

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – Beginning 9-22-2013

The Book of Hosea

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF HOSEA

A. Hosea's Particulars

1. His name means "Savior," the same as Joshua and Jesus.
2. He was a prophet for this book, and the last king of the Northern Kingdom of Israel had the same name;
 - a. 2 Kings 15:30 *And Hoshea the son of Elah made a conspiracy against Pekah the son of Remaliah, and smote him, and slew him, and reigned in his stead, in the twentieth year of Jotham the son of Uzziah.*
3. Hosea prophesied for a very long time. He prophesied from the time of Uzziah to the time of Hezekiah, kings of Judah, the southern kingdom of Israel.
4. No one knows for sure, but Hosea could have prophesied 80, 90 or even 100 years, according to some.
5. His contemporaries were Amos and Isaiah.
6. It is believed that he went to Babylon and lived through the 70-years' captivity.
7. The Jews say he was brought back to Palestine and was buried near the Sea of Galilee.
8. But we have no biblical knowledge of the end of his life.

B. Hosea's Prophecy

1. Theme: God's unchanging love for Israel, despite Israel's continual backsliding.
2. God loves us with an everlasting love.
3. Someone said the theme of the book is fourfold:
 - a. Israel's idolatry
 - b. Israel's wickedness
 - c. Israel's captivity
 - d. Israel's restoration
4. Hosea's prophecy was to the northern kingdom of Israel.

C. Hosea's Posterity

1. Jezreel: "God sows"
2. Lo-ruhamah: "No mercy"
3. Lo-ammi: "No people"
4. Wife, Gomer: Gomer means "complete."

D. Israel's Problems

1. Lack of knowledge (4:6, 11)
2. Pride (5:5; 7:10)
3. Instability (6:4)
4. Worldliness (7:8)
5. Backsliding (11:7)
6. Corruption (9:9)

7. Idolatry (13:2)¹
- E. Hosea's Practical Lessons²
 1. Nothing is able to quench God's Love
 2. God suffers intense pain when men desert him.
 3. The sacredness and sanctity of the marriage relation
 4. The tragic consequences of heeding unworthy teachers.
 5. In God's plan there can be no double standard of morality.
 6. Sin destroys the nerve that enables men to make moral distinctions
 7. Divorce is not a solution. It is merely an effort to escape.
 8. Worship cannot please God until the worshiper comes in the right spirit.
 9. A nation declines rapidly when its leaders become corrupt
 10. There is real danger of becoming like those with whom we associate.
 11. Genuine repentance will bring forgiveness and full restoration of God's favor.
 12. Inward corruption in a nation is more dangerous to its existence than external enemies.
 13. The root sin from which all others spring is unfaithfulness to Yahweh.

¹Robinson, George L., *Twelve Minor Prophets*, Baker Book House . . .

²Yates, Kyle M., *Preaching From The Prophets*, Broadman Press . . .

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 9/29/2013

MERCY AND TRUTH

Hosea 1-2

I. CAPTIVITY AND RETURN OF ISRAEL, 1:1-11

A. The Correction, Hosea 1:1-9

1. The Marriage, 2

- a. Hosea was commanded by God to go and take a wife or whoredoms.
- b. This means that he was to take a wife from among a people or a family that is known for their unfaithfulness.
- c. This does not necessarily mean that Hosea married a woman who had already committed adultery or fornication.
- d. But she was prone to it because of the influence of her family.
- e. His wife's name was Gomer, meaning "complete"

2. The Children, 4-9

- a. The first child was a son, whose name was Jezreel, 4
 - (1) Jezreel means "to sow, or to scatter."
 - (2) There are two meanings in application here.
 - (3) First, Israel would be scattered among the Assyrians as a chastisement for Israel's spiritual adultery (see verse 4).
 - (4) Second, Israel would become very fruitful, verse 10, and gathered as a harvest.
- b. The second child was a daughter, whose name was Lo-ruhama, 6
 - (1) Lo-ruhama, as we have already noticed, means "no mercy, or no pity."
 - (2) God will "utterly take them away" accord to verse 6
 - (3) A note is inserted here to let Israel know that God will continue to have mercy upon Judah, the southern kingdom, 7
- c. The third child was a son, whose name was Lo-ammi, 9
 - (1) Lo-ammi means "not my people."
 - (2) God will not act the part of a Father to Israel as he had done in the past.
 - (3) This relationship will be hindered due to Israel's sin.
 - (4) Isaiah 59:2 *But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.*
 - (5) Jeremiah 5:25 *Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden good things from you.*

3. Verse 5 tells us that God will break the bow of Israel, making them weak against their enemies so that the enemies of Israel will be able to take them captive.

4. For further reference you may see 2 Kings 15:10, 14, 25

5. God had made a conjugal covenant with Israel, and they broke it time and time again, Exodus 9:1-8 (Read)

B. The Return, 1:10-11

1. It will eventually be said to Israel, "Ye are the sons of the living God."

2. When Israel goes into captivity and understands that God is God, they will repent of their sins and return to God while in captivity.
3. Then eventually both Israel and Judah will return to him and be gathered together.
4. They will return to their land and begin what is known as the second period of Jewish history.
5. We will eventually learn that God will deal with Israel in a different way in this second period of Israel's history, bringing the "one head," which is Christ, and saving Israel by grace through faith in Jesus Christ.
6. In the days of Cyrus, king of Persia, Israel and Judah returned to their land, and at that time God began to work with Israel in a different way.
7. Zerubbabel was the leader over both Israel and Judah when they came back into the land, who is a type of Jesus Christ and our marriage to him,
8. This implies salvation by the grace of God. He would be a God and a father to them, and they would be "sons of the living God."
9. Rom. 7:4 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.*
10. God still has a remnant in Israel, because the grace of God has been effective among them. See Romans 11:1-5.

II. THE CORRECTION OF ISRAEL, 2:1-23

A. The Pleading To The Mother, 2:1-2

1. This seems to be a message to the southern kingdom of Judah, to the prophet Hosea, and to anyone else who had a desire to plead with Israel to repent and turn from her sins of whoredom, adultery, and idolatry.
2. Israel is Judah's mother, since they were the major part of the complete body of Israel in the separation in the time of Rehoboam and Jeroboam.

B. The Result Of The Whoredoms, 2:3-5

1. God will strip her naked to her own embarrassment. This means that God will take away all the blessings that he has given to Israel.
2. Even the children will have the tendency to go after these paramours, or lovers, 4
3. She will need, then, to go to her lovers for her provisions, 5

C. The Correction By The Husband, 2:6-13

1. Hosea was, in this physical story, going to correct his wife. He was going to take away all of her pleasures to give her time to think of what she was doing in her sin.
2. We do not know how he did this in a physical way.
3. In despair, then, Israel returns to the Lord, 7
4. But the spiritual teaching here is that God, the Husband of Israel, will correct her by taking away all privileges, niceties, goodies, riches, her mirth, etc. 11-13.

D. The Alluring Of God, 2:14-23

1. The Alluring, 2:14
2. The Valley of Achor (Trouble) will be turned into a "door of hope." 15
 - a. This is where Achan and his family were put to death, but then God turned from his anger after their death (Joshua 7:26).

3. Gomer will sing (Israel will sing) as she did in her deliverance from Egypt (See Exodus 15).
4. Then she will call the LORD “my man,” or “my husband.”
5. She will not call the LORD “my lord.”
6. In verse 17 we see that Israel is healed of her idolatry. “History testifies that the restoration Jews no longer were idolaters.”³
7. In verse 18 Israel was to be at peace with other nations. These short-lived blessings are a great type of our spiritual blessings promised to the people of God, those who are saved by grace through faith.
8. In our day, we do not know how many times God will judge Israel in this same way, but we do know that he judged Israel at the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.
9. We also believe that God’s relationship with Israel is an everlasting one, culminating in the salvation of God’s remnant in Israel.
 - a. Rom. 9:6 *Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:*
 - b. Rom. 11:5 *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

³Hisel, Berlin, *Studies In the Minor Prohets*, First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio, n.d.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 10/6/2013

MARRIAGE AND DIVORCE

Hosea 3:1-5:7

- I. HOSEA PURCHASES HIS ADULTEROUS WIFE, 3:1-3
 - A. Hosea's love for Gomer is beyond natural love. He so loved her in the true sense, as God had given him, that he could do as he did in this chapter.
 - B. Hosea learned how much God loved Israel through these events.
 - C. Hosea, then, went out to Gomer's owner (or lover) and purchased her from him in order that he might reclaim her, 2
 - D. But Gomer must first be put on probation to learn what real love is, 3
 1. Gomer was to stay in seclusion, and this real love is explained in verse 3
 2. First, "Thou shalt abide for me many days." In other words, she was to stay with Hosea but not be his wife for many days.
 3. Second, "Thou shalt not play the harlot." She was not to leave her house to go out to make covenants or business deals as a harlot with other men during this time of probation.
 4. Third, "Thou shalt not be for another man." She was not to make arrangements to marry another man but to stay and wait for Hosea for many days.
 5. Fourth, "So will I also be for thee." Hosea said that his part of the agreement would be that neither would he be unfaithful, nor would either of them live together as husband and wife until this time of probation was over. Hosea kept himself pure for his wife.
- II. GOD HAD PUT ISRAEL ON PROBATION, 3:4
 - A. Israel will abide many days without a king; that is, after Israel is taken captive by Assyria until the restoration of both Israel and Judah back into the land.
 - B. Israel lost their privilege to worship, to perform sacrifices, and even their idols to search for the future through the ephod and teraphim. Judges 17:5 *And the man Micah had an house of gods, and made an ephod, and teraphim, and consecrated one of his sons, who became his priest.*
- III. ISRAEL RESTORED, 3:5
 - A. But afterward, when the many days are finished, Israel and Judah will be united and restored under one head – Zerubbabel, of the line of David.
- IV. ISRAEL'S ADULTERY, 4:1-19
 - A. Case Against The Nation, 4:1-3
 1. Category of Sins, 1-2
 - a. In verses 1 and 2 of chapter four we have a list of sins that show Israel's adultery with false religion:
 - b. Verse 1 - No truth, no mercy, no knowledge of God

- c. Verse 2 - Swearing, lying, killing, stealing, adultery,
 - 2. Effects of These Sins, 3
 - a. These sins affected people as well as the land and the animals.
 - b. Our sins affect the lower life of animals. We can see this in many war-torn countries.
- B. Case Against The Priests, 4:4-10
 - 1. God's problem is with the priests, 4
 - 2. The priests' job was to teach truth to the people, but they were a rebellious and gainsaying people (Romans 10).
 - 3. God is telling the priest not to reprove the people, since they are a hopeless people as far as learning the truth, because they (the people) strive, or argue with, the priests.
 - 4. Everyone has his own theology, and it does not matter what the teachers of the word of God say, they are going to have their own private interpretation without correction.
 - 5. The people are destroyed for lack of knowledge (6), because God's word through the prophet is the right word, the rule, the standard; but the people want a different prophet and a different doctrine than that one that comes from God.
 - 6. Even the priests would not listen to God, so the priestly line ended with the destruction of Israel into captivity to Assyria.
 - 7. As a result, they will "eat up the sin of my people." That means that they will enjoy, like a gourmet meal, the sins of the people of Israel, who have gone headlong into their personal sins to enjoy (8). Even the priests encouraged the people to sin.
 - 8. There will be no difference, then, between the priest and the people; they are all the same in judgment: as the people are judged, so will the priests be judged.
 - 9. The people have "left off to take heed to the LORD" (10)
- C. Case Against Cult Worship (4:11-14)
 - 1. Whoredom and wine take away the heart, 11
 - 2. The people worship the stock (a wooden god), staff (perhaps an image put on a shepherd's staff), not worshipping God but are committing adultery against their God, 12.
 - 3. In their worship, they committed fornication in the groves, burning incense on the hills in the shadows of the trees, causing their own daughters to commit fornication (13)
 - 4. In verse 14 God is putting the guilt upon the fathers.
 - a. The fathers are to bring up and nurture the children. Eph. 6:4 *And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*
 - b. The daughters nor the spouses will be blamed for it; it is the fathers' fault.
- D. This Is A Warning To Judah (4:15-19)
 - 1. Though Israel played the harlot, Judah is not to do the same, 15
 - 2. Judah not to backslide as did Israel, 16
 - 3. Judah was to leave Israel alone and let God be the judge, 17
 - 4. "Their drink is sour" indicates that Israel has backslidden so far that God must take severe action, 18
 - 5. God will snatch them as the wings of the wind, and they will be ashamed, for they will be scattered (Jezreel) among the Assyrians, 19

V. GOD WITHDRAWS HIMSELF FROM BLESSING ISRAEL (5:1-15)

- A. Wickedness And Fall of Both Israel And Judah, 5:1-2
 - 1. God is pronouncing judgment against Israel in 1-2, for they have been a snare on two high mountains in Israel, giving their ungodly sacrifices upon mountains and worshiping on the high places, 1
 - 2. The revolters are those against the true laws of God and his true message.
 - 3. But Hosea has rebuked them all without compromise. This is what a true prophet does, 2
- B. Israel Has Gone Too Far To Return, 5:3-7
 - 1. They cannot hide their sins from God, 3
 - 2. Because Israel is obsessed with harlotry and false worship, 4
 - 3. Pride does come before the fall in verse 5 – “the pride of Israel” and “Judah also shall fall with them.”
 - 4. They cannot find God, because he has withdrawn himself from them, 6
 - 5. They have produced a strange generation of children who are given over to harlotry, 7
 - 6. This is the divorce of God from Israel.
 - a. *Matt 15:8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.*
 - b. *Isaiah 29:13 Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:*

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EPHRAIM, WHAT SHALL I DO UNTO THEE?

Scripture: Hosea 5:8-7:16

Text: Hosea 6:4 *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?
O Judah, what shall I do unto thee?
for your goodness is as a morning cloud,
and as the early dew it goeth away.*

- I. THE PRONOUNCEMENT UPON EPHRAIM (ISRAEL), 5:8-15
 - A. The cornet (or horn) is blown, because an announcement is now being given, 8
 - B. Ephraim is to be desolate in the day of rebuke, 9
 - C. Even Judah will receive the Lord's rebuke, 10
 - D. Ephraim is oppressed and broken in judgment, because they walked after the commandment (the commandment of men or of idolatry), 11
 - E. God will be as a moth to Ephraim, 12, and to Judah as rottenness.
 - F. Ephraim sent to Assyria for help instead of trusting the Lord, 13
 - G. God will "tear and go away" from Ephraim, 14
 - H. God will stay away until Ephraim acknowledge their sin and seek God's face, 15

- II. THE PRETEND REPENTANCE, 6:1-13
 - A. "Let us return unto the Lord: for he has torn, and he will heal us. He hath smitten and he will bind us up." 1
 1. They thought all they had to do is call on the Lord and they would be healed, and then they could just go along in their sins.
 2. Isa 29:13 *Wherefore the Lord said, Forasmuch as this people draw near me with their mouth, and with their lips do honour me, but have removed their heart far from me, and their fear toward me is taught by the precept of men:*
 - B. Here they even imply the Gospel in verse 2 "in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."
 - C. They think this calling on the Lord will bring the Lord as the former and latter rain, a real blessing to Israel.
 - D. A pretended repentance, a simple note to God that you have sinned, will not do.
 - E. There must be true contrition, sorrow, for repentance to be real, and Israel were not really sorry; they simply wanted God to refrain from his anger and his rebuke and chastisement.
 - F. Because of this pretend repentance, God says in 6:4, "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee?"
 - G. He has hewed them and slain them by the prophets and the word of God, warning them over and over again of God's coming judgment without repentance, 6:5
 - H. God desires only two things: 6:6
 1. Mercy, and not sacrifice

- a. They were giving their sacrifices unto idols, and they were doing it in the name of Jehovah, the LORD.
- 2. The knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.
 - a. They were burning sacrifices unto idols, and they were doing it in the name of Jehovah, the LORD.
- I. But they have transgressed the covenant (God's covenant with them), 7
- J. God has seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel: their whoredom (going after other gods), 10
- K. God also gives a warning to Judah not to be involved with this idolatry of Israel, 11
- L. Hosea 7:16 *They return, but not to the most High: they are like a deceitful bow: . . .*
- M. Hosea 11:5 *He shall not return into the land of Egypt, but the Assyrian shall be his king, because they refused to return.*

III. THE PRIDE OF A NATION, 7:1-16

- A. God would have healed Israel, but Israel kept on walking in their iniquity, 1
- B. They did not consider their hearts, 2
 - 1. Hosea 4:8 "they set their heart on their iniquity"
 - 2. Hosea 4:11 "Whoredom and wine and new wine take away the heart."
 - 3. Hosea 7:2 "they consider not their hearts"
 - 4. *Hosea 7:8 "Ephraim is a cake not turned"
 - 5. *Hosea 7:11 "Ephraim also is like a silly dove without a heart."
 - 6. Hosea 7:14 "And they have not cried out to me with their heart"
 - 7. *Hosea 7:16 " They are like a deceitful bow"
 - 8. Hosea 10:2 "Their heart is divided"
 - 9. Hosea 13:6 "their heart was exalted; therefore have they forgotten me."
 - 10. Hosea 13:8 "I will meet them as a bear that is bereaved of her whelps, and will rend the caul of their heart, and there will I devour them like a lion: the wild beast shall tear them."
- C. See now 7:10-11

Hosea 7:10-11 And the **pride** of Israel testified to his face: and they do not return to the LORD their God, nor seek him for all this. 11 Ephraim also is like a silly dove without heart: they call to Egypt, they go to Assyria.

- D. Because of their pride, God says in 7:12, "I will chastise them."
- E. The saddest thing in this chapter is 7:13 *though I have redeemed them, yet they have spoken lies against me.*

IV. CONCLUSION

- A. We learn today, first, that, if we do not take care of what God has given us, he will take it away.

Matt. 25:24-27 Then he which had received the one talent came and said, Lord, I knew thee that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed: 25 And I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth: lo, there thou hast that is thine. 26 His lord answered and said unto him, Thou wicked and slothful servant, thou knewest that I reap where I sowed not, and gather where I have not

strawed: 27 Thou oughtest therefore to have put my money to the exchangers, and then at my coming I should have received mine own with usury.

- B. Second, we learn that false repentance does not please God and is not an excuse to continue in your sins.
 - 1. John the Baptist said to the Pharisees in Matt 3:8 *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:*
 - 2. Matt 11:20 *Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not:*
 - 3. Jonah was truly repentant, or willing to pay his vow, but notice Jonah 2:9 *But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the LORD.*
- C. Third, we learn that God will judge his people
 - 1. Heb 10:30 *For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people.*
 - 2. Rom. 14:12 *So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*
- D. Fourth, God's love is stronger than sin and death.
 - 1. Hosea 10:12 *Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.*
 - 2. Is today the time for you to seek the LORD?
 - 3. If you find him through the hearing of his word today, he will come and rain righteousness upon you, for his righteousness is imputed to us through his death, burial, and resurrection.

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The Book of Hosea

GOD'S WARNING AND ISRAEL'S CRY

Hosea Chapter 8

I. GOD'S WARNING, 1

- A. The sound of the trumpet indicates a warning: Rev. 8:13 *And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!*
- B. Here he says, "Set the trumpet to thy mouth," telling Hosea to announce a warning.
- C. God is coming like an eagle against the house of the LORD. This will be a quick battle and a decided one.
- D. The reason for this warning is "because they have transgressed my covenant, and trespassed against my law." 1
- E. Israel had substituted God's law with Canaanite religion.

II. ISRAEL'S CRY, 8:2-3

- A. Hypocrisy Of The Cry
 1. They will cry "My God, we know thee."
 2. This was a hypocritical cry, a cry from the mouth, not the heart.
 3. They know God by name, but they do not know him by heart.
 4. They don't know him by practice.
 5. Verse 3 says they have cast off the thing that is good (God's law), so the enemy is coming and is pursuing Israel.
 - a. Rom. 7:12 *Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good.*
 - b. Rom. 7:16 *If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.*
- B. Reasons For The Cry, 8:4-14
 1. False Government.
 - a. They set up kings, but not for God such as Saul (1 Sam. 8:4-7). 4a
 - b. They have set up idols, as in the days of Jeroboam (1 Kings 12:28), 4b
 2. False Gods, 5-7
 - a. Thy calf (5a). It seems that Israel had a love for calves, especially when making golden ones for idols, false gods. They built a golden calf when Moses was in Mt. Sinai receiving the Law of God. Jeroboam set up two calves in Israel for the people to worship. They will not stop this until they attain in innocency, 5b. That will be only through repentance (See 1 Kings 13:29). "The calf had a long association with pagan cults in Egypt and in Canaan." Eerdman's Handbook to the Bible.

- b. Verse 6 - Workmen made these idols, so they are not God. The golden calf at Samaria will be broken, thus proving that it is not God. The word *pieces* indicates the smallest particle that someone can imagine and may allude to the grinding of the golden calf of Aaron into powder.
 - c. Verse 7 speaks of the sowing of Israel. The idea is that they will not reap what they have sown due to the fact that their sowing was religion rather than spiritual quality; it was vain and worthless due to God's judgment coming upon them. They will reap, rather, the whirlwind, the armies of Assyria coming upon them like a great eagle sweeping down upon its prey. What does have yield the strangers (Assyrians) will swallow it up.
3. False Allies, 8:8-10
- a. Israel went to Assyria and hired lovers, those who they thought would help them in a time of calamity; but they were wrong, for Assyria was not going to help them but rather enslave them.
 - b. God will gather Israel together for their destruction and their captivity.
 - c. They will also be put under burden (taxes) by Assyria.
4. False Altars, 8:11-14
- a. God calls these altars in verse 11 "altars to sin." These were the altars Israel had made to false gods.
 - b. As a result, they thought of God's law as a strange thing, since they had taken up a new law, the law of idols.
 - c. So, then, God will not receive their offerings of flesh, and he will remember their iniquity, and visit their sins. 13a
 - d. They will return to Egypt (13b). This could mean two things:
 - (1) It could mean that some of the Israelites ran to Egypt when Assyria overtook their cities, which many did.
 - (2) It could be an allusion to Israel's bondage in Egypt, that they are now again returning to that kind of bondage but in Assyria.
 - (3) Either way, God is bringing this to them because of their sins.
 - e. These false altars show that Israel has forgotten his maker (14). Today America has forgotten its Maker. Israel built temples – 1 Kings 12:31 *And he made an house of high places, and made priests of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi.*
- C. Then God gives an additional warning to Judah (the southern kingdom). God will send a fire upon Judah's cities and devour the palaces thereof, 14

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ISRAEL'S AWFUL DESTINY

Hosea Chapter 9

I. ISRAEL'S ABANDONED JOY, 9:1-9

A. Fasting Instead Of Feasting, 1-6

1. Verse one says "Rejoice not, O Israel, for joy as other people"
2. Their crops will fail, 2
3. They will lose the Lord's land, 3
4. They will not be able to give proper sacrifices to the Lord, 4
5. They will not be able to celebrate their harvest festivals in strange lands, 5
6. Their land will be overrun with nettles and thorns, and many of their bodies will be buried in the famous graveyards of Memphis, Egypt, 6

Memphis was called a necropolis, which means literally "a city of the dead." One archeologist called it "the silent city of the dead" (Thompson Chain Bible, 4396). This, no doubt the largest cemetery in the world, stretches two miles wide and sixty miles long in which are buried over 50 million animals, men, women, children, and Pharaohs. It is believed that Alexander the Great was first buried here, then moved from here to Alexandria, Egypt, which bears his name. No one knows for sure where the grave of Alexandria the Great is to be found.

B. Rejection Instead Of Repentance, 7-9

1. The people curse the prophet. They call him a mad fool. They hated the truth, 7
2. They showed their hatred even at the house of God, 8. Ephraim was a watchman, but they had lost their effectiveness in watching out for the sin of the people and had also lost their standard for right and wrong, which, of course, was God's word. If we lose the measure, the standard, the canon, the rule, then we have nothing with which to judge ourselves and our society.
3. Hosea reminds them of the sin at Gibeah, where almost the whole tribe of Benjamin was wiped out because of wickedness (Judges 19-21), 9

II. ISRAEL'S ANCIENT APOSTASY, 9:10-17

A. Apostasy At Baal-peor, 10-14

1. God delighted in Israel, yet they consecrated themselves to Baal (Numbers 25:1-9), 10.
 - a. Isaiah 28:4 *And the glorious beauty, which is on the head of the fat valley, shall be a fading flower, and as the hasty fruit before the summer; which when he that looketh upon it seeth, while it is yet in his hand he eateth it up.*
 - b. The word Ephraim means "fruitful," but now it is losing its fruitfulness.
2. Israel depended upon their children for their growth in future generations, but God will

- stop the births from the womb and from conception, 11. This will destroy Israel, 11
3. Even their existing children, who will grow up, will be taken by famine, war, pestilence, and captivity. It is a dreadful thing when the Lord departs from them, 12
 4. Israel's sons were destined to be a prey to the enemy. Tyrus had a prosperity in a secure place, but even it eventually fell. Israel, then, was raising their children for the enemy. Some have asked, "Are we raising our children for the enemies of our country?" 13
 5. Hosea, in verse 14, prays that God will not allow the babies to be born to experience this horrible judgment of God upon Israel, 14
- B. Apostasy At Gilgal, 15-17
1. The sin at Gilgal was the choosing of Saul as the King of Israel. In doing so they were rejecting God's prophet, Samuel, and God himself. Since that time they all have been revolters. God says, "I will love them no more." They will be destroyed. God's judgment is based upon their sin at Gilgal. This started their long disobedience. 15
 - a. But this did not hinder God from having mercy upon individuals in this backslidden nation.
 - b. This is a national judgment, not an individual one.
 - c. Notice that later (Hosea 14:4) God says, "I will love them freely."
 2. Ephraim (Israel) has become fruitless. Even if they have children, God will destroy even them, the fruit of their womb, 16
 3. Israel will now become as vagabonds, travelers through a wilderness country, judged to wander among the nations of the world, 17
 4. Repentance and faith in their Messiah, Jesus Christ, is the only remedy for their malady. It is left to us to give the Gospel to them. Let us be faithful to that task.

Wandering Israel

By Pastor Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe

10-24-2013

*Wandering, wandering, dear Israel of old
 Into a land so calloused and cold,
 Empty of fruit as it once blessed your land,
 Because of rebellion 'gainst God's blessed hand.*

*Wandering, wandering, no fruit from God's grace,
 Wanting so strongly to go to your place
 Once filled with the honey and milk of God's choice,
 You lost your pure worship, your joy, and your voice.*

*Come sing the song that Moses has written;
 Give to the Lord the hand that is smitten.
 Show your repentance to the God of your past,
 And come to the land of God's children at last.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 11/10/2013

The Book of Hosea

ISRAEL UNDER THE YOKE

Hosea Chapter 10

- I. THE VINE AND THE VENGEANCE, 10:1-8
 - A. The Vine, 1
 1. This means that Israel has had a good crop, and they have harvested it
 2. Israel is proud of the prosperity that God has given them, and they bring forth the fruit unto themselves. They are much like people today who get paid from their jobs and keep all the money for themselves, never thinking that any portion of it belongs to God.
 3. As a result, they spend their money, not to give back to God his portion, but to build up their idolatrous altars.
 4. They have also made graven images so that they can worship their god, Baal.
 - B. The Vengeance, 2-8
 1. But this selfishness, this self-love, this humanistic thinking and acting makes their hearts divided, 2
 2. They were halting between two opinions.
 - a. 1 Kings 18:21 *And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the LORD be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.*
 - b. Psalm 119:2 Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart.
 3. They will now be found “faulty.” The Hebrew word here is AW-SHAM, and it means several things.
 4. We could say they are found faulty, guilty, offensive, or even sinful. These are all good translations of this word.
 5. As a result, God will use the king of Assyria to break down the Jewish altars, which had horns on the corners. These horns were made of gold, so they were of great price.
 6. In Assyria they will be without a king. No king could save them from the wrath of God’s judgment, 3
 7. Because Israel has made many covenants and has broken them, God will bring the poison of his judgment against Israel like the hemlock, which grows up quickly and ubiquitously in the fields, 4
 8. There is a strong dilemma here in verse 5. The Israelites loved and trusted their idols, but they were at the same time fearful that Assyria would come in and steal these idols. The glory of the idols will disappear.
 9. The glory of the idols will be carried off to Assyria, 6-8. Oh, how weak that glory is!

