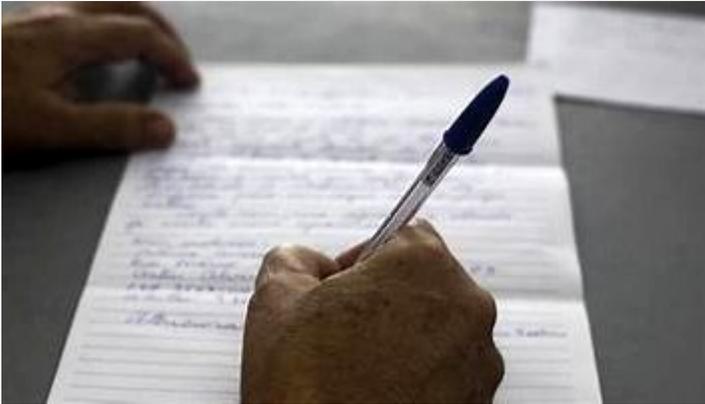


Watchman's Monthly Teaching Letter Number 9



**Clifton A.
Emahiser**

Watchman's Teaching Letter Number 9 (Including Patriarch Judah Part 9)

Clifton A. Emahiser

This is the ninth in a series of teaching letters. If you have not received any of my previous teaching letters, please send \$2.00 for each back issue you would like to have. These teaching letters are not just the average run-of-the-mill type of letter. If you really want to learn the Scripture's deepest hidden truths, you will not want to miss any of these back issues. Because of the nature of these teaching letters, they will not go out of date, so you will want to keep them in a safe place where they won't get lost. I have been getting quite a bit of response to these teaching letters recently, and in a very positive way.

I appreciate all the kind comments many of you have been making about my work. I am beginning to realize I am making a bigger impact than I ever thought possible. Again, I want to thank all of you who are helping to keep this teaching ministry going financially. All of your donations and purchases are deeply appreciated! As I no longer have an income and now depend on Social Security, you can imagine how precious each donation is (however small it may be).

Now Continuing the Topic: JUST WHO IS THIS PATRIARCH JUDAH? (Part 9)

I am going to continue with this lesson from where I left off in lesson #8. In the last lesson, I considered an overview of the history during the inter-testament period from the return of the Judean exiles in Babylon to Jerusalem, until the time of Yahshua our Messiah, a period from about 529 B.C. to 4 B.C. Then I concentrated on the period of the reconstruction of the temple and walls of Jerusalem during the time of Ezra and Nehemiah, when a considerable amount of race mixing happened among the peoples of the land in the surrounding area. To understand just what kind of a race mixture this produced, we must know who was living in

this area at this particular time and how they got there. To refresh your memory on this, I am going to repeat the last paragraph of lesson #8:

We are led to believe, by our Bibles today, that all of the people who had contracted foreign spouses during Ezra's and Nehemiah's time, divorced them and repudiated the children they had by them, but this seems to be only part of the story, for they took back these divorced spouses and repudiated half-breed children and contracted more foreign mates.

All we have to do is look around us today at multiculturalism, and it isn't hard to imagine what was going on during this period in history. To understand better the mixture that was developing during this period, which we call "Jews today", it might be well to further study the words Cuthah, Ava, Hamath, Sepharvaim, Jebusites, Girgashites, Canaanites, Amorites, Rephaims, Perrizzites, Hittites, Hivites, Kadmonites, Kenizzites, Moabites, Ammonites, Egyptians, Zidonians (Sidonians, Canaanite merchants) and the Kenites who were and are the descendants of Cain. All these peoples represent a composite from which the Jews originated. Check out the following passages: 2 Kings 17:24; Deuteronomy 7:1; Acts 7:45; Joshua 12:7,8; 24:11,12; Nehemiah 9:8, 24; 13:1; Ezra 13:1; Psalm 78:55; Genesis 15:19-21; Exodus 3:8, 17; 13:5; 23:23; Judges 3:5,6; 1 Kings 11:1; 2 Chronicles 8:7-10; Genesis 12:6.

Actually, this is not a complete list of all the ethnic peoples which Assyria imported into Samaria, after they had taken the northern Ten Tribe Kingdom into captivity and displaced them to the north. There were also the Dinaites, Apharsathchites, Tarpelites, Aphrasites, Archevites, Babylonians, Susanchites, Dehavites and Elamites as recorded in Ezra 4:9-10. There is another group of imported peoples which were brought into Samaria by Assyria that can be found only in Assyrian records and not the Bible. This list consists of the Thamudites, Ibadidites, Marsiminites and Khapayans. This adds 13 more ethnic groups to make up the peoples of the land, a total of 34 different so-called "Gentile" peoples.

