

1 Wk. 14 Ses 14: Divided Kingdom Part 2

2 Well, today is the divided kingdom, Part 21. This is the second part of the divided kingdom, the first part looked at
 3 the fall of Israel to the north. There were nine (10?) dynasties up in the north, and they did not listen to the
 4 prophets up in the north, the major prophets who spoke to the north were Hosea and Amos and they spoke, but
 5 the people didn't listen. So as a result, the Assyrians came down in 722 and took the North away, and those 10
 6 tribes are gone, they are gone. And now this week, we're going to focus on Judah.
 7 And you remember that the kingdom divided in 930 BC and our readings last week kind of focused you on the
 8 north, and your readings this week, focus you on the south. So today, rather than go into a lot of stories and the
 9 details of stories, this is once again one of the lessons where it's really **important to understand the structure of**
 10 **this time period.** It is the **black period** on your Bible timeline. And this is the time where most of the writing
 11 prophets come in. Last session, we had Amos in Hosea, and this week, we have a number of major prophets that
 12 begin to speak to the south because the warning is, **you know what the same things going to happen to you in**
 13 **the south that happened in the north, IF you don't listen.** And the North, we kind of look back on it. And we think
 14 well, that's sort of understandable because, you know, they didn't have the temple, didn't have the monarchy and
 15 they didn't have the Torah at least they weren't following the Word of God. In the south, they've got the temple,
 16 the Davidic monarchy, they have the word of God. And so, what's their excuse? I see my own life at times in the
 17 south, having everything to live a godly life, and yet, ignoring Him and kind of doing my own thing. So, we're going
 18 to explain this session, what's happening in the south. We're going to talk about a few of the major kings in the
 19 south because there's 20 kings in the south. Then we're going to talk about a few of the prophets who speak in the
 20 south so that you get kind of a taste of reading 1 and 2 Kings with the prophets being inserted exactly where they
 21 belong. And in your workbook, you have a list of all the kings of the South (pg. 106). And you also have a list of all
 22 of the prophets and exactly where they fit in and who the audience is. So, let's take a look at the South. This is the
 23 line that Jesus comes from, the kingdom of Judah. It's the purple line of the divided kingdom, the southern capital,
 24 is Jerusalem, and there's 20 Kings here, one dynasty. So, let's take a look at a few of them. There's a lot of Kings, 20
 25 of them as I mentioned, and some of them are good and some of them are bad, and some of them absolutely
 26 terrible, like Manasseh. And it's kind of interesting, because there's not a clear pattern of good, bad, good bad. In
 27 fact, we find that in some cases, there was a very, very evil king who had a very righteous son. And so, the pattern
 28 is a little bit of a mystery, but we find in 1 Kings 15, the first of the kings of the south is Rehoboam and Rehoboam
 29 (Bad) is Solomon's son. And so, you will follow the Royal monarchy from that point on to 1 Kings 22, Jehoshaphat
 30 (Good) is kind of the worst of the best in a way and he's one of the first kings in the south. And already in the
 31 south, we find that there's a major weakness about to take place here due to intermarry with the North. So, we
 32 want to take a look at that in 2 Kings 8: 16-18, we see that Jehoshaphat's son, Jehoram marries Ahab and Jezebel's
 33 daughter, Athaliah (from Israel – the North) and that ends up becoming really bad news for the South because
 34 Ahab and Jezebel are from the north, but Jehoshaphat's son Jehoram marries Athaliah from the north as a peace
 35 treaty between the North and the South, but it ends up being anything but peaceful. King Jehoram murdered his
 36 six brothers, and it was most likely instigated and certainly credited to Athaliah from the north. She's not good
 37 news. After eight years of Royal Life, Athaliah became a widow, and her son Ahaziah, then 22 years old, ascended
 38 his father's throne. And within a year, the young king fell and once that young king fell, the only people between
 39 the throne and Athaliah were her grandchildren. So, her grandchildren would be next in line. But Athaliah
 40 murdered her own grandchildren, she murdered everyone in the royal family, except for one man, by the name of
 41 Jehoash; I shouldn't say a man, he is a little bitty boy. So, the royal line came down to just one small child, Jehoash,
 42 who was hidden by his aunt (?) (or maybe hand?). And then the guards participated in a rebellion and killed
 43 Athaliah, and Jehoash; the young boy, became king of Judah. So, you have at this point here very early on in the
 44 southern kingdom, you have this this period where the South looks like they're going to lose it completely. And it
 45 comes down to one little boy, but it also is a lesson that we see repeatedly in the Bible, and that is **that marriage is**
 46 **important.** And when you have Jehoshaphat in the south, and his son married the daughter of the king of the
 47 North, Ahab, and they get together, Athaliah and ended up wreaking havoc in the south and almost costing the
 48 south the entire Davidic kingdom. It is a really very notorious time in the history of the South. You also have in the
 49 south in 2 Kings 15, Azariah. Some translations call him as Paramnesia (déjà vu sense). Another notable from the
 50 south, he reigns for 52 years. And if you have your Bible, I'd like to have you just look over there for a 2 Kings 15.
 51 There's a couple of things to take notice of that are kind of a reminder of things that I brought out in previous
 52 lessons. In 2 Kings, 15, it says, *In the 27th, year of Jeroboam, King of Israel, Azariah, the son of Amaziah, king of*

