



The tribe of Issachar understood the times and knew what Israel should do

Issachar Ministries UK seeks to be a people who understand the times, listen to the Lord and know what should be done

## Issachar Comments Papers

Expounding biblical concepts on the world scene today

# ***Build Houses!!***

March 2015

***Build houses! That is the cry of politicians today in the run-up to the General Election.*** Each of the political parties is pledging to build more houses. The Labour Party said they would build 200,000 new houses, so the Conservative Party said they will build 250,000 houses and the Lib Dems capped them all by saying that they will build 340,000 new houses.

Why is all this rush to build more houses? None of the politicians like to admit it, but there are two reasons why we need so many new houses. The first is family breakdown; and the second is immigration. Politicians don't like speaking about either of these issues. But it is a plain statement of truth. 450 children in every 1000 suffer the traumatic experience of family breakdown before they leave school. Every family that splits creates the demand for more houses.

### **Wise Advice**

This is just a little glimpse of the huge social problems in our nation today. But the demand for more houses is not new. ***"Build houses!"*** This was the first piece of advice sent to the people who had been captured in Jerusalem and taken to Babylon in 596 BC. The people were utterly depressed and saw no hope for the future. They were forced to live in a hostile environment where they had nothing in common with their neighbours - they didn't even speak the same language or worship the same God.

The prophet Jeremiah sent a letter to the exiles saying ***"Build houses and settle down; plant gardens and eat what they produce. Marry and have sons and daughters; find wives for your sons and give your daughters in marriage, so that they too may have sons and daughters. Increase in number there; do not decrease."*** This was wise advice because the little community in Babylon could very quickly have been wiped out. He wanted to see a strong and vibrant community of people whose faith would not only survive the testing times in which they lived but would grow and mature. He foresaw the time when the faith of these people would be so attractive that their neighbours would

want to embrace their faith. In the words of Isaiah they would become **"a light for the Gentiles"**.

## Change of Attitude

For this to happen the exiles in Babylon had to change their attitude towards their neighbours and the city where they were now living. Jeremiah's letter also told them that God's word to them was **"Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper."** Jeremiah knew that the people would hate to hear this message so he added by way of emphasis, **"Yes, this is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel says"** (Jeremiah 29).

## Learning to Prosper

In Britain today we are not facing the brutal opposition the Jews faced in Babylon. But Christianity is no longer the religion of the whole nation and the church no longer has a privileged position. We have to learn to be careful how we express our faith and not to provoke unnecessary opposition. The older generation of Christians need to heed the advice of Jeremiah to the exiles: to learn to prosper in a changed social environment. In particular older Christians have to learn how to support their children and their grandchildren who live and work and study alongside others who have no knowledge of the Christian faith and who do not share the same values.

## Building Households of Faith

Mature Christians have to build houses: but not with bricks and mortar. It is **'households of faith'** that are needed - households where there is love and security for all members of the family, especially the young ones who may be the only Christian child in their school class. These children have to learn how to be different but still maintain friends. It is not easy for them and they need much tender loving care. Praying, caring grandparents who build houses, **'households of faith'** for the whole family, are the greatest asset in the nation today. They are the house-builders who will provide **'hope and a future'** for the next generation.

*This paper comes to you as part of the Issachar Ministries Intercessionary prayer e-mail in March 2015 and also as blog on the Issachar Ministries website if you want to comment [www.issacharministries.co.uk](http://www.issacharministries.co.uk) and will also be on the Prophecy Today website when it goes live next month. [www.prophecytoday.uk](http://www.prophecytoday.uk)*

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