

Covenants of God V Breaking the Covenant

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Good morning, everyone! We're going to continue on in our topic on covenants. This morning we're going to start with the death penalty as it applies to breaking the covenants. Then we will cover two specific covenants that Judah broke that really sealed its faith, or we might say put the nails in the coffin in the days of Zedekiah.

The book of Deuteronomy itself has been called the Book of the Law. It is filled with God's Laws, God's instructions as well as God's penalties.

Deuteronomy 17:1: "You shall not sacrifice to the LORD your God *any* bull or sheep in which there is a blemish, *or* any evil thing for that is an abomination to the LORD your God. If there is found among you, inside any of your gates which the LORD your God gives you, a man or woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, **in breaking His covenant**, and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, either the sun, or moon, or any *of* the forces of heaven, which I have forbidden, and if it is told you, and you have heard and inquired diligently... [you've had an inquiry, maybe a trial] ...and, behold, it is true and the thing is certain, that such abomination is done in Israel; then you shall bring forth that man or that woman who has committed that evil thing to your gates, even that man or that woman, and **shall stone them with stones until they die**" (vs 1-5).

Clearly this is the death penalty! God's death penalty was given over to man to administer it, shortly after the Flood. We will see where God authorized man to take the life of a fellow man if certain acts were committed.

Genesis 9:5: "And surely the blood of your lives will I require. At the hand of every animal will I require it, and at the hand of man. At the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man." In terms of an animal, what He's referring to is if you have a bull that goes wild and gores someone, you are to execute the bull; kill him.

Likewise, in sections of India and Africa, sometimes villages are terrorized by a rouge elephant, lion or tiger. God has authorized such people to hunt that animal down and kill it if necessary. Quite often the tiger or lion has been injured and can't hunt the way he used to be able to hunt, and now he's hunting men—humans—because it's easier. God says, 'I authorize you to kill it!'

Verse 6: "Whoever sheds man's blood, his

blood shall be shed by man—for He made man in the image of God." So, if you're going to take the life of somebody made in the image of God, God says to execute you.

This is very short and concise; it's not the whole story. Years ago at Ambassador College I had the privilege of knowing one of the kindest, nicest, gentlest men I ever met, and he was a scholar in his own right and had a good sense of humor. Some of you know him, you might have met him; his name was Charles B. Dorothy. I had a good relationship with him. In fact, just after I graduated and was put on the sermonette list, he knew that I was on that list though he didn't say anything.

On a Monday, right after the Sabbath when I had given my first sermonette, he came up to me and he asked, 'How did it go?' *Well, Dr. Dorothy, I told them about the Law of God! If it was good enough for Moses, it's good enough for us!* He replied, 'A bit reactionary, but we'll accept it.'

He taught me a lesson in reading the Bible. Actually, he taught a lot of us a lesson. He said, 'The Bible is a book of addition, not subtraction, which goes hand-in-hand with Isa. 28 about learning 'line upon line; precept upon precept; here a little, there a little.' What you have to do is you have to find the various sections of the Bible that talk about the subject.

We're going to see a limitation put on execution, Deuteronomy 17:6: "**At the mouth of two witnesses or three witnesses** shall he that is worthy of death be put to death. At the mouth of one witness he shall not be put to death." Wait a minute, Lord, You just told me in Gen. 9 that if a person kills somebody, he's to be put to death. Now you're telling me that if he does and there's only one witness, he shall not be put to death. What gives? Is this not a contradiction?

Some years ago I was listening to a talk show and the subject came up about David, Bathsheba and Uriah. The caller was furious at God! He said that David should have been executed! The talk show host tried to say, 'Well, he wasn't; God didn't do it.' Of course, the caller said, 'Why didn't He? He should have!'

If you kill somebody, doesn't it say to execute him? *Yes, it does!*

- What do we have here?
- How do we understand this?

Isaiah 55—something we all should be wise to remember. God reminds us of something. In this case:

Isaiah 55:7: “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the LORD, and **He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.** ‘For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor your ways My ways,’ says the LORD. ‘For *as* the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts’” (vs 7-9).

We would do well to remember this. Why was David not killed? First of all, Israel was a theocracy, and God was the ultimate Ruler of that theocracy. David sinned against God. The penalty, theoretically, was death. But is not the penalty of *all sin* death? ‘The wages of sin is death.’

