

## Series 6: The Old Covenant Hebrews in the New Testament Times

Now, with this understanding of:

- 1) The OC was only with Israel. (which remember was established with them by the 10 Commandments (read) Deut. 5:1-3; 22; 9:9-11)
- 2) The curses God promised Israel if they broke their covenant (Deut. 28 - 32)
- 3) The constant harlotry and adultery by Israel (Hosea 1 thru 4; Jer. 3:1-9; Ezek. 16 and 23)
- 4) The sworn promises of God of coming judgement to Israel. (Above and throughout OT)
- 5) Keeping clearly in mind: the metaphoric hyperbole Hebraic language, historical culture, prophecies and worldview of the “Old Covenant” Jewish audience to whom John the Baptizer and Jesus Christ are speaking to.

**\*\* We now roll into the NT with a much better understanding of the mindset that the Hebrews of Christ’s day would have had of their own history.**

Let’s start with a look at the ministry of John the Baptizer – he came with a message of judgement, and with that judgement being only for the Jews:

**(Read)** Matt. 3:1-2, 7, 10, 12 Pending judgment about to come (we, in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century western culture, have so often only thought of John as coming to announce the coming of the Messiah, as the lamb of God as the “saviour” of the world, but when understanding the OT predictions of the coming of the Messiah it was **two-fold: judgment and salvation**. The Hebrew people very well knew their OC writings.)

It is critical at this point that we slow down to understand the significance of the Holy Spirit’s selecting of words, and their meaning. John the Baptist is standing amidst his Old Covenant audience, among who are many farmers, and have come from generations of farming, or are of or familiar with the agricultural industry, and are well aware of the farming language metaphors John is speaking to them. Again, we need to hear and understand this from the audience relevance significance to whom it is spoken, and not lose the power in the message from any modern or uncultured (their 1<sup>st</sup> century culture) lack of understanding.

In Matt. 3:12 the Holy Spirit inspired John to speak to them about a winnowing **fork** (some translations say fan, but it actually refers to a “pitch fork”). His audience being well aware of the customs and procedures done for wheat harvesting would fully understand the significance of what God was wanting **them** to know. It is us, here in our modern unfamiliar world/culture views who are the ones who need to see the power of what **they** are being told – explain “winnowing fork” (used to throw the wheat up in the air to separate the wheat from the chaff)

- A winnowing fork is used at the “end” of the harvest once all of the wheat/tares are gathered.
  - John is giving **them** clear visual imagery about the whole passage he had just spoken:
    - It was all stated as present tense/time, and imminent to **them**.
    - The Kingdom had drawn near (vs. 2)
    - The axe is at **their** root (vs. 10)
    - Christ’s winnowing fork for the end of the harvest was **already** in His hand.

Look at what Jesus had to say about John the Baptizer: (**read**) Matt. 11:10, 14; then 17:10-13, “The disciples asked him, ‘Why then do the teachers of the law say that Elijah must come first?’ Jesus replied, ‘To be sure, Elijah comes and will restore all things. But I tell you, Elijah **has already come**, and **they** did not recognize him, but have done to him everything **they** wished. In the same way the Son of Man is going to suffer at **their** hands.’ Then the disciples understood **that he was talking to them about John the Baptist.**”

To understand all of this better we need to go back to the OT prophecies to see what was written: (**read**) Mal. 3:1...then keep reading vs. 2-3 (which is about Jesus Christ). Look what it says was a major purpose of His coming – **judgment** – **Israel**. (See how Amos 9:8-10 confirms same thing.)

This same prophecy does not end there – look over at (**read**) Chpt. 4:4 What does it say, “Remember the law of Moses...” here again the OC people are brought back to **their beginning** to remind them that God has not forgotten His promises – and **their** judgment is coming.

**AND** what was to be **their warning** of when the “time was at hand/at the door” – v. 5, “behold I will send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.”

- This was **their/Israel’s** judgment time warning! And what did we just read Jesus said in Matt. 17:10-13 – John the Baptizer **was Elijah**, and **had now come already**.

**\*\*Matt. 17:12 is a direct cross reference from Mal. 4:5. Do we realize what we are being told here – Elijah “had” come, and that this coming was in fulfillment of the prophecy in Malachi, which said this was “just before” the “great and dreadful day of the Lord.”**

- Do you not think the Jews understood the significance of this warning?
- Do you not think their history came into their minds?
- The covenant promises/curses?
- Hundreds of years of prophet after prophet warning them to repent and turn back to God, or the promise of judgment and destruction? (The last thing they heard was from Malachi warning them that Elijah was coming to prepare the way of the Lord, and part of this was to be to “purify the sons of Levi” and of this “great and dreadful day of the Lord” coming upon them)

**NOW, after 400 years of no word from God, out of the “wilderness” comes a voice crying to them (v. 2) “repent,” (v. 7) “the wrath is about to come,” (v. 10) “the axe is now at the root,” (v. 12) “Jesus’ winnowing fork is in His hand...to thoroughly clean out His threshing floor...” (Israel - same as Mal. 3:2 – purify the sons of Levi).**

**\* Let’s turn to read what Luke has to tell us about the purpose of the ministry of John the Baptist in (read) Luke 1:16-17 – John’s ministry was again stated to be to Israel, and he was used to turn many of them to God. And as we saw in Matthew Chpt. 3 - away from the pending judgment about to come upon them when Jesus Christ cleaned His threshing floor (Israel) in vs. 10 and 12.**

**\* Let us also look at what the Book of John has to say about John the Baptist, and to whom he said Jesus had first come for – (read) John 1:11; 29-31, “He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.” (Israel) Vs. 29-31, “I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”**

**We need to understand all of this. We need to keep working into our beliefs all of the Scriptures from Genesis through Revelation so we can see how the whole Bible fits together. Always:**

- Remember the OT (including all we learned from the fall in the garden, and the promise given to Abraham of the Messiah to come to bless the nations).

