

The Promise

Judges-Malachi

Now that God has brought his people into the promise land, given them the power to control that land, and is blessing them as they live in that now, God expects some return on his investment. Not in the legalistic sense, but in the spiritual reconciliation of his creation, sense. God fulfilled his promise to them, lets see how Israel keeps their promise to God. Keep in mind this is only a quick overview to get the major concepts, beliefs, and hope of Israel.

-(**Judges**) A Spiritual Rollercoaster

-The Book of Judges is an account of how Yahweh [God] was taken for granted by His children year after year, century after century. Yet, God has never failed to open His arms in love to His people whenever they repent from their wicked ways and call upon His name. (**Judges 2-15**) God honored His promise to Abram to protect and bless his offspring -

- (**Judges 2|16-19**), "Then the LORD raised up judges, who saved them out of the hands of these raiders. Yet they would not listen to their judges but prostituted themselves to other gods and worshiped them. Unlike their fathers, they quickly turned from the way in which their fathers had walked, the way of obedience to the LORD's commands. Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the LORD had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them. But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers, following other gods and serving and worshiping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways."
- (**Judges 21|25**) Approximately 250 years later, we end with this verse. Obviously the people of God were not living up to their purpose.

-(**Ruth-2 Chronicles**) A Quick Overview

These books record the history of Saul, David, Solomon, and the rest of the Kings during this period. They also record the rise and fall of Jerusalem.

- **Saul:**
 - 1st King of Israel. Called by God, but eventually does evil in the eyes of God.
- **David:**
 - David fights for God's honor and defeats Goliath (**1 Samuel 17**). When Saul loses favor in God's eyes, God chooses David to replace Saul. Saul becomes jealous and tries to have David killed.
 - David wants to build God a permanent place to live, but God tells him no, because of the amount of blood on his hands.
- **Solomon:**
 - This is David's son, who eventually builds the Temple where God is pleased to live in this temple, with this warning.
 - **1 Kings 9|1-9**
- **Other Kings:**
 - After Solomon there were a few good kings and many more evil kings.
 - Israel and Judah, as a nation, eventually split and have separate kings that were against each other
- **The Fall of Jerusalem**
 - **2 Kings 25:** It is held that the (*Shek-hin-ah*) presence of God left Israel when the Temple was destroyed.
 - At this point Israel is taken captive and lives under the rule of foreign nations. From this time on, Israel hopes for the temple to be rebuilt and for God to once again bless them with the *Shekhinah*, but even after the second temple was built, God still seemed to be missing. They were still in exile and still under foreign oppression.

-(**Prophetic Books**) Another Quick Overview

- **Major Prophets:** Named for the amount of writing and not necessarily the importance of the author. Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel.
- **Minor Prophets:** Again, named for the amount of writing. Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zachariah, Malachi.

-(**Israel's Hope**) Zion and the "age to come"

Zion was another name for Jerusalem. More importantly, it was the name they used to explain their homeland. The central headquarters, as it were, for God's people to do their work. This was the place where God would act to restore his creation, which was the central hope of Israel. One of the main ways to talk about this hope was to separate it into two time periods. The present age (*ha-'olam hazeh*) and the age to come (*ha-'olam haba'*). The present age was a time when God seemed to be hiding his face from them. The age to come would be the renewal and restoration of his created world.

-(**Isaiah 2|1-5**)

- What could the mountain symbolize?
(Mountains, generally were meant to be places of worship or places where you could experience God. The mountain that will be chief of all mountains could very well be Jesus, seeing how he is seen as the temple in carnal.)
- What could the phrase "many peoples" mean?
(Not just the people of God, i.e Israel, but other peoples who will come from all around. People who want to worship the true God.)

-(**Isaiah 11**)

Note: Jesse was the father of king David. God had promised David that a descendant of his would rule of the world (**2 Samuel 7**). Jesus, in the gospels, is a direct descendant of David.

- What is verse 3b,4 all about?
(Jesus was not sent to judge, but his words will judge those on the last day (John 12|47,48). Striking the earth with the rod of his mouth and the breath of his lips, sounds a lot like what it's talking about in John.)
- What about 10 and 11?
(A banner is used to show people who and where you are. Jesus will be a banner to all people. Also, God will reach out a second time to Israel to reclaim those who still want to be

part of God's people (Romans 11) and still want to fulfill his purpose.)

-(Zephaniah 3|14-20)

If God was to restore Israel and bring them into the age to come, then God also had to deal with their sin. The ways in which this could be accomplished varied, but what we know for sure is this. The age to come, Israel's return from exile, was seen as the inauguration of a new covenant between God and his people.

-(Jeremiah 31|27-33)

- What does it mean, 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'?
(It's like saying, if you eat green apples, you'll get a stomach ache, but instead when the father's eat the green apples, their children will suffer the consequences. This was the way of the old covenant, but now (verse 30) 'Instead, everyone will die for this own sin; whoever eats sour grapes- his own teeth will be set on edge. Now you suffer the consequences of your own actions, everyone will reap what they sow.)
- Why does God want to make a new covenant?
(Possibly to start fresh. To not just renew the old covenant, but to do something different, better. God wants this new covenant to be within us, written on our hearts.)

CONCLUSION:

-While this was a very quick overview of the rest of the Old Testament, it gives us a good picture of what God's plan has always been. To partner with us in the restoration of his entire creation.

-Even though all throughout the Old Testament, Israel fails to do what God asks, he is very patient and always wanting them to turn back to him. Israel's hope of the "age to come", is central to understanding how they lived for the next 200 or so years.

-We see a people cherishing this deep hope of resurrection and restoration. Soon a prophet will come in the Jordan wilderness. He will call the people to

repent and undergo baptism for the forgiveness of sins. He will also warn them that Israel was about to pass through a fiery judgment out of which a new people of Abraham will be forged. It will also be during this time, another prophet will come. He would announce to the villages of Galilee that at last, Israel's God was becoming king and bringing in the "age to come". We should not be surprised at what happens next.