

# A Short History of Israel

A 20-Lesson Study by Keith Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®  
Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

## About This Series

This 20-lesson series by Keith Blades provides an introductory and preparatory survey of the nation Israel's history from its foundations in the Abrahamic covenant through to the establishment of God's kingdom on earth. Using a dispensational time line throughout, Keith equips believers to understand why Israel's program matters — not because we are under it, but because understanding it makes the Old Testament, the Gospel accounts, the opening chapters of Acts, and the books of Hebrews through Revelation make sense as they ought to. The study is anchored in Leviticus 26 (the five courses of punishment) and Daniel 2 and 9 (the time schedule and five installments of the fifth course), and concludes with Israel's future kingdom as the fulfillment of God's eternal purpose for the nation.



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## Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 1	Introduction: Why Israel's history matters for believers today
Lesson 2	Right division foundations: times past, now, and things to come
Lesson 3	The beginning of the nation: Genesis 12 and the Abrahamic covenant
Lesson 4	God's Jehovahness and grace vs. the Law contract at Sinai
Lesson 5	The five trials before Sinai and the nature of the Law contract
Lesson 6	Leviticus 26: the five courses of punishment introduced
Lesson 7	The scope of the fifth course of punishment
Lesson 8	Leviticus 26 in the later prophets: the fifth course arriving
Lesson 9	Joshua's farewell and the seeds of rebellion in the nation
Lesson 10	The first course of punishment: the book of Judges
Lesson 11	Transition to the second course: Israel rejects the Theocracy
Lesson 12	The second course of punishment: Leviticus 26:19–22
Lesson 13	The fifth course arrives: 2 Kings 17 and the Assyrian captivity

Lesson	Core Focus
Lesson 14	Five installments of the fifth course: Jeremiah 25 and Daniel
Lesson 15	Daniel 2: the scope of the fifth course on the timeline
Lesson 16	Daniel 9: the time schedule of the five installments
Lesson 17	The fourth installment and the insertion of the dispensation of grace
Lesson 18	Daniel 9 continued: detailed survey of the five installments
Lesson 19	The third and fourth installments: Greece, Rome, and Messiah's coming
Lesson 20	The fifth installment and the glory of the coming kingdom

## Lesson Summaries

L1

### Why Study Israel's History? *Laying the Foundation*

- This study surveys the major highlights of Israel's history that are essential for understanding the Old Testament, the Gospel accounts, Acts 1–8, and Hebrews through Revelation.
- Romans 11 provides five reasons why Israel's history matters to believers in the dispensation of grace — Paul himself gives value to this study.
- A dispensational time line is introduced as the primary visual tool used throughout all 20 lessons.
  - The time line tracks the nation from the Abrahamic covenant through to the establishment of the kingdom.
- Right division is the framework: times past (Israel's program), now (the dispensation of grace), and things to come (the resumption of Israel's program).
- Israel's program is temporarily suspended during this dispensation of grace — understanding it is essential, even though we do not live under it.
- This series is introductory and preparatory; extended studies on individual topics are available from Enjoy the Bible Ministries®.

L2

### Right Division Foundations *Times Past, Now, and Things to Come*

- Review of the right division of God's word and its three categories: times past, now in this dispensation of grace, and things yet to come.
- Reference to the 10-lesson "Basic Bible Comprehension" series ("Properly Handling the Word of Truth") for those needing deeper grounding in right division.

#### Moses and Paul: The Two Major Revelators

- Moses revealed God's word to Israel; Paul revealed God's word for the Body of Christ in this dispensation of grace.
- The dispensation of grace is unique and new — Paul's unique apostleship to

the Gentiles is emphasized.

- Gentile believers today are not under the Law contract given to Israel — this distinction must be maintained throughout the study.
- These foundational right-division truths are required equipment for understanding everything that follows in Israel's history.

L3

### **The Beginning of the Nation Israel** *Genesis 12 and the Abrahamic Covenant*

- Genesis 12 introduces the fifth of five beginnings in the book of Genesis: the beginning of the nation Israel.
- The five beginnings in Genesis: the world (1:1–25), man (1:26–2:25), post-flood world (Gen. 9), the nations (Gen. 10–11), and Israel (Gen. 12).
- The name “Israel” (given in Genesis 32:28) carries forward-looking significance: it identifies the nation's God-given role in establishing His kingdom on earth.

