

## The Davidic Covenant

*“When your days are fulfilled and you rest with your fathers, I will set up your seed after you, who will come from your body, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his Father, and he shall be My son. If he commits iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men and with the blows of the sons of men. But My mercy shall not depart from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I removed from before you. And your house and your kingdom shall be established forever before you. Your throne shall be established forever”*

*2 Samuel 7 v 12*

The Five Points of the Covenant -

1. to set David's offspring on David's throne
2. to establish his throne forever
3. that his offspring would build a house for God to dwell in
4. that He would be his offspring's Father
5. that His mercy would not depart from his offspring, in spite of his sin

The Covenant applies **TO THE OFFSPRING OF DAVID**. It states that their kingdom and throne will last forever. And this will begin with David's son building a house for God.

## The Covenant is Conditional

However, the promise that the kingdom would last forever IS CONDITIONAL. The Kingdom of Israel would only last forever if the people and the king who represented them kept God's laws –

*And it came to pass, when Solomon had finished building the house of the Lord and the king's house, and all Solomon's desire which he wanted to do, <sup>2</sup> that the Lord appeared to Solomon the second time, as He had appeared to him at Gibeon. <sup>3</sup> And the Lord said to him: "I have heard your prayer and your supplication that you have made before Me; I have consecrated this house which you have built to put My name there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. <sup>4</sup> Now if you walk before Me as your father David walked, in integrity of heart and in uprightness, to do according to all that I have commanded you, and if you keep My statutes and My judgments, <sup>5</sup> then I will establish the throne of your kingdom over Israel forever, as I promised David your father, saying, 'You shall not fail to have a man on the throne of Israel.' <sup>6</sup> But if you or your sons at all turn from following Me, and do not keep My commandments and My statutes which I have set before you, but go and serve other gods and worship them, <sup>7</sup> then I will cut off Israel from the land which I have given them; and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight. Israel will be a proverb and a byword among all peoples. <sup>8</sup> And as for this house, which is exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and will hiss, and say, 'Why has the Lord done thus to this land and to this house?' <sup>9</sup> Then they will answer, 'Because they forsook the Lord their God, who brought their fathers out of the land of Egypt, and have embraced other gods, and worshiped them and served them; therefore the Lord has brought all this calamity on them.'"*

*Then the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying: <sup>12</sup> "Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. <sup>13</sup> And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will*

*not forsake My people Israel.”*

***1 Kings 6:11***

There would be a continuous succession of kings - one after the other as long as they obeyed Mosaic law.

God's dwelling in the temple was also conditioned upon this obedience. He says that the temple was consecrated to put His name there forever. Yet he goes on to state the conditional nature of forever. God revealed the same thing to Solomon during its construction.

*Then the word of the Lord came to Solomon, saying: “Concerning this temple which you are building, if you walk in My statutes, execute My judgments, keep all My commandments, and walk in them, then I will perform My word with you, which I spoke to your father David. And I will dwell among the children of Israel, and will not forsake My people Israel.”*

***1 Kings 6 v 11***

### **Solomon Failed to Meet the Conditions**

But King Solomon loved many foreign women, as well as the daughter of Pharaoh: women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Sidonians, and Hittites— from the nations of whom the Lord had said to the children of Israel, **“You shall not intermarry with them, nor they with you.** Surely they will turn away your hearts after their gods.” Solomon clung to these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines; and his wives turned away his heart. For it was so, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned his heart after other gods; and his heart was not loyal to the Lord his God, as was the heart of his father David. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Sidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. Solomon did evil in the sight of the Lord, and did not fully follow the Lord, as did his father David. Then Solomon built a high place for Chemosh the abomination of Moab, on the hill that is east of Jerusalem, and for Molech the abomination of the people of Ammon. And he did likewise for all his foreign wives, who burned incense and sacrificed to their gods. So the Lord became angry with Solomon, because his heart had turned from the Lord God of Israel, who

had appeared to him twice, and had commanded him concerning this thing, that he should not go after other gods; but he did not keep what the Lord had commanded. Therefore the Lord said to Solomon, “Because you have done this, and have not kept My covenant and My statutes, which I have commanded you, **I will surely tear the kingdom away from you and give it to your servant. Nevertheless I will not do it in your days, for the sake of your father David; I will tear it out of the hand of your son. However I will not tear away the whole kingdom; I will give one tribe to your son for the sake of My servant David, and for the sake of Jerusalem which I have chosen.**”