It will be a gift to King Jareb of Assyria, and Israel will be ashamed. The king of Samaria will be cut off as the foam on the water, that is, easily. This capital city held out for three years but then fell easily. The high places of Aven (iniquity), worship places, of Israel will be destroyed, and thistles and thorns (the curse of the Garden of Eden) will grow up in their place. Israel did not trust in God; now they have nowhere to turn for trust.

II. THE VANITY AT GIBEAH, 10:9-10

- A. Judge 19, a brutal assault on the Levite's concubine.
- B. Judges 20-21, the tribe of Benjamin was almost exterminated.
- C. 1 Sam. 10:26; 11:14, King Saul dwelt at Gibeah while he was king, when Israel sought a future apart from God.
- D. These may be the events Hosea is speaking of.
- E. Judges 20:47, There were some who fled and were saved from the battle, 9b
- F. Hosea is saying here that God will punish Israel more than he will Gibeah.
- G. Verse 10 - Israel were plowing in two furrows (God and man), and this was part of their sin.

III. THE VESSELS OF THE YOKE, 10:11-13

- A. Verse 11 tells us that Ephraim (Israel) is like an ox that has been taught to work under a yoke, but he does not naturally desire to do so, but rather, he loves to tread out the corn; he loves to eat the corn and moves around, back and forth, to find new corn to eat on his own, not under a yoke of obedience.
- B. Israel has been given the Law of Moses, but Israel did not want to be under that yoke; so they made their own religion, built golden calves, and changed the name of Bethel to Bethaven, from "the house of God" to "the house of iniquity."
- C. Verse 12 is a call to repentance. They are to sow righteousness, not sin; then they will reap in mercy.
- D. They are to break up the fallow ground, tear down their idols, plowing them up, and seek the Lord until he comes and rains righteousness on them.
- E. Verse 13: When they plowed wickedness, they reaped iniquity. They have eaten the fruit of lies, because they trusted in man and not in the God of truth.
 - 1. Acts 15:10 *Now therefore why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon the neck of the disciples, which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear?*
 - 2. Gal. 5:1 *Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*
 - 3. Matt 11:29 *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. Mt 11:30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*
 - 4. 2 Cor. 3:17 *Now the Lord is that Spirit: and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.*

IV. THE VICTORY OF THE ENEMY, 10:14-15

- A. There will be a great tumult when the Assyrian army rushes upon Israel to take her

captive.

- B. All the protection that Israel has made sure for themselves will be spoiled or destroyed.
- C. Josephus, the Jewish historian, calls the place Arbela, which here we read as Betharbel (house of God's ambush), Arbela being an abbreviation such as Bethaven's being shortened to Aven and Shalmanezzer's being shortened to Shalman.
- D. There is no reference of this battle in Scripture, but in the apocrypha there is a reference to it in 1 Maccabees 9:2 where it says, "Who went forth by the way that leadeth to Galgala, and pitched their tents before Masaloth, which is in Arbela, and after they had won it, they slew much people."
- E. This was so terrible: the mothers with child were dashed to pieces so that both mother and unborn baby died.
- F. John Gill explains verse 15 in this way: "God was the cause of it; the king of Assyria the instrument; but the procuring or meritorious cause was their abominable wickedness at Bethel;"
- G. God is the cause of the destruction, because he is the Great Judge.
- H. Assyria is the instrument of it, because it is God's tool to be used for the destruction of Israel.
- I. But the human cause of this great tragedy is the wickedness of Bethel, their changing the name of Bethel (house of God) to Bethaven (house of iniquity), their building a golden calf at Bethel and worshiping that calf in the face of God, shunning God's judgment and mercy.
- J. Since Israel was to be a light of the Gentiles, to teach them the ways of the Lord, there was really no reason for Israel to exist. Their testimony was vain; their work was iniquity; their love for God was gone.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. What about you today? Are you faithful to serve the Lord and know his will for your life? Have you put your trust in Jesus Christ, repenting of your sins and believing that Jesus died for your sins to give you eternal life?
- B. Is your life as a professed believer filled with idols? Are you worshiping the world more than God? Have you turned the house of God into the house of iniquity?
- C. Then take heed to verse 12 – Hosea 10:12 *Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 11/17/2013

The Book of Hosea

ISRAEL AND THE MESSIAH

Hosea Chapter 11

- I. GOD'S LOVE FOR ISRAEL AS A CHILD, 11:1-4
 - A. When Israel was a child . . .
 1. This could be the nation of Israel as an infant when they knew nothing of God but were taught by Moses, and God took care of them and loved them as an innocent, foolish, and helpless child.
 - B. I Loved Him . . .
 1. This could also mean the man Israel (Jacob), as he was once a child and was loved by God more than his creation, and even more than his brother, Esau (Rom. 9:13).
 - C. Called my son out of Egypt . . .
 1. This is speaking in type of Jesus, as we read in
 - a. Matt 2:15 *And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son.*
 2. Israel is a type of Jesus Christ as the Son of God. As Israel was God's son, so was Christ God's Son.
 3. Jesus is (1) the new Adam, (2) the new Moses, (3) the new David.
 - D. They called them, vs 2
 1. These are the prophets of old who called out the commands and promises of God to Israel, yet Israel "went from them."
 2. They turned their back upon God's commandments and promises.
 - a. Exodus 6:9 *And Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage.*
 3. Preachers and teachers today stand and proclaim the message of God to the hearers, and many leave with nothing gained in the knowledge of God. They "turn from them" and never give them another thought afterward.
 4. Listen to the last part of verse 2: *they sacrificed unto Baalim, and burned incense to graven images.*
 - E. God taught them, vs 3
 1. This is like a parent taking an infant and teaching him to walk, taking him by the arms.
 2. Notice Deut. 1:31 *And in the wilderness, where thou hast seen how that the LORD thy God bare thee, as a man doth bear his son, in all the way that ye went, until ye came into this place.*
 3. They knew not that God healed them, brought them up in Egypt, not allowing their destruction by the rulers of Egypt, giving the benefit of leading them out of bondage, which they credited to their own idol gods.

4. God loved them in their infancy.
- F. Verse 4 says that God drew them with bands of love. He took off their yoke of bondage in Egypt and allowed them to be free from that bondage. They were free to eat the supply that God gave them, and they were free to worship and praise God. God gave them meat, or food, all the way from Egypt to Canaan's land.

II. GOD'S PROMISE OF BONDAGE, 11:5-6

- A. Israel and Ephraim will not return to Egypt for help, and they will not return there for bondage as they did before; but they will rather go forward to a worse enslavement in Assyria for their refusal to return to God from their idols.
- B. They had the pattern for pure worship and the ordinances of God, but they turned to golden calves, groves, and high places for their worship.
- C. Verse 6: The sword will be used, shall fall, or abide in the cities of Israel to devour their towns and cities (branches).
- D. This will be due to the counsels they took to try to win against Assyria, when God should have been their protection.
 1. They went to Egypt for help.
 2. They even went to Assyria for help.
 3. But God was the only help they needed, and they went from him to idols.

III. THE NATURE OF ISRAEL, 11:7

- A. In one small phrase we know of Israel's nature: *my people are bent to backsliding from me.*
- B. Even though God has sent prophets to call them to the most High, none of Israel would exalt him, exalt God; but they exalted their own gods, their idols, giving them credit for bringing them out of the land of Egypt.

IV. ISRAEL PROTECTED BY THE ELECTION OF GRACE, 11:8-9

- A. How can God give up Ephraim and Israel completely? How can he cause them to be destroyed as he did Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim? (See Deut. 29:23)?
- B. God will not allow all of Israel to be destroyed.
 1. Romans 1:1-5 *I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*
- C. God's repentings are not like our repentings. When God repents, he changes course according to his will and does something different from what it seems he may be going to do.

- D. Those who would not trust in the Messiah were destroyed from Israel, but there was a remnant according to the election of grace, and there is until this day.
- E. Verse 9 tells us that God will destroy some due to their sin, but he will never destroy those who come to him by faith, trusting in the Messiah.
- F. He is God and not man, and he can and will do whatever he wills to do.

V. SPIRITUAL ISRAEL WILL FOLLOW THE LORD, 11:10-11

- A. “They shall walk after the Lord.”
- B. Christ, as the Lion of the tribe of Judah, will roar, and those who will believe will tremble, not from fear of him, but in awe of him, seeing his majesty and his beauty and his comfort and his salvation.
- C. They will tremble like a bird out of Egypt, which means that they will have no confidence in themselves but must depend completely upon the Lord.
- D. God will put them in their own houses, in the mansions, which John 14 says, “In my Father’s house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you.”
- E. Here believers will stay with complete confidence and security.

VI. EPHRAIM, ISRAEL, AND JUDAH, 11:12

- A. Ephraim is full of lies, sinning, and deceitful.
- B. Israel is filled with deceit.
- C. This is the case with Israel, who will soon go into captivity to Assyria as God has predicted and promised.
- D. But Judah rules with God, and is faithful with the saints.
 - 1. All God wants from us is to remain faithful.
 - 2. 1 Cor. 4:2 *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*
 - 3. Abraham was faithful, Gal. 3:9
 - 4. Epaphras was faithful, Col. 1:7
 - 5. Onesimus was faithful, Col. 4:9
 - 6. Moses was faithful, Heb. 3:2
 - 7. Silvanus was faithful, 1 Peter 5:2
 - 8. But mainly, Christ is faithful, Rev. 1:5
 - 9. Heb. 10:23 *Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*
- E. Questions for you:
 - 1. After hearing the call to come to Christ today, have you, or will you come to him and trust him as some of Ephraim did?
 - 2. Will you have a mansion in God’s house? It is only by faith that you can.
 - 3. If you are born again, saved by grace, are you faithful?
 - 4. Remember 1 Cor. 4:2 *Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*
 - a. We should be faithful to believe all the prophets have spoken of Christ – Luke 24:25 *Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the*

prophets have spoken:

- b. We should be faithful in church attendance – Heb 10:25 *Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*
- c. We should be faithful in giving – 2 Cor. 9:7 *Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*
- d. We should be faithful in witnessing – 2 Cor. 5:20 *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*
- e. We should be faithful in loving – John 13:34 *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.*
- f. We should be faithful in watching and waiting –
 - (1) Matt 24:42 *Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come.*
 - (2) 1 Thess. 1:10 *And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 12/01/2013

The Book of Hosea

ISRAEL'S REMINDER OF THEIR HISTORY

Hosea Chapter 12

- I. THE CONDITION OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH, 12:1-2
 - A. Ephraim Feeds on the Wind, 1
 1. The wind is not edible. The east wind is dangerous.
 2. Jonah 4:8 *And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, It is better for me to die than to live.*
 - B. Judah Not Far Behind, 2
 1. God has a controversy with Judah and will punish Judah according to his works.
- II. THE STORY OF JACOB, 12:3-5
 - A. Jacob had power with God, 3
 - B. Jacob had power with the angel of God, 4
 - C. The Lord is Jacob's memorial, 5
- III. THE CALL FOR ISRAEL TO TURN AS JACOB DID, 12:6
 - A. Jacob waited on the Lord
 - B. Israel is to do the same: "turn thou to God"
 - C. As long as they wait on God, they will be protected by God.
- IV. JACOB IS A CANAANITE, 12:7-14
 - A. The word "merchant" is a word that refers to the Canaanite.
 - B. Israel is now like a Canaanite, the very people they were supposed to overcome and be an example to, 7
 1. Ephraim had got too involved in the world and was enjoying their sin.
 2. Three things we need to do to remedy our relationship with the world:
 - a. Refrain – We must refrain from so much involvement in the world. The world is a great temptation to these old bodies.
 - (1) 1 John 2:15 *Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.*
 - b. Regain – This is what we call revival. We need to regain the love we used to have for the Bible and the Lord.
 - (1) Rev. 2:4 *Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love.*
 - (2) The Ephesus church did not vote to leave their first love. They did not change their confess of faith to leave their first love. They left their first love (Jesus

- Christ) individually until it had a serious effect upon that local church.
- (3) We need to regain that love, so the next verse says . . .
- (a) *Rev. 2:5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.*
- c. Remain – Then, after we are revived, we need to remain faithful to the Lord and never let go to back into the beggarly elements of the world, from which the Lord has saved us.
- (1) *Rev. 2:25 But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.*
- (2) *Heb 10:23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)*
- (3) We are also to strengthen the things that remain, as we read in *Rev. 3:2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.*
- C. Ephraim considers himself guiltless in saying that people could not find any iniquity or sin in Ephraim, 8
- D. God will take away all their riches, 9
- E. God has prophesied to them in different ways so they could understand: 10
1. By prophets, a very clear message to Ephraim.
 2. By visions, a more subtle way of expression, these were visions God had given to the prophets.
 3. Similitudes; these are types, parables, and stories that were told by the prophets to give Ephraim an additional way to understand the truth.
- F. Tiglath-pileser took Gilead (2 Kings 15:29), but is Giliad more sinful than Ephraim?
- G. Jacob worked for a wife for seven years so he would not marry a girl alienated from God, but Israel is not concerned about that.
- H. By a prophet (Moses) God brought Israel out of Egypt, 13
- I. But Israel did not listen to the prophets but kept on in their sins, 14

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 12/11/2013

Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

The Book of Hosea

GOD'S ANGER TOWARD EPHRAIM

Hosea Chapter 13

- I. THE REALITY OF EPHRAIM'S FAULTY WORSHIP, 13:1-2
 - A. When Ephraim is spoken of here, it is speaking of the leaders of Ephraim or of Israel.
 - B. Jeroboam was the first of the kings of Israel, and Ahab was later, both who were very sinful in building idols for the people.
 - C. Jeroboam built the golden calves at Bethel and Dan, and the people were to worship them as the gods which brought them out of the land of Egypt.
 - D. Ahab entered the worship of Baal later, and there was also the practice of each person making his own idol in his home according to his own design or the design of the silversmiths.
 - E. When these leaders spoke in trembling (that is, trembling before God as their only God), they were exalted in Israel.
 - F. But when he offended God in the worship of, not only the calves, but also in Baal, he died, or this was his death knell. This is what brought about the final destruction of the nation of Israel, going into captivity to Assyria as a punishment for these crimes against Almighty God.
- II. THE REALITY OF EPHRAIM'S DESTRUCTION, 13:3-8
 - A. In these verses Hosea describes their destruction.
 - B. He compares Israel's existence in several ways in verse 3.
 1. A morning cloud, which may promise rain, but the rising sun quickly melts it away.
 2. The early dew, that goes away when the heat from the sun penetrates the air.
 3. The chaff, which is blown away from the wheat as the threshing floor fans are waves and the chaff is blown away and put into the fire. We read about this also in Psalm 1:4 *The ungodly are not so: but [are like the chaff which the wind driveth away].* Hosea speaks of this earlier in Hosea 6:4 *O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, what shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away.*
 4. The smoke out of the chimney, which as soon as it is seen quickly goes away from sight. Psalm 68:2 *As smoke is driven away, so drive them away: as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God.*
 - C. God has been good to Israel ever since they came out of Egypt. He has fed them, gave them water, protected them, given them shade by day and light by night. There is no other God like he is, and there is no other savior, 4
 - D. In verses 5-8 Hosea gives more detail about how God has been with them and how that he will keep his promise to destroy them due to their unfaithfulness to him.

1. He knew them in the wilderness when there was great drought, 5
2. They were filled with food (pasture), and they forgot God because their bellies were full, 6
3. But because of their idolatry, God will not be a savior to them now. He will be like a lion and a leopard. He will devour them, 7-8

III. THE REASON FOR EPHRAIM'S DESTRUCTION, 13:9-13

- A. Israel has destroyed himself as a nation, but God is their only help, 9
- B. God will be their king. Where else can they find someone who will be their king? Who else will be a king like God? 10
- C. God gave them a king, but he took him away in anger. He was no good for Israel. He did not save Israel. He was the choice of the people, not the choice of God, 11
- D. Sin is so great that it is hidden from normal view. People have made excuses for sin for so long that they no longer understand their idolatry as sin. They think they should be able to do that which is right in their own eyes, 12
- E. The sorrows of a travailing woman will come upon Ephraim. These are the calamities surrounding the battles, the destruction Assyria as they come in to take over the land of Ephraim (Israel). These pains eventually ended in complete captivity of Ephraim, 13
- F. Also in verse 13 we notice that Ephraim will not stay long, or long enough, to see the breaking forth of children, which may point to a future generation of children in Israel that would, no doubt, take place if they were not going into captivity. Israel was not satisfied with repenting, thus remaining in their land with God's blessings. They went headlong in constant worship of their idols, and they got worse and worse until God brought much pain and eventual captivity.

IV. THE REMNANT IN EPHRAIM'S FUTURE, 13:14

- A. Some of these future children will live through the captivity, and some will return to their land. Then begins the second period of Israel's history, when God will make a new covenant with them and will send his only begotten Son, Jesus, to be their ransom for spiritual birth. He will not cast away his people which he foreknew.
 1. He will ransom them from the power of the grave
 2. He will redeem them from death.
 3. He will be plagues and destruction to death.
 4. Repentance shall be hidden from God's eyes, since he has a plan, and he will not turn from that plan but will bring about its purpose.
 5. We read in Romans 11:5 *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*

V. THE REMINDER OF SAMARIA'S DESTRUCTION, 13:15-16

- A. Though Christ will be faithful among his brethren, as mentioned in verse 14, still the calamities of war and an oncoming destruction will happen like an east wind. Ephraim will lose everything that is precious to him (or to them).
- B. Verse 16 tells of the horrors of the destruction of the Samaria, the capitol. Since Samaria has rebelled against God, he will allow many tragedies to come upon her. They will fall by the sword, their infants dashed in pieces, and women with child will be ripped up.

- C. Oh, what a terrible thing to allow idolatry to separate us from our God! Sin is a reproach to any people (Prov. 14:34). We as a nation have many idols, I am sure. Though we try to eliminate them from our lives, they keep popping up, and our hearts are distanced from God by them. Perhaps, as the sin of our country gets worse and worse, God may send us calamities as the travail of a woman with child; and, if so, we may have a destruction end just as Israel did.
- D. If we turn, he will be our God. He will be our savior. He will help us. The question is, will America reclaim its worship to Jehovah, or will she come to doom and the greatest successful experiment in all of history be destroyed, leaving no freedom around the entire world?

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 12/18/2013

Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

The Book of Hosea

ISRAEL'S RETURN

Hosea Chapter 14

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In every prophet's writing in the Bible there is some reference to the return of the Lord, and in Hosea we have it here in Chapter 14.
- B. Last time we considered the return of Israel and Judah back into the land from which the Lord is allowing them to be taken captive into Assyria and Babylon.
- C. Jeremiah tells us in Chapter 25 that this captivity will be for a period of 70 years, and at the end of that 70-year period Israel will return to the land.
- D. Then will be the time when God will work, not to bring Israel into a physical land, for he has already done that, but that he will bring them into a country whose builder and maker is God.
- E. He will enjoin them concerning the coming of the Messiah, Jesus, and will tell them of wonderful things that will be their inheritance and peace they can have in true and eternal salvation.

II. FIRST REPENTANCE OF ISRAEL, 14:1-3

- A. The prophet, Hosea, here encourages (yea, commands) that Israel return unto the LORD their God.
 1. They have been a backsliding people. They have been a rebellious, a murmuring, an idolatrous people. Now they are instructed to return to the LORD and him only, no more trusting in the work of their hands, the strength of armies, or the confidence of idols.
 2. They have, he says, "fallen by thine iniquity." They have fallen from the keeping hand of God, since their idols have come between them and their true God, Jehovah.
- B. They are, in this repentance, to bring words to the Lord, vs 2, "Take with you words."
 1. We all know that the true character of a man is in his heart and that "the LORD looketh on the heart" (1 Sam. 16:7), but that which is in the heart may come out of the mouth in praise to God or in cursing.
 2. Jesus said concerning the Pharisees, Matt 15:8 *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.*
 3. Hosea desires that these people bring words of meaning, true words, not false or deceiving words; but they are to "turn to the Lord" or repent before they say the words.
- C. They are to say a few things specifically. This is in a way like The Lord's Prayer in Matthew Chapter Six.

1. But here they are to say first, “Take away all iniquity”
 - a. Throw them as far as the east is from the west: Ps 103:12 *As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.*
 - b. Cast them into the depths of the sea: Mic 7:19 *He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.*
 - c. Seal them up in a bag: Job 14:17 *My transgression is sealed up in a bag, and thou sewest up mine iniquity.*
 - d. Sins remembered no more: Heb. 10:17 *And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*
 - e. Sins are put behind his back: Isaiah 38:17 *Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back.*
 - f. Our sins are covered: Romans 4:7 *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.* See also Psalm 32:1.
 - g. Our sins are not imputed (or charged) to us: Romans 4:8 *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*
2. Secondly, they are to say, “... receive us graciously.”
 - a. 2 Cor. 6:17 *Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,*
 - b. So, this request for God to receive them is predicated upon the first requirement, and that is to “return unto the LORD,” vs 1.
 - c. They must also first receive the message before they can be received: 1 Cor. 15:3 *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;*
3. Thirdly, then, there will be praise “the calves of our lips.”
 - a. Nineteen times the Psalmist says, “Praise the LORD.”
 - b. Psalm 63:3 *Because thy lovingkindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee.*
 - c. Psalm 63:5 *My soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and fatness; and my mouth shall praise thee with joyful lips:*
4. Fourth, they are to admit their error in trusting earthly things. Here will be their admission (verse 3):
 - a. “Asshur shall not save us.” No other nations can be their savior. They are to trust the LORD, not bigger or stronger nations than themselves.
 - b. “We will not ride upon horses,” that is, to save ourselves, unless the order comes from the Lord. We will not trust in our army but in God’s army.
 - c. “Neither will we say any more to the work of our hands . . .” They will not pray to their idols any more. They will not trust them, honor them, love them, or kiss them. They will stop saying to their idols, “You are our gods: for in thee the fatherless findeth mercy.”

III. SECOND, THE REFRESHING FROM THE LORD, 14:4-6

- A. Now God is saying, through Hosea, what he will do if they will repent and give praise to God.
- B. He will heal their backsliding, 4
 - 1. Jeremiah speaks more than any other prophet of the backsliding of Israel. He mentions it 12 times. I think Jeremiah sums most of it up when he says in Jer. 3:8 *And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also.*
 - 2. You see, God had married Israel and Judah by bringing them into the land of Beulah, Isaiah 62:4 *Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate: but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land **Beulah**: for the LORD delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married.*
 - 3. God divorced Israel and Judah when he sent them into captivity. They had been brought to a place of holiness, as we are studying in another series, but they did not keep their part of the covenant with God in that land, so the holiness of God was never manifested in its completeness.
- C. “I will love them freely, for mine anger is turned away from him,” 4
 - 1. He will love them without charge: Rom. 3:24 *Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.*
 - 2. He will also love them willingly, as here in verse 4.
- D. “I will be as the dew unto Israel . . .” 5-6
 - 1. In Hosea Chapters 6 and 13 we find that, when Israel was as the dew, they were passing away into destruction, but when God says he will be the dew, it does not mean that he will vanish away but that he will bring fresh nourishment to the nation so that he can grow into a spiritual nation.
 - 2. We find in Romans Chapter 11 that God has not cast away his people, because Paul is an Israelite: Rom. 11:1 *I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*
 - 3. In verse 6 he explains this in more detail. He speaks of his branches, his beauty, and his smell.

IV. THE RETURN OF ISRAEL, 14:7-8

- A. There will be some of Israel who will, as it says in verse 7, “dwell under his shadow.”
- B. These will return to the land and be subjected to the second period of Israel’s history.
 - 1. Later Judah will also be sent into captivity, and for 70 years Israel (now speaking of both Israel and Judah) they will be in captivity; but when this 70-year period is complete, they shall return into the land.
 - 2. Then, many (the remnant) will return, not only to the land, but also to a spiritual relationship with God. It is to this remnant that God speak here.
- C. They will return. Then they will revive as the corn, or have new life (salvation).
- D. They will grow up as a vine: John 15:5 *I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that*

abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.

- E. Their scent (smell or savor) will be a sweet smell, as the wine of Lebanon, 7
 - 1. All of the offerings of the Old Testament given in the true nature of worship were a sweet smell to God.
 - 2. Israel then began to offer offerings of “a sweet savour” to their idols (Ezek. 6:13).
 - 3. Notice also Ezekiel 20:41 *I will accept you with your sweet savour, when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen.*
 - 4. 2 Cor. 2:15 *For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish:*
- F. Ephraim (Israel) will say, “What have I to do with idols?” This is true repentance.
 - 1. 1 Thess 1:9 *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;*
 - 2. 1 John 5:21 *Little children, keep yourselves from idols. Amen.*
- G. Then God speaks again and says,
 - 1. I have heard him; that is, God has heard their words of repentance, since they were from the heart, speaking of the remnant.
 - 2. I have observed him; that is, God has observed the true nature of the born-again soul, that it is different from before and is truly changed by God’s grace.
 - 3. I am like a fir tree. From me is thy fruit found.
 - a. John Gill suggests that this tree is Christ. A fir tree is both tall so that it pictures the height of Christ, who is above all heavens, as is stated in Eph 4:10 *He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.*)
 - b. But the fir tree also bends down toward the earth so low that people can easily come to it and touch its leaves. So Jesus Christ is both “transcendent” and “immament,” both high and low, both exalted and humbled.
 - c. When he says, “From me is thy fruit found,” it suggests that, at the low branches man can easily obtain the fruit of God, the fruit of the Spirit of God. Maybe that has something to do with the Lord’s explanation in Matt. 11:29 *Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

V. CONCLUSION, Hosea 14:9

- A. Here we have a concluding remark made by Hosea, teaching us the very basis for which he is writing this prophecy to Israel.
- B. First, he speak to us about how hard it is to understand these things, not that it is impossible, but it is hard, “who is wise and he shall understand these things?” No one understands God but Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
- C. Second, who is prudent, which is the same Hebrew word as the word translated “understand” above, “and shall know them.” To know these things means to perceive

- them, to be able to discern their source and their purity, their strength, and their fruit.
- D. Third, Hosea speak of of the ways of the Lord, which are past finding out.
1. Job, speaking of God, says in Job 9:10 *Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number.*
 2. Paul speaks of this in Romans 11:33 *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!*
- E. Fourth, he ends with “but the transgressors shall fall therein.”
1. The transgressors shall fall:
 - a. Prov. 11:5 *The righteousness of the perfect shall direct his way: but the wicked shall fall by his own wickedness.*
 - b. 2 Thess. 1:7-10 *And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, 8 In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: 9 Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; 10 When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day.*
 2. The transgressors shall fall therein.
 - a. “The Lord is right,” so notice how the transgressors will fall into this.
 - (1) Right, or righteous: Psalm 98:9 . . . *for he cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.*
 - (a) The transgressor will fall into the perfect righteousness of God and be judged by it.
 - b. “The Lord is ... just,” so notice how the transgressors will fall into this.
 - (1) Psalm 89:14 *Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face.*
 - (2) Heb. 2:1-3 *Therefore we ought to give the more earnest heed to the things which we have heard, lest at any time we should let them slip. 2 For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;*
 3. When the Lord judges the transgressors, it must be a just judgment. It will not be based upon prejudice or arbitrariness, but it will be based upon that which is right and just. The saved will be judged upon the rightness of Jesus Christ, or his righteousness, for we read in 2 Cor. 5:21 *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* This is the only righteousness that we have.
 4. But since those who have never come to Jesus by faith, trusting him as the only mediator between God and men, will be judged righteously, they have no righteousness, since the Bible says in Rom. 3:10 *As it is written, There is none*

righteous, no, not one; they will be destroyed: “the transgressors will fall.”

