried away captive unto Babylon.

What does this tell us? When Jerusalem fell and Nebuchadnezzar took the whole city and its people captive, Jeremiah was there. Jeremiah was hauled away captive in chains just like the rest of them. They were hauled as slaves to Babylon. But what happened now? God had a special commission for Jeremiah. It was not His will that Jeremiah stay in chains. Not at all. God gave Jeremiah favor in the eyes of Nebuchadnezzar, and here we're going to find out what happened.

And the captain of the guard took Jeremiah, and said unto him, The [Eternal] thy God hath pronounced this evil upon this place.

Here, even through this pagan general, God records this prophecy out of his mouth—that Judah was paying the price for their own sins.

Now the [Eternal] hath brought it, and done according as he hath said: because ye have sinned against the [Eternal], and have not obeyed his voice, therefore this thing is come upon you. And now, behold [Now he's speaking to Jeremiah personally.], I loose thee this day from the chains which were upon thine hand. If it seem good unto thee to come with me into Babylon, come; and I will look well unto thee: but if it seem ill unto

thee to come with me into Babylon, forbear: behold, all the land is before thee: whither it seemeth good and convenient for thee to go, thither go.

Jeremiah was given the option to do what he wanted to do. He was initially put in chains like the rest of the people, but through Nebuchadnezzar, the instructions came down to this captain of the guard and said, "Jeremiah is to be set free, and he can go wherever he wants to. If he wants to go with the captives to Babylon, he can go. If he wants to go somewhere else, he can go wherever he wants." Not only that, they gave him money, provisions and food. God blessed him incredibly at the hands of his captors. Verse 5:

Now while he was not yet gone back, he said, Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan [Who were these men? We're going to find out in just a moment.], whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah . . .

So, Nebuchadnezzar removes Zedekiah, takes the city captive, and hauls the majority of the people into captivity; but he leaves some of the poorest people of the land in Judah. It wasn't the same as the captivity of the northern house of Israel, where the king of Assyria took the entire people captive. Every human being of the house of Israel was taken out of the land—a clean sweep. No, when Nebuchadnezzar took over the kingdom of Judah, he actually left some of the poor people in the land, and he left someone that he picked to be a governor over the region. This was not a king of Judah, because from now on, we've already seen that God stripped that throne away from the Jews. But Nebuchadnezzar left some of the poor people in the land, and he appointed a man of Judah over them as a governor of the province. And that's who this Gedaliah was.

Now while he was not yet gone back, he said, Go back also to Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan, whom the king of Babylon hath made governor over the cities of Judah, and dwell with him among the people: or go wheresoever it seemeth convenient unto thee to go. So the captain of the guard gave him victuals and a reward, and let him go.

Jeremiah is a free man. What did Jeremiah decide to do? Did he decide to go to Babylon? Did he decide to stay, or go somewhere else? Jeremiah knew he still had a commission to fulfill. Only the first half of his commission had been fulfilled up to that point—the tearing down, the rooting out of the throne of David out of Judah. That's only half of it, though.

Then went Jeremiah unto Gedaliah the son of Ahikam to Mizpah; and dwelt with him among the people that were left in the land.

Jeremiah went back and stayed with these remnant Jews that were still in the land. Jeremiah returned to the land of Judah to fulfill the second part of his critical commission.

Who was this Ahikam? He had actually been an earlier ally of Jeremiah. So this father of the new governor in Palestine was actually a friend and an ally of Jeremiah. If you want to look at the story in Jeremiah 26 and specifically verse 24, you'll find that this Ahikam had bailed Jeremiah out from the wrath of the king. So he had a strong personal relationship with this family. And now this man's son, Gedaliah, is the new governor of the province. Gedaliah was placed in power by Nebuchadnezzar over those poor people who were left in the land. Let's pick it up in Jeremiah 40:7:

Now when all the captains of the forces which were in the fields, even they and their men, heard that the king of Babylon had made Gedaliah the son of Ahikam governor in the land, and had committed unto him men, and women, and children, and of the poor of the land, of them that were not carried away captive to Babylon; Then they came to Gedaliah to Mizpah, even Ishmael the son of Nethaniah, and Johanan and Jonathan the sons of Kareah . . . [Then verse 9.] And Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan sware unto them and to their men, saying, Fear not to serve the Chaldeans . . .