- Remember the OC (Established with only Israel. The Seed would come through them).
- Remember God's prophecies of what would happen to OC Israel if they broke the covenant, and also how the NC would come into place - and **when** would be that transition. (**Read**) Deut. 32:20-21 then Acts 13:45-46 (The Jews had to be preached to **first**, and **reject** their Messiah and judge themselves (in other words seal their own fate and imminent judgement/completion of OC divorce), **before** the gospel could turn out to the Gentiles. Also, **read** Acts 18:5-6, 28:20-29.

**\*\* Have you thought about some of these verses that Jesus said during His ministry:**

Matt. 16:13-21, Here is a turning point in Jesus' discipleship of His disciples - "... (vs. 21) **From that time on** Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life."

We get some further enlightenment from the parallel (**read**) Luke 9:20-22, "Then he said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' And Peter answered, 'The Christ of God.' And he strictly charged and **commanded them to tell this to no one**, saying, 'The Son of Man **must** suffer many things and **be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes**, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.'"

And more light from (**read**) Luke 17:25, "**But first**, he must suffer many things and **be rejected by this generation**."

- Why are we told in many places that Jesus had to be rejected by Israel?
- Why Israel?
- Why could Jesus not have just done something to have caused the Romans to crucify Him?

**\*\* This is why it is so important to slow down and ask these questions, and then to search through the Bible for the answers. The Holy Spirit **never** chooses words that He puts in the Bible that are random, or have no meaning nor purpose.**

**\*\* Have you also ever asked yourself, why was Jesus so often telling His disciples, and many of those He healed to keep silent of the truth they knew, or not to say who healed them? (Turn to and read all the following):**

- **(Luke 5:14** - Man cleansed from Leprosy);
- **Luke 8:56** - Jairus' daughter raised from the dead;
- **Mark 7:36** - deaf/dumb man healed;
- **Mark 8:26** - blind man healed;
- **Mark 8:29-30** - Disciples commanded to not tell anyone he is the Christ. (Parallel Luke 9:20-22);
- **Mark 9:9** - Peter/James/John commanded to not tell anyone what they saw about the transfiguration.

(We must constantly do our best to try and keep in our memory all the things which are said in the Bible, who spoke what and to whom was he speaking? What was being said...was it for the present/future? What would the people hearing the message be understanding through who they were (Jew/Gentile), and the culture and worldview they were in? It can be a lot to do, but in order to properly interpret much of the scriptures it is imperative to always be thinking and remembering the whole Bible as being one Bible).

As for us here at this point in our study, we need to remember:

- That the Hebrew people were in a Covenantal/Marriage relationship with God.
- We recall from our study through the OC that it revealed that God had predicted Israel's breaking of the OC with harlotry/adultery with foreign Gods (even before they crossed over the Jordan to enter the promised land – Deut. 31:16-20; 24-29).
- God had promised in Deut. 28-31 all the curses and final judgement that would come upon them (Israel) if they broke their Covenant.
- Through our previous studies we have looked at many verses describing Israel's harlotry/adultery of their OC marriage with God (Hosea, Ezek., Jer. and many other places), and also the prophesied promised final divorce of Israel in Jer. 3:8 and Isa. 50:1, and of Judah in Ezek. 23:22-35.

So, with a fuller understanding of the OC relationship kept in mind, we start to understand that Jesus had to be rejected by the Jews, so the promised divorce from His marriage/covenant to OC Israel could be brought to final conclusion, and then He could turn to His new bride/church and bring in His New Covenant (Hebrews 8), and for His salvation to be open for the entire world, not being restricted to coming to access to Him through the OC animal sacrifice Israel/God covenantal relationship.

In order for us to understand the continuity of the Bible in its entirety, which means it is one interwoven story of the God/Man (Heaven/Earth) relationship, expressed to us mainly through two covenants (old and new). Within the OC we see many things spoken of to come in the NC, and the NC explains and sheds deep light on so many things in the OC. Both are needed, and we need to constantly strive to keep in our mind that the Holy Spirit has spoken the entire Bible and wants us to study it all in context. (2 Tim. 3:16)

**\*\* When we come to the NT and the Messiah, it is important for us to realize that the Messiah's ministry was "two-fold":**

- 1) To fulfill **all** OT prophecies and promises (**(read)** Matt. 5:17-18), which included the judgement, and closing of, OC Israel.
- 2) The transition and bringing in of the eternal NC, which was to be established through/in His blood (Hebrews 7 - 12).

**\*\* Let's look at some more scriptures to put perspective and context in place for us:**

Deut. 32:15, "Jeshurun (Israel) grew fat and kicked; filled with food, they became heavy and sleek. **They** abandoned the God who made them and **rejected** the Rock their Savior.

Matt 21:42, "Jesus said to them, 'Did you never read in the Scriptures, 'The stone which the **builders** rejected, the same was made the head of the corner. This was from the Lord. It is marvelous in our eyes?'"

- Turn back and **read** where this comes from in the OT – Psa. 118:22.
- To provide a wider context of what the Lord is wanting us to know we need to turn to the cross reference where this is explained more in context of the **timing and audience** – (**read**) Isa 28:16; "Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "Look! I am placing a foundation stone in **Jerusalem**, a firm and tested stone. It is a precious cornerstone that is safe to build on. Whoever believes need never be shaken." (NLT) (**Read green** Isa. 27:7-11, 28:5, 11, 14-16, 18-19, 22)

We can see further light given on this is 1 Pet. 2:6-8, "For this is contained in Scripture: 'Behold, I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, and he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.' This precious value, then, is for you who believe, but for those who disbelieve, 'The stone which the **builders** rejected, this became the very corner stone,' and 'A stone of **stumbling** and a rock of **offence**'; for **they** stumble because **they** are disobedient to the word, and to this doom **they** were also appointed.'" (Or, as the NLT says, "and so **they** meet the fate that was planned for them.")

