

Lectures 18 and 19: Prophecy I; Prophecy II.

Reading:

Hosea 2-3; 6:6;

Isaiah 1; 10;

Amos 4; 5:18-27; 6;

Isaiah 40; 44-45; 52:13-53:12; 58;

Jeremiah 7; 25; 26; 29; 31;

Ezekiel 6; 18; 33; 37.

JSB pp. 455-461 (Introduction to Nevi'im, beginning with "The Latter Prophets and their Order");

JSB pp. 780-784 (Introduction to Isaiah);

Kugel 438-442 (What is prophecy?);

Kugel 618-626 (Hosea and Amos);

Kugel 538-555 (Isaiahs);

Kugel 555-568 (suffering servant)/

The Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, The Twelve).

Prophet: human intermediary between God and society; Hebrew word is *navi* (plural *nevi'im*), of uncertain etymology.

Prophetic state:

- Ecstatic (or charismatic) possession: Saul and the prophets; priests of Baal in 1 K 18;
- Trance: Balaam (Numbers 24:16);
- Dreams – only Moses speaks to God face to face (Numbers 12:6-8);
- Modern view: prophecy is a paranormal state; society accepts and validates these experiences.

Social function:

- close connection with kingship (Kugel), whether alliance or, more commonly, opposition;
- holy man, seer, miracle worker;
- analogous to diviners and necromancers (Deut 18) (Kugel);
- classic function of literary prophets: to criticize, to warn, to protest; speak truth to power (classic example: Amos 7:10-17);
- literary prophets do NOT foretell the future; "forthteller" rather than "foreteller";
- no dynastic succession among the prophets; some are priests (Jeremiah, Ezekiel); guilds of prophets ("sons of prophets").

The figure of the literary prophet as it emerges in ancient Israel has no precise analogues in ANE (Kugel); mystery of the first literary prophets (Hosea, Amos) writing such poetry.

The emergence of prophetic books:

- transmission and collection, either by the prophet himself (notably Jeremiah and his scroll, Jeremiah 36; cf. Isaiah 30:8-11) or his disciples / audience;
- Editors assemble the collection(s), add superscriptions, add “biographical material” (when they have it) (e.g. Amos 7:10-17) and create a book;
 - ✦ These collections are selective;
 - ✦ “minor” vs. “major” prophets (depends on length of text);
 - ✦ Use various sources, e.g. Hosea 3:1 in first person, 1:2 third person; seams are evident in the book of Jeremiah;
 - ✦ The book of Jeremiah contains poetic prophecies, prose sermons, and biographical narratives that are arranged differently in the Septuagint and in Dead Sea scrolls than in our Hebrew text (cf. 1 Samuel).
- Tension between original oracles and later “updates”; according to MBS all of our prophetic books have interpolations, additions long and short; none is a single organic composition.
- Prophets sound different one from the other, thus supporting the notion of “authorship”:
 - ✦ Amos’ language and concerns differ from those of Hosea although they are contemporaries;
 - ✦ Jeremiah and Ezekiel are very different although they are near contemporaries;
 - ★ Jeremiah has numerous close connections with D, Ezekiel with P;
 - ★ The Talmud notes that the throne vision of Ezekiel 1 is similar to Isaiah 6, but they differ in that “one is written by a city dweller (Isaiah) who sees the king all the time, while the other is written by a rustic (Ezekiel) who sees the king only rarely”.

Three main periods of activity of literary prophets.

1. Period of Assyrian domination: eighth century BCE: (key date: : 721 BCE fall of northern kingdom).
 - Amos and Hosea, the earliest literary prophets, both active in the north during the reign of King Jeroboam II (r. 786-746);
 - End of eighth century BCE: Isaiah of Jerusalem, contemporary with King Hezekiah;
2. Period of Babylonian domination: late seventh – early sixth century BCE (key date: 587 BCE destruction of the temple of Jerusalem).

