

OLD TESTAMENT SURVEY 3

JUDGES TO THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

Let's turn to the book of Judges, chapter 21...

My middle son was a good soccer player, and while watching him play I learned a little about the game.

And one thing I know - a winning shot requires a good follow through. If you swing at the ball, and stop at the point of impact, the shot loses its power. You won't get it past the goalie. But if your leg goes all the way through, the ball will fly off your foot into the net!

A winning shot requires a strong follow through.

This is where the nation of Israel failed. **They lacked a good follow through.** When Joshua led them into the Promised Land, God's instructions were clear...

Drive out the Canaanites, and take possession of every square inch of the land that God had given them.

They got off to a good start, but they had a poor follow through. They followed God half-way. They'd take a little land; then compromise with the enemy.

And this is what happens in our Christian lives.

God gives us a victory over the sin in our lives, but rather than let Him uproot the causes of that sin - *we fail to follow through.* We compromise with sin, and try to coexist with sin, rather than drive it out completely.

We end up with too much of the world to be happy in God, and enough of God not to be happy in this world.

We follow God half-way, and end up defeated.

Moses brought Israel out of Egypt in 1445 BC. The Hebrews wandered in the desert for 40 years. Joshua brought them into the promised land in 1405 BC.

And for the next 350 years the nation of Israel was governed by a series of fourteen different judges...

When I say “*judge*,” realize these were not men who set in a court of law and handed down legal decisions.

These were men and women of action. They rallied God’s people together, and led them into battle against their enemies. They brought about God’s judgment.

Some of the more famous Judges were **Deborah**, a woman - **Gideon**, a farmer turned warrior - **Jephthah**, the man who made a rash vow - **Samson**, a biblical strongman - and the prophet, **Samuel**, the last judge.

These all were mighty people of faith.

Judges (show muscles)

Deborah, Gideon, Samson

Imagine the faith **Gideon** needed to do the will of God. When he called on the people of Israel to join his army, 32,000 men responded. He had an army of 32,000 to fight the Midianites who numbered 135,000. From the outset, **Gideon was outnumbered 4 to 1.**

But God told him he had too many soldiers... Send the ones home who didn’t really want to fight. His army shrunk to 10,000. Now **he’s outnumbered 13 to 1.**

But this was still too many. So God tells him to take the men to the spring and have them drink. A good soldier drops to his knees, cups his hands, and drinks with his head up. He's aware of his surroundings.

Whereas, a careless soldier falls on his face and laps up water like a dog. Gideon was relieved that only 300 men fell on their face. But that's who God tells him to keep! "*Send the others home. Keep the sloppy soldiers.*" Now **Gideon's army is outnumbered 450 to 1.**

Here's what God is doing... When Gideon wins this battle, he won't be able to take credit for the victory. It'll be obvious to everyone that the glory belongs to God.

This is why at times God stacks the odds against us.

God sees to it that we're outnumbered, so that when the victory is won, He alone gets the credit and the glory. Thus, Gideon surprised the mighty enemy with his little army, and God gave him the victory!

Samson is also an interesting character... The Spirit of God would come upon Samson and give him extraordinary strength. Once, he picked up the jawbone of a donkey and used it to kill one-thousand Philistines all by himself. He was God's strongman!

But though Samson was *strong physically*, he *compromised spiritually*. He had a weakness for the ladies. **Samson was a he-man with a she-problem.**

Samson ended up living with a Philistine gal named Delilah - who tricked him into breaking his vow to God.

Samson was a life-long Nazarite. He'd taken a special vow. It had three parts... *drink no wine, never cut your hair, and don't touch anything that was dead.*

Samson was to stay away from [liquor stores](#), [barber shops](#), and [funeral parlors](#). And these three institutions get plenty of traffic. People want [a nip - a clip](#) - and [a RIP](#) (they want success in this life - to *rest in peace*).

This is what makes the world go round. In 1 John 2:16 John describes the spirit of the world, "[the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life.](#)"

The world we live in is all about [physical pleasure](#), and [outward beauty](#), and [temporal success](#).

But the Nazarite was suppose to be a juxtaposition to this world - a contradiction. His vow spoke of just the opposite. He was a walking billboard for godly values.

