

# *Resurrection Life of Jesus Church*

## **BIBLICAL TRUTH CONCERNING THE STATE OF ISRAEL**

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### **PART 5C: THE PROPHETS**

#### **DANIEL**

Daniel was taken to Babylon eleven years prior to the destruction of Jerusalem along with his three companions. **Daniel 1:1-6**

He was elevated to a political office in Babylon and served as a political advisor to the kings of Babylon until it was conquered 61 years later in 539 B.C. by King Cyrus of Persia.

Daniel was retained as a political advisor for the King Darius and served for a total of 70 years as a top political leader. **Daniel 6:1-3**

The prophet Ezekiel referred to Daniel twice. **Ezekiel 14:14; 28:1-3**

Daniel referred to the prophet Jeremiah. **Daniel 9:1-2**

The Book of Daniel is a powerful testimony for the Jewish people of what God can do when His people are obedient and trust in Him. God also used Daniel to reveal secrets of the end times, and together with the Book of Revelation, Christians have a clear understanding of the end times.

#### **SUMMARY OF THE FOUR PROPHETS**

God raised up four prophets in Jerusalem to prepare the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to carry the message of the Living God for generations to come. They also laid the foundational teaching for the coming Messiah, who would come to the Jewish people some 450 years later.

The prophets never promised the Jewish people that God would restore an earthly political kingdom on the earth. Instead, the people were told that there would be a total restoration in the future, an event totally from God and under the leadership of the divine Messiah, not a human political/military leader.

#### **THE RETURN FROM BABYLON**

King Cyrus of Persia, who conquered Babylon in 539 B.C., in the first year his rule decreed that the temple in Jerusalem would be rebuilt and that Jews who had been kept in captivity in Babylon were free to go home to Judah. Cyrus died just nine years later in 530 B.C.

It is important to note that King Cyrus did not restore political freedom to the Jewish people; Judah was still to remain a loyal province of the Persian Empire but they would have freedom to rebuild the temple and worship the true God. **Ezra 1:1-11**



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Only a small remnant of the descendants of Judah and Benjamin left Babylon; a total of 42,360 persons. **Ezra 2:1, 64-70**

The majority of the Jews remained in Babylon because they were comfortable with their lifestyle. 530 years later during the time of Christ, the Jewish population in Babylon was estimated to have grown to one million.<sup>1</sup> During the years of 200-500 A.D., there were more than two million Jews living in Babylon.

This should explain why the Apostle Peter left Jerusalem and took up residence in Babylon for a season and established a strong Christian Church made up of Babylonian Jews. **1 Peter 5:13-14**

## **DIFFICULTIES FOR THE JEWS IN JERUSALEM**

In 445 B.C., when Artaxerxes was king over the Persian Empire, the Jews in Jerusalem were having a hard time. They had come back 94 years earlier, but because of political intrigue, the rebuilding program of Jerusalem and the temple had come to a standstill. This news was brought to the attention of Nehemiah who was the cup bearer for Artaxerxes. **Nehemiah 1:1-11**

Nehemiah's job was to make sure that the king was not poisoned. So before the king would eat or drink, the cup bearer would first taste it to make sure there was no poison present. This was an important position and the cup bearer would yield certain political powers.<sup>2</sup>

When the King Artaxerxes found out why Nehemiah was grieved, he commissioned Nehemiah to travel to Jerusalem and take control over Jerusalem. **Nehemiah 2:1-20**

13 years later a small temple was finished and the walls of Jerusalem had been rebuilt. **Nehemiah 7:1-2; 8:1-18**

## **THE LAST PROPHET BEFORE JESUS**

The last prophet God sent to the Jewish people in the Old Testament was Malachi, which in Hebrews means "messenger." He did not reveal his true name so we do not know who he was. The date of this prophecy is set by Bible scholars to be around 432 B.C. It would be some 400 years before God again spoke to the Jewish people through a prophet whose name was John the Baptist. **Matthew 3:1-12**

Malachi gave the Jewish people instructions about what to do in their current situation and what would happen to them in the future. It was a clear message that the coming Messiah would not reign as an earthly Jewish king but as God himself. **Malachi 3:1-18; 4:1-6**

***Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!***

### **DO YOU HAVE AN EAR TO HEAR WITH?**

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<sup>1</sup> Solomon Grayzel, A HISTORY OF THE JEWS, 1948, p.227

<sup>2</sup> Merrill F. Unger, UNGER'S BIBLE DICTIONARY, 1966, p.230