

# THE STORY OF MAN

*for children five to one hundred five*

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## DAVID'S THRONE RE-ESTABLISHED

### CHAPTER ONE HUNDRED FIFTY-THREE

**T**HE ARRIVAL of Nebuchadnezzar's army at Egypt's northeastern border was perhaps even more dismaying to the self-exiled Jews than it was to the Egyptians. They began to realize that what the Prophet Jeremiah had told them really would happen. (Jeremiah 44:24-30; 46:13-26.) Having treated God's prophet without respect, they now began to fear both God and the Babylonians.

#### No Safety in Egypt

The arrival of the invaders at this time was due to unusual circumstances in Egypt, as reported in an-

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When the Babylonian army later came through Judah, they found that most of the cities were inhabited only by animals.

cient histories. For a long time the citizens had been increasingly unhappy with their ruler, Pharaoh Apries. When Apries learned that his people were on the verge of a national revolution, he sent one of his generals, Amasis, on a tour of the nation to try to calm the people down with so-called goodwill speeches intended to paint Pharaoh as a ruler they should learn to appreciate.

To the surprise of both Pharaoh and Amasis, the citizens were so impressed by Amasis' oratory and manner that a large crowd of them forcibly insisted that Amasis become their leader and seize the throne from Apries. Amasis couldn't resist this doubtful opportunity to become the ruler of a powerful nation. He became the champion of the revolution.

Apries organized enough of an army to make a



feeble attempt against Amasis' army, but he was defeated in an initial battle.

News of this came to Nebuchadnezzar, who decided that this was the opportune time to invade Egypt, and punish the nation for its many attempts to bring Judah into rebellion against the Babylonians.

Nebuchadnezzar picked his time well. Even Pharaoh's army rebelled and refused to fight for him. Within days Egypt fell victim to the Babylonians and Apries was killed. Nebuchadnezzar naturally proclaimed Amasis as the new ruler and returned to Babylon, but not without taking most of the Jews and many Egyptians with him. Thus more of Jeremiah's prophecies were carried out, including the one that Nebuchadnezzar would overcome Egypt as easily as a shepherd puts on his coat. (Jeremiah 43:8-12.)

Before the Babylonians started rounding up their captives, Jeremiah and Baruch safeguarded Zedekiah's daughters and a few loyal Jews who had been taken into Egypt against their will. All were miraculously spared by the invaders. All other Jews were killed or captured and herded off toward Babylon. The hopeless captives miserably remembered that Jeremiah had told them they would deeply regret leaving their land against God's instruction.

The Babylonians departed with their spoils and apparently took Jeremiah and his little group with them. A few days later they arrived in Judah but not to stay long in a place that had become so utterly desolate. Ravaged cities had turned into the habitations of animals and birds. Fields and orchards were full of weeds.

### Royal Family Transplanted

Jeremiah and his little band might well have survived there, but God had instructed the prophet to take Baruch and Zedekiah's daughters and go elsewhere. Jeremiah obeyed God and, taking leave of Nebuchadnezzar's army, led Baruch and Zedekiah's daughters to a seaport on the Great Sea, possibly Joppa. There they embarked on a sailing ship to the far country of Spain, about two thousand miles to the west. Irish and Celtic-European annals have preserved the record that a young Irish prince, who was in Jerusalem when the city was taken, stayed with Jeremiah in all these travels and married one of the Jewish princesses in Jeremiah's care.

To learn where Jeremiah and his companions

went after going to Spain, it's necessary to flash back almost twelve centuries to the time of Judah. Judah, remember, was the father of the Jews, one tribe among the twelve tribes of Israel. Through that small part of Israel God planned to carry on the "sceptre," or reigning line of His chosen people (Genesis 49:10):

But the birthright line of Israel was given to Ephraim and Manasseh. (I Chronicles 5:1, 2.) These latter two tribes and their descendants by the millions were to receive the material blessings promised because Abraham had obeyed God, even to the extent of being willing to sacrifice his only son. (Genesis 26:1-5.)

Judah, one of Abraham's great-grandsons, was the father of twin sons, Zarah and Pharez. Just before they were delivered, when the midwife realized there were twins, she was especially careful to note which would be born first. That one would be the royal seed through whom the reigning line, or "sceptre," would be carried on.

As it happened, a hand emerged first, whereupon the midwife tied a red thread around the little wrist to show which child was the first to start from the mother. However, that baby drew its hand back and the other twin emerged. (Genesis 38:27-30.) Zarah, with the red thread around one wrist, was rightfully first from his mother, but only in part.

The other child, Pharez, was the one through whom the reigning line in Judah was first passed on, though generations later God combined it with the line of Zarah. David, Zedekiah and Christ were of the Pharez line. But Zedekiah's daughter was destined to marry into the Zarah line.

God used the Prophet Jeremiah in re-establishing the throne of David by sending him and his group by ship via Spain to the island known later as "Ireland."