Judah, began to reign. He was sixteen years old when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty-two years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Jeconiah of Jerusalem. Remember how I mentioned before that many times the queen mother in the kingdom is mentioned with the king, that the queen of the kingdom in the ancient Near East was not the wife of the king, but the mother of the king, who had a special throne, and she was an interceptor and an advocate. And most times, you will see in a text that the mother is mentioned with the king. And of course, this is a type of the New Testament king and his mother, who is the queen, and that would be the Blessed Virgin Mary. So, I just wanted to bring that point out. As you read on in verse three, it says, "And he did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, according to all that his father Amaziah had done. Nevertheless, the high places were not taken away, the people still sacrificed and burned incense on the high places. And then it says in verse five, "And the Lord struck the king so that he was a leprosy to the day of his death. And he dwelt in a in a separate house. And Jotham, the king's son, was over the household governing the people of the land. I want you to remember that phrase **over the household**. Because those aren't just words, that's a title *Over the Household* and in Hebrew he has a title that we're going to look at that at the end of today's lesson and see how important that role is. The person who is *over the household* is very, very, very, very important and an important role in 2 Kings 15:6 chapter 15. It also mentions "Now the rest of the acts of as Azariah and all that he did. are they not written in the book of the Chronicles of the kings of Judah? Now, this suggests when he talks about the Chronicles of the kings it suggests that there are other Chronicles, and we know there were because we have some in our Bibles, for example:

- 1 and 2 Chronicles parallels our narrative books:
 - 1 Chronicles parallels 2 Samuel. So, the things that happened in 2 Samuel are in 1 Chronicles.
 - 2 Kings paralleled by 2 Chronicles.

