A Very Simple Survey of the Old Testament

Block #7 — Lessons 49–56

Block #7 · Lessons 49–56 | Keith R. Blades | Enjoy the Bible Ministries®

Study Overview & Lesson Summaries

About This Block

Block #7 (Lessons 49–56) follows without alteration the next 8 lessons in the Bible in Felt outline. It covers from I Kings 1 to Daniel 1 — doctrinally speaking, from Solomon's reign as Israel's king to the time when the fifth course of punishment of Leviticus 26 was brought upon Israel. Israel's Law contract with God and its five courses of punishment is the 'key' to understanding and appreciating the Old Testament. Israel's progress under those courses is the thrust of these lessons: course 2, then 3, then 4, and finally commencing course 5. Elijah was raised up in connection with the arrival of the second course; his miracles just about all pertained to it, as did Elisha's to the third. Their stories are there because of what their ministries testified that God was doing to Israel according to the Law contract. A lesson will often include much more than is indicated in its title alone.

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Lessons at a Glance

Lesson	Core Focus
L49	Solomon's Choice — II Chronicles 1,2,5
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Lesson Summaries

L49

Solomon's Choice *II Chronicles 1,2,5 • The second half of the interlude of gracious and glorious blessings*

The Interlude of Blessing

- Israel deserved the start of the second course of punishment. But God, solely on the basis of His mercy and grace, postponed it and brought in an interlude of glorious blessing — a foretaste of what His "Jehovah-ness" and grace will eventually give to Israel.
- Under David the interlude began: mighty deliverance from their enemies, fame for their strength, and the start of righteous rule. Under Solomon Israel experienced fantastic peace and unparalleled prosperity; they were the envy of the nations.
- David was the "man of war"; of Solomon the LORD said, "who shall be a man of rest" (I Chron. 22:9). The Lord will first be a "man of war" for Israel, then like Solomon a "man of rest", giving Israel everlasting peace and quietness.

The LORD's House (chapters 2–5)

- The main reason Israel will eventually experience everlasting peace is that God will be actually dwelling among them, in His house in Jerusalem. So one of the first things He wants Solomon to do is build Him a temple.
- David gave Solomon the location and the pattern he had received from the LORD. What Solomon was charged to do, he did: the temple was built according to the pattern God gave — a magnificent structure.
- As the singers praised the LORD, "For *he is* good; for his mercy *endureth* for ever", "the glory of the LORD had filled the house of God" (5:13–14) — in response to Israel's recognition that the issue with God is His "mercy."

Solomon's Choice (chapter 1)

- The LORD said, "Ask what I shall give thee." Instead of personal gain, Solomon asked, "Give me now wisdom and knowledge" (1:10) — wisdom to rule God's people properly. God granted it, plus the riches, honor, and glory he didn't ask for.
- Solomon's request was right in line with Israel's glory as God's "great nation" functioning as His "kingdom of priests". He functioned as a foretaste of what Israel will have when the Lord Jesus Christ Himself reigns in Israel.

About 80 Years

- Forty years under David and forty under Solomon: the interlude lasted about 80 years. At the end of Solomon's reign Israel began to revert to her former rebelliousness, deserving again the second course of punishment — and this time God began to bring it.

L50

God Cares for Elijah *I Kings 17 • The second course of punishment brought upon Israel, and Elijah its prophet*

Solomon Plunges Israel Back (I Kings 11)

- Though Solomon had obeyed the LORD well for most of his years, near the end of his reign he began to do things expressly against God's commands — things which 'played into Satan's hands,' contrary to God's warnings about Satan's policy of evil.
- As 11:1 declares, "king Solomon loved many strange women" — one thousand, as verse 3 reports — though God had warned, "surely they will turn away your heart after their gods" (11:2). And "his wives turned away his heart

after other gods" (11:4).

- Solomon also led all Israel into forsaking the LORD, building high places for Chemosh and Molech "in the hill that *is* before Jerusalem" (11:7). This provoked the LORD to anger, and the people of Israel as a whole were going along with it.
- God would bring the second course in the reign of Solomon's son. But He immediately began to re-institute some curses of the first course: God 'stirred up adversaries unto Solomon' (11:14–25).

The Second Course of Punishment (Leviticus 26:18–20)

- The increased curses of the second course fall into two areas: 'breaking the pride of Israel's power' — fracturing their governmental power into pieces; and the land cursed by unfavorable weather, with severe droughts. This is what Israel contracted for God to do.
- God broke the pride of Israel's power by dividing the kingdom into two: the northern kingdom under Jeroboam, the southern under Rehoboam. Still Israel increased its rebelliousness: Jeroboam established idolatry as the state-religion, with golden calves again.