I read information on these people partly from The Assyrian Invasions And Deportations of Israel by J. Llewellyn Thomas, F.R.C.S. From this, we can begin to get an idea of the mixed crowd that became known

generally as Samaritans, with whom the Judeans and Levites began to intermarry. We should be starting to see how severely dangerous it is to share our beliefs with other non-Israel peoples, or for us to accept, share and practice the religions of people not of our race, A religion can serve as an artificial common bond, thus breaking down the natural normal existing racial barrier. Once a precedence is established of a common religion among racially different people, it can only lead to intermarriage with them. The enemy has been very busy establishing artificial common bonds. As a matter of fact, anything in common with the other races can be risky. We must pause, at this point, and go back in history for not all of Judah was involved with this race-mixing at this time.

JUDAH BECOMES DIVIDED

To understand how Judah became divided, let's go back and consider a general outline history of the Assyrian invasions of the then northern Tribes of Israel and Judah:

- (a)** 745-727 B.C., Tiglath Pileser invades northern Israel and deports Israelites.
- (b)** 727-722 B.C., Shalmaneser V invades the northern Ten Tribes and deports more Israelites.
- (c)** 722-705 B.C., Sargon II invades the northern Ten Tribes and deports the remaining Israelites.
- (d)** 705-681 B.C., Sennacherib invades Judah and deports all of Judah except Jerusalem to where the northern Kingdom of Israelites were deported.

At this point, all of Judah except Jerusalem is taken into Assyrian captivity along with the northern Ten Tribes. Only Jerusalem is left un-captured. This is the division I am pointing out, as Jerusalem went into Babylonian captivity later in 604-561 B.C. The Judeans which went into Assyrian captivity, eventually went into Europe with the northern Ten Tribes, while the Judeans of Jerusalem went into Babylonian captivity and 70 years later

some of them returned to Jerusalem. This history of Judah is critical to understand in order to understand the difference between a member of the Tribe of Judah and a “Jew.” There are a lot of people (even in Identity) who don’t know the difference. This is why there is so much confusion on this issue today. I would highly advise anyone who does not understand the difference between a member of the Tribe of Judah and a “Jew” to study everything possible on Judah under the servitude of Assyria during the time of Sargon and Sennacherib. Also, if we don’t understand the history of Judah during this particular period, we cannot understand the problems that existed at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah. In order to comprehend this period of time, I am now going to present to you some excerpts from different publications concerning this history.

JUDAH UNDER THE ASSYRIANS

In order to grasp this era of time, we must take into account that Assyria had systematically invaded Samaria and taken the whole northern Kingdom of Israel into captivity over a period of about 65 years and replaced the population with foreigners from distant lands. I am going to start this study of Judah under the Assyrians by quoting excerpts out of the book *The Bible As History* by Werner Keller, pages 259-260:

In 705 B.C. news spread like wildfire raising at once fresh hopes of liberation from the Assyrian yoke — Sargon had been murdered! All over the Fertile Crescent, in the Assyrian provinces and in the vassal states, conspiracies, discussions, and intrigues began. ‘In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death’ (II Kings 20:1). Happening precisely at this moment of feverish political activity, it was a grave handicap. For many states in Syria and Palestine were looking expectantly to the able king of Judah. How could Hezekiah be cured of his serious illness? “And Isaiah said, Take a lump of figs, And they took and laid it on the boil, and he recovered” (II Kings 20:7). ...

At that time Berodach-Baladan, the son of Baladan king of Babylon, sent letters and a present unto Hezekiah: for he had heard that Hezekiah had been sick’ (II Kings 20:12). This was the traditional practice in court circles and was part of the royal etiquette in the ancient East. ... Merodach-

Baladan, however, found Hezekiah's illness a convenient pretext for making contact with him. The real reason for his polite courtesies lay in the field of high-level politics. 'Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon', was for a long time a mysterious personage both to readers of the Bible and to scholars. It is now certain that he was in his own day an extremely important person.

Merodack-Baladan (in a former place he is called Berodach-Baladan) was a very important player in trying to throw off the yoke of the Assyrian. It was natural for him to take advantage of the death of Sargon to enter into confederacy with other countries to defeat the Assyrian bondage. Judah is one of the countries he attempted to enlist in this endeavour. Let's now take a look at what the Pictorial Bible Dictionary by Merrill C. Tenny has to say about Merodach-Baladan, page 526:

MERODACH BALADAN ... (Marduk has given a son), a king of Babylon called Berodach-baladan in II Kings 20:12. He was a strong, courageous leader of the Chaldeans, who lived in the marshes of southern Mesopotamia. In 722 B.C. he rebelled against the Assyrians, who had control of Babylon for many years, and became king of Babylon. Sargon, king of Assyria (before he was murdered), recognized him as Babylonian king in 721 B.C. He reigned 11 years. At about 712 B.C., Merodach Baladan sent an embassy to Hezekiah.