So, as you continue on and you look at the kings of the South, you will you run into contrasting kings, Ahaz, a bad King followed by Hezekiah, a good king, as I mentioned before. Then Manasseh, bad man, Amos, really bad, followed by one of the best, Josiah. So, as I was saying, earlier, it's hard to pin down a pattern to this. Now one of the other kings in the south of note is Hezekiah in 2 Kings 18. He was preceded by Ahaz in the south. Now I know that a lot of these names you're thinking, yeah, I got that. I'll remember that the rest of my life. I'm not asking you to memorize all these kings right now. But it's important to soak yourself in here and start to become familiar with some of the more popular kings. Ahaz was followed by Hezekiah, good guy. Ahaz did not listen to God's prophet or humble himself or pray. But Hezekiah did and Ahaz didn't. And here's the situation with Hezekiah and Ahaz. First of all, the situation is that Jerusalem is under siege and King Hezekiah is ill. Now oftentimes the king is a reflection of what's happening in the country. So as Hezekiah is ill. Jerusalem is ill at this point; Jerusalem is not following the Lord. So, what does Hezekiah do? He prays that God will deliver them because of His righteousness. And God saves Jerusalem, and he intercedes on behalf of the people. So, Hezekiah, his condition and faith embodies that of the people, he is sick. At the time that Jerusalem is besieged, he prays and when he is delivered from his illness, it's a sign that Jerusalem will be delivered also. Now, **the prophet Isaiah (chapter 38, and 39) fit right there**. They fit right there at 2 Kings 18 because in Isaiah 38, it is a hymn of thanksgiving to God from Hezekiah. So that hymn is right in there. Now, as I mentioned earlier, one of the worst in the south is **Manasseh**. And he was one of the worse kings. He became king at 12 years old. Young and reigned for 55 years. He was the **first king in the south that did not experience a northern kingdom**. In other words, right after the North is taken away into Assyrian captivity. we have Manasseh. He was the first evil king in the south that did not experience a northern kingdom. He did not keep God's commandments, like his father Hezekiah who was king at the time of the Assyrian conquest of the northern kingdom. Once the South didn't have the northern kingdom as a rival, they relaxed. And this is an interesting thought that once the South, who is the line of David, did not have the North around anymore hassling them or entering into battles with them, the South relaxed, and that's so true of nature, nations and cultures, that when we are being attacked, we come together, we're strengthened, we have national pride. I remember 911 and what happened to our country right afterwards, and the number of people who gathered together and we were one and we had prayer meetings and to in social meetings together. And then people warned that we got to keep this. Time went on and people stopped going to church, and they stopped focusing and praying. And that's what we see happening here, particularly under Manasseh, who reinstituted pagan worship, and reversed the reforms of Hezekiah. And then the last thing that I'd like to make a note of, we're going to talk about one more, but the last big one that is really a great king is Josiah. And this is towards the end of the southern kingdom of Judah. And you'll find this in 2 Kings 22. Josiah was a young king, and his father was very wicked. But Josiah brought reform to Judah. And Judah had been forsaking the Lord, not paying attention to the law of the Lord, the Sabbath, the feeding of the poor, the

clothing of the naked, many of the issues surrounding social justice. And Josiah, this young king, brings reform and Josiah has a twofold devotion. Josiah has a

1. **Devotion to the Temple:** the whole worship and sacrifice and worshiping God
2. **Word of God:** he also has a great devotion to the Word of God, to Torah.

So, he has this dual devotion, and he responds to Torah. He hears the word of God and knows people haven't obeyed. And he tears his garments, and has the Torah read to the people. And someone asked me one time, *What's the meaning of rendering or tearing your garments? What does that mean?* And it certainly is associated with mourning when you when you tear your garment. But a lot of times it has to do with this idea that truth is lost, and garments oftentimes signify truth. And so, when you rip your garment, it says if truth is gone, you begin mourning at that point, and so we see a lot of examples in the Bible, where there's this tearing of the garments. Now Josiah, as I said, had a dual devotion (1) one to the temple, which is what people needed to come back to worshiping God, they need to do focus on worshiping God. And that's the sacrifice and the Word of God. It's kind of interesting, because that parallels the Catholic Church also with Mass and the Liturgy of the Eucharist and (2) the Liturgy of the Word (the Law). And those are the two points that Josiah brings up for his reform and Judah when they are beginning to fall apart. And the book of Sirach (which is a book that a lot of people don't read a whole lot) but the book of Sirach (one of the deuterocanonical books) has been in the church all these years, and was approved by all the bishops in 393, and 397, in the councils of Hippo in Carthage. This Sirach 49 speaks of Josiah. And I'd like to take a look at that for just for a moment in chapter 49. I'm going to read the first three verses. It says, *"the memory of Josiah is like a blending of incense prepared by the art of the perfumer, it is sweet as honey to every mouth, and like music at a banquet of wine. He was led aright in converting the people and took over way the abominations of iniquity. He said his heart upon the Lord, in the days of wicked men, he strengthened godliness*. So, it gives a tribute there. But I mentioned two things that I think are worth mentioning. One is that *his memory is sweet, as honey*. Now this isn't the honey from the bees, but the honey of the dates. And it's sweet as honey, his memory. And that immediately to a Jewish reader will remind them of the Word of God. Tara reminds them of how the, as the Prophet said *that the word of God is sweet, like honey in my mouth*. And it's an interesting thing that back in the first century life of the Jews, and the way that they would get young children to learn to read. First of all, you learn to read so you could read Torah. But the way that they would get them to read and learn is that they would put the Hebrew consonants on a slate. And then they poured honey onto it. And you would learn the words, you learn the letters, and when you learn them, you've got to lick the honey. So, you started associating the Word of God as sweet as honey, I think we did that. The Catholic Church we have more young people loving the Word of God, because they would want more honey. So, it mentions honey in Iraq and remembering Josiah. But it also mentioned incense, the memory of Josiah, like a blending of incense prepared by the art of the perfumer. And that would automatically bring you back to the temple. So those are his two major devotions. And *he strengthened godliness* in a time where people were very, very ungodly. Well, that brings us to our prophets. And as you know, in the northern kingdom of Israel, Amos and Hosea spoke to the north and were not fruitful. Now in the south, and you can look on your chart in your workbook and see all the prophets that begin speaking to the south. And it's just very important to know the political situation of the south and how their hearts are moving away from the Lord. And then when you read the prophets, you begin to understand how it's God pleading with them and moving them to return to the Lord and to be faithful concerning His commands. So, you have prophets like Joel and Isaiah and Micah and Jeremiah and Zephaniah, just as a note, one of the hardest places job, that's one of the hardest, one of the hardest books to do exactly date. Some scholars believe that Joel spoke to the north, Israel, and some scholars believe that Joel spoke to the south to Judah, I would recommend reading Joel twice. Once from the perspective of the North, and once from the perspective of the South, the granddaddy of prophets in the Old Testament, Isaiah is quoted often in in the New Testament. And by the way, we call them major and minor prophets not because one has more important things to say than another but because there's more text. Major prophets like Isaiah are equally important as Daniel, Jeremiah, lots of texts given to them. Smaller prophets, like Habakkuk, Malachi and Zephaniah, they are minor prophets because there are smaller books. **ISAIAH 1-39: Part 1: Book of Woe** But Isaiah is a very, very powerful book and the book of Isaiah, the prophet Isaiah has different parts to it. And scholars talk about these various parts of Isaiah. It is kind of divided up into a first part, which is chapters one through 39 and what I'm about to tell you here is really, really important to understanding the ministry in the New Testament of John the Baptist and Jesus, because the first part of Isaiah 1-39 is called the Book of Woe. You can imagine what this is all about. The woes are about how the South is living.

