

Notes: February 29, 2020

Start: 10 AM

Order of service:

1. Meet and Greet
2. Introduction (if new people)
3. Ma Tovv
4. Open in Prayer for service
5. Liturgy – Sh'ma +
6. Announcements
7. Jeri - Drash
8. Praise and Worship Songs
9. Message
10. Aaronic Blessing
11. Kiddush
12. Oneg

Children's Blessing:

Transliteration: Ye'simcha Elohim ke-Ephraim ve hee-Menashe

English: May God make you like Ephraim and Menashe

Transliteration: Ye'simech Elohim ke-Sarah, Rivka, Rachel ve-Leah.

English: May God make you like Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel and Leah.

Introduction: Where There is a Mission, There Is A Message – The Message of the Prophets Part 5 (The Covenants)

I have been talking much about the New Covenant over the last few weeks. It is the message of Messiah. It is the Kingdom. This message came from the Prophets in that the nation of Israel was responsible for representing the principles of Adonai's Kingdom. Namely,

To be His People.

And

To follow His ways, having no other god.

Unfortunately, the nation did not live up to the standards by which were presented. Sha'ul, conveys the following to a primarily gentile Roman audience...

Rom 3:21 But now, quite apart from Torah, God's way of making people righteous in his sight has been made clear — although the Torah and the Prophets give their witness to it as well —

What Sha'ul is about to say here, is upheld by Torah and the Prophets. This is what you have been hearing for the last few weeks and will be no different this morning.

Rom 3:22 and it is a righteousness that comes from God, through the faithfulness of Yeshua the Messiah, to all who continue trusting. For it makes no difference whether one is a Jew or a Gentile,

Rom 3:23 since all have sinned and come short of earning God's praise.

The nation most certainly fell short of earning the praises of Adonai. Yet, this didn't mean He was done with them.

Quite the contrary. He would not cast them aside because He had given His Word, first to the Patriarchs, then to the people. As much angst as they had caused Adonai, His love for His people is far reaching. We read of Adonai's promise to establish a New Covenant with His people in Yiremehu, Jeremiah 31...

Jer 31:31 (31:30) "Here, the days are coming," says Adonai, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Isra'el and with the house of Y'hudah.

Jer 31:32 (31:31) It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers on the day I took them by their hand and brought them out of the land of Egypt; because they, for their part, violated my covenant, even though I, for my part, was a husband to them," says Adonai.

Jer 31:33 (31:32) "For this is the covenant I will make with the house of Isra'el after those days," says Adonai: "I will put my Torah within them and write it on their hearts; I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Jer 31:34 (31:33) No longer will any of them teach his fellow community member or his brother, 'Know Adonai'; for all will know me, from the least of them to the greatest; because I will forgive their wickednesses and remember their sins no more."

Yet, this is not the only place where the promise of a New Covenant is found, I will build on these verses over the next couple of weeks, ultimately providing you with confirmation of this promise as being a message from the Prophets. A message that Sha'ul and others have conveyed to the nation of Israel, ultimately going forth to the nations, the Goyim.

Today we are going to look at the promises made through the Prophet Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) and specifically chapter 36.

What Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) is about to convey is two distinct promises. One is to the people and incorporates the promises of Jeremiah. Yet the first part is rather interesting in that it is spoken to the land.

Eze 36:1 "Now you, human being, prophesy to the mountains of Isra'el. Say: 'Mountains of Isra'el, hear the message from Adonai.

There is an intimate relationship between Adonai, Israel and the land. You will see this dynamic revealed through this prophecy.

Eze 36:2 Adonai Elohim says: "The enemy is boasting over you, 'Ha! Even the ancient high places are ours now!' " "

The nations are boasting about their control over the land and that they have brought their high places to the land that Israel once possessed.