While it came ostensibly to congratulate the Hebrew king on his recovery (II Kings 20:12-19; Isaiah 39:1-8), the embassy really came to invite him to join in a confederacy with Babylon, Susiana, Phoenicia, Moab, Edom, Philistia and Egypt for a grand attack on the Assyrian empire, Sargon (before he was murdered), getting wind of the plot, attacked and defeated his enemies individually. In 710 B.C. he took Babylon; in 709 B.C. Bit-Yakin (Merodach Baladan's home in southern Mesopotamia) fell and Merodach Baladan was captured. He managed to be reinstated in his principedom of Bit-Yakin.

In 703 B.C., he briefly took Babylon and ruled there, but was again driven to Bit-Yakin by Sennacherib, Sargon's son and successor. Later he was obliged to flee the country and found refuge in Elam, while the Chaldeans

were subjugated. Although Merodach Baladan had failed in his project to revive the power of the city of Babylon, the Chaldeans, whose chief he was, became from his days the dominant caste in Babylon (Dan. 2:2, 10; 5:7; Ezra 5:12).

Now returning to the book, *The Bible As History* by Werner Keller pages 260-263:

Apart from his private hobby of gardening, Merodach-Baladan both as a king and as a Babylonian was the most bitter and determined opponent of Nineveh (Assyria). No other monarch in the Fertile Crescent attacked the Assyrian so vigorously over many years, engaged them in so many heated battles, or intrigued so unremittingly against the tyrants of the Tigris, as he did.

The assassination of Sargon brought Merodach-Baladan into the field. It was at this point that his ambassadors visited Hezekiah. What was in fact discussed on the occasion of the official visit during the convalescence of Hezekiah can be read between the lines: 'And Hezekiah hearkened unto them, and showed them all the house of his precious things —and all the house of his armour' (II Kings 20:13), Judah's arsenal. Secret armaments and feverish preparations for D-day, the great showdown with Assyria which they saw to be imminent, were in full swing. 'Also ... he built up all the wall that was broken, and raised it up to the towers, and another wall without, and repaired Millo in the city of David, and made darts and shields in abundance' (II Chron. 32:5). ...

'This same Hezekiah also stopped the upper water course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David ...' (II Chron. 32:30). ... Outside the city where its southeastern slopes sweep gently down to the Valley of the Kidron, lies a small still sheet of water enclosed by walls, the Pool of Siloam.

—It was followed up and a long underground tunnel was discovered. A narrow passage about two feet wide and barely five feet high had been cut through the limestone. It can be negotiated only with rubber boots and a slight stoop. Water knee deep rushes to meet you. For about 500 yards

the passage winds imperceptibly uphill. It ends at the Virgin's Fountain, Jerusalem's water supply since ancient times. In Biblical days it was called the Fountain of Gihon. ...

During a siege the first problem is that of providing drinking water. The founders of Jerusalem, the Jebusites, had sunk a shaft down through the rock of the Fountain of Gihon. Hezekiah directed its water, which would otherwise have flowed into the Kidron Valley, through the mountain to the west side of the city. The Pool of Siloam lies inside the second perimeter wall which he constructed. There was no time to lose. The Assyrian troops could be at the gates of Jerusalem overnight. The workman therefore tackled the tunnel from both ends. The marks of the pickaxes point toward each other, as the inscription describes.

Now let's go to another book to pick up the next piece of the story. This time I am going to quote from a book entitled History Of The Hebrew Commonwealth by Albert Edward Bailey and Charles Foster Kent, pages 216-217:

Sennacherib again marched westward evidently for the purpose of conquering Egypt, the arch-plotter and disturber of his peace. The army had reached the Philistine plain when Sennacherib decided that it was unwise military strategy to leave in his rear a strong fortress like Jerusalem, if it should revolt, it might cut off his retreat. He accordingly sent a detachment of his army under the Rabshakeh (commander-in-chief) to demand the surrender of the city. Three Hebrew officials came out to treat with the Assyrians but found them insolent in their demands.

The Assyrians even talked loudly in the Hebrew tongue so that the common people on the wall might hear and take panic. Their argument was: 'Surrender, and let us transplant you to a more fruitful land where you can prosper and be happy. If you resist we will tear you to pieces. Trust not that your god Yahweh will deliver you, for you see what we have done to the gods of all the other nations.' When the officials brought the Assyrian demands to Hezekiah, he went into the temple to spread them before Yahweh, and he sent for his best friend, Isaiah. The prophet assured him that Yahweh would not allow his city to be violated.

