

Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas
Fredericksburg Bible Church

107 East Austin

Fredericksburg, Texas 78624

830-997-8834 jthomas@fbgbible.org

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Now we're going to turn to the last major event of the OT. We're not saying there aren't other important events, every event is important; we're just saying that there are certain events that are referred to over and over and over by the great saints of Scripture in their addresses to the nation, in their prayers, in their speeches. So that's the why behind these events being chosen. And the last event we've chosen in the OT is the Restoration, it's a partial restoration and we want to understand why? Turn to Jer 29. We've seen the nation go into Exile and now they're embedded in pagan kingdoms and right here a uniqueness of history occurs that has never been duplicated. . We said with the Exile the curtain fell on Israel's supernatural history but if you study history carefully you might be tempted to conclude that the partial restoration of the nation is a supernatural event. As John Bright in his *A History of Israel*, which is on the liberal side says, "Israel was left for the moment an agglomeration of uprooted and beaten individuals, by no external mark any longer a people. The marvel is that her history did not end altogether. Nevertheless, Israel both survived the calamity and, forming a new community out of the wreckage of the old, resumed her life as a people."

THE DECREE GIVEN TO DANIEL

So turn to Jer 29. Here's a letter written by the prophet Jeremiah during the early years of the Babylonian Exile. Remember, they didn't all get deported at one time; there were actually three deportations, 605BC, 597BC and finally 586BC. So this comes while Jeremiah is still in Israel. Verse 1, "Now these are the words of the letter which Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders of the exile, the priests, the prophets and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon." This is correspondence between a Jew inside the land with Jews outside the land. In v 2 we get the time marker and then he starts telling

them how to live in a pagan culture, the truth we just went through at the Exile, how to be in the world but not of the world. They got this word of separation from the culture through the prophet Jeremiah. And let's pick up in verse 10, "For thus says the LORD, 'When seventy years have been completed for Babylon, I will visit you and fulfill My good word to you, to bring you back to this place. ¹¹'For I know the plans that I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans for welfare and not for calamity to give you a future and a hope. ¹²'Then you will call upon Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. ¹³'You will seek Me and find *Me* when you search for Me with all your heart. ¹⁴'I will be found by you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will restore your fortunes and will gather you from all the nations and from all the places where I have driven you,' declares the LORD, 'and I will bring you back to the place from where I sent you into exile.'

Now, hold your place in Jeremiah and with that background turn to Dan 9. Daniel is one of the guys who got Jeremiah's letter. Daniel was a son of royalty and this letter has been in circulation for years and finally Daniel gets his hand on the letter. The year in verse 1 is 538BC. So let's read verse 1, "In the first year of Darius the son of Ahasuerus, of Median descent, who was made king over the kingdom of the Chaldeans— ²in the first year of his reign, I, Daniel, observed in the books the number of the years which was *revealed as* the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, *namely*, seventy years. ³So I gave my attention to the Lord God to seek *Him by* prayer and supplications, with fasting, sackcloth and ashes." Alright, so we know exactly what pages of Jeremiah's letter Daniel has been reading. He's been reading Jer 29:10-14. And as Daniel reads he is faced with a problem because in verses 2-3 he's looking at the prophecy from Jeremiah, which says there's going to be 70 years and then the Exile in Babylon is going to be over. He then says well, what did God show me in Daniel 2? In Daniel 2 God showed me that there had to be four Gentile kingdoms. What we're talking about now, and here's one of the apparent conflicts in the Bible, on the one hand in Daniel 2 we have the four kingdoms. The first kingdom is Babylon, the second kingdom is Medo-Persia, then Greece, then Rome. Which kingdom is Daniel living in when Daniel 9 is written? He says "the first year of Darius," of what descent? Median, so Daniel on the statue is only in the second kingdom.

