

# *Getting Acquainted With the Old Testament*

## **VOLUME 2**

By CHARLES A. PLEDGE  
Memphis, Tennessee

1971

A POPULAR INTRODUCTION TO THE  
OLD TESTAMENT

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*To a mother, now past the four score year  
mark of life, whose guiding hand and loving  
heart has meant so much in my life and to the memory  
of a father whose hard toil and lofty principles  
influenced me more than he ever realized.*

**“The sum of thy word is truth;  
And every one of thy righteous  
ordinances endureth forever.”**

***Psalm 119:160***



## FOREWORD

Volume one has been graciously received and heartily recommended by a large and responsive audience. What was originally planned to be a two-volume introduction to the Old Testament has, due to the much urging of many who saw a need for the detailed outlines and expanded analyses, been made a three-volume set. This will necessitate additional time to complete the set but, hopefully, the work will be finished late in 1971 or very early in 1972.

The prophets offer a great challenge to the student of the Bible. One finds it necessary to study the New Testament very intensely in order to gain the proper perspective of prophecy. Among the many works of men, perhaps no other has contributed so much to my understanding of prophecy as has Foy E. Wallace, Jr. His piquant writings have helped me to determine a course of study that has proved extremely rewarding. For his many works I am most grateful.

In a work of this nature it is necessary to deal primarily with facts and leave the commenting to those who write commentaries. However the great and eternal truths encountered in the word of God so stir the soul that one finds it impossible to pass over them lightly. Therefore, I have taken the liberty to pause along the way and deal with some of the individual passages, especially if some critical problem has been attached to them. Isaiah 7:14 is one example of textual analysis which the reader will find occasionally but not too often.

As in volume one, I have not hesitated to state the view which I believe to be expressed by the scripture. Every position taken in this work reflects my conviction that the Bible is the plenary, verbally inspired word of the living God. For this I do not apologize but ask the reader who may not fully agree with my basic convictions to investigate all of the facts available before he renders harsh judgment. I have not discarded views merely because they were expressed by scholars of this generation. Neither have I accepted the position a man proposed just because he lived a century or more ago. Truths regarding matters in the field of introduction have been es-

poused by some in every generation and if one desires to be "scientific" in his study he must follow wherever truth leads and search in every quarter for facts which will lead him into more light in these matters. In compiling this work it has been necessary to explore the limbo land of the radical modernist. Although I reject their basic tenets because they are but unprovable assumptions, I do appreciate some of the facts which they use in compiling their books. It is the interpretation of the facts about which we must be careful.

A writer finds it impossible to express his gratitude to all to whom he is indebted. Many times an idea is planted in the mind but it is not until other ideas fertilize the soil that fruit is brought forth. With the blending of thoughts, proper credit can never be given to whom credit is due. All that I know I have learned from some source, therefore, I claim no originality in the truest sense of the word. However the material presented in this work is the result of thousands of hours spent in studying, teaching and preaching the Old Testament and the arrangement of the material is representative of my judgment. My studies of the Pentateuch and prophets, along with my teaching and preaching from them, has occupied upwards of twenty thousand hours of my time — time immensely enjoyed and highly profited from.

This manuscript, as was the first one, was diligently read by James McGill, chairman of the English department of Freed-Hardeman College. His suggestions have been highly valued and his help greatly appreciated.

I must also express my profound gratitude to two great congregations and their elders for encouragement in this work. The church at Cloverdale, Tennessee encouraged me in my decision to begin this work. It was in a Bible class there that one of the elders suggested, and the other elders were in agreement, that I should commit to writing some material on the Old Testament. The membership exhorted and encouraged me in the same manner. During the last part of the nearly three years that I preached there the elders graciously consented to my being out of the pulpit whenever I became too burdened with the efforts of writing and other responsibilities and the members were very understanding. It was due, in large measure, to their kind understanding that I was able to finish the manuscript of volume one in less than three months and to do most of the work on volume two in about the same

length of time. Although the press of other labors has since severed our working association, the pious elders and devout members of the Cloverdale church of Christ must share much of the credit for these first two volumes.

The other congregation to which I owe no less gratitude is the Knight Arnold church of Christ in Memphis, Tennessee. This great church conducts the Memphis School of Preaching and supports me in my teaching efforts. Were it not for the atmosphere of love and peace which prevails among the members, the wise guidance of the dedicated elders and the pleasant association of their good preacher, such a work could not have been successfully undertaken. It was with the encouragement of the Knight Arnold elders: James Bobbitt, Floyd Hayes, Dorrence Kirby and Jerry Lee, that work on this volume was completed and volume three begun. It is with constant thanksgiving that I bear remembrance of these elders, the preacher and the membership before the throne of God daily. Such a congenial relationship has enabled me to be far more productive in my writing, teaching and preaching and the spiritual atmosphere has been as a haven for the weary in time of need.

My wife and children merit special credit for their patience with one whose preaching, teaching and writing usually took precedence over all else. For such love, help and mutual understanding there is no earthly reward great enough but may their heavenly compensation be eternally sufficient.

To all of these and a host of others I am forever indebted. May God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, richly bless each one whose encouragement and influence is reflected in this work and may it all abound to the glory of him who loves us so much.

Memphis, Tennessee  
July 9, 1971

CHARLES PLEDGE

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## Part One

### THE PROPHETS

#### I. FORMER PROPHETS

The second division of the Hebrew Old Testament is called the *Prophets*. This term is not applied primarily because of the prophetic content of the books, but because the *authors* were prophets. The second division of the Hebrew Old Testament comprises eight books. These books are:

1. Former Prophets: Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, (Samuel is counted as one book in the Hebrew Bible), 1 & 2 Kings (also counted as one book in the Hebrew Bible).
2. Latter Prophets:
  - a. Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel.
  - b. Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

In the Hebrew Bible these were eight books while in our Bible they are divided into twenty-one books. However, the material is the same.

The section which is entitled *Former Prophets* and comprises Joshua, Judges, 1 & 2 Samuel, and 1 & 2 Kings consists of anonymous books. By anonymous is simply meant that *the author is not declared within these books*. However, this present writer firmly believes that God is the author of these books.

*Prophets* necessarily wrote the books that we call the Former Prophets because of the very *nature* of them. We must remember that a prophet is the *spokesman* of God. Liberal theologians, in their attempts to discredit inspiration, contend that Old Testament prophecy had its origin in the human intellect. Israel's religion is said by these liberal theologians to be the result of their natural piety and spiritual ability. These liberal theologians depicted the prophets of Israel as men who had a moral and spiritual insight heightened by their environment to such a degree that they were able to more fully discern the issues of good and evil than their con-

temporaries. The liberals assert that because the prophets were spiritually sensitive and more morally aware that they could "read the signs of the time" more carefully than their neighbors.

However, the Old Testament emphasizes, as does the New, that *prophecy is not the result of human wisdom*. That emphasis was given in the following ways:

(1) No true prophet of Israel claimed a special wisdom for discerning the unknown. Cf. Exodus 4:10; 6:12, 30; 1 Samuel 16:6; 2 Samuel 7:1-3. Peter settled the matter in the New Testament in 2 Peter 1:20-21.

(2) The true prophets of God *denied* that what they were speaking was their own wisdom or from their ingenuity. Therefore, the prophet was one who spoke for God.

Two passages in the Old Testament, Exodus 4:15,16 and Exodus 7:1, give us a classic understanding of the meaning of the word *prophet* and enable us to better understand why the books we call the Former Prophets must have been written by *prophets*. In Exodus 4:15-16 we read, "And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And He shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God." Observe that it is said in verse 16 that Moses was to be unto Aaron as God. That was simply an elucidation of the fact that Moses was to put the words into Aaron's mouth and therefore in this respect would be as God unto him. Again in Exodus 7:1 we read, "And the Lord said unto Moses, see, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh: and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." The phrase, "Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet," indicates that the word prophet means *a mouthpiece* or *one who speaks for another*.

There are other terms used to describe the one that is called a prophet:

(1) *Seer*, I Sam. 9:9. There are critics who scoff at the idea of *seer* being applied to a man inspired of God to reveal God's will to others. Some (Pfeiffer and others) believe that the seers spoken of in Samuel were individuals roused to an ecstatic mood by some source within them and were mere "clairvoyants." However, the word *seer* indicates one who



sees into the counsel of God and speaks only that which he sees. It is significant that in Amos 7:12, the prophet Amos is called a *seer*. In 2 Samuel 24:11, the prophet Gad is called both *prophet* and *seer*. He is again called the *king's seer* in 2 Chron. 29:25. It is quite obvious then that a prophet and a seer are one and *the same*. The two words merely indicate different phases of the work of a spokesman of God. The word *prophet* stresses the active work of God's spokesman in speaking forth God's word. The word *seer* emphasizes the receiving of divine revelation by *seeing* into the counsel of God, cf. Isaiah 30:10.

(2) *Man of God* was a common and general term for the prophet of Israel. This term was used very early, cf. Moses, Samuel, Elijah, and Elisha, Deut. 33:1; 1 Sam. 9:6; 2 Kings 4:9. This general term for the spokesman of God emphasized his holy calling and moral character.

(3) *Servant of the Lord* was a title used of the prophet Ahijah, in 1 Kings 14:18. God frequently speaks of "My servants the prophets," cf. 2 Kings 9:7; 17:13; Jer. 7:25; Ezek. 38:17.

(4) *Messenger of the Lord* was a Hebrew term used for both messenger and angel. As the angels of the Lord are his special spiritual messengers, so his prophets were the messengers of his revealed word. Cf. Haggai 1:13; Mal. 3:1. This term was used by the prophets generally in 2 Chron. 36:15-16; Isa. 44:26.

It is obvious from the terms used and from the word engaged that the man called *prophet*, *seer*, *man of God*, *servant of the Lord*, and *messenger of the Lord* was of divine origin and not from any human source. This would qualify him to do the work that was set before him.

The one, therefore, who wrote a canonical book necessarily had to be a *spokesman* for God. He would have to be *recognized* by God's people as God's spokesman. Before God's people would recognize the spokesman as *God's spokesman* there must be certain traits present in his life and in the writing which he would undertake. Therefore, whoever wrote these books of the Former Prophets were necessarily writing the truth — God's message.

There were several tests which God's people were to apply to those who claimed to speak for God. Following are some of them:

(1) The prophet spoke only by revelation or inspiration. Any prophet who claimed to speak for God and relied upon divination, sorcery or other heathen practices for his revelation was to be rejected, Deut. 18:9-14. When a prophet spoke for God, God spoke through him and in him, separate and apart from any external prop or supply. This distinguished the prophets of God, the *true prophets* in Israel, from the heathen prophets about them. God would make himself known to his prophets, Amos 3:7.

(2) The prophet of God was *conscious* of his prophetic work. The prophetic office was not one into which a person might propel himself. There was no natural disposition which could qualify a man for the office or the work of prophecy. It was not a work which could be inherited such as the priesthood or Levitical ministry. God alone placed men in the prophetic office. Amos is a very good example of this fact, Amos 7:14-15.

(3) The prophets' commission was always accompanied by *confirmation* from God. The ultimate test of a spokesman for God was whether or not God would confirm his message. His word must be *fulfilled*, Deut. 18:21-22. If a prophet's word was not fulfilled this was a clear indication that God was not with him. In the authentication of the message with miracles or signs, the prophet often allowed the witnesses to whatever proceedings there were to have a part in the selection of a sign. God sent Isaiah to offer Ahaz the choice of any sign from the heights of heaven to the depths of hades, Isaiah 7:12-14. Many times miracles were performed, such as those by Elijah and Elisha, as well as others of the Old Testament, to demonstrate that they were the true spokesmen of God.

(4) The true prophets spoke only in the name of Jehovah, Deut. 13:1-5 and 18:20. It is true that false prophets also attempted to speak in the name of Jehovah but they were not consistent generally. This test was allied with the one which follows and should be applied in that context. If the young prophet in 1 Kings 13 had applied the following test to the words of the older man who claimed to speak for Jehovah, he could have detected the falsity of the older man's message.

(5) The true prophet's message was *always* in harmony with all previous revelation of God's word. According to



Deut. 13:1-3, the word of the spokesman for God could not contradict or disagree with any previous revelation of truth. The young prophet in 1 Kings 13 had the word of God which he could have followed exactly had he been convinced of the basic facts contained in this particular truth. He could have applied this test to the older man's word. Then he could have concluded that since the older man's word was not in harmony with the word which Jehovah had given him that the older man was necessarily a false prophet.

(6) The *quality of the message* of the true prophet was easily discernable over that of the false prophet. True prophets always tried to call men back to God from whom they had turned. False prophets always appealed to the popular or sensual mind rather than to spiritually minded individuals. The true prophet sought his acceptance from God and, therefore, on the burning issues of his day, he spoke those words which would get men to do the will of God. The false prophets cared not for the issues nor for the souls of men but rather whether or not they would remain popular and acceptable to the people. Consequently their messages differed greatly.

(7) Many times a seventh test of prophecy was the *moral character* of the prophet. Usually the false prophet could be distinguished by his low morality. He was sometimes a mercenary who prophesied for hire — (Micah 3:5) 11; he was often a drunkard (Isa. 28:7); a profane and wicked person (Jer. 23:11); a treacherous person (Zeph. 3:4); he was generally immoral in life and conduct (Jer. 23:15), along with other such things which could be said about him. To summarize it all, the false prophet was an *opportunist*, tickling the ears of a degenerate people. He would cry "peace, peace," when often there was no peace, Jeremiah 8:11.

Furthermore, the children of Israel realized the consequences of following a false prophet and the whole nation, with this awareness, was not likely to follow a false prophet. True, there were times when a majority of the nation accepted the prophecies of false prophets and walked in their ways, but there is no indication that the whole nation ever did accept them for any significant period. In contrast, *these books of the Former Prophets were accepted universally throughout the land of Judah*. The Jews accepted them as a message from God. They would not do that without applying

the tests which could be applied to a prophet, and the individual who thus wrote or spoke in the name of God had passed these tests successfully. Therefore, even though we might not, in every case, be able to determine beyond doubt who the author of each of these four books was, we can know with certainty that Jehovah is the divine Author. We can rest in confidence that these books are as assuredly from the mind of God as any books in all the Bible and that the man who penned each of them was truly God's spokesman in *every* respect. Therefore, the problem of the authorship of the Former Prophets should not cause us to be disturbed but rather to rest more confidently in the providence of God in giving and preserving this book we call the Bible.

The Former Prophets are *accurate historical books*. However, they are *more* than just books of history: They deal with the history of God's people from the time of the entrance into Canaan until the dissolving of the theocracy in exile, but *in addition*, they *interpret* the facts of history for our understanding. Edward J. Young correctly said that the former prophets "served to complement and to furnish the necessary background for the correct understanding of the latter prophets," (Intro. to the O. T., page 156). The Latter Prophets are referred to as *writing prophets*.

## Chapter One

### JOSHUA

#### Name

The book is generally thought to be named for the principal character rather than the author (Keil, E. J. Young, Raven, and others). The name *Joshua* means "Jehovah is salvation" or "Jehovah saves." The Greek form of *Joshua* is *Jesus*, Heb. 4:8.

#### The Independence of Joshua

Many liberal critics have asserted that the book of Joshua actually belongs in the same unit as the Pentateuch. However, *assertion* is about as far as the proof has ever gone. Geddes (1792) was evidently the first to include Joshua with the Pentateuch. Since that time many others have attempted to justify its inclusion. Raven (*O.T. Intro.*, page 154) pointed out that "Joshua is related to the later books of Moses as fulfillment is related to promise." Joshua is *not* to be thought of as a successor to Moses and thus carrying on the work which Moses started. Moses was a deliverer from Egypt while Joshua was the leader into the land of promise. Therefore, there is the ending of one era at Moses' death and the beginning of another era under a new leader when Joshua was installed by God through Moses to lead the people of Israel into the land of promise. Certainly the history of the Pentateuch is continuous, but this does not argue that the book is a unit with the Pentateuch. The argument that would insist that Joshua is an extension of the Pentateuch would also argue that Judges, Samuel, and Kings be included because they also continue the history begun in the Pentateuch. Therefore, the argument would include too much for the critic. We must regard Joshua as an independent book. Although it has a close connection with the other books, it must stand alone separated from the Pentateuch. Keil, in speaking of the independence of the book, pointed out three excellent reasons why Joshua is regarded as an independent

book: "(1) At no time was it bound together with the law into one single book; (2) On the contrary, there is internal evidence of its independent character, both in its contents, which are rounded off and complete in themselves; (3) And in its peculiarities of language, diverging from that of the Pentateuch."<sup>1</sup> Edward J. Young adds another excellent argument for the independence of the book; "The Samaritans took over only the Pentateuch, but not Joshua."<sup>2</sup>

We must recognize that even though the contents of the book of Joshua are connected very closely with the Pentateuch and it is primarily a carrying out of the regulations and commands of Moses, yet it remains an independent book. As an independent book it bears the stamp of its own unity. DeWette and others applied the documentary hypothesis of Joshua as they did to the Pentateuch, but the same reasons why it could not be applied to the Pentateuch [see Vol. I of *Getting Acquainted with the Old Testament* by this present author] also apply to the book of Joshua. Furthermore since the book is a unit and stands complete in itself, the documentary hypothesis, the supplementary hypothesis and every other critical hypothesis applied to it must fall short of the true explanation. Keil listed three reasons for accepting the unity of the book: "(1) The book contains no traces of fragments nor of contradictions in reference to facts, (2) Nor of differences in mode of thinking or expression, to justify a hypothesis of this kind, (3) But it is closely connected in all its parts, and pervaded and governed by one and the same idea, so that neither its original nor its actual unity is exposed to any well-founded doubts."<sup>3</sup>

We must conclude therefore that *The Hexateuch is but a figment of the critics' imagination. Joshua*, although connected with the law, does not depend upon the law for its existence nor does it belong with the law as the completion of the law, but it belongs with the former prophets where it originally started.

<sup>1</sup>Keil, C.F., *Introduction to the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark), page 203.

<sup>2</sup>Young, E.J., *An Introduction to the Old Testament*, (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), page 158.

<sup>3</sup>Keil, *op. cit.*, page 204

## Author

Certain parts of the book claim to have been written by Joshua himself, 24:1-26, and other parts. The Talmudic tradition is that Joshua wrote all of the book. However, there is a Jewish tradition that alleges that Eleazar added the account of Joshua's death, and that Phinehas added the account of Eleazar's death. There are those who reject the Joshuanic authorship altogether because parts of the book definitely could not have been written by Joshua since they referred to events which followed after his death. However, these events occurred not long after the death of Joshua. The conquest of Hebron by Caleb took place shortly after the death of Joshua because Caleb was 85 years old when the land was divided and it was the conquest of this particular place that led Caleb to bestow his daughter in marriage upon the victor. Everything in the book which did not occur during Joshua's lifetime could very easily be said to have been fulfilled immediately following, perhaps within a decade of the death of Joshua. The phrase which critics have generally used to try to prove a longer period is "to this day." However, that particular phrase does not necessarily allude to a late date, but rather within ten years the statement would very easily be understood as of great significance. That phrase proves nothing more than the simple fact that the written record was a little later than the events themselves. It does not warrant a conclusion that the book was written several generations after the settlement of Israel in Canaan.

It seems to be very probable that Joshua wrote the part of the book which includes the events which transpired during his lifetime. Following his death a spokesman for God was authorized to complete certain material which the book had begun. Therefore, the style within, evidencing some change of authors, would indicate this probability. We may never know, even in eternity, who the inspired author was who took up Joshua's pen and completed the book. The human author is unimportant, else God would have revealed him to us. What is important is that we understand clearly that the book of Joshua is altogether *inspired* and that *God is the divine author* of it.

This present author cannot, in good conscience, subscribe

to the liberal view that the book of Joshua in its present form is the result of a frequently reworked source. If we understand and accept plenary verbal inspiration then we must believe it to be either accurately representative of the original manuscripts or else admit that it is not the very word of God. This present writer would urge all to view the *end results* of their positions and realize what the logical consequences of such a position would be, before that position be adopted and espoused. When people stop to think of the danger-fraught way of loosely compromising with the liberal theology which is rampant in the religious world today and agreeing with them to the extent of conceding that the present form of Joshua barely resembles the original, then, most would cease all appearances of compromise and uphold the view that Joshua is the *very word of God*.

### Purpose

(1) The purpose of the book of Joshua is *to magnify the immutability of God's faithfulness* by showing the fulfillment of his promises made to Abraham and to Abraham's seed, 21:43-45. Joshua affirmed in the passages just referred to, "And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which he swore to give unto their fathers; and they possessed, and dwelt therein. And the Lord gave them rest around, according to that he swore unto their fathers; and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all of their enemies into their hand. There failed not ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; all came to pass." Therefore, in reading the book of Joshua, we are duly impressed with the faithfulness of God and, therefore, are ourselves assured in this age that God will keep his word because he has never failed his people.

(2) The book of Joshua furnishes a *continuation of the history of the Israelites* from the close of the Pentateuch. This history is important because it continues the fulfillment of God's promise made to Abraham.

(3) The book also serves to show, or to demonstrate, the *fearless character* of Joshua, God's servant. The observation was made in the *McClintock Strong Encyclopedia*, (Vol. 1, page 1026) that Joshua's life is one of the very few recorded

in history with fullness of detail which stands without any stain upon it.

John P. Lange wrote of Joshua, "Among the heroes of sacred history he stands forth as the one, above almost all others, free from self-will. The most conscientious fidelity towards the law, and a disposition the most imperturbably theocratic, distinguish him. He is prudent, circumspect, where he has to act of himself, for he conducts the wars of the Lord; but unhesitating, quick, and decided where the Lord sends him. His courage is humility, his strength is faith, his wisdom is obedience and fear of the Lord. A gentle disposition, but the furthest possible from feebleness, as is proved by his sternly solemn sentence upon Achan, and the strictness with which he executes the curse upon the Canaanites. Such a union of mildness with strength, of simplicity with prudence, of humility with magnanimity, has in it something evangelical. This peculiarity of his character, together with the peculiarity of the period in the kingdom of God in which he lived, and of the position which he took makes him and his work a rich type of Him that was to come. He leads the people into the land of promise and of rest, but there is yet a better rest to be enjoyed, to which his antitype and namesake must introduce us (Heb. 4:9)."<sup>4</sup> This is an apt description of the hero of the book and the author of the major portion of its contents.

### Lessons to be Learned from the Book

One of the characters of the book, Caleb, whose secret of success was revealed in the book of Numbers [for a fuller discussion see the book of Numbers in Volume 1 of this work.] (1) His secret of success was that he "wholly followed the Lord." (2) The greatness of a man is measured by the extent of his *surrender to God*. The question is not, who are you? or, what is your ability? but rather, *does God govern your life?* (3) We are taught not to ask for an easier life but to pray for the grace of God that we might accomplish the task put before us. Joshua accepted the leadership of Israel in a

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<sup>4</sup>Lange, John Peter, *Commentary on the Holy Scriptures*, Vol. 1 (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1969), page 22.

very critical period. It was not an easy task which he faced but Joshua, man of God that he was, relied upon God for strength and guidance and fulfilled his task. (4) A great lesson that is taught in the book of Joshua is that *man ought always to be prepared* — God will open the door of opportunity. This is a lesson that young and old alike need to learn. Too often we want to wait until we have the opportunity and then prepare ourselves for it. By that time it is too late, and the opportunity will pass us by while we are preparing. We all can prepare ourselves by using every opportunity available for us in service to God. This is the preparation of life in which God is fitting us for greater service. If we yield ourselves and engage in such service, God will prepare us and then one day God will open wide the door of opportunity wherein we may use the preparation which has been made. Therefore, whenever a child of God has the opportunity to do a job for his Lord, to give a cup of cold water in the name of the Lord, to visit the sick, to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, or whatever the service might be, let him use it — this is preparation — the opportunity for higher service will one day present itself. Joshua was content to follow the directions of God revealed through Moses and assist Moses in all things. One day he suddenly found himself thrust forward to the head of God's people. Prepare — *God gives the opportunity*. There are many other lessons that you will observe as you study the book of Joshua itself.

### Contents

The book of Joshua falls easily into two divisions: (1) The history of the conquest of Canaan — chapters 1-12; (2) The history of the division of the promised land — chapters 13-24.

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    1. The circumcision of the people—5:1-9.
    2. Israel keeps the Passover in the land—5:10-12.
  - E. The appearance of the captain of the Lord's host and the capture of Jericho—5:14-6:27.
    1. The appearance of the prince of the host of heaven—5:14-15.
    2. The prince of God's army gives instructions for the capture of Jericho—6:1-5.
    3. Jericho is captured—6:6-27.
  - F. The trespass and punishment of Achan—7:1-26.
  - G. Ai destroyed and the law read to the people—8:1-35.
    1. The destruction of Ai—8:1-29.
    2. The law read—8:30-35.
  - H. The craftiness of the Gibeonites—9:1-27.
    1. The kings of Canaan band together against Israel—9:1-2.
    2. The Gibeonites approach Joshua and deceive him into making a covenant with them—9:3-15.
    3. Discovery and punishment for the fraud—9:16-27.
  - I. The great victory at Gibeon—10:1-27.
    1. The alarm of the king of Jerusalem—10:1-5.
    2. The slaughter at Gibeon—10:6-15.
    3. The flight and death of the five kings—10:16-27.
  - J. The conquest of Southern Palestine—10:28-43.
    1. Destruction of the fortified town—10:28-39.
    2. Summary of the conquest—10:40-43.
  - K. The victory over the Northern Canaanites—11:1-23.
    1. The war—11:1-15.
    2. General retrospect of the conquest of West Palestine—11:16-23.
  - L. Catalogue of the vanquished kings of Canaan—12:1-23.
    1. A summary of the defeated kings east of Jordan—12:1-6.
    2. A list of kings defeated west of Jordan—12:7-24.
- II. THE DIVISION OF CANAAN—Chapters 13-24.
- A. Division of land east of Jordan—13:1-33.
    1. The instructions of God to divide the land—13:1-7.
    2. The boundaries of the land to be divided—13:8-14.
    3. The inheritance of Reuben—13:15-23.
    4. The possession of Gad—13:24-28.
    5. The possession of the half tribe of Manasseh—13:29-33.
  - B. Inheritance of Caleb—14:1-15.
    1. Introduction to division of Canaan—verses 1-5.
    2. Caleb is rewarded for his faithfulness to God—6-15.
  - C. The inheritance of Judah—15:1-63.
    1. The boundaries of Judah—1-12.
    2. The conquest of the inheritance of Caleb—13-19.
    3. A list of towns of Judah—20-63.
  - D. The inheritance of Ephraim and Manasseh—16:1-17:18.
    1. The boundaries—16:1-4.
    2. The portion of Ephraim—16:5-10.
    3. The inheritance of the half tribe of Manasseh—17:1-13.

4. Complaint of descendants of Joseph—17:14-18.
- E. The inheritance of the 7 remaining tribes and of Joshua—18:1-19:51.
  1. The tabernacle at Shiloh—18:1-10.
  2. The Inheritance of Benjamin—18:1-28.
  3. Inheritance of Simeon—19:1-9.
  4. Inheritance of Zebulun—19:10-16.
  5. Inheritance of Issachar—19:17-23.
  6. Inheritance of Asher—19:24-31.
  7. Inheritance of Naphtali—19:32-39.
  8. Inheritance of Dan—19:40-48.
  9. Inheritance of Joshua—19:49-50.
  10. Conclusion—19:51.
- F. Cities of refuge appointed—20:1-9.
  1. The command of God to Joshua—20:1-6.
  2. The command obeyed—20:7-9.
- G. Cities appointed for the priests and Levites—21:1-45.
  1. The Levites demand their cities—21:1-3.
  2. A general account of Levitical cities—21:4-8.
  3. Cities of Aaron—21:9-19.
  4. Cities of Kohathites—21:20-26.
  5. Cities of the Gershonites—21:27-33.
  6. Cities of the Merarites—21:34-42.
  7. Conclusion to division of the land—21:43-45.
- H. The two and a half Transjordanic tribes return to their inheritance—22:1-34.
  1. Joshua's parting address to them—22:1-8.
  2. The tribes return and build an altar on Jordan—22:9-10.
  3. Israel sends men to investigate—22:11-20.
  4. The two and a half tribes reassure their brethren—22:21-29.
  5. The delegation returned home—22:30-34.
- I. Joshua's farewell and death—23:1-24:33.
  1. The first parting address—23:1-16.
  2. The second parting address and renewal of the covenant—24:1-33.

### Analysis

#### I. ISRAEL CONQUERS THE LAND—1:1-12:24.

A. Preamble to the book—1:1-9. Joshua is directed by God to lead his people across Jordan. God assures Joshua that he will give him success if Joshua is *faithful* to his law.

B. *Israel prepares to cross over Jordan*—1:10-2:24. Preparation for crossing the River Jordan—1:10-18. Joshua directs the officers of the people. Vs. 12-18, Joshua appeals to the two tribes and a half, to observe the conditions on which Moses gave them the land east of Jordan. The tribes promise to obey in every respect and threatened everyone with death who refused obedience. Forty-thousand of their men of war crossed over with the rest of the tribes to help

them conquer the land of promise. Apparently seventy-thousand of the men of war, (cf. Numbers 26:7, 18, 34, and compare Joshua 4:13) remained behind to protect the women, children, and flocks, and defend their land which they had taken possession of.

Chapter 2. *Spies sent to Jericho*. The two spies first went to the house of Rahab the harlot. There have been objections to the use of the word *harlot* and some have intimated that the word should be *innkeeper*. However, there is no need to try to explain away the word. It is *zanah* in the Hebrew which is always translated to mean *harlot*. Furthermore, in every reference in the New Testament, Rahab is referred to as a harlot. Cf., Hebrews 11:31; James 2:25. There is no need to try to apologize for the life of this woman before she obtained mercy due to her faith. The Bible neither justifies nor condemns this situation but rather states as a mere fact this matter concerning the woman. Vs. 2-6, Rahab concealed the spies from the king. Some have objected to the way that Rahab concealed the spies because she lied to the men who were from the king. Again, no justification is offered for her lying. It is simply a fact which the Bible records. She obtained mercy because of her great faith, not because of a lie she told. Vs. 7-14 treats the request of Rahab. Because of her faith in Jehovah, she sent the men of Jericho, who were pursuing the Hebrew spies, in the wrong direction. She asked for and received the promise of mercy when the Jews came to Jericho and conquered the city. Vs. 15-24, the spies escape and report to Joshua. Before leaving, the spies set forth three conditions relative to their promise to Rahab, vs. 15-21. These conditions were: (1) a scarlet thread (cord) was to be hung from her window to identify her house; (2) all of the house of Rahab was to be gathered unto her - father, mother, brethren and all of her father's household; (3) none of them should go outside of her house during the siege.

These conditions prevented Rahab from arriving at an arbitrary interpretation of the promise of mercy and also served to safeguard against the misuse of the promise to the embarrassment of Rahab and the detriment of Israel. The spies then returned to Joshua and reported that all the people of the land were terrified because of Israel.

C. Chapters 3 and 4. *Crossing the Jordan*. Israel came to

the Jordan, 3:1. Final preparations made to cross the Jordan, 3:2-6. The people cross over and erect a memorial to God, 3:7-4:24. Vs. 3:7-8, God encourages Joshua by assuring him that he will magnify Joshua that all Israel might *reverence* and *respect* him. Vs. 9-10, Joshua encourages the people. In 3:11-13, Joshua informs the people of the miracle which God will perform. In 3:14-16, the miracle is performed. This miracle was *not* the result of a natural cause. A miracle can never be explained by natural means. Miracles are *above* the natural. This work was solely the work of God, and in the fifth chapter it is indicated by the condition of the people of the land when they saw the miracle performed and heard about it, that they understood that it was the work of God. The stopping of the flow of the water came at a time when the banks were overflowed. Therefore, the work was unquestionably the work of God.

The priests stood on *dry* ground in the middle of the riverbed. The people passed over on dry ground. Twelve stones were taken from the riverbed, 4:1-8, to serve as a memorial for the succeeding generations. The eighth verse specifically states that these twelve were carried over the other side.

In 4:9 it is stated that Joshua set up stones in the midst of Jordan to serve as a memorial. R. H. Pfeiffer and some others think that they see a contradiction, which they say exists due to the use of divergent sources to compile the book. However, if the book came from divergent sources and had such glaring inconsistencies as this, it would be a pretty stupid redactor or reviser who would put such a "glaring inconsistency" (R. H. Pfeiffer) side by side. Anyone who would be qualified to bring together such "divergent sources" in the manner of Joshua would certainly know better than to place such *glaring inconsistencies* side by side. The problem is not with Joshua or the Bible but with the *critic*. It would appear that anyone would be able to see that there are two accounts of two memorials here. These are not the same memorials but rather two different memorials. One was to be established on the *west side* of Jordan. The other was to be established in the *midst of the riverbed*. Whenever the water in the Jordan was low, the stones could possibly be seen. It would stand as vivid testimony of what God had done for all who came on either side of the Jordan. The one on the west of Jordan

would serve as a memorial primarily for the children of Israel in *future generations*. If the critics would take the time to read the text then they would not see so many "glaring inconsistencies."

4:10-14—the crossing of the people. In 4:10 the priest bearing the ark remained in the riverbed until all Israel passed over. Through the events of the day God magnified Joshua in the sight of all Israel so that the people gave him the same reverence which they had given Moses, 4:11-14.

4:15-24—the completion of the miraculous crossing. 4:15-19, after the people have crossed, the priests leave the riverbed and the river once again overflowed the banks. 4:20-22, a memorial of stones was to be erected for the sake of the future generations of Israel. In 4:23-24, the crossing of Jordan is likened to the crossing of the Red Sea. The purpose of this great miracle was to show the nations round about the *power* of Jehovah. This would instill fear of him in their hearts and they would be more easily overcome by God's people.

D. 5:12—the people are circumcised and celebrate the passover at Gilgal. Vs. 1-9, the circumcision of the people is recorded. 5:1 indicates to us that the inhabitants of the land lost their spirit of resistance when they heard of the great miracle of the crossing of the Jordan.

5:2-8—the people are circumcised. Israel must be circumcised (the second time) because, as the text explains, all the males who left Egypt were circumcised but no circumcision had taken place in the wilderness. Therefore, all the males of the generation which entered into Canaan were uncircumcised - hence a *nation* must be circumcised the *second* time.

5:9—the reproach of Egypt is rolled away. The reproach which the Egyptians have heaped upon Israel, perhaps by saying that they would all perish in the wilderness, and many other evil surmisings relative to their departure from Egypt, was now taken away. Israel was not only safe in the land promised them but were once again bearing the token of the *Abrahamic covenant* — circumcision. The Abrahamic covenant assured them of the land and all attendant blessings.

5:10-12—Israel keeps the passover in the land. There is no problem posed here as some critics might think. Some have objected to their keeping the passover on the third day of

their circumcision on the theory that the Israelites were ceremonially unclean because of circumcision and were also too sore from it to prepare the passover. There is no problem here because the *Levitical tribe*, which was not involved in the original numbering of Israel, and which did not suffer the fate of the other Hebrews who died in the wilderness, was sufficient in number to prepare the sacrifices for all Israel. It would not be impossible for *each family* to prepare and eat the passover as they normally did. They *were* ceremonially clean and the only hindrance would be soreness which would *not* make it an impossibility. There is quite a bit of difference between *inconvenience* and *impossibility*.

E. 5:14-6:27—the appearance of the captain of the Lord's host and the capture of Jericho. Vs. 14-15, the appearance of the prince of the host of heaven. This prince of God's army gives instructions for the captured Jericho, 6:1-5. Jericho is captured in 6:6-27. There is only one account of the captured Jericho in spite of the contention of liberals or modernists such as Pfeiffer and others. Joshua gives instructions to the priests, 6:6-7. The people obey the command of God, 6:8-20. Every attempt to explain away the miracle of the fall of Jericho is based upon *naturalism*. This was the strongest and most fortified city in all Canaan. God *gave* the city to Israel. The fall of the walls of Jericho have only *one explanation* — God. In 6:21-27 is recorded the destruction of Jericho. It is *devoted* to God; therefore, *all* must be destroyed. Rahab and her family were saved according to the promise made to them, 6:22-25. A prophetic curse was pronounced upon anyone who would rebuild the city, 6:26. The fame of Joshua was now spread abroad, 6:27.

F. 7:1-26, *the trespass and punishment of Achan*. Achan had robbed his nation of its purity and God would protect them only if they would put away the sin from them. The plural used in vs. 25-26 does not indicate "confusion" as Pfeiffer and others contend. A redactor who would be intelligent enough to put together as many stories as Pfeiffer and his fellow-critics assert that he did, in order to complete our present book of Joshua, would certainly have enough intelligence to avoid a *contradiction* of plurals within the same verse. Since Achan was the principal character as head of his house, he is mentioned alone but apparently the whole fam-

ily was involved; therefore, all are mentioned along with Achan. The fate suffered by this family was the same fate assigned for a city which fell away to idolatry, Deut. 13:16-17.

G. 8:1-35, *Ai destroyed and the law read to the people.* 8:1-29, the destruction of Ai. Joshua is encouraged and instructed concerning Ai, 8:1-2. 8:3-13 relates the setting of the ambush. Note: It is the opinion of some that v. 3 contains an error of numbers (Keil, Pfeiffer, and others). This is not necessarily true. The passage could be reconciled in the following manner: vs. 3-9 present a general statement. Vs. 10-11 begin a detailed account of what happened. *All* the people of war in v. 11 refers only to those chosen in v. 3. V. 12 is a *specific detail* whereas v. 4 would be a command given to the leaders who in turn would carry out that command in a specific way *later*. The night of vs. 12-13 is the same night of v. 3 or else there are two nights involved and 35 thousand men who are to rush into a little place of 12 thousand population.

Therefore, the reasonable solution seems to be that there is first a *general* and then a *specific description* of the event. This does not eliminate every difficulty but it does make each passage reconcilable with every other passage involved. It seems far more reasonable to think that Joshua stationed five thousand men in ambush and with the remaining 25 thousand appeared before Ai the next day. The fighting force of Ai combined with Bethel probably amounted to no more than six to eight thousand at the most. It would seem utterly irrational for a fighting force of this size to go out against five hundred to six hundred thousand armed men which all Israel would have. If Joshua had had that many men present they could have just marched right over the few thousand presented by the forces of Ai and Bethel and without any weapons have destroyed everyone of them. But by stationing five thousand men in ambush and arranging twenty-five thousand the next day in the valley before Ai, the people of Ai and Bethel, emboldened by the events a few days before, would be tempted to rush out and do battle with them as on the previous occasion. This at least presents a *reasonable* view. The ambush succeeds, 8:14-23, and all Ai is destroyed and the king is hanged, 8:24-29. An altar is built and the law is written upon it, 8:30-32 and then the law is read to the people, 32-35.

H. 9:1-27—*the craftiness of the Gibeonites*. 9:1-2, the kings of Canaan band together against Israel. Vs. 1-2 form an introduction to chapters 9-11. The news of the miracle occurring when Israel crossed the Jordan at first threw such terror into the hearts of the people that they had no power to resist. However, gradually they recovered and now decided that by joining together they could successfully resist Israel. 9:3-15, the Gibeonites approached Joshua, deceived him, and he made the covenant with them. A discovery of their deceit is made three days afterwards and they are punished for the fraud, 9:16-27.

I. 10:1-27—*a great victory at Gibeon*. 10:1-5, the news of the destruction of Ai and of Gibeon's defection so alarmed Adonizedec, king of Jerusalem, that he joined with four other kings to punish Gibeon for their defection to Israel. The slaughter of Gibeon, 10:6-15. When the kings come against Gibeon, the Gibeonites appeal to Joshua and he returns with help. Note: The various attempts to explain away the "long day" in Joshua 10 are either based upon, or are compromises with, a "low view" of the scripture. The account is manifestly a *miracle* and is associated with another miracle — both designed to demonstrate to the people of Canaan that it was not merely the people of Jehovah against whom they were battling, but it was primarily against Jehovah himself. If men today are unable to confirm by science or secular history every miracle mentioned in the Bible, that is no indication that they did not occur. Many miracles have been satisfactorily *confirmed* by external evidences. If one miracle happened, all the other miracles of the Bible could have happened. Therefore, attempts to explain away Bible miracles are simply denials of the supernatural. 10:16-27, the flight and death of the five kings.

J. 10:28-43—*the conquest of southern Palestine*. The destruction of the fortified towns into which the enemy fled, 10:28-39. 10:40-43 presents a summary of the conquest.

K. 11:1-23—*the victory over the northern Canaanites and capture of the land*. 11:1-15, the war. The second league of the Canaanitish kings is seen in 11:1-6. Note: The Jabin here is *not* the one mentioned in Judges 5 but a *predecessor* of that Jabin. 11:7-9, victory is given at the waters of Merom. Vs. 10-15, the destruction of Hazor. 11:16-23, a general re-



trospoct of the conquest of west Palestine. Note: The taking of the *whole land* does not imply that every last village or town had been taken or that every Canaanite had been dispossessed of his land, but merely that the Israelites had broken the power of the Canaanite and overthrown his dominion of the land so thoroughly that the Canaanites who remained were powerless to offer more than *token resistance* to Israel *if* Israel would be faithful to God.

L. 12:1-23—*A catalog of vanquished kings of Canaan.* 12:1-6, a summary of the defeated kings east of Jordan. 12:7-24, a list of the thirty-one kings defeated west of the Jordan. This section is a concise summary of Israel's victories over the kings of Canaan.

## II. THE DIVISION OF CANAAN—Chapters 13-24.

A. 13:1-33—*A division of the land east of the Jordan.* 13:1-7, the command of God to divide the land. It appears that Sidon is the chief city of the Phoenicians at this time, indicating the early date of writing because in later times (as early as Solomon) Tyre was the chief city. 13:8-14, the boundaries of the land which is to be divided. Levi was to receive no territory. 13:15-23, the inheritance of Reuben. 13:24-28, the possession of Gad. 13:29-33, the possession of the half tribe of Manasseh and a word relative to Levi.

B. 14:1-15—*the inheritance of Caleb.* 14:1-5 is an introduction to the division of Canaan. 14:6-15, Caleb is rewarded for his faithfulness to God. The secret of his outstanding success in life was in that "he wholly followed the Lord," verse 8. At the age of eighty-five he was anxious to face the challenge of the fortified cities of the enemies because he knew that God would be with him.

C. 15:1-63—*the inheritance of Judah.* 15:1-2, the boundaries of Judah. 15:13-19, the conquest of the inheritance of Caleb. 15:20-63, a list of towns of the tribe of Judah. Note: The cities of Canaan are referred to by their names before the conquest of the land and then by the names given to them after the Israelites conquered them. This indicates a mark of antiquity.

D. 16:1-17:13—*The inheritance of Ephraim and Manasseh.* 16:1-4, the boundaries of the tribe. 16:5-10, the portion of Ephraim. 17:1-13, the inheritance of the half tribe of

Manasseh. 17:14-18, the complaint of the descendants of Joseph.

E. 18:1-19:51—*The inheritance of the seven remaining tribes and of Joshua.* 18:1-10, the tabernacle set up at Shiloh and a description of the land yet to be divided. 18:11-28, the inheritance of Benjamin. 19:1-9, the inheritance of Simeon. 19:10-16, the inheritance of Zebulun. 19:17-23, the inheritance of Issachar. 19:24-31, the inheritance of Asher. 19:32-39, the inheritance of Naphtali. 19:40-48, the inheritance of Dan. 19:49-50, the inheritance of Joshua. 19:51 forms the conclusion of this section.

F. 10:1-9—*Cities of refuge appointed.* 20:1-6, God commands Joshua concerning the cities. 20:7-9, the command is obeyed.

G. 21:1-45—*Cities are appointed for the priests and Levites.* The Levites demand the cities which had been promised to them by God, 21:1-3. 24:4-8 is a general account of the Levitical cities. The cities of Aaron are set forth in 21:9-19. The cities of the Kohathites are recorded in 21:20-26. The cities of the Gershonites, 21:27-33. The cities of the Merarites, 21:34-42. The conclusion to the division of the land, 21:43-45.

H. 22:1-34—*The two and a half Transjordanic tribes return to their inheritance.* 22:1-8, Joshua's parting address to these tribes. 22:9-10, the tribes return and build an altar on the banks of the Jordan. 22:11-20, Israel sends men to investigate lest there be an apostasy among their brethren. 22:21-29, the two and a half tribes reassure their brethren that it was for *memorial purposes* and not for sacrificial purposes that the altar had been built. 22:30-34, the delegation returned home pleased with the explanation and the eastern tribes named the altar "witness between us." This name indicated that the altar was to stand as testimony that the eastern tribe also worshipped God.

I. 23:1-24:33—*Joshua's farewell and death.* 23:1-16, the first parting address. Joshua reassured Israel that God would bless them, vs. 1-11. In vs. 12-16 he warns them against apostasy from God. In 24:1-33, the second parting address. A renewal of the covenant is made. In vs. 29-33, the death of Joshua and Eleazer is recorded. The interment of the bones of Joseph is mentioned.

## Chapter Two

### JUDGES

#### Name

The book takes its name from the rulers (Judges, *shophetim*) who ruled Israel during the period between Joshua and Samuel. The *judge* was one who directed and ruled the state as well as delivered the people from oppression. This was not a continual office, but during this period of Israel's peculiar needs God raised up persons and endowed them, through His Spirit, with the necessary strength and wisdom to accomplish the deliverance of his people.

#### Author

Destructive critics such as Pfeiffer and others do not regard the book of Judges as a unit but rather consider it a "trite compilation" from different sources. However, there is no valid basis for such an assumption but only the naturalistic tendencies reacting against *divine* authorship. The *unity* of the book is evidenced by its *orderly arrangement* which would be impossible if it came into its present form the way the destructive critics said that it must have. We may never absolutely determine the date and human authorship of the book. However, this is unimportant if we acknowledge the *prophetic authorship* of it on the human side and God's authorship for the divine side. According to ancient *Rabbinic tradition*, Samuel was the author. Internal evidence confines the date of the book to approximately Samuel's time. There are *objections* to the authorship of Samuel of the book of Judges, based upon the expressions, "to this day," found in 17:6; 18:1, and 21:25. Some believe that these passages imply a time of writing in the early monarchy. If this be true then that would still put it within the days of Samuel who lived into the reign of Saul and who would be well qualified to write the book of Judges.

There is no justification whatsoever for believing that the book is compiled from several written sources and oral tra-

ditions. The writer was inspired of God and whatever sources that were used, if any, were accurate, and the writer would be guarded by the Holy Spirit against making an error in recording it.

### Purpose

The purpose of the book is religious. It was given (1) for a book of *instruction* for those who lived later; (2) the book shows the *relationship* between God and Israel and Israel and the nations about them; (3) the design of the book indicates that the *warnings of God* are not only authoritative but always true. As Israel did that which they were commanded not to do, the punishment came upon them which God had foretold. As they repented and turned to God, God kept his part of the promise and relieved them of their oppressions. C. F. Keil summarized the matter when he said, "It indicates the attitude of Israel toward their God, and of the Lord toward His people, during the first period after they had taken possession of the promised land, so as to evince that the faithful Covenant God ruled His congregation in righteousness and mercy; and thus it warns and instructs for the time to come."<sup>5</sup>

The book of Judges shows an alternation between *apostasy* and *faithfulness* to God. One of the purposes of the book perhaps is to show the confusion that exists in the lives of those who live without God.

### Facts About Judges

The period of Judges includes the time from the entrance of the people led by Joshua into the promised land, through the judgeship of Samuel, to the inauguration of Saul, the first king. The book of Judges itself does not cover that whole period but it does include more than 300 years; from 320 to 350 years of time is probably covered in the book of Judges. The book mentions thirteen judges and of these there were three types:

- (1) *warrior* - judges such as Gideon and Samson
- (2) *priest* - a judge such as we see in Eli
- (3) *prophet* - a judge such as we see exemplified in Samuel

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<sup>5</sup>Keil, *op. cit.*, page 217.

The period covered in the book of Judges has aptly been termed the "dark ages" of Israel. As one views the anarchy and confusion that existed in this period it is easy to understand why. A phrase that runs through the book is, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes," 17:6; 21:25.

There is *confusion* in the religious, moral, and political life of Israel. Chapters 17 through 21 indicate this very clearly. The book indicates that apostate individuals will produce a backsliding and apostate nation.

The chief judges were: (1) Deborah, (2) Gideon, (3) Samson, (4) Samuel.

There were six major invasions of Israel:

- (1) the Mesopotamian invasion from the east, 3:7-11
- (2) the Moabites invasion from the southeast, 3:12-31
- (3) the Canaanite invasion from the north, chapters 4-5
- (4) the invasion of the Midianites from the east, 6:8-32
- (5) the invasion of the Ammonites from the east, 10:6-12:15
- (6) the invasion of the Philistines from the southwest, chapters 13-16

The history of the book begins with compromise and closes with confusion which is but the logical conclusion of the course of *compromise*. If God's people had only been faithful to God, then all of the promises would have been fulfilled to them in that period. However, his people of that day learned many lessons the difficult way — the way that many of us today are forced to learn them. The book of Judges offers some very sobering thoughts, and we would do well to reflect upon them occasionally. As the book is studied, keep in mind that this was God dealing with his beloved nation. He chastened them because he loved them. Sometimes the same is necessary for his people today.

### Outline of Judges

#### I. THE CONDITION OF ISRAEL AFTER THE DEATH OF JOSHUA—1:1-3:6.

##### A. Introduction—1:1-2:5.

1. The time of the events—1:1.
2. The relationship between Israel and God, and Israel and the nations—1:2-2:5.
  - a. A record of success—1:2-18.
  - b. Compromise and failure—1:19-36.
  - c. The angel of the Lord appears at Bochim—2:1-5.

**B. Israel's faith and God's actions—2:6-3:6.**

1. The apostasy began—2:6-10.
2. Repetition of apostasy—2:11-19.
3. Rebellious Israel punished—2:20-23.
4. Nations God left in Canaan to prove Israel—3:1-6.

**II. ISRAEL UNDER THE JUDGES—3:7-16:31.**

**A. Judgeship of Othniel—3:7-11.**

1. The apostasy of the people aroused the wrath of God—3:7-8.
2. The deliverance—3:9-11.

**B. The judgeship of Ehud—3:12-31.**

1. Israel sinned and paid the wages—3:12-25.
2. Ehud rallied all Israel behind him and broke the yoke of bondage—3:26-31.

**C. The bravery of Shamgar—3:31.**

**D. Judgeship of Deborah and Barak—4:1-5:31.**

1. The oppression by Jabin—4:1-3.
2. Deborah and the reluctant Barak—4:4-10.
3. The defeat of Jabin's army—4:11-16.
4. Sisera slain by a woman - Jael—4:17-22.
5. With his power broken Jabin was finally destroyed—4:23-24.
6. Deborah's song of victory—5:1-31.

**E. The judgeship of Gideon—6:1-8:35.**

1. Midian's oppression and Gideon's call—6:1-32.
  - a. Apostasy and punishment—6:1-10.
  - b. Call of Gideon—6:11-32.
2. Gideon's victory—6:33-8:3.
  - a. Gideon's equipment—6:33-34.
  - b. God's selection of 300 men to use—7:1-8.
  - c. The battle and victory—7:9-22.
  - d. Enemy pursued to the Jordan—7:23-8:3.
3. Further pursuit of the Midianites; appointment of Gideon as judge—8:4-35.
  - a. Complete overthrow of the Midianites—4-12.
  - b. Punishment of Succoth and Peniel and the execution of Midianite kings—13-21.
  - c. Summary of Gideon's later life and death—22-32.
  - d. Introduction to the history of Gideon's sons—33-35.

**F. Abimelech - Gideon's house judged—9:1-57.**

1. Abimelech murders his brethren—1-6.
2. The parable of the trees—7-21.
3. Treachery between Shechem and Abimelech begun—22-25.
4. Abimelech takes revenge on Shechem—26-49.
5. Abimelech pays for his sins—50-57.

**G. Tola and Jair judge Israel—10:1-5.**

**H. Deliverance from Ammonites and Philistines by Jephthah—10:6-12:7.**

1. Israel falls away again and is punished—10:6-18.
2. Jephthah—11:1-12:7.
  - a. Jephthah chosen as leader of Israel—11:1-11.
  - b. Jephthah attempts to negotiate a settlement with the Ammonites—11:12-28.
  - c. Jephthah subdues the Ammonites—11:29-33.
  - d. Jephthah's vow—11:34-40.

- e. Jephthah subdues the jealous Ephramites and rules Israel—12:1-7.
- I. Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon judge Israel—13:8-15.
- J. Samson's life and battles with the Philistines—13:16-16:31.
  - 1. The birth of Samson—13:1-25.
  - 2. Samson's first skirmish with the Philistines—14:1-20.
  - 3. Samson's revenge on the Philistines—15:1-8.
  - 4. Samson slays one thousand men with the jawbone of an ass and judges Israel 20 years—15:9-20.
  - 5. Samson's fall into captivity and his death—16:1-31.
- III. A PERIOD OF ARBITRARY CONDUCT—17:1-21:25.
  - A. Micah and his idolatry—17:1-13.
    - 1. The mother of Micah aids him in procuring an image—1-6.
    - 2. Micah hires a priest to serve—7-13.
  - B. Micah loses his priest and image to the Danites—18:1-31.
    - 1. The Danites in quest of their inheritance—1-10.
    - 2. Micah loses his image and priest to the Danites who take Laish and rename it Dan—17-31.
  - C. The sin at Gibeah—19:1-30.
  - D. The rest of Israel wars against Benjamin—20:1-48.
  - E. The tribe of Benjamin saved from complete extermination—21:1-25.

## Analysis

### I. THE CONDITION OF ISRAEL AFTER THE DEATH OF JOSHUA—1:1-3:6.

A. 1:1-2:5—*Introduction*. 1:1, the time of the events. (The time is *after* the death of Joshua. Judges takes up the history of Israel where the book of Joshua leaves off.) 1:2-2:5—the relationship between Israel and God and Israel and the nations. Vs. 2-18 are a record of success. It appears that at first Israel was intent on *doing* God's will. 19-36 record the *compromise* and the *failure* of the people. Israel failed to drive out of the land all of the natives. They compromised God's plan for them. Herein lay the *reason* for their miserable failure. Any attempt at compromise can only result in failure in any age. 2:1-5—the angel of the Lord appears at Bochim. Israel is reproached for breaking their covenant with God. It is stated that the nations would be a *snare* to them.

B. 2:6-3:6—*Israel's faith and God's reactions*. 2:6-10—the apostasy begins. This is a great compliment to the righteous influence of Joshua by the writer of Judges. 2:11-19, repetition of apostasy. A list of departures from the faith by Israel. 3:20-23, rebellious Israel is punished. The idolatry was not only repeated but constantly grew worse until God de-

terminated not to destroy any more the nations around them. It must be remembered that God was driving the natives out *in part* because of *their* sins. When the sins of Israel became as great as their sins there was no longer any point in driving them out. Critics have raised questions relative to vs. 21-23 regarding the appearance of Joshua's name in this section. However, v. 22 explains the *why* of v. 21. V. 23 reiterates v. 21. It does not refer to a time subsequent to the death of Joshua. 3:1-6 show that the nations left in Canaan were left by God to prove Israel.

## II. ISRAEL UNDER THE JUDGES—3:7-16:31. (A record of the results of Israel's compromise).

A. This section shows clearly that *sin is always followed by punishment: repentance is followed by God's mercy*. The following list is not intended to be a summary of all the years because those listed sometimes overlap with some of the ones on either side of them. Therefore, an exact chronology of *years* is not necessarily to be gained from this list. However, it does offer a chronology of *events*:

- (1) The Mesopotamian invasion from the East—3:7-11.
  - A. Eight years' servitude.
  - B. Othniel deliverer; rest for forty years.
- (2) The Moabite invasion from the Southeast—3:12-31.
  - A. Eighteen years' oppression.
  - B. Ehud and Shamgar deliverer; rest for 80 years.
- (3) Canaanite invasion from the North—chapters 4-5.
  - A. Twenty years' oppression.
  - B. Deliverers Deborah and Barak; land rest for 40 years.
- (4) Invasion of the Midianites from the East—6:8-32.
  - A. Seven years' oppression.
  - B. Gideon deliverer; land rested for 40 years.
- (5) (Note: This was internal oppression) Civil war—9:1-10:6.
  - A. Judges Tola and Jair.
- (6) Invasion of Ammonites from the East—10:6-12:15.
  - A. Affliction for 18 years.
  - B. Deliverer - Jephthah - (and his successors, Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon).
  - C. Rest for 31 years.
- (7) Invasion of the Philistines from the Southwest—chapters 13-16.
  - A. 40 years affliction by the Philistines.
  - B. Samson deliverer.

B. 3:7-11—*Judgeship of Othniel*. Vs. 7-8, the apostasy of the people aroused the wrath of God. This apostasy seemed to be connected with the intermarriages which took place. Cf. also Solomon's life and a similar tragedy. Vs. 9-11, the



deliverance. The cry of repentance (Israel left off *seeking help* from idols and *turned back* to God) brought forth the long-suffering mercy from Jehovah. A judge, the nephew of Caleb, was raised up by God to deliver them from oppression. Note: The *spirit of Jehovah* came upon him which indicates that the Spirit of God gave him the *power* and *wisdom* to do whatever was necessary to do in order to *deliver*. This similar phrase found throughout the book of Judges indicates that fact.

C. 3:12-30—*The Judgeship of Ehud*. Because Israel forsook God, the Israelites were forced into subjection to the Moabites and had to pay tribute to them. This is a sad lesson which Israel seemed never to fully comprehend and one which man today finds difficult to grasp: If man does not sacrifice *for* and *unto* God, he must pay heavy tribute to the world. 3:12-25—Israel sinned and paid the wages. (Upon their repentance God raised up Ehud who slew Eglon, king of Moab). 3:26-30—Ehud rallied all Israel behind him and the yoke of bondage was broken.

D. 3:31—*The bravery of Shamgar*. Although Shamgar is not generally reckoned among the judges, he apparently delivered a section of Israel which lay next to the Philistines from the oppression of the Philistines and made the roads safe for travellers once again. Therefore, in a limited sense, he would be a *deliverer* - judge. The phraseology of the verse seems to indicate that he should be reckoned as a judge, although not to be counted in a chronology because it was a partial deliverance and perhaps overlapped in the period counted among other years.

E. 4:1-5:31—*Judgeship of Deborah and Barak*. Vs. 1-3 describe the oppression by Jabin. Deborah summoned the reluctant Barak and, because of his reluctance, she prophesied that a woman would be given the honor. Vs. 12-16 record the defeat of Jabin's army. Vs. 17-22, Sisera, commander of the enemy, fled and was slain by a woman - Jael. Note: Pfeiffer claims that a conflict is seen between this account and the one in chapter 5. However, a careful reading of the text will show that one chapter simply mentions some *different* details, *not contradictory* details. Both accounts harmonize by showing the following facts: Sisera drank the milk, then fell asleep, and then was slain by Jael who placed a tent nail on

his temple and drove it through his head. The confusion is to be found *only* in the critic's mind. Vs. 23-24, with his power thus broken, Jabin was finally destroyed. 5:1-31, Deborah's song of victory. This chapter is poetic and the figures of speech must be understood in their *context*. The contention that Deborah was a mere personification of a city in Israel has no validity whatsoever. She is spoken of throughout chapters 4-5 in the very same way as is Barak. She is manifestly declared to be a prophetess and proves this declaration to be true by her prophecy and its fulfillment. She is said to be the wife of Lapidoth and also to be the judge of Israel at this time. Again the contradiction is in the mind of those who *reject* the text.

F. 6:1-8:35—*The judgeship of Gideon*. This is a unified account and deals with a short but very severe oppression brought about because of Israel's sin. 6:1-32 reveals Midian's oppression and Gideon's call. Israel's apostasy and punishment, vs. 1-10. The call of Gideon, 11-32. 6:33-8:3—A record of Gideon's victory. Gideon is equipped, 6:33-40. However, lest Israel should vaunt herself in her forthcoming victory God selects a mere 300 men to obtain the victory, 7:1-8. The battle and victory over Midian—7:9-22. 7:23-8:3, the enemy is pursued to the Jordan. Note: The diplomacy of Gideon is shown in 8:1-3. Also, the victory of the Ephramites seems to have been very important, cf. Isa. 10:26. 8:4-35, further pursuit of the Midianites; appointment of Gideon as judge. A complete overthrow of the Midianites is seen in vs. 4-12. Vs. 13-21 record the punishment of Succoth and Pnuel and the execution of the Midianite kings. Vs. 22-32 are a summary of Gideon's later life and death. Vs. 33-35 serve as an introduction to the history of Gideon's sons.

G. 9:1-57—*Abimelech - Gideon's house is judged*. In vs. 1-6 we have a record of Abimelech cruelly murdering his brethren. Vs. 7-21, the parable of the trees. (Jotham makes the application of the parable and this sufficiently explains it.) Vs. 22-25, treachery between Shechem and Abimelech begin. Vs. 26-49, Abimelech takes revenge on Shechem. Vs. 50-57, Abimelech pays for his sins.

H. 10:1-5—*Tola and Jair judge Israel*. Note: No specific oppression is mentioned but it is to be understood that Israel's neighbors were constantly against them and *internal strife* as

well disrupted the peace of Israel. These judges ruled 23 and 22 years respectively.

I. 10:6-12:7—*Deliverance from Ammonites and Philistines by Jephthah*. Chapter 10:6-18, Israel falls away again and is punished. 11:1-12:7 deals with Jephthah. 11:1-11, Jephthah is chosen as leader with the Ammonites. 11:29-33, Jephthah subdues the Ammonites. 11:34-40, Jephthah makes a vow.

Note: An excellent discussion on Jephthah's vow can be read in *Keil and Delitzsch Commentary on the Old Testament*, Vol. 1, on Joshua, Judges and Ruth, pages 385-395. The position defended there is that Jephthah's daughter was devoted to a life of *virginity* and *service* to Jehovah. A very strong case is presented for this view.

Others hold the position that Jephthah literally offered his daughter as a burnt offering.

It seems that the first view would more nearly harmonize with every fact than would the latter view.

12:1-7, Jephthah subdues the jealous Ephraimites and rules Israel.

J. 13:8-15—*Ibzan, Elon, and Abdon judge Israel*, 7, 10, and 8 years in their respective order.

K. 13:16-16:31—*Samson's life and battles with the Philistines*. 13:1-25 deal with the birth of Samson. 14:1-20 deal with Samson's first skirmish with the Philistines. 15:1-8 deal with Samson's revenge on the Philistines. 15:9-20 record Samson slaying one thousand men with the jawbone of an ass and judging Israel 20 years. 16:1-31, Samson's fall into captivity and his death.

Note: Samson was endowed with tremendous power by God but that power was contingent upon his *faithfulness* to the Nazarite vow. His character was very weak, and therefore his latter end was a tragic result of his earlier lusts. He reaped what he had sown, which is the basic lesson we all need to learn, cf. Gal. 6:7-8.

In this stage of Israel's history, *internal decay* is becoming more discernable. Israel is headed toward a point of almost total apostasy.

### III. A PERIOD OF ARBITRARY CONDUCT—17:1-21:25

A. 17:1-13—*Micah and his idolatry*. Vs. 1-6 are the re-

cord of the mother of Micah aiding him in procuring an image. Vs. 7-13, Micah hires a priest to serve.

B. 18:1-31, *the Danites take the image and priest of Micah to Laish - Dan*. Vs. 1-10, the Danites in quest of their inheritance. Vs. 11-31, Micah loses his image and priest to the Danites who take Laish and rename it Dan.

C. 19:1-30, *The sin at Gibeah*.

D. 20:1-48, *The rest of Israel wars against Benjamin* because Benjamin would not deliver up the people of Gibeah.

E. 21:1-25, *The tribe of Benjamin is saved from complete extermination* and the small remnant provided with wives.

Note: The closing words of Judges form the refrain, "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes." This is a sad state of affairs and reflects the apostasy in the *heart* and *life* of the Israelites.

## Chapter Three

### SAMUEL

#### Name

The two books of Samuel, like the two books of Kings, were originally a single book in the Hebrew Bible. It appears that the division was made because of the matter of space. The Greek Septuagint translation seems to have first divided the books because at that time it took more space to write in the Greek than it did in the Hebrew text, and the rolls used to write upon apparently were not large enough to accommodate both books as one; therefore, the division into two books on two rolls. *Samuel* means *name of God*.

#### Author

Jewish tradition attributed the authorship to Samuel. However, Samuel died (1 Samuel 25) before the major portion of the events recorded in the book happened. Therefore, this tradition is uniformly rejected today.

Some believe Samuel to have been written after the division of the kingdom, even as late as the captivity (cf. Keil, Young, and others). Although the authors mentioned are conservative, there are some who contend for a very late date who do not share their conservatism. Among those theorized to be the author, as advanced by some of this conservative school of thought, is *Jeremiah*.

The late authorship theory is supported by the statement, "Ziklag pertaineth unto the kings of Judah unto this day," 1 Sam. 27:6. However, this statement does not offer conclusive evidence for a date later than Solomon, at the latest.

The following passages indicate a distinction between Israel and Judah: 1 Sam. 11:8; 17:52; 18:6; 2 Sam. 2:4; 5:5; 11:11; 12:8; 1 Kings 1:35. It is possible therefore, to hold to an early date and a correct view of 1 Sam. 27:6 at the same time. The passage is explainable on the basis that Judah was to bear the sceptre, Gen. 49:10. So long as one of the tribe of Judah reigned, it was the will of God that *all* Israel be subject

to him. Therefore, this could well be a synecdoche, a figure of speech where a part is set for the whole, indicating all Israel. The time of Solomon would sufficiently satisfy the requirements of 1 Sam. 27:6 and thus allow for an early date of Samuel. The writer was a prophet who doubtless had a ministry that overlapped with either Samuel or one who was contemporary with part of Samuel's ministry. The author could have been either Nathan or Gad, two prophets whose ministries were during the lifetime of David, cf. 1 Chron. 29:29. In that David's death is not recorded, it would seem that the book was composed before that event.

Whoever the writer was, he was a *prophet, inspired of God* to record accurately the history of the period covered by the book. This period covers approximately one hundred twenty-five years. By divine inspiration the writer was able to record without error those things that happened during that period.

### Composition

Critics are of one voice in ascribing the books of Samuel to different sources. However, there is sharp division among the critics over *what* comes from *which* source. *Raven* aptly summarized the matter when he pointed out that the arguments used to substantiate the theory of different sources are basically the same arguments used by those who would partition the Pentateuch. (*Intro. to the O. T.*, page 164).

The arguments used to assign more than one source to Samuel are:

- (1) Certain events are *supposedly* repeated in the record. Among these are:
  - (a) two denunciations of Eli's life
  - (b) two accounts of Saul's rejection
  - (c) two or three accounts of Saul's appointment as king
  - (d) three accounts of Saul's introduction to David
  - (e) two sets of negotiations for Saul's daughter
  - (f) two accounts of David's flight from Saul's court
  - (g) David twice having Saul in his power to slay
  - (h) David twice seeking refuge with Achish
  - (i) two accounts of the death of Saul
- (2) Differences in style and point of view. The second argument will be answered in this section on composition while the first argument will be answered in the analysis of the text itself as these particular passages are noticed and a positive explanation is set forth.

A general refutation to the first argument of the critics may be observed by the following facts which argue for a unified account throughout the book of Samuel:

(1) Obviously, a redactor or editor with enough intelligence to gather sources in order to write such an account would have enough ability to see the *alleged* parallels and contradictions and eliminate them. However, the critics would insist by their *conclusions* that the editor of Samuel was little better off than an idiot, intellectually.

(2) Some parts of the books are related to other parts. Driver admitted that, "Some of the narratives contained in 1 & 2 Samuel point forward or backwards to one another, and are in other ways so connected together as to show that they are the work of one and the same writer."<sup>6</sup> When one reads the record of David, he finds that section dependent upon the section which relates the life of Saul. Likewise, the section dealing with Saul is related to the first section which deals with Samuel. The events related with Samuel show their consequences throughout 1 & 2 Samuel. Therefore, this is a telling argument for the unity of the book of Samuel and the singular authorship.

(3) The unity of Samuel is further emphasized by the logical and consistent order of the historical events. Although no chronological perfection is claimed for the events recorded, there is an *obvious plan* to the *order*, and the *careers* of Samuel, Saul, and David, are so interwoven as to be a naturally *progressive* narrative.

(4) Alleged differences in *point of view* do not present a valid argument for the "variety of authors." Pfeiffer (page 341) makes a great effort to discredit the singular authorship of Samuel by referring to the *supposed* differences of views regarding Samuel's earlier meetings with Saul; the different attitudes concerning the monarchy; and finally a comparison of 2 Sam. 7 (which he calls "a prose as wretched and inapt as that of the worst written parts of the Old Testament") with 2 Samuel 9-20 (which he called "the unsurpassed prose masterpiece of the Hebrew Bible").

Pfeiffer and other critics fail to realize that the divine record is faithful to produce every aspect of an event which at one time or another will serve to teach the people of God

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<sup>6</sup>Driver, *op. cit.*, page 173.

a valuable lesson. Therefore, God presents the *excuse* offered by his people in their desire for a king as well as *his wrath*. He also records the acquiescence of God to their demands and his promise of blessings in order that man later might see how the will of God was done and his purpose fulfilled *in spite of all that men could do to the contrary*.

Much could also be said in answer to the scoff at the alleged difference of view regarding the importance of Samuel as viewed by Pfeiffer's allegation. However, suffice it to say that God *arranged* for the meeting between Saul and Samuel in this manner, and this in no way reflects upon the greatness of Samuel.

Pfeiffer's degrading view of 2 Samuel 7 does not make the passage any less lovely, when one considers the figures of speech used in it. An arbitrary assertion does not make it necessarily true.