### **1 Kings 11 v 1**

#### **The Division of the Kingdom**

The consequences of breaking the covenant were –

1. The kingdom was taken away from Rehoboam, Solomon’s son
2. Rehoboam would only remain ruler over a single tribe – Judah.
3. The other tribes will be ruled over by a servant

God is very clear: Solomon failed to keep the condition, so the conditional promise will not be fulfilled. His kingdom in Canaan will not be established forever down through successive generations for Israel living in the land. It will be taken from him. However, “for the sake of David” Solomon’s kingdom will not be taken from him during his life. Instead, the kingdom would be taken away from Solomon’s son Rehoboam.

Rehoboam became king, but the people rebelled against him because of his heavy taxes. 10 tribes broke away from Rehoboam and made Jeroboam king instead. These 10 tribes became known as “Israel” in opposition to “Judah”

So the Kingdom of Israel was split in two –

- Northern Kingdom – ruled by Jeroboam – consisting of 10 tribes – with a capital at the town of Samaria
- Southern Kingdom – ruled by Rehoboam – consisting of the tribe of Judah – with a capital at the town of Jerusalem.

## **Fulfilments**

The offspring of David would only have a kingdom forever if they obeyed God's statutes. IF they did not obey, then their kingdom would be brought to an end.

## **Simply Summing the Reigns of the Kings of Judah**

The reigns of Judah's monarchs was summed yielding 394 years 6 months and 10 days. To this, we must add the year designated in Scripture as "the Captivity". Thus, the total becomes 395 years 6 months and 10 days.

**394 years 6 months and 10 days**

## **Subtracting Overlap of Reigns**

The only Scriptural co-regency between these kings is that of Jehoshaphat and Jehoram. The length of this overlapping co-regency was determined to be 4 years. Subtracting the 4 year overlap from the total, leaves 391 years 6 months and 10 days.

**391 years 6 months and 10 days**

When Jehoram died, Ahaziah claimed his father's last year as his first official year. Then upon Ahaziah's being slain that same year, his mother Athaliah seized the throne and also made that her first official year. Consequently, Jehoram, Athaliah, and their son Ahaziah all three occupied the throne in 886 BC, and all laid claim to that year. As a result, the official years become two years more than the actual years. Therefore, these extraneous years must be subtracted from the 391 years 6 months and 10 days in order to obtain the true interval of the period.

**389 years 6 month and 10 days**

So, the Kingdom ended in the 390th year. Solomon reigned for 40 years, so it can be seen that from the beginning of Solomon's reign, until the last king of Judah, there were exactly

**430 years !**

## Message

### Blessings and Curses

The survival of a kingdom, and its protection from enemies is conditional upon obedience to the commandments of God.

- Obedience → Conquest of enemies
- Disobedience → Defeat by enemies

“And if you faithfully obey the voice of the Lord your God, being careful to do all his commandments that I command you today... The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before you.”

#### **Deuteronomy 28:1, 7**

“But if you will not obey the voice of the Lord your God or be careful to do all his commandments and his statutes that I command you today... The Lord will cause you to be defeated before your enemies.”