5. Do you need to repent today? Do you need to take with you words and confess your sins to God, as Hosea instructs Israel to do?
6. He will heal your backsliding and love you freely (without charge), and you will be fruitful as a believer, a Christian. Then you can say “What have I to do with idols?”

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 1-1-2014

Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

The Book of Joel

THE STORM OF LOCUSTS

Joel Chapter One

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

- A. In this book is the only mention of this man named Joel.
- B. His name means “Jehovah God,” or “Jehovah is God.” The latter one, I think, fits more appropriately.
- C. This book is written to the southern nation of Judah, which remained faithful to the Lord for about 150 years after the northern nation of Israel had gone into captivity to Assyria.
- D. Now Judah is in the same position of backsliding, and God is bringing judgment upon them, also.

II. A SPEECH TO THE OLD MEN, Joel 1:1-4

- A. The extent of the devastation, 1-3
 1. There has been a great swarm of locusts that has come upon the land of Judah.
 2. They are asked whether anything like this swarm of locusts has ever happened in their memory before.
 3. This will be an event to tell their children and grandchildren and then to the next and the next generations.
- B. The explanation of the devastation, 4
 1. It is said that there are four kinds of insects here, and one kind follows the other in their devastation of crops.
 2. This is explained in verse 4.
 - a. First, there is the *caterpillar*, and he eats first from the crops.
 - b. Second, there comes the *cankerworm*, and he eats more of the crops.
 - c. Third, there come the *locusts*, and they eat even more of the crops.
 - d. Fourth, there comes the *palmerworm*, and he finishes off what the other insects do not eat.
 3. Some believe these are all locusts and that the description of four depicts the four levels of destruction that the locusts bring upon crops.
 - a. One is known as the *gnawer*.
 - b. One is known as the *swarmer*.
 - c. One is known as the *licker*.
 - d. One is known as the *devourer*.
 4. Even a third explanation is given that these four-mentioned things are four stages of the growth of locusts.

5. Whatever they are, we know that they brought total destruction upon the crops, which brought hunger and death.
6. All of this leaves devastation in Judah.
7. Nothing has ever happened like this in Judah before, and nothing like this will ever happen again. This tells of the extent and explanation of this devastation.
8. Some believe that these four insects are a type of the four armies that come upon Judah led by four leaders: Tiglath-pileser, Shalmaneser, Sennecherib, and Nebuchadnezzar.

III. THE SYMBOL OF THE INSECTS, Joel 1:5-7

- A. In these verses God explains what will befall Judah as a result of the invading armies.
- B. The drunkards will not have any new wine, because it is cut off from their mouth, 5
- C. The nation that will come upon them (Babylon) will be a very strong nation depicted by the “teeth of a lion” and “cheek teeth of a great lion.” 6
- D. The vine will be made waste.
- E. The bark will be eaten off the fig tree.
- F. The branches are white due to no bark, which is deadly to trees.
- G. These are the armies which took Judah away captive for 70 years.

IV. THE SCARCITY OF JOY, Joel 1:8-12

- A. The people are to lament, or weep, as a virgin who has lost her husband in the battle against these swarming armies, 8
- B. The house of the Lord is devastated. There is no meat offering or drink offering for worship, and the ministers mourn because of it. The land is wasted, 9.
- C. In verse 10 we see the destruction of the fields for produce, the sorrow of the land itself, which has to nourishment, the new wine is gone, and the oil is about gone. These are all needed for proper life in Judah, but they are gone.
- D. The keepers of the field, husbandmen and vine-dressers, are to be ashamed (vs 11), because they have done their work, but there has been no crop, no harvest.
- E. Notice the total destruction in verse 12.
- F. But the main problem mentioned here is the problem of NO JOY.
 1. All of this has happened, because there has been no joy from the sons of men.
 2. They did not rejoice in the Lord. The Hebrew word here is SA-SONE. It means *rejoicing or exultation*.
 3. This is our praise to God. That is the reason the Lord has allowed this to happen to Judah; they forgot to exult, or praise, God and to rejoice in his blessings, or be thankful to God for his benefits.
- G. The word *joy* is used again in verse 16, and it is the Hebrew word SIM-CHAH, but it means nearly the same as the word in verse 12.
- H. Then there is a third word that is translated from the Hebrew word GHE-EL and means *exceeding joy or gladness*. There was no *gladness*, which this word indicates.
- I. Joel himself says in Joel 2:21 *Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the LORD will*

do great things.

- J. Joel also says in Joel 2:23 *Be glad then, ye children of Zion, and rejoice in the LORD your God: for he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain in the first month.*
- K. Why is Judah suffering? because they did not rejoice in the Lord or praise him, and they were not glad in the Lord. Could that be us today?

V. THE CRY OF THE LORD, Joel 1:13-18

A. Gird Yourselves, 13

- 1. This may mean to dress in clothes for mourning, perhaps sackcloth.
- 2. This is directed to the ministers and priests of the altar.
- 3. They were to lie all night awake mourning because they have no meat offering or drink offering in the house of God, 13
 - a. How many preachers and pastors mourn for the lack of concern in our churches?
 - b. How many evangelists pray for God's blessing upon their ministries and mourn for the lack of concern for lost people?
 - c. How many deacons and workers in churches have a strong and sincere concern for the work of God in a true and meaningful way?
 - d. Are we really serious about our worship to God?

B. Sanctify Ye A Fast, 14-18

- 1. There was to be a calling by the ministers and priests to a solemn assembly, not a jubilant and riotous assembly, but one of silence, contemplation, and mourning and a crying unto the Lord for forgiveness.
- 2. Many today do not ask for repentance, because most do not know that there is anything to repent for.
- 3. Many today have also lost the solemnity of the assembling of ourselves together. We take things for granted, because we do them often. That is what happened to Judah.
- 4. They had the temple, the sacrifices, the ministers and priests, but they did not take them seriously.
- 5. Everything sometimes becomes nonchalant, and we are simply robots, worshiping as machines rather than having a heart-felt joy and gladness to praise and honor the Lord.
- 6. We are no less guilty than Judah if that is the case.
- 7. The day of the Lord, or the prophesied day of the coming of great armies from the north, Assyria and Babylon, is at hand.
 - a. This "day of the Lord" also portends, or predicts, the day of Jehovah when the judgment of God comes upon the world in the Great Tribulation.
 - b. There is a "day of man" implied in 1 Cor. 4:3, where it speaks of "man's judgment." This is our day when man carries on his business on the earth.
 - c. Then there is the Day of Christ, mentioned in Phil. 1:10, 2:16; 2 Thess. 2:2. This is either the Rapture, when Christ comes back for his people, or the Day when Christ rules upon the earth, or both.

- d. Then there is the Day of God, mentioned in 2 Peter 3:12 and Rev. 16:14, when God comes to judge the lost, to change the earth into a perfect one, and to keep us in his care for eternity.
- 8. These armies coming upon Judah will be as destructive as the locusts have been.
- 9. The destruction will come from the Almighty. God will be in charge of this.
- 10. Again in verse 16 he reminds Judah of the lack of joy and gladness in the house of God, but notice he says “our God.” He is still their God, even though they have been very lax in their worship and praise of him.
- 11. In verses 17-18 Joel again reminds Judah of the great devastation that has come because of the locusts. Even the animals groan for relief.

VI. THE CRY OF JOEL TO GOD, Joel 1:19-20

- A. Joel’s Cry Has A Theme: “O Lord, to thee will I cry.”
 - 1. It is unto God that he will cry and not unto idols or people or nations or armies.
 - 2. He will confide in God, trust in God, and plead with God for forgiveness and renewal for God’s great nation, Judah.
 - 3. He does this as though there is nowhere else to turn, and that is a fact.
- B. Joel’s Reminder Of Devastation
 - 1. Then Joel reminds God of the great devastation that has already happened to the land of Judah and by doing so admits that only God can change that into a more pleasant land.
 - 2. In these words Joel also implies that he understands that another devastation is coming, as God has just explained in his cry to Judah.
 - 3. When the armies come upon Judah, Joel understands that Judah will be in the same condition as the destruction by the locusts, but this will be a destruction of people, of a temple, of the worship of God in Jerusalem, and of a captivity into a foreign land, which was prophesied even by Moses in the book of Deuteronomy.
 - a. See Deut. 28:15-44 (Read some of these verses).
- C. Our answer, as theirs, is to cry unto the Lord and plead with him that he will forgive our nation, our churches, and God’s children, that we will not look to idols but unto the Lord for the answer to our problems and that we will have full joy and gladness, praise and honor to our God.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 1-15-2014

Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

The Book of Joel

THE DARK DAYS OF HISTORY

Joel Chapter Two

- I. THE REAPING OF GOD’S JUDGMENT, Joel 2:1-11
 - A. The Trumpet of Alarm, 1
 1. The trumpet was used in Joel’s day for different reasons.
 2. There was a certain sound for difference situation.
 - a. Paul uses this metaphor in 1 Cor. 14:8 *For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?*
 3. This sound was one of alarm, a warning of God’s judgment.
 4. The trumpet was to be blown in the “holy mountain,” which meant Jerusalem, where the temple was and where God’s message was to be announced.
 - B. The Day of the Lord Cometh, 1-2
 1. This is the Day of the Lord that pointed to the day when the armies of the north would come upon Jerusalem and destroy the city and take Judah captive.
 2. This was not a good day:
 - a. A day of darkness and gloominess
 - b. A day of clouds and thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains.
 - c. There will be a great and strong people that will be more unique than any people before them or after them.
 - C. The Destruction of This Army, 3-11
 1. There will be fire, 3a
 2. Judah is a land like the Garden of Eden before the armies came, 3b
 3. Behind the army is like a wilderness; nothing can escape them. 3c
 4. They appear as horses and horsemen, 4
 5. Their sound is loud, 5. Some say that the sound of the locusts could be heard up to six miles; perhaps it is the same with these armies, 5
 6. Judah’s people will be in much pain, 6; their faces gather blackness, or famishing.
 7. These soldiers will appear as miraculous men, 7-11
 - a. Climb the wall like men of war and shall not break their ranks, 7
 - b. When they fall upon the sword, they will not be wounded, 8
 - c. The will climb upon houses and enter through the windows like thieves, 9
 - d. The earth will quake, and the heavens will tremble (hyperbole), and the sun and moon will be dark (some say this is the king and queen. The stars are the common people of Judah). Otherwise, it may be simply be a hyperbole about what this seems to be like to the people of Judah, 10
 - e. The Lord will utter his voice, because this is his army, an army that he is using to

2. This is the time after Judah has been attacked by the northern armies, taken captive for 70 years, and returned to the land with God's blessing.
 3. This "afterward" is a time that reaches into the far future after Jesus has come to the earth, as promised, and has gone home to Heaven.
- B. Coming Of The Holy Spirit, 28-29
1. This is the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the church of the Lord on the Day of Pentecost.
 - a. Acts 1:8 *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.*
 - b. Acts 2:16-17 *But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; 17 And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams:*
 2. In Joel 2:28, the expressions about sons, daughters, old men, and young men have to do with the inspiring of Scripture through the Holy Spirit's revelation to men.
 - a. 2 Peter 1:21 *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*
- C. Destruction of Jerusalem, 30-31
1. These verses tell of a time when God again brings judgment upon the city of Jerusalem and destroys all of the ceremonial parts of Judaism.
 2. This showed wonders in heavens and in earth, blood, fire, pillars of smoke.
 3. The sun turned into darkness, and the moon into blood.
 4. This was to happen before "the great and the terrible day of the LORD come."
 - a. This day of the LORD will come later.
- D. In this new day of the Second Period of Israel's History, when all of these things will happen, "whosoever shall call upon the name of the LORD shall be delivered" (saved), as it says in Romans 10:13.
1. Rom. 10:13 *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*
- E. In Jerusalem will be deliverance or salvation.
- F. This will pertain to the remnant of Judah spoken about in Romans 11.
1. Rom. 11:1 *I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*
 2. Rom. 11:5 *Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*
- G. Notice, the remnant is to all "whom the LORD shall call."
- H. We read, though, in Rom. 10:12 *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 1-22-2014 No Service

1-29-2014

Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

The Book of Joel

JUDGMENT AND BLESSING

Joel Chapter Three

- I. THE JUDGMENT OF THE LOST WORLD, Joel 3:1-16
 - A. The Time of the Judgment, 3:1
 1. It will be a time after God has gathered Judah back into her land after their 70-year period of captivity to the Chaldeans–Babylon
 - B. The Place of the Judgment, 3:2
 1. God will gather all nations of the lost into the “valley of Jehoshaphat.”
 - a. No one knows for sure where the Valley of Jehoshaphat is. Some say it is the same as the Valley of Kidron near to Jerusalem.
 - b. Others think that it is a name given as a metaphor for a valley, wherever it may be, for the judgment of God.
 - c. The name Jehoshaphat means “division, decision, judgment, or even threshing.”
 2. There God will plead (govern, judge, or even vindicate).
 3. God will judge them for what they have done to Israel: the people and the land.
 - C. The Reason of the Judgment, 3:3-6
 1. They have cast lots for God’s people, 3
 - a. This means they have bargained the people of God for what they wanted in return for their sale or barter.
 - b. They gave a boy for a harlot, or exchanged a young boy, who could be used for work and war, in return for a harlot.
 - c. They gave Judah’s girls in return for wine so they might drink.
 - d. In other words, they made Judah’s people slaves to their own appetites.
 2. God will judge Tyre and Sidon, who were tradesmen who were involved in this slave trade. God asked them if they had done anything for him (recompensed). The answer, of course, is no; but God will recompense them for their sin, 4
 3. They took God’s silver and gold and put them in pagan temples, 5
 - a. The Philistines took Israel’s ark and put it in Dagon’s temple.
 - b. Nebuchadnezzar took away the holy vessels from the temple.
 - c. Daniel 1:1-2 *In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it. 2 And the Lord gave Jehoiakim king of Judah into his hand, with part of the vessels of the house of God: which he carried into the land of Shinar to the house of his god; and he brought the vessels into the treasure house of his god.*

- d. In a spiritual sense, some have taken the ordinances of Christ and made them sacraments, placing them in pagan temples rather than in Christ's churches.
- 4. They sold the children of Judah to the Grecians so they might remove them far from their border, 6
- D. The Details of the Judgment, 3:7-16
 - 1. Re-gathering and Recompense, 7-8
 - a. First, God will re-gather Judah, his elect people of Israel, out of the places where they have been sold by Tyre and Sidon and bring recompense upon their head, 7
 - b. In his time Alexander the Great sold the people of Tyre and Sidon and Gaza. There is no doubt that Jews were among the buyers of these slaves, 8
 - 2. Gentiles' preparation for war, 9-12
 - a. The time will come in this second period of Israel's history that the Gentiles will prepare for war, 9
 - (1) Rev. 16:16 *And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.*
 - (2) Rev. 19:19 *And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. 20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.*
 - b. They are to beat their plowshares into swords and their pruninghooks into spears and say "I am strong." 10
 - (1) But see: Isaiah 2:4 *And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*
 - c. The heathen are to gather themselves together, and Joel calls for "thy mighty ones to come down, O LORD." 11-12
 - (1) These are the angels who will come down where God will judge the heathen.
 - d. Angels are to reap the harvest with a sickle, since the sin of the Gentiles is now full, 13
 - (1) Rev. 14:18-20 *And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. 19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs.*

- e. Multitudes, multitudes (which means many multitudes) will gather in the Valley of Decision, or the valley of Judgment, division, or threshing, 14
- f. The sun and the moon will be darkened. This battle will be at the very end of the Great Tribulation Period, 15
- g. The Lord will “roar” out of Mt. Zion, 16
 - (1) Rev. 14:1-2 *And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps:*
 - (2) See Revelation 19:11-16 (READ)

II. THE BLESSING TO GOD’S PEOPLE, 3:17-21

A. Blessings Listed, 17

1. Then you will know that I am the LORD and God
2. Then shall Jerusalem be holy
 - a. Isaiah 4:3 *And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem:*
3. No stranger will pass through –
 - a. No wickedness, no paganism, no enemy.
 - b. Isaiah 11:9 *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*
 - c. Joel 3:19 *Egypt shall be a desolation, and Edom shall be a desolate wilderness, for the violence against the children of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land.*

B. Blessings of the Land, 18-20

1. Mountains drop down with wine
2. Hills flow with milk
3. Rivers flow with waters
4. A fountain will come forth out of the house of the LORD and water the valley of Shittim.
 - a. This fountain is, no doubt, the great truth of God, written in brief on the heart of every person to make us guilty before God, written in the great book, the Bible, which was inspired by the Holy Spirit as he moved upon men of old, and the great righteousness of Christ, which indwells each of us by imputation by grace through faith in Jesus, his death, burial, and resurrection.
5. Judah will dwell forever, and Jerusalem from generation to generation, 20
6. Jews and Gentiles alike will be cleansed completely. We will no longer sin. We shall have our new bodies, which will not sin. This will be the completion of the hope that is in Christ Jesus, a sure and steadfast hope, – Heb. 6:19 *Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the*

- veil;*
7. All of this, because the LORD dwells in Zion.
 - a. Zion is a name that in the earliest usage referred to Jerusalem.
 - b. In the time of Constantine, his mother, Helena, names the western mountain by this name, Zion.
 - c. The Lord's dwelling in Jerusalem is a Jewish notion, for this was the place where the temple dwelt, and that is where the name of Jehovah dwelt to the Jews.
 - d. Jerusalem is "the mother of us all" Galatians 4:26 *But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*
 - (1) Wherever Jesus is, that is where I want to be.
 - (2) John 14:3 *And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.*
 - (3) Rom. 6:8 *Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:*
 - (4) Col. 3:4 *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 2-5-2014

Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

The Book of Amos

INTRODUCTION TO AMOS

I. AMOS THE SHEPHERD

- A. Amos prophesied to the northern nation of Israel. He went there for that very purpose.
- B. His message had the theme of “justice,” because Israel’s judges had perverted righteous judgment.
 - 1. *Exodus 23:6-8 Thou shalt not wrest the judgment of thy poor in his cause. 7 Keep thee far from a false matter; and the innocent and righteous slay thou not: for I will not justify the wicked. 8 And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous.*
 - 2. *Leviticus 19:15 Ye shall do no unrighteousness in judgment: thou shalt not respect the person of the poor, nor honour the person of the mighty: [but] in righteousness shalt thou judge thy neighbour.*
- C. Amos’s charges against Israel
 - 1. *Amos 2:6 Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes;*
 - 2. *Amos 8:4-8 Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, 5 Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? 6 That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat? 7 The LORD hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works. 8 Shall not the land tremble for this, and every one mourn that dwelleth therein? and it shall rise up wholly as a flood; and it shall be cast out and drowned, as by the flood of Egypt.*
- D. Amos was contemporary with Hosea in Israel, while Isaiah and Micah prophesied in Judah at the same time.
- E. The name Amos means “to carry a load,” or “a burden.”
- F. Amos was “among the herdmen of Tekoah.”
 - 1. The word “herdman” is not the usual word for “shepherd,” but it is used for a person who tends special varieties of sheep, prized sheep, to be sold for a high price.
- G. Amos was also a gatherer “of Sycamore fruit.” This was a type of fig tree, and it is said that those who tended to these trees would pinch the fruit so that it would ripen quicker and make a fuller, juicier, fruit.

II. AMOS THE PROPHET

- A. Amos 7:14-15 *Then answered Amos, and said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son; but I was an herdman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit: 15 And the LORD took me as I followed the flock, and the LORD said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.*

III. AMOS THE MINISTER

- A. His ministry was during the reign of Jeroboam II (786-765 BC).
- B. His work began two years after the earthquake, 1:1
 - 1. Zech. 14:5 *And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: . . .*
- C. Amos's ministry of prophecy extended to all nations in the world, but Israel was the most guilty of all, since they had God's standard and were abusing and perverting that standard of God's word.

IV. THE CONDITION OF ISRAEL

- A. Their Condition Was Prosperous
 - 1. The rich cheated the poor – Amos 8:4-7 *Hear this, O ye that swallow up the needy, even to make the poor of the land to fail, 5 Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying the balances by deceit? 6 That we may buy the poor for silver, and the needy for a pair of shoes; yea, and sell the refuse of the wheat?*
 - 2. The rich had summer houses – Amos 3:15 *And I will smite the winter house with the summer house; and the houses of ivory shall perish, and the great houses shall have an end, saith the LORD.*
 - 3. The abundance of food – Amos 6:4 *That lie upon beds of ivory, and stretch themselves upon their couches, and eat the lambs out of the flock, and the calves out of the midst of the stall;*
 - 4. This gave them a false sense of security.
 - a. Amos 6:1 *Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria, which are named chief of the nations, to whom the house of Israel came!*
- B. Their Condition Was Pious
 - 1. Amos 4:4-5 *Come to Bethel, and transgress; at Gilgal multiply transgression; and bring your sacrifices every morning, and your tithes after three years: 5 And offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, and proclaim and publish the free offerings: for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord GOD.*
- C. Their Condition Was Petty
 - 1. Israel treated the poor unmercifully –
 - a. Amos 2:6 *Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I*

will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes;

2. They thought little of the prophecies that God would judge them
 - a. Hosea 1:4 *And the LORD said unto him, Call his name Jezreel; for yet a little while, and I will avenge the blood of Jezreel upon the house of Jehu, and will cause to cease the kingdom of the house of Israel.*

V. CONCLUSION

- A. The ministry of Amos was one of decision for Israel.
- B. Amos 5:4 *For thus saith the LORD unto the house of Israel, Seek ye me, and ye shall live:*
- C. No doubt, the most famous verse in this books is Amos 4:12 *Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.*
- D. Probably the second most familiar verse in the book is Amos 3:3 *Can two walk together, except they be agreed?*
 1. Without agreement together of those who travel together, how can they have a common goal? How can they travel without confusion?
 2. John Gill states this:

The design of these words is to show, that without friendship there is no fellowship, and without concord no communion; as this is the case between man and man, so between God and man; and that Israel could not expect that God should walk with them, and show himself friendly to them, and continue his favours with them, when they walked contrary to him; when they were so disagreeable to him in their sentiments of religion, in their worship, and the rites of it, and in the whole of their conduct and behaviour.

- E. The situation of Israel is parallel in many ways to our own society today.
 1. We have gone almost to sleep with apathy. We care not for the sins in our society.
 2. We are not seeking the Lord in our knowledge and in our daily living.
 3. We, hopefully, are not treading down the poor.
 4. Certainly I hope we love the Lord with our whole heart.
 5. If not, then we are to prepare to meet our God in righteous judgment and justice.
 - a. Amos 5:7 *Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth,*
 - b. Amos 5:15 *Hate the evil, and love the good, and establish judgment in the gate: it may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.*
 - c. Amos 5:24 *But let judgment run down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream.*

- d. Amos 6:12 *Shall horses run upon the rock? will one plow there with oxen? for ye have turned judgment into gall, and the fruit of righteousness into hemlock:*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 2-19-2014

Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

The Book of Obadiah

INTRODUCTION TO OBADIAH

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. **Twins Were Born:** Genesis 25:22-26 *And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD. 23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. 24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb. 25 And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. 26 And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.*
- B. **Esau Sold His Birthright:** Genesis 25:27-34 *And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. 28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob. 29 And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: 30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. 31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright. 32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? 33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. 34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.*
- C. **Esau Received Blessing From His Father:** Genesis 27:37 *And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him [Isaac] thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants; and with corn and wine have I sustained him: and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?*
- D. **In the Exodus, Esau Refused To Help Israel:** Numbers 20:14-21 *And Moses sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travail that hath befallen us: 15 How our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers: 16 And when we cried unto the LORD, he heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt: and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border: 17 Let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells: we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders. 18 And Edom said unto him, Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword. 19 And the children of Israel said unto him, We*

will go by the high way: and if I and my cattle drink of thy water, then I will pay for it: I will only, without doing any thing else, go through on my feet. 20 And he said, Thou shalt not go through. And Edom came out against him with much people, and with a strong hand. 21 Thus Edom refused to give Israel passage through his border: wherefore Israel turned away from him.

- E. Edom Built Cities In The Rocks: Obadiah 1:3 *The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation [is] high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?*
- F. In About 100 A.D. Edom completely lost their identity. Herod the Great was an Edomite, I have read.

II. REMINDER TO EDOM, 1-14

A. Edom Were A Proud People

- 1. Verse 2: They were a small people
- 2. Verse 3: “Who shall bring me down to the ground?”
- 3. Verse 7: They will be broken down by deceit: “the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, and prevailed against thee ...”

B. Edom Reminded Of His Violence Against His Brother, 10-11

C. A Reminder Of Edom’s Sins, 12-14

- 1. Looked on the day of their brother in the day that he became a stranger, 12
- 2. Rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction, 12
- 3. Spoke proudly in the day of distress, 12
- 4. Entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity, 13
- 5. Looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, 13
- 6. Laid hands on their substance in the day of their calamity, 13
- 7. Stood in the crossway to cut off those of his that did escape, 14
- 8. Delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress, 14

D. RETRIBUTION TO EDOM, 15-18

- 1. Because Edom has done all of these things, retribution shall come upon them.
- 2. “Thy reward shall return upon thine own head.”
- 3. Jeremiah 25:17 *Then took I the cup at the LORD’S hand, and made all the nations to drink, unto whom the LORD had sent me:*
- 4. Just as Edom will drink of the judgment of God, so all the nations will drink of it, 16.
- 5. Revelation 18:21 *And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.*
- 6. Along with God negative judgment against Edom and all nations, a part of that judgment will be the deliverance of Israel, here in the name of Jacob; and, after God has judged Edom, Israel will possess their possessions, 17.
- 7. This may also have a spiritual and far-reaching meaning when the nations of the world will become the kingdoms of the Lord and his Christ (Rev. 11:15).
 - a. Amos 9:11-12 *In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen,*

and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: 12 That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen, which are called by my name, saith the LORD that doeth this.

- b. *Psalms 2:8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession.*
- 8. There will be a fire started by Jacob and Joseph, meaning the two tribes of Israel after their division: Judah and Israel. They will start a fire, but Edom will be their stubble, or their kindling wood. They will be destroyed completely just as the embers of a fire turn into ashes, 18.

