

Leviticus 26 - The Promise of Blessing and Retribution; The Basis for the Second Coming

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(B) Blessings and curses (Lev 26:1-46)

The Word "If"

We often emphasize the fact that the Abrahamic Covenant is unconditional and that all of our benefits—even as Gentiles—derive from that covenant. The heresy of "replacement theology" is a tragic legacy of many denominational churches. Furthermore, our security in Christ is unconditionally sealed by His completed work on our behalf and the sealing of the Holy Spirit.

However, we have rarely focused on the conditional aspects of God's covenant, and this is the area of Israel's failure—and our own! (The Book of Judges chronicles their dismal cycle of failures and it tragically mirrors our own times as well.)

This chapter will focus on the shortest, and most tragic, word in the English language: "if." Debating on what might have happened in world history if Wellington had lost at Waterloo, or if Lee had won at Gettysburg is an exercise in futility. However, the history of Israel cannot be properly understood apart from the "if's" in God's covenant. In terms of Israel's—and our—relationship to God, "if" is a very big word. ***Obedience is the grounds for blessing.***

In the two remaining chapters of Leviticus, the word "if" is used at least 32x. Examples:

- "If you walk in my statutes..." (v3)
- "If you do not obey me..." (v14)
- "If they confess their iniquity..." (v40)

These final two chapters will also focus us on four responsibilities every Christian has toward the Lord. We are blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies in Christ.

However, there are some "ifs" connected with these also. We can put up an umbrella of indifference, an umbrella of sin, or an umbrella of stepping out of the will of God.

Rebuke Against Replacement Theology

Lev 26 contains 5 (or 6, depending on how one counts) levels of judgment that God warned the Jews about as a consequence of disobedience. Each step was designed to open their eyes to their sins so they could repent and be forgiven. If they failed to do so, the next step became more severe and so on until they would be driven out of their land and waste away in the lands of their enemies.

Lev 26 evidences a striking similarity with Deut 28-30 except Lev 26 presents the cursings (26:14-39) within the framework of 5 (or 6) progressive stages to the covenantal curse. Each stage was to increase by a factor of 7 (26:18,21,24,28) resulting in the fifth stage, which would be devastation and deportation from the land. The chapter ends with hope that if Israel repented, while in exile, they would return to the land and receive blessing (26:40-46).

They went all the way through these steps on two occasions. Once in the Babylonian captivity and once after they rejected the Messiah. But Lev 26:44 says, "Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them or abhor them so as to destroy them completely, breaking my covenant with them. I am the LORD their God."

After being returned to their land on May 14, 1948, Is 11:10-11 tells us that in the last days the Lord would reach out His hand a second time to reclaim the remnant of His people.

This "second time" is at the end of the Tribulation, when the remnant will be saved and enter the Messianic Kingdom. Amos 9:14-15 says that after that they'd never be uprooted again.

Leviticus 26

(a) First four commandments (26:1-2)

1 'You shall not make for yourselves idols, nor shall you set up for yourselves a carved image or a memorial stone, nor shall you place a figured stone in your land to bow down to it; for I am the LORD your God.

1 'You shall not make for yourselves idols, nor shall you set up for yourselves an image or a *sacred* pillar, nor shall you place a figured stone in your land to bow down to it; for I am the LORD your God.

1 "You are not to make worthless idols, images, or pillars for yourselves, nor set up for yourselves carved images to bow down to them in the land, because I am the LORD your God.

1 Ye shall make you no idols nor graven image, neither rear you up a standing image, neither shall ye set up any image of stone in your land, to bow down unto it: for I am

the LORD your God.

- These two verses sum up the first part of the Ten Commandments. We are to make no idols.

— The Hebrew word for "idol," *'elee/*, of nought, good for nothing, worthless.

— When we make an idol we make nothing. Anything that takes the place of God is a nothing.

Moses lists four reasons why we should obey the Lord:

(1) Because of who God is (v1)

(2) Because of what God did (v2a)

(3) Because of where God dwells (v2b)

(4) Because of what God promised (v3-13)

2 You shall keep My **Sabbaths** and revere My sanctuary; I am the LORD.

2 You shall keep My sabbaths and reverence My sanctuary; I am the LORD.

2 "You are to keep my Sabbath and fear my sanctuary. I am the LORD.