\*\* You see, if we don't recognize when verses are quoted from the OT, and then go and look them up to see the context and audience and timing, then how can we be sure that we are correctly understanding any given passage, or not missing something?

Paul re-iterates **who** it is who the cross was a stumbling stone for in 1 Cor. 1:23, "but we preach Christ crucified: a **stumbling block to the Jews** and foolishness to Gentiles,"

Luke 7:30, "But the Pharisees and the experts in the law **rejected** God's purpose for **themselves**, because they had not been baptized by John." (Also **read** Matt. 21:32)

- By their rejection of John, they were also saying they were rejecting the Messiah to come whom John was preaching about - they were sealing their/Israel's OC judgement John the Baptizer said was "**about to come.**"

Jesus further explains His purpose of this “stumbling” and “doomed fate” in:

**(Read)** Matt. 13:10-15. The disciples ask Him why He is speaking to the crowds in parables (remember the audience relevance of the time and people when all of this is taking place - most are all **OC Israel**). Jesus clearly tells us an amazing thing – that He deliberately speaks to them (these **OC Israel** crowds) so that they will not understand and accept Him as their Messiah & then turn to Him, or He would have to heal/forgive them their sins (See parallel in Mark 4:10-12 and how it says Jesus **never** spoke to the OC crowds except by parables in vs. 34)

- Have you not ever asked yourself why Jesus Christ did not plainly and repeated show Himself to the world as the Messiah?
- If His purpose here on earth was to clearly reveal who He was to **all**, then why when asked plain and straightforward questions did He often not provide a clear answer to many of the questions?
- We all have come to some conclusions ourselves on why we thought this was so, but have we ensured to have taken all of the Scripture into consideration?
- His disciples asked Him this very thing in verse 10 that we just read. We need to carefully examine the entire context when Jesus is speaking something, to understand to whom the audience is when He is speaking, recall to mind the OC that He and His audience were living in, and the whole scope of His “coming” into the world.

**\*\*** For us to get a fuller understanding of this “two-fold ministry of the Messiah” we need to go back to where he is quoting from:

Isa. 6:8-11, “And I heard the voice of the Lord... Go, and say to **this** people... Make the heart of **this** people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes... Then I said, “**How long**, O Lord?” And he said: Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and **the land is a desolate waste**,”

- In the first century time, Jesus was telling His disciples that the fulfilling of this prophecy was happening then, and was going to be brought to completion before them. The “how long” was about to come to an end.



Keep in mind the contrast in answers we have from the above reason for Jesus speaking in “parables” to the OC Israel crowds in His audience, and how the Lord answers the disciples of John:

- When John the Baptist had the same questions about if Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus gives a plain answer showing how He is the fulfillment of the OT prophecies (read) Matt. 11:2-6, “...and Jesus answered them, ‘Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.’”
- Also, look how clearly the Lord spoke with the Samaritan woman at the well, and the people of her city in John 4:39-43.

\*\* Again, when the NT is quoting from the OT it is strongly encouraged that you go back to where the passage was first spoken to gather any information on the audience, time, culture and fuller context:

- Isa. 35:5-6, “Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing.”
- Isa. 61:1-2, “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me, because the Lord has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound. To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, **and the day of vengeance of our God**; to comfort all who mourn.”

\*\* Do we see the two-fold purpose of the Messiah in Isa 61:2 – while to one group of people He was to provide salvation, to another group at the same time, He was to be bringing vengeance/judgement (Same as we have also seen in Deut. 32:20-21; 43; Matt. 21:33-45; Isa. 65:15; Acts 13:45-46; Rom. 10:19-21; Heb. 8:6-9:11 and elsewhere).

The OT provides passage after passage showing how Israel was to know who their Messiah was, and the above ones shown in Isaiah are just two. However, it is important to remember that Israel had broken their covenant with God, as we saw in our previous studies, and divorce and judgement in fulfillment of the Deut. promises had to be carried out as God had promised.

Keeping the whole OC in view, clearer context is now put on the two-fold ministry of the Messiah. We now are seeing why the parables were spoken to the OC Israel audiences and why Jesus said He did not want them to understand and receive Him as their Messiah.

- Their OC fate had already been sealed and spoken of in the OT by their breaking of the covenant.
- The judgement and closing of the OC Israel kingdom relationship was needed, and the OC people needed to have their eyes blinded, eyes stopped, and reject their Messiah to seal their judgement and fulfill all the promised OT prophecies, and then the eternal NC kingdom promise begins its inauguration.
- (Read) Hebrews 8:13 states that right there in the present tense of the 1<sup>st</sup> century Christians this was taking place. The OC was now **obsolete**, and the empty shell was about to be destroyed and removed forever, while the NC was shining brighter. And they are told how they were to know when the OC judgement was being enacted and finalized – as it states in **Heb. 9:8**, when they saw the temple in Jerusalem, and everything it stood for, destroyed...and this was just about to be done by the Romans in only a short 7-8 years from their time – AD 70.

\*\*\* Now, let's turn to look through the ministry of Jesus, and hear, and try to understand the Bible in the context it was written - as OC Hebrews living in the midst of Jesus speaking to us:

- In Matt. 3:1-2, 7, 10, 12 we have clearly seen the warning and repent message John the Baptist was preaching to the OC Hebrews in the wilderness of Judea, but have we taken into account what the Bible states Jesus message was? Sometimes it can be easy to miss or glance over a verse, especially when our worldview may not understand the cultural significance it may have to an audience we are not a part of.

(**Read**) Matt. 4:17 Jesus had just gone through the testing by Satan in the wilderness and proved Himself faithful, and was now starting His ministry, and look what it says, “**From that time** Jesus began to preach and to say, ‘**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.’” We have already seen from several verses earlier in this study that He had come to be revealed to His people (**Israel**) (John 1:31 and elsewhere).