III. RESTORATION OF ISRAEL, 19-21

- A. The Jews who live in the southern part of the land will over take Idumea, the land just north of them and contiguous with them, 19
- B. They of the Jews who lived in the plains will possess the Philistines, 19
- C. It seems that, when Israel and Judah together will return from the captivity, they will capture the land and increase their possessions, 19-20
- D. Then saviors will come up on Mt. Zion: Zerubbabel, Ezra, Nehemiah, 21.
 - 1. This after the captivity of Israel in Babylon and upon their return to the land.
 - 2. These will judge the mount of Esau. This return from captivity of Israel marked the beginning of the judgment of Esau until its final destruction. After 100 A.D. there is no more mention of Edom
- E. The kingdom that will come after the return of Israel to the land will be a kingdom of kings and priests whereby God will by his election never forget Israel and will save many of them from their sins as he did the Apostle Paul.
- F. “And the kingdom shall be the LORD’s.” Revelation 11:15 *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 2-26-2014
Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

The Book of Jonah

Key verse: 4:11 – *And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?*

Jonah:

Nothing much known of Jonah except that his name means “dove,” and his father’s name means “my truth.”

There is a reference in 2 Kings 14:25, which says he is from the city of Gathhepher, a city in the tribe of Zebulun.

2 Kings 14:25 *He [Jeroboam] restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gathhepher.*

It is often stated by commentators that a mistake was made in John 7:52 *They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.* Certainly Jonah came from out of Galilee as a prophet. So these men must not have accepted Jonah as a prophet.

Theme: God's compassion for sinners

I. Jonah Commissioned To Ninevah (ch. 1)

A. Jonah fled God's command to preach to Nineveh (1:2-3)

1. God commanded Jonah to preach against Nineveh's sin (2)

Nineveh is first mentioned in Genesis 10:11 *Out of that land went forth Asshur, and (Nimrod) builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah,*

Nineveh was capital of the Assyrian empire, and it was destroyed by the Medes and Persians in 612 BC. It was the largest city in the world in its day according to classical writers.

2. Jonah fled to go to Tarshish instead (3)

2 Chronicles 9:21 *For the king's (Solomon's) ships went to Tarshish with the servants of Hiram: every three years once came the ships of Tarshish bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks.*

3. Why did Jonah flee? Probably because he knew God was a merciful God and he will surely have compassion upon these heathen people, and God promised That he would destroy Israel's enemies -- Deuteronomy 20:4 *For the LORD your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.*

B. God sent a great storm to intercept Jonah (1:4-9)

1. God sent the storm (4)
2. The mariners attempted to save the ship (5-6)
3. Jonah was identified by lot as the cause of the storm (7-9)

C. Jonah was thrown into the sea to save the ship (1:10-16)

1. Jonah told the mariners to throw him into the sea (10-12)
2. The mariners tried to save the ship without sacrificing Jonah (13-14)
3. The mariners threw Jonah into the sea (15-16)

D. Jonah was swallowed by a fish prepared by God (1:17)

II. Jonah Compelled To Whale University (ch. 2)

- A. Jonah lamented his fate (2:1-6)
- B. Jonah promised to fulfill his vow to God (2:7-9)
- C. God commanded the fish to vomit Jonah on dry ground (2:10)

III. Jonah Completed His Mission (ch. 3)

- A. God again commanded Jonah to preach against Nineveh (3:1-2)
- B. Jonah preached against Nineveh (3:3-4)
- C. The Ninevites repented (3:5-9)
- D. God relented of the judgment against Nineveh (3:10)

IV. Jonah Complained of God's Mercy (ch 4)

- A. Jonah requested to die in protest to God's mercy (4:1-4)
- B. Jonah rested under God's prepared plant (4:5-6)
- C. God's prepared plant withered and died (4:7)
- D. Jonah requested to die in protest for the withered plant (4:8)
- E. God rebuked Jonah for his misplaced compassion (4:9-11)

V. Jonah Considered A Prophet

- A. Matt. 12:39-41 *But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation*

seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For 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. 41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.

B. "Sign of the prophet Jonas" – Matt. 16:4; Luke 11:29-30

1. Matthew 16:4 *A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given unto it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas. And he left them, and departed.*
2. Luke 11:29-30 *And when the people were gathered thick together, he began to say, This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonas the prophet. 30 For as Jonas was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation.*

Four Prepared Things in Jonah:

- (1) A prepared fish (1:17)
- (2) A prepared plant (4:6)
- (3) A prepared worm (4:7)
- (4) A prepared east wind (4:8)

God is not bound to our feelings, our emotions, our designs, our plans, or anything that is man's. Let's read Romans 9:15 *For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion.*

God did not give in to Jonah's feelings. He did not change his plan because Jonah was angry with God. John 13:1 says, *Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*

We don't know who "his own" are. We must give the Gospel to every creature, not considering whether they are God's own or not. God will take care of the compassion, redemption, salvation, deliverance, etc.

Jonah's job was to preach to the people of Nineveh—that is all. He was not responsible for the outcome of that mission. God had control of that.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 3-5-2014

Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

THE BOOK OF MICAH

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Micah, the Man

1. The name Micah means “Who is like unto Jehovah?”
2. He is mentioned in Jeremiah 26:18
3. He is not to be confused with the Micah of 1 Kings 22:8, whom Ahab hated.
4. Micah was a country preacher.

B. Micah’s Motivation

1. Micah 3:8 *But truly I am full of power by the spirit of the LORD, and of judgment, and of might, to declare unto Jacob his transgression, and to Israel his sin.*
2. With this power he uncovered Israel’s sin and pointed to Jesus, the Messiah.
3. J. M. Smith said that “He had Amos’ passion for justice and Hosea’s heart of love.”

C. Micah’s Home

1. Moresheth (Micah 1:1).
2. More properly it is Moreshethgath (1:14), which means “the possession of Gath.”
3. The international highway between Assyria and Egypt went practically just past his house, so he had contact with the goings-on of the public and the nations of Israel and Judah.

D. Micah’s Writing of The Book

1. This was during the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah
2. The writing is dated between 738 BC and 698 BC.
3. Samaria fell in 722 BC.
4. He lived at the same time as Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos.

E. Micah’s Historical Background

1. Assyria was the world power.
2. Israel, the northern kingdom, and Syria joined together against Assyria, but Judah would not enter into the agreement, so they attacked Judah; but Ahaz called upon Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria to help, and Judah was saved from Syria and Israel.
3. But then Assyria had control over Judah.
4. There was war between Assyria and Egypt. Hezekiah turned to Egypt for support. Sennacherib, of Assyria, conquered all of Judah’s cities but Jerusalem.

II. THE EXTENT OF MICAH’S MINISTRY (Chapter 1)

A. The Time of the Prophecy, 1:1

1. Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah
2. Jotham was a fair king (2 Kings 15:34-35)
3. Ahaz was the worst king of Judah. He brought Baal worship to Judah – 2 Kings 16:2

Twenty years old was Ahaz when he began to reign, and reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem, and did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD his God, like David his father.

4. Hezekiah was one of the best kings of Judah, son of Ahaz. Someone said that Hezekiah was “the best son of the worst father.”
- B. The Territory of the Prophecy, 1:2-7
1. Both Judah and Israel
 2. Micah 1:5 *For the transgression of Jacob is all this, and for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the transgression of Jacob? is it not Samaria? and what are the high places of Judah? are they not Jerusalem?*
- C. The Tears in the Prophecy, 1:9-16
1. Micah wept and howled as Israel will be weeping when the armies come against them.
 2. He will go around naked, which means that he will take off his prophet’s mantle as though he is no prophet, disgraced in the presence of the people.
 3. Thus Israel will be naked, their prophets’ being taken with no seriousness. The enemies will see their nakedness, which may mean their sin and compromise.
 4. Their wound is incurable (9). There is no chance of a cure. They have gone too far in rejecting the messages of the prophets and hearing the word of God.
 5. But they are not to weep in Gath where the people of Gath will hear and belittle them and say “We told you so.”
 6. Why should they weep?
 - a. Towns will no longer live up to their names, 11
 - (1) Saphir means “beautiful,” but it will no longer be beautiful.
 - (2) Zaanan means “go out,” but they will not go out to fight to help their neighbors.
 - (3) Beth-angel means “the narrow house,” but it will not be unprotected (narrowed) by anyone so that Assyria can easily destroy it.
 - b. The name “Maroth” will live up to its name (bitter things). The Assyrians will come and destroy while they wait for deliverance, which does not come, 12
 - c. Lachish is the first Judean city where the sins of northern Israel are found. Lachish will retreat from the enemy but will not be saved, 13
 - d. Micah’s hometown of Moreshethgath will be so weak that, even though it may receive presents for help, they cannot help.

III. THE EXPLANATION OF GOD’S ANGER (Chapter 2)

- A. The Description of Sin, 2:1-2
1. Judah and Israel “work evil upon their beds,” which means that they lie in bed, not to sleep, but to devise ways to perform evil the next day.
 2. Verse 2 gives more description of their sin – Micah 2:2 *And they covet fields, and take them by violence; and houses, and take them away: so they oppress a man and his house, even a man and his heritage.*
- B. The Devices of God, 2:3-6

1. God will put them into stocks, “an evil, from which ye shall not remove your necks;” 3
 2. Their inheritance will be given to others. Verse 4 says, “turning away he hath divided our fields.” 4
 3. God will exclude them from their own land, “cast their cords,” meaning they will be disinherited or have cut their cords from their homeland, 5
 4. God will withdraw prophets from them. “. . . they shall not prophesy to them” 6
- C. The Detail of their Sin, 2:7-11
1. They are to blame, not God, 7
 2. The rich exploited the poor, 8
 3. They stole property from the widows, 9; but they would not enjoy it, 10
 4. The people were weary of true prophets. They wanted a prosperity prophecy, not one of doom and destruction, 11 – Micah 2:11 *If a man walking in the spirit and falsehood do lie, saying, I will prophesy unto thee of wine and of strong drink; he shall even be the prophet of this people.*
- D. The Deliverance of the People, 2:12-13
1. By deliverance here I do not mean restoration or safety, but I mean a deliverance of Israel into the hands of the enemy.
 2. They are like a flock in a sheepfold, or rather a slaughterhouse.
 3. The “breaker” in verse 13 is Assyria, who will deliver the people into Assyrian captivity.
 4. Notice “and the LORD on the head of them.”
 - a. Some believe this is the LORD’s going on the head or as the leader of Assyria as he uses Assyria as an instrument of correction for Israel.
 - b. Some believe this is the Messiah, Jesus Christ, or even God the Father, Jehovah, going ahead of his people into captivity in order to see them through this captivity on to restoration later.

IV. THE EXPOSURE OF ISRAEL’ SIN (Chapter 3)

- A. The Politicians, 3:1-4
1. It is the heads of the ancient courts that had corrupted justice, 1
 2. These courts are like butchers, 2
 3. These courts were like cannibals, 3
 4. The judges will reap what they have sown, 4
- B. The Prophets, 3:5-8)
1. Prophets prophesied for rewards, 5
 2. Prophets will lose their prophetic gift, 6 (see verse 11)
 3. False prophets will become ashamed and dumb, 7
 4. But true prophets are filled with the power of the spirit of the LORD, 8
- C. The Prosperity, 3:9-12
1. Those who prospered by reputation (judges) will be judged by God, 9
 2. The rich build their houses in Zion with blood, meaning they reject the poor and let them die in order to have their prosperity, 10

3. But their rich houses will be torn down and destroyed, 12

V. THE ENCOURAGEMENT FOR THE FUTURE (Chapter 4)

A. The Focus on the Remnant, 4:1-8

1. The word *remnant* is used six (6) times in this book—2:12; 4:7; 5:3, 7, 8; 7:18
2. The remnant is to be restored, 1 (See Rev. 21:26)
3. A literal kingdom to be established, 2 (See Matt. 8:11)
4. The kingdom will be one of peace, 3 (See Joel 3:10)
5. There will be perfect justice in this kingdom, 4
6. In this kingdom only God will be worshiped, 5
7. God's people will be gathered together, 6
8. God's people will be made a remnant, and God will rule, 7
9. Jerusalem will be the capitol for the King, 8

B. The Fix on Restoration, 4:9-10

1. There seems to be no king to which they can call, 9
2. Like labor pains, Israel will go into captivity and remain in these pains until they are delivered by God himself, 10

C. The Freedom from the Enemy, 4:11-13

1. The heathen (Assyria) know not the thoughts of the Lord, 11-12
2. God's people are called out upon the threshing floor, and God's people will thresh out the heathen from beneath their brazen feet and go to freedom from the enemy, 13

VI. THE EXPECTATION OF THE MESSIAH (Chapter 5)

A. The Coming of the Messiah, 5:1-3

1. Assyria will smite the cheek of the king of Judah, Hezekiah, 1
2. But another king will come, 2. This is Jesus Christ
3. Matt 2:1 *Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,*

B. The Character of the King, 5:4-7

1. He will be great to the ends of the world, 4
2. He will bring peace, 5
3. He will deliver from Assyria through Babylon, 6
4. He will allow Israel to stay in captivity, but he will be with them, 7

C. The Crown of Victory, 5:8-15

1. Though in the mouth of the lion, God can and will deliver his people, for the Lord is with them, 8-9
2. God will deliver from all sinful idolatry, 10-15

VII. THE EFFECTIVENESS OF OUR SERVICE (Chapter 6)

A. The Acknowledged Guilt, 6:1-5

1. Not only must Micah prophesy of Israel's sins, but Israel must confess them, also.
2. Micah 6:3 *O my people, what have I done unto thee? and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me.*

B. The Acceptable Service, 6:6-9

1. They ask the question, "What will God accept?" – Micah 6:7 *Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?*
2. This is what the Lord will accept: Micah 6:8 *He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?*

C. The Accountable Idolatry, 6:10-15

1. The people were unjust in their dealings: 10
2. God cannot count pure that which is impure, 11
3. God will bring devastation upon these sinners, 12-15
4. Micah 6:16 *For the statutes of Omri are kept, and all the works of the house of Ahab, and ye walk in their counsels; that I should make thee a desolation, and the inhabitants thereof an hissing: therefore ye shall bear the reproach of my people.*

VIII. THE EXPECTANCE OF HOPE (Chapter 7)

A. The Hope not in Man, 7:1-4

1. There is no crop (fellowship) for Micah, because humanity has been corrupted, 1-2
2. The corruption is bad, 3-4
 - a. They do evil with both hands, 3
 - b. The best of them is a brier, 4

B. The Hope only in God, 7:5-7

1. A man's enemies are the men of his own house, 6 (See Matt. 10:36)
2. Micah 7:7 *Therefore I will look unto the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me.*

C. The Hope of Restoration, 7:8-13)

1. Micah 7:8 *Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.*
2. Micah 7:11 *In the day that thy walls are to be built, in that day shall the decree be far removed.*

D. The Hope for the Remnant, 7:14-20

1. Micah 7:14 *Feed thy people with thy rod, the flock of thine heritage, which dwell solitarily in the wood, in the midst of Carmel: let them feed in Bashan and Gilead, as in the days of old.*
2. Micah 7:18 *Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 3-12-2014

Changed from Sunday Evening to Wednesday Evening

THE BOOK OF NAHUM

I. INTRODUCTION TO NAHUM

A. Nahum The Man

1. His name means “Consolation”
2. He was from Elkoshite, which has the meaning of “The God of Ensnarement.”
 - a. No one is sure where this place was.
 - b. It was probably in Judah, which may be indicated in 1:15.

B. The City of Nineveh

1. Nineveh was built by Nimrod.
 - a. Genesis 10:8-11 *And Cush begat Nimrod: he began to be a mighty one in the earth. 9 He was a mighty hunter before the LORD: wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the LORD. 10 And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. 11 Out of that land went forth Asshur, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth, and Calah,*
2. In 331 BC Alexander the Great did not notice the site, but in 1842 Layard and Botts found the first trace of the city, proving the truth of God’s prophecies.

C. The Message of Nahum

1. The theme is the destruction of Nineveh, the capitol of Assyria.
2. Nineveh once repented at the preaching of Jonah, but they fell away, and they were destroyed by the hand of God.

II. NINEVEH’S DOOM DECLARED (Chapter 1)

A. God’s Goodness To His People, 1:1-7

1. Nahum had a burden. Whenever a prophet has a burden, it means that he is to prophesy of the destruction of a city or country and manifests the wrath of God.
2. His prophecy is called “a vision.” Prophets of old were called “seers,” so the word “vision” is an appropriate word.
3. God is jealous of his people, so he is manifesting his love for them; and he is taking vengeance against the enemy of God’s people.
4. But God is “slow to anger” (verse 3). He is slow to anger, but he will eventually bring justice to bear.
5. Verses 3-6 describe the Lord’s power in the world and declares his wrath.
6. God is good to his people (verse 7). “He knoweth them that trust in him.”

B. God’s Glory In Judgment, 1:8-15

1. God’s judgment is like a flood, and he will overwhelm and overcome his enemies.

2. God will bring a flood upon Nineveh only once. He says, “affliction shall not rise up a second time” verse 9
3. Nineveh will be destroyed as dry stubble, thorns tied together to burn as kindling wood.
4. The “evil counselor” of verse 11 may be Sennacherib, who came against Judah in around 699 BC (2 Kings 18:13-16).
5. The mighty Assyrians are to be cut down, verse 12
6. God will burst the yoke of Israel from Assyria, 13
7. God says about Nineveh, “I will make thy grave; for thou art vile.” He uses the Medes assisted by Babylon to overthrow Nineveh. He will throw down all their idols and graven images, 14
8. When this is all done, Judah will be able to again hear the good message of freedom and will be able to continue to worship through their feasts and vows which Assyria had stopped for a time, 15.
 - a. The good news of the freedom of Israel from Assyria: Nahum 1:15 *Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! . . .*
 - b. The good news of the freedom of Israel from Babylon: Isaiah 52:7 *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*
 - c. The good news of the freedom of the sinner from sin by the Gospel: Rom. 10:15 *And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

III. NINEVEH’S DOOM DESCRIBED (Chapter 2

- A. Description Of The Destroyer – The pronoun “he” is a personification, using the word to point to the army of the Medes along with the help of Babylon. “He” will destroy despite the best efforts of Nineveh and Assyria, 1
- B. Description Of The Emptiers – These emptiers are the Assyrians, who emptied Israel and Judah of all their good things. One idea of the “vine branches” is that these are the men and women who were killed or carried away captive to Assyria, 2
- C. Description Of The Army – The “shield” speaks of the whole armor that is worn by the enemies of Nineveh. The armor is red due to the blood of those killed. The army carried torches to burn Nineveh. The cut down trees to aid them in battle. It has been known that armies have cut down complete forests in order to help them in battle, 3
- D. Description Of The Chariots – These chariots will so furious and so many that they will hit together as they go through the streets of Nineveh; they will produce sparks as their wheels hit together, 4
- E. Description Of The Orders – The army leaders will give orders to so many men in the city that people will not be able to walk because of the number of people trying to walk together. As the people of Nineveh go to the walls, there will be a “defence.” This word

means a “covering,” or a bridge that goes across the wall so the Chaldeans can come over the walls into Nineveh, 5

- F. Description Of The Flood – The rivers will open and overflow, and the palace will be dissolved, 6
- G. Description Of Nineveh’s Queen – John Gill says this word Huzzab means “queen.” This would mean that the queen of Nineveh was taken captive. The word “tabering” means to beat or pound. The maids who served the queen will be beating their breasts in mourning her loss, 7
- H. Description Of Nineveh’s Loss – Nineveh is like a pool of water; but, as the walls break down, they are like fish who fall out of the pool when it is broken. They may stand, but they will still fall out, 8
- I. Description of The Spoil – The Medes and Chaldeans will take all the booty, or the precious things from Nineveh. There was much riches in Nineveh, which they had stored up for many years. Now Nineveh is empty of her wealth, 9-10
- J. Description Of The Destruction – As lions eating prey, so the Chaldeans came to devour and did devour. They emptied Nineveh of all their wealth, the king, their precious things, and their idols, 11-12.
- K. Description Of God’s Displeasure – God is against Nineveh, and we hear the final ringing words from God in this last verse of chapter 2, “... the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.”

IV. NINEVEH’S DOOM DESERVED (Chapter 3)

- A. Because Of Sin, 3:1-7
 - 1. Nahum 3:4 *Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.*
 - 2. Nahum 3:7 *And it shall come to pass, [that] all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?*
 - 3. Nahum 3:19 *There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?*
- B. Because Of Silence, 3:8-19
 - 1. Are you better than No? No was a city in Egypt that was destroyed by the Assyrians. It has ramparts, or defenses, around them, being surrounded by water on every side, including, say some, of motes around the walls. Is Nineveh more protected than this city? The answer would be that they are not, 8.
 - 2. When verse 11 speaks of Nineveh’s being drunken, it means that Nineveh will drink of the same drunken cup of suffering as did No in Egypt. They will be hid, meaning they will go out of existence, 11.
 - 3. Verse 14 encourages the people of Nineveh to prepare for battle: Nahum 3:14 *Draw thee waters for the siege, fortify thy strong holds: go into clay, and tread the mortar, make strong the brickkiln.*

4. The shepherds, who are the rulers of the land are silent as to the oncoming war. They dwell in the dust (as though they are dead). The people are scattered like lost sheep, and there is no man to gather them together. Nahum 3:18-19 *Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell in the dust: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth them. 19 There is no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?*

V. LESSONS TO BE LEARNED

- A. There is a limit to the patience of God.
- B. God is in active control of all the world.
- C. God's wrath must be interpreted in terms of his love.
- D. The wages of sin is death.
- E. God will avenge his people.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 3-19-2014

THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The name Habakkuk means “to embrace.”
 - 1. Here Habakkuk is embracing the cares of the people
 - 2. He is taking the concerns of the people to God, even as Moses did in the wilderness. Instead of taking the message to the people, he is taking the people’s message to God.
- B. The date of the book
 - 1. The dates is said to be between 612 and 606 BC. Judah was taken captive to Babylon in 606 BC.
 - 2. Babylon was well on its way, going west, to world domination.
- C. Theme of the book
 - 1. One writer named this book “From A Sob to A Song.”
 - 2. Habakkuk is wondering why God is doing what he is doing, so he is sad; but in the end he delivers up a prayer to God in the form of a psalm, thus “from a sob to a song.”
- D. Outline of the Book
 - 1. Chapter 1:1 - 2:1 – Habakkuk’s Burden
 - 2. Chapter 2:2-2:20 – Habakkuk’s Vision
 - 3. Chapter 3 – Habakkuk’s Prayer

II. CHAPTER 1: HABAKKUK’S BURDEN, 1:1-2:1

- A. Habakkuk’s First Question, 1:1-4
 - 1. We have many questions for God
 - a. Acts 1:6 *When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*
 - b. Revelation 6:10 *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?*
 - 2. Now notice Habakkuk’s question in 1:1-4
- B. God’s Answer, 1:5-11
 - 1. What I will do, Habakkuk, you will not understand or believe, even if it were told to you, 5
 - 2. The Chaldeans will come and destroy and take captive the land of Judah.
 - 3. Description of the Chaldeans.
 - a. Terrible, dreadful, 7
 - b. Horses swifter than leopards, 8, flying as an eagle toward its prey.
 - c. They will come in violence, 9
 - d. They will gather the captive like the sand, 9

- e. They will scoff (or make fun of) kings and princes, 10
 - f. The king of Babylon changed his mind from one of scoffing and anger to one of cruel violence with more evil intent to take over Judah, 11
- C. Habakkuk's Second Question, 1:12 - 2:1
1. God, you cannot behold evil (verse 13), so how can you hold back when a nation so evil as the Chaldeans is threatening Israel?
 2. Many today ask why God doesn't do something about the evil around the world and especially around our own nation.
 3. The Chaldeans make men like the fish of the sea, who have no leader. The Chaldeans scoff at the kings and princes as though they are nothing, 14
 4. They fish with an "angle," or a fish hook liking fishing. They rejoice when they have caught their "fish." These fish are men, and they are happy when they catch them, 15
 5. They give sacrifice to their gods, their idols, for their victory in catching men, 16
 6. Will the Chaldeans "empty their nets" in order that they may go out and conquer more and more nations, one after another, as a man emptying his net when fishing and putting the net back in the water to catch more.
 7. Habakkuk is going to set his watch upon a tower, or to be a watchman for Israel as prophets were known for, not literally, but in their minds and hearts, 2:1
 8. He will see what God has to say to him and what his answer will be when he is "reproved," by those who hear him to be able to give a good answer to the people when they ask the same questions that Habakkuk is asking.

III. CHAPTER 2: HABAKKUK'S VISION, 2:2-20

- A. God's Answer To Habakkuk's Second Question, 2-11
1. Write the vision, which the Lord is giving to Habakkuk.
 2. The reason is that the people may run when they read it to escape what is coming, 2
 3. The vision is for a specific time, and it will not tarry, so wait for it, 3
 4. There are two kinds of people who will read verse 4 tells us.
 - a. A person whose soul is not upright in him, 4
 - b. The just, who live by their faith, 4
 - (1) Which is the "like precious faith" of 2 Peter 1:1
 - (2) This is the "faith of Christ" as in Gal. 2:16
 - (3) This is the faith of which Christ is the object
 5. Those who do not have faith are described in verse 5
 - a. Transgresseth by wine
 - b. A proud man
 - c. Does not stay at home
 - d. Enlarges his desire as hell
 - e. He is as death
 - f. Cannot be satisfied
 - g. His heart desires all nations and all people
 6. The people take up a proverb against such a man, 6
 - a. Woe to him that increases that which is not his

- b. He lades himself with thick clay. This is a symbolism of riches such as silver and gold, as men will wear it heavily upon their bodies. These riches are but clay; they have no value in themselves.
- 7. Someone will come along and “bite thee,” or take the gold and silver and riches, 7
- B. The Five Woes:
 - 1. Woe to the proud possessed with the lust of conquest and plunder, 2:5-8
 - 2. Woe to their efforts to build a permanent empire through cruelty and godless gain, 2:9-11
 - 3. Woe to those who build cities with bloodshed, 2:12-14
 - 4. Woe to those who with cruelty in their treatment of those they conquer, 2:15-17
 - 5. Woe to those given over to idolatry, 2:18-20
- C. We learn from this that God, although he uses Babylon against Judah, he will not allow Babylon’s wickedness to go unpunished.