So on one hand the Dan 2 prophecy says there's going to be a long Exile under Gentile kingdoms; on the other hand he's got the Jer 29 prophecy that says 70 years and we'll be restored. So how can you have the restoration of Israel if we haven't been through all these kingdoms? It's an interesting problem that comes up here. Daniel is very sensitive to it; after all, this man was high up in the administration of both the Babylonian and Medo-Persian kingdoms. He had to stay on top of the movements of history so he's got to deal with this. It looks like the prophetic utterances of Scripture are wrong. We can well imagine him saying well gee, I'm reading here in Jeremiah, Lord, that 70 years are up, that ought to be it, but on the other hand You've spoken through me and You've said there'll be four kingdoms. What's going on Lord?

That's why he seizes on something that's very, very interesting. Notice in verses 4, 5, 6, and 7, that he does not approach this theoretically. Daniel isn't abstracting himself from the prophecy. Often times you get people who are all interested in the details of prophecy forgetting that knowing the future has to be applied today. There's got to be a *today* application or it's of no spiritual benefit to me. So what Daniel does instead of taking a fatalistic view, and when we get into the doctrinal section you'll see how this comes out in his prayer, but he's not saying whatever will be will be. He's an astute enough student of the Jeremiah text, in Jer 29, to understand that restoration that's going to happen in 70 years can't happen without confession. Jer said when "you call upon Me and come and pray to Me...I will listen to you." So Daniel knows confession is involved.

Why is that? What principle? Let's go back to OT history. There's the principle. How did they get in the Exile in the first place? Sin. Why Exile? It was discipline because of the sin. For the discipline to be removed, what has to happen? Confession of sin. Daniel recognizes the principle and immediately in Daniel 9 he applies it. That's why he has that big long prayer, just basic elementary theology. He doesn't just say, well, this 70th year we don't have to do a thing, it's just going to happen all by itself. It doesn't work that way. So he starts to pray and it's a prayer that's very well designed, very organized on the basis of Scripture.

Then in verse 20 the answer comes, and God's answer is an explanation of Jeremiah's prophecy. There are a lot of issues that come out of this. We'll

take up those issues in some appendices that cover the issue of the millennium; premillennial, postmillennial or amillennial because I want to go over how you interpret prophecy. The arguments aren't between the different views. The argument is over what are the rules you use to interpret prophecy. That's where the debate is. Here we know that there are 70 literal years. How do we know that? Because Jeremiah said so. And we know that subsequently from 586 BC to 516 BC, that's the exile. In 516 BC they're coming back to the land, so we verify. It wasn't 70 months, it was 70 years. The angel sent from God now begins to interpret the Jeremiah prophecy, and adds something to it, not in conflict, but to supplement it because the angel is giving Daniel his answer.

The angel is going to answer Daniel's question as to how it can be that Jeremiah said restoration in 70 years, yet you have to go through four Gentile kingdoms before the Son of Man comes. So the angel says, verse 24, and it literally reads in the Hebrew, "Seventy sevens have been decreed for your people and for your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness." What that literally says is Daniel, there's going to be seventy sevens here; for Jeremiah, the initial condition that verified was seventy years. But the angel says in answer to your question, this is a partial restoration, because the nation spiritually has not nationally confessed her sin. Daniel confessed, maybe a few others did here and there. But it's not a nation-wide confession, so the restoration isn't nation-wide; it's only partial-wide.

The angel says now we're going to have seventy sevens. Prophetic scholars interpret this "seven" as a unit of years, or 490 years, five centuries of time. Five centuries of history until, it says, these six things will happen, the transgression is finished to make an end of the sin, etc...Let's go back to Israel's history and look at the end of sin. What does the angel mean when he says "the end of sin?" He's referring to the fact that the nation is in trouble because of their sin. The exile, the angel says, in other words, will continue, partially, 490 more years until the nation is cleansed of her sin.

