

## 01 Captivity- Why Expelled from Land (side 1)

To be one of those evenings that I can say I more often get than others, that's either July 4, July 3, or July 5, depending on how it falls.

It's a weekend of a memorial of events that took place now more than two centuries ago.

As we often think of July 4, 1776, it sort of rings in people's ears if they have studied anything or heard anything that is traditional of American history.

What I wanted to do this evening is to say that there is a whole section of the Bible that you should read in connection with this event that we commemorate once every year.

To put it in simple terms, United States is indeed a remarkable nation.

Now in a special way, but even if we did not know our national identity, in a special way, this nation is going to have to face what it means to be a superpower and to potentially lose that superpower status.

Smaller nations can afford to lose status.

Great nations cannot truly afford to lose status without collapsing.

I think we have to realize that far more than most have ever thought about.

Great nations are attacked and assaulted by others.

They have things that others want.

This is what happened to Babylon.

This is what happened to Persia.

It happened to the Greeks and the Greek realms to Rome.

Rome was, in fact, pledged to death.

It was assaulted decade after decade after decade until it collapsed in the wet.

Smaller people can come and go.

People don't take notice.

Sometimes, smaller people also, in their region, may be what we would call regional power.

As the Armenians were, it has paid a very terrible price in their history.

Because other nations came in and ultimately occupied much of their land.

The Bible is made up of two kinds of prophets.

I'm speaking here of books.

Books that we call the former prophets and books that we call the latter prophets.

One of us, if we look at a King James version of the Bible, would, in a sense, start reading the prophets with the book of Isaiah.

And we would end with the book of Malachi, or wonder what to do with Daniel.

But in reality, the prophets do not start with Isaiah.

Isaiah only begins the latter prophets.

There were the former prophets who wrote very important books of the Bible.

Now, unlike the latter prophets who simply told a few things about history in order to use them as illustrations, the latter prophets as a whole spoke of events yet to come.

And we are told that they will certainly come, even if we have to wait and wait and wait till they do.

There are essentially messages for the latter day very loosely attached to any events of their time by way of example.

Hence, there's a little reference to the fall of Israel in Isaiah.

There's somewhat of a reference to the fall of Jerusalem in Ezekiel.

But the message of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the others look into the future taking aspects of the past only as some kind of guide for specific and lengthy messages.

But now the former prophets are different.

The former prophets wrote what we call a historic perspective.

And they are telling it in a historic framework.

And they are giving very few messages in terms comparable to Isaiah, for instance.

But we're asked to read their message, not as history alone, but as the implication of what history can mean for later generations.

Now the former prophets begin with Joshua.

And we need at this point to go back to the Hebrew Bible and to forget what the Greek librarians in Alexandria thought when they developed a way of organizing the books of the Bible that have come down to us out of the Greek and Roman world so that we don't see the real picture of the real story.

Because when you look at what you have in the authorizer, King James Version or comparable versions, that is every basic version of the Old Testament in English other than a Jewish translation or a Farrar Fenton, you simply don't have this picture at all.

Oh yes, you might have Joshua, judges, and then Ruth would be put in which is not a part.

You would have the two books of Samuel and two books of Kings which are part of the former prophets.

And you would find Esther would be the books of Chronicles and Ezra and Nehemiah, Esther, but actually Chronicles and Ezra and Nehemiah and Esther have nothing to do with this story.

It is unfortunate that this aspect is lost, but it is our responsibility at least to make it known to you.

And I want to take a look at it.

We're dealing here with a group of books as finally divided in the present editions.

They compose six books of the former prophets.

Joshua, judges, first and second Samuel and first and second Kings as we normally name them.

It's the story of the settlement of Palestine.

It's the story of the period of judges.

It's the story of the monarchy.

At its high point, it's the story of the divided nation or church.

Israel and Judah.

It's the story of the ultimate exile of both Israel and Judah.

It's the story of the entry of the people into a land that was promised them and their exit.

In the one case, in seventh centuries, these are rough terms.