- We need to understand the significance of why the Holy Spirit said exactly this phrase “From that time...repent” as being what the ministry of Jesus was. This is something from our 21<sup>st</sup> Century mindset that is not a common or natural thought, but when we now put ourselves in that time, and as one of the OC Hebrew audience, who know their whole history, prophecies, promises, and John the Baptizer’s message of pending judgement for covenant breaking, then passages like these come alive with more full meaning.

Let’s turn to the parallel of this in (**read**) Mark 1:14-15, “...**the time is fulfilled**, and the kingdom of God is at hand. **Repent**, and believe in the gospel.”

Matt. 10:5-7, “These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them, ‘Go nowhere among the Gentiles and enter no town of the Samaritans, but go rather to **the lost sheep of the house of Israel**. And proclaim as you go, saying, ‘The kingdom of heaven is at hand.’”

- The whole world is represented in these three groups listed – and **only** the OC Hebrews were to be warned to repent. (It is important to understand the significance of this: the command was to just go to the cities of Israel, as the judgments from the OC that were promised were “about to” come, were only against them). Christ sent His disciples to **only** the “cities of Israel” where their message separated the Hebrew sheep from the goats (believer from unbeliever).

(**Read** all) Matt. 15:21-28 see vs. 24, “He answered, “I was sent **only** to the lost sheep of the house of **Israel**.”

- There is a multitude of messages that can be taught out of this passage, but for our study, I wanted to draw our attention to vs. 24 where Jesus emphatically states that He was not here at this time in His ministry for anyone other than OC Israel.

Matt. 12:39-42, “But he answered them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah... The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.”

- Have we stopped to consider all that this passage is saying? We all see the inference of Jesus speaking of His death and resurrection, but have we asked ourselves what would the OC Hebrew people who knew their own history be hearing? This is very important, because after all, it is to them He is speaking.

For further light on this, let's Read the Parallel in Luke 11:29-32, “When the crowds were increasing, he began to say, “This generation is an evil generation. It seeks for a sign, but no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah became a sign to the people of Nineveh, so will the Son of Man be to this generation. The queen of the South will rise up at the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn “them,” for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon, and behold, something greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh will rise up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold, something greater than Jonah is here.”

- Do we see the comparison Jesus makes in vs. 30 regarding the sign? What is a sign? Does not a sign tell us something? If we see a stop sign it indicates: obey and be safe, but disobey and potential danger, as well as breaking the law. What sign was Jonah to the Ninevites...what message did he have? Was it not a message of imminent judgement, and “repent or perish?”

**\*\*Let's look back at Jonah, (read) Jon. 3:1-4, “Then the word of the Lord came to Jonah a second time: ‘Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you.’ Jonah obeyed the word of the Lord and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very large city; it took three days to go through it. Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, ‘Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown.’”**

**\*\* Turn back to Luke 11 vs. 30 - Jesus is saying the exact same thing to the OC Hebrew audience He is speaking to: just as Jonah was a sign/warning of “repent or perish,” so, I too, say to you here before me, “...the Son of Man will be (a sign) to this generation.”**

- Then look how clear His message becomes in vs. 32, “The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented...”
- Those very people who repented will rise up with the believers of this 1<sup>st</sup> century time at the judgement and condemn these unbelieving OC Hebrews. We must remember John the Baptizer’s words, and the repeated imminence warnings throughout we have been seeing – it was “about to” happen (Greek: Mello. An event right on the doorstep to happen within a soon time from the present). And their utter destruction and judgement in AD 70 by the Romans was truly within that generation as promised.
- In vs. 31 the Lord doubly impresses this pending judgement upon them, by stating how the Queen of the South will also, “...rise at the judgment with the people of this generation and condemn ‘them.’”

**\*\* Jesus Christ was their (OC Israel’s) sign to “repent or perish” and they rejected Him and sealed the same fate that the Ninevites would have had upon themselves if they had not repented.**

- Nineveh was given 40 days to repent or be destroyed – they did repent and were saved.
- Is it a mere coincidence that it was 40 years from the resurrection of Christ in AD 30 until AD 70 when God used the Roman armies to carry out judgement, destroy, and completely shatter the power of OC Israel, to never exist since?
- In Matt. 23:31-38 Jesus promised judgement to the OC Israel audience He was speaking to, standing right in front of Him, and He said it would all be “within that generation.” Yet, even after OC Israel committed the most heinous crime history has ever known – crucifying their Messiah – the Son of God!, they were still provided 40 years of proclamation and a call to repentance (an entire generation – His 1<sup>st</sup> century generation). This was their “sign of Jonah,” repent or perish – and most of them did not (only those few who did repent and believe were saved – only a remnant).

**\*\* 40 in the Bible is very often symbolic – referring to “two distinct epochs,” or a period of time indicating a “completion/change,” or a “purifying/cleansing:”**

- Gen. 7:4, 12 – Flood – rain 40 days and nights completed the destruction and a purifying of the land of sinful men.
- Gen. 50:3 – It required 40 days to complete the embalming process for Jacob’s body.
- Exod. 24:18; Deut. 9:11 – Moses 40 days on My Sinai receiving the 10 commandments.
- Exod. 34:28; Deut. 10:10 – 2nd time Moses on My Sinai for 40 days receiving the 10 commandments for the second time after the first were destroyed.
- Deut. 9:18, 25 – Moses prayed 40 days and 40 nights to beg God for the forgiveness of the people’s sin.
- Moses' life is divided into three 40-year segments, separated by his growing to adulthood and subsequent fleeing from Egypt; his return to lead his people out; and then the time wandering in the wilderness with Israel afterwards. (Acts 7:23,30,36)
- Several Jewish leaders and kings are said to have ruled for "40 years", that is, a generation. Examples include Eli (1 Sam. 4:18), Saul (Acts 13:21), David (2 Sam. 5:4), and Solomon (1 Kings 11:42).
- 1 Sam. 17:16 – Goliath challenged the Israelites twice a day for 40 days before David defeated him.
- 1 Kings 19:8-9 – Elijah did not eat for 40 days until he completed his journey, and then he heard from the Lord.
- Jonah 3:4 – we see God telling Jonah to preach and warn the Ninevites that if they did not repent then in 40 days they would perish by the judgment of God.
- Lev. 12:1-6; Luke 2:22 – Christ was presented in the temple 40 days after His birth in accordance with the Mosaic law and days of purification.
- Matt. 4:2; Mark 1:13; Luke 4:2 – Jesus was in the wilderness for 40 days (the completion of His testing and purification for His readiness to start His ministry on this earth).
- Acts 1:3 – it was 40 days from the time of the resurrection to the ascension of Jesus.