- Jeremiah (in the land of Israel), Ezekiel (in Babylon);
- 3. Period of Persian domination: mid-sixth century BCE : (key dates: 539 BCE Persia conquers Babylon; 516 BCE dedication of second temple).
 - Second (and Third) Isaiah; How do we know that Isaiah 40-66 is the work of an anonymous prophet of the Persian period?
 - First Isaiah or Isaiah of Jerusalem: Isaiah 1-39; second half of the 8th cent BCE.
 - ♦ Biographical material: Isaiah 36-39; Judah and Assyria; Isaiah is in contact with monarchy.
 - Second (and Third) Isaiah: an anonymous prophet(s) whose work is preserved in Isaiah 40-66. Mid sixth century BCE. Cyrus king of Persia, conqueror of Babylon, mentioned by name in 44:28 and 45:1. No Assyrians anywhere. No Judaeian king.
 - Second Isaiah has thematic and literary connections with Isaiah I: centrality of Zion; God is the “holy one of Israel”; divine punishment for pride. We understand why the two collections were juxtaposed.
 - Did the editor try to deceive us (Kugel) or is this innocent?
 - Anonymous/ additional materials collect at the end of the prophetic books [elsewhere too!]:
 - ♦ Isaiah 34-35 may also be the work of Second Isaiah; Isaiah 36-39, parallel to passages from Kings;
 - ♦ Jeremiah 50-51 [if indeed they are additions to Jeremiah]; Jeremiah 52 a passage from Kings;
 - ♦ Ezekiel 40-48 [if indeed they are additions];
 - ♦ The end of the 12 minor prophets: additions to Zachariah and [Malachi].

Five main themes in literary prophets:

1. **Divine exclusivity, monolatry, monotheism;**
2. **Ritual and ethics, social justice;**
3. **Israel and the nations;**
4. **Reward and punishment;**
5. **The future, wonderful and dreadful.**

1. **Divine exclusivity, monolatry, monotheism.**

Dtr shows a clash in ancient Israel between a “YHWH-alone” theology and a theology that permits combining the worship of YHWH with other gods.

The YHWH-alone theology triumphed. Both the Torah and Dtr endorse the “YHWH alone” position and see the other approach as sinful (“idolatry”). Israel is not to worship any God other than YHWH. But many Israelites for a long time were not convinced.

MBS: the literary prophets led the push to monolatry and monotheism.

- Monolatry: the worship of the one God alone without necessarily denying the existence or efficacy of other Gods (cf. Deut 18 re necromancy and soothsaying);
- Monotheism: the belief in, and worship of, the one God, accompanied by the denial of the existence or efficacy of other Gods (= cosmic monism);
- The distinction between the two is clear conceptually even if not always clear textually.

Hosea has classic exposition of the marriage metaphor (Hosea 2-3); like a husband, God demands exclusivity of his “wife” Israel; but if Israel is an adulterous wife, how does God take her back? Jeremiah 3.

- Hosea attacks *Baal* worship; God is not to be Israel’s *baal* but her husband (a pun, 2:18).
- Israel is to put aside her harlotries = worship of other Gods.

Jeremiah complains the Judeans abandon God in two senses: they worship *Baal* and other gods, and they seek foreign political alliances (see esp. Jeremiah 2) (akin to Samuel’s critique of Israel’s request for a king: it shows lack of reliance on God).

The great prophet of cosmic monism is Second Isaiah:

- “I am the Lord and there is no other” (Isaiah 45:5) - a common theme in Isaiah II; God’s universal power; anti-dualistic statement in 45:7:
- Isaiah 45:1-7 ¹Thus said the LORD to Cyrus, His anointed one— Whose right hand He has grasped, Treading down nations before him, Ungirding the loins of kings, Opening doors before him And letting no gate stay shut:²I will march before you And level the hills that loom up; I will shatter doors of bronze And cut down iron bars.³I will give you treasures concealed in the dark And secret hoards—So that you may know that it is I the LORD, The God of Israel, who call you by name.⁴For the sake of My servant Jacob, Israel My chosen one, I call you by name, I hail you by title, though you have not known Me.⁵I am the LORD and there is none else; Beside Me, there is no god. I engird you, though you have not known Me,⁶So that they may know, from east to west, That there is none but Me. I am the LORD and there is none else,⁷I form light and create darkness, I make weal and create woe—I the LORD do all these things.
- God is the only god; brilliant satire of idolatry (Isaiah 44); the stupidity and uselessness of image worship.
- The Babylonian deities cower before God; they are nothing (Isaiah 46).

Paradox: as Israel’s political power diminishes, the power of Israel’s God increases.

2. Ritual and ethics, social justice.

Amos is the great prophet of social justice; God demands justice in society; criticism of the well-to-do (Amos 4:1-2; 6).

Literary prophets (not Ezekiel) regularly contrast ritual and ethics/social justice. Some verses are more radical than others. Here are the main passages:

- Amos 5:21-25: ²¹I loathe, I spurn your festivals, I am not appeased by your solemn assemblies.²²If you offer Me burnt offerings—or your meal offerings—I will not accept them; I will pay no heed To your gifts of fatlings.²³Spare Me the sound of your hymns, And let Me not hear the music of your lutes.²⁴But let justice well

up like water, Righteousness like an unfailing stream.²⁵Did you offer sacrifice and oblation to Me Those forty years in the wilderness, O House of Israel?