2 Ye shall keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary: I am the LORD.

- "...Sabbaths" - refers to all the special days on the Jewish calendar, not just the 7th day of the week (see Lev 23)

— Although the 7th day was instituted as a special sign between the Lord and Israel (Ex 31:13), its focus was the first week of creation and is an appropriate acknowledgment for all of us.

In addition to the emphasis on what God did, they needed to obey Him because of where He dwelt: among them in the Tabernacle. To sin was not only violation of His law, it was a desecration of His sanctuary. To sin was to defile the camp and that's why the unclean had to leave the camp. [That is even more emphatic for us, because He dwells in us! (Cf. 1 Cor 6:1-20; Eph 4:17-32)].

(b) Blessings for obedience (26:3-13)

3 If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out,

3 If you walk in My statutes and keep My commandments so as to carry them out,

3 "If you live by my statutes, obey my commands, and observe them,

3 If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments, and do them;

- To "obey God" is to walk in His statutes; to disobey Him is to walk contrary to the Lord and despise His statutes (v15,21,23-24,27-28,40-41)

— Another reason (of the four reasons) that we should obey is because of what He promised (v3-13)

Moses later elaborated on the “covenant of blessing” (Deut 28-30) which were the conditions of Israel’s tenancy on His land: the conditions that they were to fulfill and the resultant promises God would perform:

4 then I shall give you rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit.

4 then I shall give you rains in their season, so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will bear their fruit.

4 then I’ll send your rain in its season so that the land will yield its produce and the trees of the field will yield their fruit.

4 Then I will give you rain in due season, and the land shall yield her increase, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit.

- Israel depended on the “latter rain” in the spring and the “former rain” in the autumn for water for their crops and domestic needs

— One reason Baal worship ensnared the Israelites was the posture of Baal as the Canaanite storm god

— To discipline His people, God would often withhold the rain, as He did in the days of Elijah (1 Kings 17-18)

5 Indeed, *your* threshing season will last for you until grape gathering, and grape gathering will last until sowing time. So you will eat your food to the full and live securely in your land.

5 Indeed, your threshing will last for you until grape gathering, and grape gathering will last until sowing time. You will thus eat your food to the full and live securely in your land.

5 Threshing will extend to the time of vintage and the vintage will extend to the time of sowing, so that you’ll eat your bread to your satisfaction and live securely in your land.

5 And your threshing shall reach unto the vintage, and the vintage shall reach unto the sowing time: and ye shall eat your bread to the full, and dwell in your land safely.

6 I shall also grant peace in the land, so that you may lie down, with no one to make *you* afraid. I shall also eliminate harmful animals from the land, and no sword will pass through your land.

6 I shall also grant peace in the land, so that you may lie down with no one making *you* tremble. I shall also eliminate harmful beasts from the land, and no sword will pass through your land.

6 I’ll give peace in the land so that you’ll lie down without fear. I’ll remove wild beasts from the land, and not even war will come to your land.

6 And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid: and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land.

7 Instead, you will chase your enemies, and they will fall before you by the sword;

7 But you will chase your enemies and they will fall before you by the sword;

7 Instead, you'll pursue your enemies and they'll die by the sword before you.

7 And ye shall chase your enemies, and they shall fall before you by the sword.

8 five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand; and your enemies will fall before you by the sword.

8 five of you will chase a hundred, and a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall before you by the sword.

8 Five of you will chase a hundred, a hundred of you will chase ten thousand, and your enemies will fall by the sword before you.

8 And five of you shall chase an hundred, and an hundred of you shall put ten thousand to flight: and your enemies shall fall before you by the sword.

9 So I will turn toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will confirm My covenant with you.

9 So I will turn toward you and make you fruitful and multiply you, and I will confirm My covenant with you.

9 "I'll look after you, ensuring that you'll be fruitful. I'll increase your number and keep my covenant with you.