IV. CHAPTER 3: HABAKKUK’S PRAYER

- A. Three Things Needed In Prayer - From Berlin Hisel’s Notes
 - 1. Humiliation
 - 2. Adoration
 - 3. Petition
- B. Petition For God’s Wrath And Mercy, 3:1-2
 - 1. Now Habakkuk has heard God, and he desire revival among God’s people.
 - 2. He knows that God will send his wrath against Judah, but in that wrath he asks God to remember mercy.
 - a. Evil can be repented of, for God creates evil, Isaiah 45:7. He can repent of that evil that he brings upon a nation.
 - b. Wrath can be repented of – Psalms 106:23 *Therefore he said that he would destroy them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, to turn away his wrath, lest he should destroy them.*
 - c. But mercy is never repented of. 41 times in the Bible, mainly in the Psalms, the word *his mercy endureth for ever* is mentioned.
- C. Praise For God’s Past Deliverance, 3:3-15
 - 1. Verse 3 seems to describe how that God came to reveal himself to man from Teman in the giving of the law.
 - a. Deuteronomy 33:2 *And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.*
 - 2. These verses tell many details of what God did for Israel in the past. He even mentioned in verse 11 that the sun stood still – Joshua 10:13 *And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.*
 - 3. He even brought salvation to his people, 13
- D. Profession of Faith, 3:16-19

1. He trembled at what he heard when God rehearsed history, 16
2. He knows that things may get very bad, 17
3. Yet will he rejoice in the Lord, 18
4. The LORD is his strength, 19

V. CONCLUSION

- A. We learn of the judgment of God upon evil.
- B. We learn that evil is self-destructive
- C. We learn about divine discipline, as Judah had to be disciplined before revival could come.
- D. We learn the value of faith
 1. Habakkuk 2:4 *Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.*
 2. Hab. 2:4 is quoted three times in the New Testament, so it must be important.
 3. Saving Faith: Romans 1:17 *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*
 4. Persevering Faith: Galatians 3:11 *But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.*
 5. Pleasing Faith: God has pleasure in our faith. Hebrews 10:38 *Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 3-26-2014

THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH

I. INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK

- A. Zephaniah “that which is hidden.” C. T. Francisco suggests that, if he was born during the reign of Manasseh, when many loyal servants laid down their lives for the faith, Zephaniah’s parents hoped that he would be hidden from that, or it could suggest that God will hide his remnant people in his day of wrath.
- B. Many believe that Zephaniah was the great, great grandson of King Hezekiah, but others believe that his identity can hardly be born out due to complications derived from making him the great, great grandson of Hezekiah. We do read, however, in Matthew 1:10 *And Ezekias begat Manasses; and Manasses begat Amon; and Amon begat Josias;*
- C. Zephaniah may have had a great influence on Josiah, who was the king of Judah in his time whereby Josiah brought about a great reformation from idolatry, which his father had encouraged in Judah.
- D. Read 2 kings 22:1-20
- E. By this time Babylon had taken over Assyria. Nineveh was not yet destroyed, and that destruction is prophesied in this book.
- F. Zephaniah’s contemporaries were Jeremiah and Nahum.
- G. The THEME of the book is “The Day Of The Lord.” This phrase is mentioned six times in the book in chapters one and two: 1:7, 8, 14, 18; 2:2, 3.
- H. The book can be divided up by three words: RETRIBUTION, REPENTANCE and REDEMPTION.

II. RETRIBUTION, Chapter 1

- A. The word *retribution* means “punishment for doing something wrong.”
- B. Retribution Against Judah, 1-13
 - 1. Animals, fowls, fish, and mankind will be destroyed because of idolatry, 3
 - 2. Remnants of Baal will be destroyed. The worship of Baal included many idols, 4
 - 3. The Chemarims (servants of the idolatrous priests) along with the priests of Baal will be destroyed, 4
 - 4. Astrologers (host of heaven) and those who swear by Jehovah and Malcham (Molech). Molech was probably the chief god of the idols, 5
 - 5. Atheists will be destroyed, 6
 - 6. This destruction will provide a sacrifice to the Chaldeans, and the guests (probably the animals) will eat up the carcasses as a gift from God, 7
 - 7. Those “clothed with strange apparel” are those who are the priests for idol worship in Judah. The priests of Israel had clothing that was prescribed by God, so those worn by the idolatrous priests would be “strange apparel.” 8
 - 8. Theft will be punished. Those “leaping on the threshold” are those who steal property

- from the poor people and take it for themselves, living in violence and deceit, 9
9. Verse 10 describes how that many will try to escape through the “fish gate,” which was on the west side of Jerusalem. This was the busiest gate of the 12 gates of the city. This is where fish were brought in from the Mediterranean Sea. They could not escape and would be killed in the hills around Jerusalem, 10
 10. The rich will cry out, verse 11. The word Maktesh is said to be a street or section of Jerusalem when the rich people lived. They will be “cut down.” 11
 11. Those who are indifferent, or those who do not care one way or another, will be destroyed. They say in their hearts, “The LORD will not do good, neither will he do evil.” They have little or no concern, no doubt thinking that they will continue in their normal, lazy, life, “settled on the lees,” which means they stay drunk all of the time, 12
 12. All of Judah’s possessions will be booty (or gain) for Babylon (the Chaldeans), 13

C. Retribution Described Further, 14-18

1. It is called “the day of the LORD,” and it is near, 14
2. It is a day of wrath, of trouble and distress of wasteness and desolation, of darkness, of gloominess, of clouds and thick darkness, 15
3. A day of the trumpet and alarm. The trumpet will sound often for warnings of the coming armies, 16
4. God will bring a great destruction because of the sin of Judah, 17
5. Their silver and gold will do them no good in this day of the LORD’s wrath, 18

III. REPENTANCE, Chapter 2

A. God Calls Judah to Repentance, 1-3

1. Gather together, “O nation not desired,” 1
2. Before this great army comes, before the destructions begins, now, while it may be done effectively, seek the LORD, 2
3. Seek ye the LORD, seek righteousness, seek meekness. It may be that “ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD’s anger.” 3 —Remember the name Zephaniah.
4. Luke 13:3 *I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.*

B. God’s Judgment On Other Nations, 4-15

1. Upon the Philistines, 4-7
 - a. The Cherethites, verse 5, are Philistines who originally came from Crete. This land is sometimes called Philistia, and it runs along the Mediterranean coast. Judah will eventually possess this land.
 - b. This land will become a land for shepherds and flocks, a very poor land, 6
 - c. But the coast (Philistia) is preserved for the remnant of Judah, because the LORD will turn away their captivity and give them this land at last, 7
2. Upon Moab and Ammon, 8-11
 - a. These were the children of Lot by his own daughters, so they would have a good knowledge of Sodom and Gomorrah.
 - b. They were judged because “they have reproached my people.” 8

- c. Moab shall be as Sodom (gone), and Ammon as Gomorrah (gone), and these nations will grow only thistles and saltpits; but the remnant or Judah, probably those who stayed behind and did not go literally into captivity, would overcome these nations and will possess them, 9-10
- d. Verse 11 explains that one day the LORD will “famish” (or make lean) all the gods of the earth, and all the earth will worship God at last. 11
- 3. Upon Ethiopia (Sudan), 12
- 4. Upon Assyria, 13-15
 - a. God will destroy Assyria and Nineveh, 13
 - b. In Nineveh wild birds (the comorant and the bittern, scavenger birds) will lodge, and the cedar work in the houses of the rich will be destroyed.
 - c. Nineveh gave itself the glory that belongs only to God. She said, “I am, and there is none beside me.” This is her pride, but when judgment comes, people will walk by and hiss and wag their hand, saluting it in a shameful way.

IV. REDEMPTION, Chapter 3

- A. First, Jerusalem Is Rebuked For Her Sins, 1-7
 - 1. Jerusalem is called filthy, polluted, and oppressing, 1
 - 2. She did not receive correction, nor did she draw near to God, 2
 - 3. Her princes, judges, prophets, and priests have polluted the sanctuary, 3-4
 - 4. But God is in the midst of Jerusalem to judge her, 5
 - 5. God judged other nations, and he will be no different with Judah, 6
 - 6. Jerusalem should have repented, seeing God’s judgment on other nations, but they rose quickly and corrupted themselves, 7
- B. Remnant To Wait For Restoration, 8-13
 - 1. After the remnant has returned to the land, God will bring “the nations” to pour upon them his indignation, and eventually the whole earth will receive judgment from God, 8
 - 2. God will give Judah “a pure language” so that they may offer worship to God. Those carried into captivity will be brought back to Judah and Jerusalem and give God praise with this pure language, one that is not clouded by idol worship, 9-10

Ezra 1:5-11 Then rose up the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests, and the Levites, with all them whose spirit God had raised, to go up to build the house of the LORD which is in Jerusalem. 6 And all they that were about them strengthened their hands with vessels of silver, with gold, with goods, and with beasts, and with precious things, beside all that was willingly offered. 7 Also Cyrus the king brought forth the vessels of the house of the LORD, which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and had put them in the house of his gods; 8 Even those did Cyrus king of Persia bring forth by the hand of Mithredath the treasurer, and numbered them unto Sheshbazzar, the prince of Judah. 9 And this is the number of them: thirty chargers of gold, a thousand chargers of silver, nine and twenty knives,

10 Thirty basons of gold, silver basons of a second sort four hundred and ten, and other vessels a thousand. 11 All the vessels of gold and of silver were five thousand and four hundred. All these did Sheshbazzar bring up with them of the captivity that were brought up from Babylon unto Jerusalem.

3. The remnant will be humble. They lost their precious temple, and now that they are returning to the land, they will build another temple, not one in the same glory as the old one, but a new, smaller temple which shall suffice for worship to Jehovah in their humility, 11
4. The poor and afflicted people, who have been corrected by God's taking them captive, will trust in the Lord and not in idols, 12
5. This remnant will not look to sin and lies nor a deceitful tongue but a place to quietly lie down, and none will make them afraid, 13

C. The rejoicing of the remnant, 14-20

1. In verse 14 the people rejoice and are glad because of their return to their land, 14
2. God has cast out Judah's enemy, Babylon, and Persia has taken charge of them, 15
3. Now Judah is not to fear but to be diligent in the building of a new temple. We see this in the words "Let not thine hands be slack." 16
4. In verse 17 God rejoices over his people. He will save and rejoice in it. He will "rest in his love," which means that he will continue to love without hesitation. "He will joy over thee with singing." Wouldn't you love to hear God sing? 17
5. God will bring the remnant back into Judah, gathering them to make them a name and praise among all the people of the earth. 18-20

V. LESSONS LEARNED

- A. Man's belief about God largely determines his conduct.
- B. One becomes like the God he worships.
- C. God's wrath is a terrible thing when turned upon human sin.
- D. A warning is sorely needed to draw us back to God's presence.
- E. The "day of the LORD" is inevitable for all races of men.
- F. Those who are humble will be safe in the time of destruction.
- G. God's purpose in his wrath here is for cleansing or purging and not destruction.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 4-2-2014

THE BOOK OF HAGGAI

- I. MESSAGE #1 – The Rebuke And Repentance, Chapter 1
 - A. The Rebuke, 1:1-11
 1. The Condition of the Temple, 4
 - a. The command from Cyrus had gone out to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.
 - b. The children of Israel started the work, but that work was stopped by Persian law, a law that could never be changed.
 - c. The foundation was laid, and this foundation is all that the people could see from day to day; the superstructure was incomplete.
 - d. The temple sat in its wasteful condition, incomplete and uninhabited by worshipers.
 2. The Excuse for Not Building, 2-4
 - a. The time is not yet.
 - b. The time was not yet come to build the temple in the minds of the people.
 - c. Perhaps they thought that a prophet would come and tell them that it was time to build the temple, but they did not know that would come in the form of a rebuke for their not starting sooner.
 - d. Perhaps they thought that the Persian law would be changed by some other power overtaking Persia, for in Persia the law could not be changed, and Israel may have thought that they had to live under that law until it was changed.
 - e. The truth of the matter was that they were so accustomed to living in their cieled houses that they thought nothing of the house of God, 4
 - f. The house of God had gone almost completely from their minds, and any reminder of the wasted remnants of the house that was left were of no importance now.
 - g. This famous verse could have no more pertinent meaning than when applied to these people in Judah: *Matthew 6:33 But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*
 3. Consider Your Ways, 5-11 (see 5, 7)
 - a. The word “consider” carries with it the idea of setting the mind or heart to do a work.
 - b. These Jews were to set their hearts and minds on the task of building the temple of God.
 - c. Because of their refusal to do so, God has not been good to them, 6-7
 - d. Now he tells them to set their minds to work by going into the mountains to get the best wood to build up the temple that now has only a foundation, 8
 - e. The Lord will be glorified if they would obey him, 8

- f. God did not bless their work when they were in disobedience, 9-11
 - g. They were to consider all of their ways: first, their sinful ways, neglecting to do God's will and pleasing themselves rather than the Lord, and second, their right ways, that they are not applied with God in their minds, giving him first praise for their possessions and their own health and welfare.
- B. The Repentance, 1:12-15
- 1. The governor, Zerubbabel, and Joshua, the high priest, obeyed the voice of God's prophet, Haggai.
 - 2. Also, the remnant of the people, those whom the Lord touched with his Spirit and worked in their hearts, obeyed the voice of the Lord and feared before the Lord.
 - 3. Not everyone, then, obeyed, but the remnant were enough to get the work done.
 - 4. It is always the remnant, the small group, who do the work, isn't it?
 - 5. After their repentance, the Lord said, "I am with you." 13
 - 6. So the people were not going to do the work alone, but God would be their help.
 - 7. God stirred up the spirit of the people to do the work, 14
 - 8. This was done in the second year of Darius, the king of Persia, on 24th day of the sixth month.

II. MESSAGE TWO: The Lesser And Greater Glory, 2:1-9

A. The Lesser Glory, 1-4

- 1. Haggai asked the people how many of them remembered the glory of the first temple.
- 2. That temple must have been a marvel to see!
- 3. Some of the people who saw the first temple were still living and had come back from the Babylonian captivity and were, no doubt, expecting that another temple just like it would be built, but that was not happening.
- 4. Howbeit, Zerubbabel encouraged the people to continue to build this smaller temple; because, even though it is smaller and shows less glory, yet a greater glory is coming.

B. The Greater Glory, 5-9

- 1. Haggai turns now from the immediate concern of the building of the temple to the prophecy of a greater glory in the temple, a glory that is yet to come.
- 2. The Lord will later "shake all nations." This is not a geographical shaking of nations but a psychological and spiritual shaking of nations.
- 3. Notice verse 7: "the desire of all nations shall come."
 - a. This Desire of all nations is none other than Jesus Christ.
 - b. When he came at his first coming, he did shake all nations with the Gospel.
 - c. He preached the Gospel, he lived the Gospel, and he died the Gospel. He even portrayed the Gospel in his water baptism.
- 4. There will be no sparsity of gold or silver, because the Lord owns it all.
- 5. The glory of this latter house will be greater than of the former.
 - a. The glory of the former was through king Solomon, and the queen of Sheba said the half had not been told her.
 - b. Matthew 12:42 *The queen of the south shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for she came from the uttermost parts of the*

earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and, behold, a greater than Solomon is here.

- c. This greater glory can come only when Jesus comes. See the glory as he visits the temple at 12 years old and as he enters the temple as an adult to cleanse it and to teach in it.
- d. In this greater glory the Lord will give peace. This will be when Jesus comes the second time.
- e. Jesus is the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6) and gives a peace that passes all understanding (Phil. 4:7), but some day he will give perfect peace, a peace that can be experienced only in his new Kingdom on earth.
- f. Isaiah 66:12 *For thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will extend peace to her like a river, and the glory of the Gentiles like a flowing stream: then shall ye suck, ye shall be borne upon her sides, and be dandled upon her knees.*
- g. We read of this new temple in Ezekiel 40-48.

C. THIRD MESSAGE, The Holy and the Unholy, 2:10-19

1. Haggai asked in verse 10, If a holy thing touches an unholy thing, will the unholy thing become holy? The answer is a resounding NO.
2. Then he asked in verse 11, if an unclean thing touch a holy thing, will it be unclean? The answer is a resounding YES.
3. Charles Feinburg says in his book on the Minor Prophets [Page 91], “Moral cleanness cannot be transmitted, but moral uncleanness can . . . A healthy man cannot communicate his health to his sick child, but the sick child can communicate its disease to the father.”
4. In the next verses God explains to Haggai that the people cannot, with their sinfulness, bring about any glory of a new temple, because God has been chastising them with “blasting and mildew, and hail” (17).
5. He wants the remnant who will be building the temple to know that without God they can do nothing (John 15:5). Philippians 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*

D. FOURTH MESSAGE, The Strength And The Signet, 2:20-23

1. The Lord now gives Haggai a message for the future.
2. When the greater glory comes to the temple of God in the future, God will overthrow the kingdoms of the heathen, 22, and there will be a great battle. This could be referring to the great Battle of Armageddon.
3. This greater glory begins when Jesus enters the temple in his days of the flesh, a greater glory than that of Solomon of old.
4. In that day, says verse 23, Zerubbabel will be a signet, a sign, a representation of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.
 - a. We find this signet in the genealogy of Jesus Christ
 - b. Notice Matthew 1:12-16 *And after they were brought to Babylon, Jechonias begat Salathiel; and Salathiel begat Zorobabel; 13 And Zorobabel begat Abiud; and*

Abiud begat Eliakim; and Eliakim begat Azor; 14 And Azor begat Sadoc; and Sadoc begat Achim; and Achim begat Eliud; 15 And Eliud begat Eleazar; and Eleazar begat Matthan; and Matthan begat Jacob; 16 And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.

- c. You will also find his name in the genealogy in Luke, also in 2:27.
- 5. We are now living in a greater glory than that of this smaller temple, and, even though this smaller temple and a later temple built by king Herod are gone, yet there is an even greater temple coming.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 4-9-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter One

I. INTRODUCTION

A. The Temple

1. This book takes in some of the history of Israel as the temple was being rebuilt after the 70-year captivity, as it says "... in the second year of Darius" (verses 1 and 7).
2. The book also deals with history after the completion of the building of the temple.
3. Zechariah 4:9 *The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house; his hands shall also finish it; and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto you.*
4. Zechariah 7:1 *And it came to pass in the fourth year of king Darius, [that] the word of the LORD came unto Zechariah in the fourth [day] of the ninth month, [even] in Chisleu;*
5. Ezra 6:15 *And this house was finished on the third day of the month Adar, which was in the sixth year of the reign of Darius the king.*

B. The Man Zechariah

1. The name Zechariah means "God remembers."
2. Zechariah was a Levite who was born in Babylon (Neh. 12:1, 16)
 - a. Ezra 5:1 *Then the prophets, Haggai the prophet, and Zechariah the son of Iddo, prophesied unto the Jews that were in Judah and Jerusalem in the name of the God of Israel, even unto them.*
3. He lived at the same time as Haggai, Zerubbabel, and Joshua, the high priest (Ezra 5:1-2; Zech 3:1; 4:6; 6:11).

II. A CALL TO REPENTANCE, 1:1-6

A. The Repentance Called For, 1-3

1. Verse one gives the time of the prophecy
2. The Lord was displeased with their fathers, those who lived before the 70-year captivity and were taken into captivity due to their refusal to hear the word of the Lord, 2
3. Repentance is encouraged, and the promise that God will return to them, 3

B. The Punishment Admitted, 4-6

1. They are not to be as their fathers who did not listen nor hearken to the voice of the prophets who prophesied then, 4
2. Israel loved their prophets, but the prophets die the common death just as any other person, but the words of the prophets lived on in the hearts and memories of those who survived the captivity and admitted that God dealt with them according to their ways, 5-6

III. THE FIRST OF EIGHT VISIONS, 1:7-17

A. The Vision, 7-8

1. A vision of a horseman on a red horse.
2. Red symbolized war.
3. This red horse symbolized our “man of war,” God, or Jesus Christ in an Old Testament appearance.
4. Exodus 15:3 *The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.*
5. This man on the red horse was in the middle of the myrtle trees. These trees represent Israel, as God is in their midst.
 - a. Isaiah 12:6 *Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee.*
6. In the vision there were also red horses, speckled and white, 8

B. The Prophet’s Question, 9

1. Who are these?

C. The Answer, 10-12

1. The angels, 10-11
 - a. These are the ones whom the Lord has sent to walk to and fro through the earth.
 - b. These symbolize the angels whom the Lord has appointed to be ministering spirits to do both positive and negative things, whichever pleases God.
 - c. He will comfort Israel, or he will chastize Israel, whichever is necessary.
 - d. That is why they are speckled and white. The angels minister in times of war and peace.
 - e. One of the angels made the statement that all is at rest on the earth, no war is going on.

D. The Angel’s Question, 12

1. The angel continues to ask the Lord how long it will be before the Lord will again have mercy on Israel after they have been in captivity for 70 years, 12

E. The Answer, 13-17

1. The Lord answers the angel concerning this question.
2. The Lord answers the angel, evidently, in private, 13
3. Then the angel talks to the prophet and says, *I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy,* 14
4. Where God was once against Israel and a great help to Babylon in taking Israel captive, now he is turning his mercy and care toward Jerusalem and against the heathen (Babylon), 15-16
5. Because of this, Jerusalem will receive good thing, and cities around Jerusalem will also enjoy good things due to God’s goodness to Israel, 17
 - a. This could be a symbol of the coming age of grace (as it is sometimes called) when the grace of God blesses many due to the grace that is shed upon his own people, those who believe upon his name.
 - b. Many cities and nations have been blessed due to the fact that God’s grace has been shed upon individuals to give to them salvation through the shed blood of

Jesus christ.

IV. THE SECOND OF EIGHT VISIONS 1:18-21

A. The Four Horns, 18-19

1. The prophet asks what these horns are, 19
2. These are the horns that scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem.
 - a. There are not only four horns which scattered Israel; there are many
 - b. The four horns, in my opinion, represent the four directions of the earth: North, East, West, and South, from which came the enemies of Israel to make them captive, to suppress them, and to have them in bondage.

B. The Four Carpenters, 20-21

1. Now, amidst the threat of the nations around (the four horns), there are four carpenters, 20
2. The question is again, "What are these?" or "What came these to do?"
3. The angel answered that these are, along with the horns that scattered Israel, the carpenters have come to "fray," or frighten the horns, put these Gentile nations to shame and hurt, because they have lifted up their hand against Israel, 21
4. Now God is jealous of Israel, and his anger is against the heathen nations.
5. He will allow the carpenters to build the temple despite the fact that nations around are belittling Israel and their work to rebuild the temple.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 4-9-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Two

- I. THE THIRD OF EIGHT VISIONS – 2:1-13
 - A. The Man With the Measuring Line, 2:1
 1. This is no specific man, because this is a vision.
 2. He has a measuring line in his hand, or a measuring rod.
 - B. The Purpose Of the Measuring Line, 2:2
 1. The purpose of the measuring line is to measure Jerusalem.
 2. I believe this indicates that the measurement of Jerusalem is a specific measurement, and this man is measuring it, showing that Jerusalem will be finished in being built along with the temple there.
 - C. The Blessing of Jerusalem, 2:3-5
 1. Two angels talk together and tell Zechariah, “Jerusalem shall be inhabited as towns without walls for the multitude of men and cattle therein:”
 - a. It will be by God’s power that Jerusalem will be inhabited.
 - b. *Zechariah 2:5 For I, saith the LORD, will be unto her a wall of fire round about, and will be the glory in the midst of her.*
 - D. Calling From The North, 2:6-9
 1. God in these verses are calling the people of Israel who have stayed in Babylon and have not returned to their own land.
 2. It is safe now is the message. God will help them and give them speed to return.
 3. “After the glory” refers to the glory after God has dealt with the Gentile nations.
 4. Then he adds that those who touch Israel touch the apple of God’s eye. This is a very precious condition to be in fellowship with God. We are the apple of his eye, the sheep of his pasture, the light of the world.
 5. When God deals with the Gentile nations, Israel will know that God has sent the angel to give Zechariah this message.
 - E. A Message For Modern Times, 2:10-13
 1. Israel (Zion) is to rejoice, because God has promised to dwell in their midst, 10
 2. When we read “in that day,” it mostly refers to the times of the New Testament and our own modern times, 11
 3. In the times of the Messiah and in our time, many nations will join to the Lord, 11
 4. We can read the Gospel story and the book of Acts for the fulfillment of this.
 5. “In that day” the Lord will bring many of Israel to know him as their personal Savior. That was done in large part as multitudes of Jews came to know Jesus as Savior in the New Testament. There may be a time in the future when many Jews will turn from their sins and trust the Lord Jesus as their Savior, 12-13.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 4-23-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Three

- I. THE FOURTH OF EIGHT VISIONS, 3:1-10 (Question, verse 2)
 - A. The Vision Of Joshua The High Priest, 1-3
 1. Joshua
 - a. Here we see a vision of Joshua, the high priest of Israel.
 - b. He is a descendant of Aaron, whose family are the only ones who can hold this office in Israel.
 - c. There is another Joshua, as we know him, who was with Moses and took leadership after Moses died.
 - d. Both of these Joshua's had the name that means "savior." These were both saviors in their own right, and they both are a type of Jesus Christ, who is the only true Savior of men.
 2. The angel of the LORD
 - a. This angel is probably a pre-manifestation of Jesus Christ, of which Joshua was a picture, a shadow, or a type.
 - b. The angel of the LORD was overseeing all that took place here.
 3. Satan
 - a. We also see Satan here, who was at Joshua's right hand. The right hand is always in the Bible an indication of our work. Satan was standing there trying to withstand the work that the high priest was supposed to do.
 - b. The priesthood had now long been inoperative, since Israel had been in captivity for 70 years. Now God is setting up the priesthood again, making it effective in Israel again.
 - c. First, in our visions, God has turned away his anger toward Israel and Jerusalem.
 - d. Second, the four horns of opposition against Israel have been removed.
 - e. Third, Jerusalem has been measured, meaning that it will be rebuilt.
 - f. Now the priesthood is being re-established, because the temple in Jerusalem is of no value until a priesthood is set up.
 - g. Satan does not want this, so he is resisting it here.
 - (1) The Lord says, "The LORD rebuke thee, O Satan." (2)
 - (2) The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke Satan.
 - (3) Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?—Question 4. Jerusalem has in so many words been under the influence of Satan during this time of backsliding and their captivity in Babylon. Now they are plucked out of the fire of judgment and are being restored as the apple of God's eye.
 4. Joshua's clothing
 - a. Joshua's garments were filthy, dirty.
 - b. This implies that Joshua in himself did not have the power to make himself high priest due to his sinful condition.

- c. Only God can make men priests.
 - d. Man in himself is filthy, but the high priest must be righteous. Christ is the only One who is righteous.
 - e. Since the clothing of Joshua was filthy, and no one can serve the Lord in this capacity without being clean, the Lord must clean him up; for no one else can make us clean but God himself.
- B. The Preparation Of Joshua The High Priest, 4-7
1. The angel of the LORD answered, in verse 4, that those around Joshua should take away his filthy garments, which illustrated the fact that God had taken away his iniquity, that it would pass from him.
 2. Ezra 2:62 *These sought their register among those that were reckoned by genealogy, but they were not found: therefore were they, as polluted, put from the priesthood.*
 3. The Lord, verse 4, will cloth Joshua with a change of raiment.
 - a. This raiment (clothes) will be new clothes, not filthy clothing, which pictures our sin and iniquity.
 - b. This raiment will hide Joshua's nakedness, because nakedness illustrates our sin before God. Just as Adam and Eve were ashamed when they were naked before God, so the high priest would be ashamed before him; so he needed a change of clothing, not to simply take off the filthy ones but to put on new ones.
 - c. If we rid ourselves of sin that sin is not replaced with perfect righteousness, then we are naked before the Lord.
 - d. The raiment worn by the high priest was very costly and showy. He was to be manifested before Israel as the high priest, especially on holy days.
 - e. This priest had to be sanctioned by God in order for the true priesthood of Israel to be re-established.
 4. Not only did the priest need to be clothed with clean clothing, but he also had to wear a miter, or a crown.
 - a. Exodus 28:4 *And these are the garments which they shall make; a breastplate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a brodered coat, a mitre, and a girdle: and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.*
 - b. Exodus 28:36-37 *And thou shalt make a plate of pure gold, and grave upon it, like the engravings of a signet, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. 37 And thou shalt put it on a blue lace, that it may be upon the mitre; upon the forefront of the mitre it shall be.*
 5. As Joshua was being dressed, and as the mitre was put upon his head, the angel of the LORD was standing by. He was supervising everything. This is our Lord, who superintends all things in the order of his doctrine and principles.
 6. Then the Lord of hosts gave Joshua a condition under which he is to exercise his priest's office. He is to walk in the ways of the Lord and to keep the Lord's charge.
 7. If he does this, he will be able to judge the house of the Lord effectively. It is true also of church leaders today.
- C. The Example Of The True High Priest, 3:8-10

1. The men who execute the priests' office are "wondered at." They are admired and put above others in the minds of the people.
2. Thus, it is important that the high priest and the other priests live lives that will give honor to the Lord, thus the conditions laid down to Joshua.
3. Joshua was director or superintendent over the other priest of Israel, so he was an important figure in Jerusalem.
4. Now Joshua is reminded that there is a High Priest that is higher than he is.
 - a. This High Priest is none other than Jesus.
 - b. He is the BRANCH.
 - (1) Henry says, "He is God's servant, employed in his work, obedient to his will, and entirely devoted to his honour and glory. He is the branch; so he was called Isa. 4:2 , The branch of the Lord. Isa. 11:1: A branch out of the roots of Jesse: Jer. 23:5: A righteous branch; and Jer. 23:15: The branch of righteousness."⁴
 - c. The stone that is laid before Joshua is again none other than Jesus Christ.
 - (1) He is the stone of stumbling (1 Peter 2:8)
 - (2) He is the stone which the builders rejected (Matthew 21:42)
 - (3) He is the stone that is head of the corner (Acts 4:11)
 - (4) He is the chief corner stone (Ephesians 2:20)
 - (5) He is a living stone (1 Peter 2:4)
 - (6) He is the stone most precious (Revelation 21:11)
 - d. In that stone were seven eyes, which indicates the complete eye-view, the whole knowledge that is with Christ, his omniscience.
 - e. The engraving I cannot decipher, but let me just suggest (whether it is right or not) that there was an engraving upon the cross of Christ that read JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS (John 19:19).
 - f. While this engraving is being read by the passers-by, in one day the Lord removes the iniquity of that land.
 - (1) Jesus did not die over and over again.
 - (2) Hebrews 7:27 *Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.*
 - (3) Hebrews 9:26 *For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.*
 - g. In that day, the day when the crucifixion of the Lord has been done and the Lord has gone to heaven to make intercession for us, then every man may call his neighbor, no matter what nationality, to come and worship the Lord under the fig tree.
 - h. I have always supposed that Nathanael was worshiping when he was under the fig tree: John 1:50 *Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee, I*

⁴Henry

saw thee under the fig tree, believest thou? thou shalt see greater things than these.

