

Transforming Daily
“ . . . carried away captive from their own land . . . ”
2 Kings 17:23, 25:21

Though 2 Kings has recorded within its pages wonderful stories about the transition of responsibility from Elijah to Elisha, and the subsequent works of Elisha according to the Word of the Lord, the significant historical events were the division of Israel's monarchy, the continuing downward spiral of Israel and Judah's rebellion against God, and the ultimate destruction of both kingdoms by 722b.c and 586b.c. respectively. After Saul, David became king, and after David, Solomon became king over the united nation of Israel. After Solomon's reign, the kingdom of Israel was divided into the northern kingdom, Israel, and the southern kingdom, Judah. Israel basically had two-and-a-half tribes and Judah had nine-and-a-half tribes. United Israel suffered division because of rebellion and defiance toward God, and in the end, their rebellion, from the Kings to the common man, led to their captivity and destruction.

The children of Israel were blessed with the Word of God and the presence of God. They experienced the forgiveness of God, and the material blessings of God were potentially without end. It wasn't that Israel didn't know or understand what the will of the Lord was. It was that Israel knew and understood the will of the Lord, but didn't want to do it or even be associated with it. The children of God wanted things for them to be just like it was for every other nation. God heard and saw what His people wanted and He allowed them to experience the end result of what they asked for.

His children didn't want to be associated with Him or His name. They didn't want to fellowship with Him. That means they didn't want to pray to Him. They didn't want to worship Him according to His Word. They didn't want to keep His commands. That means they wanted to support the laws of unbelieving law makers and experience the end result of foolishness. Further, His children wanted and chased after pleasures that would draw them away from Him, and satisfy their lusts. Basically, God who needs nothing wanted His children and His children who needed God wanted nothing to do with Him.

Do you see a pattern here? The United States of America has everything that the children of Israel had, and more. And yet, our nation still seems to be on the same path of destruction as were the children of Israel. The church holds some responsibility in this downward trend. Do you wonder why Christians have the Bible? We are the truth bearers. We are called and commissioned to lift high the cross of Christ. We have the testimony of Jesus Christ to look back to, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to lead, guide and direct us forward. Where do you stand? Can you see any similarities between the two great nations and their relationship with God? Prayerfully our testimony will not be like Israel's that they were carried away captive from their own land.