With his abstinence he was saying that [real pleasure is spiritual, not physical...](#) With his unkept hair he was saying [real beauty is inward, not outward...](#) And by avoiding death he illustrated [real success is found in eternal pursuits, not temporal preoccupations...](#)

Samson's long hair was a part of his Nazarite vow. It was a symbol of his devotion to God. Thus, when Delilah shaved his locks, God's power departed.

And Samson is a warning for people in ministry today. You can compromise your commitment to God in little ways over and over, and still God will empower you to preach and serve. But there comes a point when you go too far, and God will withdraw His power.

This is what happened to Samson. He married a Philistine, *yet God still used him...* He slept with a prostitute, *yet God still used him...* He shackled up with Delilah, *yet God still used him... up until a point.*

For when Samson crossed the line God had drawn, God's Spirit departed... **And here's the take away, you never know where that line is drawn, until it's been crossed - and sadly, by that point, it's too late.**

The Philistines took Samson prisoner, and plucked out his eyes. *Which was the very thing that had given Samson his problems - he had an eye for the ladies.*

In desperation, Samson repented of his sin, and begged God for the power of the Holy Spirit to come upon him one last time... The Philistines had placed Samson in their temple to mock and ridicule him.

They tied him up to the two supporting pillars. And with a surge of God's power, Samson pulled down the posts, bringing down the whole temple with them.

You could say that in his final performance, Samson brought down the house! Judges 16:30 informs us of Samson's grand finale', **"So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life."**

Throughout this period of their history, Israel repeats a cycle of behavior... In fact, it occurs a total of seven different times throughout the book of Judges...

First, the people **sin**, and follow false gods. **Second**, God brings judgment. They end up in **slavery** to their enemies. **Third**, they cry to God for deliverance. They make

supplication. **Fourth**, God raises up a judge who brings His people **salvation** from their enemies.

And **Fifth**, a period of peace and **serenity** follows. Until that peace is interrupted again by more sin.

And the cycle gets repeated. Five words sum up this cycle: *sin, servitude, supplication, salvation, serenity*.

The whole period of the judges is summed up in Judges 21:25, “In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Abandon God’s Law and it’s every man for himself. *Do what seems right to you* - is a recipe for disaster.

So write down, “**Everyone... Right In His Own Eyes**” (point to eyes) And it lasted **350 years**

The last of the judges, Samuel, was the most godly. He was *last of the judges*, and *first of the prophets*. Samuel has been called “**the prophet of prayer**.”

Samuel’s mom dedicated him to God before he was born. After she nursed him, she took Samuel to the Tabernacle, and put him in the care of Eli the priest.

Even at a young age God spoke to Samuel. One night he heard a voice, “**Samuel, Samuel**.” He heard it twice and thought it was Eli. The old priest realized God was speaking to the boy. The third time Samuel heard the voice, he followed Eli’s instructions, and answered, “**Speak, LORD, for Your servant hears**.”

God revealed to Samuel that He would judge the family of Eli. The priest's sons were corrupt - greedy. They were actually holding orgies in the Tabernacle.

The high priest's sons were sinning against God, *but worse, Eli was ignoring their actions.* In 1 Samuel 3:13, God says of Eli, "his sons make themselves vile, and he did not restrain them." Every father has the responsibility to discipline his kids when it's needed.

Judgment comes to the house of Eli when the Philistines attack Israel. The Israelites didn't have much of a relationship with God, *so they trusted in the things of God, rather than in God Himself.* They took the Ark of the Covenant from the Tabernacle into battle.

When the Ark passed through the camp, the Hebrews let out a shout. Remember, the Ark was the golden box that held the stone tablets on which were written the Ten Commandments. The Ark was God's throne in the tabernacle. It represented His presence.

The Hebrews thought they'd win the battle because the Ark was with them. *They trusted in the Ark not God.*

And sometimes we make the same mistake. We trust in the things of God, rather than in God Himself.

You see religious folks today who trust in prayer beads, or a cross they wear on a chain - rather than in the Savior who died on the cross. Always remember, *representations of God* are no substitute for *God Himself.* And the Israelites find this out the hard way.