#### **God's Purpose for the Nation**

- God's original purpose from creation: to establish His kingdom on earth through a mediating nation.
- Adam's mandate (dominion over the earth) connects to Israel's future role as the kingdom nation through whom God will rule.
- The Abrahamic covenant (Gen. 12:1–3) is unconditional — God's sworn and irrevocable purpose for Abraham's seed.

L4

### **God's Jehovahness and Grace** *The Critical Issue Before Sinai*

- God's name “Jehovah” (Exodus 3) reveals His capacity to be whatever the nation Israel needs Him to be — this is the heart of His grace toward them.
- Israel's only hope of fulfilling God's plan is through His Jehovahness and grace — never through their own performance or merit.
- Hosea 13 illustrates the issue: God's grace and Israel's dependence on Him vs. their tendency to rely on themselves.

#### **The Fatal Decision at Sinai**

- At Sinai (Exodus 19), Israel signed the Law contract — binding themselves to be dealt with by God solely on the basis of their own performance.
- The Law contract had no provision for God to deal with them by grace — they contracted it away at Sinai.
- This decision set the stage for everything that follows in Israel's history, including all five courses of punishment in Leviticus 26.

L5

### **The Trials Before Sinai** *God's Preparation and the Nature of the Law Contract*

- God brought Israel through five trials between the Exodus and Sinai (Exodus 15–17) to establish beyond question that His Jehovahness and grace was their only hope.
- Trial 1 (bitter waters of Marah): manifests God's Jehovahness — He can be

what they need.

- Trial 2 (manna in the wilderness): directly contrasts God's grace with Israel's performance; proves they cannot sustain themselves by merit.
- Trials 3–5 (Exodus 17): further underscore the same truth — God abundantly made the case before they ever arrived at Sinai.

#### The Law Contract Examined

- The nature of the Law contract: Israel contracted to be dealt with by their own performance rather than God's grace and Jehovahness.
- Their inability to perform was already established before they signed — making the consequences of Leviticus 26 an inevitable result.

## L6

### Leviticus 26 Introduced *The Five Courses of Punishment*

- Leviticus 26 is the single most critical passage for understanding Israel's entire history — everything from Joshua through Revelation (except Romans–Philemon) is outlined here.
- The five courses of punishment set forth in Leviticus 26 are the master framework for all of God's historical dealings with Israel.
- Each course amplifies and builds upon the preceding one; the fifth course is the final and most critical.

#### No Sixth Course

- There is no sixth, seventh, or eighth course — the fifth course is the last. Once the nation enters it, they remain in it until the kingdom is established.
- Example application: Elijah stopping rain for 3½ years (1 Kings 17–18) is not an isolated event — it is the second course of punishment operating exactly as contracted in Leviticus 26.
- Understanding Leviticus 26 opens up Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, the prophets, the Gospels, and Revelation with clarity.

## L7

### The Scope of the Fifth Course *From Captivity to the Kingdom*

- Review of all five courses of punishment: their general contents and escalating severity.
- The fifth course is the last, the most severe, and the most important to understand.

#### The Scope of Scripture Under the Fifth Course

- From 2 Chronicles 36 / 2 Kings 25 (historical commencement of the fifth course) onward, everything in Scripture — except Romans–Philemon — pertains to the fifth course.
- This includes: all of the Major and Minor Prophets, the four Gospel accounts, Acts 1–8, and Hebrews through Revelation.
- Ezra, Nehemiah, and Esther record events within one of the installments of the fifth course.
- The fifth course has multiple installments — the 70-year Babylonian captivity is only the first of five.

## L8

### **Leviticus 26 in the Later Prophets** *The Fifth Course Prophets and Their Message*

- The prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Amos, and others) understood that the history of Israel was laid out in Leviticus 26.
- Amos 4 provides an example of a prophet directly referencing the courses of punishment in his ministry.
- Two primary passages for the curses of the Law contract: Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 — the prophets referred to both.

