

Lesson 41

8.9 Palestinian Pact

- Let's take a closer look at why Israel is still undergoing great discipline today. Two thousand years passed, and the nation was scattered among the other nations of the earth. Only in the middle of the 20th century did it return to its land. Now, let's study the Palestinian Covenant.
- What happened when God brought the Israelites out of Egypt? They became a redeemed nation and traveled to the Promised Land. At Sinai, they received the law, strayed by worshiping the golden calf, and were judged by God. Then, they continued on to the Promised Land. When they arrived at the gates of Canaan at Kadesh Barnea, spies were sent to scout the land. Only two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, believed that God could help them conquer the land despite the people who lived there. They said, '*If God has promised, we can go in*', but the nation rejected them, and they didn't enter. Then God said: '*The blessing is there. The blessing is to enter the land as I promised. But since you have rejected it, I cannot bless you. I cannot bless a disobedient generation. This generation that rejected entering the land will die in the desert, and only their children will receive the blessing.*' God passed the blessing on to the next generation.
- The people's disobedience annulled the covenant for that generation. God could not bless that generation of unbelievers, and after 40 years, the next generation arrived at the gates of Canaan.
- Moses then gathered the people together and read the entire Law for the second time, hence the name of the Book of Deuteronomy (*deuteros* means 'second' and *nomos* means 'law'). This does not mean that it is another law; the law is the same. However, something was added for the generation that would enter the Promised Land. Chapters 28, 29, and 30 of Deuteronomy are important for understanding the history of Israel. Why was there so much persecution throughout history? Why were they outside their land for so long?

⇒ **Deuteronomy 28;** The law is given by God in the form of blessings and curses.

⇒ **Deuteronomy 28:1~14;** Blessings are conditional on obedience to the law.

⇒ **Deuteronomy 28:15~68;** Punishment and curses are the consequences for disobeying the law.

- God repeated the entire law to the people, adding the condition of obedience in order to receive blessings (**V. 1 and 2**). If they did not obey, they would be cursed (**V.15**).

⇒ **Deuteronomy 29;** God establishes the Palestinian Covenant with Israel.

➤ **V.1:** '*These are the words ...*', words that God spoke in chapter 28.

➤ '*Of the covenant ... in the land of Moab.*' This was a Covenant in Palestine. That is why it is called the Palestinian Covenant.

➤ '*Beyond the covenant... at Horeb.*' What was the covenant at Horeb? The Law and the commandments of Mount Sinai. In other words, in addition to that covenant, Moses came to the people at the gates of the Promised Land, ready to cross the Jordan River, and repeated the entire law. He said that they would receive blessings if they obeyed.

- Many people ask: '*Where is the God of Israel who allowed the Crusades, the Inquisition, Hitler, and other persecutions?*' The answer can be found in ⇒ **Deuteronomy 28**. In this chapter, God establishes a principle that applies to all His people: '*Obedience brings blessings, while disobedience brings curses and discipline.*'
- Blessings were promised in the Abrahamic Covenant, but the generation that was to receive them had to obey. To receive the blessings, the nation had to obey God's establishment.

⇒ **Deuteronomy 28:1~2;** '*If you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully... all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you.*' They were just blessings, but they had to listen, keep, and fulfill the Word of the Lord.

- If the nation did not obey, the new covenant stipulated curses.

⇒ **Deuteronomy 28:15;** '*But if you do not obey the voice of the Lord your God to observe carefully all His commandments and His statutes ... all these curses will come upon you and overtake you.*'

Coming up in ⇒ **Deuteronomy 28:64-68** is the following: '*the Lord will scatter you among all peoples, ... you shall be offered for sale to your enemies as male and female slaves, but no one will buy you.*' This happened in 70 A.D. when General Titus invaded Jerusalem and overthrew the city. There was a 'flood' of blood; everything was overthrown: the temple and the city. The people who survived were scattered among the other nations and did not return until 1948.

- Did it happen? Did God abandon Israel, or did Israel abandon God? It was all foretold in the Palestinian Covenant. In the book of Joshua, blessings occurred. In the book of Judges, we studied the curses for deviating from the Word, as well as the blessings that occurred when the people repented. In the time of David and Solomon, we saw how Israel prospered. When Solomon deviated, however, problems began to arise, culminating in the division of the kingdom.
- God could have scattered the people among the nations immediately after Israel's first deviation from the Palestinian covenant, but He didn't because of His mercy. Centuries passed before God raised up judges and prophets to say: 'Repent! *Beware of the Palestinian Covenant!*'
- After the kingdom was divided in 722 B.C., the ten northern tribes were taken captive to Syria due to their disobedience. They never officially returned to the Land of Israel as tribes, as part of the nation. The tribe of Judah remained in Jerusalem and watched what happened to the northern tribes. They could have redeemed themselves from their deviations, but they continued to worship idols and were also taken captive to Babylon. The people of Judah were held captive in Babylon for 70 years, after which they returned to Jerusalem because of God's mercy and His plan for the birth of the Messiah.

⇒ **Jeremiah 25:1~12;** prophecy of Judah's captivity.

⇒ **Daniel 9:1~19;** Daniel intercedes for the people with God.