The army gets slaughtered by the Philistines. Eli and his sons are killed, and the Ark of the Covenant is captured. *What happened to the Ark is a funny story...*

The Philistines took the Ark as spoils of the battle, and display it in the Temple of their god, Dagon - the half-man, half-fish idol. But each morning the statue of Dagon was found lying prostrate before the Ark of God.

In addition wherever the Philistines took the Ark, the people were struck with a plague of hemorrhoids. This led to the development of Philistine H, but no one could withstand the pain, so they sent the Ark back to Israel.

The incident though had one lasting effect on God's people. Now they want an earthly king to rule them.

God wanted to be Israel's king! He wanted to rule the nation directly. But the Hebrews wanted a physical throne - a leader they could see. In 1 Samuel 8:5 they ask, **"give us a king to judge us like all the nations."**

They said what every High School student has uttered, *"Well, everybody else is doing it, why can't I?"*

In 1 Samuel 8:9 God warns the Hebrew people that a king will oppress them and treat them harshly.

And we know from history that God was right.

Of the 42 kings who will ruled over God's people, Israel, only nine will receive any kind of positive approval rating from God. It's a true saying, **"Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely."**

The People Want a King (crown on head)

The first king of Israel was everything the people thought they wanted in a king. Saul was handsome, strong, and tall. You could always spot Saul. He stood head and shoulders above everyone else in the crowd.

But the problem with Saul was he was **all show, and no substance**. He was impressive physically, but he lacked the strength of character needed to follow God and lead His people. He was impulsive and insecure.

Spiritually speaking Saul was a little man. **Saul was tall in stature - but small in faith**. Rather than trust in God, he relied on his own abilities, and when they proved inadequate, he'd shrink from the challenge.

Worst of all, **Saul was an externally-motivated person**. *He lived to please people. Circumstances and opinions dictated his behavior. Saul lacked conviction.*

Thus, when Saul defeated the Amalekites, God told him to take no spoils from his victory - yet Saul disobeyed. *He put convenience above conviction.*

And this angered God. In response to Saul, God states 1 Samuel 15:11, **“I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments.”**

Saul tries to excuse his disobedience by sacrificing a few sheep to God. But the Prophet Samuel corrects him, **“to obey is better than sacrifice... For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He also has rejected you from being king.”**

Saul remained king over Israel for thirty more years, but God removed His blessing from Saul's life...

And God chose a new king... "a man after His own heart." His name was *David, a simple shepherd boy.*

As far as physical appearance and natural prowess were concerned, David was the opposite of Saul. He was just a kid when God selected him to be king.

God passed on his older brothers and selected the runt of the litter, the baby. Samuel took a ram's horn full of oil, and poured it over his head to anoint David king.

As God told Samuel, "**Do not look at his appearance or at the height of his stature... For the LORD does not look at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.**" And here's a huge lesson for us...

We tend to look at a person's appearance, or size, or the clothes that he wears - and draw conclusions about him. *But when God sizes up a person, he always puts the measuring tape around the person's heart.*

Ironically, Saul looked the part of a king, but ended up having a peasant's heart. Whereas, David looked like a peasant, yet clearly he had the heart of a king.

What you see is not always what you get!

David's life can be divided into three segments...

1 Samuel 16-31 recounts his rise to prominence and his flight from Saul. **David as a fugitive...**

2 Samuel 1-10 records the birth and expansion of his kingdom after the death of Saul. **David as a fighter...**

And 2 Samuel 11-24 recounts how David's sin threatened his kingdom. It's **David as a failure...**

The Bible describes **David's trials, David's triumphs, and David's troubles.** His successes and his failures.

In fact, David talks about all three - his **trials, triumphs, troubles** - in the book of **Psalms**. David was a musician. He wrote many of the psalms, and in them he talked about his feelings, and failures, and faith.

David's story begins with his triumph over the Philistine giant, Goliath. All the Hebrew soldiers were afraid, but David believed God would give him victory.

Everyone else looked at Goliath, and said, "**He's too big to hit.**" David took one look at Goliath, and said, "**He's too big to miss.**" Faith made all the difference.

With a slingshot, and a stone, and a daring faith - the little shepherd boy toppled the Philistine champion, and led Israel to a mighty victory. **(my try)** In the wake of David's glorious victory he became a celebrity in Israel.

