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Therefore, My People Will Go into Exile

5: 13

Therefore my people will go into exile DIG: When did the LORD decide that the Israelites would have a special identity? Did they accept it? Did they have opportunities to learn God's ways? What happened as a result? Would the little nation of Judah survive? How?

REFLECT: When did the LORD decide that you had a special identity (see Psalm 139:13-16; Romans 8:28-30). When did you accept Him? When did you rebel? What happened as a result? Do you feel that you have taken hold of what God has prepared for you? Why or why not?



The wealthy of Judah were only interested in pleasing **themselves** and excluding **God**. What would be the consequences of **their** actions? The first **therefore** refers to the captivity. **Therefore, My people will go into exile. The Hebrew phrase will go is in the prophetic perfect, and even though the event is in the future, it is depicted as already happened.** And about one hundred years after **Isaiah** made this prophecy, the **exile** will come true with the Babylonian captivity.

The thought is reminiscent of **Hosea**, where **the LORD** spoke to **Isra'el** through **His** prophet saying: **You are not My people, and I am not your God (Hosea 1:9)**. From the very beginning, **their** special destiny had been known to **ADONAI**. **He** commanded Moses to say to **the Israelites**, **"I am the LORD, and I will**

bring you out from under the yoke of the Egyptians. I will free you from being slaves to them, and I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and with mighty acts of judgment. I will take you as My own people, and I will be your God” (Exodus 6:6-7a). But it was evident that **they** did not know **Him**. For if **they** did, **oppression and cries of distress** would not have replaced **justice and righteousness (5:7).**

Was **their** plight a result of not knowing, or was it willful rebellion? Due to **their** lust for riches and wine, **their** senses had been deadened to the point where **they** were like brute beasts, thrashing around in a drunken stupor, and missing out on a relationship with the Creator of the universe. What a waste; what a tragedy. **Their lack of understanding** resulted in **their** need for discipline **(5:13a)**. **They** had refused to learn **God’s** ways and sought other escapes. But **their lack of understanding** was not because **they** hadn’t had the opportunity to learn **His** ways. The prophets, like **Amos**, had warned and warned **them**. **They** lacked **understanding** because **they** refused to listen and learn.

When **Isaiah** lived, there were mighty nations on the move and it was a real possibility that **Judah** could be swallowed up. **Their men of rank will die of hunger and their masses will be parched with thirst (5:13b)**. Since **God does not show favoritism (Romans 2:11)**, and death had no respect of rank **(5:14)**, both the mighty and lowly of society would **die**.

When I think of the promises of **the LORD**, I’m reminded of the story of the young man who had a dream to go to America. He scrimped and saved, and did everything in his power to save enough money to buy a ticket on a boat bound for America. The day came when he had precisely the amount of money needed, and he went immediately and purchased that ticket. The ship was to leave the next day, so with great excitement, and with all of his possessions wrapped neatly in a blanket he boarded the ship, and settled down for his great journey. After the first couple of days, the young man had exhausted the meager supply of food that he had been able to scrimp and save in his blanket, and he began to get hungry. He knew that if he could only survive for a few days more, he would enjoy all the riches that America promised.

It was that evening that a steward found him preparing to sleep in a secluded corner on deck. The steward confronted him, accusing him of being a stowaway. Pleading, his innocence, the young man produced his ticket. The steward apologized, but then asked, “but why are you sleeping here on deck, when you

have quarters below”? When the young man replied that he had only enough money for the passage but no room, the steward explained that the room was included in the price of the ticket. As the steward led the astonished young man to his room, they passed the large dining room where a sumptuous meal was being laid out. The young man peeked in and saw that the room was filling with people, and the steward told the young man that he could be seated for dinner in about fifteen minutes, as that was also included.

So many times we understand that we have redemption (see the commentary on **Exodus Bz - Redemption**), and we look forward to the beauty of Heaven, but we are ignorant of so much that is in between. We fail to grasp all that **ADONAI** has prepared for us.