Elijah the Tishbite (17:1)

- In Ahab's days God raised up Elijah both to announce the coming of the rest of the second course and to bring it: "there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word" (17:1).

God Cares for Elijah

- Only Elijah and a small remnant served the LORD. By the brook Cherith God provided water by the brook and food by the ravens. Then He sent him to Zarephath, a Gentile city, where by means of a widow God would have Elijah cared for.
- When the widow's son died, she, unlike Israel, saw herself as a sinner. God restored him at Elijah's prayer, and she was blessed with the assurance that the LORD God of Israel was the true and living God, and that she was accepted of Him.
- In Israel itself things were different. So God instructs Elijah to go back and confront Ahab, putting Israel in the position of having to declare its response to what God had done.

L51

Elijah on Mount Carmel *I Kings 18–19 • God mercifully confronts Israel with the issue of Him being the only true and living God*

Israel Repudiates God's Word

- Under the second course Israel for the most part continued disobedient and refused to hearken unto the LORD and be reformed by Him, as Leviticus 26 refers to. For three years Ahab and Jezebel searched for Elijah — to put him to death.
- Jezebel, an idol-worshipping woman, took it upon herself to see that the LORD's prophets were gotten rid of. But Obadiah, Ahab's governor, "feared the LORD greatly", and at the risk of his own life hid 100 of them.

Not Something God Had to Do

- The Law contract did not call for God to do this; God would have been completely justified to begin the next course. Because He is "merciful and gracious," as with the judges under the first course, He gave Israel an

opportunity to change their minds.

- Ahab asked, "*Art* thou he that troubleth Israel?" (18:17). In truth it was Ahab and the kings before him: "I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD" (18:18).

The "Showdown" at Mount Carmel

- All Israel and the 450 prophets of Baal were gathered to Mount Carmel: "How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD *be* God, follow him: but if Baal, *then* follow him" (18:21). The people were not willing to be honest with themselves.
- Elijah gave the prophets of Baal every opportunity: they provided the bullocks and had just about all day long. Yet "*there was* neither voice, nor any to answer, nor any that regarded" (18:29).
- Elijah repaired the altar of the LORD with twelve stones for the twelve tribes, and had four barrels of water poured on the sacrifice three times — making it abundantly apparent that there was no way of deceit or trickery.
- "The fire of the LORD fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust" (18:38). The people said, "The LORD, he *is* the God" (18:39) — how horrible that Israel had to be shown this by such a means.
- For the first time in a long time the people did right, seizing the prophets of Baal. God lifted the drought as He said, mercifully giving Israel the opportunity to return to Him. But would the people of Israel respond?

L52

Elisha Makes a Dead Boy Live *II Kings 4 • The movement from the second course of punishment to the third (in two parts)*

Part One — Mercy Rejected

- After Mount Carmel, Israel's positive response was only short-lived. Ahab and Jezebel rejected God's mercy, and Jezebel swore revenge upon Elijah (I Kings 19). Elijah ran away out of fear — because it was evident that Israel was persisting in its rebelliousness against God.
- God's forbearance with Ahab came to an end; he died in battle. His son Ahaziah "served Baal, and worshipped him, and provoked to anger the LORD God of Israel" (I Kings 22:53). Things were going better in Judah under Jehoshaphat.
- Ahaziah inquired of Baalzebub the god of Ekron: "*Is it* not because *there is* not a God in Israel" (II Kings 1:3)? God's anger was provoked to beginning the third course. Rebelling to the last, Ahaziah died "according to the word of the LORD."

The Third Course (Leviticus 26:21–22)

- The third course added plagues especially from "wild beasts," robbing them of their children and destroying their cattle; they would be reduced in number, and their freedom of travel and commerce judged. With it God positions Himself to begin to "walk contrary" to Israel.
- In II Kings 2 God backed Elijah out of the land — Gilgal, Bethel, Jericho, across the parted Jordan — reversing the route by which He entered the land under Joshua. God was leaving with Elijah, to re-enter with Elisha. [End of Part One]

Part Two — Elisha, Prophet of the Third Course

- As Elijah was God's major prophet under the second course, so Elisha under the third. Elisha took the mantle that fell from Elijah and struck the waters of the Jordan with it: God re-entered the land with Elisha (2:11–15).
- Near Bethel, ones probably being trained in Israel's idolatrous abominations mocked him: "Go up, thou bald head." "There came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them" (2:24) — the first to experience the third course.
- Under Elisha Israel was given opportunities to 'hearken unto God.' In II Kings 3 the LORD delivered Jehoram, but only on account of Jehoshaphat. Jehoram did not change his mind; they did not take the capital, but returned to their own land.

