

GATECITY CHURCH

CRY OUT: The Tale of Two Mountains

May 14, 2023 – Hannah Stevens

I. Review

- A. Last week we asked God to impact our hearts with His faithful, zealous heart for the people of Israel. We looked at how God's chesed love. How God has intentioned that He will have a people for His own possession and that He will give Himself completely to them!
1. God reveals His faithful and burning heart of love for the people of Israel through His covenant promises that are laid across the metanarrative of Scripture. There are seven covenantal promises of God as revealed in the Scriptures. Last week we looked at the first four: Adamic, Noahic, Abrahamic, and Mosaic.
 2. This morning we are going to go on a journey from Mt. Sinai to Mt. Zion. We see that as God walks the path of history with mankind, He's getting closer and closer and closer to His people.

II. Mount Sinai

- A. Let's return to where we ended last week, on Mt. Sinai (the Mosaic covenant). The people of Israel have just been set free from 400 years of oppression and slavery in Egypt. They are in shock and awe and wonder at the miracles God has performed to shake them loose from slavery. They've just walked through a dry sea with walls of water held back, They gather at the mountain. And God is about to come to them.

Exodus 19:9 "The Lord said to Moses, "See, I will come to you in a thick cloud. So the people may hear when I speak with you, and may believe you forever."

- B. The people prepare for three days for the coming of God to the mountain. And on the third day, God comes.

Exodus 19: 16 On the morning of the third day there was thunder and lightning. A cloud covered the mountain, and a very loud horn sounded. All the people among the tents shook with fear. 17 Then Moses brought the people from among the tents to meet God. They stood at the base of the mountain. 18 Mount Sinai was all in smoke because the Lord came down upon it in fire. Its smoke went up like the smoke of a stove. And the whole mountain shook. 19 The sound of the horn became louder and louder. Moses spoke, and God answered him with thunder.

- C. The Giving of the Law

1. The giving of the Law was the next step in God's plan in bringing His people closer to Himself and drawing nearer to them.

Galatians 3:24 "Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. (vs. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.)

2. The law was never meant to be the end. It was the next step in a growing revelation of God that met the people where they were but also showed them their greater need for a savior.

Romans 7:12 "So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good."

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13 Did that which is good, then, become death to me? By no means! Nevertheless, in order that sin might be recognized as sin, it used what is good to bring about my death, so that through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.

3. The law was beautiful and good. But here is where the Jewish people (and perhaps many of us today) made a serious error. **They put their faith in the law itself instead of the God who had given the law.** They submitted themselves to the law as their Taskmaster, the way Egypt had been.

Exodus 1:11 “Therefore they set taskmasters over them to afflict them with heavy burdens.”

4. An Example.
5. The law was not meant to be a Taskmaster. The law was meant to be a tutor to lead people to Christ. This is not a small distinction.
6. A Testimony

III. The Land

- A. So the years go by.. Israel enters the promised land and God helps them conquer their enemies. As Israel progresses to the land, we see the Fifth covenant made, what scholars call The Palestinian covenant.
- B. **The Palestinian Covenant** (made with Israel) is God's declaration that Israel is intimately knit with a geographic location set apart for them related to their obedience. Their obedience and disobedience would have a direct impact on the actual land itself – as Isaiah would later declare: Israelites and the land are “married” (Isaiah 62:4). Despite their future disobedience, God is committed to fully establish them in the land of promise. This covenant reveals that God is zealously committed to establish us into our inheritance despite our weakness.

Deuteronomy 30:1-10 “So it shall be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have set before you, and you call them to mind in all nations where the Lord your God has banished you, 2 and you return to the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul according to all that I command you today, you and your sons, 3 then the Lord your God will restore you from captivity, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. 4 If your outcasts are at the ends of the earth, from there the Lord your God will gather you, and from there He will bring you back. 5 The Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will prosper you and multiply you more than your fathers 6 “Moreover the Lord your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live. 7 The Lord your God will inflict all these curses on your enemies and on those who hate you, who persecuted you. 8 And you shall again obey the Lord, and observe all His commandments which I command you today. 9 Then the Lord your God will prosper you

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abundantly in all the work of your hand, in the offspring of your body and in the offspring of your cattle and in the produce of your ground, for the Lord will again rejoice over you for good, just as He rejoiced over your fathers; 10 if you obey the Lord your God to keep His commandments and His statutes which are written in this book of the law, if you turn to the Lord your God with all your heart and soul.

