

31 Just at that time some Pharisees came up, saying to Him, "Go away and depart from here, for Herod wants to kill You." 32 And He said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I reach My goal.' 33 "Nevertheless I must journey on today and tomorrow and the next day; for it cannot be that a prophet should perish outside of Jerusalem. 34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it! 35 "Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

There is so much to talk about here and this is such a critical passage to understand.

Last week we looked at vs 31 - 35a together and considered the fact that Luke is introducing through this passage the fact of the imminent death of Jesus.

Herod wants to kill you. Well, Herod doesn't really get a shot at me because Jerusalem holds all of those cards. Jerusalem is where the prophets and messengers of God are murdered. Sorry Herod, you're just not a credible threat.

We had a good look at those ideas and if you're interested and missed last week, the manuscript is on line at our web pages. This morning I want rather to look at the prophetic words of Jesus that grow out of God's chosen people Israel rejecting their Messiah.

Last week we said there are two infallible proofs of the deity and Messiahship of Jesus. Miracles are one. Jesus performed non stop miracles that showed to anyone with eyes and some without eyes that He alone possesses power and authority over the created elements.

He speaks and the creation obeys the same voice that spoke it all into

existence in the first place. The wind ceases and the waves cease their roaring at his command. Demons flee at His command. Demons cease to speak at His command. Flesh that was damaged and dead is replaced with flesh that is living and perfect at His touch.

Never before and never since has the world witnessed the power of the Creator of the universes over the elements of His creation in miracles. But we didn't get to see them first hand. We can read about them, written down for us by multiple perfectly reliable witnesses. But we don't get to witness them first hand.

The irony isn't lost on me that Bethel Church, a big California mega-church that had faith healing services at hospitals that featured the laying on of hands has stopped those services because of Covid 19. Think about that one for a minute.

Jesus could have eradicated Covid 19 with two words. Covid 20. When Jesus called dead four days Lazarus out of the grave by the power of His words, ***Lazarus, come forth!*** If He had not said *Lazarus*, all of the dead would have come out of the tombs. The authoritative power of His words.

We didn't get to see it happen. But last week we said, there's a trade off with being here instead of being there. We get to see the prophecies being fulfilled. A second infallible truth that sets our God and our Book and our Lord Jesus apart from anything else, anywhere, ever. Completed prophecy. And in our passage this morning, there is a single prophecy made by Jesus that incorporates much of the theme of this entire book.

And there has been movement on that prophecy. Since He pronounced those words, we can study what has happened in the intervening 2000 years. Let's review what Jesus said;

34 "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it! 35 "Behold,

your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"

There are actually 2 prophetic statements made here. God leaves. God abandons Israel. Temporarily. He abandons them to the desolation of a world without God. And the second prophecy is the reversing of that abandonment, He returns to Israel.

Blessing departs when God departs. The abandonment is a pulling back of all blessing and a giving over of them to cursing.

Did that happen? Because, if it did, we can surmise two important conclusions just from that single prophetic statement. Two life changing truths. Number (1). Jesus has the powers of God to know the future. This is an infallible proof, equal to all of the miracles He did, that He is the Son of God.

Isaiah 46:9 - 11

*9 "Remember the former things long past,
For I am God, and there is no other;
I am God, and there is no one like Me,*

*10 Declaring the end from the beginning,
And from ancient times things which have not been done,
Saying, 'My purpose will be established,
And I will accomplish all My good pleasure';*

*11 Calling a bird of prey from the east,
The man of My purpose from a far country.
Truly I have spoken; truly I will bring it to pass.
I have planned it, surely I will do it.*

God is the one who tells the end as well as the beginning. His purposes come to pass. He tells us ahead of time what He will do, and in our vernacular, you

can take it to the bank. If God declares something, it will happen.

Jesus has just stepped into this capacity, in these verses this morning, that defines God alone.

Jesus has declared that Israel will suffer the abandonment of God for an undisclosed amount of time, until He returns and reverses that very abandonment.

It's 2020 folks. Did it happen? Did God abandon Israel. Did He, in the words of the apostle Paul in Romans 1; God gave them over. Did God pull back His blessing and turn Israel over to the ruler of this world for cursing and punishment?

You don't have to be a Bible scholar to answer that question. The answer is in our face every day. This truth that Jesus stated as future prophecy is like an open festering wound, almost from the day He stated it, right up to and including this 9th day of August 2020.

The cursing of the abandonment of God on these people has been a reality and is a reality that we can see with our eyes, study all of the different facets and phases of it since Jesus spoke it, and the world teeters this day on the fact of Israel. Surrounded by enemies. Hated by everyone, including increasingly by the hour, our nation that was formed expressly to protect Israel.

