

The last time we were together we read this about the next king of Judah.

2 Chronicles 33:21-25 ²¹ Amon *was* twenty-two years old when he became king, and he reigned two years in Jerusalem. ²² He did evil in the sight of the LORD as Manasseh his father had done, and Amon sacrificed to all the carved images which his father Manasseh had made, and he served them. ²³ Moreover, he did not humble himself before the LORD as his father Manasseh had done, but Amon multiplied guilt. ²⁴ Finally his servants conspired against him and put him to death in his own house. ²⁵ But the people of the land killed all the conspirators against King Amon, and the people of the land made Josiah his son king in his place.

And so, Josiah becomes king in Judah. Josiah was very young.

2 Chronicles 34:1 ^{NAU} Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem.

As we pointed out last time if Josiah was only 8 and his father, Amon, died at age 24, then Amon was about 16 when his son Josiah was born.

Now, in today's world we might conclude that since Amon was only 8 and his father died at an early age that his father's influence on his life was minimal and therefore he would not repeat his father's sin. This only works in an environment where there is always a one to one correlation between your surroundings growing up and your behavior based on those surroundings.

This doesn't mean that those who influence you don't have an effect on your life. It only means that in God's economy He can take any person coming from any background and change that person's heart in such a way that he trusts and follows and loves the God who gives life eternal.

And so, whether it's a murderer and adulterer like David, who came from a godly family, or a Timothy who was reared by a godly mother, or a Rahab who came from a pagan upbringing, God is the One who is able to turn the heart toward Himself for His glory. He doesn't depend on one's upbringing when it comes to bringing them into the Kingdom of God.

Having said that we see that Josiah is not going to follow his father's heresy and faithlessness when it comes to Creator God.

2 Chronicles 34:1-3 ^{NAU} Josiah *was* eight years old when he became king, and he reigned thirty-one years in Jerusalem. ² He did right in the sight of the LORD, and walked in the ways of his father David and did not turn aside to the right or to the left. ³ For in the eighth year of his reign while he was still a youth, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the Asherim, the carved images and the molten images.

Now, there is an interesting thing regarding Josiah's father Amon.

According to verses 2 and 3, who is Josiah's father?

Why does the Holy Spirit have recorded that Josiah's father is David?

Often times the Scriptures are speaking in covenantal language, which is to say that one group of people belong to a particular person as designated by God.

For example, every Jew during the time of Christ was born of a particular mother and father, but when they wanted to identify themselves with the Covenant that God made with them who did they identify as their father?

Abraham. And so, what the Holy Spirit is doing here in our text is a couple of things. Notice that Josiah, who is a Jew, is not identified with Abraham as his father but as David. Why do you suppose this is done?

Remember what the book of Chronicles and Kings is all about. It's the historical account of the nation of Israel under the leadership of kings and judges.

Who was the first king of Israel who was identified with the promise to participate in the building of the temple of God?

It was David. He was not allowed to actually build the temple because of his sin with Bathsheba, but he was actually the one who drew up the plans for the temple to give to his son Solomon, who did build the temple.

And so, in a very real sense David is the king of promise. And in fact, he is the one identified as the patriarch of the Messiah.

^{NAU} **Matthew 1:1** The record of the genealogy of Jesus the Messiah, the son of David, the son of Abraham:

The Jews knew that it was the son of David whom they longed for who was going to be their deliverer.

Matthew 9:26-29 ²⁷ As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed Him, crying out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" ²⁸ When He entered the house, the blind men came up to Him, and Jesus said to them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They said to Him, "Yes, Lord." ²⁹ Then He touched their eyes, saying, "It shall be done to you according to your faith."

Matthew 12:21-23 ²² Then a demon-possessed man *who was* blind and mute was brought to Jesus, and He healed him, so that the mute man spoke and saw. ²³ All the crowds were amazed, and were saying, "This man cannot be the Son of David, can he?"

Where did the Jews get this idea that the son of David was to be their Messiah?

Psalms 89:3-7 ³ "I have made a covenant with My chosen; I have sworn to David My servant, ⁴ I will establish your seed forever And build up your throne to all generations." Selah. ⁵ The heavens will praise Your wonders, O LORD; Your faithfulness also in the assembly of the holy ones. ⁶ For who in the skies is comparable to the LORD? Who among the sons of the mighty is like the LORD, ⁷ A God greatly feared in the council of the holy ones, And awesome above all those who are around Him?

