

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT LESSON 10 – ISAIAH AND JEREMIAH

"Of Him all the prophets bear witness that through His name everyone who believes in Him receives forgiveness of sins." Acts 10:43

ISAIAH'S FOCUS ON THE "HE" OF GENESIS 3:15

The "Him" that Peter refers to in Acts 10:43 is the "He" of Genesis 3:15.

ISAIAH 7 - A SIGN TO THE HOUSE OF DAVID "GOD WITH US"

To understand this prophecy, we must understand its setting within the context of the Kings of Israel.

Following the reign of Solomon and building of the Temple, the Kingdom of Israel began a down hill spiral. The Kingdom was split between Solomon's son Rehoboam who became king of the 2 Southern tribes (Judah) and Jeroboam, an official in Solomon's court who became king of the 10 Northern tribes (Israel). This probably occurred some time between 921 BC and 931 BC.

ISAIAH THE PROPHET APPEARS

Isaiah appears almost 200 years *after* the Kingdoms divide. During that 200-year period, the Northern and Southern Kingdoms are continually at war with each other. Isaiah is called to be a prophet of GOD (around 740 BC) when he is still a young man.

This prophecy begins when King Ahaz is on the throne of Judah. Ahaz is in the line of David (An important point). Ahaz is in fact, mentioned in Matthew's genealogy of Jesus. (Matthew 1:9) Despite being in the line of David and consequently a major player in the coming of the "He" of Genesis 3:15, Ahaz is wicked, introduces idolatry and ignores the prophets. He is so wicked in fact, he is not buried with the other kings of Israel.

THE BACKGROUND FOR THE PROPHECY

The Assyrian king Tiglath-pileser has conquered all of northern Syria and is heading for Judah. Around 734 BC he enters Israel, and enters a coalition with the 10 tribes in the north. Ahaz (Judah the southern tribes) refuses to enter the coalition against Assyria thinking Egypt will come to his aid (closer geographically to him and requiring less tribute). Egypt is a no-show. The northern coalition decides to overthrow the Davidic line/dynasty in Judah and put someone on the throne who will support Assyria. (2 Kings 15:37; 16:5; Isa. 7:1)

This means a king of Judah who is not in the line of David leading to the "He" of Genesis 3:15.

So, GOD intervenes in a very interesting way.

AHAZ THE BRAVE

When Ahaz finds out that Israel (the northern tribes) has joined this coalition and is invading Jerusalem and Egypt is not coming to the rescue, he is shaking in his boots.

ENTER ISAIAH

Isaiah exhorts King Ahaz to trust in GOD even though things look impossible.

“Ask the Lord your God for a sign of confirmation, Ahaz. Make it as difficult as you want—as high as heaven or as deep as the place of the dead.”

But the king refused. “No,” he said, “I will not test the Lord like that.”

Then Isaiah said, “Listen well, you royal family of David! Isn’t it enough to exhaust human patience? Must you exhaust the patience of my God as well? All right then, the Lord himself will give you the sign. Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel (which means ‘God is with us’).”

In other words, GOD told Ahaz he could ask any miracle. When he refuses to trust GOD, He says the sign will be a virgin who will conceive a child who will be called, ***“GOD is with us”***. **Isaiah 7:11-14**

GOD tells Ahaz the “He” of Genesis 3:15 will come through Ahaz’s survival (a miracle in its own right) and will be accompanied by the “sign” of a virgin bearing this GOD-child.

CONTROVERSY OVER THIS PASSAGE

Many of you know the Hebrew word used for virgin here is **Alma** or **almah**. Jews today say this word Alma does not mean 'virgin' but a **young woman**.

It is interesting that the Septuagint (LXX) (Greek 250 B.C. translation of the Old Testament), in other words, 70 Jewish scholars, understood exactly what this verse was all about (The “He” of Genesis 3:15) and made **almah** to read **parthenos**, which in Greek specifically means, 'virgin'.

“...this man is the King Messiah of whom it is said, (Psalms 2:7), This day have I begotten thee.” - Babylonian Talmud

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.¹⁵ He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right. ¹⁶ But before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

“Well, the sign is that the child was said to be **God is with us** which means GOD intervened and allowed Ahaz to survive.” A Jewish Rabbi

ISAIAH 9 - A SUPERNATURAL KING

Isaiah immediately follows up his prophecy that Christ (the “He” of Genesis 3:15) will be born of a virgin (the “sign” given to King Ahaz), with more details about this virgin-born human.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

THE MIGHTY GOD, THE EVERLASTING FATHER

We are all so familiar with the words (especially around Christmas). Have you ever looked closely at the meaning given by GOD through the prophet?

