

Lecture Notes on the Minor Prophets
Lesson 1 – Overview

Introduction

- A) The first person called a "prophet" in the Old Testament was Abraham – Genesis 20:7 Now return the man's wife, for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you will live. But if you do not return her, you may be sure that you and all yours will die."
- B) The Hebrew term, נביא refers to one who is "called of God" (cf. R.K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1969) p. 742) ostensibly for a specific purpose.
- C) The role of the prophet is an emerging one.
- 1) The earliest prophet was but a leader. This is sometimes called the **pre-monarchy** phase. Ex. Moses and Deborah. They address people directly but they serve mostly as leaders.
 - 2) Once the monarchy began, we enter the **pre-classical** phase. They sometimes served as the conscience to the king. Examples are Nathan, Elijah, Elisha, Micaiah (1 Kings 22).
 - 3) Then there is the "classical prophet." Some of these do advise the king, but their ministry is much larger. They emphasize *social issues* though they were not just social reformers. Sometimes called **forth-tellers** they were much like preachers of today. Their ability to tell the future the future gave them credibility. The prophet is a **covenant enforcement mediator**. He stands between the people and God to call people back to the covenant of God. Their authority comes from the covenant.
 - 4) There were writing and non-writing prophets. Elijah and Elisha are examples of the non-writing prophets.
 - a) The Hebrew Bible has two categories of writing prophets: the "former prophets" are those who spoke or compiled the works of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings. The "latter prophets" are those who write.
 - b) Among the writing prophets, there are two sections: Major and Minor, both having to do with the length of the books, not the value of their content.
- I) Overview of Old Testament history
- 1) The Old Testament covers the time from the beginning of mankind until about 400 years before Christ.
 - 2) It does not purport to give the history of the world. In fact, it leaves a lot out. It is mainly concerned with how God works among people on the earth to accomplish his will.
 - 3) From the beginning until 1800 B.C. is covered by the book of Genesis and the focus is on God's relationship with a particular family, the descendants of Shem, the son of Noah -- and 4 of those descendants in particular: Abraham, Isaac,

Jacob, and Joseph. This becomes a “chosen” family that God adopts as “his” people. In the story you see such themes as:

- a) The grace of God. These are not always the most admirable people, but God sticks with them regardless because he has chosen them.
 - (1) Abraham lies about his wife.
 - (2) Abraham’s wife uses a slave girl to get a son, then throws the slave woman away.
 - (3) Isaac knows that his youngest son is to get a special blessing but he favors the oldest and determines to give the blessing to him instead.
 - (4) Jacob and Esau cannot get along, and Jacob conspires to cheat his brother out of his blessing.
 - (5) Jacob marries two women and they end up using Jacob in a contest to see who can have the most children.
- b) The provision of God -- God takes care of His people
 - (1) A famine comes into the land and Abraham goes to Egypt where he is given many gifts and becomes wealthy. Genesis 12:16
 - (2) Another famine causes Isaac to go to Philistia and becomes so wealthy through the Lord’s blessing that his neighbors envy him Genesis 26:12-15
 - (3) Jacob, though working as a hired hand in the home of his uncle, became more prosperous than his uncle Genesis 30:43
 - (4) A famine causes Jacob’s family to move to Egypt, but there they get preferential treatment by the
- c) The blessing of God.
 - (1) Wherever Abraham went, he became respected by even kings.
 - (2) Abraham goes to battle against the greatest kings of his time and defeats them with his own personal army.
 - (3) Isaac becomes so powerful that the King of Philistia asks him to leave.
 - (4) Joseph becomes second in command to Pharaoh.
- B) 400 years pass from Genesis to Exodus but when that book opens, the “family” has become a nation and they are in great difficulty. Enslaved in Egypt, God provides for their release and deliverance and makes a new covenant with them to be with them as a nation. The people are not happy with being directed by God, but they reluctantly go along with it.
- C) The nation journeys to the land of their forefathers where God calls for displacing other people that His people might possess the land. That displacement is covered in the book of Joshua. The troubles of the people increase because they refuse to follow God’s commands of displacement.
- D) 400 years pass during which time the nation is guided by special servants of God called judges. The period is dealt with in the book of Judges. The nation vacillates in it’s allegiance to God and is often punished for its disobedience. Always, God is caring for them.