Eze 36:3 Therefore prophesy, and say that Adonai Elohim says, 'Because they desolated you and swallowed you up from every side, so that the other nations could take possession of you; and now people are gossiping about you and slandering you;

Eze 36:4 therefore, mountains of Isra'el, hear the message of Adonai Elohim — this is what Adonai Elohim says to the mountains and hills, the streams and valleys, the desolate wastes and the abandoned cities, now preyed on and derided by the other surrounding nations —

Eze 36:5 therefore this is what Adonai Elohim says: "In the heat of my jealousy I speak against the other nations and all of Edom, since, rejoicing with all their heart, they have arrogated my land to themselves as a possession and, with utter contempt, seized it as prey." "

Eze 36:6 "Therefore prophesy concerning the land of Isra'el, and say to the mountains, the hills, the streams and the valleys that Adonai Elohim says this: 'I speak in my jealousy and fury, because you have endured being shamed by the nations.

Eze 36:7 Therefore thus says Adonai Elohim: "I have raised my hand and sworn that the nations surrounding you will bear their shame.

What did Adonai do here by raising His hand to the land...He took an oath unto Himself. In other words, He has given His Word as an oath, just as we have seen Him do previously.

Exo 32:13 Remember Avraham, Yitz'chak and Isra'el, your servants, to whom you swore by your very self. You promised them, 'I will make your descendants as many as the stars in the sky; and I will give all this land I have spoken about to your descendants; and they will possess it forever.' "

So, Adonai is making a vow to the land and it will involve the people of Israel...

Eze 36:8 But you, mountains of Isra'el, you will sprout your branches and bear your fruit for my people Isra'el, who will soon return.

Eze 36:9 I am here for you, and I will turn toward you; then you will be tilled and sown;

Eze 36:10 and I will multiply your population, all the house of Isra'el, all of it. The cities will be inhabited and the ruins rebuilt.

Eze 36:11 I will multiply both the human and animal populations, they will increase and be productive; and I will cause you to be inhabited as you were before — indeed, I will do you more good than before; and you will know that I am Adonai.

Eze 36:12 I will cause people to walk on you, my people Isra'el; they will possess you, and you will be their inheritance; never again will you make them childless."

Eze 36:13 Adonai Elohim says, "Because they say to you, 'Land, you devour people and make your nations childless,'

Eze 36:14 therefore you will no longer devour people, and you will not make your nations childless any more," says Adonai Elohim.

Eze 36:15 "I will not permit the nations to shame you, or the peoples to reproach you any longer; and you will no more cause your nations to stumble," says Adonai Elohim.' "

Yechezk'el has one of the most unusual ministries of any prophet as he prophesies through the darkest days in the history of his people. While the exiles hope for immediate relief from judgment, Yechezk'el has the thankless task of speaking an opposing word. Like Yirmeyahu (Jeremiah), Yechezk'el preaches God's judgment on Y'hudah, but also the hope of restoration.

One must ask if this prophecy has already occurred?

Remember Adonai's promise to the land...

Eze 36:15 "I will not permit the nations to shame you, or the peoples to reproach you any longer; and you will no more cause your nations to stumble," says Adonai Elohim.' "

One might ask when do we see this promise coming to fruition. Some might say it was after the exile to Bavel and the subsequent return 70 years later. Yet, was the nation every truly in control of the land. After Bavel, you have occupation by the Greeks followed by the Romans for which would expel the people. There is more to the time of the Roman expulsion that I don't have time to get into, but needless to say it may have been at the hands of Rome but it was permitted by Adonai.

Yet, for nearly 2000 years, the nations would possess, or should I say try to possess the land. Yet, remember what Adonai said about the land and how it will prosper. It will prosper through the Jewish people residing in the land.

The land without the people would be desolate, hard to tame, hard to bring the land to produce. Yet with the people Adonai would cause the land to flourish.

One might say, the land needs Adonai's people. The land needs the people of Israel to inhabit it in order for it to flourish.

So, now, what about the people? Adonai has now made a promise, sworn an oath to Himself regarding the land...now what about the people? This is the second part of Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) 36

Eze 36:16 The word of Adonai came to me:

Eze 36:17 "Human being, when the house of Isra'el lived in their own land, they defiled it by their manner of life and their actions; their way before me was like the uncleanness of niddah.