**‘He shall not come into the city,
Nor shoot an arrow into it;
I will guard this city that I may rescue it,
For my own sake and for my servant David’s sake.’**

Isaiah was strengthened in his faith by his consciousness of the people’s virtue. They had paid their tribute (to Assyria) faithfully, they had purged away idolatry and had reformed their wicked ways in accordance with their best light. Sennacherib had no moral right to make these demands, and therefore it was right for Jerusalem not to yield. The prophet, who forty years before had warned Ahaz not to make alliance with Assyria, and who for thirty years after the compact was made had counselled absolute fidelity to Assyria, now in the light of Assyria’s perfidy boldly challenged the great empire and threw himself on Yahweh’s protection. It is a sublime spectacle of faith and courage.

The prophet’s faith was justified by an extraordinary event. When the Rabshakeh returned to Sennacherib with his report of Jerusalem’s defiance, he found that the Assyrian army had advanced to the border of Egypt to attack Tirhakah, the Ethiopian king. Here a pestilence broke out, or, in the language of the scripture, ‘an angel of Yahweh slew in the camp of the Assyrian 185,000 men.’ Sennacherib was frightened and beat a hasty retreat, ordering home at the same time the detachment that was about Jerusalem. The city was saved, and the aged prophet became after all his trials and labours the most honoured and beloved citizen of the nation.

Next I would like to comment on the Assyrian policy of repopulation of masses of people. So you won’t think it is all my words, I will take a couple of quotes from Reader’s Digest Story of the Bible World In Map, Word And Pictures by Nelson Beecher Keys, pages 81 and 84:

Both there (in Babylon) and in other restless dependencies to the east, deportation on a large scale was inaugurated. Native populations were mixed with foreigners brought sometimes great distances from their home countries. The purpose behind this device was to temper national

consciousness — to break up special groups and with them the will to resist. ...

In the conquering Assyrian manner, people from other lands were then brought in and settled there, so that the population might be mixed.

What you had going on back then — was the same as today! Race-mixing on a grand scale! And being promoted by the same people, the “Jews.” The Assyrians of those days had the same hook noses as you can observe among the “Jews” of today. So now you know what they had in mind in the case of the Samaritans. Another topic I would like to stress is the incident of the plague that broke out among the Assyrians soldiers causing 185,000 deaths. For this, I am going to return to *The Bible As History* by Werner Keller, pages 266-268:

Just at the moment when the whole country had been subjugated and the siege of Jerusalem, the last point of resistance, was in full swing, the unexpected happened: Sennacherib broke off the attack at five minutes to twelve. Only something quite extraordinary could have induced him to stop the fighting. What could it have been? While the Assyrian records are enveloped in a veil of silence. the Bible says: ‘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. So Sennacherib, king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh’ (II Kings 19:35, 36). ...

It happened that at the very time that Sennacherib the Assyrian marched against Egypt with a large armed force, there was a priest-king on the throne of Egypt who treated the army as a contemptible profession. The Egyptian warriors, who had been so disdainfully dealt with, refused to take the field. Thereupon the priest-king hurried to the temple in deep despair. There he was told that the god would help him. Relying upon this the king who had actually no soldiers behind him but only storekeepers, tradesmen, and market folk, went to meet Sennacherib. At the narrow entrances into the country ‘an army of field-mice swarmed over their opponents in the night ... gnawed through their quivers and their bows,

and the handles of their shields, so that on the following day they fled minus their arms and a great number of them fell. Hence', concluded Herodotus' story, 'this king still stands in Hephæstus' temple with a mouse in his hand, and with the following inscription: 'Look on me and live in safety.'"

To bring another witness to this story, I am going to quote excerpts from the book, Reader's Digest Story of the Bible World In Map, Word And Picture by Nelson Beecher Keys from pages 84 to 89. While this is a very well written documentation of this historical period of Judah, the writer does make inaccurate suppositions. I will point them out as we go along. The purpose for doing this is to show you how, when you are reading material like this, you can readily spot these untrue assumptions for yourself. So this will not only be a second witness to this story, but a critical review of this part of Key's book:

The kingdom of Israel, which had lasted for two hundred years, had now come to an end, in 721 B.C., and the members of the Ten Tribes who had been hurried off to Assyria became the Lost Tribes, for they have never again emerged in world history.