(5) Uniform *diction* and *style* evidences a unity *throughout*. Driver lists nine most notable expressions which occur in Samuel. These are: "1. *As thy soul liveth*; 2. *Jehovah of hosts*; 3. *So may God do to me and more also*; 4. *From Dan even to Beersheba*; 5. *Prince or leader*; 6. *To come mightily*; 7. *As Jehovah liveth*; 8. *Blessed be thou (ye) of Jehovah*; 9. *To speak out, deploy*."<sup>7</sup> Driver attempts to dismiss the recurrences "as phraseology of the time." This is a very feeble effort for so great a critic to dismiss a telling argument. The style and diction of the whole of Samuel is a well integrated effort and rebuts all attempts to divide the authors on the basis of style and diction.

Pfeiffer thinks that the early source of Samuel (writers) drew on their fancy or on popular legends and at times had a *historical kernel* in the story, (Pfeiffer, page 345). This statement that Pfeiffer makes is in reference to the source which Pfeiffer calls "the outstanding prose writing historical masterpiece in the Old Testament;" (page 356). It would seem that Pfeiffer believes that a "kernel of history" taken here and there is a sufficient basis for a *historical masterpiece*. This would hardly qualify Pfeiffer to be a good historian, let alone a writer of the scripture.

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<sup>7</sup>Driver, *op. cit.*, pages 184-185.



### Purpose

There are several purposes served by the book of Samuel, among which are: (1) to describe the founding of the Hebrew monarchy, (2) Samuel serves as the connecting link between the period of the judges and the early monarchy, (3) Samuel tells us that the gloom of despair characteristic of the book of Judges is now rectified by the ministry of the prophet Samuel but that Israel is still a *rebellious son who must be chastened* for his own welfare, (4) Samuel serves to show that the monarchy was *contrary* to the desire of God but that he *overruled* the sinful actions of men to his own glory and to accomplish his *purpose* on earth — the *redemption of man*, cf. Gen. 3:15.

The book of Samuel offers a summary of Samuel's work. (1) Samuel was able to effect a great national reform. (2) Samuel was able to achieve such a victory over the Philistines at Eben-ezer that the Philistines were unable to pose a serious threat to Israel again during his judgeship. (3) Samuel inaugurated the schools of the prophets. (4) Samuel judged Israel very effectively during his life.

### Contents

The book of Samuel is a *biographical* narrative. All of the historical events are interwoven into the accounts of the life, or lives, of the individuals spoken of in the book. Therefore, the book of Samuel breaks down very easily into three major portions: (1) the life of Samuel; (2) the life of Saul; (3) the life of David.

### Outline of Samuel

- I. ISRAEL UNDER SAMUEL—1 Samuel 1-7.
  - A. Samuel's birth and Hannah's song—1:1-2:10.
    1. Elkanah and his two wives—1:1-8.
    2. Hannah's prayer—1:9-18.
    3. Samuel's birth and his dedication to Jehovah—1:19-28.
    4. Hannah's grateful song of praise—2:1-10.
  - B. Samuel's apprenticeship under Eli, and the promise of judgment upon Eli and his house—2:11-36.
    1. Eli's sons—11-17.
    2. Samuel's ministry—18-26.
    3. Judgment pronounced upon Eli and his house—27-36.

- C. Samuel called to the prophetic work—3:1-21.
  - 1. Jehovah appears to Samuel in a vision—3:1-14.
  - 2. The vision related to Eli—3:15-18.
  - 3. God's support of Samuel—3:19-21.
- D. The Philistines overcome Israel, take the ark, and Eli dies—4:1-22.
  - 1. Israel overcome by Philistines—4:1-11.
  - 2. The effect of the news of Israel's loss—4:12-22.
- E. The ark of God among the Philistines and their reactions—5:1-6:21.
  - 1. The ark in the land of the Philistines—5:1-12.
  - 2. The Philistines send the ark away from them—6:1-21.
- F. Under Samuel, Israel reforms and is victorious over the Philistines—7:1-17.
  - 1. Israel turns from idols to God—7:1-4.
  - 2. God gives Israel a victory over the Philistines—7:5-11.
  - 3. Eben-ezer, the *stone of help*—7:12-14.
  - 4. The circuit of Samuel—7:15-17.

## II. THE REIGN AND DEATH OF SAUL—8:1-31:13.

- A. Israel demands a king—8:1-22.
  - 1. Samuel's sons go astray—8:1-3.
  - 2. Israel's desire to be like other nations expresses itself in their demand for a king—8:4-9.
  - 3. Samuel warns Israel of the action of a king—8:10-18.
  - 4. Israel refuses to listen to God's warning—8:19-22.
- B. Saul is anointed king—9:1-10:27.
  - 1. Saul searches for his father's asses—9:1-10.
  - 2. God reveals to Samuel the appointment of Saul—9:11-21.
  - 3. Saul eats with Samuel—9:22-24.
  - 4. Samuel prepares to send Saul home—9:25-27.
  - 5. Saul is anointed—10:1-13.
  - 6. Saul relates his experiences to his uncle—10:14-16.
  - 7. Saul publicly chosen king at Mizpah—10:17-27.
- C. Saul's victory over the Ammonites—11:1-15.
  - 1. The people of Jabesh appeal for help—11:1-5.
  - 2. God rouses Saul and gives him the victory—11:6-11.
  - 3. The victory unites Israel behind Saul—11:12-13.
  - 4. The monarchy renewed at Gilgal—11:14-15.
- D. Samuel's address to the people—12:1-25.
  - 1. Samuel's challenge regarding his conduct as judge—12:1-5.
  - 2. Samuel emphasizes that the monarchy was an apostasy from God's will—12:6-18.
  - 3. God's manifestation of anger arouses fear among the Israelites—12:19-25.
- E. Saul's war with the Philistines and his presumptuous sacrifice—13:1-23.
  - 1. The Philistines aroused because Jonathan attacks a Philistine garrison—13:1-23.
  - 2. The size of the Philistine army terrorizes Israel—13:5-7.
  - 3. Saul *presumes* to act as priest and is rebuked—13:8-15.
  - 4. Israel stands disarmed—13:16-23.
- F. Saul's wars with the Philistines—14:1-52.
  - 1. God gives Jonathan a great victory—14:1-15.
  - 2. All Israel joins in the battle—14:16-23.

3. Saul forbids the Israelites to eat until evening—14:24-30.
4. The people sin in eating animals that had not been properly slain—14:31-35.
5. Saul is prevented by the people from slaying Jonathan for having eaten contrary to Saul's command—14:36-46.
6. Saul successfully wars against the enemies of Israel—14:47-52.
- G. Saul's rejection by God—15:1-34.
  1. God's commandment regarding the Amalekites—15:1-3.
  2. Saul's presumptuous disregard for God's command—15:4-9.
  3. God sends Samuel to Saul at Gilgal—15:10-16.
  4. God's ultimatum delivered—15:17-23.
  5. Samuel fulfills God's command and then leaves Saul with finality—15:24-34.
- H. David anointed king—16:1-23.
  1. Samuel sent to the house of Jesse—16:1-5.
  2. God's choice of a man—16:6-13.
  3. David in Saul's court—16:14-23.
- I. Saul's last days and his death—17:1-31:13.
  1. David and Goliath—17:1-54.
  2. Jonathan's friendship—17:55-18:5.
  3. David's flight from Saul—18:6-27:12.
  4. Saul hears his final doom pronounced—28:1-25.
  5. David removed from the army of the Philistines—29:1-11.
  6. David avenges Ziklag—30:1-30.
  7. The death and burial of Saul and his sons—31:1-13.

### III. DAVID'S REIGN OVER ISRAEL—2 Samuel 1:1-25:25.

- A. David's grief over Saul and Jonathan—1:1-27.
  1. An Amalekite brings David the news of Saul's death—1:16.
  2. David's lament and elegy—17-27.
- B. David and Judah against Ishbosheth and the battle at Gibeon—2:1-32.
  1. Jehovah sends David to Hebron to be made king over Judah—1-4.
  2. David sends a message of appreciation to the men of Jabesh-gilead for interring Saul—5-7.
  3. Ishbosheth is made king over Israel by Abner—8-11.
  4. Abner and Israel defeated at Gibeon—12-17.
  5. Asahel, the brother of Joab, slain by Abner—18-23.
  6. Joab returns to Hebron—24-32.
- C. David increases and Joab murders Abner—3:1-39.
  1. David's house increases—1-5.
  2. Saul's house decreases—6-39.
    - a. Abner and Ishbosheth quarrel—6-11.
    - b. Abner defects to David—12-21.
    - c. Joab murders Abner—22-30.
    - d. David laments Abner's death—31-39.
- D. The death of Ishbosheth—4:1-12.
  1. Ishbosheth murdered—1-6.
  2. David punishes the murderers of Ishbosheth—7-12.
- E. Israel's rise to power under David—5:1-10:19.
  1. David anointed king over all Israel and the beginning of his victories—5:1-25.
    - a. David made king over all Israel—1-5.

- b. Zion taken and Jerusalem made the capitol of Israel—6-10.
  - c. David's palace and his family—11-16.
  - d. God gives David two decisive victories over the Philistines—17-25.
2. David moves the ark to Jerusalem—6:1-23.
  - a. Uzziah's death and the ark in the household of Obed-edom—1-11.
  - b. The removal of the ark to Jerusalem is finished—11-19.
  - c. Michal ridicules David—20-23.
3. David's desire to build a temple and God's promise to establish David's house—7:1-29.
  - a. David's desire to build God a house—1-3.
  - b. God denies David the privilege of building a temple—4-7.
  - c. God promises to establish David's house—8-17.
  - d. David's prayer of thanksgiving and praise—18-29.
4. David's victories and his officers—8:1-18.
  - a. The Philistines and the Moabites subdued—1-2.
  - b. The extent of David's victories—3-14.
  - c. David's officers—15-18.
5. David's kindness to Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan—9:1-13.
  - a. David seeks one of the house of Saul to show kindness to—1-8.
  - b. Saul's property is restored to Mephibosheth—9-13.
6. David breaks the power of the Syrians—10:1-19.
  - a. The cause of the war with the Ammonites—1-5.
  - b. The Ammonites hire the Syrians to fight David—6-8.
  - c. Israel puts the Syrians to flight—9-14.
  - d. The Syrians make peace with Israel—15-19.
- F. The decline of David's reign—11:1-20:26.
  1. David's sin with Bathsheba—11:1-12:31.
    - a. David's adultery—11:1-5.
    - b. David's sin of murder—11:6-25.
    - c. David marries Bathsheba—11:26-27.
    - d. God's reproof delivered by Nathan—12:1-15.
    - e. Bathsheba's child by David dies—12:16-23.
    - f. The birth of Solomon—12:24-25.
    - g. The capture of Rabbah, the royal city of the Ammonites—12:26-31.
  2. The murder of Amnon—13:1-39.
    - a. Amnon commits incest—1-19.
    - b. Absalom kills Amnon for his deed—20-29.
    - c. Absalom flees to Geshur—30-39.
  3. Absalom returns and is reconciled with David—14:1-33.
  4. The rebellion of Absalom—15:1-18:33.
    - a. Absalom's revolt—15:1-12.
    - b. David's flight—15:13-16:14.
    - c. Hushai's council and Ahithophel's suicide—16:15-17:24.
    - d. Absalom slain—17:24-18:15.
    - e. David laments the death of his son—18:16-33.
  5. David reinstated to the kingdom—19:1-39.
    - a. David's mourning and Joab's reproof—1-8.
    - b. Preparation for David's return to Jerusalem—9-14.
    - c. David's return and the events at the Jordan—15-39.

6. Discontent in Israel—19:40-20:26.
  - a. Strife between Israel and Judah over the restoration of David—19:40-43.
  - b. Sheba's rebellion—20:1-22.
  - c. David's officers—20:23-26.
- G. The conclusion of David's reign—21:1-24:25.
  1. Three years' famine—21:1-14.
  2. Acts of bravery in the war with the Philistines—21:15-22.
  3. David's psalm of praise for his triumph over his enemies—22:1-51.
  4. David's last prophetic words—23:1-7.
  5. David's heroic men—23:8-39.
  6. The numbering of the people and the pestilence—24:1-25.
    - a. David's sin in numbering the people—1-9.
    - b. David chooses the pestilence as punishment—10-17.
    - c. David's sacrifice accepted—18-25.

### Analysis

#### I. ISRAEL UNDER SAMUEL—1 Samuel 1-7.

A. 1:1-2:10, *Samuel's birth and Hannah's song*. 1:1-8 prepares us to better understand what will transpire regarding the birth of Samuel. 1:9-18, Hannah's prayer for a son. 1:19-28, Hannah's prayer is answered and accordingly Hannah dedicates Samuel to the service of Jehovah. 2:1-10, Hannah's song of praise. This song is *prophetic* in character.

Some critics deny that this is a historical event (Pfeiffer, page 360). However, the basis for such a denial is based upon a *documentary hypothesis*, an *absolute denial* of the verbal inspiration of the Old Testament. Pfeiffer believes that the song is a much later addition and does not belong in the account at all. Pfeiffer would date the song about 750 B.C. (page 362). Many critics deny the historicity of the song of Hannah on the following assumptions: (1) V. 10 is said to assume the existence of the monarchy. (2) It is said that the theme of the song is national victory, not personal thanksgiving. (3) The language and style are said to belong to the late Psalms.

In answer to the first assumption it should be noted that this is a prayer of thanksgiving and is *prophetic* in character. In regards to the second assumption, it may be noted that to speak of a king (verse 10) does not presuppose the existence of one but rather, could refer to, as Keil states (page 34, *Commentaries on the O. T.*, Samuel), "the king is an ideal king which culminates in the Christ." The monarchy had

been prophesied very early, Deut. 17:14-20. Who would be in better position to prophetically anticipate that monarchy which was to come than the *mother* of him whom God would use to guide Israel as a monarchy was formed? As regarding the language and style relative to the third assumption, no argument can be used against the early origin of this prayer of praise because the very words that are used in this are also used in different books that are generally accepted as early. Keil very strongly affirmed "that no argument" can be drawn from the use of words for a late date. The theme can well express Hannah's own experience in life and yet be prophetic in nature. If the theme could not at all fit the circumstances of Hannah and if it were so far removed from her time, why would a late redactor ever think of inserting it at this place? All things considered, we must view this as an *inspired prayer of praise*, all the words of which were probably not understood by the speaker but were reserved for a later age to receive in the fullness of meaning.

B. 2:11-36—*Samuel's apprenticeship under Eli*, and the promise of judgment upon Eli and his house. 2:11-17 records the presumptuousness and covetousness of the sons of Eli. Vs. 27-36, the beginning of Samuel's ministry under Eli. Vs. 27-36, a record of the judgment God pronounced upon Eli and his house because he restrained not his sons.

C. 3:1-21—*Samuel called to the prophetic work*. Vs. 1-14, Jehovah appears to Samuel in a vision. Vs. 1-10, Samuel's difficulty in understanding *who* was calling him is easily understood. As yet God had not appeared to him in this manner. Eli's eyes were dim; Samuel therefore, thought that it was Eli calling to him for help. In vs. 11-14, the basis for the need of a change of judge-priest is set forth. In vs. 15-18 Samuel relates the vision to Eli. In vs. 19-21 we have God's confirmation of Samuel's prophetic work.

The critics who would divide Samuel into different sources rely upon the supposedly parallel events in the book to indicate a diversity of authorship. There are the critics who say that these two denunciations of Eli's life and course of action indicates that two different authors wrote these accounts. However, these critics refuse to consider the *unity* of these accounts. They refuse to judge this on the basis of *oriental* writing. For a fuller discussion of this type of criticism the

reader might refer to the chapter on the *Pentateuch* in Vol. 1 of this work. It is inconceivable that a redactor or later editor would allow such "blundering repetitions" to remain in a book which he knew were composed of different authors. It would not take very much intelligence to edit out such repetitious material if indeed it did not belong there in the first place. Surely the editors who were brilliant enough to redact such material would see the obvious repetition and eliminate it. Especially would this fact be true *if* these books were not what they claimed to be.

D. 4:1-21—*The Philistines overcome Israel*, take the ark, and Eli dies as God said he would. Vs. 1-11, Israel is overcome by the Philistines. Vs. 1-2, Israel confidently attacks the Philistine army. In the first three chapters we have noticed how low the priesthood had sunk in degradation and sin. Now in this section we see how low the people had sunk. Vs. 3-4 indicate the mistaken concept the people had regarding God and his ark. They felt that the mere presence of the ark in their midst would guarantee the presence of God. They failed to consider the fact that God would refuse to dwell in the midst of an unholy people. In vs. 5-11 we see Israel smitten by the Philistines because God refused to be in their midst and fight for them. In vs. 12-22 we are shown the effects of the news of Israel's loss. In vs. 12-18 we view Eli's reaction and his death. Jamison (*Critical and Experimental Commentary*, page 145) offers a description of the seat upon which Eli sat. When the news was brought to him he fell backward and broke his neck and died. Vs. 19-22, the record of the death of Phinehas' wife in childbirth.

E. 5:1-6:21—*The ark of God among the Philistines* and their reaction. 5:1-12, the ark in the land of the Philistines indicate that there was more than mere superstition attached to this ark. 1-6, the ark was placed in the house of Dagon but the havoc wrought there caused the Philistines to send the ark to Ekron, vs. 7-12. 6:1-21, the Philistines send the ark away from their land. Vs. 1-9, the Philistine priest and diviners offer their advice. Vs. 10-16, the advice of the priest and diviners is followed and the cattle carry the ark to Beth-shemesh. Vs. 17-18, the ark remained in the field of Joshua. In vs. 19-21, the men of Beth-shemesh are taught to reverence the presence of God. When they irreverently gazed into the

ark they were smitten of God, and learned that when in the presence of Jehovah one must conduct himself in a reverent manner.

F. 7:1-17—*Under Samuel Israel reforms* and is victorious over the Philistines. Vs. 1-4, Israel turns from idols to God. She has learned a lesson and now, vs. 5-11, God gives Israel a victory over the Philistines. 12-14, Eben-ezer, the stone of help was set up between Mizpeh and Shen as a monument to the help which God had given them. Vs. 15-17 relate the circuit of Samuel as he exercised his duties of ruling Israel.

## II. THE REIGN AND DEATH OF SAUL—8:1-31:13.

A. 8:1-22—*Israel demands a king*. Israel uses as an excuse the fact that Samuel's sons had gone astray, vs. 1-3. In reality, however, the reason for their demands was in their statement of *desire to be like other nations*, vs. 4-9. This desire was fully expressed in their demands for a king. They were tired of the theocracy and wanted a monarchy of their own. Samuel warns Israel of the actions of a king once they selected one, vs. 10-18. Israel refused to listen to God's warning, vs. 19-22.

Note: This demand which the people made *was not* in harmony with the will of God. There is the express statement by God that Israel was *rejecting* his rulership, 8:7. There could be no plainer expression of fact than this. There was no justification for Israel's acting in the manner in which they acted nor in making the demand which they made. It had been *prophesied* by Moses that they would have a king; furthermore, it had been foretold what the king would do. This does not indicate, however, that God was pleased with the people's demand for a king, nor does it indicate that God could not continue to work his purpose through the people of Israel in spite of their *stubbornness*. A parallel fact in the Old Testament, Mosaic dispensation is the matter of divorce and remarriage. The Israelites, because of the *hardness of their hearts*, were given the freedom to divorce their wives and remarry for almost any matter. This was not according to the original will of God nor was he ever happy over the arrangement. However, he worked through and with those people, *in spite* of their stubbornness, to bring about, in the fulness of time, the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15. The same is



true in the matter of the king which Israel demanded. God allowed them to set up a monarchy but it was not in harmony with his original will. Nevertheless, in order to fulfill Genesis 3:15, he worked through and in spite of the stubbornness of his people.

B. 9:1-10:27—*Saul is anointed king*. In 9:1-10, we find Saul searching for his father's asses. The first four verses introduce us to Saul. In vs. 5-10 Saul is induced by his servants to go to Samuel for help in finding his father's asses. Pfeiffer thinks that 9:9 was inserted by a later glossator, "who had not the slightest idea of what a seer (clairvoyant) was and confused him with the prophet." This goes to show to what extremes a critic will go in order to try to eliminate faith or cast aspersion upon a passage. 9:11-21, God reveals to Samuel the appointment of Saul as king. Vs. 11-14, Saul arrives at the city where Samuel was. Vs. 15-21, God's revelation, Samuel's application and Saul's reaction is seen. In 9:22-24, Saul eats with Samuel and in vs. 25-27, Samuel prepares to send Saul home.

10:1-13, the anointing of Saul. Vs. 1-8, Samuel promises three signs for confirmation that God had chosen Saul to lead the people of Israel. Vs. 9-13, the signs were fulfilled. Vs. 14-16, Saul, back home, relates his experiences to his uncle. Vs. 17-27 Saul is publicly chosen king at Mizpeh. Vs. 17-24, Saul's humility is indicated. Some critics think they are able to see a contradiction between the Saul of the previous chapter and this Saul. Some (Pfeiffer, page 346) view Saul in chapter nine as a bashful young man and in chapter thirteen as a mature man with a son old enough to command a detachment of troops. However, chapter nine *does not* present him as a young man too young to marry. The same Hebrew word is used in Isa. 62:5 and refers to the *young man* marrying. The plural of this word is used in Num. 11:18 referring to Joshua who, in a few years would assume leadership of Israel. Saul could have been a *young man* and yet have been old enough to marry. Furthermore, we do not know how much time elapsed between the events of chapter nine and those of chapter thirteen. It might be interesting for the critic to tell us exactly how old Saul was in chapter nine and precisely how many years elapsed from that event when he sought his father's asses and the events alluded to in

13:2. The Bible does not propose to relate each detail of every matter. Many times decades are passed over with only casual mention. Knowing the time element would not help one to a better understanding of these events. Vs. 25-27, some refuse to accept Saul as king. The appointment of Saul is confirmed in a straightforward and unified account. The critics who would discover several sources (Eissfeldt and others) have made some very notable failures in their efforts.

C. 11:1-15—*Saul's victory over the Ammonites*. 1-5, the people of Jabesh appeal for help. This is the opportunity which God uses to arouse Saul, vs. 6-11, giving him the victory over the Philistines and uniting Israel behind him, vs. 12-13. The monarchy is renewed at Gilgal, vs. 14-15.

D. 12:1-25—*Samuel's address to the people*. Vs. 1-5, Samuel challenges the people regarding his conduct as judge. The righteousness of his life is obvious when no one can point an accusing finger regarding any matter in which he has not conducted himself as a true representative of God. Vs. 6-18, Samuel emphasizes that the monarchy was an apostasy from God's will. Vs. 19-25, God's manifestation of anger arouses fear among the Israelites.

Note: Critics such as Pfeiffer and others, ancient and modern, who view these two different accounts in chapter eight and chapter twelve as conflicting views of the monarchy are simply failing to read the text carefully. In chapter eight God made it plain that *the people were rejecting* him and his rule and, furthermore, Samuel warned them of the things which would transpire when they chose a king to be over them. In chapter twelve the fact is emphasized, that God was displeased with their choice and he manifested that displeasure. Some who are believers in verbal inspiration have mistakenly viewed the prophecy that there *would* be a king as God's will *for there to be a king*. However, this is not true. God foretold that his children would apostatize from him but it was not his will that they should do that and thus be destroyed. God was exercising his *foreknowledge* and he worked his purpose out on earth in spite of the rebellion of his people. One should read the statement of the prophet Hosea, Hosea 13:11, to see God's will in the matter. It was not that Israel merely had the wrong spirit in asking for a king. It was *wrong for them to ask for a king*. The people of

Israel were not acting in harmony with the will of God. God was displeased and he manifested his displeasure over their rejection of his theocracy in favor of their monarchy but, as in the case of his laws given by Moses pertaining to marriage and divorce, God worked his purpose out using Israel to fulfill it, Genesis 3:15.

E. 13:1-23—*Saul's war with the Philistines and his presumptuous sacrifice.* Vs. 1-4, the Philistines are aroused because Jonathan attacked a Philistine garrison. Vs. 5-7, the size of the Philistine army terrorized Israel. The people were still not fully convinced that God was going to deliver their enemies over to them. Vs. 8-15, Saul presumes to act as priest and is rebuked by God through Samuel. Critics believe that this is a duplicate account, along with the account in chapter 15, of Saul being deposed. This is not correct. In this account Saul is not deposed, but is merely told that his dynasty will not continue forever, i.e., by being transmitted through his posterity. God would have established his house on the throne had Saul been faithful. This chapter does not relate the rejection of Saul from being king. Vs. 16-23, Israel stands disarmed. This seems to have been the result of the battle that ensued after the Israelites were dispersed following Saul's presumptuous sacrifice.

F. 14:1-52—*Saul's wars with the Philistines.* Vs. 1-15, God gives Jonathan a great victory over the Philistines. Vs. 16-23, all Israel joins in the battle. Vs. 24-30, Saul foolishly forbids the Israelites to eat until evening. The people sinned when evening came by flying upon the animals of the spoils and eating them without properly slaying and bleeding them. Vs. 36-46, the account of Saul being prevented by the people from slaying Jonathan for having eaten contrary to Saul's command. Vs. 47-52, Saul successfully wars against the enemies of Israel.

G. 15:1-34—*Saul's rejection by God.* Vs. 1-3, God commanded Saul and Israel to completely destroy the Amalekites. Vs. 4-9, Saul's presumptuous disregard for God's commandment is seen in his return. Vs. 10-16, God sent Samuel to meet Saul at Gilgal. Vs. 17-23, Samuel delivered God's ultimatum against Saul. Vs. 24-34, Samuel fulfills God's command and then leaves Saul with finality. This is the only account given of God's rejecting Saul from being king. Pre-

viously we saw how God would *end Saul's dynasty* with Saul's death. Now we view God's rejection of Saul as king. Even though he is allowed to remain upon the throne, God withdraws his spirit from Saul. From this day forward Saul must go without the aid, comfort, and strength of God or the encouragement of God's servant, Samuel.

H. 16:1-23—*David anointed king*. Vs. 1-5, God acquiesced to the people's demand for a king. Saul was fair to look upon, standing head and shoulders above the other men of Israel. He represented in a *worldly way*, success in a measure perhaps to which David did not attain. Saul was successful in many ways if one does not count the spiritual success the greatest of all and the standard by which all else is to be measured. However, God apparently impressed upon Israel the need to look beyond what the eyes can see. Now Samuel is sent, not to a man to capture the fancy and the imagination of the people of Israel, but to one after God's own heart. Vs. 1-5, Samuel is sent to the house of Jesse. Vs. 6-13, we see *God's choice* of a man. Vs. 14-23, David is in Saul's court.

I. 17:1-31:13—*Saul's last days and his death*. In 17:1-54, we have the account of David and Goliath. Goliath terrorizes Israel with his talk and challenges. Vs. 12-27, Jesse sends provisions to his older sons by David. David slays Goliath in verses 28-49 and the Philistines flee, vs. 50-54. David is brought to Saul, vs. 55-58.

Critics think they find diverse sources and even contradictions in the account of chapter 16 and this account in chapter 17 regarding the introduction of David to Saul. However, in 16:18-22, we have an account of general information being provided Saul relative to David. The emphasis is upon his playing with the harp and the general information is furnished regarding his background. However, in chapter 17 more specific information is necessary because: (1) Saul will likely desire to have this valiant man, who slew the giant which terrorized his whole army, connected with the inner circle of his valiant men; (2) He will also likely desire to know more about David's family. Were there any more like him? What was his father like? and so forth: (3) Furthermore, there will be the matter of special treatment to the whole family from the king. Therefore, 17:55-56 is not to find out David's name but rather to find out David's back-

ground in *fuller detail*. There is no contradiction or difficulty in these passages at all. In the first account we find David being brought to Saul's court to play the harp. Just so long as he was a man of good character and could play skillfully on the harp, that was all that was necessary. However, in this last account, if he would join Saul's elite bodyguard he must be a man of valor, and perchance there were others like him in the family. Abner was instructed to investigate.

The critics claim that the text is confusing regarding the slaying of Goliath. Bewer (*The Literature of the O. T.*, page 23) views this account as a mere tale which was elaborated on later and it was only in later times that the Philistine was called Goliath whom, in reality, Bewer thought, not David, but Elhanan the Bethlehemite slew, 2 Sam. 21:9. Bewer thought that David's name was attached to the deed simply because he was more famous and he got the credit for what someone else did. However, this dismissal of the text itself is insufficient to satisfy the problem that does exist. In the first place, the view which Bewer and other critics would take of this problem would indicate that they would view one of the accounts as a *total corruption* of the truth. This is not the case.

Edward J. Young said of this problem: "In the first place it should be noted that if the final 'redactors' of Samuel left such a glaring error, they must be regarded as incompetent. But was there such a glaring error in the original? Careful examination will make it clear that 2 Sam. 21:19 and 1 Chr. 20:5 are closely related. In the course of transmission some copyists' errors have evidently crept in, particularly into 2 Sam. 21:19. In the first place, we should remove the word '*oregim*', which appears as part of the proper name, and which is evidently a copyists' mistake, for the word appears again at the end of the verse (*-beam*). Secondly, the particle '*eth*' (which introduces the direct object and is not to be translated) should, after Chronicles, be emended to read '*ahi*' (the brother of). Thirdly, the name of Elhanan's father should be read *Jairi* (y'r).

Two alternatives now face us. Either we should read (both in Samuel and in Chronicles).

(1) 'And Elhanan the son of Jairi smote Lahmi the brother of Goliath.' If this is adopted we must further emend

the words *Bethlehemite* (*beth hallahmi*) to *Lahmi* (*'eth lahmi*).

(2) Or, we may read, 'And Elhanan the son of Jairi the Bethlehemite slew the brother of Goliath.' If this is adopted, we must emend the *Lahmi* (*'eth lahmi*) of 1 Chr. to agree with the words *Bethlehemite* (*beth hallahmi*) of 1 Samuel.

Either of these alternatives is possible. The fact of the matter then is that (1) David slew Goliath; (2) Elhanan slew the brother of Goliath."<sup>8</sup>

In short, the record stands that David slew Goliath and Elhanan slew a brother of Goliath. The King James translators, seeing the difficulty and understanding the problem, supplied the words, *the brother of*. There is no valid reason for discounting those supplied words since they are necessary for the proper understanding of the verse. Where this is allowed, the difficulty is cleared away and no intentional corruption of the text is observed. That there have been some copyist errors (although when the textual criticism process is completed they are rare) is to be admitted, but to say that there is an *intentional* corrupting of the text is to impute to the copyist of the Old Testament that which no critic on earth can prove.

In 18:1-5, Jonathan and David make a covenant. 18:6-27:12, David's flight from Saul. 18:6-30, Saul tries to use the Philistines to kill David. This ruse fails, and in 19:1-24 Jonathan intercedes for David, but the peace effected by him is short-lived and David flees to Samuel. 20:1-21:1, Jonathan makes one last attempt to reconcile his father to David. 21:2-15, David flees to Gath by Nob.

Doeg acts very treacherously and cruelly slays the priests of Nob. 23:1-29, the covenant between David and Jonathan is renewed. 24:1-22, David spares Saul at En-gedi. 25:1-44, David is saved from rashness by Abigail whom he later marries. 26:1-25, David spares Saul the second time. 27:1-12, David is received by Achish and is given Ziklag for a sanctuary.

Critics think that the record of David twice fleeing from Saul's court is an obvious contradiction and repetition. However, the record clearly states that Jonathan effected a peace between his father and David after the first flight, and David came back. However, when he fled again he remained away from Saul's presence. Therefore, there is no contradiction or

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<sup>8</sup>Young, *op. cit.*, pages 181-182.

repetition of the same account. They are two different accounts.

Critics think that the accounts of Saul twice having David under his power to slay and his fleeing to Achish are either contradictions or repetitions of the same account. This indicates a low view of inspiration, or a view that the Bible is not inspired at all. However, the record shows that David did have Saul within his power on two different occasions. Even though there may be certain similarities in the case, yet they are two different occasions and not merely two accounts of the same occasion. Furthermore, his flight to Achish is seen to be on two different occasions. On the first occasion he feigned madness or insanity because he saw that the Philistines would not receive him kindly. On the second occasion he knew that he could convince them since he was fleeing from Saul and the news had spread through the Philistines that he would join their cause. These are, therefore, two different occasions and not merely accounts of the same occasion. There is no contradiction or repetition in these events.

In 28:1-25, Saul hears his final doom pronounced. Samuel had died (25:1) and now Saul decided to seek the dead about the living. In vs. 9-24 the witch at Endor was startled that Samuel appeared. There are those today who would teach *spiritualism* and use this passage to uphold their teaching. However, the context clearly indicates that this event was *beyond* the powers of the witch. She would *not* have been amazed and startled had she been actually expecting Samuel to appear. Her chirping, muttering, and peeping was all a part of the deception which these people managed. The *actual* power to communicate with the dead did not belong to them. Anyone who would use this event to uphold such teaching plainly has not read the text very closely. Samuel delivered the final sentence upon Saul, 15-19. Vs. 20-25, Saul can only leave the witch. Everything is now out of his hands and it only remains for the final doom to be spelled out in actuality. 29:1-11, David is removed from the army of the Philistines because the princes and the commanders do not trust David. 30:1-30, David avenges Ziklag and in 31:1-13, the death and burial of Saul and his sons is recorded.

Note: Less space will be devoted to 2 Samuel than to 1 Samuel. The essential unity of this book is not generally

questioned. Even Pfeiffer "admits" that 2 Sam. 9-20 is "the unsurpassed prose masterpiece of the Hebrew Bible." (*Intro. to the Old Testament*, page 341).

### III. DAVID'S REIGN OVER ISRAEL—2 Sam. 1:1-25:25.

A. 1:1-17—*David's grief over Saul and Jonathan.* 1:1-17, an Amalekite brings David the news of Saul's death. In verses 17-27 we have David's lament and elegy for Saul and Jonathan.

B. 2:1-32—*David and Judah are at war against Ishbosheth* and the battle at Gibeon. Vs. 1-4, Jehovah sends David to Hebron to be made king over Judah. Vs. 5-7, David sends a message of appreciation to the men of Jabesh-gilead for interring Saul. Vs. 8-11, Ishbosheth is made king over Israel by Abner. Vs. 12-17, Abner and Israel are defeated at Gibeon. Vs. 18-23, Asahel, brother of Joab, is slain by Abner. Vs. 24-32, Joab returns to Hebron.

C. 3:1-39—*David increases and Joab murders Abner.* Vs. 1-5, David's house increases and in 6-39 we see Saul's house decreasing. There is a quarrel between Abner and Ishbosheth, 6-11. Abner defects to David, 12-21. Joab uses deceit and murders Abner, 22-30. David laments Abner's death, 31-39.

D. 4:1-12—*The death of Ishbosheth.* Ishbosheth is murdered, 4:1-6. David punishes his murderers, 7-12.

E. 5:1-10:19—*Israel's rise to power under David.* 5:1-25, David is anointed king over all Israel and we see the beginning of his many victories. 1-5, David is made king over all Israel. Following this, Zion is taken and Jerusalem is made the capitol, 6-10. Vs. 11-16, we catch a glimpse of David's palace and family. 17-25, God gives David two decisive victories over the Philistines. 6:1-23, David moves the ark to Jerusalem. Uzziah's death comes because he touches the ark when God had forbidden men to touch it. The removal of the ark to Jerusalem, vs. 11-19, and on David's return, as he dances before the ark expressing his joy to God, 20-23, Michal ridicules David. 7:1-29, David's desire to build a temple for God is expressed but God denies David the privilege. God promises to build for David a house. David's prayer of thanksgiving and praise is expressed to God.

8:1-18—*David's victories and officers.* 9:1-13, David showed kindness to Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan.



David actively sought out one of the house of Saul, 1-8, and upon finding Mephibosheth he restored Saul's property to him, 9-13. 10:1-19, David broke the power of the Syrians. The Ammonites gave David cause to wage war, 1-5. The Ammonites hired the Syrians to fight David, 6-8. Israel is able to defeat the Syrians to the extent that the Syrians make peace with Israel, 9-19.

F. 11:1-20:26—*The decline of David's reign.* 11:1-12:31, David's sin with Bathsheba is dealt with. Although David is a man after God's own heart he has his weakness and the inspired writer does not hesitate to record it. This is a mark of inspiration. 13:1-39, the murder of Amnon is recorded and Absalom must flee to Geshur.

14:1-33—Absalom returns and is reconciled with David. 15:1-18:33, the rebellion of Absalom. 19:1-39, David is reinstated in the kingdom. 19:40-20:26, there is discontent in Israel.

G. 21:1-24:25—*The conclusion of David's reign.* There are three years of famine because of what Saul did to the Gibeonites, 21:1-14. 21:15-22, acts of bravery in the war with the Philistines. 22:1-51, David's psalm of praise for his triumph over his enemies. 23:1-7, David's last prophetic words. 23:8-39, David's heroic men. 24:1-25, the numbering of the people and the pestilence.

David is the main character in the second book of Samuel. He is the epitome of faith and patience. David was willing to wait on the Lord for the fulfillment of the Lord's promise. He was able to do this because of his unfaltering and unwavering faith. David had a great heart, a heart capable of the deepest love and highest devotion. This love was manifested toward those about him and to God, and his devotion to the cause of God is evident from beginning to end. The promise which God made to David is now limited to the descendants of Solomon and Nathan. From Solomon descended Joseph, the legal stepfather of Christ (Matt. 1:6, 16). From Nathan descended Mary, the virgin mother of Christ according to the flesh (Luke 3:23, 31). Therefore, Christ was the son of David both legally and according to the flesh, for both his earthly mother and stepfather sprang from David. Hence from the time of Nathan's prophecy the coming Messiah is truly the son of David according to the flesh.

## Chapter Four

### THE BOOK OF KINGS

#### Name

The books which we know as First and Second Kings were originally counted as one in the Hebrew canon. It appears that the translators of the Septuagint were the first to make a division between the books. The title is appropriate because of the subject matter. The books contain a record of the careers of the kings of Israel and Judah from the time of Solomon to the Babylonian exile.

#### Author

The ancient Jewish theory of authorship is that Jeremiah wrote the book of Kings. This theory has a good deal of support for it and many have accepted it without question. However, if all of the book was written by the same author, which it certainly appears to have been, then there is a difficulty with 2 Kings 25. Jeremiah ended his last days in Egypt while the author of Kings appeared to be a prophet living in the *Babylonian exile*. Furthermore the latest events recorded in 2 Kings 25, the liberation of Jehoiachin from prison and his exaltation by Evil-merodach, occurred about sixty-six years after Jeremiah's call to be a prophet. Jeremiah received his prophetic call in the thirteenth year of Josiah. This would have made him eighty-six years old in the 37th year after Jehoiachin had been carried away into exile. Even if he had begun his prophetic career when only twenty years of age he would have been eighty-six years old. Had he reached this age it is unlikely that he would have composed the book at a later period than that. It is true that there are similarities in the character of Kings with the writings of Jeremiah but these similarities do not conclusively *prove* that Jeremiah was the author. It has already been pointed out that all of these early books of the former prophets were written by a prophet. This is why they were designated in the Hebrew canon as the *former prophets*. So long as this view is held, it matters little

who the actual human author was, because God is the divine author. However, it would seem that the author was at least contemporary with much of Jeremiah's work and was familiar with Jeremiah. Some people hold the view that Jeremiah wrote all of the material except the last chapter which was added later. Because of the historical contents of the book and the lack of an ascription to any part of it, there is nothing wrong with this view if it could be sustained. However, the *unity* of the whole book seems to go strongly against that view. It should not be ruled out *absolutely* but, as stated, it does not matter who the human author was so long as we accept the *divine authorship* of the book — *written by the inspiration of God*.

The author mentions some records available during his day; 1 Kings 11:41, "The books of the words of Solomon;" 1 Kings 14:29; 15:7, 23, "The book of the chronicle by the kings of Judah." Evidently these were public works of the kingdom which the prophets had written down. The author of Kings shows that whatever materials were necessary for the record were selected from these documents. It must be understood that this selection was made under the guidance and supervision of the Holy Spirit.

### Purpose

The aim of the book of Kings is to demonstrate that the welfare of God's people depended upon their *obedience* to God's law — *faithfulness to the covenant* into which they had entered. The books of *Kings* take up the royal and prophetic history where Samuel ended and carry it forward in the same spirit manifested in Samuel. Kings traces the history of the United Kingdom from Solomon's accession to the throne and the division of the kingdom, until both Israel and Judah were carried away into captivity by Assyria and Babylon respectively. This period covers something like four hundred and fifty-five years.

In Kings we have a *prophetic-historical* account. The ministry of the prophets assumes a very prominent position in the book of Kings and sometimes even causes the *history* of the Kings to fall into the background by comparison. However, the labors of the prophets were important because God sent

them to call the people back to the law which they had forsaken. In Kings, the rulers of the northern kingdom take the preeminence in the account in the amount of space devoted to them because God is showing how *sin developed* in that part of the kingdom to bring about the *consequences* which they had to suffer. The history of the northern kingdom is the overthrow of one dynasty after another while all of the rulers walk in the same sin of Jeroboam. The events of Judah which are related to the progress of the fulfillment of God's promise in Genesis 3:15 are just as elaborately described. Justice is done to both kingdoms, the record showing how God manifested himself equally to both and bore with errors in his divine patience and grace.

Because it was not the intent of the author to glorify national heroes, he omitted the achievements which would have assumed great importance in the eyes of a secular historian except where those achievements were related to the *faithfulness* of God in his fulfillment of his promise and of his *integrity* in keeping his part of the covenant.

Pfeiffer theorized that the author of Kings attempted to prove that obedience to the Deuteronomic law brought prosperity, and *vice versa*. Pfeiffer felt that "the doctrine of just retribution for human conduct on this earth, which he declared that the author of Kings accepted blindly from Deuteronomy, has always conflicted with actualities." Pfeiffer thought that the author struggled desperately with the known facts, in order to make them fit the author's theory. However, the purpose of the book has been pointed out, and the author does not attempt to prove that all sin has its *full retribution* on earth or that all righteousness receives its *full reward* in this life. The author simply points out that there were certain material consequences attached to faithfulness and unfaithfulness according to the law of Moses and that except where there was divine intervention these consequences had to be accepted and the people must recognize the source of them.

### Problems of Chronology

Considerable difficulty can be encountered in harmonizing the numbers given in the books of Kings for the reigns of the

rulers of the northern and southern kingdoms unless one recognizes certain facts which existed:

(1) It must be recognized that in *some instances the crown prince*, or immediate successor to the throne, *was crowned and his reign officially begun in the lifetime of his father*. Azariah appears to have been crowned secondary king as early as 790 B.C. after his father, Amaizah, had reigned for only six years. Azariah began as sole king in 767 B.C., when his father died. Jotham, the son of Azariah, was crowned in 751 B.C. when Azariah was smitten by leprosy and Jotham continued to reign until 736 B.C. Before his death in 736 B.C., his son Ahaz was crowned and reigned until his death in 728 B.C. So between 743 B.C. and 739 B.C. Judah had *three kings* at once; Azariah, Jotham and Ahaz. If one fails to recognize the facts stated, *confusion* will result. Failure to recognize this fact has sometimes caused people to list an extremely long chronology.

(2) There were several co-rulers in both Judah and Israel, *and the years of the co-rulers were reckoned in the total figure* for the reign of each king involved.

(3) It appears that there was also a *difference in calendar reckoning* between the northern and southern kingdoms. If a king was crowned as late as the last day of the previous year, that one day would be counted as a year in his reign in the reckoning by the northern kingdom. However, it appeared that this system was not followed by Judah until about 850 B.C. or about 80 years after the division of the kingdom. The system used by the northern kingdom was followed until the time of Amaziah when Judah reverted to her former system of reckoning. It also seemed that Israel, the northern kingdom, changed her system about 800 B.C. until the fall of Samaria. This would complicate the reckoning of the chronology a good bit. One must keep these facts in mind if he is to fix the dates during this period of the divided kingdom even approximately.

(4) To further complicate matters, the northern kingdom began its new year in Nisan or Abib, the first month of the religious year. Judah used the month of Tishri or Ethanim (the seventh month of the religious year) to begin its secular year and all of its dates and reigns were figured on that basis.

By this time one is able to see that the matter of chro-

nology in the book of Kings can indeed pose a *difficult* problem. It should be remembered that chronology is a *historical science*; therefore, *subject to revision*. There is a good bit of difference among conservative scholars regarding the dates and kings. One must be able to be flexible within the bounds of reason. To fix every event in the exact year is sometimes impossible. It is enough to remember that if we get the *characters* harmonized in point of time, this is the most important thing.

Edward J. Young has an excellent tabular view of the monarchy, presented in his *Introduction to the Old Testament*, page 194. This present author believes that he began his dating of the division of the kingdom a few years late, but otherwise there is ample cause to believe that his dates are very close in most instances.

### Outline of Kings

- I. ISRAEL UNDER SOLOMON—Chapters 1-11.
  - A. The last days of David—1:1-2:11.
    1. Solomon is given the throne—1:1-53.
      - a. David's infirmity of age—1-4.
      - b. Adonijah's attempt to usurp the throne—5:27.
      - c. David appoints Solomon king—28-48.
      - d. Solomon spares Adonijah—49-53.
    2. The death of David—2:1-11.
  - B. Solomon's dealing with his opposition—2:12-46.
    1. Solomon succeeds David—12-25.
      - a. The request of Adonijah—12-18.
      - b. Adonijah executed—19-25.
    2. Prophecy concerning Eli's house is fulfilled—26-27.
    3. Joab executed—36-46.
  - C. Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter—3:1-28.
    1. The beginning of apostasy—1-3.
    2. Solomon's request of God—4-9.
    3. Solomon's choice pleases God—10-15.
    4. Solomon's judgment between two harlots—16-28.
  - D. The officers, splendor and wisdom of Solomon's court—4:1-34.
    1. Solomon's princes—1-6.
    2. Solomon's twelve officers—7-19.
    3. Israel's prosperity—20-28.
    4. Solomon's wisdom—29-34.
  - E. Solomon's building program—5:1-9:28.
    1. The temple of God—5:1-6:38.
      - a. Agreement with Hiram—5:1-12.
      - b. Solomon's workers—5:13-18.
      - c. The dimensions of the temple—6:1-10.
      - d. God's promise of his presence—6:11-13.
      - e. The oracle—6:14-28.

- f. The ornaments—6:29-36.
- g. The temple finished—6:37-38.
- 2. Solomon's palace and the temple furnishings—7:1-51.
  - a. The glory of the palace—1-12.
  - b. Hiram's work in the temple—13-50.
  - c. The work of the temple finished—51.
- 3. The temple is consecrated—8:1-66.
  - a. The ark brought into the temple—1-11.
  - b. Solomon's address to the people—12-21.
  - c. Solomon's prayer—22-53.
  - d. Solomon blesses the congregation—54-61.
  - e. The sacrifice of dedication—62-66.
- 4. God's covenant with Solomon and further facts about Solomon's buildings—9:1-28.
- F. The fame and wealth of Solomon—10:1-29.
  - 1. The queen of Sheba—1-13.
  - 2. Solomon's riches—14-29.
- G. Solomon's apostasy and death—11:1-43.
  - 1. His foreign wives—1-8.
  - 2. The consequences of Solomon's sin—9-13.
  - 3. Solomon's adversaries—14-40.
  - 4. Solomon's death—41-43.

## II. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM—1 Kings 12:1 - 2 Kings 17:41.

- A. The first period - hostility between Judah and Israel—12:1-16:28.
  - 1. The division of the kingdom—12:1-33.
    - a. Rehoboam rejects wise counsel of the old men—12:1-15.
    - b. Ten tribes rebel—12:16-20.
    - c. Rehoboam does not war against Israel—12:21-24.
    - d. Jeroboam's idolatry—12:25-33.
  - 2. The young prophet warns Jeroboam—13:1-34.
    - a. The prophecy against the idolatry—1-10.
    - b. An old prophet leads the young prophet astray—11-32.
    - c. Jeroboam increased the sin—33-34.
  - 3. The reigns and deaths of Jeroboam and Rehoboam—14:1-31.
    - a. Ahijah prophesies against Jeroboam and Israel—1-20.
    - b. Rehoboam's reign and death—21-31.
  - 4. Abijam and Asa over Judah—15:1-24.
    - a. Reign of Abijam—1-8.
    - b. Reign of Asa—9-24.
  - 5. Reigns of Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri over Israel—15:25-16:28.
    - a. Nadab—15:25-32.
    - b. Baasha—15:33-16:7.
    - c. Elah—16:8-14.
    - d. Zimri—16:15-22.
    - e. Omri—16:23-28.
- B. The second period - peace between Judah and Israel—16:29-2 Kings 10:36.
  - 1. Ahab—16:29-22:40.
    - a. Ahab begins to reign—16:29-34.
    - b. Elijah at Cherith and Zarephath—17:1-24.
    - c. Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel—18:1-46.

- d. Elijah's flight and Elisha's call—19:1-21.
- e. Ahab given a double victory over Syria but displeases God by allowing Ben-hadad to go free—20:1-43.
- f. The murder of Naboth—21:1-29.
- g. The death of Ahab, reigns of Jehoshaphat of Judah and Ahaziah of Israel—22:1-29.
  - 1) Affinity between Ahab and Jehoshaphat and the death of Ahab—1-40.
  - 2) Reign of Jehoshaphat of Judah—41-50.
  - 3) Reign of Ahaziah of Israel—51-53.
- 2. The close of Elijah's ministry and the beginning of Elisha's—2 Kings 1:1-2:25.
  - a. The death of Ahaziah of Israel—1:1-18.
    - 1) Ahaziah sends to inquire after Baal-zebub concerning his sickness—1:1-4.
    - 2) Ahaziah's messengers return with Elijah's message of doom—1:5-8.
    - 3) The king's efforts to take Elijah by force failed—1:9-16.
    - 4) Ahaziah dies—1:17-18.
  - b. Elijah taken into heaven and Elisha begins his prophetic work—2:1-25.
    - 1) Elisha refuses to leave Elijah's side—1-4.
    - 2) Elijah divides the Jordan—5-8.
    - 3) Elijah taken into heaven in a whirlwind—9-12.
    - 4) Elisha divides the Jordan—13-14.
    - 5) Elijah could not be found—15-18.
    - 6) Elisha heals the waters—19-22.
    - 7) The young men between Jericho and Bethel slain—23-25.
- 3. The reign of Jehoram of Israel—3:1-8:15.
  - a. Jehoram and Jehoshaphat against Moab—3:1-27.
    - 1) The ways of Jehoram—1-3.
    - 2) Jehoram and Jehoshaphat form an alliance and defeat the Moabites—4-27.
  - b. A series of miracles by Elisha—4:1-6:7.
    - 1) The widow's oil—4:1-7.
    - 2) The Shunammite woman gives birth to a son—4:8-17.
    - 3) The Shunammite woman's son restored to life—4:18-37.
    - 4) The poisonous pottage—4:38-41.
    - 5) The loaves and grain multiplied—4:42-44.
    - 6) Naaman the leper healed—5:1-27.
    - 7) The axe-head made to float—6:1-7.
  - c. Elisha during the Syrian invasion—6:8-8:15.
    - 1) The Syrians blinded—6:8-23.
    - 2) Elisha's activity during the siege of Samaria—6:24-7:20.
    - 3) Elisha's influence—8:1-6.
    - 4) Death of Ben-hadad of Syria—8:7-15.
- 4. Jehoram and Ahaziah in Judah and Jehu in Israel—8:16-10:36.
  - a. The reign of Joram—8:16-24.
  - b. Ahaziah begins to reign—8:25-29.
  - c. Elisha anoints Jehu to be king over Israel—9:1-13.



- d. Jehu kills Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah—9:14-29.
- e. Jehu destroys the house of Ahab—9:30-10:17.
  - 1) Jezebel slain—9:30-37.
  - 2) The sons of Ahab slain—10:1-11.
  - 3) Relatives of Ahaziah slain—10:12-14.
  - 4) The rest of Ahab's relatives slain—10:15-17.
- f. Baal-worshippers slain—10:18-28.
- g. Jehu sinned as his fathers—10:29-31.
- h. Death of Jehu—10:32-36.

C. The third period - hostilities between Judah and Israel resumed—11:1-17:41.

- 1. Athaliah's reign and fall—11:1-20.
- 2. The reign of Joash—11:21-12:21.
- 3. Jehoahaz of Israel—13:1-9.
- 4. Joash of Israel—13:10-25.
- 5. Amaziah of Judah—14:1-22.
- 6. Jeroboam II of Israel—14:23-29.
- 7. Uzziah (Azariah) of Judah—15:1-7.
- 8. Zachariah of Israel—15:8-12.
- 9. Shallum of Israel—15:13-16.
- 10. Menahem of Israel—15:17-22.
- 11. Pekahiah of Israel—15:23-26.
- 12. Pekah of Israel—15:27-31.
- 13. Jotham of Judah—15:32-38.
- 14. Ahaz of Judah—16:1-22.
- 15. Hoshea, last king of Israel and the Assyrian captivity—17:1-41.

III. JUDAH FROM NORTHERN DESTRUCTION TO BABYLONIAN EXILE—18:1-25:30.

A. Hezekiah—18:1-20:21.

- 1. Duration and character of Hezekiah's reign—18:1-8.
- 2. Sennacherib invades Judah—18:9-37.
- 3. Assyrian army destroyed—19:1-37.
- 4. Hezekiah's sickness and recovery—20:1-11.
- 5. The Babylonian embassy—20:12-19.
- 6. Death of Hezekiah—20:20-21.

B. Reigns of Manasseh and Amon—21:1-26.

- 1. Manasseh—1-18.
- 2. Amon—19-26.

C. Josiah—22:1-23:30

- 1. Nature of his reign—22:1-2.
- 2. Temple repaired and the book of the law found—22:3-13.
- 3. Huldah, the prophetess, reveals the fate of Jerusalem—22:14-20.
- 4. Josiah's reforms—23:1-30.
  - a. The law read and covenant renewed—1-3.
  - b. Idolatry eliminated—4-20.
  - c. The passover kept—21-23.
  - d. Conclusion of Josiah's reign—24-30.

D. Jehoahaz—23:31-35.

E. Jekoiakim (Eliakim)—23:36-24:7.

F. Jehoiachin (Coniah or Jechoniah)—24:8-17.

G. Zedekiah (Gedaliah)—24:18-25:26.

H. Jehoiachin honored—25:27-30.

## Analysis

## I. ISRAEL UNDER SOLOMON—Chapters 1-11.

A. 1:1-2:11—*the last days of David*. Chapter one deals with the elevation of Solomon to the throne, vs. 1-53. David's infirmity of age (vs. 1-4) is the opportunity Adonijah uses to usurp the throne, vs. 5-27. However, David appoints Solomon king, 28-48, and Solomon works out a peaceable settlement with Adonijah, 49-53. 2:1-11 is the record of the death of David.

B. 2:12-46—*Solomon's dealing with his opposition*. After Solomon succeeds David, Adonijah makes a request for one of David's concubines, vs. 12-18. Because of this Solomon has Adonijah executed, vs. 19-25. Vs. 26-27 shows the prophecy regarding Eli's house is fulfilled. Vs. 28-35, Joab is executed. Vs. 36-46, Shimei is slain.

C. 3:1-28—*Solomon marries Pharaoh's daughter*. Vs. 1-3 seem to set forth the beginning of Solomon's apostasy. Vs. 4-9, Solomon's request of God. Vs. 10-15, God's pleasure with Solomon's choice of wisdom. Vs. 16-28, the great wisdom of Solomon in dealing with the two harlots.

Young and others do not understand vs. 2-3 to indicate that the people were offering sacrifice in places where they should not offer them. It is said that v. 4 seems to indicate the approval of God because Gibeon was the *great* high place. It is true that the temple of God at this time had not been built. However, they were in the land and the worship was to be *centralized* in Jerusalem. There is no doubt that God approved specific places where he had stated his approval for the sacrifices to be offered. However, it would seem that the Israelites were abusing that privilege and vs. 2-3 might well reflect the general state of religion of that day. It is obvious that Solomon began his deviation from the Lord's way when he made affinity with Egypt through his marriage to Pharaoh's daughter. She was the cause of some of his departures from God. Vs. 16-28 have been called by Pfeiffer (page 383) and others "an oriental folktale." This compares with their dismissal of the history of Elisha as "Elisha tales." These matters indicate clearly the *low view* that the critics generally take of the word of God.

D. 4:1-34—*The officers, splendor, and wisdom of Solo-*

*mon's court.* Vs. 1-6, Solomon's princes. Vs. 7-19, Solomon's twelve officers who are most distinguished during his reign. Vs. 20-28 deal with the prosperity of Israel while vs. 29-34 extol Solomon's wisdom. Pfeiffer (page 384) believes that the wisdom of Solomon was primarily a concept of an uninspired author's imagination. However, *the New Testament verifies* the wisdom of Solomon, cf. Mt. 12:42.

E. 5:1-9:28—*Solomon's building program.* 5:1-6:38 is a record of the building of the temple of God. Solomon makes an agreement with Hiram of Tyre, 5:1-12. 5:13-18, the workers which Solomon had for this project. 6:1-10, the dimensions of the temple. 6:11-13, the record of God's promise of his presence in the temple. 6:14-28, the oracle of God described. 6:29-36, the ornaments which Solomon had carved on the walls and in the temple are described. 6:37-38, the temple is finished and the promise which God had made to David that David's sons should build his house, is now fulfilled. The building of the temple required four years.

7:1-51 sets forth the building of the palace, and the temple furnishings. Vs. 1-12 tell of the glory of Solomon's palace. Vs. 13-50 indicate the work of Hiram done in the temple. V. 51 shows that the work of the temple was finished. 8:1-66, the temple of God is consecrated. Vs. 1-11, the ark of God is brought into the temple. Vs. 12-21, Solomon's address to the people. Vs. 22-53, Solomon's prayer to God is based on Moses' law of Lev. 26 and Deut. 28. It is only with the background of knowledge of the law of Moses that one can fully appreciate the language of Solomon's prayer. There is no *valid* reason for denying this was actually Solomon's prayer. In spite of the efforts of different critics to attribute the prayer to a later time than Solomon because of "advanced profound theology," there is *no basis* for such a position. Some critics think that they see in this prayer the exile as already having been *accomplished*. However, the exile was *foretold* by God through Moses when the law was delivered, and God pointed out the consequences of failing to keep that law. Solomon, basing his prayer upon the law, merely had reference to that. Critics who would suppose a much later date for this prayer are simply without any ground to stand upon.

Vs. 62-66—the sacrifices of dedication. Pfeiffer (page 389)

views the celebration of the feast as a "midrashic exaggeration." What he calls *fantastic figures* are not fantastic at all when one realizes the *purpose* involved in the temple and the extent of the prosperity of Israel at this time. The Levites and the heads of the households could very well provide the setting for such a tremendous number of sacrifices offered at this time. There would be no problem of time nor effort involved whatsoever with the great manpower resources available for this purpose. 9:1-28, God's covenant with Solomon and further facts about Solomon's buildings are related.

F. 10:1-29—*The fame and wealth of Solomon*. Vs. 1-13, the queen of Sheba comes to hear of the wisdom of Solomon and to view his wealth with her own eyes. After she had viewed it she made the remark, "Behold the half was not told me," verse 7. Our Lord verifies the historicity of this past event, Matt. 12:42. It is an actuality recorded and not a mere exaggeration, cf. also Luke 11:31. Vs. 14-29, Solomon's riches are described. It is in the reign of Solomon that peace and wealth are granted to an extremely high degree by God to his people.

G. 11:1-43—*Solomon's apostasy and his death*. Vs. 1-8, the foreign wives of Solomon cause him to forsake God and God's law. Vs. 9-13, the consequences of Solomon's sin. 14-40, God raises up adversaries against Solomon in partial consequence of his sin. Vs. 41-43, the death of Solomon.

## II. THE DIVIDED KINGDOM—1 Kings 12:1-2 Kings 17:41.

A. 12:1-16:28—the first period - *hostility between Judah and Israel*. 12:1-33, the division of the kingdom. Vs. 1-15, Rehoboam rejects the wise counsel of the old men. 16-20, the ten tribes of Israel rebel against the oppressive measures which had been instituted by Solomon and which Rehoboam refused to relieve. 21-24, Rehoboam is prevented by God from warring against his brethren who had rebelled against him. 25-33, Jeroboam's idolatry.

13:1-34—God sends a young prophet to warn Jeroboam regarding his idolatry. Vs. 1-10, the young man prophesies against the idolatry at Bethel. Vs. 11-32, an old prophet leads the young prophet astray. Vs. 33-34, Jeroboam increases the sin of idolatry. 14:1-31, the reigns and deaths of Rehoboam and Jeroboam. Vs. 1-20, Ahiziah prophesies

against Jeroboam and Israel. Vs. 21-31, Rehoboam's reign and death. 15:1-24, Abijam and Asa over Judah. 15:25-16:28, the reigns of Nadab, Baasha, Elah, Zimri, and Omri over Israel. *Omri* is noted for establishing the capitol of Israel at Samaria. Omri was one of the greatest of Israel's kings from a political viewpoint. However, he continued the apostasy in religion and was displeasing before God.

Note: Remember the difficulty in establishing the chronology during this period of the divided kingdom. Young has some very good remarks regarding the matter as he attempts to deal with it on pages 190-194 in his *Introduction to the Old Testament*. This present author has pointed out that knowing the exact year of a specific event is not essential for the purposes of the scripture, but rather knowing the characters involved and synchronizing the events with the characters. One may receive some help from the Assyrian and Babylonian literature of the period although the information he may obtain from such sources would not necessarily be conclusive. If it were conclusive, there would be no difficulty involved in arranging Biblical chronology insofar as the dates which are recorded in such literature could be reconciled with the events recorded in the Bible. However, the difficulty in affixing definite dates does not argue against making an effort to approximate the dates. We can know with reasonable closeness the years during which the various kings reigned.

B. 16:29 - 2 Kings 10:36—the second period - *peace between Judah and Israel*. 16:29-22:40, Ahab. This period of peace extended from the reign of Ahab, who made affinity with the king of Judah, to the death of Joram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah. It is during this period that the southern kingdom, Judah, fades into the background of the record and the emphasis is laid upon Israel and the prophets. Young points out the obvious reason for this: "Jehoshaphat's son had married Ahab's daughter, and Judah had taken Israel's part in struggles against Syria. But, above all, Jezebel had introduced the Tyrian, Baal-worship into the land, and there ensued a life-and-death struggle between this heathenish idolatry and the pure worship of Jehovah. Hence, at this time, God raised up the prophets Elijah and Elisha. This is the second great period of miracles in Biblical history. The prophets, performing miracles in the name of Jehovah, were by

God's grace enabled to prevent Baal-worship from becoming the dominant state-religion in Israel."<sup>9</sup>

16:29-34—*Ahab begins to reign.* 17:1-24, Elijah at the brook Cherith and at Zarephath. 18:1-46, Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel. 19:1-21, Elijah's flight into the desert and to Horeb and Elisha's call. 20:1-43, Ahab is given a double victory over Syria but displeases God by allowing Ben-hadad to go free, 21:1-29. The despicable murder of Naboth and the wresting of his inheritance. 22:1-53, the death of Ahab, reigns of Jehoshaphat of Judah and Ahaziah of Israel. In the reign of Jehoshaphat of Judah, 41-50, Jehoshaphat made affinity with Ahab and gave his son Joram to Ahab's daughter, Athalia, in marriage. Jehoshaphat joined Ahab in war against Syria. Vs. 51-53, the reign of Ahaziah of Israel, resembles the iniquitous period of Israel under Ahab.

2 Kings 1:1-2:25—the close of Elijah's ministry and the beginning of Elisha's. 1:1-18, the death of Ahaziah. Vs. 1-4, Ahaziah sends to inquire after Baal-zebub concerning his sickness. Vs. 5-8, his messengers return with Elijah's message of doom. Vs. 9-16, the king's efforts to take Elijah by force fail. Vs. 17-18, Ahaziah dies.

2:1-25—Elijah ascends into heaven and Elisha begins his prophetic work. Vs. 1-4, Elisha refuses to leave Elijah's side. Vs. 5-8, Elijah divides the Jordan. Vs. 9-12, Elijah is taken into heaven in a whirlwind. Vs. 13-14, Elisha, having received a double portion of Elijah's spirit, divides the Jordan. Vs. 15-18, efforts to find Elijah fail. Vs. 19-22, Elisha heals the waters around Jericho. Vs. 23-25, the young men between Jericho and Bethel slain. The Bible text calls them *little children* in the KJV while the ASV uses the phrase, *young lad*. However, one must keep in mind that in Hebrew terminology one was a lad until he was in his early twenties and a youth while even older than that. *Young lads* would simply indicate that they were perhaps in the late teens, certainly old enough to know better than to do what they were doing. The phrase, "go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head" is not merely ridiculing a *supposedly* hairless head of Elisha. The phrase *go up* is indicative of more than *mere* ridicule of Elisha — it is ridicule of *Jehovah himself* and is, in all probability, a reference to the miracle of Elijah ascending to

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<sup>9</sup>Young, *op. cit.*, page 191.

heaven. The *impiety* and *irreverence* of Bethel was manifested by these young lads as they ridiculed a *miracle of God*. It is significant that Elisha "cursed" them in the *name* of Jehovah. It would be a reflection upon Jehovah himself for one to cast aspersion upon this incident, for it was in fulfillment of Elisha's curse that the bear came out and tore the young lads. It was not personal vengeance which Elisha sought but rather a vindication of the power and holiness of God, and it is to this end that one must view this story.

The negative critics deny the historicity of the miracles of Elisha. This is understandable since, to begin with, they deny, in general, the supernatural of the Bible altogether. To them these are just some anecdotes that grew up and finally were put into this form and are really unhistorical altogether.

It is evident that the miracles of Elisha in this section are arranged according to their nature rather than in chronological order. Therefore, there is no difficulty in viewing these miracles as actual events which happened if one will accept the basic assumption that God has, within the framework of human history, performed miracles.

3:1-8:15—the reign of Jehoram of Israel, 3:1-27, Jehoram and Jehoshaphat are against Moab. Vs. 1-3 describe the ways of Jehoram. Vs. 4-27 describe the alliance formed between Jehoram and Jehoshaphat as they defeat the Moabites. 4:1-6:7, a series of miracles by Elisha. 4:1-7, the widow's oil. 4:8-17, the Shunammite woman is empowered to give birth to a son. 4:18-37, the Shunammite woman's son restored to life. 4:38-41, the poisonous pottage. 4:42-44, the loaves and grain multiplied. 5:1-27, Naaman the leper healed. 6:1-7, the axe-head made to float.

6:8-8:15—Elisha during the Syrian invasion. 6:8-23, the Syrians are blinded by a miracle. 6:24-7:20, Elisha's activity during the siege of Samaria. 8:1-6, Elisha's influence. 8:7-15, the death of Ben-hadad of Syria.

8:16-10:36—Jehoram and Ahaziah in Judah, and Jehu in Israel. 8:16-24, the reign of Joram. 8:25-29, Ahaziah begins to reign. 9:1-13, Elisha anoints Jehu to be king over Israel. 9:14-29, Jehu kills Jehoram of Israel and Ahaziah of Judah. 9:30-10:17, Jehu destroys the house of Ahab. 9:30-37, Jezebel is slain. 10:1-11, the sons of Ahab are slain. 10:12-14, the relatives of Ahaziah are slain. 10:15-17, the rest of Ahab's

relatives are slain. 10:18-28, Baal-worshippers are slain. 10:29-31, Jehu sins as his fathers had. 10:32-36, the death of Jehu.

C. 11:1-17:41—the third period, *hostilities between Judah and Israel resumed*. 11:1-20, Athaliah's reign and fall. Note: Athaliah is an interloper and is not reckoned in the dynasty of David. 11:21-12:21, the reign of Joash. 13:1-9, Jehoahaz of Israel. 13:10-25, Joash of Israel. 14:1-22, Amaziah of Judah. 14:23-29, Jeroboam II of Israel. 15:1-7, Uzziah (Azariah) of Judah. 15:8-12, Zachariah of Israel. 15:13-16, Shallum of Israel. 15:17-22, Menahem of Israel. 15:23-26, Pekahiah of Israel. 15:27-31, Pekah of Israel. 15:32-38, Jotham of Judah. 16:1-22, Ahaz of Judah. 17:1-41, Hoshea, last king of Israel and the Assyrian captivity.

### III. JUDAH FROM NORTHERN DESTRUCTION TO THE BABYLONIAN EXILE—18:1-25:30.

A. 18:1-20:21—*Hezekiah*. 18:1-8, Hezekiah's reign. This is a summary; the beginning, duration, and general character. 18:9-37, Sennacherib invades Judah. 19:1-37, Assyrian army destroyed. Note: The original account (Young, page 193) is found in Isaiah 36 and 37. Archaeology has well confirmed the historicity of the Assyrian invasion and confirmed the Biblical account.

20:1-11—Hezekiah's sickness and recovery are related. The Babylonian embassy comes to visit Hezekiah, 20:12-19. The death of Hezekiah is recorded, 20:20-21.

B. 21:1-26—*The reigns of Manasseh and Amon*. During the reign of Manasseh in vs. 1-18, pagan idolatry grew as never before. Several traditions have arisen from this period, one which states that Isaiah the prophet was sawn asunder by Manasseh. The reign of Amon 19-26. Amon continued in the idolatrous ways of Manasseh and was murdered during the second year of his reign.

