

***Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas***  
***Fredericksburg Bible Church***

*107 East Austin*

*Fredericksburg, Texas 78624*

*830-997-8834    [jthomas@fbgbible.org](mailto:jthomas@fbgbible.org)*

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**Israel's Covenants**

We're talking about eschatology which is a study of last things or the last in a sequence of things, in this case, the last things of history. Unfortunately there is very little teaching on eschatology today, even in our evangelical circles. People say, well, it's not that important and it will all just pan out in the end anyway so why make a big deal about it. Well, if you don't study eschatology you're going to have a very lousy eschatology because you already have one anyway whether you've studied it out or not and it has implications for the present, for your decision making, for your ethics. Communism for example is a very definite eschatology and look what they did to try and achieve it. Islam's has a very clear eschatology and look at what they're trying to do to achieve it. Iranian president Ahmadinejad believes very firmly that by causing turmoil in the present he can trigger the return of the 12<sup>th</sup> Imam and which will result in Islamization of the Globe, Sharia Law, the whole nine yards. So it has implications for the present because people realize that to have my eschatology realized I have to do something today. So the issue is not whether we should study eschatology or not, it is what is my eschatology, is it the biblical eschatology or is it a delusion. So the study of eschatology is important.

And primarily what eschatology is is understanding the destiny of the three people groups of history; Gentiles, Israel and the Church. Gentile people before the Flood, Jewish and Gentile people until the Cross and now Jews, Gentiles and the Church of God. So as the plan of God has expanded the complexity has expanded. Now we have people from all three people groups that have been and are saved; and we might note that each person down through history, both Jew and Greek, slave and free were saved one and the same way, by grace through faith in the current revelation. So when I say three people groups don't confuse that with three ways of salvation; we're just

talking about three different purposes and goals in history. What is God's plan for each of these people groups? And what does God have in store for them? Do they all sort of blend together in the end or are there distinctions that are maintained? That's what we're trying to unravel.

Here's the problem. Down through Church History the majority believe that when ethnic Israel rejected Christ the true Israel, the Church replaced ethnic Israel in the plan of God. That is, the Church replaced Israel and Israel doesn't have a future any more. That's been the majority view down through the Church. In the early church they didn't believe that; Justin Martyr was clearly premillennial and so were all right minded Christians. But allegorical interpretation came into the church through Origen and later Augustine and replacement theology reigned for 1,000 years. It wasn't until the last 200-300 years that biblical scholars went back to a literal interpretation and as a result there has been a resurgence of early premillennialism which argues that God does have a future for Israel and that it will be revived in the age to come.

Last week we showed two biblical distinctions between Israel and the Church that show you they are not the same. One is that Israel has a Calendar Based History vs the Church that is Non-Calendar Based. What we mean here is Israel is on a timing schedule: 400 years you will be in Egypt, 70 years in Exile to Babylon, 490 Years until the Final Restoration. That kind of timing is based very specifically on calendar time vs the Church, where there is no calendar time. You don't read in the NT, the Church will do this for three and one half years and then this will happen, the church will do this for 40 years and then this will happen. You never read that because the Church is not Israel, the Church is distinct from Israel and therefore they have distinct eschatological goals in history.

The other difference we highlighted was the enemies of Israel vs the enemies of the Church. The Church wages a battle in the heavenly places against princes and principalities of darkness. Israel waged battle against earthly enemies, it was flesh and blood, it was a war over the Promised Land and Israel's desire to have peace and security in the Land. So there is a very big difference as far as the realm where we are fighting and this relates to a very large difference in what we are really involved in right now, politically

speaking. What is the Christian's role in politics and finally what does God have in store for Israel and the Church.

Today we want to go back to Israel. They came first in the plan of God and this will clarify the progress Israel made toward her goal in history as we look at four things: Israel's Origin, Israel's Rise and Blessing, Israel's Fall and Cursing and finally the Judgment of Nations, Salvation of Israel and Final Blessing.