5. Now the whole complex economy of Israel has not yet been set up, but it will soon be. In Chapter four we will continue this establishment of worship to Israel after their return to Jerusalem at the end of their 70-year captivity.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 5-7-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Four

- I. THE FIFTH OF EIGHT VISIONS - 4:1-14
 - A. This Vision Is Of A Candlestick, 4:1-5
 1. Awakened out of sleep, 1
 - a. This could mean that he was physically asleep, and the angel awakened him from that sleep.
 - b. This could mean that suddenly he was awakened to a spiritual understanding of things in order to receive this vision,
 2. The first part of the vision was a candlestick all of gold, just like the one that was in the tabernacle and the temple, 2
 3. But this one had a bowl upon the top of it and several other differences, 2
 4. There were seven lamps, just as the one in the tabernacle and temple. This number seven symbolized perfection, 2
 5. There were also seven pipes going to the lamps.
 6. There were two olive trees on the right and left sides of the candlestick, 3
 7. Zechariah asked, “What are these, my lord?” 4
 - a. At first it seems that he asking about the two olive trees,
 - b. But I believe he is asking about the lamps, because he later asks about the olive trees
 - c. The conversation in verse 5 is an emphasis of the subject at hand.
 - B. The Revelation Of The Candlestick Vision, 6-9
 1. “This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel.” 6
 - a. The word of the Lord says, “Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.” 6
 2. So this candlestick represents God’s speaking to Zerubbabel, and, I believe, it represents God’s speaking to us today through his word. The candlestick is the word of the Lord, and the lamps are the character of the eternal God, just as God has seven burning lamps before him in Heaven in Revelation Chapter 4, which represent the full work of God through his Spirit.
 3. This represents how that the word of the LORD comes to us, not by might nor power, but by the spirit of the LORD, and it is through this divine power that we as believers are able to accomplish the will of God in our lives.
 4. So, we could say, these seven lamps represent God the Father, since all things, especially his work and word, come from him and not man; and the candlestick represents God’s eternal word, which instructs us of his sovereignty in our work for him.
 5. In verse 7 God rails against the enemies of Israel, telling Zerubbabel that they will “become a plain.”
 6. Then Zerubbabel will bring up the headstone of the temple, or the capstone, the last

- stone to be laid in building the temple.
7. No enemy will hinder the work of Zerubbabel, 8-9
- C. Despising Little Things, 10
1. Here is a lesson for all of us.
 2. Song of Solomon 2:15 *Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes.*
 3. We should not look with disdain on small things; because, “Little Is Much When God Is In It.”
 4. The Manna was a “small round thing,” yet it fed a multitude of people, Exod 16:14.
- D. The Revelation Of The Two Olive Trees, 11-14
1. Asking for the meaning
 - a. Now we see, because it was not revealed to Zechariah before, that he now asks specifically about the two olive trees, one on one side of the candlestick, and one on the other side.
 - b. This has caused much confusion to Bible students, and I am not going to be able to put a stop to that confusion, because these two are mentioned again in the book of Revelation, which brings different people to different conclusions.
 - c. We cannot be dogmatic about the meaning of these olive trees, but we can rejoice that, whatever it is, it depicts, as does the candlestick, the power of God working in his Providence, not depending upon man to complete his plan throughout the ages.
 2. My interpretation of the meaning.
 - a. Many believe that these two olive trees represent two men.
 - (1) Some say Joshua and Zerubbabel (Gill)
 - (2) Others say Moses and Elijah
 - (3) Others say Enoch and Elijah
 - (4) Others say Old and New Testaments
 - (5) Others say the Bible and the Church
 - b. But allow me to show you something else; and, even though you might not agree with my interpretation, at least it will give you something to consider.
 - c. The candlestick represents the word of God the Father and his using his Spirit to do his work and to execute his sovereign plan, especially in revealing himself to man through his word.
 - d. The two olive trees, then, represent Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit.
 - e. So, all three persons of the Trinity have a work in the production of God’s written word.
 - (1) God the Father – 2 Timothy 3:16 *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: God-breathed.*
 - (2) God the Holy Spirit – 2 Peter 1:21 *For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.*
 - (3) God The Son (Jesus) – Hebrews 1:1-2 *God, who at sundry times and in divers*

manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

3. The problem with my interpretation
 - a. When we read Revelation 11:3 *And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.*
 - (1) Now to be a witness means to tell the truth about God, to be a prophet in one sense or another.
 - (2) But to be a witness also means to see and understand things, to witness the goings on in the earth and in heaven.
 - b. The character of these two olive trees is that they . . . *stand by the Lord of the whole earth*, 14. The word Lord here means “sovereign.” They are also the anointed ones.
 - c. The problem comes when we read Revelation 11:7 *And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.*
 - d. Now, we cannot kill God the Father, the Spirit and the Son.
 - e. So this signification is that the Trinity is working all the time to watch the events in the world and to work out the plan of God through his own people.
 - f. Even though the candlestick represents God’s revelation to Zerubbabel, it is his work through Zerubbabel that is the main subject here in Zechariah Chapter 4, and this through the words of the prophets.
 - g. The Holy Spirit and the Son (Jesus) were also working in the life and work of Zerubbabel. They were feeding the olive oil into the word of God, making the work “not by might nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.” 7
 - h. So, when the work of the through the candlestick is being done in the book of Revelation among the saints of God, it is that work that is the subject, and not just two specific men. It represents all who learn and preach the word of God, Philippians 2:13 *For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.* It is actually God doing the work through us.
 - i. These two olive trees are still providing the power by which the testimony of Christ is carried on especially through his churches, which draw some people to the conclusion that they represent the Bible and the church.
 - j. So, when the people of God are killed, those who have tormented the lost world with their gospel, the world rejoices, for now they have made ineffective (they think) the work of God on earth.
 - k. Revelation 11:11 *And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.*
 - l. This is the rapture of the saints, after they have been dead for a while (no specifics here), they, including the martyrs, will rise from the dead in resurrection, and every eye shall see them and fear; for they know that God, the

Holy Spirit, and Jesus are the reason for their resurrection.

m. Now verse 14 explains these two olive trees (in present tense—"these are," not "these shall be"), Zechariah 4:14 . . . *These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.*

E. The Lesson

1. We have had a little fun with the symbolism of this vision, but we must remember to get the primary meaning rather than getting distracted by symbolism. There is substance here.
2. The lesson here is then, more than knowing who is represented in these two olive trees, the fact that God is doing his will and work among the people of the earth in his Divine Providence, and his will is to be done and will be done perfectly to bring honor and glory to himself.
3. Zerubbabel was to finish the temple, not by his own power or the power of Israel, but through the power of the Spirit of God.
4. That is the real meaning of this vision.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 5-21-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Five

- I. THE FLYING ROLL - THE SIXTH OF EIGHT VISIONS, 5:1-4
 - A. Illustration Of The Vision, 1-2
 1. As Zechariah is still thinking about the candlestick vision, telling him that his work will be done, not by himself, but by the word of God, he then looks up and notices a flying roll.
 2. This roll is opened up. There were no books in those days as we know them today. Words were written on scrolls and rolled up, but this one was open as a sheet is opened up.
 3. The roll (or sheet) was 30 feet long and 15 feet wide, the same size as the holy place that was a part of the tabernacle. It is the same size as the porch of Solomon in the temple that Solomon built where the law was laid.
 4. The roll covered the entire earth.
 - B. Explanation Of The Vision, 3-4
 1. This is said in verse three to be a curse that goes over the entire earth.
 2. The people of God (Israel) had turned to idols and were thinking of themselves rather than God. They were thinking of their own houses and possessions and leaving God's house a waste.
 3. This curse goes all over the world. It is the curse of sin, which is summed up with the two words *swearing* and *stealing*.
 - a. Swearing
 - (1) In swearing, people give allegiance to other gods, not the God of heaven.
 - (2) In swearing, they pretend to love God and call his name, but in their hearts they are far from him.
 - (3) In swearing they take his name in vain.
 - (4) Matthew 15:8 *This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.*
 - (5) Swearing takes up the first part of the *decalogue*, or the 10 commandments.
 - b. Stealing
 - (1) Stealing takes up the second part of the *decalogue*, or the 10 commandments.
 - (2) Thinking of self rather than others or of God himself.
 - (3) Not honoring father and mother is stealing honor that belongs to them.
 - (4) Killing is stealing a life.
 - (5) Adultery is stealing something from a neighbor.
 - (6) Stealing is stealing.
 - (7) Bearing false witness is stealing a reputation from your neighbor.
 - (8) Coveting is stealing in your heart, and what is done in the heart will eventually be done physically if temptation is allowed to continue.
 4. So this flying roll is the curse of sin, and Romans 3:23 says, *For all have sinned, and*

come short of the glory of God;

II. THE FULL EPHAH, SEVENTH OF EIGHT VISIONS, 5:5-11

A. Illustration Of The Vision, 5-7

1. An ephah is like a barrel. It is a measuring device and commonly holds about three bushels.
2. After the lid was lifted, a woman was seen sitting in the barrel. Women in the Bible symbolize both good and bad.
3. In Proverbs 7, we see a “strange woman,” which is wickedness, or worldiness.
4. In Proverbs 31, we see a “virtuous woman,” which is a manifestation of God’s grace.
5. There is evil in the world, and much of it is manifested through religion. This woman seems to symbolize idolatry, since she is later put on a base.

B. Explanation Of The Vision, 8-11

1. This woman represents a wicked nation, Israel.
2. She also, I think, represents every wicked nation on the earth.
3. She represents false religion. Revelation 17:3 *So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.*
4. The worst sins of all are religious sins.
5. Two women come out of the ephah, or barrel, and carry the ephah away.
 - a. This illustrates how that someone, perhaps the Roman Empire, will carry away sinful Israel into the nations of the world for a long period of time, at least until 70 AD when Rome plunders the temple and destroys Jerusalem.
 - b. We read of this in Matthew 24:2 *And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.*
6. This wicked nation, Israel, was taken to Shinar, a city in Babylonia. That is where the first major conflict of a nation against God was manifested. It was called Babel then.
7. From Shinar the Jews have been scattered among many nations and are still residing in many nations around the world.
8. From these many nations, many Jews, the natural branches, will be grafted back into the Vine, which is Jesus Christ, through faith in him; thus, many will believe and be saved.
9. And now we read in Romans 10:12 *For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 5-28-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Six

I. THE CHARIOTS OF WAR, 6:1-8

A. Description Of These Chariots In General, 1

1. There are four of these chariots
2. I believe this chapter predicts the end time when God's kingdom will overcome the world kingdoms in God's Providence.
3. These may represent the angels of God who carry out God's work on earth.
4. Hebrews 1:14 *Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*
5. Revelation 7:1 *And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. 2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, 3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. 4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.*
6. Psalms 68:17 *The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.*

B. Description Of The First Two Chariots, 2

1. These red and black horses represent war, war from the judgment of God.
2. At the very end, the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of God.
 - a. Revelation 11:15 *And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.*

C. Description Of the Last Two Chariots, 3

1. These chariots represent victory, joy, and prosperity.
2. These grisled and gray horses represent strength. God's kingdom will have final triumph and victory.

D. Zechariah Asks What These Are, 4

1. Everyone wants to know what these represent.
2. This keeps our inquiry sharp and our minds wondering.

E. Not only do these chariots represent Providence but empires, worldly empires that must be tumbled before God comes to set up his own kingdom, 5

1. In this God's Providence is divine judgment upon these earthly empires.
2. Some believe that these four chariots represent the last four kingdoms that will exist on the earth as described by Daniel: Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome.

3. Kingdoms or empires are sometimes compared to winds (spirits): Daniel 7:2 *Daniel spake and said, I saw in my vision by night, and, behold, the four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.*
- F. All Kingdoms Will Be Judged, 7-8
1. We notice the horses going in all directions of the winds of the earth.
 2. Every nation will be judged, but the nation to the north (Babylon) seems to be the first that will be judged. Through this judgment the angel was quieted or satisfied.
 3. Others go to the south, and others go to and fro in the earth, thus every nation on earth is judged.
 4. After the eventual destruction of these empires, there will be a new kingdom, the visible kingdom of God in which dwells righteousness: 2 Peter 3:13 *Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.*

II. THE CROWNING OF JOSHUA, 6:9-15

A. Choosing The Men, 9-10

1. These men, Heldai, of Tobijah, and of Jedaiah, who seem to have just come from Babylon, were invited to go with Zerubbabel and Joshua into the house of Josiah.
2. This Josiah seems to have been a gold and silver-smith, one who makes things from silver and gold,

B. Crowning The Priest, 11

1. Notice that he was not to make “a crown,” but “crowns.”
2. Priests wear only mitres, not crowns; and if you say they are the same, he would wear only one and not two.
3. Joshua was the high priest, so these crowns were to be put upon his head, which would be a very unusual thing to be done to a Jewish high priest.

C. Casting The type, 12

1. It is interesting to note that the same phrase is used both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament concerning Jesus Christ, our High Priest.
2. The phrase is “behold the man.” Notice it here in verse 12
3. Then notice it in John 19:5 *Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith unto them, Behold the man!*
4. In Zechariah he is called The BRANCH. It is used also in other Scriptures:
 - a. Zechariah 3:8 *Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.*
 - b. Jeremiah 33:15 *In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.*
5. So here Zechariah is casting a type of Jesus Christ, using Joshua as the type of Christ as our High Priest.
6. He will build the temple of the LORD, 12b-13a
 - a. The temple in Jerusalem

- (1) This illustrates Jesus Christ as a High Priest.
- (2) He will build his temple.
- (3) Now, the temple in Jerusalem did not include all of Israel. It represented the teaching of the truth to each individual person in Israel.
- (4) Jesus built this temple for a house of prayer, worship, and teaching.

D. Consecrating The Temple

1. Verse 13 says that he will build the temple of the LORD.
2. He is speaking about Jesus Christ.
3. Notice the only thing that Jesus built:
4. Matthew 16:18 *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*
5. Just as the temple in Jerusalem did not encompass all the people of Israel, so the church of the Lord in the New Testament does not include all believers.
6. Only people who were chosen were to be a part of the operation of the temple in the Old Testament.
7. Only people who are chosen for the operation of the Lord's New Testament church.
 - a. The Lord chose 12 apostles, who were set primarily in the church.
 - b. Then were added to them others by small and great numbers.
 - c. The Lord adds to his church.
8. So, the fulfillment of this type is in the building of the church of the Lord, Jesus Christ in New Testament times.
9. We are a royal priesthood, so each believer is in a position to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in his church; but he did not build a priesthood. He built his temple, his church.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 3:16 *Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?*

E. Crowning Both King And Priest, 13b-15

1. This BRANCH shall bear the glory, 13
2. The crown is a double crown (remember the plural number). Jesus will be crowned both as king and as priest.
3. First he will be crowned as king: "He [shall] rule upon his throne." 13
 - a. Matthew 2:6 *And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel.*
 - b. Revelation 2:27 *And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father. (See also Rev. 19:15)*
4. Notice verse 13 again: "and he shall be a priest upon his throne."
 - a. Hebrews 5:10 *Called of God an high priest after the order of Melchisedec.*
 - b. Hebrews 7:15-17 *And it is yet far more evident: for that after the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, 16 Who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. 17 For he testifieth, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.*

- c. Hebrews 4:15 *For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.*
- d. Romans 8:34 *Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.*

III. CONCLUSION

- A. So we learn that God is doing his work among the nations of the world, that he sends his angels to the four corners of the earth to accomplish his purpose.
- B. God is always at work, and all things are working together for the good to them that love the Lord and are the called according to his purpose (Rom. 8:28).
- C. Then we notice that the BRANCH, Jesus, is crowned with a double crown, not as the priest were given a mitre in the Old Testament, but he was crowned with a double crown, one for his kingly duty, and one for his high priestly duty.
- D. He is both High Priest and King of kings.
- E. We are little priest and kings (Rev. 1:6), but he is our eternal high priest and our ever-living king.
- F. He is our salvation.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 6-4-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Seven

FASTING AND PRAYING

- I. THE QUESTION ABOUT FASTING ASKED, 7:1-3
 - A. The Setting Of The Question, 1
 1. Many say this was about 518 BC (Unger / per B. Hisel).
 2. The month Chisleu answers to our Nov / Dec
 - B. The Sending Of The Men to The House of God, 2
 1. Nothing is known more of these two men who were sent to the house of god.
 2. Sarezzer means “protect the king.”
 3. Regem-melech means “king’s friend.”
 4. They were to go to “the house of God” which was nearly or newly finished at Jerusalem.
 5. The men went there to pray, which was a custom for them.
 - C. The Separation Of The Men, 3a
 1. Should I weep? This was customary, since this was a remembrance of the captivity and loss of the temple. When they prayed, they wept on these occasions, whether it was pretend or real.
 2. “Separating myself” – This separation was the refusal to eat food, to fast during the time of prayer, which made the prayers supposedly more powerful.
 3. God does many times associate prayer with fasting and fasting with prayer.
 4. 1 Corinthians 7:5 mentions “fasting and prayer.”
 5. Matthew 17:21 mentions “prayer and fasting.”
 6. This was a time to be very serious about prayer and to plead to God for the completion of the temple and for continued freedom for Israel after their captivity for 70 years.
 - D. The Soundness Of The Question, 3b
 1. The question is whether they should fast and pray.
 2. The soundness in this question was the idea that they had been doing this for a long time “as we have done these so many years.”
 3. All through their captivity they had consistently prayed for the Lord to bring them home from captivity; they fasted, wept, and prayed for this on a regular basis.
 4. So, the question now is, “Do we continue to do this, since the temple is newly or nearly finished?”
 5. We have many questions about praying in our minds. You may question whether you should continue to pray for a thing or a person after you had already asked the Lord many times before.
 6. You may question whether the Lord would ever answer your prayer and that he may be tired of hearing from you, and on and on.

II. THE QUESTION ABOUT FASTING ANSWERED, 7:4-14

A. The Lord Answers This Question, 4-5

1. The Lord answers the question with a question, as even the Lord Jesus did when he was here on earth.
2. This question is answered in the rest of this chapter and in chapter eight.
3. When you did fast and mourn in your captivity, did you do it your me, or did you do it for yourself, says the Lord, 5
4. In fasting, we are made humble and broken. We are depriving ourselves of needed satisfaction of food in order to concentrate upon the Lord and his will for us.
5. But they had not done this but had done all of their feasting, fasting, and mourning for themselves.

B. The Lord Aggravates Their Motives, 6

1. Most of us eat and drink for our own pleasure and sustenance. This is, after all, the purpose of eating and drinking.
2. But read 1 Corinthians 10:31 *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*
3. These men needed to answer this question: “did not ye eat for yourselves, and drink for yourselves?”
4. The Lord was far from their minds, and they were not really fasting but only pretending to fast, eating, not unto the Lord, but unto themselves, to their own satisfaction.
5. Their motives were all wrong.
6. When we serve the Lord and worship the Lord and pray to the Lord, we need to be sure that our motives are right; otherwise, they produce no fruit.

C. The Lord Announces Their Need, 7

1. Their need is that they should hear the word of the Lord, which he had given them through the former prophets, Isaiah and Jeremiah and others.
2. Blessing and prosperity was to come to Israel only through their heeding the word of God. Their motives must be pure, and their faith must be strong in the word of God.
3. It is because they refused to hear God’s word that they went into captivity for such a long time; now they need a refresher course on listening and obeying God’s word.
4. We need that same lesson today.

D. The Lord Adds To His Instructions, 8-10

1. The word of the Lord came, 8
 - a. What the Lord has said is not enough.
 - b. He must add more to his instructions for those who serve him
2. Justice, compassion and mercy are necessary, 9
 - a. God has always required justice, compassion, and mercy, and now he says that still today they are needed.
 - b. They are needed in our day, also.
 - c. Justice:
 - (1) They are not to accept bribes, and equity is required.

- (2) We must use the proper balance to measure our trade.
- d. Compassion:
 - (1) 1 Peter 3:8 *Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:*
 - (2) Compassion is tender love, love without dissimulation.
 - (3) The Hebrew word is also translated “womb” because of the tender love of a mother to her unborn child.
 - (4) Many today have lost this natural characteristic of compassion.
 - (5) We hear so much of bullying, hatred, and terror.
 - (6) Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:13 *But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.*
 - (7) Jesus had compassion on many people when he was here on earth.
 - (8) We need to learn the lesson of compassion.
- e. Mercy
 - (1) God had mercy on us, saving us from our sins.
 - (2) We are to have mercy on others.
 - (3) Paul says in Romans 12:8 *Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.*
 - (4) Galatians 6:2 *Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*
- 3. More teachings of the prophets, 10
 - a. Oppress not the fatherless, to make fun of them, or to look down upon them, depress them, steal from them, hurt them, etc.
 - (1) James 1:27 *Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.*
 - b. Oppress not the stranger.
 - (1) This is called *zenophobia*, a fear of foreigners or strangers.
 - (2) We are all of one blood (Acts 17:26).
 - c. Oppress not the poor.
 - (1) Jesus said that the poor you have with you always (Mark 14:7).
 - (2) They are not to be oppressed, not taken advantage of, not ignored, but we are to help our poor brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - d. No evil against a brother.
 - (1) Matthew 5:22 *But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.*
 - (2) Brothers are born for adversity (Prov. 17:17).
- E. The Lord Acknowledges Their Error, 11-12a
 - 1. They refused to hearken, 11
 - 2. They pulled away the shoulder, 11, pulling away from being yoked, as an ox, to the Lord to serve him.

3. They stopped their ears, 11.
 4. They made their hearts like an adamant stone, 12a
 - a. The word *adamant* means “sharp,” like thorns or sharp points. Some think this may be a diamond.
 - b. They do not want to hear the law, so they put sharp points between them and the hearing of the law, determined not to do whatever the law says.
 5. They would not hear the former prophets.
- F. The Lord Awakens Their Lesson, 12b-14
1. 12b tells them that great wrath came upon those who would not listen, and it came from the LORD of hosts.
 2. The serious result of their refusal to listen is two-fold, 13
 - a. God said that he cried unto them, and they would not hear.
 - b. So the result is that, when they cry to him, he will not hear.
 - c. Job 35:13 *Surely God will not hear vanity, neither will the Almighty regard it.*
 3. Then there was the scattering, 14
 - a. God scattered Israel, not just to Babylon, but in all parts of the earth, into countries of strangers, people, customs, and languages that they did not know.
 - b. This was like a whirlwind.
 - c. Then the pleasant land, Palestine, the land of Israel, was made desolate, empty, barren of all good and pleasant things, where God has forsaken his people through their disobedience.
 - d. Romans 10:21 *But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.*

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Are we just like Israel? I think we are.
- B. What do we need to do? Just as God told Israel in this chapter.
- C. Psalms 9:17 *The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.*
- D. Psalms 103:2 *Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:*
- E. God’s hand of blessing may not be very long upon our great nation due to the fact that many have turned away from God and Christ Jesus.
- F. Maybe we should pray Daniel’s prayer – Daniel 9:16 *O Lord, according to all thy righteousness, I beseech thee, let thine anger and thy fury be turned away from thy city Jerusalem, thy holy mountain: because for our sins, and for the iniquities of our fathers, Jerusalem and thy people are become a reproach to all that are about us.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 6-11-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Eight

RESTORATION AND BLESSING

- I. REBUILDING JERUSALEM, 8:1-8
 - A. Jerusalem is being rebuilt, because God is “jealous” over Israel, 1-2
 1. He once divorced Israel; now he is reuniting with Israel. What a wonderful thing!
 2. The word “jealous” is used three times in verse 2.
 - B. Past, Present, Future, 3
 1. “I am returned” is past (QAL, Perfect). This action has already been taken. It is in the perfect tense in Hebrew.
 2. “And will dwell in the midst” is also Perfect tense, but it gives the idea of present tense, since God will continue with them and among them.
 3. “Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth” is also Perfect tense, but it gives the idea (being given third), that Jerusalem’s name will live in the future and be called “a city of truth.”
 - C. From the beginning of the nation of Israel God had planned to make Jerusalem a place for his name. 1 Kings 11:36 *And unto his son will I give one tribe, that David my servant may have a light always before me in Jerusalem, the city which I have chosen me to put my name there.*
 1. From this city David reigned as king. From this city came the first church of the Lord Jesus Christ. From this city came all the other churches of the Lord.
 2. The real Jerusalem “above” is called “the mother of us all.” Galatians 4:26 *But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*
 3. It is also called God’s **holy mountain**.
 - D. The Young And Old Shall Live There, 4-5
 1. When good was angry with Jerusalem (Israel), the young men were killed in war, and many died of famines and other things while they were young.
 2. But now that God has turned back to them, men and women will grow older.
 3. The men will grow old and use canes; the children will run around in the street.
 - E. This Is A Marvelous Thing, 6
 1. Israel would marvel at what God is doing, since they could not do it themselves.
 2. It is, however, not extraordinary to God, since it is an easy task for him.
 - F. God Will Save His People From Everywhere, 7-8
 1. God has brought many from Babylon, but many of them were sold into slavery to other countries.
 2. Here God promised that he will reach out to those countries and bring back many of his people to dwell again in Jerusalem.
 3. They, along with God, will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and they will be God’s people, and he will be their God in truth and righteousness.