#### **Deuteronomy 28:15, 25**

- The Canaanites were removed from the land after 430 years of rebellion
- The offspring of David were removed from the Land after 430 years of rebellion

**In this section we show how God was instrumental in bringing about the end of the Kingdom of Israel.**

**Isaiah's prophecy**

- **of the Babylonian Captivity**
- **of Cyrus who would end the Captivity**

**Jeremiah's prophecy**

- **of the seventy Years of Captivity**
- **of 70 sabbath years of rest**

**Ezekiel's prophecy**

- **of the siege of Jerusalem**
- **for 430 (40 + 390) years of sin**

## Prophecy of Isaiah

In Isaiah chapter 39 Isaiah prophecies –

*At that time Marduk-Baladan son of Baladan king of Babylon sent Hezekiah letters and a gift, because he had heard of his illness and recovery. <sup>2</sup> Hezekiah received the envoys gladly and showed them what was in his storehouses—the silver, the gold, the spices, the fine olive oil—his entire armory and everything found among his treasures. There was nothing in his palace or in all his kingdom that Hezekiah did not show them.*

*<sup>3</sup> Then Isaiah the prophet went to King Hezekiah and asked, “What did those men say, and where did they come from?”*

*“From a distant land,” Hezekiah replied. “They came to me from Babylon.”*

*<sup>4</sup> The prophet asked, “What did they see in your palace?”*

*“They saw everything in my palace,” Hezekiah said. “There is nothing among my treasures that I did not show them.”*

*<sup>5</sup> Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, “Hear the word of the LORD Almighty: <sup>6</sup> The time will surely come when everything in your palace, and all that your predecessors have stored up until this day, will be carried off to Babylon. Nothing will be left, says the LORD. <sup>7</sup> And some of your descendants, your own flesh and blood who will be born to you, will be taken away, and they will become eunuchs in the palace of the king of Babylon.”*

*<sup>8</sup> “The word of the LORD you have spoken is good,” Hezekiah replied. For he thought, “There will be peace and security in my lifetime.”*

This prophecy occurs in the 39<sup>th</sup> chapter of Isaiah – which corresponds to the end of the old testament period – and the beginning of the intertestamental period.



## Prophecy of Jeremiah

In 626 B.C. the prophet **Jeremiah** began his ministry. For 40 years he preached a message of coming judgment – urging the people to repent.

Jeremiah made this prophecy - he prophesied that the Jews would be taken captive by the Babylonians and put under their power for 70 years.

*"Therefore the LORD Almighty says this: 'Because you have not listened to my words, I will summon all the peoples of the north and my servant Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring them against this land and its inhabitants and against all the surrounding nations. I will completely destroy them and make them an object of horror and scorn, and an everlasting ruin. I will banish from them the sounds of joy and gladness, the voices of bride and bridegroom, the sound of millstones and the light of the lamp. This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon for seventy years.*

*But when the seventy years are fulfilled, I will punish the king of Babylon and his nation, the land of the Babylonians, for their guilt,' declares the LORD, 'and will make it desolate forever. I will bring upon that land all the things I have spoken against it, all that is written in this book and prophesied by **Jeremiah** against all the nations. They themselves will be enslaved by many nations and great kings. I will repay them according to their deeds and the work of their hands."*

**JEREMIAH 25 v 7-14**

*"When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place."*

**JEREMIAH 29 v 10**

It is a remarkable fact of history that **Jeremiah's** prophecy was fulfilled exactly.

*"He (Nebuchadnezzar) carried into exile to Babylon the remnant (of the Jews) who escaped the sword, and they became servants of him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. The land enjoyed its sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word*

*of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah."*

*2 CHRONICLES 36 v 22*

### **Fulfillment of the 70 Years**

Let us take a closer look at this prophecy.. The prophecy of the seventy years of captivity was fulfilled in 4 different ways.

#### **1) The Period of Babylonian Power**

This is the period during which the Jews and western Asiatic peoples in general came under the sway of the Babylonian power. This period began with the defeat of the Assyrians and Egyptians at the siege of Harran. The New Babylonian Chronicle describes this event as occurring in the 17th year of Nabopolassar, ie 607 B.C. With the defeat of the Egyptians and Assyrians in 607 B.C., the domination of the peoples of Syria and Palestine passed from Egypt to Babylon. Jehoiakim (the king of the Jews) was reduced to a vassal king.

This assumption of Babylonian authority over all western Asia is confirmed by Jeremiah as dating from the accession year of Jehoiakim - 607 B.C. Jehoiakim served the Babylonian king for three years and then rebelled against him; consequently Nebuchadnezzar sent an army against Jerusalem. The date of this attack is the 3rd year of Jehoiakim.