In the other case, in approximately eight and a half centuries.

It is hard to realize that the whole story from the fall of Israel back to the entry into the promised land was not more than seven centuries and since 59 have elapsed.

From the story of Adam, we realize that this is really one very small part.

Not more than one eighth of the history of human experience.

We may think it rather a long period.

But it was not as long as one might imagine.

Those seven centuries would take us back to a period significantly after William the Conqueror came to Britain.

And he came to Britain in the 11th century.

We would have to go from that back to the departure of the Romans around 410 AD to have another period of 700 years.

In other words, we are dealing with a period that is half of the time between the departure of Rome and the present day if we were to look to Great Britain as an illustration.

Now, the meaning of these books can easily be lost if all we think of is that we are studying what Joshua did, how the land was divided, what judges did that has no bearing today, or what kings did who lived and died and whose experience is not being repeated today.

That is, if we think it is, the fact remains we are not asked to read it as just history or just geography.

We are asked to read it to understand what is the moral issue that is addressed.

Because kings are praised not because they did great deeds, or rejected because they did not do great deeds, they are addressed as also the judges on the fundamental premise of whether a person did good or evil in the sight of God.

Today, there was a debate, I was listening to it as we were ready to leave the house on the McNeil-Lara Report, which we get on radio, the only radio station that carries this belongs to the University of Southern California, otherwise normally seen on television.

But this particular program is significant because this evening it was addressing the question of whether we are indeed losing our national competitiveness, and the whole argument from either point of view was simply economic, as if the economic problems today are fundamental.

There was not a single issue raised as to whether the problem was economic or moral.

That is spiritual.

Remember what Mr. Armstrong wrote long ago in the story of Roger Baphson at the beginning of the 1920s, that you don't want to look at the state of affairs today in terms of the heat in the room, you want to look at what is happening to the boiler in the basement in terms of what is going to occur.

Now, that boiler was, is Roger Baphson's view a perspective on human morality? Now, his view was something like this, when, essentially, the nation is more than 50% doing what is right.

We can look for things looking up, or prosperity.

When it is, on other occasions, doing things that are not right more than 50%, it's likely to go the other way.

Now, Roger Baphson, of course, didn't take Abraham as view, but he wondered if you could survive in Sodom even with 10 people.

God does not necessarily do it on a 50-50 basis.

The story of Abraham, the bargaining with God for Lot and his family to spare the whole city just for their sake, God said he would do it even for a small fraction.

But the point is, Abraham saw that the issue was a moral issue, and would he overlook the majority sins even for the sake of a few who were doing what is right? And God said, yes, you set the number 10, and I'll agree with that.

As it turned out, the number was only four, and even that was high.

So God didn't have to keep his part, but the bargain in the city was destroyed, and Abraham had to learn that the rest of the family of Lot perished, other than those four of whom we have the record.

And, of course, one of them did, and root out.

We should take a look at these particular books of the Bible from a certain point of view, and I would like to state this point of view now.

We have knowledge about the identity of this nation, but this is July 4, this is not July 4, celebrated in Australia, Canada, Britain, Scandinavia, or Northwestern Europe, or the Alpine region.

It's simply an American experience based on what happened more than two centuries ago.

It could apply in principle, and if I were in another country on Canada Day or in Australia, they'll be celebrating their 200th anniversary next year, then we would address the question in a similar fashion to those countries.

What is important to realize is that we do know our identity, therefore we can have a clearer view of what the story is here, because the identity of this nation is essentially that of a dominant people of whom this story in the Bible is written.

That is the birthright people, one of the two tribes holding the birthright in the family of Israel.

Now, in a certain sense, what is here could apply equally to China, but in another sense it cannot, so I want to explain something first of all.

This land was not given after the flood to the people who now dwell here.

This land was given to another people.

Essentially the land of China was given to the people who dwell there.

The Chinese will never be taken captive and totally removed from China.

For the simple reason that is their land.

Their problems will essentially be of their own making, and they will suffer what their neighbors impose on them and what they do to themselves in their own land.

