



# bb-TBC-27

Context	<span>Bible Study</span> <span>Deliverable</span> <span>NLR</span> <span>Preaching</span>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DONE!	<input type="checkbox"/>
Day	Thu
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Delivered	<input type="checkbox"/>
Due Date	@July 8, 2021
Duration	
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Note:	
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Now with	
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Property 1	
Read attached docs	
Refs:	
Related to Projects (Column)	<a href="#">NLR bb-TBC - Study Guide</a>
Status	<span>Ready</span>
Who?	

☰ Working Title	The Remnant Returns
Σ days to go	-10
☰ with Allan H	
☰ with Ron B	

bb-TBC-27 The Remnant Returns

## Introduction: Part 1

The Better Covenant *-revisited-*

### ▼ The Library is now Open:

The History of Israel is made more complex as a result of the order of the Bible books.

The word 'bible' comes from a Greek word 'biblia' which is a plural and translatable simply as 'books'. If we remember that the originals were written on scrolls and that the Bible is a library of books we can extract the History of Israel throughout the Old Covenant period. In a modern library books are rarely ordered by the date they were written, or even by author. Usually the avenues of books are sorted according to category. This is true of 'he biblia', the books. Let's enter the Library of Eternal Truth. The Holy Scripture is a "Library of Holy Books"

### ▼ Ground Floor: The Old Covenant/Testament

"The Library" is first divided into two floors. On the ground floor, we have the books that were written "by and for" members of the Old/Sinai Covenant. Yes, even Genesis. Genesis was written to introduce its readers to the two parties to the Sinai Covenant; Jehovah and the Covenant Nation of Israel. It contains many other truths and is valuable for many other reasons but it is really an introduction to the Old Covenant (a better word than Testament). We would not be able to make sense of the Covenant that came into being in Exodus without the introductions to the cast list found in Genesis.

#### ▼ a recommendation:

There are many helpful 'histories of Israel' available. An older but helpful book of this kind is

FF Bruce 'Israel and the Nations' - The History of Israel from the Exodus to the Fall of the Second Temple. Still available in paperback.

▼ First Floor (UK) / Second Floor (USA): The New Covenant/Testament

The Gospel(s) and the Acts of the Apostles serve the same kind of purpose. They were written "by and for" members of the New Covenant. We would not be able to make sense of the New Covenant (a better word than Testament) without the introductions to the cast list found there. Again, they are many truths and life lessons throughout the whole.

As we explore our Library we discover that each floor has its books ordered by category not date. On the ground floor, we find the broad categories of the Sinai Law, followed by history and a section given over to books that have a more Poetic style. Then we discover 16! books of the life and work of Prophets. To understand the history we need to read the prophets but to understand the prophets we need to read the histories.

▼ another recommendation...

when you enter the 'Library' to begin the reading/study of a Bible book, ask two questions...

1. Which 'floor' am I on? ie Which Covenant is operating? Old Covenant or New Covenant?
2. Which shelf/category' am I in? ie What genre of Bible content am I in? History, Prophets, Poetic, Apocalyptic,

## Introduction: Part 2

▼ It was back in Study 25 that we began the theme of "The Remnant"

and I have spent more time than usual on the topic as I sometimes feel that the intersection of Israel's history and the ministry of the prophets, relative to the New Covenant, is not well understood. It's all about context, context, context... the historical context of the prophetic ministries of the Old Covenant record really lights up the long-term significance of their words.

#### ▼ Israel: the Northern Nation-State

A tiny trickle of 'Jehovah' worshippers had trickled south from the Northern Kingdom of Israel into the Southern nation-state of Judah and their history became joined to the history of the Judah. Ultimately they would be known as 'Jews' from the word Judah. They represented a 'remnant' of the Northern Kingdom that God had created as a judgement on the house of David. So that 'remnant' joined the Southern nation-state of Judah. The Northern nation-state of Israel ceased to exist and its peoples ceased to be identifiable as they merged with the conquering Empires. The Northern nation-state of Israel never returned from exile. Its existence as people and as a nation-state had ended.