So, the fall of Babylon and the tragic crash of the Babylonian Empire occurred in 537 B.C. - exactly 70 years after Babylon assumed power over Palestine.

#### **2) The Desolation of the Temple**

The Temple was burnt to the ground in 585 B.C. The Book of Ezra 6 v 15 informs us that the rebuilding of the Temple, after the Jews had returned from the Babylonian exile, was completed in the end (12th month) of the 6th year of Darius king of Persia. The reign of Darius, as given in Ptolemy's Canon is completely confirmed by the contract tablet datings and is also astronomically fixed by two independent eclipse records relative to two separate lunar eclipses, hence indisputable. The first year of Darius began in Spring 521 B.C. and finished in Spring 520 B.C., hence the 6th year ended in Spring 515 B.C. and no authority disputes this date. Now, from the cessation of Divine Services and the destruction of the Temple in 585 B.C. to the time the Temple was rebuilt and Divine Services recommenced in

515 B.C. was an interval of precisely 70 years - and the 70 year desolation was therefore fulfilled to the letter.

### **3) The Captivity of the Jews**

The first batch of Jews to be removed from the Land of Judah to Babylon were those taken in the 3rd year of the reign of Jehoiakim - 604 B.C.

Now, the first batch of Jews to come back from Babylon returned in the first year of Cyrus, as recorded in the first two chapters of Ezra. The first year of Cyrus as direct king of Babylon was his 3rd year as emperor - commencing March 534 B.C. and ending March 533 B.C. It was during this very year that the first return of Jewish captives from Babylon took place. This was precisely 70 years after the first batch of Jews were taken to Babylon in 604-603 B.C.

### **4) Divine Indignation**

During this period God expressly declares His righteous indignation against the Jews. Both the beginning and end of this chronological band are clearly defined in the Scriptures.

The 8th chapter of Ezekiel informs us that in the 6th year of Jehoiachin's captivity the wickedness of the House of Judah had reached such a pitch that it provoked God's righteous indignation and He declared

*"Therefore will I also deal in fury; mine eyes shall not spare, neither will I have pity" and He withdrew His Shekinah Glory from the Most Holy in the Temple" (ie He withdrew His protecting "presence" from their midst.)*

The 6th year of Jehoiachin's exile began March 590 B.C. The period of Divine Indignation on the Jews began in the 6th month (Elul) of the 6th year, that is in autumn 590 B.C.

Zechariah chapter 1 reveals the termination of that period of Divine Indignation. In verses 2 and 3, God declares

*"The LORD hath been sore displeased with your fathers. Therefore say unto them, Thus saith the LORD of Hosts."*

Verse 1 states that this was uttered in the eighth month (Bul) of the 2nd year of Darius, ie in autumn 520 B.C., exactly 70 years after the provocation of Divine Indignation in autumn 590 B.C. And verse 12 definitely draws attention to the fact that the indignation had lasted 70 years.

*"Then the angel of the LORD answered and said, 'O LORD of Hosts, how long will thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these three score and ten years?'"*

To which the Divine reply came,

*"Therefore, thus sayeth the LORD: 'I am returning to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it,' sayeth the LORD of Hosts, 'and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem.'"*

*"For I,' saith the LORD, 'will be unto her a wall of fire round about and will be the glory in the midst of her.'"*

### **Why Did the Captivity Last 70 Years?**

In the time of Moses, one thousand years before the Jewish Captivity, God gave the following laws to the Jews. Moses wrote these laws down

*"At the end of every seven years you must cancel debts. This is how it is to be done: Every creditor shall cancel the loan he made to his fellow Israelite. He shall not require payment from his fellow Israelite or brother, because the LORD's time for cancelling debts has been proclaimed. If a fellow Hebrew, a man or woman, sells himself to you and serves you six years, in the seventh year you must let him go free."*  
*DEUTERONOMY 15 v 1-12*

*"If you buy a Hebrew servant he is to serve you for 6 years but in the seventh year he shall go free, without paying anything."*  
*EXODUS 21 v 2*

As if the Sabbath Year law wasn't clear enough, God also instituted a Year of Jubilee. Every seven sabbaths of years - or seven times seven years, a special year of ATONEMENT was to be proclaimed throughout the Land. It was a special year of LIBERTY when each person was to return home to his family and property.