1. This covenant, found in Deuteronomy 30:1-10, noted God's promise to scatter Israel if they disobeyed God, then to restore them at a later time to their land. This covenant has been fulfilled twice, with the Babylonian Captivity in 597 BC and subsequent rebuilding of Jerusalem under Cyrus the Great; and with the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70, followed by the reinstatement of the nation of Israel in 1948.
2. The intimate relationship between the people of Israel and the promised land is important because it is the chosen land that God has picked from which to rule and reign over the entire earth. The land of Israel is precious to the Lord.

Matthew 25:31-32 “31 “But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him;”

Jeremiah 3:17 “At that time they will call Jerusalem ‘The Throne of the Lord,’ and all the nations will be gathered to it, to Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord; nor will they walk anymore after the stubbornness of their evil heart.”

Revelation 22:3 “There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it [New Jerusalem] and His bond-servants will serve Him”

C. May 14, 1948-May 14, 2023

1. Today marks 75 years since Israel became a nation. There is a long and tumultuous struggle over the land of Israel and the city of Jerusalem that has extended for thousands of years.
2. The struggle of the land itself is tied to the Covenantal promises God spoke over the land. The enemy is ever seeking to destroy and thwart God's purposes.

Psalm 83: “Do not keep silent, O God! Do not hold Your peace, And do not be still, O God! 2 For behold, Your enemies make a tumult; And those who hate You have lifted up their head. 3 They have taken crafty counsel against Your people, And consulted together against Your sheltered ones. 4 They have said, “Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation, That the name of Israel may be remembered no more.”

3. There is a blessing for those who love the land of Israel like God does.

Psalm 122:6-9 “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: “May those who love you be secure. 7 May there be peace within your walls and security within your citadels.”8 For the sake of my family

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and friends, I will say, "Peace be within you."⁹ For the sake of the house of the LORD our God, I will seek your prosperity.

IV. David: a man after God's own heart

A. The years go by, Israel grows great in the promised land and they want a king like the other nations.. So two kings arise, First there is Saul, who was a king after the people's heart. Gods favor departed from him after he bowed to the opinions of the people instead of the word of God. But then came David, a man after God's own heart.

B. David was a different breed.

1. David KNEW God. He was different. He understood and honored the law. But the law was not His taskmaster. He sought to know the God behind the gift. Jesus Himself attests to this about David.

Luke 6:1-4 " Now it happened on the second Sabbath after the first that He went through the grainfields. And His disciples plucked the heads of grain and ate *them*, rubbing *them* in *their* hands. 2 And some of the Pharisees said to them, "Why are you doing what is not lawful to do on the Sabbath?" 3 But Jesus answering them said, "Have you not even read this, what David did when he was hungry, he and those who were with him: 4 how he went into the house of God, took and ate the showbread, and also gave some to those with him, which is not lawful for any but the priests to eat?" 5 And He said to them, "The Son of Man is also Lord of the Sabbath."

1 Samuel 13:14 But now your kingdom shall not continue. The LORD has sought for Himself a man after His own heart, and the LORD has commanded him to be commander over His people, because you have not kept what the LORD commanded you."

C. **The Davidic Covenant** (made with the house of David, King of Israel) is God's identification of the family line within the broader family of Judah and all Israel from which the Messiah (chosen, or anointed one), Savior (from all enemies), Deliverer (into all promises and blessing), and King (perfect ruler after God's own heart) would come from. It is then the declaration and promise that this future King would usher Israel and the whole earth into a glorious, everlasting kingdom.

2 Samuel 7:2 "the king said to Nathan the prophet, "See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains."

- a) Towards the end of his life David set his heart to build a house for the Lord – a glorious Temple that reflected the beauty, majesty, and power of God. He was grieved that his palace was beautiful while the presence of God dwelled in a simple tent. He wanted God the Father to be exalted in a manner that greatly surpassed any glory or splendor he possessed. God delighted in the heart of David to honor and bless the Lord – particularly his desire to fight with all of his might and wealth to establish a "resting place" for the Lord to dwell on the earth.

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David set his heart to fight for God and the desires of God's heart – that the greatness of God would be expressed fully on the earth. Thus God set His heart to fight for David.