9 For I will have respect unto you, and make you fruitful, and multiply you, and establish my covenant with you.

10 And you will eat the old supply, and clear out the old because of the new.

10 You will eat the old supply and clear out the old because of the new.

10 When you have consumed what was stored of the old, then you'll take out the old and replace it with what's new.

10 And ye shall eat old store, and bring forth the old because of the new.

11 Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you.

11 Moreover, I will make My dwelling among you, and My soul will not reject you.

11 I'll set up my tent in your midst and I won't loathe you.

11 And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my soul shall not abhor you.

12 I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.

- 12 I will also walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people.
12 I'll walk among you. I will be your God, and you'll be my people.
12 And I will walk among you, and will be your God, and ye shall be my people.

13 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so that *you* would not be their slaves, and I broke your yoke and made you walk erect.

13 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so that *you* would not be their slaves, and I broke the bars of your yoke and made you walk erect.

13 I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt so that you will no longer be their slaves, since I've broken their oppressive yoke upon you to make you walk upright."

13 I am the LORD your God, which brought you forth out of the land of Egypt, that ye should not be their bondmen; and I have broken the bands of your yoke, and made you go upright.

- 9x in Leviticus we find the Lord reminding them that He had delivered them out of Egypt and this alone was sufficient to deserve their obedience (Lev 11:45; 19:36; 22:33; 23:43; 25:28,42,55; 26:13,45)

— We, too, have everything we need for "life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3) because we have "every spiritual blessing in Christ (Eph 1:3)

— But possessing is one thing; invoking them is something else

— We, too, have battles to fight and work to do, but as we walk in obedience to the Lord, He enables us to overcome the enemy, claim the land, and enjoy its blessings.

- But God's blessing isn't always health, wealth, and success. Some of the greatest heroes of faith suffered because of their obedience - Heb 11:36-40

— The "success preachers"—the "name it and claim it" or "blab it and grab it" health-and-wealth evangelists—like to promote the blessings but assume the accompanying judgments and curses apply to someone else!

(c) Curses for disobedience (26:14-39)

14 'But if you do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments,

14 'But if you do not obey Me and do not carry out all these commandments,

14 "But if you won't listen to me and obey all these commands,

14 But if ye will not hearken unto me, and will not do all these commandments;

15 if, instead, you reject My statutes, and if your soul loathes My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, *but rather* to break My covenant,

15 if, instead, you reject My statutes, and if your soul abhors My ordinances so as not to carry out all My commandments, *and* so break My covenant,

15 and if you refuse my statutes, loathe my ordinances, and fail to carry out all of my commands, thereby breaching my covenant,

15 And if ye shall despise my statutes, or if your soul abhor my judgments, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but that ye break my covenant:

- The "ifs" of these two verses are of a breach of the covenant: refusal to hear, refusal to do, despising and abhorring God's statutes and judgments

16 I, in turn, will do this to you: I will summon a sudden terror against you, **consumption** and fever that will make the eyes fail and the soul languish; also, you will sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies will eat it.

16 I, in turn, will do this to you: I will appoint over you a sudden terror, consumption and fever that will waste away the eyes and cause the soul to pine away; also, you will sow your seed uselessly, for your enemies will eat it up.

16 then I will certainly do this to you: I'll appoint sudden terror to infect you like tuberculosis and fever. Your eyes will fail and your life will waste away. You'll plant in vain, because your enemies will consume what you plant.

16 I also will do this unto you; I will even appoint over you terror, consumption, and the burning ague, that shall consume the eyes, and cause sorrow of heart: and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it.

- "...consumption" - slow wasting diseases, like tuberculosis

The Four Sore Judgments (Cf. Ezek 14:21)

Whether Israel reaped God's blessings, or His Four Sore Judgments (Sword, Famine, Wild Beasts, Plague), was entirely up to them. It was their choice. Moses gave them truthful warnings in v17-25:

- Lev 26:1-2,14-15,17 - in v17, "slain" = sword
- Lev 26:20 - "land shall not increase" = famine
- Lev 26:22 - wild beasts
- Lev 26:25 - plague (pestilence)

These same four idioms are prophesied as God's wrath in several other passages (Cf. Lev 26:21-28; Num 11:33; 16:46; 25:8-11; Deut 11:17; 28:20-26; 32:22-25; Jer 15:1-9; 16:4-11; 19:7-9; Ezek 5:11-17; 6:11-12; 7:3-15). These parallelisms of idioms in Scripture are very intentional, engineered to catch our attention so that we cannot miss who the real author of these Words is.