That is theirs.

But you see, both the land that we call Canaan and what we call Anglo-North America was not originally our land.

And that now presents a different problem.

It was a very important one, because it actually belonged to someone else before.

It wasn't the so-called land of Canaan, it was Canaan's land, and Canaan forfeited it.

And now we will touch that in a moment.

But we want to recognize that when a people comes into a land that really belonged to someone else, when God deals with that nation, it is just possible when God deals thoroughly with that nation that those people may not stay in that land unless they break off their sins.

And hence the church has warned that we face, not merely a tragedy in this country, as the Germans face a tragedy in Germany as a result of Nazism that they had espoused.

They're still there. We call it East and West Germany. They were driven out of occupied lands.

The East is no longer dominant in Prussia or German Poland or in parts of Eastern Europe or the Balkans.

But they live where they are.

We have warned this nation for more than 50 years that what is going to happen is that we will be removed from a land just as the ancient Israelites were.

And the reason we will be removed is that if the people who were here before deserved to be removed and we do the same things they did, we will deserve to be removed.

Now we come to the background of our story, which is not in Joshua, but is in the book of Genesis.

So let me turn to the background of the book of Genesis here momentarily.

Because if you don't understand this, you will have difficulty understanding the difference between why we have a different consequence to sin than let us say the Chinese or the people of India would.

In the book of Genesis, chapter 14, we have the story of what was occurring when there was a struggle between Mesopotamia with four kings and Canaanites with five kings as Abraham was entering this land.

Abraham gained the victory, and we are told on his return, so you'll fill in the background which is not essential here, that as Abraham returned, Melchizedek the king of Salem brought forth bread and wine.

He was priest of God most high, and he blessed him and said, Blessed be Abraham, and the most high God.

And Abraham gave tithes.

Now what is significant here is often overwhelming.

This is not a study on Melchizedek or a study of this part of Genesis.

It is simply to say that the church's teaching may be verified, if you wish, in other literature that is available.

The church points up that what is described in the book of Hebrews and what is described here pertaining to Melchizedek refers to a person whose name is king of righteousness.

And the place he was responsible for as rumor is the city of peace.

And he has no recorded lineage, and he is a priest, and to him tithes are paid.

And commentators tell us foolishly that this was just a Canaanite king.

A Canaanite king who is the king of righteousness, whose city deserves to be named peace, a king who is a priest of the most high God, to whom Abraham would give tithes.

This gives you in general a perception of the wisdom of those who write commentaries.

Paul says, consider how great this personage was, to whom Abraham gave a chance of all, about whom we have no record of his birth or death, as you would have expected of a king.

This is the story, if you please, of the one whom we have already seen earlier in Genesis, whom we call the Lord in English.

This is the one who we would call Yahweh, the one who is, the one who exists, the one who speaks, and who functions as a speaker as a priest for the great creator of God.

God created all things by Jesus Christ.

Yet there are those, for instance, who have even gone before us in the church in earlier generations, and there are ministers in the church of God seven days, who would say that there was no living Jesus Christ before he was conceived in Mary's womb.

Now if he was not living and only came to be, that is, if you take the view of Dr. Eric's, the non-Trinitarian view, then God did not create all things by Jesus Christ because Jesus Christ was not then there.

Who then were these who came down and said to one another when they beheld babel, behold now what man is doing? Who were these who said, Let us think man after our image, if it was only God that Jesus Christ never existed before the birth, the conception in Mary's womb? Alright, so much for the background. Now here is the case, and it's very important to understand this, if you're going to understand what happens to Israel as distinct from what happens to Arabians, to Egyptians, and others as a whole.

The Egyptians have paid their penalty as a whole in the lands in which they have lived, though some were prophesied to be expelled.

But many people have suffered in the lands they have lived in. The Persians are still there. The Greeks are still there.

Anybody who's enrolled was happy to tell you he's a Roman, he's still there.

But the United States, when the final catastrophe comes, won't be here any more.