#### **The Fifth Course Prophets**

- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel are “fifth course prophets” — men God raised up to speak to Israel in the context of the fifth course of punishment.
- Jeremiah in particular makes direct reference to the curses of the law contract being fulfilled upon the nation.
- Things established before Joshua crossed the Jordan (e.g., Deuteronomy 28) set the context for everything the prophets address.

## L9

### **From Foundation to Joshua** *Seeds of Rebellion in the Land*

- With the foundational lessons established, the study now moves forward into the historical outworking of the five courses, beginning with Joshua.
- Joshua 23: Joshua’s farewell charge acknowledges God’s faithfulness — every good thing He promised was fulfilled during the conquest.
- Seeds of rebelliousness were evident even in Joshua’s time (e.g., Achan in Joshua 7) — they did not put away their idols.

#### **Joshua’s Warning**

- Joshua recognized that the generation following him would face the first course of punishment if they did not continue to cleave to the LORD.
- The covenant stone of witness (Joshua 24) was set up against them — Israel swore faithfulness they would not keep.
- The good things of Joshua’s day were a result of Israel’s relative cleaving to the LORD; the curses were inevitable once that ended.

## L10

### **The First Course of Punishment** *The Book of Judges*

- Judges 2 provides the outline and pattern of the first course of punishment as it plays out historically.
- God reserved the right to show mercy and compassion even within the Law contract framework — this explains the pattern of the judges.
- The cycle of the first course: Israel rebels → God brings punishment → Israel cries out → God raises up a judge → deliverance → rebellion resumes.

#### **The Duration of the First Course**

- Approximately 450 years elapsed under the first course (from Judges 1 through early 1 Samuel).
- God repeatedly showed mercy within the framework of the first course, but the nation never genuinely reformed.
- The first course prepared the ground for the second course — Israel’s failure to respond to discipline escalated God’s dealings.

## L11

### **Transition to the Second Course** *Israel Rejects the Theocracy*

- After approximately 450 years of the first course, Israel's demand for a king "like the other nations" (1 Samuel 8) constituted a rejection of the Theocracy.
- 1 Samuel 12: Samuel gave Israel a sign of thunder and rain out of season as a witness of the great wickedness of their rejection of God's kingship.

### **The Second Course Becomes Warranted**

- The two components of the second course (Leviticus 26:19–22): breaking the pride of their power, and climatic/agricultural judgment.
- Political judgment also accompanies the second course — the pride of their governmental power will be broken.
- God was now in a position, under the Law contract, to begin bringing the second course of punishment upon the nation.

## L12

### **The Second Course of Punishment** *Leviticus 26:19–22 in History*

- The second course has two major aspects: (1) breaking the pride of Israel's power, and (2) climatic and agricultural judgment.
- 1 Kings 12: Solomon's pride and the splitting of the kingdom under Rehoboam — the governmental pride of the nation broken.

### **Elijah and the Climatic Judgment**

- 1 Kings 17–18: Elijah's ministry and the 3½-year drought directly fulfill the second aspect of the second course — heaven as brass, earth as iron.
- The famine and drought are not arbitrary — they are the precise outworking of what Israel contracted for at Sinai.
- 1 Kings 12 through 2 Kings 17 covers the nation historically under the second course of punishment.
- The second course is not the last — three more courses await before the fifth and final course arrives.

## L13

### **The Fifth Course Arrives** *2 Kings 17 and the Assyrian Captivity*

- 2 Kings 17: the Assyrian captivity of the northern kingdom marks the historical arrival of the fifth and final course of punishment.
- The fifth course is the last — there is no sixth course. This is confirmed directly from Leviticus 26.

### **Everything Now Is the Fifth Course**

- From this point forward, everything in Scripture — except Romans–Philemon — pertains to the fifth course of punishment in Israel's history.
- Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the Minor Prophets, the four Gospels, Acts 1–8, and Hebrews through Revelation: all fifth course.
- The fifth course = the "times of the Gentiles": Israel is taken out of the land, the land is desolate, and Gentile nations rule over them.
- The fifth course will only end when the God of heaven establishes His kingdom and restores Israel to her land.