And God is saying **woe** to you, in the south, in the same way that Jesus in the in the New Testament said, *Woe to you Capernaum, Chorazin and Bethsaida. Woe, woe, to you in the south.*

ISAIAH 40 – 55: Part 2: Book of Consolation The second major part would be chapters 40 to 55. And that is called the Book of Consolation are referred to as the book of consoling. So, you have the book of woes one through 39, the book o consolation, 40 through 55.

Now you can imagine what the **woes** are all about. It's **about their behavior**. And I'm going to go through just a little bit of that with you. But here's the interesting thing that **we're going to look at when we get to the New Testament**. And this shows you how the New Testament is so locked into, into the old that it's not just haphazard stories in the New Testament, but every word that spoken and every word that's quoted from the Old Testament **has purpose. And it's like laser precise**. Now, there weren't chapters back in the Old Testament, there weren't versus; those all came in the Middle Ages and the Reformation. But you could tell what part of the book the beginning of consolation was, our chapter 40. Well, all of this time, Israel's been living under the woes. And when we come to Jesus' time, they're waiting for the *consolation of Israel*. And they are beat down by the Romans, and they are looking for the Messiah and there we are at the beginning of Matthew's Gospel. John the Baptist goes down to the Jordan, just north of the Dead Sea, and in Luke 3 it brings it out that *he opens up his mouth* and the first words are to *prepare a way in the wilderness the way of the Lord*. Where does it come from? Chapter 40, the Book of Consolation. So, the beginning of Jesus public ministry is an ushering in of what Isaiah said, it is second the part of consoling Israel, and there's a return. So, it's really precise, the way that John the Baptist and the way Jesus handles, particularly the book of Isaiah. So, we see, for example, in Isaiah 6:1– 11, Isaiah talks about how *the cities will lie waste*. In Isaiah 7: 10-17, it says, *Behold, a sign of virgin (almah) shall conceive and give birth*. You and I are very familiar with that text in Isaiah 7. You know, if I ask anybody, well, what's that referring to you and say, Well, duh, that's Jesus, it is referring to Jesus. But the very fact that Matthew had to remind his readers and quote, Isaiah 7 concerning the birth of Jesus meant that they didn't get it, that Matthew had to accent that he had to bring that point out. So, what was obvious is obvious to us was not obvious to them in the first century. But the New Testament writers bring out the meaning as it applies to Jesus from these prophets. So, you have the **literal sense** in Isaiah, and then you also have the **spiritual sense: the allegorical sense** or how it applies to Jesus in Isaiah 7. Just giving you some examples here in Isaiah 9 just run over that real quick here. In Isaiah 9:1-7, it talks about two tribes, *"but there will be no gloom for her that was in anguish. In the former time, he brought into contempt, the land of Zebulon, in the land of Naftali"*. Those are two of the tribes up in the north. So, he brought it in the former time he brought into contempt, the land of Zeppelin in the land of Naftali. But in the latter time Isaiah says, *He will make glorious, the way of the sea*. **There's a highway that comes right down into Israel from the northern countries connecting through the Africa in the south. And that highway goes right up through this small land of Israel, and that highway was a place of a lot of bloodshed, because everybody wanted the highway. And this is the area called Galilee, of the Gentiles.** And Isaiah says that *in the latter time, he will make glorious the way of the sea, the Land Beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations, the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in the land of deep darkness on them has light shined*. And so, he goes, on from there. What is interesting is that this area Zeppelin and Neftali to lead is right around the northern side of the Sea of Galilee. And Isaiah says in the latter times, **it's going to be glorious, there's going to be a light that shines. That place in the northern shores of the Sea of Galilee, is Capernaum and Capernaum was Jesus headquarters**. There

