

latter part of each of these two chapters contains some of the most terrible statements that ever have been written, as they portray the misery and suffering that will come upon the people if they turn away from God. If Israel forsakes her Lord, the very forces of nature will conspire to bring her misery. Yet Leviticus 26 ends with the assurances of verses 44-45:

And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them: for I am the LORD their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the heathen, that I might be their God: I am the LORD.

The terrible statements in the latter part of these two chapters have been fulfilled in the wide dispersion of persecuted Israel through the centuries. The sufferings that Israel has undergone would have completely destroyed almost any other nation, but as Isaiah so clearly pointed out, God's promises cannot be destroyed, even by man's sin. God has not cast away His people. His promises will be fulfilled.

Jeremiah expresses the faithfulness of God toward His earthly people very vividly in chapter 31:35-37:

Thus saith the LORD, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The LORD of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the LORD, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me for ever. Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD.

III. EVEN THE APPARENT CASTING-OFF OF ISRAEL HAS A DIVINE PURPOSE

Particularly in Isaiah and in Romans we find depicted an important aspect for understanding God's dealings with Israel. Israel is to be punished for its sin, but even through this punishment the divine plan of God is to be advanced. Even through their troubles blessing is to come to the world.