C. 22:1-23:30—*Josiah*. The nature of his reign is set forth in 22:1-2. The temple was repaired and the book of the law was found, 22:3-13. The discovery of the book of the law came during the eighteenth year of Josiah's reign. This book seems to have been the entire Pentateuch and apparently contained the law of holiness as well as the law which taught centralization of worship. It was not merely Deuteronomy but a fuller content of the law. Huldah, the prophetess, re-



veals the fate of Jerusalem, 22:14-20.

Josiah's reforms, 23:1-30. The law is read and the covenant is renewed, vs. 1-3. Vs. 4-20 show how Josiah eliminated idolatry from the land. The passover is kept by the people, 21-23. The conclusion of Josiah's reign, 24-30.

D. 23:31-35—*Jeoahaz*.

E. 23:36-24:7—*Jekoiakim (Eliakim)*. It was during this reign of Jekoiakim that Neduchadnezzar first attacked Jerusalem. It was at this time that Daniel was carried captive.

F. 24:8-17—*Jehoiachin (Coniah or Jechoniah)*. It was this man which God said would be *childless* pertaining to the throne. This meant that the dynasty of David would *end on earth* with this man and would not be reinstated to the throne until the Christ came and was elevated to heaven to sit on the throne of David, cf. Acts 2. Coniah reigned for three months and then was deposed and carried to Babylon.

G. 24:18-25:26—*Zedekiah (Gedaliah)*. This section parallels very closely Jeremiah 52, except for omitting the account of Gedaliah's murder and the people fleeing to Egypt.

H. 25:27-30—Jehoiachin is honored. In the first year of Evil-merodach Jehoiachin is released from prison.

### Conclusion

The northern kingdom saw *nine* dynasties in power: (1) Jeroboam, Nadab; (2) Baasha, Elah; (3) Zimri; (4) Omri, Ahab, Ahaziah, Jehoram; (5) Jehu, Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II; Zechariah; (6) Shallum; (7) Menahem, Pekahiah; (8) Pekah; (9) Hoshea.

Note: There were *nineteen* kings with an average of about eleven years to a reign. *Eight* of these kings met death by violence.

The southern kingdom had *only one* dynasty, the House of David, with the exception of the usurper, Athaliah, from the northern kingdom who by marriage broke into David's line and interrupted the succession for six years. There were twenty kings in all, reigning an average of about sixteen years each.

There is a great contrast between the northern and southern kings. In the northern kingdom there was *not one single good king*. In the southern kingdom there were several good kings as well as several bad kings.

## **Part Two**

### **THE LATTER PROPHETS**

The second division of the prophets is known as the latter prophets. These prophets are also commonly referred to as the writing prophets because they are the authors of the books which bear their names. Some of the prophecies in this section may not have been spoken to groups of people but merely written by the prophet and circulated among God's people. In other instances the prophecies were delivered orally before groups and later written by the prophet and circulated. In either instance, the result is the very word of God, delivered by the supervision of the Holy Spirit, 1 Peter 1:21.

The books in this section are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the twelve minor prophets. In the Hebrew Bible, the twelve formed one book. The first three prophets in this section are commonly called major prophets because of the size of their works while the twelve are called minor prophets due to the fact that their works are shorter than the three major prophets. It certainly is not on the grounds of importance that the twelve are called minor prophets because some of the most significant messianic prophecies in the Old Testament are found in the minor prophets.

## Chapter Five

### ISAIAH

#### Name

The first striking appearance of the book is the name *Isaiah*. The name is a compound one, and signifies "Jehovah's salvation," or the "Lord is salvation." The meaning of this phrase is that salvation is from Jehovah. This is what the whole book is about, and the name of the prophet himself is descriptive and perhaps prophetic of its contents. The English is a transliteration of the shorter Hebrew form. The book is named after the prophet, its *author*.

#### Author

The most disputed matter about the book of Isaiah has long been the dispute over the *authorship* of the whole book. Involved in the matter of authorship is the *unity* of the book. There have been many diverse views taken concerning the authorship of Isaiah, a few which we shall notice of necessity. Needless to say, the *radical* critics have so disputed the authorship of Isaiah and its unity that so far as they are concerned only 262 verses out of the total of 1,292 verses actually belong to the prophet Isaiah himself (Cheyne, Duhm, etc.). They say that the other 1,030 passages are interpolations, glosses, and later redactions of various editors, the number of which no one could possibly know. In actuality they deny the divine authorship of the book. This rejection rests upon their understanding of the supernatural. The reason for their denial of the authorship of Isaiah may be better understood when one understands their view of the religion of Israel. Carl Heinrich Cornill expressed this radical view of the religion of Israel when he said, "But to appreciate the position which prophetism assumes in the development of the Israelitish religion and to be able to understand how in Israel this thorough transformation of prophesying could be effected, we must attempt to render clear to ourselves the course of evolution of the Israelitish religion."<sup>10</sup> One should notice

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<sup>10</sup>Cornill, Carl Heinrich, *The Prophets of Israel*, (Chicago: The Open Court Publishing Company, 1897), p. 14-15.

that emphasis will be placed by Cornill on the word evolution.

These radical critics have been influenced by the Deism, Encyclopedism, Rationalism, and Naturalism of the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries. The *end result* of course is *skepticism*. This infidelity is thought by some to be a *necessary phase* through which scholars must go to find the truth. Such a theory is expressed in the preface to Carl Heinrich Cornill's work, when Mr. Paul Carus stated, "The negations of the Biblical criticism are only a preliminary work, which prepares the way for positive issues. Skepticism may be a phase through which we have to pass, but it is not the end."<sup>11</sup> One can see from this statement that the radical critics *expect* skepticism to result from their work, although they optimistically believe that there is something better on the other side of skepticism. The question arises, however, "How will one pass through skepticism and emerge with faith?" If unbelief can produce faith, then to be certain that all will have faith we should work to create unbelief!

The period of the emergence of critical theories of the modern destructive critics concerning Isaiah actually began about 1780.

(1) J.B. Koppe suggested in 1780 that chapter 50 might have been the work of Ezekiel or someone else during the period of the exile. This seems to have touched off a rash of critical theories of the same nature.

(2) Johann Doederlein (1745-1792) published a systematic argument (1789) for the sixth century (B.C.) composition of Isaiah chapters 40-66. Doederlein based his theory on the supposition that an eighth century Isaiah could not have foreseen the fall of Jerusalem, the captivity of the people and other matters. His view was that someone must have written the chapters who was an eyewitness or at least one who could gain his information from a natural source. Among those who followed this school of thought were: (a) Eichhorn, (b) Heinrich, (c) Gesenius (1786-1842). Note: Gesenius argued for the unity of 40-66 but he denied the Isaianic authorship of these chapters. The consequence of the basic premise that was set forth by Doederlein and followed by these men was that there could be no supernatural within the framework of human history. Therefore, anything that suggested a divine

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<sup>11</sup>*Ibid.*, p. xi.

prediction could not be written beforehand and must have been written by someone during the events spoken of, or following the events.

(3) Rosenmueller (1768-1835) pointed out that if the foreknowledge ruled out the writing of 40-66 by Isaiah himself then the Babylonian section of 1-39 must also be eliminated. This left fewer than three hundred verses to be written by Isaiah.

(4) Duhm (1847-1928) taught that there were three Isaiahs, none of whom lived in Babylon. Duhm taught that second Isaiah was redacted, or edited about 540 B.C., and third Isaiah about 450 B.C. Duhm theorized that in all three Isaiahs there were insertions and redactions which continued down to the first century B.C. George Adam Smith followed him and popularized that view. However, this view was dealt a devastating blow when the Qumran Scroll was found in 1947 which contained Isaiah in its fullness and the supposedly two books of Isaiah were joined together as one. The Qumran Scroll containing the complete manuscript of Isaiah, is thought to have been written about 200 B.C. This fact would eliminate Duhm's theory of Trito — Isaiah and his idea regarding the redactions of it.

(5) Carl Elliger taught that 56-66 was from one author who lived toward the close of the 6th century. Elliger theorized that the writer of these chapters was one about whom we may learn something, and one who also composed the famous passage, 52:13-53:12, and whose hand is found in the "servant" passages and other places in 40-55.

Pfeiffer, a more recent critic (*Introduction to the O. T.*, page 452), states that "all critics with rare exceptions are agreed that Isaiah 40-66 was not written by Isaiah the son of Amoz." Pfeiffer and others believe that these chapters were written by an anonymous author or authors in brief sections. Pfeiffer subscribes to the Deutero - Isaiah theory (two Isaiahs). That author (page 457) declares that these chapters are but imaginative descriptions of a new Exodus in the nature of "Pilgrim songs." He rejects the historicity of such an event that was mentioned.

Pfeiffer theorized (pages 447-448) that the first part of Isaiah (1-39) is but a collection of separate little books. He believes that these books were circulated as separate selections

of articles before they were copied together on a single scroll of the papyrus. Pfeiffer felt that our book of Isaiah which we presently have, came into existence about 200 B.C. He also maintained that the second book in Isaiah (13-23) was a collection of foreign oracles. Pfeiffer believes that what he calls the book of Isaiah, chapters 1-39, is actually composed of three books with supplements. Naturally, what Pfeiffer calls the "genuine prophecies" of Isaiah are a few moral and ethical preachments. Around this nucleus which originated with Isaiah, he would have all the prophecies and predictive elements contained in the book to adhere.

*Form criticism* attempts to determine, classify, and to trace the history of the various literary types or patterns which are to be found in the Bible and to relate them to similar forms which are to be found in other literature. Form criticism is obviously *contrary to reason* in that its tendency is to break up extended passages into fragments. Form criticism would count perhaps fifty or more small units — songs and sayings — in chapters 40-55. The form critic would break these small units up into verses averaging six or seven to the unit. It is clearly seen that such an approach destroys the unity and cohesion of every chapter and every section. *Form criticism* has introduced no radical change into the overall *general critic* position. It has merely placed new application upon the old principles. It has primarily concerned itself over whether they were written down by the prophet.

This brief survey of the critical theories of Isaiah will indicate to the readers that before us is a prominent array of men who have relied upon what they call "scientific investigation," which appears to them to be an impartial investigation, while in reality it is based upon a *hostile view* toward the supernatural. These critics believe that the prophet is *a man of his own time* speaking to the people of his own time in matters of importance to them. These radical critics believe that the prophet's word could concern only the present or the *immediate* future, relative to which, the prophets could read the "signs of the time."

With these matters before us, the fact that there is a problem raised regarding the authorship of Isaiah cannot be denied. The authorship of the whole book is denied to Isaiah on three basic premises. According to the critics Isaiah could not

written the whole book because:

(1) The internal evidence indicates that the standpoint of the writer of chapters 40-66 is the exile. The radical critic who denies the supernatural element in prophecy can not, of course, allow Isaiah to write in the eighth century regarding matters of the sixth and seventh century. Therefore, they must find another author or authors for the section 40-66.

The real argument, though, is not whether the standpoint of the writer is exilic. This is plainly obvious. The question is whether the prophet is able to be projected *supernaturally* into the future to describe the events of the future for the benefit of a future generation as well as the present generation of the author. This question will carry one back to the basic view of *inspiration* and *supernaturalism*. If one believes in the Biblical view of inspiration, i.e., that *God breathed his word into men and guided those men by his spirit in the revelation of that word to men without error* then it is not difficult to accept the predictive element in prophecy. The reader may wish to review some of the considerations regarding prophecy at the beginning of section one.

The essential idea of prophecy is the *direct operation* of God's spirit upon the *faculties* of man. If this idea is allowed by the critics, the critic cannot successfully refute the predictive elements at any point in any given prophecy. Ezekiel was transported in the spirit from Babylon and set upon a very high mountain, Ezek. 40:2. Ezekiel is also brought out, in the spirit of the Lord, and set in the midst of the valley "full of bones," 37:1. One might also read Rev. 1:10, 4:1-19:21; 2 Cor. 12:2-4. This indicates that one may be projected into the future. To deny the authorship of the book to Isaiah on the grounds of the predictive element in 40-66 is to deny every passage in the entire Bible which is similar in its nature.

Chapters 40-66 were written especially for the *consolation* of Israel, as well as being *prophetic* in nature.

(2) The supposed differences in style between the two sections of the book (1-39 — 40-66) confirms the radical critic in his refutation of the Isaianic authorship of 40-66. It has been aptly stated by Raven and others that the literary argument taken by itself is really *no argument*. At best, the literary argument is always in a dangerous position and may

easily posit false conclusions. The literary argument *assumes* that a writer will write in only *one* style. This argument would claim that any change in style or manner of writing would indicate a change of authorship. This argument is arbitrary and subjective. It is only possible to know an author's style by the book which bears his name. The critics' weak position based on this argument is seen in that they will take the first 39 chapters to gain the style of Isaiah and then use that style to deny his authorship for the rest of the book. This is sort of like the dog chasing his tail. It is *circular reasoning* and therefore is not valid.

Many radical critics have actually destroyed the argument of differences in style in that they argue that there are very close similarities between the two sections. The critic then explains these away on the grounds that the second Isaiah imitated the first Isaiah, using the first as his model. Some of the critics have thought that a close disciple of Isaiah wrote the book or that the writer was filled with Isaiah's spirit, writing in conscious imitation of Isaiah. It seems obvious that if the similarities are so great, the differences are not sufficient to require another author. Raven (*Intro. to the O.T.*, page 190) aptly pointed out that "instead of emphasizing the differences and then attempting to explain the resemblances, it is simpler and more logical to emphasize the resemblances and explain the differences." Some deny that Isaiah wrote 40-66 because of the *supposed differences* while others reject Isaianic authorship on the basis of *striking similarities*. "To whom shall we go?"

(3) Differences in the theological ideas of the two sections of the book of Isaiah indicate separate authorships, according to the critics. (Pfeiffer - page 416). The critic does not claim the differences of the second part of the book to be *contradictory* to those of the so-called "first" of Isaiah, but broader and more elevated. (Raven - page 192). It is said that the second supposedly spoke of the *infinitude* of God while the first Isaiah spoke of the *majesty* of God. In the first 39 chapters, the Messiah appeared as a king, while in the latter half of the book, 40-66, the Messiah appears as the "servant" and "the righteous sufferer." However, the reference to David (55:3) indicates that the former conception is not forgotten. Whatever different ideas are presented in 40-66 are necessary



for the *completion* of the thoughts begun in 1-39.

Furthermore, when one sees that the "theological ideas" of the "second Isaiah" are very similar to those of his contemporary, *Micah*, the argument based on differences in theological ideas loses any strength it might have had. To see the literary resemblance of Isaiah 40-66 to *Micah*, one might compare the following: *Micah* 1:11-Isaiah 47:2; *Micah* 2:13-Isaiah 52:12; *Micah* 3:5-Isaiah 56:10-11; *Micah* 3:8-Isaiah 58:1; *Micah* 3:11-Isaiah 48:2; *Micah* 4:13-Isaiah 41:15-16; *Micah* 7:17-Isaiah 49:23.

From this brief survey of the three basic arguments of the critics against the Isaianic authorship and unity of the book, one can quickly comprehend the *weaknesses* of the critics' position and, therefore, *reasonable doubt* is cast upon their conclusions. However, it is not just because reasonable doubt is cast upon the conclusion of the critics that we believe in the Isaianic authorship and the unity of the book. Rather, there are various *strong reasons* for accepting the unity and Isaianic authorship of the book.

The *author* of the book was *Isaiah*, the son of Amoz, who lived and worked in Jerusalem. He received his prophetic call during the closing years of the reign of King Uzziah and continued his ministry in the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. Hosea and *Micah* were contemporary prophets. There was no way to ascertain the date of Isaiah's death. There is a Jewish tradition that Isaiah suffered martyrdom in the reign of Manasseh, being sawn asunder by that wicked king. If that tradition has any truth to it, his ministry extended over about sixty years. Isaiah was influential with King Hezekiah.

Isaiah was married (8:3) and had two sons who bore symbolic names. The first was *Shear-jashub* (7:3) meaning "a remnant shall return" and the second *Maher-shalar-hazbaz* meaning "spoil quickly, plunder swiftly."

The family of Isaiah was apparently fairly distinguished and influential. His father's name is given, and he seemingly was on familiar terms with the royal court, even in the reign of Ahaz. Until the death of Hezekiah (in 698 or 696 B.C.) Isaiah was highly respected in spite of his unpopular political views.

There are valid reasons for assigning the book in its entirety to the prophet Isaiah. Among these reasons are:

(1) The author of Isaiah 40-66 was a Palestinian Jew. The writer does not show a familiarity with the land of Babylon as one would expect from one among the captives. He does speak of Jerusalem and the mountains of Palestine, and he mentions several particulars such as native trees and other matters which a *Palestinian* would naturally think of using. 41:9 could be used only if the writer were in Palestine while writing. One might make the same statement relative to 45:22. 52:11 seems *conclusive* that the writer was in the promised land.

(2) Some passages in 40-66 do not correspond to the time of the exile. 62:6, the walls of Jerusalem are standing. 40:9, the cities of Judah, as well as Zion are yet in existence. How could such statements have been made during the exile?

(3) The tradition of Isaianic authorship appeared as early as Ecclesiasticus. For nearly twenty-five hundred years (according to A.B. Davidson - a radical critic) no one would think of denying the Isaianic authorship to the book.

(4) The *New Testament* writers offer conclusive proof that both parts of the book of Isaiah are by the same author and that single author is *Isaiah*. Isaiah is quoted in the New Testament *more* than all of the other prophets together. The use of Isaiah by the New Testament writers and speakers leaves no room for doubt that Isaiah was the author of the entire book which bears his name. In John 12:38-41, quotations are made from both parts of Isaiah and are attributed to *Isaiah*. In *Romans*, Paul makes abundant use of the prophecies of Isaiah. One needs only to read Romans 9-11 to see how frequently Paul introduces Isaiah as the author of the entire book which bears his name.

In the New Testament use of Isaiah, there are several methods used to introduce quotations from the prophet. Following are some of the methods: *The prophet Isaiah* is introduced in Matthew 3:3 when Isaiah 43 is quoted, (II) Note: These Roman numerals in parentheses indicate whether the source is found in what is alleged to be the "first," "second," or "third" Isaiah. *Isaiah the prophet*, Matt. 8:17 in a quotation of 53:4 (II-III). *The prophecy of Isaiah*, Matt. 13:14 in quoting Isaiah 6:9-10 (I). *In Isaiah the prophet*, Mark 1:2 in quoting Isaiah 40:3 (II). *Isaiah prophesied*, Matt. 15:7 in quoting Isaiah 29:13 (I). *Isaiah prophesied*, Mark 7:6 in

quoting Isaiah 29:13 (I). Luke is very specific when he said, "In the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet," Luke 3:4 in quoting Isaiah 40:3-5 (II). Again Luke is specific, "The book of the prophet Isaiah," Luke 4:17 in quoting Isaiah 61:1-2 (III). One might also compare John 1:23 with Isaiah 40:3 (II). John 12:38 with Isaiah 53:1 (II-III). John 12:39 with Isaiah 6:9-10 (I). John 12:41 with Isaiah 53:1; 6:9-10 (I-II). Acts 8:28 with Isaiah 53:7-8 (II-III). Acts 8:30 with Isaiah 53:7-8 (II-III). Acts 8:32 with Isaiah 53:7-8 (II-III). Acts 28:25 with Isaiah 6:9-10 (I). Romans 9:27 with Isaiah 10:22-23 (I). Romans 9:29 with Isaiah 1:9 (I). Romans 10:16 with Isaiah 53:1 (II-III). Romans 10:20 with Isaiah 65:1 (III). The inspired writers of the New Testament *attributed all* to Isaiah, whether it appeared in the supposedly first, second, or third part. Inspiration made *no distinction* such as the critics make. One might notice that Romans 9 and 10 contain many allusions to the language of Isaiah.

There is no room for question about what position the New Testament takes on the authorship and unity of Isaiah.

When one denies the unity and authorship of Isaiah he must deny the following:

(1) The heading, Isaiah 1:1, which attributes the authorship of that which follows to the prophet Isaiah.

(2) Internal evidence which points out that the writer was a Palestinian Jew, familiar with his surroundings in Jerusalem and Judea.

(3) He must go contrary to the evidence of some of the statements in the later chapters of Isaiah which could not have been written during the exile — passages which show that the walls of Jerusalem and the cities of Judah still existed at the time of writing.

(4) He must deny the external evidence which for twenty-five hundred years shows an acceptance of the Isaianic authorship of the whole book which bears the name *Isaiah*.

(5) And lastly, he must reject *the inspiration* of the New Testament. As far as this present writer is concerned, the only *logical* and *safe conclusion* which can be reached regarding the book is that it is a *literary unit* comprising the *prophecy which Isaiah uttered*, which God wanted recorded, and that *Isaiah, the son of Amoz*, is the author of the whole unit. There is *no reason* for denying the Isaianic authorship which

is either logical or which could contribute to the welfare of man. On the other hand, there is every reasonable cause to accept the Isaianic authorship and the unity of the book.

### Purpose

Isaiah appeared on the scene during a crucial time in Judah's history. Assyria was ascending as the world power while Egypt was on the decline. These two empires were warring against each other and would necessarily have little Judah caught in a pincer movement in their battles. To avoid complete devastation, the rulers of Judah, using *human wisdom* while rejecting divine instructions, would seek an alliance with one or the other of these empires. *Isaiah*, as the name itself indicates, emphasizes that salvation is only from Jehovah. The *purpose* of this book is to teach that *salvation would come only from God*, never from man. Therefore, no alliance should be made with either of these kingdoms, but rather trust should be placed in Jehovah from whom salvation would come. Isaiah 7:14 is a sign of the deliverance of the nation and the preservation of the house of David so that God could be faithful to his promise made to David that he would establish David's throne and house forever. Chapters 40-66 are to show the conclusion of the fulfillment of that promise when God's people would walk with God in a new and living way. *Isaiah is Messianic*, the most Messianic of any of the Old Testament prophets. He could truly be called *the evangelist of the Old Testament*. *The message of Isaiah is to warn the wicked and comfort the righteous.*

### The Time of the Prophet

For a fuller understanding and better appreciation of the prophecies of Isaiah, one must know something of the conditions of his time. The ministry of Isaiah began in the latter part of the reign of Uzziah who died about 758 (some say as late as 736 B.C.). Exactly *when* Isaiah began his ministry in Uzziah's reign depends upon one's view of Isaiah 6. Isaiah began his ministry toward the close of Uzziah's reign and prophesied through the sixteen years of the reign of Jotham. In this period the prosperity and glory of Judah *ascended*

while the glory and wealth of the northern kingdom descended. But the outward splendor and the great prosperity of Judah gave rise to much of the *corruption* and *idolatry* which arose in the nation. This constituted the *first period* of Isaiah's ministry.

The *second* period of Isaiah's ministry began with the reign of Ahaz and extended through the reign of that king, a period of about sixteen years. During this period *open idolatry* was introduced in several forms. The hostilities between Israel and Judah were continued and the Syrians and the Israelites warred against Jerusalem with the intention of destroying the house of David. Ahaz, contrary to the word of God, appealed to Tiglath-pileser, the king of Assyria. In so doing he made the arm of flesh his crutch, but that arm of flesh was cut off. It was during this period that Isaiah delivered the many great prophecies regarding the coming *Messiah* and his kingdom, chapters 7-11.

The *third* period of Isaiah's prophetic ministry began with the *elevation of Hezekiah* to the throne and his *public ministry* extended through the fifteenth year of Hezekiah's reign. Under Hezekiah the nation rose even as it had declined under Ahaz. Hezekiah was a righteous king who forsook the idolatrous ways of his father, Hezekiah restored the worship of Jehovah and effected an outward reformation. It was because the righteous Hezekiah listened to the words of God uttered by Isaiah that the destruction of Jerusalem during his reign was averted. After the fifteenth year of Hezekiah's reign, Isaiah seemed to have taken no further part in public affairs.

An analysis of the text itself will shed further light on these periods but this brief sketch of the times during which Isaiah prophesied will enable one to grasp more fully the evident meaning of the prophecies of Isaiah.

### Outline Of Isaiah

#### I. PROPHECIES REGARDING JUDAH AND ISRAEL—1:1-12:6.

##### A. The great trial—1:1-31.

###### 1. A general title of the book—1.

###### 2. The charge against the people—2-9.

###### a. Corruption brought by ingratitude—2-3.

###### b. Sin had separated the people from God—4-6.

###### c. Calamity was the result—7-9.

###### 3. The defense which Israel would presume to offer—10-17.

- a. Splendor of ritual and precision of worship alone meant nothing—10-15.
  - b. A pure heart and holy life must accompany worship—16-17.
- 4. An offer of pardon—18-23.
  - a. The challenge issued to Israel to prove her case—18.
  - b. The condition of pardon—19-20.
  - c. The pardon rejected—21-23.
- 5. The sentence is passed—24-31.
- B. Judah's imminent judgment—2:1-5:30.
  - 1. Introductory title—1.
  - 2. The establishment of the church—2-4.
    - a. The fruit of Israel's religion—2:2.
    - b. The universal character of the church—2:3.
    - c. The peaceful character of the church—2:4.
  - 3. The present condition of God's people contrasted—2:5-9.
  - 4. The judgment which will fall—2:10-22.
    - a. The people will be humbled—10-17a.
    - b. Jehovah alone will be exalted—2:17b-22.
  - 5. Jerusalem and Judah to be devastated—3:1-4:1.
    - a. All upon whom Judah depended would be taken away—3:1-17.
    - b. The corruption of the leaders is responsible—3:8-15.
    - c. The abnormal luxury of the women is condemned—3:16-4:1.
  - 6. The church under Christ—4:2-6.
  - 7. The prevalent sins of Judah—5:1-30.
    - a. The parable describing the divine disappointment Israel had produced—5:1-7.
    - b. A series of woes—8-23.
      - 1) Upon the greedy landowners—8-12.
      - 2) Spiritual dullness responsible for captivity—13-17.
      - 3) Upon materialists with false values—18-23.
    - c. Judgment to be swift and severe—24-30.
- C. Isaiah's vision—6:1-13.
  - 1. The vision—1-7.
  - 2. The message—8-13.
- D. Immanuel offers relief to the oppressed—7:1-12:6.
  - 1. Deliverance from Syria and Israel—7:1-25.
    - a. The historical setting—1-2.
    - b. God reassures Ahaz—3-9.
    - c. The son of a virgin to be a sign that David's house would not be destroyed—10-17.
    - d. The consequence of the Assyrian alliance—18-25.
  - 2. Prophecy of the Assyrian invasion—8:1-22.
    - a. Renewal of prediction of the overthrow of Israel by a symbolical name applied to Isaiah's son—1-4.
    - b. Consolation to his disciples—5-8.
    - c. Judah to suffer because of her unbelief—9-15.
    - d. Another prophecy of Christ—16-18.
    - e. Darkness and despair results from their unbelief—19-22.
  - 3. Messianic light to shine forth—9:1-21.
    - a. The Messiah to emerge in the darkest gloom—1-3.
    - b. This Messiah to have a spiritual reign—4-7.
    - c. Isaiah predicts the defeat of Israel—8-21.

4. The scourge of Assyria—10:1-34.
  - a. Woe against the "blood sucking" covetous rulers—1-4.
  - b. Assyria employed of God—5-15.
  - c. The doom of Assyria is spelled out—16-19.
  - d. A righteous remnant of Israel to be spared—20-23.
  - e. Jerusalem encouraged—24-27.
  - f. A description of the approach of Assyria upon Jerusalem—28-34.
5. The Branch of Jehovah—11:1-12:6.
  - a. The nature of the government of the Branch—11:1-15.
  - b. The nature of those who submit to the government of the Branch—11:6-9.
  - c. The Branch to be a universal ruler—11:10.
  - d. The unity of believers—11:11-16.
  - e. The thanksgiving for salvation the Branch offered—12:1-6.

## II. ORACLES CONCERNING THE NATIONS WHOSE DESTINIES AFFECT ISRAEL—13:1-23:18.

- A. The fall of Babylon—13:1-14:23.
  1. The heading of the section—13:1.
  2. The coming destruction was to be from God—13:2-5.
  3. The horror of the day of destruction—13:6-16.
  4. The Medes named as ones who would bring total destruction—13:17-22.
  5. The fall of Babylon will effect the release of God's children—14:1-2.
  6. The song of judgment on the king of Babylon—14:3-20.
    - a. Rest given to the earth for a period—14:3-11.
    - b. The pride of Babylon depicted as the reason for her fall—14:12-20.
  7. The extent of Babylon's destruction—14:21-23.
- B. The fall of Assyria—14:24-27.
- C. Prophecies concerning nations threatened by Assyria—14:28-36.
  1. Prophecy against Philistia—14:28-32.
  2. The prophecy against Moab—15:1-16:14.
    - a. A description of the strong cities of Moab—15:1-9.
    - b. Exhortation to Moab to ally themselves with Judah—16:1-5.
    - c. Moab will be made desolate because of her pride—16:6-12.
    - d. The time involved in the destruction of Moab's glory—16:13-14.
  3. Prophecy against Damascus and Ephraim—17:1-14.
    - a. The destruction of Damascus and Ephraim—1-3.
    - b. Ephraim's destruction—4-6.
    - c. Some of Ephraim shall return to God—7-8.
    - d. The cause of their doom—9-11.
    - e. The rise and fall of the Assyrians—12-14.
  4. The prophecy against Ethiopia—18:1-7.
    - a. Ethiopia to be gravely threatened—1-3.
    - b. The deliverance of Ethiopia will turn them toward Jehovah—4-7.
  5. The prophecy against Egypt—19:1-25.
    - a. Civil war and anarchy in Egypt described—19:1-4.

- b. Material depression upon Egypt—5-10.
- c. All political counsel in Egypt to fail—11-15.
- d. The eventual (Messianic) conversion of some Egyptians to Jehovah—16-22.
- e. The universal nature of the gospel blessings—23-25.
- 6. The symbol of Assyrian victory over Egypt and Ethiopia—20:1-6.
- D. The oracle concerning the fall of Babylon—21:1-10.
- E. The oracle concerning Dumah (Edom)—verses 11-12.
- F. The oracle concerning the disruption of affairs in Arabia—21:13-17.
- G. The oracle concerning the valley of decision—22:1-25.
  - 1. Jerusalem during a siege—1-14.
  - 2. Prophecy against proud Shebna—15-25.
- H. The oracle concerning Tyre—23:1-18.
  - 1. The announcement of doom—1-7.
  - 2. God purposed the destruction because of the pride of Tyre—8-12.
  - 3. The Babylonians will carry out God's purpose—13-14.
  - 4. After seventy years Tyre will be restored and her goods used to serve God—15-18.

### III. GOD'S JUDGMENTS UPON THE NATIONS—24:1-27:13.

- A. Judgment upon Judah—24:1-23.
  - 1. Waves of approaching judgments—1-5.
    - a. Earth-land refers to Judah, cf. Jer. 4:23.
    - b. Apparent desolation brought by Syria referred to.
  - 2. The curse of Deut. 30:15-19 comes upon Israel—6-15.
  - 3. Punishment and deliverance—16-23.
- B. Judah rejoices over her deliverance—25:1-12.
  - 1. A hymn of thanksgiving for the deliverance spoken of—1-5.
  - 2. The great rejoicing in Jerusalem—6-8.
  - 3. Judah rejoices but Moab must suffer—9-12.
- C. Jerusalem's song sung because of her deliverance—26:1-21.
  - 1. Exhortation to trust in God—1-10.
  - 2. God's enemies are put to shame to God's glory—11-15.
  - 3. Judah's cry and God's reply—16-19.
  - 4. God's indignation against the evildoers—20-21.
- D. God punishes Israel's enemies and blesses Israel—27:1-13.
  - 1. God smites Babylon—1.
  - 2. God's tender care in delivering his people—2-6.
  - 3. God's people shall no more be idolators—7-11.
    - a. Israel, though captive, not smitten as their captors—7-8.
    - b. Israel's captivity destroys their desire for idols—9.
    - c. Israel's captors receive no compassion—10-11.
  - 4. Israel, just ready to perish, would return to Jerusalem to worship God—12-13.

### IV. A BOOK OF WOES—28:1-35:10.

- A. A woe to drunken, skeptical rulers of the land—28:1-29.
  - 1. A vivid description of the rulers of Ephraim—1-8.
  - 2. The hardened reprobates sneer at God's prophets—9-10.
  - 3. Their ungodliness will be punished—11-13.
- 4. A woe upon the skeptical rulers of Jerusalem and a Messianic prophecy—14-17.



5. Assyrian invasion demonstrates the folly of the Egyptian alliance—18-22.
6. God's judgment is designed to produce fruit—23-26.
7. As different harvesters reap different crops, so God's judgment will produce different blessings—27-29.
- B. Oppression and deliverance of Jerusalem—29:1-24.
  1. A summary of the woe—1-4.
  2. A mighty deliverance—5-8.
  3. Isaiah's mission was being accomplished—9-12.
  4. The stupefied spiritual condition prevented them from believing—13-14.
  5. The hypocritical leaders would be punished according to God's universal law—15-21.
  6. The righteous would have no cause to fear—22-24.
- C. A woe against the pro-Egyptian party—30:1-33.
  1. The alliance with Egypt well advanced—1-5.
  2. The Jews placed their trust in those who could not help—6-7.
  3. Judah's rebellious attitude—8-11.
  4. Israel must pay for her desire to be free from God—12-17.
  5. God teaches and blesses through the adversity of captivity—18-22.
  6. God promises greater blessings than ever before to those who are faithful—23-26.
  7. God blesses penitent Israel but finally destroys Assyria—27-33.
- D. A woe to those who trust in false help, and the new era—31:1-32:8.
  1. Further warnings against an alliance with Egypt—31:1-3.
  2. God calls upon Judah to repent—31:4-9.
  3. A new era for Judah—32:1-8.
    - a. The first fruit produced by judgment is righteous rule—1-2.
    - b. The second fruit is an opened understanding—3-4.
    - c. The third fruit is a proper evaluation of character—5-8.
- E. The approaching judgment—32:9-20.
  1. A woe upon the women—9-14.
  2. The land to receive the people back—15-20.
- F. The woe against Assyria, and Israel's deliverance—33:1-24.
  1. Prayer and prophecy about Assyria—1-6.
  2. The pitiful condition brought on by false trusts—7-9.
  3. Assyria's end—10-12.
  4. A fearful example—13-14a.
  5. The question answered—14b-17.
  6. A vanquished conqueror—18-20.
  7. A fourfold glory given to God—21-22.
    - a. Judge.
    - b. Lawgiver.
    - c. King.
    - d. Saviour.
  8. The present condition of Judah is very poor—23-24.
- G. God avenges his people—34:1-17.
  1. A warning to those who hate God's people—1-4.
  2. God's sword used to judge—5-7.
  3. God avenges Zion because he is not to be mocked—8-10.

4. The destiny of Edom—11-15.

5. God's book serves as a memorial as well as a warning—16-17.

#### H. The return of Israel—35:1-10.

1. The land blesses the returning people—1-2.

2. Brethren are to strengthen the weak—3-4.

3. The spiritual state changes—5-7.

4. The highway of redemption—8-10.

a. The antitype is Jesus and His church.

b. The edict of Cyrus was plain and simple; the Lord's directives to sinners today are also plain.

#### V. HEZEKIAH'S SICKNESS AND THE REIGN OF JERUSALEM—36:1-39:8.

(These prophecies belong to the 14th year of Hezekiah's reign and the years following shortly thereafter.)

##### A. Assyria's first attempt to capture Jerusalem—36:1-37:7.

1. The first attempt—36:1-3.

2. Rabshakeh's message—36:4-10.

3. A plea to Rabshakeh—36:11-12.

4. Rabshakeh's harangue—36:13-15.

5. Rabshakeh's address to the people—36:16-17.

6. Rabshakeh blasphemes God—36:18-20.

7. The effect of Rabshakeh's word—36:21-22.

8. Hezekiah appeals to Isaiah—37:1-4.

9. Isaiah's reply—37:5-7.

##### B. God's deliverance of Jerusalem—37:8-38.

1. Rabshakeh returns to Sennacherib—37:8-9.

2. Sennacherib blasphemes—37:10-13.

3. Sennacherib sends Hezekiah a letter—37:14-15.

4. Hezekiah's prayer for help—37:16-20.

5. Isaiah's prophecy against Assyria—37:21-25.

6. God tells Assyria that he empowered her—37:26-27.

7. God would control Assyria—37:28-29.

8. God's sign to Israel—37:30.

9. God's promise to Judah—37:31-32.

10. The promise made definite—37:33-35.

11. An account of God's act—37:36-38.

##### C. Hezekiah's illness—38:1-22.

1. Hezekiah's prayer for his life—38:1-3.

2. God's promise—4-6.

3. The token of God's pledge—7-8.

4. Hezekiah's psalm—9.

5. A deep lamentation—10-12.

6. A backward glance—13-14.

7. The effect of God's promise—15-17.

8. Hezekiah's joy and promise—18-20.

9. Hezekiah's curiosity—21-22.

##### D. The Babylonian captivity foretold—39:1-8.

1. Hezekiah's weakness—1-2.

2. God rebukes Hezekiah—3-8.

a. Hezekiah's pride—3-4.

b. The consequences Judah must pay—5-6.

c. Hezekiah's descendants must suffer—7-8.

#### VI. ISRAEL'S RESTORATION FROM EXILE IN BABYLONIA—40:1-66:24.

- A. Words of comfort and the God of comfort—40:1-31.
  1. Jerusalem to be comforted—1-2.
  2. The real comfort would be from Christ in the gospel era—3-4.
  3. God's glory revealed by Jesus—5.
  4. A second and third voice enter with hope—6-8.
  5. God to rule by his arm, Christ—9-12.
  6. Israel made to see that God alone possesses absolute might and wisdom—13-14.
  7. Jehovah is a matchless being—15-18.
  8. The making of an idol—19-20.
  9. Four questions for those who desire to worship idols—21.
  10. A description of God in works and words—22.
  11. God is the most exalted being—23-25.
  12. The incomparable nature of God—26-29.
  13. The faithful will be strengthened—30-31.
- B. Men are saved because of God's majesty—41:1-29.
  1. Jehovah challenges the nations—1-5.
  2. The idolatrous nations who war against the Medes and Persians thrown into confusion—6-7.
  3. God has proved himself to be along God—8-10.
  4. Israel's enemies would be overcome—11-13.
  5. The promise to Israel—14-16.
  6. Israel was helpless alone—17-20.
  7. God resumes the trial with the heathen—21-23.
  8. A contrast between the idol and God—24-25.
  9. God, by prophecy, proves to be God—26-28.
  10. The judicial process ended—29.
- C. The mediator of Israel and the Saviour of the Gentiles—42:1-43:13.
  1. The Messiah would bring a right judgment—1-4.
  2. God addresses his servant, Messiah—5-7.
  3. Jehovah's name is pledged to restore his people—8-9.
  4. The new things are from God himself—10-12.
  5. Israel in captivity—13-15.
  6. The restoration of Israel—16-19.
  7. Israel reprov'd—20-22.
  8. Israel must remain in her afflicted condition until she changes—23-25.
  9. Israel consoled—43:1-2.
  10. A second reason why Israel will be restored - God's love—3-4.
  11. A third reason why Israel would be restored—5-7.
  12. The nations must give an answer for their treatment of Israel—8-10.
  13. God proves himself by his works—11-13.
- D. God's vengeance and deliverance—43:14-44:5.
  1. Babylon would be overthrown—14-15.
  2. A second scene of redemption—16-20.
    - a. A reminder of Egypt's doom—16-17.
    - b. Israel encouraged to look forward—18.
    - c. The new things which God would do for his people—19-20.
  3. God will be glorified by his people—43:21-24.
  4. Only God's grace was the cause for Israel's salvation—25-28.

5. The promise of restoration was increased—44:1-5.
- E. The absurdity of worshipping idols and the rejoicing of God's people—44:6-23.
  1. God proves that he alone is God—6-8.
  2. All who trust in idols will be shamed—9-11.
  3. A description of the making of an idol—12-13.
  4. The existence of the material for the idols depended upon God—14-17.
  5. Irrational idolatry hardens the heart—18-21.
  6. God would not forget his people—22-23.
- F. Cyrus, the anointed one—44:24-45:25.
  1. The promise of redemption becomes more specific—44:24-28.
  2. The career of Cyrus will cause the heathen to recognize God—45:1-3.
  3. God identifies Cyrus by name for the sake of Israel—45:4-7.
  4. The blessings of heaven and earth will be upon Israel in their restoration—8-13.
    - a. The murmurer is reproved—8-10.
    - b. God's name expresses blemesslessness and supremacy—11.
    - c. The creator had the sole right of guidance—12.
    - d. God would prosper Cyrus in order for him to restore Israel—13.
  5. The release of Israel would influence the Gentiles—14.
  6. Israel stands amazed—15.
  7. God cures his people of idolatry forever—16-17.
  8. Why Israel is to be restored to the land—18-19.
  9. The salvation of Israel will also include the Gentiles—20-21.
  10. God desires man's salvation—22-23.
  11. The submission to God by men would be voluntary—24-25.
- G. The fall of Babylon with her gods—46:1-47:15.
  1. The nothingness of the Babylonian gods—46:1-7.
  2. A warning to the apostate Jews—8-11.
  3. A third admonition to the hardhearted Jews—12-13.
  4. The fall of Babylon—47:1-15.
    - a. God proclaims judgment upon Babylon and her gods—1-4.
    - b. God would disgrace Babylon in the eyes of men—5-7.
    - c. The punishment is based upon the ground of Babylon's conduct—8-11.
    - d. Nothing could save Babylon—12-15.
- H. Israel reproved—48:1-22.
  1. God reproves the hypocrisy of his captive people—1-2.
  2. God reminds them of his foretelling their captivity—3-5.
  3. Israel must acknowledge that God foretold and that his prophecy was now fulfilled—6-8.
  4. Only God's grace had saved Israel from complete destruction—9-11.
  5. God alone is God—12-16.
  6. The future of Israel depends upon her attitude toward God's commandments—17-19.
  7. Loyalty and faith is demanded of Israel if she is to be restored—20-22.
- I. God's servant of salvation—49:1-26.
  1. God's servant would restore Israel to God—1-4.

2. The mission of this servant of God was to all the world—5-7.
3. The glory of the work of this servant—8-9.
4. The return of the redeemed of Israel is described—9b-12.
5. The transition pointing back to Israel—13.
6. Israel complains—14.
7. God's compassion is greater than that of a woman for her infant son—15-16.
8. Because God cannot forget, Israel can hope—17-18.
9. Zion will be greatly enlarged in the future—19-20.
10. Future Zion would marvel at her population—21-23.
11. Israel's weak faith questions God—24-26.
- J. The connection between the sin of Israel and the suffering of God's servant—50:1-11.
  1. Israel had broken God's covenant—1-3.
  2. The suffering servant of God—4-9.
  3. All men are invited to hear God's servant—10.
  4. Those who despise the word of the servant will be destroyed—11.
- K. Salvation comes and wrath is turned away—51:1-23.
  1. The prophecy turns from the despisers of the word to those who long for salvation—1-3.
  2. The promise extended beyond the physical restoration—4-5.
  3. Israel is summoned to look above—6-8.
  4. Israel responds—9-11.
  5. God encourages Israel to believe—12-16.
  6. God cries for Israel to awake—17-23.
- L. Jerusalem exchanges her bondage for freedom—52:1-12.
  1. Israel is pictured as being exhausted with grief—1-2.
  2. Israel would know that it was God who delivered them when he gave them deliverance—3-6.
  3. Redemption is preached—7-10.
  4. Israel was to go back in faith and courage—11-12.
- M. The Messiah is exalted out of deep humiliation—52:13-53:12.
  1. The Messiah shall deal prudently—52:13.
  2. The deep humiliation of the Messiah—14-15.
  3. The extreme humiliation of the Messiah—53:1-3.
  4. The former despisers of Messiah now confess him—4-6.
  5. The prophecy of the suffering, death, and burial of Jesus—7-9.
  6. God extended the life of the Messiah—10.
  7. The blessings given the Messiah for his self-sacrifice—11-12.
- N. Jerusalem and the servants of God glorified—54:1-17.
  1. The new Jerusalem, the church of the Lord—54:1-3.
  2. Jerusalem pictured as a widow—4-5.
  3. God renews his relationship with Jerusalem—6-8.
  4. The ground of God's kindness to Israel—9-10.
  5. The restoration of Israel to be glorious—11-13.  
(The final application is the gospel age)
  6. Jerusalem will stand against all enemies—14-15.
  7. The church will be kept so long as she remains pure—16-17.
- O. God's salvation—55:1-13.
  1. The invitation of God—1-2.
  2. All blessings may be received through obedience—3-5.
  3. God's gracious promises extended to all the world—6-7.
  4. God's appeal to the unrighteous—8-9.

5. God's word accomplished its purpose—10-11.
6. The word realizes its fulfillment—12-13.
- P. God's righteousness in the new age—56:1-8.
  1. Israel will emphasize her sabbath—1-3.
  2. The full realization of this promise was to be for the gospel age—4-5.
  3. Jew and Gentile alike coming to God's house—6-7.
  4. God extends his salvation to all—8.
- Q. The negligence of Israel's leaders and the errors of his people—56:9-57:21.
  1. The conduct of the greedy rulers—56:9-12.
  2. The rulers' unconcern over the injustice in the land—57:1-2.
  3. The incorrigible state of Israel—57:3-10.
  4. The sin of Israel will destroy her—57:11-13.
  5. All who repent will receive the promise of blessings—14:21.
- R. The national wickedness of the people—58:1-14.
  1. Israel's hypocrisy—1-7.
  2. Israel must repent to receive God's blessing—8-14.
- S. The redeemer is sent—59:1-21.
  1. Israel's sins had separated her from God—1-8.
  2. No man could deliver Israel from her sins—9-15.
  3. God's redeemer—16-21.
- T. Zion is glorified in her new state (the church)—60:1-22.
  1. Zion shall be the light of the world—1-3.
  2. All blessings are to be found in Zion—4-9.
  3. The government of Zion to be universal—10-14.
  4. New Zion to be glorified beyond imagination—15-22.
- U. The cause for a great change—61:1-11.
  1. The mission of Messiah—1-3.
  2. The many blessings which result from the work of the servant—4-11.
- V. The new glory of Jerusalem is universal—62:1-12.
  1. Jerusalem to receive a new name—1-5.
  2. New Jerusalem to be established forever—6-9.
  3. God's salvation makes New Jerusalem a much sought place—10-12.
- W. Jerusalem in her desolate state—63:1-64:12.
  1. God's wrath upon the wicked—1-6.
  2. A confession of Israel's sins—7-14.
  3. Supplication for God's mercy—63:15-64:7.
  4. Final recognition and trust in God—8-12.
- X. The new state of religion inaugurated by the redeemer—65:1-25.
  1. The Gentiles seek God while Israel turns away—1-7.
  2. Only those of Israel who refuse God's word are rejected—8-12.
  3. The new servants of God are called by a new name—13-16.
  4. The nature of the new Jerusalem is different from the old—17-25.
- Y. The change of heart among the people and the effects produced—66:1-24.
  1. The kind of man God seeks—1-4.
  2. The blessings that pour into the new Jerusalem—5-14.
  3. Redemption from all the nations is enjoyed—15-21.
  4. Worship is offered from among all nations—22-24.

## Analysis

## I. PROPHECIES REGARDING JUDAH AND ISRAEL—1:1-12:6.

A. 1:1-31—*The great trial*. V. 1 stands for the general title for the entire book. It sets forth the character, author, subject and date. Vs. 2-9 record the charges set forth against God's people. Ingratitude, vs. 2-3, brings forth corruption. Vs. 4-6, sin had separated the people from God and vs. 7-9 point out that calamity was the result.

Vs. 10-17 state the defense which Israel would presume to offer. Vs. 10-15 show that the splendor of ritual and the precision of worship alone meant nothing to God. Vs. 16-17 indicate that a pure heart and holy life manifested by righteousness towards one's fellow man must accompany worship and service. Vs. 18-23 record the offer of God's pardon. V. 18 is the challenge issued to Israel to prove her case. (This must result in failure for Israel, consequently, the offer of pardon). Vs. 19-20, God states the condition of pardon. Vs. 21-23 show that Israel rejected God's pardon. Vs. 24-31, there is nothing left for God to do except to pass sentence upon his people.

Note: This is a general prophecy which depicts the overall situation of God and Israel. It serves as a comprehensive introduction to the whole book of Isaiah and as well serves to graphically describe the *total* picture of Israel, the final demise of the monarchy and the restoration of the theocracy. The great trial is over. Israel has lost only because of the *hardness of her heart*. Now the only thing left was for passing time to permit her to fill up her cup of iniquity even as God has foreseen that she would.

B. *Judah's imminent judgment*—Chapters 2-5. 2:1 serves as an introductory title. 2:2-4 plainly describes the establishment of the Lord's church in Jerusalem. This is pictured in v. 2 as being a fruit of Israel's religion. Truly, it can be said in a sense that the whole gospel dispensation has *grown out* of the Old Testament age and religion. This is not to indicate a developmental or evolutionary concept but rather indicates that all that went before was merely *preparatory* and would serve to propagate the gospel blessings when they arrived. V. 3 points out the universal character of the church. V. 4

indicates the peaceful nature of the internal conditions of the church.

Note: 2:4—It is often debated whether Isaiah based his prophecy on Micah 4:1-3 or whether Micah based his on Isaiah. The answer is that neither necessarily based his prophecy upon the other's. Each was *inspired*. Therefore, there was no necessity for their borrowing from anyone else. The *Holy Spirit* was capable of supplying all the information needed.

Vs. 5-9 indicate the present condition of God's people. Vs. 10-22 point out the judgment which will fall upon Israel. Vs. 10-17a, the people will be humbled. Vs. 17b-22, Jehovah alone will be exalted.

3:1-4:1—Jerusalem and Judah will be devastated by the enemy. 3:1-17, all upon whom Judah depended are to be taken away. 3:8-15, the corruption of the leaders is responsible for the condition of the people. 3:16-4:1, the abnormal luxury of the women of Judah and Jerusalem is condemned.

4:2-6—the church under Christ. Note: One of the difficulties encountered in rendering an exegesis in Isaiah is the sudden and unexpected shift from fleshly Israel to the Messiah. However, these references are an *integral* part of his prophecy and serve to enhance both the *promises* and *threats* to Judah.

5:1-30—the prevalent sins of Judah. Vs. 1-7, a parable describing the divine disappointment Israel had produced in God. Vs. 8-23, a series of woes. 8-12, woes upon the greedy landowners. 13-17, spiritual dullness is responsible for Israel's captivity. 18-23, woes upon the materialists who have a false set of values. 24-30, judgment is to be swift and severe.

C. 6:1-13—*Isaiah's vision*. Vs. 1-7, the vision which Isaiah saw. Vs. 8-13, the message of the visions. Note: Many expositors view this vision as the call of Isaiah to his prophetic work. This does not necessarily follow even though the vision is in close proximity to the beginning of his ministry. Eissfeldt went so far as to maintain that this chapter originally stood at the beginning of the book, after the heading of 1:1. There is no objective evidence for this theory.

The vision is to *prepare Isaiah* for the seemingly fruitless efforts which he is going to expend, but above and beyond this it is a vivid description of the glory and majesty of the Christ who in chapter 6 sits on the heavenly throne which has



been established in the closing events of chapter 4. Chapter 5 has indicated that fleshly Israel cannot receive the blessings, and chapter 6 shows that the cause for their rejection is the hardness of their hearts, cf. John 12:37-41.

The work of Isaiah in preaching to Judah was a vague *foreshadowing* of the preaching of Christ to Isaiah. Therefore, even this wisdom is primarily *Messianic*.

The phrase the "holy one of Israel," which is so common to the entire book is based upon this majestic vision. Cf. 6:9 with 42:18-20 and 43:8; 6:9-12 with 53:1; 6:10 with 63:17.

D. *Emmanuel offers relief to the oppressed*—7:1-12:6. 7:1-25 sets forth the deliverance from Syria and Israel.

Note: The alliance between Syria and Israel threatened the very existence of the house of David. This greatly alarmed Ahaz and all Judah. Ahaz thought to solve matters by an alliance with Assyria which itself provides the setting for the first Messianic prophecy.

Vs. 1-2 provide the historical setting for the prophecy which is to follow. Vs. 3-9, God reassures Ahaz. Vs. 10-17, the son of a virgin to be a sign that David's house would not be destroyed.

Note: The virgin conception was a *supernatural event* which was fulfilled by the *birth of Jesus*, Matthew 1:18-23. This prophecy was not merely *applied* to Jesus' conception but the scriptures said it was *fulfilled* therein. There is a vast difference in a prophecy being *applied* and one being *fulfilled*. The Christ is *on his throne of glory* in chapter six and here in chapter 7 is seen as being *conceived*; in chapter nine as *having been born* and qualified to serve; in chapter eleven as *over his kingdom*.

Vs. 18-25 show the consequences of the Assyrian alliance. 8:1-22 is a prophecy of the Assyrian invasion. Vs. 1-4 is a renewal of the overthrow of Israel by the symbolical name applied to Isaiah's son. Vs. 5-8 form a consolation to his disciples. Note: V. 8 indicates who the Emmanuel of 7:14 is: it is the one whose land Israel is — God. Therefore, "God with us" is God in the flesh — Jesus Christ.

Vs. 9-15 show that Judah must suffer because of her unbelief. Vs. 16-18 is another prophecy of Christ forming a prophetic type, cf. Heb. 2:13. Vs. 19-22, darkness and despair results from their unbelief.

9:1-21—the Messianic light to shine forth from the darkness. Vs. 1-3 indicate that the Messiah is to emerge from the darkest gloom, cf. Matt. 4:15-16. Vs. 4-7, this Messiah is to have a *spiritual* reign. Vs. 8-21, reverting to the present, Isaiah predicts the defeat of Israel.

10:1-34, the scourge of Assyria. Vs. 1-4, a woe against the “blood sucking” covetous rulers. Vs. 5-15 point out that Assyria is employed of God. Note: Assyria does not realize that she is the instrument of God to punish his sinful people and thus exalts herself in pride.

Vs. 16-19—the doom of Assyria is spelled out. Vs. 20-23, a righteous remnant of Israel is to be spared. Vs. 24-27, Jerusalem is encouraged. Vs. 28-34, a description of the approach of Assyria upon Jerusalem.

The Branch of Jehovah—11:1-12:6. Note: From the apparently dried up (destroyed) house of David shall arise one whose kingdom will be *different* from any kingdom before it.

In vs. 1-5 the nature of the government of the Branch is set forth. In vs. 6-9 we read of the nature of those who submit to the government of the Branch. V. 10 indicates that the Branch is to be a universal ruler. In vs. 11-16 is seen the unity of believers who submit to the government of the Branch. 12:1-6 is a record of the thanksgiving for salvation the Branch offered.

## II. ORACLES CONCERNING THE NATIONS WHOSE DESTINIES AFFECT ISRAEL—13:1-23:18.

A. *The fall of Babylon*—13:1-14:23. 31:1 is the heading for this whole section. This heading carries the name of Isaiah the son of Amoz. To deny the Isaianic authorship of this section is to deny the *genuineness* and *authenticity* of it. It is to say in effect, what is written is false. If the negative critics cannot believe this to have been written by Isaiah, how can they believe anything else. Their assertion that this is simply the addition of a later redactor has no objective validity whatsoever. It is pure *supposition* and *subjective* thinking.

13:2-5 shows that the coming destruction is from God. 13:6-16 sets forth the *horror* of the day of the destruction of Babylon. 13:17-22, the Medes are named as the ones who will bring total destruction. 14:1-2, the fall of Babylon will effect the release of God’s children from captivity. 14:3-20,

the song of judgment on the king of Babylon. Vs. 3-11 show that rest is given to the earth for a period at the fall of Babylon. Vs. 12-22, the pride of Babylon is depicted as the reason for her fall. 14:21-23, the extent of Babylon's destruction is set forth.

B. *The fall of Assyria*—14:24-27.

C. *Prophecies concerning the nations threatened by Assyria*—14:28-36. 14:28-32, a prophecy against the Philistines. Note: the destructive critics must reject the Isaianic authorship of this whole section in order to be *consistent* with their basic principles. The *basic guiding principle* in their negative criticism is that there can be *no supernatural prediction* reaching far into the future. Because in this section we find a definite prediction into the future — *the fact which the negative critic says cannot happen* — they must necessarily reject the whole section. Yet, the heading of these chapters attributes to Isaiah the authorship. Therefore, one is able to see clearly the lengths to which negative criticism will go, and the extremes to which it leads.

15:1-16:14 is the prophecy against Moab. 15:1-9 is a description of the strong cities of Moab. 16:1-5 is an exhortation to Moab to ally themselves with Judah. 16:6-12 shows that Moab will be made desolate because of her pride. 16:13-14 sets forth the time involved in the destruction of Moab's glory.

17:1-14 is a prophecy against Damascus and Ephraim. Vs. 1-3 set forth the destruction of Damascus and Ephraim. Vs. 4-6 deal with Ephraim's destruction. This prophecy against Damascus and Ephraim serves to point out the doom of the enemies of God's purpose. Those who would thwart God's purpose on this earth should beware. Vs. 7-8 indicate that some of Ephraim shall return. Vs. 9-11 set forth the cause of their doom. Vs. 12-14 show the rise and fall of the Assyrians. Note: This seems to be a prophecy of the destruction of Sennacherib's army when he was at the height of his power.

18:1-7 is a prophecy against Ethiopia. Vs. 1-3, Ethiopia was to have her very existence gravely threatened. Vs. 4-7 show that the deliverance of Ethiopia will turn them toward Jehovah.

19:1-25—the prophecy against Egypt. Vs. 1-4, civil war and anarchy are described in Egypt. Vs. 5-10 show the material depression which falls over all Egypt. Vs. 11-15 show that all

political counsel in Egypt is to fail. Vs. 16-22, the eventual (Messianic) conversion of some Egyptians to Jehovah. Vs. 23-25, the universal nature of the gospel blessings. 20:1-6, the symbol of Assyrian victory over Egypt and Ethiopia.

D. *The oracle concerning the fall of Babylon—21:1-10.*

E. *The oracle concerning Dumah (Edom)—21:11-12.*

F. *The oracle concerning the disruption of affairs in Arabia—21:13-17.*

G. *The oracle concerning the valley of decision—22:1-25.* Vs. 1-14 depict Jerusalem during a siege. (Whether this is a generic description of the frequently besieged city or a description of the capture of the city by the Assyrians during the reign of Manasseh is difficult to determine. Either interpretation would seem to do justice to the language of the chapter. However, in view of the general context of the oracles against the other nations, perhaps it is best to view this as the actual event which happened to Jerusalem in the reign of Manasseh.) (Blind presumption brought the downfall of Jerusalem.)

Vs. 15-25 form a prophecy against proud Shebna, the treasurer of the house of David. (Driver, page 218, thinks that Shebna was evidently a friend of Egypt and would therefore lobby for a foreign policy obnoxious to Isaiah). It is obvious that God was displeased with the *pride* of Shebna. It may be possible that Shebna was pro-Egyptian. This is the only prophecy of Isaiah directed against an individual, separate from a prophecy against a kingdom.

H. *The oracle concerning Tyre—23:1-18.* Vs. 1-7 form an announcement of the doom of Tyre. Vs. 8-12 show that God purposed the destruction because of the pride of Tyre. Vs. 13-14, the Babylonians are the ones who will carry out God's purpose. Vs. 15-18, after *seventy* years Tyre will be restored and her goods used to *serve* God. Note: The Tyrians used their goods, as did all other people in areas adjacent to Israel, in subjection to the command of the Persian kings, to help the Jews rebuild the temple. Once-proud Tyre who devoted her goods to her own selfish means and purposes will now humbly offer them to God's people that they might abound to the glory of God.

III. GOD'S JUDGMENTS UPON THE NATIONS—Chapters 24-27.

Note: There are innumerable interpretations of this section. Negative critics must deny the Isaianic authorship altogether because they think it involves ideas later than Isaiah's day and also because there is a lack of a suitable occasion in Isaiah's days, cf. Driver, pp. 219-220. This theory precludes the possibility of inspired revelation. This materialistic theory necessitates a prophet speaking *only* to the people of his *own day* and of events which are *immediate* or had *already passed*. This view cannot honor God and therefore must be rejected.

Young said of this section, "To apply these chapters to a specific period in Isaiah's ministry is very difficult. In fact, they do not have reference to specific events. Rather, the prophet here sets forth his philosophy of God's judgments. His purpose is to exalt God as sovereign ruler over all. Hence, he seeks to show that God can and will visit the earth in judgment. In this visitation God's own people will suffer that they may ultimately be glorified, but the enemies of God will utterly perish."<sup>12</sup>

There are others who would apply these prophecies to the present day and would eliminate all Israel and all references to the people of that day altogether before Christ. These are generally some kind of *premillennialist* who make such applications and, although they attempt to honor God by their explanations, they must necessarily take what is fundamentally a *materialistic* approach. Therefore, this view must also be rejected. The following analysis sets forth this present author's viewpoint and that which he believes to be the *reasonable* approach.

A. *Judgment upon Judah*—24:1-23. Vs. 1-5 show the waves of approaching judgments. That the earth-land probably refers to Judah, cf. Jer. 4:23, where a similar thought is incorporated in the word, and *there* can *only* refer to Judah. This seems to refer to the desolation brought upon the land of Judah by the armies of Assyria. In vs. 6-15 we view the curse of Deut. 30:15-19 coming upon Israel. In vs. 16-23, punishment and deliverance of Israel. Note: This seems to describe the desolation brought on Judah by Assyria in the days of Hezekiah when all the people of Judah had to seek refuge in larger cities and more especially in Jerusalem. In those days the Assyrian army overran all the land of Judah and

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<sup>12</sup>Young, *op. cit.*, page 213.

even came before the city of Jerusalem and threatened its very existence.

B. *Judah rejoices over her deliverance—25:1-12.* Vs. 1-5, a hymn of thanksgiving for the deliverance spoken of. Vs. 6-8, the great rejoicing in Jerusalem. Note: This seems to be a vivid description of the deliverance of Jerusalem from the Assyrians when they laid siege to the city in the reign of Hezekiah. The death of 185,000 soldiers in one night was truly a "swallowing up of death." Jerusalem was saved from extinction and the deliverance provided relief for all people from the frenzied aggressiveness of the Assyrians during that particular period. Vs. 9-12, Judah rejoices but Moab must suffer.

C. *Jerusalem's song sung because of her deliverance—26:1-21.* In vs. 1-10 there is an exhortation to trust in God because he blesses the faithful. Vs. 11-15, God's enemies are put to shame to the glory of God. Vs. 16-19, Judah's cry and God's reply. Vs. 20-21 show God's indignation against the evildoers.

Note: Although vs. 16-21 could well harmonize with all the facts of the Assyrian siege and deliverance therefrom, it would seem best suited to the general context of the following chapter to refer 26:16-21 to the Babylonian period. As has been pointed out before, one of the difficult features about Isaiah's work is his custom of shifting without warning from one period to another. In a song of deliverance relative to the Assyrian period, Isaiah seems to shift suddenly to the Babylonian captivity. For similar terminology in reference to the Babylonian captivity and the deliverance of the Jews from it, cf. Ezek. 37:11-14.

D. *God punishes Israel's enemies and blesses Israel—27:1-13.* V. 1, God smites Babylon. Vs. 2-6, God's tender care in delivering his people. Vs. 7-11, God's people shall no more be idolators. Vs. 7-8 show that Israel, though captive, will not be smitten as their captors are smitten. V. 9, Israel's captivity destroys their desire for idols. Vs. 10-11, Israel's captors receive no compassion. Vs. 12-13, Israel, just ready to perish would, by royal edict, (that of Cyrus) return to Jerusalem to worship God.

#### IV. A BOOK OF WOES—Chapters 28-35.

A. *A woe to drunken, skeptical rulers of the land—28:*

1-29. In vs. 1-8 we read a vivid description of the rulers of Ephraim. Vs. 9-10, the hardened reprobates sneer at God's prophets. Vs. 11-13, their ungodliness will be punished.

Note: The strange lips and stammering tongue of verse 11 are to be for a *sign of judgment* upon God's people, not a sign of a blessing. There are those today who would use this passage to attempt to justify speaking in "other tongues." However, those who would use this passage to apply to themselves and attempt to justify the use of such language do not realize that they are actually serving as a judgment upon themselves for their *ungodliness*. That is what Isaiah said about the matter and those who would use Isaiah's word otherwise are *perverters*.

Vs. 14-17—a woe upon the skeptical rulers of Jerusalem and a Messianic prophecy involved. Note: V. 16 refers to no mortal *but only* to Christ. Jesus quotes it in reference to himself, Matt. 21:42; Peter quotes it in reference to Jesus, Acts 4:11; Paul uses it in Romans 9:33; 10:11; Eph. 2:20; in referring to Christ, and again it is used by Peter in 1 Pet. 2:6-8 and 2:20. Therefore, this is a Messianic prophecy.

Vs. 18-22—the Assyrian invasion demonstrates the folly of the Egyptian alliance. Vs. 23-26, God's judgment is designed to produce fruit. Vs. 27-29, as different harvesters reap different crops, so God's judgment will produce different fruits.

B. *The oppression and deliverance of Jerusalem*—29:1-24. Vs. 1-4, a summary of the woe. Vs. 5-8, a mighty deliverance is promised. Cf. 2 Kings 19:35-36. Vs. 9-12, Isaiah's mission (of hardening the hearts) was being accomplished. Vs. 13-14, the stupefied spiritual condition prevented the people from believing, cf. Matt. 15:7-9. Vs. 13-21, the hypocritical leaders would be punished according to God's universal law, Psalms 18:25-27; Gal. 6:7-8. Vs. 22-24, the righteous would have no cause to fear.

C. *A woe against the pro-Egyptian party*—30:1-33. Vs. 1-5 show that the alliance with Egypt is in a well advanced stage. Vs. 6-7 indicate that the Jews had placed their trust in those who could not help. Vs. 8-11 depict Judah's rebellious attitude. Vs. 12-17 show that Israel must pay for her desire to be free from God. Vs. 18-22, God teaches and blesses through the adversity of the captivity. Vs. 23-26, God promises greater blessings than ever before to the faithful. Vs. 27-

33, God blesses penitent Israel finally, but destroys Assyria.

D. *A woe to those who trust in false help, and the new era*—31:1-32:8. 31:1-3 serve as a further warning against an alliance with Egypt. 31:4-9, God calls upon Judah to repent. 32:1-8 is a new era for Judah. In vs. 1-2 we see that the first fruit produced by the judgment is a righteous rule. Vs. 3-4 show that the second fruit is an opened understanding of the people. Vs. 5-8 relate that the third fruit is a *proper* evaluation of character.

E. *The approaching judgment*—32:9-20. In vs. 9-14 there is a woe pronounced upon the women. This is an appendage to the fourth woe and is directed against the proud women that Isaiah had described so vividly in chapter three. In vs. 15-20 the land will receive the people back. This seems to fit best a *prophetic type*, i.e., the near fulfillment would serve as a type of a greater and far superior fulfillment. The *gospel dispensation* fulfills in the greatest degree those things spoken of as being applicable to Judah.

F. *The woe against Assyria and Israel's deliverance*—33:1-24. Note: This is in the 14th year of Hezekiah. The threats of the first year had been delayed by repentance on the part of the people but are now reiterated. The Assyrians are already in Judah, have laid the land waste, and are now threatening Jerusalem itself.

Vs. 1-6—a prayer and prophecy about Assyria. Vs. 7-9 show the pitiful condition brought on by false trusts. Vs. 10-12 reveal Assyria's end. 13-14a, a fearful example. 14b-17, the answer to the question. Vs. 18-20 picture a vanquished conqueror. Vs. 21-22, a fourfold glory is given to God: (a) Judge; (b) Lawgiver; (c) King; (d) Saviour. Vs. 23-24 indicate that the present condition of Judah is very poor.

G. *God avenges his people*—34:1-17. In vs. 1-4, we have a warning to those who hate God's people. Vs. 5-7, God's sword is used to judge. Vs. 8-10, God avenges Zion because he is not to be mocked, cf. Gal. 6:7-8. Vs. 11-15, the destiny of Edom. Vs. 16-17, God's book serves as a *memorial* as well as a *warning*.

H. *The return of Israel*—35:1-10. Vs. 1-2 indicate that the land blesses the people as they return. Vs. 3-4, strong brethren are to strengthen the weak brethren. Vs. 5-7 show the change in the spiritual status. Vs. 8-10, the highway of



redemption. The great antitype is Jesus and his church, John 14:6; Eph. 3:10-21; Acts 9:1-2. As the edict of Cyrus was plain, simple, and easy to understand and obey, so are the Lord's directions to the sinner today, Acts 2:38-40, 47.

Note: Edom fell, never to rise again. However, Israel is not only restored to her land, but the very wilderness through which she must return is turned into a *garden*. Again we meet with what appears to be a *prophetic type*. The return of Israel is depicted in glowing terms to contrast with the *destiny of Edom*, but above that serves to *typify* the gospel dispensation. Stated in figurative language, one can easily see how it was fulfilled actually although not literally. As the wilderness through which Israel returned blossomed and, as the prophet declared, blossomed abundantly and rejoiced, so the land in which the enemies of God's people lived actually produced material goods to supply the people of God with their necessities upon their return and even aided them in rebuilding their beloved city.

Pfeiffer (page 441) terms chapters 34-35 a poem which cannot be earlier than the fifth century B.C., possibly written about the third century B.C. Driver (page 226) thinks that these chapters were written toward the close of the exile. Negative critics are agreed that Isaiah was not the author. Naturally, the predictive element in these chapters precludes, in the minds of the critics, any possibility of Isaianic authorship. On this *assumption only*, they date the chapters later than Isaiah's time. Circular reasoning is used so frequently by the negative critics in their analysis of Isaiah that it is to be doubted that one of them could part his hair in a *straight* line.