- **Hosea 6:6** For I desire goodness, not sacrifice; Obedience to God, rather than burnt offerings.
- **Isaiah 1:10-17:** ¹⁰Hear the word of the LORD, You chieftains of Sodom; Give ear to our God's instruction, You folk of Gomorrah! ¹¹"What need have I of all your sacrifices?" Says the LORD. "I am sated with burnt offerings of rams, And suet of fatlings, And blood of bulls; And I have no delight In lambs and he-goats. ¹²That you come to appear before Me—Who asked that of you? Trample My courts ¹³no more; Bringing oblations is futile, Incense is offensive to Me. New moon and sabbath, Proclaiming of solemnities, Assemblies with iniquity I cannot abide.¹⁴Your new moons and fixed seasons Fill Me with loathing; They are become a burden to Me, I cannot endure them.¹⁵And when you lift up your hands, I will turn My eyes away from you; Though you pray at length, I will not listen. Your hands are stained with crime—¹⁶Wash yourselves clean; Put your evil doings Away from My sight. Cease to do evil;¹⁷Learn to do good. Devote yourselves to justice: Aid the wronged. Uphold the rights of the orphan; Defend the cause of the widow.
- **Jeremiah 7** ¹The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ²Stand at the gate of the House of the LORD, and there proclaim this word: Hear the word of the LORD, all you of Judah who enter these gates to worship the LORD! ³Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Mend your ways and your actions, and I will let you dwell in this place. ⁴Don't put your trust in illusions and say, "The Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD, the Temple of the LORD are these [buildings]." ⁵No, if you really mend your ways and your actions; if you execute justice between one man and another; ⁶if you do not oppress the stranger, the orphan, and the widow; if you do not shed the blood of the innocent in this place; if you do not follow other gods, to your own hurt—⁷then only will I let you dwell in this place, in the land that I gave to your fathers for all time. ⁸—See, you are relying on illusions that are of no avail. ⁹Will you steal and murder and commit adultery and swear falsely, and sacrifice to Baal, and follow other gods whom you have not experienced, ¹⁰and then come and stand before Me in this House which bears My name and say, "We are safe"—[Safe] to do all these abhorrent things! ¹¹Do you consider this House, which bears My name, to be a den of thieves? As for Me, I have been watching—declares the LORD. ¹²Just go to My place at Shiloh, where I had established My name formerly, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. ¹³And now, because you do all these things—declares the LORD—and though I spoke to you persistently, you would not listen; and though I called to you, you would not respond—¹⁴therefore I will do to the House which bears My name, on which you rely, and to the place which I gave you and your fathers, just what I did to Shiloh. ¹⁵And I will cast you out of My presence as I cast out your brothers, the whole brood of Ephraim.
 - ♦ People are relying on inviolability of the temple, God's house [such a theology is often imputed by modern scholars to Isaiah I] but they're wrong; God destroyed Shiloh, and God can destroy Jerusalem – just as he destroyed the northern kingdom.
 - ♦ Perhaps a more radical formulation in 7:21-26: ²¹Thus said the LORD of Hosts, the God of Israel: Add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat! ²²For when I freed your fathers from the land of Egypt, I did not speak with them or command them concerning burnt offerings or sacrifice. ²³But this is what I commanded them: Do My bidding, that I may be your God and you may be My people; walk only in the way that I enjoin upon you, that it may go well with you. ²⁴Yet they did not listen or give ear; they followed their own counsels, the willfulness of their evil hearts. They have gone backward, not forward, ²⁵from the day your fathers left the land of Egypt until today. And though I kept sending all My servants, the prophets, to them daily and persistently, ²⁶they would not listen to Me or give ear. They stiffened their necks, they acted worse than their fathers.
 - ♦ **Isaiah 58:** ³"Why, when we fasted, did You not see? When we starved our bodies, did You pay no heed?" Because on your fast day You see to your business And oppress all your laborers!⁴Because you fast in strife and contention, And you strike with a wicked fist! Your fasting today is not such As to make your voice heard on high.⁵Is such the fast I desire, A day for men to starve their bodies? Is it bowing the head like a bulrush And lying in sackcloth and ashes? Do you call that a fast, A day when the LORD is favorable? ⁶No, this is the fast I desire: To unlock fetters of wickedness, And untie the cords of the yoke To let the oppressed go free; To break off every yoke.⁷It is to share your bread with the hungry, And to take the wretched poor into your home; When you see the naked, to clothe him, And not to ignore your own kin... ¹³If you refrain from trampling the sabbath, From pursuing your affairs on My holy day; If you call the sabbath "delight," The LORD's holy day "honored"; And if you honor it and go not your