Its people will be replaced by another, not equal in numbers for sure, because this country will also be drought-ridden, and have many other natural problems. But go back now to Melchizedek.

In the land of Canaan, there is a little city called Peace.

The town, the city would be an improper word in the sense that we think of as a city of Pasadena.

It would simply be something equivalent, if you know the size of the small sites, archeologically, under excavation in the Middle East, we would say it's something like what we would think of in terms of the greater area of our campus here.

There were towns that were often in times past, not more than a few hectares or acres, just a few.

A few buildings. You wonder what Melchizedek did with the tides. He didn't put them in a blue and then send them off to heaven.

I mentioned that because of what's happened today.

If you remember this transit landing crossing that didn't quite get over there.

Sadly.

No, the tides would have been used. God does not put it up in a napkin.

It wasn't put away for some future days. It was being used.

And it was being used to build a place called Peace.

That is, you could come here as distinct from Sodom and Gomorrah and you would find Peace.

Now, if you wanted to visit Sodom and Gomorrah, there was a different perspective.

You want to know what it was like when the angels came there as one? Yes.

You can read it in the book of Genesis. One of the great tragedies.

It was far and beyond anything that San Francisco can provide today.

Much worse.

But there was a place called Peace.

Now, it was not like Hopsoar, which was the military capital of Canaanites in the north.

This was a place called Peace.

I want you to get the point, get the feel of all the little places of all the big places.

Canaan was a land of many kings and many city-states.

It was not one Egypt under a favor.

It was not Mesopotamia under a great city-state that lorded it over others.

As in the case of the first dynasty of Babylon.

That dynasty we associate with the name of Hammurabi, but that's not the only person in the dynasty.

The name that has come down because of this deal that was found where the law of Hammurabi was engraved.

Mesopotamia was generally dominated by major city-states.

Canaan was not so dominated.

There were various groups that worked together, but most of them worked on their own.

And each king had a particular area.

It's not so happened that we don't know the background.

If Abraham bought a place to bury his family, there is no reason that Yahweh would not have bought a place.

In the land of Canaan, as priest of God, to build.

Canaanites were good businessmen and they would see a good deal here.

They had no reason not to sell.

Of course, there were honest people among them who wanted to give.

The David refused to receive from the Canaanite king.

Decided the Temple Mount.

It wasn't the king then, I should say, but the chief didn't let us say it.

He paid for it.

Abraham refused a direct gift.

He paid for what he purchased around the Hebrew for the burial of his family.

So we can perceive that the priest, Yahweh, now know him as Melchizedek in this story.

First of all, he buys a piece of land in a beautiful, hilly area that we now know as Jerusalem.

And he starts to build with the ties of those who know that he is priest of God most hot.

And he creates a small place where you could come to visit, to counsel, to learn the truth.

This was not like the real world of Canaanites.

This was the ambassador campus of that day and he was the ambassador.

I've told you many times the story of my friend Jacob Sightlin, friend of the college, the book dealer who upon leaving this campus said, now to go back to the real world.

I think it's a very important phrase that you should not forget.

Because ambassador is not the world around us.

It is an oasis.

The same thing may be said in East Texas of our sister campus there.

Now I want you to consider the fact that Melchizedek didn't do this in Beijing.

He didn't do this in Delhi.

He didn't do this in Anuradapura.

You want to know where that is? That's Sri Lanka, the ancient capital.

He didn't do this in Athens.

He didn't do this in Egitana or in Babylon or Evelyn or Damascus.

Where the Arameas were.

I want you to think of the implication.

What he built was in a land so that a people were without excuse in a way that other nations might have been considered as having excuses because they saw no such example.

God did not give such an example to ancient China.

In return he never told the Chinese that they would have to be expelled from their land.

Now you get the picture.

He didn't place a site in that land because he was not giving the land of China to someone else.

But he did place this site in the land of Canaan and we don't know how much earlier than the call of Abraham this occurred.

We don't know.

He was already known as a king.