What is the key for God’s forgiveness? *Repentance!* The difference here is that David repented bitterly. Read Psa. 51 and you will see how David repented, and said, ‘Against **You only** have I sinned!’

Think of this, we’ve all sinned. What happens when we repent? Remember, the ‘wages of sin is death; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. What is the penalty? What happens when we repent? *God waves the death penalty*; even though what we have done is worthy of death.

What David did was worthy of death! But God chose to wave that penalty for his repentance. So, God tells us that if we repent He doesn’t always execute the death penalty at that time. If you continue to repent, He’ll wave it forever! That’s something this caller didn’t understand.

What about the business of witnesses? What happens when a man commits a crime, slaughters somebody, and there’s someone who happens to be in the next room and witnesses it or says that he witnesses it. He comes forth and says, ‘I saw him do that.’ God says, ‘It doesn’t matter. At the hand of one witness he shall not be put to death.’ Why?

This is where we have to consider how God thinks. What God is telling us, as one rabbi once said to me, ‘What is the Torah trying to tell you?’ Or as I put it, ‘What is God trying to tell us through the Torah?’ He wants an additional layer of protection upon the accused. He is more concerned about the accused being not guilty than being found guilty and being executed when he shouldn’t be.

Not that God says to let him go; not that God says he shouldn’t be punished; but He’s talking about the death penalty. Perhaps he could be set

aside and be put in one of the cities of refuge. It could be any number of reasons.

Do you know how many people who are innocent and are on death row have recently been found to be innocent? They didn’t follow God’s instructions. I read a number of those cases. I haven’t read all of them, but every one that I read and studied, the case was circumstantial, or a half-witness. In none of the case that I saw were there two witnesses.

Now, three or four witnesses can be corrupt, too. But God says that it’s ‘easier for one witness to be false than for two witnesses.’ So, He says, ‘I want two witnesses. I’m giving it over to you. Humans are flawed! Humans can be corrupt! Humans have their own prejudices! Their own personal views!’

God says, ‘I want two independent witnesses before I allow you to execute someone.’ That is why God said, ‘Only two witnesses, at the mouth of one witness, sorry. You can punish him some other way, but do not kill him.’ That shows us how God thinks when he applies the death penalty.

Now we’re going to look at a fascinating covenant that is between Babylon, Judah and God. God was furious at what happened. We will read Ezek. 17 and then we will see an addition of what Ezra wrote about the same incident.

Ezekiel 17:11: “And the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Say now to the rebellious house, “Do you not know what these *things mean*?”’ Tell them, “Behold, the king of Babylon has come to Jerusalem and has taken its king and its rulers, and brings them to himself to Babylon.”” (vs 11-12). This also included Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, and many of the important people in Judah.

Verse 13: And he has taken of the king’s seed... [the king’s family] ...and has made a covenant with him... [this is Nebuchadnezzar making a covenant with the new ruler of Judah] ...and has taken an oath from him.... [from the new ruler of Judah] ...He has also taken the mighty of the land... [the nobles, traders, artisans] ...so that the kingdom might be low, that it might not lift itself up, *but* that by keeping his covenant it might stand” (vs 13-14).

God is saying here that you’re not going to be as you were in the days of Jehoshaphat or Asa or Hezekiah or Josiah, but if you agree to the covenant that you made with Nebuchadnezzar, you’ll be a vassal state. The temple will still be there, the priests will still be there and you’ll survive if you do this. What happened?

Verse 15: “But he rebelled against him in sending his ambassadors into Egypt, to give him horses and many people. Shall he be blessed? Shall he who does such *things* escape? Or shall he break the covenant and be delivered?” Is he so stupid as to think he’s going to get away with this? *Frankly, the answer was yes! They thought they could!*

Verse 16: “‘As I live,’ says the Lord GOD...” That’s another of those phrases to look out for:

- by Myself have I sworn
- I swear by Myself
- as I live

As I am the Almighty God!

“...‘surely in the place of the king who made him king... [in the place of King Nebuchadnezzar who made this individual king of Judah] ...whose oath he despised... [the oath that he took with Nebuchadnezzar] ...and whose covenant he broke, even with him in the midst of Babylon he shall die” (vs 16). So, he’s going to be taken captive and go up to Babylon.

