

July 11–17: 2 Kings 17–25, “He Trusted in the Lord God of Israel”

Assyrian's Capture the North Kingdom (Ephraim)

Lets turn to 2 Kings for the events that led to their captivity. Assyria was a large empire that had conquered most of the known world because of innovative warfare and causing fear because of their brutality. There power and reputation allowed them to extort money from small kingdoms near their borders.



One of these boarder kingdoms was Ephraim

2Kgs 15:19-20

19 And Pul the king of Assyria came against the land: and Menahem gave Pul a thousand talents of silver, that his hand might be with him to confirm the kingdom in his hand.

20 And Menahem exacted the money of Israel, even of all the mighty men of wealth, of each man fifty shekels of silver, to give to the king of Assyria. So the king of Assyria turned back, and stayed not there in the land.

These unrealistically large tributes began about 30 years before their actual captivity.

A few years later Syria, north of Ephraim, rebelled so Assyria captured Syria and many cities of Ephraim that were near Syria and carried them away.

2Kgs 15:29

29 In the days of Pekah king of Israel came Tiglath-pileser king of Assyria, and took Ijon, and Abel-beth-maachah, and Janoah, and Kedesh, and Hazor, and Gilead, and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.

Later Ephraim's king held back tribute so the Assyrian's captured the capitol, Samaria, and carried rest of the North Kingdom away

2Kgs 17:1-6

1 In the twelfth year of Ahaz king of Judah began Hoshea the son of Elah to reign in Samaria over Israel nine years.

2 And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD, but not as the kings of Israel that were before him.

3 ¶ Against him came up Shalmaneser king of Assyria; and Hoshea became his servant, and gave him presents.

4 And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea: for he had sent messengers to So king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.

5 ¶ Then the king of Assyria came up throughout all the land, and went up to Samaria, and besieged it three years.

6 ¶ 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.



It was the practice of the Assyrian's to relocate captives. They did this to destroy the unity of the people, which suppressed rebellion. Other captive people were brought to settle the North.

2Kgs 17:23-24

23 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.

24 ¶ And the king of Assyria brought men from Babylon, and from Cuthah, and from Ava, and from Hamath, and from Sepharvaim, and placed them in the cities of Samaria instead of the children of Israel: and they possessed Samaria, and dwelt in the cities thereof.

How did resettling Samaria with Assyrian captives impact the Jewish culture/tradition at the time of Christ?

The author of 2 Kings reminds us of why the 10 tribes were captured.

2Kgs 17:7-14

7 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,

8 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.

9 And the children of Israel did secretly those things that were not right against the LORD their God, and they built them high places in all their cities, from the tower of the watchmen to the fenced city.

10 And they set them up images and groves in every high hill, and under every green tree:

11 And there they burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen whom the LORD carried away before them; and wrought wicked things to provoke the LORD to anger:

12 For they served idols, whereof the LORD had said unto them, Ye shall not do this thing.

13 Yet the LORD testified against Israel, and against Judah, by all the prophets, and by all the seers, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets.

14 Notwithstanding they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the LORD their God.

Had Israel been warned that this would happen if they did not repent?

Yes – by every Israelite prophet

Moses:

Duet 4:25-27

25 ¶ When thou shalt beget children, and children's children, and ye shall have remained long in the land, and shall corrupt yourselves, and make a graven image, or the likeness of any thing, and shall do evil in the sight of the LORD thy God, to provoke him to anger:

26 I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.

27 And the LORD shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the LORD shall lead you.

The Whereabouts of the Ten Tribes

Do we know anything about what become of the 10 tribes after they were carried away to Mesopotamia?

All lands:

Hosea 9:16-17

16 Ephraim is smitten, their root is dried up, they shall bear no fruit: yea, though they bring forth, yet will I slay even the beloved fruit of their womb.
17 My God will cast them away, because they did not hearken unto him: and they shall be wanderers among the nations

Amos 9:9

For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve.

What do these verses tell us?