He's not introduced as coming there in Abraham's day.

The Canaanites in all likelihood had seen this small site on the hills of Jerusalem.

What we would call the earlier part of the Middle Bronze Age as archaeologists define it.

They would have seen this site and should have known how to live in their cities.

And while this oasis of peace was occurring, Sodom was going its way.

Gomorrah was going its way and the other cities of the place.

Hasor was developing its military strength.

The city states were quarreling with one another.

Whereas the Egyptian fellow he may have had to live in peace through circumstances essentially beyond their own because Pharaoh had all the power.

The cities of Canaan were not like that.

They were in the land and around the city wall where glassies are very heavily compacted, cement-like areas that protected the foot of the wall.

If you couldn't use a battering ram to get to the wall you would just be going up like this.

The most remarkably defended cities anywhere in the history of antiquity were the cities of Canaan.

Because the cities of Canaan were not the cities of peace.

If you please, the Canaanites fought like the people of Lebanon are thinking today around the capital of Beirut.

You see the people right now who are living in that area are the descendants of one of the stocks of Canaan, the Sidonians who were not expelled by the children of Israel.

And every once in a while the Greeks perceived that before a nation is punished, the gods, as the Greeks thought of it, made them mad.

The Greeks were mad and they fell to the Macedonians and then spread around the known world.

There was once reasonable quiet for a while after 1948 in Lebanon, but the country is mad today.

There's no way to explain it. They are not thinking in terms of peace.

If you want to know what the land of Canaan was as a whole, from the time of Abraham and especially to the time of Joshua, you don't have to go any further than look at what is going on in Lebanon and the area of Beirut.

And that will give you an understanding.

Because that's been the state of life that was characteristic of the city-states of Canaan.

Now there was one thing about the city of peace.

You did not have a king who went to war.

You could come there and be at peace.

Because the lands of Canaan, there were different tribes, the peoples of Canaan, paid no serious attention to what God had been doing.

He told them that they were going to be expelled from that land.

And that it would be given to another. And he even told them who it would be.

And he brought that man in.

And of course they didn't believe his way and they didn't believe that he would even do this.

Because Abraham didn't seem like that kind of person.

And they even had friendship with Abraham when they knew that God had promised their land to him.

They didn't see it made any difference.

I mean, I know the church of God keeps the Sabbath today, but I don't see it makes any difference.

My life is their Sabbath keepers.

Oh, they even keep the feast of tabernacles and these other odd Jewish days.

Because we mean life. They're nice neighbors.

But I don't see why I have to do what they do.

You know, we have friends out of the world who don't believe God and they still like it.

Because God's character should make you likeable.

Now they don't like you because of your religion.

They like you in spite of your religion.

Now they like Melchizedek.

In spite of his religious ideas.

You get the picture, you see.

And for a long time, there were a lot of people like Jesus in spite of his ideas.

But then he cut out the hand.

His ideas began to catch on with too many.

At least in the minds of those who were the religious leaders of the time.

The Jesus knew it wasn't sinking in, but they thought it was.

God set a direct example of what society should be.

And he did it only in the land of Canaan.

There is no other record in or out of the Bible.

The God ever doing this anywhere else.

And the people who were in the land were given a period of time.

In fact, the Amorites, the not insignificant people, were confederated with Abraham.

At least some of them were.

And God said their iniquity isn't full and would be another 400 years after Abraham would die before their land would be inherited.

Now other Canaanite tribes probably had deserved it already like Sodom and Gomorrah.

That tribes were the people who dwelt in some of these towns.

But God didn't punish them all until even the least evil had reached that point that they no longer deserved to be in the land.

And then the conquest took place.

Now let us read a story.

Now the story is simply a warning in the book of Leviticus.

A book.

I told you we were looking in the former prophets that we're really examining the background of the former prophets.

Because if you don't understand these verses, you simply won't understand the rest of the Bible.

Chapter 18, the Lord says to Moses, speak to the children of Israel.

Say to them, I'm the Lord your God.