17 And I will set My face against you so that you will be defeated before your enemies; and those who hate you will rule over you, and you will flee when no one is pursuing you.

17 I will set My face against you so that you will be struck down before your enemies; and those who hate you will rule over you, and you will flee when no one is pursuing you.

17 I'll set my face against you so that you'll be defeated before your enemies. Those who hate you will have dominion over you and you'll keep fleeing even when no one is pursuing you.

17 And I will set my face against you, and ye shall be slain before your enemies: they that hate you shall reign over you; and ye shall flee when none pursueth you.

The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion (Prov 28:1)

- Cf. Judges 2:14; 3:8; 4:2; Jer 5:17; Micah 6:15.

18 If also after these things you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

18 If also after these things you do not obey Me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

18 "If, despite all of this, you still don't listen to me, then I'll punish you seven times more on account of your sins.

18 And if ye will not yet for all this hearken unto me, then I will punish you seven times more for your sins.

19 I will also break down your pride of power; and I will make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze.

19 I will also break down your pride of power; I will also make your sky like iron and your earth like bronze.

19 I'll break your mighty pride. I'll make the heavens to be like iron and the ground like bronze.

19 And I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass:

20 Your strength will be consumed uselessly, for your land will not yield its produce and the trees of the land will not yield their fruit.

20 Your strength will be spent uselessly, for your land will not yield its produce and the trees of the land will not yield their fruit.

20 Your strength will be spent in vain, because your land won't yield its produce and the trees of the land won't yield their fruit.

20 And your strength shall be spent in vain: for your land shall not yield her increase, neither shall the trees of the land yield their fruits.

21 'Yet if you show hostility toward Me and are unwilling to obey Me, I will increase the plague on you seven times according to your sins.

21 'If then, you act with hostility against Me and are unwilling to obey Me, I will increase the plague on you seven times according to your sins.

21 "If you live life contrary to me and remain unwilling to listen to me, then I'll add to your wounds seven times more on account of your sins.

21 And if ye walk contrary unto me, and will not hearken unto me; I will bring seven times more plagues upon you according to your sins.

22 I will also let loose among you the animals of the field, which will deprive you of your children and eliminate your cattle, and reduce your number so that your roads become deserted.

22 I will let loose among you the beasts of the field, which will bereave you of your children and destroy your cattle and reduce your number so that your roads lie deserted.

22 I'll send wild beasts against you from the open country to deprive you of your children, destroy your cattle, and decrease your number so that your roads become desolate.

22 I will also send wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children, and destroy your cattle, and make you few in number; and your high ways shall be desolate.

23 'And if by these things you do not learn your lesson regarding Me, but you show hostility toward Me,

23 'And if by these things you are not turned to Me, but act with hostility against Me,

23 "If, despite these things, you still won't return to me, but live life contrary to me,

23 And if ye will not be reformed by me by these things, but will walk contrary unto me;

24 then I in turn will show hostility toward you; and I, even I, will strike you seven times for your sins.

24 then I will act with hostility against you; and I, even I, will strike you seven times for your sins.

24 then I'll certainly oppose you. I'll take vengeance against you seven fold on account of your sins.

24 Then will I also walk contrary unto you, and will punish you yet seven times for your sins.

- Here is the multiple of seven again (Cf. v18,21,24,28)

25 I will also bring upon you a sword which will execute vengeance for the covenant; and when you gather together into your cities, I will send a plague among you, so that you will be handed over to the enemy.

25 I will also bring upon you a sword which will execute vengeance for the covenant; and when you gather together into your cities, I will send pestilence among you, so that you shall be delivered into enemy hands.

25 I'll bring the sword against you to execute the vengeance of my covenant. When you gather in your cities, I'll send a pestilence. As a result, you'll be delivered into the control of your enemies.

25 And I will bring a sword upon you, that shall avenge the quarrel of my covenant: and when ye are gathered together within your cities, I will send the pestilence among you; and ye shall be delivered into the hand of the enemy.