Adonai is planning to reverse the outcome of the curses and in essence the unholy condition of the people who were defiled and unclean. The word niddah (as the uncleanness of a removed woman (KJV)) likens Isra'el to a woman during the period of her separation, whose husband looks forward to when she will be clean and who longs to return to her. This is the state of Israel and Adonai reveals His promise through Yechezk'el (Ezekiel)

Eze 36:18 Therefore I poured out my fury on them, because of the blood they had shed in the land and because they defiled it with their idols.

Notice the connection back to the land and the impact of the nation's transgression. It wasn't just against Adonai, yet that alone would have been sufficient, but it was also the impact endured by the land. A gift, a promise of the Covenant was so disregarded that it not only impacted the land, but the one who gave it.

Eze 36:19 I scattered them among the nations and dispersed them throughout the countries; I judged them in keeping with their manner of life and actions.

Again, Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) is in the midst of this as he is writing the Words of Adonai to a people being judged for their transgressions.

Eze 36:20 When they came to the nations they were going to, they profaned my holy name; so that people said of them, 'These are Adonai's people, who have been exiled from his land.'

The mere actions of the people profaned the name of Adonai, in a type of mocking way.

Eze 36:21 But I am concerned about my holy name, which the house of Isra'el is profaning among the nations where they have gone.

One might think that Adonai would just take the hit, write them off and move forward. Not so...

Eze 36:22 "Therefore tell the house of Isra'el that Adonai Elohim says this: 'I am not going to do this for your sake, house of Isra'el, but for the sake of my holy name, which you have been profaning among the nations where you went.

Eze 36:23 I will set apart my great name to be regarded as holy, since it has been profaned in the nations — you profaned it among them. The nations will know that I am Adonai,' says Adonai Elohim, 'when, before their eyes, I am set apart through you to be regarded as holy.

What He is about to do, will cause the nations to proclaim His holiness. Throughout the centuries, recorded through Scripture, goyim, nations have come to recognise Adonai. From the Midyan priest and Moshe's father in law Yitro, to the city of Nineveh. Now, Adonai is getting ready to do something even greater.

Eze 36:24 For I will take you from among the nations, gather you from all the countries, and return you to your own soil.

This would be the first step. Exactly what I had conveyed last Shabbat when we looked at D'varim

(Deuteronomy) 30:5

Deu 30:5 Adonai your God will bring you back into the land your ancestors possessed, and you will possess it; he will make you prosper there, and you will become even more numerous than your ancestors.

So, if the first part is to bring them into the land does the second part of D'varim (Deuteronomy) 30 align with the second part of Yechezk'el (Ezekiel)?

Deu 30:6 Then Adonai your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your children, so that you will love Adonai your God with all your heart and all your being, and thus you will live.

Notice what Adonai will do for His Holy Name...

Eze 36:25 Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your uncleanness and from all your idols.

Eze 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit inside you; I will take the stony heart out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Eze 36:27 I will put my Spirit inside you and cause you to live by my laws, respect my rulings and obey them.

Eze 36:28 You will live in the land I gave to your ancestors. You will be my people, and I will be your God.

Eze 36:29 I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will summon the grain and increase it, and not send famine against you.

Eze 36:30 I will multiply the yield of fruit from the trees and increase production in the fields, so that you never again suffer the reproach of famine among the nations.

What did you notice?

Every action after Adonai brings Israel back into the land begins with "I will"

Eze 36:31 Then you will remember your evil ways and your actions that were not good; as you look at yourselves, you will loathe yourselves for your guilt and disgusting practices.

What will we, the people do when the nation is brought back into the land...we will remember our transgressions.

Eze 36:32 Understand,' says Adonai Elohim, 'that I am not doing this for your sake. Instead, be ashamed and dismayed for your ways, house of Isra'el.'

Eze 36:33 "Adonai Elohim says, 'When the day comes for me to cleanse you from all your guilt, I will cause the cities to be inhabited and the ruins to be rebuilt.

The challenge we have as being created in the confines of time, think in the manner of time. Yet, Adonai, existing outside of time, is not bound by the limits of time. So, as He was speaking through the Prophet, Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) was He even speaking to the generation for which he was writing to? In hindsight we see the foundation of the New Covenant here and that it wasn't until Yeshua established it through His death during Passover that it, the New Covenant became authoritative.