- Num. 13:25 – Spies explored the land of Israel for "40 days." All of the spies, except Caleb and Joshua, were scared of the giants in the land and did not trust God to keep His promises to be with them to conquer the land. Therefore, we read in Num. 14:33-34, "For 40 years – one year for each of the 40 days you explored the land – you will suffer for your sins and know what it is like to have me against you."
- Num. 32:13; Deut. 8:1-2 – Israel wandering in the wilderness 40 years (until the last of the old generation had died away and the completion was done of cleaning out all of the old disobedient generation. 40 years before they crossed the Jordan, the guarding city Jericho was destroyed, and they entered the promised land).
- It was 40 years from the resurrection of Christ until AD 70 when Jerusalem was completely destroyed by the Roman armies and not one stone of the temple left standing upon another.

**\*\*** Let's examine in more detail some of the passages where Jesus uses the metaphoric language of the good and bad trees, and fruit, and the significance of what He is saying to His OC audience He is speaking to:

Matt 7:19, "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."

- Exact same figurative warning language used here by Jesus, as by John the Baptist in Matt. 3:10, "Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees. Every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire."
  - Terminology that would be well known by His OC Hebrew audience, and Jesus would continue to use and explain further throughout His ministry to them.

**(Read)** Matt. 21:18-19, "In the morning, as he was returning to the city, he became hungry. And seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he went to it and found nothing on it but only leaves. And he said to it, 'May no fruit ever come from you again!' And the fig tree withered at once."

**\*\*** Let's read the parallel for more detail in Mark 11:12-20 (**read**), "...seeing in the distance a fig tree in leaf...he found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs...he entered the temple and began to drive out those who sold and those who bought in the temple... you have made it a den of robbers." And the chief priests and the scribes heard it and were seeking a way to destroy him... As they passed by in the morning, they saw the fig tree withered away to its roots."

- Do we see the repeated use of Jesus referring to trees, and the curses/destroying of those without fruit?
- Do we notice a very informative piece of information the Holy Spirit has Mark tell us here at the end of vs. 13, "...it was not the season for figs."
  - That had always been a strange thing to me why Jesus curses a tree for not having any fruit, and yet it was not even time for the tree to have any fruit. I knew the Holy Spirit never put anything in the Bible for no reason nor meaning, but it was not until I started digging into the Bible from the audience it was written to, and keeping the entire Bible together as one book, researching Hebrew history, the culture and customs of Jesus and the 1<sup>st</sup> century OC audience, and then comparing all the teachings in the NT, did these verses start to come alive and have meaning that we just simply miss from our 21<sup>st</sup> century western worldview.
- Jesus went into the temple and condemned the religious disgrace that had become of the people. They were apostate from God and profaned the things He had given them. In vs. 20 we see the judgement of Christ upon **these barren people** – the fig tree was dried up and condemned to never bear fruit again.

### **Illustrative Points:**

- I. This tree was intended to point out the state of the **Jewish people**.
  - 1. They made a profession of the true religion.
  - 2. They considered themselves the peculiar people of God, and despised and reprobated all others.
  - 3. They were only hypocrites, having nothing of religion but the profession - leaves, and no fruit.
- II. Our Lord's conduct towards this tree is to be considered as emblematical of the treatment and final perdition which was to come upon this hypocritical and ungodly nation.
  - 1. It was a proper time for them to have borne fruit: Jesus had been preaching the doctrine of repentance and salvation among them for more than three years; the choicest influences of Heaven had descended upon them; and everything was done in this vineyard that ought to be done, in order to make it fruitful.
  - 2. The time was now at hand in which God would require fruit, good fruit; and, if it did not produce such, the tree should be cut down by the Roman axe.



- Therefore,
  - 1. The tree is properly the Jewish nation.
  - 2. Christ's curse was the sentence of destruction which had now gone out against it; and,
  - 3. Its withering away, the final and total ruin of the Jewish state coming by the Romans in AD 70.

His cursing the fig tree was not occasioned by any resentment at being disappointed at not finding fruit on it, but to point out unto His disciples the wrath which was coming upon a people who had now nearly filled up the measure of their iniquity, as He will soon go on to reveal in Matthew chapters 21 through 23.

Matt. 21:33-45 (**read green sections**), “...But when **the tenants** saw the son, they said to themselves, ‘This is the heir. Come, let us kill him and have his inheritance.’... When therefore the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to **those tenants**? They said to him, “He will put those wretches to a miserable **death** and let out the vineyard to **other tenants** who will **give him the fruits** in their seasons.”... Therefore I tell **you**, the **kingdom of God will be taken away from you** and **given to a people** producing its fruits... When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they perceived that **he was speaking about them.**”

- It is noticeable, and clearly planned as well, that the further along Jesus’ ministry gets, and the closer to His work being completed, that the more and more open and obvious and accusational against the OC Hebrew religious body we see Him become.
- Here we have the Lord unequivocally making known to all in His audience of their entire history of killing the Lord’s servants, and now even predicting right to them that He was going to be killed by them as well. Even though they were blinded from their hardness, as spoken of in Matt. 13, quoting from back in Isaiah 6 we will recall, they were able to understand some of this, as in vs. 45 they realize that He was speaking of them.
- Do we see again in vs. 42 Jesus quoting the passage we looked at earlier from Isaiah chapter 28. Jesus said this prophecy was being fulfilled by them right there in their time. They were the builders – and they were the ones rejecting the chief cornerstone. And if we also recall from that passage in Isaiah, that was contained within the same timeframe of when the terrible scourge was shortly going to come and judge them.