Provisions for the Faithful (chapter 4)

- Chapter 4 records four marvelous provisions for the few in Israel faithful to God. Besides the boy (vv. 8–37), oil was multiplied for a prophet's widow (vv. 1–7), poisoned food was healed (vv. 38–41), and 100 men were fed in Gilgal (vv. 42–44).
- The woman in Shunem recognized Elisha as "an holy man of God"; though she and her husband were childless, the LORD honored her with a son. When the boy suddenly died in her arms, the LORD restored him to her through Elisha.

L53

Captive Maid *II Kings 5 – 10:31 • A Gentile's faith a rebuke to Israel, and the rest of the third course of punishment*

No Real Change of Mind

- Under the third course Israel's contrariness was so entrenched there isn't any indication of any real change of mind. Instead, certain individuals are singled out, and God through Elisha honors them for their faithfulness in the midst of the rebellious nation.

Naaman and the Little Maid (chapter 5)

- Naaman, "captain of the host of the king of Syria," was from a nation which had sorely hurt Israel; yet by him "the LORD had given deliverance unto Syria" (5:1). He was a leper, and healing him through Elisha is how God especially honored him.
- A little maid taken captive from Israel, one of the faithful few, said, "Would God my lord *were* with the prophet that *is* in Samaria! for he would recover him of his leprosy" (5:3).
- The king of Israel, rebellious against God and hating Elisha, rent his clothes — "*Am* I God, to kill and to make alive" (5:7) — thinking it a trick to instigate a war. But God would not let it thwart Naaman's positive response.
- Naaman expected an impressive ritual like his people's idol worship; Elisha sent word to wash seven times in the Jordan. Once his thinking got back in line with the truth, he did as Elisha had said and was cleansed (vv. 10–14).
- A Gentile believed what Israel should have believed, and Israel were the idol worshippers. If Israel would only respond to the LORD like Naaman did, God would also heal them of all their afflictions under the third course.
- Naaman asked for a load of Israel's dirt: "thy servant will henceforth offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD" (5:17). On a small pile of Israel's dirt in Syria God would be properly worshipped by a Gentile.

The Rest of the Third Course (chapters 6–10)

- In famine the king of Israel blamed God and swore to kill Elisha. God, Whose mercy always rejoices against judgment, provided deliverance (7:1–20) — with no record of Israel responding. Then the LORD called for a seven year famine (chapter 8).
- God judged Israel's apostasy from the top through Jehu (chapters 9–10). But "Jehu took no heed to walk in the law of the LORD God of Israel with all his heart" (10:31). Israel's refusal to be reformed merited the fourth course.

L54

Good King Josiah *II Kings 10:32 – 23:37 • The fourth course of punishment, and one of the few bright spots of this time*

The Fourth Course (Leviticus 26:23–26)

- Israel was clearly deserving the fourth course. Its curses are just one step shy of the nation being taken completely captive: "Then will I also walk contrary unto you" (26:24) — God would begin to "walk contrary" unto Israel in earnest.
- God's contrariness meant letting enemies invade the land, lay siege, and sack portions of Israel. Huddled in their cities for protection, they would find no refuge, but begin to fall and be delivered into the hands of their enemies.

Israel Cut Short (chapters 10–13)

- It began in the days of Jehu: "In those days the LORD began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel" (10:32) — reducing their territory by letting their enemies take possession of portions of it.
- Under Jehoahaz the LORD delivered them to Hazael and Benhadad (13:3). Jehoahaz besought the LORD, and "the LORD gave Israel a saviour" (13:5) — a bright spot, but superficial and short-lived: "they departed not from the sins of the house of Jeroboam" (13:6).
- Northern Israel continued with one wicked king after another. The fifth course came upon it first (II Kings 17), but it is dealt with as a unit in the next two lessons.

Judah — Two Bright Spots

- Judah, though not as rebellious yet, was following the same course, with wicked kings such as Ahaz (II Kings 16). Two bright spots stand out — Hezekiah and Josiah. But Hezekiah's son Manasseh was one of the worst of all the kings.
- Manasseh violated every one of the LORD's commands concerning the nations' practices, even to human sacrifices. God declared He would have to bring the fifth course, and gave an opportunity to change their minds (21:10–16), but they did not heed.

