

~Promises of God--are they contingent?~

The promises of God are good. His promises were contingent, however, on Israel keeping the Covenant! Proof positive of this are the conditional words: 'if' and 'then'! Take a look at the following and see for yourself!

Ex. 19:5,6 "Now therefore, *if* ye will obey my voice indeed and keep my covenant, *then* ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people; for all the earth is mine. And you (Jews) shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation".

This was said to Israel at Sinai. Of course, they promptly, and constantly, broke it. God kept His part, however. When Israel **continually** failed to live up to the terms of their end of the contract, God finally destroyed them (70AD) for their rebellion, as He said He would (and as the numerous prophets confirmed to their faces).

In the NT, it tells us WHO the kingdom of priests and the holy nation NOW are!

1 Pet 2:9

But you (Christians) are a chosen generation, a royal **priesthood**, and an **holy nation**, a peculiar people; that ye should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Here are the warnings!

Deut. 6:14,15 "Ye shall not go after other gods of the people which are round about you... lest the anger of the Lord be kindled against thee, and ***destroy thee from off the face of the earth***" (*'land' or 'country'*).

Duet. 8:1-18 "Otherwise it shall be, *if* you do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods and serve them, I testify against you this day that *then* ye shall ***surely perish***. As the nations which the Lord destroyed before your face, so shall ye perish, because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the Lord you God."

Deut. 28:47,48 "***Because*** thou served not the Lord thy God with joyfulness and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; ***therefore*** shall thou serve your enemies which the Lord shall send against thee;... and He shall put a ***yoke of iron upon your neck until He have destroyed thee.***"

This was fulfilled in the Roman annihilation of Israel, **iron** being the symbol of the Roman empire (Dan. 2:40; 7:7). Following that (vv. 50-67) is an exact and vividly descriptive prophecy (given through Moses), of the final siege and destruction of Jerusalem--the horrors, of which, were to be unsurpassed in all history; which prophecy ends with this prediction (vv. 63-67):

"And it shall come to pass that, as the Lord rejoiced over you to do good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you ***to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and ye shall be plucked from off the land*** whither thou go to possess it. And the Lord ***shall***

scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth unto the other... And among these nations shall thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest," etc.

1 Sam 2:30 "Therefore the LORD, the God of Israel, declares: 'I promised that your house and your father's house would minister before me forever.' *But now* the LORD declares: 'Far be it from me! Those who honor me I will honor, but those who despise me will be disdained.'"

In this same chapter Moses says concerning "all these curses" that "they shall be upon thee, for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed *forever*" (v. 46).

Jer 15:6 "You have rejected me," declares the LORD. "You keep on backsliding. *So* I will lay hands on you and *destroy* you; *I can no longer* show compassion."

Jer 18:1-11

1 "This is the word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD:

2 Go down to the potter's house, and there I will give you my message.

3 So I went down to the potter's house, and I saw him working at the wheel.

4 But the pot he was shaping from the clay was marred in his hands; so the potter formed it into another pot, shaping it as seemed best to him.

5 Then the word of the LORD came to me:

6 O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter does? declares the LORD. Like clay in the hand of the potter, so are you in my hand, O house of Israel.

7 If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed,

8 and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned.

9 And *if* at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted,

10 and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, *then* I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it.

11 Now therefore say to the people of Judah and those living in Jerusalem, This is what the LORD says: Look! *I am preparing a disaster for you and devising a plan against you*. So turn from your evil ways, each one of you, and reform your ways and your actions."

Jer 26:4-6 "Say to them, 'This is what the LORD says: *If* you do not listen to me and follow my law, which I have set before you, and *if* you do not listen to the words of my servants the prophets, whom I have sent to you again and again (though you have not listened), *then* I will make this house like Shiloh and this city an *object of cursing* among all the nations of the earth.'"

As we can see--the OT promises to earthly Israel were the physical land, etc. These promises were conditional upon Israel's obedience:

Heb 8:8-9 "But God found fault with the people and said: "The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, *because they did not remain faithful to my covenant, and I turned away from them*, declares the Lord."

Time and time, again, the Israelites provoked God to anger. God had had enough! For centuries, He implored Israel to return to Him and they refused. Finally, He rejected them and brought upon them the worst catastrophe in their history--their final destruction (70AD). Jesus prophesied of it throughout

the Gospels

Luke 21:23-32

- 23 How dreadful it will be in those days for pregnant women and nursing mothers! There will be great distress in the land and *wrath against this people. (Jews)*
- 24 They will fall by the sword and will be taken as prisoners to all the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled on by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.
- 25 "There will be signs in the sun, moon and stars. On the earth, nations will be in anguish and perplexity at the roaring and tossing of the sea.
- 26 Men will faint from terror, apprehensive of what is coming on the world, for the heavenly bodies will be shaken.
- 27 At that time they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
- 28 When these things begin to take place, stand up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."
- 29 He told them this parable: "Look at the fig tree and all the trees.
- 30 When they sprout leaves, you can see for yourselves and know that summer is near.
- 31 Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that the kingdom of God is near.
- 32 "I tell you the truth, *this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened.*"

This last verse tells us when it happened--70AD--the end of OT Israel!!

Finally, according to the parable of Jesus,

Matt 21:33-41

- 33 "Listen to another parable: There was a landowner who planted a vineyard. He put a wall around it, dug a winepress in it and built a watchtower. Then he rented the vineyard to some farmers and went away on a journey.
- 34 When the harvest time approached, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect his fruit.
- 35 "The tenants seized his servants; they beat one, killed another, and stoned a third.
- 36 Then he sent other servants to them, more than the first time, and the tenants treated them the same way.
- 37 Last of all, he sent his son to them. 'They will respect my son,' he said.
- 38 "But when the tenants saw the son, they said to each other, 'This is the heir. Come, let's kill him and take his inheritance.'
- 39 So they took him and threw him out of the vineyard and killed him.
- 40 "Therefore, when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?"
- 41 "He will bring those wretches to a wretched end," they replied, "and *he will rent the vineyard to other tenants*, who will give him his share of the crop at harvest time."

The New Tenants

The old tenants were OT Israel who not only failed to keep the covenant, but killed the Son of God. The Kingdom was taken away from them and given to 'other' tenants (Christians) who WILL keep the New Covenant. *There is nothing in this parable to say that the owner of the vineyard will take it away from the new tenants and, one day, give it back to the old ones!*