Nelson Beecher Keys is very wrong here, for all the history of the White nations of the world is Israel's history. But we will have to excuse Keys here as he is not the only one who is blind to who the true Israelites are. He probably assumes that Assyria was successful in mixing the Israelites with other races to the area where they were deported. Israel did indeed again emerge in world history, and what a history it is. Now back to his article on page 84:

The mixture of peoples in and about Samaria came to be known as the Samaritans, and their numbers were far less than those who had peopled this highland area before the coming of the Assyrians. There were so few of them that lions began to multiply in the land. And since these people worshiped many false gods, the Lord used these beasts as a scourge against them. The poor discouraged people finally resorted to the Assyrian king for aid and guidance, and he sent them a priest of Israel from among the captives he had taken. The holy man established a shrine at Bethel and

sought to instruct his charges in the worship of Yahweh. But their idolatry was too ingrained; they combined the worship of God with that of their many idols.

Here is another assumption on the part of Keys, that somehow it was good on the part of the Hebrew priests to teach the Samaritans the ways of Yahweh. Yahweh declares to Israel: You only, have I known of all the families of the earth. Right away, these Samaritans wanted to pervert the teachings of Yahweh, making a sham out of them. Non-Israelites will do it every time! They are not kinsmen to Yahweh as we are, so their comprehension is nil. Let's again continue with excerpts from Keys' article from pages 84 to 88:

—Now the northern kingdom, made up the greater portion of the domain promised to God's Chosen People, had passed back into heathen hands. Only the tiny Kingdom of Judah remained, a little oval block running from a few miles above Jerusalem south to Kadesh-barnea and from the Salt Sea to just west of Lachish. It embraced hardly more than one fourth the area of present-day Belgium. In fact, it was a mere trace of the kingdom passed along by David to Solomon; and even this remnant was virtually a possession of the Assyrians. Hezekiah, its king continued the role of vassal assumed by his father, Ahaz, and records of his annual payments of tribute may still be read on the numerous clay tablets unearthed in Assyria. He and his people found the burden unbearable. ...

—Assyria launched another series of invasions, which ultimately were to end disastrously for her. There were apparently three waves of invasions, the first coming while Sargon was still upon the throne, but led by a tartan, turtanu, or commander in chief, who may have been his son Sennacherib.

—During the next ten years several notable occurrences took place. One was the death of Sargon, which resulted in a wave of restlessness, sweeping the empire from one end to the other. Sennacherib quickly took over the throne, so no major revolt occurred. ...

Sennacherib accepted the huge tribute sent to him by Hezekiah, but he had no intention of letting Jerusalem escape all punishment. After Lachish had been reduced and the main stage of this second invasion got under

way, Jerusalem received immediate attention. Suddenly the Assyrian multitude was before its gates; as described in Byron's classic words, 'The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold.' A rab-saris, or court officer of Sennacherib, bawled out a dire warning to the representatives of Hezekiah, who stood upon the wall to hear his words. ...

His (Hezekiah's) remarkable cure, plus the exhortation of the man of God, Isaiah, seems to have strengthened Hezekiah's faith in Yahweh; he stoutly refused to admit these Assyrian troops sent to garrison the city. The main Assyrian army was just then embroiled in Libnah, and when Sennacherib heard of Hezekiah's defiance he dispatched messengers with letters threatening vengeance. But as his own situation at the moment was highly critical — a major battle against the Egyptians was threatening — Jerusalem would have to wait.

The Assyrian forces fell back to Eltekeh, about twenty miles west of Jerusalem. There Sennacherib met the combined forces of Egypt and Ethiopia and defeated them. Turning upon nearby Ekron, he added it to his list of conquests. While Sennacherib's inventory, like other similar lists, may be exaggerated, he claims to have taken a total of forty-six fortified cities and towns in Judah alone, from which he led away into bondage a reported 200,150 persons. He plundered the countryside of countless horses, camels, donkeys, mules and sheep.

He would most certainly have gone on and levelled Jerusalem had not disaster just then struck him a paralysing blow. A plague broke out in the ranks of his army and killed according to the Bible account, 185,000 of his warriors in a single horrible night (2 Kings [4 Kings (sic)] 19:35). He had no choice but to gather together his few remaining men and hurriedly retreat. Jerusalem was thus miraculously spared.

Troubles in Babylon now demanded Sennacherib's attention, and Judah was to know a few quiet years, during which Hezekiah died in peace. He was succeeded by his twenty-two year old son, Manasseh, whose reign was to prove at first as evil and revolting as his father's had been just and good. He rebuilt the altars to Baal which his father had torn down; he believed in enchantments and dealt with soothsayers and wizards, all of which were an abomination in the eyes of the Lord.

