

CHAPTER TEN:

UNTIL SHILOH COMES

THE TWO-HOUSE PROPHECY OF JACOB

Genesis Chapter 49 contains the prophecies of Jacob over his sons Judah and Israel, and is rich in symbolism that is helpful for interpretation of Scriptural passages with Two House implications. We will consider the symbolism of the Vine and the Colt, as well as the implications of the Messiah being identified with Shiloh.

“The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes and the obedience of the nations shall be his. He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch; he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes” (Genesis 49:10-11).

“Joseph is a fruitful vine, a fruitful vine near a spring, whose branches climb over a wall” (Genesis 49:22). Alternately, this same verse is translated *“Joseph is a wild colt, a wild colt near a spring, a wild donkey on a terraced hill.”*

THE VINE OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL

Just as the House of Judah is represented in scripture by the fig tree, the House of Israel (Joseph), is represented by the vine in Genesis 49. We find additional support for this in Isaiah 5:3-7:

“And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, Judge between Me and My vineyard.....For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel.”

Now let’s consider that Judah’s sin in following Israel’s example links Judah to the vine as well. Judah chose to follow the example of the vine and:

“Therefore this is what the Sovereign Lord says: As I have given the wood of the vine among the trees of the forest as fuel for the fire, so will I treat the people living in Jerusalem. I will set my face against them. Although they have come out of the fire, the fire will yet consume them. And when I set my face against them, you will know

that I am the Lord. I will make the land desolate because they have been unfaithful, declares the Sovereign Lord” (Ezekiel 15: 6-8).

But just as Judah was defiled by following the example of Israel, he is redeemed through the same association. Jesus the Judean “*will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch,*” meaning that He becomes intimately related to Israel as His bride, and in His role as Israel’s redeemer becomes the rescuer of Judah as well: “*he will wash his garments in wine, his robes in the blood of grapes*” an unmistakable reference to His return as conquering king in Revelation 19, and the winepress of His wrath toward His enemies.

Importantly, while God’s vine is Israel, Satan’s vine is Sodom. These vines produce the wicked grapes (men) whose blood marks the robes of the Messiah.

“For their rock is not like our Rock, as even our enemies concede. Their vine comes from the vine of Sodom and from the fields of Gomorrah. Their grapes are filled with poison, and their clusters with bitterness. Their wine is the venom of serpents, the deadly poison of cobras” (Deuteronomy 32:31-33).

Throughout the Bible, but especially after the Messiah has conquered His adversaries, and His Millennial Kingdom has begun, the vine and the fig tree are used as symbols of the harmony of the two houses.

1 Kings 4:25: “*So Judah and Israel lived in safety, every man under his vine and his fig tree.*”

Zech 3:9-10: “*and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, shall ye call every man his neighbour under the vine and under the fig tree.*”

Micah 4:1-4: “*But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. **But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it.***”

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SHILOH

“The scepter will not depart from Judah, nor the ruler’s staff from between his feet, until Shiloh comes and the obedience of the nations shall be his” (Genesis 49:10).

The leadership of the Hebrews will remain the purview of the Tribe and House of Judah “*until Shiloh comes.*” The context also makes clear that “Shiloh” is a reference to Jesus Christ, a Judean, and that His reign is yet a future one (since the obedience of the nations is not yet His). But the reference to Christ as “Shiloh” is unique in all of scripture, thus indicating a very special significance. Many Bible students have been baffled by this passage, but the analysis is quite simple when the Two House teaching is considered.

Shiloh was the home of God’s Tabernacle in the territory of Ephraim, when Joshua the Ephraimite was the Judge and leader of the Hebrews. I believe its significance is as a symbol of the authority of the House of Israel in contrast to the authority of the House of Judah (in whose territory was the First and Second Temple to God). When Jesus comes as “Shiloh,” He comes as the Judean King of both the House of Israel and House of Judah, and High Priest of a Tabernacle whose authority precedes and is superior to that of the (future) Third Temple in Jerusalem (defiled by the Antichrist’s “Abomination of Desolation”).

