

The First Messianic Prophecy

Introduction

Messianic Prophecy is prophecy about the coming of the Messiah (Anointed One). The very first instance in the Old Testament occurs in Genesis chapter 3. They occur in many other locations as we shall see as we continue to study. These prophecies constituted the record by which the Jews came to expect the arrival of Messiah, an expectation that reached a climax just before the birth of Christ.

The sentence for sin Genesis 3:14-24

1. Punishment of the Serpent 14-15

The serpent is the first to be condemned, and the condemnation pronounced is direct and without mercy. He would be cursed above all other creatures, even the lowliest of creatures. There is some disagreement about the expressions 'eat dust' and 'crawl on your belly'... you can read the various opinions elsewhere; here is my take on it:

To 'eat dust' in the ancient Hebrew is an idiom (sorry for the grammar bit here but it's necessary). The idiom means to be reduced to the most despicable level, utterly beneath contempt. (cf. Mic. 7:17; Isa. 65:25) Consider the plight of the great Lucifer, the most beautiful and powerful of the angelic beings of Heaven who thought he would be like the Most High being reduced to utter garbage before all of Creation! A fitting punishment, indeed! Following his period of debasement, the serpent will be crushed by the woman's offspring.

2. Punishment of the Woman 16

For the woman, the consequences of sin are threefold:

- a) She would experience great physical pain from childbirth. She who sought delight and joy from sin would receive pain and difficulty instead.
- b) She would desire her husband. Eve had acted independently of Adam and had enticed him into sin, and now she would desire he who could cause her great pain (through childbirth).
- c) She would be subjugated to her husband. She who had acted to control him through temptation would be the one controlled. Let's face it; women have suffered much through the ages because of sin.

3. Punishment of the Man 17-19

Man's punishment would also be severe. He had succumbed to temptation, he had followed his delight, and the result would be toil, sweat and difficulty. The earth over which he had been given dominion would revolt against him, as he had revolted against God. Food would be difficult to obtain. Edible plants would be overcome by inedible, and man would have to toil every day of his life. In due course, the earth would reclaim his body, for it would return to the dust from whence it had come. Finally, he was driven out of the Garden, and he could never return.

The Hope that Remained 15; 20-21

In the midst of the gloom, hope remained for the ultimate outcome. The first Messianic prophecy in the Bible is found in v. 15.

- a) God gave the woman enmity for the serpent. She would never again be the pushover she had been in the Garden. Satan would have a fight on his hands!
- b) The battle would continue through the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman. As time went on, Satan would never be able to dominate all of humanity, for there would be those who were righteous in God's sight. Those would continue to resist the Devil.
- c) This battle would come to a climax when a particular representative of the seed of the woman would battle Satan. Satan would strike at His heel, but that heel would ultimately crush Satan once and for all. This representative of course would be Messiah: Jesus.

d) In v. 20 Adam demonstrates repentance when he renamed his wife Eve: 'one who gives life'. This demonstrated his faith in the promise of God for the continuance of mankind. God, in turn, accepts this act of repentance by clothing them in skins, requiring the shedding of blood. Now, we have the first Covenant: the Adamic Covenant.

Abraham

For the Jew, history began with Abraham, and the covenant that God made with him. (Gen, 15, 17) This is because it established the "seed" or descendants of Abraham as God's people. From this "seed" came Israel, God's Nation, and out from Israel came the Messiah, Jesus. Jesus, by His work on the cross, and the establishment of a New Covenant changed the nature of things from the physical to the spiritual, thus all peoples who are in Christ are "Abraham's seed". (Gal. 3:29 context: Gal. 3:26-4:7).

Revelation 12

Chapter 12 opens with a scene in which we have three characters; a woman, a child and a dragon. The woman represents the people of God, both Old and New Testament. (Is. 50:1; 54:1; Hos. 2:1; Eph. 5:32) The child is nothing less than the Christ; the seed of woman (Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4) The dragon of course is Satan (Rev. 20:2) The crowned heads represent his world dominion (Eph. 2:2; 6:12).

The dragon takes up his place in front of the woman when she is ready to deliver the child so as to devour it at once. A male child is born, he is to rule all nations. Before he can be devoured, he is snatched up to Heaven... to the throne of God to rule. The dragon, very angry makes war on Heaven and is cast out and down to the earth, where he makes war against the woman (church). The woman is protected by God, while she is in a dangerous position in the midst of spiritual battle, she is not destroyed, and the chapter closes with a very angry dragon at the seashore, ready to continue the fight. No doubt, recalling the story of Jesus contained in the Gospels, and along with the story of the church in the book of Acts, you can easily see how this is playing out.

