

Triennial Torah Study – 2nd Year 01/10/2011

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<https://sightedmoon.com/files/TriennialCycleBeginningAviv.pdf>

Exodus 35	Jeremiah 3-4	Proverbs 7	Acts 5
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Exodus 35

Chapter 35 begins with instruction about the weekly Sabbath. God said, “You shall kindle no fire throughout your dwellings on the Sabbath day” (verse 3). A long-held Jewish interpretation is that it is wrong to start any fire on the Sabbath, such as a fire in a fireplace or just lighting a match. On the basis of this verse, some even argue that it is not permissible on the Sabbath to light a stove, turn on an oven or use any electrical device with a heating element, such as a hairdryer. Others go so far as to say that we can't start a car or even turn on a light switch on God's weekly Holy Day.

Yet the context here is important. There certainly may be a need to limit personal fire usage— as major fire maintenance can certainly become a violation of the Sabbath if a great deal of obvious work is involved (for example, moving logs and chopping them up or a major gathering of sticks, such as that in Numbers 15:32). However, this passage, occurring at the beginning of Moses' relaying of the instructions for building the tabernacle, is most likely referring to tabernacle construction. God, it appears, was telling them to not kindle industrial fires on the Sabbath—to melt silver or gold or forge other metals for the construction of the tabernacle. No doubt some minor smelting was done in individual homes, which was also forbidden by this proscription. Instead, all industry was to cease, even the special work of building the tabernacle, so people could give full attention to resting and worshiping God on the Sabbath as He commanded.

God has always wanted His weekly Sabbath day to be a blessing and a delight to us (Isaiah 58:13-14), not an intolerable burden as some would later make it out to be through their focus on overly restrictive rules. However, there are certainly general rules we should follow. For instance, as a general rule we must not be conducting our regular business on the Sabbath or using the Sabbath as a time to plan our regular work. Moreover, the Sabbath is not a time for sports and personal hobbies. Instead, the Sabbath is a time to focus on our relationship with God.

Jeremiah 3-4

The law stated in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 that, after a divorce where one spouse then marries another, and the second marriage is terminated by divorce or death, remarriage to the original spouse is forbidden. This is comparable to Israel's situation—but not exactly the same since Israel did not actually marry other gods (indeed, the false gods Israel has pursued don't really exist). While God looked upon the idolatry of Israel and Judah as “play[ing] the harlot with many lovers,” He says He will yet take her back if she will but repent (Jeremiah 3:1).

But that is not immediately forthcoming. God remarks, “You have had a harlot's forehead [never blushing]; you refuse to be ashamed” (verse 3; compare 6:15). Continually acting against one's conscience leads to a seared conscience (see 1 Timothy 4:2)—repeated immorality leads to amorality. Logically, one would think that Judah would have learned some fear of God when she saw God punish the house of Israel with divorce, destruction, and captivity. But no, “treacherous Judah” sank lower than Israel! Any appearance of returning to God was done “in pretense” (3:8-11).

It is interesting to note that though God says He issued a certificate of divorce to Israel (verse 8), He still claims to be married to the Israelites in verse 14. This is because, though God put away Israel as a whole, He maintained His covenant relationship with a remnant of Israel—in Jeremiah's day meaning the faithful of Judah. Yet God would also consider individuals of the house of Israel as part of this remnant if they would repent and return to Him (same verse). In verse 12 Jeremiah is told to proclaim the message to the north. This may well have been directed to those Israelites (the Scythians) who came back into the land of the northern kingdom at this time. They are said to be “more righteous” than Judah—which makes sense when we realize that many of these Israelites (perhaps humbled from their captivity) were soon going to help Josiah purge the land of idolatry and observe his great Passover.

Yet, as explained in the highlights for chapter 2, the message was meant for all the families of Israel—meaning this call to repentance is likely intended primarily for the end time. In the last days, much of end-time Israel is still to be found mainly to the north of Judea—northwest that is—prior to and during their final captivity (https://sightedmoon.com/sightedmoon_2015/?page_id=595). For those physical Israelites who repent, God will take them as individuals and join them to the faithful remnant of Israel—the remnant according to grace, (see Romans 11:5). Yet also intended here is the return from captivity of those of the physical remnant of Israel to God at the time of Christ's return—when, according to this and many other prophecies, they too collectively repent and become spiritual Israelites according to grace.

Israel and Judah will finally and truly return to God “in those days,” at which time the two houses will be rejoined (verse 18). Notice that Israel and Judah will “come together out of the land of the north” (same verse). This never happened in ancient times following the Assyrian captivity of Israel or the Babylonian captivity of Judah. It is clearly a prophecy of the end time.

