

Ezekiel 28B

- Let's jump back into one of the most fascinating chapters of Scripture in all the Bible
 - We're midway through Chapter 28 studying the Lord's declaration of judgment against Tyre, one of Israel's historical enemies
 - This section on Tyre runs from Chapter 26-28
 - The first two and a half chapters dealt with the city, its people and finally its leader
 - Tyre was a city-state, a single settlement sitting on a rocky island about 1km off shore of present-day Lebanon
 - It had an ideal harbor for deep ships, and high walls that extended into the island and into the sea
 - Which made the city practically impenetrable, an ideal place from which to regulate and rule world trade through the Mediterranean
 - So for centuries Tyre was the trading power and envy of the world
 - But the Lord says that their pride and wealth conspired to deceive the people's hearts
 - They looked around at the wealth and power and decided they were captains of their own fate
 - They believe they accumulated so much wealth and ruled commerce because they were inherently superior to other peoples
 - And at the top of the heap were the men who ruled Tyre, the kings who amassed wealth and power at an astounding rate
 - So as the Lord spoke to Tyre through Ezekiel, He declared the city would be brought low, robbed of its wealth and stripped of its power
 - The city would cease to be important and influential
 - And the people would perish in the sea

- And the king of the city, a man the Lord calls “prince” of Tyre, would be judged for his pride and arrogance against God
- Then in v.11 of Chapter 28, the Lord shifted gears in a major way, still speaking about Tyre but referencing a new and very different character
 - Addressing this character as the “king” of Tyre, the Lord retells a story of privilege leading to pride and a fall into judgment and destruction
 - While that outline sounded very similar to the one we studied in the first 10 verses of the Chapter, it deviated in major ways
 - This new character served God in the throne room in a very special way
 - And his fall into sin shook both heaven and earth
 - So clearly, this individual was no ordinary ruler of the city of Tyre
 - Rather, we learned last week that the king of Tyre was a reference to Satan himself
 - Satan was the spiritual authority operating invisibly behind the scenes
 - He corrupts the hearts of the people and drives their opposition to God and the people of Israel
 - So as the Lord promised Israel that their earthly enemies would be judged in time, so also He promises that Israel’s – and mankind’s – spiritual enemy would meet his fate too
 - We read the entire lamentation for Satan last week but only studied through the first part of it
 - Tonight, we’ll re-read the whole section again, and even as we move forward in our study, we will need to revisit some of those earlier details

Ezek. 28:11 Again the word of the LORD came to me saying,

Ezek. 28:12 “Son of man, take up a lamentation over the king of Tyre and say to him, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD,

“You had the seal of perfection,

Full of wisdom and perfect in beauty.

[Ezek. 28:13](#) "You were in Eden, the garden of God;
Every precious stone was your covering:
The ruby, the topaz and the diamond;
The beryl, the onyx and the jasper;
The lapis lazuli, the turquoise and the emerald;
And the gold, the workmanship of your settings and sockets,
Was in you.
On the day that you were created
They were prepared.

[Ezek. 28:14](#) "You were the anointed cherub who covers,
And I placed you there.
You were on the holy mountain of God;
You walked in the midst of the stones of fire.

[Ezek. 28:15](#) "You were blameless in your ways
From the day you were created
Until unrighteousness was found in you.

[Ezek. 28:16](#) "By the abundance of your trade
You were internally filled with violence,
And you sinned;
Therefore I have cast you as profane
From the mountain of God.
And I have destroyed you, O covering cherub,
From the midst of the stones of fire.

[Ezek. 28:17](#) "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty;
You corrupted your wisdom by reason of your splendor.
I cast you to the ground;
I put you before kings,
That they may see you.

[Ezek. 28:18](#) "By the multitude of your iniquities,
In the unrighteousness of your trade
You profaned your sanctuaries.
Therefore I have brought fire from the midst of you;
It has consumed you,

And I have turned you to ashes on the earth
In the eyes of all who see you.

Ezek. 28:19 "All who know you among the peoples
Are appalled at you;
You have become terrified
And you will cease to be forever."""