Let's come back to the text, he details it. There are complexities in here, because obviously Christ hasn't come in 490 years to end the transgression, to make an end of sin and so forth. So let's look at the fine print. The fine print says, verse 25, "So you are to know and discern that from the issuing of

a decree to restore and rebuild Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince there will be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks,” so we’re given a bracketed time period here of seven weeks and sixty-two weeks, which is sixty nine weeks. “it will be built again, with plaza and moat, even in times of distress.” That’s the Gentiles giving Jews authorization to rebuild Jerusalem in a difficult time.

Verse 26, “Then after the sixty-two weeks the Messiah will be cut off,” this is an eloquent prophecy. The Messiah is going to come in here, after seven plus sixty-two, after sixty-nine weeks, or 483 years, it says Messiah will come but He will be cut off. That places him in the Roman Empire if you do the math. This prophecy is so exact. Granted, there are some problems with chronology because there are three or four answers to what year the decree was issued, there are issues about the length of years, but we’re not off here by a lot. That’s the time period; it gets locked down between this decree and the cutting off of the Messiah, that’s His crucifixion. It says clearly that the Messiah is going to be crucified. The interesting thing is you would have thought somebody in the NT, with all the arguments that were going around about Jesus Christ, somebody besides Jesus would have referenced this passage. Here the Pharisees are, the students of the day, and they never discussed the passage that talks about the Messiah being cut off.

So Messiah is going to be cut off and have nothing. He’s going to basically be rejected by the nation. He’s going to be cut off, He has nothing, and the people of the “prince who is to come,” there’s a prophecy that’s very relevant to us today. “The people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city and the sanctuary.” Who are those people? The people who invaded Jerusalem in AD70, the Romans. The Bible says those peoples are the peoples of the “prince who is to come.” “The prince who is to come” is going to come out of the stock of these people. It says that they “will destroy the city and the sanctuary. And its end will come with a flood’ even to the end,” and then you’ll notice, whereas in verse 26 it says “the people of the prince who is to come will destroy the city,” there the subject of the verb “to destroy” is the people.

But if you go down to verse 27 a subtle change happens in the text. Notice now the subject is no longer a plural but it is a singular, and it says “And he will make a firm covenant with the many for one seven.” “He,” who is “He?” He is “the prince who is to come,” the great ruler who is to come, we know

him as the antichrist. He will come, he “will make a firm contract with the many for one week, but in the middle of the week he will put a stop to sacrifice and grain offering; and on the wing of abominations will come one who makes desolate, even until a complete destruction”; this is given further explanation in the book of Revelation.

Our point here is not to go into a big prophecy exposition; our point is that the angel is expanding prophecy at this point. He’s adding to prophecy, he’s not contradicting it. He’s explaining that history unfolds on many levels. Now, from the standpoint of God history is already in His head. He’s omniscient and He knows everything that’s going to come to pass. The problem is we never can get in His head. He’s incomprehensible to us, and for us to sit here and think that we can draw a diagram of all the knowledge that God has in his head makes us God.

All we have is what He has chosen to reveal, Deut 29:29, “the secret things belong to the LORD our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our children forever that we may do them.” What He has in His mind He only knows. He reveals bits and pieces, that can be known, what He hasn’t revealed, can’t be known.

The point of the angel to Daniel is that there are very specific things Daniel, history has a pattern; history has a purpose. It is not contradiction, it will all work out. That’s the big message we want to get from Dan 9 and Jer 29, it’s a partial restoration until the nation confesses.

THE LAST OF THE OT PROPHETS

We want to move to something else, three prophets conclude the OT during this period of the restoration and they have a dual theme we want to pull out. There’s a tendency to say when prophecy is being fulfilled man isn’t involved, man isn’t responsible, just back off and let God do His thing. To show you that’s wrong these three guys stress God’s sovereignty and man’s responsibility. So open your Bible to the unopened part. Go to Haggai. Keep in mind that these people have gone back into the land, they’ve settled there, they’ve rebuilt their homes, they’ve experienced fulfilled prophecy. And you could say, well then they don’t have any responsibility. Oh, but they do, notice verse 5. “Now therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways! 6““You have sown much, but harvest little; *you* eat, but *there is* not