This is what God had been telling them all along. Fear not to be subject to the Babylonians. It was the will of God. He had subjected the people to the Babylonians because of their sins. Had they at least accepted that, they would have been much better off. Zedekiah didn't; he rebelled. And now he and most of the people are brought into captivity in Babylon. For the few poor people who are left, God is going to work through Gedaliah and say, "If you will be subject to the Babylonians, God will take care of you. Just accept it."

. . . Fear not to serve the Chaldeans: dwell in the land, and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you. As for me, behold, I will dwell at Mizpah, to serve the Chaldeans, which will come unto us: but ye, gather ye wine, and summer fruits, and oil, and put them in your vessels, and dwell in your cities that ye have taken.

These were the ones that were blessed of the entire nation because they were not taken in chains as captives. They were left in the land. Now, if they had learned their lesson and submitted to the very will of God, God would have continued to take care of this small remnant still in Palestine. But as we're going to find out, they never learned the lesson.

Likewise when all the Jews that were in Moab, and among the Ammonites, and in Edom, and that were in all the countries, heard that the king of Babylon had left a remnant of Judah, and that he had set over them Gedaliah the son of Ahikam the son of Shaphan; Even all the Jews returned out of all places whither they were driven, and came to the land of Judah, to Gedaliah, unto Mizpah, and gathered wine and summer fruits very much.

What does this tell you? Before things got to the end, there were some smart ones of the nation of Judah that got out while the getting was good. They didn't wait for Nebuchadnezzar to surround Jerusalem with the armies and starve them out. They got out early, and they went into the neighboring countries and basically hid and waited until all the dust settled. And then when Nebuchadnezzar set up this new government in the land and preserved some of the Jews as a remnant in the land, they came out of the woodwork and they all came back home again. You can say that was pretty smart. Now, there were a number of the Jews in World War II that did the same thing—a lot who saw the writing on the wall, and they got out of those countries before the Nazis cracked down; but the majority of them didn't, and they paid the price. But here is a very similar corollary that went on at this time.

So you've got these Jews that had already escaped and gotten away before the final crushing blow. Now they're coming back to the homeland to be with these remnant Jews that are still in Palestine under this new governor. What happened? Who was this Ishmael we read about in verse 8? As it turns out, this Ishmael was actually a royal descendant of David. He was one of the ones that had gotten out ahead of time and was hiding among the Ammonites. So he comes back in and pledges his allegiance to Gedaliah, along with some of these other nobles of Judah that had escaped. Ishmael, though, has the same proclivity as those past kings of Judah. He is very nationalistic, and he decides that he is going to help bring the Jews back out of captivity and establish them again as their own nation. So what does he do? He, along with his little band of men, assassinates Gedaliah. He assassinates the governor that Nebuchadnezzar had put in charge of the region. They never could learn. He led this nationalistic revolt and

killed Gedaliah. You can read that part in Jeremiah 41, the first few verses. But let's pick it up in verse 10 of Jeremiah 41.

"Then Ishmael carried away captive all the residue of the people that were in Mizpah, even the king's daughters . . ." What king? What daughters are these? Remember, Nebuchadnezzar killed King Zedekiah's sons in front of him before he put his eyes out, and then hauled him off to prison. But guess what? Zedekiah had daughters. They were still royal blood, royal children of the house of David. These are the daughters of Zedekiah that were still a part of this remnant that was left in the land. How were they preserved? Obviously, miraculously, God kept them because it was through these daughters that God was going to fulfill his promise to David—that Davidic covenant—to preserve that royal seed to reign over the house of Israel.

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.

Who was a part of this captivity? Jeremiah was in there too. Remember, Jeremiah went back and was there at Mizpah with Gedaliah. So now, this upstart who thinks he's going to rally people around and secure the independence of the nation of Judah again, kills the governor and then takes all of these people, including Jeremiah and the king's daughters, captive. He's going to take them back to the land of the Ammonites where he feels comfortable because he has his allegiance there for protection against the wrath of Nebuchadnezzar. But things didn't work out for Ishmael like he thought it was going to. Because guess what? These other nobles in the land didn't support him in this rebellion. They didn't support him at all. One of them, Johanan, then led an army against Ishmael. So it actually backfired on him. Johanan led this army, caught up with Ishmael who had taken all of these captives, and liberated them. It turns out that Ishmael had to flee for his own life with his small band of men.