- Last week I taught through the first part of v.16, but before we move into what follows, let's remember what we learned in those verses
 - First, we learned about Satan's origins, his appearance, intelligence and abode
 - Satan was created to be the wisest and most beautiful creature in all Creation
 - He was adorned with every precious jewel, resulting in a brilliant appearance that reminds us that Satan presents himself as an angel of light
 - And he began his existence in Eden, the Garden of God
 - Last week we learned that this Eden is not the same one we see in Genesis 2, where Adam and Woman first lived
 - The Eden of that chapter is the Garden of Adam, not the Garden of God
 - And it was created specifically for Adam and Woman, not for Satan
 - Furthermore, we noticed in v.14 that Satan was on the holy mountain of God, Mt. Zion, in the midst of burning stones of fire
 - From other Scripture, we learned that this was a description of God's throne room, not a place on earth
 - Furthermore, as we'll see tonight, Ezekiel says Satan was cast down from this place to the earth after he sinned
 - So the Garden of God was a place Satan lived before he sinned and before he was cast down to the earth
- Then we learned about Satan's occupation prior to his fall, and that was probably the most fascinating aspect of the entire account

- In v.14 we're told that Satan was the anointed, covering cherub
 - A covering cherub is the name given in the Bible for the figure that guarded the top of the ark in the tabernacle
 - Two golden covering cherubim were carved into the mercy seat and underneath their wings appeared the glory of God
- Furthermore, we remembered that Hebrews tells us that the tabernacle and all its furniture were patterned after things found in Heaven
 - There is a heavenly sanctuary, a heavenly tabernacle, the writer of Hebrews tells us
 - And the things God told Moses and the children of Israel to build were patterned after things in Heaven, including the mercy seat
 - So since the mercy seat on earth had golden statues of cherubim, we can know that the mercy seat in Heaven used actual cherubim
- Cherubim are angels created by God to guard His glory
 - And now we know that Satan's original trade, his occupation, was to be the cherub guarding God's glory on the heavenly mercy seat
 - Day by day, Satan stood guard, the closest created thing to the glory of God
- And his privileged position became the source of his downfall
 - Then we're told in v.16 that the abundance of Satan's trade (or his high occupation) caused him to become prideful and arrogant
 - Much like the human king of Tyre, this spiritual king of Tyre let his success and beauty and power go to his head
 - And eventually, Satan's pride led him to sin against God
 - In v.15 we're told that unrighteousness was found within him... sin originated in the heart of Satan
 - His sinful heart brought him to violence, and though we don't know what violent act resulted, I suggested one possibility
 - We know that throughout history, Satan has sought to take the place of God

- In several instances, he tried to seat himself in the place of God in the heavenly tabernacle
- So perhaps that pattern started from the beginning, when Satan guarded that very place in Heaven
- Perhaps he sought to sit in that place of authority in Heaven, trying to take the mercy seat by force
- Whatever Satan did in heaven, it results in the Lord casting him down, which is where we pick up again tonight
 - Notice in v.16 that after Satan sinned against God, he was cast down from the mountain of God in Heaven
 - And Satan is removed from the stones of fire, further confirmation that this place is not the Eden on earth
- Likewise in v.17 we're told Satan is cast to the ground because he was corrupted by his beauty and splendor
 - His beautiful appearance gave him reason to think he was inherently powerful and worthy of authority and privilege
 - And as we read earlier, his position guarding the glory of God puffed him up
- The phrase ending the first half of v.17 actually reads, you have corrupted your wisdom because of brightness
 - The reference to brightness refers to the glory of God, which Satan guarded
 - Because he stood so close to it, it corrupted his wisdom leading him to think he could replace God
- So the Lord cast Satan down as profane, meaning as unholy, impure and unworthy to remain in the presence of God
 - Now to this point in the narrative, we know we're studying past events
 - These events aren't just the past for us...they were also in the past for Ezekiel's Israel
 - These things happened before Adam and Woman even existed
 - So this part of Satan's story is merely the beginning of his judgment

