

# **HOW ISRAEL'S STORY ILLUSTRATES OUR OWN, PART 1**

Deuteronomy 4:25-31; 30:1-6; Jeremiah 29:11-13

## **IS ISRAEL'S STORY SOMEHOW CONNECTED TO OURS?**

### **STARTING POINT: FINDING A COMMON THEME TO THE OLD TESTAMENT**

#### **A SIMPLE SUMMARY OF ISRAEL'S NARRATIVE**

- From the birth of Abram to the death of Joseph in Egypt = about 400 years  
[Can be described as Israel's FAMILY period, from Genesis 12 to Exodus 1]
- From the death of Joseph to the Exodus from Egypt = about 400 years  
[Can be described as Israel's TRIBAL period, from Exodus to Deuteronomy]
- From the Exodus to Saul, the first King of Israel = about 400 years  
[Can be described as Israel's THEOCRACY period, from Joshua to 1 Samuel]  
When 14 leaders were appointed as judges: including Deborah, Gideon, Samson, Eli and Samuel.
- From King Saul to the last king Zedekiah into the Exile = about 400 years  
[Can be described as Israel's MONARCHY period, from 1 Samuel to 2 Chronicles]
- The Exile in Babylon = about 50 years
- After 50 years in exile, Persian defeats Babylon and King Cyrus allows Israel to return from their Babylonia captivity. Only 50,000 returns to Jerusalem to rebuild.  
[Ezra and Nehemiah records the remnant who returned. Esther records the Jews who remained.]
- The Inter-Testamental period (Between the OT and the NT) = about 400 years [Silent period]

#### **WHAT KIND OF STORY IS THIS?! (AM I MISSING SOMETHING?)**

Deuteronomy serves as a “hermeneutical key” to the Pentateuch and to the Old Testament.  
(Hermeneutics is the study and methodology of biblical interpretation.)

Deuteronomy means, “The Second Giving of the Law” [Moses' three sermons: Deut 1-4:43; 4:44-28:69 and 29:1-30:20. Moses transfers his leadership 31:1-34:12.]

A look at Deuteronomy 4:25-31 and Deuteronomy 30:1-6

#### **EXILE AND DISPLACEMENT IN THE HANDS OF A SOVEREIGN GOD**

### Deuteronomy 4:25-31

*“When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, <sup>26</sup>I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. <sup>2</sup>And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. <sup>2</sup>And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. <sup>29</sup>But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. <sup>30</sup>When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice. <sup>31</sup>For the LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them.”*

### Deuteronomy 30:1-6

*“And when all these things come upon you, the blessing and the curse, which I have set before you and you call them to mind among all the nations where the LORD your God has driven you <sup>2</sup>and return to the LORD your God, you and your children, and obey his voice in all that I command you today, with all your heart and with all your soul, <sup>3</sup>then the LORD your God will restore your fortunes and have mercy on you, and he will gather you again from all the peoples where the LORD your God has scattered you . . . <sup>6</sup>And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your offspring, so that you will love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live.”*

### Jeremiah 29:11-13

<sup>10</sup>*“For thus says the Lord: When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will visit you, and I will fulfill to you my promise and bring you back to this place. <sup>11</sup>For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. <sup>12</sup>Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me, and I will hear you. <sup>13</sup>You will seek me and find me, when you seek me with all your heart. <sup>14</sup>I will be found by you, declares the Lord, and I will restore your fortunes and gather you from all the nations and all the places where I have driven you, declares the Lord, and I will bring you back to the place from which I sent you into exile.”*

### **SOME QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DEVOTION:**

1. Have you ever wondered what the story of the Old Testament was all about? Have you ever come to the place where you can summarize or explain it to someone? How do the verses in Deuteronomy help to give insight to the story of Israel, if any?
2. It has been suggested that a good theme to understand Israel's story is the simply the theme of “The Land.” Would you agree that this is a good theme for Israel's history? How might Israel's theme also be a theme or illustration for our own story?
3. How does knowing the story God had written into Israel's history give insight into the story that God is writing into your history? In what ways have God been shaping your life so that you know you're in need of Jesus Christ?