## L14

### **Five Installments of the Fifth Course** *Jeremiah 25 and the Framework of Daniel*

- Leviticus 26 and Jeremiah 25 together establish that the 70-year Babylonian captivity is only the first installment of the fifth course.
- There are five distinct installments within the fifth course, each corresponding to a different Gentile world power ruling over Israel.

#### **Daniel 2: The Five Gentile Dominions**

- Daniel 2's image (Nebuchadnezzar's dream) provides the God-given framework for the five installments: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the final kingdom of iron and clay.
- The land enjoying her Sabbaths (2 Chronicles 36:21) fulfills the first aspect of the fifth course — but it is only the first installment.
- 2 Chronicles 36 fulfilling Jeremiah's 70-year prophecy does not exhaust the fifth course — four more installments remain.
- Understanding the five installments is essential for placing every subsequent prophetic and historical passage in its correct context.

## L15

### **Daniel 2 and the Scope of the Fifth Course** *The Timeline Filled In*

- Daniel 2 becomes the primary base text for the remainder of the study, supplementing and expanding upon Leviticus 26.
- The five installments are placed on the time line: (1) Babylon, (2) Medo-Persia, (3) Greece, (4) Rome/days of Messiah, (5) Day of the Lord's wrath and kingdom establishment.

#### **The Dispensation of Grace as Interruption**

- The dispensation of Gentile grace — in which we live today — is an interruption in God's program with Israel, not part of Israel's prophetic outline.
- God will resume His program with Israel in the fifth installment after this dispensation concludes.
- Second Chronicles 36, Jeremiah, Daniel, and Leviticus 26 are used together to show the coherence of the five installments.
- Visualizing the entire fifth course on the time line equips the student to place every subsequent passage correctly.

## L16

### **Daniel 9 and the Time Schedule** *The Seventy Weeks Explained*

- Daniel 9 provides God's specific time schedule for the installments of the fifth course: the prophecy of the 70 weeks.
- The 70 weeks are structured and divided in connection with the five installments of the fifth course.

#### **The Fifth Course Prophets in Installment Context**

- Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi were prophets raised up after the first installment ended — they functioned at the opening of the second installment.
- Each group of prophets (Isaiah-Jeremiah era, Ezekiel-Daniel era, post-exilic era) is positioned within a specific installment.
- Daniel 9 confirms the dispensation of grace fits between the fourth and fifth

installments of the fifth course.

- Understanding Daniel 9 is critical for understanding the Gospel accounts, the opening chapters of Acts, and the book of Revelation.

L17

### **The Fourth Installment and the Dispensation of Grace** *Messiah's Ministry, Acts 1–7, and the Interruption*

- The five installments are reviewed: (1) Babylon, (2) Medo-Persia, (3) Greece, (4) Rome/days of Messiah/Acts 1–7, (5) Day of Lord's wrath.
- The fourth installment = the days of Christ's earthly ministry plus the extension of mercy to Israel in Acts 1–7.

#### **Stephen's Vision Marks the Transition**

- Acts 7: Stephen's vision of the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God marks the conclusion of the fourth installment.
- God then suspended Israel's program and raised up Paul to begin this dispensation of Gentile grace.
- The dispensation of grace was inserted between the fourth and fifth installments — when the fifth installment with the Day of the Lord's wrath was ready to be brought.
- Hosea 5 is used to illustrate Israel's condition during this interruption: God has withdrawn until they acknowledge their offence.

L18

### **Daniel 9 in Detail** *Surveying All Five Installments*

- This lesson (and lessons 19–20) constitutes the concluding phase of the study — the most critical phase.
- Detailed examination of Daniel's 70 weeks in direct connection with each of the five installments.

#### **The Five Gentile Dominions in Sequence**

- First installment (Babylon): the 70-year captivity; land enjoys her Sabbaths; a remnant returns under Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah.
- Second installment (Medo-Persia): Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi prophesy; the second temple built; the inter-testamental period begins.
- Third installment (Greece): Alexander and the subsequent Greek kingdoms; the "silence of God" (400 years between Malachi and Matthew).
- Each installment is examined for its historical reality in the nation's experience and its connection to Daniel's prophetic time schedule.