There, long before King David's time, a colony of Israelites called the "Tuatha De Danaan" arrived and subdued the people called "Firbolgs" who had inhabited the island before them and ruled for hundreds of years. Later more Israelites, called "Milesians," arrived from Scythia, this time of the line of Zarah. One of Zedekiah's daughters who came with Jeremiah married a prince who was a descendant of Zarah. This prince became king at his father's death. Inasmuch as his wife was a princess of the Pharez line, the Pharez and Zarah lines were united and



Few people have known that the line of David's throne, cut off in Judah at the time of King Zedekiah, was re-established by God through the obedience of the Prophet Jeremiah who sailed with others to Ireland to carry out his commission.

David's throne was re-established in Ireland to continue as God promised.

### People of Israel Relocated

There are many detailed facts about this fascinating matter. Most of them have been uncovered in the last few decades along with surprising revelation of what happened to the supposedly "Lost Ten Tribes" of Israel, an absorbing story in itself. Jeremiah and Ezekiel had much to say about it, but the key to understanding much of what these two prophets wrote about is to realize that the Jews were not included in the ten-tribed House of Israel, although the Jews were Israelites.

Ezekiel wrote that Zedekiah's throne would be overturned three times. (Ezekiel 21:25-27.) The first overturn was accomplished when Jerusalem was destroyed and the Israelite prince who married one of Zedekiah's daughters became king, and the throne was transplanted thousands of miles away. The dynasty that resulted lasted down through many generations in Ireland.

Eventually, the throne was overturned a second time when it was removed from Ireland and established in Scotland. The third overturn was much later when it was removed by Edward I to London, where it exists today. As this is written, Queen Elizabeth II occupies the throne that came down all the way from King David! Christ will occupy that same throne after the third prophesied overturn and its final re-establishment in Jerusalem.

While the seat of Israelite rulership was being changed from place to place, more and more Israelites were migrating to Europe. Having escaped over the centuries from their Assyrian captors, in the area of the Black Sea, they moved northward and westward to flourish in many regions — even across the Atlantic Ocean to North America, where their numbers compounded.

God's promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob were steadily carried out, inasmuch that the descendants of Ephraim under the rule of Davidic kings became large, wealthy and powerful, culminating in the British Empire and the Commonwealth. The descendants of Manasseh developed into the most powerful single nation on earth — the United States in North America. Both fulfilled the prophecy of Israel, their father. (Gen. 48:14-20.)

Careful study of the Bible and history together shows that descendants of the tribe of Manasseh, the elder son of Joseph, are the principal inhabitants of the United States. But most Bible scholars refuse to accept this fact.

Most of the people of the British Commonwealth are descended from the tribe of Ephraim, the youngest son of Joseph. In both nations are also people of many lands who have come to share in the wealth and freedom. Relatively few citizens of both nations know themselves to be Israelites, although it was a fairly common belief a few centuries ago. Today most consider themselves Gentiles.

This error makes understanding Bible prophecy

almost impossible for them. It's a matter of God giving special understanding to those who choose to be obedient to His laws. Most refuse to recognize the vital importance of these permanently living laws because they consider them "Jewish" and assume they were discarded and cancelled by Christ.

### The Seventy Years' Captivity

About the time Jeremiah was still trying to convince Judah to shun any alliance with the Egyptians, there was living in the Babylonian capital a young lad named Daniel. Daniel had been taken captive from Judah in the time of King Jehoiakim. Many other Jews shared Daniel's circumstances, in which their captors sought to determine which of the captives could be of the most value in contributing to a superior culture.

Nebuchadnezzar's nobles were particularly pleased with Daniel's abilities, given to him because God had long since chosen him to be a prophet and to find favor with his captors. With three other young princes who also proved to be unusually intelligent, Daniel went through a three-year period of intensive training in the knowledge of Babylonia's most learned men. (Daniel 1:1-7.)

Because Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah had grown up as followers of God, even when almost all the rest of the royal family were turning against God, they weren't swayed by the pagan philosophy of the Babylonians. Of course, their instructors naturally hoped and tried to influence their religious beliefs.

Their names were changed. Daniel was to be known as "Belteshazzar"; Hananiah was altered to "Shadrach"; Mishael was given the name of "Meshach"; Azariah was renamed "Abed-nego." Their original names had to do with God, whereas their new names had pagan meanings. When the period of instruction was at an end, these four close friends stood out as the topmost among the trainees.

It was the custom that the same kind of food that was served at the king's table was also served to the youths in special training. This meant that unclean foods and such as were previously offered to idols would often be brought to the young men. The four friends agreed that they wouldn't follow such a diet but would remain faithful to God and be at their best physically and mentally. (Leviticus 3:17; 7:22-27; 11:1-47.)

"We must take a stand on this matter," Daniel

observed. "Even if meat hasn't been offered to idols, we can't know if it has been properly drained of blood, which we know should not be eaten. As for liquids, we're given more wine than water. If we continue this way, we'll make little headway. We'll have to try to have our food changed."

The next time Melzar, the man in charge of them, came to bring scrolls to study, Daniel diplomatically reminded him that they were there for the purpose of developing physically and mentally but that they couldn't make much progress if they ate food prepared mainly for epicurean appetites and not necessarily for nourishment.