2 Samuel 7:8-17 “Now therefore, thus you shall say to My servant David, ‘Thus says the Lord of hosts, “I took you from the pasture, from following the sheep, to be ruler over My people Israel. 9 I have been with you wherever you have gone and have cut off all your enemies from before you; and I will make you a great name, like the names of the great men who are on the earth. 10 I will also appoint a place for My people Israel and will plant them, that they may live in their own place and not be disturbed again, nor will the wicked afflict them any more as formerly, 11 even from the day that I commanded judges to be over My people Israel; and I will give you rest from all your enemies. The Lord also declares to you that the Lord will make a house for you. 12 When your days are complete and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your descendant after you, who will come forth from you, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He shall build a house for My name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be a father to him and he will be a son to Me; when he commits iniquity, I will correct him with the rod of men and the strokes of the sons of men, 15 but My lovingkindness shall not depart from him, as I took it away from Saul, whom I removed from before you. 16 Your house and your kingdom shall endure before Me forever; your throne shall be established forever.”” 17 In accordance with all these words and all this vision, so Nathan spoke to David.”

- b) David's desire to find a worthy dwelling place for the Lord blessed the heart of the Lord. However, to the Lord there was no place more desirable than in the redeemed hearts of His precious people. This could only happen if a worthy sacrifice could make a way for complete reconciliation for God and Man. This happens through David's line, in the person of Jesus.

Isaiah 66:1-2 ““Heaven is My throne and the earth is My footstool. Where then is a house you could build for Me? And where is a place that I may rest?” 2 “For My hand made all these things, Thus all these things came into being,” declares the Lord. “But to this one I will look, To him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word.”

- (1) The coming covenant would make the unthinkable possible. God would make His dwelling place inside of men, through the new and living way of His Son and the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Psalms 89:4 “I will declare that your love [chesed] stands firm forever, that you have established your faithfulness in heaven itself. You said, “I have made a covenant with my chosen one, I have sworn to David my servant, I will establish your line forever and make your throne firm through all generations.””

V. The New Covenant

- A. David longs for God to come nearer, and He does with the establishment of temple worship. But that's not enough for God. He wants to be closer still. And the prophets in the

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days before the first great exile. It's amazing at the height of Israel's hardheartedness, God is still proclaiming His plan to come closer still.

- B. **The New Covenant** (from Jeremiah 31:31-34; made with Israel but available for all to enter into) is God's declaration that the means to bring all of the earlier promises to pass and provide for all men a "new and living way" into relationship with God comes through the blood of His Son, Jesus. That the promised Davidic King who was appointed to rule was first appointed to die so that all mankind could enter into His kingdom was a shocking revelation of the perfect justice and mercy of God to make a way for wicked men to dwell with Him forever. The promise was first made to Israel and then extended to everyone who comes to Jesus Christ in faith.

Jeremiah 31:31-34 "31 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, 32 not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. 33 "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. 34 They will not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they will all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

Matthew 26:28 "Drink from it, all of you; 28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins."

Hebrews 9:15 "For this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, so that, since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance."

- a) The New Covenant is a covenant that God promised to bring Israel and the Jews into in the fullness of the times – yet along the way God uses the New Covenant as a means to bring in everyone from the nations of the earth that wanted to say "yes" to His invitation to come and satisfy our thirst to encounter the Living God. What were originally Jewish covenants and promises (Romans 9:4) are now available to all mankind (Acts 15:8-9; 15-17) without regard to race, gender, or social status (Galatians 3:26-29) – we are Christ's, we belong to Him, and therefore we are all now Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.
- b) As good as the Mosaic covenant was, the New Covenant is even better.

2 Corinthians 3 "7 Now if the ministry that brought death, which was engraved in letters on stone, came with glory, so that the Israelites could not look steadily at the face of Moses because of its glory,transitory though it was, 8 will not the ministry of the Spirit be even more glorious? 9 If the ministry that brought condemnation was glorious, how much more glorious is the ministry that brings righteousness! 10 For what was glorious has no glory now in

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comparison with the surpassing glory. 11 And if what was transitory came with glory, how much greater is the glory of that which lasts! 12 Therefore, since we have such a hope, we are very bold. 13 We are not like Moses, who would put a veil over his face to prevent the Israelites from seeing the end of what was passing away. 14 But their minds were made dull, for to this day the same veil remains when the old covenant is read. It has not been removed, because only in Christ is it taken away. 15 Even to this day when Moses is read, a veil covers their hearts. 16 But whenever anyone turns to the Lord, the veil is taken away. 17 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. 18 And we all, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his image with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

VI. For Freedom

A. This is why Christ came. For Freedom.

Galatians 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

B. Paul appeals to the church in Galatia. The church in Galatians were gentiles saved by the blood of Jesus. But they began to believe they needed to adhere to tenants of the Mosaic law, like male circumcision.