Jesus words on this day set in motion the abandonment and cursing of this people, but it goes back even further than Jesus. The possibility that Jesus words set in motion that we can watch daily with our eyes, actually begins with a warning from Moses. In Deuteronomy. Let's look at the beginnings of this cursing from Jesus, 1500 years earlier.

After the 40 years of wandering because of stiff necked disbelief and disobedience, Israel is again, for a second time, standing at the door of the promises of God, about to enter the possession, given to them by God, and Moses takes time, to once again give them the law of God. That's what

Deuteronomy means. 2nd Law.

It was a different generation. The original generation that left Egypt has died in the wilderness because of disobedience and disbelief, and this new generation that is going in to take the possession is getting God's law, again. 2nd try.

I want to take you quickly to Deuteronomy 28 and 29 and I'm just going to read some selections quickly, just to give you a taste of the severity of the warnings of God about blessing and cursing.

But first a preface. We touched on this last week. Paul makes an important statement in Romans 1:18 *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,*

What I want you to think about though is how the wrath of God works. It isn't like God is sitting up in heaven throwing out wrath darts at people He's mad at. I cut some guy off on the freeway and God's like, this Jim needs a bit of wrath and my tire blows out.

Now I'm not saying that couldn't happen, and I probably deserve that . . . every day, but that isn't the idea. The wrath of God is built into the universe like gravity. It's automatic. It's just set up that way by God's design.

So a person, or a people group, or a nation that honors and keeps God's laws, and yes, I'm talking about the simple 10 commandments, God's moral law, it's just built into the universe that blessing follows. It's automatic.

Our national experiment, more than any other nation on earth, ever, was a picture of that principle for 250 years. Keep God's moral law and blessing follows. Built in. Automatic. By design. Keep God's moral law and blessing will follow. Individually. Corporately. Nationally.

When I was born, not that long ago really, I'm still a young guy, don't let this

white hair fool you, when I was born in 1952, big business in the state of Nevada was something called *the cure*. Anyone know what I'm referring to? People would set up residence in Nevada in order to get a divorce.

In 1915 the residency requirement dropped from a year to 6 months and an industry was born. In 1927 it dropped to just 3 months. Dude ranches appeared around Reno for the women "doing time" waiting for the cure.

After the depression hit in 1929, Nevada feeling the need for a little boost, changed the residency waiting period to just 6 weeks, and passed a law that after your decree of divorce you could remarry in one day.

All of that just to say, in my lifetime, our nation began its descent down the slippery slope of abandoning God's moral law. Remember, I'm not that old. In the span of my lifetime we have, as a nation, beginning with little toes in the water things like a state that made divorce easier, we've rocket shipped so far away from God's moral law, that this week a state recognized in law for the first time, legalized polyamory relationship status.

Never mind getting married. You can have an orgy and have it recognized as equal to all the benefits that once were only for those who were married. Binary marriages of two people of opposite gender are what sit-coms are laughing at most these days, and no one even remembers what "the cure" even was. In my lifetime.

Now then, if the wrath of God is built into His universe and it's automatic cursing and wrath for peoples, groups, and nations who abandon God and His moral law, where does that leave us, this morning, August 9th 2020?

We are at the edge of the abyss, looking down into it, with a billion people pushing and shoving us over the edge. That's where. That's how God's wrath works. You can depend on it.

Got any proof Jim? Let me take you back to something Jesus said. It's a case study we can dig into a little bit to see if God's wrath for people who abandon

Him is real, or not.

34 *“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it! 35 “Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”*

We need to first go back almost 1500 years before this day that Jesus says these words, to some other words, also inspired words of God. Quickly from Deuteronomy 28;

1 *“Now it shall be, if you diligently obey the LORD your God, being careful to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you high above all the nations of the earth. 2 “All these blessings will come upon you and overtake you if you obey the LORD your God:*

3 *“Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country.*

4 *“Blessed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground and the offspring of your beasts, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.*

5 *“Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.*

6 *“Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out.*

7 *“The LORD shall cause your enemies who rise up against you to be defeated before you; they will come out against you one way and will flee before you seven ways. 8 “The LORD will command the blessing upon you in your barns and in all that you put your hand to, and He will bless you in the land which the LORD your God gives you. 9 “The LORD will establish you as a holy people to Himself, as He swore to you, if you keep the commandments of the LORD your God and walk in His ways.*

15 *“But it shall come about, if you **do not obey** the LORD your God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:*