## V. PROPHECIES BELONGING TO THE FOURTEENTH YEAR OF HEZEKIAH'S REIGN AND THE TIME SHORTLY THEREAFTER—Chapters 36-39.

In chapters 36-39, three very important events are recorded:

- (1) two attempts of Sennacherib to take Jerusalem, 36-37.
- (2) Hezekiah's sickness and recovery, 38.
- (3) Ambassadors of Babylon, 39.

These chapters are also duplicated in 2 Kings 18:13-20:19. Chronologically chapters 38-39 come before 36-37. The siege by the Assyrians comes after Hezekiah's sickness.

Delitzsch points out, "The whole of the first half of the

collection is a staircase, leading up to these addresses to the exiles, and bears the same relation to them, as a whole, as the Assyrian pedestal in chapter 14:24-27 to the Babylonian 'massa' in chapters 13-14:26. This relation between the two - namely, that Assyrian prophecies laid the foundation for Babylonian - runs through the whole of the first half. It is so arranged that the prophecies of the Assyrian times throughout have immediate layers, which reach beyond those times; and while the former constitutes the ground work, the later form the gable."<sup>13</sup>

A. *Assyria's first attempt to capture Jerusalem*—chapters 36-37:7. 36:1-3, the first Assyrian attempt to capture Jerusalem. 36:4-10, Rabshakeh's message. Vs. 11-12, a plea to Rabshakeh. Vs. 13-15, Rabshakeh harangues Hezekiah before the people. Vs. 16-17, Rabshakeh's enticement to the people to make an agreement. Vs. 18-20, Rabshakeh blasphemes God by placing him on the same level with the false gods. Cf. 10:8-12 for a prophecy of this. Vs. 21-22, the effect of Rabshakeh's word. 37:1-4, an appeal to Isaiah for help. 37:5-7, Isaiah's reply.

B. *God's deliverance of Jerusalem*—37:8-38. Vs. 8-38 show a second attempt by the Assyrians to force the surrender of Jerusalem and its deliverance by God. Vs. 8-9, Rabshakeh returns to Sennacherib. Vs. 10-13, Sennacherib blasphemes. Verses 14-15, Sennacherib sends Hezekiah a letter. Vs. 16-20, Hezekiah's prayer for help. Vs. 21-25, Isaiah's reply is a prophecy against Assyria. Vs. 26-27, God tells Assyria that he gave her power over the nations. Vs. 28-29, God would control Assyria. V. 30, God's sign to Israel. Vs. 31-32, God's promise to Judah. 33-35, the promise made definite. 36-38, an account of God's act.

Note: This close is not at the moment of the prophecy but after the sign (a whole year) of v. 30 when the deliverance of Jerusalem took place. It is not revealed here how much time passed before the murder of Sennacherib. It is estimated that from 8 to 21 years elapsed which would carry it into the reign of Manasseh.

C. *Hezekiah's illness*—38:1-22. Vs. 1-3, Hezekiah prayed

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<sup>13</sup>Delitzsch, Franz, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*, Volume II, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1967), page 133.

for his life. It is within the year of the Assyrian invasion of 36:1 [Hezekiah reigned 29 years and 15 of them are promised here] that the event described by Isaiah falls. Vs. 4-6, God's promise to Hezekiah. Vs. 7-8, the token of God's pledge of recovery. V. 9, Hezekiah's psalm. Driver and others believe that the original was the passage in Kings (2 Kings 18:13-20:19). Negative critics have believed that the "compiler" for the book of Isaiah copied it from the Kings account. However, there is *no valid reason* for believing that Isaiah was not the writer of this psalm, i.e., that he recorded this psalm as Hezekiah uttered it. Since the book of Kings was authored at a later date than Isaiah, it would seem only natural to suppose that if anybody copied anything, the writer of Kings would copy from the book of Isaiah to which he would have free access.

Vs. 10-12—a deep lamentation. Vs. 13-14, a backward glance. Vs. 15-17, how God's promise had quickened him. Vs. 18-20, Hezekiah's joy and promise to God. Vs. 21-22 relate Hezekiah's curiosity. Some have thought that these two verses were somehow removed from their proper place following verse 6 and are misplaced here. This would cause them to follow immediately after v. 6 and come before v. 7.

D. *Babylonian captivity foretold*—chapter 39:1-8. Note: this chapter parallels with 2 Kings 20:12-19; cf. also, 2 Chron. 32:24-31.

Vs. 1-2—Hezekiah's weakness. Note: It is here that we are introduced to the ambassadors of Babylon to prepare us for what will come later. Apparently Merodach sent his ambassadors with two *obvious* reasons: (1) to congratulate Hezekiah upon his miraculous recovery; (2) to see where the "sign" occurred and learn more about it. The ambassadors seemed to have at least two *hidden* purposes: (a) to spy out the wealth of the land with the view of one day taking it; (b) to secretly make an agreement with Hezekiah to help throw off the Assyrian yoke.

Vs. 3-8—God rebukes Hezekiah. This intimate disclosure to strangers indicates *vanity* and *pride* on the part of Hezekiah. Vs. 3-4 indicate a smugness on the part of Hezekiah. Vs. 5-6 show us that Judah must pay for his pride and indiscretion. Vs. 7-8 indicate that Hezekiah's descendants must also pay. The sons of Hezekiah (i.e., descendants, cf. Vol. 1) would be

carried captive by Babylon, cf. Dan. 1:3.

The negative critics have broken up the book of Isaiah into two distinct portions — *first* Isaiah and *second* Isaiah. Some have gone on into a *trito* Isaiah theory while others have clung to the *two* Isaiah theory and ascribed many of the prophecies to compilers and other editors, and in reality leaving Isaiah credited with very few of the actual prophecies of his book. The critics have assumed that the battle over the question of the unity of Isaiah has long been decided in their favor. However, their smug attitude is no indication that it is the truth. The *unity* of the book has already been pointed out from the *New Testament usage* of the different passages from Isaiah, some from the so-called “first Isaiah,” some from the “second Isaiah,” and some from the “trito-Isaiah” — *yet all ascribing them to Isaiah*.

The Dead Sea scrolls discovered in 1947 indicate that Isaiah has been regarded as a unit from at least 150 B.C. This is the date which competent scholars assign to the Dead Sea scrolls found in 1947. Finding this scroll did much to discount the hypothesis of a dual or trito Isaiah. In the Dead Sea scroll, Isaiah chapter 40 begins on the very last line of the column which contains chapters 38:9 to 39:8. The last words on the one column are, “cry unto her” and the first words on the next column are “that her warfare is accomplished.” The scribe who wrote this ancient manuscript of the prophecy in about 150-200 B.C. was totally ignorant of the critical hypothesis of a deutero or trito Isaiah which necessitates an important change of an historical situation beginning with chapter forty as well as an entire change in authorship. If another Isaiah wrote chapters 40-66, *who was he?*

## VI. ISRAEL'S RESTORATION FROM EXILE IN BABYLONIA—40:1-66:24.

Note: The theme of this whole section is the deliverance from the captivity threatened in chapter 39. Judah was to be comforted if she would repent. The prophecies in this section have the Babylonian captivity as their viewpoint.

A. *Words of comfort and the God of comfort*—40:1-31. Vs. 1-2 show that Jerusalem is to be comforted. This would naturally raise the question which is answered next. Vs. 3-4 indicate that this is the time when real comfort would come

— not restoration from the captivity but a *greater restoration* of which the restoration from exile was but a *prophetic type*, that which Christ would effect. Matt. 3:3 is the New Testament interpretation, and it says that *this* of which Isaiah was speaking is the person and work of John the Baptist. John was a *spiritual* roadbuilder who did a work appointed to him by God. V. 5, God's glory to be revealed to all flesh, was done by Jesus whose *way* John had prepared. Cf. John 1:14-18; Heb. 1:3; John 17:4; Acts 15:14-17. One must keep in mind that this entire last half of the book of Isaiah is *intensely Messianic*. There were many Messianic prophecies in the first half, but the latter half is almost entirely filled with them. Even though some of the prophecies were for the immediate time, i.e., for the Jew, on the whole the part the Jews played in this section was *primarily typical* of the greater era which was to come.

Vs. 6-8—a second and third voice enters with words of hope. Peter uses the same principle in speaking of the new birth in 1 Peter 1:23-25. In vs. 9-12, Isaiah shifts from the promise to the fulfillment which we saw in 2:3. However, before good news can be preached from Jerusalem, God must come and rule — but how will he rule? By his arm — Christ — bringing both *reward* and *retribution*. Christ will feed the flock, cf. John 10:11-16. V. 12, the first question designed to help God's people realize the glory of God.

In vs. 13-14 the question is propounded to which the only reply would be that God is possessor of both *absolute might* and *wisdom*. In vs. 15-17, the conclusion must be reached that Jehovah is a *matchless being*. The conclusion reached through 17 will form the question of v. 18 to be addressed to the Jews in order to arm them against the seduction of the idolatry about them. Vs. 19-20 is an ironical description of the making of an idol. V. 21 lists four questions directed to those who look upon the idols about them with desire. In v. 22 Isaiah describes God whom both his *words* and *works* proclaim. In vs. 23-24, in his position, there is nothing so high in the world that God can not bring down. In v. 25 a conclusion is reached which is a refrain of v. 18. In v. 26 another start is made to demonstrate the *incomparable nature* of Jehovah. In vs. 27-29, Israel's despondent unbelief has no grounds and so Israel, who should have known by experience, would at least

have heard of the exalted glory and power of God. Vs. 30-31, faith is needed to receive strength from God. Those who have every fleshly reason to be strong will fail if they believe not.

B. *Men are saved because of the majesty of God*—41: 1-29. Vs. 1-5, Jehovah challenges the nations to contend with him that he may show them that he alone is God. The whole heathen world is challenged to speak after hearing the evidence. The deciding voice was to be *reason*. Which is more reasonable to believe that Jehovah is the only true and living God or to disbelieve all the evidence? V. 2 is an indication that Cyrus who is later mentioned in 44:28 and 45:1 would be successful in all of his efforts. Vs. 6-7, idolatrous nations have come from all directions to help meet the Persian army but all is confusion, and fear reigned among them. The gods by which they expect deliverance are not made until now. Vs. 8-10, God who has offered proof of his sole deity, without waiting for a reply which the heathen might think to produce as a cavil, now turns his attention to Israel. The nations, trusting in their idols, were thrown into confusion, but Israel trusting in Jehovah might take comfort.

Vs. 11-13—the eyes of Israel are pointed to the future. All of her enemies would be overcome because God was her protector. Vs. 14-16, the consoling words, “fear not,” are repeated for the purpose of again adding the promise that Israel will not succumb to her foes but will rise above all of her enemies. The “worm of Jacob” hopelessly oppressed now would later rejoice in the glory of God because her enemies would be broken. Vs. 17-20, at the present time the state of his people is helpless but their cry was not in vain, and when deliverance came they would know that it was from God.

Vs. 21-23—Jehovah returns to the legal process to which he has challenged all contenders. In the *first place*, God stated the fact that it was he who had *called* the oppressor of the nations in being. This ought to have sufficed as proof of his deity. In the *second place* he appeals to the fact that he alone can *know* the *future*. If any of the idol gods can produce knowledge of the future, God says in effect, let him step forth.

This fact of *divine foreknowledge* — predictive prophecy — is one of the *strongest evidences* available to prove that God is, and that he alone is God. There are those today who scoff

at fulfilled prophecy as *proof* of the deity of God and of his existence. These people might as well scoff at God. God himself uses this fact to demonstrate his sole deity. If God used it, why can man today not use it with *validity* and *force*?

Vs. 24-25 offer stark contrast between the idol who cannot speak and God who not only speaks but *molds* history, *makes* the future and *keeps* all things in subjection unto himself. The calling upon the name by Cyrus in v. 25 probably refers to the edict Cyrus issued which allowed the Jews to return to their homeland. In vs. 26-28, God points back to the second charge against the heathen. In raising up Cyrus God demonstrates himself as a *universal* God and *omniscient* ruler. No heathen god had ever foretold the appearance of Cyrus but only Jehovah himself could. In v. 29 the closing declaration of God is one of wrath and contempt toward those with which the Judicial process ended in v. 24.

C. *The mediator of Israel and the Saviour of the Gentiles—42:1-43:13.* Note: In this chapter Isaiah introduces a servant that is different from his servant Jacob and *cannot* refer to his shepherd Cyrus of 45:1; 44:28. The New Testament finds the fulfillment of this prophecy in Jesus Christ. The coming Saviour is embodied in the *idea* of Israel. The first seven verses of chapter 42 are purely *Messianic*. With these verses we are able to see the Bible presenting Christ in three figures: (1) the second David, Hosea 3:4-5 — the center of the *promised kingdom*; (2) the second Israel, Isaiah 42:1-7 — the center of the *people of salvation*; (3) the second Adam, 1 Cor. 15:45-47 — the center of the *human race*.

Vs. 1-4 indicate how the Messiah brings to the Gentiles God's right judgment in a peaceful way, cf. Luke 4:18-21 for the New Testament fulfillment. Isaiah tells how the Messiah will manifest himself in the world as a quiet, gentle, and humble individual, the opposite of self-seeking, cf. Matt. 6:1-7. In his unassuming appearance there is associated a tender care. His mission is not to destroy but to *seek* and to *save*, Luke 19:10. That is, judgment-truth, cf. Matt. 12:16-21. The Messiah will not be broken nor his strength diminished until he brings the redemption.

Vs. 5-7—Jehovah addresses his servant. The Messiah has an exalted mission answering to the exaltation of him who called him. The Messiah will not lack the power to fulfill his mission.

By the Messiah, God makes a new covenant with his people through himself, cf. Jer. 32:31-32; John 14:6; Luke 2:32. To open the blind eyes refers not to a physical act but a figurative, cf. Isa. 35:5; John 9:39-41; and the spiritual prisoners, cf. Heb. 2:14; Eph. 4:8. In v. 8 Jehovah pledges his name and all the honor associated with it that the work of the Messiah will be carried out. In v. 9, restoration blessings of the return from the Babylonian captivity, and secondly, the redemption offered — this is predicted *before* it happened. Vs. 10-12, the prediction of the “new things” are separate from all human meditations and is manifestly the work of God himself. These new things will be an occasion for all the earth to sing a new song because they are set free.

Vs. 13-14—a change from the Messiah to Israel in captivity — God would overcome his enemies after he held his peace long enough. V. 15, in order for this deliverance to take place, a great change must come — the land of captivity is turned from a garden land into a waste land. This is indicative of the destruction that is going to come upon the captors of Israel. V. 16, the redemption of God’s people is to furnish them a deliverance which they knew not — the decree of Cyrus. V. 17, connected with this deliverance is the effect upon the heathen. V. 18, to the blind is addressed the summons to free themselves from the bond upon them. V. 19 tells who the blind are and how complete this blindness and deafness was, cf. John 9:40-41; John 15:22. Vs. 20-22 form a reproof toward Israel in a severe tone because so much has been committed unto her. V. 21 shows what v. 20 refers to. In spite of the glory given to Israel, when she fell into the captivity no one could deliver her but God. Vs. 23-25, when Israel ceased to be deaf to her contradiction, she would recognize that she was suffering what she had earned. Until she was willing to see her condition she would remain in this condition.

43:1-2—the tone of the address is suddenly changed. A shift from reproach to consolation is very significant. It would help them to understand that *not their merit* warranted their deliverance, but because she was God’s, he would preserve her. This is the *first* reason for encouragement. In 42:3-4, just as verse 1 gave a reason for their encouragement, a *second* reason is given to ensure them against complete destruction -



God's free love. Vs. 5-7, a *third* reason why they were to "fear not," *Jehovah was with Israel* and would restore her from every quarter of the earth.

Vs. 8-10—the summons is now addressed to someone to bring Israel forth while all the nations are to assemble for the purpose of justifying themselves for their treatment of Israel. All the witnesses failed, and God turns to Israel who is his *witness* and *servant* and who ought to acknowledge him for what he is — *God exclusively* and *forever*. Vs. 11-13, this address closes by holding up once more the *object* and *cause* of faith. God proves himself by his *works*, and *Israel* is overwhelming evidence to what he claimed. God is *creator*, none can prevail against him. Therefore, salvation for Israel is certain. This closes this section of the prophecy.

D. *God's vengeance and deliverance*—43:14-44:5. In verses 14-15 God promises to overthrow Babylon for the sake of Israel (the purpose of releasing). Therefore, Jehovah would treat them in this manner because he was their creator and king. Vs. 16-20, a second scene of the picture of redemption. The expression "for your sake" is expounded. Vs. 16-17 is a reminder of what had happened to Egypt at the Red Sea. V. 18, Israel is encouraged to look forward, not backward.

Vs. 19-20 speak of the new things God would do for his people. A deliverance which the old deliverance from Egypt only served to typify. In this "new thing" there seems to be a Messianic reference. There would be a new type of deliverance — not a physical but a *spiritual* deliverance. If it referred only to the Babylonian captivity, then it would not be a completely new thing, because God had effected a mighty deliverance from Egypt. However, it was seen that the Egyptian as well as the Babylonian captivity would serve as a *type* of the greater deliverance - the *spiritual redemption* through Christ Jesus. Vs. 21-24, the promise is brought to a close, with God to blot out Israel's sins - only for the sake of Jehovah.

V. 26—God calls upon Israel to show him some merit. This is done in order to impress the grace and love of God more deeply. V. 27, Israel had no good work to show, merely a string of sins to offer. V. 28, it was because of this sinful state that God had turned her over to the captor.

44:1-4—Isaiah does not dwell any longer upon this picture of their state of punishment. Now the *promise* shines forth

brightly with the outpouring of blessings contrasted to the barren state of captivity and God's spirit is the very zenith of blessings. The result would be the bringing forth of fruits - restoration to the land which is but a *type* of the greater era to come - the church of the Lord. The willingness of the Gentiles to be proselyted is seen, cf. Matt. 23:15. Thus with the name of Jehovah honored among the heathen, the stage is set for a further prophecy.

E. *The absurdity of idols and the rejoicing of God's people*—44:6-23. These verses form a new pledge of redemption and a fresh exhortation to trust in Jehovah. God points out the wretchedness of idols and that of their worshippers in contrast with Jehovah, the only God, who is true and living and could speak and act. In v. 6, God's deity rules over nature in history showing that he alone is without equal and is God. In v. 7 God's deity is further declared by the fact that he alone can foretell the future. God challenges all to speak out on this. The emphasis should be noticed that the foretelling of the future is *one* of the *irrefutable* evidences that God is and that he alone is God. This fact needs to be stressed today in our study with individuals who do not believe that Jehovah is God. V. 8, no heathen god could answer the challenge, which alone should assure Israel. Vs. 9-11, the heathen gods are so far from being a ground of trust that all who trust in them will discover with alarm how they had deceived themselves and will be put to shame.

Vs. 12-13—Isaiah leads us into the workshop where the idol is manufactured. This description is intended to show the foolishness of putting trust in the product of man's labors. Vs. 14-17, Isaiah traces the origin of the idols further back. Their very existence depended upon God's rain, and the irony of it all is seen in their existence being from the residue of what man did not use for his physical needs.

Vs. 18-19 sets forth idolatry as *irrational*, yet idolatry hardens the heart so much that men cannot see or understand what is so obvious. Notice the New Testament application in Col. 3:5; Luke 12:15; Luke 16; 1 Tim. 6:8-10; and Luke 15. Vs. 20-21, the infatuation with idolatry so deceived the heart that it had turned Israel so far from the truth and salvation that she could not even think of salvation. V. 22, the assurance that God would not forget his servant is fol-

lowed with an announcement of an act of love manifested by redemption. In v. 23 there is already good ground to rejoice and the reply of God is as follows — God has accomplished what he has purposed — *the redemption of his people*.

F. *Cyrus the anointed one*—44:24-45:25. Vs. 24-28, the promise of redemption of Israel becomes more specific. God first gave existence to Israel, and he refuses to let Israel be completely destroyed. He would rebuild Jerusalem and use his shepherd to perform it. This chapter is the first mention of Cyrus by name. This is about 165 to 170 years before Cyrus issued the decree for releasing the Jews.

45:1-3—Cyrus' irresistible career of victories would bring recognition of God among the heathen. Because Cyrus was willing to serve God's purpose, God would bless Cyrus with so much that he would know that it was God who had called his name. This is still further evidence that *fulfilled prophecy* is one of the most *convincing* evidences of God's existence.

Vs. 4-7—God called Cyrus by name and distinguished him for *Israel's sake*, not for the sake of Cyrus. This honor was given to Cyrus, even though Cyrus did not "know" Jehovah, in order that all the nations might recognize the *supremacy* of Jehovah. V. 7 has posed a difficulty for many. The peace and evil in the context indicate a *contrast* - evil is *contrasted* with peace, thus indicating a *physical condition*. Peace represents *rest* and *quiet* as a blessing - evil represents *chaos* and *ruin* brought about as a punishment. God declares himself responsible for the affairs of all nations as they are related to his people. Evil, as an act or condition of sinfulness or sin cannot be attributed to God, cf. James 1:13; 1 Pet. 1:15-16. God is not responsible for sin - John 8:44; 1 John 3:8. V. 8, in view of the saving mission of Cyrus - the *redemption of Israel* - heaven and earth are summoned by God to pour out their blessings upon his way.

Vs. 9-13—the promise assumes more distinct terms. Vs. 9-10, there is reproof of the murmurer who rebels against God's ways. V. 9, a comparison is drawn between a man as the work of God and the clay, the work of the potter, to show the absurdity of man's complaint. Both *man* and *clay* vessels are but earthen works which *owe everything* to the creator. In v. 10 the instance of a son who complains against his father and mother because of his existence is used to show

how revolting Israel's complaint is to God. Thus a woe is pronounced upon the complainers. In v. 11, after the woe, God addresses the criticizers - the names of God express his absolute blamelessness and his right of supremacy over Israel. The faultfinders in Israel were to leave things in God's hands. In v. 12, the one who created and arranged history was the one who had the sole right of guidance. V. 13, God who created all things had also raised up Cyrus whose ways he would prosper because Cyrus was designated to *restore* Israel.

V. 14—Isaiah associates the release of Israel with an expanse of influence on the Gentiles. Since the voluntary "coming over" is pointed out, this appears to be a *type* of that which was to come, cf. Matt. 11:28; Rev. 22:19, and other passages in the New Testament. V. 15, a response of Israel to the Gentiles' reaction — amazement. Vs. 16-17, the way in which God is revealed as the God of salvation - he makes the idols to perish among his people forever.

Vs. 18-19—indication why Israel must be restored to her land. V. 18 is commonly used by some to try to prove that a *gap* existed between the original creation of Gen. 1:1 and the state of creation in Gen. 1:3. However, this passage does not so teach. Isa. 45:18 teaches that God did not create the land of Palestine to be a *desolation* or an *uninhabitable* place, but to be inhabited. The *context* has reference to the land which Israel had been given according to promise. At the present time, during their captivity that is, the land was *desolate* and *covered* with *thorns* and *briers*. This was not the state for which God had created it. This was used as *proof* that God would return his people to their land. To take it out of the context and apply it in any other way would be but a pretext of exegesis. There is no principle in this verse which would allow for a *restitution* or *gap* theory of Gen. 1:2.

Vs. 20-21—the salvation of Israel, foretold by God, becomes salvation also for the Gentiles. God declares that those who burden themselves with idols have no knowledge. Vs. 22-23, God desires man's salvation - Isa. 55:7; 2 Pet. 3:9 - which salvation he offers to all the world, cf. John 3:16-36; Phil. 2:5-11. V. 24, the bending of the knee and confession was to be forced from no one. V. 25, only in God could Israel become righteous, and the same is true today, cf. Gal. 3:26-29.

G. *The fall of Babylon with her gods*—46:1-47:15. Vs. 1-5, the *nothingness* of the gods of Babylon being proved gives rise to several admonitions. God assures that he will act in the future as he has acted in the past. Vs. 6-7, the negative answer to the question of v. 5 is the direct result of what precedes, a still further proof given that the idols are *nothing*. In view of this, who would dare to compare an idol with Jehovah? Vs. 8-11, a second admonition is given to those who would imitate the heathen. These are the apostate Jews who have not yet gone all the way. They are wavering between God and idols. Vs. 12-13, a third admonition is given to the hardhearted who are not interested in righteousness. God warns them that salvation is at the door. With this admonition, the seventh prophecy closes. The three stages have been: (1) hear, (2) remember, (3) hear.

47:1-15 deals with the fall of Babylon. In the first four verses the proclamation of judgment passes from the gods of Babylon to Babylon itself. The shame of Babylon is her shameful conduct. Vs. 5-7, God shows that when Babylon was conquered she would be disgraced in the eyes of men. Vs. 8-11, the proclamation of punishment is based on the ground of conduct which is condemned. Babylon was surrounded by a false security and she would be destroyed suddenly without warning because of her *pride* and the trust in her *wickedness*. Vs. 12-15, the prophecy of the doom of Babylon. Babylon would benefit nothing from her wise men - *nothing could save her*.

H. *Israel reprov'd*—48:1-22. Vs. 1-2, God turns to the captives with an admonition to hear, and he reproves their hypocritical lives. Vs. 3-5, God summons them to hear and reminds them that he had foretold their captivity because he knew the condition of their hearts that they would bring it to pass. God made this matter known so that they would not say that their idols had done it. In vs. 6-8 is determined what the *former things* were which God had foretold. They must acknowledge, even if against their will, that God has foretold all that is now fulfilled. The object of these predictions was to guard Israel from giving credit to idols. Vs. 9-11, the people, now paying for their offenses, have been faithless from the beginning and it was only God's grace that kept his people from being completely destroyed. Vs. 12-16, God

alone is God, *creator, shaper of history*, God of *prophecy* and God of *fulfillment*. God had raised up Cyrus, and His spirit had sent him against Babylon. Vs. 17-19, Israel continues to be exhorted to learn from the incomparable nature of Jehovah from the work of redemption prepared in *word* and *deed*. The whole future of Israel depends upon the attitude which it assumes toward God's commandments. Vs. 20-22, so far the address has exhorted. In view of the approaching redemption it demands loyalty and faith. The promise to those who believed and were true to God is held out for redemption, but to the unbelievers there was no peace or escape. The mention of Cyrus by name does not occur from now on to the end of Isaiah, nor does the name *Babylon*.

I. *God's servant of salvation*—49:1-26. God's servant of 42:1-7 speaks and reproves the despondence of Zion. Vs. 1-4, this servant would restore Israel to God, cf. v. 6. What is said of this servant is *unique* and can apply only to Christ, Luke 2:32. Jesus is the seed of Gen. 3:15; Gal. 4:4. Out of his mouth issues the words of life, John 6:68; Heb. 4:12-13. It is in Jesus that God was and is glorified, John 17:4; Heb. 1:3; John 15:1-8. In v. 4 the servant meets the words of the divine calling with complaint which immediately silences itself. This would be understood in a prophetic sense that after all his earthly labors, one of the closest disciples betrayed him and the others scattered. After his resurrection they even spent part of the time fishing, and later they watched him ascend to heaven with a wrong conception of the kingdom still in their hearts. The main thrust of this is that it has failed to draw the nation of Israel back to God.

Vs. 5-6, the mission God has given this servant is not restricted to Israel but is *world-wide*, to *all* mankind, cf. Luke 2:32. All of Israel would not be gathered. Jesus did not fail in his mission but was glorified by God because he accomplished his work, John 17:4-5; Phil. 2:9. In v. 7, God replies and indicates the nature of the mission of Jesus. His mission is not to be *served* but to be a *servant*, Matt. 20:25-28; cf. Isa. 50:3. However, the result of his life will be glory to God through service rendered by *believers*. In vs. 8-9a, the glory of the vocation of this servant is seen. This indicates clearly that salvation is given in response to the call that Jesus made (by his life) and is offered to those for whom he requested, Heb. 5:8-9.

Vs. 9b-12—the Messiah now begins to fall into the background and the return of the redeemed is about to be described. The imagery of the lands is to the Jew in captivity but is in such close connection with Jesus that it must be understood in that connection.

In v. 13, there is a transition pointing back to fleshly Israel. The Messiah has brought all, Jew and Gentile, to God. Heaven and earth responds with praise because he has saved its people and the joy of Israel becomes the joy of all the earth. In v. 14, Israel in her captivity complains that God has forgotten her suffering. Vs. 15-16, it would be as easy for a woman to refuse compassion toward her infant son as it was for God to forget Israel. Vs. 17-18, because God will not forget her, Israel can look forward to renewed glorification among the nations. The population Zion recovered will be to her as a woman's ornaments. Vs. 19-20, Zion will once again shine forth with a multitude of people so that she would need to enlarge her borders. In v. 21 the national restoration would produce such an amount of population that Zion would marvel in disbelief as she remembered her desolation in captivity.

In v. 22 the prophecy looks backward a step from the future of v. 21, and describes the way the people are restored. God gives a sign to the heaven and they obey his instructions, even to carrying Israel back, i.e., providing the material means for their return. In v. 23 is indicated the extent of material help given Israel, and all of this served to enlarge their faith in God.

V. 24—a question arises from Israel's weak faith while they are in captivity. They are so weak and Babylon is so strong that deliverance looks impossible. Vs. 25-26, the prophecy closes with God's answer that he would "curse those who had cursed her" in such a manner that all flesh — Jew and Gentile — would know that he was God. This is both a *stern rebuke* and a *strong promise* to Israel.

J. *The connection between the sin of Israel and the suffering of God's servant*—50:1-11. Vs. 1-3, God addresses Israel showing that it was not he but she who had broken the covenant relationship. God did not sell her into captivity but she sold herself into the exile by her sins. The reason for Israel's captivity was not due to a lack of strength on God's part. Vs. 4-9 deal with the suffering servant of Jehovah. This

prophecy can only fit *Jesus* who came to speak to Israel (and the world) God's word, John 12:48-59. The Messiah submits completely to God, John 8:29; 5:19. Jesus did not draw back from persecution, Matt. 26:67-68; 27:27-31; 1 Pet. 2:18-24. The shame and humiliation did not cause him to be faint-hearted because he trusted in God. In the midst of his sufferings he was certain of victory. He was exalted above every accusation and he knew that God would acknowledge him. This closes the words of the Messiah here. In v. 10 God addresses those who fear him and will hear the voice of his servant. *All* are invited. In v. 11 God addresses those who despise his word, of which his servant is bearer. The destruction they had prepared becomes their own.

K. *Salvation comes and wrath is turned away*—51:1-23. Vs. 1-3, the prophetic address turns from the despisers of the word to those who long for salvation. Those who are running after righteousness are instructed to look at Abraham and Sarah, the rock and pit from which the house of Israel was formed. Now Israel in captivity, her strength and numbers gone, is to remember this.

In vs. 4-5 the promise extends beyond the *physical* restoration of Israel even as the promise to Abraham went beyond the material. This salvation extends to all, but before this universal salvation can be offered, its *type* must arrive. In v. 6 Israel is summoned to look above because of the destruction that will befall their captors, cf. 13:6-16. Vs. 7-8, upon the promise of safety in the midst of destruction, Israel, God's servant, is instructed not to be afraid of men. Vs. 9-11, the exhortation of verses 7-8 arouses a longing for salvation which brings forth this response.

Vs. 12-15—the promise begins with a more distinct reference to the exiles and sufferings of Jerusalem. God encourages Israel to trust in him and upon his all-sufficiency pledges to release Israel from captivity. In v. 16 God has pledged his absolute power to fulfill the promise, and now this promise reaches new glory for Israel. In vs. 9-11, Israel cried out to God for him to awake because of the precious promise; now in vs. 17-23 the cry to awake goes forth from God to Jerusalem.

L. *Jerusalem exchanges her bondage for freedom*—52:1-12. Vs. 1-2, Israel's call in 51:9, addressed to God's arm as though it were in a sleeping state, is now turned upon itself.



She is pictured in chapter 51 as lying on the ground stupefied by God's wrath and exhausted with her grief. She is now told to clothe herself and arise from her degraded captivity. Vs. 3-6, a promise that is filled with reflection on treatment given God's people. Once more he would give his people deliverance and they would know that it was God who spoke. Vs. 7-10, the salvation which is being carried into effect is exalted. Isaiah sees the tidings of redemption carried over the mountains of Judah to Jerusalem. This news of redemption is taken by the Holy Spirit and applied to the *preaching* of the *gospel*, Rom. 10:15-16, because the gospel age is the *body* of which Israel's restoration was but a *shadow*. Vs. 11-12, Israel was to sanctify herself and go back in an orderly and courageous fashion because God would still be with her, going before and behind for her guidance and protection.

M. *The Messiah is exalted out of deep humiliation*—52:13-53:12. Note: Isaiah reaches the peak of his prophecy in this Messianic prophecy and presents what could well be termed some of the most *profound* ideas to be found in the Bible. This prophecy poses a grave difficulty to the Jew and all others who reject the Messiahship of Jesus. As the eunuch of Acts 8 asks, "Who is the servant? Was Isaiah speaking of himself or did he speak of another?" Of course, for Christians, the New Testament interpretation is sufficient - Acts 8 and numerous other passages elucidate this prophecy.

In v. 13 the words describing the exaltation of the Messiah all stem from his action - he shall deal prudently. It was because of this in every New Testament reference that he was exalted, cf. Phil. 2:5-11.

Vs. 14-15—the humiliation which the Messiah suffers is so deep that none have ever witnessed the like before. The antithesis of v. 15 shows the state of glory into which the state of humiliation has passed. As before, many were astonished at his humiliation; now all nations literally gaze in amazement at his glory and the kings of the earth are all struck dumb. In 53:1-3 the Messiah is so despised and humiliated that none believe the prophecy of his future - not even the apostles and close disciples at first, Luke 24:1-11; 15-27.

This first verse apparently refers to fleshly Israel and is quoted by Paul in Romans 10:16 to show that few Jews were obedient to the gospel of Christ. It might be termed, "Who,

believing that Jesus is the Messiah, is willing to submit to him?" cf. 1 Cor. 1:23. V. 2, there is nothing about the person of Jesus that attracted the Jews who were looking for an earthly kingdom. He was not the kind of Messiah the Jews were looking for, cf. John 18:36. In v. 3, to the contrary, his appearance to the Jews caused them to despise him because they used a *worldly* standard to measure him, cf. Psalm 22. V. 4, those who formerly despised the Messiah because of his sufferings now confess that those sufferings were for a different purpose than they had supposed. Whereas they had supposed the sufferings to be a just reward of a pretender, they now see the real meaning of the cross, Rom. 4:25 and 2 Cor. 5:16-17. V. 5 continues the true state of the case as contrasted with their false judgment. Peter quotes Isaiah, 1 Pet. 2:24. His sinless person died as the perfect sin offering, Heb. 9:28; 2 Cor. 5:21. In v. 6 thus does all the redeemed body confess with penitence, that he whom they so grossly misunderstood was made sin for them, 2 Cor. 5:21. That is, Jesus became a sin offering on behalf of the sinful world.

In v. 7 the prophecy begins to describe his suffering, death, and burial. This passage sets forth the nature of Jesus as he suffered. Peter holds this forth as our perfect example, 1 Pet. 2:21-24. In the ill treatment he received, he offered no retaliation but accepted it in humble obedience, Heb. 5:8-9; Matt. 26:63. V. 8 is a description of the closing portion of the life of Jesus. He was literally snatched from the land of the living for the transgression of his people, Gal. 3:13-14. In v. 9, having seen the patience with which he suffered in v. 7, and the manner of his death in v. 8, there is now offered a brief glance at his burial in v. 9. The antithesis is in what the Jews would have done in his burial and in what was actually done by Joseph of Arimathea. The fifth turn of the prophecy in v. 10 begins and extends the thought of v. 6 still further. The counsel of God for our redemption is accomplished in this way, Eph. 2:14-16; 3:10-11. When Christ was made an offering, his life was thus extended, Heb. 10:5-7; 9:14. In the eleventh verse the work of *salvation* as accomplished by Christ is the great object of his calling and continues on victoriously through his mediation. He now reaps the fruit of his self sacrifice in a continuous priestly course, Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 1 John 2:1. In v. 12 the last reward of his offering self for sin, for

the sin of man, is his full dominion over his kingdom, Matt. 28:18; Acts 2:36; Heb. 1:4-8. This promise stands between the humiliation and his exaltation. Jesus receives it because of his sacrifice, but people rally around him because he was exalted above every name, Phil. 2:9-11.

N. *Jerusalem and the servants of God glorified*—54:1-17. V. 1 is used by Paul in Gal. 4:27 and applied to the church, but it had its root in physical Jerusalem and here we have to look to get the proper understanding. Jerusalem was barren, living apart from her husband while Israel was captive, but now she was to rejoice because she would produce more children than the wife living with her husband. V. 2, Jerusalem would need to be enlarged, and she finds her antitype in the church which is universal in scope. V. 3 carries the idea further - her seed, i.e., spiritual Israel, Romans 2:28-29, would be through all the nations and cities. V. 4, the encouraging promise is continued but is applied to Jerusalem while she is in captivity. She was a widow - no husband - at that time. V. 5, it was no real widowhood but only an apparent one (Jer. 51:5), because God was still alive.

V. 6, God renews the relationship with Jerusalem. Vs. 7-8, God's displeasure toward Jerusalem passed quickly, and the love which manifested itself later was more intense and lasting. V. 9, the ground of God's kindness is given. V. 10, no more would God bring this kind of punishment upon his people. Vs. 11-12, in exile Jerusalem is desolate and afflicted, but the restoration will be glorious for her. V. 13, the outward glory of the city is only the manifestation of the spiritual glory of those who dwell within. Vs. 12-13 take their *immediate* application in *Jerusalem restored*, but find their final application in the *gospel age*, John 6:44-45. Vs. 14-15, in keeping with the righteousness produced by grace — Titus 2:11-12 — Jerusalem will stand against all enemies. This finds its final application in the church. Vs. 16-17, the church can rest assured in the same way that Jerusalem could, so long as she is righteous and holy, because God, who creates the creatures who creates the weapons, shall surely keep control of the matter. This safety is the *heritage* of God's servants.

O. *God's salvation*—55:1-13. In vs. 1-2 all things are ready and the invitation is extended with only the requirement to *come*. This finds fulfillment in Jesus, John 7:37-39.

Salvation cannot be purchased. In a small way this was seen in the restoration following the Babylonian captivity, but not fully. *Hearken unto me* is the way of obedience by which the blessings may be obtained. Vs. 3-5, by way of obedience, not only satisfaction of soul but superabundance of joy and an overflowing fulfillment of the promise and sure mercies of David - the mercies already realized by David, 2 Sam. 7:16. Note: David was given as a witness to the people - Hosea 3:5; Jer. 39 - the Messiah. (Ps. 18:50; 57:9-10) David said that he would proclaim the name of Jehovah among the heathen and this he did in his seed - Jesus. Therefore it was a prophecy of Jesus.

In vs. 6-7 the gracious promises are extended to all the world. If the wicked would be saved, he must forsake his wickedness and return to God. Vs. 8-9 set forth God's appeal to the unrighteous to forsake their ways, based upon the vast difference between the ways and thoughts of God and those of men. Vs. 10-11, God's word accomplishes its *purpose* just as certainly as the rain and snow do. The word is the messenger of God, 9:8; Ps. 107:20. This personification of the word presupposed that it is not a *mere sound or letter*. As it goes forth from God it has divine *life* and *power*. It goes, with *life*, from God and does not return until it has done the work God designed it to do. The word of God is a part of God himself and must not be regarded as a "mere word." Vs. 12-13, the point of comparison is the *energy* with which the word realizes its fulfillment. In joy and peace the people will return to the land, and their condition in that land will be reversed. This return serves to testify to God's *faithfulness*.

P. *God's righteousness in the new age*—56:1-8. Vs. 1-2, the sabbath, so long neglected by Israel, receives special emphasis by God. Those who do this will be blessed. The blessedness of v. 2 is extended in v. 3 to those who might imagine that they had no right to console themselves with the promises - the proselytes and the eunuchs, cf. Deut. 23:2-9. In vs. 4-5 the prophecy breaks through these limits (Acts 8) but with the understanding that the real force of this promise was to be realized in the *gospel age*. In the restoration God would richly bless those who kept his covenant. However, the promise finds its fulfillment *in the church* in the name given. Notice: (1) The name was to be given *by God*. (2) It

was to be given *in his house*. (3) It was to be *everlasting*. (4) It was to be *better* than that of sons and daughters. (5) It was to be given to the *obedient*.

New Testament application: (1) The name "Christian" was given by God, Acts 11:26. (2) The name was given *in God's house*, 1 Tim. 3:14-15. (3) It is to *last* unto the end, 1 Pet. 4:16. (4) It is bestowed upon *obedient* children.

Vs. 6-7—the fears of the proselytes are also removed. Jew and Gentile alike are gathered into God's house, Eph. 2:14-16. V. 8, God will not restrict salvation to the Jews but will go beyond Jewry, John 10:16; Mark 16:15-16; Rev. 22:17.

Q. *The negligence of Israel's leaders and the errors of his people*—56:9-57:21. 56:9-12, the conduct of the greedy rulers. 57:1-2, the unconcerned over the injustice which existed in the land. 57:3-10, the incorrigible state of God's people is condemned. 57:11-13, the sin of God's people will finally destroy them. 57:14-21, all who repent will be delivered and only the penitent have the promise of blessings (p. 21).

R. 58:1-14—the *national wickedness of the people*. 1-7, Israel is hypocritical in her religion. 8-14, to obtain the blessings of God, Israel must repent and turn back to him.

S. *The redeemer is sent*—59:1-21. 1-8, the sins of Israel had separated her from God. 9-15, there was no one among men to deliver man from his sins. 16-21, God sends his redeemer.

T. *Zion is glorified in her new state (the Church)*—60:1-22. 1-3, in Zion shall be the light for the world. 4-9, all blessings shall be found in Zion. 10-14, the government of Zion is universal. 15-22, new Zion to be glorified beyond imagination.

U. *The cause for a great change*—61:1-11. 1-3, the mission of the servant (Messiah - Luke 4:18). 4-11, the many blessings which come as a result of the work of the servants.

V. 62:1-12—*The new glory of Jerusalem is universal in scope*. 1-5, Jerusalem to receive a new name after God's righteousness and glory was seen by all nations and kings. 6-9, new Jerusalem to be established forever. 10-12, the salvation of God makes new Jerusalem a much sought place.

W. 63:1-64:12—*Jerusalem in her desolate-state*. 1-6, the picture of God who brought his wrath upon the wicked. 7-14, confession of the sins of Israel committed in the distant past.

63:15-64:7, supplication for the mercies of God. 64:8-12, final recognition and trust in God.

X. 65:1-25—*The new state of religion inaugurated by the Redeemer.* 1-7, the Gentiles seek God while rebellious Israel turns away. 8-12, not all of Israel is rejected, only those who *refuse* God's word. 13-16, the new servants of God, called by a new name would enjoy superior blessings. 17-25, the *nature* of the new Jerusalem (the church) is altogether different from the old. A radical change is effected in the work. A *peaceful* disposition reigns over the church in stark contrast to the previous disruption within the kingdom.

Y. 66:1-24—*Change of heart among the people and the effects produced.* Note: The idea of Israel's return is associated with that of erecting a *new temple*. This section deals with the spiritual Jerusalem, the kingdom that we saw in 2:2-5. Chapter 66 deals with *Israel's restoration and its anti-type*, the church of our Lord. 1-4, the kind of a man (he who has a contrite heart) which God seeks. 5-14, the blessings that stream into the new Jerusalem. 15-21, redemption from all the nations is enjoyed. 22-24, worship is offered from among all nations. It would be well to keep in mind that the language of this closing section is extremely figurative and deals with the church today. It does not refer to some state yet future, but it was spoken regarding the national restoration of Israel as a *type* of the greater restoration which should be effected by the servant whom the Lord would send - Jesus Christ. It is absolutely essential to understand the new heavens and the new earth as the *new state of religion which exists today*, not that which one day shall exist.

It is well to note that the closing verses of Isaiah 66 constitute a description stated in *material* form which would certainly cause the Jews to remember the terrible judgment God had brought upon the Gentiles for their sake and to hold in abomination that one thing which brought it all upon them — *idolatry*. This lesson was so effectively taught and so vividly remembered that the Jews were *cured* once and for all time from their idolatry.

## Chapter Six

### THE PROBLEMS OF ISAIAH 7:14

There is a two-fold problem in dealing with the prophecy of Isaiah 7:14: (1) *Who* is the virgin of whom Isaiah speaks? (2) Is the term *virgin* the correct translation of the Hebrew word *almah* used in this verse?

*Who is the virgin* of Isaiah 7:14? There have been several different solutions proposed. Following are some of them:

- (1) The virgin was Isaiah's wife.
- (2) The virgin was the wife of Ahaz and the son was Hezekiah.
- (3) The term *virgin* is used as a personification of the house of David.
- (4) There was to be a double fulfillment, the first in the day of Ahaz and the second at a later date.
- (5) The exclusively Messianic view which holds that the prophecy refers exclusively to the virgin birth of Christ.

The answers to these different theories will be noticed in a different part of this section. Let it suffice now to say that this author holds the exclusively Messianic view. It is the considered opinion of this present writer that any other view would do *extreme violence* to the context as well as to the text that we are considering.

The prophecy cannot refer to the birth of a mere human child, as is insisted by the proponents of the view that the wife of Ahaz or Isaiah was the one considered. The child to be born was to be called Immanuel which means "God with us." To find out who Immanuel is, one needs only turn to 8:8 where Isaiah, concerning the scourge of Assyria said, "And he shall pass through Judah; he shall overflow and go over, he shall reach even to the neck; and the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of thy land, O Immanuel." Now the question arises, who is Immanuel to whom the *land* belongs? Since this verse views the Assyrian as overflowing the land of Judah, and the land of Judah belongs to God, then it reasonably follows that the Immanuel of 8:8 is God; therefore, the Immanuel of 7:14 is *God in the flesh* born of a virgin.

Isaiah 9:6-7 and 11:1-5 refer to the *same* child as that in 7:14. The description in these passages just referred to is that of a divine person.

If Isaiah was referring to his wife he would probably have used the common term for wife, *'ishshah*. The use of the term *almah* must have signified some person other than his wife. Moreover, Isaiah's wife had already borne a son, Shear-jashub, and was, therefore, not a virgin at the time of the prophecy. In addition, there is no mention of a father, as is also the case in Micah 5:2, 3, Isaiah 9, and the gospel accounts.

Further matters relative to this problem will be noticed shortly. The *second problem* in connection with Isaiah 7:14 concerns the term *'almah*. Is the designation "virgin" a correct translation of this Hebrew term? Some critics insist that *'almah* means only "a young woman" who is sexually mature or of a marriageable age. Is this insistence by critics and others correct? In order to determine that, we must notice some specific things relative to the term *'almah*.

In order for us to properly conceive the truth of the statement made by Isaiah, we must view the *context*. Isaiah was sent by God to Ahaz as Ahaz was viewing the defenses of the city and making ready for the siege which was bound to come. God offered Ahaz a *sign* from as high as the heaven above or in the depth below, indicating *both extremes* from which Ahaz might select any sign that would be sufficient proof to him that God was *faithful* and a *keeper* of his promises. However, Ahaz refused to ask for a sign and, therefore, God, through the prophet, gave him one. The sign was that a virgin would *conceive* and bear a son and that son, conceived in the virgin, would be called *Immanuel*, 7:14.

When Ahaz refused the offer to choose a sign, God withdrew that offer and gave a sign himself. The word *behold*, used by Isaiah, was a Hebrew word used to attract attention to the announcement itself. The attention was drawn to the *virgin*. "A virgin is with child. . ." Isaiah uses the definite article in speaking of this particular virgin. There was a "certain" virgin seen. Not just any virgin but "the" virgin.

The word *virgin* - *'almah* - is a word used to distinguish this woman from all other women. This is the one which would be called "blessed among women." In effect, Isaiah said that she was not: (1) an old woman; (2) a married woman; (3) a bride; (4) a young girl.

*Almah* is never used in the scriptures to refer to a *married* woman. One use of the word is to designate a *true* virgin,



Gen. 24:43. Rebekah is called an *almah* in the previous passage and is further designated *bethulah*, and it said of her that a man had not known her, Genesis 24:16.

There is a statement, oft repeated and generally believed, that *almah* can designate *any* young woman, good or bad, married or unmarried. If this is true, *why* is this particular word used to designate the *mother* of Jesus? Notice some things relative to the word *almah* as used in the Holy Scriptures: (1) it is used only seven times in the Hebrew Old Testament; (2) it *never* designates an immoral woman; (3) it never designates a *married* woman; (4) it never designates a betrothed woman; (5) the passages where this term is used and the translations are: (a) damsel - Psalm 68:25; (b) maid - Exodus 2:8; (c) maiden - Proverbs 30:19; (d) virgin - Genesis 24:43; Song of Solomon 1:3; 6:8; Isaiah 7:14.

There is a Hebrew term "yaldah" which is used for a woman who has a child. Another Hebrew word "naarah" is applied indiscriminately to any woman. Another term "bethulah" may mean virgin, but she also may be one who is married. Joel 1:8 uses this term in a peculiar way, and the use of it must be noticed to understand more about it. Joel said, "Lament like a virgin girded with sack cloth for the husband of her youth." The picture drawn by Joel in 1:8 is that of a young lady, a *virgin* who had married, but before the marriage could be *fully* consummated, her husband was slain. She was therefore, to lament the husband of her youth, while she remained a virgin though having been married.

*Almah* was clearly the only choice which could be used to specifically identify *the* woman. No other name would point to an unusual birth. Could *almah*, in this context, refer to any but a virgin? Would the phrase "young woman" fit the text? To carry the investigation a little further notice now another term.

The word translated "sign" in this passage is from the Hebrew "oth" and appears some 83 times in the Old Testament. Some of the English words are: (1) ensign, (2) marks, (3) miracle, (4) sign, (5) token. This "sign" was offered by God after Ahaz had refused to ask for a sign from as high as heaven or as deep as hell. This indicated the *miraculous* and this sign spoken of by Isaiah would be a miracle that could not be denied as such by anyone.

This would rule out an evil woman who had lost her virginity. If only one man had known her, the *supernatural* could be denied.

This rules out the young married woman, for people would say that the birth was a *natural* one. This brings us back to the word "virgin" as used in its acceptable sense - *a woman who has never known man*.

In that this word "oth" as used here indicates a miraculous event, how is the word *sign* to be understood? Is it to be used to refer to some event in the day of Ahaz? If not how could it be a *sign* to the house of David?

One must understand the *situation* facing the house of David in order to understand what this sign promises. Israel, the northern kingdom, had conspired with Syria to war against Judah. The purpose of their warring against Judah was to overthrow the dynasty of David and establish their own king upon the throne, 7:6. The knowledge of the intentions of Rezin and Pekah, caused the people of Judah to be terrified, 7:2. It is against this background that the prophet Isaiah is sent with this prophecy of the virgin conception.

We must understand however, that this prophecy was not to be merely a *comfort* to Ahaz but was to serve primarily to underscore the *faithfulness* of God. If Rezin and Pekah succeeded in their evil intentions, they would in effect be overthrowing the purpose of God and frustrating his power, thereby saying to the world that God *cannot* keep his promises. Therefore, God sent his prophet, Isaiah, to offer a sign to Ahaz and all the house of David, to prove that these evil kings would not succeed in their devilish intentions. When we view this prophecy as one which emphasizes the *faithfulness* of God, we can see more clearly the *miraculous* element that is intended therein.

Therefore in verse 13, Isaiah addresses not only Ahaz, but also the whole house of David, and even Judah. A *broader scope* than one man is now included. It involves the *Messianic promise* that the throne of David should be established forever. If man could break that chain of succession and successfully overthrow the throne at this point, then what is to keep man from overthrowing the throne definitely and forever? Therefore, a sign is promised, one that is not necessarily to be performed immediately but at some future date,

and only declared at this time in *confirmation* of something foretold.

In order to better understand how a sign can be promised which comes after the event that was spoken of, let us notice some of the following passages:

Exodus 3:12. God said, "Certainly I will be with thee; and this shall be a token unto thee, that I have sent thee: when thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." In effect, God was saying to Moses, I will be with you as you go into Egypt and to prove that I am with you then, when you come out you will serve me upon this mountain. Now here is a sign promised to be given *after* the *passing* of the event spoken of which it was to confirm. In short, God said, I will confirm that I am with you as you go down into Egypt; after you go down and come back out you will serve me upon this mountain. The critic might argue that the time which elapsed was considerably less than the time involved in the prophecy of Isaiah. However, that argument falls short and loses its force for the simple reason that the *time element* is not so important as the *time order*. The fact is, the *confirmation* that God was with Moses was given *after* Moses had gone down into Egypt and then had come out of Egypt. God *afterwards* confirmed that he had been with Moses and, therefore, was still with Moses. One might view also the following passages with this in mind: 2 Kings 19:29-32; Zech. 3:8; the book of Jonah; and other passages in the Old Testament.

If a thing yet *future* may be called a sign, the *length* of the time element is unimportant. What was God saying through Isaiah in 7:14? Was he speaking only to Ahaz or was he speaking to *all of the house of David* encouraging them to trust in him to keep his promise to David? It would seem that he would have reference to the broader scope, that is, that which would include his keeping his promises to David to *establish his house forever* and that a *seed of David* would sit *forever* on the throne. To more fully understand this idea one would need to qualify this with the statement that as long as the throne of David existed and one would sit upon that throne, then David's seed would be there.

Certainly, we recognize two intervals where one of the seed of David did not sit upon his throne: (1) the time from

the captivity of Babylon until the *day of Pentecost* after the resurrection of Jesus when it was recorded that *Christ was sitting on David's throne in heaven*. During this interval between these two events there was not a throne of David upon the earth. This was according to the prophecy and was as it should be. Therefore, there is no difficulty here. (2) The time of the interloper Athaliah who *usurped* the throne of David. Athaliah was of the house of Ahab and had *no right to reign* upon the throne. The only way she was able to establish herself upon the throne was, not by deposing a king, but by usurping the right to sit upon the throne after her son Ahaziah, king over Judah, died. She then destroyed the royal seed, i.e., the small children, and herself sat upon the throne. However, she only *usurped* the throne for six years, and during that time one of the royal seed, Jehoash, who was saved by Jehoiada, was brought forth and used by the good priest to serve as king over Judah. There is no difficulty here in that the dynasty of David was not destroyed but the legal heir to the throne merely awaited the day when he was old enough to be guided in order to occupy his proper place on the throne.

In order to better understand this prophecy we might notice the different elements of it. (1) A virgin is with child; (2) That child will be a son; (3) His mother will name him; (4) His name will be Immanuel; (5) He will eat butter and honey; (6) Before he will do that, the land which Ahaz hated (whether this be Judah which he hated as far as his actions were concerned or whether it referred to the northern kingdom is of no consequence) would be forsaken of her two kings, Rezin and Pekah. The question arises, *which* of these was *Ahaz* to view with his own eyes? The *only element* clearly foretold as coming to pass in the day of Ahaz is that the land he hated would be forsaken of her two kings. Before the other elements of the prophecy would come to pass, he would see this one thing, but he was not promised to view the fulfillment of other parts of the prophecy.

Ahaz saw the *last* specific, the land he hated was forsaken of her two kings, and the house of Judah (the Jews) saw the sign. There is no difficulty involved here. The sign of the *virgin conceiving* and bearing a son was not for Ahaz personally but for the house of David to assure, not only the

house of David, but all, that God was a faithful *keeper* of his promises which he made to David.

Notice the phrase *Immanuel* - "God with us." The birth of this son was to be an *incarnation of deity*. This is the only way that deity could assume flesh. If the birth was to occur in the days of Ahaz the following questions must be answered: (1) who was the virgin; (2) who was named Immanuel under these circumstances; (3) since this was to be a sign to the house of David, why is there no record of its fulfillment?

Because this was such an important event and would play so significant a part in the development of the promise that God had made to David, why is there no *record* of it in the Old Testament times, *if it was indeed fulfilled in that age*? The name could not rightly be applied to any son who was not *God in the flesh* - the circumstances forbid that.

It was the Messiah whom Isaiah saw here as about *to be born*, then again in chapter nine as *actually born* and then in chapter eleven *as reigning*.

We have noticed in 8:8 that *Immanuel* is the one to whom the land of Judah belonged, *God*. Therefore, to make Immanuel of 7:14 to mean anything less than God in the flesh, would be to pervert the *general context* of the passage itself. To have this passage referring to anything less than God in the flesh would be to isolate the text and ignore the way that the phrases which compose the text are used *throughout* the Old Testament. In Isaiah 9:5, Immanuel himself was to be *wonderful*. He would be *God manifested in the flesh* and therefore, Immanuel. His birth must also be a wonderful or miraculous one.

To further clarify the matter we have the New Testament statements in Matt. 1:18-23. This settles the matter conclusively. When the New Testament says, *this is that*, it represents the end of all controversy. We read in Matt. 1:18-23, "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband being a just man, and not willing to make her a publick example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord, appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary, thy wife:

for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." Notice especially the statement in v. 22, "Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying," and then the passage of Isaiah 7:14 is quoted.

We are faced with the prospect of doing one of two things: (1) accepting the record of Matt. 1:18 as being true and therefore, as being the inspired interpretation of Isaiah 7:14, or; (2) rejecting the New Testament interpretation as being the inspired one and applying the *subjective standard of human wisdom* to reach an interpretation which cannot be substantiated by any objective record of method. Of course, those of us who believe in the *plenary verbal inspiration* of the scriptures are willing to accept the *New Testament record* as that which is *true*.

When the Bible says that *this is in fulfillment of that* which was spoken, it does not mean that Matthew quoted from the Septuagint Version a word which some say does not accurately represent the inherent meaning of the Hebrew word *almah*. This would, in effect, have the Holy Spirit falsifying because he guided Matthew to say, "Now all this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying." Matt. 1:22. Matthew said that the prophet said it and then quoted Isaiah, using the Greek word which can only mean virgin. If it is not the equivalent of the Hebrew word *almah*, it is error. Is there one willing to affirm that and still claim to believe in plenary verbal inspiration? Neither does it mean that someone merely took a prophecy and made an application of it to the present event, but rather, this is what was intended to be *understood* by that prophecy. Anything less than that is of little consequence. There are *prophetic types* in the Old Testament, i.e., matters that were to come to pass immediately but *of themselves* would only *typify* a greater fulfillment which was yet to come. The *restoration* of Israel to the land of promise is one

of those *prophetic types*. *Jonah* is another prophetic type. There are other prophetic types in the Old Testament which only signified the *greater* fulfillment that was to come. However, in prophetic types, such an interpretation is indicated somewhere in the scripture to be the proper meaning. However, with Isaiah 7:14 no such meaning is *ever* indicated and there is *nothing* to suggest, by the Old Testament or the New, that it was fulfilled in any way other than by the *birth of Jesus Christ*. Therefore, we conclude that Isaiah 7:14 is *exclusively Messianic* and could not logically or scripturally refer to anyone else. Furthermore, the word *almah* does not refer to a young lady or young maiden in the generic sense without any special significance. Insofar as the *use of the word in the Old Testament* is concerned, it is a *special* "virgin."

It must also be remembered that in finally deciding the exact shade of meaning for any word in the Bible, the context is the ultimate factor. To the context the last appeal is to be made. If both the general and immediate context favor a certain meaning, that meaning is usually accepted by students of the scripture. The general context of the Old Testament, as well as the New, favors the meaning of "virgin" in 7:14. The immediate context of chapters seven through eleven demand the use of "virgin" in order to accomodate the miraculous element involved in the birth of Immanuel. Why anyone would contend for a meaning foreign to the context and thus detrimental to a proper exegesis of scripture is incomprehensible.

It is recognized that some very scholarly individuals hold *different* positions than the one which is espoused by this present author. Recognition is made of these positions and certainly there are some things to be said for them but, over all, they fall *far short of the divine record* of the fulfillment as related in Matt. 1:18-23 which, after all, must be accepted as the proper interpretation - *the New interprets the Old*.

## Chapter Seven

### JEREMIAH

#### Name

The name *Jeremiah* apparently means "whom Jehovah establishes," or "Jehovah exalts." The name seems rather strange in view of the fact that God was preparing to *overthrow* the kingdom of Judah. Judah had sold herself into sin and now God would use the Babylonians to punish her for seventy years. However, the name is used in a prophetic sense and indicates that God is going to *establish* his people. Restoration to their land is to be understood as a setting up by God of his people. This was a faint *shadow* of the establishment of his *spiritual* Israel (Romans 2:28-29) which would be done on the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, cf. Acts 2.

#### Author

We can know more about the life of Jeremiah than that of any other Old Testament prophet. Perhaps the most outstanding man of God in the 7th century B.C., Jeremiah was called to be a prophet in the 13th year of the reign of Josiah. During this period Judah enjoyed peace and comparative prosperity. The fortunes of Assyria had taken a downward turn during the reign of Hezekiah when God had destroyed the one hundred eighty-five thousand Assyrian soldiers before Jerusalem and now there was a period when Judah was enjoying peace from Assyria's aggression. Josiah, during this period, had begun his reforms and was bringing Israel, outwardly at least, *back to God*.

At first Jeremiah tried to decline the office on the grounds of his age, 1:9-10, but God encouraged him. God warned Jeremiah that he would be opposed by princes, priests, and people alike but that Jehovah would be with him to strengthen him.

Jeremiah was of the *priestly* class, 1:1. It is not to be assumed, without evidence, that Hilkiah, the father of Jere-



miah, was the high priest mentioned by that name in 2 Kings 22:4ff and 2 Chron. 34:9. It is hardly likely that the high priest would have lived with his family outside of Jerusalem as did Jeremiah's family. It would seem that this *Hilkiah* was one of the *common* priests and without valid, objective evidence it would be a mistake to assume otherwise.

Jeremiah was contemporary with the prophets Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Ezekiel, Daniel and possibly Nahum. He served during the reigns of Josiah, Jehoahaz (Shallum), Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin (Coniah), and Zedekiah.

The prophet Isaiah had served his mission of hardening the heart of Israel through his prophesying. The condition of the hearts of the Israelites had sealed their doom. They had sold themselves into sin, and it only awaited the passing of time for the prophecy of Isaiah to be fulfilled. Then Jeremiah was commissioned by God to speak unto his people. Although he began to prophesy in the reign of Josiah, who had effected certain *outward* reforms, it seemed that the people merely obeyed the *king's* commandment and did not obey God from the heart. Therefore, Jeremiah must prophesy to his people with the fact in view that the destruction of Jerusalem was sealed.

When Josiah fell in the battle of Megiddo, Jeremiah composed a lamentation over the death of that pious king. *Jehoahaz* held the throne for three months when Pharaoh-Necho removed him and set *Jehoiakim* on the throne. *Jehoiakim* was perhaps the most treacherous and cruel of the four wicked kings that followed Josiah.

In the beginning of the reign of *Jehoiakim*, Jehovah commanded Jeremiah to stand in the court of the temple and tell the people that their beautiful sanctuary would be made desolate. This so angered the religious leaders that they seized him to put him to death. During his trial, Jeremiah's defense was, *Jehovah had sent him*. He could only warn them that they would be bringing innocent blood upon themselves if they slew him.

Throughout the reign of *Jehoiakim*, Jeremiah had to suffer because of *Jehoiakim's attitude toward God*. This attitude of irreverence and rebellion is reflected in his cutting the word of the Lord with his penknife and burning it in the fire, Jer. 36:27-32. Throughout the reign of *Jehoiakim*, Jeremiah lived in extreme danger. Then during the brief reign of *Jehoiachin*,

Jeremiah encouraged the people to do what the Lord had told them to do. Nebuchadnezzar took *Jehoiachin* to Babylon as *captive* and placed *Zedekiah* on the throne of Judah.

Zedekiah was inclined to treat Jeremiah with kindness but, being a weak man, he did not have sufficient courage to do what he knew to be right. Throughout Zedekiah's reign Jeremiah taught that God had given Judah into the hands of Nebuchadnezzar. He taught that Nebuchadnezzar was a servant to Jehovah, 27:6 and urged Zedekiah and his people to serve Babylon faithfully.

Zedekiah finally rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar in spite of Jeremiah's preaching that he should be in submission. At this rebellion Jeremiah thought to leave Jerusalem but was arrested by one of his fellow Jews as he was leaving the gates and was accused of deserting to the Chaldeans. The princes smote Jeremiah and placed him in the dungeon. Jeremiah continued to preach submission to the Babylonians and the princes demanded that Zedekiah put him to death as a traitor. Jeremiah was cast into the mire of a dungeon in the court. An Ethiopian interceded for him and drew him out of the mire. Jeremiah had a long and faithful ministry extending over more than forty years. He had begun his ministry some sixty years after the death of Isaiah. Jeremiah's message was never a popular one but it was an *essential* one. Jeremiah helped the people of God go into the exile with faith in God's promises. He showed that God's hand was that which brought about the downfall of Judah. Jeremiah stood as it were, *alone* in the midst of a great catastrophe and resisted the attacks of the ungodly upon him by relying altogether upon Jehovah.

It has been inferred from 16:2 that Jeremiah was unmarried. Jeremiah was not, however, a type of John the Baptist preacher. He did not come in the style of an Elijah. Jeremiah seemed rather to symbolize the compassionate Saviour who was to come later and establish his church. Jeremiah wept over Jerusalem even as our Lord did. Jeremiah's work was characterized by an intense love for Judah and a strong determination to deliver God's message. Modern critics deny that Jeremiah wrote many of the sections which, *they say*, would be too late for Jeremiah. They especially deny the *prophetic* element in Jeremiah.

Jeremiah dictated to Baruch, his scribe, all his prophecies

from the beginning of his ministry to the fourth year of Jehoiachin, 36:1-4.

### Nature of the Contents

The book is composed primarily of *biography*, *history*, and *prophecy*. The events and chapters are not arranged in chronological order. This fact sometimes makes Jeremiah difficult to understand. Jeremiah marks the end of the monarchy, and the destruction of Jerusalem with its temple, and depicts the nation of Israel in her death throes. Beyond the desolation of Jerusalem, the prophet Jeremiah was able to see a greater day when God's *eternal purpose* would be *realized*, Eph. 3:10-11.

The book emphasizes the *future glory* of the kingdom of God which will be accomplished, but before it can come to be, Israel must *perish*. There are several lessons to be observed in Jeremiah among which are:

- (1) The presence of God among his people, 3:16.
- (2) The salvation of a righteous remnant, 3:12, 21, 22; 4:27; 5:10, 18; 16:14-15; 30:11.
- (3) The rise of a new Jerusalem, 33:16.
- (4) The Messiah to come, 31:22; 23:4-6; 30:9, 31.
- (5) The new covenant whereby God would bind his people to him, 31:31-34; 32:40; 33:8.
- (6) The turning of the nations to God, 3:17; 4:2; 16:19; 33:9.

Jeremiah emphasized the need for *spirituality* in religion and a keener recognition of *personal responsibility*, 31:29-30.

### Outline of Jeremiah

- I. JEREMIAH'S CALL—1:1-19.
  - A. The superscription—1:1-3.
  - B. The call of the prophet—1:4-19.
    1. By word—4:10.
    2. By vision—11-19.
- II. PROPHECIES AGAINST JUDAH AND JERUSALEM—2:1-20:18.
  - A. The crass ingratitude of Judah is condemned—2:1-3:5.
  - B. The sins of Judah and Jerusalem will bring their downfall—3:6-6:30.
  - C. The sins of the people bring exile as punishment—7:1-10:25.
  - D. God reproves Judah for breaking the covenant, and the consequences of her faithlessness—11:1-13:27.

- E. Jeremiah's intercession is to no avail, and the sign of drought and dearth—14:1-17:27.
  - F. Symbols of the coming exile—18:1-20:18.
- III. PROPHECIES AGAINST THE WICKED SHEPHERD—21:1-24:32.
- A. Zedekiah's inquiry—21:1-2.
  - B. Jeremiah's reply—21:3-14.
    - 1. Fate of the city and the king—3-7.
    - 2. Only one way to escape—8-10.
    - 3. Exhortation to the house of David to righteousness—11-14.
  - C. Prophecies against wicked men—22:1-23:40.
    - 1. The house of David offered an alternative—22:1-19.
    - 2. Prophecy against Shallum—22:10-12.
    - 3. Prophecy relative to Jehoiakim—22:13-19.
    - 4. The people must also suffer—22:20-23.
    - 5. Prophecy against Coniah (Jehoiachin)—22:24-30.
    - 6. Israel to be restored—23:1-4.
    - 7. A Messiah promised—23:5-8.
  - D. Prophecies against false prophets—23:9-40.
    - 1. Prophets condemned because they were profane—9-12.
    - 2. The prophets had led Israel astray—13-15.
    - 3. Warning against listening to the false prophets—16-22.
    - 4. To mingle man's word with God's word incurs God's wrath—23-32.
    - 5. The misuse of the word "burden" to be punished—33-40.
  - E. The fate of the people and the king—24:1-10.
- IV. THE EXILE OF JUDAH AND JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS—25:1-38.
- A. Judgment on Judah—1-11.
  - B. Babylon's desolation prophesied—12-14.
  - C. Judgment must fall on all nations—15-29.
  - D. The severity of God's wrath upon the nations—30-38.
- V. JEREMIAH AND THE FALSE PROPHET—26:1-29:32.
- A. Jeremiah's arrest—26:1-24.
    - 1. Jeremiah's sermons—1-7.
    - 2. The reaction of the priest and false prophets—8-9.
    - 3. Jeremiah's defense before the princes—10-15.
    - 4. Jeremiah's acquittal—16-24.
  - B. Jeremiah's confrontation with the false prophets—27:1-28:17.
    - 1. Jeremiah warns and exhorts the king to submit to Babylon—27:1-11.
    - 2. The admonition to Zedekiah not to hear the false prophets—27:12-15.
    - 3. Jeremiah admonishes the priest and the people not to hear the false prophets—16-22.
    - 4. Hananiah's rebuttal—28:1-4.
    - 5. Jeremiah's public reply to Hananiah—5-11.
    - 6. God sends the word of doom to Hananiah—12-17.
  - C. Jeremiah's letter to the exile—29:1-23.
    - 1. They were encouraged to trust in Jehovah—1-14.
    - 2. The threat against the impenitent ones—15-20.
    - 3. Two false prophets rebuked—21-23.
  - D. Shemaiah and Zephaniah condemned—24-32.