Conclusion

Back in the Garden, God Himself foretold of the seed of the woman, later the seed of Abraham that would ultimately crush the head of the serpent (Satan). Revelation 12 provides us with a Heavenly view of this struggle in which the woman (Israel) gives birth to the Messiah, and the dragon's reaction: war. War fought against God, war against the people of God, and ultimately in Revelation 14 the destruction of the dragon (Satan) and all of his followers and allies. Remember that the Genesis 3 pronouncement of God occurred at the time of mankind entering into rebellion against God, and the son was the one who brought the end to rebellion and victory over the one who caused the rebellion.

A Serpent is Lifted Up

Numbers 21:4-9

In this section, the Israelites are going the long way around Edom, which they will not cross because the Edomites, who are the descendants of Esau, are hostile to them. (You may recall this discussion from our study of the Olivet Discourse.) This is a very harsh desert region that even now, is inhabited by several varieties of venomous snakes. As they people mover through the region, they began to gripe and complain about the conditions; they spoke harshly against both Moses ('type' of Christ) and God Himself. God, hearing their mutinous talk, sent them a plague of snakes that left many with very painful and often fatal wounds. (vv. 4-6)

Before long, the people began to repent of their *rebellion* and sought out intercession from Moses, who prayed to God for deliverance. God gave Moses an odd instruction: make an image of a snake, attach it to a pole and hold it up for people to see. If they looked upon the image, they would be saved from their bites and the venom of the snakes. Notice that God did not simply remove the snakes or make the people immune to their bites. (vv. 7-9)

John 3:11-18

Here, Jesus is speaking to Nicodemus, shortly after He has told Nicodemus that he must be born again to enter the kingdom of Heaven. (vv. 1-10) Of course, Nicodemus is having a hard time following Jesus' meaning, so Jesus is trying to explain the matter further in 11-18. Jesus points out that He knows what He is talking about, because He is speaking of things He has seen (v. 11). The Gospel, from that day to this, is spread by the testimony of believers, from Jesus' own testimony to that of the Apostles, later recorded in Scripture, and also that of believers today: you can either believe it or not. Then, Jesus says that if Nicodemus cannot understand earthly things, how can he understand Heavenly ones? Up to this point, Jesus was speaking of redemption, which occurs here on earth, not in Heaven. No one, He says, has ever gone into Heaven. Note that under the covenants with both Abraham and Moses, there is no promise of either Heaven or eternal life for anybody. The only one who had ever seen Heaven was Jesus Himself, who *came from Heaven*. (vv. 12-13)

It is at this point in His conversation that Jesus recounts the events of Numbers 21 with regard to the snake that was lifted up. He tells Nicodemus that as the people were cured of the snake venom when they looked upon the snake, so also will they be "cured" when they look in faith at Jesus Himself, when He is lifted up. In fact, He used the words "must be lifted up" in verse 14; there is simply no other way to restore the relationship between Man and God then Jesus going to the cross. When the snake was lifted up, the onlooker was cured of the venom, but God did not remove the snakes. When Jesus was lifted up, and people look to Him on the cross in faith, God takes away the more serious venom of rebellion, but He has left the cause of it in our world; interesting! Finally, Jesus tells Nicodemus that those who believe in Him will receive "eternal life". (vv. 14-15) This is the first time Jesus used the term "eternal life" and it is the very first time it is promised in either the Old or New Testament, chronologically speaking.

From there, Jesus builds upon His theme of His dieing to give those who believe in Him eternal life. In these very familiar verses, He ties together the concept of rebirth with His death on the cross.

The Shoot from the Stump of Jesse

Isaiah 11:1-16

Chapter 11 is the beginning of the concluding portion of the first section within the Book of Isaiah which runs from chapter one through chapter twelve. Here, the prophet takes a victorious view of better days ahead to top off a section that is primarily discussing Judah's sin and its devastating consequences. Here, the messianic figure found in chapter 9 is revealed more clearly as the key to the future, culminating with a hymn of praise found in chapter 12.