L19

### **The Third and Fourth Installments** *Greece, Rome, and the Coming of Messiah*

- Hosea 5 as a key passage: God withdraws from Israel ("I will go and return to my place") until they acknowledge their offence and seek His face.
- Third installment (Greece): reviewed briefly — Alexander's conquest, the Greek kingdoms, and the 400 years of silence.

#### **The Fourth Installment: The Gospel Accounts**

- Fourth installment (Rome/Messiah): the Lord Jesus Christ comes as the

minister of the circumcision to confirm the promises made to the fathers (Romans 15:8).

- The Gospel accounts are entirely within the fourth installment of the fifth course of punishment — they are not doctrine for the Body of Christ today.
- Acts 1–7: the extension of mercy and forbearance to Israel following the resurrection — the final call to the nation within the fourth installment.
- Acts 7 (Stephen’s martyrdom) and the vision of the Son of Man concludes the fourth installment and opens the way for this dispensation of grace.

## L20

### **The Fifth Installment and the Kingdom** *God’s Faithfulness to Israel Fulfilled*

- Romans 11 serves as both the starting passage (Lesson 1) and the concluding passage — framing the entire study with Paul’s declaration of God’s faithfulness to Israel.
- The fifth and final installment: the Day of the Lord’s wrath — the tribulation period during which God pours out the full fury of the fifth course upon the world.

#### **The Kingdom Established**

- The kingdom of God is established on earth: the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant and everything promised to the nation from Genesis 12 onward.
- Israel is restored to the land; the Davidic kingdom is set up; the Gentile nations are brought under God’s righteous rule.
- The dispensation of grace concludes at the Rapture; God then resumes His program with Israel through the fifth installment.
- The glory of the coming kingdom is surveyed from prophetic passages — the capstone of everything Israel’s history has been building toward.

## Key Doctrinal Distinctions

### **Leviticus 26 as the Master Key to Israel’s History**

Leviticus 26 contains the five courses of punishment that outline, in advance, the entire history of God’s dealings with Israel from the time they entered the land under Joshua through to the establishment of the kingdom. Everything in Scripture from Joshua through Revelation — with the single exception of Paul’s epistles (Romans–Philemon) — is set forth in outline form right there in Leviticus 26. Understanding this passage is not optional for understanding the Old Testament prophets, the Gospel accounts, Acts 1–8, or Hebrews through Revelation.

### **The Fifth Course of Punishment: One Course, Five Installments**

The fifth and final course of punishment is far more than the 70-year Babylonian captivity. It has five distinct installments corresponding to the five Gentile world powers that rule over Israel during the “times of the Gentiles”: (1) Babylon, (2) Medo-Persia, (3) Greece, (4) Rome and the days of Messiah, and (5) the

Day of the Lord's wrath. Israel remains under this fifth course until the God of heaven establishes His kingdom and fulfills His covenant with Abraham. Daniel 2 and Daniel 9 provide the visual image and the time schedule for these five installments respectively.

## The Dispensation of Grace as an Interruption in Israel's Program

The current dispensation of Gentile grace is not part of Israel's prophetic program — it is a parenthetical interruption God inserted between the fourth installment (the days of Messiah and Acts 1–7) and the fifth installment (the Day of the Lord's wrath). God suspended His program with Israel, raised up Paul with the revelation of the mystery, and has been calling out the Body of Christ from among the Gentiles. When this dispensation concludes at the Rapture, God will resume His program with Israel exactly where He left off — moving into the fifth and final installment of the fifth course.

## God's Jehovahness and Grace vs. the Law Contract

Israel's only hope of ever being the nation God designed them to be was through His Jehovahness — His capacity to be whatever they needed Him to be — and His grace. God made this abundantly clear through the five trials before Sinai. The tragedy of Sinai is that Israel chose to be dealt with on the basis of their own performance, signing the Law contract and contracting away any provision for God to deal with them in grace. The result was inevitable: the five courses of punishment of Leviticus 26, culminating in the fifth course that continues to this day.