- So now we move ahead to the next step of that judgment, beginning with the second half of v.17
 - The Lord says he has put Satan before kings that they might see him brought low
 - We know this can't refer to the immediate aftermath of his fall
 - Because when Satan fell, there were no human beings in existence, much less kings
- So clearly, the narrative has transitioned to future events, so now we need to understand what period of history the Lord has moved into
 - Going to the next verse, the narrative initially takes a step back before moving forward again
 - The Lord repeats that Satan's fall was the result of the unrighteousness of Satan's trade
 - That refers to the sinful way Satan went about performing the role he was given by God
- And as a result, Satan profaned his sanctuaries
 - The sanctuaries refers to the Heavenly tabernacle where Satan worked
 - His sin made this place unholy for a time, until Christ's death sanctified the temple by His blood
 - This is further evidence that Satan served as a covering cherub
- But then the narrative returns to future judgment in the second half of v.18
 - The Lord says He bought fire from the midst of Satan, which is a cryptic phrase
 - But then notice that this fire will consume Satan
 - Ultimately it will turn him to ashes and kings will be astonished
 - This passage has been written in a poetic way to parallel what was said earlier about the prince of Tyre, making it more difficult to follow
 - But because we have other Scripture to consult, we can figure out what it's saying

- First, we know that in a day to come, during the middle of Tribulation on earth, the Lord begins to carry out His plan to destroy Satan
- He will permanently bar Satan from having access to Heaven

Rev. 12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Rev. 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

Rev. 12:11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

Rev. 12:12 "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

- This future day is the fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy that Satan is cast down to the ground before kings
 - Even now, Satan has been cast down in the sense that he was removed from his place of honor in heaven
 - But in the meantime, he is permitted to roam to and fro on the earth
 - And he may even enter the throne room of God as we read in Job

Job 1:6 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

Job 1:7 The LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?" Then Satan answered the LORD and said, "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it."

- The angels are present before God, and Satan is among them

- Notice Satan is not presenting himself before God, since he has fallen and cannot stand before God in that way any longer
- But Satan moves among the angels
- And by his own testimony, he can move freely on earth
- But Revelation tells us that these days of freedom for Satan are numbered
 - In a day to come he will be barred from heaven forever
 - And in that day, it marks a new chapter of horror for the inhabitants of the earth says Revelation 12
 - Because on that day, Satan faces the reality that his time is short
 - Until that day, he held hope that he could find a way to avoid the fate God has promised him
 - But once he is barred from Heaven, he becomes like an angry, caged animal, leading him to produce even more destruction on earth
 - We know from the rest of Revelation that he begins to persecute the world, especially Jews and Christians, with ferocity never seen before
 - That persecution leads the world into the very end of the age when Jesus comes back
 - And at the end, the Lord's return results in Satan's downfall
 - At that moment, Satan is caught and bound and placed in the Abyss, a place of torment for angels similar to Hades for human beings

Rev. 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.

Rev. 20:2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

Rev. 20:3 and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

- At this moment, the kings of the earth are able to marvel at his predicament

- Which kings? Those who share his fate in Hades, who can see Satan in the pit, in the abyss
- We hear a description of this moment in Isaiah
 - Like Ezekiel, the Lord spoke through Isaiah to Israel reassuring them that their eternal enemy would be judged

Is. 14:3 And it will be in the day when the LORD gives you rest from your pain and turmoil and harsh service in which you have been enslaved,

Is. 14:4 that you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon, and say,
 “How the oppressor has ceased,
 And how fury has ceased!

Is. 14:5 “The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked,
 The scepter of rulers

Is. 14:6 Which used to strike the peoples in fury with unceasing strokes,
 Which subdued the nations in anger with unrestrained persecution.

Is. 14:7 “The whole earth is at rest and is quiet;
 They break forth into shouts of joy.

Is. 14:8 “Even the cypress trees rejoice over you, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying,

‘Since you were laid low, no tree cutter comes up against us.’

Is. 14:9 “Sheol from beneath is excited over you to meet you when you come;
 It arouses for you the spirits of the dead, all the leaders of the earth;
 It raises all the kings of the nations from their thrones.

Is. 14:10 “They will all respond and say to you,
 ‘Even you have been made weak as we,
 You have become like us.

Is. 14:11 ‘Your pomp and the music of your harps
 Have been brought down to Sheol;
 Maggots are spread out as your bed beneath you
 And worms are your covering.’

Is. 14:12 “How you have fallen from heaven,
 O star of the morning, son of the dawn!
 You have been cut down to the earth,
 You who have weakened the nations!

[Is. 14:13](#) “But you said in your heart,

‘I will ascend to heaven;

I will raise my throne above the stars of God,

And I will sit on the mount of assembly

In the recesses of the north.

[Is. 14:14](#) ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;

I will make myself like the Most High.’