ways Nor look to your affairs, nor strike bargains—¹⁴Then you can seek the favor of the LORD. I will set you astride the heights of the earth, And let you enjoy the heritage of your father Jacob—For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Classic Jewish interpretation of all these is that God is rejecting not ritual/sacrifices but the attitude that ritual/sacrifices alone, even without righteousness, suffice. But some of these verses seem more radical than that.

3. Israel and the nations.

God is a universal god enforcing a universal moral code (cf. Gen. 1-11).

Oracles against nations Amos 1-2; Isaiah 13-23; Jeremiah 46-51; Ezekiel 26-33.

Amos reflects on the meaning of “the election of Israel”:

- (3:2) You alone have I singled out Of all the families of the earth— That is why I will call you to account For all your iniquities.
- (9:7-8) ⁷To Me, O Israelites, you are Just like the Ethiopians —declares the LORD. True, I brought Israel up From the land of Egypt, But also the Philistines from Caphtor And the Arameans from Kir. ⁸Behold, the Lord GOD has His eye Upon the sinful kingdom: I will wipe it off The face of the earth...
- Israelites seem to have thought that they were immune to disaster because they are God’s people. Cf. Jeremiah 7 re the temple.

God uses the nations to punish/benefact Israel:

- Most striking in Isaiah 10: Assyria is God’s staff of anger but Assyria will in turn be punished; same point Deuteronomy 32:27ff;
- Jeremiah 25: ⁸Assuredly, thus said the LORD of Hosts: Because you would not listen to My words, ⁹I am going to send for all the peoples of the north—declares the LORD—and for My servant, King Nebuchadrezzar of Babylon, and bring them against this land and its inhabitants, and against all those nations roundabout. I will exterminate them and make them a desolation, an object of hissing—ruins for all time. ¹⁰And I will banish from them the sound of mirth and gladness, the voice of bridegroom and bride, and the sound of the mill and the light of the lamp. ¹¹This whole land shall be a desolate ruin. And those nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. ¹²When the seventy years are over, I will punish the king of Babylon and that nation and the land of the Chaldeans for their sins—declares the LORD—and I will make it a desolation for all time. ¹³And I will bring upon that land all that I have decreed against it, all that is recorded in this book—that which Jeremiah prophesied against all the nations. ¹⁴For they too shall be enslaved by many nations and great kings; and I will requite them according to their acts and according to their conduct.
 - ♦ God is using Nebuchadrezzar for his own ends – to punish Israel (cf. Isaiah 10 re Assyrians);
 - ♦ In order to allow this to happen God is giving Nebuchadrezzar, who is “my servant” or “my subject” (25.9, 27:6), an empire of 70 years (25:11, 29:10); the states to be subjugated by the Babylonians are listed in 25:19-26;
 - ♦ Therefore “put your necks in the yoke” of Babylon; resisting Babylonia is not only foolish it is also against God; those who claim that God will protect us are false prophets (27-28);

- ♦ In Babylon do not resist the government; live quietly and normally, and wait (29:4-9);
 - ★ This is the charter of Jewish diasporism.
- ♦ After 70 years God will punish the Babylonians “according to their deeds” – their sin is not stated – and Israel can be restored (29:10).
 - ★ This is proto-apocalyptic thinking: scripted history; rise and fall of empires; tenuous connection with notion of sin and punishment; pre-determined periods.

Isaiah II: God gave Cyrus an empire, so that he can benefit Israel (45:4); Cyrus is “my shepherd” (44:28), the “anointed one” (45:1).

4. Reward and punishment.

Nexus of sin and punishment is central to the prophets; God’s ways are just and comprehensible. (Why was the temple destroyed? See Jeremiah and Ezekiel.)

Prophets have much more to say about sin and punishment than about virtue and reward.

Prophet is a warning figure; he does not predict disaster so much as he (in the name of God) warns people of impending disaster in the hope that they will repent (Ezekiel 33; Jeremiah 7 and 26; see esp. Isaiah 1-5 (see JSB note on 6:1).