**VI. PROPHECIES OF ISRAEL'S RESTORATION AND THE MESSIAH TO COME—30:1-33:26.**

- A. The restoration of Israel promised—30:1-24.
  - 1. The theme—1-3.
  - 2. Redemption promised—4-11.
  - 3. Judah was beyond human help—12-17.
  - 4. Israel to return to her land—18-22.
  - 5. Full understanding regarding these matters would come in the last days—23-24.
- B. God decrees that Ephraim shall be redeemed—31:1-22.
  - 1. Restoration decreed—1-6.
  - 2. The return to the land—7-14.
  - 3. Rachel comforted—15-20 (Matt. 2:18).
  - 4. The virgin conception prophesied—21-22.
- C. Judah's share of blessings—31:23-26.
- D. The renovated affairs—27-30.
- E. A new covenant—31-34.
- F. God's faithfulness a guarantee that all will come to pass that is promised—35-40.
- G. Redemption symbolized by the purchase of land—32:1-44.
  - 1. The transaction—1-15.
  - 2. Jeremiah's prayer—16-25.
  - 3. Punishment to come upon Israel—26-35.
  - 4. Order and peace will once again prevail in Israel—36-44.
- H. The restoration and its antitype—33:1-26.
  - 1. Judah and Israel to return to the land—1-13.
  - 2. The Branch of Righteousness—14-22.
  - 3. The certainty of the blessings rest upon the faithfulness of God—23-26.

**VII. PROPHECIES AGAINST THE KING AND PEOPLE OF JUDAH—34:1-36:32.**

- A. Zedekiah's sin—34:1-27.
  - 1. The announcement to Zedekiah of captivity—1-7.
  - 2. The treacherous heart of the people manifested by their treatment of the servants—8-22.
- B. The Rechabites stand in sharp contrast with disobedient Judah—35:1-19.
  - 1. The faithfulness of the Rechabites—1-11.
  - 2. God's application of the example—12-19.
- C. Prophecies against Jehoiachin—36:1-32.
  - 1. The command and first writing—1-8.
  - 2. The reading to the people—9-18.
  - 3. The reading to the king—19-26.
  - 4. Prophecy of punishment to Jehoiachin and the second writing—27-32.

**VIII. JEREMIAH DURING THE SIEGE AND DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM—37:1-39:18.**

- A. God's declaration regarding the siege—37:1-10.
- B. Jeremiah is in prison—37:11-21.
- C. Jeremiah in the pit—38:1-13.
- D. Jeremiah's last interview with the king—38:14-28.
- E. The fall of Jerusalem—39:1-18.
  - 1. Jerusalem is captured—1-3.

2. The fate of Zedekiah and Jeremiah—4-14.
  3. Ebed-melech blessed for his faith—15-18.
- IX. EVENTS AND PROPHECIES AFTER THE FALL—40:1-45:5.
- A. Jeremiah freed in Ramah and goes to Gedaliah—40:1-5.
  - B. The murder of Gedaliah and its consequence—40:6-41:3.
  - C. Ishmael murders Gedaliah and the people—41:4-10.
  - D. Johanan frees the captive taken by Ishmael—41:11-18.
  - E. God warns the people not to flee into Egypt—42:1-22.
  - F. The flight into Egypt—43:1-70.
  - G. Jeremiah in Tahpanhes—43:8-13.
  - H. Prophecies regarding idolatry—44:1-30.
    1. Warning against idolatry—1-14.
    2. The rebelliousness of the people against God's word—15-19.
    3. Reminder by Jeremiah that idolatry had brought upon them the affliction—20-23.
    4. The promise of judgment to come—24-30.
  - I. God's promise to Baruch—45:1-5.
- X. JEREMIAH PROPHECIES AGAINST FOREIGN NATIONS—46:1-51:64.
- A. Babylon to invade Egypt—46:1-28.
  - B. Against the Philistines—47:1-7.
  - C. Concerning Moab—48:1-47.
  - D. The fate of Ammon—49:1-6.
  - E. Prophecy regarding Edom—49:7-22.
  - F. Against Damascus—49:23-27.
  - G. Kedar and the kingdom of Hazor to fall—49:28-33.
  - H. Concerning Elam—49:34-39.
  - I. Babylon to be destroyed—50:1-51:64.
- XI. THE HISTORY OF JERUSALEM'S FALL, FATE OF ZEDEKIAH AND THE PEOPLE, AND THE LIBERATION OF JEHOIACHIN FROM PRISON—52:1-34.

### Analysis

Note: It is very obvious that the prophecies of Jeremiah are not arranged in a strict chronological order. God's reason for so causing these prophecies to be arranged in the book of Jeremiah might be for the sake of *repetition*. Even though the prophecies may not appear to the western mind to be in the order they should be, for the sake of *teaching* and *impressing* the will of God upon the mind, man could not improve upon them.

#### I. 1:1-19—*DEALS WITH THE CALL OF JEREMIAH.*

1:1 and 3:6-30 are the only passages actually dated in the reign of Josiah but because of the integral part formed in this section to which they belong, it would seem that from

1:1 through 20:18, the material belongs to the time of the reign of Josiah.

II. 2:1-20:18—PROPHECIES DURING THE TIME OF JOSIAH CONTAIN SIX SERMONS RELATIVE TO JUDAH'S IMPENDING DOOM.

Note: Nearly all are agreed that chronological sequence is not maintained throughout the book. This present author does not expect to *settle* the matter satisfactorily for all, but only offers a *suggestion* as to chronology and emphasizes a *content* outline and *analysis*.

A. 2:1-3:5—the crass ingratitude of Judah is condemned. Israel's infidelity is contrasted with God's fidelity.

B. 5:6-20:18—sowing sin produces a crop of consequences. 3:6-6:30, the sins of Judah and Jerusalem would bring their downfall. 7:1-10:25 indicates that it was the sin of the people which would bring the exile upon them as punishment. 11:1-13:27, God reproves Judah for breaking the covenant with him and shows the consequences which she must pay for her unfaithfulness. 14:1-17:27, Jeremiah's intercession was to no avail and God gives the sign of a drought and dearth that was to come over the land. 18:1-20:18, God reveals the symbols of the coming exile of the people.

Chapter 18 is a strong statement of *God's sovereign rule* over the nations. The destiny of the nations rests unquestionably in the hands of God. Israel, because of the horror of her sins, must pay a dreadful price. Chapter 19 indicates the extreme punishment and the suffering as well as the scattering of the people which the nation of Israel must experience. Chapter 19 also indicates that the punishment will prevent Israel from ever being a kingdom of the same nature that she was before the punishment. Although the people would be restored to the land of Canaan, they would never again have an earthly king to reign over them. The *monarchy* was gone forever. There would no more of the seed of David sit upon the royal throne on earth forever, cf. 22:30. It would remain for Christ, who in the flesh was the seed of David (Rom. 1:3), to sit upon the throne after it had been removed to heaven, Acts 2:29-36.

## III. 21:1-24:32—PROPHECIES AGAINST THE WICKED SHEPHERDS.

A. 21:1-2—Zedekiah's inquiry of the prophet.

B. 21:3-14—Jeremiah's reply. Vs. 3-7 indicate the fate of the city and the king. Vs. 8-10 point out to Israel that there is only one way for Israel to escape. Vs. 11-14 contain the exhortation to the house of David to righteousness.

C. 22:1-23:40—prophecies against wicked kings and prophets. 22:1-23:8, prophecies against the wicked kings. 22:1-9 indicates that the house of David is offered an *alternative*. 22:10-12 is a prophecy against Shallum. 22:13-19, a prophecy relative to Jehoiakim. 22:20-23 indicates that the people must also suffer for the sins of the king. 22:24-30, a prophecy against Coniah who is called also Jehoiachin and Jeconiah, cf. 1 Chr. 3:16 and 2 Kgs. 24:6, 8. Note that this prophecy makes it *impossible* for the lineage of David ever again legitimately to occupy the earthly throne of David. This was the *end* of the earthly reign of any of the seed of David upon his *earthly throne*.

Coniah was not congenitally childless but was childless only in respect to the *earthly throne of David*. In this man the earthly throne of David ceased. Zedekiah was a son of Coniah and sat upon the throne. However, he had no divine right to it, and it was overthrown, cf. Ezek. 21:25-27. No man had a right to this throne until he should come (Christ) whose right it was. By comparing the genealogies of Matt. 1:12 and Lk. 3:27 we can see that Christ is the seed of Coniah. However, since no man can prosper while sitting upon the earthly throne of David (Jer. 22:30), it necessarily follows that Jesus must occupy a heavenly throne, not an earthly. This is in effect what Peter pointed out to the Jews on Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus.

It is to be noticed that in the direct connection with this prophecy are the following two prophecies: (1) 23:1-4, Israel to be restored; (2) 23:5-8, a Messiah is prophesied. This is further indication that the glowing promises to Israel were to find their ultimate realization, not in fleshly Israel, but in the *church*, the *Israel of God*, Gal. 6:16.

D. 23:9-40—prophecies against false prophets. Vs. 9-12, the prophets and priests were condemned because they were profane. Their conduct was unbecoming to one who pro-



fessed to serve God, and their service was for hire. Chapter 23 continues the prophecy of chapters 21-22 and denounces those false prophets who had held out false promises of peace and safety. Vs. 13-15 show that the prophets had led Israel astray. The prophets of Jerusalem were no better than the false prophets of Baal in the northern kingdom. They spoke sweet lies but must face bitter truth. 16-22, a warning against listening to the false prophets. 23-32, the extreme foolishness of mixing the word of God with man's word is indicated. It can only bring the wrath of God. Vs. 33-40 show that the misuse of the word *burden* was to be punished. The Hebrew word translated *burden* here signified both *oracle* (saying) and *burden*. The sin-laden people, false prophets and corrupt priests often asked the true prophets, mockingly, what kind of burden the prophet had to those who thus derided; Jeremiah was instructed to reply that God would reject them.

#### E. 24:1-10—the fate of the people and the king.

The people were warned against listening to the false prophets, whose pattern of action set forth in chapter 23 was to:

1. Speak without divine revelation or authority, v. 16.
2. Promise peace when war was inevitable, v. 17.
3. Predict well-being when judgment was imminent, v. 17.
4. Represent themselves as God-appointed when they were only self-appointed, v. 21.
5. Camouflage their lies with a claim to visions, vs. 25-28.
6. Steal God's word from the heart of the people by filling them with lies, vs. 30-32.
7. Make a mockery of the phrase, "burden of the Lord," vs. 33-36.

All false teachers, then and now, must inevitably face their doom. Not only must every teacher of error face his judgment, but also those who follow them. It is, therefore, not only proper but essential for each of us to demand of our religious teachers that they speak only truth as divinely revealed, I Jn. 4:1. If we fail in this we can blame only self if we are rejected in that final judgment.

### IV. 25:1-38—THE EXILE OF JUDAH AND THE JUDGMENT OF THE NATIONS.

This chapter consists of judgment on Judah, 1-11; Babylon's desolation, 12-14; judgment on all nations, 15-29; and the severity of God's wrath upon the nations, 30-38.

## V. 26:1-29:32—JEREMIAH AND THE FALSE PROPHETS.

A. 26:1-4 *deals with Jeremiah's arrest.* His arrest is brought about by his sermon, vs. 1-7. The priest and false prophets react violently, 8-9. Jeremiah's defense before the princes is that he had uttered only God's word and, therefore, they would be fighting against God himself, 10-50. The princes acquit Jeremiah, 16-24.

B. 27:1-28:17—*Jeremiah has a confrontation with the false prophets of his day.* Note: 28:1 clearly indicates a difficulty between 27:1 and itself. According to many conservative scholars it seems as if 27:1 is a scribal error that crept in. The ancient Syriac version, as well as some other ancient codices, read *Zedekiah* in 27:1. This is a case where textual (lower) criticism is still wanting and must one day amass the evidence that will favor the text. Cf. also 27:3, 12, 20. *Zedekiah* is evidently meant.

27:1-11—Jeremiah warns and exhorts the king to submit to Babylon and thus be spared. 27:12-15, an admonition to Zedekiah not to hear the false prophets. 16-22, Jeremiah now admonishes the priest and the people not to hear the false prophet. It would seem that the king, the priest, and the people all together would exercise enough common sense under the circumstances to reject altogether the false prophets. However, such was not the case and the false prophet continued to plague Jeremiah. 28:1-4, Hananiah rebuts the accusation of Jeremiah and in verses 5-11 Jeremiah makes a public reply to Hananiah. In vs. 12-17 God sends the word of death to Hananiah.

C. 29:1-23—*Jeremiah writes a letter to the exiles to encourage them to trust in Jehovah and to reveal God's threat of punishment against the impenitent ones.* Two false prophets are rebuked, 21-23. 24-32, Shemehiah and Zephaniah are condemned.

## VI. 30:1-33:26—PROPHECIES OF ISRAEL'S RESTORATION AND THE MESSIAH TO COME.

A. 30:1-24—*the restoration of Israel is promised.* God promises the redemption of the people, pointing out to them all the while that they are completely beyond the help of mortals. Yet, God will graciously return Israel to her land. It would only be in the latter days (in the Gospel Age in

which we live) that a full understanding of these matters would come about.

B. In 31:1-22 *God decreed that Ephraim should be redeemed also*. He shows how the restoration to the lands will be made possible and indicates that Rachel will be comforted. This is a figure of speech that is a very beautiful application, here indicating that Rachel, upon seeing her seed taken from the land, mourns for them, but the real *full* and *final* application is to be found in Matt. 2:18. This indicates, as those events in Matthew point out, that it surrounds the birth and early part of the life of our Saviour.

In vs. 21-22 the virgin *conception* is prophesied. This virgin conception was prophesied in order to instill *hope* for those who might be losing hope and *encourage* them to trust more strongly in Jehovah. The *new thing* which God promised to do must have been the incarnation. God *finished all* of the material work of the creation of the universe in six days. He left nothing to be completed later but all things were finished, Gen. 2:1-4. The virgin conception and the ultimate birth of Jesus by Mary, the *incarnation* of God in flesh, was the only new work that God did upon the earth until that time.

C. 31:23-36—*Judah's share of blessings*.

D. 27-30—the *renovated affairs following the restoration to the land are seen*.

E. In vs. 31-34 *a new covenant is promised*. An inspired commentary upon this new covenant may be found in Heb. 8. The inspired writer in that chapter plainly indicates what God revealed through Jeremiah.

F. Vs. 35-40 show that God's *faithfulness* is the guarantee that *everything* which he promises will come to pass.

G. 32:1-44—the *redemption is symbolized by the purchase of land*. It may well be that this particular passage can help to explain a difficult passage that is found in Matt. 27: 9-10: "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." At first glance this difficult passage in Matthew seems to attribute a prophecy in Zechariah 11:12 to Jeremy (Jeremiah). However, the main

force of this passage may well be upon the *purchasing* of the land as the people appointed. In Jeremiah 32, the *purchase of the land was an indication that Israel would be redeemed*. We know that before God could bring *redemption* to mankind Jesus had to die. Judas fulfilled a prophecy by *purchasing* a field to guarantee redemption. This could well be what Matthew was inspired to emphasize. If so, the difficulty in Matt. 27:9-10 is fairly well cleared away, and the beauty of the prophecy of Jeremiah is enhanced greatly.

H. 33:1-26 *deals with the restoration of Israel to the land and its great antitype, the gospel age*. 1-13 show that Judah and Israel must *both* return to the land. 14-22 deals with the Branch of Righteousness who is none other than *Jesus Christ*. Therefore, this is a prophecy of the *gospel age*, the great *antitype* of that era following the return of Israel to her land. Vs. 23-26 point out once more that the *certainty* of the blessings promised Israel rest upon the *faithfulness* of God.

## VII. 34:1-36:32—PROPHECIES AGAINST THE KINGS AND PEOPLE OF JUDAH.

A. 34:1-22 *deals with Zedekiah's sin*. God announces Zedekiah's impending captivity, 1-7. The treacherous heart of the people is manifested by their treatment of the Hebrew servants, 8-22, cf. Ex. 21:2; Deut. 15:12-14. This reprobateness of heart indicates the very reason why God carries them away into captivity.

B. 35:1-19—*The Rechabites offer a sharp contrast to the disobedient and hardened Judah*. The *faithfulness* of the Rechabites is shown and God makes an application of their example. He shows that these listen to their earthly forefather but that Israel would not even listen to God; therefore, a sharp contrast is drawn.

C. 36:1-32—*prophecies against Jehoiakim*. Note: This chapter relates to the writing of the prophecies to Jehoiakim. Vs. 1-8 is the command and first writing. Vs. 9-18, the prophecies are read to the people. 19-26 relates the reading to the king. It is at that point that Jehoiakim, in an open act of rebellion, had the prophecies burned. Vs. 27-32, a prophecy of the punishment that Jehoiakim must suffer and the second writing of the prophecy.

VIII. 37:1-39:18—JEREMIAH AND HIS PROPHECIES DURING THE SIEGE AND DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM. (Chapter 37 is historical, relating the accession of Zedekiah).

- A. *God's declaration* regarding the siege—1-10.
- B. 11-21 indicates the *imprisonment of Jeremiah*.
- C. 38:1-13 deals with *Jeremiah's being thrown into the miry pit*.
- D. 38:14-28 shows *Jeremiah's last interview with the king*.
- E. Chapter 39 deals with the *fall of Jerusalem*, the *fate of Zedekiah and Jeremiah*, and shows the *blessing that God bestowed upon Ebed-melech* because of the faith of that Ethiopian.

IX. 40:1-45:5—THE EVENTS AND PROPHECIES AFTER THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.

A. Chapter 40 deals with the *freeing of Jeremiah in Ramah* and his going to Gedaliah, the murder of Gedaliah and its consequences.

B. Chapter 41 deals with *Ishmael's murdering the people* and Johanan freeing the captives taken by Ishmael.

C. Chapter 42 is *God's warning* to the people not to flee into Egypt. Chapter 43 deals with the flight into Egypt. 43:1-44:30 is largely historical. 43:8-13 records the presence of Jeremiah in Tahpanhes.

D. Chapter 44 is a *severe warning against idolatry*. In this chapter Jeremiah explains the reason for the destruction of Jerusalem and the captivity. He announces that those who live in Egypt will be punished and that a remnant will be saved. Chapter 45 deals with God's promise to Baruch, the scribe.

X. 46:1-51:64—JEREMIAH'S PROPHECY AGAINST THE FOREIGN NATIONS.

These particular prophecies are very difficult to date. It seems that they were uttered after the defeat of the Egyptians at Carchemish, 46:2. These prophecies are against: Babylon; the Philistines; Moab; Ammon; Edom; Damascus; Kedar and the kingdom of Habor; Elam; and Babylon.

**XI. 52:1-34—A HISTORY OF JERUSALEM'S FALL, THE FATE OF ZEDEKIAH AND THE PEOPLE AND THE LIBERATION OF JEHOIACHIN FROM PRISON.**

Many (Young and others) believe that a difficulty is seen in chapters 50-52. Several scholars believe that the prophecy implies that the temple had already been destroyed in 50:28 and 51:11, 51. However, these passages do not indicate that the temple was destroyed either actually or even in a vision of Jeremiah. Rather, the *implication* is that the holy sanctuary of the temple had been defiled by strangers. This could have taken place at any time from 606 B.C. onward. This date marks the first carrying away of captivity from the land and it could well be that at this time the Babylonians defiled the holy sanctuary by entering into it. This would fulfill the words referred to above. There is no difficulty there regarding time of the writing.

Chapter 52 is *historical* and is almost the same as 2 Kings 24-25. Young and others believe that Jeremiah borrowed from the same source from which the passage in 2 Kings was taken. However, he and others fail to tell us *where* this source is to be found. It would seem far more reasonable to accept the inspiration of Jeremiah as being responsible for his accurate historical account and to accept that perhaps the inspired writer of 2 Kings 24-25, also being a prophet, would be directed by God's Spirit to write the same thing. They do not need a *common source* to borrow from because they both have a common origin - God, *by his Holy Spirit*.

There is no valid reason for not believing that Jeremiah wrote the entire book which bears his name. This writer is well aware of the attempt by modern critics to pick the book apart and attribute the writing to different sources. Baruch was merely a scribe and all that he wrote was at the direction of Jeremiah himself who was inspired. Therefore, the writing is Jeremiah's and to him we must attribute it as the human author and God as the divine author.

## Chapter Eight

### EZEKIEL

#### Name

*Ezekiel* means "God strengthens." The name of this prophet was itself *prophetic* of his mission. Ezekiel, the son of Buzi, was a *captive* prophesying to captives. He was an *exile* among exiles whose mission was to minister to the captives, preserving and strengthening their faith until the coming *restoration*.

#### Author

Ezekiel is the author of this book that bears his name. He wrote it in the first person and ascribed it unto himself. Until recent years there was very little doubt that Ezekiel was the author of the book and also the arranger of the prophecies. Even Cornill (*The Prophets of Israel*) ascribes the authorship to Ezekiel. Driver (page 279) ascribes the authorship of the book to a single mind.

There are several reasons for believing in the Ezekiel authorship of the entire book:

(1) The book is auto-biographical. Ezekiel used the first person pronoun throughout the book.

(2) Many of the prophecies are dated, and the locality of the prophecy is specifically stated.

(3) The book throughout impresses one as coming from the *work of a single mind*, so much so that even critics admit it.

(4) Ezekiel declares himself to be the one who is receiving the word of the Lord. The one who receives the word is the *author* of the book.

There have been many attacks made on the authorship of Ezekiel during the 20th century. However they are generally made by those radical critics who deny the supernatural. They cannot accept the *predictive elements* contained in Ezekiel and therefore assert that the book must have been written at a period later than the exile itself. In recent times radical critics, like C.C. Torrey, have theorized that the book was

composed as late as 230 B.C. Following him in this dating were M. Burrows and G. Dahl. This would necessitate rejection of the authorship of Ezekiel and denial of the genuineness of the stated dates within the text. This is too radical a conclusion for the reasonable mind. Even Pfeiffer calls the book "substantially trustworthy."

Daniel and some of the other Hebrew children had been carried away among the first groups of the captives in 606 B.C. Daniel had risen to a very prominent position in Babylon. Ezekiel, on the other hand, was set by God as a *watchman* among his people. It was in this capacity that Ezekiel was to continue the work of the earlier prophets, such as Jeremiah, to preach to his fellow Jews both the *judgment* and the *salvation* of God.

Ezekiel was carried captive about 598 or 597 B.C., the 11th year before the destruction of Jerusalem. He was in the group with Jehoiachin (Ezek. 1:2; 11:1-2; 2 Kings 24:14ff; Jer. 29:1). Some believe that Ezekiel lived in the northern part of Mesopotamia during the captivity but other scholars believe that he lived in Chaldea. Ezekiel married during the early part of the captivity (1:1; 3:15, 24; 8:1; 24:18).

In the fifth year of his exile, 594 B.C., he was called to be a prophet and labored at least twenty-two years or longer. His latest prophecies were dated about the 27th year of his exile, 571 B.C. Little is known of his life outside the time of exile. The death of his wife is recorded in 24:18. Some traditions state that Ezekiel was put to death by a Jewish prince for rebuking idolatry.

In order to understand the work of Ezekiel we need to understand three things:

- (1) The exile was a result of apostasy.
- (2) The exile was necessary to cleanse God's people of the sin of idolatry and to prepare them for the fullness of times, Gal. 4:4; Eph. 1:10.
- (3) The relationships among which Ezekiel worked.

God had forewarned Israel, Deut. 28:15-68; Lev. 26:14-15. This threat had already been carried out against the northern kingdom through the *Assyrians* and was now in the process of being executed against the southern kingdom at the hands of *Babylon*. In 586 B.C. the kingdom came to its final end, when Jerusalem was destroyed and the period of apostasy under



the kings was ended. The *heart* of the nation was thus removed, and the *monarchy* was broken.

### Purpose

Ezekiel was raised by God to prophesy at a time when *lying prophets* were saying to the people that God would break the yoke of Babylon in two years, Jer. 29. One of these was Hananiah, Jer. 28:1-4; 5:17; 29:21-32. Both *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel* were vindicated in their prophecies when the false prophets were proved liars at the destruction of Jerusalem. However, at this time there was a desperate need of the people to be saved from their despair. This accounts for the many assurances of the prophet that if the people would turn and willingly serve the Lord, the Lord would take them back to their own land.

The phrase "the word of the Lord came unto me," Ezek. 24:15, occurs forty-nine times in Ezekiel. For eleven years about 10,000 exiles were living in a concentration camp in Babylon while Jeremiah and the folks at home tried to keep things going. For five years these captives in Babylon had no prophet to preach to them. Then Ezekiel began his work. His *first work* was to remove their false hopes. They were living in a false sense of security with the hope of an early return home. He *next* tried to prepare them for the news of the tragic destruction of the beloved Jerusalem. His chief work was to *comfort* the faithful and encourage them to trust in the Lord more.

### Surroundings

Ezekiel's Babylonian home was by the Chebar River, probably a ship canal which branched off from the Euphrates above Babylon. The *glory of God* seems to be a key phrase in Ezekiel. It occurs twelve times in the first eleven chapters. Ezekiel lived perhaps within fifty miles of Babylon, one of the most beautiful cities in the world whose hanging gardens were one of the *seven wonders* of the ancient world. Yet, despite all of this material glory surrounding Ezekiel, in his visions he saw plainly the glory of the Lord.

## Outline of Ezekiel

- I. THE CALL OF EZEKIEL—1:1-3:27.
  - A. The consecration and call of Ezekiel to work—1:1-3:3.
    1. The glory of God appears—1:1-28.
      - a. Time and place of the appearance of the glory—1-3.
      - b. Description of the glory of God—4-21.
      - c. The four Cherubims—5-14.
      - d. The wheels beside the Cherubim—15-21.
      - e. The throne of God—22-28.
    2. The call of Ezekiel to the work—2:1-3:3.
  - B. The prophet is sent—3:4-27.
- II. PROPHECIES AGAINST JUDAH BEFORE THE FALL OF JERUSALEM—4:1-24:27.
  - A. The destiny of Jerusalem and the inhabitants—4:1-5:17.
    1. The sign of the siege of Jerusalem—4:1-17.
      - a. The first symbolic action—4:1-3.
      - b. The second symbolic action—4-8.
      - c. The third symbolic action—9-17.
    2. The sign portraying Israel's impending destiny—5:1-4.
    3. The explanation of the sign—5:5-17.
  - B. The judgment upon the idolaters and their places of worship—6:1-14.
    1. The land desolated and idolaters destroyed—6:1-7.
    2. The survivors will remember that God's word was fulfilled—8-10.
    3. Their punishment is just—11-14.
  - C. Israel overthrown—7:1-27.
    1. The end—1-4.
    2. Judgment executed—5-27.
      - a. A terrible calamity is near—5-9.
      - b. Nothing shall be left of the ungodly—10-14.
      - c. Israel faces irreversible doom—15-22.
      - d. Captivity of the people and the overthrow of Judah—23-27.
  - D. Vision of Jerusalem's fall—8:1-11:25.
    1. Abomination of the idolatry of Israel—8:1-18.
    2. The angel which would smite Jerusalem—9:1-11.
    3. Jerusalem burned and God's glory withdrawn from the sanctuary—10:1-22.
    4. Judgment threatened, mercy promised, and the conclusion of the vision—11:1-25.
  - E. Zedekiah's capture, and the people to eat the bread of tears—12:1-28.
    1. Symbol of the emigration—1-7.
    2. Explanation of the symbolical action—8-16.
    3. The sign depicting the terrors and consequences of the conquest of Jerusalem—17-20.
    4. Declaration to remove any doubt regarding the threat—21-28.
  - F. Prophecy against the false prophets and prophetesses—13:1-23.
    1. Against the false prophets—1-16.

2. Against the false prophetesses—17-23.
- G. The attitude of God toward the idolaters and the certainty of the judgment—14:1-23.
  1. The Lord does not answer the idolaters inquiry—1-11.
  2. The righteousness of the godly will not avert the judgment of God—12-23.
- H. Jerusalem is useless—15:1-8.
- I. Ingratitude and faithlessness of Jerusalem—16:1-63.
  1. A description of the sins of the nation through its idolatrous apostasy—11-34.
    - a. Israel was near destruction—1-5.
    - b. Israel owes its existence to God's mercy alone—6-14.
    - c. The apostasy of Israel—15-34.
  2. The punishment announced—35-52.
    - a. Punishment would correspond with the sin—35-42.
    - b. Reasons why the judgment was just—43-52.
  3. Restoration of Israel—53-63.
    - a. Israel had no room to boast—53-55.
    - b. Israel's pride forced God to humble her—56-59.
    - c. God would not forget his covenant—60-63.
- J. The house of David humbled and then exalted—17:1-24.
  1. The parable—1-10.
  2. The interpretation of the riddle—11-21.
    - a. The parable of 2-10 is interpreted in vs. 11-17.
    - b. The threat in the parable is expounded—18-21.
  3. The planting of the true stem—21-24.
- K. The retribution of God—18:1-32.
  1. The proverb and the word of God—1-4.
  2. The righteous man shall not die—5-9.
  3. The righteousness of the father cannot protect the unrighteous son—10-13.
  4. The righteous son will not die for his father's sin—14-20.
  5. Repentance of the ungodly leads to life while the turning of the godly to evil leads to death—21-26.
  6. Another call to repentance—27-32.
- L. Lamentation for the princes of Israel—19:1-14.
  1. The capture and exile of the princes—1-9.
  2. Destruction of the kingdom and banishment of the people—10-14.
- M. Israel's past, present, and future—20:1-44.
  1. Date, occasion, and theme—1-4.
  2. God's election and Israel's reprobation—5-9.
  3. The behavior of Israel in the wilderness—10-17.
  4. The wilderness generation—18-26.
  5. God rejected Israel's inquiry—27-36.
  6. God punishes Israel that they might hear him plead with them—32-38.
  7. The conversion of Israel from idolatry—39-44.
- N. The burning forest and the sword of the Lord—20:45-21:32.
  1. The burning forest—20:45-49.
  2. The explanation of the parable—21:1-17.
  3. The application of the threat of Nebuchadnezzar—18-32.
- O. The sins of Israel—22:1-31.
  1. Blood guiltiness of Jerusalem and the great burden of her sins—1-16.

- a. Principal accusation; bloodshed and idolatry—1-5.
- b. Enumeration of several sins which Jerusalem was guilty of—6-12.
- c. God would cleanse them by scattering them among the heathen—13-16.
2. Israel to be refined in the furnace of the siege of Jerusalem—17-22.
3. The corruption of all classes brought the destruction of Jerusalem—23-31.
- P. Aholah and Aholibah - the harlots, Samaria, and Jerusalem—23:1-49.
  1. The two sisters—1-4.
  2. Samaria's harlotry and punishment—5-10.
  3. The whoredom of Judah—11-21.
  4. Punishment of the harlot, Jerusalem—22-35.
  5. A summary of the sins of the two sisters—36-44.
  6. Both are to be punished for murder as well as idolatry—45-49.
- Q. The prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem—24:1-27.
  1. God's word came when Babylon went against Jerusalem—1-2.
  2. The parable of the pot—3-14.
  3. Signs of sorrow relative to the destruction of Jerusalem—15-24.
  4. The destruction of Jerusalem was the signal to prophesy freely—25-27.

### III. PROPHECY OF JUDGMENT UPON THE NATIONS—25:1-32:32.

- A. Against Ammon, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines—25:1-17.
  1. Against the Ammonites—1-7.
  2. Against the Moabites—8-11.
  3. Against the Edomites—12-14.
  4. Against the Philistines—15-17.
- B. Against Tyre and Sidon—26:1-28:26.
  1. The fall of Tyre—26:1-21.
    - a. The date of the word—26:1.
    - b. Tyre utterly destroyed—26:2-6.
    - c. The threat extended—26:7-14.
    - d. News of Tyre's destruction creates commotion in her colonies—26:15-18.
    - e. Tyre to vanish forever—19-21.
  2. Lamentations over the fall of Tyre—27:1-36.
    - a. Introduction and description of the glory of Tyre—1-11.
    - b. Tyre's widespread commerce—12-15.
    - c. The destruction of Tyre—26-36.
  3. Against the prince of Tyre—28:1-19.
    - a. Fall of the prince of Tyre—1-10.
    - b. Lamentation over the king of Tyre—11-19.
- C. Prophecy against Sidon, and promise for Israel—28:20-26.
  1. The faith of Sidon—20-24.
  2. The promise to Israel—25-26.
- D. Against Egypt—29:1-32:32.
  1. Judgment upon Pharaoh, people and the land—29:1-16.
  2. Prophecy of the conquest of Egypt by Nebuchadrezzar—29:17-21.

3. Judgment upon Egypt and her allies—30:1-19.
4. Pharaoh's might broken by Babylon—30:20-26.
5. The overthrow of Assyria to be a warning to Egypt—31:1-18.
6. A lamentation over the king of Egypt—32:1-16.
7. A second lamentation over the destruction of his imperial power—32:17-32.

#### IV. AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF SALVATION—33:1-48:35.

- A. The prophet as a watchman and his attitude toward the people—33:1-33.
  1. The prophet's office of watchman—1-9.
  2. Ezekiel to proclaim the preservation of the penitent—10-20.
  3. News of the fall of Jerusalem and the consequences to Ezekiel—21-22.
  4. Preaching of repentance after Jerusalem's fall—23-33.
- B. Israel restored, and Gog and Magog destroyed—34:1-39:29.
  1. The shepherds, the sheep and the good shepherd—34:1-31.
  2. The devastation of Edom and the restoration of the land of Israel—35:1-36:15.
    - a. The devastation of Edom—35:1-15.
    - b. The restoration and blessing of Israel—36:1-15.
  3. The resurrection of Israel and the reunion of the two kingdoms as one nation—37:1-28.
    - a. Israel resurrected to a new life.
    - b. The reunion of Israel under the second David—15-28.
  4. The destruction of Gog with his great army—38:1-39:29.
    - a. Preparation of Gog to invade Israel—38:1-9.
    - b. God would use Gog to sanctify himself—38:10-16.
    - c. The judgment of Gog proves the holiness of God—38:17-23.
    - d. Extended description of judgment on Magog—39:1-20.
    - e. The result of the judgment and the promise—39:21-29.
- C. The new temple—40:43:12.
  1. The introduction—40:1-4.
  2. The outer court—40:5-27.
  3. The inner court with its gates, cells, and slaughtering tables—40:28-47.
  4. The temple-house, the porch, the side stories and back-building—40:48-41:26.
  5. The glory of God fills the temple—43:1-12.
- D. The new worship—43:13-46:24.
  1. A description and consecration of the altar of burnt offerings—43:13-27.
  2. The position of the different classes of people relative to the new sanctuary—44:1-31.
    - a. The place of the princes—1-3.
    - b. Position of foreigners, Levites and priests—4-16.
    - c. The requisites, obligations and privileges of the priestly office—44:17-31.
  3. The holy portion of the land and the heave offerings of the people—45:1-17.
  4. Instructions concerning the festal and daily sacrifice—45:18-46:15.
- E. Distribution of blessings among Israel—47:1-48:35.

1. The river of life—47:1-12.
2. Boundaries and divisions of the holy land and description of the city of God—47:13-48:35.
  - a. Boundaries of the land—47:13-23.
  - b. Divisions of Canaan among the tribes, and boundary of the "holy offering"—48:1-29.
  - c. Size, gate, and name of the city—30-35.

## Analysis

### I. 1:3-27—THE PROPHET'S CALL.

A. 1:1-3:3—*The consecration and call of Ezekiel.* The first chapter deals with the appearance of the glory of God. There are several (eleven) specific dates in the book of Ezekiel relative to the giving of the word of God. These specific and definite dates indicate clearly that the book must be accepted at face value or completely rejected. The internal evidence demands that we accept it at face value. The date of the first appearance was probably the thirtieth year of Ezekiel's life. Ezekiel was among the captives by the River Chebar where the heavens were opened unto him and the visions came. He was probably alone at the time he received the vision. V. 2 further clarifies the time. V. 3 indicates that the word of the Lord came at a time of trial when it would seem to some that God had forgotten his people.

1:4-28 is a description of the appearance of the glory of God. This description begins in v. 4 with the general outline of the phenomenon. Vs. 5-14 describe the four cherubim which come from the fiery center of the cloud. There has been and remains much *speculation* relative to these four cherubims and what their faces, their wings, and other factors involved in their appearance represent. However, it would be wise to keep in mind that these are connected with the glory of God and that the glory of God is appearing to Ezekiel to impress upon his mind the ever present majesty and supremacy of God. Ezekiel was to prophesy to the captives to instill in them *hope, courage* and *faith* to enable them to remain loyal to God. There must be a deep impression made upon him to help him to remain true and loyal in his difficult task. The same sort of impression was made upon Isaiah (Isaiah 6) in order to fortify him for the task of preaching to a hardened and reprobate people who would not repent. Therefore, rather

than waste endless efforts and energies attempting to speculate relative to the mysteries surrounding the appearance of the cherubim, it is far better simply to accept them as a part of the glory of God appearing to Ezekiel to impress upon his mind God's *glory* and *supremacy*. Vs. 15-21 describe the wheels beside the cherubims and the fact that the spirit was in the wheels regulating the going of the wheels as well as the creatures. Vs. 22-28 deal with the throne of Jehovah. It was in view of this throne where the light poured out like fire that the glory of God overwhelmed Ezekiel, and he fell upon his face.

2:1-3:3 is the call of Ezekiel to the prophetic work. Vs. 1-2, Ezekiel is raised up and God's spirit enters into him that he might hear what God would say to him. Vs. 3-7 offers a description of the people to whom Israel must go. They are called a rebellious and transgressing nation, impudent and stiff-hearted. God encouraged Ezekiel not to be discouraged by their looks and actions but to preach so that they would *know* that a prophet had been among them.

2:8-3:3—Ezekiel is prepared to perform his work. 2:8, Ezekiel can only preach what he is inspired to. 2:9-3:3, Ezekiel was given a book which contained all that he was to prophesy with the instructions to eat those words and then speak them to Israel. This is indicative of the need to have in his innermost parts that which he was to speak.

B. 3:4-27—*Ezekiel is sent to the people*. Vs. 4-9, he is given the promise of power to overcome every difficulty. If he will just do the commands of God, God will take care of every other matter. Ezekiel was now prepared by God to be able to withstand all that Israel could do against him so that he should not fear their rebellious actions. Vs. 10-15, Ezekiel is carried to the place of his activities. It is emphasized that he must speak all the words which he has received whether Israel is willing to hear or not. He was obedient to the command but in bitterness of spirit over the prospect of having to preach to a rebellious people without any success, he was *motionless* and *dumb* for seven days.

3:16-27—the responsibility of souls is placed upon Ezekiel. God instructed him to be a watchman to receive God's word and warn them from him. A solemn warning that if he did not warn the sinners, then the blood of the sinner would be required of his hand. On the other hand if the sinner rejected

the warning he would die in his sins, but the watchman would be delivered.

## II. 4:1-24:27—PROPHECIES AGAINST JUDAH BEFORE THE FALL OF JERUSALEM.

A. 4:1-5:17—*the destiny of Jerusalem and its inhabitants.* 4:1-17, the sign of the siege of Jerusalem. 1-3 is the first symbolical action composed of a tile with a city sketched upon it *representing* Jerusalem, around which was to be erected siege works. An iron pan, which probably represented the *hearts of Israel*, was set between the prophet and the city. Vs. 4-8 contain the second symbolical act. The left side represents Israel and the right side Judah, seeming to indicate the *pre-eminence* of Judah over Israel. Vs. 9-17 contain the third symbolic action. Provisions were to be stored for the siege and the food rationed as well as the water. The food was to be cooked with dung which would leave a terrible smell and taste clinging to the food. This indicated the manner of affliction in which Israel must eat her bread among her captors. Ezekiel rebelled against such food and God substituted cow dung for the human. This indicated the way God would deal with the people in Jerusalem and disperse them among the heathen.

5:1-4—the sign which portrayed Israel's impending doom. Ezekiel's hair and beard were to be cut off and served as part of the symbol. After being divided by the scales, a third part was to be burned, a third part smitten with the sword, and a third part scattered and chased with the sword. This indicated the way all Israel would be dealt with.

5:5-17—God explains the signs given. Vs. 5-9 indicate the cause of the judgment set forth. Jerusalem had been exalted but fell in spite of her great privileges and therefore must pay the greater price. Jerusalem had rejected God's laws more than the heathen because of her great privileges. Vs. 7-8 indicate that it was because of her outright *rebellion* that God would bring his judgment upon Israel. V. 9 indicates that the judgment would be different in *kind* and *degree* from all other punishments of her. Vs. 10-17 set forth the *nature* of this judgment. The fathers and children would eat each other and God would disperse the small remnant which was left. Because Israel had polluted God's temple with their



abominations and crimes, God would look the other way while they suffered. The full measure of God's anger would be felt by Israel before his wrath was ended, and when he had finished, Israel would know that it was God who did it. The cities of Israel were to become a mockery to the nations about her as described in Deut. 28:36-37. Jerusalem was to become a hiss and a byword to instruct others of what would happen to those who refused to hear God. There was to be an evil *quartet of judgments* to fall upon Jerusalem: (1) evil beasts; (2) pestilence; (3) blood; (4) the sword.

B. 6:1-14—*Judgment upon the idolaters and their places of worship*. 6:1-7 indicates the *desolation* of the land and the *destruction* of the idolaters. Vs. 1-2, God's command is come. The emphasis is upon the Lord and the prophecy was against the mountains, rivers and valleys; *every part* of the land. Vs. 3-7 show that the land would be wasted and the idolaters ruined. Mountains, hills, rivers, and valleys were places where idolatry was especially practiced. God would bring a sword upon these places and destroy them. The high places and groves with their images would be destroyed and the idolaters must fall along with them. The *shame* that the idols must suffer is heightened by the bones of those who worshipped them being scattered around them. Before idolatry can be rooted completely from the land, cities and high places must be made desolate. Those who have served the idols will know that Jehovah is responsible for the overthrow of them. Vs. 8-10, the survivors will know that God's word has been fulfilled. A remnant will escape death. In exile they would come to their senses and eventually despise themselves for what they had done. When that day came, the people would know that their plight was God's punishment and that God had not made an idle threat. Vs. 11-14 show that their punishment was just. Ezekiel makes known God's displeasure at the idolatry and pronounces the judgment indicating that those who are afar off shall die by pestilence, and those who are near by the sword and if any are missed, they will starve to death.

C. 7:1-27—*Israel is overthrown*. This chapter contains the "second word of God" and completes the announcement of judgment upon Jerusalem and Judah by expanding the thought that the end will come quickly upon the people and the land. Vs. 1-4 show the end coming. The word of Jehovah

is set forth to clearly distinguish the pronouncement from any prediction that man could possibly make. God's wrath is aroused, and the people must reap what they have sown, Gal. 6:7-8. Vs. 5-7 indicate the execution of the judgment of God. Vs. 5-9 show that a terrible calamity is near. An evil is going to come upon the people which has never occurred before. Vs. 8-9, a repetition of vs. 3-4 with the addition of smiteth. Vs. 10-14, the rod is prepared and nothing shall be left of the ungodly. The clauses of v. 10 are synonymous with a graduation of thought. Fate springs up; rod blossoms, and pride buds. The violence rises into a rod of wickedness and finally Israel must pay for her sins. When this happens, the wrath of God will fall equally upon all. Israel shall lose her possessions because her sin was unable to strengthen or preserve life. Israel attempts but can offer no real resistance to the enemy. Vs. 15-22, Israel faces irresistible destruction. God's punishment penetrates everywhere. Few would escape with their lives from that punishment. All hands would be feeble, i.e., *loss of all ability* to do or resist. In a state of terror all Israel would throw their treasures away as sinful trash and look upon them in disgust. God gave all of their wealth to strangers for spoil. God turned his back upon Israel while robbers entered in, defiling the land and the temple. Vs. 23-27, the captivity of the people and the overthrow of the kingdom. The worst of the heathen would come and defile. Vs. 26-27 offer minute description of punishment. One can almost feel stroke upon stroke as the rod strikes. All ranks of God's people will mourn.

D. Chapters 8-11—*Vision of Jerusalem's fall*. A year and two months after his call, the glory of God appears to Ezekiel a second time, as he had seen it in Chebar. The prophet is transported *in the spirit* to Jerusalem into the court of the temple (8:1-4), where the Lord causes him to see:

- (1) The idolatry of Israel, 8:5-18.
- (2) The judgment which falls upon all the people of Jerusalem because of this idolatry, chapter 9.
- (3) The burning of the city and the sanctuary with fire, chapter 10.
- (4) He is thus charged to proclaim to the representatives of the people the coming judgments. After this Ezekiel is carried back to Chaldea where the vision ends and he an-

nounces to the captives what he has seen, 11:24-25.

8:1-18—abominations of the idolatry of Israel. Vs. 1-4, the time and place of revelation. This is a specific dating of a particular vision and is one of the characteristics of the book of Ezekiel. Vs. 5-6 show the first picture of abomination. This is a picture of God being *forced* from his holy temple by idols. There is a lesson here for us today. Christ can be forced out of the heart and life, cf. Rev. 3:20. These abominations viewed by Ezekiel seemed to be on a *graduated scale*. Vs. 7-12 indicate to us the second abomination. The digging in the wall indicates the secrecy which the people exercised, thinking that their idolatry was well hidden from the eyes of God. It was inside the walls that Ezekiel viewed the secret abominations of the people. He sees the pictures drawn on the wall representing all of the various forms of idolatry practiced in Israel. Before the pictures of idolatry stood seventy men of the ancients of Israel, representing the whole nation of Israel. Representing all who were prominent in Israel that would stoop to idolatry was Jaazaniah, the son of Shaphan. Every man was offering incense to the idols. These people probably rationalized that their actions were justifiable because they believed that God did not see them.

Vs. 13-15 indicate the third abomination, the worship of Tammuz. Ezekiel was taken from the entrance into the court to the entrance of the gate of the temple where he saw the women weeping for Tammuz. Tammuz was the Hebrew form of *Adonis*. The heathen legend was that Adonis was a young lover of Venus, slain in the month of June and then restored to life. They called *June* by his name and kept an annual festival in his honor at which he was mourned over by the women as though he were dead, and then afterward celebrated in songs as having come to life again. Vs. 16-18 set forth the fourth abomination, worship of the sun by the priests. The backs of these priests were toward the temple and, therefore, upon Jehovah who was enthroned in the temple. They were worshipping the sun toward the east. Because they did these great abominations, God's fury would come upon them without mercy.

9:1-11—the angels which would smite Jerusalem. Vs. 1-3, God's watchmen, the *heavenly guards*, Psa. 127:1, come with instruments of destruction in their hands. Vs. 4-7, the divine

command. The man with the inkhorn was to go through the city and smite all upon whose head was not the *mark of the cross*. Judgment began with the old men and the temple was filled with the slain. Vs. 8-11, Ezekiel intercedes for the people, and God's answer. Upon viewing the number slain, it seemed to Ezekiel that none were found with the mark of the cross and therefore that none would be spared. God's answer to Ezekiel was an emphatic no. The people must pay for their sins. The land was full of blood; the city was full of perverseness, and the people exercised "practical atheism". God would recompense their way upon them.

10:1-22—the burning of Jerusalem and the withdrawal of the glory of God from his sanctuary. Vs. 1-8, the angel scatters coals of fire over Jerusalem. This is an introduction of the second act of judgment. God forsook his temple. Vs. 3-8 give a minute description of the glory of the Lord and the execution of the command to scatter the fire. Vs. 9-22, the glory of the Lord forsakes the temple. In v. 9 a new feature is introduced; the appearance of the cherubim coincides in the most part with the account in chapter 1. Ezekiel is describing the *departure* of the glory of Jehovah from his temple. God withdrew his presence from the people of Israel by his departure from the temple. Ezekiel emphasizes that God did not withdraw from him but rather appeared to him by the river Chebar.

11:1-25—threatening of judgment and the promise of mercy; a conclusion of the vision. Vs. 1-3 indicate the judgment upon the *rulers* of the nation. Ezekiel sees the princes and the counsellors. There are different theories regarding who these *counsellors* were, but the emphasis is upon the fact that whoever they were, they devised mischief and gave *wicked* counsel to the rulers. V. 3 is a difficult passage. It may refer to a warning already given in Jer. 29:5. The phrase, *pot-flesh*, that as the pot protects the flesh from burning, so does the city of Jerusalem protect us from destruction, was the thought of the wicked. This, however, was a *perverted* notion that they sustained. Ezekiel was commanded to prophesy against such counsellors. The actions of the people are proof of the evil thoughts that entered their minds. Ezekiel gives their own words back to them with a *different meaning* attached to them than what they had indicated. V. 8, the

sword which they feared, God would bring upon them. V. 9, the people would be brought out of the midst of the city which they had trusted so much and be given into the hands of strangers. Vs. 10-11, those who had wielded the sword and had *trusted* in its power would be slain by it. V. 12, the people would know that Jehovah was Lord when he judged them for their idolatry. V. 13, the sudden death of one of the princes of the nation was to assure the house of Israel that fulfillment of Ezekiel's prophecy was certain.

Vs. 14-21—a promise of restoration. The word came to Ezekiel, v. 14, and in v. 15 the repetition of "thy brethren" indicates the *true brethren* of Ezekiel. These were the Israelites who, carried away into captivity, were regarded by the inhabitants of Jerusalem as cut off from the true people of God. Vs. 16-17, it is to the exiles that Ezekiel is to announce that God is their sanctuary, even in exile. Vs. 18-21 indicate that they will be cured of idolatry when they are brought out of the seventy years of captivity. A completely new disposition will be theirs. Vs. 22-25, the confirmation of God's judgment. Vs. 24-25, the vision ended, and Ezekiel spoke to the captives all that God had showed him.

E. 12:1-28—*Zedekiah's capture and the promise that the people would eat the bread of tears*. Chapters 12-19 do not contain chronological data telling us the exact periods during which these words were communicated to Ezekiel and spoken by him. However, the contents are closely connected with the foregoing announcements and in all probability there were about eleven months or a year intervening between chapters 8-20. The purpose of this section is to show the vanity of trusting in Jerusalem for deliverance and to affirm the certainty of the destruction of Jerusalem and of punishment, in the hope that the people would repent. In chapter 12, Ezekiel receives instructions to depict, by symbolical action, the departure of the king and people from Jerusalem.

Vs. 1-7—the symbol of the emigration. In v. 2, the fact is pointed out that the root of Israel's *mental* blindness and deafness was their rebellion. Vs. 3-4, Ezekiel was to carry goods for the exile out of his house in the light of day so that all could see. V. 5, he was not to go out by the door but by a hole in the wall. V. 6, Ezekiel was to show himself with his outfit in the sight of the people. V. 7 shows that Ezekiel did

exactly as God commanded.

Vs. 8-16—an explanation of the symbolical action. Vs. 8-11 indicate that the people had asked, but not in the proper frame of mind, relative to the meaning of his actions. Ezekiel was to explain to them what this sign that he represented meant. Therefore, he would rob the present captives of *hope* for a speedy return to the land which had perhaps been aroused by the false prophets. Vs. 12-14, the announcement that both king and people must go into exile is carried out further in vs. 12-13 with reference to the king. Vs. 15-16 indicate that God would make the people know that it was he who had done this thing and that some of the idolaters would be spared for the purpose of knowing that it was not the weakness of God or their military strength alone, but because of the *idolatry* of the Jews, that the Jews were their captives.

Vs. 17-20—signs indicating the terrors and consequences of the fall of Jerusalem. The people must eat and drink with fear and anxiety, indicating this to be the *manner* of those who now live in Jerusalem. Vs. 21-28, declarations to remove all doubt as to the truth of the threat. There were some in the land who thought that the word of God would never be fulfilled. God would put a speedy end to those thoughts and to the false prophecies by bringing his word to pass without delay so that none of his words would fail.

F. 13:1-23—*Prophecies against the false prophets and prophetesses*. Vs. 17-19, against the conduct of the prophets and prophetesses. Their prophecies were made to order which, in reality, were only flattering lies adaptable to the inclinations of their hearers. They profane God among the people by telling the people lies of their own hearts and palming them off as divine revelation for the purpose of being supported by the people. Vs. 20-23 set forth the punishment of the false prophet. God would make them known for what they were and they would be punished with the evil which they predicted for the righteous who disagreed with their conduct.

G. 14:1-23—*The attitude of God toward idolaters and the certainty of the judgments*. Vs. 1-11 state the fact that the Lord will give no answer to the cry of the idolaters. Vs. 2-5 show that God would answer according to their idolatry.

Vs. 6-8, the divine threat and summons to repent are expanded. A clear command is given to repent along with a reason for repentance. Vs. 9-11, no prophet is to give any other answer. If any deceived himself into thinking he had the word of God when he did not have it, God would deal with him. The false prophet would share the same punishment as that of the one who sought after him.

Vs. 12-23—The righteousness of the godly will not avert the judgment of the ungodly. Vs. 12-20 indicate that the judgment against the land of Israel is inevitable. The threat contained in the previous word of God, that if the idolaters did not repent God would destroy them, left the possibility open that God would spare Judah and Jerusalem, if they repented. However, the hope for repentance and the thought that perhaps the righteousness of the righteous might save the land and the city is now lost. Vs. 12-13, Israel had dealt treacherously in her idolatry by *withholding what belonged to God alone*. V. 14 mentioned Daniel and Job as examples of righteousness. The mention of Daniel before Job does not indicate that Job lived at a later date than Daniel or that there was an older Daniel about whom history relates nothing. Rather it is according to subject matter that the order is given, being determined by the nature of their deliverance for their righteousness. Therefore, a climactic order is seen; Noah, the *world*; Daniel, the *nation*; Job, the *family*. If these three great righteous men were now present in the land, not even their righteousness could avert the judgment of God upon the land. This indicates the certainty of God's judgment upon the people. Vs. 15-16, the second judgment, noisome beasts. Vs. 17-18, the third punishment, the sword; vs. 19-20, the fourth punishment, pestilence.

Vs. 21-23—the rule concerning the country is also applied to Jerusalem. Some would be spared who were not righteous but these were the exception to the rule and would only serve the purpose of vindicating God in the eyes of the earlier captives.

H. 15:1-8—*Useless Jerusalem*. As certainly as God would not spare Jerusalem for the sake of righteous men therein, so certain is it that Israel has no natural superiority over the other nations around them which could secure Jerusalem against destruction. God has already overthrown the false

hope that the righteousness of the godly would deliver the city. Chapter 15 is directed *against the idea* that Israel cannot be rejected and punished because of her election as the covenant people of God. Vs. 1-2, Israel is compared to a vine which will burn as quickly as the wood of any tree in the forest. Vs. 3-4, the vine has no practical advantage over any other wood and, in fact, as wood, is inferior to others. The only possible use for wood of the vine is burning. When the vine was whole, if it were unfit for anything, how much more unfit shall it be after it is cut down? V. 6, the application is to Jerusalem and Judah who, as useless wood of the vine, would be given over to the fire. Vs. 7-8, God's face would be against them and the land would be ruined because of their trespasses. A summary of chapter 15 is: A vine is profitable only when it produces good fruit. The wood is worthless for *practical use*. The only use for it is to burn it. Since Israel had ceased to bear fruit for God, she was a useless vine, and her abominations had become so great that it would be contrary to the holiness and righteousness of God to allow her to exist without punishment of destruction, cf. John 15:1-8.

I. 16:1-63—*The ingratitude and unfaithfulness of Jerusalem*. Chapter 15 showed that Israel is a *useless vine* which must be burned. Some might still argue that God cannot destroy Israel because she is his covenant nation. This argument is quickly devastated in chapter 16. God shows that Israel is no better by nature than the other nations. However, at the same time, God will be mindful of his covenant and will provide for an establishment of that covenant at the latter end. The past, present, and future of Israel is presented. An allegory is seen throughout the chapter.

Vs. 1-34—a description of the sins of the nation as it falls away from God through idolatry. Vs. 1-5, Israel was by nature miserable and close to destruction. Vs. 1-2, Ezekiel is commanded to make Jerusalem know her abomination. This is a major effort of this chapter. Vs. 3-5, she was born in the most abject environment, with the heathen and the heathen land as *parents*. Vs. 6-14, Israel owes its existence to the *mercy of God alone*. Vs. 6-7 show what God had done for the glorification of Israel by adopting it as the people of his possession. V. 8, Israel had been covered by the protection and love of God and had entered voluntarily into a covenant with her in



which Israel became God's possession. Vs. 9-12, God gave care, protection, and glory to Israel his son. Vs. 13-14, Israel thrived on the royal care God lavished upon her, so much so that the name of Israel was on the lips of many nations because of the glory God had given.

Vs. 15-34 set forth the apostasy of Israel. Vs. 15-22 shows the *origin* and *nature* of that apostasy. This apostasy is described as whoredom and adultery. Israel, in her ingratitude, took the many rich blessings which God gave her and bestowed those blessings upon idols in her spiritual adultery.

Vs. 23-34 show the extent and magnitude of the idolatry of Israel. Vs. 23-25 set forth the widespread idolatry Israel practiced - little temples and altars at every street corner and cross road. Vs. 26-29 show that she had committed adultery with heathen nations but was not satisfied with her fornications. Vs. 30-31, Israel had committed fornication out of the pure joys of fornication, thus sinking so low that even the heathen Philistines were ashamed of her. Vs. 32-34, Israel could not be induced to turn loose of her idolatry, either by chastisement or the useless vanity of their conduct. Israel was more corrupt than even the heathen. Others who committed fornication did it for hire, but Israel only did it for enjoyment.

Vs. 35-52—an announcement of punishment. Vs. 35-42 set forth the fact that Israel's punishment must correspond with her sins. Vs. 35-37 constitute a summary of the guilt of whorish Israel:

- (1) the pouring out of her brass and the exposure of her shame,
- (2) her abominable idols,
- (3) the blood of her sons.

Two things are mentioned as the grounds of her punishment:

- (1) because of her filthiness Israel had squandered all her possessions on idolatry,
- (2) because her shame had been poured out, Israel had sacrificed the honor and dignity of God's peculiar possession when she sacrificed to idols. Because of her corruption God would expose all of her sins to the world, even if it meant allowing the people to blaspheme his holy name among the Gentiles. Vs. 38-42, Israel would be stripped of all that she had, and complete destruction would have to be suffered because of her sins.

Vs. 43-52—reasons why the judgment was perfectly just. Israel had forgotten all that God had done for her, v. 43. Vs. 44-48, her abominable life was conspicuous to all, and the different thoughts of this deep corruption are set forth. V. 49 sets forth the iniquity of Sodom as: (1) pride; (2) superabundance of material prosperity; (3) abundance of idleness; (4) lack of compassion toward the poor in their need. Vs. 50-52, Judah had been so *proud* and *haughty* in her sins that she had surpassed Samaria in indulging in iniquity and had reached the point where the sins of *Samaria* and *Sodom* appeared trivial as compared to those of Jerusalem.

Vs. 53-63—the restoration of Israel. Vs. 53-55 exclude boasting in Israel. Lest Israel boast, God sets forth Sodom and Samaria as being restored, either before or at the same time that Israel was. Sodom must be viewed as being in the *future* - the time when the tabernacle of David was built up, Amos 9, Acts 15:14-17.

Vs. 56-59—Israel's pride demanded that God bring her low. Before Israel began to suffer for her sins, she looked upon her sister, Sodom, in contempt. V. 57 may refer to the times of Ahaz when the Syrian armies looked upon her in scorn and she was at the mercy of them. Israel had broken the oath, and God must deal with her according to the oath he had made to her.

Vs. 60-63—God would remember the covenant with Israel. At the time that God remembered his covenant with Israel she must accept her sisters, Sodom and Samaria. This, of course, would have reference to the broader expansion of Israel into spiritual Israel, Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 6:16. The covenant would be the new one which he would make with Israel in which he would take away her sins, Jer. 31:31-32; Heb. 8:1-13.

J. 17:1-24—*The house of David is humbled and exalted*. Vs. 1-10 set forth a parable which is called a riddle because under the parabolic shell lay a deeper meaning. Vs. 11-21 state the interpretation of the riddle. Vs. 11-17, the parable of vs. 2-10 is interpreted. Zedekiah rebelled but it was not going to be of any value to rely upon Egypt because Babylon would overrun all. Vs. 18-21, the threat in the parable is expanded still further. Vs. 22-24, the planting of the true stem is a Messianic prophecy.

K. 18:1-32—*The retribution of God.* In chapter 18 the delusion that God visits the sins of the fathers upon innocent children is overthrown and the fact is clearly set forth that every man must bear the guilt for his own sins.

Vs. 1-4—the proverb and the word of God. Perhaps some sinful men did not want to bear the guilt for their sins so they blamed their fathers for getting them into their predicament. This was a perversion of the law of God, Deut. 24:16. Ezekiel was instructed to set forth the facts of the later period. Vs. 3-4, God points out that *all in Israel* are responsible for their *own* actions and that all of them are amenable to him.

Vs. 5-9—the righteous man shall not die. These verses assert that God only punishes the sinner and that those who are righteous have no need to fear judgment. Righteousness consists of:

- (1) the religious duties of men, 5-6,
- (2) moral responsibilities and duties to neighbors, 6-8,
- (3) doing justly and walking in God's statutes, 8-9.

Vs. 10-13—the righteousness of the father does not protect the unrighteous son from death. Vs. 14-20, the son who avoids his father's sins will live. These verses form an *antithesis* of the preceding ones. The father, in this instance, is the one who sinned, while the son is a keeper of the law. These passages clearly show that the righteousness of the righteous will be upon him and the consequences of the unrighteousness shall be upon the unrighteous.

Vs. 21-26—turning to good leads to life, while turning to evil leads one to death. The proof that every man must bear the consequences of his sin did not exhaust the reply to the question, "In what relation does the righteousness of God stand relative to the sin of man." Vs. 5-20 took for granted that the course taken was followed constantly and overlooked the instances where the path of life was changed. Therefore, vs. 21-26 take note of these changes. If the ungodly man repents he shall live and if the righteous forsakes his ways he shall die. The complaint made in v. 25 is answered in 23 and 26.

Vs. 27-32—another call to repentance. The vindication of God's ways could have supplied a very good ending, but God was concerned about repentance of his people. Therefore, another call goes forth to the people to repent.

L. 19:1-14—*Lamentation for the princes of Israel.* Vs.

1-9, the capture and exile of the princes. Israel is pictured as the mother and the princes as the whelps.

Vs. 10-14—destruction of the kingdom and banishment of the people. The *mother* is Israel. Israel had been planted in a *place* well suited for growth and *strong rulers* had been brought forth that caused her to be exalted among the nations. Vs. 12-14 are prophetic, since those things mentioned had not as yet happened but were in the future.

M. 20:1-44—*Israel's past, present, and future*. Vs. 1-4 indicate the *date, occasion* and *theme* of the following discourse. In vs. 5-9, God's election and Israel's reprobation. God chose Israel and acted in favor and mercy towards Israel. God's election demanded of Israel that she give up all the idols of Egypt. However, Israel rebelled against God's command. The reason God did not punish Israel in Egypt was that his name be not polluted in the heathen land.

Vs. 10-17—the behavior of Israel in the wilderness. It was God's power which was responsible for Israel's deliverance. God had given the law which said, "Do and live; break and die," Deut. 30:15-19. The sabbath was given as a *sign* between himself and Israel, Deut. 5:15. Israel rebelled, not only against the sabbath but against all other commands, Ps. 78; Ex. 32:1-6; Num. 25:1-3. For this God must destroy them. God had sworn that he would destroy them for this, but not *then*, lest his *name* be polluted among the heathen; Ex. 32:21-25; Deut. 9:12-29. God swore in the wilderness that he would not bring that generation into the promised land; Num. 14:21-23; Heb. 3:16-18.

Vs. 18-26—the wilderness generation. God warned the children but, notwithstanding the warning, the children acted like their fathers. God did not destroy them all in the wilderness because of their rebellion, but swore unto them that he would scatter them among the heathen, cf. Deut. 29-30. God made the oath for four reasons:

- (1) the people did not execute God's judgment,
- (2) the people despised the sabbath,
- (3) the people polluted and profaned the sabbath,
- (4) their eyes lusted after their father's idols.

Vs. 25-26, the law could not give life, cf. Gal. 3:11-14, Rom. 3:20. They were polluted by their idolatries and perverted, Ex. 13:12, to the extent of offering their children to *Molech*.

God gave them up to idolatry that they might become desolate, with the end in mind that at that time they should know that Jehovah was God.

Vs. 27-31—because Israel had clung stubbornly to her idols, God would not allow her to inquire of him. Almost every generation had blasphemed God by their idolatrous practices. No more had the people entered the land of promise than they began to worship in the high places contrary to the law of God. The present generation to whom Ezekiel spoke was steeped as deeply in sin as their fathers were and for this cause, God refused to hear them.

Vs. 32-38—God punished Israel that they might hear him plead with them. God tells them what they are thinking before the thought enters their mind. God has determined that he will rule over them and the same power and fury with which he rules over Israel in v. 33 is used in v. 34 to separate Israel from the heathen. In her separation, Israel is in the midst of a “wilderness of people.” God had pleaded with their fathers in the wilderness in the same manner as he would plead with them. Vs. 37-38 form a lovely figure of speech of *passing under the rod* - a description of the shepherd counting his sheep by letting them pass under his rod and when one which was not his came, he refused to let it pass with the others. Also, when one that was his came and he saw a wound, he would pour oil in and provide tender care as needed. Like a shepherd, God would bring Israel into his special care and again turn them into his *sheep-fold* - his *covenant*.

Vs. 39-44—the conversion of Israel from idolatry. God would keep Israel in captivity but he would prevent them from being absorbed by the heathen environment. He would chastize them to purge the rebellious heart. The faithful will once again serve God in his *holy hill*. God would gather his people out of exile and accept their sacrifices once again in the land of promise. At this time Israel would *remember her past*, *hate herself* for her sins, and *praise God* for his grace for not having destroyed them as they deserved.

N. *The burning forest and the sword of the Lord*—20:45-21:32. 20:45-49, the burning forest, the prediction of Israel's destruction in parabolic form. 21:1-17, the explanation of the parable. In vs. 1-17 the sword of the Lord was to

fall upon Judah and Jerusalem - upon the *righteous* and the *unrighteous*. The object of this punishment was that all flesh might know that Jehovah was God. Vs. 8-13, the sword is readied for its slaying. This is actually a lyrical "sword song."

Vs. 14-17—the sword's effect. The sword was to be doubled the third time - a parabolic statement concerning the terrible *effect* produced by the sword.

Vs. 18-32—the application of the threat to Nebuchadnezzar. Vs. 18-22 compose a general announcement of Nebuchadnezzar's design. Vs. 23-27, the overthrow of the Judeans will verify God's announcement. To some people this may appear deceptive but the fulfillment is sure and will ultimately convince the most skeptical. Vs. 25-27 refer to Zedekiah who had no right to the throne and would be overthrown. The throne would be no more occupied until the one came who had a right to it, cf. Jer. 22:24-30. This is an indication that the threat which God made against Coniah in Jer. 22:24-30 is being carried out against Zedekiah. Zedekiah, although a fleshly descendant of the seed of David, had no right to the throne because no man would anymore be prospered by God upon the *earthly throne* of David. It would be reserved until the one came who had a right to it, i.e., *Jesus Christ who now sits upon the spiritual throne of David in heaven where he will reign until the kingdom is on earth no more*, cf. Acts 2:16-36; 1 Cor. 15:24.

Vs. 28-32—the overthrow of the Ammonites. Judah and Jerusalem will fall by the sword to Babylon contrary to their expectations and the Ammonites will be punished for their scorn at the destruction of Israel, Zeph. 2:8. The Ammonite prophets had prophesied lies to the people which caused them to fall upon the ruins of Judah. However Babylon would fall upon them, and even the *memory* of the Ammonites would be wiped out.

O. 22:1-49—the *sins of Jerusalem and Israel*. Vs. 1-16, the bloodguiltiness of Jerusalem and the burden of her sins. Vs. 1-5, the principal accusation - *bloodshed* and *idolatry*. Ezekiel was to reprove Jerusalem for her sins, especially for the *blood she had shed* in her midst. Because of her sins she had forfeited every right to call herself the *holy city*. Vs. 6-12, an enumeration of several sins Jerusalem was guilty of. These sins can be divided into three groups:

- (1) sins of immorality, 6-8,
- (2) slander, idolatry, lewdness, and incest, 9-11,
- (3) sins of covetousness, v. 12.

Vs. 13-16—God would cleanse his people by scattering them among the heathen. The sins mentioned in 6-12 have aroused God's wrath. The only way that his people can be purified is by being sent among the heathen.

Vs. 17-22—Israel to be refined in the furnace of besieged Jerusalem. In vs. 17-18, Israel had become dross. Vs. 19-22, because she was but dross, God would gather them in Jerusalem to refine them with the fire of tribulation.

Vs. 23-31—the corruption of all classes brought the destruction of Jerusalem. Vs. 23-28 show that the prophets, priests, and princes were corrupt. V. 29 indicates that all the land was corrupt. Vs. 30-31, because God could not find a *single righteous man* to intercede for the land, he would pour out his wrath upon it. This is not to indicate that there was not one single individual who was righteous in the sight of God, because *Ezekiel* was righteous and had interceded for Israel. This indicates the *scarcity* of righteous men in the land.

