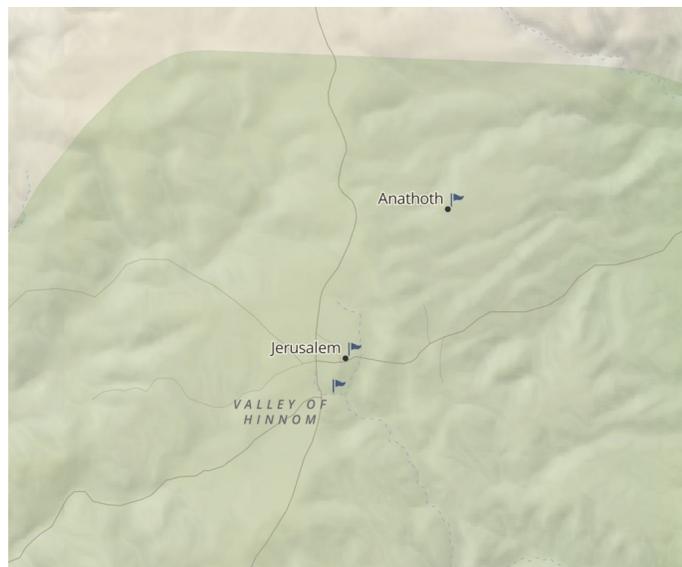




LESSON 26 HOPE

Israel		Judah	
Jeroboam	931–910	Rehoboam	931–913
Nadab	910–909	Abijah	913–911
Baasha	909–886	Asa	911–870
Elah	886–885		
Zimri	885		
Omri	885–874		
Ahab	874–853	Jehoshaphat	873–848
Ahaziah	853–852		
Joram	852–841	Jehoram	848–841
Jehu	841–814	Ahaziah	841
		Athaliah	841–835
Jehoahaz	814–798	Joash	835–796
Jehoash	798–782	Amaziah	796–767
Jeroboam II	793–753	Uzziah	792–740
Zechariah	753		
Shallum	752		
Menahem	752–742	Jotham	750–731
Pekahiah	742–740		
Pekah	752–732	Ahaz	735–715
Hoshea	732–722	Hezekiah	729–686
		Manasseh	696–642
		Amon	642–640
		Josiah	640–609
		Jehoahaz	609
		Jehoiakim	608–598
		Jehoiachin	598–597
		Zedekiah	597–586

Our study has painted a bleak picture of God's people. Homeless and leaderless because of their constant covenant breaking, and without prospect of any change in their immediate fortunes, what hope was there? But hope is exactly what God held out for Israel! Consider the Lord's instructions to Jeremiah to purchase his cousin's field at Anathoth (Jeremiah 32.6-8). Jeremiah, though imprisoned, did as instructed and instructed that the deed be placed "in an earthenware jar, that they may last a long time" (Jeremiah 32.14). Why? "For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, 'Houses and fields and vineyards will again be bought in this land.'" (Jeremiah 32.15). But the physical return of Israel to the promised land was just the beginning of the hope the Lord held out for them.



Hope of a Restored Nation

Jeremiah may have complied with the Lord's instructions, but he didn't understand them. After all, these instructions were given while the Babylonian's

were besieging Jerusalem and the people were suffering the consequences of doing “nothing of all that You commanded them to do” (Jeremiah 32:23-24). Yes, the Lord was bringing calamity upon the people, but He had not abandoned them: “Behold, I will gather them out of all the lands to which I have driven them in My anger, in My wrath and in great indignation; and I will bring them back to this place and make them dwell in safety. They shall be My people, and I will be their God;” (Jeremiah 32:37–38, NASB95).

Similarly, Ezekiel was shown in a vision a valley full of dry bones, representing the death of Israel (Ezekiel 37). The Lord asked Ezekiel if these bones could live and then instructed His prophet to prophecy to these bones, saying that the Lord would “cause breath to enter you that you may come to life” (vs. 5). Israel, though considered dead, would live again (vss. 11-14)!

A great aspect of this hope was that God would gather Israel from among all the nations where they'd been scattered (Ezekiel 37:21). But what the faithful could not appreciate at that time, and would not appreciate for many years to come, was that this new “Israel” God was gathering to Himself would include the nations as well! The Lord had previously revealed this to Isaiah: “Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it.” (Isaiah 2:2, NASB95) In the future, the Lord's servants would understand its fulfillment: “I most certainly understand now that God is not one to show partiality, but in every nation the man who fears Him and does what is right is welcome to Him.” (Acts 10:34–35, NASB95)

Hope of a Restored King

“Thus says the LORD, ‘Write this man down childless, A man who will not prosper in his days; For no man of his descendants will prosper Sitting on the throne of David Or ruling again in Judah.’” (Jeremiah 22:30, NASB95) Such was God's pronouncement against Jehoiachin, the last legitimate heir of David to reign in Jerusalem. Zedekiah, the puppet installed by Nebuchadnezzar, would not succeed having his sons slain in front of him before he was blinded and led captive to Babylon (2Kings 25:6-7). David's line had failed.