The lost tribes are scattered among all nations

North:

Jeremiah 3:18

18 In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.

There is some supporting info in the Apocryphal book of 2 Esdras

The Churches position on the Apocrypha is found in Section 91

D&C 91:1-2,4

1 Verily, thus saith the Lord unto you concerning the Apocrypha—
There are many things contained therein that are true, and it is mostly translated correctly;
2 There are many things contained therein that are not true, which are interpolations by the hands of men.
4 Therefore, whoso readeth it, let him understand, for the Spirit manifesteth truth;

This passage from 2 Esdras in the Apocrypha is quoted by James E. Talmage in his book *The Articles of Faith* and in several other Church publications.

Vern G. Swanson, "Other Tribes", *Ensign*, Jan. 1982
George Reynolds, "Are We of Israel", pg. 20

2 Esdras 13:40-46

40 Those are the ten tribes, which were carried away prisoners out of their own land in the time of [Hoshea] the king, whom Salmanasar the king of Assyria led away captive, and he carried them over the waters, and so came they into another land.

41 But they took this counsel among themselves, that they would leave the multitude of the heathen, and go forth into a further country, where never mankind dwelt.

42 That they might there keep their statutes, which they never kept in their own land.

43 And they entered into Euphrates by the narrow places of the river.

44 For the most High then shewed signs for them, and held still the flood, till they were passed over.

45 For through that country there was a great way to go, namely, of a year and a half. and the same region is called Arsareth.

46 Then dwelt they there until the latter time...

Elder George Renolds adds commentary to this passage

George Reynolds

“They determined to go to a country ‘where never man dwelt,’ that they might be free from all contaminating influences. That country could only be found in the north. Southern Asia was already the seat of a comparatively ancient civilization; Egypt flourished in northern Africa; and southern Europe was rapidly filling with the future rulers of the world. They had therefore no choice but to turn their faces northward.” (“Are We of Israel”, pg. 20)

In Judea (South kingdom):

Lehi was from Manasseh and Ishmael was from Ephraim

Gathering of the Lost Tribes

In this dispensation they are being gathered from all lands. And it appears that they will yet come as a group from the North

D&C 110:11

11 After this vision closed, the heavens were again opened unto us; and Moses appeared before us, and committed unto us the keys of the gathering of Israel from the four parts of the earth, and the leading of the ten tribes from the land of the north.

James E. Talmage

“Some people say that prediction is to be explained in this way: A gathering is in progress, and has been in progress from the early days of this Church; and thus the ‘Lost Tribes’ are now being gathered; but that we are not to look for the return of any body of people now unknown as to their whereabouts.... But the prophecy stands that the tribes shall be brought forth from their hiding place... [and their] scriptures shall become one with the scriptures of the Jews, the holy Bible, and with the scriptures of the Nephites, the Book of Mormon.” (CR, April 1916)

Southern Kingdom (Judah) Saved From the Assyrians

Just after the Assyrians had taken the North Kingdom captive they came against Jerusalem. Hezekiah was the king and he showed great faith. This is what the messenger from Assyria told the Jews.

2Kgs 18:28-35

28 Then Rab-shakeh stood and cried with a loud voice in the Jews' language, and spake, saying, Hear the word of the great king, the king of Assyria:

29 Thus saith the king, Let not Hezekiah deceive you: for he shall not be able to deliver you out of his hand:

30 Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD, saying, The LORD will surely deliver us, and this city shall not be delivered into the hand of the king of Assyria.

31 Hearken not to Hezekiah: for thus saith the king of Assyria, Make an agreement with me by a present, and come out to me, and then eat ye every man of his own vine, and every one of his fig tree, and drink ye every one the waters of his cistern:

32 Until I come and take you away to a land like your own land, a land of corn and wine, a land of bread and vineyards, a land of oil olive and of honey, that ye may live, and not die: and hearken not unto Hezekiah, when he persuadeth you, saying, The LORD will deliver us.

33 Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria?

34 Where are the gods of Hamath, and of Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivah? have they delivered Samaria out of mine hand?

35 Who are they among all the gods of the countries, that have delivered their country out of mine hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of mine hand?

What is the Assyrian messenger warning the Jews against?

(Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the LORD,
Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered at all his land out of the hand
of the king of Assyria?)

What does the messenger offer the Jews in an effort to get them to surrender?