II. RECEIVING BLESSINGS, 8:9-15

A. Blessing Of Hard Work, 9-10

1. Israel is now in a position that they can work hard and not tarry, since God is giving them blessings, returning to them in love, 9
2. The same prophets who preached to them in the beginning will continue to preach to them now (Haggai and Zechariah), 9
3. In the earlier days there were no jobs, no money, no peace. God was afflicting his people for their sins, 10

B. Blessing As In Past Days, 11-12

1. God was with Israel in past days, delivering them from Egypt, caring for them throughout the wilderness, giving them victory in Canaan, and strengthening them to build the first temple.
2. Now God will do it again, 11
3. The crops will grow, and the ground will be rich, and God's remnant people will possess all these things, 12

C. Blessing From The Past Curse To The Present Blessing, 13-15

1. They were a curse among the heathen, 13
2. So will he now save them from that curse, 13
3. Two things God promised, 14-15
 - a. He thought to "punish" them, 14
 - b. He thought to "do well unto Jerusalem," 15
 - c. Now they are not to fear the enemy if they will continue faithful, 15

III. REQUIRING JUSTICE, 8:16-17

A. Positive Things Required, 16

1. Speak the truth, 16a
2. Execute the judgment of truth, 16b
3. Execute the judgment of peace, 16c
4. Judgment was done at the city gates, and this should be done in truth and peace.

B. Negative Things Required, 17

1. Do not imagine evil in your hearts against your neighbor, 17a
2. Love no false oath, 17b
3. These things the Lord hates, 17b
4. If the Lord hates it, then we should hate it.

IV. REACHING BEYOND, 8:18-23

A. The Humbling Inclination, 18-19

1. Fast of the fourth month: On the 9th day of the month the Babylonians broke into their city (Jer. 52:6-7).
2. Fast of the fifth month: On the 10th day the temple had been burned.
3. Fast of the seventh month: Gedaliah, their governor, had been killed (Jer. 41:1).
4. Fast of the tenth month: On the 10th day the army of Babylon besieged the city.

5. These were humbling fasts, fasts of mourning and sorrow. Israel was inclined to mourn their losses due to their sins.
 6. Now these fasts will be fasts of joy and gladness and cheerful feasts.
 7. Therefore, they are to love the truth and peace.
- B. The Humble Inclusion, 20-23
1. Now God includes inhabitants of many cities will come and be a part of these feasts.
 2. This includes Gentiles, I am sure, pronouncing even in that day that God's eternal love extends, not just to Israel, but to the Gentiles, as Peter and other disciples had to learn in the New Testament, 20 (Acts 11).
 3. People will go from city to city preaching the Gospel, and many will come to know the God of Israel and their Messiah, Jesus Christ, 21
 4. People will come to seek the Lord of hosts in Jerusalem, since that is where the first church was established and from where the churches have been extended from that day until this, 22
 5. In that present day, many people for other nations took up the cause of Israel, because they realized that God was with them and was giving them many blessings.
 6. Would it be possible today that we as God's children and in his churches could give such a testimony to the nations that they would desire to come to Jerusalem, that Jerusalem which is above, that one that is the mother of us all, and see Jesus dying for their sins, and trust him as Savior and Lord?

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 6-18-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Nine

WAR ON EARTH AND THE PRINCE OF PEACE

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Many, especially liberal Bible scholars want us to think that chapters 9-14 of Zechariah were not written by Zechariah but from some unknown writer.
- B. The arguments against its authority have all been answered many times.
- C. This chapter is both a historical passage and a prophetic passage.
- D. We will see the progression of history as it unfolds from Alexander the Great until the coming of the Lord to earth the first time.

II. POWER OF THE GREEK EMPIRE, 1-8

- A. The Fall of Syria, 1
 1. In 332 BC Alexander the Great conquered many countries.
 2. One writer says, “The course of his victories in 332 BC was from northern Syria south by the valley of the Orontes River to Damascus, then along the Phoenician and Philistine coast.”⁵
 3. The wonder of Alexander the Great was that he overtook and conquered Damascus, which was the capitol of Syria.
 4. The eyes of Israel at this time will be upon the Lord, 1
 5. Hamath was at the entrance of Israel from Syria.
 6. *Amos 6:14 But, behold, I will raise up against you a nation, O house of Israel, saith the LORD the God of hosts; and they shall afflict you from the entering in of **Hemath** unto the river of the wilderness.*
- B. The Fall Of Tyre and Sidon, 2-4
 1. Two of the richest cities in the world. They were on the seacoast and had trade from across the Mediterranean Sea.
 2. Tyre was proud over Israel, because Tyre was rich, and Israel was poor.
 3. Nebuchadnezzar had destroyed Tyre as prophesied by Isaiah and Ezekiel 26:10.
 4. Then Tyre built their city on an island and built two walls 150 feet high around the city to protect it. They were also surrounded by the Great Sea.
 5. Tyre existed this way for about 200 years. *Zechariah 9:3 And Tyrus did build herself a strong hold, and heaped up silver as the dust, and fine gold as the mire of the streets.*
 6. God allowed Alexander to come against Tyre and destroy it, although it seemed to

⁵Feinberg, Charles Lee, Th.D., Ph.D., *Zechariah, Israel's Comfort And Glory*, American Board of Missions to the Jews, Inc. New York, New York, 1952, p. 90

them in Tyre that no one could penetrate their city.

7. Berlin Hisel has in his notes, “Alexander took the ruins of Old Tyre and ran a mole [a tunnel] from the shore to the island. It took him seven months to take the city. . . Tyre’s bulwark was cast into the sea, and she was burned. 30,000 were made slaves, and 10,000 were killed.”⁶

C. The Fall Of Philistine Cities, 5-6

1. After all of the cities are plundered, Alexander will put up a king, who is an illegitimate king. This king broke the pride of the Philistines.
2. Alexander attacked Gaza for two months. “It was taken, and King Betis was dragged through the city.” (Hisel)

D. The Fall Of Philistine Religion, 7

1. The religion practiced by the Philistines was one that included the drinking of sacrificial blood, but here God used Alexander to remove this blood from the mouth, and then the people will please the Lord by not practicing this.
2. This will please the Lord, and some of them will eventually be saved – Luke 6:17
And he came down with them, and stood in the plain, and the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Judaea and Jerusalem, and from the sea coast of Tyre and Sidon, which came to hear him, and to be healed of their diseases;

E. The Fall Of Israel Not To Be, 8

1. History tells us that Alexander had a dream that he was to spare Israel.
2. Jerusalem was right in his path, but he marched right through it and went to Egypt and then back through Israel again without destroying it.
3. Josephus said, “. . . The conqueror (Alexander) bowed in reverence to the Holy Name upon the priest’s frontlet; and, being asked by Parmenio the reason for his conduct, said that in a dream at Dium, he had seen the God of Jaddua, who encouraged him to pass over into Asia, and promised him success. Then entering Jerusalem, he offered sacrifice in the temple, heard the prophecy of Daniel about himself, and granted certain privileges to all the Jews through his empire.” (Hisel), p. 183

III. PROPHECY OF MESSIAH’S COMING, 9:9-10

- A. These two verses interrupts this period of history by telling of the coming of the Messiah.
- B. This will cause great rejoicing, 9, because the King is coming.
- C. The Character Of The Messiah, 9:
 1. He is just: He will give righteous judgment and do all things well and by the will of his Father in heaven.
 2. He is having salvation: Jesus may seem to be a lowly person, but he carries with him salvation, which he purchased with his own blood.
 3. He is lowly: He is our High Priest that is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.
 4. He is riding on an ass: This is a specific prediction of the Messiah was fulfilled in the New Testament in John 12:12-19.

⁶Hisel, Berlin, *The Minor Prophets*, First Baptist Church, Harrison, Ohio, p. 182

D. The Extent Of the Messiah's Kingdom

1. This kingdom will reach unto the "regions beyond." 2 Corinthians 10:16 *To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.*
2. It will go beyond the Jewish nation unto the Gentiles, as was promised.
3. Notice the wording in verse 10: . . . *his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.*
4. The Messiah will speak peace to the heathen (Gentiles).
5. Matthew 11:28 *Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*

IV. THE PATH TO VICTORY, 9:11-17

A. Persecution Under Epiphanes, 11-12

1. Under the persecution of Antioch Epiphanes, Israel suffered greatly. There is much lengthy history written about this period that occurred between the Old and New Testaments.
2. The "pits wherein is no water" were used for prisons. God's chosen people will be persecuted, put in prison, and probably tortured and killed.
3. In verse 10 God calls Israel to turn back to him, and he will protect them.
4. By "the blood of thy covenant" is meant, probably, with the covenant of God with Moses or his covenant with Abraham, or both.
5. It at least implies the covenant of grace between the persons of the Trinity, who by God's covenant has delivered the sinner out of his prison of sin and into the safety of God's salvation.
6. God's people are to "turn you to the strong hold," which is Zion, God's spiritual kingdom through which they may find salvation for their souls and find peace.

B. Jewish Revolt Against Epiphanes, 13-15

1. God has raised up Israel's sons against the sons of Greece and made them as the sword of a mighty man, 13
2. God will deliver the victory as he blows his trumpet of war and goes forth as lightning and a whirlwind, 14
3. God's chosen men (the Maccabees and their helpers) will fight with sling stones, because that is all they need with God's help, 15
 - a. They will drink and make noise and men who have been drinking wine.
 - b. The blood of the enemy will be filled like bowls of the altar are filled with blood.
 - c. They will have the victory.
4. Jewish Victory Through The Maccabees, 16-17
 - a. God will do the saving, and the people of Israel shall be as the stones upon the crown of Messiah. We are his jewels – Malachi 3:17 *And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him.*
 - b. The crown of the Messiah, their King, will be an ensign in Israel.
 - c. Goodness and beauty will be enjoyed by Israel after this victory, and corn and

wine will be plentiful, which means that God will give them prosperity as well as peace to their souls.

- d. Because God was with them, the Maccabean family restored through a great historical event temple worship and Jerusalem. This was all done by the hand of their God with the promise of the coming of their Messiah.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 6-25-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Ten

- I. THE CALL TO PRAYER, 10:1-3
 - A. Introduction: This chapter deals with a call to prayer for Israel. It also deals with application of redemption the Maccabean Period, the so-called Christian Era, and Israel in the future.
 - B. In these first three verses God calls Israel to prayer.
 - C. The Latter Rain, 1
 1. There are two important times for rain in Israel: the early, or first, rain and the latter rain.
 2. The first or early rain came just after the crops were planted in order to soak the seeds to begin germination.
 3. The latter rain came just before the harvest, which was to fill the grain on the stalks.
 4. So we read in Psalms 65:10 *Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.*
 5. The word *springing* means “to sprout, to grow”
 6. Here God is asking for thanks for this latter rain that comes just before the harvest of the fields.
 7. The word *grass* in verse one means literally “green plants.”
 - D. The Idols Are Vain, 2
 1. These idols have spoken vanity, or emptiness. They cannot see, nor hear, nor taste, nor speak, etc. (See Psalm 115:4-8).
 2. The diviners, the priests of idol worship, have seen (a vision) that is a lie.
 3. They give comfort that is no comfort at all; it is vanity.
 4. Therefore, the people, the Jews, went after these false prophets, following them as a flock of sheep in innocent surrender, because there was no shepherd, not true shepherd to guide them into the true way of God.
 - E. God’s Anger Kindled, 3a
 1. God’s anger is against the shepherd, so there really were shepherds in Israel, but they had either been lazy, compromising, or rebellious against God.
 2. God punished the *goats*, which are the Greeks who came against God’s people and profaned their worship of God.
 3. A little history:
 - a. Mattathias the Hasmonian, a Jewish priest, had sons named Judas, Eleazar, Simon, John, and Jonathan.
 - b. Mattathias has mounted a revolt against Antiochus IV (Epiphanes), and had some small victories.
 - c. After the death of Mattathias, Judas took over leadership.
 - d. From the Jewish Encyclopedia we read: “The first thing the patriots did was to

reconsecrate the profaned Temple, and with this is connected the origin of the Hanukkah feast. This closes the first period of the Maccabean revolt.”

4. So God’s anger was against the *goats*, and God allowed the Jews to reconsecrate worship in their temple, which had been profaned the temple with what the Jewish Encyclopedia calls the “erection of a Zeus statue in its sacred precincts.”

F. God Will Give Victory, 3b

1. God visited his flock, the house of Judah.
2. He has given them goodly horses in the battle.
3. But this is surprising; since, when we read the secular histories, we find that the Maccabees were very deprived of the horses, the armor, and the swords that seemed to be needed for such a battle.
4. But God had his own horses to help in their victories.

II. THE CAUSE OF VICTORY, 10:4-7

A. Out Of HIM, 4

1. This HIM refers back to Judah in verse three.
2. Out of Judah, the flock of God, will come a strength that only God can give.
3. The corner means the anchor, the cornerstone, the important leader, which at that time was Judas Maccabeus.
4. The nail:
 - a. Isaiah 22:23 *And I will fasten him [Eliakim] as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father’s house.*
 - b. The nail here is, no doubt, Judas Maccabeus, but it also reached farther in time to the Messiah, Jesus Christ.
5. The battle bow
 - a. The arrow is in the hand, but it is of little value without a bow.
 - b. The battle bow, no doubt, denotes the army of Judas as he won great victories over the Greeks.
 - c. This also denotes Christ, our Victory over sin.
6. Every oppressor
 - a. This is every individual who fights with the armies against the Greek insurgency.
 - b. We as individual believers are used by God to fight against the wiles of the devil.

B. The Great Battles, 5

1. With the corner, the nail, the battle bow, and the oppressors, God will have great victories over these armies who stand against Israel.
2. “Because the Lord is with them.”

C. Saving The House of Joseph, 6

1. God will bring strength to Israel.
2. He will treat them as though they had not sinned, as though he had not turned away from them, destroyed their place and their temple, and had taken them into captivity for chastisement.
3. He will again hear them, hear their prayers and receive their praise.

D. Even Ephraim Will Praise Him,7

1. Those who remain in the land from Ephraim, the northern kingdom, will also praise God for these victories and this delivery from the enemy.
2. Their children shall hear the message of the Gospel and be saved as time goes on, reaching into the Christian Era.

III. THE COMING FROM AFAR, 10:8-12

- A. But all of Israel are not together here.
- B. They must be called by a hiss (a whistle), 8
 1. Some say this was a whistle that the shepherd used to call together his flock.
 2. Some say it is the sound of a bird calling his mate.
 3. Some say it is the whistle that is used to gather bees together by the beekeepers.
 4. God must call his flock together; they will not come themselves.
 5. This also implied the calling of the Gospel both to those in that day and the call of the Gospel in our day.
 6. The good news of peace in Israel was a message to them.
 7. The call of God upon the heart is a great and deeper call, but it is his calling to his sheep to gather together in his kingdom.
- C. They will return, 9-10
 1. When the call goes out, people respond to that effectual call of God.
 2. Israel, those who were in all parts of the world, heard this call to “turn again,” come back to Jerusalem, worship in the temple, and pray to the God of heaven, was heeded.
 3. So the effectual call today is heard by all of God’s sheep, where Jesus says in
 - a. John 10:16 *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, [and] one shepherd.* –and in . . .
 - b. John 10:27 *My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:*
 4. They will return from all countries of the world, 10
 - a. Acts 2:39 *For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.*
 - b. John 6:37 *All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*
- D. God will remove any hindrance, 11-12
 1. God will pass through the sea with affliction, 11
 - a. Notice what God did for Joseph: Acts 7:10 *And delivered him out of all his afflictions, and gave him favour and wisdom in the sight of Pharaoh king of Egypt; and he made him governor over Egypt and all his house.*
 2. God will smite the waves in the sea, just as Jesus calmed the waves on the stormy sea.
 3. If need be, all the rivers will dry up, which is an easy job for God to do.
 4. The enemies (Assyria and Egypt) will be weakened.
 5. God will strengthen them in the LORD.
 6. This is what God did for Israel, and he does it, also, for his sheep, those who have and will believe in him.

7. Our coming to his final kingdom is not our work, but it is the work of the Lord.
 - a. He will call his elect to himself.
 - b. He will bring his elect to himself.
 - c. He will walk with his elect for himself.
 - d. He will deliver them to the holy city, the New Jerusalem.
 - e. And we shall all walk up and down in the name of the Lord.
 - f. What a day that will be!

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 7-2-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Eleven

- I. HUMBLED IN THE FLOCK, 11:1-3
 - A. Israel needed to be humbled. They had become very obstinate and proud, 1
 - B. Now God is opening the doors of destruction that will allow the Roman armies to come in and destroy their pride, 2
 - C. The fir tree and the cedars are to be spoiled, or destroyed, 2
 - D. The oak trees will be destroyed; the forests will be destroyed, 2
 - E. This is where the pride of Israel stood—in all of its wealth and prosperity.
 - F. The shepherds, the teachers in Israel, the leaders in Israel, were also to howl, or cry, because the forest was their glory, 3
 1. The temple itself was built from the great oaks and cedars.
 2. The shepherds also enjoyed the fruit of the trees and were satisfied.
 3. But the shepherds will be destroyed, also,3
 - G. Also, the soldiers (young lions) would howl because their pride is spoiled; they cannot fight against Rome because of God’s judgment, 3

- II. HELPED BY THE LORD, 11:4-13
 - A. Current Shepherds Not Feeding The Flock, 4-6
 1. The prophet, Zechariah, reveals the command of the LORD, Jehovah, to his Son, the Good Shepherd, to “Feed the flock of slaughter.” 4
 2. The possessors of this flock (the current shepherds) are not feeding the flock but are rather feeding off the flock, 5
 3. They will sell the flock, says verse 5.
 4. They do not pity the flock, 5
 5. As a results, God will not deliver the land, but he will put the land into the hands of the pagan neighbors, Rome, 6
 - B. This Good Shepherd Will Feed The Flock, 7-11
 1. It is evident that this is speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ simply due to the quoted references in the New Testament of some of the passages here.
 2. He will feed the poor of the flock, for they are the ones who have true faith in him.
 - a. Luke 7:22 *Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.*
 - b. Matthew 5:3 *Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*
 - c. James says in James 2:5, *Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith,*
 3. Two Rods (staves) of protection, 7
 - a. Beauty – God made Israel a beautiful people with the beauty of holiness, and he brought them into a beautiful land for an inheritance.

- b. Bands – God unified Israel with a wonderful language and customs of the Law and the mercy of God that would keep them and protect them from their enemies and give them many blessings from God.
 - c. God fed them with these precious promises of blessing and his ongoing protection and love.
4. Three shepherds, 8
- a. Some believe these may have been the three orders of the Jewish leaders: (1) priests, (2) teachers of the law, and (3) civil magistrates.”
 - b. God will cut them off in one month, meaning in a very short time.
 - c. Note: John 10:11 *I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.* And John 10:12 *But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep.*
5. The Rods Broken, 9-11
- a. God will reject Israel by not feeding them. He will turn them over to their own ways, and whoever dies dies, and whoever is cut off will be cut off by their own doings, 9
 - b. God will allow them to do despicable things such as eating one another’s flesh, 9
 - c. God broke the staves of Beauty and Bands. He will not hold them together; he will not bless them; he will not work in grace among them as before.
 - d. This is the “casting off” from Romans 11:15 *For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?*
 - e. But God has not cast them off altogether. See Romans 11:1 *I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin.*
 - f. Verse 11 tells us that the poor (the believing ones) will know that this is the word of the LORD.
6. Final Jewish Rejection, 12-13
- a. The price of a servant or slave was 30 pieces of silver: Exodus 21:32 *If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.*
 - b. The Jews thought that the price of a servant was 30 pieces of silver, and that is what they paid for the betrayal of the Good and Great Shepherd, whose price was true repentance and faith in him, 13
(1) Matthew 26:15 *And said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver.*
 - c. They were to cast the money to the potter. The potter’s house was in the valley of Hinnom where there was good clay, but the place was a dump (2 Kings 23:10).

III. HURT BY REJECTION, 11:14-17

A. The rod called Bands is now broken, 14

- 1. This is the rod of protection, holding together Judah and Israel; but the rejection of

- Jesus as the Messiah and his crucifixion held with it a harsher punishment.
2. God would cut them asunder by their destruction in 70 AD.
- B. A Foolish Shepherd Will Be Given, 15-16
1. Verse 15 calls him a “foolish shepherd”
 2. This is not one shepherd but many who will rule Israel throughout the years from 70 AD and forward.
 3. This shepherd (whoever he may be) will not feed the people but will eat the fat of his position, enjoying the wealth and prestige of his place as ruler, 16
- C. This Idol Shepherd Will Be Destroyed, 17
1. The wording of verse 17 simply tells us that, as these rulers rule over Israel, they will get worse and worse, and then that position will eventually be destroyed.
 2. His eye will be utterly darkened.
 3. This shepherd was not only appointed by God, but it is evident that he is a hireling, because he “leaveth the flock.” But the sword of God will be upon him, and he will be completely destroyed.
 4. This speaks of any nation who hates and fights against Israel. One day they will be judged for standing against the nation that God has blessed.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 7-9-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Twelve

- I. THE SIEGE OF JERUSALEM AND GOD’S VICTORY, Zech. 12:1-9
 - A. The Message From God, 1
 1. The LORD, who stretched forth the heavens.
 2. The LORD, who lays the foundation of the earth.
 3. The LORD, who forms the spirit of man within him.
 4. This is the LORD who will prophecy the burden and give the victory.
 5. This is a message of burden, which points to just judgment.
 - B. The Making Of Jerusalem, 2-3
 1. The LORD will make Jerusalem a cup, 2
 - a. At one time Jerusalem drank of God’s cup of fury – Isaiah 51:17 *Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out.*
 - b. Now they will be like a poison cup to their enemies; and, as the enemies drink of Jerusalem’s cup, they will stagger as a drunk man and be confused; thus, they will not have victory over Jerusalem.
 2. The LORD will make Jerusalem a heavy stone, 3
 - a. Jerusalem will be like a heavy weight so that, if the nations around her try to lift her, or conquer her, it will be like lifting a burdensome stone; and they will not be successful even though all the people of the earth help.
 3. “In that day” I believe refers to the age after Israel and Judah have returned to the land and built their temple, the days that will give us the Messiah, manifest his death, burial, and resurrection, and eventually complete God’s purpose on earth by his coming again and making a new heaven and a new earth “wherein dwelleth righteousness.”
 - C. The Madness Of The Enemies, 4
 1. The horses of the enemies will be astonished and blinded; therefore, they will not be able to be effective in the battles against Judah and Jerusalem.
 2. Even the riders on the horses will be struck with madness, or insanity (as one writer puts it).
 3. But the LORD will open his eyes upon Judah to bless them with strength, spiritual strength, the strength of the LORD for their victory.
 - D. The Mediation Of God, 5-9
 1. Those in Judah, those in the more vulnerable parts of Israel, with less fortification, will look to Jerusalem for help, and they believe that God will be their strength.
 2. God will deprive the enemies of their normal strength against Judah and Jerusalem and will fortify his people for a great victory.
 3. God will make the governors of Judah like fire on wood to their enemies, like a torch

- of fire on wheat, burning quickly and having a great success, 6
4. God's people will inhabit Jerusalem and dwell there until Jesus comes again.
 5. Even in our day, which is part of "in that day," enemies of Israel have tried many times to conquer them and would run them into the sea if they could; but God has kept his promise.
 6. God will save them, says verse seven (7), so that they will know that it is not through their own strength but through the intercession of God that they have been saved, 7
 7. "In that day," (verse 8) God will defend the lineage of David, because it is through that line that Jesus, the Messiah, will come, 8
 8. The house of David will be "as God," meaning that it will be victorious as God, since it is God who is the strength, but also meaning that God's only begotten Son, Jesus, will come through David's line and be "as God" and "as the angel of the LORD before them."
 9. God will seek to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem. This speaks, not simply of one future action, but of every action in every age when enemies of Israel have come against Jerusalem to destroy them, but God has been their strength, even in their unbelief, 9

II. THE SEEING OF THE MESSIAH AND ITS RESULT, Zech. 12:10-14

A. Seeing Through The Spirit of Grace, 10a

1. John 3:3 says in part, . . . *Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*
2. But it takes the grace of God to be born again – Ephesians 2:8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:*
3. God says in verse 10 that he will pour upon the house of David and upon Jerusalem "the spirit of grace and of supplications."
4. According to Romans Chapter 11, Jews will return to their Messiah in faith and believe in him, becoming part of the spiritual Israel and rejoicing in their new-found sight of Jesus as their Messiah and Lord.
5. They cannot see him as Messiah until they look upon him whom they have pierced. This is done by faith, seeing the true Kingdom of God.
 - a. Adam saw the Messiah through the seed of the woman.
 - b. Noah saw the Messiah through the flood.
 - c. Israel saw the Messiah through the brazen serpent.
 - d. In our text Israel saw the Messiah through "whom they pierced"

B. Seeing Through Mourning, 10b-14

1. The last part of verse 10 says that "they shall mourn for him."
2. This means that they will now be sorry for their sin, looking away from their Messiah, and have now turned to him in contrition and repentance.
3. They will sorrow in that they have preached a false gospel and have made the cross of Christ of none effect by the wisdom of their own words (1 Cor. 1:17). They will be as sorrowful as if they had lost their own firstborn. Remember how they cried in Egypt for this very reason.

4. They will mourn as Jeremiah did over Josiah in 2 Chronicles 35:25 *And Jeremiah lamented for Josiah: and all the singing men and the singing women spake of Josiah in their lamentations to this day, and made them an ordinance in Israel: and, behold, they are written in the lamentations,* 11
5. Each family will mourn, 12-13
 - a. The family of David, which is the royal family.
 - b. The family of Nathan, which is the son of David (2 Samiel5:14)
 - c. The family of Levi, the priestly family
 - d. The family of Shimei, the son of Levi (Numbers 3:17; 18, 21)
6. The wives apart, 14
 - a. Each family was to mourn “apart.” Mainly this means “privately,” but some believe it relates to a custom that the men and women lived apart and worshiped apart.
 - b. Even the closest ties on earth, such as marriage, will not preclude each individual from going into his closet, his personal space we may say today, to mourn before God, due to the rejection of Jesus as the Messiah.
 - c. Five times this chapter mentions the wives’ mourning apart. Each person must repent before him personally, not as a group or through another believer. Each person must himself confess before God. Each person must believe on the Lord, Jesus Christ, for salvation.
 - d. And each person must live his life in the presence of God, his Son, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit.

III. CONCLUSION

- A. This will be the returning of the Jews to their Messiah as it takes place “in that day.” that day is this day. That day is the days from Judah’s and Israel’s return into the land and the setting up of the temple until Jesus returns.
- B. Many Jews have already come to Christ and trusted him as Savior. They may in days and years to come trust him in more and more numbers, and many believe that there will be a turning to Christ of the nation of Israel suddenly and on a large scale just before the second coming of Jesus Christ.
- C. That would be a wonderful day!

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 7-16-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Thirteen

I. THE FOUNTAIN OPENED, Zech 13:1-6

A. This fountain is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ himself, 1

1. Remember, “There Is A Fountain Filled With Blood.” We sing it.
2. This is explained in Zechariah 12:10 *And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.*
3. When the soldier pierced the side of Jesus, he opened, as it were, the fountain of true and full grace, whereby Jesus said before, “It is finished.”
4. Now the fountain flows like a refreshing fountain of living water to all who will believe in him as Savior.
5. The Jews who repent and believe will mourn for him as they come to him in true repentance and faith, returning to him as the rejected branches, who are grafted back into the true Vine, which is Jesus Christ.
6. John Gill suggests that there came out both blood and water from this piercing, blood for remission, and water for cleansing, as verse 1 says, “for sin and for uncleanness.”
7. The iniquity will be removed in “one day” – Zechariah 3:9 *For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.* This is the day that Jesus died, having suffered for the sins of his people.
8. At one time the house of David said, Matthew 27:25 *Then answered all the people, and said, His blood be on us, and on our children.* Now the fountain is open for their forgiveness.

