

Week 19: Understanding the Old Testament: Exile and the Promise of Restoration



MV: *"I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."* (Ezek 36:25-27)

God ALWAYS keeps His promises:

- He multiplied Abraham's descendents
- He planted them in the Promised Land
- He established David's kingly line.

God ALWAYS keeps His promises:

- Israel was conquered by a foreign nation for their idolatry and disobedience
- They were pulled from their homeland
- They were sent into exile

God keeps ALL His promises.

Israel was constantly disobedient and continually complaining (are you too?)

If Israel would not serve her God, she would serve her enemies.

Israel disobeyed as soon as the covenant was given, but God waited until 722 BC and 586 BC to judge Israel and Judah

Not long after David's kingship ended, the kingdom divided into two and never recovered

Israel was almost completely godless and was conquered by Assyria in 722 BC

Judah (the Southern kingdom) should have learned but succumbed to the same fate in 586 BC.

God didn't want this for His people but it was the consequences of their sin

"How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I treat you like Admah? How can I make you like Zeboyim? My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused." (Hosea 11:8)

God hated the exile and moved slowly towards it. He sent prophets to warn them. Israel refused to listen. They chose this for themselves. But God remained faithful.

Even in exile, God was still working.

He called them to repent and promised a future.

God destroyed entire nations for godlessness. Why did he spare Israel? God preserved them out of concern for His name.

"I dispersed them among the nations, and they were scattered through the countries; I judged them according to their conduct and their actions. 20 And wherever they went among the nations they profaned my holy name, for it was said of them, 'These are the LORD's people, and yet they had to leave his land.' 21 I had concern for my holy name, which the people of Israel profaned among the nations where they had gone. 22 'Therefore say to the Israelites, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: It is not for your sake, people of Israel, that I am going to do these things, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have profaned among the nations where you have gone.'" (Ezek 36:19-22)

God promised to bring them back to the Promised Land. Ezra and Nehemiah were sent back to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem and the temple

But the glory of God didn't return to the temple. Not until JESUS....

God was going to recreate His people from the inside out!

"I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. 26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." (Ezek 36:25-27)

So a new covenant was created. What was wrong with the old one??? SIN!!!

In the old covenant, the law was written in stone. In the new covenant, it would be written on human hearts.

"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. 32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD. 33 "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people. 34 No longer will they teach their neighbor, or say to one another, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." (Jer 31:31-34)

They would be made spiritually alive.

Obedience would not be the condition for entering into covenant
Obedience would be a promise through the new covenant

Mediation would be thru a flawless man... JESUS

It's easy to look down on Israel but we are guilty of EXACTLY the same things—idolatry and sin.

"The heart [is] deceitful above all [things], and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer 17:9)

We are all covenant breakers by nature and incapable of obedience

The new covenant centered on God and His people

The new covenant promised restoration

The new covenant included hope and healing for the nations

God's plan of redemption was for all nations but Israel and lost sight of that

As the OT closes Israel waits for God who is now silent

God was going to send the Messiah
God was going to make a new covenant

From birth, Jesus demonstrated His messiahship
His ministry demonstrated he was Israel's true King
The Passover celebrated God's act of redemption in setting His people free from slavery

With Jesus, the new covenant arrives.

"In the same way, after the supper he took the cup, saying, 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you.'" (Luke 22:20)