First of all, we have her origin. What is the origin of the nation Israel? It's the Call of Abraham. There was no Israel before the Flood? Where do you find an Israel in Gen 1-8? There's no Israel there. There were believers there, yes, but they weren't Israeli believers. So Israel begins with Abraham. And what's the defining issue of Abraham? What defines the nation? It's a covenant. What covenant? The Abrahamic Covenant. What kind of covenant is it? It's unconditional. What do we mean by that? We mean there are no human conditions that must be met for God to fulfill it. God is going to give Abram and the nation that comes from Abram certain things. What are the three big things God says I will give you? A land, a seed, and a worldwide blessing. Israel will receive a territory. Israel will produce a seed, the Messiah. And Israel will be a blessing; Israel ultimately will bless the world. And notice the language God uses in this covenant; I will do this for you and I will do that for you. There's no if you do this then I will do that. It's all I will.

Let's see two ways in which Israel has already blessed the world. What is the contribution of Israel down through time that you hold in your lap? The Bible, the Word of God; it didn't come from Gentiles, it came from Jews. So Israel's number one contribution so far to civilization has been the Bible, the Word of God. The second contribution of the nation Israel as a worldwide blessing to the world is the Lord Jesus Christ; Israel has produced the Messiah. Both the Bible and the Savior have come from the Jews. Remember that the next time you hear some Christian make an anti-Semitic remark and also remember something else. There's a little clause, a little fine-print in the Abrahamic Covenant and God says "I will bless those who bless you" and guess what else, "I will curse those who curse you." So just keep it up, as far as these people that want to attack and eliminate the Jew from history, go ahead, keep it up and watch what happens. "I will bless them that bless you and I will curse them that curse you."

That's the Abrahamic Covenant and that's a statement of God's sovereignty, that's the connection there. Each of these three parts of the Abrahamic Covenant was then amplified in other Covenants. The passages for the Abrahamic Covenant; Gen 12, 13, 15, 17, 19, 22, all those are passages that have to do with the Abrahamic Covenant; there are some more in there but those are the big three. The first way in which the Abrahamic Covenant land promise was expanded is the Land Covenant. We'll go through that one in Deut 30 and also in Gen 15, and that's an expansion of this number one element; the Land. In other words, it's explained what the land is, where it's located and its destiny down through time. The land that the modern state of Israel occupies, God says, and more, will belong to the Jew. There's going to be no discussion between the UN or anybody else, that's God's sovereign plan. They are going to get the land, eventually.

The seed promise was amplified in a Covenant called the Davidic Covenant because it was the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and it finally came to rest on David. 2 Sam 7 promised that there will be a Son of David who will sit forever on the throne of Israel. So the seed promise gets clearer and clearer and clearer as you go down through history. That's the story of the OT; it's clarifying the lineage of the seed.

Then we have the worldwide blessing and that is amplified in a Covenant in the OT called the New Covenant. That is found in Jer 31 and the New Covenant says that Israel one day will be regenerated as a nation, not just as individuals but as a nation, there will be 100% believers in Israel and certain spiritual phenomenon will happen, etc. That's the New Covenant.

Now we introduce one more contract and this is a special one. After the Exodus in 1445 they march to Mt Sinai and God makes another covenant with them. This is the Mosaic Covenant or Sinaitic Covenant. The Mosaic Covenant is a little different. The Mosaic Covenant is not unconditional- it's conditional, meaning there are conditions attached to it. That's why the language in this covenant is if...then. If you bless Me I will bless you but if you curse Me I will curse you. So it's either/or. So then it's real simple, there are blessings and there are cursings and we'll go to Lev 26 to show you very simply how the Mosaic Contract worked out, the terms of that contract. Everything in the Bible is really quite well organized; it doesn't look that way

when you first read it but if you dig down there's a clear structure here. The Mosaic Contract says if you obey the Lord you will be blessed; if you disobey the Lord you're going to be cursed, that's the essence of the Mosaic Covenant. Notice what it doesn't say, it doesn't guarantee anything other than consequences for choices. So if Israel is to have a certain future it can't be contingent on human choice, it has to rest on divine sovereignty.