However, God's promise to David had not failed (2Samuel 7:12-13). The Lord promised that in the future “a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.” (Isaiah 11:1, NASB95) Furthermore, the people God was gathering from among the nations would have David reigning over them as king (Ezekiel 37:24). No longer would the people suffer under evil and wicked shepherds, rather the Lord would “set over them one shepherd, My servant David, and he will feed them; he will feed them himself and be their shepherd.” (Ezekiel 34:23).

Jesus is the promised son of David (Matthew 1:1). But, He would not de-

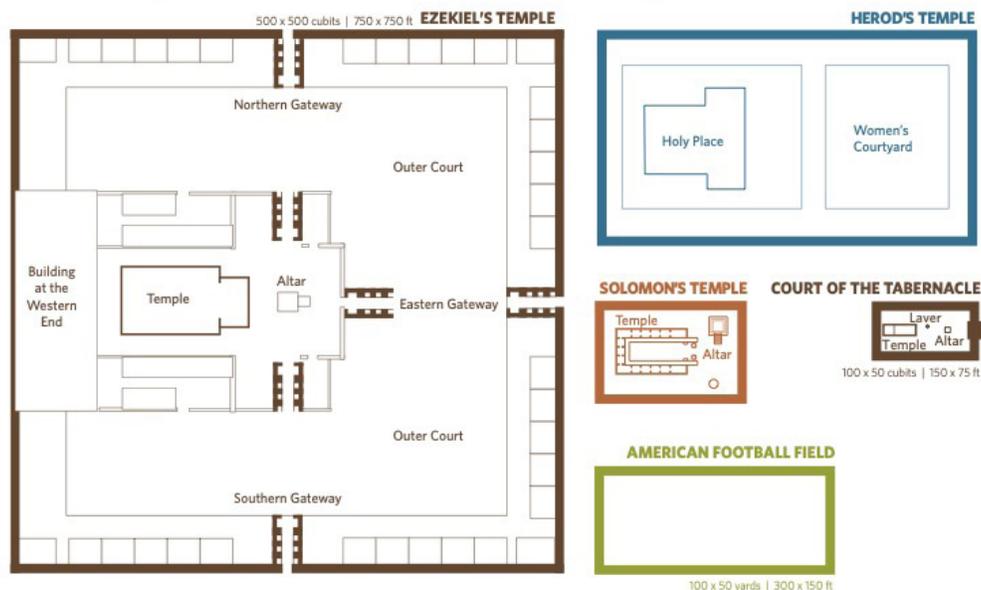
scend from the line of kings, but through a different part of David's family tree (see Luke 3.31). The King would be restored (Mark 16.19); the Lord's promise to David would be kept!

Hope of a Restored Temple

Even before Israel had conquered the Promised Land, the Lord commanded the people to "seek the LORD at the place which the LORD your God will choose from all your tribes, to establish His name there for His dwelling, and there you shall come." (Deuteronomy 12.5). However, even before Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B.C., the Lord had shown to Ezekiel that His presence was no longer in the Temple (Ezekiel 10.18-19; 11.22-23). And when the Babylonians captured Jerusalem, they thoroughly looted the Temple before burning it with fire (2Kings 25.8-17).

But the Lord revealed to Ezekiel that there would be a new and greater Temple (Ezekiel 40-42) and there He would dwell: "And the glory of the LORD came into the house by the way of the gate facing toward the east. And the Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court; and behold, the glory of the LORD filled the house." (Ezekiel 43:4-5, NASB95) This was NOT the Temple constructed in the days of Zerubbabel, for it was not even as grand as Solomon's Temple (see Ezra 3.12) and the Lord's glory did not fill its sanctuary (contrast Ezra 6.15-18 with 1Kings 8.10-11). No, God's new Temple is far more glorious; His new dwelling place is in His people (1Corinthians 3.16; Ephesians 2.19-22).

Temple Size Comparisons



Hope of a Restored Covenant

God's people had constantly broken His covenant, Jeremiah even described the people as doing "nothing of all that You commanded them to do" (Jeremiah 32.23). As a result, the people had experienced all the curses of the covenant (see Deuteronomy 28.15ff). What hope could the people have without being in a covenant relationship with God? None, which is why the Lord promised to make a new covenant:

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."

Jeremiah 31:31–34 (NASB95)

This new covenant is where sins are completely forgiven, where each individual has a direct relationship with the Father, and where God's covenant would not be written on stone tablets, but on each human heart. This new covenant is our hope (Hebrews 8.8-13; 9.11-15).

"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." (Hebrews 9:15, NASB95)