TABERNACLE V. TEMPLE

Just as God’s preferred system of leadership for the Hebrews was Judges, not Kings (1 Samuel 7:4-7), His choice of dwelling place was the Tabernacle, not the Temple. The Tabernacle was ordained by God Himself while the Hebrews were under the leadership of Moses:

“And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them. According to all that I shew thee, after the pattern of the tabernacle, and the pattern of all the instruments thereof, even so shall ye make it” (Exodus 25:8-9).

But building the Temple was the choice of David the King, many years later:

*“And it came to pass, when the king sat in his house, and the LORD had given him rest round about from all his enemies; That the king said unto Nathan the prophet, See now, I dwell in an house of cedar, but the ark of God dwelleth within curtains...And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying, Go and tell my servant David, Thus saith the LORD, **Shalt thou build me an house for me to dwell in?** Whereas I have not dwelt in any house since the time that I brought up the children of Israel out of Egypt, even to this day, but have walked in a tent and in a tabernacle. **In all the places wherein I have walked with all the children of Israel spake I a word with any of the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to feed my people Israel, saying, Why build ye not me an house of cedar?”** (2 Samuel 7:1-7).*

Yet, just as God allowed the people to reject His system of Judges and replace it with their own system of Kings, He allowed David’s son Solomon to build the Temple (2 Samuel 7:12-13). Thus, the replacement of the Tabernacle with the Temple is another example of God’s mercy in indulging

human will that departs from His own. And, just as the City of Jerusalem is synonymous with the Temple, the Town of Shiloh is synonymous with the Tabernacle.

Importantly, the Town of Shiloh was in the territory of Ephraim and was the resting place of the Tabernacle of God (Joshua 18:1) until, under the High Priest Eli, the people returned to idolatry and God “*forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which he placed among men; And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy’s hand*” (Psalms 78:55-61). The incident, in which the Ark of the Covenant was captured by the Philistines, is described in 1 Samuel 4.

As we well know, the Temple was in the territory of the tribe of Judah. It likewise was destroyed as a consequence of idolatry. Jeremiah Chapter 7 showcases God’s warning of judgment against the Temple, in which He invokes Shiloh as the example:

*“The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ‘Stand in the gate of the LORD’S house and proclaim there this word and say, ‘Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah, who enter by these gates to worship the LORD!’ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, ‘Amend your ways and your deeds, and I will let you dwell in this place. Do not trust in deceptive words, saying, ‘This is the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD.’ ... Behold, you are trusting in deceptive words to no avail. Will you steal, murder, and commit adultery and swear falsely, and offer sacrifices to Baal and walk after other gods that you have not known, then come and stand before Me in this house, which is called by My name, and say, ‘We are delivered!’—that you may do all these abominations? **Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of robbers in your sight?** Behold, I, even I, have seen it,” declares the LORD.*

“But go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I made My name dwell at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. And now, because you have done all these things,’ declares the LORD..... ‘therefore, I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brothers, all the offspring of Ephraim’” (Jeremiah 7:1-15).

SHILOH AS A SYMBOL OF CHRIST THE JUDGE

As we proceed with this aspect of our study, we will find that Matthew 21 contains a wealth of critical information. Take special note of the common symbolism in Matthew 21 and Jacob’s prophecies in Genesis 49.

First, we must remember that God’s warning delivered by Jeremiah regarded the First Temple, invoking the specter of the Tabernacle at Shiloh as the example of the consequence the people faced for idolatry. In like manner, centuries later during His first advent, Jesus Christ warned of the destruction of the Second Temple and invoked the First Temple as the example.

*“And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the seats of them that sold doves, **And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves** [quoting Jeremiah 7:11]....Now in the morning as he returned into the city, he hungered. And when he saw a fig tree in the way, he came to it, and found nothing thereon, but leaves only, and said unto it, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever. And presently the fig tree withered away” (Matthew 21:12-19).*

Note that Jesus specifically cites Jeremiah so as to leave no doubt as to the parallel to the First Temple and its defilement. But note also the parallel symbolism of Ephraim (the vine) and Judah (the fig tree). Where Jeremiah 7:15 warns *“I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brothers, all the offspring of Ephraim [the vine],”* Jesus curses the fig tree (Judah) in Matthew 21:19.