Galatians 4:9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years. 11 I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

- C. My question today for us, are there are any ways we living in bondage to sin, to vain works, to generational iniquity? Are there any ways we are taking up the works of the flesh with striving in our own strength, like slaves, instead of leaning into the freedom of sonship?
- D. We have two choices: We can live under the oppression of dead works and legalism, under the bondage of the sin that entangles us. We can be children of the bondwoman. Or we can be children of the freewoman, entitled to all the freedom and blessings of sonship.

Galatians 4:26 "26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all."

VII. Mt. Zion

Hebrews 12: 18-22 "18 For you have not come to the mountain that may be touched and that burned with fire, and to blackness and]darkness and tempest, 19 and the sound of a trumpet and the voice of words, so that those who heard it begged that the word should not be spoken

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to them anymore. 20 (For they could not endure what was commanded: “And if so much as a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned or shot with an arrow.” 21 And so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I am exceedingly afraid and trembling.”

22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel.

Appendix #1: Timeline and History of Jerusalem

Iron Age II (1000-529 BCE)

- 1000 BCE - King David Conquers Jerusalem; Declares City Capital of Jewish Kingdom
- 960 BCE - David's Son, King Solomon, Builds First Jewish Temple
- 721 BCE - Assyrians Conquer Samaria; Refugees Flee to Jerusalem and City Expands onto Western Hill
- 701 BCE - Assyrian Ruler Sennacherib Lays Siege to Jerusalem
- 586 BCE - Babylonian Forces Destroy Jerusalem and Demolish First Temple

Persian Period (539-322 BCE)

- 539 BCE - Persian Ruler Cyrus the Great Conquers Babylonian Empire, Including Jerusalem
- 516 BCE - Cyrus Permits Jews in Babylonian Exile to Return to Jerusalem; Second Temple Built
- 445-425 BCE - Nehemiah the Prophet Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem; City Confined to Eastern Hill

Hellenistic Period (332-141 BCE)

- 332 BCE - Greek Leader Alexander the Great Conquers Judea and Jerusalem
- 332-141 BCE - Ptolemaic and Seleucid Rule in Jerusalem

Hasmonean Period (141-37 BCE)

- 141 BCE - Hasmonean Dynasty Begins; Jerusalem Again Expands Limits to Western Hill
- 63 BCE - Roman General Pompey captures Jerusalem

Herodian Period (37 BCE - 70 CE)

- 37 BCE - King Herod Restructures Second Temple, Adds Retaining Walls
- 30 CE - Jesus Crucified by Romans in Jerusalem

Roman Period (70 - 324 CE)

- 70 CE - Roman Forces Destroy Jerusalem and Demolish Second Temple
- 135 CE - Jerusalem Rebuilt as a Roman City

Byzantine Period (324-638 CE)

- 335 CE - Church of the Holy Sepulchre Built
- 614 CE - Persians Capture Jerusalem
- 629 CE - Byzantine Christians Recapture Jerusalem from Persians

First Muslim Period (638-1099 CE)

- 638 CE - Caliph Omar Enters Jerusalem
- 661-750 CE - Jerusalem Ruled Under Umayyad Dynasty
- 691 CE - Dome of the Rock Built on Site of Destroyed Jewish Temples

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- 750-974 CE - Jerusalem Ruled Under Abassid Dynasty

Crusader Period (1099-1187 CE)

- 1099 CE - First Crusaders Capture Jerusalem

Ayyubid Period (1187-1259 CE)

- 1187 CE - Saladin Captures Jerusalem from Crusaders
- 1229-1244 CE - Crusaders Briefly Recapture Jerusalem Two Times

Mamluk Period (1250-1516)

- 1250 - Muslim Caliph Dismantles Walls of Jerusalem; Population Rapidly Declines

Ottoman Period (1516-1917)

- 1517 - Ottoman Empire Captures Jerusalem
- 1538-1541 - Suleiman the Magnificent Rebuilds the Walls of Jerusalem

British Mandate (1917-1948)

- 1917 - British Capture Jerusalem in World War I

Divided City (1948-1967)

- 1948 - State of Israel Established; Jerusalem Divided By Armistice Lines Between Israel & Jordan

Reunification (1967-Present)

- 1967 - Israel Captures Jerusalem's Old City and Eastern Half; Reunites City