- Then, a small group of Judahites returned to Israel, and Jerusalem, the Temple, and the walls were rebuilt. Why did all this happen to Israel? Because the people disobeyed the Palestinian Covenant.

⇒ **Deuteronomy 30:** God's grace and mercy through the New Covenant.

- God established the New Covenant after the Palestinian Covenant. He recorded instructions on how disobedient people could change their ways and receive blessings. It is His promise and commitment being fulfilled.

➤ **V.1~6**; '*When all these things come upon you...*' God did not determine it, but He knew it would happen. He instituted the signs, the blessing, and the curse. Then, He showed that Israel was going to fall under the curse because they were going to turn away from Him. Israel would be scattered among the nations. However, God ends by saying: '*If you repent, I will bring you back.*' In **V.4**, we read: '*Even if your banishment is to the ends of the earth*', I will go and get you. In **V.6**, God says, '*I will circumcise your heart, and I will be your God.*'

- God is disciplining Israel to restore it. Excluding Israel is not a vengeful punishment; it is a discipline to 'attract His people' to Himself. He has committed His Word to these people and cannot turn back.

⇒ **II Chronicles 7:14**; '*If My people ... will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face ... , I will forgive their sin and heal their land.*'

- Conversion to God is based on the same principle as in ⇒ **Deuteronomy 30:2**, which says, '*you return to the Lord your God.*'

⇒ **Isaiah 22:1~14**; Here, Israel did not apply the principles of ⇒ **Deuteronomy 30:2** and ⇒ **II Chronicles 7:14**. Instead of relying on God, Israel wanted to fight with their own strength. God invited them to '*weep and mourn*' and turn to the Lord (**V.22**).

⇒ **Hebrews 5:7**; We must follow Jesus' example and seek God with crying and tears, prayers, and supplications, that is, with all our heart.

- *To be humble!* Recognize that we are incapable of anything! Pray, depending on God. Walk in obedience and seek God! Turn from evil ways! Abandon disobedience! The principle of '*conversion to God*' can be summed up in one word: *repentance*. First, recognize that we are wrong, which is '*humiliation*', and then change course; basic rule: '*no one changes if they think they are right.*'

- Israel is on the path of disobedience and rebellion, but God will fulfill His promises literally ⇒ **Deuteronomy 30:1-6**. At the end of the Tribulation period, when the Antichrist attacks Israel from all sides, the nation will look to heaven, and God's grace will pour out on Israel in the form of a Spirit of supplication. '*For Israel, supplication means humiliation and repentance*'. Then, Jesus will return to deliver his people.

⇒ **Zechariah 12:1~14**; Jerusalem's repentance

⇒ **Revelation 1:7**; At Jesus' return, all the tribes of the earth (*here he is talking about Israel*) will mourn him.

- **'If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.'** In order for God to establish His kingdom and bestow the blessings promised to Israel upon Abraham, repentance is necessary, as it is part of the Palestinian Covenant.
- Before the birth of Jesus, God remained silent with Israel for 400 years, during which there were no prophets. Then, John the Baptist appeared, and God spoke to Israel again.

⇒ **Matthew 3:1~3**

 - **V.2:** 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!'
 - **V.3:** 'Prepare the way of the Lord. Make His paths straight.' Can anyone prepare the way for God? The preparation is for Israel. It is the preparation of the people to receive their Messiah and King of the kingdom. This preparation is **repentance**.
- As long as the nation of Israel does not recognize that it is on the wrong path and does not repent, it will never receive the promised kingdom. That's why John the Baptist came preaching repentance: the kingdom of God had come. He said, '*If you, Israel, do not repent, you will not see the King*,' and that's what happened.
- The preparation for receiving the Kingdom of God is repentance. When we accept Jesus as our Savior and Lord, we repent of our previous life. (*This is the preparation*.) Then, the kingdom of God is implanted in us, and we begin to see King Jesus. When Jesus began his ministry, he preached the same message:

⇒ **Matthew 4:17;** 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

Jesus said: '*Israel will change course, and then they will see their Messiah offering them the kingdom.*' However, that generation was unwilling and rejected the kingdom. (*Remember when the same thing happened at the gates of Canaan?*) Therefore, God postponed the conclusion of the program with Israel until after the formation of the Church. The generation of Israelites who will receive the kingdom will first repent and then look up to heaven and say, '*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!*' Jesus literally said this to Israel.

⇒ **Matthew 23:36~39**

- The Messiah had two tasks: to redeem and to reign. He had to redeem the nation from sin and establish the kingdom. Those who repented during John the Baptist's time were baptized in water as a sign of their repentance and readiness to receive the kingdom.
- Today, Israel as a nation is being disciplined. God is not dealing with Israel as a nation. He is not acting through Israel as His channel on earth, '*for which Israel was made*'. Israel is on the sidelines, while God forms the Church through individuals, including Israelites. When the Church leaves the earth at the rapture, Israel will be the channel through which God will finish His program with the nation. Then, Jesus will return with the Church to reign with Israel and fulfill the Abrahamic and Davidic Covenants.

⇒ **Ezekiel 37:21~28;** the kingdom for Israel.

- God is faithful to His Word. We must be prepared for the Rapture because it is a promise to the church. If God is faithful to Israel, then He will also fulfill His promise to the Church.

Hallelujah!