- War, pestilence and famine usually go together (Cf. Ezek 5)

26 When I break your staff of bread, ten women will bake your bread in one oven, and they will bring back your bread in rationed amounts, so that you will eat and not be satisfied.

26 When I break your staff of bread, ten women will bake your bread in one oven, and they will bring back your bread in rationed amounts, so that you will eat and not be satisfied.

26 When I destroy the source of your bread, ten women will bake bread in one oven. Then they'll return back your bread by weight. You'll eat but won't be satisfied.

26 And when I have broken the staff of your bread, ten women shall bake your bread in one oven, and they shall deliver you your bread again by weight: and ye shall eat, and not be satisfied.

- Ezekiel warned them that 1/3 would die of pestilence and with famine, 1/3 would be scattered (Ezek 5:12)

[Rev 8 records the first of 4 "trumpet judgments" that are also known as the "judgment of the thirds"]

Prophecy of the Babylonian Captivity

27 'Yet if in spite of this you do not obey Me, but act with hostility against Me,

27 'Yet if in spite of this you do not obey Me, but act with hostility against Me,

27 "If, after all of this time, you don't listen to me, but instead live life contrary to me,

27 And if ye will not for all this hearken unto me, but walk contrary unto me;

28 then I will act with wrathful hostility against you, and I for My part will punish you seven times for your sins.

28 then I will act with wrathful hostility against you, and I, even I, will punish you seven times for your sins.

28 I'll oppose you with vicious rage. Indeed, I myself will punish you seven fold on account of your sins.

28 Then I will walk contrary unto you also in fury; and I, even I, will chastise you seven times for your sins.

- Here is that multiple of seven again (Cf. v18,21,24,28)

29 Further, you will eat the flesh of your sons, and you will eat the flesh of your daughters.

29 Further, you will eat the flesh of your sons and the flesh of your daughters you will eat.

29 At that time, you'll eat the flesh of your sons and you'll eat the flesh of your daughters.

29 And ye shall eat the flesh of your sons, and the flesh of your daughters shall ye eat.

- We have difficulty imagining the desperation of real famine (Cf. 2 Kings 6:29; Jer 19:9; Lam 4:10)

30 I then will destroy your high places, and cut down your incense altars, and pile your remains on the remains of your idols, for My soul will loathe you.

30 I then will destroy your high places, and cut down your incense altars, and heap your remains on the remains of your idols, for My soul shall abhor you.

30 I'll destroy your high places and cut down your sun pillars. Then I'll cast your dead bodies on top of the bodies of your idols. I'll loathe you.

30 And I will destroy your high places, and cut down your images, and cast your carcasses upon the carcasses of your idols, and my soul shall abhor you.

31 I will turn your cities into ruins as well and make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your soothing aromas.

31 I will lay waste your cities as well and will make your sanctuaries desolate, and I will not smell your soothing aromas.

31 I'll lay your cities to waste and destroy your sanctuaries so I don't have to smell the scent of your soothing odors.

31 And I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries unto desolation, and I will not smell the savour of your sweet odours.

- Even when they try to revive their worship of YHWH, it will be too late. Their cities and sanctuaries will be leveled to the ground.

— Up to now, their chastisements would be in the land, but now He removes them from the land

— The siege of Samaria (2 Kings 6:28-29) and the siege of Jerusalem by Babylon (Lam 2:20; 4:10)

32 And I will make the land desolate so that your enemies who settle in it will be appalled at it.

32 I will make the land desolate so that your enemies who settle in it will be appalled over it.

32 I'll make the land so desolate that your enemies who live in it will be astonished."

32 And I will bring the land into desolation: and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it.

Captivity Among the Nations

33 You, however, I will scatter among the nations, and I will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become ruins.

33 You, however, I will scatter among the nations and will draw out a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste.

33 "I'll scatter you among the nations and draw the sword after you so that your land becomes desolate and your towns become ruins.

33 And I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.

34 'Then the land will restore its Sabbaths all the days of the desolation, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land will rest and restore its Sabbaths.

