



Lesson 9: Tending the Fields I

The LORD's Progressive Revelation about His Plan of Redemption.....

NOTES FOR LECTURE 9
Israel: Tending the Fields - Karen

Review of Firstfruits:

- The Firstfruit was picked on the weekly Sabbath following Passover (Nissan 14); it was then presented before the LORD on the first day of the week
- Jesus fulfilled this Appointment at His resurrection – passing from death to Life
- Timing coincided with the Israelites' passing through the Red Sea

Review of Pentecost (Shavuot):

- 50 Days after Firstfruits, the priests presented two loaves of new grain to the LORD
- 50 Days after crossing the Red Sea, the Israelites received the Torah at Mount Sinai
- 50 Days after Jesus's resurrection, the Believers received the gift of the Holy Spirit

After Pentecost, the church begins to grow; first to the Jew, then to the Gentile

Tending the Fields is:

- the time on the Jewish agriculture calendar between the spring and fall harvests.
- the time on the Prophetic calendar called the "Times of the Gentiles."
- the time when individual Jews accept Jesus, but the nation of Israel, as a whole, does not.

Luke 21:24: *They (the Jews) 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.*

So, why have the Jews been so persecuted?

First we must ask ourselves; do you believe what God says in **Isaiah 46:9-10**?

*Remember the former things, those of long ago;
I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me.
I make known the end from the beginning, from ancient times, what is still to come.
I say, 'My purpose will stand, and I will do all that I please.*

We are going to be looking at:

- The nation (people) of Israel and/or the land of Israel
- The promises given to the nation of Israel
- How Israel's belief affected their possession of the land and the promises

1. Genesis 12 – God made Himself known to Abraham

a. Abraham believed God

- **Hebrew** comes from the word *ivrit* which means “to cross or pass over”
- When someone believes God, they cross from death to life (Genesis 15:6)
- Righteousness has always come by having faith in God

b. God promised Abraham that from him a great nation would arise that would bless the entire world.

- **Genesis 13:15-17:** *All the land that you see I will give to your offspring forever...*
 - **Genesis 17:5-8:** *...I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for generations to come.....*
 - **Genesis 22: 16-18:** *...through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed (believed) me.*
 - The nation of Israel was chosen by God for three purposes:
 - ♦ To show the nations the blessings of worshiping the One True God
 - ♦ To receive, record and transmit the Word of God (Torah)
 - ♦ To be the channel by which Messiah (the Savior) would enter humanity
 - God’s treasured possession:
 - Zechariah 2:8** - *...for whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye.*
 - Genesis 12:3** - *...I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse.*
 - The nation of Israel remains as God’s chosen people today.
To be understood in the context of **role** and **not** racial superiority.
 - John 3:16** – *For God so loved the World...*
 - John 4:22** – *Salvation is from the Jews....*
 - Isaiah 49:5-6** – *...that my salvation may reach to the ends of the earth*
 - This explains the persecution of the Jewish Nation.
- c. God promised the Land to Abraham and his descendants as an everlasting possession.
- **Genesis 17:5-8:** *...I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant...*
Hebrew word: **olam** means forever and ever, always, eternal, perpetual

2. The sets Jerusalem in the center of the Nations.

Ezekiel 5:5 - *This is what the Sovereign LORD says: This is Jerusalem, which I have set in the center of the nations, with countries all around her*

- The promise to possess the Land is unconditional

- The privilege of living there is conditional upon their belief
Deuteronomy 30:19-20 - *....you can make this choice by loving the LORD your God, obeying him, and committing yourself firmly to him.*
- God knew what choices would be made
Jeremiah 16:10-13 – *See how each of you is following the stubbornness of his evil heart instead of obeying me. So I will throw you out of this land.....*
Leviticus 26:27-33 – *If in spite of this, you still do not listen to me.....then in my anger...I myself will punish you for your sins seven times over..*

This came to pass in 586 B.C. with the Babylon Captivity and 70 A.D. at the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem – all happened on the ninth day of the fifth month known as Av.

- But, God promises that He will bring them back to the land.
Jeremiah 16:14-15 – *I will restore them to the land I gave their forefathers*
- God is in Covenant with Israel forever – and He is faithful
Numbers 23:19 – *...does He promise and not fulfill?*
Isaiah 11:12 – *He will assemble the scattered people of Judah...*
Amos 9:11-15 – *I will bring back my exiled people of Israel back...*

3. Return of the people of Israel to the land

- Historically significant events:
Balfour Declaration of 1917
League of Nations Mandate, 1922
United Nations General Assembly:
November 29, 1947 - Resolution for Establishment of Jewish State
May 14, 1948 - Created the State of Israel; end of British Mandate
1967 – The Six Day War - Jewish people possess Jerusalem

More information can be found on Recommended Sources of the Information, page 199 under **God's Unchanging Plan for Israel in Redemptive History.**

Ezekiel 11:16-17 -

Therefore say: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: Although I sent them far away among the nations and scattered them among the countries, yet for a little while I have been a sanctuary for them in the countries where they have gone.'