Verse 17: “Neither shall Pharaoh with *his* mighty army and great company help him in the war, when they cast up mounds and build siege forts to cut off many persons. And he has despised the oath by breaking the covenant. And, behold, he had given his hand... [in alignment with Nebuchadnezzar] ...and has done all these, he shall not escape” (vs 17-18).

Verse 19: “Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘As I live, surely My oath that he has despised, and My covenant that he has broken, I will even repay it upon his own head. And I will spread My net upon him, and he shall be taken in My snare, and I will bring him to Babylon, and I will judge him there for his sin which he has sinned against Me” (vs 19-20). God says that Zedekiah—whom this is talking about—sinned against himself. He despised his own oath and he despised Nebuchadnezzar’s oath.

What are they all talking about? Come and let us see, as Dr. Dorothy would say, the Bible is a book of addition.

2-Chronicles 36:1: “And the people of the land took Jehoahaz the son of Josiah...” Historically speaking this occurred right after the death, unfortunately, of Josiah. For whatever reason—I don’t know why—he just felt he had to fight Egypt. The Pharaoh of Egypt—Necho—said, ‘What are you coming out against me for? This fight is not with you; I must go fight the Babylonians.’ But Josiah was headstrong and went and was killed.

Verse 2: “Jehoahaz *was* twenty-three years

old when he began to reign, and he reigned three months in Jerusalem. And the king of Egypt deposed him at Jerusalem and laid a fine of a hundred talents of silver and a talent of gold on the land. And the king of Egypt made Eliakim his brother king over Judah and Jerusalem, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Necho took Jehoahaz his brother and carried him to Egypt. Jehoiakim *was* twenty-five years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did *what was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God. Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon came up against him and bound him in chains to carry him to Babylon” (vs 2-6).

We need to realize something from God’s point of view. We know that Nebuchadnezzar was the head of gold, the beginning of the beast power/beast system. But not every aspect of the beast power was bad.

In fact, Nebuchadnezzar is considered God’s servant. God at one point says, ‘I have not paid him his wages.’ God gave the whole seacoast into Nebuchadnezzar’s hands. God gave that to him. Let’s not blame this on Nebuchadnezzar; he was God’s agent. God sent him against Judah for its sins.

In his own way, acting under God’s instructions; though Nebuchadnezzar was ordered by God to do it, he was led by God to do it; v 7: “And Nebuchadnezzar carried away *some* of the vessels of the house of the LORD to Babylon and put them in his temple at Babylon. And the rest of the acts of Jehoiakim, and his abominations... [that’s a strong word] ...which he did, and that which was found in him, behold, they *are* written in the Book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. And Jehoiachin his son reigned in his place” (vs 7-8).

Now here we come toward that oath that was broken, v 9: “In the eighth year *of Nebuchadnezzar’s reign*, Jehoiachin became king and reigned three months and ten days in Jerusalem. And he did *what was* evil in the sight of the LORD.” What did he do for three months and ten days that was bad?

Verse 10: “And when the year had ended, King Nebuchadnezzar sent and brought him to Babylon with the valuable vessels of the house of the LORD. And he made his brother Zedekiah... [the last] ...king over Judah and Jerusalem. Zedekiah *was* twenty-one years old when he began to reign, and he reigned eleven years in Jerusalem. And he did *what was* evil in the sight of the LORD his God...” (vs 10-12).

“...^[#1]He did not humble himself before Jeremiah the prophet *who spoke* from the mouth of the LORD. And ^[#2]he also rebelled against king

Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God. But he stiffened his neck and hardened his heart from turning to the LORD God of Israel.”

What happened was, Zedekiah swore by God. He said, ‘I will do this.’ He swore in the name of God that he would. Not only did he break the oath to Nebuchadnezzar, but since he swore by God, the real God, that he would do it, **he broke his oath to God**, as well. A double breaking, and God was furious! Again, Zedekiah went into captivity.

Now let us look at the real covenant that Zedekiah broke. This is the picture of God and His relationship to Israel. It’s a beautiful picture; it really is!