David's popularity among his fellow Hebrews made Saul jealous. Saul tried to kill David - and for the next 25 years or so, David remains on the run from Saul.

On two occasions, David had an opportunity to kill his tormentor, King Saul. *Though it would've been convenient to rid himself of his enemy,* David respected Saul's position as

king. He refused to take matters into his own hands. God would deliver him in due time.

When David ultimately became king he consolidated; *then expanded his kingdom*. He made Jerusalem his capitol city, and brought the sacred Ark to Jerusalem.

David wanted to build a temple, *a house for God*, but God declined his offer. God told David that because he was a **man of war** it was not for him to build a **place of peace**. His son, Solomon, would build the temple.

Instead of David building God a house, God promises to build David a house - a dynasty of kings. David's descendants will sit on the throne of Israel.

This promise God made to David is another foundational portion of Scripture. It's called [the Davidic Covenant](#). God promised David a son who would sit on his throne forever. He will be an eternal king who will reign over an eternal kingdom. The Hebrews called this future ruler the [Messiah](#), which means *"the anointed One."* Jesus is the fulfillment of the Davidic Covenant.

This is why Matthew and Luke provide us Jesus' genealogy, and trace His family tree back to David.

Under David's reign, God turned Israel into a world superpower. Every time King David and his army went to battle, Israel returned victorious. [Sadly, David's problems came from within, rather than from without.](#)

One spring, when his army had gone to battle, David stayed behind. He felt he deserved a little R and R...

But here's where you need to beware. When you're in the battle - facing challenging circumstances - you're on guard and vigilant. It's in times of ease, that you drop your guard, and become vulnerable to temptation.

Always remember, Satan never takes a vacation. He never takes a day off. Always beware of his snares.

One night David was lounging on the rooftop of his palace - no doubt, taking pride in his accomplishments.

When suddenly he noticed in the distance a beautiful lady bathing naked in the moonlight.

Rather than turn his head, *he took a look... and then another look...* soon he wanted to meet this woman...

One thing leads to another, and by the end of the night, David and Bathsheba have committed adultery.

I'm sure, when Bathsheba left the king's palace the next morning, David thought it was all over. But it wasn't. It was just beginning. Bathsheba was pregnant.

We need to be careful! Realize, **"It takes a lifetime to build a good reputation, but only one moment of indiscretion to tear it all down."** We need to be constantly on guard against temptation. Don't let your thoughts run wild, keep your mind under control!

The consequences of David's sin may not have been as tragic had he quickly confessed, and asked for God's forgiveness. Instead he tried to cover up his sin.

David arranged with his general, Joab, to move Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, to the front lines. Uriah died in battle, and David took Bathsheba to be his wife.

David thought no one would ever know the truth. He fooled everyone, *but God*. The Lord sent the prophet, Nathan, to expose David and call him to repentance.

Psalm 51 is David's response, "I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against You, You only, have I sinned..." God had been so good to David, yet he sinned against *his wife - his kids - Uriah - Bathsheba - the nation*. But what overwhelmed David the most was the fact that he had let God down.

David's sin set in motion a chain of events that almost toppled his kingdom. Two of his sons, Absalom and Adonijah, became so disillusioned with their father's leadership that they lead revolts against his government. David's sin literally tears his family apart.

Think it through, *King David paid a high price for one night of pleasure*. Always remember the truthful adage, **the cost of sin is always more than advertised!**

David's son, Solomon, became the third king of Israel. And shortly after taking the throne God came to Solomon with an interesting proposition. The Almighty told Solomon that He would grant him one request.

Whatever he asked for, God would give it to him.

If God told you he would grant you one request, what would it be? Riches, long life, victory over your enemies? Solomon asked for *wisdom to lead*.

And God was so impressed with his wise request that he also granted him riches, long life, and victories.

Solomon became both the wisest and wealthiest man to ever live. People came from all over the world to witness his greatness. Solomon authored three books of the Bible - [the Proverbs](#), [Ecclesiastes](#), and [the Song of Songs](#) - all a treasure house of wisdom!

Solomon also built the Temple - the place in the OT where men were suppose to come and worship God. The Temple took the place of the Tabernacle, and was the center of Israel's national life for 400 years.