After the doings of the land of Egypt wherein you dwell, shall you not do.

After the doings of the land of Canaan, whether I bring you, shall you not do.

Neither shall you walk in their ordinances.

You shall do my judgments.

Keep my ordinances, or in this case statutes, walk therein.

I'm the Lord your God.

Then it lists certain things.

Verse 27, for all these denominations have the men of the land done, which were before you and the land is defiled.

So much so that the land, let me put it this way, so much so that they were going to be expelled.

Now the story is, you shall, in verse 26, keep my statutes.

And if not, that land will spew you out, in the morning.

Look at it very carefully.

Defile not yourselves, verse 24.

The nations defile themselves, and I cast them out before you.

Therefore, I visit the iniquity upon it, and the land itself, itself promise out its inhabitants.

So you're to be aware that you don't do the same thing.

So that the land spew not you out when you defile it, verse 28, as it spewed out the nations that were before you.

For whoever shall commit any of these denominations, even the soul that commits that shall be cut off, that is excommunicated from among his people, and in some cases the death penalty wasn't, and to be informed.

Now think about this.

The people who were in this land suffered as their penalty, suffered as their penalty expulsion from the land.

That was what was going to happen to them.

Now they didn't all become expelled, circumstantially.

Presumably the same would hold true with the House of Israel as far as every last person.

But it is important that this kind of thing doesn't happen to every nation.

I don't know of any nation that wants to live on the Japanese island, other than Japan.

I don't know of any people who wants to live in India other than the Indians, or in China other than the Chinese.

God will punish any nation that sins when he has not given their land to anybody else in the land.

They're going to be punished in their land to reap the consequences of it.

The land of Canaan was different because God set an example, and they did not follow it.

And so God said, the nations around the example that I have set through Melchizedek, my priestess speaking, that's how the Father is wording it, will be expelled.

Now the statement is further amplified.

Don't do these abominations so that the land doesn't spew you out.

What happened to the ancient House of Israel? Oh, they did these very things.

And guess what? They were spewed out.

They went out of the land and do not live there now as far as the Ten Tribes.

God dealt with Judah somewhat differently.

And that's a separate matter for the moment.

But even the Jews were ultimately expelled and under different circumstances.

God divorced Israel and sent them away never to permit them to come back.

Judah was simply separated and was allowed to come back.

And then there occurred much, much later in the New Testament what we would call a family squabble.

And the wife killed her husband.

Now the Romans did the deed, but in a sense they hired it.

Like you have some murders today for hire.

They promised money to shut the mouths of those who might know the rest of the story.

But that's a separate matter. We won't take time for this evening.

Now I have in a sense got ahead of the story.

What we want to take note of briefly is that we are beginning here with a picture that unless you understand the meaning of Genesis 14, the meaning of Leviticus 18, the two most important single chapters, and not the whole chapter, but the specific verses in these areas, you won't get the rest of the picture.

You see, Joshua enters the promised land with the children of Israel.

And then I'm going to skip the rest of the story for the moment, and then we come to near the close.

And near the close, the nation is warned that they will go into an Assyrian captivity if they don't repent, and God sent one prophet after the other to the northern kingdom.

They did not repent any sentiment to ultimate exile.

There's a verse in Isaiah that I want to read here, which is often, which is self-referred to, and for most people, never associated with the fall of the house of Israel.

There was a struggle taking place between Judah, on the one hand, and the house of Israel, and Syria, or the Arameans on the other.

And so approximately the year 733, the Israelites and the Syrians had got together.

Oh, Judah.

Let us go up against Judah, Isaiah 7-6.

And Vexus, let us make a breach therein for us, set a king in the midst of it.

And neither shall it come to pass.

For the head of Syria is Damascus.

The head of Damascus is its king, Redison.

With his 65 years shall Ephraim, the ally, be broken that it be not a people.

It would be so broken and scattered that it would not be recognized as a people and the head of Ephraim is Manasseh.

And the head of Samaria is Remoliah's son, who is Pika.