

Lesson Seven — The Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms

Day One — The Law and the First Generation

Day Two — The Law and the Second Generation

*Day Three — The Establishment and
Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom*

Day Four — The Words of the Prophets

Day Five — The Words of the Prophets and the Psalms

Last week we learned about the redemption of the Children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt. We learned about the purpose of their redemption and the conditional covenant God made with Israel at Mt. Sinai, with the realization of the blessings of the covenant conditioned upon their obedience. This week we will focus on a little more detail concerning the Law, and glimpse the message of the Prophets and the Psalmist, completing the Old Testament portion of our survey. (It's too bad that this section of the study has to be so brief!)

From the time the Children of Israel left Egypt to the time they reached Kadesh Barnea was about one and a half years. During this time, they had moments of praise for God, moments of trust in God, moments of testing God, and moments of receiving judgment from God. Much of the year and a half was spent learning about God and what He expected of them as they entered the promised land. God told them what the land would be like — that it would be a land flowing with milk and honey and that the produce of that land would be plentiful. He told them that He would be with them and all they needed to do was to obey Him and He would bless them. He specifically gave them both sides of the picture — blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience (Lev. 26). He made this explicitly clear. He also manifested His Power before them continuously. They had no reason to doubt His ability or His desire to fulfill all that He told them concerning the promised land. He had proven Himself faithful to them in all ways (II Tim. 2:13).

FYI — This week may look like a long week of study, but not to worry. There is simply a little more reading than usual, but not as much in the way of writing. Just be sure to adjust your time accordingly. (It is so difficult to summarize so much information into one week's study!)

Day One — The Law and the First Generation

As you begin, be sure to pray for your week of study.

Several weeks ago, we learned that God, at the time He created man, said, “Let them rule...” If Scripture is studied apart from understanding this stated purpose for mankind, one becomes handicapped in

understanding how God deals with His people. Therefore, we must not forget God's statement made on the sixth day in Genesis chapter one concerning man's creation — "And let them rule."

We also studied that the present rulership over the earth takes place from the heavenly realm surrounding the earth and that the rulers in the realm above the earth are the fallen angels who rebelled against God in eternity past.

We learned that God raised up Abraham in Ur and called him out of Mesopotamia in order to take him into a land which God would give to him and his descendants. Along with promising Abraham a land, God also promised him many descendants and an inheritance for him and his descendants in that land. Some of the promises made to Abraham have yet to be fulfilled in their fullness.

Through a series of events, God brought Abraham's great-grandson, Joseph, into a foreign land (Egypt), followed by all of Abraham's lineage through Isaac and Jacob — seventy in all — in order to grow them into a nation set apart (Gen. 46:3, 4). During that period of time, not only did their numbers grow, but they eventually became enslaved by the Pharaoh who had come into power after Joseph's death. Thus they found themselves in the exact position which God foretold to Abraham in Genesis 15:13 — enslaved in a land not their own.

God Himself, redeemed this people, the descendants of Abraham, in a very specific way and for a very specific purpose. He redeemed them with His mighty outstretched arm from the bondage of slavery. The only role the Children of Israel had to play in this redemption was to act in faith according to what God said about the matter, through appropriating the blood of a paschal lamb. Then God traversed through the land of Egypt bringing death to the first born of all the inhabitants of the land — man and animal alike. But God passed over every household which displayed blood on the door posts and lintel of the house because a death had obviously taken place in that household. The blood on the door posts and lintel was a sign that a death had taken place — a *substitutionary* death. This tenth plague was the final act of judgment upon the land of Egypt, which caused Pharaoh to release the Children of Israel from bondage. Possibly more than 2,000,000 people marched out of Egypt freed that night from slavery.

At exactly the right time, God redeemed this people out of bondage, took them through the Red Sea, and then brought them to Mt. Sinai. It is at Sinai, where God began to extensively reveal to His people all the various things surrounding the purpose of their redemption. Exodus 19:4-6 reveals this purpose for God's redeeming Israel out of bondage. God's purpose was that they were to become a kingdom of priests, administering the kingdom of God over all the other nations of the world. But, just as Adam and Abraham were tested to prove their worthiness to serve God in His Kingdom, so must the Israelites be tested in order to prove themselves worthy.

God revealed to them this very purpose for their redemption. God very specifically told them that He had brought them to Himself as on eagles' wings, and now they were to become a holy nation, a kingdom of priests. From Exodus chapter nineteen forward, He laid it all out for them — blessings for obedience, curses for disobedience. And after they had unanimously agreed they would obey (Ex. 24:3, 7), He made a conditional covenant with them concerning blessings in the land and the inheritance therein. This covenant, however, had nothing to do with their redemption out of bondage, other than the fact that they had to first be redeemed in order for them to be in a position where they could become a kingdom of priests, a holy nation.

Then for about a year, God taught the people about Himself and His plan for them, and gave them the Law. During this time in the wilderness, God brought the Children of Israel to a mature understanding of His plans for them.