*"Count off seven Sabbaths of years - seven times seven years - so that the seven Sabbaths of years amount to a period of 49 years. Then have the trumpet sounded everywhere on the tenth day of the seventh month; on the Day of Atonement sound the trumpet throughout your land. Consecrate the 50th year and proclaim liberty throughout the land to all it's inhabitants. It shall be a jubilee for you; each one of you is to return to his family property and each to his own clan."*

*LEVITICUS 25 v 8*

God's laws indicate that after a period of "seven", debts are to be forgiven and slaves are to be freed and allowed to return home. How appropriate, therefore, that after 70 years of captivity and enslavement to the Babylonians, the Jews were set free and allowed to return to their homeland.

God deliberately set the duration of the captivity as 70 years because such a period was in accordance with the Sabbath Year Law - a law that the Jews had repeatedly broken.

The Jews were also meant to allow the land itself to rest every seventh year. This ,too, the Jews had disobeyed.

One thousand years earlier, in the time of Moses, God had told the Jews what would happen to them if they continued to disobey Him.

*"I will turn your cities into ruins and lay waste your sanctuaries, and I will take no delight in the pleasing aroma of your offerings. I will lay waste your land, so that your enemies who live there will be appalled. I will scatter you among the nations and will draw out my sword and pursue you. Your land will be laid waste, and your cities will lie in ruins. Then the land will enjoy it's Sabbath years all the time that it lies desolate and you are in the country of your enemies; then the land will rest and enjoy it's Sabbaths. All the time that it lies desolate, the land will have the rest it did not*

*have during the Sabbaths you lived in it."*

*LEVITICUS 26 v 31-35*

Here, God makes it very clear that the duration of the future Captivity (scattered among the nations) is to be related to the Sabbath Year Law - and the length of the period of Captivity is to equate to a great Sabbath for the land.

2 Chronicles confirms this.

*"The land enjoyed it's Sabbath rests; all the time of it's desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah."*

*2 CHRONICLES 36 v 21*

Over a period of 430 years, there would be  $430/7$  sabbath years of rest +  $430/50$  Jubilee years  
= 61.4 sabbaths + 8.6 Jubilee = 70 years of rest.

## Two Men Before Their Time

Only twice in the whole Bible does God predict the proper name of a person before they are born. In both cases God also predicts the specific events surrounding these two people, and the specific things they will do. The first name is JOSIAH. The second name is that of CYRUS. Both have an interesting connection to the events of the Captivity.

### Josiah

During the reigns of king Saul, king David and king Solomon, Israel was a united kingdom. However, after the reign of king Solomon ended (in 977 B.C.) Israel became divided into 2 separate kingdoms - the Northern Kingdom with it's capital at Samaria, and the Kingdom of Judah with it's capital at Jerusalem. There was a king of the Northern Kingdom - named Jeroboam, and a king of the Kingdom of Judah - named Rehoboam.

Division of the Kingdom After Solomon		
The Northern Kingdom	King is Jeroboam	Capital at Samaria
The Kingdom of Judah	King is Rehoboam	Capital at Jerusalem

There was still only one religion, the worship of YHWH, and the centre of this religion was at the Temple of Jerusalem . However, Jeroboam was worried because he believed that if his people continued to worship at Jerusalem they would return to serving Rehoboam. So to avoid this Jeroboam set about creating a new religion with a new centre of worship - so his people would no longer have to go to Jerusalem.

So Jeroboam made 2 gold calves, and set one up at Bethel and the other up at Dan. He established a new religion with new idols, new shrines, new priests, new festivals. Then a prophet from Judah came to the shrine at Bethel while king Jeroboam was worshipping there.