(I come and take you away to a land like your own land
that ye may live, and not die)

Hezekiah seeks the council of the Lord thru the prophet Isaiah

2Kgs 19:1-2,5-7

1 And it came to pass, when king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and went into the house of the LORD.

2 And he sent Eliakim, which was over the household, and Shebna the scribe, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet the son of Amoz.

5 So the servants of king Hezekiah came to Isaiah.

6 ¶ And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say to your master, Thus saith the LORD, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed me.

7 Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

What did Isaiah counsel Hezekiah to do?

(Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard)

What would the Lord do to protect Judah and defeat the Assyrians?

(Behold, I will send a blast upon him,... and shall return to his own land)

The Lord protects Jerusalem and the South kingdom by destroying most of the Assyrian army at night while they slept

2Kgs 19:35-37

35 ¶ And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.

36 So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

37 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sharezer his sons smote him with the sword: and they escaped into the land of Armenia. And Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

JST 2Kgs 19:35

...and when they who were left arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses

How did the Lord fulfill his promise?

Brigham Young

"Whenever good men... hearkened to his counsel, then the Lord would fight their battles.... On one occasion the angel of the Lord slew one hundred and eighty-five thousand of those who came against His people to destroy them, 'and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses.' So reads the Bible. The Lord fought their battles." (JD 2:248)

This was the beginning of the end for the Assyrians. They would not conquer the South kingdom and soon the Assyrians would be overthrown by the Babylonians.

Babylonians Capture Jerusalem

Hezekiah's son, Manasseh, was a wicked king and destroyed all the good his father had done. His son, Amon, was also wicked. His son, Josiah, was a righteous king but his sons (Jehoahaz, Jehoiakim, Jeholachin) were so wicked that the Jews were ripened with iniquity and ready for destruction.

Hezekiah: 29 years
Manasseh: 55 years
Amon: 2 years
Josiah: 31 years
Jehoahaz: 3 months
Jehoiakim: 11 years
Jeholachin: 3 months

During the reign of king Jehoiachin, the Babylonians came against Jerusalem.

2Kgs 24:11-14,17

11 And Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon came against the city, and his servants did besiege it.

12 And Jehoiachin the king of Judah went out to the king of Babylon, he, and his mother, and his servants, and his princes, and his officers: and the king of Babylon took him in the eighth year of his reign.

13 And he carried out thence all the treasures of the house of the LORD, and the treasures of the king's house, and cut in pieces all the vessels of gold which Solomon king of Israel had made in the temple of the LORD, as the LORD had said.

14 And he carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and smiths: none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.

17 ¶ And the king of Babylon made Mattaniah his father's brother king in his stead, and changed his name to Zedekiah.

What did the Babylonians do to Jerusalem and its people at this time?

Rob the temple, take the best and brightest captive (Daniel), Setup Zedekiah as a puppet king (son of Josiah)

The Jews would not rule themselves again until after World War 2

Lehi leaves during the 1st year of Zedekiah – before the great destruction of Jerusalem

After ruling about 10 years Zedekiah rebelled against Babylon. Babylon placed Jerusalem under siege for about 2 years. Many starved.

Lets read what happened to the king, the city, the temple, and the people after the siege

2Kgs 25:6-11

6 So they took the king, and brought him up to the king of Babylon to Riblah; and they gave judgment upon him.

7 And they slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and put out the eyes of Zedekiah, and bound him with fetters of brass, and carried him to Babylon.

8 ¶ And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month, which is the nineteenth year of king Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, came Nebuzar-adan, captain of the guard, a servant of the king of Babylon, unto Jerusalem:

9 And he burnt the house of the LORD, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem, and every great man's house burnt he with fire.

10 And all the army of the Chaldees, that were with the captain of the guard, brake down the walls of Jerusalem round about.

11 Now the rest of the people that were left in the city, and the fugitives that fell away to the king of Babylon, with the remnant of the multitude, did Nebuzar-adan the captain of the guard carry away.

This time what did the Babylonians do to the Jews?

(slew the sons of Zedekiah before his eyes, and... carried him to Babylon
burnt the house of the LORD
brake down the walls of Jerusalem
the rest of the people... carry away)

It says Zedekiah's sons were killed but we know that an infant son survived and came to this continent.