One thing God revealed to them was that He desired (and planned) to dwell in their midst. Over and over again a similar statement was made as the one following —

Exodus 25

8 “And let them construct a sanctuary for Me, that I may dwell among them. 9 According to all that I am going to show you, as the pattern of the tabernacle and the pattern of all its furniture, just so you shall construct it...”

What did God instruct Moses and the Children of Israel to do and why?

How were they to do this?

As has been shown, God entered into a *conditional covenant* with His redeemed people, saying that they would be His kingdom of priests, a holy nation, if they only obeyed and fully kept the covenant. Leviticus chapter twenty-six is the summary of blessings for obedience and curses for disobedience to the first generation. God spelled it out exactly.

Leviticus 26

3 ‘If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out, 4 then I shall give you rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit. 5 Indeed, your threshing will last for you until grape gathering, and grape gathering will last until sowing time. You will thus eat your food to the full and live securely in your land.

6 ‘I shall also grant peace in the land, so that you may lie down with no one making you tremble. I shall also eliminate harmful beasts from the land, and no sword will pass through your land. 7 But you will chase your enemies, and they will fall before you by the sword; 8 five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword.

9 ‘So I will turn toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will confirm My covenant with you. 10 And you will eat the old supply and clear out the old because of the new. 11 Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you. 12 I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people. 13 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so that you should not be their slaves, and I broke the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect.

From this passage, fill in the chart —

If you...

Then I will...

Now we will continue in Leviticus to read the consequences for disobedience —

Leviticus 26

14 ‘But if you do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments, **15** if, instead, you reject My statutes, and if your soul abhors My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, and so break My covenant, **16** I, in turn, will do this to you: I will appoint over you a sudden terror, consumption and fever that shall waste away the eyes and cause the soul to pine away; also, you shall sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies shall eat it up. **17** And I will set My face against you so that you shall be struck down before your enemies; and those who hate you shall rule over you, and you shall flee when no one is pursuing you.

8 ‘If also after these things, you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins. **19** And I will also break down your pride of power; I will also make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze. **20** And your strength shall be spent uselessly, for your land shall not yield its produce and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit.

21 ‘If then, you act with hostility against Me and are unwilling to obey Me, I will increase the plague on you seven times according to your sins. **22** And I will let loose among you the beasts of the field, which shall bereave you of your children and destroy your cattle and reduce your number so that your roads lie deserted. **23** And if by these things you are not turned to Me, but act with hostility against Me, **24** then I will act with hostility against you; and I, even I, will strike you seven times for your sins. **25** I will also bring upon you a sword which will execute vengeance for the covenant; and when you gather together into your cities, I will send pestilence among you, so that you shall be delivered into enemy hands. **26** When I break your staff of bread, ten women will bake your bread in one oven, and they will bring back your bread in rationed amounts, so that you will eat and not be satisfied.

27 ‘Yet if in spite of this, you do not obey Me, but act with hostility against Me, **28** then I will act with wrathful hostility against you; and I, even I, will punish you seven times for your sins. **29** Further, you shall eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters you shall eat. **30** I then will destroy your high places, and cut down your incense altars, and heap your remains on the remains of your idols; for My soul shall abhor you.

31 ‘I will lay waste your cities as well, and will make your sanctuaries desolate; and I will not smell your soothing aromas. **32** And I will make the land desolate so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled over it. **33** You, however, I will scatter among the nations and will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste.

But, if you....

Then, I will...

As we have seen, God is speaking to His redeemed people — the first generation out of Egypt. The message of obedience versus disobedience is a message which can only be given to redeemed people. Unredeemed people are not called upon to obey, as obedience is never an issue prior to redemption, either in the Old Testament or in the New Testament. Salvation through faith always precedes any expectation of obedience. According to this chapter in Leviticus, is *obedience* or *disobedience* the only variable which dictates the respective consequences?

Was their redemption dependent upon their obedience?

Let me phrase the above question in another way because I want you to get the point! Based on the above chapter, is redemption **totally accomplished** *prior* to any expectation or acts of obedience or disobedience?

Do their subsequent actions have any bearing on their being redeemed from bondage?

If obedience doesn't have to do with the redemption, then according to this chapter in Leviticus, what does it have to do with?

After a year at Mt. Sinai, God had brought them to a mature knowledge of His plans and purposes for them as His firstborn son. (I wish we had time to more fully develop this fact, but since this is only a 17 week survey, we must continue on.) In deeming it time to move them away from Mt. Sinai in order to bring them into the land, God took them to Kadesh Barnea, the location where they would enter the land. Now it was time for their test. “Send twelve spies into the land...”