[Is. 14:15](#) “Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol,

To the recesses of the pit.

- The Lord tells Israel that in the day when Israel receives the glory of the Kingdom as they were promised, their enemy will meet his fate
 - In this passage, Satan is called the king of Babylon, which is similar to the way Ezekiel describes him
 - In Ezekiel’s text, Satan is the king of Tyre, which becomes a type of the Tribulation world power; Babylon
 - In both cases, the power behind the scene is Satan; the true king
 - To that king, Isaiah says a day comes when his oppression will cease
 - The Lord breaks the scepter of wicked earthly dominions in preparation for His Son’s return to rule the earth
 - The whole earth is at peace, at rest, everyone breaks forth in joy
 - Try to imagine a world without the enemy at work, no rebellion and no temptation to sin...that produces a worldwide response of joy
 - But beneath the earth, it’s a different scene...it’s a scene of misery and gloating
 - In v.9 Isaiah says that Sheol beneath greets the arrival of Satan (and the antichrist he indwelt) gleefully
 - They take pleasure in seeing their ruthless leader suffering in judgement just as they are
 - It’s a misery-loves-company moment on a cosmic scale

- Notice the description of how Satan lives...with maggots as a bed and worms for a covering
 - Quite a contrast with a covering of precious stones and a place on the mercy seat in the heavenly tabernacle!
 - In v.12 the Lord says Satan has fallen from heaven, the star of the morning, the son of the dawn
 - That phrase may seem odd, since it almost sounds like we're talking about Jesus
- But the morning star is the ancient name for the planet Venus
 - Venus was visible in the early morning light until the sun rose in the east and the light of the sun eclipsed the light of Venus
 - For that reason, the Bible refers to Satan as the Day Star, because his light shines in the world only until the Son of God returns
 - His glory will outshine Satan and as the Son of God reigns forever, the light of the Day Star will never be seen again
 - And by the way, the name Lucifer means "day star" in Hebrew
- So Isaiah 14:12 is speaking to Satan about his fall, the day star cut down to the earth, the one who weakened nations
 - In v.13 Isaiah reminds us of his fall repeating a piece of Ezekiel's story
 - Satan said he could ascend to the throne, seated on the mount of the assembling
 - Becoming like the Most High
 - But instead, Satan was thrust down to Sheol, to the pit
 - So that's the punishment Ezekiel is speaking about in v.18; the beginning of Satan's punishment that happens in Tribulation
 - He is cast down at mid-Tribulation
 - The Lord brings forth fire from Satan's midst, meaning that from what Satan begins the Lord orchestrates Satan's downfall
 - The fury that Satan produces on earth among the nations becomes the means by which the Lord brings Satan to his end
 - And he becomes "ashes" in the eyes of all who see him

- But this is merely the first part of Satan's destruction
 - In v.19 Ezekiel repeats that Satan will be appalled by all the people
 - Again, that can't be speaking about today or any day in the past
 - Because the world as a whole has yet to be appalled by Satan
 - In fact, many worship him, directly or indirectly
 - The rest pretend he doesn't exist or isn't real
 - But notice in the future, all who know him among the peoples (or you could translate that word as all creatures)
 - So on some day in the future, all creatures in creation who know Satan will be appalled at his fate
 - That day will be at the end of the Kingdom, when the world will be cleansed of all sin and evil

[Rev. 20:7](#) When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison,

[Rev. 20:8](#) and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.

[Rev. 20:9](#) And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

[Rev. 20:10](#) And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

- At the end of the 1,000 year kingdom on earth, the Lord begins to wrap up His plans for this physical Creation, beginning with our eternal enemy
 - Satan is released from the abyss for a short time, leading him to recruit all those unbelieving on earth
 - This army of unbelievers rallies to his side, because they are essentially already on his side by virtue of their unregenerate nature