B. The Two Sins Of Israel And Their End, 2

1. Idolatry

- a. 1 Corinthians 8:4 *As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one.*
- b. Psalm 115:2-8 *Wherefore should the heathen say, Where is now their God? 3 But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased. 4 Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men’s hands. 5 They have mouths, but they speak not: eyes have they, but they see not: 6 They have ears, but they hear not: noses have they, but they smell not: 7 They have hands, but they handle not: feet have they, but they walk not: neither speak they through their throat. 8 They that make them are like unto them; so is every one that trusteth in them.*
- c. By God’s grace through believing in Christ, the idols are cut off out of the land,

since believers do not worship idols. Israel will get rid of their idols through faith in Christ, and that is the only way.

- d. 1 Thessalonians 1:9 *For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God;*
2. False prophets
 - a. Jeremiah 5:31 *The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: and what will ye do in the end thereof?*
 - b. Jeremiah 14:14 *Then the LORD said unto me, The prophets prophesy lies in my name: I sent them not, neither have I commanded them, neither spake unto them: they prophesy unto you a false vision and divination, and a thing of nought, and the deceit of their heart.*
 - c. Matthew 24:24 *For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if [it were] possible, they shall deceive the very elect.*
 - d. 2 Peter 2:1 *But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.*
 - e. 1 John 4:1 *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.*
3. He also mentions “the unclean spirit.”
 - a. This is singular in the Hebrew, but many take as “a plural for the singular.”
 - b. This, then, could mean the unclean spirits of the false prophets and idolators.
 - c. But it may also refer to Satan himself, who is “the unclean spirit,” the one who is responsible for the lies told by the false prophets.
- C. The End Of These, 2
 1. The idols, the names of the idols, and the damnable heresies of the false prophets are all cut off through faith in Christ as Savior.
 2. Hebrews 9:14 *How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?*
- D. A Family Separation, 3
 1. Jesus said he came to make a division – Matthew 10:34-36 *Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. 35 For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36 And a man’s foes shall be they of his own household.*
 2. Under the law, whoever in a family who went after other gods rather than Jehovah was to be killed (Deut. 13:6-11).
 3. But under grace we do not kill people for idolatry; we simply shun them, depart fellowship with them, and therefore cut off idolatry from our homes. We do the same in the churches.

4. This is that “sword” spoken about in Matthew 10:34-36, which we just read.
- E. Shameful Prophets, 4-5
1. False prophets will make predictions that do not come to fruition.
 2. Deuteronomy 18:22 *When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him.*
 3. How many prophetic prognostications have been made in past years, even in our own lives, that have been proven to be untrue? Many! Many!
 4. How many people have predicted the very time that Jesus will come back?
 5. Some even predicted that the 2012 election was our “last chance” before the wrath of God comes down upon us.
 6. I mentioned last week about the man who said the on July 12, 2014, there would be a very serious earthquake, but I did not hear of any large earthquake on that day.
 7. I don’t say that these people are false prophets, but let’s consider
 - a. The weatherman, who cannot predict the weather for the next two days, let alone for the next seven days.
 - b. Economists cannot correctly predict the outcome of some monetary event, that it will be good or bad.
 - c. Environmentalists cannot predict the cooling or heating of the planet.
 - d. No one can predict the outcome of an election.
 8. When a person trust the Lord, all of the specific predictions of the coming of the Lord die. They no longer interest the believer, because the Bible says we cannot know.
 9. Prophets wore rough, or hairy, garments, prophets such as Elijah and John the Baptist. Those prophets today who wear religious garb to manifest their position as prophet, after being saved, will take them off in shame and no longer pretend to be prophets of God.
 10. The prophet, after salvation, will say that he is a husbandman, a farmer, and will now lay down the robe of a prophet and go to the business that I should never have left, 5
 11. Amos went from being a farmer to being a prophet because God called him to it; but this false prophet goes from his prophesying to being a farmer, everyone in his proper place.
- F. Wounds Of The False Prophet, 6
1. Notice: 18 *If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father, or the voice of his mother, and that, when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: 19 Then shall his father and his mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the elders of his city, and unto the gate of his place;*
 2. The prophet in our text evidently has been wounded by chastisement from his parents, which was to be done before any killing was done.
 3. He has seen his error and now serves the Lord in his proper place.
 4. When asked about his wounds, he will say they are the wounds of a friend, which they are. Proverbs 27:6 *Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.*
 5. His family are now his friends, which before seemed to be his enemies.

6. This is what salvation does.

II. THE SHEPHERD SMITTEN, 13:7-9

A. The Command Of God The Father, 7

1. God commands from heaven that the sword come against his Shepherd.
2. The Shepherd, of course, is his only begotten Son, Jesus.
 - a. Isaiah 53:4 *Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.*
 - b. Isaiah 53:10 *Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.*

This sword must awake against him; he having no sin of his own to answer for, the sword of justice had nothing to say to him of itself, till, by particular order from the Judge of all, it was warranted to brandish itself against him. He was the Lamb *slain from the foundation of the world*, in the decree and counsel of God; but the sword designed against him had long slumbered, till now at length it is called upon to awake, not, "Awake, and smite him; strike home; not with a drowsy blow, but an awakened one;" for God *spared not his own Son*. -Matthew Henry

3. The sword is against both a human and a divine Son.
 - a. "... and against the man that is my fellow"
 - b. The phrase "the man" shows forth the humanity of Christ.
 - c. The phrase "my fellow" shows forth the divinity of Christ.
4. Therefore, he laid down his life for the sheep John 10:15 *As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep.*

B. The Scattering Of The Sheep, 7

1. Mark 14:27 *And Jesus saith unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered.*
2. John 16:32 *Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me.*

C. His Hand Upon The Little Ones, 7

1. After Jesus suffers, he will turn his hand of grace upon the little ones, the lowly ones, the poor ones, the meek ones, to save them from their sins, since that is the reason that he was smitten of his Father.
2. Luke 19:10 *For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*

D. A Remnant Will Be Saved

1. The two parts and the one part have to do with the differential between the lost and

- the saved. The world may be considered the 2/3 part, and the believers may be considered the 1/3 part.
2. That is why we are called the remnant.
 3. This third part must go through fire and flood on their way to their final and eternal inheritance, 8
 4. “Some through the water, some through the flood, some through the fire, but all through the blood,” says the song “God Leads His Dear Children Along.”
 5. They will be tried as gold and be refined to be present faultless before God - - Jude 1:24 *Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy,*
 6. Two things will happen:
 - a. The remnant will call his name (either in salvation or in need), and he will hear.
 - (1) Romans 10:13 *For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*
 - (2) John 15:16 *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you.*
 - b. The remnant will be the people of God, 9
 - (1) 2 Corinthians 6:16 *And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.*
 - (2) Revelation 21:3 *And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*

What a fellowship! What a joy divine!

Leaning on the everlasting arms.

What a blessedness; what a peace is mine;

Leaning on the everlasting arms.

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 7-23-2014

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH – Chapter Fourteen

INTRODUCTION

This is “the picture of the Battle of Armageddon,” says Charles Feinberg, Th.D., Ph.D., in his book of Zechariah. This same message is given in Psalm 2, Joel 3, Ezekiel 38 and 39, and Revelation 16 and 19, to which reference will be made in this lesson.

I. THE RETURNING OF THE LORD, 14:1-5

A. The Day Of The Lord, 1

1. The phrase “the day of the Lord” is mentioned 29 times in the Bible
2. If we were to read all of the Scriptures pertaining to this phrase, we would learn much of the character of that day.
 - a. Many of them say that it is “at hand.”
 - b. Jeremiah 46:10 says it is a “day of vengeance.”
 - c. Joel 2:11 says it is “great and terrible.”
 - d. Amos 5:18 says it is a day of “darkness, and not light.”
 - e. Zephaniah 1:18 says it is a day of God’s “wrath.”
 - f. Acts 2:20 says, *The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come:*
 - g. 1 Thess 5:2 and 2 Peter 3:10 says that this day comes “as a thief in the night.”
3. This is the coming of the Lord, when he comes to take up residence on the earth, making it new for our eternal abode.
4. It has not come, but God is faithful to his word; and it will come.

B. The Battle Of Armageddon, 2-3

1. He will gather all nations together
 - a. When the Lord returns to earth with his saints, the saints will be put upon the earth in a safe place through the valley that has been made by dividing the mountain north and south, but the enemy will still be here and will make war with the saints.
 - b. Revelation 19:19 *And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.*
 - c. See also Rev. 16:14-16

2. God will fight against the wicked nations of the earth, 3
 - a. Revelation 19:20 *And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.*

C. The Land Divided Into Three Parts, 4

1. Revelation 16:19 *And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.*
2. Now notice our text (verse 4): The Mount of Olives is divided into two parts—north and south. Then there is a valley between. This is the three parts in which the city is divided.

D. The Earthquake As A Way Of Escape, 5

1. Verse five mentions an earthquake which divided the mountain and made a valley.
2. The people of God, then, will have a way to escape from the devastation of this great day that is being poured upon the nations of the earth.
3. They will escape through the valley.
4. There is a type of this earthquake mentioned in Amos 1:1 *The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.*

II. THE REIGNING OF THE KING, 14:6-15

A. The King Will Reign In That Day, 6-7

1. This is that “one eternal day” that we talk about where no night will come. This is mentioned both in Rev. 21:25 and in Rev. 22:5. There will be “no night there.” – Revelation 22:5 *And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.*
2. This light will not be clear nor dark, because it is a light different from any light that we know. It will be the shining of the “Bright And Morning Star,” Jesus Himself.
3. Someone said, “Since natural light shall be withdrawn, it cannot be day, and with the brightness of Christ’s coming, it cannot be night.”

B. The King Will Reign With Fertility, 8

1. There will be a river of living water, 8
 - a. John 7:38 *He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*
 - b. We know of the woman at the well where Jesus gave her living water.
2. This water will flow from the “former sea,” or the Persian Gulf all the way across to

- the west to the Mediterranean Sea, which would supply water for the entire population. This living water is thought by some to be the truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
3. Many believe that this living water is water that will make it possible for the earth to be like it was in the Garden of Eden before the fall.
- C. The King Will Reign Over The Whole Earth, 9
1. Isaiah 11:9 *They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.* This is repeated in Habakkuk 2:14.
 2. Psalms 47:2 *For the LORD most high is terrible; he is a great King over all the earth.*
 3. At this time there will be . . .
 - a. One Day - Verse 6
 - b. One Lord - Verse 9
 - c. One Name - Verse 9
- D. The Earth Will Be Made New, 10-11
1. All the mountains will be lowered, and the valleys will be raised to make the earth “a plain.”
 2. There are mountains all around Jerusalem (See Psalm 125:2).
 3. Revelation 16:20 *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.*
 4. In this new earth, Jerusalem will be “safely inhabited.”
 5. Jerusalem represents the saints of God, which in this application would include, not simply physical Jerusalem, but the entire world of believers, because there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek.
- E. The King Will Fight The Battle, 12-15
1. Many believe from the description of this destruction that there will be some sort of atomic bomb, but the Bible says it is a plague (verse 18).
 2. As many of the heathen stand in their place, not literally fighting, but prepared for battle, they will be consumed in their flesh, 12
 3. Others will turn one against the other and therefore destroy themselves, 13
 4. Judah will be prepared for the batter; therefore, they are said to “fight,” 14
 5. But God will actually fight for his saints.
 6. The animals will also receive the same plague, 15

III. THE REFUSING OF THE NATIONS, 14:16-21

- A. The remnant who are left after the battle will go up year by year representatively to Jerusalem to worship, celebrating the Feast Of Tabernacles, which was a celebration by the Jews of their now living in houses rather than in tents in the wilderness, as they did

when they came out of the land of Egypt, 16.

- B. Someone called the Feast Of Tabernacles the feast of the Millennium, because the Passover and Pentecost have both been fulfilled, but this feast is a celebration of the harvest and of the final dwelling of the saints, giving God the credit for our deliverance.
- C. But then there were those of the nations (the Gentiles) who would not come to worship. None of the enemies of the Lord will go up. They have been destroyed through the Battle of Armageddon. But it illustrates their unwillingness to come to Christ as their Savior. The Lord said in John 5:40 *And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.*
- D. They have no representative to go for them, so they will suffer loss. They will be cast into the Lake of Fire eternally. They have no one to represent them in the Kingdom of God, so they will not come through a representative. No one is available to represent the ones coming to this feast except Christ, and they have denied him.
- E. These who will not come will be cursed with “no rain,” 17-19
 1. Deuteronomy 32:2 *My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass:*
 2. The doctrine of the saving grace of God is no more given to they who will not come to Christ for salvation.
 3. The doctrine of eternal security will not be enjoyed by those who will not come.
 4. The doctrine of the deliverance from sin and from the wrath of God will no longer rain upon these who will not come.
 5. The doctrine of the soon coming of Jesus Christ to give eternal rewards will not rain upon these ones who will not come.
 6. The doctrine of peace, the doctrine of compassion, the doctrine of mercy, the doctrine of understanding and knowledge will not rain upon them. They will eternally remain in a spiritual drought.
 7. There will be a plague upon them (18). The Lord will smite them.
 8. In verse 19 they are called Egypt, which is a name that has long been used for a type of the lost world.
- F. What Those Who Will Not Come Will Miss, 20-21
 1. They will miss the “holiness unto the LORD.”
 - a. The lost have never really loved nor have they desired holiness.
 - b. Psalms 51:6 *Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.*
 - c. They desired to be conformed to the world and do not desire to be transformed by the renewing of their minds (Romans 12:1-2).
 - d. Even the bells on the horses will be labeled with “Holiness Unto The LORD.”
 - e. Even the pots and bowls will be labeled the same.
 - f. There will be holiness everywhere; therefore, the wicked would not enjoy this existence even if they were allowed to be a part of it.

- g. Many lost people say they want to go to heaven, but they would not enjoy it in their present state, for there will be only holiness and no “un-holiness.”
 - h. The Bible says in Revelation 22:11 *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.*
2. They will miss the perfect peace that will come with attendance in this great land. The Canaanite will not be in the land, the lost, the persecutors of the truth, the liars, the thieves, the perverters of the Gospel, the antichrists, the rebels, etc.
 3. Those who are not there are called by bad names: Revelation 22:15 *For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.*

IV. CONCLUSION

- A. Are you looking for a new place to live? If you are, then this is the place. No one can come to Christ unless the Father draw him (John 6:44).
- B. No one can come to this place unless he believe in Christ: Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

The Minor Prophets

By Dr. Ronnie W. Wolfe – 4-9-2014

THE BOOK OF MALACHI

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Name & Historical Information

1. The name Malachi means “my messenger.”
2. Malachi’s prophecies took place in the latter days of the Persian Empire.
3. Nehemiah began the rebuilding of the temple in 445 BC.
4. The temple was already built, and Jewish worship had been re-established.
5. So, God sent Malachi to remind Israel of their sins.

B. This Is A Burden, 1:1

1. Any time a prophet is introduced with the word *burden*, it means that God’s judgment is involved somehow.
2. God is answering questions that are brought up by Israel as they hear the prophecies of Malachi.
3. In this lesson we will answer those questions. There are eight of them.

II. FIRST QUESTION: “Wherein hast thou loved us?” 1:2-5

A. God Loved Israel, 2

1. It must take a very sinful people, corrupted in their own religion and in their own minds, to ask such as question as this.
2. There is no doubt that God loved Israel – 1 Kings 10:9 *Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee Solomon on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.*
3. Deuteronomy 23:5 *Nevertheless the LORD thy God would not hearken unto Balaam; but the LORD thy God turned the curse into a blessing unto thee, because the LORD thy God loved thee.*
4. Jeremiah 31:3 *The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.*

B. God Loved Jacob, 3-5

1. Why would they ask the question “Wherein hast thou loved us?” when they should have known that God loved them due to his work and mercy toward Israel.
2. Here God shows the difference between Esau and Jacob
 - a. These boys were twins. There was as little difference between them as there can

be between any two people.

- b. Yet God chose Jacob – Psalms 135:4 *For the LORD hath chosen Jacob unto himself, and Israel for his peculiar treasure.*
3. The love toward Jacob (Israel) is shown in his particular work and his choosing of Israel over all other nations on the earth.
4. God’s love toward Jacob is illustrated and known in his choosing of Israel and his particular and peculiar mercy and grace exercised toward Jacob, or Israel.
5. Deuteronomy 4:7-8 *For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the LORD our God is in all things that we call upon him for? 8 And what nation is there so great, that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day?*

C. God Hated Esau

1. A quick study of Esau shows us that, while God directed his special blessings in an active way toward Jacob, he left Esau to his own wit and ability.
2. Anyone who does not have God to guide him will in the end come to nothing. This is a type of the lost sinner, losing everything in the end, though he may have tried all of his life to gain everything.
3. Mark 8:36 *For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?*
4. When Esau built up, God tore down.
5. Esau (Edom) will be called “the border of wickedness.”
6. Left alone, without God’s mercy and grace, each of us may be called “the border of wickedness.”
7. When Isaiah saw the Lord high and lifted up, he said in Isaiah 6:5 *Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts.*
8. We are all sinners, but those of us who are saved must realize, as Jacob did, that we are special to God in that he has chosen us and not others.
9. The Lord has indignation against the wicked forever, 4 (end of verse).
10. Israel should be thankful that, if it were not for God, they would be in the same situation as Esau. We owe everything to God. It is only by his grace that we are what we are.
11. God chose only Israel, and they should have understood that that shows God’s love toward them.
12. Romans 9:13 *As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*
13. Romans 9:18 *Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.*

III. SECOND QUESTION: “Wherein have we despised thy name?” 3:6

A. Father And Master

1. God here calls himself Israel’s Father and Master.
2. It was a long-standing rule that sons honor their fathers and servants fear their masters.
3. But Israel had not done that with God.
4. He was both their father and their master, but they neither honored him as father nor feared him as master.
5. Then they ask, “Wherein have we despised thy name?” What have we done or not done that brings despite upon your name?

B. They Gave Inferior Sacrifices, 1:7-9

1. Polluted bread on the Lord’s altar, 7
2. The table of the Lord is contemptible, 7. They did not reverence the Lord’s offering. They gave good offerings to the governor, but they gave inferior offerings to the Lord in worship.
3. They gave the blind, the lame, and the sick as sacrifices to God, even though they would not have given that to their governor, 8
4. They are to beseech (beg) God regarding this that God may be gracious. He will not regard the person of a man, 9

C. They Wanted Pay For Their Worship, 2:10-11

1. They would not shut the doors for nought (for no pay). Someone said, then, that they were mercenaries, 10
2. They would not kindle a fire for nought, 10
3. “For nought” also means that they would give offerings and perform their worship in vain, *for nought*.
4. But God will have his glory and his worship. He will turn to the Gentiles for it eventually, and theirs will be a *pure offering*, 11
5. God’s name will be great among the heathen, 11
6. In this they have despised God’s name.

D. Their Worship Was A Weariness, 1:12-14

1. They said, verse 12, “What a weariness is it!”
2. They were giving animals that were torn, lame sick for offerings, not taking seriously the commandments of the Lord, 13
3. It became a ritual rather than worship.
4. They are to remember that their sacrifices are a “corrupt thing” 14
5. They also are to remember that God is a great King, and his name is dreadful (or a great wonder) among the heathen, or the Gentiles.
6. In this they have despised God’s name.

E. The Priests Are Wicked, 2:1-7

1. The priests represented the people before God. They were to be honest in this duty.
2. This admonition is to “lay it to heart, to give glory unto my name.” 2
3. Because they are disobedient, God will send a curse upon them and their seed. He will curse their blessings, even as God blessed the cursing of Balaam, 2-3
4. The seed here may refer to the seed that is planted in the ground, meaning that it will not produce, or the seed of children, that they will not be able to have children, or that their children will be even more corrupt if they continue in the pattern of their parents.
5. To put dung on their faces, verse 3, means to embarrass them, as if someone had come in and smeared dung all over their faces.
6. When the Romans come in to take them away captive, they will be ashamed.
7. The priests had a covenant through Levi, a ceremonial covenant in becoming a priest that Levi might be a type of the coming High Priest, Jesus Christ.
8. In this they have despised God’s name.

F. The Sin of Mixed Marriage, 2:10-12

1. We have one father, Adam or Abraham, perhaps. Abraham is the father of the faithful and the father of all those who, through the covenant of circumcision, were in the kingdom of Israel.
2. God, of course, is the great creator, who created both Adam and Abraham and their children.
3. The Pharisees said they were the children of Abraham.
4. There was a covenant made through the fathers (Sinai, the Law), but they dealt treacherously that covenant in marrying daughters of those who worshiped strange gods. Judges 3:6 *And they took their daughters to be their wives, and gave their daughters to their sons, and served their gods.*
5. Those who sin God will cut off, 2:12

IV. THIRD QUESTION: Wherefore? 2:13-16

- A. This simple word *wherefore* means “why.”
- B. This was asked, because we notice in verse 13 that the priests are going into the altar with tears, weeping and crying.
- C. This weeping is done, because God (“he” in verse 13) will not regard the offering any more. He is done with their offerings. Eventually he stops the offering. In fact, in history he stops the offerings several times.
- D. The *why* question, then, is asked: “Why will God not regard our offerings?” 14
- E. The reason is that they were divorcing, or putting away, their wives and marrying other wives. They were probably putting away their Jewish wives so they could marry wives from other nations. Therefore, they are dealing treacherously with the wives of their

youth, or the “wife of thy covenant” (the covenant of marriage).

F. Now, in verse 15-16, God explains something about marriage:

1. Did not God make one? He made one Adam, and took from Adam a rib and made a woman. They are the same flesh. Their marriage was made by and endorsed by God, male and female, one flesh.
2. Genesis 2:24 *Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*
3. This “one flesh” indicates that the husband and wife should be compatible and equal in most ways. We are warned in 2 Corinthians 6:14 *Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?*
4. This will bring about godly seed, children who are trained up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, 15

G. Now, God (verse 16) hates putting away, or divorce.

V. FOURTH QUESTION: “Wherein have we wearied him?” 2:17

A. This question is answered in few words.

B. The answer is: “When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD and he delighteth in them.”

1. As when people say for excuse, “God loves everyone,” and “All sins are the same.”
2. As when people say, “God would not send anyone to Hell.”
3. Or when homosexuals tell us that God loves them just as much as he loves everyone else and that God understands them and encourages them to love one another.
4. Or when people misrepresent Christ Jesus in a false gospel.

C. Isaiah 5:20 *Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter!*

D. That is how they had wearied God, and that is how many today weary God in much of what is called Christianity.

VI. FIFTH QUESTION: “Where is the God of judgment?” 2:17 - 3:7

A. They have a judgment to which they can look forward.

B. First, God will send “my messenger.” Remember, this is the name of this book.

1. “My messenger” is John the Baptist
2. He will prepare the way before the Lord comes.
3. Isaiah 40:3 *The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD, make straight in the desert a highway for our God.*
4. Malachi 4:5 *Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD:*

5. Matthew 11:12-14 *And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force. 13 For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John. 14 And if ye will receive it, this is Elias, which was for to come.*

C. Then the Lord will suddenly appear in his temple, 3:1

1. He is the messenger of the covenant.
2. He will come, 3:1
3. He will appear in his temple, the church, sing in the church, set up the ordinances in the church, and leaving the church with the commission and the power of the Holy Spirit to carrying on his work as the body of Christ on earth.

D. Here is The Judgment, 3:2-3

1. Who may abide (or stand) the day of his coming?
2. He will purify the sons of Levi. These sons of Levi are true believers, who are all priests unto God.
3. He will purge them with grace, not too hot to destroy them, but heated as a refiner's fire, to purge our sins and to make us the children of light, brilliant, shining as pure gold.
4. Verse 5 says he will come near in judgment against all wickedness.
5. "I am the LORD" he says in verse 6. Then he says, "I change not." His methods change, and different dispensations are brought upon the world, but God's decrees are solid and will never and can never change. God's nature does not change.
6. Therefore, because of his judgment, Jacob is not consumed. His judgment is that he will purge Jacob, not destroy him. This is God's mercy.

VII. SIXTH QUESTION: "Wherein shall we return?" 3:7

- A. This is a very good question, but it reveals the idea that Israel did not know where to turn if they turned away from their wickedness.
- B. They had a progressive mind, that all things must go forward; but God tells them where they are to return in his statement to them before their question.
- C. He said, "Return unto me." That is, they had gone away from him, so they must return to him.
- D. They must return to the old ways, the old offerings, the old solemn assemblies, the old marriages, the old morals, etc.
- E. This will bring God's blessings. God says, "and I will return unto you." God had also gone away from them, from a close, intimate relationship, to a veiled, faint relationship.

VIII. SEVENTH QUESTION: "Wherein have we robbed thee?" 3:8-12

- A. God accused Israel of robbing him. Now, no one would rob God, right?

- B. Well Israel had, and so have we today in a large part.
- C. He answered, “In tithes and offerings.”
- D. As a result, they are cursed with a curse, 3:9
- E. Then in verse 10 he gives them the remedy for that curse:
 - 1. Bring ye ALL the tithes into the storehouse.
 - 2. Then prove me, if I will not bring you a great blessing.
 - 3. He will also rebuke the devourer, nations who may come against Israel.
- F. If they will do this, all nations will call Israel blessed, 12

IX. EIGHTH QUESTION: “What have we spoken so much against thee?” 3:13-15

- A. God accused them of speaking strongly against him, 13
- B. Their question is, “What did we say?”
- C. First you said, “It is vain to serve God.”
 - 1. Surely they did not say that, but they may as well have said it as to practice it, which they did.
- D. Second, they said, “What profit is it that we have kept his ordinance and walked mournfully before the Lord of hosts?” 14
- E. When they speak in this way, three things happen, 15
 - 1. We call the proud happy.
 - 2. They that work wickedness are set up (on high, or in high places).
 - 3. They that tempt God are even delivered (from accusations, rebuke, or punishment).

X. CONCLUSION

- A. The Book of Remembrance, 3:16-18
 - 1. Through all of this sin, there was a remnant of believers, those who loved the Lord and obeyed his commandments.
 - a. *Revelation 20:12-15 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.*
 - 2. God will write a book of remembrance to remember these precious ones, 3:16
 - 3. Then one day he will make up his jewels (believers, the remnant) and will spare them of all rebuke and judgment, 17

4. They will know the difference between the righteous and the wicked, etc. 3:18
- B. The Day of Judgment, 4:1-3
1. Behold, the day cometh, 4:1, when God will destroy the wicked from off the earth and leave them neither root nor branch.
 2. But the righteous will go forth in the earth and grow up as calves through the Sun of righteousness with healing in his wings, 4:2
 3. Because the Lord will “tread down the wicked” under our feet.
- C. The Remedy, 4:4-6
1. Remember the law of Moses.
 - a. Remember this law, because we all must know that we have broken this law before we will ever know our need of Jesus Christ as Savior.
 - b. Remember to deliver this law to others as they have all broken it, also.
 2. God’s progress is sure.
 - a. He will certainly send Elijah the prophet before the great and dreadful day of the Lord, 5
 - b. He (John the Baptist) will preach the gospel and turn hearts through that preaching toward fathers and children.
 - c. If this does not happen, then God will come and smite the earth with a curse.
 - d. Thus ends the Old Testament.

T H E E N D