The first generation of the Children of Israel failed the test of obedience, which was trust and belief in God at the very place where they could have laid hold of their inheritance at Kadesh Barnea. They failed to believe God at His word concerning the very land He had been promising to take them into. They said “No” to God, and planned to appoint a new leader in order to go back to Egypt, preferring their bondage to trusting God. God never dealt with the “going back to Egypt” question — it was a *non-issue*. God knew that a redeemed person (or nation, for that matter), could not become ‘unredeemed’ by unfaithfulness. But this redeemed generation coming out of bondage *could fail* their test of worthiness and be found to have fallen short of their intended goal or purpose. Such was the case with this first generation (*cf.* Heb. 3 and 4; I Cor. 10:1-11).

Therefore, God declared that this first generation of redeemed people would never ‘enter the rest’ that was to have been theirs in the land. They could not go back into bondage as that was impossible, but they would *never* enter the rest nor would they personally participate as a kingdom of priests, administering His theocratic kingdom and blessings to the other nations of the world. And this brings up a very important key in Scriptural understanding. The Sabbath rest is *reckoned in time* not in eternity. This is an important fact to note! In fact, looking at your time line, see the line between the last two vertical lines? It represents the millennial kingdom. Scripture refers to this period as the Sabbath Rest (Heb. Chs. 3 and 4). It is the seventh day.

Meditate on these things. We’ll develop this more as we go. I’ll see you tomorrow.

Day Two — The Law and the Second Generation

We have already seen that the first generation of Israelites coming out of Egypt fell short of their intended goal. We have seen the consequences of their unbelief and disobedience — they were not allowed to enter the very land to which they were being taken, and could not receive their inheritance as a descendant of Abraham. Therefore, for the remainder of the forty years while this first generation was dying in the wilderness, the second generation was being groomed to be taken into the land. God wanted them to fulfill the position their parents had forfeited. This generation was being taught the same things their parents had been taught, that of feasts and holy days, priestly duties, offerings and sacrifices, etc. In fact, *immediately* following His setting aside the first redeemed generation of Israelites at Kadesh Barnea (Num. 14), God began teaching this second generation what they were to do upon entrance in the land (Num. 15:1ff.). Immediately! The remainder of the Book of Numbers deals with the subsequent 38 year historical account of the wanderings in the wilderness and the things that God taught this second generation.

Today we'll see that the second generation was being led into the land in the same way that their fathers had been led and for the same purpose. God had not changed His purpose, nor His requirements for entrance into the land. He set before this second generation the same call to obedience with the same consequences for obedience and disobedience (Deut. 28 compared to Lev. 26).

In fact, the Book of Deuteronomy is sometimes called the second giving of the Law — a reiteration of the same law, only it is now being given to the second generation. God desired Moses to tell the second generation the exact things he had told the first generation. The first few verses of the book show us the time frame —

Deuteronomy 1

3 And it came about in the fortieth year, on the first day of the eleventh month, that Moses spoke to the children of Israel, according to all that the LORD had commanded him to give to them...

The Book of Deuteronomy opens in the 40th year after their release from bondage. Forty years had passed since the nation's enslavement had ended. Now God tells the people again, why He redeemed them, only this time He is speaking to the second generation of people, the ones who had grown up in the wilderness. (Underline the last portion of the following passage.)

Deuteronomy 4

37 “Because He loved your fathers, therefore He chose their descendants after them. And He personally brought you from Egypt by His great power, 38 driving out from before you nations greater and mightier than you, to bring you in and to give you their land for an inheritance, as it is today...”

He also tells them why He tests them. His reasons for testing does not change with time nor with generations.

Deuteronomy 8

2 “And you shall remember all the way which the LORD your God has led you in the wilderness these forty years, that He might humble you, testing you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not.

State in your own words *the reason* God tests His people. Did it have anything to do with their redemption?

Do you remember that God tested Adam, Abraham and the first generation? Now we begin to get a very clear purpose for His testing — *to know what is in their hearts, whether or not they would keep His commands.*

As God continues to speak to this second generation through Moses, He reminds them that they, too, are to be His treasured people, and of His goal for them is the same as the goal of their fathers.

Deuteronomy 26

18 “And the LORD has today declared you to be His people, a treasured possession, as He promised you, and that you should keep all His commandments; 19 and that He shall set you high above all nations which He has made, for praise, fame, and honor; and that you shall be a consecrated people to the LORD your God, as He has spoken.”

He had told the first generation something very similar. Remember? (Refer back to Ex. 19:4-6.)

God mentions again that He plans to put them above all the other nations of the earth, but it is still conditional. They were also told of the consequences for obedience and disobedience, as their parents had been told in Leviticus chapter twenty-six, the same commands given to this generation in Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight, almost verbatim!

These two chapters (Lev. 26 and Deut. 28) tell of the great list of consequences for obedience and disobedience. God minces no words about the respective outcomes. The point is that redeemed people **must continually choose to obey and to be whole-hearted to the Lord if they desire to have the opportunity to fulfill God’s goal for them.** Their redemption, however, is *not* in question nor is it conditional. But God’s favor and blessing upon them is certainly conditioned upon obedience!

In summing up the redemption God brought about on Israel’s behalf, answer the following questions.

Can anyone lose their redemption that God has gained for them?

