

ESCHATOLOGY: DOCTRINE OF LAST THINGS

PART 43

THE COVENANTS, PART 3

In Leviticus 26:40-45, restoration for Israel is promised because God will “remember for them the covenant with their ancestors” (vv. 42, 44-45) which is the Abrahamic Covenant. There are faith conditions attached to the final restoration. Obviously, there are no faith conditions attached to the regathering in unbelief which is ongoing at this time. We do, however, note the connection coming back into play between the fulfillment of the Abrahamic Covenant and being in the land.

Leviticus 26:40–45 ⁴⁰If 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 with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land. ⁴³For the land will be abandoned by them, and will make up for its sabbaths while it is made desolate without them. They, meanwhile, will 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, 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.’”

This is an end times event, but Replacement theologians must maintain this Scripture refers to the return from the Babylonian captivity in order to sustain their theology but it is not referring to a past period of time at all. Replacement Theology is proven to be completely false if this Scripture refers to a period of time that is still in the future and has yet to take place. The kind of confession, repentance, and faith God is referring to here has not yet happened. In fact, most of the Jews in Israel today are atheists and the religious Jews are mostly Orthodox who follow legalistic, Rabbinic Judaism rather than God.

In Leviticus 26, God promised to subject Israel to five successively more severe cycles of discipline in response to their unfaithfulness. Discipline is for those who are in the family of God; it is a relationship issue. Judgment is for those who are not in the family of God in the sense it is not designed to bring unbelieving nations back to God. They are not part of the family of God but Israel is in relationship with God. These cycles of discipline are applicable to Israel only; there are no secondary applications for other nations in terms of divine, familial discipline which is the context of Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy

28. Every nation of the world other than Israel that has existed has been part of the satanic κόσμος world system and as such is subject to wrath, judgment, and destruction, and not to discipline. Nations and the governmental systems in those various nations come and go and they may go violently, but they don't undergo cycles of discipline such as those described in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. They may experience similar catastrophes, but they are not from God in the sense of familial disciplinary measures to bring them back to God. They are pagans and they are not part of God's family. Gentile/pagan nations often rise and fall quickly with no time to endure these cycles of discipline. There is not one Scripture in the Bible that reveals God addressing Gentile/pagan nations and warning them about five successive, increasingly severe cycles of discipline they will undergo for rebellion against Him with the goal of national restoration and fellowship with God. Through the prophets, God at times predicted what He was going to do to Gentile nations in terms of exercising His wrath against them. For example, Isaiah 10:12-19 reveals God's judgment planned against Assyria and in Isaiah 13:17-22, Isaiah revealed that Babylon would be judged by the Medes. During Daniel's explanation of the statue in Daniel 2, he told Nebuchadnezzar the Babylonian kingdom would come to an end but he never said Babylon would experience any discipline beforehand in an effort to return that nation to God; that nation was not of God. Babylon was pagan and perhaps with some individual exceptions, Nebuchadnezzar and possibly some of the Magi, they people of Babylon were never in the family of God as a nation. In fact, Babylon did not go through cycles of discipline or judgment; one day they were a mighty empire and the next day they were destroyed. They didn't go through a long period of increasingly severe cycles of discipline and they were never told to return to God and be restored, but that has been Israel's experience. Throughout history, there are examples of Gentile/pagan nations moving from establishment to downfall relatively quickly in terms of world history and they are never reestablished. Nations of the world are not promised restoration by God once they meet their demise as Israel was promised restoration. In terms of exegesis, there is no warrant for assuming cycles of discipline apply to all nations without also assuming restoration will follow if the faith condition is met because that is the context of these chapters in the Bible. There is absolutely nothing in the recitation of the blessings and curses in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28-30, that relates to any nation at any time other than Israel. The blessings and curses were given to Israel and they apply to Israel alone. The purpose of these Scriptures is to bring Israel to a place where they will recognize and believe in their Messiah in order to inherit the Covenants; that's not a Gentile program.

Deuteronomy 28:63-68 repeats the fact the final curse was to be removal from the land. This is a completely accurate description of the life the Jewish people have had to live for nearly two thousand years.

Deuteronomy 28:63-68 ⁶³"It shall come about that as the LORD delighted over you to prosper you, and multiply you, so the LORD will delight over you to make you perish and destroy you; and you will be torn from the land where you are entering to possess it.