- Look back at Matt. 21:41. Here is a section that too can be missed if we are not being an OC Hebrew in His audience, and understanding our language nuances, idioms, and familiar OC references.

\*\* We see this whole parable using the terminology of a vineyard. As always, it is not used by the Holy Spirit for any accident or random purpose. Let's go back to the OC to see how God spoke in reference to this in order to put better perspective on what is being said:

**(Read)** Isa. 5:1-7, “Let me sing for my beloved my love song concerning his vineyard: He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watchtower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; and he looked for it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. **What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it?**...And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and **it shall be devoured**. I will break down its wall, and **it shall be trampled down**. **I will make it a waste**; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and briers and thorns shall grow up; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For **the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Israel are His pleasant plant...**”

\*\* Turn back to Matt. 22:1-10, **(read green sections)**, “And again Jesus spoke to **them** in parables, saying, “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but **they would not come**...while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and **destroyed those murderers and burned their city**. Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but **those invited were not worthy**. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast **as many as you find**.’ And those servants went out into the roads and gathered **all whom they found**, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.”

- The Lord had just been very specific about His Father's vineyard, and how in Matt. 21:43 it was also said to be the **“kingdom of God,”** and how it was going to be taken away from OC Israel and given to a nation, or peoples, who would bear fruit. This parable was clear enough that even the Pharisees and Chief Priests understood that Jesus was referring to **them** (v. 45)

- Now, He is even more direct in speaking of **their** coming judgement in Chapter 22. Verse 1 emphasized the audience context for us again – “spoke to **them** again.”
- Look at the familiar terminology the Holy Spirit is speaking about a marriage. Here we are seeing the **NC marriage** that is for God’s Son. Remember the whole ministry of Jesus and the disciples up to this point had been to go and preach to **only Israel**, “Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand.” (Matt. 10:5-7; 15:24; etc.) **They** were invited, but **they** were not willing to come (receive Him as their Messiah).
- Jesus is then prophesying to **them** about what **they** were about to do, in vs. 6, “while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them.”
- Verse 7 spells out prophecy, and the fulfillment of it, about as clear as it can be done. God said He will send His armies and destroy **those** murderers, and burn up **their** city. (Remember, all through the OT when God said He would come to enact vengeance, or send His army, every instance it was a foreign nation He sent to carry out His vengeance and punishment, but it was always referred to as “**the Lord doing it**, or **coming**.”).
- Virtually every scholar is in complete agreement here that this passage was a prediction of the near coming fulfillment of the massive slaughter of Israel, and the complete destroying and burning of their city and temple by the Romans in AD 70.
- Look how Jesus is wanting us to have no mistake of the timing of this event, and the scope of all that it covers: vs. 8-9, “Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is **ready**, but **those invited were not worthy**. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast **as many as you find**.’ And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, **both bad and good**. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.”
  - The judging and destroying of the OC people who rejected the wedding invitation would be within the same time as the Kingdom was given to another people, the gospel was to go forth to invite all good or bad (Jew or Gentile), and the wedding of the Son was **ready** & about to take place. (A lot of food for thought here alone).

- (Don't turn to, just read the following) Remember these passages: Deut. 32:20; 26; 43, "And he said, 'I will hide my face from them; I will see what their end will be, for they are a perverse generation, children in whom is no faith.'" "I would have said, 'I will dash them in pieces; I will make the memory of them cease from among men,'" "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people; For He will avenge the blood of His servants, and render vengeance to His adversaries; He will provide atonement for His land and His people." (NKJV)
- In our previous study we saw how in Hosea, after God had said that Israel was a harlot, and He was no longer going to be her husband, and they were going experience the promised OC judgements, however, then notice how He also speaks of the future coming of a NC re-marriage which would include the faithful believing remnant of the 10 northern tribes which had been scattered in the Diaspora, and says in summary of Hos. 2:18-20, 23, "In that day I will make a covenant for them..."..."I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in loving kindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord."..."And I will have mercy on her who had no mercy; then I will say to those who were not my people, 'you are My people!' And they shall say, 'You are my God!'"
- Recall from our last **Study Series 5** how Peter in 1 Pet. 1:1 is writing to this same Diaspora, but he was now writing long after their promised destruction in Hosea had happened by the Assyrian armies in 722 BC. It was then, in approx. AD 64, Peter is writing to these same scattered OC Hebrews Christians reminding them and quoting directly from Hos. 1:9-10, 23, and he writes to them in 1 Pet. 2:9-11 how this re-gathering and re-marriage was being fulfilled right there and then in the 1<sup>st</sup> century, and in v. 5 he tells them that this was about the building up of a "spiritual house," of which they were living stones (and how they were being (present tense of that 1<sup>st</sup> century) fitted into a spiritual temple, which was growing: Eph. 2:19-22; and how now only those who "believe in faith" in Christ would represent "true spiritual Israel:" See Gal. 3:7, 28-29, 6:15-16; and how this would fulfill the mystery that had perplexed OC Hebrews of how God could take both Jew/Gentile and make "one body" of believers in Christ: Eph. 2:15, 3:3-6).

