
Ether 7 — Brought Into Captivity — The Kingdom Divided, and the Brother of Jared's Warning Begins to Come True

Ether 7: the second and third generations of the Jaredites, the first cycles of the dynastic struggle the brother of Jared foresaw. Orihah reigns long in righteousness, but his grandson Corihor rebels and takes his own father Kib captive — and Moroni notes that this brought to pass the saying of the brother of Jared that they would be brought into captivity. What follows is a tangle of rebellion, war, and counter-rebellion among brothers and sons over the throne, the kingdom repeatedly divided and seized. But the chapter ends in grace: in the days of king Shule, prophets come crying repentance, the people mock them, and Shule — unlike the wicked kings to come — defends the prophets, gives them liberty to preach, and brings his people to repentance, so the Lord spares them. It is the chapter where the prophesied captivity begins, and where a righteous king shows that the cycle can, for a season, be broken by honoring the prophets.

Ether 7 begins the long, grinding cycle that will fill most of the book of Ether — the dynastic struggle over the Jaredite throne, generation after generation of rebellion, captivity, and bloodshed. The brother of Jared had warned that asking for a king *leadeth into captivity* (Ether 6:23), and this chapter records the warning beginning to come true, by name: when Corihor rebels and takes his father Kib captive, Moroni notes that this *brought to pass the saying of the brother of Jared that they would be brought into captivity* (v. 5). The chapter is a study in how monarchy breeds the very bondage the brother of Jared foresaw — the crown becomes a prize to be seized, and so brothers war against brothers and sons against fathers for it, and the losers are not killed but kept in captivity, generation after generation. Yet the chapter does not end in darkness. It closes with king Shule, a righteous ruler who defends the prophets when the people mock them, gives them liberty to preach, and brings his people back to God. The chapter shows both the curse of kings and the one thing that can hold the curse at bay: a king who honors the prophets and remembers what the Lord has done.

Hebrew Word Studies

shevi / *mashach* / *zakar* (שָׁבַי / מָשַׁח / זָכַר) — **captivity, those taken captive / to anoint (the act that makes a king) / to remember, to call to mind and act upon vv. 5, 7; vv. 10, 27 (kingship); v. 27.** Three Hebrew ideas frame the chapter. *Shevi* — captivity — is the word the brother of Jared's prophecy hangs on (vv. 5, 7). *Shevi* is the state of those carried away as captives, the bondage Israel knew in Egypt and Babylon; and the bitter irony of the book of Ether is that the Jaredites bring *shevi* upon themselves through the very kingship they demanded. The captivity is self-inflicted, the predictable fruit of a crown that becomes a prize worth seizing. *Mashach* — to anoint — is the act behind every accession in the book (the kings are *anointed*, Ether 6:27; 9:14–15). It is the root of *mashiach*, Messiah, the Anointed One. There is a quiet tragedy in the word: the Jaredite kings are *mashach*-anointed, set apart with the same gesture that names the Messiah, yet most of them become the opposite of the true Anointed — tyrants and captives rather than deliverers. The institution that should image the reign of Christ becomes, in their hands, the engine of captivity. *Zakar* — to remember — is the chapter's saving word (v. 27): Shule *remembered the great things that the Lord had done*. As throughout the record, *zakar* is the active memory that shapes conduct; because Shule remembered the crossing, he ruled in righteousness. The whole book of Ether can be read as a contest between *shevi* and *zakar* — the captivity that comes from forgetting, and the righteousness that comes from remembering. Where the kings *zakar* (remember the deep), the people are spared; where they forget, the *shevi* deepens, until the final forgetting brings the nation to its end.

From the Chapter's Architecture

```cross-references 1 Sam. 8:4–18 (Israel demands a king; Samuel warns it leads to servitude — the prophecy fulfilled at v. 5); Judg. 9:1–6, 22–57 (Abimelech seizes the throne by killing his brothers, and the kingdom turns on him — the dynastic bloodshed of vv. 4–22); 2 Kgs. 17:13–14 (the Lord testified by all the prophets, yet they would not hear — the mocked prophets of v. 24); 2 Chron. 36:15–16 (God sent messengers, but they mocked the messengers of God... till there was no remedy — the reviling of v. 24); Deut. 8:2, 11–18 (beware that thou forget not the Lord — the remembering of v. 27 against forgetting); Ps. 78:9–11, 42 (the people forgot his works... they remembered not his hand — the forgetting that undoes a people, against v. 27); Ps. 106:7, 13 (the fathers remembered not... soon forgot his works — v. 27); Prov. 29:2 (when the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice — Shule's righteous reign, vv. 25–27); Jer. 7:25–26 (the Lord sent the prophets daily, but they hearkened not — v. 24); Matt. 23:34–37 (the prophets killed and stoned — the fate Shule prevents, v. 24); Acts 7:51–52 (which of the prophets have your fathers not persecuted? — the reviling of v. 24); Mosiah 29:16–23 (the danger of kings, how much iniquity doth one wicked king cause — the captivity-cycle of vv. 5–22); Alma 37:13 (O remember, remember — the remembrance of v. 27); Ether 6:22–23, 30 (the brother of Jared's warning and Orihah's remembering — fulfilled and continued at vv. 5, 27); Ether 9:28–29; 11:5 (later kings who cast out and kill the prophets — the dark contrast to Shule, v. 25); Ether 2:8–11 (the choice-land decree the prophets invoke, v. 23); Hel. 13:24–28 (a later people who cast out and stone the prophets and honor false ones — the pattern of v. 24); D&C 1:37–38 (whether by mine own voice or by the voice of my servants, it is the same — the authority of the prophets Shule defends, v. 25). ```