P. 23:1-49—*Aholah and Aholibah - the harlots Samaria and Jerusalem*. Vs. 1-4 set forth the sisters *Aholah* and *Aholibah*. These names are given to Samaria and Jerusalem, the capitols and representatives of the two kingdoms, Israel and Judah. Vs. 5-10 set forth Samaria's *spiritual* adultery and the punishment which she must pay. Vs. 11-21 set forth the whoredom of *Judah*. Vs. 23-35 set forth the punishment of the harlot *Jerusalem*. Because of her sins, God will bring the Chaldeans upon them to plunder and put them to shame. Because they had forgotten God they would be punished the same way as their sister Samaria would.

Vs. 36-44—another summary of the sins of the two women. The guilt of the idolatrous ways is shown in more severe terms. Vs. 45-49, both are to be punished for murder as well as for idolatry. All of her sins would be brought upon her head, cf. Gal. 6:7-8.

Q. 24:1-27—*Prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem*. Vs. 1-2, God's word came when Babylon went out against Jerusalem. God revealed this event to Ezekiel on the same day that it happened. Vs. 3-14, the parable of the pot with the boiling pieces, through which God was making known

to the people the fate of the city.

Vs. 15-24—the sign of silent sorrow concerning the destruction of Jerusalem. God foretold the death of Ezekiel's wife and told him not to mourn for her death. Ezekiel did as he was told and the people understood that it must be a *sign* for something. The people asked the prophet what was to be understood by it. He announced to them the word of God concerning Jerusalem and instructed them to react in the same manner regarding Jerusalem as they had seen him act with regard to the death of his wife.

Vs. 25-27—the destruction of Jerusalem was the signal to prophesy freely. Up to that time, Ezekiel was to speak to the people only when God gave him a word for them and was to remain silent at all other times. However, when the messenger came with the news that Jerusalem had fallen, this was to be changed.

### III. PROPHECIES OF JUDGMENT UPON THE NATIONS— 25:1-32:32.

A. 25:1-17—*Against Ammon, Moab, Edom, and the Philistines*. Vs. 1-7, the prophecy against the Ammonites. Ezekiel has already foretold the destruction of Ammon in chapter 21. This is merely a resumption of that prophecy. Ammon had reviled God's people, cf. Zeph. 2:8-10, and must pay for that sin.

Vs. 8-11—against the Moabites. Moab was guilty of the same sin against Judah as was Ammon. She despised the divine election of Judah. Moab said that Israel was like all the heathen, and she must be judged for her contempt in the same way that the Ammonites were.

Vs. 12-14—against the Edomites. Edom is accused of taking vengeance against Israel. This seems to result from the age-old hatred that existed over the *birthright*. Because of this, she must suffer at the hands of Israel. This was to take place after the restoration of Israel to the land, which, according to some was probably about the time of the Maccabbes.

Vs. 15-17—against the Philistines. The Philistines had been the *perpetual enemies* of Israel, always manifesting hatred for them and at every opportunity oppressing God's people. Therefore, God would bring great vengeance upon the Philistines.

Chapters 26-28 constitute a prophecy against *Tyre* and *Sidon*. Chapter 26 deals with the fall of Tyre. The word is



*dated* in v. 1, (the 11th year of the exile of Jehoichin). Vs. 2-6 show that Tyre was to be utterly destroyed. At the time of the utterance of this prophecy, Tyre was the mistress of the sea and the center of world trade. Vs. 7-14, the threat is extended further. Nebuchadnezzar is mentioned by name as the one responsible for her downfall and a vivid picture is drawn. Vs. 15-18, the news of the destruction of Tyre would bring a great commotion all over her colonies. Vs. 19-21, Tyre will vanish forever from the face of the earth.

Chapter 27 presents the *lamentation* over the fall of Tyre. Vs. 1-11, the introduction and description of the glory of Tyre. The picture of the glory of the city, its situation, its architectural beauty, and its military strength and defenses, is set forth. Tyre thinks that she is perfect in beauty and strength. Vs. 12-15, Tyre's widespread commercial relations. A vivid description of all the nations who delivered their produce to the center of the world market. Vs. 26-36, the destruction of Tyre.

Vs. 28:1-19—a prophecy against the prince of Tyre. Vs. 1-10 show the fall of the prince of Tyre. The *pride* of the prince of Tyre is described and probably included in his *self-deification*. Daniel is mentioned here, probably because all the world had heard of the great wisdom he possessed and how Daniel attributed the source of all his wisdom to God. However here was a heathen prince who regarded himself wiser than all, even Daniel, thus even wiser than Jehovah.

Vs. 11-19—lamentation for the king of Tyre. Lamentation over the fall of the prince of Tyre begins with a picture of the *super-terrestrial* glory of his position, so as to correspond to his self-deification as already pictured. God would punish him because his heart had been lifted up in *pride*.

Vs. 20-26—a prophecy against Sidon and a promise for Israel. Vs. 20-24 set forth the fate of Sidon. The threat is very brief because in reality the prophecy against Tyre involves the announcement of the fall of Sidon which is dependent upon Tyre. The oracle against Sidon brings to a close the prophecy of judgment against the heathen nations which had expressed malicious pleasure at the downfall of God's people. Vs. 25-26, the promise to Israel. The heathen nations must bow before God's judgment, some never to rise again, but the people of God have a *promise of future blessing*.

Chapters 29-34—prophecies against Egypt. The announcement of judgment upon Egypt is proclaimed in seven words; the first five are threats:

1. 29:1-16, Judgment upon Pharaoh, the people, and the land.
2. 29:17-21, A prediction of the conquest and plundering of Egypt by Nebuchadnezzar.
3. 30:1-19, The day of judgment upon Egypt and its allies.
4. 30:20-26, The might of Pharaoh broken by Babylon.
5. 31:1-18, Warnings to Egypt by the overthrow of Assyria.
6. 32:1-16, A lamentation over the king of Egypt.
7. 32:17-32, A second lamentation over the destruction of his royal power.

The power of Pharaoh and Egypt seems to have been regarded as the *embodiment* of self-deification that is able to uphold the kingdom of God in its rebellion. It, therefore, induces God's people to place their trust in the flesh rather than in God. This probably accounts for the elaborate prophecy concerning Egypt.

#### IV. AN ANNOUNCEMENT OF SALVATION—33:1-48:35.

A. 33:1-33—*the prophet as a watchman and his attitude toward the people*. Vs. 1-20, Ezekiel's calling as a spiritual watchman over Israel is renewed. Vs. 1-9, the prophet's office of watchman. Vs. 2-6, example from life makes the duty of Ezekiel plain. Vs. 7-9, these seem to be repeated from 3:17-19 with a slight deviation which in no way affects the sense of it. Vs. 10-20, Ezekiel is to announce the preservation of the penitent. Vs. 10-11 indicate that some, because of the *magnitude* of their sins, *despair* of their life. Ezekiel points out that God takes no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but desires his conversion, cf. 2 Pet. 3:3-9. Vs. 12-20, Ezekiel repeats the principal thoughts of chapter 18:20-32.

Vs. 21-22—news of the fall of Jerusalem and the consequences. A fugitive who had escaped from Jerusalem came to bring news of the city. Vs. 23-33, preaching of repentance after the fall of Jerusalem. Vs. 23-29, false reliance upon God's promises. V. 23 is a threat against those who remain in the land of Judah after the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. These people were impenitent, yet they boasted of the promise God gave to Abraham and acted as if they would retain possession of the promised land regardless of their sins. Vs. 24-29, Ezekiel destroys this delusion by announcing that the unrighteous shall have no share in the land but must perish so

that the land will be desolate. Vs. 30-33, the behavior of the people toward the prophet. The people came to listen to the *eloquence* of Ezekiel, not to *hear* the truths which he preached.

B. Chapters 34-39—the *restoration of Israel and the destruction of Gog and Magog*. The shepherds, the sheep, and the good shepherd are concerned in chapter 34. Vs. 1-10 present a woe to the bad shepherds. Vs. 1-3 show that the bad shepherds were concerned only with themselves and fed themselves rather than the flock. Vs. 4-6, the bad shepherds in their selfishness, ignored the helpless sheep. The conduct of the shepherds was oppressive and the beast of the field devoured the sheep. Vs. 7-10, the shepherds hear the pronouncement of punishment for their unfaithfulness. God will demand an accounting of them. Vs. 11-22, Jehovah himself will take charge of the sheep. Vs. 11-13, God would search out his sheep from all the lands where they scattered and bring them back to the land of promise. Vs. 14-16 indicate that God would prosper his people in the land. Vs. 17-19, God would judge between his flock and those who were stronger. God always manifests his love and concern for the righteous. Vs. 20-22, God would judge between the people of Israel.

Vs. 23-31—appointment of the one good shepherd. Vs. 23-24, God would raise up one shepherd to be over all his people. This shepherd is the *second David*, cf. Jer. 23:5-6; Jer. 30:9; Hos. 3:5. The people would worship God and submit to God's prince. This is fulfilled in Jesus in the *gospel age*, cf. John 10:14-16, V. 25, God would make a covenant of peace, cf. Jer. 31:31ff; Eph. 2:13-16; Col. 1:20-21; 2:14. The evil beasts to cease, correspond to the picture of Isa. 2:4 and Isa. 11:6-9. This merely indicates the peaceful character of the church contrasted with the former need for bloodshed by God's people. The kingdom is not to be advanced by the carnal sword but by the sword of the spirit, Eph. 6:17. Peace would reign in the hearts of members of God's kingdom in the gospel age, cf. Phil. 4:4-7.

Vs. 26-28—God will bless his people when they shall bear fruit. Due to the *nature* of God's kingdom under the *second David*, they shall never again be a prey for the heathen. Vs. 29-31, a summary of what God would do and he points out that his sheep are men. This whole prophecy may be sum-

marized as follows:

(1) The Lord will free his people from the evil shepherd and himself feed the flock.

(2) God will gather his flock from the land where it is dispersed and bring it back into the land of promise, for the righteous and unrighteous will eventually be separated.

(3) God will raise up a second David as a shepherd for his people under whom the greatest blessings shall be received.

35:1-36:15—Edom is devastated and the land of Israel is restored. 35:1-15 deals with the devastation of Edom. Vs. 1-4 indicate that the mountains of Seir shall be laid waste. Vs. 5-9 show that the enmity and hatred toward Israel had been cherished for all generations past by Edom. The Edomites had never forgotten the birthright which had been lost by their father. Vs. 10-15 show that Edom coveted the land and blasphemed God in this respect.

In chapter 25, Edom had been listed as among the hostile nations threatened with destruction. The present prophecy follows the same theme and stresses the age-old *hatred* on the part of the Edomites that had been nurtured since the days of Esau and Jacob. The present covetousness of the Edomites for the land of Israel seemed to stem from that age-old enmity. In all of this Edom had adopted the attitude that Israel had existed without God or that Jehovah was *powerless* to defend her against the heathen.

36:1-15 deals with the restoration and blessings of Israel. Vs. 1-7 show that the heathen had appropriated Israel's mountains. The mountains are in *antithesis* to the mountains of Seir and stand for the land. Edom rejoiced that the land of promise had been laid waste and fell upon it for her own. However, the land would again receive God's people, and the heathen would trade places, as it were. Vs. 8-15, the land would be inhabited by Israel. That the people would be *multiplied* and blessings would abound, is the leading thought.

36:16-18 shows that the salvation of Israel is founded upon its *sanctification*. 16-21, the Lord will forbear for his name's sake. In vs. 16-19 God explains why he has thrust his people out of the land - because of their *sins*. V. 20 indicates that Israel had profaned God's name among the heathen in their exile. V. 21 is prophetic and shows that God will gather his people from among the nations.

Vs. 22-28—God will purify Israel and return her to the promised land. Vs. 22-23 show why and how God had mercy upon Israel. His mercy was *not* because of Israel's merit. The heathen had regarded the giving up of his people as a sign of *weakness*. Now his deliverance would indicate his *majesty*. Vs. 24-25, God would bring his people from all the countries and cleanse them from their impurities. V. 25 is an allusion to the water of purification in Num. 19:17-19. In their captivity the Jews would naturally become *ceremonially* unclean. They would be forced to *bury* their dead, thus touching dead bodies; they would live in the *houses* of Gentiles and have close association with them; they would eat *unclean foods* and partake of many other things which would ceremonially *defile* them. God would bring them back into the land where they must be sanctified with the water of purification in order that their *worship* might be acceptable according to Moses' law. Some have used these passages in an attempt to prove that baptism in the New Testament is *sprinkling* rather than immersion. However, it is a gross misapplication of this passage to so teach. The passage has nothing whatsoever to do with baptism in the New Testament. It was strictly a *ceremony of Moses' law* and it had reference to God's people. Baptism is not an ordinance for God's people today but is rather a command for the *alien sinner*, Acts 2:38. Vs. 26-28, God would put in them a *new heart* and a *new spirit* which is a *contrast* with the old heart and old spirit of Israel. This newness of life in which Israel lived would allow them to remain within the sphere of God's grace and receive his blessings.

Vs. 29-38—the Lord will bless his people after they are sanctified. Vs. 29-31, God promises to save Israel from her uncleanness and then bless her as in the days of old. After God had blessed Israel in such a manner, Israel would remember her past sins and despise herself because of them. Vs. 32-35, God would impress upon their minds that it was not for Israel's sake but because he was so *merciful* that he would save them. After their return, the land about them would become so productive that it would remind them of Eden. However, this productivity and the attendant blessings would be contingent upon their obedience to the law of God. V. 36, when all of this transpired, the heathen would know

that it was God who had done it. Vs. 37-38, God *obligates himself* to bless the nation and cause them to be like "the holy flock of Jerusalem." This is possibly an allusion to the flock brought to Jerusalem at the yearly feast when all the male Jews came to worship God.

37:1-28—the *spiritual* resurrection of Israel and the reunion of Israel and Judah as *one* nation. Vs. 1-14 deal with the resurrection of Israel for a new life. Vs. 1-10 is a record of the vision of dry bones. God asked Ezekiel the question whether the bones should live or not and Ezekiel's answer, "Lord thou knowest," indicated that from the human standpoint it was impossible but the power was with God. Ezekiel was told to prophesy to these bones and God would cause the impossible to happen - the *resurrection* to come about. Vs. 7-10, Ezekiel obeyed the command and saw the great sight of a resurrection. This resurrection is a *symbolical* or *figurative* resurrection and the explanation is given in the next four verses.

Vs. 11-14—the vision interpreted. V. 11 states who the bones represent - Israel - in a lost and hopeless condition. V. 12, their graves represent the captivity. Vs. 13-14, their deliverance from captivity would convince them of the sovereignty of God. In all of this the nation which had been destroyed is *raised* to their former position of blessings again; thus a *spiritual resurrection* is effected. The people who have been cut off and lost all hope are given a new hope with this promise by God.

Vs. 15-28—a reunion of Israel under the second David. Vs. 15-17 constitute a *sign* of the union. The two pieces of wood were to be written upon and joined together by Ezekiel and they would become one. Vs. 18-21 indicate that this was going to happen when the *restoration* from the captivity was effected and the people were brought back into the land. They were going to be brought back as *one* people. The old distinction between the nations would be gone.

Vs. 22-28—the future blessedness under the second David. Vs. 22-23, when God brought the people back, the rivalry between them would be ended and their lust for idols destroyed. Vs. 24-25, the *second David* was to bless and lead Israel. He would be the *one* shepherd. For fulfillment of this, see John 10:13-16. At this time they would walk in his ways,

cf. Isa. 2:1-4; Rom. 2:28-29. Vs. 26-27, God would make a *covenant of peace* with his people and set his sanctuary in their midst forever, cf. Eph. 2:15-16; 2 Cor. 6:16-7:1. V. 28 shows the *universal* aspect of the church - all the heathen would know that Jehovah alone is God.

38:1-39:29—the destruction of Gog with his great army. 38:1-9, the preparation of Gog to invade Israel. Vs. 1-2, the command to prophesy against Magog. God was ruler of the land of Magog. In Gen. 10:2, Magog, Neshech, Tubal and Gomer are named the sons of Japheth and are listed as *founders* of the northern group of nations. In Ezek. 27:13, Neshech and Tubal are mentioned as being sellers of slaves to Tyre and in 32:26 as being *rebel nations* of antiquity. Apparently these nations are used *symbolically* here, as they are in Rev. 20:7-10, as *representative* of the great host of the wicked which opposed the righteous cause of God. Ezekiel seems to be giving a figurative description of the overwhelming number of the forces of evil arrayed against the people of God.

38:10-16—God would use Gog to sanctify himself. Gog determines to destroy Israel and confidently marches against Israel, not knowing that it is God who leads him.

38:17-23—the judgment of Gog proves the *holiness* of God. Gog is a fulfillment of God's word, not that the prophets had mentioned him by name but that the prophets had foretold an *opposer* of God's cause as well as the destruction of that opposer, cf. Joel 3:2; 11-17. The overthrow of the enemy is intensified by plagues inflicted by God to the end that all will know that he is the Lord. This points toward the establishment of *Christianity* on earth.

39:1-20—an extended description of the judgment upon Magog. Vs. 1-8, a general announcement of the destruction of Magog. God would teach the command to Ezekiel to prophesy against Magog and to tell this power that he would mislead and disarm him before giving him up as a prey. After the powers of the world were broken (1 John 3:8; Heb. 2:14), then God would send a fire among the isles to the end that the isles would know that he was the Lord, cf. Col. 1:23. At this time his *name* would be sanctified in the midst of his people. The fire that is mentioned may very well refer to his *word* (Jer. 23:29) which is likened unto a fire.

Vs. 9-20—total destruction of Gog and his hosts. This is a

highly figurative description of the *complete* victory over the forces of evil. It is so great that "all Israel" can not bury the dead in seven months but must hire strangers passing through to search for dead bodies, cf. Col. 2:14; Acts 26:26. This destruction was to be a day of renown to the world - this is the glory of Christians, cf. 1 Cor. 1:18-2:5; 1 Pet. 4:16.

39:21-29—the result of the judgment and the promise. God's judgment will make the world know that he alone is Lord. This judgment will also help the world to understand God's plan for man especially as it related to Israel, cf. Eph. 3:9-11. "All Israel" referred to here must be understood from the *context* of Rom. 9:4-8; Rom. 2:28-29.

C. 40:1-43:12—the *new temple*. 40:1-4, the introduction. The appearance of the man and his response indicates that he was a heavenly being with a charge to Ezekiel to proclaim all to the house of Israel. In his hands were held two measuring devices - large and small - in order to be able to measure *all things*.

40:5-27—the outer court. V. 5 deals with the surrounding wall. A description of the temple begins with the wall. Vs. 6-16 deal with the building of the east gate. Vs. 6-9 indicate that the entire length was measured on one side. Vs. 10-12 deal with the inner portions on both sides. Ezekiel sees the measurement taking place in a very precise way. Vs. 13-15 set forth the relations and measurement of the whole building. V. 16, the wall decorations. Vs. 17-19, the outer court described and measured. Vs. 20-27, the north gate and the south gate of the outer court are described.

40:28-47—the inner court with its gates, cells, and slaughtering tables. Vs. 28-37 describes the gates of the inner court, while 38-47 set forth the cells and the arrangements for sacrificial worship by and in the inner court.

40:48-41:26—the temple-house, with the porch, side stories, and back-building. 40:48-49, the temple-porch. 41:1-4 indicates the inner space of the temple. 41:5-11, the wall and the side building. There were three stories with thirty rooms on each floor. 41:12-14, the separate place and the external dimensions of the temple. Vs. 15-26 are a summary of the measurement and description. All parts of the building had their measurement. The ornamentation of the inner walls of the sanctuary was significant. The altar in the holy place is



described. The character and decoration of the doors of the sanctuary are mentioned. The style of the porch and side buildings of the temple are described.

43:1-12—God's glory enters the temple. 1-3, the glory of the Lord appears. 4-5, the glory of God fills the temple. 6-12, the Lord commands Ezekiel to speak to Israel.

Summary: Two facts distinguish sharply between the new temple and the old —

(1) It is situated on a high mountain.

(2) Not only the temple or a part of it is holy but also the *whole* of its surroundings. This temple was one that *could not* be defiled by their sins of the past; therefore, we do not look for a *material* temple in this description, but for a *spiritual* temple. We must therefore look to the time of its erection at a later date than the restoration of Israel to the land. We must look to the first *Pentecost* following the resurrection of Christ. Beginning in chapter 40 we find a description of the spiritual temple of God, the church purchased with the blood of his son Jesus Christ, Acts 20:28. Ezekiel is therefore describing, not an old material temple in which fleshly Israel would enter, but a *spiritual temple*, the dwelling place of God's family *today* in the gospel age.

D. 43:13-46:24—the *new worship*. 43:13-27, a description and consecration of the altar of burnt-offering. Vs. 13-17 give a description of the altar. Vs. 18-27 deal with the consecration of the altar.

44:1-31—the position of the different classes of the people in relation to the new sanctuary. Vs. 1-3, the place of the prince. This prince was to be the *second David*, cf. 34:23-24; 37:24. He was to hold a sacrificial meal at the place of divine presence. It has already been observed that this second David is *Jesus Christ*. Therefore, we look to the fulfillment of this in the *gospel age*.

44:4-16—the position of foreigners, Levites and priests in relation to the temple and its service. Vs. 4-8, instructions concerning foreigners. The glory of God filled the house, and God reminded Ezekiel how Israel had defiled the temple by their abominations in allowing the *uncircumcised* in heart and spirit to partake of the sacrifices.

Vs. 9-16—worship in the new temple led by sons of Zadok. There were many of the Levites and priests who strayed

from God earlier but the sons of Zadok remained faithful. Therefore, God will honor their name by giving them an exalted responsibility. The other Levites would be allowed to perform menial tasks, and in this way would bear the shame of their sins of the past. Zadok was the son of Ahitub, of the line of Eleazar, 1 Chron. 5:34, 6:37-38. This faithful priest had remained loyal to David during Absalom's rebellion, 2 Sam. 15:24ff. Ahitub also anointed Solomon king in opposition to Adonijah, 1 Kings 1:32. Abiathar, of the line of Ithamar, took part with Adonijah, 1 Kings 1:7, 25, and was deposed by Solomon. Now the high-priesthood was in sole possession of Zadok and his descendants, 2 Kings 2:26-27; 35.

From this attitude of Zadok toward David, it may be assumed that his descendants not only did not stray, but actively *opposed* the prevalent sins of the people. Therefore, from v. 15, it is seen that lineal descent alone was not sufficient but that *loyalty to God* was the prime factor. This typifies the condition of the New Testament age. The gospel of Christ emphasizes that *fleshly descent* is not sufficient to make one a son of God but that the descent must be of *faith*. Paul expressed it like this in Rom. 9:6-8, "But it is not as though the word of God hath come from nought. For they are not all Israel, that are of Israel: neither, because they are Abraham's seed are they all children: but, in Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, It is not the children of the flesh, that are the children of God: but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed." Paul was emphasizing that it was not *fleshly* descent that caused one to be accepted as a child of God but it was upon the *individual's obedient faith* that brought him into a covenant relationship with God Almighty.

44:17-31—requisites, obligations, and privileges of the priestly office. Vs. 17-19, their clothing. Vs. 20-22 deal with their personal conduct. Vs. 23-24, the responsibility to teach and judge. Vs. 25-27, regulations concerning defilement from the dead. Vs. 28-31, recompense for the priests. Since this section is applicable to the gospel blessings of this dispensation, and the priesthood of the Old Testament was typical, the high priest of the Aaronic order typified *Jesus Christ* and the common priest typified the priesthood of *every* Christian today. The same terms are applied to Christians as were formerly applied to fleshly Israel. Peter said in 1 Pet. 2:5,

"Ye also as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." Christians today are *priests* unto God. Therefore, the things that were spoken regarding the Aaronic priests were *shadows* of that which was to come. Hence, it is to be observed that Christians today are to be *holy* as the priests of old were commanded to be holy.

45:1-17—the holy portion of the land and the heave offerings of the people. Vs. 1-8, the holy portion of the land. Upon their return to the land, the people of Israel must again receive their inheritance according to tribe and family. This could be done as their genealogies were furnished and they established their right to receive their inheritances. Without the genealogies as proof of their descent they could not receive an inheritance. Before their inheritance could be received, a portion must first be set aside to God. This is called an *oblation* or "heave-offering," a part of which was to be used for a sanctuary and a part for the priests and Levites. In addition to what the priests and Levites required, a parcel was to be used for a city, a part of which would be for the prince and a part for the people.

Vs. 9-12—a general exhortation to the princes to be just in their dealings. Oppression had been a way of life in the past with the nobility, but God exhorts them of the need to deal justly and righteously.

Vs. 13-17—the oblation of the people. The contribution of the people is fixed as well as that for the princes. These verses indicate a *perfected* state of service, equal among all. This is typical of the services in the church.

45:18-46:15—instructions concerning the festal and daily sacrifice. 45:18-20, the sin offering in the first month. This was different from the original, cf. Num. 28:15, 22:30, 29:5, 11, 16ff. 45:21-25, the sacrifices at the Passover and Feast of Tabernacles.

46:1-15—sacrifices for the sabbath and new moon. Freewill-offerings and daily sacrifices are described. In vs. 1-7, the sacrifices for the sabbath and new moon are to be compared with Num. 28:11-15. These are new sacrifices. In vs. 8-12, the opening of the temple for the people and for the voluntary offerings of the prince. Vs. 13-15, the daily sacrifice. This ends the new order of worship and indicates that a perpetual

sacrifice will be offered. In order to better understand this sacrifice, cf. Rom. 12:1-2.

Vs. 16-18—the right of the prince to dispose of his property. Any gift outside of the royal family was to be conditional and would revert back at the year of Jubilee. 19-24, sacrificial kitchens for the priests and for the people.

E. 47:1-48:47—distribution of blessings among Israel. 47:1-12, the river of the water of life. Vs. 1-2 indicate the *origin* and course of the river. Vs. 3-5 indicate the *increase* of water. V. 6 shows the growth of trees on the waters edge. Vs. 7-12 indicate the *destination* and *effects*. It is to be noted that the greater the distance from the beginning, the deeper the waters. It has a small beginning, but it flows outward and onward growing wider and deeper, showing the *drastic effects* which it has. The question is, is this *literal* or *figurative*? Is the water to be symbolical while the temple is literal? Naturally we would assume that if one is literal both must be, and if one is symbolical than the other also is. Compare the “fishings” of this passage with Isa. 11:6-9. Is Isaiah to be taken literally and Ezekiel figuratively in this passage? Is this a glorified land literally or is it a land pictured thusly to represent a *glorified kingdom*? Cf. Joel 3:18. *Zechariah* also uses a like figure in speaking of *Messianic* blessings, Zech. 14:8.

The life-giving waters flow over desolate and barren country to that which has been completely ruined by *sin* and where the waters do not go (in the marshes) no life is. Where the water is found is also to be found trees whose fruit not only furnishes *food* but also *medicine*, cf. Matt. 5:13-16; John 7:38-39.

47:13-48:35—boundaries and divisions of the holy land and description of the city of God. 47:13-23, the boundaries of the land. The main point to notice here is that the stranger was to be given his inheritance within the borders of whatever tribe he sojourned with. This strongly indicates that no difference was to be observed between the *Jew* and *Gentile*, cf. Gal. 3:27-29.

48:1-29—the division of Canaan among the tribes and the boundary of the “holy offering.” Vs. 1-7 indicate the location of seven tribes. Vs. 8-22, the “holy offering.” Vs. 8-10 is a measurement of the land offering, while 11-14 deal with regulations of the offering. 15-18 is the city possession and

19-20 deal with the service and dimensions of the city. Vs. 21-22 state the property of the prince. 23-29, the location of the other tribes.

Vs. 30-35—the size, gate, and name of the city. The new Jerusalem shall bear the name of Jehovah. The land has been inherited by those who “will dwell” there and the holy city has been named. Her *services* are perfected and her *populace* to be perpetuated. Ezekiel closes his prophecy with the *perfect note*, “the Lord is there.”

Chapters 40-48 must be understood as prophecies of the Messianic age. These blessings portrayed here in highly figurative language are to be understood as referring to those blessings which Paul refers to, 1 Cor. 2:7-10. These blessings represent the *glorious riches of the grace of God* given to *Christians* described in Eph. chapters 1-3. To try to force a literal interpretation upon these chapters as referring either to the restoration of Israel to their land following the Babylonian captivity, or to a future millennium, is to *misapply* and *misinterpret* these passages. Such cannot be done consistently, and if not consistently, not truthfully.

Keep in mind that these prophecies are primarily to encourage the people in captivity to *hope*. They can look forward in hope to the glorious and majestic scenes as described here, even though they themselves will never participate directly in these blessings. However, knowing that these blessings shall be bestowed by their God assures them that God must keep his word to *them* in order to fulfill these promises. Therefore, this highly figurative description of the temple and the services of it is merely a vision of the *church* of our Lord upon earth in this age. Chapters 40-48 represent a time when the true worship of the Lord will be upon this earth — an elaborate representation of this Messianic age in which the Lord dwells in the midst of his people.

## Chapter Nine

### HOSEA

#### Name

The name *Hosea* means "God is salvation," "help," "deliverance." *Hosea* is from the same root word as *Joshua* and the Greek form *Jesus*. The name is equivalent to *Hoshea*, the last king of Israel of the northern kingdom. However, the English Bible always spells the name of the minor prophet as *Hosea* without the second "h" in it, to distinguish between the prophet and the king. Hosea is the only writing prophet of the northern kingdom, which is usually called *Ephraim*.

#### The Times of the Prophet

The scope of the prophet's ministry is indicated in the superscription, "the word of the Lord that came unto Hosea, son of Beri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel," 1:1. These were dark times for Israel. During the days of Jeroboam the northern kingdom grew very prosperous and wicked. At the death of Jeroboam the national power became very weak, and Ephraim paid tribute to Assyria and Egypt, eventually losing its independence. Ephraim became prematurely old. The priests became bandits and rejoiced in the sins of the people. The princes and kings led the people in drunkenness and debauchery. Things went from bad to worse, 4:1-2.

The religious situation saw a turning further into idolatry and the darkness of error. The resulting conditions were the most revolting pollution, luxurious living, robbery, oppression, falsehood, adultery, murder; and accompanying these conditions was the most violent *intolerance* imaginable.

God levelled nine stinging accusations against his people in the controversy (trial) of God *vs.* Israel. They are:

- (1) There was no truth, mercy, or knowledge of God in the land, 4:1. V. 2 indicates the far-reaching consequences.
- (2) The priests fed on the sins of the people instead of teaching them truth, 4:4-11.

- (3) God's people sought their guidance from the world, 4:12-14.
- (4) The people were devoid of understanding the fundamental principles of right or wrong, 4:13-15.
- (5) The leaders of the people, both civil and religious, had led the way in sin, 5:1-2.
- (6) The spirit of harlotry prevailed in the land, 5:3-7.
- (7) Their goodness was mere hypocrisy, 6:4; 10:2.
- (8) Ephraim was unstable in her ways, 7:11.
- (9) Ephraim was very proud, 12:8.

Socially, religiously, morally, and politically, Israel was just about everything that God wanted her *not* to be. Small wonder, then, that *Hosea must emphasize sin and judgment.*

Israel's *black list of sin* could very well account for the successive steps in Israel's downfall. The sins described so vividly by the prophet are:

1. Lack of knowledge, Hos. 4:6, 11.
2. Pride, Hos. 5:5.
3. Hypocritical doublemindedness, Hos. 6:4, 10:2.
4. Worldliness, Hos. 7:8; 6:6; 7:3,4.
5. Moral and religious corruption, Hos. 9:9-10.
6. Intentional backsliding, Hos. 11:6-8.
7. Gross idolatry, Hos. 13:2.

The list of Israel's moral sins ranged from falsehood through licentiousness, murder, robbery, oppression, and about every ungodly thing they could think of to do. Because of her gross immorality and backslidden state, God applied several figures for the sins that Israel was guilty of. Among the many are:

1. An adulterous wife, 3:1.
2. A wine-inflamed drunkard, 4:11.
3. A backsliding heifer, 4:16.
4. Troops of robbers, 6:9.
5. Adulterers, 7:4.
6. Hot as an oven to do sin, 7:7.
7. A half-baked cake, 7:8.
8. Like a silly dove, 7:11.
9. Like a deceitful bow that could not shoot its arrow to the true mark, 7:16.
10. Swallowed up in sin, 8:8.
11. A vessel wherein there is no pleasure, 8:8.
12. A wild ass in the wilderness, 8:9.

Israel sowed the wind and she must reap the whirlwind - that is, she must pay for her iniquities, Gal. 6:7-8.

It was in these times that God called Hosea to the work of a prophet and *Hosea came upon the scene with a message of sin, judgment, and love.* Many have emphasized the love preached by Hosea to the point of ignoring the *sin and judgment* preachments. Hosea preached all three, showing that *sin*

was responsible for the coming *judgment* of God but that the *love* of God offered the people an opportunity to repent. Therefore, the message was one of *sin, judgment, and love*.

### Date and Duration of the Prophet

The contents of the book indicate that Hosea's ministry probably extended for a period of more than forty years. Keil (*Commentary on the Minor Prophets*, page 15) suggests that the ministry of Hosea extended from sixty to sixty-five years. G. Campbell Morgan suggested that Hosea's ministry extended for more than seventy years. Others have suggested that Hosea's active ministry lasted only about ten years. However, the *content* of the book itself would indicate that Hosea had a very *long ministry*. The condition of the people of Israel and the nature of the *prophetic types* which were called forth by God through Hosea would indicate that a *long period* of time was necessary in order to accomplish the work which Hosea accomplished. Hosea began prophesying during the days of Jeroboam, the king of Ephraim, and Uzziah the king of Judah. It is declared that his ministry extended into the reign of Hezekiah, at least 715 B.C. This would place his ministry beyond the fall of the northern kingdom. Negative critics do not accept that late a date for the closing of his ministry because he makes no mention of the fall of Ephraim. However, his silence regarding the matter does not at all indicate that his active ministry did not extend beyond that date. His message was not merely for the *purpose* of recording history but to *turn the people of God back to God*.

### Purpose

The work of Hosea was among the *ten apostate northern tribes*, to turn them back to God from whom they had departed. Their desertion was an *inward* corruption and apostasy which manifested itself later by the outward acts of *idolatry* and *immorality*. Hosea came to these northern tribes trying to get them to repent. In describing the condition of the people, Hosea used the word "whoredom" 16 times. He was trying to burn upon the minds of the people their need for repentance. The nation had rejected God and placed their



trust in foreign alliances. The people confused and mixed the worship of God with Baal, and calf worship was prevalent everywhere. *Moral and spiritual* decline, political chaos, idolatrous worship, and apostasy from God characterized the nation. Hosea was moved by the spirit of God to utter warnings and rebukes to Israel.

Two ideas predominate the message of Hosea: (1) Jehovah's loving faithfulness to Israel; (2) Israel's thankless ingratitude toward Jehovah.

### Authorship

The entire book is the handiwork of the prophet Hosea who is directed by the Holy Spirit. The activity of Hosea is partly contemporary with that of Isaiah.

Some have denied to Hosea different parts of the book. Those parts especially which have mention of the *future blessings* of Judah are denied by the radical critics who cannot accept the supernatural.

There is no *valid* reason for denying the authorship of any of the prophecies of Hosea. He must necessarily mention Judah because the destinies of the northern and southern kingdoms are intertwined. Furthermore, the whole monarchy is viewed by God as an *apostasy* from his will, and Hosea is directed by God to bring this to light. From this viewpoint he would necessarily involve the southern kingdom.

One of the problems raised regarding the text is that of *Gomer*, the wife of Hosea. The question often raised is, is this to be viewed literally or as an allegory? There are *three views* commonly found regarding the wife of Hosea. These views are: (1) the record is only an allegory; (2) that it was a literal fact which occurred but that Gomer was faithful when she married the prophet; and (3) she was a prostitute sent by God to show the true situation of the land.

Many have held the allegorical viewpoint, i.e., that this was not an actual happening but that it was only an *allegory* spoken to show Israel her true status. However, this view does not fit the context very well since there is nothing in the context to indicate that it is not a literal event. Neither is there anything in all the Bible to indicate that it is not an actual happening. The *language is literal* and the nature of

the *historical surroundings is literal*; therefore, it would seem that it was an *actual event* which transpired. The main question is whether or not Gomer was a harlot when she married or whether she merely possessed the tendencies which led her into harlotry after she married Hosea.

This present author tends to view Gomer as a *chaste* woman when she married Hosea but possessing the tendencies which would produce harlotry in her life. As one considers the background of the conditions in the country at that time, remembering the false worship that existed and the different rituals and customs connected with that false worship, it is easy to see how Gomer, raised in this environment from her youth up, would naturally fall prey to some of those principles involved in that erroneous religion of her day. These conditions would produce *lax principles* in her life which would account for her *actually* going into harlotry after she had married Hosea and had borne him three children.

The word *harlotries* is in the *plural* which would indicate that it was the *nature* or *disposition* of Gomer that was involved. If this is an actual event in the life of Hosea it would fully conform to the antitype of Israel. All of the time necessary for the children to be born and reared would provide a perfect analogy for Israel to view herself by. This would involve a lengthy time during which Gomer would *slowly* apostatize from her loving husband and eventually leave him altogether. This is what was involved in Israel's departure from God, not one sudden step which took her completely away from God. Israel apostatized in degrees until finally her apostasy was complete and she forsook her loving husband — God. This seems to be the way it was with Gomer. She was not a harlot when she married Hosea but rather possessed those *tendencies* that drew her into harlotry *after* she had been married to Hosea for several years. This view conforms to every principle taught in the book of Hosea as well as in the whole Bible. It in no way reflects upon Hosea or the message that he proclaimed. Rather it emphasizes the great love that Hosea had which *typified* the love that God had for Israel. It emphasizes, in every detail that needs to be emphasized, the condition that Israel was in. Therefore, *sin*, *judgment*, and *love* were all preached to the people of Israel — both by *words* and *prophetic types*.

## Outline of Hosea

## I. THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF ISRAEL REFLECTED BY HOSEA'S MARITAL EXPERIENCE—1:1-3:5.

## A. Hosea's first marriage to Gomer—1:1-2:23.

1. Hosea's children symbolized Israel's rejection—1:1-9.
2. Salvation to the Gentiles prophesied—1:10.
3. Unity of Israel and Judah prophesied—1:11.
4. Israel must be chastized—2:1-7.
5. God would take away the blessings which Israel had lavished upon Baal—2:8-13.
6. God would "remarry" Israel—2:14-20.
7. God would restore his blessings upon Israel—2:21-23.

## B. Hosea's remarriage to Gomer was to typify God's remarriage to Israel—3:1-5.

1. Gomer's redemption—1-2.
2. Gomer was taken back upon conditions—3.
3. Israel would also be taken back conditionally—4.
4. The second David to be king—5.

## II. THE APPLICATION OF GOD'S WORD TO ISRAEL—4:1-14:9.

## A. Israel's indictment of sin—4:1-7:16.

1. God's controversy with his people—4:1-5:7.
  - a. The moral conditions in Israel—4:1-5.
  - b. The basic contributing cause—4:6-10.
  - c. The religious conditions in Israel—4:11-14.
  - d. The stubborn disposition of Israel—4:15-19.
  - e. The inevitable end of God's people—5:1-7.
2. Israel's repentance in exile—5:8-14.
  - a. Israel to be severely afflicted—8-13.
  - b. In deep affliction, they will seek God—13.
3. Israel's repentance described—6:1-11.
  - a. The people sought God for his blessings—1-3.
  - b. The goodness of the people was shallow—4.
  - c. The purpose of sending prophets—5-6.
  - d. The corruption of the people in spite of the prophets—7-11.
4. Ephraim's corruption and rebellious conditions—7:1-16.
  - a. The extreme desire to sin—1-7.
  - b. Pride had deceived Israel—8-16.

## B. Israel's unfaithfulness was to be punished—8:1-10:15.

1. Israel's apostasy must soon reap its reward—8:1-14.
  - a. Israel's apostasy in government and religion—1-7.
  - b. Israel diminished by the nations—8-10.
  - c. Israel had put God out of her memory—11-14.
2. Israel's idolatrous corruption must reap the wages of exile—9:1-9.
3. Israel's idolatry had made her worthless to God—9:10-17.
4. Ephraim wasted his goods on self—10:1-3.
5. God would destroy the places of idolatry for which Israel had squandered her wealth—10:4-8.
6. Ephraim's sin earned retribution—9-15.

## C. God's love for Israel—11:1-14:9.

1. God's fatherly compassion—11:1-11.
  - a. God's tender training for Israel—1-4.
  - b. Israel's reprobate rebellion—5-7.
  - c. God's love prevented Israel's total destruction—8-11.
2. Israel's rank apostasy must be punished—11:12-13:16.
  - a. A contrast between the two kingdoms—11:12.
  - b. The vanity of Ephraim—12:1.
  - c. Israel must live like Jacob to be blessed like Jacob—12:2-6.
  - d. The gross idolatry of Israel condemned—12:7-14.
  - e. The sin of Ephraim would make Ephraim's existence short—13:1-3.
  - f. God's wrath would certainly fall upon Israel—13:4-8.
  - g. Israel's folly was great but she would have the opportunity to accept redemption—13:9-14.
  - h. Israel must suffer cruelty at the hands of her enemies—13:15-16.
3. Israel was promised a restoration—14:1-9.
  - a. Israel exhorted to repent—1-3.
  - b. Israel fully repenting, was promised a return to the land—4-8.
  - c. Wisdom would be reflected by obedience to God—9.

### Analysis

#### I. 1:1-3:5—THE SPIRITUAL CONDITION OF ISRAEL WAS REFLECTED BY HOSEA'S MARRIAGE AND FAMILY EXPERIENCE.

A. 1:1-2:23—Hosea's *first marriage to Gomer*. Hosea has been called the prophet of Love. Hosea's message was one of sadness. His message was *sin, judgment, and love*. To help prepare him as well as to provide a perfect *type* of his people and their sins, God commanded Hosea to take him a wife of harlotry. In the words in the book that bears his name, one can almost see his tears and hear the heart rending as Hosea wrote and, as one views Hosea's marital experience, it is easy to understand why.

1:1-9—Hosea's children were symbolical of Israel's redemption. The names of the children were symbolic of that which would happen to Israel. (1) *Jezreel* meant a *scattering* or *sowing*. Here the emphasis is upon the fact that God would *scatter* Israel among the nations. (2) *Loruhamah* means *not-pitied*. God would not have mercy upon Israel. He will destroy them as a nation and not bring them out as a kingdom anymore. (3) *Loammi* means *not my people*. No longer would Israel be God's people. These three children were prophetic

types against Israel.

1:10—salvation to the Gentiles is promised here. This is an echo of the promise God made to Abraham, Gen. 12:1-3. Paul quotes this in Rom. 9:25-26 and applies it to the Gentiles.

1:11—the unity of Israel and Judah prophesied. After their return from Babylon, the distinction between Israel and Judah was entirely destroyed. This, of course, indicates the total fulfillment in Christ, Eph. 2:14-16; Gal. 3:28-29.

2:1-7—Israel must be chastised. God now makes a play on the names of the children of Hosea. *Ammi* means "shall be my people." *Ruhamah* means "having obtained mercy." The children are exhorted to plead with their mother that she would put away her whoredoms out of her sight. This is simply a plea for the nation of Israel to repent of her idolatry. The attitude of *Gomer* is the attitude of *Israel* in seeking after her lovers - strange nations and strange gods.

2:8-13—God would take away the blessings which she had lavished upon Baal. Israel had never stopped to consider that all the wealth she had squandered on idols had been given to her by God. Because she failed to understand these things, it would turn to her own destruction. V. 13 is a vivid picture of a deprived husband.

2:14-20—God would "remarry" Israel. A lovely picture is drawn by Hosea of the love of God seeking his willful bride. The happy days of the *first betrothal* were to be renewed. The promise is that the ugly part will all be forgotten. This is the picture of *speaking to the heart*, one of the tenderest figures in all literature.

The valley of *Achor*, v. 15, which means "trouble," would be turned into a *door of hope* because here the troubler would be destroyed. A door of *salvation* would open to the people of God. There will be a remarriage - a renewal of the loving-kindness and mercy shown by God to Israel.

2:21-23—God would restore his blessings upon Israel. The word *Jezreel* now takes upon it the condition of blessings. As Israel had been sown among the nations now she would be sown back into the land and God would give her the increase. His blessings would be upon them but the blessings would be conditional, i.e., based upon Israel's obedience. The new betrothal of Israel to God would be in *righteousness, judgment, loving-kindness*, and in *faithfulness*. V. 23 is an application of

the names of the children of Gomer and Hosea, indicating that Israel would find blessedness in the land. However, the primary application is in the New Testament. Paul, in Rom. 9:25-26, and Peter, in 1 Pet. 2:10, applies it to the fact that those who had not been the people of God and who had not been pitied by God would now be the people of God and would be pitied. This could have reference in the New Testament context only to the *Gentiles'* receiving salvation.

B. 3:1-5—*Hosea's remarriage to Gomer was to typify God's remarriage to Israel.* 1-2, Gomer's redemption. God was able to love Israel in spite of what Israel had done. This chapter is indicative of the rich provisions of God's forgiving mercy. The very thing that Israel had lost, God would restore. The command is to Hosea to go and love a woman, even an adulteress, as God has loved the children of Israel. The redemption is indicated in v. 2. Gomer had sold herself and now must be redeemed. This is a perfect type of the way that Israel had sold herself and was beyond her ability to redeem herself. Her redemption must come from her Lord.

V. 3—Gomer was received back by Hosea but only conditionally. The condition of her being kept by Hosea was faithfulness.

V. 4—Israel also would be taken back but only upon *conditions*. She must abide without a king and prince for many days. If she remained faithful during this period the implication was that she would be kept by God. However, one needs only to see this prophetic type as the New Testament reveals the application to understand that Israel was not faithful during this period and, therefore, had to be rejected on the basis of her unfaithfulness, cf. Rom. 11:7-27.

V. 5—The *second* David to be king. The second David here can only refer to *Jesus Christ*. The second David is spoken of here as well as in Isaiah and refers to the *king* of the promised kingdom to come. He is called David because in the flesh he is the seed of David but also because David epitomized the perfect monarch in serving God. The second David would be the obedient son of God.

## II. 4:1-14:9—THE APPLICATION OF GOD'S WORD TO ISRAEL.

A. 4:1-7:16—*Israel's indictment of sin.* Observable in this

section is the fact that inward corruption is far more dangerous to the existence of the nation or the church than the external enemies that are present. The whole land of Israel had been corrupted by sin, and God brings a stinging indictment of that fact against Israel.

4:1-5:7—God has a controversy with his people Israel. He brings a lawsuit against Israel based on:

- (1) no truth,
- (2) no mercy,

(3) no knowledge of God in the land. One of the fundamental problems among Israel was that there was no knowledge of God among them. They no longer cared about God and spiritual values. They were interested in wealth and luxury. In the picture of this lawsuit against Israel, God is the plaintiff and Israel is the defendant. Therefore, it might be entitled *God vs. Israel*. The principals involved are God and Israel, and the controversy was raised by God because there was no *truth*, *mercy*, and *knowledge* in the land. V. 2 indicates the extreme corruption that existed and because of this (v. 3) the whole land would be punished. Vs. 4-5 indicate that prophets and priests alike were in the *same category* as the corrupt people. These verses emphasize the moral conditions in Israel.

4:6-10—The basic cause of the moral conditions in Israel. V. 6 is one of the key verses in the book. A lack of the knowledge of God will destroy any people. God's people cannot exist - they never have existed and never will be able to exist - as a people of God without the knowledge of God. To fail to know God by knowing his laws and understanding his will is to commit spiritual suicide. This lack of knowledge, which was a willful matter, had led to moral corruption and *anarchy* in the land. This is a stinging indictment against the priests of God because they were responsible for teaching the knowledge of God to the people. However as the priests multiplied, their sins multiplied. Rather than standing firm against sin, v. 8 indicates that they fed on the sins of the people and enjoyed walking after their iniquity. Therefore, it was "like people - like priests." God would necessarily have to punish them both.

4:11-14—the religious conditions in Israel. Whoredom and wine had taken away the understanding of the people. Such

moral conditions - as described in the first five verses - would cause the spirituality of the people to be destroyed. They prostituted themselves by serving idols in every place and causing their daughters and wives to play to harlots. Their understanding and perception of spiritual values had become so *dull* that they had lost all sense of moral value. It was with Israel as it was lightly said about a certain man known for his sinfulness. "He only has one moral defect - he can't tell right from wrong."

4:15-19—the stubborn disposition of Israel. Although Israel was dulled spiritually, there was no excuse for her not to do the will of God. She was likened to a stubborn heifer in that she had refused *every overture* God had made through the teachings of the prophets. She would have only herself to blame for her eventual destruction.

5:1-7—the inevitable end of God's rebellious people. God directs the attention of the people to the fact that their sins were not hidden from his eyes but that he knew everything they had been doing. Israel's pride, v. 5, was one of the causes of Israel's downfall.

5:8-14—Israel's repentance and exile. The punishment of God is promised to be upon them, poured out like water. Ephraim would be crushed in judgment because she had chosen to follow man rather than God. Severe affliction would be dealt to Israel because they had not sought God but *after* they were afflicted, in their affliction they would seek God diligently.

6:1-11—Israel's repentance described. Vs. 1-3, the people sought God for his blessings. In v. 4 the goodness of the people is seen to be very shallow. Vs. 5-6 indicate the purpose of God sending his prophets to his people. He had sent the prophets with strong and cutting words to indicate the judgments of God that would soon be upon the people. This was done, not merely to terrorize the people, but to produce repentance and goodness in their lives. The prophets' messages were designed to produce righteousness rather than formalistic sacrifices, and that their lives might be filled with the knowledge of God. The burnt offerings, separated from faith in God, had come to have no real meaning to them whatsoever. In vs. 7-11 the corruption of the people continued in spite of the prophet's preaching. They transgressed like Adam



- willfully, 1 Tim. 2:14. The people of Israel went about working sin in a willful manner, v. 8. Even the priests seemingly banded together in company to murder and commit lewdness. The sins that God had viewed among his people were indeed horrible, 10-11.

7:1-16—Ephraim's corrupt and rebellious condition. Vs. 1-7 indicate the extreme desire of Israel to sin. Every time that God would heal Israel a new iniquity was uncovered and a new wickedness was brought to light. The reason for this was that they were not considering in their heart that God knew all of their works. V. 4 describes them as an oven in waiting, heated by the baker after he had ceased from the kneading of the dough until it would be leavened. This indicated that the Israelites were constantly waiting for the opportunity to sin just as the oven was waiting for the baker's bread. The people had made their hearts ready for sin like the oven was ready for bread and were ready to devour every opportunity.

Vs. 8-16—Pride had deceived Israel. Ephraim thought himself to be great but v. 9 tells us that his strength was about gone and his age had just about reached the limit. Because of his pride, v. 10, Ephraim was without understanding, vs. 11-12. Because they had wandered from God, v. 13; and cried, but not with their heart, v. 14; devised mischief against God, v. 15; and were like a deceitful bow, the wrath of God must be upon them and they would be had in derision in the land of Egypt.

B. 8:1-10:15—*Israel's unfaithfulness to be punished.* 8: 1-4, Israel's apostasy must soon reap its reward. Vs. 1-7 indicate the apostasy of Israel in both government and religion. Israel would cry unto God but because Israel had cast God off, God would turn Israel over to her enemies. V. 8 indicates that Israel's period of monarchy - the setting up of kings - was a time of apostasy. This verse indicates that God had not *approved* of the kings although he *allowed* Israel to have kings. For further study, one might refer to the material in this chapter dealing with Hos. 13:11. Israel had sown her actions in idolatry. This action is called "sowing the wind" for which they must reap the whirlwind.

8:10—Israel to be diminished by the nations. Israel must be swallowed up, i.e., taken captive. She would be as a vessel

wherein none delighted. She would be like an old wine vessel, a rotten skin-bottle, into which none would dare pour any new wine or grape juice because the skin would burst. Israel was a worthless people. When taken into captivity, none would delight in them. Although Israel tried to hire a nation for protection, that nation would offer no protection against the wrath of God.

11-14—Israel had put God out of her memory; therefore, Israel must pay the consequences. Ephraim had multiplied altars to sin and Ephraim must pay the price. God had given Israel a law, v. 12, but the sacrifices that they offered were not according to that law by faith and, therefore, were rejected by God. The great sin of Israel was forgetting its Maker. Like the hog that grazes on the acorns under the oak tree and never lifts up its eyes to see the source of blessing, so Israel had been content to consume the many material blessings which God had given but never once had acknowledged God as the giver of them. Having forgotten her Maker, her Maker would now forget her in her captivity.

9:1-9—Israel's idolatrous corruption must reap the wages of exile. Israel had prostituted herself in idolatry by offering sinful sacrifices to idols at every threshingfloor. The time would come when the people would not be allowed to dwell in Jehovah's good land but would have to eat unclean food in Assyria while paying for their sins in captivity. Because of the deep corruption of their morals, Israel must be consumed in the land where they would go.

9:1-17—Israel's idolatry had made her worthless to God. Israel had a great potential when God took her but she had failed to measure up to that potential. She had become barren because of her consecration to Baal instead of God. God had looked upon them with mercy and favor, but they had turned aside in favor of an idol. Vs. 11-15 give a progressive description of the punishment that God would bring upon Ephraim because of their sins. Vs. 16-17 indicate the extreme barrenness and unproductivity of the people when God would take them away from the land and make them wanderers among the nations because of their sin.

10:1-3—Ephraim wasted its goods on self. Israel is described as a luxuriant vine that used all of its fruits to satisfy its own desires rather than producing fruit for the glory of

God. Their heart was divided and they attempted to serve both God and Baal. However, they failed even as all men today must fail in like efforts, cf. Matt. 6:24. V. 3 indicates that they had rejected Jehovah from being their king and, therefore, would have no king.

10:4-8—God would destroy the places of idolatry for which Israel had squandered her wealth. Because of their false swearing and making of deceitful covenants, judgment against Israel would spring up against Israel as the hemlock in the furrows of the fields. The inhabitants of Samaria would be brought to terror and the people would mourn over the calves of Beth-aven because they would see the calves being destroyed by their enemies. The calves would be carried away into Assyria, v. 6, and Israel would be shamed. The king of Samaria would be cut off and the high places destroyed, vs. 7-8.

10:9-15—Ephraim's sin earned retribution. The sins of Israel stemmed all the way back to the days of Gibeah, v. 9. The people are said, in v. 16, to be bound to their two transgressions, i.e., their golden calf worship - one at Dan and one at Bethel. In v. 11 it is pointed out that Ephraim was taught to tread out the grain and had become proficient in the work but had turned aside from that which she was expert in and would, therefore, be brought under a hardship. Judah would also have to share in the hard labor with Israel.

Vs. 12-15 is an exhortation to repent and seek God that he might rain righteousness upon them. Israel had ploughed wickedness and reaped iniquity. Because of her sinfulness, a tumult would rise among the people as the land was overrun. The extreme cruelty of the Assyrians against Israel is noted in vs. 14-15.

C. 11:1-14:9—*God's love for Israel.* In 11:1-11, God's fatherly compassion for Israel is set forth. The whole chapter emphasizes how much God loved Israel. This book sets forth two relationships which Israel sustained to God; that of a wife to a husband and that of a son to a father. Hosea can understand these relationships and speak very tenderly concerning them because he was both a husband and a father. Vs. 1-4 indicate God's tender training for Israel. God had taught Ephraim as a son, taking him gently by the arms and teaching him to walk, but Ephraim had turned away from God. Vs. 5-7 show Israel's reprobate rebellion toward God. Ephraim had

followed his own way according to v. 6. Vs. 6-7 set forth the backsliding disposition which Israel possessed. Ephraim was determined to do his "own thing." Despite the goodness of God, Ephraim would follow his own desire. Vs. 8-11 show how God's love prevented Israel's total destruction. V. 8 is a key verse in the chapter. God asks the question, "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim?" Israel was the son of God and greatly loved by God. God had taken him as an infant and taught him to walk and he could not think of casting him off altogether. V. 9 indicates that Israel deserved complete extinction but God would not destroy them all because he was God and not man, i.e., he will not give them what they deserved as a man would give them, but would allow his compassion to be kindled and spare them from total destruction.

11:12-13:16 teaches that Israel's rank apostasy must be punished. 11:12 is a contrast between the northern and southern kingdom. 12:1 sets forth the vanity of Ephraim in the figure of Ephraim feeding on the wind and following the east wind. This was due to the fact that he continually multiplied his lies and made covenants with Assyria and Egypt. There was no more nourishment and sustenance in that than there was in the wind because he was trusting in the flesh and not in God. 12:2-6, Israel must live like Jacob to be blessed like Jacob. V. 2 sets forth the fact that Israel must be punished according to his doings. Vs. 3-5 teach the power that Jacob possessed with God because of his faith and life. V. 6 indicates that Ephraim must turn in repentance and live like Jacob if they would be blessed by God as God had blessed Jacob. 12:7-14, the gross idolatry of Israel is condemned by God. Ephraim dealt with balances of deceit indicating the extreme dishonesty that the people of the land were guilty of. Ephraim must be punished with desolation, v. 9. V. 10 indicates that God had used every means to try to teach them, but they had refused all. V. 11 is a rhetorical question which has a self-evident answer. Vs. 12-13 indicate the care and protection that God had provided for Jacob throughout his wanderings. V. 14 indicates that Israel had provoked God to the point that Ephraim's blood would be upon his own head.

13:1-3—the sin of Ephraim would make Ephraim's existence short. When Ephraim exalted himself through pride he sinned

against God, v. 1, and their sins multiplied in direct ratio with their prosperity, v. 2. V. 3 indicates the brevity of their remaining existence. 13:4-8, God's wrath would come upon Ephraim with certainty. God must punish them in order to make them know that he alone was God. 13:9-14, Israel's folly was great but she would have the opportunity to accept her redemption. Vs. 9-11 indicate that *the period of the monarchy was a period of apostasy from God*. The people had demanded a king. In his anger God had given them a king but in his wrath had taken the king away. This, taken with the account of the giving of the king in the book of Samuel, indicates that it was not in the will of God for Israel to have a king, but because of the hardness of their hearts he allowed it. In v. 14 we have a prophecy of the resurrection, cf. 1 Cor. 15:55. 13:15-16, Israel must suffer cruelty at the hands of her enemies.

14:1-9—Israel was promised a restoration. This is another call to repentance in which there is an appeal to forsake idols and return to the Lord. The Lord promises *forgiveness, healing and blessings*. Hosea is shown to be the prophet of God's love.

Vs. 1-3—Israel is exhorted to repent. V. 1 is a plea by God for Israel to return and v. 2 constitutes what Israel must say:

1. They must confess their guilt.
2. Israel must affirm her repentance.
3. Israel must express praise with her lips.

Israel must deny that there is any God save Jehovah, and this must be done with clarity and sincerity.

Vs. 4-8—Israel, fully repenting, was promised a return to the land. "I will heal their backsliding," God said, because he loved them freely. All of the promises that he indicates would be theirs were based upon the condition of their true *repentance* and continued *obedience* when he brought them back into the land. V. 9 shows that *genuine wisdom* is reflected by obedience to God.

## Chapter Ten

### JOEL

#### Name

The name *Joel* means "Jehovah is God," or "whose God is Jehovah." Joel is distinguished from any other Joel in the Old Testament by the phrase, "son of Pethuel." Joel's name is indicative of the contents of the book itself.

#### The Times of the Prophet

The book is undated in the superscription; therefore, many scholars have felt free to suggest whatever date suited their fancy. The book has been dated from early pre-exilic times by some students to the late post-exilic date of 350 B.C. mentioned by Pfeiffer. Naturally, critical scholars favor the post-exilic date. Many others, such as Keil, (page 169, volume 1) placed the times of the prophecy of Joel before Amos, 837 to 803 B.C. Sente suggests the date of about 830 B.C., which is perhaps close enough. A very early date would fit the context just as well as a very late date. Therefore, there is no difficulty in accepting the early date. Perhaps the most conclusive evidence in favor of the very early date is the mention of the enemies of the people of God. First, there is no mention of the Assyrians, Chaldeans or even the Persians. Judah's foes are the Phoenicians, the Philistines, the Egyptians and the Edomites. This points to a very early period. The failure of Joel to mention the northern kingdom, the rule of any king of Judah or even the idolatrous high places is no argument in favor of a late date. The argument from silence relative to such things is indeed a weak argument if an argument at all. The Greeks are, in the early period of history, a distant people. Every internal evidence fits best into a context of early pre-exilic time.

#### Purpose

The chief purpose of the book seems to be to call God's

people to repentance and to show the great judgment coming upon the nations who oppress the people of God. Joel has been called the prophet of Pentecost because of the application of the prophecy of Joel 2 by the apostle Peter in Acts 2.

### Authorship

The authorship of the entire book is by "Joel the son of Pethuel," 1:1. The authorship was denied as early as 1872, and that pattern has been followed generally by radical critics who deny the unity of the book. Their views, however, have not met with general acceptance, the uniform plan and style of the book sufficiently refuting the radical critics.

### The Message of Joel

The judgment of the nations and the ultimate glory of the cause of God is emphasized by Joel. The "day of Jehovah" is a day when all the enemies of God will know that the events are from God. Joel's message was manifestly of the same nature as his name, i.e., "Jehovah is God." Joel's message to the people concerned the *authority and overcoming government* of God.

He declared the absolute supremacy of God. The prophecy of Joel points out the fact that the divine purposes of God will ultimately be realized through God's government. *God is on the throne, in the book of Joel.*

Throughout the book the manifestation of God's power, government, and grace is clearly seen. Joel is the prophet who prophesied of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to mark the beginning of the gospel age. Joel emphasizes, perhaps above other lessons, that the present is not the day of God's judgment - it is rather the day of God's grace. Great judgment is reserved for a future time beyond this present life. The message of Joel is that the day of the Lord must come when every wrong shall be righted and every injustice shall be recompensed.

### Problems of Interpretation

There are two problems to be recognized in the interpretation of Joel:



1. The interpretation of the locust plague and the subsequent famine.

2. The interpretation of Joel 2:28-32.

Are the plague and famine literal? Are there two locust plagues mentioned in the book? If there are two, is the first literal and the second figurative or vice versa? Are we to accept the plague and famine as allegorical? This writer sees no difficulty in the view that there is only one locust plague mentioned. Chapter one tells of the devastation, and the second chapter describes with figurative language the presence of the locusts. It would seem that there is but one locust plague and that it is used to call the people to repentance. As such, it may well serve to foreshadow the great Babylonian plague that was yet to come and take the people captive. As such it would seem more apocalyptic than prophetic. This apocalyptic language would use some details to impress a lesson rather than to reveal specific incidents in every instance. If the language is apocalyptic it would seem to impress the need for repentance at this early date or else suffer the terrible fate implied by the language of chapter two. It would imply that the sins of Israel had already carried her far toward the goal of destruction.

The second problem involved in interpreting the text properly is the fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32. The millennial view is, that at best, that part of Joel which was fulfilled on the Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ was but typical fulfillment. The typical fulfillment view states that the final fulfillment will be realized only in the millennium. Other millennial views hold that no part of the prophecy has ever been fulfilled and will not be until Christ comes again. There are others who hold to a continuous view that says the fulfillment began on Pentecost but requires all of the gospel age to be completely fulfilled and must culminate with the coming of Christ.

The *correct* view of the fulfillment appears to be that it found its fulfillment beginning at Pentecost, culminating not later than the destruction of Jerusalem itself in A.D. 70. Some millennialists object to this view by pointing out that Peter did not use the exact words that "this is in fulfillment of prophecy" but rather that "this is that." Some Millennialists insist that this means that Peter *thought* that this only



represented the beginning of the fulfillment. It is asserted that he said in Acts 2:39 that it was for all that the Lord would ever call to enjoy the same thing that the apostles were enjoying. Naturally this view entails the direct, supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit and demands that all Christians enjoy what the apostles experienced on Pentecost - the baptism of the Holy Spirit. That is a complete misapprehension of Peter's statement. In the second place, what more did Peter need to say than "this is that" to indicate a fulfillment? Was it necessary to point out that what was happening at that time was not only what Joel said was going to happen but it was also in fulfillment of what Joel said would come? The Holy Spirit never wastes words like that. Peter said enough to point out that what was happening was in fulfillment of Joel 2:28-32 and that the completion of that prophecy was not far off.

Peter said, "This is that. . . ." and he then enumerated different events mentioned by Joel. It seems safe to assume that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was directly connected with the fulfillment of all, but it is dangerous to assert that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit must last through the gospel age in order for the fulfillment to take place. That would necessitate all Christians receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Such is simply not the case. If Holy Spirit baptism existed today, every miracle performed in the first century could be duplicated with exactness in the same public manner now as then.

The figures of speech in Joel 2:28-32 find apt expression in the destruction of Jerusalem and the abolition of the system of Judaism from the face of the earth forever. The millennial view weakens itself in that it expects a literal fulfillment of all that is involved in figures of speech. This is a common weakness of that mode of interpreting the Bible. The Bible abounds in figures of speech which one must recognize in the interpretation of any section of it. Joel is no exception. When Peter said, "This is that. . . ." the matter was settled by inspiration. If we cannot understand all of the figures of speech, the least we can do is refrain from forcing a meaning into them which contradicts *plain passages* of scripture.

### Outline of Joel

- I. THE JUDGMENT OF GOD AND THE CALL TO REPENTANCE—1:1-2:17.
  - A. The judgment of God—1:1-20.
    1. Devastation by locusts—1-4.
    2. Every segment of Jewish society affected—5-12.
      - a. Wine-bibbers called to soberness—5-7.
      - b. Priests are distressed—8-10.
      - c. Husbandmen and vinedressers afflicted—11-12.
    3. Priests urged to call solemn assembly—13-14.
    4. The Day of Jehovah very near—15.
    5. Crops and animals alike suffer—16-18.
    6. The prophet's prayer for help—19-20.
  - B. Summons to assemble in penitent prayer to avert judgment—2:1-17.
    1. Day of Jehovah is upon the people—1.
    2. The day of Jehovah is terrible—2-3.
    3. A description of the locust army of God—4-6.
    4. The irresistible advance of the locusts—7-9.
    5. The horrors of the plague—1-11.
    6. The offer of mercy—12-14.
    7. Admonition to assemble for prayer—15-17.
- II. GOD'S PROMISE TO SAVE AND BLESS—2:18-3:21.
  - A. The locusts destroyed and blessings renewed—2:18-27.
    1. Locust plagues to be averted—18-20.
    2. The earthly and spiritual blessings renewed—21-27.
  - B. The promise to pour out the Spirit upon all flesh—2:28-32.
    1. The abundance of distribution—28-29.
    2. Signs indicating judgment—30-31.
    3. The promise of salvation—32.
  - C. God's judgment between the nations and his glorification of Zion—3:1-21.
    1. Nations to be judged because of their treatment of God's people—1-8.
    2. The call to judgment—9-13.
    3. God is the refuge for his people—14-17.
    4. Abundance of spiritual blessings promised—14-21.

### Analysis

Apparently wave after wave of locusts had swept through the land of Israel as a judgment of God upon a sinful people. The scene of devastation was enough to make one's blood run cold. The first chapter introduces the consequences of the locust plague. Chapter two turns one to a description of the plague as it hit the land.

- I. 1:1-2:7—THE JUDGMENT OF GOD AND THE CALL FOR ISRAEL TO REPENT.
  - A. 1:1-20—*The judgment of God.* Verse 1 identifies the

prophet and states that the word of the Lord came unto him; therefore, all that follows in this book has come from God. Vs. 2-4 is an appeal to take the catastrophe to heart and never forget it. Vs. 5-7 is a summons for the drunkards to lament over their calamity. Vs. 8-12 is a call for the priests to appoint a time of service that the people might show their repentance. Vs. 11-12 indicate that those whose livelihood depended upon the soil were affected. All classes had therefore been affected by the locust plague. God is no respecter of persons.

13-18—the priests are urged to call a solemn assembly and thus appeal to the people to come in repentance. The day of Jehovah was to be recognized as being very near to them, v. 15. 16-18 indicate that the crops and animals were alike suffering hardships because of the sins of the people. 19-20, the prophet, in view of this, petitioned God for deliverance.

B. 2:1-17—*Summons to assemble in penitent prayer to seek God's mercy in ending the locust plague.* V. 1, the day of the Lord is mentioned again. This phrase is found many times in the Old Testament, generally referring to a day of punishment but not necessarily always. However in every case the phrase indicates a day when the events which transpired were attributed to Jehovah. Vs. 2-3, the day of the Lord is a terrible day, having reference to the locust plague, the likeness of which had never before been seen in Israel. Vs. 4-6, a vivid description of the locusts which God brought upon Israel. It is a time of universal mourning when the locusts were crawling over every object. Vs. 7-9, a description of the irresistible advance of the locusts. There is no human way to stop them and the people must watch helplessly as they destroy everything before them. Vs. 10-11, the horrors of the plague set forth in vivid terms with the day of the Lord being mentioned again in v. 11. Vs. 12-14, the offer of mercy. The people must turn, with three means of turning recommended: 1. Fasting; 2. Weeping; 3. Mourning, i.e., continued sorrow. They were to repent and trust in the goodness of God to intervene and turn aside the calamity. Vs. 15-17, an admonition to assemble for prayer. There was no time to lose. The people should indicate genuine repentance. All must share in the humiliation.