Therefore say: 'This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will gather you from the nations and bring you back from the countries where you have been scattered, and I will give you back the land of Israel again.'

Homework after Lecture 9

Prepare for Lecture 10 – Gentile Tending the Fields

As we learned in the last lecture, the LORD made promises to the nation of Israel, through their father Abraham. These promises included, but were not limited to a promise to bring them into a land, a promise of a Messiah and a promise to be her God. And God will keep all of His promises. After all, if the LORD were to cut off Israel then all those promises would have been broken. So what guarantee would we have as Believers that our God would keep his promises to us? The LORD is not finished with the nation of Israel; His focus has simply shifted, temporarily, to the gentiles.

Although the church and its leaders were originally Israelites, Roman influence led to a church that was far removed from her Hebrew roots. The separation of Jewish and gentile Believers led to misunderstandings of the Hebrew Scriptures. Many within the church were led to believe that, because of the nation of Israel's rejection of their Messiah Yehoshua (Jesus), the LORD was finished with Israel as His covenant people. Many were convinced that the people of Israel had been cut off from the promises of God and that those promises were now transferred to the church, "Spiritual Israel." This doctrine is called Replacement Theology. It is **not** consistent with Scripture and has led to wide spread persecution of the Jews. They have been the most persecuted people in church history, and that persecution continues to this day.

God has **not** cut off the Hebrew people; He keeps His promises and He has a plan for them. His promises to Abraham will be fulfilled:

I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you. The whole land of Canaan, where you are now an alien, I will give as an everlasting possession to you and your descendants after you; and I will be their God.

- **Genesis 17:7-8**

Let's look into Scripture to see what the Word says regarding the Jews and the gentiles, and how both people groups have a purpose in God's Plan of Redemption for the whole world. This plan includes all nations and it will come to pass – it has never changed, but is being progressively revealed to us in His way and in His perfect timing.

6. Read Ephesians 2:11-22.

- To whom is Paul referring when he says *those who call themselves the circumcision*?
- Who are the two who have been made one (v. 14)?
- Who has made them one and how was it done (v. 14-16)?
- What was His purpose in destroying the dividing wall of hostility (v. 15-16)?
- What state of being or position were the gentiles formerly in, with relation to Israel, prior to Christ (v. 11-12)?
- Who are *those who were far away*, and who are *those who are near* (v. 13 and 17)?
- What state of being (position) are gentile Believers in now (v. 19)?
- What is Yehoshua in the process of building and for what purpose (v. 21-22)?

7. Read Romans 11:13-33. Keep in mind that Paul is **not** referring to individuals in this analogy, but to **generations within the nations**. Otherwise, you might think, mistakenly, that Paul is teaching contrary to the gospel and that the LORD cuts off individual Believers.
- Who is the *wild olive shoot* that has been cut out of an olive tree that is *wild by nature* (v. 13, 17 and 24)?
 - Who are the *natural branches of the cultivated olive tree* (v. 24)?
 - What warning does Paul give to the *wild olive shoots* (v. 18)?
 - What do you think the **root** of the cultivated olive tree represents (v. 16-18)?
Read Isaiah 27:6 and 37:31-32 and Jeremiah 17:7-8 for some insight.
 - What do you think the *nourishing sap* represents (v. 17)?
 - Why were some of the natural branches broken off (v. 20)?
 - Is God able to take natural branches and graft them back into the cultivated olive tree? Why would He do so (v. 23-24)?
 - What needs to happen before Israel's partial hardening will end (v. 25)?

8. Read John 17:20-26 known as "The High Priestly Prayer."
- Who do you think Jesus is talking about in these verses when he uses the pronouns those, they and them?
 - What reason does Jesus give for wanting these two separate people groups to be brought to complete unity?
 - What, historically, has this relationship been like?
9. With the understanding that the story of Joseph is a **shadow** or a prefiguring of the Messiah, read Genesis 41:41-45; 42:6-8, 45:1-7 and 50:19-20.
- Why didn't Joseph's brothers recognize him? What did Joseph look like?
 - At what point did they know who he was?
 - What difficult circumstances did Joseph need to endure in order for the LORD to bring the details of this situation to this conclusion?
 - In this story, how did He work all things together *for the good of those who love him, who have been called, according to His purpose* - **Romans 8:28**?