Ezekiel 16:1: “Again the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, ‘Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations. And say, “Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem, ‘Your origin and your birth is of the land of Canaan. Your father was an Amorite, and your mother a Hittite. And *as for* your birth, in the day you were born your navel *cord* was not cut, nor were you washed with water to cleanse you. And you were not salted, nor swaddled at all. No eye pitied you, to do any of these for you, to have compassion on you. But you were thrown out into the open field because your life was despised in the day that you were born. And when I passed by you and saw you squirming in your blood, I said to you in your blood, “Live!” Yea, I said to you in your blood, “Live!” I have caused you to multiply like the growth of the field, and you increased and grew up, and became exceedingly beautiful; *your* breasts are formed, and your hair is grown, yet, you *were* naked and bare. And I passed by you and looked on you, and, behold, your time *was* the time of love. And I spread my skirt over you and covered your nakedness. And I swore to you and entered into a covenant with you,’ says the Lord GOD. ‘And you became Mine’” (vs 1-8).

This is a marriage covenant. Israel was the bride of the Lord.

Verse 9: “And I washed you with water; I washed away your blood from you, and I anointed you with oil. I also clothed you *with* embroidered work, and I shod you *with* leather sandals. And I wrapped you in fine linen, and I covered you *with* silk. And I adorned you *with* ornaments, and I put bracelets upon your hands and a chain on your neck. And I put a ring on your nose, and earrings in your ears, and a beautiful crown on your head” (vs 9-12).

I remember a number of times Mr. Armstrong commenting, years ago, that he didn’t really want earrings on a woman’s ear, but Loma

wanted them. Here it is in Ezek. 16:12 that God said that He put earrings on Israel’s ears, so there was nothing Mr. Armstrong could do about it.

But notice that God said, “...I put a ring on your nose...” Today we have young ladies, teenage girls, that have rings on their noses, and elsewhere, too. Maybe there’s not too much we can say to ladies and girls who want a ring on their nose. God said that he did it to Israel, and He said that Israel was beautiful. So, maybe it’s time to rethink some of these things.

Verse 13: “‘And you were adorned with gold and silver; and your clothing *was of* fine linen and silk and embroidered work. You ate fine flour and honey and oil; and you were exceedingly beautiful. And you advanced into a kingdom. And your name went out among the nations because of your beauty; for it *was* perfect through My splendor, which I had put on you,’ says the Lord GOD” (vs 13-14).

Part of this splendor was in the days of Solomon, when God blessed Israel to the full. Solomon’s name was known far and wide. Jerusalem was filled with gold and silver. It was a glorious kingdom. In fact, we might say that it was the original Camelot!

Verse 15: “‘But you trusted in your beauty, and played the harlot because of your name, and poured out your fornications on all who passed by—on any who *would have* it. And you took from your clothes and adorned your high places with different colors, and played the harlot on them. Such things should not happen, nor should ever be! And you have taken of your beautiful jewels of My gold and of My silver, which I had given you, and made images of men, and did commit whoredom with them. And *you* took your embroidered dresses and covered them, and you have given to them My oil and My incense. Also, My food, which I gave you, fine flour and oil and honey *with which* I fed you, you have given it to them for a sweet savor. And so it was,’ says the Lord GOD.” (vs 15-19).

These next verses are absolutely horrendous, horrific, v 20: “‘And you have taken your sons and your daughters, whom you have borne to Me, and you sacrificed them unto these images to be devoured. Is this, your whoredoms so small a matter? You have slaughtered My children and delivered them up and caused them to pass through the fire. And in all your hateful deeds and your whoredoms you have not remembered the days of your youth, when you were naked and bare, *and* squirming in your *own* blood’” (vs 20-22).

This was so horrific that God said twice,

through the prophet Jeremiah, that He did not even think or dream that Israel would ever do this. This is God speaking. We'll discuss a concept or two regarding what God really is. We say He is all-powerful and all-knowing, and sometimes we have a false concept of God.

Jeremiah 7:29: “Cut off your hair and throw *it* away, and take up a lamentation on the high places. For the LORD has rejected and forsaken the generation of His wrath. For the children of Judah have done evil in My sight,” says the LORD. ‘They have set their abominations in the house which is called by My name, to pollute it. They have built the high places of Tophet, which *is* in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I did not command *them*, nor did it *even* come into My mind” (vs 29-31)—that they would sink to such depths.

We'll see the same thing mentioned in Jeremiah 32:28: “Therefore, thus says the LORD, ‘Behold, I will give this city into the hand of the Chaldeans, and into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall take it.” That’s what we saw in Ezek. So, we’re talking about the same timeframe.