- **This supernatural virgin-born child will be given to “us”.** (This completely fulfills the reason for GOD providing a “He” of Genesis 3:15 in the first place. He is for our redemption which we cannot accomplish on our own, through religion of any form.)
- **This supernatural virgin-born child will be a “son”.** (This connects Him physically with “us and spiritually given by our GOD Creator.)

NOTE: A professor in College used to say, “Christ was uniquely 100% man and 100% GOD with us.

- **This supernatural virgin-born child will have the government “on his shoulders”.** Puzzling until you realize, the word government means, *the legal and political direction and control exercised over the action of the members, citizens or inhabitants of communities, societies and states.* (the Dictionary) “He” will be in His rightful place as King!

In the next verse Isaiah elaborates on this point, connecting it clearly to the line of David (King Ahaz and the virgin-prophecy) and, to Genesis 3:15: (How clear can it?)

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Isaiah 9:6

Then, Isaiah provides one of the greatest confirmations of Who Christ is in all Scripture.

...his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

Christ, though unique in Person, IS GOD WITH US! He is, THE MIGHTY GOD. He is, THE EVERLASTING FATHER! And, “He” is ours if we only accept His offer!

PARTING NOTE: Jews treat the verse as follows and scorn Christian’s misunderstanding of Jewish Scripture. ***“...his name shall be called a wonderful counselor of the mighty God, the everlasting Father who is the Prince of Peace.”***

Pray for Israel.

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead themIn that day the Root of Jesse (the father of king David), will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest (Jerusalem) will be glorious. - Isaiah 11: 6 & 10

His ministry will be accompanied by miracles – Isaiah 35

He will be beaten and spit on – Isaiah 50

He will allow this to happen despite his power – Isaiah 52

He will be a suffering servant to all mankind – Isaiah 53

ISAIAH 66 - WHO HAS SEEN SUCH A THING?

The prophet explains clearly that Israel will turn away from GOD but GOD will not turn away from Israel.

Israel will be GOD's people through whom the Messiah will come. And, GOD will once again establish Israel as a nation... **in one day**.

The following passage is one of the most amazing in all scripture.

This is what the LORD says: "Before she goes into labor, she gives birth; before the pains come upon her, she delivers a son.

Who has ever heard of such a thing? Who has ever seen such things? Can a country be born in a day or a nation be brought forth in a moment? Yet no sooner is Zion in labor than she gives birth to her children.

Do I bring to the moment of birth and not give delivery?" says the LORD . "Do I close up the womb when I bring to delivery?" says your God.

"Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her. For you will nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breasts; you will drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance." For this is what the LORD says:

"I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream; you will nurse and be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees. As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem."

When you see this, your heart will rejoice and you will flourish like grass; the hand of the LORD will be made known to his servants, but his fury will be shown to his foes.

See, the LORD is coming with fire, and his chariots are like a whirlwind; he will bring down his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire.

For with fire and with his sword the LORD will execute judgment upon all men, and many will be those slain by the LORD.

MAY 1948

"On Friday May 14, 1948 (the day in which the British mandate over Palestine expired) the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel was signed by members of the National Council gathered at the Tel Aviv Museum, representing the Jewish community in the country and the Zionist movement abroad. It went into effect at midnight, Tel Aviv time."

This is the opening paragraph from the front page headline of the Palestine Post (now known as the Jerusalem Post), for Saturday May 15, 1948.

When the prophet Isaiah wrote, nations were not born, "in a day". GOD knew then, the events of May 14, 1948. He also knows Israel will never be destroyed again despite Islamic threats of nuclear destruction or should all the world desert her in her time of greatest need.

Why not?

"Rejoice with Jerusalem and be glad for her, all you who love her; rejoice greatly with her, all you who mourn over her. For you will nurse and be satisfied at her comforting breasts; you will drink deeply and delight in her overflowing abundance." For this is what the LORD says:

"I will extend peace to her like a river, and the wealth of nations like a flooding stream; you will nurse and be carried on her arm and dandled on her knees. As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you; and you will be comforted over Jerusalem."

THE PROPHET JEREMIAH

But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. Jeremiah 31:33

Jeremiah is one of the most interesting characters in the Bible. He deserves a bit of background material before we get into his interesting prophecies.

Jeremiah ministered for over 40 years, approximately 80 years after the Prophet Isaiah and during the reigns of the last four kings of the divided Southern Kingdom of Judah. (Remember how Israel splits into two Kingdoms, the Northern 10 Tribes of Israel and the Southern 2 Tribes of Judah.)

Jeremiah preached in the city of Jerusalem itself (in the Southern Kingdom), about 2,700 years ago (from about 628 BC to 586 BC). During his time as a prophet of GOD, the Babylonian Empire took control of Jerusalem and began taking Jews as captives to Mesopotamia. (Remember Daniel in the lions den?)