Eze 36:34 The land that was desolate will be tilled, whereas formerly it lay desolate for all passing by to see.

Eze 36:35 Then they will say, "The land that used to be desolate has become like Gan-`Eden, and the cities formerly ruined, abandoned and wasted have been fortified and are inhabited!"

Eze 36:36 Then the nations around you that remain will know that I, Adonai, have rebuilt the ruins and replanted what was abandoned. I, Adonai, have spoken; and I will do it.'

Eze 36:37 "Adonai Elohim says, 'In addition, I will let the house of Isra'el pray to me to do this for them: to

increase their numbers like sheep —

Eze 36:38 like flocks of sheep for sacrifices, like the flocks of sheep in Yerushalayim at its designated times, in this degree will the ruined cities be filled with flocks of people. Then they will know that I am Adonai.' "

Considering Adonai has made a promise that He would increase the number of the people and has made a promise to the land that He would increase the number of people to reside in the land, what do you believe will happen. They did not flourish under the oppression of Greece or Rome, yet the very reestablishment of the Nation acts as a gauge for monitoring the promises of Adonai.

Let's go back to verse 27 for a minute...

Eze 36:27 I will put my Spirit inside you and cause you to live by my laws, respect my rulings and obey them.

We actually have a record of this occurring.

Act 2:1 The festival of Shavu`ot arrived, and the believers all gathered together in one place.

Act 2:2 Suddenly there came a sound from the sky like the roar of a violent wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Act 2:3 Then they saw what looked like tongues of fire, which separated and came to rest on each one of them.

Act 2:4 They were all filled with the Ruach HaKodesh and began to talk in different languages, as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

And yet it would only be some 40 years later that the Jewish people would be once again removed from the land, this time by the hands of Rome. So, one might call this a partial fulfillment of the promise.

This is but one step, albeit, an extremely important step in Adonai's plan for restoring His people.

He will increase their number. Today there are more Jewish people residing in the land than ever before. This number continues to rise.

The State of Israel has a population of approximately 9,138,400 inhabitants as of December 2019. Some 74.24% are Jews of all backgrounds (about 6,697,000 individuals) . Considering just 10 years ago in 2010, Jewish people residing in the land was approximately 5,800,000. That is a 15% increase in 10 years.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Israel

At its peak, during the time of Solomon and prior to the divided Kingdom, Israel's peak population was approximately 5,000,000

This should be obvious to anyone, yet the nation of Israel, even by some believers is not considered to be a move of Adonai, (a sign) in that they have not become the righteous nation Adonai promised them to be. However, many do not pay attention to the order by which Adonai functions. In both Deuteronomy 30 and Yechezk'el (Ezekiel) 36 Adonai would bring them into the land first and then begin to work on their hearts.

There is an intimate connection between the land and the people that does not exist anywhere else. Today we see more people in the land and the land flourishing like it has never before.

Isa 35:1 The desert and the dry land will be glad; the `Aravah will rejoice and blossom like the lily.

Isa 35:2 It will burst into flower, will rejoice with joy and singing, will be given the glory of the L'vanon, the splendor of Karmel and the Sharon. They will see the glory of Adonai, the splendor of our God.

Isa 35:3 Strengthen your drooping arms, and steady your tottering knees.

Isa 35:4 Say to the fainthearted, "Be strong and unafraid! Here is your God; he will come with vengeance; with God's retribution he will come and save you."

Isa 35:5 Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped;

Isa 35:6 then the lame man will leap like a deer, and the mute person's tongue will sing. For in the desert, springs will burst forth, streams of water in the `Aravah;

Isa 35:7 the sandy mirage will become a pool, the thirsty ground springs of water. The haunts where jackals lie down will become a marsh filled with reeds and papyrus.

Isa 35:8 A highway will be there, a way, called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not pass over it, but it will be for those whom he guides — fools will not stray along it.

It is through this blooming desert we will witness the return of Messiah when Adonai removes ungodliness from Ya'akov and the people proclaim...

Baruch ha ba B'shem Adonai.

Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord.

There is still more from the Prophets to share regarding the New Covenant, but next week we will pause for Purim.