Then the actual presence of Jesus Christ and the throne of the Lord will make the glory of Israel's history—when the Ark of the Covenant was merely a type of that throne—unimportant and unmemorable by comparison (verses 16-17). Incidentally, some have speculated that the fact of the ark not being mentioned anymore after Christ's return is an indication that it will have had prominent mention just prior to His return—that it may yet be found and play some part in end-time events if it was not destroyed in ancient times (see highlights on Isaiah 17-18). Of course, even an event as stunning and incredible as finding the Ark of the Covenant would be paled into utter insignificance by the return of Jesus Christ in power and glory to rule all nations.

At last, Israel and the world will have “shepherds according to My heart,” who will “feed the Israelites with knowledge and understanding” (verse 15). This likely had a forerunner in Jeremiah's day—meaning Jeremiah, Zephaniah, other contemporary prophets, faithful priests and the faithful king Josiah. They provided spiritual leadership to the Israelites returning back then. Today the shepherds are God's faithful ministers. And in the coming reign of Christ, which is apparently the predominant reference, the shepherds will be Christ, the glorified saints and righteous human leaders.

All Israel will then submit to God and revere Him as Father, no longer turning away from Him (verse 19). The nation will no longer respond in a mere pretense of repentance—for the return to God will be genuine (verses 22-25).

Jeremiah 4, which continues on from the end of chapter 3, begins with a play on words. God tells Israel, “If you will return [from captivity to their homeland]...return to Me [that is, in a spiritual sense—meaning repentance]” (4:1). In verse 3, the message is directed to the people of Judah—perhaps both to those of Jeremiah's day and to people far in the future. As for God's instruction to break up the fallow ground and not sowing among thorns, it should be noted that the reference is to “unused soil, not a regularly plowed field. Israel [including Judah] needed a new field in which to sow its seed of faithfulness, a radical departure from its ways of sin and idolatry” (Nelson Study Bible, note on verse 3).

In verse 4, we see that the main purpose of circumcision is to illustrate the need for mankind to remove any hardness of heart and all barriers separating us from God. This repeats what God told the Israelites just before He first brought them in to the Promised Land (see Deuteronomy 10:16). If the people refuse to heed, the consequences will be severe.

Verse 5 of chapter 4 begins a prophecy that continues to the end of chapter 6. It is addressed here at the outset to Judah and Jerusalem. This undoubtedly referred to the Jews of Jeremiah's day, but could also refer to future inhabitants of the land. Moreover, reference is later made to the recipients of the message being the “house of Israel” or “house of Jacob” as well as Judah (see 5:15, 19). Israel had been taken into captivity long before Jeremiah wrote, so that at least would seem to look to the future.

Still, the message was clearly intended for Jeremiah's fellow countrymen. Tragically, the people do not yet heed God's call to repentance (see 4:4). They are therefore instructed to “blow the trumpet” (verse 5), the shofar or ram's horn, an “alarm of war” (verse 19)—a symbol repeated throughout Scripture. For God will bring “disaster from the north.” As explained in the highlights

for chapter 1, this was the course of invasion followed by ancient Babylon and that will yet be followed by end-time Babylon.

The warning is to be raised from Dan to Ephraim (verse 15). These areas were in the northernmost and southernmost parts of the ancient northern kingdom and would have seen a northern threat coming against Judah.

God warns of “watchers” (verse 16), which could indicate advanced scouts of a coming army. However, the term may also be translated “besiegers” (Jamieson, Fausset & Brown’s Commentary, note on verse 16).

All this was rather unsettling to Jeremiah. He was “overwhelmed at what God was about to bring upon Jerusalem. This passage indicates the deep inner struggle Jeremiah faced in his proclamation of the divine message. Jeremiah challenged God’s dealings with His people, claiming that God had deceived the people with a message of peace” (note on Jeremiah 4:10). Remember that in chapter 3 God had just told Jeremiah to convey a message of Israel’s repentance and return under the reign of the Messiah. Now here he was delivering an ominous message of doom—to people he deeply cared about. God well understood Jeremiah’s compassion—and was no doubt merciful to him in his anguished remarks.

Verse 18 declares that the people have brought this on themselves. Just as in today’s world, God said the people are “experts at doing what is evil, but failures at doing what is good” (verse 22, Today’s English Version).

The prophet then sees in vision a destroyed land—employing the same language used in Scripture of the chaotic, desolate planet Earth before man’s creation (verse 23; see Genesis 1:2). It is now the result of the destruction God will bring because of the people’s sins (see verse 26). But thankfully, the land will not be utterly destroyed and not everyone will die (verse 27; 5:18). Yet the consequences will be severe—and, as the people are set in their sinful ways, the punishment is now inevitable (4:28).

If Zion tries to appease, distract and seduce her enemies—like a harlot with seductive clothes and makeup, offering favors—it won’t work (verse 30). Instead, she will soon experience unavoidable pain, as a woman in labor with her first child. And in the end, her lovers will become her murderers (verse 31).

Proverbs 7

The seventh exhortation (7:1-27) gives yet another warning against succumbing to the temptations of adultery.