It appears that Manasseh continued as a vassal of Assyria; two Assyrian kings, Esarhaddon and Ashurbanipal, have left records of tribute payments made by him. It was probably the latter who caused the brash young man to be led captive to Babylon. While there, Manasseh repented of his gross wickedness, and the Lord therefore restored him to his kingdom. He ruled for the incredible period of forty-five years, the longest term any king of Judah held that throne.

The next to rule on the throne of David was Amon. I will use Insight On the Scripture, volume 1, page 96 to tell his story:

AMON. A King of Judah (661-660 B.C.), and son of wicked king Manasseh. He began to rule at the age of 22 and followed the idolatrous course of his father's earlier years. The bad conditions described at Zephaniah 1:4; 3:2-4 doubtless were developing at this time. After two years on the throne, he was murdered by his own servants. 'The people of the land ['am ha-'a'rets]' put the conspirators to death, placed his son Josiah on the throne, and buried his son Amon in 'the garden of Uzza.' (2 Ki 21:19-26; 2 Ch 33:20-25) The genealogy of Jesus includes his name. — Mt 1:10.

The next king after Amon was Josiah. For his story, we will return to Reader's Digest Story of the Bible World In Map, Word And Picture by Nelson Beecher Keys, page 88:

The people of the land then quickly dispatched the assassins and placed Amon's eight-year-old son, Josiah, on the throne. Josiah's reign was to prove one of the finest in the history of the little Kingdom of Judah—

While still a young man he sought to make his life and that of his court conform to the Law of God, and he set about suppressing idolatry not only in his kingdom but also to the north in what had once been the Kingdom of Israel. —Josiah was about twenty-six years old when he gave orders for the repair and refurnishing of the Temple, during which an ancient copy of the Law was discovered in a chamber. Its reading profoundly impressed not only the young king but his subjects as well. A second campaign for the elimination of every conceivable form or vestige of

idolatry was set in motion, and the Passover celebration is said to have had greater religious fervor than any since the time of Samuel.

We should take notice of something that is really important here. When Josiah tried to act as a missionary to the Samaritans trying to convert them to Hebrew ways, he was ignorant of the Law. If he would have found the copy of Yahweh's Law first, and then studied it carefully, he would have never tried to force his beliefs on the Samaritans. This action only added fuel to the fire when Ezra and Nehemiah were having trouble with them later on, when the Samaritans wanted to join in to help rebuild the temple and join in worship with them.

Keys, in his article, tries to imply that it was "very pleasing to the Lord" for Josiah to do this. You will notice that once Josiah had read the Law, he never tried to enforce his Hebrew convictions on the Samaritans again. We are to keep ourselves separate from the heathen!

These heathen have no compunction about breaking Yahweh's Law! This is one of the important incorrect postulations I wanted you to notice about Keys' article. While Key's does a very excellent job of putting this story together, he has a few kinks in it. Let's continue with his article on page 89:

Josiah, a vassal of Assyria like his father, grandfather and great-grandfather before him, hated the Assyrians and wanted to see them destroyed. Hoping, therefore, to prevent the Egyptians from joining the Assyrians, he gathered together his small army and met them at Megiddo in 609 B.C. During the battle a well-placed arrow dealt King Josiah a mortal wound. Hastily transferred from his own chariot to another, he was hurried back to Jerusalem, sixty miles away, but he had no more than arrived there when he died.

We should be starting to get an idea of the history of Judah under the hand of Assyria. It is important to understand that all of Judea except Jerusalem went into Assyrian captivity and about one hundred years later Jerusalem went into Babylonian captivity. This divided Judah into two different groups. Isaiah 1:7-8 describes this situation of Jerusalem being isolated from the rest of Judah quite well:

7 Your country is desolate, your cities are burned with fire: your land, strangers devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers.

8 And the daughter of Zion (Jerusalem) is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers, as a besieged city.

To understand this passage more fully, I will use some comments from different commentaries to expound on it, and I will start with the 12 volume Interpreters Bible which has the following to say, volume 5, page 169:

7. The devastation of war was almost as terrible then as now, especially after invasion by the Assyrians. who were specialists in the techniques of military terrorism. As overthrown by strangers: 'like an overthrow by [of] strangers.' Ewald's suggested reading, 'like the overthrow of Sodom', has much to commend it.

8. The daughter of Zion: The city personified as a young woman: cf. Amos 5:2. Originally the name of the Jebusite stronghold captured by David (II Sam. 5:7), Zion became a poetic name for the city as associated with David and his dynasty. The name Jerusalem, like the city itself, is many centuries older than his time. ... In three deft (quick and skillful) illustrative phrases the prophet here emphasizes the complete isolation of the capital.