16 *“Cursed shall you be in the city, and cursed shall you be in the country.*

17 *“Cursed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl.*

18 *“Cursed shall be the offspring of your body and the produce of your ground, the increase of your herd and the young of your flock.*

19 *“Cursed shall you be when you come in, and cursed shall you be when you go out.*

20 *“The LORD will send upon you curses, confusion, and rebuke, in all you undertake to do, until you are destroyed and until you perish quickly, on account of the evil of your deeds, because you have forsaken Me. 21 “The LORD will make the pestilence cling to you until He has consumed you from the land where you are entering to possess it. 22 “The **LORD will smite you with consumption and with fever and with inflammation** and with fiery heat and with the sword and with blight and with mildew, and they will pursue you until you perish. 23 “The heaven which is over your head shall be bronze, and the earth which is under you, iron. 24 “The LORD will make the rain of your land powder and dust; from heaven it shall come down on you until you are destroyed.*

25 *“The LORD shall cause you to be defeated before your enemies; you will go out one way against them, but you will flee seven ways before them, and you will be an example of terror to all the kingdoms of the earth. 26 “Your carcasses will be food to all birds of the sky and to the beasts of the earth, and there will be no one to frighten them away.*

After Moses said these words to Israel, just before his death, and just before Joshua led them into the promised land, the history of Israel is a roller coaster.

They wander away from God and the curses come and they repent and regroup and follow God for a while and then; repeat. Over and over. Until Jesus comes on the scene.

What Jesus says is different than Moses warning. Jesus basically says, time is up, I'm about to be murdered, and because of your rejection, you will be abandoned. Your house is "left to you" desolate.

But Jesus modifies the old pattern of dis-obedience, cursing, repentance, blessing. Because Jesus words state that this time the desolation will remain in place until the nation, Israel, together as a nation, see Him returning and they recognize Him and say *Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord*.

It's different than before. In all of their long history they would leave God and the cursings would come and they would cry out to God in repentance and God would come and bless them for a time until they would walk away from Him again. Roller coaster. You can read it. Good king, bad king. Blessing. Cursing. Repentance. Blessing.

This time is different. They're about to murder their own Messiah and Jesus clearly states that the desolation will remain until He returns to them.

Did that happen? In 66 - 70 AD, the jews revolted against Rome, and Rome came down and utterly destroyed Jerusalem. The emporer ordered every building, every wall leveled to the ground and indeed below the ground, he ordered the foundations to be scattered so that no one could tell a city was ever there.

Except for a few towers and a wall that he left so that when travelers came upon the site they would stand aghast at the level of destruction. 1,100,000 jews were slaughtered, and less than 100,000 survivors were carried off into slavery.

That was just the launch of desolation. If you're in the mood to be depressed you can read on wikipedia, the timeline of the jews in the christian era and it just goes on and on like that. They are dispersed throughout the known world and everywhere they congregate and begin to propogate a little bit, another crushing comes. Over and over.

And it just keeps going like that until our era and Hitler does his best to eradicate jews completely from the earth, murdering over 6 million jews.

Only in America are the jews allowed to get a little toe hold and thrive

somewhat. And that's an interesting study in itself. The Jewish people have added so much color and depth to the culture of this nation, it's astonishing.

Personally, I believe, and you can take what I say and add 3 bucks and it'll buy you a cup of coffee, I believe one of the reasons God set America apart for the incredible blessing we have known for 200+ years is because we not only gave the Jews a safe haven in our nation, we have for 72 years now been the big stick that limits the Arab nations that surround the nation of Israel from the complete annihilation that is their sworn intent. America has been the protector of the nation of Israel after 1948.

Those folks would make Israel into a smoking hole if it wasn't for the United States. Fact. I think it's safe to say that Jesus' words of prophecy here have astonished the world now for 20 centuries.

35 *“Behold, your house is left to you desolate; Left to you is abandonment. But that isn't all that Jesus said here, is it. His prophecy is in two parts, and the second part remains to be fulfilled.*

and I say to you, you shall not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”

Almost as astonishing as the unfathomable realization of the desolation of Israel for the last 2000 years, just as Jesus said it would be, is the fact that if you took a count in so-called Christendom, you would discover that most Christians do not believe the second part of what Jesus said here will come true.

Most main line old school denominations and other fringe groups believe that God dismissed Israel forever, after the first part here. Israel is finished. Cooked. Done. Forgotten. No longer on God's agenda both for now or in the future. God abandoned Israel and He's done with them.