Doctrine of individual responsibility and repentance: people complain that “the parents have eaten sour grapes but it is the children whose teeth are set on edge.” (Ezek 18:2, Jeremiah 31:28-29) For Jeremiah, a day will come when people will see that this is not true; for Ezekiel it simply is not true. “Each person dies for his own sin.”

[Judaism and Christianity: punishment and reward in the hereafter, a doctrine not yet known to the Bible.]

The suffering servant songs of II Isaiah, most famously Isaiah 53, depict someone who suffers for the sins of others, who “takes away the sins of the many.” Endless debate about who this figure is and his significance (see Kugel). Probably not a Davidic king since Isaiah II (unlike Isaiah I) has nothing to say about future ideal Davidic king. The people of Israel? The prophet?

5. The future, wonderful and dreadful.

Prophets routinely speak of the future, either the near term (Babylon is coming! The Temple will be destroyed!) or some indefinite future (“end of days,” “coming days”).

Prophecies of (immediate) gloom and doom are offset by prophecies of (ultimate) restoration and “golden age.”

The great prophet of end-time prophecies is Isaiah, both I and II.

Gloom and doom:

Isaiah 13 ⁶Howl!For the day of the LORD is near;It shall come like havoc from Shaddai.⁷Therefore all hands shall grow limp,And all men's hearts shall sink;⁸And, overcome by terror,They shall be seized by pangs and throes, Writhe like a woman in travail. They shall gaze at each other in horror, Their faces livid with fright. ⁹Lo! The day of the LORD is coming With pitiless fury and wrath, To make the earth a desolation, To wipe out the sinners upon it.¹⁰The stars and constellations of heaven Shall not give off their light; The sun shall be dark when it rises, And the moon shall diffuse no glow. ¹¹“And I will requite to the world its evil, And to the wicked their iniquity; I will put an end to the pride of the arrogant And humble the haughtiness of tyrants.¹²I will make people scarcer than fine gold, And men than gold of Ophir.”¹³Therefore shall heaven be shaken, And earth leap out of its place, At the fury of the LORD of HostsOn the day of His burning wrath.

See note of JSB on Joel 1:15 for other “Day of the Lord” passages, day of judgment for the wicked, cosmic upheaval.

Tribulations/ wars remove the wicked, a righteous remnant endures: Isaiah 24-27.

Modern MBS debate whether these chapters are real Isaiah.

Later Jews and Christians read Ezekiel 38-39 Battle with Gog of Magog as another version of this.

Isaiah is also the prophet of restoration:

Ideal Davidic king: 9:1-6 (9:2-7) ¹ The people that walked in darkness Have seen a brilliant light; On those who dwelt in a land of gloom Light has dawned. ²You have magnified that nation, Have given it great joy; They have rejoiced before You As they rejoice at reaping time, As they exult When dividing spoil. ³For the yoke that they bore And the stick on their back— The rod of their taskmaster— You have broken as on the day of Midian. ⁴Truly, all the boots put on to stamp with And all the garments donned in infamy Have been fed to the flames, Devoured by fire. ⁵For a child has been born to us, A son has been given us. And authority has settled on his shoulders. He has been named “The Mighty God is planning grace; The Eternal Father, a peaceable ruler”— ⁶In token of abundant authority And of peace without limit Upon David's throne and kingdom, That it may be firmly established In justice and in equity Now and evermore. The zeal of the LORD of Hosts Shall bring this to pass.

- Who is this mysterious child? Has he already been born? Or is he yet to be born? If so, in the immediate future (Hezekiah), or in the distant future?
- The name of the king is praise of God (see note in JSB); punctuation of vs. 6 is debated.
- Another mysterious child in 7:14:

¹⁰The LORD spoke further to Ahaz: ¹¹ “Ask for a sign from the LORD your God, anywhere down to Sheol or up to the sky.” ¹² But Ahaz replied, “I will not ask, and I will not test the LORD.” ¹³“Listen, House of David,” [Isaiah] retorted, “is it not enough for you to treat men as helpless that you also treat my God as

helpless? ¹⁴ Assuredly, my Lord will give you a sign of His own accord! Look, the young woman is with child and about to give birth to a son. Let her name him Immanuel. ¹⁵(By the time he learns to reject the bad and choose the good, people will be feeding on curds and honey.) ¹⁶ For before the lad knows to reject the bad and choose the good, the ground whose two kings you dread shall be abandoned.

- ♦ Discussion in Kugel. The “young woman” (not “virgin”) is probably Mrs Ahaz, and the child is Hezekiah, unless it be Mrs Isaiah.
- ♦ What exactly is “the sign” is not clear (see note in JSB).