enough to be satisfied; *you* drink, but *there is not enough* to become drunk; *you* put on clothing, but no one is warm *enough*; and he who earns, earns wages *to put* into a purse with holes.” ⁷Thus says the LORD of hosts, “Consider your ways!” What’s the appeal that the Lord is making through Haggai? Is it to just sit there and do nothing because prophecy has been fulfilled? No, it’s to get with it. They have a responsible area of the will of God for their lives. So Haggai addresses the need for human responsibility. And then in verses 21 and 22 we have the other side, he shows the sovereignty of God in ultimately blessing the nation Israel, “...I am going to shake the heavens and the earth. ²²‘I will overthrow the thrones of kingdoms and destroy the power of the kingdoms of the nations; and I will overthrow the chariots and their riders, and the horses and their riders will go down, everyone by the sword of another.’ ²³‘On that day,’ declares the LORD of hosts, ‘I will take you, Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, My servant,’ declares the LORD, ‘and I will make you like a signet *ring*, for I have chosen you,’ ” declares the LORD of hosts. He’s talking to the leaders of this group.

We see the same dual theme in Zechariah which we don’t have time to do, but keep in mind Zechariah is another guy, he’s the next fellow in line here. Turn to the last book of the OT, Malachi 1:6, and again let’s ask a question of the text. Is he saying I’m sovereign, do nothing or is he addressing their responsibility, their human responsibility? “A son honors *his* father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?” says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, ‘How have we despised Your name?’ ⁷“*You* are presenting defiled food upon My altar. But you say, ‘How have we defiled You?’ In that you say, ‘The table of the LORD is to be despised.’ ⁸“But when you present the blind for sacrifice, is it not evil? And when you present the lame and sick, is it not evil? Why not offer it to your governor? Would he be pleased with you? Or would he receive you kindly?” says the LORD of hosts.” This is a little racket that was going on in the temple, sort of a fore view of what happened when Jesus had to clean it out.

There Malachi is addressing human choice. But if you turn to the end of the book, Mal 4:5-6, you’ll see it always ends, at the end of these guys, they all look forward to God’s great sovereign works that will culminate history in the future. “Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. ⁶“He will restore the hearts of the

fathers to *their* children and the hearts of the children to their fathers, so that I will not come and smite the land with a curse.” See, ultimately they will confess. He’s going to pull it off where the nation gets blessed under His sovereignty but only when they meet the human responsibility of confession. Human responsibility is the means through which the blessing comes.

That’s why, we’ll mention it, when Jesus came into Jerusalem the last days of His life, He made that strange remark to the crowds. They were gathered together and He said you will not see Me until you say “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord,” and He’s quoting a Psalm. What He’s saying is I’m not coming back, Israel, I can come back any time, but I’m not going to come back until you invite Me. You’re the nation that crucified Me, and you’re the nation that is going to have to invite Me back. So it’s up to the choice of Israel, and in that sense, and this is kind of a unique way to think about it, but in that sense Israel is a stumbling block to world peace, real world peace, because until Israel gets right with the Lord, the world can’t get right. It’s all pending, it’s all waiting, the Jew first and then the Gentile.

THE CLOSING AND TRANSMISSION OF THE CANON

We’ve covered Daniel and Daniel’s decree. We’ve covered the last of the OT prophets. There’s one other thing we need to pick up. I want to deal with another problem that we get into as believers, and that is what about the thing that we hold in our lap. Is this the word of God or isn’t it. It’s a struggle; Christians have struggled with this. Notice the doctrinal statement of the church. Our doctrinal statement does what most doctrinal statements do when they talk about the word of God; they say we believe in the inspired Bible in the original autographs. That’s correct as far as it goes. The problem is how do we know what we’ve got approximates the autographs. It’s great to know the word of God came inerrant; 1900 years ago through sinners like the Apostle Paul guided by the Holy Spirit, but how do we deal with the textual variants 1,900 years later? That’s the issue we’re going to talk about now as the OT canon comes to a close.

