

Whirlwind: The Four-Generation Curse: Introduction: KERs of the Kings of Judah; Josiah's Excellent KER; Fourth-Generation Curse Culminates in the Fifth Cycle Administered to Judah; the 70-Year Captivity in Chaldea: Jeremiah's Prophecy in Jer 25:11; Daniel's Prayer & Judah's Restoration under Darius the Mede & Darius Hystaspes; Biblical Documentation of the Curse: the Second Commandment, Deut 5:8-9

Whirlwind

The Four-Generation Curse

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Whirlwind

Exodus 20:4 - “You shall not construct out of existing materials any idol, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth.

v. 5 - “You shall not cause yourself to bow down to them nor cause yourself to receive enslavement to them; for I, the LORD your God, permit no rival, punishing the iniquity of the fathers upon the children down to the third and fourth generations of them that hate Me ... (EXT)

Hosea 8:7a - They sow the wind and they reap the whirlwind.

Introduction:

1. Judah suffered the fourth and fifth cycles of discipline under Nebuchadnezzar II (c.630–562 B.C.), king of Babylon.
2. His invasions began in 606 B.C. and terminated with the Jews being expelled from the land in 586 B.C.
3. Following the initial attack on Judah, Nebuchadnezzar took a number of POWs back to Babylon including about fifty young men from the tribe of Judah (c. 604 B.C.)¹
4. Among them were Daniel, Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah. To deprogram them away from the spiritual culture of Israel, Nebuchadnezzar assigned to each of them a name from among the gods of the Chaldean pantheon: Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, respectively.

¹ Jeremiah 25:11, ‘This whole land will be a desolation and a horror, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.’ ‘The seventy years are considered by some to be a round number. Others find the number to be exact, counting from 604 B.C. (the first deportation being in Jehoiakim’s reign, whereas the second was in 597 B.C. in Coniah’s [Jehoichin] reign and the last in Zedekiah’s reign in 586 B.C.) to about 535 B.C. when the exiles returned to the land under the decree of Cyrus (Ezra 1:1–3)’ (*Scofield Study Bible: NASB*, ed. C. I. Scofield [New York: Oxford University Press, 2005], 1046n25:11).

5. It is important to get some background of the political leadership of the Southern Kingdom before and after the births of these four young men and their fellow deportees:

(1) Hezekiah reigned from 716–687 B.C., and received the following King Evaluation Report:

2 Kings 18:3 - He did right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father David had done.

(2) Manasseh (687–642 B.C.). KER:

2 Kings 21:2 - He did evil in the sight of the LORD.

(3) Josiah (640–608). KER:

2 Kings 22:2 - He did right in the sight of the LORD and walked in all the way of his father David, nor did he turn aside to the right or to the left.

NOTE: Even though Josiah received an excellent KER, his reign took place during a time of continued spiritual decline among the people of the Southern Kingdom:

2 Kings 23:25 - Before him [**Josiah**] there was no king like him who turned to the Lord with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might [**a quote from the Shama', Deuteronomy 6:5**], according to all the laws of Moses; nor did any like him arise after him.

v. 26 - However, the LORD did not turn from the fierceness of His great wrath with which His anger burned against Judah, because of all the provocations with which Manasseh provoked Him.

v. 27 - The LORD said, "I will remove Judah also from My sight, as I have removed Israel. And I will cast off Jerusalem, this city which I have chosen, and the temple of which I said, 'My name shall be there.'"

PRINCIPLE: Good political leadership cannot override the degeneracy of the people.

(4) Jehoiakim (608–597). KER:

2 Kings 23:37 - He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his fathers had done.

(5) Jehoiachin (597 B.C.). KER:

2 Kings 24:9 - He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that his father had done.

(6) Zedekiah (597–586). KER:

2 Kings 24:19 - He did evil in the sight of the LORD, according to all that Jehoiakim had done.

6. Following the generation under Hezekiah, there was a return to idolatry. Each subsequent generation, beginning with the reign of Manasseh, violated the first two commandments.
7. The second generation continued the apostasy under Josiah although he made every effort to destroy the outward manifestations of its idolatry.

PRINCIPLE: Once apostasy infests the souls of a majority of the people, political solutions are no longer effective in restoring order.

8. The third generation continued Second-Commandment violations under the reign of the evil King Jehoiakim.
9. The Fourth Generation suffered the fourth cycle of discipline early in Jehoiakim's reign and the fifth cycle under King Zedekiah.
10. Nebuchadnezzar's three deportations of Israeli hostages fulfilled the prophecy of Jeremiah in Jeremiah 25:11 quoted in the footnote above. Daniel confirmed the prophecy in his prayer recorded in:

Daniel 9:1 - In the first year of Darius \da-rī-ūs\ ... who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans—

NOTE: The time frame for this passage is 539 B.C. Consequently, Daniel has been in captivity for 67 years, which makes him about 83 years of age at the time.

v. 2 - in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was revealed as the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet [**Jeremiah 29:11**] for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, namely, seventy years.