In releasing Israel from slavery, God placed Israel in a position where they might fulfill the plan God had intended for them to fulfill. In your own words, state what the plan was, and how it would be fulfilled.

In your own words, explain how God expects a redeemed person to cooperate in fulfilling the purpose, or goal, of their redemption.

God is the same yesterday, today, and forever!

Leviticus chapter twenty-six and Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight contain sobering words concerning what God expects of His people in the way of obedience. Do you believe He expects the same from redeemed people today, or has He changed in His way of dealing with His people?

Finally, in summation of the Deuteronomy discourse, God speaks through Moses a ray of hope and promise —

Deuteronomy 30

1 “So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the LORD your God has banished you, 2 and you return to the LORD your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, 3 then the LORD your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you.

Ultimately, the choice is to be made on the part of the ones redeemed!

Deuteronomy 30

11 “For this commandment which I command you today is not too difficult for you, nor is it out of reach. 12 It is not in heaven, that you should say, ‘Who will go up to heaven for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?’ 13 Nor is it beyond the sea, that you should say, ‘Who will cross the sea for us to get it for us and make us hear it, that we may observe it?’ 14 But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may observe it.

15 “See, I have set before you today life and prosperity, and death and adversity; 16 in that I command you today to love the LORD your God, to walk in His ways and to keep His commandments and His statutes and His judgments, that you may live and multiply, and that the LORD your God may bless you in the land where you are entering to possess it.

Just one more question today. Combining all that we have learned about Israel being redeemed, and seeing God’s part and man’s part — God calling them to obedience, yet giving them the choice — according to vv. 15 and 16, what was their choice put before them, and what was the outcome of their choice?

Day Three — The Establishment and Fall of the Theocratic Kingdom

With the overview we have done of the first two generations of Israel in the past two days of study, we are ready to move on into the remainder of the Old Testament. In the next three days, we will be completing the survey of the Old Testament. (Oh dear! The brevity of this!!) Here is how it goes —

The second generation of Israel was found to be relatively faithful to their calling, as seen throughout the Book of Joshua. But faithfulness on the part of the Children of Israel as a whole was short-lived! God established His rule in Israel at Sinai, then in the land through Joshua, the Judges and the kings. But because of Israel’s ongoing disobedience and the failure to live up to the conditions of the kingdom covenant set up at Mt. Sinai, the historical kingdom never became the fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham. That has yet to happen.

While the second generation was basically faithful to their calling, it seems evident that they made one grave mistake. It appears that they didn’t hand down their ways to their children. And as soon as this generation of Israel died off, the following generations spiraled down in their relationship with the God of

Israel. The Book of Judges depicts a miserable and ongoing lack of obedience on the part of succeeding generations, stating several times throughout the Book of Judges that “every man did what was right in his own eyes” (Judges 17:6; 21:25)

Finally, Samuel appeared on the scene as the final judge and the first prophet. Samuel is the one who anointed Saul, from the tribe of Benjamin, as king of Israel. It was not God’s will for the people at this point in time to anoint a king over Israel, but the people requested God to give them a king as the other nations had. And, so to speak, God acquiesced. A few years into Saul’s reign, he disobeyed God (I Sam. 13:13, 14; 15:22, 23; 28:7-19), and God told Saul through Samuel that He would remove him from the throne and would place another in his stead. His successor would not even be a member from his line, nor from his own tribe, but from another. David, a shepherd boy in Bethlehem, from the tribe of Judah, was appointed by God through Samuel to be Saul’s successor. Again, this happened many years prior to Saul acquiescing the throne, and David ascending the throne.

Though David committed gross sins while king, due to his ultimate repentance, he found favor with God and was called *a man after God’s own heart*. It was due to David’s repentance and his commitment to serve the Lord God and Him *alone* that gave him such favor from God. During David’s entire reign he did not enter into idol worship, and for the most part the people followed the leadership of David in worshipping only God. This was not the case with many of the other of the kings over Israel.

During David’s reign, God used the prophet Nathan to give David some very important information about his lineage. Study the passage below and carefully outline the detail of it in the chart provided.

2 Samuel 7

8 “Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD of hosts, “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, that you should be ruler over My people Israel. 9 And I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. 10 I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, 11 even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you. 12 When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom.

Fill in the chart with the information from this passage.

**What God had already done
for David:**

**What God will yet do
for David:**

II Samuel 7

11 ...The LORD also declares to you that the LORD will make a house for you. 12 When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, 15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 And your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.””

God is referring to a descendant of David. Make notes as to any new promises made to David and the promises concerning David's descendant.

**New promises made
to David:**

**Promises concerning his
descendant:**

Just as Saul had been king for 40 years, so was David king for 40 years. At the end of David's reign, there was peace on all sides. David had committed sin in his life, as the Bible says all men do, but David had a heart that sought after God. He always repented and ultimately was faithful to the end.

Although David desired to build a house for the tabernacle of God, God would not allow him to do it. The building of the temple was to be done by David's son, Solomon.