I’ll tell you why we spend time addressing this. This isn’t just seminary stuff; this is practical because Islam attacks right here. The Muslim argues that they have direct lineage back to AD600 on their text because it was written in Arabic, and it was passed on by scholars who took it right from Mohammed, there’s no breaks in it, etc. But you Christians, you don’t have a

continuous line of text, you just have some manuscripts here and there, and the Bible's contaminated. What you hold in your lap is just a shredded version of the word of God. So we need the Koran, the Koran corrects the Bible; the Koran has superior authority to the Bible because the Koran has a better textual lineage.

Let me back up one step before we get into this. You might not always get this from a Muslim; you can get this from an ordinary person on the street, secular humanists. They'll argue well, you can't really be sure that what you guys have in there, that Bible thing that you've got, you can't be sure that that's the way it was originally, after all, 1900 years have come and gone since that text was written. How can you be sure of that. A quick turn around, remember we said it gets back to one of the martial arts called jujitsu. Jujitsu uses a technique where you take the guy's punch and pull it further and use it against him, that way he's expending all the energy and you make it easy to pin him down. That technique can work with apologetics too. If you really are convinced that we don't have the original text of the Bible that must also mean we don't have the original text of Aristotle, we don't have the original text of Plato, we don't have the original text of any other historical book. So fine, dump the Bible out but dump all the rest of the books too. Why are you bothering studying all those other books?

The textual evidence behind the Scripture is much better. Any good text on the introduction to the Bible will cover these evidences. What we want to deal with is the overall concept of what happened in the closing years of Israel because here's where the text problem started. The reason is that the OT ended here. With Malachi the OT was closed. No further text, it's ended, terminated, over and out! No more revelation. For 400 years no revelation, no prophets, no word from God, only the surviving texts of these prophets.

So they're going into a period of silence, no verbal revelation, no confirming miracles for over 400 years, total silence. Several evidences support what I'm saying. Not one of the many books written during this period of the silence of God ever was considered as inspired Scripture worthy of being included in the OT canon. Other evidences show that the people themselves knew there was a silence. In 164BC, for example, when Judas Maccabeus wanted to cleanse Antiochus' abominations from the Temple, he and the priests tried to decide what to do," and here's a quote and I italicized a little section in the

quote so you can see how the Jews thought 160 years before Jesus. They're dealing with a problem, they don't have any prophets, they don't have any text, but they're conscious of that. Look at what Maccabees says, "So they tore down the altar, and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill *until there should come a prophet to tell them what to do.*" (1 Macc 4:46). How did they know there weren't any prophets?

Let me say that again so we make sure we understand the implications of that italicized part of that sentence. The very fact that they know they didn't have a prophet tells you that they knew when there were prophets. Something about the real thing convinced the people, and they knew intuitively, in spite of the fact that Judas Maccabeus was a great Jewish leader, he could have qualified to have been the Messiah, and this guy knocked off some of the ugliest people in history. If you ever want to read 1 Maccabees in the Catholic Bible, it's a neat book, a tremendous story of Jewish history. In that Judas could have been considered a Messiah, he delivered his people. But he himself knew that he wasn't the Messiah and not only did he know that he wasn't the Messiah, he knew he couldn't even claim to be. Not only that, he knew there wasn't even a prophet around. This is what he said. These are his words, we're not making this up, this is his own words.

What do we say then? A principle grows out of this, we studied it last year but it comes to dramatic focus here. You can't have Scripture written without a living prophet. Those two go together. Let me say it another way backwards. This is what is wrong with people in evangelical circles who talk today about this prophet, the gift of prophecy is operating. If the gift of prophecy is operating today, where's Revelation 23? The gift of prophecy functions to generate the word of God in writing. That's the way it has always operated. We've got the record here; it goes back a while, two or three thousand years of record.

Why all of a sudden are we getting jerked all around and saying now the prophetic gift doesn't do that? It always has, what changed now? So when we see these two, put these two words together in your head, it'll save you grief, believe me, because you'll hear people make these inane remarks and don't think what they're saying.