When God says that he will establish David's seed and throne forever what throne was David sitting on and what people was he ruling over at the time?

He was sitting on the throne in Israel in the city of David known as Jerusalem ruling over the Jews.

So, is God speaking about the physical nation of Israel with an earthly seed and an earthly king on its throne forever?

Absolutely not. Everything in Psalm 89 is in reference to an eternal kingdom with an eternal king and an eternal seed.

So, what king and kingdom and seed is Psalm 89 referring to?

The eternal kingdom with King Jesus ruling over an eternal seed known as His chosen people, His church made up of both Jew and

Gentile on an eternal earth that will accommodate the King of kings and Lord of lords, the new earth and the new heavens.

Unfortunately, the Jews of Jesus' day, though they understood that the son of David in the O.T. Scriptures was a reference to a king who would rule in Jerusalem on David's throne, they mistakenly thought it was an earthly seed with an earthly rule during their lifetime on a sin filled, cursed world.

But what are we told about this world as to our home?

But the Jews would continue to lay hold of many passages that they thought spoke of this present world.

^{NAU} **Psalm 132:11** The LORD has sworn to David A truth from which He will not turn back: "Of the fruit of your body I will set upon your throne.

Isaiah 9:6-7 ⁶ For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ There will be no end to the increase of *His* government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

Isaiah makes it clear that this kingdom spoken of is no ordinary kingdom with an ordinary king on an ordinary world. The king will certainly be born into this world of the seed of David.

But what distinguishes this king from other kings according to verse 6?

God Himself will be the king.

Where in this passage does it speak of the new earth upon which He will rule?

Verse 7... there will no end to the increase of His government or of peace on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore.

That's not a rule over a temporary kingdom, but an eternal kingdom on the new earth. But many of the Jews of the Messiah's day missed it because they didn't have eyes to see.

Josiah was a man that God chose to wake up the nation of Judah and make it clear that the eternal rule over His people starts with the truth of who God is and what God says in relationship to His eternal plan of calling a people to Himself.

In the first 18 years of Josiah's reign he tore down the high places dedicated to false gods, he tore down the altars and purged Judah from anything that was associated with pagan practices. And it must have been quite a lot of stuff to take 18 years to accomplish. But in the 18th year we see that he now turns his attention to the house of God.

2 Chronicles 34:8 ⁸ Now in the eighteenth year of his reign, when he had purged the land and the house, he sent Shaphan the son of Azaliah, and Maaseiah an official of the city, and Joah the son of Joahaz the recorder, to repair the house of the LORD his God.

During the course of repairing the house of God the workmen make a very special find.

2 Chronicles 34:14-19 ¹⁴ When they were bringing out the money which had been brought into the house of the LORD, Hilkiah the priest found the book of the law of the LORD *given* by Moses. ¹⁵ Hilkiah responded and said to Shaphan the scribe, "I have found the book of the law in the house of the LORD." And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan. ¹⁶ Then Shaphan brought the book to the king and reported further word to the king, saying, "Everything that was entrusted to your servants they are doing. ¹⁷ "They have also emptied out the money which was found in the house of the LORD, and have delivered it into the hands of the supervisors and the workmen." ¹⁸ Moreover, Shaphan the scribe told the king saying, "Hilkiah the priest gave me a book." And Shaphan read from it in the presence of the king. ¹⁹ When the king heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes.

Tucked way back somewhere in the house of the Lord what did the priest Hilkiah discover?

The priest found the book of the law of the LORD *given* by Moses. Now keep in mind that Josiah is reigning and the time frame is around 622 B.C. Moses was given the law from the Lord around 1448 B.C. A quick calculation shows that the law was given 826 years before this time of Josiah's reign.

Does anyone remember on what the law of the Lord was written?

Stone tablets. Of course the original stone tablets were destroyed shortly after they were inscribed by God when Moses came down from the mountain and smashed them at the foot of the mountain because of his outrage regarding the golden idols that had been made when he came down.

Shortly after that the Lord had Moses carve out 2 additional tablets and then the Lord personally wrote the commandments of the covenant on the tablets that Moses had made.

We know that those same tablets were brought into the house of the Lord that Solomon had constructed for the Lord. In fact, we are told that when Solomon had brought the Ark of the Covenant into the house of the Lord there were only two articles in it at that time.

1 Kings 8:8-9 ⁹ There was nothing in the ark except the two tablets of stone which Moses put there at Horeb, where the LORD made a covenant with the sons of Israel, when they came out of the land of Egypt.