Compare the specific language of Jeremiah 7:

“[T]herefore, I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, as I did to Shiloh. I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brothers, all the offspring of Ephraim, ’ ”

with that of Matthew 23:37-39:

*“**Jerusalem, Jerusalem, who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, the way a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were unwilling. ‘Behold, your house is being left to you desolate! For I say to you, from now on you will not see Me until you say, ‘Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord’.**”*

The House of Judah, the fig tree symbolically cursed in Matthew 21:19, was *actually* cursed in Matthew 23, and in God’s perfect timing, by the hand of General Titus of Rome in 70AD, and a subsequent greater Roman attack in 135AD, it was made as desolate as Shiloh.

SHILOH AS A SYMBOL OF CHRIST THE KING

Note carefully here that immediately preceding the above passage about the cleansing of the Temple in Matthew 21, is the passage detailing the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem.

*“And when they drew nigh unto Jerusalem, and were come to Bethphage, unto the mount of Olives, **then sent Jesus two disciples, Saying unto them, Go into the village over against you, and straightway ye shall find an ass tied, and a colt with her: loose them, and bring them unto me.** And if any man say ought unto you, ye shall say, The Lord hath need of them; and straightway he will send them. **All this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was***

spoken by the prophet, saying, Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass. And the disciples went, and did as Jesus commanded them, **And brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon.** And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest” (Matthew 21:1-9).

The prophet being cited here is not Jacob, who in Genesis 19:10-11 had said to Judah that his line would hold the royal throne “*until Shiloh comes and the obedience of the nations shall be his. He will tether his donkey to a vine, his colt to the choicest branch.*” The prophet was Zechariah, expanding upon Jacob’s prophecy:

“Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass. And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim [Israel], and the horse from Jerusalem [Judah], and the battle bow shall be cut off: and he shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth....

“And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south. The LORD of hosts shall defend them; and they shall devour, and subdue with sling stones; and they shall drink, and make a noise as through wine; and they shall be filled like bowls, and as the corners of the altar. And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of his people: for they shall be as the stones of a crown, lifted up as an ensign upon his land...

“And I will strengthen the house of Judah, and I will save the house of Joseph, and I will bring them again to place them; for I have mercy upon them: and they shall be as though I had not cast them off: for I am the LORD their God, and will hear them” (Zechariah 9:9-10:6)

Do you see the richness of this teaching about the first and second coming of Christ and their intimate association with the Two Houses? The first portion links the triumphal entry of Jesus into Jerusalem to Jacob’s prophecy and to Shiloh. The second portion evokes multiple symbols of the second coming of Christ as Conquering King from the Olivet Discourse and Revelation. The third portion links the reconciliation of the Two Houses to the Millennial Kingdom and identifies it as the purpose and goal of the second coming.

What is the purpose of the ass and colt symbolism? It is to identify Christ as Shiloh, and with the Two Houses.

SHILOH AS A SYMBOL OF THE RETURN TO THE LAND

*“Then the whole congregation of the sons of Israel assembled themselves at Shiloh, and set up the tent of meeting there; and the land was subdued before them. There remained among the sons of Israel seven tribes who had not divided their inheritance. . . . They shall divide it into seven portions; Judah shall stay in its territory on the south, and the house of Joseph shall stay in their territory on the north. . . . So the men went and passed through the land, and described it by cities in seven divisions in a book; and they came to Joshua to the camp at Shiloh. **And Joshua cast lots for them in Shiloh before the LORD, and there Joshua divided the land to the sons of Israel according to their divisions**” (Joshua 18:1-10).*

*“When Shiloh comes,” and the Millennial Kingdom is established, His tasks will include the restoration of the land to the tribes. As detailed in Ezekiel 48, the allocation of the territories to the tribes differs markedly from that under Joshua, but for the purposes of this study that fact only underscores the issue of authority and its association with Shiloh. For, as we learned at the start of this section, God Has made clear **“I am a father to Israel, And Ephraim is My firstborn”** (Jeremiah 31:9).*

The division of the land is the task of the firstborn: the task of Joshua, the Ephramite leader of the twelve tribes, in Shiloh of the territory of Ephraim.

Yet, as King over both Houses, the Messiah will at this time also ascend the Throne of David, for, as God promised at the time of Solomon’s betrayal *“I will humble David’s descendants because of this, but not forever”* (1 Kings 11:39).