Isaiah used the image of a stump in chapter 10 in referring to what would become of the Assyrians (10:33-34) and again in chapter 6 in reference to Judah itself (6:13). The idea is that Judah and the House of David had become so utterly corrupt as to require tearing down (as you might chop down a sick tree) but that out of the stump would grow a shoot that will ultimately bear great fruit. In mentioning Jesse, rather than David, it could be that Isaiah intends to minimize David's Dynasty because of the corrupt state it had fallen into. (Remember that Jesse is David's father)

vv. 1-5: In this opening section, we see that there is coming a day when there will be a new ruler for God's people, one that comes from the ruins (stump) of the old Davidic line of kings. This ruler will be noteworthy for several reasons. First, the Spirit of the Lord will be upon him, and he will have power and abilities lacking in current kings of that period. He will possess attributes that kings over Judah had not held for a very long time, such as wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and he will delight in the fear of the Lord. He will rule with justice, righteousness and he will even give fairness and justice for the needy; all of these attributes being in stark contrast with the status quo of that time. In short, this coming king would be nothing that the people have ever known.

vv. 6-9: There are several contrasts between predator and prey here with the statement that they will lie down together in peace. Recall that in the times of Eden, there were no carnivores (Gen. 1:29-30) and how this changed when sin entered the world. What is being depicted here is not a literal return to Eden, but rather the removal of the curse of sin. Notice also that Isaiah uses the image of an infant and a small child; pictures of innocence not being harmed by sin's curse. God's holy mountain is a reference to God's dwelling place, and in that dwelling place, nothing will either harm or destroy those innocents. Paul tells us in Romans 1:18-32 that the root of man's fallen position is the suppression of the obvious knowledge of God, and in this image the knowledge of God covers the world. In 1 Cor. 15:24-25, Paul refers to the church age as a time when Christ reigns over His kingdom until all of the remaining curse of sin is removed.

vv. 10-16: The final part of this chapter we see the result of the triumph of the Messiah as He rallies not only the remnant of Israel, but the nations of the Gentiles to His cause. Clearly, this is an indication that both Jew and Gentile will respond to His message of salvation (rest, i.e. peace) by the removal of sin through the atonement of the blood of Christ, which enables Man and God to once again live in fellowship. Verses 15-16 help us to see that this passage is not to be taken literally, as they are Apocalyptic, but rather that all barriers will be taken down. Both remnants of Judah and Ephraim (Israel) will come together from the nations to which they have scattered (13-14) to join in the new kingdom of the Messiah. This is a victorious picture of the redeemed in Christ living within His kingdom, the church now, and with Him in Heaven ultimately.

Romans 15:7-13

This is a section that shows that the unification of Jew and Gentile is clearly and unmistakably the work of the Christ. In bringing these two groups together in the Body of Christ (Kingdom) Jesus has done something that would have been considered so improbable that it can only be the work of God. To make matters more interesting, Paul cites Isaiah 11 in this section as being fulfilled in this unity within His Body.

vv. 7-11: Paul admonishes the two groups to accept one another as Christ has accepted them, in other words Jews and Gentiles should accept one another as Jesus has accepted each group; a group of sinners. In doing this, Jesus who became a servant to the Jews, has kept His promise to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God (by joining in relationship with God, rather than to continue in rebellion against Him). Paul then goes on to cite several Old Testament passages that confirm this

statement. (Rom. 15:9 cf. 2 Sam. 22:50; Ps. 18:49; Rom. 15:10 cf. Deut. 32:43; Rom. 15:11 cf. Ps. 117:1;) Note that these quoted verses are spoken of as *present reality*.

v. 12: In this verse, Paul quotes Isaiah 11:10 from the Septuagint, which is an ancient translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek as was his custom. Again, this verse is quoted within the context of vv. 7-9 as *present reality*. I point this out because from time to time people assume that the prophecy of Isaiah 11 must refer to some future date, since lions and lambs don't usually hang out together these days. However it is vital to understand that prophecy is generally understood as not being literal in fulfillment. In this case, the predators and their prey referred to by Isaiah are about as likely to live in peace as Jews and Gentiles... and Jews and Gentiles are a whole lot more important! For God to accomplish unity in the Body of Christ between Jew and Gentile is every bit as miraculous and theologically speaking much more significant than peace in the animal kingdom.

v. 13: Here, Paul winds up with a prayer for joy and peace amongst God's people who trust Him, that they may be filled with hope. Considering what we have just seen in these two passages, I would say that if we cannot find hope and trust in God here, then we are woefully weak in understanding. Unity on this earth, in this life between these two devoted and committed enemies of the ancient world may not seem like such a big deal to us... but that is only because of the magnitude of the miracle that God has performed through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

The Crucifixion

Psalm 22

This is an amazing Psalm, one of agony, desperation... and victory. It is entirely fulfilled in the crucifixion of Jesus, and it contains details of what the crucified person endures before they die, that are amazing. These details are amazing even if the Psalmist had known about crucifixion when he wrote this. When you consider the fact that the Psalm was written about 700 before crucifixion was even invented, the details are not only amazing; they are prophetic.