Verse 29: “And the Chaldeans who fight against this city shall come up and set this city on fire, and burn it with the houses on whose roofs they have offered incense to Baal... [v 30]: ...For the children of Israel and the children of Judah have only done evil before Me... [v 31]: For this city has been to Me as a cause of My anger and of My fury from the day that they built it even to this day; that I should remove it from before My face... [v 32]: Because of all the evil of the children of Israel and of the children of Judah, which they have done to provoke Me to anger... [v 33]: And they have turned the back to Me, and not the face; though I taught them...” (vs 29-33).

Verse 35: “And they built the high places of Baal, in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to cause their sons and their daughters...”—burning them in the fire. This is very similar, by the way, to what the Carthaginians did. In the Roman/Punic War, Rome destroyed Carthage. They leveled it, put salt through it, and it was not inhabited. The Romans said that they sacrificed their children to the fire. Many historians question that it couldn't be that bad. Then along came the 17-1900s and the archeologists got into the area of Carthage and they excavated it and sure enough, they found the remains, bodies and areas where the children of Carthage were literally burned up in the fire.

I learned a principle from Dr. Hoeh, years ago: many times God will use one way to punish a

nation whose sins are much greater. God used the Romans Republic (at that time) to destroy Carthage for its sins of burning its own children in the fire.

This is what the children of Judah were doing! God said, ‘I’m furious!’ That was one of the nails in the coffin of Judah.

I need to set the pattern. Jer. 34 talks about Israel and the covenant the Jews, Jerusalem and the covenant that they broke. We have a parallel in the United States.

In the 1770s was a time of rebellion. King George in the eyes of the Colonists was getting ‘too big for his britches’: the Stamp Acts, the Intolerable Acts. Part of it really wasn't Britain's fault. They had just concluded the French and Indian War and they protected the Colonies from it. Britain bore most of the cost. ‘Isn't it reasonable that the Colonies should pay some of the taxes.’ It was perfectly reasonable from the British point of view. The problem was that nobody in Britain told the Colonists what they had in mind. You know, *No taxation without representation!*

Well, things came to a head and the rebellion broke out. How do you justify that rebellion? What I'm doing is setting the stage for Jer. 34. What argument could be used for rebelling against the crown? They were subject to Britain. Were the sins of Britain that great? *Frankly, no, they really weren't that great!* But the only argument that Thomas Jefferson had was a religious one.

What they said was that ‘rebellion against tyranny is obedience to God; we ought to obey God rather than man.’ So, the argue went in the Declaration of Independence:

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve...

Disband! Talks about

...natures God...

We hold these truths to be self-evident:
That all men are created equal...

Yes! You British, you the crown, have come between us and God! You are enslaving us, so we are going to say, in so many words, that we ought to obey God rather than men!

Remember something like that in the book of Acts, chapter five: the Apostle Peter. This was not exactly the Apostle Peter talking to the Sanhedrin, but what Jefferson's declaration was is that God had declared all men free, and the British had no right to tax without representation. It was the only argument

he had. So, he was saying, 'We're going to be free! We're going to be independent under God, not under the British.

But the problem was, they brought God's name into it by talking about nature and nature's God, Who is the real God. Understand, I'm not saying that Thomas Jefferson understood the real God. He did not. He understood that there was a first cause. He knew that he was more of a deist who believed that there was a first cause, who set the universe up according to laws, and we've seen some of those laws in stones, in water, incredible laws governing the universe. They're all working in precision, and Thomas Jefferson knew that. He didn't fully agree with the God of the Bible necessarily. He had a scissors and he cut out the portions of the Bible that talked about miracles. He was a realist, but he did understand about liberty. He did understand that that first cause declared all men free!

But one glaring fault! They extended it to the Colonists themselves, but they didn't extend it to the black man; not to African-Americans. And Lincoln saw. God gave them over 80 years to abolish slavery. We will see that the real cause of the civil war was God's judgment on this country for the sin of slavery. Lincoln said so himself.

Have any of you ever read Lincoln's Second Inaugural speech from beginning to end? Some historians call it the greatest speech ever written. It's unbelievable. Lincoln saw it; he knew it was coming: the Missouri Compromise of 1850, all those things in history. Lincoln did not really believe that you should fight the war over slavery. That came later during the war.