This introduces an interesting subject. For those of you who have Covenant Theology friends, these guys always think that they are the only people on earth that have some sort of concept of the sovereignty of God. We've just gone through four contracts that are based on the sovereignty of God. All of them are unconditional; they have nothing to do with choices in the sense that God promises that blessing will finally happen, period! But look, if the Mosaic Covenant is conditional and blessing is based on obedience then put on your thinking cap and try to figure out how is this ever going to work out? As far as Israel's OT history is concerned what was their track record? Not so good. Did Israel really obey all the time? No! Israel was disobedient and God had to discipline them, put them in Babylonian captivity and go through all the rest of the stuff. So they're going through all this fallout of their own negative choices under the Mosaic Law treaty, and they're getting depressed and they're saying wait a minute, if in the Abrahamic Covenant God promised that we would be in the land, how does that come about? That land promise can only come about if what happens? If God sovereignly says that they *will* be in the land. But in the Mosaic Covenant it says you won't be blessed unless you obey. So what is the conclusion to the logic? That in the future they will obey! There will be a time when they will obey because if they don't obey they're never going to get blessed and yet God says they will be blessed.

So how is that future obedience promise going to be attained? It's that New Covenant that replaces the old covenant, the Mosaic covenant is the Old and the New will replace the old and this will be fulfilled when the nation turns back to God and then God will fulfill the New Covenant and when that happens they will be blessed. I don't know anything more Calvinistic than what I just told you. See what I'm talking about is that the sovereignty of God guarantees that sometime in the future they are going to believe corporately.

So there's interplay between these covenants, the Abrahamic says God has a sovereign purpose over all, the Mosaic says man has choice. But it's God's sovereign purpose that brings about the positive creature choices. Its genuine choice of course, it's just that human choices are inside of God's sovereign purpose.

Alright, let's go to Leviticus. This is a tough, nasty chapter in OT history. There is some stuff in here that if Christians read this more seriously I think we'd have a little more serious view of God. I want you to notice verses 1-13 describe the blessings. Verse 1 says, "You shall not make for yourselves idols, nor shall you set up for yourselves an image or a sacred pillar," that's all the false religions, "nor shall you place a figured stone in your land to bow down to it; for I am the LORD your God. 2 You shall keep My sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary. I am the LORD Verse 3, there's the "if," the condition, "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." Stop right there.

In the modern world what kind of blessing is God talking about right there? This is a nation and God says if you as a nation will obey me then I will send rain and what kind of a blessing today would we say that is like? Economic blessings, a prospering economy. If this nation obeys God, God will prosper her economy. That's what He's saying. This is talking about business because what was the big business of the time? Agriculture. He is saying "I will give rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce," what do you need to make money? Produce in the fields. This is dollars and cents here, he is talking about economic prosperity will follow Israel *if*, notice the clause verse 3, "If you walk in My statutes" then you will be economically prosperous.

Verse 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." What's that talking about? We talk about cycles in the economy, it's talking about a linear, progressive economy, there won't be this volatility up and down, up and down all the time, it's smooth, and it's growing. So verse 5 is talking about a smoothly progressing economy.

Verse 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. 7But you will chase your enemies, and they will fall before you by the sword; 8five 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.” Verses 6-8 in modern English are talking about what kind of prosperity? Military victory, homeland security.

Verse 11, “Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you. 12I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.” That’s talking about spiritual prosperity; that God is going to be with His people, they’re going to actually get a chance to see Him and they did, the Shekinah glory dwelt there in the Tabernacle.

<b>Israel’s Historical Existence</b>	<b>Leviticus 26</b>	<b>Deuteronomy 28</b>	<b>Deuteronomy 30</b>	<b>Deuteronomy 32</b>
Origin	----	-----	-----	32:7-14
discipline & exile (includes both Babylonian & Roman conquests)	26:14-39	28:15-68		32:15-35
judgment (of nations) / salvation (of Israel)	26:40-45	-----	30:1-7	32:36-43
ultimate enjoyment of blessings in the land	26:1-13	28:1-14	30:8-10	-----

Table 8. Divine outline of Israel’s historical existence. God’s covenants control how Israel’s experience is to be interpreted.