Then the people are in a real pickle, because what do we have now? This Johanan who wasn't in favor of rising up in rebellion against Nebuchadnezzar, nonetheless, is left. All the people and those nobles that are left are in a real bad situation because the governor, Gedaliah, is dead. Ishmael has fled. He's the one who was responsible, but they don't think that Nebuchadnezzar is going to listen to them. They want to say, "We weren't responsible for this. We want to be subject to you." They had a strong reason

to believe that Nebuchadnezzar was going to want revenge against all of them. So now, what do they do? They're in fear for their lives, and they're not sure where to turn. Should they stay put? Should they run off to another country and hide? What should they do? Jeremiah chapter 42 and beginning in verse 1. They ask Jeremiah for his counsel. They ask him to go to God and ask for His intervention and for Him to tell them what they should do. They are very sincere. They need desperate help now because they're in fear for their lives.

Then all the captains of the forces, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and Jezaniah the son of Hoshaiah, and all the people from the least even unto the greatest, came near, And said unto Jeremiah the prophet, Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the [Eternal] thy God, even for all this remnant; (for we are left but a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us:) That the [Eternal] thy God may shew us the way wherein we may walk, and the thing that we may do.

Oh, they're beseeching for God's intervention now. *Oh, show us, please, please, please. Help us know the right thing to do.*

Then Jeremiah the prophet said unto them, I have heard you; behold, I will pray unto the [Eternal] your God according to your words; and it shall come to pass, that whatsoever thing the [Eternal] shall answer you, I will declare it unto you; I will keep nothing back from you.

Jeremiah promised to be a faithful messenger. Whatever God said, he was going to tell them precisely that.

Then they said to Jeremiah, The [Eternal] be a true and faithful witness between us, if we do not even according to all things for the which the [Eternal] thy God shall send thee to us. Whether it be good, or whether it be evil, we will obey the voice of the [Eternal] our God, to whom we send thee . . .

Oh boy, they bound themselves. "Whatever you say, Jeremiah; we believe you're the servant of God. We have no doubt about it. You've proved it over all of these years. We're sorry we didn't listen to you before. Now please beseech God on our behalf, and we'll do whatever you say. We're going to know it's coming from God." Verse 7:

And it came to pass after ten days, that the word of the [Eternal] came unto Jeremiah. Then called he Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces which were with him, and all the people from the least even to the greatest, And said unto them, Thus saith the [Eternal] [Jeremiah is speaking with the authority of God to give the people the answer that they asked for.], the God of Israel, unto whom ye sent me to present your supplication before him; If ye will still abide in this land . . .

Here's the answer. Should they flee, or should they stay put?

If ye will still abide in this land, then will I build you, and not pull you down, and I will plant you, and not pluck you up: for I repent me of the evil that I have done unto you.

God was willing to show mercy unto this remnant of Judah. He had already shown mercy by not allowing them to be part of those that were hauled off into Babylon in chains. Now He's saying, "Stay put and trust Me in faith." And He was going to protect them. Nebuchadnezzar wasn't going to come down and wipe them out because of the assassination of this governor. He promised that He was going to protect them; all they had to do was stand still in faith. Verse 11:

Be not afraid of the king of Babylon, of whom ye are afraid; be not afraid of him, saith the [Eternal]: for I am with you to save you, and to deliver you from his hand. And I will shew mercies unto you, that he may have mercy upon you, and cause you to return to your own land. But if ye say, We will not dwell in this land, neither obey the voice of the [Eternal] your God, Saying, No; but we will go into the land of Egypt, where we shall see no war, nor hear the sound of the trumpet, nor have hunger of bread; and there will we dwell: And now therefore hear the word of the [Eternal], ye remnant of Judah; Thus saith the [Eternal] of hosts, the God of Israel; If ye wholly set your faces to enter into Egypt, and go to sojourn there; Then it shall come to pass, that the sword, which ye feared, shall overtake you there in the land of Egypt, and the famine, whereof ye were afraid, shall follow close after you there in Egypt; and there ye shall die. So shall it be with all the men that set their faces to go into Egypt to sojourn there; they shall die by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: and none of them shall remain or escape from the evil that I will bring upon them.

