

The Journey
Series 03: Covenant
Week 28: Prophets Sent; Israel Ignores
We are indebted to [Ethnos360](#) for providing the basis of these lessons

Review (Where We Have Been)

Reflection Questions...

What was Israel's spiritual condition after Joshua died? (around 1400BC)

They turned away from God and began to worship idols.

Joshua 24:19 (NLT) Then Joshua warned the people, "You are not able to serve the Lord, for he is a holy and jealous God. He will not forgive your rebellion and your sins. **20** If you abandon the Lord and serve other gods, he will turn against you and destroy you, even though he has been so good to you." **21** But the people answered Joshua, "No, we will serve the Lord!"

How did God punish the Israelites for worshiping idols?

He allowed their enemies to conquer them.

What did God do when the Israelites repented and asked Him to rescue them?

He provided a judge to lead and deliver them from their enemies. (1376-1100BC)

What important promise did God make to David?

That one of his descendants would be the Deliverer

BIG Idea

God strives and desires to rescue man.

We've seen MANY examples of God extending opportunities for people to repent. God *patiently* and *consistently* warns us of the consequences of not believing Him.

He wants us to realize (before it's too late) that we need to listen to His warnings.

This lesson shows us what happens when Israel refuses God's attempts to rescue.

Information (What We Need to Know)

Let's establish this truth before we move forward...

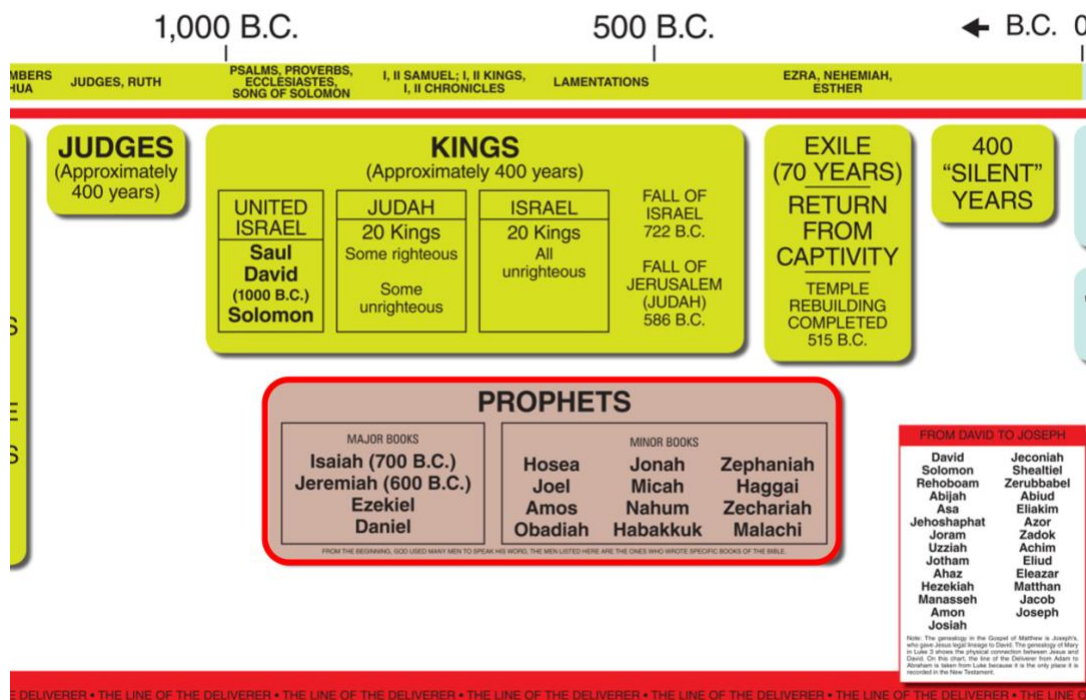
God wants to communicate with and have a relationship with mankind.

- He created and loves mankind
- He desires mankind to be rescued from judgment (and live with Him eternally)
- He wants mankind to know the truth about Himself

How has God communicated with mankind so far?

- God communicated directly with people (Adam in Eden, Cain, Israel)
- God communicated through messengers (Noah, Moses)
- God communicated through prophets (Isaiah/750BC – Malachi/430BC)

“The Prophetic books record God’s messages to the people of Israel and Judah. Speeches/sermons, visions, and life experiences of prophets were used. Some of the messages are of judgment/warning, while others focus on forgiveness and renewal. The prophets spoke from approximately 750-450 B.C in Israel’s history.”