Prophecies and fulfillments:

Prophecies in Psalm 22

- v. 1: My God, my God...
- vv. 6-8: insults hurled at Jesus
- v. 16: surrounded by dogs
- v. 18: they cast lots for his clothing

Fulfillments in the Gospels

- Mt. 27:46; Mk. 15:34
- Mt. 27:39-44; Mk. 15:29; Lk. 23:35-39
- Mt. 27:39-44; Mk. 15:29; Lk. 23:35-39
- Mt. 27:35; Mk. 15:24; Lk. 23:34; Jn. 19:23-24

Crucifixion details:

- v. 14: 'poured out like water'
'bones out of joint'
'heart turned to wax... melted away within me' *very elevated heartbeat, respiration and blood pressure*
- v. 15 'strength dried up... tongue sticks to roof of mouth' *severe dehydration*
- v. 16: 'pierced my hands and my feet'
- v. 17: 'can count all my bones' *bones not broken*
- v. 18 'divide my garments among them' *people were crucified naked*

Outline

- A. Despair (1-21b)
- B. Delivery (21c)
- C. Victory (22-31)

A Child is Born

Isaiah 9:1-7

This passage falls within a section that runs from 8:1-9:7. The section begins with a discussion about the relationship between the lack of belief in Judah and the resulting invasion of the Assyrians. (8:1-10) It affirms that God will not allow His people to be entirely wiped out, and moves on to tell those who remain faithful not to join in disbelief (8:11-22) presenting a very dark picture of anguish for those who are not faithful to God. 9:1-7 tells of hope; that just as God brought light out of darkness at the creation, so will He bring light to a world darkened by unbelief.

Our passage begins by telling the people that deliverance will come first in the North; "Galilee of the Gentiles". This area was the first to be invaded by foes from the North, and would also be first to see deliverance. It is "of the Gentiles" because at the time of writing, the Israelites had been taken into captivity from this area, and the resultant inhabitants were gentiles. The two tribes mentioned in the text, Zebulun and Naphtali were representative of those "lost" tribes. The reference, in verse 4, to the defeat of Midian is noteworthy, as it reminds the people of what God has done for them in the past. In addition, it was a deliverance that had particular effect on Zebulun and Naphtali. (Judges 7) Of course, after God's deliverance the people again fell into disobedience and were re-conquered. This was a cycle that Isaiah's readers should have been well aware of. Yet this time, the deliverer would be far greater than before!

Deliverance would come through a child of the House of David; but not a ruler like any they have seen before. Verse six contains a series of names for this coming ruler which reveal beyond dispute that the child will be no mere mortal: "Mighty God" for example is hardly a term that Jews would apply to a mortal man. "Everlasting Father" is most definitely another one that is beyond debate: the child would be God! Verse 7 indicates that his rule will last from that time on forever, and that all of this would be accomplished through the "zeal of Lord Almighty".

In short, Isaiah is telling the people that they have grave trouble with God, and bad times ahead. This is all brought on by their own disbelief and rebellion against God, yet in the end, God will replace their disbelief with deliverance when He Himself will rule over His people.

It would be unthinkable for a Christian not to see Jesus Christ as the fulfillment for this prophecy in light of Matthew 4:13-17 in which Matthew specifically states that Jesus went back to Galilee to fulfill it. Note also that in verse 17 what is Jesus telling the people? "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." Jesus was bringing the kingdom of heaven to Galilee. He established this kingdom by bringing deliverance to those who would remain faithful to God through His work on the cross. This was deliverance not by the sword, but by forgiveness; and the Kingdom of Heaven came into being. This Kingdom makes war obsolete, for it is not of this world. (Isaiah 9:5; John 18:36)

God's Vineyard

Isaiah 5:1-7

Introduction

This passage is a parable. A teacher may use a parable to aid his hearer to recognize his own sin by separating the hearer from the story; that is to draw them into the story before they realize that they are the one who needs to learn a lesson. Here, Isaiah is speaking on God's behalf to the men of Judah so that they might see the sin they have committed. He approaches this as a prosecuting attorney of God, prosecuting the listeners...