##### ▼ The Prophet Amos had written her epitaph.

The virgin of Israel is fallen; she shall no more rise: she is cast down upon her land;  
there is none to raise her up. (Amos 5:2 ASV)

#### ▼ Judah: the Southern Nation-State

God gave times of respite and renewal during the next 130 years but finally God's 'strange works' of judgement brought the nation-state and kingdom of Judah to an end and her people were taken captive as the prophets had warned.

##### ▼ 2Chronicles 36:17–21 ASV

¶ Therefore he brought upon them the king of the Chaldeans, who slew their young men with the sword in the house of their sanctuary, and had no compassion upon young man or virgin, old man or hoary-headed: he gave them all into his hand.

And all the vessels of the house of God, great and small, and the treasures of the house of Jehovah, and the treasures of the king, and of his princes, all these he brought to Babylon.

And they burnt the house of God, and brake down the wall of Jerusalem, and burnt all the palaces thereof with fire, and destroyed all the goodly vessels thereof.

And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; and they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom

of Persia:

to fulfil the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed its sabbaths: for as long as it lay desolate it kept sabbath, to fulfil threescore and ten years. (2Chronicles 36:17–21 ASV)

▼ The Promises to the Exiles

So a 'remnant' of Israel mingled with the people of Judah were taken captive and 70 years later, exactly 'on schedule', a 'remnant' of those exiles in Babylon returned to the territory of Judah and began to re-colonise their ancient territory.

During their exile they were encouraged with the prophecies that had promised a triumphant return. Unlike the escape from Egypt, the escape from Babylon was going to be one glorious step after another. This time they would not journey through a hostile wilderness but through a garden paradise until they reach the promised land. Before the exile the prophets had painted the return in glowing colours.

▼ Isaiah 35:1–10 ASV

¶ The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.

It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing; the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon: they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the excellency of our God.

¶ Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees.

Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God; he will come and save you.

¶ Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped.

Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert.

And the glowing sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water: in the habitation of jackals, where they lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes.

And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way

of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for the redeemed: the wayfaring men, yea fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast go up thereon; they shall not be found there; but the redeemed shall walk there: and the ransomed of Jehovah shall return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads: they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. (Isaiah 35:1–10 ASV)

▼ Micah 2:12–13 ASV

¶ I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men.

The breaker is gone up before them: they have broken forth and passed on to the gate, and are gone out thereat; and their king is passed on before them, and Jehovah at the head of them. (Micah 2:12–13 ASV)

This, it appeared, would be a grand production, a spectacle that would put the first Exodus into the shade.

▼ The Remnant returns

In fact, other than that trickle that had joined the house of Judah before the Exile returned. How are we to understand these prophecies? Could there still be a future return of the vanished family tribes of the 'house of Israel'? As I write these words we are 2500 years further down our timeline and extracting the 'house of Israel' from the nations of the world is going to pose some unique problems.

A remnant of the remnants of the house of Israel and the remnants of the house of Judah did return.

It was a miracle of synchronisation and the superpowers tumbled and an almost unknown man, a tribal leader named Cyrus, took the centre stage... Somewhere around 535 BC an upstart 'nobody' toppled the mighty empire of Babylon; his name was Cyrus and he had been predicted by Isaiah 180 years earlier!