*By the word of the LORD a man of God came from Judah to Bethel as Jeroboam was standing at the altar to make an offering. The man of God cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD:*

*"O altar, altar! This is what the LORD says: "A son named Josiah will be born to the house of David. On you he will sacrifice the priests of the high places who now make offerings here, and human bones will be burnt on you."*

*That same day the man of God gave a sign: "This is the sign the LORD has declared: the altar will be split apart and the ashes on it will be poured out."*

*When king Jeroboam heard what the man of God cried out against the altar at Bethel, he stretched out his hand from the altar and said, "Seize him!". But the hand he stretched out towards the man shrivelled up, so that he could not pull it back. Also the altar was split apart and its ashes poured out according to the sign given by the man of God by the word of the LORD.*

*Then the king said to the man of God, "Intercede with the LORD your God and pray for me that my hand may be restored." So the man of God interceded with the LORD, and the king's hand was restored and became as it was before.*

#### *1 KINGS 13 v 1-6*

This prophecy achieved a remarkable fulfilment 350 years later when for the first time a king named JOSIAH became king of Judah. When Josiah was 8 years old he became king, and he reigned at Jerusalem for 31 years. In the 18th year of Josiah's reign (622 B.C.) Josiah's officials discovered the Book of the Law - and Josiah read it and realized how much Israel had disobeyed God's laws. He humbled himself before the LORD, and became determined to purge Israel of its idolatry.

Josiah sent his officials to the prophetess Huldah in Jerusalem to enquire of her what the discovery of the Book of the Law meant. She gave them this prophecy -

*"This is what the LORD says: I am going to bring disaster on this place and its people, according to everything written in the Book the king of Judah has read. Because they have forsaken me and burned incense to other gods and provoked me to*



*anger by all the idols their hands have made, my anger will burn against this place and will not be quenched."*

*"This is what the LORD, the God of Israel says concerning the words you heard: Because your heart was responsive and you humbled yourself before the LORD when you heard what I have spoken against this place and it's people, that they would become accursed and laid waste, and because you tore your robes and wept in my presence, I have heard you declares the LORD. Therefore I will gather you to your fathers, and you will be buried in peace. Your eyes will not see all the disaster I am going to bring on this place."*

### *2 KINGS Chapter 22*

King Josiah carried out a complete purge of idolatry both in the Kingdom of Judah and in the Northern Kingdom. It was the greatest purge that Israel had ever seen and would ever see. He removed all the idols from the Temple of Jerusalem and burned them outside Jerusalem. He also destroyed all the "high places" or altars throughout all of Israel where worship of the idols took place and slaughtered all the idolatrous priests. At Bethel people had been buried near to the altars (buried on holy ground they believed). Josiah dug up these bodies and burned them on the altars, thus fulfilling the prophecies made 350 years earlier. 2 Kings chapter 23 describes the purge of Josiah.

## Cyrus

God not only prophesied the exact duration of the captivity, He also prophesied the name of the man who would bring the captivity to an end - **CYRUS**. More amazing still, the name of **CYRUS** was prophesied more than 100 years before **CYRUS** was even born.

God prophesied that **Cyrus** would allow the Jews to return to their homeland and would issue a decree authorizing the rebuilding of their Temple at Jerusalem.

*"This is what the LORD says - your Redeemer, who formed you out of the womb:....who says of Jerusalem, "It shall be inhabited," of the towns of Judah, "They shall be built", and of their ruins, "I will restore them", who says to the watery deep, "Be dry and I will dry up your streams", who says of **Cyrus**, "He is my shepherd and will accomplish all that I please; he will say to Jerusalem, "Let it be rebuilt", and of the Temple, "Let it's foundations be laid."*

*ISAIAH 44 v 24-28*

*"This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to **Cyrus**, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him and to strip kings of their armour, to open doors before him so that gates will not be shut: I will go before you and will level the mountains; I will break down gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron. I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in secret places, so that you may know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who calls you by name. For the sake of Jacob my servant, of Israel my chosen, I call you by name and bestow on you a title of honour, though you do not acknowledge me. I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God. I will strengthen you, though you have not acknowledged me, so that from the rising of the Sun to the place of it's setting men may know there is none besides me. I am the LORD, and there is no other. I form the light and create darkness, I bring prosperity and create disaster; I, the LORD, do all these things..."*