Here, we have several images in the parable, a vineyard, a song, and the "one I love". The song is his label for the parable itself, while the one I love refers to the men of Judah, and the vineyard refers to God's people (men of Judah). This is all cleared up in verse 7, which serves as the climax of the parable. The vineyard is the property of the "Lord God Almighty". The vineyard serves well in this analogy because a vineyard requires a long term investment before it returns any profit for its owner, and because as a unit the vine represents the productivity of parts connected as a whole organic unit. This is an analogy that is used frequently in both the Old and New Testaments to represent the people of God.

5:2: This verse describes the work that the owner of the vineyard has put into ensuring a good result. He has carefully chosen a fertile hillside for the vineyard; the ideal location for grape production. He has carefully cleared and prepared the land; he has carefully planted only the best variety of grape, built a watchtower for its protection, and prepared a winepress to process the crop. Alas! The crop has turned out to be bad. The owner of the vineyard "looked for a crop of good grapes" has an inherent note of anticipation of success, only to be rewarded by disappointment and loss.

5:3-6: This section opens with Isaiah calling upon the men of Judah to be judges in a court case: Owner v. Vineyard. They are called upon to render a verdict about who caused the failure of the crops. Speaking on behalf of the owner, Isaiah asks what more the owner could have done to prepare the ground, select the site and the plants, and what more he could have done to protect and nurture the vineyard; and still the vineyard produced only bad fruit. In verses 5-6, attorney Isaiah tells the judges what he proposes to do to the vineyard for its lack of productivity: he will destroy it completely. (This almost sounds like a motion for summary judgment that might be filed in a modern court) Note particularly verse 6 when he says that he will cause the rain not to fall on the vineyard. Of course, this makes it obvious that God is the owner of the vineyard, but more than that, God causing the rain not to fall is a curse under the Law of Moses; a covenant term to be used to punish disobedience. (Lev. 26:19; Deut. 28:23-24)

5:7: The meaning of the parable comes into focus at this point. Notice the parallel between v. 2 "he looked for... but it yielded" and v. 7 "he looked for... but he saw/heard" God built and blessed the Nation in anticipation of good fruit, but the Nation yielded bloodshed and distress; rebellion was what God received in return for His abundant love! The day of reckoning has come. Compare this to Matthew 21:33-46; Hebrews 6:4-6.

The Suffering Servant

Isaiah 53

In Isaiah 53, the prophet describes for us a servant who would be despised, rejected and die; with the result of saving many. The poem here actually begins with verse 13 of the preceding chapter...

Notice in 52:13-14 an account of one who was disfigured beyond the likeness of a man. Of course this disfigurement was the result of the brutality of men. He was to undergo terrible treatment, but in the end he would receive great honor for what he had done. As the poem moves forward into chapter 53, we see that he would be despised in part for who he was; having no apparent nobility or pedigree. He came from the most humble of roots, and grew up as one who was not beautiful or privileged. (53:1-3) People hid their faces from him; but why? He was a man of sorrow and hardship who grieved at the way he was received, for who would believe his message?

In verses 4-6 we find that he was oppressed on our account; that he was to bear the afflictions and sins of all of us who have gone astray. This was no ordinary man, but rather He was One who had come to save the rest of us! Note the parallels in this poem:

Our Experience

Grief
Sorrow
Transgression
Iniquity
Peace
Healed

His Experience

Bore
Carried
Pierced Through
Crushed
Chastening
Scourging

In verses 7-9 the servant is silent during his trial; offering no defense against accusation. He bore our guilt upon himself willingly, and was sent away to die. Nobody would take much notice of his fate, even though he was guilty of no crime. He would be tortured beyond human endurance, disfigured, ridiculed... and who would care?

Yet, in the final verses we see His triumph. He would live after death; His "seed" (disciples) would spread over many nations and countless millions would be saved by His suffering. He would share the spoils of His victory over sin and death with His followers; He had changed the course of human history, and accomplished the purpose of God.