David's reign ended well. Solomon, his son, would sit on the throne. Solomon had a great start. He built the temple for God, something David was not allowed to do, and he sought wisdom from God for his reign. Once the temple was finished, God's presence filled the temple as He continued to dwell among His people!

God's presence on the earth continued in manifest glory, filling the temple. What a moment! His glory so filled the temple that the people fell on the faces in worship to their God. He continued to rule among His people through earthly kings, and would remain in their presence as long as they obeyed Him and kept the covenant.

God is unchanging. He still requires His people to be holy and set apart. Read what He said to Solomon and the conditions He continues to put upon His redeemed people. This immediately follows the dedication of the temple —

2 Chronicles 7

12 Then the LORD appeared to Solomon at night and said to him, “I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. 13 If I shut up the heavens so that there is no rain, or if I command the locust to devour the land, or if I send pestilence among My people, 14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land. 15 Now My eyes shall be open and My ears attentive to the prayer offered in this place. 16 For now I have chosen and consecrated this house that My name may be there forever, and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually. 17 And as for you, if you walk before Me as your father David walked even to do according to all that I have commanded you and will keep My statutes and My ordinances, 18 then I will establish your royal throne as I covenanted with your father David, saying, ‘You shall not lack a man to be ruler in Israel.’

19 “But if you turn away and forsake My statutes and My commandments which I have set before you and shall go and serve other gods and worship them, 20 then I will uproot you from My land which I have given you, and this house which I have consecrated for My name I will cast out of My sight, and I will make it a proverb and a byword among all peoples. 21 As for this house, which was exalted, everyone who passes by it will be astonished and say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land and to this house?’ 22 And they will say, ‘Because they forsook the LORD, the God of their fathers, who brought them from the land of Egypt, and they adopted other gods and worshipped them and served them, therefore He has brought all this adversity on them.’”

Fill in the chart with information from the passage —

What God said He would do:

What the people were to do:

If they disobeyed, what would happen?

Eventually, Solomon was not faithful to God and fell into ongoing sin. Solomon’s reign did not end well. Solomon had a divided heart. He did three specific things God had told the kings of Israel not to do: 1) he followed other gods, 2) he had many wives and concubines (actually hundreds!), and 3) he multiplied horses, building an army for himself. God, alone, was to be Israel’s protection.

Due to Solomon’s sins of disobedience and that of his son’s, God allowed the kingdom to be divided in the reign of Solomon’s son, Rehoboam, and the kingdom remained divided from that day forward. The

northern ten tribes seceded to form the Northern kingdom, called Israel, and the two southern tribes (Judah and Benjamin) formed the Southern kingdom, called Judah. The Northern kingdom walked continuously estranged from the Lord, and resultantly the Lord brought about the judgment upon them which He had stated He would do — He scattered them amongst the nations (Lev. 26; Deut. 28). On the other hand, the Southern kingdom had its ups and downs, but also eventually was judged by God for disobedience, and was exiled into the Babylonian kingdom in keeping with that which was stated in Leviticus chapter twenty-six and Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight. All in all, it was not a pretty picture.

We'll stop there. We are covering a lot of history this week. Meditate on these things, asking God to continue to give you understanding of His Word.

Day Four — The Words of the Prophets

We have only glimpsed the historical kingdom — its establishment, its disruption and its overthrow. God sent prophets to His people in order to keep His Word ever before them. There is so much to learn from these prophets, therefore, once again, it becomes very difficult to choose which verses to include in our study. Remember that God had a complete message for His people through each one of the prophets. Yet, only in studying all the prophets together, does one begin to get the complete picture.

God continued to make statements that “if you will...” then “I will...” Or “if you do not...” then “I will not...” God told them through these prophets that if they did not repent, they would be given over into captivity. And though He is long-suffering, giving them many, many, many chances, we can see that God is very serious about what He says. There is always a consequence to sin and disobedience. Always! Yet, in God's mercy, all they had to do was to repent and follow Him. But they would not!

One thing to understand about the prophets is that God sent some prophets to the Northern kingdom and some to the Southern kingdom, with a couple prophets ministering to both. Some prophets were sent before the scattering and exile (pre-exilic prophets), some during the exile (exilic prophets), and some after the exile (post-exilic prophets) when a remnant from the Southern kingdom was allowed to go back into the land and rebuild Jerusalem and the temple.

The prophets had very difficult messages to give. But the interesting thing to note is that, in the end, they all gave *words of hope*. On the one hand, they spoke of exile, captivity, scattering, death and separation. On the other hand, they spoke of hope. In the end, the hope mentioned throughout the Prophets — the hope of the coming Messiah and his kingdom, of the re-gathering of Israel, of the re-construction of the temple (in which God will once again dwell in the midst of His people) — was always before them. Through each and every one of the prophets, God gave them hope of the restoration of the kingdom of Israel wherein they would once again be united as a nation and set above all other nations with God ruling through them, even in the midst of them. What a glorious hope for Israel.