The Dake's Annotated Reference Bible says, page 681, column 1, item v:

This was literally fulfilled about 175-180 years after this stern prediction. Many times hereafter the word desolate is used of the coming destruction of Judah and Jerusalem.

The Wycliffe Bible Commentary remarks on this on page 610:

Doubtless these verses look forward prophetically to the far more serious investment of Jerusalem by the Assyrians under Sennacherib in 701 B.C. (some scholars refer this whole chapter to that later period).

Matthew Poole's Commentary on the Bible says, volume 2, page 327:

Is left as a cottage in a vineyard, as a lodge in a garden of cucumbers; is left solitary, all the neighbouring villages and country round about it being laid waste.

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible, Abridged by Ralph Earle, page 564:

8. As a cottage in a vineyard — ‘As a shed in a vineyard.’ A little temporary hut covered with boughs, straw, turf, or the like materials, for a shelter from the heat by day and the cold and dews by night, for the watchman that kept the garden or vineyard during the short season the fruit was ripening (see Job xxvii. 18), and presently removed when it had served that purpose. As a lodge. That is, after the fruit was gathered, the lodge being then permitted to fall into decay. Such was the desolate, ruined state of the city.

With all this, we should have a better idea of the history of Israel's deportations, and Judah under the Assyrians. I don't know how many times I have read in the past, and continue to read articles by various Identity authors who continually persistently indicate that Israel went into Assyrian captivity and that Judah went into Babylonian captivity, it is simply misleading!

I believe, in most cases, these writers and teachers are speaking in generalities, while others are ignorant of the facts and are just repeating what the others are saying without doing any research for themselves on the subject. I have to admit, for a long time, such writers had me convinced that this is the way the history of Israel and Judah were. After much study, I found there were a few writers and teachers who understood the true history of Israel and Judah, and this generalization didn't fit with what I had previously been told.

Once an understanding is achieved on the true history of Israel and Judah, one can begin to understand the difference between a Judahite of the tribe of Judah and a “Jew.” This is a very important difference to understand

and there are many who have not accomplished this discretion. It would seem well, if these persons who have not done their homework on this history, discontinue having opinions on the subject until they have acquired such knowledge. In spite of the record, there are still many so-called big names in Identity who still claim the Jews are Israelites! It is high time they are taken to task! Now we will get back to the time period of Ezra and Nehemiah.

NEHEMIAH RETURNS A SECOND TIME TO JERUSALEM

After Nehemiah left Jerusalem the first time, things started to fall apart at the seams. To tell the story of this, I will use excerpts from the "History Of The Jews by Heinrich Graetz, volume 1, page 375-393. (I use this reference because there is not much written on this period of time, and it does go along with Scripture quite well):

But no sooner had Nehemiah left than a counter-current set in that could be traced to the influence of the high-priest Eliashib. The first retrograde step was taken when Eliashib held friendly communication with the Samaritans and the offspring of the mixed marriages, in violation of the decision of the Great Assembly. As an earnest of his friendship, a member of the priest's household, named Manassah, married Nicaso, a daughter of Sanballat. Others, who had been secretly dissatisfied with Nehemiah's strict line of separation, now followed the example of the priestly house. An entire change took place. Tobiah, the second great enemy of Nehemiah, was allowed to return unmolested to Jerusalem, and a large court in the outer Temple was actually assigned to him. ...

But worse than all else was the discord which prevailed in the Judæan community, and which even divided families. What could be pronounced right and lawful? The father did not agree with the son; the one accepted the stern practice, the other the lax, and thus disputes arose in each household. To counteract these lamentable occurrences, the more pious, who would not allow themselves to be shaken in their convictions, met and discussed a plan of action. They turned with hope and longing towards Nehemiah, who was still at the court of Artaxerxes. If he would return to Jerusalem, he could, with one blow, put an end to this miserable state of

confusion, and restore peace, unity, and strength to the city. At this auspicious moment a God-fearing man suddenly appeared on the scene. He belonged to the party that was incensed at the behaviour of the high-priest, and he undertook to chastise the wicked, and to reanimate the waning courage of the good.

This man, full of vigour, and moved by the prophetic spirit, was Malachi, the last of the prophets. Worthily did he close the long list of godly men who had succeeded each other for four centuries. Malachi announced to his dejected and despairing brethren the speedy arrival of the Messenger of the Covenant, whom many delighted in, and who would bring better days with him. The prophet counselled the people not to omit paying the tithes on account of the evil-doing of some of the priests, but to bring them all, as in former days, into the store-houses. ...