If the OT text ended here, what do we do between the OT and the Lord Jesus Christ? That's all we're going to deal with. We're not going to handle between the end of the OT and us; we're going to deal between the end of the OT and the Lord Jesus Christ. Here we have a period of about 400 years. How do we know that the Lord Jesus Christ and the apostles had the OT text? It's the same question that we're being asked. How do we know we have the NT text? Well, how did the Lord Jesus Christ know he had the OT text? It hadn't been written for 400 years. It goes back to manuscripts.

Visualize a map of the Near East, here you have Israel and over here you have Babylon, and Egypt. So you had three centers of the Jewish community. The people over in Babylon had gone into Exile, they took the OT with them, and they started copying the text. They were very, very faithful to the text, for reasons which we'll go into later. These people are called the Masoretes. They preserved a tradition of OT texts that translators used to translate to the English version. After the Exile you have the partial restoration, they take the OT back to Israel and start copying, so you have a family of texts coming out of Israel. Then you have some Jews that went down into Egypt with a Hebrew text also, but what happened to it people don't know. They went ahead and translated it into Greek, which is the Septuagint. Sometimes you're reading and you'll see a Roman Numeral LXX, that's the symbol for the OT Bible in Greek. It was a pop version of the OT for the street. They spoke Greek, they'd forgotten their Hebrew, they didn't speak Hebrew any more; Greek was the language of the world at the time. So they translated the Hebrew Bible into Greek.

Along comes Qumran, in 1948 an exciting story of a little Arab boy that was throwing rocks, boys always throw rocks, and he chunked this rock up into what they call Cave 1, up by the Dead Sea, and he's used to hearing it go clunk, clunk, clunk, and one day he heaved the rock up and it made a funny noise. So he walked into the cave and saw these clay pots, and the rock had shattered one of these pots. He started rummaging around; he found some of these old texts. The story has taken some time to get straightened out but it's a fascinating story and the chief guy, if you want to read it, is Randall Price's book *Secrets of the Dead Sea Scroll*, and he actually traces that the original discovery was about 1936 or so, and what they found were that these ancient texts had been buried by the Qumran community. These texts date from around 100-150BC. The texts were old; they'd been preserved in this dry

environment inside these clay pots for 2,000 years. So now we have the Dead Sea scrolls. We've got three things here. We've got the Babylonian text, we've got the Qumran scroll text, and we've got this Greek text that had a Hebrew text behind it.

Verse of Isaiah 53:1-5	Hebrew Masoretic Text (~AD980)	Hebrew Qumran Isaiah Scroll A (~125BC)	Greek Septuagint (LXX) (~200BC)
1	on whom	to whom	to whom
2	form* comeliness see him* desire him*	form* comeliness** see him* desire him*	form comeliness see him beauty
3	man of sorrows known by grief he was despised	man of sorrows knows grief we despised him*	man in calamity knows grief he was despised
4	he has borne*	he has borne*	he has borne
5	by his wound	by his wounds	by his wound

Differences in textual readings for Isaiah 53:1-5 between the modern Masoretic text and the text of the Qumran Dead Sea Scrolls and the Greek LXX. *refers to spelling differences; **means synonym used.

Now let's test. That's what I do on this chart. Let's look at how these texts differ. Everybody says oh, there are big differences in the text. Let's see what the big differences are.

I have chosen a very interesting passage of Scripture, Isaiah 53. I've taken five verses of Isaiah 53 and I've gone through all three of those texts. The Hebrew Masoretic text, you'll see dates on that table, notice the date on Hebrew Masoretic Text is AD980; you say wait a minute, AD980. Yes, that's the oldest that we have of this textual tradition, this Babylonian text type. The earliest manuscript we've got is AD980, which makes an interesting text. How many years difference between the Masoretic text and the Qumran text, its date is 125 BC? The Hebrew text that we have existing is 980 AD. That's a thousand years between those two texts. Absolutely true, it's over a thousand years. The Greek Septuagint dates from 200BC. Where do you suppose we get sources for the Septuagint that existed in Jesus' day, because He quotes from it? So our Greek text of the NT has embedded in it the Septuagint text. It has other texts too but it has this one.