Did Israel listen to the prophets? *Most of them did not.*

2 Chronicles 24:18 (ESV) ...they abandoned the house of the Lord, the God of their fathers, and served the Asherim and the idols. And wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this guilt of theirs. **19** Yet he sent prophets among them to bring them back to the Lord. These testified against them, but they would not pay attention.

...but many of the Israelites continued to *go through the motions*.

Isaiah 28:13 (NLT) And so the Lord says, “These people say they are mine. They honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me.”

“They prayed and followed other religious rituals. They didn’t believe in God or worship Him from the heart. Astoundingly, most of the priests and leaders of the Israelites were evil men who didn’t really believe God’s Word.” – Firm Foundations

What happened to Israel at the conclusion of the Old Testament?

- **They were overthrown by enemy nations - exile (722BC and 607BC)**

Both Israel and Judah gave into sin, and thus experienced the curses of disobeying the covenant God had made with them.

Deuteronomy 28:64 (NLT) For the Lord will scatter you among all the nations from one end of the earth to the other. There you will worship foreign gods that neither you nor your ancestors have known, gods made of wood and stone! **65** There among those nations you will find no peace or place to rest. And the Lord will cause your heart to tremble, your eyesight to fail, and your soul to despair. **66** Your life will constantly hang in the balance. You will live night and day in fear, unsure if you will survive.

- ✓ **Israel was exiled to Assyria in 722 BC [MAP]**

2 Kings 17:5 (NLT) Then the king of Assyria invaded the entire land, and for three years he besieged the city of Samaria. **6** Finally...Samaria fell, and the people of Israel were exiled to Assyria.... **7** This disaster came upon the people of Israel because they worshiped other gods. They sinned against the Lord their God, who had brought them safely out of Egypt and had rescued them from the power of Pharaoh, the king of Egypt. **8** They had followed the practices of the pagan nations the Lord had driven from the land ahead of them, as well as the practices the kings of Israel had introduced.

- ✓ **Judah was exiled to Babylon in 586 BC [MAP]**

2 Chronicles 36:17 (NLT) So the Lord brought the king of Babylon against them. The Babylonians killed Judah's young men, even chasing after them into the Temple. They had no pity on the people, killing both young men and young women, the old and the infirm.

- **Israel returned to their land (537BC) and the temple is rebuilt (515BC)**

Ezra 1:5 (NLT) Then God stirred the hearts of the priests and Levites and the leaders of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to go to Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple of the Lord.

- **God did not speak for 400 years (430-30BC)**

“This is the time between the Old Testament and New Testament, during which God did not speak. It began with the warning that closed the Old Testament in Malachi 4:5-6: ‘Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. He will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.’ The 400 years ended with the coming of John the Baptist, the Messiah’s forerunner.” – Got Questions

- Although Israel had returned to their land, they were conquered by other nations
 - ✓ The Greeks conquered Israel [MAP]

“Greece flourished around 400 BC, and Israel came under the rule of Alexander the Great about 330 BC. During this time, Greek became a second language of many Jews.” – Firm Foundations
 - ✓ Israel came under Roman rule in 63BC [MAP]

“The Romans worshiped many false gods, and they also worshiped Caesar. They permitted the Jews to continue worshiping the Lord.” – Firm Foundations

Application (What We Need to Do)

What was Jewish worship like under Roman Rule?

- The Jews built synagogues in almost every city/town

“Each Sabbath, religious leaders read/taught God’s Law and the writings of the prophets. However, the rabbis’ explanations were often incorrect because they interpreted things in light of Jewish traditions rather than in the context of the rest of the Scriptures.” – Firm Foundations
- Only some Jews continued their belief in the One, True God

“They offered sacrifices in the Temple (as their ancestors) and went to hear the teaching of the Law in the synagogues, but most Jews weren’t sincere.” - FF
- There was a remnant of those who continued to believe in God’s promises

“Thousands of years had passed since God had first promised to send the Deliverer, but these believing Jews knew that He would come at the exact time God had planned.” – Firm Foundations

Where are we at on the promises God made to Abraham?

Nation – Israel was a nation; **Land** – although in, out, and back in...they had land. Now we are just awaiting the **Deliverer**.