"But Nebuchadnezzar himself chooses what you should eat," Daniel's overseer informed him. "He eats the same kinds of food, and he is convinced that it is the best food available anywhere. Perhaps you don't appreciate this rare and costly fare because you don't know that much of it comes from distant lands, even at the expense of human lives. You four fellows didn't eat the oysters that were brought at great expense all the way from the Persian Gulf. And you didn't touch the special stew made of squirrels brought from the mountains. Nor the exquisite papyrus wine from Egypt. And you didn't even taste the..."

"We truly appreciate being offered these specialties," Daniel interrupted. "My point is that the health-giving qualities of food are more important than unusual flavors and costliness. We can't speak for others of our countrymen in training, but we prefer cereal grains, vegetables and water for the time of our training."

Melzar stared in disbelief.

"You'd soon starve on only those things!" he exclaimed impatiently. "My superiors would demand to know why you had become so thin and weak. If they found out how poorly I had been feeding you, Nebuchadnezzar would have me beheaded!"

"I assure you we would never starve," Daniel told Melzar. "If you could manage to provide us with only vegetables, cereal grains and water for the next ten days, we'll prove to you that we'll be healthier than the men who gorge themselves with the king's favorite foods."

Melzar blinked worriedly, unable to understand that Daniel's simple choice of food and drink could do anything but enfeeble the four young men. (Daniel 1:8-13.)

"At the risk of losing my life, I'll do as you ask

for ten days at the most," Melzar reluctantly agreed. "Meanwhile, if I notice that you are failing, I'll start giving you only the richest foods to build you back up before your lack of nourishment is discovered."

For the full ten days Melzar managed to bring Daniel and his companions the food they wanted. Even in that short time the four youths developed a healthier appearance than that of the other trainees who ate unclean meats and drank so much wine. Melzar was amazed. (Daniel 1:8-16.) Of course, he didn't understand that the God of Israel had a hand in the matter because the four young Jewish men were obedient to Him in the matter of avoiding food that was unclean in the Creator's sight.

At the same time, because of that obedience, God gave them special wisdom and good judgment. Added to that, Daniel was given unusual understanding in interpreting visions and dreams. This *isn't* to say that Daniel was a psychiatrist. Visions and dreams by certain people sometimes have special meanings from God. Daniel was given the ability to know if visions and dreams had any important meanings and what those meanings were. With God's help, he had a great advantage over "wise" men and magicians, who often were influenced by demons.

At the end of the three years of training, Daniel and his three close friends were adjudged the healthiest and most learned and intelligent of all the trainees. Nebuchadnezzar himself tested their knowledge and decided that they were far more mentally keen than any of the others whom the Babylonians had chosen to train. (Daniel 1:17-20.)

### Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

Not long after this happened, the king of Babylon had a dream that greatly troubled him because it was so sharp and clear at the time and seemed to have strong bearing on the future. By next morning, as dreams usually do, it had mostly faded from remembrance. Still it bothered him. He called in his magicians, astrologers and Chaldean philosophers, hoping that there was someone among all these who could tell him the meaning of his unusual dream.

"May you live forever," these men gravely and dutifully announced, according to the manner of greeting a king in those times. "We understand that you have had a very unusual dream whose meaning you would like to know. Tell us about it,

and we shall interpret it for you." (Daniel 2:1-4.)

"I can't tell you about the dream because it has gone from my mind," Nebuchadnezzar explained. "You will have to use your powers to find out what the dream was about as well as its meaning. If you fail, you will be put to death and your homes will be knocked down and used as places for manure piles."

This chilling statement brought deep fear to the so-called "wise" men. Every one of them knew he was incapable of knowing or even guessing what the king's dream was about, unless possibly with the help of demons. But it was their job to try to create the impression that they had supernatural knowledge and powers.

"On the other hand," continued Nebuchadnezzar, "anyone who is able to tell me my dream and the meaning of it shall be highly rewarded and honored. Now speak out. Your lives depend on what you have to say!" (Daniel 2:5-9.)

There was a hurried, hushed consultation of the astrologers, magicians and philosophers while Nebuchadnezzar looked on impatiently. At last the group broke up. A spokesman approached the king, bowing low and smiling hopefully.

"Please try to remember what you dreamed, O mighty ruler," he begged. "Then we will tell you what the dream means."

"I've already told you that I've forgotten!" Nebuchadnezzar snapped. "It's obvious that you're all stalling because you don't know what to say! It's also obvious that you got your heads together just now to agree on some kind of lie!"

"I humbly remind you, sire, that your request is most unusual," the spokesman hesitantly mumbled. "No man, not even an astrologer, magician or philosopher, should reasonably be expected to have an answer to such a difficult question. Only the gods are capable of knowing such things and they rarely communicate with man."

Of course, this was quite the wrong thing to say to Nebuchadnezzar. It was an act of desperation, done with the hope that the king would appreciate a frank approach and would reconsider his drastic threats of punishment. It didn't turn out that way.

"Out!" Nebuchadnezzar bellowed. "I want all of you out of my palace immediately! All sorcerers, magicians, philosophers and astrologers are to die!"

Unhappily, this included Daniel and his three close friends.

*(To be continued next issue)*