This is what Jeremiah said to the people. Now, what do you think they did? Do you think they believed Jeremiah just as they said they would—that they would accept whatever God said? They would believe that Jeremiah was a faithful servant of God. They wouldn't contend with him. Whether it was good or whether it was bad, they'd follow what God said. Well, is that what they did? God said, "Stay put. Don't be afraid of Nebuchadnezzar. Stay right where you are."

The problem was, humanly speaking, that seemed to be the stupidest thing they could've done. They were certain that Nebuchadnezzar was going to seek revenge. They were certain they were going to be destroyed if they stayed put. The natural thing they wanted to do, which made perfect sense, was to run off to Egypt to the south—prosperous country, everything was fine; they could certainly take refuge there, and they would be just fine. They could protect themselves and their families, and they'd be out of reach of Nebuchadnezzar, under the shelter of the Egyptian pharaoh. That made perfect sense. And probably over the ten days that it took for Jeremiah to get this word from God and bring it back to them, you see, they had concluded in their own minds, that was the smart thing to do. So when Jeremiah came back and told them to do just the opposite, they said, "You're not the servant of God. We don't believe you're speaking in the name of God at all."

Notice Jeremiah 43:1:

And it came to pass, that when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking unto all the people all the words of the [Eternal] their God, for which the [Eternal] their God had sent him to them, even all these words, Then spake Azariah the son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the proud men, saying unto Jeremiah, Thou speakest falsely: the [Eternal] our God hath not sent thee to say, Go not into Egypt to sojourn there: But Baruch the son of Neriah setteth thee on against us, for to deliver us into the hand of the Chaldeans, that they might put us to death, and carry us away captives into Babylon.

So now, they accuse Jeremiah and his scribe—that's who this Baruch was, a faithful scribe of Jeremiah—of being in collusion with the Chaldeans to try and get them to stay put long enough for Nebuchadnezzar to come down with his armies and wipe them out. That's how human rationalization goes, and how quickly people who were supposed to have—and should have—recognized a faithful servant of God, turn and accuse him instead when the message that he brings is not what they want to hear. Oh, the fickleness of our carnal minds. Verse 4:

So Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, and all the people, obeyed not the voice of the [Eternal], to dwell in the land of Judah. But Johanan the son of Kareah, and all the captains of the forces, took all the remnant of Judah . . .

Now, Jeremiah and this remnant had already been taken captive twice—first, by Nebuchadnezzar, and then set free; and then by this Ishmael who assassinated the governor of the province, Gedaliah. And now, the ones that are left that have risen up to take command are also making them all captives.

. . . took all the remnant of Judah, that were returned from all nations, whither they had been driven, to dwell in the land of Judah; Even men, and women, and children, and the king's daughters . . .

Why do the king's daughters keep showing up in this story? Why are we going through this much detail on this story? Because it is the story that tells you how God brought about the circumstances for the transplanting of that throne.

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.

They took them all captive. Jeremiah had just told them that God said, "Stay put in the land, and you'll be protected." They said, "No, not only are we going to run off to Egypt, we're taking you with us." They took Jeremiah, his scribe, and the two daughters of Zedekiah; they were all part of this remnant. All of those who had come back into the land and who had been protected from the captivity and not hauled off to Babylon are now running off to Egypt. They never learned a thing.

God then warned them again. Read it for yourselves in Jeremiah 44:11–14. God is so merciful and so patient. He gives us so many opportunities to pay attention and to respond. They rejected the words of Jeremiah; they ran off to Egypt anyway. God warned them again. He said, "You're doing the wrong thing. You're going to pay the ultimate price. You're going to be killed by the sword, famine, and pestilence if you don't do what I said and get back to Palestine."

Let's turn to Jeremiah 44:13:

For I will punish them that dwell in the land of Egypt, as I have punished Jerusalem, by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence: So that none of the remnant of Judah, which are gone into the land of Egypt to sojourn there, shall escape or remain, that they should return into the land of Judah, to the which they have a desire to return to dwell there: for none shall return but such as shall escape.

Who was it that was going to escape? Those who were taken against their will, whose desire was not to go down with these rebels. A small remnant was going to be saved by God out of this group that went down to Egypt. Verse 27:

Behold, I will watch over them for evil, and not for good: and all the men of Judah that are in the land of Egypt shall be consumed by the sword and by the famine, until there be an end of them. 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.