*ISAIAH 45 v 1-7*

*"This is what the LORD says - the Holy One of Israel, and it's maker: Concerning things to come,.....I will raise up **Cyrus** in my righteousness: I will make all his ways*

*straight. He will rebuild my city and set my exiles free, but not for a price or reward, says the LORD Almighty."*

*ISAIAH 45 v 11-13*

The ministry of the prophet Isaiah lasted until about 690 B.C. so these prophecies were all made before that date. **Cyrus** was born 607 B.C. at the earliest - almost 100 years after the prophecies were written.

### **Testimony of Cyrus Himself to Isaiah's Prophecy**

We find recorded in the history of Josephus that **Cyrus** wrote throughout all his dominions that -

*"God Almighty hath appointed me to be king of the habitable earth," and that "He indeed foretold my name by the prophets, and that I should build him a house at Jerusalem which is in the country of Judea."*

Josephus goes on to say that, when **Cyrus** had read the words of the prophet Isaiah,

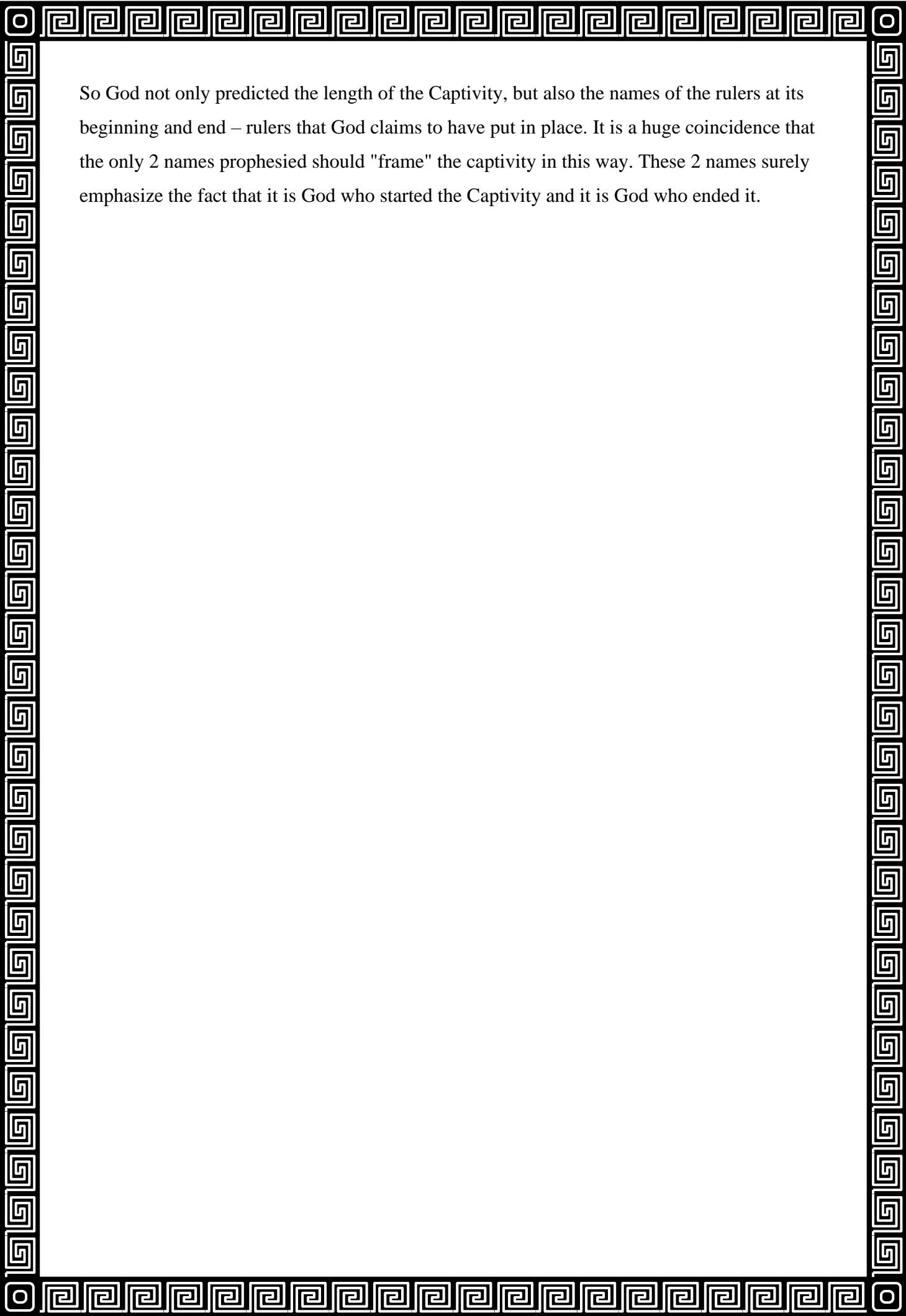
*"He called for the most eminent Jews in Babylon and said to them, that he gave them leave to go back to their country and to rebuild their city Jerusalem and the Temple of God."*