34 'Then the land will enjoy its sabbaths all the days of the desolation, while you are in your enemies' land; then the land will rest and enjoy its sabbaths.

34 Then the land will finally be pleased with its Sabbaths as long as it lies desolate while you are in the land of your enemies. At that time, the land will rest and take its Sabbaths.

34 Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths, as long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then shall the land rest, and enjoy her sabbaths.

- In 722 BC, the Assyrians took the Northern Kingdom captive, never to return; in 606 BC, the Babylonians took the Southern Kingdom captive for 70 years - leaving the land to "enjoy her Sabbaths" (2 Chr 36:21; Jer 25:11)

35 All the days of *its* desolation it will have the rest which it did not have on your Sabbaths, while you were living on it.

35 All the days of *its* desolation it will observe the rest which it did not observe on your sabbaths, while you were living on it.

35 As long as it lies desolate, it will have rest that it will not have had during your Sabbaths when you were living in it.

35 As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest; because it did not rest in your sabbaths, when ye dwelt upon it.

36 As for those among you who are left, I will also bring despair into their hearts in the lands of their enemies. And the sound of a scattered leaf will chase them, and even when no one is pursuing they will flee as though from the sword, and they will fall.

36 As for those of you who may be left, I will also bring weakness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies. And the sound of a driven leaf will chase them, and even when no one is pursuing they will flee as though from the sword, and they will fall.

36 "As for the remnants among you, I'll bring despair in their hearts in the land of their enemies so that even the sound of a blown leaf will chase them and they flee as though pursued by the sword and fall when no one is pursuing.

36 And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.

37 They will then stumble over each other as if *running* from the sword, although no one is pursuing; and you will have no strength to stand before your enemies.

37 They will therefore stumble over each other as if *running* from the sword, although no one is pursuing; and you will have *no strength* to stand up before your enemies.

37 They'll stumble over each other as though fleeing before the sword, even though no one is pursuing.

"You won't have power to resist your enemies.

37 And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies.

38 Instead, you will perish among the nations, and your enemies' land will consume you.

38 But you will perish among the nations, and your enemies' land will consume you.

38 You'll perish among the nations and the land of your enemies will consume you.

38 And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up.

39 So those of you who may be left will rot away because of their wrongdoing in the lands of your enemies; and also because of the wrongdoing of their forefathers they will rot away with them.

39 So those of you who may be left will rot away because of their iniquity in the lands of your enemies; and also because of the iniquities of their forefathers they will rot away with them.

39 The remnants among you will waste away in the land of your enemies due to their iniquity. Indeed, they'll also waste away on account of the iniquities of their ancestors with them."

39 And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them.

- The Lord mercifully allowed a remnant to return under the leadership of Ezra and Nehemiah (fewer than 50,000)

— The nation never regained its former power or glory. With exception of short periods of freedom, such as under the Maccabees, the Jews were subsequently always under the control of some foreign power, until May 14, 1948...

(3) Trusting His Covenant (V40-46)

Ex 34:6-7a:

6 Even under the worst situations, however, there is always hope, for the Lord is: merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,

7a Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin...

The Basis for Christ's Second Coming (v40-42) The Campaign of Armageddon

Verses 1-39 have already been fulfilled historically, but v40-42 await a future fulfillment.

There is one major pre-requisite condition for the Second Coming. This condition can be deduced from five passages:

(1) Lev 26:40-42: Moses predicts that the Jews would be scattered all over the world, because of disobedience to God's revealed will. Verse 42 states that God has every intention of giving to Israel all the blessings and promises of the Abrahamic Covenant, especially as it pertains to the Promised Land. However, before they can begin to enjoy these blessings during the Messianic Kingdom they must fulfill the condition of v40: "... they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers...". Notice that "iniquity" is singular and specific. The fathers committed one specific iniquity that has been perpetuated through time. Israel must confess this sin before she can enjoy the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant.

(2) Jer 3:11-18: In v14-18, Jeremiah describes the blessings that God has prepared for Israel during the Messianic Kingdom. It will be a time for tremendous blessing and restoration for the Jewish people when their Messiah establishes the Kingdom. However, these blessings are conditional on v13 where they must acknowledge and confess one specific iniquity which they committed against God.