The chapter begins with instruction to prize and be attentive to the father’s commands; which are, in fact, God’s commands. The son is to take wisdom as “sister” and understanding as nearest kin. “Sister” here may be used in the sense of a bride (see Song of Solomon 4:9-10, 12; 5:1-2). In any

case, a deep, close relationship is to be forged with all that constitutes wisdom. The young man must be prepared to escape the clutches of that ubiquitous adulteress.

An example is given of a gullible young man who did not escape. The woman perversely speaks of having offered peace offerings, which meant she could bring part of them home for a feast before God; yet her banquet, while her husband is away, is for the purpose of luring the young man into her home. And in he went to his own destruction. "Her house is a highway to the grave, leading down to the chambers of death" (verse 27, NIV).

When two people engage in premarital or extra-marital sex, the actual circumstances, motives and attitudes vary a great deal. They may both plan on having sex, or one may intentionally seduce the other, or they may be increasingly intimate in their affection and get carried away. Regardless, every couple that engages in immoral sex lacks or ignores the precious wisdom of God that He spells out in His Word for our protection, health and happiness. Wisdom includes making firm godly plans to remain pure. Any decisions made while emotional or sexually aroused will likely be foolish decisions. He who fails to plan plans to fail.

We should remember to see figurative parallels here between the way of wisdom and the way of folly and wickedness. Woman Folly later issues similar invitations with the same horrible result (9:13-18). And we will read of Woman Wisdom throwing a feast in her home and inviting the simple in (9:1-6); in that case a banquet we should be delighted to attend.

Acts 5

In Chapter 4 we read how the brethren were all of one accord and looking out for everyone. Act 4:34 For there was not anyone needy among them, for all who were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of what was sold, 35 and laid them at the feet of the emissaries, and they distributed to each as anyone had need.

36 And Yoseph, who was also called Barnab'ah by the emissaries (which means Son of Encouragement), a Lewite, a native of Cyprus, 37 having land, sold it, and brought the proceeds and laid it at the feet of the emissaries.

And then we come to chapter 5 and read

Act 5:1 But a certain man named H'ananyah, with Shappirah his wife, sold a possession. 2 And he kept back from the price, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the feet of the emissaries. 3 But Kepha said, "H'ananyah, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Set-apart Spirit and keep back from the price of the land for yourself? 4 "While it remained, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your authority? Why have you conceived this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to Elohim." 5 Then H'ananyah, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. And great fear came upon all those who heard of this. 6 But the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out and buried him. 7 And it came to be, about three hours later, that his wife came in, not knowing what had taken place. 8 And Kepha responded to her, "Say to me whether you sold the land for so much?" And she said, "Yes, for so much." 9 So Kepha said to her, "Why have you agreed to try the Spirit of

Yeshua? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they shall carry you out.” 10 And immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, they buried her beside her husband. 11 And great fear came upon all the assembly and upon all who heard of this.

H'ananyah, with Shappirah his wife lied to the Holy Spirit through Peter. They could have said they are only going to give so much and keep the rest just in case, but they wanted to appear as if they were giving of all they had just like Barnabah had done in chapter 4.

Act 5:34 But a certain one in the council stood up, a Pharisee named Gamli'el, a teacher of the Torah, respected by all the people, and ordered them to put the emissaries outside for a little while, 35 and said to them, “Men of Yisra'el, take heed to yourselves what you intend to do to these men. 36 “For before these days Tod'ah rose up, claiming to be somebody. A number of men, about four hundred, did join him. He was slain, and all who obeyed him were dispersed, and came to naught. 37 “After him, Yehud'ah of Galil rose up in the days of the census, and drew away many people after him. He also perished, and all who obeyed him were scattered. 38 “And now I say to you, stay away from these men and leave them alone, because if this plan or this work is of men, it shall be overthrown, 39 but if it is of Elohim, you are unable to overthrow it, lest you even be found to fight against Elohim.”

Brethren this section of Acts is very special to me. For when I was being told I was no longer welcome at The United Church of God I was very upset. And I said to them that if the things I was saying were not true then in a few months' time I would be proven false by those who were hearing me. But if what I was saying about the Sabbatical and Jubilee cycles were true, then there was no way anyone could stop this message from going forth.

That was in July of 2006. Since then this web site of www.sightedmoon.com has grown to be known around the world. That web site was quickly filled, and another began www.sightedmoon.com

We are about to have 1.5 million hits to the web site. The DVD about the Sabbatical cycles is growing and continues to be shared around the world. This led to The Prophecies of Abraham and it too continues to stun those who read it and understand it. Why? Not because of my great wit and intelligence for I barely graduated high school with a 51% average in English. Not is because of the Holy Spirit and the truths of His words that HE is allowing me to share this end time message of His soon coming and the many things that must happen just before that time.

With each week I am encouraged to do more and speak out more. I encourage each of you to help share this message of the Sabbatical years and the curses for not keeping them. Do not shy away from it.