Verse 14, and now we shift to the cursings. Vv 1-13 sketched the blessings so now in vv 14-39 what’s going to happen is God is going to sketch what will

happen if you don't obey Me. This is good material for parents and parenting, because what is God? He's the parent of the nation here, and what is He doing to His children? He's laying out the consequences; you do this and you're going to be blessed and you do that and you're going to be cursed. It's all explained up front, there are no surprises later on; the boundaries are set out nice and clear right up front. It's just a matter of consistently disciplining according to the principles that were laid out up front.

Verse 14, "But if you do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments, 15if, 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, 16I, in turn, will do this to you," watch what He's going to do, "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. 17And 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." Let's look at those verses for a minute, let's take them apart and think about what's going on here. What are the consequences? He's saying "if instead you reject" these things ... I will appoint over you a sudden terror, consumption and fever...." In terms of modern English what is that cursing? Public health, it's talking about public health here. It's not just physical health because he's talking about "sudden terror," so it's psychological and physical health.

And "you shall sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies shall eat it up," economic disaster where the land is pillaged, all the fruit and production is gone; it's stolen or destroyed by the enemy. So we have economic disaster.

In verse 17 you have military disaster; verse 18, "If also after these things, you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins." In other words, if you don't get the picture, keep it up and you're going to get more of it. This is God speaking here; look at how nasty He can be sometimes.

Verse 19, "And I will also break down your pride of power; I will also make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze," talking about agricultural disaster. There's a climate problem there. We know a little about that. What happen to livestock when you don't have any water? There's no food for them,

the ponds and rivers dry up. It's drought, an economic hardship, resources and years of building suddenly destroyed.

Verse 20, "Your strength will be spent uselessly, for your land shall not yield its produce and the trees of the land shall not yield their fruit." And then he goes on, "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. 22And 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." It's talking about the psychological fear of dangerous animals, it's talking about population decrease, which is also a powerful economic factor. People are necessary for economic growth because you've got to have people to produce things, you've got to have people to buy the goods and services that are produced. So this is disaster.

Verse 23, "And if by these things you are not turned to Me, but act with hostility against Me, 24then I will act with hostility against you and I, even I, will strike you seven times for your sins." It just keeps on increasing, there are degrees of His discipline and it gets more and more intense the more the disobedience. Verse 25, "I also will bring upon you a sword which will execute vengeance for the covenant," notice *the covenant*, that's the Mosaic Covenant, "and when you gather together into your cities, I will send pestilence among you, so that you shall be delivered into enemy hands." Here's the nation desperately trying to defend itself against the enemy and what do they get? A public health disaster on top of it all. Verse 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."

It just keeps on increasing, look at this! Verse 29, this is horrible, let me just say that as horrible as this is, this actually happened twice in history that we know of and may have happened three times. Take a look at this one, verse 28, this is almost unbelievable, "then I will act with wrathful hostility against you' and I, even I, will punish you seven times for your sins. 29Further, you shall eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters you shall eat. 30I 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. 31I will lay waste your cities as well, and will make your sanctuaries desolate; and I will not smell your soothing aromas. 32And I will make the

land desolate so that your enemies who settle in it shall be appalled over it. 33You, 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.”

Verse 29 refers to what happened in the city of Jerusalem in 586BC and AD70. The city was under siege, and it was a long, long siege, and the food ran out. If you want to read this outside of the Bible get a book called *Josephus, Wars of the Jews*. He tells you what happened because he was there in AD70 and he watched what happened. The people became so desperate for food the mothers ate their own babies and while they were chewing the flesh a person would reach in their mouth and yank it out so they could eat it. That actually happened, a horrifying picture. Talk about insanity. But why did it happen? People say oh well, God's a real meany here. Now wait a minute, how many verses did we have to read to get to verse 28 from verse 14. How many warnings did God give them? What did God say He was going to do if they disobeyed Him? And if I don't get your attention the first time I'm going to increase it seven times more, it keeps escalating. So this thing that everybody thinks is so horrible is after five cycles, five cycles later. Yeah, it gets bad, but they've had four cycles before to get with the program and nothing happened so God just kept it up and kept increasing. Hello.