11. Daniel confesses to God the reason the captivity occurred in:

Daniel 9:5 - ... we have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from Your commandments and ordinances.

v. 6 - “Moreover, we have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes, our fathers, and all the people of the land.

v. 7 - “Righteousness belongs to You, O LORD, but to us open shame, as it is this day—to the men of Judah, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, those who are nearby and those who are far away in all the countries to which You have driven them, because of their unfaithful deeds which they have committed against You.

v. 8 - “Open shame belongs to us, O LORD, to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, because we have sinned against You.”

NOTE: As Daniel continues his recitation of Israel’s indictment, he references the penalty clause of the Second Commandment in:

Daniel 9:11 - “Indeed all Israel has transgressed Your law and turned aside, not obeying Your voice; so the curse has been poured out on us, along with the oath which is written in the law of Moses the servant of God, for we have sinned against Him.”

12. Daniel’s prayer is that God would remember the prophecy of Jeremiah and bring the captivity to an end on schedule.
13. The dynasty of the Neo-Babylonian Empire fell at the hands of the Medes and the Persians in 539 B.C., and recorded in Daniel 5, the famous “handwriting on the wall passage” (Daniel 5:5–31):

VISUAL #1:

Handwriting on the wall: Dan 5:25 ff.

Daniel 5:25 - “Now this is the inscription that was written out: ‘MENĒ, MENĒ, TEKĒL, UPHARSIN.’

v. 26 - “This is the interpretation of the message: ‘MENĒ’—God has numbered your [Belshazzar] kingdom and put an end to it.



Daniel 5:27 - “ ‘TEKĒL’—you have been weighed on the scales and found deficient.

v. 28 - “ ‘PERĒS’—your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians.”

Daniel 5:31 - So Darius the Mede received the kingdom at about the age of sixty-two.

14. Darius the Mede was one of the two generals who conquered Babylon. The Persian leader was Cyrus the Great. It was agreed that Cyrus would be the king of the new Persian Empire but that Darius would serve as de facto king in the absence of Cyrus. Cyrus continued with other military exploits while Darius remained in Babylon to coordinate the new government. This is noted in:

Daniel 6:1 - It seemed good to Darius to appoint 120 satraps \sā'-traps\ [**governors**] over the kingdom, that they would be in charge of the whole kingdom,

v. 2a - and over them three commissioners (of whom Daniel was one), that these satraps might be accountable to them ...

15. Daniel’s prayer was acted on immediately although under the aegis of Cyrus the Great.

Ezra 1:1 - Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also put it in writing, saying:

v. 2 - “Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, ‘The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.’”

16. At this time the Jews considered Zerubbabel to be their king in exile. Similar to our four heroes, he, too, had been assigned a Chaldean name: Sheshbazzar \shěsh-băz'-er\ [rX^B^v=v# (**Sheshbassar**)], noted in verses 8 and 11.
17. In verse 8, he is said to be the “prince of Judah” meaning Darius had appointed him governor over the Province of Judah.

18. Ezra 2:1–67 documents those selected to return to Judah and begin the restoration of the city and the temple.
19. As far as God is concerned, Judah could not function as a client nation until the temple was completed and His ritual plan resumed through the Levitical priesthood.
20. Many delays plagued the construction of the temple under Zerubbabel. It took the benevolent act of another Darius, this one Darius Hystaspes \hīs-tās'-pēz\, whose actions are documented in Ezra 6.
21. Completion of the temple is noted in:
Ezra 6:15 - This temple was completed on the third day of the month Adar \ā'-dār\ [**March**]; it was the sixth year of the reign of King Darius [Hystaspes, i.e., 516 B.C.].
22. The 70-year, four-generation curse, which had been imposed on client nation Judah in 586 B.C., was finally over.
23. Details of what causes a four-generation curse and how it can be avoided will now become the focus of our study.

Biblical Documentation of the Curse:

1. The Second Commandment introduces the Jews to the four-generation curse and it is precisely linked to violation of the first two commandments.
2. If freedom is to be protected in a client nation, the Ten Commandments must be fulfilled in the dispensation of Israel and all but keeping the Sabbath in the Church Age.
3. Many fundamentalists like to refer to the United States as a *Christian* nation. It is not. It is a *client* nation in which the Christian community is divinely protected by God.
4. That protection is inseparably linked to whether the entire population keeps the Nine Commandments.

5. It must first be understood that the commandments were issued to Israel as Article I of its Constitution. Article II was the spiritual code while Article III was the establishment code.
6. All ten were given to Israel as its legal guide in accomplishing its duties as a client nation. They were not given to client nations in the Church Age unless so stated in New Testament Scripture.
7. Nine are. The first four relate to the spiritual code while the last six relate to the establishment code.