⁶⁴“Moreover, the LORD will scatter you among all peoples, from one end of the earth to the other end of the earth; and there you shall serve other gods, wood and stone, which you or your fathers have not known. ⁶⁵“Among those nations you shall find no rest, and there will be no resting place for the sole of your foot; but there the LORD will give you a trembling heart, failing of eyes, and despair of soul. ⁶⁶“So your life shall hang in doubt before you; and you will be in dread night and day, and shall have no assurance of your life. ⁶⁷“In the morning you shall say, ‘Would that it were evening!’ And at evening you shall say, ‘Would that it were morning!’ because of the dread of your heart which you dread, and for the sight of your eyes which you will see. ⁶⁸“The LORD will bring you back to Egypt in ships, by the way about which I spoke to you, ‘You will never see it again!’ And there you will offer yourselves for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but there will be no buyer.”

Deuteronomy 30:1-10 is the promise of restoration we refer to as the Land Covenant.

Deuteronomy 30:1–10 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, ²and 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, ³then 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. ⁴“If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the LORD your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. ⁵“The LORD your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers. ⁶“Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live. ⁷“The LORD your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. ⁸“And you shall again obey the LORD, and observe all His commandments which I command you today. ⁹“Then the LORD your God will prosper you abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the LORD will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; ¹⁰if you obey the LORD your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the LORD your God with all your heart and soul.

After Moses had finished informing the people of the blessings they would enjoy for obedience and the curses they would undergo for disobedience, God warned Moses about the future apostasy Israel would enter. God knew they would forsake Him and as a result the curses would be invoked and He informed Moses of that fact.

Deuteronomy 31:16–21 ¹⁶The LORD said to Moses, “Behold, you are about to lie down with your fathers; and this people will arise and play the harlot with the strange gods of the land, into the midst of which they are going, and will forsake Me and break My

covenant which I have made with them. ¹⁷“Then My anger will be kindled against them in that day, and I will forsake them and hide My face from them, and they will be consumed, and many evils and troubles will come upon them; so that they will say in that day, ‘Is it not because our God is not among us that these evils have come upon us?’ ¹⁸“But I will surely hide My face in that day because of all the evil which they will do, for they will turn to other gods. ¹⁹“Now therefore, write this song for yourselves, and teach it to the sons of Israel; put it on their lips, so that this song may be a witness for Me against the sons of Israel. ²⁰“For when I bring them into the land flowing with milk and honey, which I swore to their fathers, and they have eaten and are satisfied and become prosperous, then they will turn to other gods and serve them, and spurn Me and break My covenant. ²¹“Then it shall come about, when many evils and troubles have come upon them, that this song will testify before them as a witness (for it shall not be forgotten from the lips of their descendants); for I know their intent which they are developing today, before I have brought them into the land which I swore.”

The problem with denying Israel's restoration is God promised to restore them in the Land Covenant. If God can be said to be unfaithful to His promises to the nation of Israel, upon what basis does the amillennial believer have the faith to believe that God will keep His promises to him? God can be trusted to be faithful to His eschatological promises or not. If He is not then our faith is worthless; but He is faithful, and we know He will do exactly as He has promised—to Israel and to the church.

The Davidic Covenant amplifies one aspect of the seed blessing which is the rulership part of being a great nation as detailed in Genesis 12:2-3. Seed also refers to the large number of descendants God promised Abram. This Covenant is presented in 2 Samuel 7:8-16 and is restated 1 Chronicles 17:1-15 with a different emphasis. We need to understand both in order to arrive at a complete understanding of this Covenant.

Dr. Olander has an excellent description of the Davidic Covenant and its importance. “The Davidic covenant defines God's covenanted throne, kingdom, and heir. God's covenanted theocratic kingdom program and David's throne and kingdom are the same. This is also known as the millennial kingdom where Christ will reign from David's throne over Israel and every nation literally for one thousand years. The Davidic covenant establishes David's seed who literally descends from the lineage of David, and who literally reigns from David's throne over David's kingdom of Israel, the Jews. This covenant fully establishes David's house, throne, and kingdom forever. The Davidic covenant is of great importance and is essential to God's program, and to understand God's program one must fully understand the Davidic covenant.... [W]ithout the Davidic covenant and a systematic understanding of it, there is no defined seed, no defined throne, no defined kingdom, no defined house (dynasty), and no defined Davidic progeny to inherit the throne and kingdom of David. The definition and establishment of the Davidic kingdom would be open to interpretation and speculation as to what God has promised and covenanted with David through the nation Israel.... [T]he establishment of God's kingdom program with David as specifically covenanted is

a vital key to understanding all future prophecy and promises related to it. Prophecy does not establish the kingdom program of God. The biblical covenants do (the Abrahamic, land, Davidic, and new). The defining of His entire redemptive program and the defining of the throne and the kingdom [of] God are in the covenants themselves. In addition, all biblical prophecy ultimately flows from the biblical covenants. The prophecies progressively display God's development toward His covenanted kingdom program and the final purpose of Jesus (the Messiah, the second man and the last Adam) ruling as God's anointed from David's covenanted throne over David's kingdom." [David Olander, "The Importance of the Davidic Covenant" in *Journal of Dispensational Theology*, 10, no. 31, pp. 51, 53].