II. 2:18-3:21—GOD'S PROMISE TO SAVE AND BLESS HIS PEOPLE.

A. 2:18-27—*The locusts destroyed and the blessings renewed.* Vs. 18-20, the locust plague was ended. God promised to destroy all of the locusts. Vs. 21-27, the earthly and spiritual blessings were to be renewed. God promised to restore the land to its former fertility and to send the rains as they were needed. All that had been destroyed would be renewed and the promise was concluded in v. 27 that if they would only serve God they would never be ashamed. This promise is extended throughout the Old and New Testaments to God's people, cf. Matt. 6:33, 2 Cor. 9:6, 1 Pet. 5:7.

B. 2:28-32—*God promises to pour out the Holy Spirit upon all flesh.* Vs. 28-29 is that passage which has won for Joel the title of "The prophet of Pentecost," for the reason that in Acts 2:16-21 he quoted this section of Joel's prophecy and declared, "this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel." In order to understand this passage we must remember that the New Testament is the only *infallible* interpretation of the Old Testament. V. 28 refers to the Day of the Lord again. Before this day of the Lord, a great day of wrath and destruction, a miraculous event would occur. Vs. 28-29 indicate the abundance of distribution of the Holy Spirit. The term *afterward* is interpreted by the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:17 as "last days." This expression is found often in the New Testament and refers to this Christian age in which we now live, cf. Heb. 1:1, 2 Pet. 3:3. This age will end with the return of Jesus Christ. When he comes, man's probation will be over, the day of mercy ended, and judgment upon all revealed with the faithful being ushered into heaven and the faithless into hell. There is no other age to look for in which man can be saved.

Vs. 30-31—signs indicating judgment. These verses refer, not to final judgment, but to the fall of Jerusalem. It can be noted that Isaiah used similar terminology in Isa. 12:1-16 as he talked about the fall of Babylon. One might see a further parallel in the language used by comparing Matt. 24:1-34 where Christ foretells the destruction of Jerusalem. Joel was here describing the end of the Jewish era which terminated on Pentecost but which the Jews insisted on continuing. God was finally forced, by their stubbornness, to bring the system to a full and final end by the destruction of Jerusalem, when the temple and genealogies were destroyed, thus making it

impossible for the priesthood of Aaron ever to exist again on earth. What began on Pentecost was culminated in A.D. 70, *finally* and *fully*.

V. 32 is a promise of salvation before that great and terrible day should come. Therefore, the salvation which was offered on Pentecost was before the great and terrible day of the Lord and those who would accept that salvation and guidance revealed by the gospel of Christ would avoid that awful calamity which came upon the Jews who rejected the Christ.

C. 3:1-21—*God's judgment between the nations and his glorification of Zion*. Vs. 1-8, nations to be judged because of their attitude toward God's purpose which he manifested through his people. The valley of decision is indicated by God. In order to properly understand this passage, one must keep in mind that *the prophet* is speaking in the first two chapters, but in the third chapter *God* is speaking. The valley of decision is spoken of, seemingly to indicate by a figure of speech, the gospel dispensation which was introduced by the prophet Joel in the last part of chapter 2. When God begins to speak in chapter three, the first words are, "For, behold in those days and in that time, when I shall bring back the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem." The expression, "those days and that time. .," refers to the gathering of people into the spiritual kingdom of God that exists on earth today. This is done through the call of the gospel, I Thess. 2:12-14.

Vs. 9-13 is a call to judgment. There are those who claim that vs. 9-17 describe a physical battle of Armageddon when the forces of evil are gathered against the forces of righteousness. However this is a baseless claim which must ignore the fact that the salvation and blessings mentioned are seen to be taking place in this age when God calls people out of the world by the gospel.

Vs. 14-17 indicate that God is a refuge for his people. Vs. 18-21 indicate the abundance of spiritual blessings promised. This can have reference only to the new dispensation in which we live today and receive these blessings from God, Eph. 2:11-19. Joel 3:20-21 indicate an absolute forgiveness of sin which did not occur until the blood of Jesus was shed for the sins of man.

## Chapter Eleven

### AMOS

#### Name

The meaning of the name *Amos* is probably "burden-bearer." Amos is not to be confused with Amoz, the father of Isaiah. Amos declares himself to be a simple shepherd and a gatherer of sycamore fruit, i.e., one who fed upon this fruit, which resembles a wild fig. Amos had not been trained in the school of the prophets but was a simple herdsman earning his living by the sweat of his brow.

#### The Times of Amos

Amos prophesied in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam II, king of Israel. His work is contemporary, in part, with the work of Hosea. It was in the golden age of Ephraim, a time when the national prosperity was at its peak. Jeroboam II was a strong king from the secular view but the spirit of greed ruled the society of Israel in his day. The corruption of justice was a common sin and the people were accustomed to the philosophy of *might made right*. Land seizure was an every day crime when the rich became richer and the poor became poorer. Small wonder then that this prophet who came out of the wilderness, by the call of God, to go and proclaim his message, was shocked beyond imagination at what he saw. There were four fundamental sins of Israel manifested during this period:

(1) Materialism; (2) Oppression of brethren or unrighteous dealings; (3) Moral corruption; (4) Religious insincerity.

Amos came to this scene of mad extravagance where the women were demanding the luxury which their men willingly supplied them. It is small wonder then that his message was one of doom!

Amos, perhaps better than any of the minor prophets, sets forth many of the attributes of God, among which are:

(1) *Personality* - Amos teaches that God is a person. God swears by himself, 4:2; 6:8. God repents, 7:3. God communicates with others, 3:7. He commands, 9:3-4. He determined

upon lines of action, 6:8; 7:3. He hates and abhors, 5:21, 22.

(2) *Righteousness* - Amos constantly emphasizes the righteousness of God.

(3) *Mercy* - Amos, although he emphasizes God's righteousness, does not forget his mercy. Twice there is intercession by Amos for Israel, 7:2, 5. There is mercy promised upon certain conditions, 5:15.

(4) *Omnipotence* - His omnipotence is seen in his acts of creation, 4:13; 5:8-9. God controls the forces of nature, 4:6-11. God is supreme over all the nations, chapters 1 and 2; 9:7. Omnipotence is also seen in the titles which Amos uses of Jehovah.

(5) *Omnipresence* - That God is everywhere is implied in chapters 1-2, and plainly taught in 9:2-4.

(6) *Omniscience* - The omniscience of God, as well as the omnipresence, is taught in 9:2-4. God knows the thoughts of men, 4:13. He must be all wise to be able to search the hearts. Amos has been called the prophet of social justice. This is because he emphasizes that justice between men is one of the divine foundations of society. He very plainly teaches that privilege implies responsibility and failure to recognize responsibility is certain to bring punishment. One of the outstanding lessons taught in the book of Amos is that any worship, regardless of the elaborateness of it, is a mere insult to God when offered by those who will not conform to his command.

### Date

There is little difficulty in dating the book of Amos due to the chronological data of the superscription, 1:1. The date falls into the era of about 767 to 753.

The title of the book states that Amos began to prophesy during the reigns of Uzziah and Jeroboam, two years before the earthquake. This particular earthquake cannot be determined with exactness although it is mentioned in Zechariah 14:5-7. It would appear that the beginning of Amos' ministry was about 760 B.C. This date would correspond well with that which is known about the conditions of Israel in that age. Prosperity had produced its inevitable fruits: pride, luxury, selfishness, greed, oppression and moral decay.

Amos was a citizen of the southern kingdom who was sent

by God to the northern kingdom to prophesy against them; therefore, the significance of his name *burden-bearer*. The people of the northern kingdom had sunk so low that Amos' message seemed to him to be a burden falling upon the deaf ears of a people turned aside from God.

### Purpose

The message of Amos was primarily to interpret **Jehovah as a God of righteousness**. In doing this he necessarily showed that God is also a God of **mercy and longsuffering**. Mercy will be extended in love if Israel will only repent. Amos further emphasizes that God is interested in the nations round about as well as in Israel. The heathen were also responsible to him and under his control. Amos began with Damascus and other surrounding nations and prophesied against their sins in order to emphasize the fact that Judah and Israel had sinned, and therefore, were all judged on the same basis. The startling announcement was made that the judgment of Judah and Israel would be more severe than other nations because of the special privileges granted to them and their neglect of them.

The last part of Amos is indicative of the love of God and the fact that the terrible process of judgment was made necessary by the long rebellion of Israel but that God and his mercy restores and his love is ultimately recognized by all.

It is this kind of a message that is necessary to save some of those who have degenerated into the luxury and vice prevalent in the northern kingdom and to encourage the few who were yet righteous. However, the people generally rejected the message of Amos. His eloquence fell upon ears deafened by the false promises of materialism; understanding dulled and voided by the insincere religious situation of the day and eyes whose perception had been so dimmed by the unrighteousness perpetuated among themselves that they failed to see the coming judgment of God upon them. Therefore, they must rush headlong in their sins to the ultimate destruction of that northern kingdom - a destruction that was so complete that it would never again rise as a kingdom.

### SINS FOR WHICH ISRAEL STOOD CONDEMNED

Among the many sins Israel was guilty of and for which the judgment of God must soon come upon her were:

1. She despised the Law of God, 2:4.
2. Violence and robbery, 3:9-11.



3. Women were encouraging their men to sin more, 4:1-3.
4. Their religious and moral corruption, 2:6-7; 4:4-12.
5. Sought blessings of Bethel rather than of God, 5:4-6.
6. Turned justice to wormwood, 5:7, 10-13.
7. Had sought evil, 5:14-15.
8. Had false hopes concerning the Day of the Lord, 5:18-20.
9. Were at ease in Zion and Samaria, 6:1-7.
10. Cared not for the needs of others, 6:6.
11. Pride, 6:8-11.
12. Trampled upon the needy, 8:4-7.
13. Trusted in their own strength, 6:1, 11-14.
14. Defrauded in trade, 8:5.
15. Oppressed the poor, 8:6.
16. Boasted that evil would never overtake them, 9:10.

### Outline of Amos

- I. JEHOVAH'S GENERAL JUDGMENTS UPON JEW AND GENTILE ALIKE—1:1-2:16.
  - A. Heading and introduction—1:1-2.
    1. Superscription—1:1.
    2. Introduction of the theme of the section—1:2.
  - B. Judgments to come upon Israel's neighbors—1:3-2:3.
    1. Damascus—because of cruelty—1:3-5.
    2. Gaza—because of slave trade—1:6-8.
    3. Tyre—because she acted as slave agents—1:9-10.
    4. Edom—because of stubborn unforgiveness—1:11-12.
    5. Ammon—because of cruel and inhuman treatment—1:13-15.
    6. Moab—because of violent and vindictive hatred—2:1-3.
  - C. Judgments upon God's people—2:4-16.
    1. Judgment upon Judah because she despised God's laws—2:4-5.
    2. Judgment upon Israel because a redeemed people had corrupted themselves—2:6-16.
- II. OFFENSES OF ISRAEL AND HER JUDGMENT—3:1-5:27.
  - A. Israel's unique relationship with God demanded that all of her sins be punished—3:1-15.
    1. Introduction to the announcement of judgment—3:1-2.
    2. Amos uses similes to show that his message is from God—3:3-8.
      - a. Each illustration is to show that the message originated with God.
      - b. The goodness of God is also seen in the forewarning of the people.
  - B. Judgment was all that was left for rebellious Israel—4:1-13.
    1. A stern rebuke against the women of Israel—4:1-3.
    2. Their idolatry multiplied—4:5.
    3. Past punishment had failed to turn Israel back to God—6-11.
    4. Because of their hardness the only course of action was to resign themselves to their judgment—12-13.
  - C. The sins of Israel and her judgment—5:1-6:14.
    1. Israel's funeral song—5:1-3.
    2. A call to repentance—5:4-9.
    3. Sins of unrighteous conduct must be punished—5:10-13.
    4. Another admonition to repentance—5:14-15.

5. God's judgments would bring wailing—5:16-17.
6. The first woe—concerning the Day of the Lord—5:18-27.
  - a. Israel had false hopes—5:18-20.
  - b. God desired justice and righteousness rather than heartless worship—5:21-24.
  - c. Their false worship would only hasten their punishment—5:25-28.
- D. Woe upon the pleasure seeking rulers—6:1-14.
  1. The rulers were content to revel in their luxury and maintain the status quo—6:1-6.
  2. The rulers will be among the first captives because of their sins—6:7-11.
  3. The perverse rulers trusted in their own power—6:12-14.
- III. FIVE VISIONS DEPICTING ISRAEL'S FATE—7:1-9:10.
  - A. Locusts-Intercession and restraint—7:1-3.
  - B. The devouring fire-intercession and restraint—7:4-6.
  - C. The plumbline—all laid waste—7:7-9.
  - D. Amaziah opposes Amos at Bethel—7:10-17.
  - E. The basket of summer fruit-Israel ripe for full judgment—8:1-14.
    1. The vision—1-3.
    2. The last admonition to the rich—4-10.
    3. A famine of the word to come—11-14.
  - F. The altar and temple smitten—the whole nation to be ruined—9:1-10.
    1. The vision—1.
    2. The Lord would pursue all everywhere—2-4.
    3. All must learn God's omnipotence—5-6.
    4. Israel had become as heathen to God and would be treated accordingly—7-10.
- IV. THE KINGDOM TO BE SET UPON THE TIME OF REGENERATION—9:11-15.
  - A. The tabernacle of David to be erected again—11.
  - B. The Gentiles would come into this tabernacle to serve God—12.
  - C. The great blessings to be obtained in the kingdom—13-15.

### Analysis

#### I. 1:1-2:16—JEHOVAH'S GENERAL JUDGMENT UPON JEW AND GENTILE ALIKE APPROACHES.

As has been noted, the time of the prophecy of Amos was a very prosperous period for Israel. Sins also had reached a high-water mark along with the national prosperity. The surrounding nations had transgressed against God's people and thus, the judgment must fall upon the nations about as well as upon God's people.

A. 1:1-2—*The heading and introduction.* The superscription, 1:1, denotes the author, his vocation and the time of the prophecy. 1:2, the introduction of the theme of the whole section, the announcement of the wrath of God upon God's people.

B. 1:3-2:3—*Judgments upon Israel's neighbors.* Beginning in a very subtle way by pronouncing God's judgments upon the Gentiles, Amos laid a foundation whereby Israel must accept the cause of judgment upon man — sin. Therefore, when sentence is pronounced upon them because of their sin they must accept that judgment as just.

1:3-5—Judgment is pronounced against Damascus because of her cruelty against the people of God. 1:6-8, Judgment against Gaza because of her slave trade, doubtlessly involving God's people. 1:9-10, Judgment against Philistia (Tyre) because they had acted as slave agents involving God's children. 1:11-12, Judgment against Edom because of her stubborn unforgiveness toward Israel. 1:13-15, Judgment against Ammon because of their cruel inhumanity manifested against the women of Gilead. 2:1-3, God's judgment upon Moab because of his violence and vindictive hatred against Israel.

C. 2:4-16—*Judgment upon Israel.* Amos cleverly led the people in their thinking to this point showing them the *foundation* for God's judgment — sin. Now when Israel is brought face to face with the reality of her own sin she must either repent or else accept the judgment upon her as just.

2:4-5—Judgment would come upon Judah because she had despised God's law. As the Gentiles must be judged because they ignored the moral knowledge that existed among all men and was clearly taught by the laws of God revealed to Israel, so Judah must be judged because she, receiving God's special revelation, had despised the revelation.

2:6-16—Israel is addressed at this point and is told that she must be judged because they, as a redeemed people, had become corrupt. That for which the Gentiles had been judged so severely was present among God's own people. The brutality which many of the Gentiles had shown toward the people of God, God's own people had manifested toward each other. God had given revelations and warnings to Israel through the prophets and Nazarites, through the law and through the different acts of natural calamities which he had brought upon them. Therefore, they were without excuse.

## II. 3:1-5:27—OFFENSES OF ISRAEL AND HER JUDGMENT.

This is the second division of the book and is introduced

by the expression, "Hear this word. . ." This phrase appears again in 4:1 and 5:1, suggesting that it is a phrase used to introduce the leading thoughts of the appeals delivered by the prophets. These appeals form a long admonition to repentance.

A. 3:1-15—*Israel's unique relationship with God demanded that all of her sins be punished.* 3:1-2, An introduction to the announcement of judgment upon Israel. God calls for the attention of his people by reminding them of that great event of their past, the deliverance from Egypt. 3:3-8, Amos showed by the use of similies that his message is from God. As he used these similies he demonstrated first of all by each example that his message originated with God. "Shall two walk together except they have agreed?" is the first of a series of questions which he begins to ask to demonstrate that the message which he delivers is from God. The goodness of God is clearly demonstrated in that he forewarns the people of the impending judgment that must come upon them.

B. 4:1-13—*Judgment was all that was left for rebellious Israel.* Israel had had every opportunity, every necessary revelation from God, every incentive, and every reason to repent but she had continually hardened her heart in impenitence. Therefore, the only recourse that God had was to destroy them as a nation.

4:1-3—The sternest rebuke against women to be found anywhere in the Bible is directed against the women of Israel. Amos calls them cows, 4:1-3. Bashan was well known for its fat, sleek cattle and Amos applied this thought to the women of Israel, thus calling them fat cows. The reason is clearly indicated. Amos is not a woman hater but rather he directs this invective against women who were the cause of their husbands crushing the poor merely to provide more luxury for their women. God, through Amos, delivers this severe rebuke against them because they are one of the basic causes for the sinfulness of the nation.

4:4-5—The idolatry of Israel is multiplied. Great irony is projected here by the phrase, "Come to Bethel and transgress; to Gilgal and multiply transgression;" God did not say, come to these places and worship but rather come to these places and sin. Iniquity beyond imagination existed in these places.

4:6-11—The past punishments that had fallen upon Israel had failed to cause her to turn back to God. These passages clearly indicate the omnipotence of God in that he had power over the forces of nature to control them. All of the things that God brought upon Israel had failed to turn them back to God from whom all of their blessings flowed. 4:12-13, Because of their hardness, all that was left for them to do was to completely resign themselves to the judgment which they must face. Therefore, Amos uttered this phrase, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." 4:12.

C. 5:1-6:14—*The sins of Israel and her judgment.* 5:1-3, Israel's funeral hymn is sung. There is a great lamentation over the house of Israel because she had fallen from such a magnificent position. 5:4-9 constitutes a call to repentance. God's mercy is indicated in that he pleaded with them to cease their rebellion and return with all of their heart to him.

5:10-13—The sins of Israel must be punished. The very principles which were involved in the heathen's oppression of God's people were plainly evident in their actions toward each other. They had become so sinful that they hated the voice of him that reproved them. Their actions toward each other had sunk to an abominable level. 5:14-15, God sends forth another admonition to repentance. This is an earnest call to repentance and his mercy is offered upon the condition that they hate the evil, love the good and establish justice in the gates. This may hold out a faint ray of hope for the salvation of a remnant in the future.

5:16-17—God's judgment would bring wailing upon the people. There would be ample cause for this wailing but a picture of professional wailers is drawn for us here to indicate the thoroughness with which the people of God would undertake to attract God's attention once the calamity came. However there is no indication that once this calamity came upon them that their wailing would do them any good.

5:18-27—The first woe concerns the great day of the Lord that must come upon the sinful. 5:18-20 indicates that Israel had false hopes. Israel thought that since she was God's covenant people that the great day of judgment would pass over her. However she was in for a rude awakening. 5:21-24 show that God desired justice and righteousness rather than their heartless worship which had evolved into a mere form

without meaning. One of the main themes of the book of Amos is *righteousness*. This is what Jehovah wants from his people. 5:25-28, The false worship of the Israelites would only hasten their punishment. God told them that they went into idolatry even while they were in the wilderness before they had received the ten commandments from Sinai. They had retained their tendency to lust after false gods. Psalm 78 is a very lengthy commentary upon this attitude of the people. Amos points out that they not only worshipped at stated public places but also carried their gods about with them everywhere.

D. 6:1-14—*A woe upon the pleasure seeking rulers of the nation.* Chapter six introduces the second woe, this one against the careless heads of the nation. These leaders of the nations had grown careless and indifferent in their luxury and were not only content to dwell in such a state of indifference but the luxury and riches were all that they sought.

6:1-6—The rulers were at ease in both Zion and Samaria because they trusted in that which was material. Amos again includes the capital of Judah along with Samaria, the capital of the northern kingdom, in this woe. The people of God in their prosperity had sunk to a faithless life in which all they could trust was that which they could see and feel. Although with their lips they professed that God is, by their lives they denied that God existed and lived as if there were no God. This is a common error into which men slip who love the things of this world. An interesting statement is made in v. 6, "But they are not grieved for the affliction of Joseph." Although Joseph had been dead for many centuries they, of this generation, possessed the same calloused disposition that the brothers of Joseph manifested when they sold Joseph into the hands of the Midianites in the long ago.

6:7-11—The rulers were to be among the first captives carried away because of their sins against God. The personality of God is evident in v. 8, in that God swears by himself because there is none greater. Vs. 9-10 indicate that whenever the calamity comes upon the people that those who are left and are burying their dead will hesitate to mention the name of Jehovah lest they call the attention of the Lord to themselves and they also die. This indicates the widespread destruction that would come over the land when the Assyrians

ravaged the nation. V. 11 indicates that all, from the greatest to the least, would be afflicted by the Assyrian scourge.

6:12-14—The rulers were perverted in their thinking so that they trusted in their own powers and neglected to trust in God and his ways. V. 12 employs similies to show that Israel cannot deliver herself by her own power. Vs. 13-14 refer to the captivity that will come upon them when God uses the Assyrians to chastise his people.

### III. 7:1-9:10—FIVE VISIONS DEPICTING ISRAEL'S FATE.

This third division of the book contains five visions designed to confirm his prophecies already uttered and to indicate to Israel the extent of God's judgment upon them. Were it not for divine judgment there would be no hope for anyone in Israel. However there is intercession and mercy indicated. This is seen many years later in the opportunities that the people of the ten northern tribes had to come out of the captivity of Babylon along with the people from the southern tribes when Cyrus granted this right through his decree.

A. 7:1-3—*The locust vision indicated that all of the luxury and even the necessities would be stripped from the land by the Lord's judgment.* Through intercession and divine mercy a full end was not made of all things by the locusts.

B. 7:4-6—*The second vision was the devouring fire which bleached the land but again by intercession and divine mercy, complete destruction was not wrought.*

C. 7:7-9—*The third vision was the plumbline.* The plumbline was used to keep the wall straight and the vision indicates that the spiritual walls of God's people were too crooked to remain standing and must therefore be destroyed. In this vision all is laid waste.

D. 7:10-17—*The visions are left momentarily and we have a historical event taking place.* Amaziah, the high priest at Bethel, opposed Amos. Amaziah told Amos that he cannot expect any pay for that kind of preaching and that he should go back to the south where they would be willing to pay to hear it. Amos had talked very directly to the people, and the priest, in view of the threatened destruction of the royal government, could stand it no longer. The truth of the matter was, that the people, especially the priests and the high priest, did not want Amos preaching the truth of God in their nation.

The priests were professionals who got paid for preaching what the people wanted to hear. The people in their sinful state wanted to hear smooth words and fair speeches wherein their sins would not be condemned. The answer of Amos was that he had not been trained in the ways of the prophets. He had not been to school to become a prophet, his father had not been a prophet and therefore he was not dependent upon the prophetic office as a profession for a livelihood. Amos was prophesying because God had called him from his work to bring a message to them and he did not depend upon the people for a living. Amos told them in effect that it mattered not what they thought of his preaching; he had a message to deliver and he intended to deliver it. This is the attitude that preachers of the gospel need to manifest today. God's word must be preached and even though it may not always be popular with the majority, if we would be faithful to God we must deliver it faithfully.

E. 8:1-14—*The vision of the basket of summer fruit.* Summer fruit represents the last fruit of the season. During the hot summer months all has been gathered and now this is the last fruit to be found. This vision indicates that Israel is ripe for full judgment. This is the last admonition to the rich, 4-10. Vs. 11-14 tell about a famine of the word that was to come when men would seek the word of God but could not find it. They would bring this condition upon themselves because of their mercenary attitudes. In v. 5 we see them depicted as asking the question, "When will the holy days and the sabbath days be past that we may sell and make money?" Their religion was nothing but a shell - a cheap pretense - and the only thing that they were concerned about was when they could end their worship and get back to the business of making money. Any time that people get so steeped in materialism that they are willing to give God a secondary place in their lives they can look forward to the ultimate judgment that must be brought upon them.

F. 9:1-10—*The fifth vision is the smitten altar.* This indicates that the whole nation must be ruined and the people buried beneath its rubble. It is at this point, v. 1, that the Lord begins to talk about the severe judgment to come on them. In vs. 2-4 the Lord indicates that he will pursue the sinners anywhere that they go. Vs. 5-6 indicate that all must



learn of God's omnipotence. God assured the people that they had forfeited their right to his favor and must therefore suffer the consequences. Vs. 7-10 indicate that Israel had become as the heathen to God and therefore, God must treat them as he will treat the heathen. Very few would escape.

#### IV. 9:11-15—THE KINGDOM SET UP IN THE TIME OF REGENERATION.

That which has been spoken of as coming upon Israel fell upon fleshly Israel. However God now shifts the scene to spiritual Israel, the kingdom of God that would be set up at a time following the prophecy of Amos. Because God is unchangeable his purpose of salvation and punishment of sin cannot be reversed or destroyed. God has drawn for us the picture of punishment for sin and now the hope of regeneration is held forth. Vs. 11-15 contain a hopeful note, not for the sinful, fleshly Israel living in her sin but for the faithful of God among fleshly Israel who had been taught by the law and the prophets to look forward to that kingdom of God which was to come.

A. V. 11—*The tabernacle of David was to be erected again.* This does not have reference to the old material house that David lived in but it has reference, as the inspired James applied it in Acts 15:13-18, to the church of the Lord.

B. V. 12—*The Gentiles would come into this tabernacle to serve the Lord.* It would be in the time when the Gentiles would seek the Lord that this tabernacle would be erected. This was made possible beginning on the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus Christ, Acts 2. Acts 10 is the record of the first Gentile convert. Therefore, from that time, Gentiles have been entering the tabernacle of David. It was set up again in what the New Testament calls the church.

C. Vs. 13-15—*The great blessings to be obtained in the kingdom.* These verses are filled with figures of speech indicating the many blessings that are available only in this tabernacle of David, the church of the Son of God. To obtain these blessings one must be in the realm where God bestows them.

## Chapter Twelve

### OBADIAH

#### Name

Obadiah means "servant of Jehovah." The name *Obadiah* was worn by about thirteen or more individuals in the Old Testament. The following references to these individuals will serve to help the reader do further research if desired:

1. The governor of Ahab's house, I Kings 18:3-16.
2. The head of a family in the house of David, I Chron. 3:21.
3. A descendant of Tola, son of Issachar, I Chron. 7:3.
4. Son of Azel, a Benjamite, of the family of Saul, I Chron. 8:34.
5. Son of Shemaiah, a Levite, I Chron. 9:16.
6. A gadite who joined David in Ziklag, I Chron. 12:9.
7. Father of Ishmaiah, prince of Zebulun, I Chron. 27:19.
8. A prince of Judah in the days of Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. 17:7.
9. A Levite who helped oversee the repairs of the temple in the days of Josiah, 2 Chron. 34:12.
10. Son of Jehiel, and a chief man that returned with Ezra, Ezra 8:9.
11. A priest who, with Nehemiah, sealed the covenant, Neh. 10:5.
12. A gate keeper for the sanctuary, Neh. 12:25.
13. The prophet who wrote the book that bears his name.

There is no foundation for the claim that Obadiah is merely a symbolic name without historic validity. The name was common among the Jews and the contents indicate that the writer is of the southern kingdom.

#### Date

Conservative scholars are generally divided over the date, therefore, this writer felt a reluctance to even attempt to fix a date for the book. However, the following facts bear considerable weight in favor of the early date.

1. Obadiah does not mention a national captivity such as the Babylonian exile was. This is extremely peculiar if the book is about such an exile.
2. The captives mentioned were not taken to Babylon as in 586 B. C. but to Phoenicia and the west. Would it not be strange for an exile to be written about but the actual facts ignored?
3. No reference is made to such a destruction of the cities, especially Jerusalem, as occurred in 586 B.C. The emphasis in Obadiah is on the people. Surely no Jew could write about that

event which all subsequent Jews remembered and fail to mention the destruction of God's holy city.

4. There is a record in 2 Chron. 21:16-17 of an invasion of the Philistines and Arabians making a raid on Judah in the time of King Jehoram. This raid was a devastating one in which even the king's house was pillaged, his wives and sons taken and, in general, all Judah was humbled. This raid corresponds well with that attack spoken of by Obadiah and would have afforded Edom the opportunity to plunder Judah.
5. Edom had revolted in the days of Jehoram, 2 Kings 8:20-22; 2 Chron. 21:8-20, and had a strong motive to use the opportunity provided by the attack of the Philistines.
6. No hint is made of the Chaldeans being the antagonist but on the other hand the Philistines are; therefore, it would seem that the occasion would more logically be understood to be that attack made by the Philistines in the days of King Jehoram of Judah in the last quarter of the ninth century. Therefore, Obadiah probably wrote toward the close of the ninth century, 820-805 B.C.

These evidences, plus a *lack of clear evidence* for a date later than 586 B.C., has influenced this author to accept the early date, approximately the close of the ninth century, B.C.

### Purpose

The book is concerned primarily with the *punishment of Edom* because of the sins of that people. The prophet seems to indicate that *pride* was one of the chief elements in the fall of Edom. In her pride, Edom thought that they were perfectly secure from all forces.

When one considers the probability of the early date of the book, the problems raised by critics disappear as the morning dew in the heat of the day. Critics are fond of raising the specter of *nationalism*, as if Obadiah were speaking solely from the depths of his own feelings. This criticism assumes that God is not interested in the nations around Judah. However it is evident from reading the Old Testament that God has always been interested in all people.

Furthermore, God, in every age, pronounced judgment upon the tormentors of his people. The book of Obadiah is not unique in this respect. It does not, as G.A. Smith claimed, raise one of the hardest ethical problems in the history of Israel. The Edomites were sinners and their rebellion against God was manifested against the people of God. Had no doom been pronounced upon Edom, then indeed an ethical problem would have existed.

One of the imposing lessons of the short book of Obadiah is that neutrality regarding any principle or truth is sin. The Edomites and Israelites were brethren but the Edomites stood idly by and watched Judah plundered by her enemies. It mattered not that Edom had hostile feelings toward Judah, justice demanded that righteousness be vindicated and that the Lord's cause be supported. This the Edomites failed to do; therefore, they must be judged in the same manner as the rest of God's enemies.

### Outline of Obadiah

- I. EDOM TO BE DESTROYED—1-9.
  - A. God's call to the nations to destroy Edom—1.
  - B. Edom is held in contempt by the nations—2.
  - C. Edom's pride to be broken—3-4.
  - D. Edom's treasures taken by his allies—5-7.
  - E. Edom's wise and great men to die—8-9.
- II. EDOM'S HOSTILITY AGAINST ISRAEL MUST BE AVENGED—10-14.
  - A. Violence toward Jacob—10.
  - B. Edom's refusal to aid Jacob—11.
  - C. Edom rejoiced at Judah's destruction—12.
  - D. Edom plundered helpless Jerusalem—13.
  - E. Edom had hindered the escape of the Jews—14a.
  - F. Edom had sold some of the helpless Jews to their enemies—14b.
- III. THE DAY OF JEHOVAH WAS DRAWING NEAR—15-21.
  - A. Edom and the other nations would reap as they had sown—15-16.
  - B. Israel to be delivered—17-20.
  - C. All would know that the Kingdom was God's—21.

### Analysis

#### I. 1-9—GOD ANNOUNCES THE IMPENDING DESTRUCTION OF EDOM.

No nation or people ever rose so high that God could not bring them low. The Edomites in their pride felt secure in their mountain fortresses but suddenly they are told that their sense of security is false and that soon they must pay for their sins.

A. 1—*God calls the nations to destroy Edom.* This oracle against Edom is delivered to Judah to comfort God's people and to assure them that he has not forgotten them in their

afflictions. God would stir up the nations against Edom.

B. 2—*Edom is to be held in contempt by the nations.* In her pride it is difficult for little Edom to conceive how the large nations about her could possibly overcome her. This would only increase the contempt of the other nations. Edom was small in number and small in spirit. No nation or person can be small in spirit and great at the same time.

C. 3-4—*God would break Edom's pride.* Pride is the very opposite of humility - complete dependence on God - and therefore will necessarily cause people to think in terms of their own sufficiency. Edom felt that no power could reach them in their mountain fortress but God pointed out to them that no matter how high they soared, he could reach them and bring them low.

D. 5-7—*All the treasures of Edom were to be taken by her allies.* The thief would not take everything but the ones who turned against Edom would take all her possessions. This is but just retribution for the people who had fallen on the prey of their helpless relatives - Judah.

E. 8-9—*All of the wise and mighty men of Edom were to perish.* When the mighty men and strong cities fell, what would Edom have left to be proud of? The answer is obvious.

## II. 10-14—THE HOSTILE ACTS OF EDMO AGAINST ISRAEL MUST BE AVENGED.

A. 10—*Violence toward Jacob must be punished.* Liberal students are inclined to view such predictions as the result of nationalism. One must remember however that an act against God's people by another nation usually represented an effort to suppress the *purpose* of God. The age-old enmity of Edom toward Judah had existed from the time of Esau and Jacob and began over the choice that God made between the two men. Edom in her hostilities toward Judah expressed hostility toward God for his choice.

B. 11—*Edom's refusal to aid Judah had not gone unnoticed by God.* More was involved here than a political move; the basic hatred of the people of God can be seen as Edom stands by and laughs at the plight of Judah. For a similar situation, study Judges 5:23.

C. 12—*Edom was glad about the unhappy situation of Judah.* They were not among the attackers but they probably

had their observers and rejoiced to see the defenses being destroyed.

D. 13—*Helpless Jerusalem was plundered by Edom.* Like scavengers hovering over the prey, Edom now descends upon Judah after the attackers had rendered her helpless.

E. 14a—*The escape of the Jews was hindered by the Edomites.* As the Jews fled, those of Edom obstructed their flight and perhaps even directed the pursuing soldiers after them. Therefore they must themselves suffer.

F. 14b—*Some of the more helpless Jews had been sold by the Edomites to God's enemies.* This indicates the height of contempt toward God and his purposes and is as if they were saying, "Look what a bad choice you made, God!" Therefore, punishment will not tarry long. God and his purposes must be vindicated.

### III. 15-21—THE DAY OF JEHOVAH WAS DRAWING NEAR.

God, through his people, had been held in contempt and treated spitefully. Now there must be a day of judgment upon the nations when they would all be forced to acknowledge his majesty and power.

A. 15-16—*Edom and all the other nations would reap as they had sown.* The day of God's power would come and the debauchery and irreverence of God's enemies would be paid for in full in the judgment they must suffer.

B. 17-20—*Judah would be delivered.* When judgment was falling upon the nations around her, Judah would be exalted and the God whom she served would be glorified. Edom, who had exulted at Judah's misfortune, would be left as a field that was burned.

C. 21—*All would know that the kingdom belonged to God.* Though the cause of God may sometimes suffer, all of his word demonstrates that ultimately his cause will triumph. *The only real concern of the people of God is to be obediently in harmony with the keeping of the purposes and will of God.* Everything else will be alright in the end because *God is on his throne.* The book of Obadiah offers eloquent testimony to this proposition.

## Chapter Thirteen

### JONAH

#### Name

The name *Jonah* means "dove." Jonah is identified as Jonah ben Amittai in two Old Testament passages; 2 Kings 14:25 and Jonah 1:1. He is described as a prophet of Gath-hepher in Zebulun, a town of lower Galilee. He would therefore be a citizen of the northern kingdom and a prophet of Israel. Jonah was an early contemporary of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah.

#### The Times of the Prophet

Jonah prophesied during the period when Assyria was a very powerful empire and Nineveh, at that time, was a great city surrounded by a complex of lesser cities or villages. The Hebrews hated the ruthless and idolatrous Assyrians and when Jonah was called to go and prophesy repentance to them, he rebelled against the commandment of God and tried to flee to Tarshish.

#### Date

Liberal critics usually date Jonah very late, sometimes as late as 400 B.C. for the actual writing and as late as 200 B.C. for the "final redaction." However, this does not fit the internal evidence regarding Nineveh at all. This is no city of the distant past but a very real one that vibrates with life typical of that day. The date of Jonah, based upon the fact that Jonah prophesied very early, 2 Kings 14, is probably from about 780 B.C. to 750 B.C.

#### Methods of Interpretation

Several different views have been advanced relative to the method of interpreting the events mentioned in the book of Jonah. Those who subscribe to the *plenary verbal inspiration*

of the Bible view the book of Jonah as historical and written by the prophet whose name it bears. However there are many critics who deny that the book was authored by Jonah and that it is historical in nature.

Several views have been espoused as a substitute for and a replacement of the historical view of Jonah. Following are some of these views:

1. FICTION - Robert H. Pfeiffer (p. 587) denies that the book is either history or allegory. Pfeiffer dismisses the book as nothing more than a religious novel with a moral attached to it.
2. PARABLE - this view was espoused by G.A. Smith (p. 484, vol. 2), as does Julius A. Bewer and many others.
3. SYMBOLICAL - many critics such as Oesterley and Robinson viewed the book as pure symbolism with every facet of it representing one thing or another, the meaning assigned according to the fancy of the interpreter.
4. MYTHOLOGICAL - the mythological view regards the fish episode as identical with many other stories told around the world of persons swallowed by sea monsters and later vomited forth unharmed.

However, it is the *parabolic view* that has been entrenched in the minds of people, no little credit belonging to the admirable ability of G.A. Smith and others of like persuasion. Therefore, it is between the parabolic and historical view that people are generally forced to choose. Robert Pfeiffer's dismissal of the book as a religious novel has no basis in reason and has never gained widespread acceptance.

One is drawn inexorably to the contents of the book itself in order to ascertain the truth of the matter. William Henry Green, that great foe of rationalistic Bible criticism, aptly stated, "There is no reason for discrediting the book of Jonah, unless it is to be found in the contents of the book itself." (*Introduction to Jesus and Jonah*-McGarvey) After a minute examination of the book itself, no valid reason can be brought forth for rejecting the contents as unhistorical. With the added weight of the testimony of the Son of God regarding the historicity of Jonah and the actuality of the events which transpired, and are recorded in the book of Jonah, one can hardly fail to see the overwhelming evidence for the historical view.

Driver, who probably summarized more ably than any other radical critic the reasons for rejecting the historical view, (p. 324) points out four reasons for his rejection of the historical view:



1. The sudden conversion, on a large scale, as is evidently implied, of a great heathen population, is contrary to analogy.
2. The behaviour of the heathen king in the presence of the Hebrew prophet.
3. The failure of the conversion to produce permanent effects.
4. The structure shows the account to be didactic in purpose.

That able critic rested his case primarily upon these four things. If they can stand the test of reason and scripture then they deserve to be recognized as plausible reasons for rejecting the historical view. If, on the other hand, the scripture and reason indicate that they are not substantial then the critic's case must fall. Notice again Driver's reasons:

1. The sudden conversion being without analogy. If this reasoning were true one would have to deny the conversion of the three thousand on Pentecost; the conversion of Saul of Tarsus; the conversion of Sergius Paulus; the conversion of the Philippian jailer; the conversion of the Ephesians and many other such conversions if that which is without analogy cannot be accepted. On that ground the thrusting out of the Hebrew slaves by the people of Egypt, being without analogy, cannot be accepted. On the basis of Driver's argument whatever is without analogy must be automatically rejected. This argument is not reasonable and is certainly contrary to the scripture, therefore, it must be rejected.

2. The behaviour of the heathen king in the presence of Jonah, the Hebrew prophet. The critic's argument is based upon the assumption that the king of Assyria was ignorant of the person of Jonah and the God that Jonah served. It is unfair to assume, without evidence, that the king had not heard of the great event which had transpired relative to the fish and Jonah.

Is it to be thought unlikely that the calming of the great tempest as Jonah was being cast into the sea was a story that would be told in every seaport and reach inland to every hamlet until it permeated all of the palaces of the world? Would not the heathen sailors whose very lives had been spared by the God of Jonah tell all that they had witnessed? Is it to be thought for a moment that the King of Assyria had not heard of the prophet being cast upon the seashore unharmed by the great fish? Would not a story such as that be spread abroad rapidly? Is it to be assumed as probable that the prophet, by whose word the king of Israel had withstood the onslaughts of the Assyrian army, would be any less known by the Assyrian monarch than Elisha was by the Syrian king, 2 Kings 6:8-12. In 2 Kings 14:25 it is stated that Jonah prophesied unto Jeroboam II and that Israel regained its ancient boundaries from Hamath on the north to the sea of Arabah on the south, according to his word. A statement of the same nature was made regarding the work of Elisha. It is understandable then that the heathen king would have heard of the prophet before he arrived at the city. The king would know that the God Jonah served was a miracle working God and therefore, when the prophet began to wander through the city and preach repentance, the tidings were brought to the ears of one who

would not need strong urging to believe. Therefore, the second argument of the critic cannot stand in view of the scripture and of reason.

3. The failure of the conversion to produce permanent effect. Just how permanent the critic wanted the effect to be is not known. One might raise the question, "Must the repentance of an idolatrous people last forever in order to be genuine?" One can readily recall how Paul marvelled at the swiftness of the apostasy of the Galatians. Is it not easy to remember how frequently the Israelites, during the period of the Judges, must be converted from their apostasies? Is there any question regarding the genuineness of their repentance? Because the brevity of repentance might be remarkable, does that justify the rejection of it as historical? There is nothing in any sort of history to tell us exactly how long Nineveh's repentance lasted, but in that it lasted through the forty day period and went beyond the expectation of the prophet, is itself an amazing testimony to the power of the preaching of Jonah. Should this not be sufficient to convert the critic if it were sufficient to convert the heathen population?

4. The structure shows the account to be didactic in purpose. The question to be raised is, "Is not all history didactic in aim?" As one reads the gospel accounts of the life of our Lord he is impressed with a didactic purpose. The chief purpose is to teach that Jesus is the Son of God in order to produce faith, John 20:30-31.

In observing the reasons advanced by one of the ablest of the critics for rejecting the historical view, it is easy to see how they have utterly failed, reasonably and scripturally, to establish his cause. There is, therefore, no valid reason for rejecting the historical view of the book of Jonah.

#### REASONS FOR ACCEPTING JONAH AS HISTORICAL

1. The contents of the book itself breathes the atmosphere of an authentic historical narrative.
2. Jonah was a historical person as has already been pointed out and his prophetic ministry is a matter of record.
3. The ancient Jews regarded the book of Jonah as historical.
4. Christ affirmed the historicity of the book, Matt. 12:38-41; 16:4; Luke 11:29-32.

Although the book may have some symbolical or typical application it is not primarily of that nature. It must constantly be emphasized that the events which are recorded in the book actually happened.

The actuality and the historicity of the book of Jonah is generally rejected by radical critics on the grounds of incredibility. They ask: "How could Jonah remain in the fish for three days and three nights and escape unharmed?" "How could the 'coincidence' of the calming of the great tempest

at the moment of Jonah's being cast overboard happen?" "How could the gourd vine grow up overnight and then die in a moment?" Of course whenever the book is rejected on those grounds, it calls for the rejection of the entire Bible because the Bible itself is a supernatural book. Therefore, when one rejects testimony simply because that testimony is connected with a miracle, one is morally obligated to reject all writings of similar nature. If one is able to accept the credibility of the miracles of the Bible he does not find it difficult to accept the credibility of the events recorded in the book of Jonah. Some of the other difficulties regarding the text and authorship will be noticed in the analysis.

For a very lively and extremely strong defense of the literal, historical view of Jonah one may read J.W. McGarvey's little book entitled *Jesus and Jonah*. This author recommends that book to all serious students of the Old Testament.

### Message

The chief lesson of the book is the universality of God's grace. God shows that he is interested in all men and that his mercy can be extended to the vilest of sinners. This lesson is reserved for the end of the book when the prophet must learn that there is a higher patriotism than to that of country. The message of the book is repentance but that repentance was brought about through the power of preaching and that preaching was backed up by a great miracle, the receiving back from the dead of the one who came preaching repentance.

The book of Jonah is unique in several ways. It is chiefly a story about a prophet during one short period of his life but only as that life is woven into the purposes of God. He is the only prophet whose activity was on foreign soil and who preached exclusively to a foreign people. The book is a book of miracles and therefore, one is not surprised to learn that radical critics reject the historicity of the events and the authorship of Jonah.

The experience of Jonah and the great fish served as a prophetic type of Christ and his experience with death. Our Lord used it as such in Matt. 12 and Luke 11. For an excellent discussion of this sign the reader is again referred to McGarvey's book, *Jesus and Jonah*.



## Outline of Jonah

- I. JONAH: COMMISSIONED, REBELLIOUS, AND PUNISHED—1:1-16.
  - A. God gives the commission but Jonah flees—1-3.
    - 1. The word came—1.
    - 2. Jonah to cry against Nineveh because of their sins—2.
    - 3. Jonah fled toward Tarshish—3.
  - B. Jonah's flight frustrated—4-10.
    - 1. The great storm—4-5.
    - 2. Jonah is exposed as the cause of the storm—6-10.
  - C. The storm calmed—11-16.
    - 1. The seamen inquire about a course of action—11.
    - 2. Jonah's answer—12.
    - 3. The effort and prayer of the seamen—13-14.
    - 4. The conversion of the seamen—15-16.
- II. JONAH'S DELIVERANCE FROM DEATH—1:17-2:10.
  - A. The great fish—1:17.
  - B. Jonah's prayer of thanksgiving—2:1-9.
  - C. Jonah returned to dry ground—2:10.
- III. JONAH COMMISSIONED THE SECOND TIME—3:1-10.
  - A. God commands Jonah again—1-4.
    - 1. Jonah to preach what God told him to—1-2.
    - 2. Jonah obeys this time—3.
    - 3. Jonah entered the city—4.
  - B. The people's reaction to the preaching of Jonah—5-9.
    - 1. The people believed and acted—5.
    - 2. The king's proclamation—6-9.
  - C. God's mercy—10.
- IV. JONAH'S ATTITUDE—4:1-11.
  - A. The repentance of the people displeased Jonah—1-5.
  - B. God rebuked Jonah for his attitude—6-11.

## Analysis

- I. 1:1-16—JONAH: COMMISSIONED, REBELLIOUS, AND PUNISHED.
  - A. 1-3—*God gave the commission but Jonah fled in order to avoid fulfilling the command of God to preach repentance to the great city of Nineveh.* Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian kingdom and the residence of the great kings of that empire. According to ancient historians it was probably the largest city in the world at that time.
  - B. 4-10—*Jonah's flight was frustrated by the Lord.* God sent a great storm and dashed Jonah's foolish hope of escape. Questions have sometimes been raised about Jonah being

asleep in the ship during such a turbulent storm. However, if one would reflect on the events that transpired prior to the time that Jonah boarded the ship such questions about the sleep of Jonah would never arise. Jonah had probably traveled about one hundred miles to reach Joppa, all the while in anxiety as to whether he could book passage on a ship when he reached the port and concerned lest God at any moment might end his flight. He would travel the distance as quickly as possible and had no doubt arrived at the port, boarded the ship, and entered his berth in a state of mental, emotional and physical exhaustion. His sleep would therefore, be one that would not quickly end unless interrupted by the most urgent need. There is therefore, no valid question to be raised concerning his sleeping during the storm. The disposition of the seamen toward Jonah was one of extreme kindness which, no doubt, was a surprise to Jonah. The seamen made every effort to row back to land and it was only after they recognized that it was an impossibility that they agreed to Jonah's proposition to throw Jonah overboard.

C. 11-16—*The storm calmed.* It seems that Jonah had no sooner been cast overboard by the seamen that the great tempest quieted. As these heathen seamen saw what took place they feared the God of Jonah and offered sacrifices and made vows unto him. These men were converted to the power of Jehovah. It would be unthinkable that these men would go from port to port throughout the world and never mention what took place concerning Jonah. It would be the natural thing for them to give a detailed report of all that took place.

## II. 1:17-2:10—JONAH'S DELIVERANCE FROM DEATH.

A. 1:17—*The great fish.* God had appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah and it was in this fish that Jonah would remain for three days and nights.

B. 2:1-9—*Jonah's prayer of thanksgiving.* It was in the belly of the fish that Jonah thanked God for his deliverance from the certain death of the ocean deep. This psalm of thanksgiving is a picture of the drowning of Jonah as he was cast over the sides of the ship into the tempestuous waters and sank in the depths. As he plunged downward the waves and billows compassed him and he describes how finally he

sank to the bottom, the seaweed wrapped around his head, the bars of the earth closed upon him and his soul was fainting, or he was slipping away into eternity. Thus a description of the time while he was in the waters. It was in this state that he was certainly dead as far as all human powers and helps were concerned, yet God brought up his life from that certain death. It was while his soul was leaving his body that Jonah declared that he still remembered Jehovah and now he is grateful that Jehovah heard his prayer for deliverance. V. 9 indicates that Jonah's determination was to pay his vow which he had made to God, doubtless to obey the commission if God would give him the second chance.

C. 2:10—*Jonah is returned to the dry land.* At the command of God, the fish, which had swallowed Jonah when it seemed that Jonah would surely die of drowning, vomits Jonah up upon the dry land. This took place on the third day after Jonah had been swallowed by the fish. The miracle in this is not in that the fish swallowed Jonah, but rather that God had the fish swallow Jonah at precisely the proper time and then revived Jonah in the belly of that fish and kept him safely there for three days and nights. It is to this miracle that our Lord points the unbelieving Jews who asked him for a sign. He offered as proof of his Deity *the sign of Jonah in the belly of the fish*. For all practical purposes, Jonah was dead when the fish swallowed him, yet God revived him and brought him forth and it was that very miracle that was able to produce so great a change in the lives of so many people. The Lord offered that sign as proof of his Deity, Matt. 12: 38-42 and Luke 11:29-31. One can easily see the analogy if he chooses to see.

### III. 3:1-10—JONAH COMMISSIONED THE SECOND TIME.

A. 1-4—*God commands Jonah again.* After Jonah had been punished for his disobedience and miraculously delivered from death he was ready to obey the command of God. It may be observed that no time element is explicitly stated to show how soon after the fish vomited forth Jonah that God renewed the commission. Is one to think that Jonah came forth from the mouth of the fish and did not even wait to eat food or to drink water before he went to Nineveh? Would it not be more plausible to view Jonah spending some time

in his native land while news of the event preceded him? Perhaps God providentially used the news of the events of this great miracle to soften the hard hearts of the idolatrous heathen to whom Jonah was to preach. It seems reasonable enough to understand that the news of the whole event of Jonah's flight, the storm, the fish and Jonah's deliverance may have been fully related in Nineveh before Jonah reached that great city. This would account for the hasty action of the people.

This time Jonah did what God told him to do. He entered the city a day's journey. This indicated that he walked about through the city for a whole day, preaching as he went wherever he could gain a hearing. The day's journey merely indicates the time spent, not the distance travelled as if he were taking a journey into a distant land and his trip would be measured by so many days journey. Jonah would wander about the city through the narrow streets and alleys, stopping in the market places to preach and appear in all of the public places that he could. He would not be able to go very far in this manner and could well be expected to take three days to get through the city with his message.

B. 5-9—*The people's reaction to the preaching of Jonah.* When the people heard the preaching of Jonah against them they were hasty to repent. Probably having already heard of the miracles of the storm, the fish and perhaps even some things relative to his counsel to Jeroboam II in that king's rise to strength and prosperity against his enemies, and knowing that Jehovah was the God of Jonah, the people felt the need of repentance.

C. 10—*God's mercy extended to the people of Nineveh.* God turned aside from the destruction which he had determined toward the city. His mercy was given due to their repentance. Although the repentance spoken of may not have lasted more than a few years at the most, it was sufficient and genuine enough to cause God to spare them for the time being.

#### IV. 4:1-11—JONAH'S ATTITUDE.

Critics commonly assert that Jonah's attitude represented the exclusivistic attitude of the Judaistic era shortly before the days of Christ. However this attitude was common at a

very early date. It would be even more forcefully understood if one would only place himself in the position of the Jews of the northern kingdom and suffer the oppression at the hands of the Assyrians. The animosity the Jews felt toward the heathen nations around them was no small thing in those early days of Jeroboam and extending toward the first century. This attitude is not one of racism but rather of nationalism and the nationalistic pride possessed by Jonah was typical of the Jews of his day.

A. 1-5—*The repentance of the people displeased Jonah.* Jonah was extremely vexed because God spared Nineveh and told God that this was the very reason why he fled from his duty the first time. There was no question in Jonah's mind from the very first that God would be merciful toward the Ninevites if they repented. Jonah went outside the city and took a position to wait and see what would happen to the city.

B. 6-11—*God rebuked Jonah.* God appointed a gourd which grew up overnight and gave Jonah some cool shade which the little booth made by Jonah failed to provide. For this refreshing shade Jonah was exceeding grateful but then God caused a worm to smite the gourd vine, bringing death to it, so that the leaves withered away when the sun's hot rays beamed upon them. Jonah, left exposed to the hot sun and dry wind, soon began to suffer. Jonah was grieved over this new development and requested death for himself. God asked Jonah if it was right for Jonah to be angry for the gourd to which Jonah replied that it was, even to death. God then compared the gourd and Jonah's attitude toward it and Nineveh and his attitude toward it. If Jonah was grieved over one withered gourd, surely it would be only right to grieve over a whole city of people and animals which would have perished had not God been merciful and gracious. The book fittingly ends with the mercy of God emphasized in an age when mercy was an uncommon quality among men.



## Chapter Fourteen

### MICAH

#### Name

Micah is a common name in the Old Testament occurring several times in one form or another. Micah is a contraction of *Micaiah*, and means "Who is like the Lord?" The home of Micah was in Moresheth-gath, a small town on the border between Judah and Philistia, about twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem.

Micah was full of zeal and courage, never hesitating to denounce sin wherever it was found in the land. Eiselen (p. 492) views Micah as a prophet of the countryside. Others think that Micah prophesied primarily in the cities of Judah but it would seem from the contents that Micah confined his labors to the smaller villages, towns and countryside. However this does not mean that he never prophesied in the larger cities of Judah, even Jerusalem itself on occasions.

#### Date

The ministry of Micah began in the days of Jotham, king of Judah, and continued through the reigns of Ahaz and Hezekiah, 1:1. This ministry extended over a period of more than forty years. Micah was probably a younger contemporary with Isaiah and the prophecies of the book were probably delivered before the reformation of Hezekiah.

#### Conditions

The conditions of the time of the work of the prophet were difficult in many respects. Toward the close of the reign of Jotham, Judah was threatened by the allied forces of Damascus and Israel. In the reign of Ahaz the kings of Syria and Israel combined to attempt to overthrow the government of Judah. It is at that time that the great prophecy of Isaiah regarding the virgin conception of the Messiah was made, Isa. 7:14. In the reign of Hezekiah the Assyrians invaded the land and the Jews fled to the city of Jerusalem where they were besieged by the Assyrians. Therefore, *po-*

litically, the times of the prophet were turbulent.

*Socially, morally and religiously*, Judah presented an even darker picture than she did politically. The greed of the landowners in building up their estates was unsurpassed in any period. They did not hesitate to eject small landowners, rob widows and orphans, treat their debtors without mercy and, in any other way, do what their unrestrained greed suggested. The rulers seemed to hate good and love evil, 3:1-4. Micah saw these social evils under the degenerate rulers and denounced them openly. The false prophets filled the land and prophesied for money. They would preach whatever the people wanted to hear if the people would pay them. The priests were those who taught for hire, 3:11. They would tell the people that the Lord was in their midst and all the while their greed was taking them down the road of sin. Micah prophesied in the midst of these evils and, in addition, saw that among the people religion had become a matter of form. Micah was a simple and forceful teacher and as he denounced the sins of his day he rebuked the people for: (1) their social injustice; (2) their dishonesty and (3) their unfaithfulness in general. There are several sins that are catalogued in the book of Micah and denounced by him among which are:

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1. Idolatry, 1:7; 6:16.                 | 6. Corruption of princes, 3:1-3.  |
| 2. Covetousness, 2:2.                   | 7. Corruption of prophets, 3:5-7. |
| 3. Oppression, 2:2.                     | 8. Corruption of priests, 3:11.   |
| 4. Violence, 2:2; 3:10; 6:12; 7:2.      | 9. Bribery, 3:9, 11; 7:3.         |
| 5. Encouraging false prophets, 2:6, 11. | 10. Dishonesty, 6:10-11.          |

Micah did not hesitate to oppose these sins that filled the land and to demand of all justice, righteousness and mercy.

### Contents

Keil points out that the contents of the book consist of three prophetic addresses clearly distinguished from one another in form by similarity of introductions and substantially by their contents. Keil emphasizes that in these three addresses we do not have three different prophecies of Micah delivered to the people at three different times, but merely a condensation rhetorically arranged of the essential contents of his verbal utterances.

The short book of Micah definitely has three predictions

of the Messiah: 5:2, the birthplace; 2:12-13, Christ as king; 4:1, 7, Christ reigning in righteousness over his kingdom, the church.

Sampey (p. 175) said that Micah's greatest contribution to the religious thought and life of the world is his admirable summary of Jehovah's requirements, 6:6-8. However Micah's presentation of the messianic hope is among the finest to be found among all the prophets of Israel. Micah compares in the most favorable light with his contemporaries, Isaiah, Amos and all who came before or followed after.

Micah makes a play on several words, evidently designed to impress lessons more vividly upon the Jews. Sometimes in the translation from Hebrew into English, this play on words is lost but Micah's lessons stand out clearly in any language. There is no valid reason to question the authorship of Micah.

Petrie (*Israel's Prophets*, pps. 87-88) points out three characteristics of the book of Micah:

1. The allusions are all from the phenomena of nature familiar to the inhabitants of Judah's lowlands.
2. There are numerous instances of what is called paronomasia; a play upon the sound of words; words of different meanings, or different spelling, but of the same sound, brought together and made in some fashion to merge or mix their meanings.
3. The dialogue is an uncommon feature also found in this book since formal dialogue is not often introduced in the scripture.

These features, along with the *essential nature* of the contents make for very interesting and uplifting study from the book of Micah when one applies himself to the task.

### Outline of Micah

- I. ISRAEL AND JUDAH TO BE EXILED BUT A REMNANT TO BE SAVED—1:1-2:13.
  - A. Samaria and Judah to be judged—1:1-16.
    1. Superscription—1:1.
    2. Destruction of Samaria foretold—2-7.
      - a. General announcement of judgment—2-4.
      - b. Destruction of Samaria—5-7.
    3. Lamentation over Judah—1:8-16.
      - a. Judah practiced the same sins as did Israel—8.
      - b. The different cities of Judah afflicted—9-16.
  - B. The causes which made the judgment inevitable—2:1-11.
    1. Greedy landgrabbers—1-5.
    2. Rejection of God's prophets—6-7.
    3. Oppression of widows and children—8-10.

4. Corruption of the prophetic office—11.
- C. Restoration of the remnant promised—2:12-13.
- II. CONTRAST BETWEEN THE PRESENT DEGRADATION AND FUTURE GLORY—3:1-5:15.
  - A. The sins of the leaders—3:1-12.
    1. Civil rulers—1-4.
    2. False prophets made the people to err—5-8.
    3. General condemnation of all leaders - prophets, rulers and priests—9-11.
    4. Jerusalem to be destroyed—12.
  - B. The Messianic hope—4:1-5:15.
    1. Glory to come in the latter days—4:1-8.
      - a. Zion to be the center of glory (when the church was established—1-5.
      - b. Afflictions to be healed in that day—6-8.
    2. Distress to come before restoration—4:9-5:1.
      - a. Babylonian exile predicted—4:9-10.
      - b. Zion delivered—4:11-5:1.
    3. The Messiah and his era—5:2-15.
      - a. Messiah to be born in Bethlehem—5:2-4.
      - b. Messiah to be peace for afflicted people—5:5-6.
      - c. Messiah would provide strength for his people—5:7-9.
        - 1) Remnant of Jacob to provide blessings—7.
        - 2) Remnant to be as a lion—8.
        - 3) Remnant to triumph over enemies—9.
      - d. In this strength, Israel would triumph—5:1-15.
- III. GOD'S LAWSUIT AGAINST ISRAEL—6:1-7:20.
  - A. The case against Israel—6:1-16.
    1. Israel's ingratitude—1-5.
    2. The kind of religion God wants—6-8.
    3. The sins of the cities—9-16.
      - a. Short measures—10.
      - b. False weights—11.
      - c. Violence and lies—12.
      - d. Desolation to come because of sin—13.
      - e. Famine must come—14-15.
      - f. The sins of Omri and Ahab prevailed—16.
  - B. Reconciliation of the controversy—7:1-20.
    1. Confession of sins of the nation—1-6.
    2. Confession of faith in God—7-13.
    3. Prayer for the renewal of God's grace—14.
    4. The Lord's answer—15-17.
    5. Doxology-praise to God—18-20.

### Analysis

#### I. 1:1-2:13—ISRAEL AND JUDAH TO BE EXILED BUT A REMNANT WILL BE SAVED.

Micah's first address is of a threatening character. It is not until the close of it that a contrast is seen. The announcement of the judgment upon Samaria as well as upon the kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem forms the first part of the first address.

A. 1:1-16—*Samaria and Judah to be judged.* Micah begins with an appeal for all nations to observe the coming of the Lord for judgment, vs. 1-7. The superscription, 1:1, gives us the background of Micah the prophet; who he was; where he lived; the reigns of the kings during which he prophesied and the fact that it was the word of Jehovah concerning Samaria and Jerusalem which he received. Vs. 2-4 actually form the introduction to the prophet's address. V. 5 gives the reason for the judicial action of God against Samaria while vs. 6-7 indicate the extent of the judgment upon her.

1:8-16—*Lamentation over Judah.* Judah practiced the same sins that Israel committed. Supposedly, Judah had every advantage over the northern kingdom but she failed to use it. Judah had gone too far to avoid the captivity which must come upon her because of her sins. As the prophet in vs. 9-16 addresses the various cities of the land he makes a vivid play on the words that are involved.

B. 2:1-11—*The causes which made the judgment of God upon his people inevitable.* The prophet's enumeration of and condemnation of the sins of the people is reminiscent of the prophecy of Amos who prophesied a little earlier than Micah. They both deal with the same sins only in different locations and slightly different times, Amos in the north and Micah in the south. Oppression was used to force the weak and helpless to abandon their possessions - the widows and orphans, aged and infirmed who had no one to care for them. The rich and greedy landowners who were not content with their inheritance were devising ways to cheat the poor. God said that as they were devising evil against the people he would devise evil against them. The prophet enumerates, in vs. 1-5, the things that the greedy landgrabbing men were guilty of. It was as if they were staying awake nights to devise iniquity and then getting up early in the mornings to practice that evil. Therefore, God declared that he would devise evil times upon them. Vs. 6-7 indicate that the people were rejecting the prophets of God, telling these men who spoke the word of God not to prophesy. In vs. 8-10 the prophet indicates how far the dishonest people of the land would go in oppressing others. In v. 11 it seems as if the final step in this direction was the corruption of the prophetic office.

C. 2:12-13—*The restoration of the remnant of God's*

*people is promised.* V. 12 indicates that a remnant would be saved. This seems to indicate the gospel age where the afflicted find rest and peace with God in a new kind of relationship. The *Breaker* of v. 13 seems to indicate the Messiah.

## II. 3:1-5:15—A CONTRAST BETWEEN THE PRESENT DEGRADATION AND THE FUTURE GLORY.

The second address, although a description of the degraded state of God's people, seems to be predominantly of Messianic character. Utter desolation of Zion is foretold, the cause of which is the corruption of the civil rulers and spiritual leaders of the nation. These sins and the punishment for them may be used to emphasize the state that men find themselves in and the need for the Messiah that would one day be sent by God.

A. 3:1-12—*The sins of the leaders.* The threats in this chapter are especially directed against the leaders of Israel. The first four verses are directed against the princes—the civil rulers—who turn right to wrong and flay the people. God also threatens with punishment the false prophets who have led the people astray and hardened them in their sins by lying prophecies, vs. 5-8. Vs. 9-11 present a general condemnation of all the divinely appointed leaders of the nation—the princes, the priests and the prophets. Jerusalem is to be destroyed and Zion and the temple will be as a plowed field because of the degeneracy that existed among them.

B. 4:1-5:15—*The Messianic hope.* Chapter three leaves Zion in a picture of hopelessness but chapter four brings the sunshine of hope from heaven. Zion will eventually be exalted from the deepest degradation to the highest glory. 4:1-8 indicates that the glory is to come in the latter days. These latter days are the last days spoken of in Acts two which refer to the *gospel age in which we now live*. The world has been living in the "latter days" since the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Christ from the dead. Therefore, glorification of Zion was a spiritual glorification of a spiritual Zion. It indicated the universal glory that would come to God when it came to pass in the church. The nature of this kingdom according to Micah was to be different from any that Israel had ever known. Rather than use carnal weapons and physical force to advance the kingdom and protect her borders, the weapons would be spiritual and the force, the force of righ-

teousness, would affect the hearts of men. The purpose of Micah is not to foretell the second coming of Christ but rather to point to the first advent and to the establishment of his kingdom on earth when he came the first time. This literally came to pass on the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus from the dead.

4:9-5:1 indicate that before the restoration came to pass, distress must come. Babylonian exile is predicted, vs. 9-10. Although in the future a remnant will be saved, the majority must pay for their sins, but beyond that, vs. 11-5:1 show that Zion will be delivered therefore, there is hope even in captivity.

5:2-15 deals with the Messiah. Although many nations will be against Israel yet God shall be for them. V. 2 indicates the birthplace of Jesus. This indicates one of the marks of inspiration - a definite and specific statement regarding a future event. How different this is from such books as the *Book of Mormon* (Alma 7:10 and present day Mormon interpretation) and other false claimants to be inspired works. Another important point of the second verse is that Micah emphasized the *eternal nature* of him who would be born in Bethlehem to be ruler of Israel. This harmonizes with John 1:1-4 regarding the eternal nature of the Christ. Vs. 5-9 indicate that the Messiah will provide peace and strength for his people. Therefore, as we read of Jesus Christ in the New Testament we read of him who is the Prince of Peace and the Sustainer of his people. Vs. 10-15 indicate that it is in this strength alone that Israel will triumph. It is only in Christ that we are able to accomplish spiritual victory, Phil. 4:13; I John 5:5.

### III. 6:1-7:20—GOD'S LAWSUIT AGAINST ISRAEL.

In this third and last address Micah shows that the people bring punishment upon themselves by their ingratitude and resistance to the commandments of God and that it is only through genuine repentance that they may take part in the promised mercy. Chapter six forms an exhortation to repentance and divine threatening in the form of a judicial contest between the Lord and his people.

A. 6:1-16—*The case against Israel*. As God began to array the evidence in his controversy with Israel he first brings the witness of their ingratitude to testify against them. After all that God had done for them they remained unthankful, vs.

1-5. Vs. 6-8, God indicates the kind of religion that he wants. Israel cannot deny God's gracious acts for them. The remembrance of God's kindness calls to their mind the base ingratitude which they had manifested toward God by rebelling against him. It is with this background that the question is raised in vs. 6-7, "What can be done to appease the wrath of the Lord?" Since Micah has spoken in the name of the congregation of Israel in vs. 6-7 he now turns and speaks on behalf of God in v. 8. There are three things that God requires of his people. These cover all of the categories of their relationship with men and God. These three things are: (1) do justly; (2) love kindness; (3) walk humbly with thy God.

Because Israel is completely lacking in these virtues, God must first threaten and then punish them. Therefore, Micah introduces the threatening words of the Lord himself and enumerates the different sins of the greedy people: short measures, v. 10; false weights, v. 11; violence and lies, v. 12. Because of these sins desolations and famine must come, 13-15. As if those sins listed were not enough, the prophet says that the land still walked in the sins of Omri and Ahab, two of the most wicked kings in the existence of Israel, v. 16.

B. 7:1-20—*Reconciliation of the controversy*. The prophet responds as it were on behalf of the penitent people of the future.

Vs. 1-6 form a sorrowful confession of the sins of a nation. As the sins had universally corrupted the land of God's people, a universal confession and repentance must take place. Vs. 7-13 constitute a confession of faith in God. The penitent are confident in the hope that the Lord's mercy will extend unto them and that he will not allow their enemies to triumph over them but will give those of penitent hearts the blessings from heaven. V. 14 is a prayer for the renewal of God's grace. Vs. 15-17 constitute God's answer in the affirmative.

Vs. 18-20 form a doxology - the prophet closes by praising the mercy and grace of God. The nature, the name and the acts of God are incomparable. God's incomparable nature is now revealed in grace and compassion toward the repentant. With this lofty praise, Micah closes his book. The apostle Paul, in Rom. 11:22-36, gives us a deeper insight into the real meaning of this praise.



## Chapter Fifteen

### NAHUM

#### Name

*Nahum* signifies "consolation" or "comfort." Nahum is called the "Elkoshite" in 1:1. The location of Elkosh is a much disputed matter. Some have argued that the location was in Galilee; others have identified it as being in Capernaum; some think that it was in Assyria while still others have thought that the location was in Judah. Raven, Young and others favor the latter location. However the location of this Elkosh will probably remain a mystery.

#### Date

Nahum seems to have written sometime between 664 and 606 B.C. Sampey places the date at about 630 which may not be far from the time that he wrote. Whatever the date, it must be between the capture of No-amon or *Thebes* in 664-3 B.C. and the fall of Nineveh in 612 B.C. because the former was referred to as past and the latter as still in the future (3:8). Other than a general period, the date cannot be fixed.

