A General Introduction to the Bible - Lecture Eleven

**Review:** The Bible is split into 2 parts – the Old Testament (books written before Jesus was born) and the New Testament (books written after Jesus’ earthly ministry)

The Old Testament is divided into 3 kinds of books: History, poetry, and prophecy

At this point in the course we are looking at the prophetical books of the Old Testament; these are divided into 2 types: Major and Minor prophets

Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel

We left off last time looking at some important passages from the Book of Isaiah. Let’s look at a couple more:

“And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots: And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD;” Isaiah 11:1-2

“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.” Isaiah 11:6-9

- Important passages concerning the future
- 2nd coming of Jesus predicted and the establishment of His kingdom
- A time of restoration; back to Eden-like conditions
- Peaceful world; everyone knows the Lord

Isaiah 24-27 “The Little Apocalypse”

- Covers many of the end times events described in the Book of Revelation

Isaiah 53 – Perhaps the clearest Messianic prophecy concerning the redemptive work of Christ

“But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” Isaiah 53:5-6

- Unmistakably speaking about Jesus the Lord
- His substitutionary atonement (Compare 1 Peter 2:24; 3:18)
- Also mentioned in the NT (e.g. Acts 8)
“The priests said not, Where is the LORD? and they that handle the law knew me not: the pastors also transgressed against me, and the prophets prophesied by Baal, and walked after things that do not profit. Wherefore I will yet plead with you, saith the LORD, and with your children's children will I plead.” Jeremiah 2:8-9

- Memorizing and teaching the Bible is insufficient; one can study the Bible and care nothing about the Lord
- God still cares for His people; pleads with them and their descendants

“For my people have committed two evils; they have forsaken me the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” Jeremiah 2:13

- God is the fountain of living water; Jesus made similar claims (John 4; 7)
- Israel’s rejection of God was like rejecting fresh, clear, refreshing running water
- Israel preferred a cistern (a hole in the ground meant to catch rainwater)
- Even if the cistern held water it would be far less palatable and refreshing as clean running water; but Israel rejected God for cistern that held no water!
- Think of our world today; people are still rejecting God for that which is worse than useless!

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.” Jeremiah 23:5-6

- Prophecy concerning the coming kingdom of Christ
- The Lord Jesus born into the house and lineage of David; rightful king of Israel
- Comes to save a restored national ethnic Israel
- He is our righteousness (compare 2 Corinthians 5:21)

“Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it. For it shall come to pass in that day, saith the LORD of hosts, that I will break his yoke from off thy neck, and will burst thy bonds, and strangers shall no more serve themselves of him: But they shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.” Jeremiah 30:7-9

- A prophecy concerning the “great tribulation” period (Mark 13) which precedes the 2nd coming of Christ
- National ethnic Israel will be tested; great persecution
- The Lord comes the save His people and establish His kingdom
- Some think that David himself will be resurrected and will reign in Jerusalem under Jesus
- Hard to say; might also be the case that the reference to David in this passage refers to the Davidic kingdom that Jesus rules over; compare 1 Kings 12:16

“Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: 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 31:31-33

- The New Covenant predicted; shows us that the Old Sinaitic Covenant was never meant to be forever
- The Old Covenant could never save us – it only made our guilt more apparent
- The New Covenant under Jesus infinitely better; not only does He cleanse us of guilt, he imputes His righteousness to us
- The New Covenant includes a new spiritual nature now and a restored and glorified body later which is fit for the new heavens and earth

“A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.” Ezekiel 36:26-28

- The same idea here as in the passages from Jeremiah; the New Covenant includes a new spiritual birth
- Essential for entrance into the kingdom of God
- New nature means (among other things) a greater sensitivity to God’s moral laws
- The new birth and the indwelling Spirit of God is a guarantee right now that Christ will come again and redeem us wholly (Ephesians 1:13-14)
- Holy Spirit like an engagement ring; ring given as a guarantee that there is a wedding coming; the woman is in special relationship to a man who promises to marry her;
- The church is called the bride of Christ (See Ephesians 5) – the Holy Spirit is the guarantee that there is wedding coming up!