1 Kings 5-6 and 2 Chronicles 2-7 describe the construction and dedication of the Temple.

And I love what Solomon says about God and the Temple on its dedication day. 1 Kings 8:27, **“Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain You. How much less this temple which I have built.”**

God is immense. He fills up the heavens. People today will walk by a church, and think, *“Oh, God lives in that building. This is God's house.”* But not so!

The whole world is God's house. He meets with us at special times and in special places - but the entire universe belongs to God. He can meet us anywhere.

Whenever we try to box God in, or confine him to something man-made - we make a huge mistake. God is boundless. He moves where and when He pleases.

Solomon started out a wise and godly person, but later in life he compromised his commitment to God.

Deuteronomy 17 prohibited the king from taking multiple wives. Solomon ignored God's law, and took 700 wives and 300 concubines - an unrivaled harem.

Most of Solomon's wives were foreigners, and they brought to Israel their false gods and idols. Solomon was the first king to bring idolatry into the nation Israel.

United Kingdom

Saul - no heart ("X" across heart)

David - whole heart ("O" across heart)

Solomon - half heart ("\\" across heart)

40 years, 40 years, 40 years

Davidic Covenant (pour oil over head) - **Messiah**

Solomon's son, Rehoboam, was a greedy king who raised the people's taxes. This caused a split in his kingdom. The northern ten tribes broke off from the southern two tribes. *Two Hebrew kingdoms formed.*

The northern tribes became known as **Israel**. Their capitol was the city of **Samaria**... While the southern tribes were **Judah**. Their capitol remained **Jerusalem**.

Rehoboam remained king of Judah.

And a man named Jeroboam ruled in Israel.

But this Jeroboam felt he had a problem... The Law of Moses required all Hebrews to worship at the temple in Jerusalem. Jeroboam feared that if his northern Israelis went

to Jerusalem three times annually they'd eventually pledge their loyalty to King Rehoboam.

Jeroboam's solution was to establish a rival religion.

He constructed golden calves in the towns of Bethel and Dan. And if you'd asked Jeroboam, he would've denied his calves weren't idols. They were similar to what Aaron made while Moses was on Mount Sinai.

They weren't substitutes for God, but representations off Him. Perhaps they were modeled after the living creatures, or angels, that surround God's throne in Revelation - one of their four faces is that of a calf.

Yet despite what Jeroboam may've intended, God saw them as idols. They may not have been a violation of the first command, *no other gods* - but they surely violated the second, *no graven images in worship*.

Jeroboam's sin was subtle. He wasn't intentionally introducing a new god. He wanted his people to worship Yahweh, *just not in the way God wanted to be worshipped...* Realize if you really love someone you'll want to love them in the way they want and need to be loved - **not just in the way that's convenient for you.**

This is the mistake people make with God today.

Oh, ask them if they worship God and they'll say "yes." But only in ways that's comfortable and easy for them. This isn't true worship. And it sinks into idolatry.

Jeroboam worshipped Yahweh, but in his *own way*.

He made the golden calves, and commissioned his own priesthood, his own sacrifices, his own feast days.

It ended up a full scale substitute for the true worship of God - **that eventually led to idolatry.** And most importantly, it angered the true God in heaven.

Over the next 200 years, 19 kings ruled over the northern kingdom of Israel, and it was said of each, **“he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam...”** None of Israel’s 19 kings faithfully followed the Lord. They followed Jeroboam.

And the worst of the bunch, was the wicked King Ahab, who ruled Israel for 21 years - 874 – 853 BC.

Ahab married a Phoenician princess named Jezebel, who imported her foreign religion. She further polluted the northern kingdom with the evils of Baal worship.

It was the 450 prophets of the Phoenician idol, Baal, who Elijah challenged on Mount Carmel. Elijah throws down the gauntlet in 1 Kings 18:24, **“you call on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of the LORD; and the God who answers by fire, He is God.”**

Jezebel’s prophets cried all day to their Baal - and not a single spark of fire... Finally, it was Elijah’s turn...

He drenched the sacrifice and altar with gallons of water, then prayed a simple prayer. God sent fire from heaven that burned up the sacrifice and wet altar alike.

All the people fell on their faces and shouted, **“The LORD, He is God!”** **The LORD, He is God!”** Elijah grabbed the prophets of Baal and slayed them all.