The time in which the Ark of the Covenant was brought into the house of the Lord was around 960 B.C, and we know that Josiah discovered the book of the law around 622 B.C. making it about 338 years since Solomon brought the law into the temple.

But what is interesting in this discovery of Josiah is that the law of the Lord is not described as the tablets of the Lord but the book of the law. The word book in the Hebrew refers to a document or a scroll. It is very likely that these scrolls that were discovered were scrolls that were used to teach the people as the priests would take them are read from them in the presence of Israel.

It would be somewhat impractical to be taking the stone tablets out of the Ark of the Covenant every time they wanted to read the law. We do know that the Ark of the Covenant and the stone tablets still existed at this time because Josiah himself addresses this.

At the time in which Josiah had instructed the celebration of the Passover he makes mention of the Ark of the Covenant.

2 Chronicles 35:2-3 ³ He also said to the Levites who taught all Israel *and* who were holy to the LORD, "Put the holy ark in the house which Solomon the son of David king of Israel built; it will

be a burden on *your* shoulders no longer. Now serve the LORD your God and His people Israel.

But back to our text in which the discovery of the book of the law is made you'll notice a very interesting thing. And it has to do with the reading of the law and Josiah's reaction.

2 Chronicles 34:19 ¹⁹ When the king heard the words of the law, he tore his clothes.

Why do you suppose Josiah reacts this way?

He knew how Judah had left God in place of idols and false places of worship. He knew that simply because he had torn them down didn't mean that the hearts of the people of Judah didn't still long for those things.

But it's one thing to take a moral stand on such issues as you as a man order the people to abstain from such things. It's another thing when the God who established you as a people speaks Himself to such matters and you are confronted with His word.

And one of the commandments that would have possibly caused Josiah to tear his clothes is a command that no one can escape and if he is reading from the scrolls of the law he would have been reading from the account of Moses found in Exodus 20.

Exodus 20:1-7 ^{NAU} Then God spoke all these words, saying, ² "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ³ "You shall have no other gods before Me. ⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. ⁵ "You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me, ⁶ but showing lovingkindness to thousands, to those who love Me and keep My commandments. ⁷ "You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not leave him unpunished who takes His name in vain.

During Jeremiah's ministry, part of which took place during the reign of Josiah, some of these very same people in Judah who are participating in the reformation of the land of Judah under Josiah will find themselves a few years later being taken into captivity into Babylon.

And Jeremiah writes about the law and the covenant that God made with Israel and a future that they can look forward to as they will be returned to the land of promise.

Jeremiah 3:15-18 ¹⁵ "Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding. ¹⁶ "It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land," declares the LORD, "they will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss *it*, nor will it be made again. ¹⁷ "At that time they will call Jerusalem 'The Throne of the LORD,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart. ¹⁸ "In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers as an inheritance.

Part of this fulfillment is found in the decrees given by Cyrus king of Persia.

Ezra 1:1-2 ^{NAU} Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, in order to fulfill the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah, the LORD stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he sent a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and also *put it* in writing, saying: ² "Thus says Cyrus king of Persia, 'The LORD, the God of heaven, has given me all the kingdoms of the earth and He has appointed me to build Him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.

This house would be built and the people would return around the mid 400's B.C. But it wouldn't be long before Israel once again rebelled against the Lord and they would be invaded again and taken over by the Greeks and then by the Romans.

But what is interesting to note is that part of Jeremiah's prophecy is not addressing simply a return to Jerusalem and the land of promise under Cyrus but a return to the land of promise with certain promises made to them. Let's read it again.

Jeremiah 3:15-18 ¹⁵ "Then I will give you shepherds after My own heart, who will feed you on knowledge and understanding. ¹⁶ "It shall be in those days when you are multiplied and increased in the land," declares the LORD, "they will no longer say, 'The ark of the covenant of the LORD.' And it will not come to mind, nor will they remember it, nor will they miss *it*, nor will it be made again.

¹⁷ "At that time they will call Jerusalem 'The Throne of the LORD,' and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the LORD; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart. ¹⁸ "In those days the house of Judah will walk with the house of Israel, and they will come together from the land of the north to the land that I gave your fathers as an inheritance.

This did not happen to any extent under Cyrus' reign and his reestablishment of the temple. The return to the land lasted a couple of hundred years. That's a far cry from an everlasting throne with the son of David sitting on it forever.