Steven Spielberg has ideas—I don't agree with all of them by any stretch—and he knows how to make a movie. The movie he did *Lincoln* was accurate. In fact, one of the instructors that I loved in the History Teaching Company evaluated the movie and he said that everything was about as perfect as you can get. He discussed the White House and how it was setup, how the furniture was laid out, the ticking of the clock on the wall was exactly where it was, the wallpaper was exactly as it was. The seating in Congress, exactly as it was. It shows you the last four years of Lincoln's life and his attempt to get the 13th Amendment passed, which, of course, was abolishing slavery.

During the war Lincoln used his wartime powers to free slaves. That was during war, it wasn't legislation. He knew it had to be by legislation, so he got this 13th Amendment passed.

Leading up to it, Lincoln saw it as

something that was wrong, something that was bad, but he wasn't going to fight against slavery himself. He just wanted it curtailed in the south. That was the dream of the founding fathers. They knew slavery was wrong, even though many of them had slaves.

George Washington was a slaveholder. Thomas Jefferson was a slaveholder. Remember the famous cry: Give me liberty or give me death by Patrick Henry? *He was a slaveholder!* Some of them would never give up their slaves. That was their way of life. The majority of the founding fathers thought that if they could contain it in the south it would eventually die a natural death. That was a reasonable thought and proposition to assume.

But something they did not foresee: *the Industrial Revolution*. The Industrial Revolution came along, and especially in Britain with the textile mills, and what do you need in textile mills in order to produce cloth, clothing, etc? *Cotton!* Where was the cheapest and most abundant available source of cotton? *The American South!* What is the cheapest way to harvest that cotton? *Black slaves!* So, instead of dying out, slavery was mushrooming and threatening to take over the country.

Lincoln was horrified because of popular sovereignty. If you will recall, popular sovereignty was the belief that, as territories that become states, the people in each territory would decide for themselves whether to be free states or slave states.

Lincoln was horrified because he was coming into his own in the 1850s; not that he felt that slavery should be destroyed or that it was necessarily that immoral or wrong, but he believed in free white labor. This is what the North believed in: *free white labor!*

If you brought slaves up into the North and into the factories, how could free whites compete with slave labor? *They couldn't!* So, he was adamantly opposed to bringing slavery into the North. Then came the famous election of 1860, in which the votes were split—divided—and God was behind it.

If God had not worked it out, with things so split, Lincoln never would have been President. Lincoln came to realize that, and during that Civil War that came about, he came to realize that the whole thing was God's judgment.

God said, 'I've given you time to end it; you haven't done it; you've brought My name into it. You said that "...nature and nature's God..."—and I'm the God of all creation and I set all men free—and you have gone back on it.' Therefore, the war took four bloody years!

Study it and you will find that the war could have been over after one or two years, but a certain series of events happened after each battle to allow Lee and his army, or another confederate army to get away to fight again, and God bled the country, bled the country and bled the country, and Lincoln's own description of how he described in his Second Inaugural.

Jer. 34—the children of Judah did the same thing. They entered into a covenant to free their own Hebrews and they weren't doing it. They entered into a covenant, into the House of God, passed through the animals of blood sacrifice swearing before God that they would free their Hebrew servants. They did it and God said, 'You do well.' ***Then they reneged and took them back*** and God was livid, furious!

That was the final nail in the coffin of Judah, which happened in the days of Zedekiah just before Nebuchadnezzar came to take over the country.

Lincoln's Second Inaugural—understand his philosophy, his theology on the subject: *malice toward none, with charity for all, firmness in the right as God gives us to see the right.*"

He said malice toward none, because he said, 'How can I blame the North for what they have done? How can I blame the South for what it's done? This isn't the work of men; this is the work of God! This is His punishment on North and South for the sin of slavery.'

I thought I knew a lot about the Civil War, I thought I knew about the preserving the Union, I thought about the tariffs; the North wanted the tariffs collected in the southern ports. There were many other reasons why that war was fought.

But the main reason was ***God's reason!*** God could have stopped it; he could have prevented it; but it was His punishment on this country, and He punished Judah in the same way!

[transcriber's note: the audio of the next message in this series is unavailable]

Scriptural References:

- 1) Deuteronomy 17:1-5
- 2) Genesis 9:5
- 3) Deuteronomy 17:6
- 4) Isaiah 55:7-9
- 5) Ezekiel 17:11-20
- 6) 2 Chronicles 36:1
- 7) Ezekiel 16:1-22
- 8) Jeremiah 7:29-31

9) Jeremiah 32:28-33, 35

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Isaiah 28
- Psalm 51
- Jeremiah 34

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