**\*\* To see another passage explaining this “changing over of the covenant people,” turn to Matt. 8:11-12, “I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, while the sons of the kingdom will be thrown into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.**

- Israel has always been called God’s son: Hosea 11:1, “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.” Also see Exod. 4:22-3, “Then you shall say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the LORD, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, “let my son go that he may serve me.” If you refuse to let him go, behold, I will kill your firstborn son.’”
- As we just saw in Matthew 21 and 22, OC Israel had the kingdom of God – and who does it say here in Matt. 8 will be thrown out into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth – these very same OC Israel sons.
- And look how we are always seeing these same connected events – during the same time these sons are being cast out – there are those coming into the kingdom from the east and the west (Gentiles receiving the gospel)

**\*\* Let’s go to Luke’s expanded understanding of this Matthew 8 passage:**

**(Read)** Luke 13:22-29, “And He said to them, (Jews)...When once the master of the house has risen up and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and knock at the door, saying, ‘Lord, Lord, open up for us,’ and He will answer and say to you, ‘I do not know you, where are you from,’ then you will begin to say, ‘we ate and drank in Your presence, and You taught in our streets,’ but He will say, ‘I tell you I do not know you, where you are from. Depart from Me, all you workers of iniquity.’ There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and yourselves thrust out. They will come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and sit down in the kingdom of God.”

- This is such a powerful passage that thoroughly explains itself for exactly who the audience is who is being spoken to, and also shows that this coming judgement and “thrusting out of the kingdom” was coming very shortly – when they would be seeing those coming from the east/west/north/south (Gentiles) coming in. This was their (OC Israel) “sign” telling them the kingdom was being taken away, and their promised coming judgement fate sealed.

**\*\* Look back at the beginning of Luke 13 for another powerful passage the Lord used to speak to these OC crowds:**

**(Read)** Luke 13:1-5, “There were some present at that very time who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish (NKJV). 'Or those eighteen, on whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them...No -- I say to you, but, if ye may not reform, all ye in like manner shall perish.'” (YLT)

- Explain the scenario. Jesus wanted them to understand that their OC way of thinking that situations like this reflected these people were being judged for sins greater than others was wrong. And look at the point He wants them to remember out of these stories, vs. 3 and 5, “No, I tell you; but unless you repent, all ye in like manner shall perish.”
- Think about this: we all have to die, so this has nothing to do with dying in itself. This is His same sign/warning that He said He was to “that generation” – Repent or Perish. Jesus did not say “you also will perish, as in some general unrelated way, no, His words are very specific – looking and speaking to those OC Hebrews in front of Him, He told them that they were all going to perish and be destroyed, in the same way, sword and destruction, if they did not repent and turn back to God.

**\*\* Look at the significance of the parable He speaks next:**

**(Read)** Luke 13:6-9 (I like how the **NLT** expresses this), “A man planted a fig tree in his garden and came again and again to see if there was any fruit on it, but he was always disappointed. Finally, he said to his gardener, ‘I’ve waited three years, and there hasn’t been a single fig! Cut it down. It’s just taking up space in the garden.’ The gardener answered, ‘Sir, give it one more chance. Leave it another year, and I’ll give it special attention and plenty of fertilizer. If we get figs next year, fine. If not, then you can cut it down.’”

- Wow, if there was a single parable of the fruit tree that more represented what the Lord said He: had done, and was doing, this “one more time” with OC Israel, then I do not know of it.

Could He have warned them of their imminent danger more strongly? Had He not shown, as we saw back in Isaiah 5, of - **What more was there to do for my vineyard, that I have not done in it?** Yet, look how “one more time” He said He was forbearing with this rebellious people. He was living among them. He was witnessing to the fulfillment of all their OC promises of their Messiah. He was providing the last sign/warning of Jonah to this final generation.

\*\* Let's bring a few more OT prophecies into perspective:

- Jer. 8:19a - 20, “Why have they provoked me to anger with their carved images and with their foreign idols? The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and **we are not saved.**”
  - This was speaking of a final end in their future when the summer of God's blessing was going to end for OC Israel, and look what we are told – they are not saved.
- Amos 7:8-9, “And the Lord said to me, ‘Amos, what do you see?’ And I said, ‘A plumb line.’ Then the Lord said, ‘Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will **never again** pass by them; the high places of Isaac shall be made **desolate**, and the **sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste**, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.’”
  - A plumb line is often used as establishing a line of truth from which to judge. God is telling Amos that this plumb line will be used to judge and utterly destroy these adulterous people. So emphatic is this prophecy that God says He will “**never again**” come back to them. Echoing God's promise from long ago from **Deut. 32:26** when He said, “...I will dash them to pieces, I will make the memory of them to cease from among men.”
- Amos 8:1-2, vs. 2, “And he said, ‘Amos, what do you see?’ And I said, ‘A basket of summer fruit.’ Then the Lord said to me, ‘**The end has come upon my people Israel**; I will **never** again pass by them.’”
  - This was foreshadowing the apocalyptic “typology” coming judgement in 722 BC of the 10 northern tribes by the Assyrian armies, with the fulfilled promise of “the end has come” and “pass by them no more” of the final utter destruction of the remaining OC Israel (Kingdom of Judah), which was to come in AD 70 by the Roman armies.

**\*\* Notice how in all of these metaphoric hyperbole language verses we have just looked at, that it is talking about a finality, but not of time itself, but rather, the time of OC Israel – their end time.**

**\*\* We will also recall from a previous study, in Study Series 5, how we looked at the “two” separate kingdoms (Israel and Judah) comprising the original total covenantal people of God, all of OC Israel. We see in all of the above passages the proclamation about the judgement/end of the 10 northern tribes (The kingdom of Israel. This is in confirmation of the promised divorce of them by God in Jer. 3:8).**

We also will recall from an earlier study how Jer. 3:8 clearly included the kingdom of Judah in the same harlotry causing the divorce as the kingdom of Israel. Ezek. 16 and 23:11-35 prophecies and promises her same judgement/end as her sister, and Ezek. 23:36-49 confirms the same common forever end of the kingdom of Judah, and how God would remove the lewdness from the land forever (vs. 48), and in vs. 49 the prophet tells them that then it should be known that, “I am the Lord God.” Thus indicating the time this would be fulfilled, and is paralleling the same language as Isa. 65:1-15.