## Romans–Philemon as the Believer's Direct Curriculum Today

Only Paul's epistles (Romans through Philemon) contain doctrine written directly to and for members of the Body of Christ in this dispensation of grace. All other Scripture — while valuable and profitable for learning — was written to Israel or about Israel's program. Believers today are beneficiaries of the rest of Scripture, not direct recipients. The history of Israel, as studied in this series, is therefore not our program — but understanding it rightly, through Paul's eyes, equips us to handle the full counsel of God accurately.

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## Key Scripture References

<b>Romans 11</b>	Paul's treatment of why Israel's history matters to Gentile believers today; the starting and concluding frame of this study
<b>Genesis 12:1–3</b>	The Abrahamic covenant: God's unconditional promise to make Abraham's seed a great nation through whom He will bless all nations
<b>Genesis 32:28</b>	Jacob's name changed to Israel — the name that identifies the nation and its God-given role in His kingdom plan
<b>Exodus 3</b>	God reveals His name "Jehovah" — declaring His capacity to be all that Israel needs; the foundation of His grace toward the nation
<b>Exodus 19</b>	Israel signs the Law contract at Sinai — the pivotal decision that determined all subsequent history under the five courses of punishment

<b>Leviticus 26</b>	The five courses of punishment: the master outline of Israel's entire history from Joshua to the kingdom
<b>Judges 2</b>	The pattern of the first course of punishment: rebellion, divine discipline, crying out, deliverance, and renewal of rebellion
<b>1 Samuel 12</b>	Samuel's sign of thunder and rain: witness to the great wickedness of Israel's rejection of the Theocracy
<b>2 Kings 17</b>	The Assyrian captivity of the northern kingdom: the historical arrival of the fifth and final course of punishment
<b>2 Chronicles 36:21</b>	The land enjoys her Sabbaths during the 70-year Babylonian captivity — fulfilling the first installment of the fifth course
<b>Jeremiah 25</b>	Establishes the 70-year captivity as only one component of the larger fifth course, not its entirety
<b>Daniel 2</b>	Nebuchadnezzar's image: the five Gentile world powers providing the framework for the five installments of the fifth course
<b>Daniel 9</b>	The 70 weeks of Daniel: God's time schedule for the five installments of the fifth course of punishment
<b>Hosea 5</b>	Israel's condition during the interruption of this dispensation: God withdraws until they seek His face
<b>Acts 7</b>	Stephen's vision of the Son of Man standing: marks the conclusion of the fourth installment and the transition to this dispensation of grace

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**“TIME PAST”**  
(Ephesians 2:11-12)

1 Crossing Jordan

2 Davidic Cov.

3 Elijah

4 Elisha

5 Assy/Baby Captivity

6 The Lord Jesus Christ

7 The 12 Apostles

8 The Day of Pentecost

9 Christ Reappears to Paul

10 Christ Raptures Church

11 The Lord's Day of Wrath

12 Christ Returns to Israel

13 Kingdom of Heaven is Set Up

**“TO COME”**  
(Ephesians 2:7)

14 Israel's Program is Resumed and Fulfilled

**ISRAEL** — “The Circumcision” “nigh unto God”

**THE LAW** serves as a “middle wall of partition.”

**GENTILES** — “Uncircumcision” “far off” “without God in the world”

Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deut.	Josh. Jud. Ruth 1 Sam 1-16	1 Sam 16 to 1Kgs 12 1 Kgs 12 to 2 Kgs 1 2 Kgs 1 to 10:32 10:32 to 16:20 16:20 to 25:30	Ezr 17:1 to Neh Est Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon	The Silence of God Isa., Jer., Lam., Ezk., Dan, Hos., Joel, Amos, Obad., Jon., Mic, Nah., Hab., Zeph., Hag., Zec., Mal.	Matthew Mark Luke John	Acts	Romans 1 Corinthians 2 Corinthians Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians 1 Thessalonians 2 Thessalonians 1 Timothy 2 Timothy Titus and Philemon	Hebrews James 1 Peter 2 Peter 1 John 2 John 3 John Jude The Revelation
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