▼ Isaiah 41:2 ASV

Who hath raised up one from the east, whom he calleth in righteousness to his foot? he giveth nations before him, and maketh him rule over kings; he giveth them as the dust to his sword, as the driven stubble to his bow. (Isaiah 41:2 ASV)

▼ Isaiah 44:28 ASV

That saith of Cyrus, He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure, even saying of Jerusalem, She shall be built; and of the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid. (Isaiah 44:28 ASV)

▼ Isaiah 45:1 ASV

¶ Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him, and I will loose the loins of kings; to open the doors before him, and the gates shall not be shut: (Isaiah 45:1 ASV)

An historian once wrote eloquently of Cyrus; "the tapestry of history has no point at which you can cut it and leave the design intelligible. Yet the sudden rise to Empire around 550 BC of Cyrus the Prince of a petty Persian tribe, is almost such a point. Herodotus saw the event as the turning point of all Greek history."

Kingdoms tumbled one after another under Cyrus' conquering army and in the first year of his reign, he began a policy of returning exiled peoples to their original homelands. His royal decree targeted the exiles of Judah and the book of Ezra includes a copy from the Royal archive;

▼ Ezra 1:1–3 ASV

¶ Now in the first year of Cyrus king of Persia, that the word of Jehovah by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, so that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying,  
Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia, All the kingdoms of the earth hath Jehovah, the God of heaven, given me; and he hath charged me to build him a house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah.  
Whosoever there is among you of all his people, his God be with him, and

let him go up to Jerusalem, which is in Judah, and build the house of Jehovah, the God of Israel (he is God), which is in Jerusalem. (2 Chr 36:22 & Ezra 1:1–3 ASV)

And that wasn't the end of it, Cyrus returned much of the looted temple treasures to the exiles, although some key pieces like the Ark of the covenant were never retrieved.

Less than 50,000 people returned under the governorship of the Prince of Judah named **Zerubbabel** or to give him his Persian name, **Sheshbazzar**. Part of this group is described as the whole congregation; the Greek translation of the Bible used the word 'ekklesia', this was the recovered 'Church of Jehovah'. The new immigrants struggle to maintain their life and culture but they made the establishing of worship a priority and laid the foundations of a new temple. Peoples feelings were somewhat mixed;

▼ Ezra 3:10–13 ASV

And when the builders laid the foundation of the temple of Jehovah, they set the priests in their apparel with trumpets, and the Levites the sons of Asaph with cymbals, to praise Jehovah, after the order of David king of Israel.

And they sang one to another in praising and giving thanks unto Jehovah, saying, For he is good, for his lovingkindness endureth for ever toward Israel.

And all the people shouted with a great shout, when they praised Jehovah, because the foundation of the house of Jehovah was laid.

But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, the old men that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy: so that the people could not discern the noise of the shout of joy from the noise of the weeping of the people; for the people shouted with a loud shout, and the noise was heard afar off. (Ezra 3:10–13 ASV)

Part of the reason for the sorrow of the older generation was that they remembered the glories of Solomon's temple and these foundations of the second temple were on a much more modest scale. The project faltered and was hindered from within and without. One God's prophets brought a message of encouragement...

▼ Haggai 2:1–9 ASV

¶ In the seventh month, in the one and twentieth day of the month, came the word of Jehovah by Haggai the prophet, saying,  
Speak now to Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people, saying,

Who is left among you that saw this house in its former glory? and how do ye see it now? is it not in your eyes as nothing?

Yet now be strong, O Zerubbabel, saith Jehovah; and be strong, O Joshua, son of Jehozadak, the high priest; and be strong, all ye people of the land, saith Jehovah, and work: for I am with you, saith Jehovah of hosts, according to the word that I covenanted with you when ye came out of Egypt, and my Spirit abode among you: fear ye not.

For thus saith Jehovah of hosts: Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; and I will shake all nations; and the precious things of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith Jehovah of hosts.

The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith Jehovah of hosts.

***The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, saith Jehovah of hosts; and in this place will I give peace, saith Jehovah of hosts.*** (Haggai 2:1–9 ASV)

▼ ... we will save that until our next session. If you are watching or listening to this close to the time was first delivered please note that we have a problem with our Internet host and our website is 'down'. Please access the audio from our podcast or the Friends of Biblebase facebook group. We will restore normal service as soon as possible.