Oh yes, God was going to make His will known to all these men who had their own wisdom and who had decided how they were going to save themselves. And it made sense. They did precisely what made sense by all of the circumstances—run down and take refuge in Egypt. But God said, "Sorry, you're my people, and I'm telling you that if you do what makes sense to your mind, you're going to be slaughtered. Do what I tell you to do and stay put, and you're going to be protected because I'm going to do it." Do we have those kinds of faith tests in our lives, brethren? We know what the Law of God is and what it requires of us—we know what we should do—yet we're tempted so easily by what makes sense to us carnally. We think we're going to save ourselves, and we're going to do what is wise and prudent and what makes sense to us physically. Do we wonder, then, why we don't receive the blessings that we think we should have had?

So, God was going to save a small remnant out of this rebellious group. Who was that small remnant? It was none other than Jeremiah; his scribe, Baruch; and guess who else? The daughters of King Zedekiah. That was the royal seed through which God was going to fulfill His promises to continue the throne of David over the house of Israel. God promised Baruch and Jeremiah divine protection.

Notice it quickly in Jeremiah 45:2:

Thus saith the [Eternal], the God of Israel, unto thee, O Baruch: Thou didst say, Woe is me now! for the [Eternal] hath added grief to my sorrow; I fainted in my sighing, and I find no rest. Thus shalt thou say unto him, The [Eternal] saith thus; Behold, that which I have built will I break down, and that which I have planted I will pluck up, even this whole land.

That's precisely what He did with the throne of David. He planted it originally through David and his descendants; and then through their rebellion, He plucked it up after the reign of Zedekiah.

And seekest thou great things for thyself? seek them not: for, behold, I will bring evil upon all flesh, saith the [Eternal]: but thy life will I give unto thee for a prey in all places whither thou goest.

This was a promise God made to Baruch, the scribe of Jeremiah. He said, "Don't worry. You're going to go through some terrible things, but you're going to be protected. I'm going to divinely save you and protect you through all these circumstances." Notice then the promise to Jeremiah.

Jeremiah 15:10:

Woe is me, my mother, that thou hast borne me a man of strife and a man of contention to the whole earth! I have neither lent on usury, nor men have lent to me on usury; yet every one of them doth curse me. The [Eternal] said, Verily it shall be well with thy remnant . . .

Here's a promise that was made years before that God was going to take care of Jeremiah and a remnant. What remnant is this? That little remnant, that group that He was going to save that was a part of the commission to fulfill the promises to David. That remnant included these special daughters of the royal house of David.

. . . verily I will cause the enemy to entreat thee well in the time of evil and in the time of affliction. Shall iron break the northern iron and the steel? Thy substance and thy treasures will I give to the spoil without price, and that for all thy sins, even in all thy borders. And I will make thee to pass with thine enemies into a land which thou knowest not: for a fire is kindled in mine anger, which shall burn upon you.

Here was a foreshadowing that God gave of part of this fulfillment of the commission of Jeremiah. God was going to open the doors and save him and this small remnant out of the hands of all of these pagan nations, as well as out of the hands of these rebellious Jews. He was going to sustain them, keep them, and give them safe passage. Why? Because through Jeremiah and this commission, God was going to replant that throne—the throne of David that had been pulled up and destroyed out of the land of Judah. That throne was going to be replanted again somewhere else where Israelites were dwelling as a part of those lost ten tribes.

Jeremiah took the daughters of King Zedekiah and escaped. Isaiah recorded this prophecy. Let's read it very quickly in closing.

Isaiah 37:31:

"And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward . . ." There was the prophecy that was going to be fulfilled in the very days, in the lifetime, of Jeremiah, as that throne was rooted out of the house of Judah and was going to be replanted again somewhere else.

And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward: For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the [Eternal] of hosts shall do this.

And so, God did do it. He had to do it to fulfill His promise—the Davidic covenant which says that a descendant of David was going to rule on that throne. That meant in perpetuity, even until the return of Christ. And Christ, who is also a descendant of David through King Jeconiah, is going to return, and He's going to sit upon that throne. He is a descendant of David. He is going to take over that throne from whoever will be reigning physically—whatever Jew it is who is now sitting on the throne of David over the house of Israel. That is who Jesus Christ is going to assume that throne from.

Next time, brethren: where did Jeremiah go with this royal little remnant, and how was a descendant of David continued in a ruling line upon that throne into these modern days? Where was that throne replanted? We're going to pick up the rest of the story next time.