Babylon destroyed the city of Jerusalem in 586 BC.

Jeremiah prophesized that the Jews would be scattered from their homeland and persecuted. He also said that GOD would protect the Jews from total destruction and that they would one day return to their homeland and that the second Israel would be even more impressive than the first. This is remarkable when you consider they are being disseminated by the Babylonians.

Jeremiah is an amazing mix of bravery, tender heartedness but, most of all, one of the **most pathetic figures in all history**. He is known as the **"weeping prophet"** for good reason.

Jeremiah was, by all earthly standards, a failure. He wept out his prophecies to people who would not listen. His writings were torn to shreds. (In fact, destroyed!) His name was disgraced. He was beaten. He was put in stocks, thrown in a pit, and for much of his life he was a hunted man. He lived to see his nation in famine and war and all of his worst predictions come true before his eyes.

When Jeremiah knew Babylon was going to invade and understood that it was GOD'S punishment and could not be avoided, he encouraged Judah, and several other nations **not** to resist, but rather avoid total devastation. That, and a temple address which predicted the destruction of the temple, earned him the ultimate title of "Traitor."

Even when King Josiah led in a religious revival, he could see it would not last among a people steeped in corruption and idolatry. When Josiah died, Jeremiah barely escaped arrest, was forbidden to enter the temple, and had to have a scribe deliver his prophecies.

His bitterest heartache was poured out in his other book called, **LAMENTATIONS**, which means **"loud cry."**

During Jeremiah's 40 years of ministry, he never received a hint of gratitude by the people he served as GOD's emissary.

This whole country will become a desolate wasteland, and these nations will serve the king of Babylon seventy years.

This is what the LORD says: "When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place.

Jeremiah 25:11 & 29:10

THE BABYLONIAN CAPTIVITY TO LAST EXACTLY 70 YEARS

Let's scroll our time-line forward a bit from Jeremiah to Daniel.

The Prophet Daniel who has been in Babylonian captivity since he was a very young man, is reading Jeremiah's prophetic writings from 70 years earlier that the Babylonian captivity will last exactly seventy years.

I, Daniel, understood from the Scriptures, according to the word of the LORD given to Jeremiah the prophet, that the desolation of Jerusalem would last seventy years.

Daniel 9:2

Daniel looks up from the book of Jeremiah and realizes 70-years is about to expire. So, he begins praying from the bottom of his heart that GOD will begin a process of reconciliation and return the exiles to Israel and Jerusalem. GOD has bigger plans than simply returning the Israelites to their homeland.

IT'S ALWAYS ABOUT THE "HE" OF GENESIS 3:15

By now, you should be able to predict that what occurs next will have something to do with the coming Messiah, the "He" of Genesis 3:15 who saves the world, not simply the Jews.

As Daniel prays he is visited by the Angel Gabriel.

Gabriel gives Daniel the famed SEVENTY WEEK PROPHECY which literally pinpoints the date of the coming of the "HE" OF GENESIS 3:15. (We will look at this marvelous prophecy beginning next week)

Why 70 Years?

The reason the judgment of the captivity of Israel in Babylon was exactly 70 years is explained in 2 Chronicles:

He carried into exile to Babylon the remnant, who escaped from the sword, and they became servants to him and his sons until the kingdom of Persia came to power. The land enjoyed its sabbath rests; all the time of its desolation it rested, until the seventy years were completed in fulfillment of the word of the LORD spoken by Jeremiah.

2 Chronicles 36:20-21

THE LAND IS ISRAEL

What GOD is doing is preparing the Land *itself*, for the coming of Messiah. The Land itself has been corrupted by a lack of faith and GOD has punished to purify. (This is the message of Jeremiah!)

70 is a special number.

As we will see, this “**sabbath of the land**” (Just like the Sabbath Day or the 7th day of rest), relates not only to **the 70 weeks of Daniel** but also, to **Ezekiel’s 430 days**.

All are part of GOD’S time-table for the coming of Messiah, not to mention, the 2nd Coming of Messiah!

JEREMIAH’S 70-YEARS IS THE STARTING POINT

Jeremiah’s prediction of 70 years of captivity is the beginning of a specific time-line.

It says the Holy Land must be Holy (just as we are to keep the Sabbath Holy) as the kick-off.

It says certain events will begin in year 71 that prove to us even today, that Jesus Christ was the “He” of Genesis 3:15.

We are going to see that GOD’s time-line beginning with this prophecy in Jeremiah, pinpoints the coming of Jesus of Nazareth.

GOD is literally proving to us Jesus (His Son), is Messiah!