Today we will glimpse their going into exile along with their relative *immediate hope out of exile*. Later we will look at their future hope.

Jeremiah was an exilic prophet sent to the Southern kingdom. (An “exilic prophet” means that his ministry to the people was during part of the exile.) We'll read only a small part of what he told them.

Jeremiah 25

1 The word that came to Jeremiah concerning all the people of Judah, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah (that was the first year of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon), **2** which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to all the people of

Judah and to all the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, 3 “From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, these twenty-three years the word of the LORD has come to me, and I have spoken to you again and again, but you have not listened. 4 And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets again and again, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear, 5 saying, ‘Turn now everyone from his evil way and from the evil of your deeds, and dwell on the land which the LORD has given to you and your forefathers forever and ever; 6 and do not go after other gods to serve them and to worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands, and I will do you no harm.’ 7 Yet you have not listened to Me,” declares the LORD, “in order that you might provoke Me to anger with the work of your hands to your own harm.

8 “Therefore thus says the LORD of hosts, ‘Because you have not obeyed My words, 9 behold, I will send and take all the families of the north,’ declares the LORD, ‘and I will send to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, My servant, and will bring them against this land, and against its inhabitants, and against all these nations round about; and I will utterly destroy them, and make them a horror, and a hissing, and an everlasting desolation. 10 Moreover, I will take from them the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the sound of the millstones and the light of the lamp. 11 ‘And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. 12 Then it will be when seventy years are completed I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation,’ declares the LORD, ‘for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans; and I will make it an everlasting desolation. 13 And I will bring upon that land all My words which I have pronounced against it, all that is written in this book, which Jeremiah has prophesied against all the nations. 14 ‘(For many nations and great kings shall make slaves of them, even them; and I will recompense them according to their deeds, and according to the work of their hands.)’”

Let’s look at the distant future hope of Israel.

Exactly 70 years after the Southern kingdom, Judah, had been taken captive, a remnant of people were allowed to go back to Israel in order to rebuild the altar, the temple, and the wall in Jerusalem. Zerubbabel built the altar and the temple; Nehemiah built the walls. But the total fulfillment of this prophecy in general has yet to be fulfilled.

Ezekiel was also an exilic prophet and he, too, spoke of a future hope, also one that has yet to be fulfilled.

Ezekiel 11

16 “Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Though I had removed them far away among the nations, and though I had scattered them among the countries, yet I was a sanctuary for them a little while in the countries where they had gone.”’

17 “Therefore say, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “I shall gather you from the peoples and assemble you out of the countries among which you have been scattered, and I shall give you the land of Israel.”’ 18 “When they come there, they will remove all its detestable things and all its abominations from it. 19 And I shall give them one heart, and shall put a new spirit within them. And I shall take the heart of stone out of their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, 20 that they may walk in My statutes and keep My ordinances, and do them. Then they will be My people, and I shall be their God. 21 But as for those whose hearts go after their detestable things and abominations, I shall bring their conduct down on their heads,” declares the Lord GOD.”

What plan did the Lord have for the people?

What can we see in the passage that makes it evident that this has not yet been fully accomplished?

Then many of the prophesies given by the prophets deal with a time yet future! Read the information below, trying to develop the picture in your mind of what the Lord is saying through these prophets —

Joel 3

17 Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, And strangers will pass through it no more.

18 And it will come about in that day That the mountains will drip with sweet wine, And the hills will flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; And a spring will go out from the house of the LORD, To water the valley of Shittim. 19 Egypt will become a waste, And Edom will become a desolate wilderness, Because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, In whose land they have shed innocent blood. 20 But Judah will be inhabited forever, And Jerusalem for all generations. 21 And I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged, For the LORD dwells in Zion.

NOTES:

Jeremiah 23

3 “Then I Myself shall gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and shall bring them back to their pasture; and they will be fruitful and multiply. 4 I shall also raise up shepherds over them and they will tend them; and they will not be afraid any longer, nor be terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the LORD. 5 Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. 6 “In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The LORD our righteousness.’ 7 Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when they will no longer say, ‘As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ 8 but, ‘As the LORD lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.”

NOTES:

Jeremiah 33

6 ‘Behold, I will bring to it health and healing, and I will heal them; and I will reveal to them an abundance of peace and truth. 7 And I will restore the fortunes of Judah and the fortunes of Israel, and I will rebuild them as they were at first. 8 And I will cleanse them

from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned against Me, and by which they have transgressed against Me. 9 And it shall be to Me a name of joy, praise, and glory before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear of all the good that I do for them, and they shall fear and tremble because of all the good and all the peace that I make for it.'

NOTES:

List some of the things you learned about this coming kingdom and God dwelling with men... Where, when, etc.

See you tomorrow.

Day Five — The Words of the Prophets and the Psalms

Begin in prayer.