He

1. Taught many
2. Performed many
3. Gave Sermon on the Mount, just north of Capernaum there.
4. Spoke of the *light of the world*.

That's the same highway, as you move north towards Damascus, Syria, that the Apostle Paul saw a flash of light and had a powerful conversion.

So, while we can't go through every story in Isaiah, I'm trying to show you that in almost every story, you could go and look at its meaning as it relates to the New Testament. And that's simply evidence that the entire Old Testament is *Christicentric*.¹ Now, I want to bring up a point here that is a particular interest to Catholics, but it should be of interest to all believers around the world. And that is Isaiah 22. Isaiah chapter 22 is really important because Isaiah 22 gives us some insight into a position in the kingdom that is not talked about a lot in Christian circles. I mentioned to you in a previous lesson about the Gibirah, the queen mother in the kingdom of David, and

how that queen mother had a responsibility as an intercession and an advocate in the kingdom. There's another key position. And that position in the kingdom of David is a position that's best described as a prime minister, Prime Minister, do you remember Joseph back in Genesis, and you went down to Egypt and Pharaoh, the king of Egypt, took Joseph and put him in charge of the entire household, or in other words over the whole household?

That's what we're talking about there. It's a position that is over the household, a prime minister, and **the role of the Prime Minister is to rule when the king is gone**. Sometimes the king was sick, or the king was gone and when that happened, the Prime Minister received the keys to the kingdom. The Prime Minister received the keys to the kingdom, and he had authority to bind and to loose, to allow and not allow. And he was considered a *papa* father to the kingdom. I got to tell you; I didn't make this up. The Catholic Church didn't make this up. This is in the Bible. And that position in Hebrew is called the *Al ha-bayit*, over the household. And it's a title like Interior Secretary or Prime Minister. And so, Isaiah describes in chapter 22, the firing of one *Al ha-bayit* and the installation of a new *Al ha-bayit*. So, let's listen to his description there. And I have to tell you, that it's a bit of a tongue twister.

PRIME MINISTER: Al ha-bayit "over the household"

