

1 Chronicles 5:6

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Beerah his son, whom Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away captive: he was prince of the Reubenites.

Analysis

Beerah his son, whom Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria carried away captive: he was prince of the Reubenites—בִּיאָה (Beerah) means 'well' or 'spring,' while תִּלְגַּת־פִּלְנֶסֶר (Tilgath-pilneser) renders Tiglath-Pileser III, the Neo-Assyrian king who deported northern tribes (734-732 BC, 2 Kings 15:29). Beerah's designation as נָשִׂי (nasi, 'prince' or 'tribal chief') indicates leadership status, making his exile particularly significant for Reuben's tribe.

Reuben, Israel's firstborn, lost birthright blessings through sin (Genesis 35:22, 49:3-4, 1 Chronicles 5:1), and now lost land through exile—fulfilled judgment for covenant unfaithfulness. Yet even recording exiled leaders preserves hope: God remembers His people even in judgment. The exile wasn't annihilation but discipline, positioning eventual restoration (Ezra-Nehemiah). Judgment doesn't negate identity in God's covenant memory.

Historical Context

Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 BC) transformed Assyria into empire, implementing mass deportation policies to prevent rebellion. The 734-732 BC campaigns decimated northern Israel, deporting Transjordanian tribes (Reuben, Gad, Manasseh) before Samaria's final fall in 722 BC. Archaeological evidence from Assyrian records confirms these deportations.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. How does Reuben's loss of birthright followed by exile warn against presuming covenant privilege excuses unfaithfulness?
2. What hope does God's preservation of exiled leaders' names offer when you face consequences of past failures?

Interlinear Text

בְּאֶרְחָה	בְּנוֹ	אִשְׁרָה	הִגְלָה	תִּלְגַּת	פִּלְנֶסֶר	מֶלֶךְ
Beerah	his son	H834	carried away	H0	whom Tilgathpilneser	king
H880	H1121		H1540		H8407	H4428
אֲשֶׁר	הָיָה	נָשָׂא	לְרֹאשֵׁי			
of Assyria	H1931	captive he was prince	of the Reubenites			
H804		H5387	H7206			

Additional Cross-References

1 Chronicles 5:26 (Kingdom): And the God of Israel stirred up the spirit of Pul king of Assyria, and the spirit of Tilgath-pilneser king of Assyria, and he carried them away, even the Reubenites, and the Gadites, and the half tribe of Manasseh, and brought them unto Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and to the river Gozan, unto this day.