Today we want to look at things concerning the temple. The first siege of the Babylonian exile began in about 606 BC. Solomon's temple was destroyed in the third and final siege in about 586. Zerubbabel was able to go back into Jerusalem from captivity in about 536, to begin to rebuild the temple. It was Zerubbabel's temple which was later remodeled by Herod the Great during the Roman Empirical rule, and it was this temple which stood during the days of Christ. God's glory never filled this temple. But God did visit His people — He came in the flesh, in the Person of Jesus Christ, and for a time, dwelled among His people. But His own people rejected and crucified Him, and this temple was destroyed 37 years later. From 70 AD to this present day, the Lord's temple has not been rebuilt. The theocracy ended in Daniel's day, when the glory departed, and it will not be reestablished until God's glory will fill the millennial temple in the coming age. Prophecies in Scripture reveal that there will be another temple built during the last days in which the Jews will once again establish a sacrificial system. It will be in this temple that the Anti-Christ will perform an abominable act which will cause a desolation in Israel (Dan.9:27; 11:31; *cf.* Matt. 24:15; II Thes. 2:3-4). Then there will be another temple constructed during the millennial reign of Christ (Eze. 43). This temple is described in several prophecies. (All of this to say, that when a temple is mentioned in Scripture it is a good idea to determine to which temple the passage is referring.)

It is important to understand the significance of the destruction of Solomon's temple. Remember, this was the house of the Lord, the very place in which the Lord dwelled. While in captivity Ezekiel saw, in a

vision, the Glory of the Lord leave the temple. In Ezekiel 9-10, he saw the cloud over the mercy seat in the midst of the temple move over the door of the temple, then he saw the cloud move to the eastern gate. Finally, Ezekiel had the heart wrenching experience of seeing the cloud move over the Mount of Olives and then watched as it disappeared.

“Ichabod” means ‘the glory of the Lord is departed from Israel.’ What a sad day in the history of mankind! After his vision, Ezekiel was privy to much interesting information concerning the history as well as the future of the world. He glimpses Satan (Lucifer) before his sin and after (the passage we studied in Lesson Four [Eze. 28:11ff]). As did the prophet Daniel, Ezekiel also received much detail concerning the coming ‘day of trouble,’ the Anti-Christ, the last days, the future battle of the nations with Israel and finally, the millennial kingdom. In chapters forty through forty-eight, Ezekiel gives very explicit detail describing the millennial temple and the glory of the Lord re-appearing. The following passage describes the moment in time when the glory of the Lord will come again to fill the future temple.

Ezekiel 43

1 Then he led me to the gate, the gate facing toward the east; 2 and behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory. 3 And it was like the appearance of the vision which I saw, like the vision which I saw when He came to destroy the city. And the visions were like the vision which I saw by the river Chebar; and I fell on my face. 4 And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east. 5 And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house. 6 Then I heard one speaking to me from the house, while a man was standing beside me.

NOTES:

Isaiah also glimpsed information about this awesome time in the future. (A mountain represents a kingdom in Scripture.)

Isaiah 2

1 The word which Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. 2 Now it will come about that In the last days, The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it.

NOTES:

Isaiah 4

2 In that day the Branch of the LORD will be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth will be the pride and the adornment of the survivors of Israel. 3 And it will come about that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy--everyone who is recorded for life in Jerusalem. 4 When the Lord has washed away the filth of the

daughters of Zion, and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem from her midst, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, 5 then the LORD will create over the whole area of Mount Zion and over her assemblies a cloud by day, even smoke, and the brightness of a flaming fire by night; for over all the glory will be a canopy. 6 And there will be a shelter to give shade from the heat by day, and refuge and protection from the storm and the rain.

NOTES:

Does this description remind you of anything? If so, what?

Jeremiah 23

5 “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “When I shall raise up for David a righteous Branch; And He will reign as king and act wisely And do justice and righteousness in the land. 6 In His days Judah will be saved, And Israel will dwell securely; And this is His name by which He will be called, ‘The LORD our righteousness.’ 7 Therefore behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when they will no longer say, ‘As the LORD lives, who brought up the sons of Israel from the land of Egypt,’ 8 but, ‘As the LORD lives, who brought up and led back the descendants of the household of Israel from the north land and from all the countries where I had driven them.’ Then they will live on their own soil.”

NOTES:

Jeremiah 30

1 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2 “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book. 3 For, behold, days are coming,’ declares the LORD, ‘when I will restore the fortunes of My people Israel and Judah.’ The LORD says, ‘I will also bring them back to the land that I gave to their forefathers, and they shall possess it.’”

... 7 ‘Alas! for that day is great, There is none like it; And it is the time of Jacob’s distress, But he will be saved from it. 8 And it shall come about on that day,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘that I will break his yoke from off their neck, and will tear off their bonds; and strangers shall no longer make them their slaves. 9 But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up for them.

10 ‘And fear not, O Jacob My servant,’ declares the LORD, ‘And do not be dismayed, O Israel; For behold, I will save you from afar, And your offspring from the land of their captivity. And Jacob shall return, and shall be quiet and at ease, And no one shall make him afraid.