(3) Zech 12:10: Zech 12-14 contain one prophecy given by God. Zech 13 speaks of the national cleansing of Israel from their sin. Zech 14 describes the Second Coming (v1-15) and the establishment of the Kingdom (v16-21). But the cleansing of Israel, the Second Coming and the establishment of the kingdom are all contingent on Zech 12:10. Before these events occur, Israel must first look "unto" the One whom they have

pierced and plead for His return. Once they do this, then, and only then, will they receive their cleansing and enjoy their blessings in the Messianic Age.

(4) Hosea 5:15: God is speaking throughout Hosea 5, including v15: "I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offense, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me earnestly." Certain logical features underlie the meaning of this verse. One must have left a place in order to return to it. This clearly implies that God left heaven. This occurred during the Incarnation when God became a Man in the person of Jesus Christ. Then, one specific offense committed against Him caused Him to return to "His place" (heaven). This verse emphatically states that He will not return "until" they confess their offense (their rejection of His Messiahship) that caused Him to leave.

(5) Matt 23:37-39: This passage describes Christ's denunciation of the scribes and pharisees, who led the nation in rejecting His Messiahship. He reiterated His original desire to gather them if they would only accept Him. But because of their rejection, they would be scattered instead of gathered. Their "house" (the temple) would be left "desolate" and destroyed with nothing remaining. He then declares that they would not see Him again until they say "Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." (quoted from Ps 118:26)

Jesus will not come back to the earth until the Jews and Jewish leaders ask Him to come back. Just as the Jewish leaders led the nation in rejecting the Messiahship of Jesus, they must someday lead the nation to the acceptance of His Messiahship. This, then, is the two-fold basis for the Second Coming:

- (1) Israel must confess her national sin, then
- (2) plead for the Messiah to return to save them from annihilation (described in Zech 12:10—13:1).

(d) Ultimate repentance and restoration (26:40-46)

40 'But *if* they confess their **wrongdoing** and the wrongdoing of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me—

40 'If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me—

40 "Nevertheless, when they confess their iniquity, the iniquity of their ancestors, and their unfaithfulness by which they acted unfaithfully against me by living life contrary to me—

40 If they shall confess their iniquity, and the iniquity of their fathers, with their trespass which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me;

- If we confess our sins and repent, He will forgive and restore (Cf. 1 Kings 8:33-34; Neh 9:2)

- This verse is a prerequisite condition for Israel to receive the benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant

- "...wrongdoing" - singular and specific ("their" iniquity; "the" iniquity)

— There is one specific iniquity that Israel must confess before she can begin to enjoy all of the benefits of the Abrahamic Covenant. This iniquity was committed by their fathers or ancestors, but now must be confessed by a subsequent generation.

41 I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies—or if their uncircumcised heart is humbled so that they then make amends for their wrongdoing,

41 I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies—or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity,

41 causing me to oppose them and take them to the land of their enemies so that the uncircumcised foreskin of their hearts can be humbled and so that they accept the punishment of their iniquity—

41 And that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the land of their enemies; if then their uncircumcised hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity:

- External circumcision wasn't enough to save them (Matt 3:7-12)

— It took more than an outward sign: it took a change of heart (Deut 10:16; 30:6; Jer 4:4; 9:25; Rom 2:29)

42 then **I will remember My covenant with Jacob**, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land.

42 then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land.

42 then I'll remember my covenant with Jacob, my covenant with Isaac, and my covenant with Abraham. I'll also remember the land.

42 Then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, and also my covenant with Isaac, and also my covenant with Abraham will I remember; and I will remember the land.

- "...I remember my covenant with Jacob" - following the regeneration of Israel, God will fully carry out the promises of the Abrahamic Covenant concerning the Land

— On the basis of the Abrahamic Covenant, He will restore to them the Land that was laid desolate for so long. Deut 30:5 states that the possession of the Land is also part of the Land Covenant.

- Moses states that God has every intention to give Israel all the blessings and promises of the Abrahamic Covenant, especially inasmuch as the covenant pertains to the Promised

Land.

