

OT-OV

Lesson 25

1. Last week I taught Gen 12:4-6 and the Doctrine of The Canaanite Gods. In the process of analyzing the gods of the Canaanites I gave you several dates relating to the major religions of the world.

2. Before we look at Gen 12:7 I want to review again those dates given you last week; additionally I want to also provide several key dates relating to Israel. I will also provide a brief comment on each.

2.1 Sumerian Myths - just after the flood in about 5000 B.C. during the time of Nimrod-bar-Cush idolatry was born. The worship of multiple gods soon spread from Babylon throughout the world.

2.1.1 Satan unveiled a facade of much of God's reality to come. For example an essential part of the Sumerian Myths involved a cross, a virgin birth, and a resurrection. All of this was done in hopes of confusing mankind in order to obfuscate the reality when it came. Dwight Pentecost has written of this matter:

"The myths became the mystery religion of Phoenicia, and by the Phoenicians was carried to the ends of the earth. Ashtoreth and Tammuz, the mother and child of these hardy adventurers, became Isis and Horus in Egypt, Aphrodite and Eros in Greece, Venus and Cupid in Italy, and bore many other names in more distant places. Within 1000 years Babylonianism had become the religion of the world, which had rejected the Divine revelation. Linked with this central mystery were countless lesser mysteries ... Among these were the doctrines of purgatorial purification after death, salvation by countless sacraments such as priestly absolution, sprinkling with holy water, the offering of round cakes to the queen of heaven as mentioned in the book of Jeremiah, dedication of virgins to the gods, which was literally sanctified prostitution, weeping for Tammuz for a period of 40 days prior to the great festival of Istar, who was said to have received her son ... back from the dead; for it was taught that Tammuz was slain by a wild boar and afterwards brought back to life. To him the egg was sacred, as depicting the mystery of his resurrection, even as the evergreen was his chosen symbol and was set up in honor of his birth at the winter solstice ... The sign of the cross was sacred to Tammuz, as symbolizing the life giving principle and as the first letter of his name. It is represented on many altars today ... and did not, as many have supposed, originate with Christianity.

"From this mystery religion, the patriarch Abraham was separated by divine call; and with this same evil cult the nation that sprang from him was in constant conflict, until under Jezebel, a Phoenician princess, it was grafted on to what was left of the religion of Israel in the northern kingdom in the day of Ahab and was the cause of their captivity ..."

2.2 Canaanite gods --The Canaanites worshipped a panoply of gods such as Ashtoreth, Baal, Beelzebub, Rimmon, Milcom, Molech, Apis, et. al., from c. 3000-600 B.C. Because of these worship practices God instructed first Moses and then Joshua to destroy all who lived in the promised land.

2.3 Islam--became the religion of the Arab world which would include the land of Canaan beginning in about 600 B.C. when Mohammed heard voices purportedly from God. Satan had found a facsimile of Christianity/Judaism in Mohammed's new found "religion." Islam was a Satanic plot to make religion more respectable.

2.4 Hinduism--came on to the scene of history in c. 1800 B.C.; from India it spread across much of the oriental world.

2.5 Buddhism--developed in northern India when a number of dis-satisfied adherents to Hinduism began worshipping Buddha in c. 400 B.C.

3. I think our overview of the Old Testament will benefit from a review of various key dates; and now seems a good time. So away we go:

3.1 5000 B.C.--The flood most likely occurred about this time although there are those who would date the flood nearer a 3500 B.C. date.

3.2 2000 B.C.--Abram received his call to leave the land of Nimrod in Babylon and move to a promised land. Abram was saved when he heeded God's call and the Jewish race was born.

3.3 1450 B.C.--Moses leads the people out of Egypt; now we have the birth of Israel as a nation. It is in c. 1450 that Moses also began writing the Pentateuch (the first five books of our Bible).

3.4 1400 B.C.--Israel enters the land under the rule of General Joshua. They were supposed to kill the Canaanites but they did not.

3.5 1400 B.C - 1000 B.C was a time of Theocracy in which the twelve tribes of Israel were governed by judges. Soon however Israel decided God's plan was unacceptable; they wanted a King like the nations; the people would not listen to either Samuel or God, so the ugly head of federalism intruded on Israel's history.

3.6 1000 B.C - 800 B.C was a period when King Saul, King David and King Solomon ruled a united kingdom; after Solomon the Kingdom was divided into two autonomous states; Rehoboam ruled Judah in the south and Jeroboam ruled 10 tribes in the north with the Levites providing the priests for both kingdoms.

3.7 721 B.C.--Assyria defeats the Northern Kingdom making them a vassal state; the defeat resulted in Jews being relocated to Assyria and Assyrians being relocated to Israel, thus the birth of the Samaritans. This left only Judah, in the south as the remaining Jewish state.

3.8 606 B.C.--is a year of infamy in which Nebuchadnezzar, Babylon's King, first defeated Israel; many hostages such as Israel's king Jehoiakim, Shadrach Meshach, Abednego and Daniel were exiled to Babylon.

3.9 597 B.C.--Jehoiakim was replaced by Jehoiachin who soon rebelled against Babylon; this indiscretion resulted in another military defeat and more hostages like Ezekiel being taken to Babylon.

3.10 586 B.C. was a terrible year for Israel; Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's replacement, revolted against Nebuchadnezzar causing Babylonian's finest to destroy the city of Jerusalem and the Temple of Solomon.

3.10.1 It was in 586 that all but the "dregs" of Israel's population were exiled to Babylon under some of the most traumatic circumstances. Psalm 119 describes the rape, murder, and general abuse of Israel's masses. Zedekiah saw his sons murdered just before his eyes were gouged out.