NOTES:

Ezekiel 37

21 “And say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “Behold, I will take the sons of Israel from among the nations where they have gone, and I will gather them from every side and bring them into their own land; 22 and I will make them one nation in the land, on the mountains of Israel; and one king will be king for all of them; and they will no longer be two nations, and they will no longer be divided into two kingdoms. 23 And they will no longer defile themselves with their idols, or with their detestable things, or with any of their transgressions; but I will deliver them from all their dwelling places in which they have sinned, and will cleanse them. And they will be My people, and I will be their God. 24 And My servant David will be king over them, and they will all have one shepherd; and they will walk in My ordinances, and keep My statutes, and observe them. 25 And they shall live on the land that I gave to Jacob My servant, in which your fathers lived; and they will live on it, they, and their sons, and their sons’ sons, forever; and David My servant shall be their prince forever. 26 And I will make a covenant of peace with them; it will be an everlasting covenant with them. And I will place them and multiply them, and will set My sanctuary in their midst forever. 27 My dwelling place also will be with them; and I will be their God, and they will be My people. 28 And the nations will know that I am the LORD who sanctifies Israel, when My sanctuary is in their midst forever.””

NOTES:

Isaiah 9

6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. 7 There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

NOTES:

Daniel 2

44 “And in the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and that kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever.

NOTES:

From the passages you have seen today, write out any impressions of the coming kingdom.

Now for a look at a few of the Psalms. We know that King David wrote most of the Psalms. We have also come to understand that David had a grasp of the future kingdom of his Descendant. He understood that one of his descendants would be the Son of God (I Sam. 7:11-16, 19). Knowing this, a person should see the Psalms beyond only seeing them as prayers of David, but also see them in the light of prophecy. Read through the ones that follow —

Psalm 8

3 When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, The moon and the stars, which Thou hast ordained; 4 What is man, that Thou dost take thought of him? And the son of man, that Thou dost care for him? 5 Yet Thou hast made him a little lower than God, And dost crown him with glory and majesty! 6 Thou dost make him to rule over the works of Thy hands; Thou hast put all things under his feet, 7 All sheep and oxen, And also the beasts of the field, 8 The birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea, Whatever passes through the paths of the seas. 9 O LORD, our Lord, How majestic is Thy name in all the earth!

NOTES:

Psalm 9

5 Thou hast rebuked the nations; Thou hast destroyed the wicked; Thou hast blotted out their name forever and ever. 6 The enemy has come to an end in perpetual ruins, And Thou hast uprooted the cities; The very memory of them has perished. 7 But the LORD abides forever; He has established His throne for judgment, 8 And He will judge the world in righteousness; He will execute judgment for the peoples with equity.

NOTES:

Psalm 10

12 Arise, O LORD; O God, lift up Thy hand. Do not forget the afflicted. 13 Why has the wicked spurned God? He has said to himself, “Thou wilt not require it.” 14 Thou hast seen it, for Thou hast beheld mischief and vexation to take it into Thy hand. The unfortunate commits himself to Thee; Thou hast been the helper of the orphan. 15 Break the arm of the wicked and the evildoer, Seek out his wickedness until Thou dost find none. 16 The LORD is King forever and ever; Nations have perished from His land. 17 O LORD, Thou hast heard the desire of the humble; Thou wilt strengthen their heart, Thou wilt incline Thine ear 18 To vindicate the orphan and the oppressed, That man who is of the earth may cause terror no more.

NOTES:

Psalm 21

1 O LORD, in Thy strength the king will be glad, And in Thy salvation how greatly he will rejoice! 2 Thou hast given him his heart’s desire, And Thou hast not withheld the request of his lips. 3 For Thou dost meet him with the blessings of good things; Thou dost set a crown of fine gold on his head. 4 He asked life of Thee, Thou didst give it to him, Length of days forever and ever. 5 His glory is great through Thy salvation, Splendor and majesty Thou dost place upon him. 6 For Thou dost make him most blessed forever; Thou dost make him joyful with gladness in Thy presence.

7 For the king trusts in the LORD, And through the lovingkindness of the Most High he will not be shaken. 8 Your hand will find out all your enemies; Your right hand will find out those who hate you. 9 You will make them as a fiery oven in the time of your anger; The LORD will swallow them up in His wrath, And fire will devour them. 10 Their offspring Thou wilt destroy from the earth, And their descendants from among the sons of men. 11 Though they intended evil against Thee, And devised a plot, They will not succeed. 12 For Thou wilt make them turn their back; Thou wilt aim with Thy bowstrings at their faces. 13 Be Thou exalted, O LORD, in Thy strength; We will sing and praise Thy power.

NOTES:

As you should easily be able to see, David wrote often about the coming kingdom of his distant Descendant. As you have time, peruse the Psalms and see if you can recognize more that deal with this future kingdom.

As we close for the week, why don’t you write out your impressions from this week’s study?