So, while Ezek. 16 and 23 clearly promised and prophesied the coming end of the kingdom of Judah, it was not at that time, and we continue to see throughout the OT the longsuffering of God. The kingdom of Judah continued to fill up the measure of her wrath from their returning from their exile to Babylon in 586 BC. Judah continued to reject the calls of God to repent, and He continued to long suffer her adulterous ways until after the promised “Seed” (Messiah) should come, until the time when she would fill up the measure of her wrath and the kingdom of Judah (Judah/Benjamin) would truly drink and drain dry the cup of wrath and annihilation she was promised, that her sister (Israel – 10 northern tribes) did drink (Ezek. 23:31-34).



**\*\* Now the climax of Jesus' ministry is rising as we turn to Matthew chapter 23:**

**(Read)** Matt. 23:29-39, "Thus you witness against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers. You serpents, you brood of vipers, how are you to escape being sentenced to hell? Therefore I send you prophets and wise men and scribes, some of whom you will kill and crucify, and some you will flog in your synagogues and persecute from town to town, so that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of innocent Abel to the blood of Zechariah the son of Barachiah, whom you murdered between the sanctuary and the altar. Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not! See, your house is left to you desolate. For I tell you, you will not see me again, until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.'"

- See Luke 11:49-51 for parallel of Matt. 23:31-36, "Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation."
- I believe the strongest support of the Zechariah Jesus is speaking of is the father of John the Baptizer, not the Zechariah listed in 2 Chronicles 24:20 in the OT, as that passage says that his father was Jehoiada. I believe Jesus is speaking of John the Baptizer's father (Some translations list the other language lessor spelling of his name, Zacharias). Luke 1:67-79 states the prophecy, "And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied..."). I believe this is the last prophet Jesus is referring to, which fits right into that time, which also strongly indicts the audience he is currently addressing, upon whom the judgement is about to be coming on.
  - Early Jewish writings, external Biblical accounts (including the apocryphal gospel of James), and church fathers such as Origen and Orthodox Christian tradition, record how Herod's guards came to the temple looking for Zechariah's son John during their massacre of the infants under 2 years old ordered by Herod. Zechariah was performing his priestly service, and when he refused to tell them where his son was hidden, they killed him right in the sanctuary between the temple and the altar. This is recorded in their history, and Jesus is accusing the very people at that very time who had just done this and then said in vs. 36, "Truly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation."

- The other strongest position is the recording in 2 Chron. 24:20-21 (read). It might bear mention that if Zechariah is Zechariah the Prophet, it does not suggest the canon is being subverted. The Bible does skip generations in genealogical lists at times; it was customary for the Hebrews (and other cultures) to do this in their genealogies. So, this leaves the plausibility this could be the Zechariah Jesus is referring to in 2 Chronicles, with Jehoiada being his grandfather; and Berekiah would be his unnamed father.
  - To further the understanding of this second position, Malachi, of course, came after Zechariah chronologically, but not in the order of the Jewish Tanakh...The Jewish Tanakh has the following order: Pentateuch, The Early Prophets [where Judges and Kings are considered Prophets], The Major Prophets, the Book of the 12 [the minor Prophets], the wisdom literature, and the historical books.... 2nd Chronicles is thus the last book of the Tanakh [or, rather, just "Chronicles" since the Jews did not divide the two]. Zechariah is thus the last prophet appearing.
- In either case, the Lord is clearly referencing that these people here before Him in Matt. 23 are being accused of being the very same OC Hebrew people, of whose fathers killed all the prophets, and upon whom all the “filling up the measure” of judgement was about complete, and that **they** would experience the full outpouring of the wrath of God to vindicate the saints before all in **their very generation** had passed away.
- Luke’s part parallel to this Matthew 23 section records Jesus Himself stating that no prophet could die outside of Jerusalem, and this too was why He had to die there, (read) Luke 13:33, “Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, **for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.**”
- Do we believe the Bible’s definition of the “Test of a prophet”? Deut. 18:18-22, “I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put **my words** in his mouth, and **he shall speak to them all that I command him**...the prophet who presumes to speak a word in my name that I have not commanded him to speak...that same prophet shall die.’ ...‘**How may we know the word that the Lord has not spoken?**’ — when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, **if the word does not come to pass or come true**, that is a word that the Lord has **not** spoken...”

\*\* Do we recall these familiar words Jesus uses in Matt. 23:38, “Look, your house is left to you desolate.” Some of these many verses that were spoken/promised and known by OC Israel:

- Isa. 6:11, “Then I said, ‘how long Lord?’ and He answered: ‘until the cities are laid waste and without inhabitant, the houses are without a man, the land is utterly desolate.’”
- Isa. 27:7-11 and 28:11-22 (**read green sections**) vs. 27:10, “The fortified city stands desolate...”
- Deut. 28:15, “But it shall come to pass, if you do not obey...all of these curses...”
- Deut. 18:58-61, “If you do not carefully observe all of the words of this law...the Lord will bring upon you...all the diseases of Egypt...every sickness...until you are destroyed.”
- Deut. 30:17-20, “But if your heart turns away...and worship other gods and serve them, I announce to you today that **you shall surely perish**; you shall **not** prolong your days...”
- Deut. 31:16-17, “...this people **will rise and play the harlot with the gods of the foreigners...they** will forsake Me and break My covenant...they shall be devoured...”
- Deut. 31:19-20, “...this song may be a witness **for Me against Israel**...when they have eaten and filled...will turn to other gods...they will provoke Me and break My covenant.”
- Deut. 32:20, “...I will hide My face from them, I will see what **their end** will be...”
- Deut. 32:26, “I will dash **them** in pieces, I will make the **memory of them cease...**”