The land that God gave to the fathers as an inheritance is the same land of promise that was first given to Abraham and we know what land he had in mind.

Hebrews 11:8-10 ⁸ By faith Abraham, when he was called, obeyed by going out to a place which he was to receive for an inheritance; and he went out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he lived as an alien in the land of promise, as in a foreign *land*, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, fellow heirs of the same promise; ¹⁰ for he was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God.

Israel was always a type of the chosen people of God and the Promised Land was always a type of the inheritance every believer in Christ receives by faith in the Messiah.

When the writer of Hebrews was making his case that no part of the Old covenant was any longer in effect as he wrote to both Jews and Greeks in the book of Hebrews he said this.

Hebrews 10:8-17 ⁸ After saying above, "SACRIFICES AND OFFERINGS AND WHOLE BURNT OFFERINGS AND *sacrifices* FOR SIN YOU HAVE NOT DESIRED, NOR HAVE YOU TAKEN PLEASURE *in them*" (which are offered according to the Law), ⁹ then He said, "BEHOLD, I HAVE COME TO DO YOUR WILL." He takes away the first in order to establish the second. ¹⁰ By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. ¹¹ Every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; ¹² but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, SAT DOWN AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD, ¹³ waiting from that time onward UNTIL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE A FOOTSTOOL FOR HIS FEET. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected for all time those

who are sanctified. ¹⁵ And the Holy Spirit also testifies to us; for after saying, ¹⁶ "THIS IS THE COVENANT THAT I WILL MAKE WITH THEM AFTER THOSE DAYS, SAYS THE LORD: I WILL PUT MY LAWS UPON THEIR HEART, AND ON THEIR MIND I WILL WRITE THEM," *He then says,* ¹⁷ "AND THEIR SINS AND THEIR LAWLESS DEEDS I WILL REMEMBER NO MORE."

In verse 16 we have the prophet Jeremiah recording these words and note to whom they are written.

^{NAU} **Jeremiah 31:33** "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

The Israel that Jeremiah addresses is the same Israel that the writer of Hebrews addresses and declares as the same people to whom Jeremiah was writing.

But they can only be addressed as the same people in so far as they embrace the same Messiah with the same faith of Abraham, be they either Jew or Gentile, thus designated as the Israel of God.

Galatians 6:14-18 ¹⁴ But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. ¹⁵ For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation. ¹⁶ And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy *be* upon them, and upon the Israel of God. ¹⁷ From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus. ¹⁸ The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

Paul acknowledges that physical circumcision did not make you a Jew and neither did your reliance upon being a physical descendant of Abraham make you an Israelite.

Romans 9:3-6 ³ For I could wish that I myself were accursed, *separated* from Christ for the sake of my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh, ⁴ who are Israelites, to whom belongs the adoption as sons, and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the *temple* service and the promises, ⁵ whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. ⁶ But *it is* not as though the

word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are *descended* from Israel;

What Paul is doing here is testifying that the promises made to Israel were not given in vain. In fact, he is saying that all of the promises made to Israel will be fulfilled because the word of God has not and will not fail as it relates to the promises to Israel. But then he goes on to describe what Israel is being addressed in the O.T. Scriptures.

Romans 9:5-8 ⁵ whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. ⁶ But *it is* not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are *descended* from Israel; ⁷ nor are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "THROUGH ISAAC YOUR DESCENDANTS WILL BE NAMED." ⁸ That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.

Romans 11:24-27 ²⁴ For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and were grafted contrary to nature into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are the natural *branches* be grafted into their own olive tree? ²⁵ For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery-- so that you will not be wise in your own estimation-- that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in; ²⁶ and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION, HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB." ²⁷ "THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM, WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS."

In verse 27 Paul is again quoting Jeremiah and he is addressing the house of Israel in that passage.

^{NAU} **Jeremiah 31:33** "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the LORD, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people."

Paul has just identified who these people are, who this house of Israel is. The same group whose hearts are written upon by God, no longer tablets of stone but tablets of the heart and they shall be His people, both Jew and Gentile. This was the mystery that Paul speaks of in Romans 11:25 and would expand upon when writing to the church in Ephesus.

Ephesians 3:1-12 ^{NAU} For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- ² if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; ³ that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. ⁴ By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; ⁶ *to be specific*, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, ⁷ of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. ⁸ To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; ¹⁰ so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places*. ¹¹ *This was* in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹² in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.