

Lesson 7

Big Question: How do we make sense of the Abrahamic promises in light of the exile?

Key points

In this lesson, we focus especially on the collapse of the kingdom of Israel and her exile. Teachers should understand these few key points before the lesson, and students should take these points away from the classroom.

- A. It seemed that Israel had “arrived” in fulfillment of the promises made to Abraham: she had her own land, ruled with her own king, and had built a glorious temple in which dwelt her God.
- B. However, all this comes crashing down when the Temple is destroyed, the land is taken from them, and they are sent into exile.
- C. Although they are eventually allowed to return to the land, they do not possess it, and they no longer have a king. The Temple, however, is rebuilt.
- D. This brings us to the New Testament and the arrival of Christ.

Review

Ask students:

1. What did we learn last class? Review your notes and rewrite a key point or takeaway that you found significant. If you were absent, your job is to review the student guide from last class and then ask your fellow students questions about the points they’re about to share.

Give them 3 or so minutes to review and write, then ask them:

- Share what you’ve written (go around the room systematically to get feedback)
- Then ask students who were absent last class: do you have any questions they have about their points? Students may not be able to answer their questions, and that’s okay. You can affirm the question, and if it’s easy to answer yourself, do so. And if not, say “We’ll hold on to that question to see if it’s answered in any of the future classes.”

Finally, review any key points from last class that were missed, especially if they are really important for this upcoming lesson.

Opening Reflection

2. Have you ever had a clear vision of how things were “supposed” to turn out in your life, only to have this vision dashed to pieces? What was it like?

Say something like:

- This largely describes the Israelites during this period. God had proven faithful to his promises of land, descendants, and blessings, ensuring Israel that they were His people.
 - However, due to their unfaithfulness, the land, Temple, and priests are all taken away from them, as they are sent into exile.
 - Today, we're going to ask the question: "How do we make sense of the Abrahamic promises in light of the exile?"
- We've seen so far that the Abrahamic promises seem to have been fulfilled at this point. God had granted the children of Abraham land, descendants, and blessings.
 - However, as they prepared to enter the Promised Land, the instructions God gave Israel indicated that this was not the end of the story.
 - When they possessed the land, just as before when they wandered in the wilderness, they were called to be holy so as to allow God to dwell with them. This had been the purpose of the Tabernacle and was now the purpose of the Temple.
 - However, we are now going to see all of these things that assured Israel that they were God's people being stripped away from them.
3. When Israel was sent into exile, what do you think it did to Israel's understanding of herself in relation to God?

Preparing for Video Clip

- In the last few lectures, we have seen that God had specific plans for how Israel would live as His People in the land He had given them.
 - In the last lecture, we saw how even God's chosen king David fell short of that expectation in his lust and murder.
 - Although he repented, future kings continued on a downward spiral until the kingdom and land were taken away from Israel, and they were dispersed in exile.
4. Now fill in the points Dr. Legaspi makes in this video clip.
 - a. The exile to Babylon took place in _____ BC.
 - b. Following the return from exile, Israelites are allowed to return to the land, rebuild the Temple, but they have no _____.
 - c. The movement begun in Abraham finds its culmination in the _____.
 - d. The women included in Matthew's genealogy may indicate that _____ may be included in what is about to take place in Jesus.

Reflection on Video

4. Without the Temple, the land, the king, or the priests, how can Israel continue to live as God's People in exile?

5. What does the exile tell us about our own lives in relation to God? Have there been times when we truly believed God was leading us in a particular direction when we suddenly found out He had different plans than we had expected?
6. Any final thoughts?

Close with any of the key points that they might not have addressed in their own sharing/discussion.