Isaiah 12: 15 says, *Thus says the Lord God of hosts, come go to this steward to Shebna, who is over the household, and say to him, what have you to do here, and whom have you here that you have hewn here at tomb for yourself, you who hew a tomb on the height and carve a habitation for yourself in the rock? Behold, the Lord will hurl you away violently, oh, you strong man. He will siege firm hold on you, and whirl you round and round and throw you like a ball into a wide land; there you shall die and there shall be your splendid chariots, you shame of your master's house, I will thrust you from your office, and you will be cast down from your station. I will call my servant Eliakim, the son of Hilkiah, and I will clothe him with your robe, and will bind your belt on him, and will commit your authority to his hand and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem into the house of Judah. And I will place on his shoulder the key of the house of David; he shall open and open and he shall shut, and none shall open. I will fasten him like a peg in a sure place and he will become a throne of honor to his father's house. And they will hang on him the whole weight of his father's house, the offspring and issue, every small vessel...*" he goes on from there. So, you have in Isaiah 22, a very comprehensive description of the role of the prime minister. Now I'm going to save some of this because when we get to the New Testament, we're going to do some teaching on this on how Peter becomes the first prime minister, the first *Al ha-bayit* in the New Covenant. Because Jesus says, *I give you the keys*. That's not up for debate. That's Prime Minister talk. That's all how *Al ha-bayit*. That's *papa*. And when Jesus ascends, it's St. Peter who is the head over this earthly family. So, we'll go into that more in detail later in Isaiah, then you move to the Book of Consolation. You're in chapter 40, all the way to 55 and that's where you here in chapter 40, what Luke 3,

Prepare a way in the wilderness for the Lord. And then really quickly. Also, in Isaiah 53, you have a description of what's called the **suffering servant**. And when you read Isaiah 53, you read about how a lamb was slain, and was unrecognizable, and by His stripes we are healed. And we know that that's Christ. And I would encourage you to read Isaiah 53 with Christ in mind. It's very, very powerful. And then we have Micah. Micah spoke to the south. about the time Isaiah was preaching in Jerusalem. Micah was prophesying in western Judah, directing his warnings to Israel as well. Listen to what Micah says to the western side of Judah in the south. *It shall come to pass in the latter days, that the mountain of the house of the Lord shall be established as the highest of the mountains, and shall be raised up above the hills, and people shall flow to it and many nations shall come and say, Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us His ways and we may walk in his paths*. So, it's speaking of this restoration in future. Now, we can say a lot more about some of these prophets. But I want to talk to you just briefly about Jeremiah. Because Jeremiah should be read in the context of the South, and the context of the south in trouble. And Jeremiah will really come alive when you start to read them. The prophetic message comes in response to their behavior in the south. It predicts what will happen if they don't change yet conveys God's love and tenderness and hope for the future. And the fact that God will bring about His promises in spite of their faithfulness. So, if you find yourself sort of down and out and struggling with sin, Jeremiah is a good one to read, because it speaks about God's hope, and restoration. This records the prophet Jeremiah tragically unsuccessful calls for Judah to repent of idolatry and immorality, thus avoiding Babylonian captivity, and his predictions that a remnant will be saved. Now, a few verses that are, I think, noteworthy here with the time that we have Jeremiah 25 for example. Jeremiah 25: 11-12 says, this whole land shall become a ruin and a waste, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon 70 years. And what's this? You know that on the Bible timeline chart, Jeremiah prophesies here. We know that he's predicting that you're going to serve Babylon for 70 years. We know that just around the corner is the deportation to Babylon. at the hands of the Babylonians,

we know that the Jeremiah is giving us how long they're going to be up there in exile 70 years, but then he says in verse 12, *then after 70 years are completed, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation, the land of the Colombians, for their iniquity, says the Lord, making the land and everlasting waste.* And then four chapters further in chapter 29, he says, *For that says the LORD, when 70 years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place.* Now we're going to study the exile in our next lesson, so I'm not going to make a lot of comments on that. We'll talk about that in the next lesson. Jeremiah also brings up hope of a new covenant. **There's a new covenant coming where the Word of God will not be written on tablets of stone, but the Word of God will be written on flesh of heart, the heart, the human heart, that will be the new tablet is the human heart.** Jeremiah 31:31-34. (Prophesy of the New Testament)

Now, I want to share this with you, if you want to know kind of a laundry list as to why the South is going to go into exile. **Jeremiah 34** is the chapter to read. Because Jeremiah 34 kind of spells out their iniquity, what they were doing wrong, the poor leadership, not only the poor leadership that the failure to honor the Sabbath, in every respect. And so, I would encourage you to read a chapter 34 and you'll get a really good snapshot as to why the South went into captivity. And when you read it, use that chapter before you go to confession. Because you can check your own heart. Am I like the South? It has a lot to do with social justice and has a lot to do with their hearts being turned from God. It has a lot to do with corrupt leadership.