Good King Josiah (chapters 22–23)

- Josiah began to reign at eight years of age. The book of the Law, discarded and lost, was found in the temple. Hearing it, Josiah was completely stunned: he understood the contracted curses of Leviticus 26, and that Israel deserved the fifth course.
- The LORD confirmed the fifth course was coming, but not during Josiah's reign. Josiah had the Law read to all the people, made a covenant with the LORD, and got rid of the idolatrous abominations: "like unto him was there no king before him" (23:25).

- After Josiah, when Jehoahaz did “evil in the sight of the LORD,” the people went along with it. The extreme curses of the fifth course which the Law contract called for were going to come upon the people.

L55

The Story of Jonah *The Book of Jonah • Jonah and God’s dealings with Israel as the fifth course of punishment was readied*

Not a Myth

- Scoffers pick on the story of Jonah as a myth. But the Lord Jesus Christ spoke to Israel about both the reality of what happened to Jonah and the reason for it; to ridicule it is to disbelieve the Lord Jesus Christ.

One More Opportunity (II Kings 14)

- Jonah was raised up during the fourth course (II Kings 14:25). Israel deserved the fifth course then and there, but God’s mercy gave one more opportunity: through Jeroboam God gave back some of the land, as He had Jonah announce.

Sent to Nineveh (chapter 1)

- The nation did not respond. Then the LORD said, “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it” (1:2). Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrians, the enemy God was going to use to administer the fifth course upon Israel.
- Israel had rejected God’s mercy, and now God was going to be merciful to the Assyrians — sparing them and readying them as His means of judging Israel. Jonah knew this, and “rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD” (1:3).
- Jonah may have had noble intentions in trying to spare Israel, but he was disobeying God all the same. The fifth course was going to come regardless; God could easily raise up another prophet.
- Cast into the sea, Jonah was given over to die. “The LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah” (1:17) — not simply natural, but super-natural.

A Sign to Israel (chapter 2)

- Jonah’s prayer “out of the fish’s belly” indicates he had actually died; the LORD raised him from the dead. Then “the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry *land*” (2:10).
- The Lord Jesus Christ declared to Israel the sign of the prophet Jonas: “as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale’s belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matt. 12:40).
- Jonah was a foreshadowing figure of what was required for Israel’s salvation. One would have to die for the nation — not by running from God, but by taking the judgment Israel’s sins merited. No mere man could; God Himself would have to come.
- Jonah preached to Nineveh; they responded, and God mercifully dealt with them, preparing them to be used for bringing the fifth course upon Israel (chapters 3–4). It would come first upon the northern kingdom, then the southern.

L56

Daniel and His Three Friends *Daniel 1 • God’s provision for His use of Daniel and his friends at the beginning of the fifth course of punishment*

A Special Prophet

- Daniel was one of the captives, but God provided for him and utilized him as a special prophet, to whom He would reveal information regarding the duration of the fifth course and when God would bring them out of it and establish His covenanted kingdom.

The Fifth Course (Leviticus 26:27–33)

- The capturing of Israel took place in two phases. First, in Hoshea's days, the Assyrian armies overran the northern kingdom: the king of Assyria "took Samaria, and carried Israel away into Assyria" (II Kings 17:6).
- This is just what the fifth course called for: "I will scatter you among the heathen" (Lev. 26:33). It came because Israel failed to respond to all the previous courses, and God was compelled to do so under the terms of the Law contract.
- When the southern kingdom's rebelliousness caught up, God brought the fifth course upon it by the Babylonians (or Chaldeans) under Nebuchadnezzar: "for the sins of Manasseh" (II Kings 24:3). Over years they took more, until they completely sacked Jerusalem.

Taken Captive (1:1–7)

- Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were taken captive into Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar wanted young men educated in the learning and language of the Chaldeans to serve in his council of wise men.
- Ashpenaz took away the names which honored the LORD and gave names honoring gods of Babylon — the first step in their Chaldean education. They were supposed to forget about the God of Israel.

Daniel's Determination (1:8–16)

- Daniel knew the LORD had not been defeated: the LORD had brought Israel into captivity. He determined not to defile himself with the king's meat and wine, offered in sacrifice to their false gods.
- "Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs" (1:9). Melzar agreed to a ten-day test of "pulse" and water, and Daniel and the others were seen to be better off without the king's meat and wine.