In the years following, over and over the kings of Israel would rebel against God, and God would raise up prophets to speak to these rulers and call them to repentance. **Elijah, Elisha, Hosea, and Amos** were all prophets sent to the northern kingdom of Israel.

Sadly, their warnings fell on deaf ears, and in 722 BC God raised up the Assyrian army to bring judgment on Israel. The Assyrians sacked the capitol of Samaria.

The spiritual condition of the southern kingdom of Judah fared a little better than their northern sister.

Of the 20 kings who reigned over Judah, 8 received a good report. **Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Amaziah, Uzziah, Jotham, Hezekiah, Josiah** were godly kings.

Jehoshaphat was the king with a strange battle plan. He went to war with musicians in front of his soldiers.

2 Chronicles 20 records that they went out singing and praising God, **“Praise the LORD, for His mercy endures forever.”** **The tactic confused the enemy and Judah won the battle.** The story teaches us the importance of praise and worship in spiritual battles.

King Hezekiah was a friend of the prophet Isaiah.

After the Assyrians had sacked Samaria, their army camped outside Jerusalem, and demanded Hezekiah's surrender. The king prayed, and God sent an angel who killed 185,000 Assyrians in a single night.

It's interesting, in Isaiah 8 the prophet identifies Judah's angelic avenger. He calls Him, "Immanuel."

This is the name the angel gave to Jesus at His birth. *Here's a thought, the babe born in Bethlehem had been here before?* That babe had been to battle. The Mighty Warrior who slaughtered the Assyrian army, became vulnerable and dependent on the care of peasant parents. Now you can appreciate His humility.

Another king, Josiah, ruled in Judah from 641-609 BC. The boy king took the throne at the age of eight.

Josiah's grandfather, Manasseh, had been a very wicked king. Manasseh destroyed copies of the Mosaic Law, and brought idols into the Temple's holy places.

It was during Josiah's reign that a copy of the Law was rediscovered. The king not only read the Law, but was determined to obey what he had read. Josiah was the catalyst for a spiritual revival in the land of Judah.

God also sent prophets to the southern kingdom: **Isaiah, Joel, Micah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah**, and perhaps the greatest prophet of all, **Jeremiah**.

But they weren't enough. The Jews forsook the Lord and pursued foreign gods. They also worshipped idols.

Kingdom Split (tear a piece of paper)

Northern tribes become Israel

Southern tribes become Judah

Prophets act as the mouthpiece of God (megaphone)

"Shape Up Or Ship Out"

Finally, God brought judgment on the southern kingdom of Judah. He raised up the Babylonian empire and King Nebuchadnezzar to invade the nation Judah.

Three times the Babylonians invaded the southern kingdom... In 605, in 597, and 586 BC. Each time the invaders took back to Babylon certain important Jews.

In 605 BC **Daniel** and friends were taken to Babylon.

In 597 BC they deported the prophet **Ezekiel**.

While in Babylon, Daniel and Ezekiel encouraged the exiled Jews. **Daniel** stood for God in the midst of a pagan society... **Ezekiel** raised the hopes of the Jews in captivity with visions of their return to their land.

Finally, in 586 BC the Babylonians sacked the city of Jerusalem, destroyed the temple, and the remaining Jews were taken back to Babylon to live in exile.

It was a sad end to a story filled with promise and opportunity - 900 years earlier Moses delivered the people from bondage, and Joshua had led them into the land God had promised Abraham - now they've lost their land and they've ended up back in bondage.

It's been said, "**The Jews wanted to live *like* idolators, so God let them live *with* the idolators.**"

Idolatry began with Nimrod at the tower of Babel.

Now the Hebrews are taken captive to the land of Babylon - the hotbed of paganism and idolatry.

Israel is Scattered by Assyria, 722 BC (palms out)

Judah Exiled in Babylon, 586 BC (wrists crossed)

Daniel, Ezekiel

70 years

It's a tragic story... *but it's not the end of the story?* God remains faithful! He still has a plan for His people.

Every time his people crash and burn, God comes to their rescue with **a covenant** - *with new terms and new promises*. And even in a hopeless Babylon the Lord begins to reveal pieces of a glorious *new covenant!*