#### Times of the Prophet

Assyria was probably at the peak of her power at the writing of this book. Her rulers were known for their ruthlessness. Ashurbanipal boasted of his violence and atrocities. He boasted of putting out the eyes of his enemies, of tearing off their limbs, of boiling them in tar, of skinning them alive and many other cruel and inhuman acts. The size of the pyramids of human heads left after the battles was a monument to his perverted pride as well as to the pride of all of the Assyrians who delighted in these things. The Ninevites felt that they were invulnerable. That pride must be brought low. Nineveh must reap as she had sown according to the universal law of God. Nineveh was overthrown, not because

of military weakness or due to the superiority of the military strategy used by her enemies but because of her sins. Because her cup of iniquity was filled up she must reap the divine retribution. Therefore, all of her wealth and military power were insufficient to save her.

The theme of Nahum was the downfall of Nineveh. God's people, long subjected to the atrocities of the Assyrians, will now be comforted to know that God had not been forgetful of them in their plight. The Prophet described the sins of Nineveh and its overthrow in vivid language. John Edgar McFadyen, (*Introduction to the Old Testament*, p. 206), said, "Poetically the little book of Nahum is one of the finest in the Old Testament. Its descriptions are vivid and impetuous; they set us before the walls of the beleaguered Nineveh and show us the war-chariots of her enemies darting to and fro like lightning. 2:4, the prancing steeds, the flashing swords, the glittering spears, 3:2-3. The poetry glows with passionate joy as it contemplates the ruin of cruel and victorious Assyria."

It has been said that "Nahum's book is one great at last!" Nahum gives voice to the outraged conscience of God's people who had been crushed by the oppressive acts of the enemies of God's purposes.

### Problems of the Book

Other than determining the exact location of the particular Elkosh of which Nahum was a citizen, about the only other problem of the book is that of unity. Raven aptly observes that it was not until well into the nineteenth century that the authenticity and integrity of the book of Nahum were called into question. This change of the critics came, supposedly, upon an alleged discovery by Gunkel of the remnants of an old alphabetic poem in chapter one. Thus, with a *supposed* find of something which the critics declared to be too late to fit in with the authorship of Nahum they began to call the unity and genuineness into question. However the critics themselves are in no manner agreed upon that particular "find" and it would be difficult indeed to construct an acrostic poem in chapter one. In 1:1 the superscription declares that the contents are a vision of Nahum regarding the burden of Nineveh. There is no valid reason for rejecting his

superscription as genuine. The matters prophesied by Nahum came true. God buried Nineveh in her own dust and other nations soon forgot her. So effectively did God dig her grave and blot out her memory that it is reported that centuries later Alexander the Great fought a battle close by and was not even aware that he was near the site of a once great city. So completely did God bury her that many critical scholars held the Bible references to Nineveh in dispute. It was not until 1845, when Layard identified the site known as Kuykunjik to be the ancient city of Nineveh and the excavations unearthed the records proving the Bible references to be accurate, that these critics were silenced.

### Outline of Nahum

- I. JEHOVAH DECREES NINEVEH'S DOOM—1:1-15.
  - A. The goodness and severity of Jehovah—1:1-7.
    1. The superscription—1:1.
    2. The vengeance of God—2-3.
    3. The terribleness of his anger toward sin—4-6.
    4. The greatness of his mercy—7.
  - B. The complete overthrow of Nineveh—8-15.
    1. Assyria to be swept away as with a flood—8-11.
    2. Judah delivered from Assyria—12-13.
    3. The destruction of Assyria—14.
    4. Rejoicing in Zion—15.
- II. JEHOVAH DECREED THE SIEGE AND DESTRUCTION OF NINEVEH—2:1-13.
  - A. Nineveh is assaulted and overthrown—1-10.
    1. Preparation for the attack—1.
    2. God to exalt his people—2.
    3. The assault of Nineveh is described—3-10.
      - a. The furious attack by Nineveh's enemies—3-6.
      - b. The captivity of the people—7.
      - c. Nineveh's defenders flee—8.
      - d. The city is plundered—9-10.
  - B. The humiliated city is compared with its former glory—11-13.
    1. Questions asked relative to where the strength of Nineveh went—11-12.
    2. Nineveh's overthrow certain because God decreed it—13.
- III. NINEVEH'S SINS AND HER INEVITABLE DOOM—3:1-19.
  - A. Nineveh's fate was to be retribution for her own crimes—1-7.
    1. A vivid description of the battle—1-3.
    2. Her sins had brought her to this end—4.
    3. Jehovah would himself uncover her shame—5-7.
  - B. Nineveh's fate sealed—8-19.
    1. Nineveh would be as No-amon—8-11.
    2. All of Nineveh's efforts at defense would be useless—12-17.
    3. The universal joy would come at the fall of Nineveh—18-19.

## Analysis

## I. 1:1-15—JEHOVAH DECREES THE DOOM OF NINEVEH.

Nahum pictures Jehovah as a jealous God who avenges evil. God has determined to break the yoke which Assyria has laid upon Judah and to destroy the enemy of his people.

A. 1:1-17—*The goodness and severity of Jehovah.* V. 1, the superscription. The word burden comes from the Hebrew word which means to *lift up, to carry, to heave*. Therefore, this is a word of extreme gravity directed against Nineveh. Vs. 2-3 deal with the vengeance of God. We have a description of divine justice and its judicial manifestation on earth in vs. 4-6. V. 7 sets forth the greatness of the mercy of God.

B. 8-15—*The complete overthrow of Nineveh.* Vs. 8-11 indicate that Assyria will be swept away as with a flood. God's wrath will not fall upon those who trust in him but only upon his enemies. Vs. 12-13 show that Judah would be delivered from Assyria. The power of Nineveh will be destroyed and her yoke will be removed from Judah's neck. Nahum explains the divine purpose more fully in order to confirm the threat expressed in vs. 8-11. V. 14 shows the destruction of Assyria. At her destruction there will be rejoicing in Zion, v. 15. God has weighed Nineveh in the balances and she has been found wanting. Therefore, God has prepared a grave for them and their idols.

## II. 2:1-13—JEHOVAH DECREES THE SIEGE AND DESTRUCTION OF NINEVEH.

The Lord sent a powerful army against Nineveh to avenge the disgrace that Assyria brought upon Judah and also to restore the glory which once had belonged to Judah. Nineveh is conquered and perishes. When Judah hears the glad tidings she rejoices.

A. 1-10—*Nineveh is assaulted and falls.* 2:1 indicates the preparation for the attack. V. 1 is an irony in which the prophet of God says to the wicked Assyrians, "You had better get strong because you are going to perish." V. 2 indicates that God will exalt his people while bringing low their enemy. Vs. 3-10 describe the assault upon Nineveh. We have a vivid picture drawn for us of the attackers coming against Nineveh with their battering rams, entering the city with ease

and the city falling. Upon seeing the certainty of her fall, the mighty men begin to flee in every direction trying to escape from the total destruction which they see coming.

B. 11-13—*The humiliated city is compared with its former glory.* Questions are asked relative to where the strength of Nineveh fled, 11-12. At the time that Nahum prophesied this, Nineveh's overthrow was certain because God decreed it, v. 13.

### III. 3:1-19—NINEVEH'S SINS AND HER INEVITABLE DOOM.

Nineveh's destruction has been announced and her sins declared to be the cause for that destruction. Nineveh has brought the horrible end on herself by her crimes and would be no more able to avoid it than that great Egyptian city of No-amon had been able to escape. In spite of all of her resources she will suffer the fate of complete oblivion.

A. 1-7—*Nineveh's fate was to be a retribution for her own crimes.* The city of blood would be filled with her own blood. The city filled with pride will be filled with her own shame. The Assyrians who had massacred multitudes will now themselves be massacred. Vs. 1-3 draw a vivid description of the battle which is to come while v. 4 shows that her sins had brought her to this end. Vs. 5-7 declare that God himself would uncover her shame, i.e., when Nineveh fell it would be because God had caused it.

B. 8-10—*Nineveh's fate sealed.* Nineveh would share the fate of No-Amon, 8-11. As that great Egyptian city fell, so would the great Assyrian city. Vs. 12-17 indicate that all of Nineveh's efforts at defense would be useless. The power and wealth would fail them in this day of their great need. This is the end to which any individual or nation can look that ignores the righteousness of God. Vs. 18-19 indicate the universal joy that will reign when the wicked city falls.

## Chapter Sixteen

### HABAKKUK

#### Name

The book is named for its author, *Habakkuk*, which means "embrace," or "embracer." Habakkuk gives us no clue to his lineage; he does not state the place of his birth; he makes no allusion to the reigning king. He merely states his name and engages in his prophetic work. There are several interesting theories about Habakkuk but they remain in the field of speculation.

Among the speculations are: (1) he was the son of the Shunamite woman during the time of Elisha in the ninth century; (2) another theory has Habakkuk as the watchman set by Isaiah (21:6) to watch for the fall of Babylon; (3) the apocryphal book, *Bel and the Dragon*, claims Habakkuk carried pottage and bread to Daniel in the lion's den; (4) Eiselen records the view that he was a man of the tribe of Simeon who died two years before the return of the Jews from exile (*The Minor Prophets*, pps. 463-4); (5) Keil and others believe Habakkuk to be of the tribe of Levi. This belief is based on the ending of the psalm in ch. three. However David and Hezekiah participated in the temple music but neither was from the tribe of Levi. Therefore, there is no valid reason to conclude that just because a man had some connection with the temple worship that he was a Levite.

#### Date

Habakkuk prophesied in Judah probably in the latter part of the reign of Josiah and in the reigns of Jehoahaz and Jehoiakim. The power of Assyria had been broken and now Babylon was the world power. Nineveh had fallen but the exile was yet future when the book was written, therefore, it was written between 612 and 605 B.C., probably shortly before 605 while Jehoiakim reigned.

#### Problems of the Book

Negative criticism denies the unity of the book. Negative

critics use three main lines of reasoning against the book: (1) misplaced passages; (2) glosses; and (3) additions at a later date.

Chapters one and two are attacked on the basis of the first two lines of reasoning while chapter three is attacked on the third basis. The critics say that chapter three is a psalm placed there by a later writer. Raven (*Old Testament Intro.*, p. 235) replies to these arguments in a very concise way. He said, "The presumption is that an author wrote all of the work which bears his name unless there be strong evidence to the contrary. In this case such evidence is lacking. It is unreasonable to require proof and genuineness of every part of a book."

### Contents

The book of Habakkuk differs fundamentally from the other prophetic books. The book seems to be centering around the prophet speaking to God on behalf of the people. When Habakkuk cries to God because of the great injustice in the land, Jehovah points to the Chaldeans, whom he has raised up that he might chastise the nations by them. However instead of solving the problem that disturbed the prophet, the wicked Chaldeans simply presented another phase of the same problem in his mind: "Why does God allow a nation as sinful as Babylon to triumph over people better than they are?" G.A. Smith pointed out (*Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. 2, p. 130) that the task of the other prophets was to address the nation of Israel on behalf of God but Habakkuk speaks to God on behalf of Israel.

Among the many lessons to learn from Habakkuk are:

1. The Lord's judgment upon the wicked is universal, ch. 3.
2. Faithfulness alone is the guarantee of permanency, 2:4.
3. Evil carries within itself its own destruction, ch. 2.
4. God disciplines his people, ch. 1.

The purpose of the book is primarily to answer the question raised by the faithful, "How long Lord?" The answer is given with the emphasis upon faith, "The just shall live by his faith." This passage is quoted three times in the New Testament; Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11 and Hebrews 10:38. In Romans Paul emphasizes the word *just*; in Gal. the emphasis is upon *faith*; in Hebrews 10:38 the emphasis is upon *live*. Therefore, the purpose is seen to be fulfilled, not in stating "how long" in terms of time but "how" in terms of integrity

- by faith. This is often the lesson that the reader of the Bible observes throughout the Old and New Covenants.

### Outline of Habakkuk

- I. JUDGMENT UPON JUDAH—1:1-2:3.
  - A. The prophet's first perplexity and God's reply—1:1-11.
    1. Superscription—1:1.
    2. Habakkuk laments the supremacy of sin—2-4.
    3. God's reply—5-11.
      - a. God has raised the Chaldeans up—5-6.
      - b. Their character is of self and not of God—7-10.
      - c. They worshipped might as a god—11.
  - B. The prophet's second perplexity and God's reply—1:12-2:3.
    1. How can a holy God use a sinful people to chastise a people less sinful than they?—1:12-17.
      - a. Confident hope expressed—1:12.
        - 1) Perplexity at God's plans—1:13-17.
      - b. God's reply—2:1-3.
        - 1) Habakkuk's decision - wait—2:1.
        - 2) God's command—2:2-3.
- II. GOD'S JUDGMENT UPON BABYLON—2:4-20.
  - A. Fundamental principles of God's dealing with men and nations—2:4-5.
    1. Pride condemns because it leads from God—4a.
    2. The righteous live by faith—4b.
    3. The wicked cannot continue—5.
  - B. Five woes pronounced upon Babylon—2:6-20.
    1. Woe upon lust of conquest and plunder—6-8.
    2. Woe upon godless gain—9-11.
    3. Woe upon cities built upon the foundation of blood—12-14.
    4. Woe upon cruel violence—13-17.
    5. Woe upon idolatry—18-20.
- III. PRAYER FOR PITY IN MIDST OF JUDGMENT—3:1-19.
  - A. Petition for revival—1-2.
  - B. The past acts of God provided assurance for the future—3-16.
  - C. The believers joy in God as certain as the integrity of God—17-19.

### Analysis

#### I. 1:1-2:3—JUDGMENT UPON JUDAH.

The book of Habakkuk offers some interesting perplexities of the prophet which have been representative of people through the ages when they showed concern about the affairs of the world.

A. 1:1-11—*The prophet's first perplexity and God's reply.*  
 V. 1 contains the heading, not only to chapters one and two, but to the whole book of which chapter three is an integral part. Habakkuk calls his writing a burden because it announces



heavy judgment upon Judah and Babylon. Vs. 2-4 form a lamentation of Habakkuk over the seeming dominion of wickedness and violence. It caused him to cry out, "How long?" Keil, in his commentary, points out that his complaint involves a petition for help, not merely an expression of the prophet's personal desire for the removal of the prevailing unrighteousness.

Vs. 5-11 form God's reply. God emphasizes that he has raised them up but their character was of self, not of God. God had providentially allowed room for this people to come into power but he did not mould their character.

B. 1:12-2:3—*The prophet's second perplexity and God's reply.* 1:12-17 raises the question, "how long can a holy God use sinful people to chastise a people less sinful than they are?" V. 12 expresses the confident hope that God's people shall not be destroyed. Vs. 13-17 express perplexity at God's plan but v. 13 is a tribute to the faithfulness of God and his righteousness. However the prophet expresses his inability to understand how the holiness of God can tolerate the perverseness of the Babylonians. Vs. 14-17 indicate the universal actions, character and disposition of the Babylonians.

God replies to Habakkuk in 2:1-3. The prophet stood upon the tower. Whether this was an actual high place where the prophet literally stood or was but a figure of speech indicating that place where he was wont to go for meditation we may never know. In v. 2 God answers Habakkuk and gives the command to write the vision and make it plain upon the tablets. The emphasis is not, as some have thought, that this should be plain enough to read it as he runs but rather it should be clear enough that he who reads it may run, i.e., he may understand the message, give heed to it and escape the judgment.

## II. 2:4-20—GOD'S JUDGMENT UPON BABYLON.

This section is intended to emphasize a contrast.

A. 2:4-5—*The fundamental principle of God's dealing with men and nations is revealed.* God intends to show that the proud cannot trust God, therefore, must stand condemned while by way of contrast, those who are the righteous because of their faith in God shall live.

V. 4 has reference to a situation which was then present

but the principle has applied in all ages. The Babylonians were proud and puffed up, therefore, they would be destroyed. On the other hand, those who were righteous before God were so because of their faith in God.

B. 2:6-20—*Five woes pronounced upon Babylon.* Vs. 6-20 are to further emphasize the contrast between the proud and the faithful. The proud Babylonians lusted after land and plunder therefore, they must suffer the woes, 6-8. Vs. 9-11 constitute a woe pronounced upon godless gain. The Chaldeans thought that by their sinful actions they would build an empire that would last forever but God knew differently. Vs. 12-14 is a woe upon the city whose foundation was the blood of men. Such iniquity would cry out to God from the earth and must suffer punishment. Vs. 13-17 is a woe upon cruel violence which the Babylonians practiced. Vs. 18-20 constitute a woe upon the idolatry that prevailed in Babylon.

### III. 3:1-19—PRAYER FOR PITY IN THE MIDST OF JUDGMENT.

One must remember that this chapter is a prayer set in poetry. As poetry it has been exalted by profane as well as spiritual minds, Petrie (*Israel's Prophets*, p. 141) told of a time when Benjamin Franklin was allegedly in the court of France in its most ungodly day. In a club of infidels, the Bible was the subject of ridicule. Franklin appeared not to notice their ridicule. In a momentary pause he began to read aloud a passage from an old book. All listened and praised the passage as sublime, and wondered where he had found the treasure. It was the psalm of Habakkuk. Its grandeur thrilled them, and evoked their hearty praise.

Vs. 1-2 form a petition of Habakkuk for a revival of the works of God in the midst of his people. Vs. 3-16, the past acts of God among his people proved assurance for their future salvation. Vs. 17-19, the believers joy in God alone is as sure as the integrity of God. Therefore, the perplexity of the prophet is cleared away and faith is clear and strong. Troublous times are coming but the faithful shall enjoy the salvation of God.

## Chapter Seventeen

### ZEPHANIAH

#### Name

The book is named from its author, *Zephaniah*, which means "Jehovah hides," or "he whom Jehovah has hidden or protected." The name was worn by three persons in the Old Testament (I Chron. 6:36-38; Jer. 21:1; Zech. 6:10).

Zephaniah's ancestry is traced back four generations in 1:1. The Hezekiah mentioned here is thought to be King Hezekiah of Judah. No valid objection to this inference has been raised.

#### Date

The superscription assigns this book to the reign of Josiah. Josiah's reign falls into two parts separated by the reform of 621. It would seem from 2:13 that the destruction of Nineveh is still future and the tenor of the book as a whole would indicate that idolatrous practices were still at large in the land. This would necessitate the prophecy preceding the reformation by Josiah. Some have thought that the objections voiced by Zephaniah were toward those who had reformed in life but had not repented in heart. However the prophet indicates that the practices were still prevalent which at this time were antecedent to Josiah's reform.

#### The Times of the Prophet

In that the prophet seems to deal with the times prior to Josiah's reform, we look to the early part of Josiah's reign. In order to better understand how those times came to be so dark, one must look still further back into the times of his father, Amon and his grandfather, Manasseh. Manasseh is remembered for his extreme sinfulness and cruelty and Amon continued in all the sins of his father until he was finally assassinated by his servants. Josiah was only eight years old when he came to the throne of Judah. The kingdom was in a spiritually bankrupt state. It would seem that Josiah's heart was turned to reform by a righteous priest of God and the preaching of faithful Zephaniah.

## Contents

G.A. Smith (*The Book of the Twelve Prophets*, vol. 2, p. 47) said, "No hotter book lies in the Old Testament. Neither dew nor grass nor tree nor any blossom lives in it, but everywhere is fire, smoke, and darkness, drifting chaff, ruins, nettles, salt pits, with owls and raven looking from the windows of desolate palaces." Smith made a perceptive observation respecting the nature of the contents up to a point. However G.A. Smith believed that there is no great hope in the book of Zephaniah, hardly any tenderness and never a glimpse of beauty. When one reads the book and observes that it is the severe denunciation of sin and the tender announcement of God's love that go hand in hand always, he can more fully appreciate the contents of this book. There is hope; great and exalted hope for the faithfully obedient child of God. Zephaniah does not fail to emphasize that hope.

Why is the book of Zephaniah one of the unfamiliar books of the Bible? It is little read by general Bible readers and perhaps even less study has been given to it. Why? The answer may lie partly in the fact that there is less individuality in this book than in any of the other prophets. Even though this may account for the general neglect of this little book, it should not be allowed to detract from the excellence of it.

Among the several lessons to learn from the book are:

1. God is the God of the universe.
2. God is the God of righteousness and holiness and expects of his worshippers a life in accord with his will.
3. The Day of the Lord is a day of terror and doom for the sinner but a day of deliverance for the faithful.
4. The judgment of God must be universal in order for the righteousness and justice of God to be vindicated. He has always been interested in all people, especially in those who affect his purposes manifested through his covenant people.

The authenticity of nearly every passage in chapter 2:1-3:8 has been questioned by the critic. One would naturally expect this from the negative critics since they cannot accept the concept of plenary verbal inspiration and, cannot therefore, accept the foretelling of any event as actual fact.

## Outline of Zephaniah

- I. GOD'S DAY OF WRATH UPON JUDAH—1:1-18.  
     A. Superscription—1:1.

- B. Judgment upon all of Judah—1:2-6.
  - 1. Prelude - judgment upon the whole land—2-3.
  - 2. Judah and Jerusalem must pay for their idolatry—4-6.
- C. Judgment to be on sinners of every rank—7-13.
  - 1. On princes—7-8.
  - 2. On thieves—9.
  - 3. On merchants—10-11.
  - 4. On the rich and indifferent—12-13.
- D. The imminence of the Day of the Lord—14-18.
  - 1. The day was very close—14.
  - 2. It was to be a terrible day—15-17.
  - 3. No deliverance was to be had by material means—18.
- II. THE CALL TO REPENTANCE AND PATIENCE—2:1-3:8.
  - A. Exhortation to seek God's deliverance—1-3.
  - B. The reason for their need to seek: God will judge—2:4-15.
    - 1. God would judge the small nations nearby—4-10.
      - a. Philistia—4-7.
      - b. Moab and Ammon—8-10.
    - 2. God would judge all the gods of the earth—11.
    - 3. God would judge the mighty nations far off—12-15.
      - a. Ethiopia—12.
      - b. Assyria—13-15.
  - C. If God punished the heathen for their sin, his righteousness demanded that he judge Judah for their sins—3:1-8.
    - 1. Woe upon the polluted city—1-7.
      - a. Classes of sinners and sin—1-4.
      - b. God reminded them of his righteousness and sovereignty—5-7.
    - 2. The conclusion is inevitable that they must be punished along with the heathen—8.
- III. SALVATION AND GLORY FOR THE RIGHTEOUS REMNANT—3:9-20.
  - A. God would gather the remnant from among the heathen—9-10.
  - B. The remnant would be cleansed and sanctified—11-13.
  - C. Israel would be comforted and honored before all—14-20.

### Analysis

#### I. 1:1-18—GOD'S DAY OF WRATH UPON ALL JUDAH, JERUSALEM IN PARTICULAR.

Zephaniah is concerned about the judgment that is going to come upon Judah. Zephaniah, more vividly than does any other prophet, paints a picture of divine judgment against all sin. This is what makes the close of the book so much more powerful and causes it to seem so compassionate.

A. 1:1—*Superscription*. In the opening verse, the prophet's family is traced back through four generations to his great-great-grandfather, *Hezekiah*.

B. 1:2-6—*Judgment on Judah and Jerusalem*. In vs. 2-3 the prophet indicates that the face of the ground (probably

an expression for the land of Judah) will be swept clean. Vs. 4-6 indicate that Judah and Jerusalem will be chastized because of their idolatry.

C. 7-13—*Judgment was to fall upon sinners of every rank.* The royal family must be punished because they have taken the lead in sinning. All those who clothed themselves in foreign dress must also be punished. Their dress betrayed their thinking. They esteemed the standards of the heathen more than they did God's standard. A person's dress generally reflects his standards. V. 9 indicates that the thieves who filled their master's houses with extortion and violence in order to enrich their masters must be judged. Vs. 10-11 show that the merchants and men of money who had grown rich through usury and deceitful trade must be judged. V. 12 indicates that the rich who lived riotously and indifferently toward God must be judged because they lived as if there were no God even though they perhaps gave lip service to his existence.

D. 14-18—*The imminence of the Day of the Lord.* The great day of judgment would not be delayed but must soon burst upon Judah and Jerusalem. The emphasis is upon the nearness of the Day of the Lord and the fact that all events were preparing for that day. It is a day when God's wrath would literally overflow. This was the only hope that the righteous had, therefore, it is not simply that God would come to destroy for the sake of destruction. It was to be a terrible day, 15-17, and v. 18 clearly shows that there would be no deliverance by material means.

## II. 2:1-3:8—THE CALL TO REPENTANCE.

Zephaniah has just described the judgment that would come upon Judah and Jerusalem and has emphasized the nearness of it. In view of this he summons the righteous to seek the Lord and strive more diligently after righteousness that they might be hid from God's wrath when that great day came.

A. 1-3—*The exhortation to seek God's deliverance.* This is actually a call to conversion as Keil notes in his commentary. It is addressed to all of Judah. They are called upon to examine themselves and then to act according to God's law.

B. 2:4-15—*There was a reason for their need to seek*

*God: God was going to judge.* The prophet indicates that God is going to bring judgment upon the heathen near and far, 4-15. None could escape. If this were true then a self-examination by God's children would lead them to conclude that they would be judged.

C. 3:1-8—*If God would punish the heathen for their sins, his righteousness would demand that he also punish Judah for their sins.* Lest the Israelites, in their pride, think themselves to be above judgment, God reminds them of the pollution and sin that filled the holy city, 1-7. He reminds them that all of the classes of sinners and the sins must be punished, 1-4. God further reminds them that he is in the midst of the city and that he is still sovereign. Therefore, if God is righteous and just and he judges one for their sin he must judge all - even Judah - for their sin. The conclusion is irresistible that they must be punished as well as the heathen.

### III. 3:9-20—SALVATION AND THE GLORY FOR THE RIGHTEOUS.

This section has to do with the restoration of the righteous remnant from the captivity and the position of honor that God would bestow upon them when he brought them back into the land. This seems to be a prophetic type in which the promise of restoration after judgment is indicated but the full meaning is the gospel age when all men have the opportunity to worship and serve God in truth and spirit.

A. 9-10—*God shall gather the remnant from among the heathen.* Even though this took place in the restoration, the Holy Spirit (Rom. 11:15), applies it to the gospel age.

B. 11-13—*The remnant would be cleansed and sanctified.* Again this was but a prophetic type of that final cleansing from sin offered by God through the blood of Christ and the sanctification that takes place in him.

C. 14-20—*Israel comforted and honored before all.* This would indicate that the honor given to fleshly Israel in a small degree after the restoration was but a faint shadow of that honor that spiritual Israel (the church, Gal. 6:16) was to receive in the eyes of all the world.

## Chapter Eighteen

### HAGGAI

#### Name

The meaning of the name *Haggai* is uncertain. There are several definitions given, among which are the following: "festal," "a feast," "festive," "festival of Jehovah," "my feast," and "feast of Jehovah."

The exact meaning of the name may never be established but surely, since all of the meanings are similar in nature, we can safely assume that his name had something to do with a festival.

Haggai was evidently older than his contemporary, Zechariah. Some assume on the basis of 2:3 that Haggai was among the small group who had seen the glory of the former temple of Solomon before its destruction in 586 B.C. If this were true he would have been well over eighty years old when he prophesied. In Heb. 12:26, the application of Haggai is made to the passing of the law of Moses and the establishment of the kingdom of Christ on earth, *which kingdom the writer to the Hebrews was in*, having already received it.

#### Date

The date of Haggai is most easily determined from the text. It is the first prophecy that is dated by a Gentile system of dating. He appears in 520 B.C. and preached four messages in four months and then disappeared from the prophetic scene. His ministry ended after about one hundred fourteen days but the *effect* of his work continued.

#### Times of the Prophet

It was during the second year of the reign of Darius that Haggai appeared. Most of the history covering the details of this period is found in the book of Ezra. Haggai watched as Jerusalem rose out of her ashes. This does not cheer the aged prophet because, as he looks, he notices that work on the house of God had been started but no workmen were busy there. They had been called away to work on the houses of the



rich. The prophet does not sit down and weep helplessly. Even though we might imagine that we see a tear furrowing his leathery cheek, we could well believe it to be caused by indignation as well as sorrow. Haggai marches to the rich and propounds the question, "Why do you build your houses and allow God's house to lie desolate?" The rich were not accustomed to being approached thusly but it had its result. Haggai cared not for the favor of men and was well fitted for the task of arousing his brethren to the building of the temple.

### Contents

Petrie points out that Haggai delivered four short, incisive messages: (1) divine reproof; (2) divine remedy; (3) divine explanation; and (4) divine encouragement.

Haggai, as Eiselen pointed out, was *a man with one idea*. With this one idea in mind he set his hands to the task and his efforts were based upon a "thus saith the Lord." His preaching, therefore, indicates to us the power of preaching the simple word of God in its purity. Robinson points out that "the most striking feature of Haggai's message is its repeated claim to divine origin: five times in the thirty-eight verses of his prophecy, he tells us that the word of Jehovah came unto him; four times, also, he used the formula, "Thus saith Jehovah of Hosts;" five times, "saith Jehovah of Hosts;" and four times simply, "saith Jehovah."

A few of the several great lessons to be learned from this short book of thirty-eight verses are:

1. The straightforward preaching of the word of God will always accomplish a great victory.
2. Indifference is contagious.
3. Faithfulness is directly affected by material prosperity.
4. Discouragement is not a proper cause for neglecting duties.
5. The time to do a good work is now.
6. The basis of all successful preaching is "thus saith the Lord."

This kind of preaching has always stirred spirits, moved people and obtained results.

Although the book of Haggai is very brief, negative critics have challenged its unity. Their efforts to prove that Haggai is of composite authorship reflects the same old tired efforts found in their every attempt to offset the fact of the plenary verbal inspiration of the Old Testament. Their allegations are generally based on literary analysis and are groundless, repre-

sending only the subjective views of the negative critics.

One thing that negative critics have challenged in this book is the prophecy in 2:20-23. They hold that Haggai tried to revive the doctrine of the ideal king and fail altogether to see the valuable prophetic announcement of future matters. Haggai refers to the fact that heathen governments would fall but God's divine government vested in his servant Zerubbabel would continue. This would encourage Israel to be faithful and also is connected with the fact of the coming Messiah. The chosen line of David was restored in Zerubbabel and was to stand secure in the face of the destruction of the heathen governments. It is thus an exaltation of the messianic line represented by Zerubbabel. When Babylon captured Judah, the Davidic line had been cut off from the throne and was even threatened by extinction. God would allow no power on earth to thwart his purpose and this prophecy clearly indicates such. Israel's hope is restored in Zerubbabel therefore, the book closes on a grand encouragement to the people.

### Outline of Haggai

- I. THE FIRST MESSAGE - REBUKE—1:1-15.
  - A. The prophet and his commission—1.
  - B. The message—2-11.
    1. The people's attitude and action—2-6.
      - a. Their selfishness—2-4.
      - b. Their actions—5-6.
    2. God's displeasure and exhortation—7-11.
      - a. Consider your ways—7-8.
      - b. God had withheld blessings from them—9-11.
  - C. The people's response—12-15.
    1. The leaders feared along with the people—12.
    2. God reassures them also of his presence—13.
    3. Work resumed—14-15.
- II. THE SECOND MESSAGE - SOLUTION OFFERED—2:1-9.
  - A. Admonition to work—1-5.
    1. Some had failed in the work because of their remembrance of the glory of the former temple—1-3.
    2. The fact that God was with them should suffice—4-5.
  - B. The temple's future glory—6-9.
    1. The present order of things to be upset—6-7.
      - a. God would do it, cf. Heb. 12:26.
      - b. After the shaking, the temple would be glorious.
    2. The latter glory would exceed the former—8-9.
- III. THE THIRD MESSAGE - EXPLANATION OF PRESENT SITUATION—2:10-19.
  - A. The cause of the trouble was in the heart—10-13.
    1. The holy could not make the unholy, holy—10-12.
    2. The unholy would contaminate the holy—13.

3. The conclusion was inevitable that their attitude had brought hardships on them.
- B. The attitude of the people was all wrong—14-19.
  1. Excuses in spite of chastisement—14-17.
  2. Blessings would come only when people obeyed—18-19.

#### IV. THE FOURTH MESSAGE - GOD'S ENCOURAGEMENT—2: 20-23.

- A. Nations all around would be overthrown—20-22.
  1. These nations would oppose and oppress—21.
  2. God would do for his people what they could not do for themselves—22.
- B. The messianic hope preserved in Zerubbabel—23.

### Analysis

#### I. 1:1-15—THE FIRST MESSAGE - REBUKE.

The brief prophecy of Haggai falls into four divisions. Haggai was called to a mission unlike any assigned to the prophets before. In accordance with that he was given a name, *Haggai*, which stands alone in the scripture. He is given a new title, 1:13, *messenger*. He is in effect Jehovah's angel. He enters the scene when Israel is at a crucial stage in her existence. They may well be on their way back into oblivion but the preaching of Haggai transforms them into the people that God wanted them to be.

A. 1:1—*The prophet and his commission*. There is no doubt as to the time of the prophecy - the second year of Darius, 520 B.C. Even the month and the day are explicitly stated. Very little is known about Haggai except what can be gleaned from the text and a few isolated passages.

B. 1:2-11—*The message*. Haggai begins by rebuking the people for their unconcern for the house of God. They were trying to excuse themselves on the grounds that the time was not right to build the house. However in the sight of God there was no excuse. Their failure lay at the feet of the selfishness of their hearts. Vs. 7-11, God reveals his displeasure and through the prophet exhorted the people to arise and build. Haggai admonished the people to choose a way that would please God.

C. 12-15—*The people's response*. The people feared Jehovah, the good example being set by their leaders, and they resumed the building of the temple. Activity usually follows the fear of God implanted in the heart.

**II. 2:1-9—THE SECOND MESSAGE - GOD OFFERS A SOLUTION TO THE PEOPLE.**

Chapter two contains three different messages from God, vs. 1-9 referring to the relation in which the new temple would stand to the former temple.

A. 1-5—*The people are admonished to work.* Some had failed in the work because they had thought so much of the former glory of the first temple and, because they could not match that glory, were using that as an excuse not to build. This was not a valid excuse, vs. 4-5. The very fact that God was with them now should suffice them in whatever work they were supposed to be undertaking. It is not external glory but the presence of God that counts.

B. 6-9—*The temple's future glory.* The fact that God had said that his presence should suffice them leads naturally into the description of the future glory of his temple. God would upset the present order of things, vs. 6-7. This literally came to pass when the Old Covenant was taken out of the way and the New inaugurated. The writer to the Hebrews referred to this in Heb. 12:26 and makes the application to the spiritual kingdom, the Israel of God (Gal. 6:16, the church). Some attempt to transpose this prophecy into a time yet future and make a physical application to a fleshly kingdom. However every effort to do this must flounder against the inspired interpretation of the writer to the Hebrew Christians. The application there is to a kingdom *already received*. It is a "past tense" application and it was after the shaking, according to Haggai, that the temple would be glorified, vs. 8-9. The church is the temple of God, I Cor. 3:16-17. The old physical temple was the house of God in the Mosaic dispensation but today the church is the house of God, I Tim. 3:15. Therefore, as we view the teaching of the apostle Paul in Gal. 4:21-31, we are impressed with the fact that the heavenly Jerusalem is far greater than the earthly and the spiritual kingdom is infinitely more glorious than was the old fleshly.

**III. 2:10-19—THE THIRD MESSAGE - EXPLANATION OF THEIR PRESENT SITUATION.**

The Jews found themselves in a very difficult situation regarding their material blessings. They might ask themselves,

“What is the trouble? We are the covenant people of God and he owes us these blessings.” Haggai identifies the problem.

A. 10-13—*The trouble the people experienced was because of what was in their heart.* As the prophet pointed out, the holy, by touching the common could not make it holy, vs. 10-12. However, if that which was unholy touched that which was holy, then the pure would become unclean. The conclusion was therefore inevitable; the problem lay with the people who were themselves unclean.

B. 14-19—*The attitude of the people was all wrong.* They were being chastized, 14-17, but continued to make excuses for that chastisement. They failed to realize that the uncleanness of their hearts produced wrong lives which caused their blessings to be withheld and would be restored only when they became obedient, vs. 18-19.

#### IV. 2:20-23—THE FOURTH MESSAGE - GOD’S ENCOURAGEMENT.

This section has offered interpreters no small difficulty. Critics have used it to try to berate the high concept of prophecy which Bible believers hold. Others have literalized it to try to make it refer to physical events which they say will yet come to pass.

A. 20-22—*Nations around Israel were to be overthrown.* These are nations that opposed and oppressed the purposes and people of God. His people, upon return from Babylon, were few in number comparatively, and weak. They were therefore, unable to withstand the organized, strong efforts of their enemies. God’s promise was, in effect, that he would do what his people were unable to do. He would overthrow the kingdoms of the earth. He does not tell how he will do it here but is concerned with the fact, the purpose being to establish Zerubbabel.

B. 23—*The messianic hope is preserved in Zerubbabel.* As already noted under the nature of the contents, this is the promise that the lineage of David would be preserved. Therefore, the messianic hope that God offered his people would encourage them. The preservation of Zerubbabel would serve as a sign of God’s faithfulness to his promises.

## Chapter Nineteen

### ZECHARIAH

#### Name

The name, *Zechariah*, means "Jehovah remembers." The prophet was born in the exile. As a tender babe, his parents gazed upon him and, perhaps thinking of the harps silent in captivity, of the tears that flowed unbidden, and of the heart-aches and burdens endured, did not despair but in faith looked forward to a time when God would remember his promise to his people and bring them forth from the land of exile. Therefore, the name, which means, "God remembers." Furthermore it seems to indicate the *theme* of his message: **God will remember his people and preserve them from destruction by the powers around them, giving them the ultimate victory for which they yearned.**

Zechariah is said to be the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo (1:1). This Iddo may be identified with the Levitical Iddo of Neh. 12:1, 4, 16. If so, Zechariah was a Levite and possibly a priest. Zechariah was an early contemporary with Haggai, beginning about two months after the ministry of Haggai began.

#### Date

Some view it as difficult to establish the date for the writing of Zechariah. However, the book's date is closely connected with its composition. The book falls into two natural divisions: 1-8 and 9-14. In the first eight chapters the future of fleshly Israel is discussed with many of the events and matters melting into a messianic prophecy while chapters nine through fourteen are primarily to encourage the people of Israel through the emphasis upon the messianic. Critics have denied the authorship of Zechariah to chapters nine through fourteen. However chapters one through eight can be dated as beginning two months after Haggai began his work and the last dated prophecy is some two years later in 518 B.C. (7:1). Zechariah does not date the last section of his prophecy and some feel that this is an indication that Zechariah wrote



this section in later life. This conclusion does not necessarily follow. Composition will be discussed later but let it be understood now that this author regards the book as a unit written by one individual - Zechariah - to whom it is ascribed in 1:1.

### The Times of the Prophet

Zechariah began his prophecy about two months later than Haggai. Many times students are wont to give full credit to Haggai for the rebuilding of the temple. Without detracting for a moment one iota from that great prophet, this author wonders if the combined strength of two faithful men of God, both proclaiming the word of God, was not required to move the men of Judah to finish the work. The work of Haggai and Zechariah complement each other as does all work of faithful evangelists today. Haggai offered some stern rebuke and plain admonition as well as encouragement but Zechariah dealt primarily in encouraging words and visions which would bolster the sagging faith of a weak people. As some of the older men recalled the former glory which they had enjoyed, especially the temple, and then observed their present weakness, it is easy to understand the disheartening attitude that developed. However with the combined efforts of Haggai and Zechariah the work of the Lord was accomplished. They were a great pair; the old and the young together working for God.

There are several lessons taught in the book of Zechariah, among which are:

1. A flagging faith may be strengthened through the preaching of God's word.
2. Zechariah shows clearly that the contest that God's people are engaged in is in reality with Satan; our enemy is spiritual rather than physical.
3. Zechariah's prophecy showed that believers ought to always have hope, even when there is no visible reason for it.
4. The book also points out that the contest between righteousness and unrighteousness always will end decisively in favor of God's people.

Few books of the Old Testament are as difficult to interpret as the book of Zechariah. Also, no other minor prophet is as *messianic* as is this book. Among the many prophecies, the following messianic and messianic related prophecies are very noteworthy:

1. Christ as the bride, 3:8.

2. Christ as servant, 3:8.
3. Christ to build the temple, (church), 6:12.
4. Christ to sit and rule upon the throne, 6:13.
5. Christ to be a priest while ruling, 6:13.
6. Christ's entry into Jerusalem on a colt, 9:9.
7. Christ, the good shepherd, 9:16; 11:11.
8. Christ, the smitten shepherd, 13:7.
9. The price of Christ's betrayal, 11:12, 13.
10. Christ's hands pierced, 12:10.
11. Christ, an offering for sin, 12:10; 13:1.
12. Christ, wounded in the house of his friends, 13:6.
13. Christ's appearance at the destruction of Jerusalem, 14:3-8.

Many problems have been raised by the negative critics but none of them have been established. Until the middle of the seventeenth century, the genuineness of the entire prophecy was generally unquestioned. What brought the difficulty about was that one Joseph Mede was troubled by the statement in Matt. 27:9-10 where many, even among the most conservative scholars, have attributed the whole statement to Zechariah rather than Jeremiah. However this is a misapprehension of the statement of Matthew and fails to consider what he really said. It is true that Matthew mentions the betrayal price, which Zechariah certainly foretold, but that is not the real force of Matthew's statement. The betrayal price of the Christ was merely incidental and as such he took what was natural to observe in such an instance and which the Holy Spirit deemed best to be included but that was not the real message. He also used a statement made by Jeremiah, 32:6-11. This was the statement the prophet made relative to the purchase of a field and this is the real gist of Matthew's statement. The silver was used for this purpose and as such stood incidental to the main lesson. The thing emphasized by Matthew was that a field would be purchased as Jeremiah had prophesied. There is no real difficulty in the statement made by Matthew; certainly not enough to warrant one denying that Zechariah wrote the book that bears his name. If Joseph Mede had been a firm believer in plenary verbal inspiration and infallibility of the scripture, he would not have departed so far from the truth in this matter. To teach that this part of Zechariah is a statement of Jeremiah that somehow or other got misplaced and ended up in Zechariah does not allow for very much accuracy in transmitting the scriptures from one generation to the next. For further study



of this matter one may refer to the analysis of Jeremiah 32 earlier in this volume.

Following the time of Mede, different critics, on one basis or another, tried to say that the book was not written when Zechariah was alive and therefore, he could not have been the author of the whole book. Some said that chapters nine-fourteen were written later than when Zechariah lived, some say earlier. Upon this the critics are not agreed. However the so-called archaisms cannot be sustained. But again, as in other cases, it revolves around the fact that negative critics cannot accept the predictive element in prophecy as supernatural. It is noteworthy that those who reject the Zecharian authorship of chapters nine-fourteen have not been able to agree upon an alternate theory. This alone should have some influence in helping decide in favor of the Zecharian authorship of the whole book.

Before beginning the outline of the book, it would be in order to help those who would interpret the book to remember that chapters 9-14 especially deal with the *messianic period*. This is the era in which we now live. If one would take the time to carefully study the New Testament as it regards the nature and purpose of the New Testament church and see the applications of the New Testament scriptures of the Old Testament prophecies relative to it, i.e., the church, one would have a deeper appreciation both of the church and of prophecy. This is not unduly spiritualizing or composing figurative applications but this is the way the actual applications are made by the inspired writers of the New Testament. It is to these inspired applications and interpretations of the prophets that we must go to obtain our knowledge. If our concept of prophecy differs from the New Testament concept, then ours must be wrong. Therefore, the reader is urged to carefully remember that these prophecies were generally made regarding the Christ and his *first advent* and the establishment of his kingdom (the church). It matters not how avid a millennialist one may be, he usually admits that *these prophecies of the Old Testament did refer to the first advent of Christ*. It would be well to remember that if they referred to the first advent when uttered that it is only reasonable that they should apply to the first advent when we read them today.

## Outline of Zechariah

- I. MESSAGES OF EXHORTATION AND CONSOLATION, AND ENCOURAGEMENT IN BUILDING THE TEMPLE—1:1-8:23.
  - A. A call for Israel to repent—1:1-6.
  - B. The eight night visions and their meanings—1:7-6:8.
    1. The rider and horses among the myrtles—1:7-17.
      - a. Date—7.
      - b. The vision—8-11.
      - c. Meaning: God is interested in his people and will guide and bless them in their obedience—12-17.
    2. The four horns and four smiths—1:18-21.
      - a. The visions—18-20.
      - b. Every nation that opposed Israel would be put down—21.
    3. The man with the measuring line—2:1-13.
      - a. The vision—1-5.
      - b. The future of Jerusalem—6-13.
    4. Joshua, the high priest, tried and acquitted—3:1-10.
      - a. Accusation, acquittal, and cleansing of Joshua—1-5.
      - b. The symbolical significance of the action—6-10.
    5. The golden lampstand and two olive trees—4:1-14.
      - a. The vision—1-3.
      - b. The angel's explanation to the prophet's question—4-14.
        - 1) The first question and answer—4-10.
        - 2) The second question and answer—11-14.
    6. The flying scroll—5:1-4.
      - a. The vision—1-2.
      - b. Meaning: curse upon all who reject the law—3-4.
    7. The woman in the ephah—5:5-11.
      - a. The vision—5-7.
      - b. Meaning: wickedness consigned to the land of iniquity—8-11.
    8. The four chariots—6:1-8.
      - a. The vision—1-3.
      - b. Meaning: God's providential protection of his people—4-8.
  - C. Symbolical crowning of Joshua climaxes the vision—6:9-15.
    1. Metal from the crown to come from the children of captivity—9-11.
    2. Meaning: symbolical of the Branch—12-15.
- II. PROBLEM OF CEREMONIAL FASTING—7:1-8:23.
  - A. Fast-days of Israel and their obedience to God—7:1-7.
    1. Occasion for the prophecy—7:1-3.
    2. Fasting was useless without obedience—4-7.
  - B. The first half of God's answer—7:8-14.
    1. God's requirement of their fathers—8-10.
    2. Their fathers judged because of refusal to obey—11-14.
  - C. The second half of God's answer—8:1-23.
    1. God's promise to protect and perpetuate Jerusalem—1-8.
    2. God's promise to bless the people and the land—9-17.
    3. The Jews would enjoy obeying and then others would follow them—18-23.
- III. MESSAGES AFTER THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE—9:1-14:21.

- A. The first message—9:1-11:17.
  - 1. Heathen powers to fall under God's judgment—9:1-10:12.
    - a. God's judgment—9:1-8.
    - b. The Messiah and his reign—9:9-10.
    - c. The redemption is complete—9:11-10:12.
  - 2. An allegory of good and evil shepherds—11:1-17.
    - a. Judgment is on the way—1-3.
    - b. Israel, ruined by false shepherds, are thankless toward the good shepherd—4-14.
    - c. Israel given to false shepherd who will afflict them—15-17.
- B. The second message—12:1-14:21.
  - 1. Israel's conflict, victory, conversion, and sanctification—12:1-13:6.
    - a. Jerusalem delivered—12:1-9.
    - b. The spirit of grace and lamentation poured upon Israel—12:10-14.
  - 2. Israel and Jerusalem face a glorious future—13:1-14:21.
    - a. Redemption from sin—13:1-6.
    - b. Redemption only for remnant—13:7-9.
    - c. Earthly Jerusalem judged—14:1-7.
    - d. Waters of life to then flow unhindered—14:8.
    - e. Salvation to be for all—14:8-11.
    - f. The enemies of God's people to suffer destruction—14:12-15.
    - g. All in Jerusalem to be holy—14:16-21.

### Analysis

#### I. 1:1-8:23—MESSAGES OF EXHORTATION, CONSOLATION, AND ENCOURAGEMENT IN BUILDING THE TEMPLE.

The first word of the Lord was addressed to Zechariah in the eighth month of the second year of Darius, about two months after Haggai's first prophecy and the commencement of the rebuilding of the temple.

A. 1:1-6—*A call for Israel to repent.* Just as Haggai had encouraged the priests and the people of Judah to be zealous in building the temple, so Zechariah begins his prophetic work with the admonition to turn sincerely to the Lord and not to bring the same judgment upon them which their fathers had brought upon themselves by their sins. In effect, the prophet was saying, be better than your fathers were.

B. 1:7-6:8—*The eight night visions and their meaning.* In vs. 7-17 God manifests his interest in his people by giving them guidance in fulfillment of a divine directive - his house to be built. These night visions are a comprehensive revelation concerning the future fate of God's people and his kingdom. The colors of the horses are variously interpreted to mean

different things. The reader will be wise to remember that the writing of Zechariah is largely apocalyptic. Therefore, the signs and symbols that are contained in these visions are to impress lessons and themselves are not to serve as endless, detailed fragments thrown in to give a complete knowledge of unimportant matters. God would work providentially in caring for his people so long as they would be obedient to his voice.

In vs. 18-20 the second vision is seen and the four horns and four smiths indicated that all of the nations that raised up against Israel would be put down. This is not merely for the sake of Israel but God must protect them in order to fulfill his promise to Abraham in the past. Therefore, every attempt to destroy his people and obliterate the government of that kingdom represented an effort to frustrate the purposes of God. God must take a vital interest in his people to protect his integrity.

2:1-13 is the vision of the man with the measuring line. It is here that the future of Jerusalem is determined. This shows the development of the people and the kingdom of God. This is a very brief vision but the brevity itself brings about some difficulties in understanding it. It would seem that this involves the rehabilitation of Jerusalem after the restoration, mingled with a vision of the new Jerusalem of the gospel dispensation. This is what makes it so extremely difficult sometimes to interpret Zechariah, i.e., it is difficult to ascertain whether he is making the primary application to the kingdom of the gospel age or to fleshly Israel of the Mosaic age. It would seem evident that vs. 9-13 refer to the gospel age.

3:1-10—Joshua, the high priest, is tried and acquitted. In order to see the real significance of this event, one must read Jude 9. The application is made of this event to a crucial battle over the destiny of Judah. It is a dispute over the spiritual body of Moses, the kingdom of Israel which had been baptized unto him (I Cor. 10:1-3). This was a dispute, the outcome of which would determine the future of God's people. Joshua was tried, acquitted and cleansed. The symbolical significance of the action is applied to the coming Branch, cf. Isa. 11:1; Isa. 53:2; Zech. 6:12 and Jer. 23:5.

4:1-14—The golden lampstands and the two olive trees. In

this vision, the visible things in the Old Testament temple must give place to the spiritual temple which they typified. People generally think of only the ninth through the fourteenth chapters as being messianic but the first eight chapters are also thoroughly messianic. In fact, one can not find a more messianic book in the entire Old Testament. Keep in mind that Zechariah is trying to encourage the Jews to rebuild the temple. He is trying to get them to persevere, and all of the visions are to that end. Perhaps one reason the book reflects so much messianic prophecy is in order to assure the Jews of permanency. God will bring forth the Messiah who, for so long, had been prophesied of. If this happens, the Jewish people must continue to exist, at least until the Messiah. Therefore, God will preserve them. If this be true, why are we not rebuilding the temple should be the question asked of selves. Zechariah was making an immediate application of these prophecies to Joshua and Zerubbabel as the anointed ones of the Lord that would stand by the Lord in the land in the doing of God's will. In a symbolical way they represent the light of God's true temple which would burn, not with might or power, but with the Spirit by which his house would reach its full end in the gospel age.

5:1-4—The flying scroll. The woman implies captivity. An ephah is about the size of a bushel basket. The woman being cast into it and removed from the land represented the removing of sin from the land. There would be a ceremonial cleansing in which the reproach of the people would be taken away.

6:1-8—The vision of the four chariots symbolizes God's providential protection of his people and forms a guarantee of all his promises being true.

C. 6:9-15—*The symbolical crowning of Joshua climaxes the vision.* Vs. 9-11 lead us into another messianic prophecy. V. 12 is a messianic prophecy intended to encourage the people to build the temple. Notice the facts that are listed in 6:12: (1) the Branch would build the temple (the church); (2) would bear the glory; (3) would sit and rule; (4) would be a priest; (5) the counsel of peace would be between him and Jehovah. All of this was fulfilled in Jesus Christ and today he is the one who bears the glory, Eph. 3:21; who built the temple (church) Eph. 2:21-2; I Cor. 3:16; Matt. 16:18; he is

sitting and ruling, Heb. 1:3; he is priest, Heb. 4:14; Heb. 8:4; he is the one who is responsible for peace and reconciliation between man and God, Eph. 2:12-16; Col. 1:20-21. In vs. 14-15 blessings shall abound toward the work of the temple. God's people shall know that God is responsible for all of their blessings.

## II. 7:1-8:23—THE PROBLEM OF CEREMONIAL FASTING.

In addition to the solemn fast appointed by Moses, the Jews had appointed others, one of which was the fasting commemorating the day when Jerusalem and the temple had been burned by the Chaldeans. As these priests and prophets asked Jehovah relative to this, a detail is emphasized, indicative of God's dealing with men of all ages.

A. 7:1-7—Fast-days of Israel and their obedience. Vs. 1-3 describe the occasion for this word of God addressed to Zechariah. The Lord's answer is that he does not look upon fasting as that which is sufficient of itself. Whenever any ceremony is detached from the righteousness of the character of those who engage in it, it is vain in the eyes of God. God does not here condemn fasting but rather emphasizes the need for the life to be in harmony with his will in obedience to his commands. It matters not what else may be present, if sincerity of purpose is lacking, the action is of no avail.

B. 7:8-14—*The first half of God's answer is found in these verses.* Vs. 8-10 are similar to Micah 6:8. The people were more interested in performing rituals than they were in living right and this was altogether unacceptable to God. Vs. 12-14 indicate that they would not hear God and therefore, God would not hear them. It was for that cause that they were sent into captivity and their land made desolate.

C. 8:1-23—*The second half of God's answer.* In vs. 1-8 we read of God's promise to protect and perpetuate Jerusalem. This would encourage the people to rebuild the temple. Vs. 9-17 is God's promise to bless the people and the land. Some people think that this remains yet for future fulfillment but it refers to the foundation of the house of God which had been laid, referring to the *physical temple* that was built in the *restoration period*. Before the temple was finished affliction must come upon them and their peace be taken away

because of their indifference. Vs. 18-23 indicate that the Jews would enjoy their obedience to God and others, upon seeing their joy in obeying their God, would follow after Jehovah. These first eight chapters have formed a unit which unit harmonizes with the work of Haggai.

### III. 9:1-14:21—MESSAGES AFTER THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE.

Chapters 9-12 form a promise of the new theocracy. Conflict between the heathen and God's people is used to form a contrast. In the first oracle, chapters 9-11, the judgment, through which the power of the heathen world over Israel is broken and Israel is given strength to overcome all her enemies, is the primary thought around which the prophecy revolves. In the second oracle, chapters 12-14, the judgment sifts Israel and she is translated into a holy nation. Both oracles take a different tone at times without warning, thereby making them difficult to understand.

A. 9:1-11:17—*The first message.* Chapters 9-10 especially deal with the glorification of God. In 9:1-7, the heathen kingdoms are overthrown and spoiled for God's holy nation. In 9:8-10, God will protect his people and cause his king to enter Zion. He will establish a kingdom of peace upon the earth. It is important to remember that our Lord did this at his first advent, cf. Matt. 21:4-5; Jn. 18:36. 9:11-17, God's people, some of whom are still held captive, are redeemed and given the victory. This may well represent the deliverance from sin and the victory in Christ, I Jn. 5:5. Chapter 10, God's people are richly blessed with strength to overcome all enemies. This indicates complete redemption of his people and is an expansion of the ninth chapter. Chapter 11 forms a messianic prophecy under the form of an allegory of the good and evil shepherds. Vs. 1-3 indicate the devastation of the land while 4-14 is a prophecy contained in a symbolical act. In vs. 4-6 the prophet is instructed to feed the flock of God. God has dealt with his people through the heathen nations, but now will take them out of the hands of the heathen. Now the heathen will be dealt with. Vs. 7-14 is a prophecy that deals with the first coming of Christ and indicates the betrayal price which Judas received. The patience of the Lord came to an end and he would break his covenant with his people

but in order to do this the Staff of Beauty must first be cut asunder. This shows prophetically that the death of Christ was necessary in order to bring the covenant with fleshly Israel to an end. Cf. Col. 2:14-15. When the staff was broken, the people knew that it was of the Lord, i.e., it was evident that this was the way the Lord had planned it and was thus the executor of that plan. Cf. Col. 2:14-15 again; Acts 26:26-27; Matt. 27:54. Many critics have believed that the reference in Matt. 27:9 was mistakenly added after Matthew wrote the book. However that belief is due to an apparent misunderstanding of the emphasis that Matthew intended in that statement. He does not emphasize the betrayal price for the Saviour which is but incidental and which does indeed come from Zechariah but rather emphasizes the purchase of a field which was prophetically typified in Jer. 32:6-11. See the analysis on Jer. 32 for further study. The band of brotherhood was cut. The unity of the people following the restoration is prophesied as coming to an end and the people will oppose each other in different factions and thus bring their own destruction as a nation. This was literally fulfilled in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. The different warring factions among the Jews was a large contributing factor that finally incurred the destruction of the city by the Roman army. Josephus describes the extremely factious disposition of the Jews and how that the destruction of Jerusalem might have been averted and a peaceable solution worked out with the Romans if only the Jews could have agreed among themselves. Vs. 15-16 set forth the foolish shepherd. The Good Shepherd had been rejected and now God would set another shepherd over them who would not care for their welfare but would end in their destruction.

B. 12:1-14:21—*The second message.* Chapter 12 is concerned with Israel's mourning. Nations should be brought against Jerusalem. 12:10-11 is fulfilled by our Lord, cf. Jn. 19:37, and indicates the sorrow at the destruction of the city which shall spell the end of the Jewish state and bring to the minds of many the words spoken by the prophets and the Lord indicating that such would be the result of their rejection of the Messiah. In 13:1 we find a reference to the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness (remission of sin). This is a picture of the mediation necessary for the recon-



ciliation of sinners to God. V. 6 connects the previous figures to the crucifixion of Christ and his atonement for the sins of the people. V. 9 refers to the remnant of Jews saved in the gospel age, Rom. chapters 9-11.

Zechariah 14:1-21 deals with the day of the Lord. V. 1 is the day of judgment when the spoil of the people would be divided in their midst. The nation would suffer. For similar phraseology read Isa. 13:9 where the destruction of Babylon is considered. V. 2, nations gathered around Jerusalem. This was fulfilled when the Roman army invaded and besieged Jerusalem. The same phraseology is used regarding the fall of Babylon, Isa. 13:15-16. V. 3, all nations were represented by the Roman army as they destroyed Jerusalem and afterwards God did fight against those nations but *only after they had fulfilled his word*, cf. Zech. 9:14-15. V. 4, the Lord standing upon the Mount of Olives refers, not to the second coming, but to the siege of Jerusalem. Jesus stood upon the mount when he uttered the doom of the city. The Roman general stood upon the mountain and the Roman army encamped there when the city was besieged. The formation of the battle lines of the Romans all enter into the description of the mountain cleaving in the midst, vs. 5-7.

The prophet says that the people should flee. This is certainly not to be the case in the last day when Christ shall come to judge and heaven and earth shall pass away because there shall be no place to flee then. Vs. 6-7 indicate by a metaphorical description that divine mercy shall be mixed with divine justice of that day. After the divine visitation, coming in the form of the Roman army, there would be light diffused - divine knowledge would then have free course. This followed the fall of Jerusalem and the destruction of the Jewish state. Judaism, which before the fall of Jerusalem frustrated on every hand the efforts of Christians to spread the gospel, was no longer an evil to be reckoned with after the fall of Jerusalem.

Vs. 8-9 speak of the living waters which should go forth. The only consistent application of this seems to be the fulfillment in the gospel of Christ and the church, Eph. 4:4-6. In the church, there is neither Jew nor Gentile but all are one and under one Lord, Gal. 3:27-29. V. 8, the blood flows backward as well as forward in the remission of sin, cf. Heb.

9:15. Vs. 10-11, in the new Jerusalem, which shall have the preeminence all over the land following the destruction of fleshly Jerusalem and the Jewish state, men shall dwell in peace. Vs. 12-21 present the grand finale of the vision in which there is a great procession moving to the universal Jerusalem to worship the King. Vs. 12-13, the nations which fought against Jerusalem shall be destroyed. There shall be wars without and wars within and they shall fall. This fits well the historians description of the downfall of Rome.

Vs. 14-15—the destruction of the nations will abound to the good of spiritual Israel, cf. Dan. 2:44.

Vs. 16-19—the conversion to God from among all the nations. People will receive blessings by worshipping God. Vs. 16-17 cannot be taken in the physical sense without concluding that all must go to Jerusalem or else fail to receive the blessings of God, cf. Jn. 4:20-24. The blessings are spiritual blessings and the Jerusalem is the church, cf. Gal. 4:21-31, which is the new Jerusalem. Vs. 18-19 show that God withholds blessings from those who withhold worship. Vs. 20-21, everything in Jerusalem shall be holy unto the Lord. This will be in fulfillment of Isaiah's prophecy that the kingdom would be known by the holiness of those in it. It refers to the New Testament teaching that God adds the saved to the church (Acts 2:47) and all the saved are in the church. Therefore, conversion must take place before entrance into the new kingdom, not after entrance. This would satisfy the requirements of prophecy. V. 21 confines complete fulfillment only in the church, Eph. 2:19-22. The last two verses refer to the expansion of gospel blessings after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. Isa. 13 is a prophecy of the destruction of Babylon and Zech. 14 is a prophecy of the downfall of Jerusalem and the Jewish state. Neither refers to a future event from our day. Matt. 24:1-34 is a good commentary on Zech. 14 and states many of the details relative to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

## Chapter Twenty

### MALACHI

#### Name

Malachi means "my messenger." Negative critics unite generally in asserting that this is an anonymous book and that the word *Malachi* refers, not to the proper name of a man but rather indicates an anonymous cloak flung over real identity. However the fact that every other book of the minor prophets opens with the name of its author makes it probable that Malachi is a proper name and not merely a title of a prophet whose identity remained unknown. This would present the absurdity of the Jews receiving into their canon of scripture a book which was anonymous but all of the nation believing it to be written by a man whose name was Malachi. Where is proof for such an assumption?

Petrie pointed out that "if we go behind the name in one case after its meaning, we must be consistent to go behind in every case and the result will be that we shall make every book in the Bible anonymous. We shall have a history without a person in it. We shall have a book of chronicles which, instead of being a list of names, will be a collection of impersonal titles. We believe that we have a real man and his real name."

#### Date

The date of the writing was apparently between 458 and 432 B.C., between the first and second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem. Some think that it was shortly after his return to Persia, though this is uncertain. All scholars, negative and conservative alike, agree that this is a post-exilic writing. This is about the only thing that all are in agreement on but it is indicative of the certainty of the late date for the writing. Freeman, in his fine work on the prophets, has an excellent discussion of the date of Malachi.

#### Times of the Prophet

Indifference now characterized the people of God. The

zeal which had early been connected with the building of the temple is dead. The Jews had been back in their land for more than a hundred years, and instead of becoming better, had progressively become worse. The promises that God had made to his people through the prophets, both before, during and after the exile, were not being fulfilled. The Jews wondered why. The answer was obvious to any thinking, pious Jew. The promises had been *conditional* and the people had not met those conditions. God had kept his part of the covenant. He had done all that he could do: he had chastized; he had brought them back and settled them in their land; he had forgiven their sins; he had demonstrated his ability and disposition to fulfill his promises; and had made some wonderful, encouraging promises to them. What more could God say or do? Therefore, with the close of the book of Malachi, it is not strange that no more word was given until the coming of him whom God had promised; of whom he had said so much and through whom his final word to mortals would be spoken.

The nature of the contents of the book is unique. Malachi used the assertion, objection, rebuttal method in which an assertion is made, an objection is raised to the assertion and then a rebuttal is brought against the objection. It makes for extremely interesting and informative reading. The seven statements are pointed out by Claus Westerman as being: (1) 1:2-3; (2) 1:6-7; (3) 2:10-16; (4) 2:17; (5) 3:7; (6) 3:8; (7) 3:13.

### Outline of Malachi

- I. GOD'S GREAT LOVE SCORNE BY HIS PEOPLE—1:1-2:9.
  - A. Superscription—1:1.
  - B. God's love for Israel—1:2-5.
    1. Love asserted—2.
    2. God's love demonstrated—3-5.
  - C. The faithless priests and people rebuked—1:6-14.
    1. Their sacrifices expressed contempt—6-8.
    2. God preferred a closed temple to the present situation—9-10.
    3. A more worthy worship would be offered by the Gentiles—12-14.
    4. The curse of God—14.
  - D. The curse pronounced upon faithless priests—2:1-9.
    1. Immediate repentance their only hope—1-4.
    2. The covenant with Levi and the ideal priest—5-7.
    3. The apostate priests were but stumbling blocks—8-9.

- II. MIXED MARRIAGES AND DIVORCES CONDEMNED—2:10-16.
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  - C. The divorces were of such nature and proportion that God would no longer accept their sacrifices—12-16.
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    - 2. Separation of the righteous from the wicked—3:16-18.
    - 3. Wicked to suffer complete destruction—4:1.
    - 4. The righteous would be glorified—4:2-3.
  - D. The closing of the Old Covenant—4:4-6.
    - 1. Exhortation to faithfulness—4.
    - 2. Elijah and his work of preparation—5-6.

### Analysis

#### I. 1:1-2:9—GOD'S GREAT LOVE SCORNE BY HIS PEOPLE.

This book represents the last prophetic word from God until we come to the New Testament age. It is only natural that it should start with an assertion of love but even more than that it is necessary because of the attitude of God's people toward him.

A. 1:1—The superscription attributes the work to Malachi.

B. 1:2-5—*Sets forth God's love for Israel.* He must assert his love for the people. This love has been demonstrated by his actions toward them in the past and he used Edom to illustrate that fact. The mere fact that Edom was desolate did not mean that God hated (personal hatred) Esau, but rather had he not loved Israel more than he loved Edom, then Judah would be in the same condition that Edom was in. Therefore, no Jew could deny God's great love for them.

C. 1:6-14—*The faithless priests and people are rebuked.* Any son would honor his father but the priests had held

Jehovah in contempt. Even the sacrifices which they offered expressed that contempt because they offered the poorest animals to God. They would not offer their governor what they were offering God. They should have been ashamed of it but they were not. Because of their lack of faith a curse must come upon them.

D. 2:1-9—*The curse pronounced upon the faithless priests.* The only hope for any of them was for genuine repentance to take place immediately. The apostasy of Israel centered in their rulers and leaders. Their blessings had turned into a curse for them. The apostate priests were the stumblingblocks, tempting the people and leading them further into rebellion.

## II. 2:10-16—MIXED MARRIAGES AND DIVORCE CONDEMNED.

The Israelites enjoyed the fatherhood of God but the Jews had profaned the temple of God because of their foreign marriages. The divorces were of such nature and proportion that Malachi said that their tears covered the altar. This signified that God would no longer accept their sacrifices.

## III. 2:17-4:6—THE DAY OF THE LORD AND THE PURGING OF ISRAEL.

The discontent and murmuring which prevailed among God's people existed because they had lost faith in God and that fact brings forth the words of God in this section.

A. 2:17-3:6—*The Lord's coming in judgment was to be preceded by his messenger.* In v. 17 the assertion was made that the people had wearied Jehovah and the people raised the question, "wherein. . .?" God's answer was that the people claimed that God blessed the wicked, therefore God was not just. This brought forth the teaching concerning the coming of the Lord. 3:1-2 indicate that his appearance would be as refining fire. At this appearing, 3:3-5, priests and people alike would be purified. V. 6 sets forth the fact that Jehovah God is unchangeable: It is only because of this fact that he had not consumed the people of Israel.

B. 3:7-12—*The neglect of the tithes and offerings.* The fickleness of the people dated back to the days of their fathers and it was because of their changeableness that the wrath of God was brought upon them, 7-9. Vs. 10-12, God challenges the people to trust him to keep his promises. If

they will just do their part, God will abundantly rain the blessings of heaven upon them, so much so that they will not be able to contain them.

C. 3:13-4:3—*God's justice is defended.* God returns to the question that was raised earlier relative to the condition of the wicked versus the righteous. God accuses them of being stout against him, i.e., by speaking against him. They had concluded that it was useless to serve God because of the condition that they were in. The people were complaining because as they looked around they saw the wicked prospering and those whom they considered to be righteous suffering from want, 13-15. God points out that he does not always fully reward in October but that there would be a great day in which the righteous would be separated from the wicked. In that day the wicked would be completely destroyed (4:1) while the righteous would be glorified, 4:2-3.

D. 4:4-6—*The closing of the Old Covenant.* As we come to the close of the book of Malachi, it is no ordinary closing of a book. This is the last prophetic word that shall be uttered to the children of Israel until that great antitype of all the prophets appeared and God spoke by and in him, Heb. 1:1-2. It is only fitting then that there should be an exhortation to faithfulness to Moses' Law, 4. Vs. 5-6 point toward Elijah and his work of preparation. This, of course, is a prophetic utterance concerning the work of John the baptist, who, as is recorded in Lk. 1:17, was to go forth in the spirit of Elijah. Our Saviour also, in Matt. 11:14 and Mk. 9:11-13, specifically explained to his disciples that John the baptist fulfilled the prophecy concerning Elijah. There is therefore, no need for people to look into the future in anticipation of this Elijah of Malachi's prophecy. According to Jesus, he has already come and accomplished his work. We come then to the close of the Old Covenant prophecy. The silence from this date forward was to cover more than four hundred years until Elijah should come according to the will of God and baptize Jesus Christ, who, at this act, was embarked upon his public ministry. It is fitting that the close of Malachi should point those under the Old Covenant to Him who should bring a New Covenant.

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