The common belief is that the church is the "spiritual Israel". The original Israel gets all of the curses, and any blessings that God has written down for a

future Israel have been transferred to "spiritual israel" which is the church. They get all the bad stuff, we get all the good stuff.

And that is so common as to put what I believe, and hopefully what I can convince you to believe as a minority. Most of christendom believes God has washed His hands of Israel forever. I've got a little trouble with that. Let me begin right here in our passage.

*and I say to **you**, **you** shall not see Me until the time comes when **you** say, 'BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!'"*

We are literalists around here. Who is the antecedent of the three times Jesus says *you* in that verse. What or who does that *you* look back to? Obvious. *Your house Your house is left to you desolate.* Whose house?

I'm poor at english grammar. Terrible. Shockingly weak at my own language. And even I can figure this one out. Who is the you here?? Israel! OF course. So if I take words of Jesus that are the simplest grammar and make them mean something different from what we all know He meant when He said it . . . where does that stop? Right?

Once we start down that road, where do we stop. We can make anything anybody says mean anything we want. And that's just the beginning of problems. That problem is massive, it literally makes the Bible worthless, we can make anything mean something else.

That's bad enough, but it gets worse. Because if this isn't Israel, then we can't trust God. We've got a God that starts down some road and gets mad at the people and crushes them and gives all the promises to someone else. Who can trust a God like that! Because I don't know about you, but I know exactly what I deserve.

I'm counting on promises written in this book and God's up there going that's one. That's two, that's 3, that's 491. You're outta here. I'dve been out of here years ago. If God makes promises and then renigs because you're a bone

head. You wouldn't be listening to me this morning.

Listen to the word of God from Jeremiah chapter 31:35 - 37 and tell me how this can no longer be about Israel, but instead, this is the church;

35 Thus says the LORD,

*Who gives the sun for light by day
And the fixed order of the moon and the stars for light by night,
Who stirs up the sea so that its waves roar;
The LORD of hosts is His name:*

36 "If this fixed order departs

*From before Me," declares the LORD,
"Then the offspring of Israel also will cease
From being a nation before Me forever."*

37 Thus says the LORD,

*"If the heavens above can be measured
And the foundations of the earth searched out below,
Then I will also cast off all the offspring of Israel
For all that they have done," declares the LORD.*

In the middle ages, people calling themselves christians, who believed that God had abandoned Israel forever, during the Crusades, marched to Israel and slaughtered Jews and Muslims alike. The Jews haven't forgotten. Neither have the muslims.

God knows how to keep His promises. My goodness, if you want to be astonished, just the fact that the Jews are still a recognizable distinct people group after 2 milleniae of dispersion and slaughter. And then be more amazed that they are back in their land.

Every promise that God ever made to them is still on slate to be fulfilled. Even the promises that involve real estate and Jerusalem, 100 years ago, people were scratching their heads going, how's God going to pull this off, the

Jews are still with us, but they're scattered all over the place.

One of my favorite promises about Israel is in Amos chapter 9. It pictures a sieve that separates the good kernels of grain away from all the chaff and junk that falls through.

*8 “Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom,
And I will destroy it from the face of the earth;
Nevertheless, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob,”
Declares the LORD.*

*9 “For behold, I am commanding,
And I will shake the house of Israel among all nations
As grain is shaken in a sieve,
But not a kernel will fall to the ground.*

Israel is scattered all over the face of the earth and God will sift them to separate them from the rest of the nations and not one kernel, not one Israelite that God wants to return to the land will be lost.

When you give up these truths and these promises in order to make the church into Israel, it literally does irreconcilable damage to a full 1/3 of the Bible, and it puts the rest under assault. Literal interpretation goes out the windows and after that, the whole book is on shaky ground. It doesn't have to mean what it says.

Well, I never intended for this to have a part III, but we've looked at Israel, past, and a bit of Israel present, and next week I want to look at Israel's future. And what a future they have! It's really exciting to think that though we didn't get to witness the miracles, we are in fact witnessing this prophecy of Jesus literally coming to pass.

Earlier in the sermon I said; If the desolation of Israel happened, we can surmise two important conclusions just from that single prophetic statement. Two life changing truths. Number (1). Jesus has the powers of God to know

the future. This is an infallible proof, equal to all of the miracles He did, that He is the Son of God.

And second (2) if the first part of His prophetic statement here came true, and it did, massively, we have no reason, in fact we'd be rather foolish, to not believe the 2nd part will also come to pass. Christ is returning to this earth and His people, the jews, will recognize Him and welcome Him. The prophetic stage is set for that event.

Next week, if the Lord tarries and we live, we'll finish looking at this prophetic statement of Jesus.