Did Nehemiah at the court of Persia have any idea of the yearning for his presence that existed at this moment in Jerusalem? Had he any knowledge that Malachi's belief in better days rested upon the hope of his return? It is impossible to say, but, at all events, he suddenly re-appeared in Jerusalem, between the years 430 and 424 B.C, having again obtained the king's permission to return to his spiritual home, and soon after his arrival he became, in the words of the prophet, 'like a refiner's fire, and like the fuller's lye.' He cleansed the community of its impure elements.

He began by expelling the Ammonite Tobiah from the place which had been given him by his priestly relative, Eliashib, and by dismissing the latter from his office. He then assembled the heads of the community, and reproached them bitterly with having caused the Levites to desert the Temple, by neglecting to collect the tithes.

A summons from Nehemiah was enough to induce the landed proprietors to perform their neglected duties, and to cause the Levites to return to their services in the Temple. The charge of the collected tithes and their just distribution he placed under the care of four conscientious Judæans, — some of his devoted followers. He restored the divine service to its former solemnity, and dismissed the unworthy priest. A most important work in the eyes of Nehemiah was the dissolution of the mixed marriages which

had again been contracted. Here he came in direct conflict with the high-priestly house. Manasseh, a son or relation of the high-priest Joiada, refused to separate himself from his Samaritan wife, Nicaso, Sanballat's daughter, and Nehemiah possessed sufficient firmness to banish him from the country. Many other Aaronides and Judæans who would not obey Nehemiah's commands were also sent into exile.

After peace and order had been restored in the capital, Nehemiah tried to abolish the abuses which had found their way into the provinces. Wherever Judæans lived in close proximity to foreign tribes, such as the Ashdodites, Ammonites, Moabites or Samaritans, mixed marriages had led to almost entire ignorance of the Hebrew tongue, for the children of these marriages generally spoke the language of their mothers. This aroused Nehemiah's anger, and stimulated his energy. He remonstrated with the Judæan fathers, he even cursed them, and finally caused the refractory (obstinate or unmanageable) to be punished. By such persistent activity he was able to accomplish the dissolution of the mixed marriages, and the preservation of the Hebrew tongue.

SANBALLAT AND THE SAMARITANS BUILD THEIR OWN TEMPLE AT GERIZIM

Sanballat, as well as his Samaritan followers and companions, out of preference for the God of Israel, had struggled to be received into the Judæan community. The virulence (hostile bitterness) of their enmity against Nehemiah, who had raised the commonwealth from its declining state, was in reality an impetuous offer of love, by which they hoped to secure an intimate connection with Judæa. But as they were repulsed again and again, this yearning love changed into burning hatred.

When Sanballat, who thought he had attained his aim by his connection with the high-priest's family, learned of the insult shown him in the banishment of his son-in-law Manasseh, because of that priest's marriage with his daughter, the measure of his wrath was full. He cunningly conceived the plan of disorganising the Judæan community, by the help of its own members. What if he were to raise a temple to the God of Israel, to contest the supremacy of the one at Jerusalem? There were among his

followers priests of the descendants of Aaron, who could legally conduct the service, as prescribed in the Torah, in the projected sanctuary. The dignity of the high-priest could fitly be assumed by his son-in-law Manasseh, and the other Aaronides who had been expelled from the Temple could officiate with him. Everything appeared favorable to his design. Both his desire of worshipping the God of Israel, and his ambition to be at the head of a separate community, could easily be satisfied at the same time.

On the summit of the fruitful Mount Gerizim, at the foot of the city of Shechem, in the very heart of the land of Palestine, Sanballat built his Temple, probably after the death of Artaxerxes (about 420 B.C.). The Aaronides who had been expelled from Jerusalem, and who were well versed in all the tenets of the Law (?), had selected this site because they knew that, according to the Book of Deuteronomy, the blessings were to be pronounced upon the followers of the Law of Moses from that mount. But the Samaritans gave to the old words a new interpretation.

They called, and still call to this day, Mount Gerizim 'Mount of Blessings', as if blessing and salvation proceeded from the mount itself. Even the town Shechem they called 'Blessing' (Ma-Gerizim). Sanballat, or the priest of this temple of Gerizim, declared that the mixed race of the Samaritans were not descendants of the exiles placed in that country by an Assyrian king, but that, on the contrary, they were true Israelites, a remnant of the Ten Tribes, or of the tribes of Joseph and Ephraim. ... They declared that they alone were the descendants of Israel, disputing the sanctity of Jerusalem and its Temple, and affirming that everything established by the Judæan people was a mere counterfeit of the old Israelitish customs.

I hope to bring more evidence in the next teaching letter concerning the temple on Mount Gerizim which was built by the Samaritans. I am running out of space in this letter and must discontinue at this point.



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