- (For a deeper discussion of how unbelievers play a part in the Kingdom, listen to our Revelation study)
- The rebellion doesn't go very far or last very long
 - Satan and his forces are defeated by fire from heaven in a brief moment
 - Then Satan is cast into a lake of fire specially prepared for him and his angels
 - This is the place where he ceases to be forever, as Ezekiel says in v.19
 - Remember, the Bible describes the eternal Lake of Fire as the Second Death
 - It is not a literal cessation of existence, but rather an unending period of torment
 - It's called the "second death" in the sense that it's the final resting place for the soul
 - Just as the first death is the final resting place of the body
 - So in summary, the Lord ends His declaration of judgment against Tyre with a promise of reckoning for Israel's ultimate enemy
 - The Tyrians were thorns in the side of Israel through their idolatrous influence and persecution
 - And now we have confirmation that the enemy was behind these attacks, as we always knew he was
 - He was corrupting Israel through the influence of places like Tyre and Sidon
- So the Lord is promising to judge these places even as He judges the people Satan directed
 - So let's look at the specific judgment spoken against the sixth enemy in Ezekiel's oracles, a sister city of Tyre: Sidon

Ezek. 28:20 And the word of the LORD came to me saying,

Ezek. 28:21 "Son of man, set your face toward Sidon, prophesy against her

Ezek. 28:22 and say, 'Thus says the Lord GOD,

"Behold, I am against you, O Sidon,

And I will be glorified in your midst.
 Then they will know that I am the LORD when I execute judgments in her,
 And I will manifest My holiness in her.

[Ezek. 28:23](#) "For I will send pestilence to her

And blood to her streets,
 And the wounded will fall in her midst
 By the sword upon her on every side;
 Then they will know that I am the LORD.

[Ezek. 28:24](#) "And there will be no more for the house of Israel a prickling brier or a painful thorn from any round about them who scorned them; then they will know that I am the Lord GOD."

- Sidon was Tyre's neighbor, only about 20 miles away to the north, also present-day Lebanon
 - It was named after Canaan's first son, Sidon
 - Like Tyre, Sidon was a Phoenician city-state and a thorn in Israel's side
 - Asher was supposed to dispossess both of these peoples, but failed to do so
 - And the gods of both the Tyrians and Sidonians became cause for spiritual corruption among the tribes of Israel
 - Sidon once rivaled Tyre as the world center of shipping, but it occupied the shoreline rather than an impenetrable island
 - So when the Philistines destroyed the city, they lost their place to Tyre
 - The city was later rebuilt, but by then Tyre had eclipsed Sidon's power
 - Later it was destroyed again by the Assyrians, but once more it rebuilt itself
 - Under the Persians, Sidon prospered and reached its height of power
 - Sidonians were great ship builders and the captain of the Persian fleet was the king of Sidon

- But a rebellion against the Persian empire sealed the city's fate and brought about the judgment God is promising here
- Once again, the judgment begins with the Lord setting forth His purpose in bringing this action
 - He says will be glorified in the midst of Sidon's destruction
 - By His action the Lord will create a testimony to all people for all time
 - That testimony is you cannot mock or oppose God nor corrupt His people without facing judgment
 - God responds in the end and when Sidon fell, the world would know that the Lord had executed the judgment
 - In v.23 the Lord describes the punishment generally as pestilence, blood in the streets and wounded falling in the midst of the city on every side
 - Historically, the army that brought this prophecy to fulfillment was the Persian army
 - When the city rebelled, King Artaxerxes Ochus came against the Sidonians to force them into submission
 - Greek historians record that as the army approached, the citizens of Sidon locked and barred the city gates locking the population inside
 - The leaders of Sidon elected to implement a scorched earth policy rather than surrender to the Persians
 - They set fire to their own city rather than allow it to fall into Ochus' hands
 - The inferno spread rapidly, consuming the city, and induced panic in the streets
 - The fire and panic left 40,000 people dead, reducing the city to a smoldering, bloody mess
 - It never regained its power
 - Although the region has remained inhabited even to this day, it has never risen above the destruction by the Persians
 - That is the legacy of God's judgment against the city

- The city may have continued to exist in some limited sense
- But the Lord's promise in v.24 has been kept...the city has never again been a thorn in Israel's side
- That ends the sixth oracle against Israel's enemies
 - The only one that remains is Egypt which is the subject of Chapters 29-32, after which we move into the descriptions of the Kingdom
 - Before we get to Egypt, there is a short intermission at the end of 28 where the Lord reminds Israel of her coming glory

Ezek. 28:25 'Thus says the Lord GOD, "When I gather the house of Israel from the peoples among whom they are scattered, and will manifest My holiness in them in the sight of the nations, then they will live in their land which I gave to My servant Jacob.