2 Samuel 7:8–16 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, to be ruler over My people Israel. ⁹"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, ¹¹even 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. 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, ¹⁵but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. ¹⁶"Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever."'"

The fact that David's name will be great implies perpetuity (v. 9). Part of this covenant is the presence of Israel in the land living under a Davidic king (v. 10). The descendant that God would raise up after David would have his house established forever (v. 13). The Covenant concludes with the promise that David's house and kingdom would endure before God forever and his throne would be established forever (v.16). I don't know of anyone who doesn't believe that Christ Jesus is the ultimate Davidic king. How can Replacement theologians believe Christ is the Davidic king and then reject part of the Davidic Covenant that says God is going to plant the Jewish people into their own land? At best, that is terribly a terribly inconsistent interpretation of the Bible; at worst, it is simply a rebellious rejection of God's Word in order to support one's theological bias.

"Forever" is expressed by עולם עַד in Hebrew and by αἰώνιος in the Septuagint. עולם means everlasting, forever, eternity, i.e., pertaining to an unlimited duration of time, usually with a focus on the future. עַד is a preposition meaning until, up to, as far as, i.e., a continuous extent of time up to a point. Together, עולם עַד, can literally mean "until eternity" or "until

forever." The Greek, αἰώνιος, also means eternal, perpetual, belonging to the age, to time in duration, constant or abiding. The point is there is nothing in these words to suggest the promises to David will ever cease. That in itself is not a theological problem with those who oppose dispensational theology; they recognize an eternal Davidic throne with Christ Jesus being identified as that King. The problem is they deny a literal Messianic Kingdom with King Jesus sitting on the Davidic throne in Jerusalem for a literal 1,000 years. They claim the Kingdom is spiritual and He is on the Davidic throne now, but the Davidic throne has not yet been reestablished. That won't happen until the Tribulation ends and the Messianic Kingdom begins.

Verse 13 reveals that Solomon's line will have the right to the throne forever, but there is a problem with that because Solomon's line was eventually cursed and removed from the throne. The key to interpreting all this as it pertains to the Lord and his right to the throne is that the right to the throne was not removed from Solomon's line even though the possibility of appointment was removed. This is important because it affects Jesus' right to the throne as the Davidic King.

Jeremiah 22:24–30 ²⁴"As I live," declares the LORD, "even though Coniah the son of Jehoiakim king of Judah were a signet ring on My right hand, yet I would pull you off; ²⁵and I will give you over into the hand of those who are seeking your life, yes, into the hand of those whom you dread, even into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and into the hand of the Chaldeans. ²⁶"I will hurl you and your mother who bore you into another country where you were not born, and there you will die. ²⁷"But as for the land to which they desire to return, they will not return to it. ²⁸"Is this man Coniah a despised, shattered jar? Or is he an undesirable vessel? Why have he and his descendants been hurled out And cast into a land that they had not known? ²⁹"O land, land, land, Hear the word of the LORD! ³⁰"Thus says the LORD, 'Write this man down childless, A man who will not prosper in his days; For no man of his descendants will prosper Sitting on the throne of David Or ruling again in Judah.'"

The genealogies of the Lord in Matthew 1 and Luke 3 serve to not only identify the problem but to present the solution as well.

Matthew 1 establishes Jesus' credentials to be the Messiah predicted to come from the line of Abraham and David. Jesus had the legal right to the throne through his father's descent from Solomon, the son of David who had the right to the throne, but that line was disqualified to actually sit on the throne by the curse on the unfaithful Davidic king, Jeconiah (or Coniah or Jehoiachin), (Jer. 22:30). Jeconiah's line had the legal right to the throne as descendants of King Solomon, however, they could not exercise that right due to God's curse on that line. Jesus was also qualified for the throne according to bloodline through His mother Mary by virtue of her descent from another son of David, Nathan (Luke 3:31). Therefore, Christ was qualified to be the Davidic King in terms of legal right as a descendant of Solomon through His father Joseph and He had the right to inherit the throne as an heir by biological descent or bloodline as a son of David