This is interesting, and this is an aspect to God that we as Christians need to think about because it is tied in with our election, with God's choice of us as people who are saved and people who have trusted in Him, become His children, abide with Him forever, have eternal life. Now here's the consequence; if we are His children and He's committed himself to us then He's not going to kick us out of the family. Do you see how much He cares for us? If He didn't care about Israel He'd let them... okay, take off, see you around. But He doesn't, He keeps after the nation and after the nation and after the nation until they finally do turn around. He pursues them in all the cursing. The fact that He pursues them in all the cursing is a sign of His parenthood. That's what Heb 12 is talking about, the same idea. Children who are illegitimate, He says, aren't disciplined but children who are genuine children are disciplined because the parent loves them so much he's going to straighten them out and get things right. The suffering is actually underneath a sovereign purpose that works together for good.

In verse 33, there you have the prediction of exile. One of the signs in Israel's history... remember now, this is 1400 BC, the major exile is 586BC, so the outline of the consequences was given eight centuries ahead of time. What else do you see in verse 33? What is one of the cursings? What was one of the blessings? To be in the land and dwell securely; what's the cursing? I'm going to kick you out of the land and you're not going to have security anywhere. Verse 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."

Verse 34 He says "Then the land will enjoy its Sabbaths all the days of the desolation, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land will rest and enjoy its Sabbaths." They wouldn't trust the Lord so they'd work seven days a week instead of six; they'd work seven years instead of six. Israel had their divinely arranged calendar, and to explain this let me just digress here a little bit. Here's an interesting concept, and this is true of the economy under the OT. Here's what would happen; here's how God designed the economy. It wouldn't work if you didn't follow what He said. What did God say? Every seventh year in your business I want you to shut the doors and take a vacation. I want it mandatory that you are only going to work for six years period and the seventh year you're going to have a year long vacation, and you're going to come back the eighth year and we're going to start another cycle of six years of work and the seventh off, just like six days a week, one day off, six years at business and one year off. Oh, how can we do that, how are we going to make it in the seventh year if we shut the business?

God promised that if Israel would obey then they would be so economically blessed in those six years that they would have plenty of money to make it through the seventh year and it was a break from work. It was a break time, not just to go out and watch the football game, it was to have a time when there would be a break in your life to have a rest and get your head straightened out spiritually and get out of the details every day that just drown us and we can't get perspective because there's just one thorn and thistle after another and it's just, you know, give me some rest, let me just get my head straight again. It was a wonderful economy and they wouldn't do it.

So that's what this meaning in verse 34 is. He says okay, I told you that I wanted you to take a break every seventh year and you wouldn't do it. You kept working the land, see there's a picture of the land here, they kept sowing the seed and harvesting the crops, sowing the seed, harvesting the crops, etc. and He said wait a minute, every seventh year I don't want you to sow any seed, I want you to let the land have a rest. I built it, it needs a rest, trust Me. But they didn't trust Him and they sowed seed anyway. And by the way, do you know where the seventy sevens of Daniel 9 came from that we looked at last week? I mean, why was the calendar of Israel set at 490 years and not 284 years? Because they didn't let the land rest for 490 years. For seventy sevens they said, we can't trust the Lord that seventh year so we're going to keep the doors open. So finally God said, that's it, the land will get its rest. I'll make sure of it and he kicked them out of the land to make up for those years.

In verse 35, "All the days of its desolation it will observe the rest which it did not observe on your sabbaths, while you were living on it." There's the exile. The land gets its rest during the Exile. Verse 36, "As for those of you who may be left, I will also bring weakness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies. And the sound of a driven leaf will chase them and even when no one is pursuing, they will flee as though from the sword, and they will fall." There's no rest, there's a public health problem, there's psychological ruin in the nation.

Verse 37, "They will therefore stumble over each other as if running from the sword, although no one is pursuing; and you will have no strength to stand up before your enemies." Everybody is frightened here; it's part of the cursing of God. Verse 38, "But you will perish among the nations, and your enemies' land will consume you. 39 So those of you who may be left will rot away because of their iniquity in the lands of your enemies; and also because of the iniquities of their forefathers they will rot away with them."