- Important to note that instead of the order as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the order is reversed, indicating that it is looking backward from the future

43 For the land will be abandoned by them, and will restore its Sabbaths while it is made desolate without them. They, meanwhile, will be making amends for their wrongdoing, because they rejected My ordinances and their soul loathed My statutes.

43 For the land will be abandoned by them, and will make up for its sabbaths while it is made desolate without them. They, meanwhile, will be making amends for their iniquity, because they rejected My ordinances and their soul abhorred My statutes.

43 They will leave the land so it can rest while it lies desolate without them. That's when they'll receive the punishment of their iniquity, because indeed they will have rejected my ordinances and despised my statutes.

43 The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, while she lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity: because, even because they despised my judgments, and because their soul abhorred my statutes.

Significantly, Lev 26 is given to the nation while they are still at Mount Sinai (v45) and before even the spies had been sent out to scout the land (Num 13-14). So decades before nation entered the land that *Yahweh* had promised them, their existence in the land—or lack thereof—had already been decreed by *Yahweh* based on either their covenant obedience or disobedience to Him. The ownership of the land (as a gift from God) is certain and eternal, but the occupation of it by any given generation is conditioned on obedience.

It should be noted in the previous chapter how *Yahweh* viewed the land: He claimed it is as His own: "The land, moreover, shall not be sold permanently, *for the land is Mine*; for you are but aliens and sojourners with Me" (Lev 25:23). For those who think too much emphasis is made about the land promises in the Bible, this verse should not be taken lightly: to this day the land remains *Yahweh's*.

Rebuke of Replacement Theology

44 Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so loathe them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God.

44 Yet in spite of this, when they are in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them, nor will I so abhor them as to destroy them, breaking My covenant with them; for I am the LORD their God.

44 Yet, despite all of these things, when they're in the land of their enemies, I won't reject or despise them so as to completely destroy them and by doing so violate my covenant with them, because I am the LORD their God.

44 And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God.

- This directly refutes the commonly taught "replacement" theology: that the church "replaces" Israel

— God may punish His people, but He will never reject them or cast them away (Rom 11:1-25; Jer 31:31-34)

— One reason for His chastening is to bring His erring people back into His arms of love, where He can bless them once again (Heb 12:1-13)

45 But I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, so that I might be their God. I am the LORD."

45 But I will remember for them the covenant with their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God. I am the LORD."

45 Instead, on account of them, I'll remember my covenant with their ancestors when I brought them out of the land of Egypt right before the eyes of the nations, so that I could be their God. I am the LORD."

45 But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.

- The people may forget His law, but He remembers His covenant

46 These are the statutes and ordinances and laws which the LORD established between Himself and the sons of Israel through Moses on Mount Sinai.

46 These are the statutes and ordinances and laws which the LORD established between Himself and the sons of Israel through Moses at Mount Sinai.

46 These are the statutes, ordinances, and laws that the LORD made between himself and the Israelis on Mount Sinai, as recorded by the hand of Moses.

46 These are the statutes and judgments and laws, which the LORD made between him and the children of Israel in mount Sinai by the hand of Moses.

Verses 40-45 are a tremendously important portion of Scripture in understanding God's future intention regarding both the Jewish people and the land He had promised them in the Abrahamic Covenant. The failure of theologians and expositors to give as much

attention to Lev 26 as they have given to Deut 27-28 has impoverished the church's doctrinal corpus.

Lev 26 contains revelation referring to Israel's future repentance and restoration, which are confirmed by both OT and NT. Since their repentance and restoration have not yet occurred, their fulfillment is eschatological. Lev 26's relationship to the Abrahamic Covenant ties fulfillment to the land God promised to give to the descendants of Abraham. The fulfillment of the land promises await Israel's repentance. When Israel turns to God and confesses her sins, God will restore her to the promised land. *Chronologically, Lev 26 is the first detailed description of Israel's eschatological repentance and restoration. **It provides significant evidence that disobedience to the Mosaic Covenant results in the removal of the blessings promised in the Abrahamic Covenant.*** The chapter is at the heart of the OT prophets' announcements concerning the future messianic kingdom. A proper understanding of the prophetic program of the OT fully integrates the revelation of Lev 26.