Ezek. 28:26 "They will live in it securely; and they will build houses, plant vineyards and live securely when I execute judgments upon all who scorn them round about them. Then they will know that I am the LORD their God."'"

- The Lord gives perhaps the shortest, most succinct description of Israel's life in the Kingdom found in the whole Bible
 - In v.25 the Lord promises that the Kingdom's appearance on earth begins with a preparation step for the nation of Israel
 - Before the Lord brings the Kingdom to Israel, the Lord works on earth to bring Israel to the place of their Kingdom
 - Specifically, the Lord begins moving the people of Israel across the face of the earth toward their Promised land in Israel
 - This migration of Jews back to Israel is the Bible's first sign that the Kingdom promised to Israel was about to appear
 - These words were written even as the nation was in the process of being scattered
 - And then in centuries that followed, the nation has undergone periods of mini-returns
 - The first happens just 70 years later when the Lord allows a remnant to return from Babylon to rebuild the temple (see Ezra)

- But that mini return of Israel (and others that followed in centuries later) are not the regathering that the Lord promises here and elsewhere
- It's easy to get them confused, and in fact no less than the prophet Daniel made that very mistake himself in Chapter 9
 - While Daniel sat in Babylon, he read the prophet Jeremiah's promise that Israel would return to her land after 70 years
 - In reading that promise, Daniel assumed that return was the one God said would lead Israel into the Kingdom
- So Daniel began praying to usher in the Kingdom
 - At that moment, the angel Gabriel visited Daniel to correct him
 - He let Daniel know that the final grand return of Israel in preparation for the kingdom was still many years away
- The distinction between these earlier, mini-returns of Israel to their land and the final return the Lord is talking about here is the degree and the occasion of their return
 - First, the return of Israel before the kingdom is a return of all Israel
 - All Jews on the earth will end up in the land of Israel or else they will perish
 - There will be no other population of Jews on earth besides those in Israel
 - Notice in v.25 the Lord says plainly He gathers "the house of Israel" back in her land
 - That description points to all of the nation, not just a representative group
 - Secondly, the occasion of their return is ultimately to greet the Kingdom's arrival
 - The regathering leads to the Lord manifesting His holiness in their sight
 - This never happened in the earlier regatherings, meaning they were not THE regathering promised here and elsewhere

- So in a day yet to come, the Lord says all the house of Israel will find their way back to the land of Israel
 - And once they are assembled, the glory of the Lord will appear, leading to the appearance of the Kingdom
 - And of course, if the Kingdom appears so must the King, Christ
- So as we look at history, we find multiple mini-regatherings like the one led by Zerubbabel or the one that followed persecutions by the Romans
 - But these didn't lead to the Lord showing His holiness to the people, nor to the arrival of all the Jews
 - So we're still looking for the fulfillment of this regathering and we can see it happening now in our very day
 - The return of Israel to her land began at the end of the 19th century and picked up speed in the 20th century
 - It continues today, but we still have a long way to go
 - Only recently has the population of Jews living in Israel exceeded the total number of Jews living outside Israel
 - Still that's an accomplishment, and it's a sign that the end of the age is approaching
 - We may be studying events of the distant past, but they have an obvious connection to our day right now
 - We are watching the fulfillment of the first part of v.25
 - Which means the rest is soon to come to pass
 - After they are regathered, then the Lord returns (and us with Him) and the Kingdom will begin as promised
 - And in v.26 we're told the Jews will live in their Promised Land peacefully and securely
 - This is another proof that we're still waiting to see this prophecy fulfilled
 - Because though the Jews have returned to their land for a period of time, in the past and even now, they have yet to live in peace

- That's one of the hallmarks of the Kingdom age, and until we see that detail fulfilled, we know we haven't seen the Kingdom yet
- And to be sure we understand what "peace" means, the Lord defines it specifically in the rest of v.26
 - They will work the land, enjoying its fruit without concern for any threat
 - And they will have no threat because all Israel's enemy's will have been judged by God and will have no power to contend with Israel
 - Clearly, that has never happened before, since Israel has remained at risk of enemies even until today
- That's the day we're all waiting for because what the Lord has planned for Israel He has planned for us as well
 - We share in their future and so we cheer on the fulfillment of these things
 - In that day to come, Israel will know the Lord as we do
 - Come quickly, Lord Jesus