Positions of Great Honor (1:17–21)

- God gave special skill in learning, understanding, and wisdom to these four, and to Daniel understanding in "all visions and dreams." Nebuchadnezzar found them ten times better and put them in positions of great honor and responsibility — the very positions God wanted them in.

Key Doctrinal Distinctions

Israel's Law Contract — Courses Two Through Five Brought Upon Israel

In view of Israel's inability to keep the Law contract, Leviticus 26:14ff is a declaration of Israel's history before it happened; the record is a crystal clear testimony of Israel coming under those contracted courses of curses. Second course (Lesson 50): this is what Israel contracted for God to do, if they

disobeyed Him and would not respond positively to the first course. Third course (Lesson 52): God would begin to punish Israel even more, just like the Law contract, which they had signed, called for. Fourth and fifth courses (Lessons 54, 56): God continued the fourth course just as the Law contract called for; the fifth is what the Law contract contracted for God to bring upon Israel if they did not respond to the previous four.

What the Law Contract Called For vs. What God Did in Mercy

Under David and Solomon God, solely on the basis of His mercy and grace, postponed the deserved second course (Lesson 49). Of Mount Carmel Keith says, "The Law contract did not call for God to do this": God would have been completely justified to begin the next course, but was merciful and longsuffering (Lesson 51). Though Israel deserved the fifth course then and there, God's mercy provided one more opportunity in Jeroboam's day, as Jonah announced (Lesson 55).

God Walking Contrary unto His People

With the third course God positions Himself to begin to "walk contrary" to Israel; in II Kings 2 He left the land with Elijah and came back in with Elisha (Lesson 52). Since they did not respond under Elisha's ministry, with the fourth course He begins to "walk contrary" unto them in earnest (Lesson 54).

Jonah — A Foreshadow of What God Himself Would Do to Save Israel

God dealt with Jonah not only to straighten out his thinking, but to provide a foreshadow of what He Himself would eventually do to save Israel from the predicament of their sins. The Lord Jesus Christ comes as the Son of David to be Israel's Redeemer and Saviour, to do that which Jonah was only a sign of.

Israel's Program vs. This Present Dispensation of Gentile Grace

Israel's riches under Solomon were exactly what God's nation was promised — a foretaste of their glory to come as God's "great nation." We today, in this dispensation of Gentile grace and as members of the "new creature", are not designed by God to be a 'great nation' on the earth; we have no such promises, nor is any measure of wealth a sign of God's blessing upon us.

Key Scripture References

Leviticus 26:18–20	The second course: "I will break the pride of your power; and I will make your heaven as iron, and your earth as brass"
Leviticus 26:21–22	The third course: "wild beasts among you, which shall rob you of your children"
Leviticus 26:23–26	The fourth course: "Then will I also walk contrary unto you"
Leviticus 26:27–33	The fifth course: "I will scatter you among the heathen" — carried into the

	land of their enemies
I Kings 11:1–2	Solomon “loved many strange women,” ‘opening the door’ to Satan’s policy of evil
I Kings 17:1	Elijah announces the rest of the second course: no dew nor rain “but according to my word”
I Kings 18:39	“The LORD, he *is* the God”: how horrible that Israel had to be shown this by such a means
II Kings 1:3	Ahaziah inquires of Baalzebub: God’s anger provoked to beginning the third course
II Kings 2:23–24	The two she bears: the first to experience the third course of punishment
II Kings 5:17	Naaman: “offer neither burnt offering nor sacrifice unto other gods, but unto the LORD” — a rebuke to Israel
II Kings 10:32	“The LORD began to cut Israel short”: the fourth course begins
II Kings 14:25–27	Jonah announces God’s kindness and mercy in restoring some of the land
II Kings 17:5–6	The northern kingdom carried away into Assyria — the fifth course
II Kings 23:25	Josiah: “like unto him was there no king before him”
I Chronicles 22:9	Solomon “a man of rest”: as Christ will give Israel everlasting peace and quietness
II Chronicles 1:10	“Give me now wisdom and knowledge”: Solomon’s request in harmony with God’s will
II Chronicles 5:13–14	“The glory of the LORD had filled the house of God” in response to Israel’s recognition of His “mercy”
Daniel 1:9	“God had brought Daniel into favour”: God working to have Daniel’s determination honored
Jonah 1:17	“The LORD had prepared a great fish”: not simply natural, but super-natural
Matthew 12:39–40	“The sign of the prophet Jonas”, declared by the Lord Jesus Christ to Israel