Another portrait of ideal Davidic king: 11:1-9 ¹But a shoot shall grow out of the stump of Jesse, A twig shall sprout from his stock. ²The spirit of the LORD shall alight upon him: A spirit of wisdom and insight, A spirit of counsel and valor, A spirit of devotion and reverence for the LORD. ³ He shall sense the truth. by his reverence for the LORD: He shall not judge by what his eyes behold, Nor decide by what his ears perceive. ⁴–Thus he shall judge the poor with equity And decide with justice for the lowly of the land. He shall strike down a land with the rod of his mouth And slay the wicked with the breath of his lips. ⁵Justice shall be the girdle of his loins, And faithfulness the girdle of his waist. ⁶The wolf shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard lie down with the kid; The calf, the beast of prey, and the fatling together, With a little boy to herd them. ⁷The cow and the bear shall graze, Their young shall lie down together; And the lion, like the ox, shall eat straw. ⁸A babe shall play Over a viper's hole, And an infant pass Over an adder's den. ⁹In all of My sacred mount Nothing evil or vile shall be done; For the land shall be filled with devotion to the LORD As water covers the sea.

- ♦ Either a depiction of an ideal, utopian future, when nature itself is at peace, or an allegorical vision of Judah at peace with its neighbors (Kugel);
- ♦ The universalism of verse 9 appears elsewhere, notably Isaiah 2:2-4 (=Micah 4:1-4): ²In the days to come, The Mount of the LORD's House Shall stand firm above the mountains And tower above the hills; And all the nations Shall gaze on it with joy. ³And the many peoples shall go and say: “Come, Let us go up to the Mount of the LORD, To the House of the God of Jacob; That He may instruct us in His ways, And that we may walk in His paths.” For instruction shall come forth from Zion, The word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ⁴Thus He will judge among the nations And arbitrate for the many peoples, And they shall beat their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks: Nation shall not take up Sword against nation; They shall never again know war.

This universal ideal will be spectacularly developed in Third Isaiah (the anonymous author of the last chapters).

II Isaiah esp. is the prophet of restoration; God will restore Israel;

- beautiful image Isaiah 54, God will take Israel back as wife;
- Isaiah 56: God's house will be a house of prayer for all nations, including eunuchs and foreigners (56:3-4);
- Isaiah 60, all the nations shall serve you and bring back your exiles to Zion;
- Isaiah 66:21 God selects from the nations people to be his priests (!)

Jeremiah and Ezekiel too have prophecies of restoration:

Jeremiah 31: ultimate restoration by God, and a new covenant (discussion in Kugel):

²⁷See, a time is coming—declares the LORD—when I will sow the House of Israel and the House of Judah with seed of men and seed of cattle; ²⁸and just as I was watchful over them to uproot and to pull down, to overthrow and to destroy and to bring disaster, so I will be watchful over them to build and to plant—declares the LORD. ²⁹In those days, they shall no longer say, “Parents have eaten sour grapes and children’s teeth are blunted.” ³⁰But every one shall die for his own sins: whosoever eats sour grapes, his teeth shall be blunted. ³¹See, a time is coming—declares the LORD—when I will make a new covenant with the House of Israel and the House of Judah. ³²It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers, when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt, a covenant which they broke, though I espoused them—declares the LORD. ³³But such is the covenant I will make with the House of Israel after these days—declares the LORD: I will put My Teaching into their inmost being and inscribe it upon their hearts. Then I will be their God, and they shall be My people. ³⁴No longer will they need to teach one another and say to one another, “Heed the LORD”; for all of them, from the least of them to the greatest, shall heed Me—declares the LORD, for I will forgive their iniquities, And remember their sins no more.

- In the future, unlike now, God’s justice will be manifest;
- In the future, unlike now, the Israelites will have a covenant that is inscribed in their hearts so that they automatically and naturally observe it;
 - ♦ The content of this new covenant is not the issue here; rather the obedience of the covenanters.

Restoration of Judah and Ephraim: Ezekiel 36:24-28 I will take you from the nations, and gather you from all the countries, and bring you into your own land. ²⁵I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances. ²⁸Then you shall live in the land that I gave to your ancestors; and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. Same idea in Jeremiah 31.

Ezekiel 37: Valley of dry bones; reunification of Judah and Ephraim under Davidic king (David himself? 37:24).

Ezekiel 38-39: Gog of the land of Magog.

Ezekiel 40-48: Restored temple and temple city.