Here are the BIG differences that people talk about between these texts. In verse 1, it says “on whom,” the other one says “to whom,” and the other one says “to whom,” a prepositional difference in the text. In verse 2 where I have an asterisk on “form*” you know, “without form or comeliness,” we know the asterisk refers to a spelling difference, no change in the words, it’s just spelled differently. On the second word in verse 2, “comeliness,” the double asterisks means there’s a synonym, another noun was substituted for “comeliness,” it means the same thing. The other one, “see him*” and “see him*” is a spelling difference; “desire him*” and “desire him*” a spelling difference, but the Greek Septuagint reconstructs that sentence and makes “desire” the verb into an adjective, adjectivally.

Notice in verse 3 where the text reads “man of sorrows,” “man of sorrows,” “man in calamity.” That’s the difference between the texts: “known by grief,” “knows grief,” “knows grief.” Then “he was despised,” “we despised him,” “he was despised.” (4) “he has borne” is just a spelling difference. That’s the kind of stuff you get into. That’s 90-95 % of the stuff that’s like that. I can bring in a Hebrew Bible and you can see all the little notes, and sometimes if you have a Greek text you’ll see the fine print down at the bottom; that’s giving you all the textual variants they find in the manuscripts. Sometimes it’s interesting to check out.

But our point is that there’s the evidence that something preserved the text. On page 82 -read that text with me. “Exactly how there came to be a fairly standard OT text in Christ’s time is not well understood. Apparently Ezra began a movement to ‘update’ the OT text into the language of the people.” Where did Ezra live? Babylon or Palestine? He was one that came to Palestine. If you look up in Neh 8:1, 2, 8, he is explaining the text to the people, meaning he was popularizing it and translating it because some of the archaic expressions he was smoothing out. That’s what that means in Nehemiah 8. “Scribes after him copied his text-type, portions which show up at Qumran and which may form the forerunner of the Greek translation in Egypt of the OT known as the Septuagint (LXX). While this copying was going on in Palestine and Egypt among the restoration remnant of Jews, other Jews still in Babylon also faithfully copied the OT text. Eventually, the Babylonian text-type came West to Palestine and was selected” by somebody, “as the ‘standard’ text for many books of Scripture.”

One little added note, we'll get into this in the doctrine next week, but what happened was that that standardization occurred among the rabbis, and they chunked all the other texts. They decided, they must have had a conference, its suspected this is what happened about AD90 at the Council of Jamnia: they had a conference and they said this is confusing, we've got people with this text, that text, we're going to standardize it, and they chose the Babylonian text-type. The interesting thing was that happened after Jesus Christ and the apostles. Which means and here's the neat thing, we'll draw a doctrinal conclusion from this later, when Jesus walked the face of this earth with the apostles, the text of the OT varied more than it does today, because when they walked the face of the earth they had three translations. We, today, have only one left.

So they had to deal with this. They had three different textual traditions. And they quoted from all three. They didn't have a problem with it. There are evidences of the Qumran text quoted in the NT, evidences of the Greek Septuagint quoted in the NT, evidences of the Masoretic text quoted in the NT. They appeared to be totally oblivious or could care less what text type they used. This should say something to us when we get uptight about translation material. That's the way it was, I'm not saying that translation isn't important, we'll get into that, but I want you to see that the text on the one hand is very well preserved; on the other hand it does have variations that are perfectly acceptable to Jesus and the Apostles.

Next week we're going to get to the conclusion of this period, we're going to start tying it together in the form of certain doctrines, and obviously the first doctrine we're going to deal with is the doctrine of canonicity, particularly the preservation of the canon. We'll pull this together and draw some conclusions.

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