Josephus also gives a copy of the letter written by **Cyrus** to the governors that were in Syria, which letter begins as follows:

*"King **Cyrus** to Sisinnus and Sathrabuzanes, sendeth greetings. I have given leave to as many of the Jews that dwell in my country as please to do so to return to their own country, and to rebuild the city, and to rebuild the Temple of God at Jerusalem on the same place where it was before."*

*JOSEPHUS - ANTIQUITIES Bk XI, Chapter 1 see 1 & 3*

But what has all this to do with the Captivity - precisely this - in the whole Bible only two people are prophesied by name before their birth - JOSIAH and CYRUS. Josiah ruled up until the very year that the captivity began. He died in 607 B.C. Cyrus's reign began in 537 B.C., the very year the Captivity ended. These two people are separated by 70 years



So God not only predicted the length of the Captivity, but also the names of the rulers at its beginning and end – rulers that God claims to have put in place. It is a huge coincidence that the only 2 names prophesied should "frame" the captivity in this way. These 2 names surely emphasize the fact that it is God who started the Captivity and it is God who ended it.

## Ezekiel's Prophecy

God instructed the prophet to lie on his left side each day for 390 days in solemn protestation against the "iniquity" of Israel as a sign unto the people that they would know that the fall of Jerusalem was the LORD'S work. Moreover, each day was said to represent one of the years during which the house of Israel had lived in open sin against its God until which time He was to bring judgment.

*"Now, son of man, take a block of clay, put it in front of you and draw the city of Jerusalem on it. [2](#)Then lay siege to it: Erect siege works against it, build a ramp up to it, set up camps against it and put battering rams around it. [3](#)Then take an iron pan, place it as an iron wall between you and the city and turn your face toward it. It will be under siege, and you shall besiege it. This will be a sign to the people of Israel.*

*"Then lie on your left side and put the sin of the people of Israel upon yourself. [4](#) You are to bear their sin for the number of days you lie on your side. [5](#)I have assigned you the same number of days as the years of their sin. So for 390 days you will bear the sin of the people of Israel.*

*"After you have finished this, lie down again, this time on your right side, and **bear the sin of the people of Judah. I have assigned you 40 days, a day for each year.** [7](#)Turn your face toward the siege of Jerusalem and with bared arm prophesy against her. [8](#)I will tie you up with ropes so that you cannot turn from one side to the other until you have finished the days of your siege.*

It appears that there were a total of 430 years of sin by Israel and Judah – the same as the number of years for the Canaanite sin to reach its full measure.

## **The Fate of the Northern and Southern Kingdoms**

From the Mosaic Covenant in 1491 B.C. until the destruction of the Northern Kingdom at the hands of the Assyrians in 721 B.C. there were -

**770 years**

The Assyrians also laid siege to the Southern Kingdom of Judah in 701 B.C, but it was miraculously spared. Judah would persist until 70 A.D. – a further –

**770 years**