Now verse 40, at the very end of this, notice the fact that God just doesn't let it end on a negative note. "If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers," by the way notice Israel is generational. There's a generational connection that when they confess their sins they actually had an identity with their father and their grandfather and so forth. "If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their

unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me— 41I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies—or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity, 42then I will remember My covenant,” what covenant is this in verse 42? The Abrahamic Covenant, “My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land.” There’s the sovereign unconditional covenant of God. But it’s going to be fulfilled because they obey. Verse 43, “For the land shall be abandoned by them, and shall make up for it Sabbaths while it is made desolate without them. They, meanwhile, shall be making amends for their iniquity, because they rejected My ordinances and their soul abhorred My statutes. 44Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies,” notice this, verse 44, here’s your eternal security of the nation Israel, there’s the sovereign unconditionality of it, “I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God. 45But I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God. I am the LORD.” It works like this: God is saying that if I let this nation go, that’s it, forget it, if I did that then it would not glorify Me because I started this nation in history and the other nations could then ridicule Me and say God failed to realize His purposes. So God has a vested interest here; once He commits to doing something in history He’s going to follow through on it, for His own glory, not because we’re so great but for His own glory.

We’ve gone through Lev 26, and originally we were interested in these four phases of Israel, her Origin and Lev 26 doesn’t cover her Origin. But verses 1-13 do describe her rise to blessing in the time of David and Solomon. They had economic prosperity, they had military security, they had tremendous blessing. Vv 14-39 describe the discipline and exile; that stage in Israel’s history. That came during Rehoboam’s reign. Who were the guys that developed the details of the discipline? The prophets; Amos, Hosea, Micah, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, all those books that nobody reads, those guys were pronouncing the terms of discipline. They were spelling it out; here’s your problem, why aren’t you following the word of God, why aren’t you listening to the prophets, this is going to happen to your agriculture, this is what’s going to happen to your public health department, this is what’s going to

happen with this Gentile power, they're going to come in and eat you for lunch. That's the classical prophets functioning as prosecuting attorney's on behalf of God against the nation. See how the prophets fit into this picture. They're administrating the discipline and announcing final discipline, Exile.

Finally history will culminate in a judgment on all nations and Israel will be restored and will enjoy blessing in the Land. Here we have vv 40-45 because remember what it says in verse 44-45, in spite of that when they are in the land of their enemies, notice the fine print, when they are in the land of their enemies, i.e. they are not in the promised land, they've been exiled but "when they are in the land of their enemies I will not reject them, nor will I abhor them to destroy them, breaking My covenant...." Verse 45, "I will remember them...." That's all it says, I will remember them. Other passages in those same classical prophets say I'm going to bring you back from where you went, I'm going to do it right in front of your eyes, so they're not going to be left there.

As far as the judgment of the nations we'll cover that as we go into other passages. That's one of our critical things because you've somehow got to get Israel separated out from the nations and so implicit in the covenant is the judgment of all nations and that also tells you that the Church really doesn't have a clear cut connection with the judgment on the nations. The Church is something different; Israel is connected with the judgment of the nations.

The last thing, final blessing in the land will happen for Israel and I think you've already seen what the blessing will look like. What were the blessings and the cursings? They were economic, public health, sociological, psychological, military victory, peace, security in the land; see how they visualized their future. That gives you a picture of what the Kingdom is going to look like. It's not some other worldly spiritual thing; it was concrete, earthly, yes, but spiritual also, those don't contradict, there's no contradiction between being on earth and being spiritual. God created Adam on earth and it was very spiritual atmosphere, until he spoiled it with sin. But intrinsically there's nothing unspiritual about the earth necessarily. So we've gone through these four stages of Israel's history; her Origin, her Rise, her Decline into Discipline and Exile and finally Her Restoration and Blessing

Contrast what we have just spent the last half hour going through in Lev 26 with things you read in the NT about the Church. Do you ever read in NT epistles about economic prosperity on a Church? Do you ever read about military victories or military defeats in the sense that we're talking about here in the NT Church? No you don't. See there's something different here and that's what I want you to pick up as we work our way through this, is that Israel and the Church are different, they have different origin, a different nature and a different destiny and we've got to respect that when we try to get this all together as to what's going to happen in the future.

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