3.10.2 Israel was officially under what the Bible calls "a final cycle of national discipline."

3.11 539 B.C.--saw Persia under Cyrus the Great defeat Babylon; In 538 Cyrus authorized the Jews to return to the land in order to rebuild the Temple. Some 50,000 Jews returned and began the work; by 520 B.C. they completed the foundation and the Ark of the Covenant and then stopped their Temple work. In 520 God raised-up Zechariah and Haggai to exhort the resumption of the work; their exhortations were successful and in 516 B.C. what would later be called Nehemiah's Temple was completed.

3.11.1 Herod later enlarges the Temple and changes its name to Herod's Temple; in A.D. 70 Herod's Temple was destroyed by Rome's finest under Titus.

3.12 475 B.C.--would seem to be a good approximate date for the events described in the Book of Esther; a Persian King, Ahasuerus after being defeated in 479 B.C. turns his attention to ruling at home where he becomes deeply involved in a story of tragedy, intrigue, adventure and victory involving Esther, Mordecai and the Jews living in Persia's vast hegemony.

3.13 445 B.C.--is the approximate year of Israel's authorization to return to the land to rebuild the city and its walls; the leader of this expedition was Nehemiah; the King authorizing the expedition was Artaxerxes .

3.13.1 This authorization is that contemplated by Daniel in Dan 9:24-27; it is from this regal promulgation that we compute the prophetic timing of the first Palm Sunday.

3.14 400 B.C. is given by many as the year in which the last book of the Old Testament was written; Malachi completed his book somewhere near 400 give or take 50 years.

3.14.1 The Old Testament was begun in c. 1450 B.C and completed in c. 400 B.C.

3.15 Ca.171 B.C was the year in which Antiochus Epiphanes plundered the Temple in Jerusalem; Antiochus was a Greek king whose family had inherited Israel from Alexander the Great.

3.15.1 As a result of the many pogroms of Antiochus against Israel, he precipitated the Maccabean rebellion which began in c. 170 B.C and in c. 167 B.C the Jews regained control of Jerusalem.

3.15.2 Israel had thus acquired their freedom from the Greeks: a freedom they would "enjoy" from 167 until 63 B.C. In 63 B.C a Roman Tribune named Pompey attacked and defeated the forces of Israel adding Israel as a jewel in the crown of Rome.

3.16 4 B.C is the most likely date for the birth of Christ; it is possible He could have been born as late as 2 B.C

3.17 In August of A.D. 70 Rome put down a Jewish rebellion in which they destroyed both the Temple and the city of Jerusalem leaving Judah a land without Jews. It was in August of A.D. 70 that the church age officially began and Israel was once again placed in a state of national discipline. They will remain under discipline until the Second Advent when Christ will once again embrace them as His people.

3.18 The New Testament was completed when John finished the Apocalypse; thus the Bible was written over a period of some 1600 years, by more than 40 men in three languages, spanning 60 generations from three different continents.

4. Now let's return to our analysis of verse seven.

5. Gen 12:7 And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.

5.1 "And the Lord appeared unto Abram ..."

5.1.1 There were to be great trials, great struggles and great blessings. The Lord who called Abram at the beginning now appears to him as he enters the land. With God such is always the case. His grace meets us at every point in our journey.

5.1.2 A nation may put soldiers on the field of battle without sufficient ammunition and supplies; but not so with God, there is always enough of His grace to go around. The battle recall is the Lord's. 1Sa 17:47

5.2 "Unto thy seed ..."

5.2.1 God has never required anything of a believer that He has not already furnished.

5.2.2 God demands righteousness and provides Christ. God demands conflict and He, Himself, comes to fight for His own (Exo 14:14).

5.2.3 The New Testament tells us that God was not promising something solely to the physical descendants of Abraham, but that He was promising it to Christ.

5.2.4 "Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring." It does not say, 'And to offsprings,' referring to many; but, referring to one, 'And to your offspring,' which is Christ." (Gal 3:16, RSV)

5.2.5 In modern language it would be: God, party of the first part, makes a promise to Abraham and Christ, joint parties of the second part ... But suppose that Abraham goes bankrupt? That makes no difference as long as Christ remains solvent.

Now for new material:

5.2.6 The promises are sure because they were made by God the Father.

5.2.7 The New Testament quotes this passage in order to make clear that God knew the difference between one and more than one, and that He used the singular here and not the plural because He was talking about Christ, the promised Messiah who would come through Abraham and Sarah.

5.2.8 This is great teaching on the nature of the Bible. Some insist that the thoughts and not the words are inspired. Satan hates the doctrine of verbal inspiration because he knows that such a belief is the true point on the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Heb 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

5.2.9 If he can break off the point of the Word of God, he will save himself many a riposte. Everyone who denies the inspiration of the Word plays into the devil's hands.

5.2.10 God says that He knows how to count and that He has sense enough to set down exactly what He means.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2Ti 3:17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

5.3 "There built he an altar ..."

5.3.1 In the place of the appearance of the presence of God, stood the altar which signified sacrifice, worship and communion. Back in Ur God had told Abram to go "to a land that I will show you."

5.3.2 Barnhouse has written: "Now Abram has seen it and God says, "this land I will give to your descendants." Abram builds an altar, for there is worship and communion that goes with the gifts and promises of God. Here is the first time in the Bible that God is said to have appeared to anyone. He called and spoke to Adam, Cain, Noah and Abram, but now to faith which has obeyed comes a manifestation of the presence of God that calls forth special worship."

6. Gen 12:8 And he removed from thence unto a mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east: and there he builded an altar unto the LORD, and called upon the name of the LORD.

End Lesson Taught 2-1-2004