through David's son Nathan and the Lord's mother, Mary. He did not have the right to the throne in terms of bloodline through Joseph because Joseph was not his biological father. This is also important because the sin nature is inherited through one's father and Jesus did not have a sin nature. Both Joseph and Mary were critical factors in terms of the Lord's right to sit on the Davidic throne. The angel Gabriel announced to Mary that her son was the Son of the Most High, the heir of the Davidic throne, and the One who would establish the Davidic Kingdom (Luke 1:32-33). Therefore, Jesus was qualified to be the Davidic king by means of legal right through Solomon and Joseph, by means of bloodline through Nathan and Mary, and by means of divine proclamation from God through the angel Gabriel. The fact of divine appointment is important because there would have been other descendants of the house of David apart from the line of Jeconiah living at the time. The Lord had Solomon's legal right to the throne through Joseph, which legal right was never removed, but He was without being under the physical curse placed on Solomon's line which removed the appointment to the throne but not the legal right. Through Joseph, who was not the physical father of Jesus, the legal right to the throne was upheld in Christ Jesus.

Matthew 1:1, 6, 11, 16 ¹The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham.... ⁶Jesse was the father of David the king. David was the father of Solomon by Bathsheba who had been the wife of Uriah.... ¹¹Josiah became the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon.... ¹⁶Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, by whom Jesus was born, who is called the Messiah.

Luke 3:31 ³¹the son of Melea, the son of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David.

Luke 1:32–33 ³²“He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; ³³and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end.”

The emphasis in 2 Samuel was on the son of David, Solomon; the emphasis in 1 Chronicles is on the Son of David, the Messiah.

1 Chronicles 17:10–14 ¹⁰... Moreover, I tell you that the LORD will build a house for you. ¹¹“When your days are fulfilled that you must go to be with your fathers, that I will set up one of your descendants after you, who will be of your sons; and I will establish his kingdom. ¹²“He shall build for Me a house, and I will establish his throne forever. ¹³“I will be his father and he shall be My son; and I will not take My lovingkindness away from him, as I took it from him who was before you. ¹⁴“But I will settle him in My house and in My kingdom forever, and his throne shall be established forever.””

In verse 10, David is promised a perpetual kingly dynasty and one of his sons who follows him will be the King over the Kingdom God will establish. This King will build

another Temple, the Millennial Temple. In 2 Samuel, the possibility of sin is disclosed and temporal punishment is decreed. In 1 Chronicles, that is not mentioned because there is no possibility of sin with the Messiah. This King is eternal and his throne will be an eternal throne. This is the ultimate fulfillment of the seed promise of Genesis 12:3. Notice also that God said the house to be built is His house and the Kingdom is His Kingdom.

Amillennialists agree that the promises to David will never cease; they will insist they know that Christ will rule for eternity as the Davidic king; therefore, they are upholding the Davidic Covenant. The problem is they destroy part of the Davidic Covenant in the process and they put Christ Jesus on the Davidic throne right now because they don't interpret the Covenant in its context as it relates to Israel. They can't because they do not believe 2 Samuel 7:10 really means a literal nation of Israel will be in their own place and never disturbed again. They believe there will be no literal nation of Israel, there will be no literal Messianic, Millennial Kingdom on earth, there will be no literal Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, and no literal Davidic throne; therefore, Christ is ruling in heaven from the Davidic throne at this time and the church has completely replaced Israel in what they would call God's redemptive program.

The Davidic Covenant guaranteed David's house or dynasty, his Kingdom encompassing the people and the land, and his throne or the right to rule would be established forever. This does not guarantee there would not be an interruption in this program; in fact, David warned Solomon that faithfulness was a requirement for having a Davidic king actually sitting on the throne.

1 Kings 2:2-4 ²"I am going the way of all the earth. Be strong, therefore, and show yourself a man. ³"Keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the Law of Moses, that you may succeed in all that you do and wherever you turn, ⁴so that the LORD may carry out His promise which He spoke concerning me, saying, 'If your sons are careful of their way, to walk before Me in truth with all their heart and with all their soul, you shall not lack a man on the throne of Israel.'"

One of the interesting details about the Davidic Covenant is God guaranteed it with an oath. We have to remember that part of the Covenant is the land and the Israelites in the land. Anyone who takes that away has denigrated the veracity of God who guaranteed the existence of the land and the people in the land. Replacement Theology blasphemes the character of God.

Psalms 89:3-4, 33-37 ³"I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, ⁴I will establish your seed forever And build up your throne to all generations."... ³³"But I will not break off My lovingkindness from him, Nor deal falsely in My faithfulness. ³⁴"My covenant I will not violate, Nor will I alter the utterance of My lips. ³⁵"Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David. ³⁶"His descendants shall

endure forever And his throne as the sun before Me. ³⁷“It shall be established forever like the moon, And the witness in the sky is faithful.”

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