Compare this account with that of the Apostle John: John 12:37-41. Who is this servant, and how has He affected your life?

The Great Day

Joel 2:28-32

Joel, like the other prophets we have studied, has predicted bad times ahead because of the unbelief and unfaithfulness of God's people. In chapter 2, beginning around verse 18, God's ultimate deliverance begins to be revealed: First God's judgment, then God's deliverance. That deliverance begins to take shape in our passage: 2:28-32. Joel speaks of a new age; a new time where God's spirit is upon all people. Verses 28 and 29 speak of the outpouring of God's spirit on all peoples and the effect that this has. Verses 30-31 speak of wonders on earth and in heaven that will come first. These wonders are figures commonly used within the prophets to describe God's judgment.

Verse 32 speaks of a time when salvation will come to all people who call upon the name of the Lord. This is God's ultimate deliverance for His people: Salvation. Chapter 3 goes on to speak of the glory of the coming Israel and the judgment of God against those who have fought against His people.

At this point, it is difficult to place our passage into historical terms: Is this referring to the return of the remnant to the Holy Land after captivity? Is it a reference to something at the very end of time? Or could it fit in somewhere else?

Acts 2:16-21

This passage clearly sets the time of fulfillment for Joel 2:28-32, as it is quoted verbatim but Peter on the Day of Pentecost. The Apostles had the Holy Spirit poured out on them in a very public and obvious way (2:1-13) and then addressed the crowd that gathered. People in the crowd wondered at what was going on and speculated that they must be drunk! But Peter set them straight, and in verse 16 told them directly that what they were witnessing was the fulfillment of Joel's prophecy.

The portions of the Joel passage that refer to the pouring out of the Holy Spirit are fairly obvious in their implications, but what about the judgment? Note that Acts 2:19-20 are the judgment verses (c.f. Joel 2:30-31) we see judgment preceding salvation ("great and glorious day of the Lord") Consider that God poured out His judgment of our sins upon Jesus on the cross before sins could be forgiven. Consider also that the sun was darkened while Jesus died upon the cross. Note also that immediately after this comes the salvation verse (Acts 2:21 c.f. Joel 2:32). Salvation through Christ is made possible by His death (sin being judged) and is now being announced to the public for the first time ever. In the section that follows (Acts 2:22-41) Peter goes on to amplify the point that this prophecy was fulfilled in Christ, citing His miracles, His Messianic nature and His sacrifice for sin.

A New Covenant

Jeremiah 31:31-37

Jeremiah has set out a picture of trouble ahead. He has cited curse after curse from the Old Covenant that God will invoke against Israel and Judah because of their unbelief that resulted in broken commands. In chapters 30-33 Jeremiah tells of a new age that would follow; hope for the future after the disaster of the present. We pick up the story in verse 31 where he tells of the new covenant that God has planned for His people.

God had been a husband to Israel, and Israel had been unfaithful to God; shattering their covenant obligations. God's people would be newly united under a new and different covenant; one in which His laws would be written not on tablets of stone, but rather upon their very hearts. They would be moved not by outward regulations, but instead by inward motivations to do right by God. They would come into relationship with God not by accident of birth, but by a desire to be His people. These would come to know Him because He had forgiven their sins, as opposed to those in the past who had only known *of* Him. They would not be taught about God, for they would know God.

Beginning with verse 35, we see that the very God who has established the laws of nature would be as reliable in keeping his promises as are those natural laws of His creation. God would remain faithful to the "descendants of Israel" just as surely as the sun will shine. The only question that remains is: Who are those descendants?

New Testament parallels

Jesus, in Matthew 21:43-44 told the Jews that the kingdom would be taken away from them for their unbelief. Paul, in Galatians 6:16 refers to the church as "the Israel of God" and Peter in 1 Peter 2:9 "...a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession".

Hebrews 8-10 deals with the Apostolic Doctrine of Two Covenants. Chapter 8 in particular is interesting for our study today. Consider 8:6 ff. Here we see our Jeremiah passage quoted (Heb. 8:8-12). The author's comments are instructive: The New Covenant is superior to the old and founded on better promises. (8:6) Something was "wrong" with the Old Covenant (8:7) God found fault with the people and foretold of a new covenant (8:7) Of course the thing wrong with the Old Covenant was that the people did not keep it. The Old Covenant is "obsolete" (8:13 and will soon disappear. In truth, it disappeared in less than a decade! (70 AD).