Well, we come to the end of the southern kingdom. We come to the end of the southern kingdom in 2 Kings 25 and it's sad. You can read all about it. The last king of Judah in the land is kings at Zedekiah is the last one in the land. And the Babylonians begin to come down because you'll notice here at the bottom of the chart, the Assyrians right here the Assyrians took over from the Egyptians as the world power. But they did not last a whole long time because the Babylonians now are the world power here. And it's the Babylonians that are going to come down and take the south, into exile. They're going to take the south into exile, the last king, Zedekiah. And it's a sad commentary when you read it that the Babylonians came down and what do they do? They took king Zedekiah and his sons, and they bound Zedekiah and they murdered his sons in front of him. And right when his sons were murdered, the Babylonians gouged his eyes out, leaving him blind. The last memory was the fall of his sons, his future and they put them in chains. And they march king Zedekiah back to Babylon. Now where's Babylon?

Babylon is where we started this story with Abraham back here at Ur of the Chaldeans in a way, we have ourselves going back to the beginning of the story. We'll learn more about that next week how exile is physically picking you up and bringing you to where you are at spiritually, far away from the presence of the Lord. God is showing them physically, what is this spiritual reality. Well, let's wrap up this the southern kingdom before we look at the exile. We have the North, Israel - main problem was the alternate religion set up by Jeroboam the first, the prophets spoke mainly of the problem with the apostate cult in the north, with the two golden calves, one at Bethel and one at Dan, their own priesthood, their own feast days, all made up all, fabricated because they were separate from Jerusalem. They had to come up with their own feast days, they had to come up with their own priests. They the prophets voiced God's love to the people in the north and called them back. As Hosea did with Gomer, his wife who was unfaithful to him in Judah in the south, **the main message is fidelity to the covenant.** They have the temple, but Jeremiah says, *they have made it a den of thieves.* Complacency, lukewarm hearts, injustice to neighbors, not eating or conforming to God's His Word - ultimately, both kingdoms ignored the messages that God sent through the prophets, North was unfaithful, its heart was somewhere else, absorbed in foreign nations and their practices. The South paid lip service and took for granted took for granted the presence of God in their midst. They fail to appreciate their freedom or to pass that freedom on to others. And as a consequence, they themselves in the south would go into bondage. Once again, Jeremiah 34, coming out of Egypt, the people of God, we're called to reflect God to one another, coming up out of Egypt, clear back the people of God, we're called to bring the message of Yahweh to the world. And in way they treated one another and the way they treated the other nations they would be a witness, but they did not. **They failed in their witness to the other nations.** They failed to release others during the jubilee. And as a result, they found themselves in bondage. **Their exile is a physical representation of their spiritual reality.** As king Zedekiah is blind, and in chains, so is the nation. They will soon realize what they took for granted. But I like to conclude with a kind of a personal note and ask myself and to have you **ask yourself:**

- Who are you more like? Are you more like the North? Are you more like the South?
- Where are you different than both? Are you like the North? In that you have decided what your religion will be? OR do you will make up your own religion and you will say what's right and wrong. And I agree with this and do agree with that. And I don't go with this and I go with that. cafeteria Catholicism cafeteria

Christianity, I'll take what I want. And I'll leave the rest and what I left wasn't right. Or it's right for you, but it's not right for me.

- Are we more like the North who forsake authority of God and the priesthood that He's established? the papacy in the tradition?
- Or are we more like the South? We have everything, the sacraments and the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and the tradition, the Blessed Mother, the Pope, the saints, Word of God, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit of God the Father. We have it all. But we are involved in the things of this world and the toys of this world and the distractions of this world. **yet we're sitting on a gold mine.**
- You more like the North? Are you more like to south? Or are you living the life that the prophets proclaimed?

Come back to God and serve God and that's your life. Let's pray. Amen. The Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

¹ **Christocentric** is a doctrinal term within [Christianity](#), describing theological positions that focus on [Jesus Christ](#), the second person of the Christian [Trinity](#), in relation to the [Godhead/God the Father](#) ([theocentric](#)) or the [Holy Spirit](#) ([pneumocentric](#)). *Christocentric* theologies make Christ the central theme about which all other theological positions/doctrines are oriented.