- E) Finally, the people insist on having a king. God gives them three: Saul, David, and Solomon and we enter a 120 year period known as the United Monarchy.
 - F) After Solomon, the people have grown tired of God's kings and decide to select their own.
 - 1) There is increased rebellion toward God and the United kingdom splits into two factions: A north, called Israel, and a south, called Judah. Joel, Hosea, and Amos and Jonah do their work through this time. It is also the time of **Isaiah**.
 - 2) It continues this way until 720 B.C. when the northern kingdom is destroyed and ceases to exist.
 - G) The southern Kingdom continues until 586 B.C. Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah and Obadiah do their work during these times. When it ceases to be a kingdom. It will never again regain its former glory, but God is still working through His people to accomplish His will.
 - H) The people of the southern Kingdom are carried into captivity where they remain for 70 years. Then, they return to Judah and Jerusalem. Over the next 200 years, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi do their work.
- II) The Prophet
- A) The prophet is a spokesman for God. "God has thrust a burden upon his soul, and he is bowed and stunned at man's fierce greed. Frightful is the agony of man; no human voice can convey its full terror. Prophecy is the voice that God has lent to the silent agony, a voice to the plundered poor, to the profaned riches of the world. It is form of living, a crossing point of God and man. God is raging in the prophet's words . . ." (p. 5) "Prophetic utterance is rarely cryptic, suspended between God and man; it is urging, alarming, forcing onward, as if the words gushed forth from the heart of God, seeking entrance to the heart and mind of man, carrying a summons as well as an involvement. Grandure, not dignity, is important. The language is luminous and explosive, firm and contingent, harsh and compassionate, a fusion of contradictions . . . The prophet is intent on intensifying responsibility, is impatient of excuse, contemptuous of pretense and self-pity. His tone, rarely sweet or caressing, is frequently consoling and disburdening; his words are often slashing, even horrid -- designed to shock rather than edify." (Heschel, p. 6-7) In other words, a saving faith involved a sanctified walk. This is perhaps the foremost emphasis in the prophets" (Gleason Archer, A Survey of Old Testament Introduction (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1974) p. 297).
Isaiah 1:13-18 Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations-- I cannot bear your evil assemblies. {14} Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. {15} When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; {16} wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, {17} learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of

the fatherless, plead the case of the widow. {18} "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.

- B) To disclose the love of God.
 - 1) Ezekiel 18:23 Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?
 - 2) "I will speak. I will wait. I will send prophets among them. That they might hear, that they might see, and understand how much I love them. Then they will know that I am father. Then they will know that I am Lord. They'll walk with me and by my people. I'll walk with them as their God. I will strike. I will scourge, and carry out vengeance among them. But I will heal the wounds I make, and tenderly take them back to me." (Michael Card, Then They Will Know (Birdwing Music, 1992).

- C) To disclose the truth of God.

- III) The purpose of prophetic literature is as follows:
 - A) To call people to change Ezekiel 18:23 Do I take any pleasure in the death of the wicked? declares the Sovereign LORD. Rather, am I not pleased when they turn from their ways and live?

 - B) To help people make the change Isaiah 35:3-4 Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; {4} say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you."

 - C) "To declare the word of God to the here and now; to disclose the future in order to illumine what is involved in the present" (Heschel, p.12). "The prophet was responsible to remind his people that safety and blessedness were conditioned upon their faithful adherence to the covenant, and that this adherence involved not only doctrinal conviction but a sincere submission to their will to obey God with their whole heart and to lead a godly life. Apart from such submission, no amount of sacrifice or ritualistic worship could satisfy the Lord.

Lecture Notes on the Minor Prophets
Lesson 2 – Amos

Introduction

- A) What are you looking for in a preacher? What do you want? What do you expect?
- B) Whatever your list, likely, the prophets of the Old Testament will likely not fit. Perhaps that's what God intended.
 - 1) Their job was not to originate truth – so qualifications were meaningless.
 - 2) Their job was to remind people of the truth they already had in the law.
 - 3) It wasn't "Obey because the prophet says," but "Obey because God says."
- C) The earliest writing prophets were Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Jonah – all of whom are datable from the Old Testament.
 - 1) Remember that the people of God had divided into two sections: a north and a south. North was called Israel, the south Judah.
 - 2) Since Solomon,
 - a) 10 Kings had reigned in the South – the longest of whom was Uzziah.
 - b) 12 Kings had reigned in the North, the longest of whom was reigning at the time of our prophets
 - c) Some 200 years had passed.
- I) Amos - Background
 - A) Solomon died about 930 - 940 B.C.
 - B) Over the next 216 years, God's people existed as a divided nation – north and south – always at odds with one another.
 - C) As much as that, the northern Kingdom was oppressed by its neighbor, Syria. Wars were fought on 2 fronts – with Syria and with Judah
 - D) But in the early 700's, Assyria conquered Syria and relieved the pressure allowing Israel to expand
 - 1) **2 Kings 13:25** – Then Jehoash son of Jehoahaz recaptured from Ben-Hadad son of Hazael the towns he had taken in battle from his father Jehoahaz. Three times Jehoash defeated him, and so he recovered the Israelite towns.
 - 2) **2 Kings 14:25** – In the fifteenth year of Amaziah son of Joash king of Judah, Jeroboam son of Jehoash king of Israel became king in Samaria, and he reigned forty-one years. 24 He did evil in the eyes of the LORD and did not turn away from any of the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat, which he had caused Israel to commit. 25 He was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Lebo {[25] Or from the entrance to} Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, {[25] That is, the Dead Sea} in accordance with the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hopher.

- E) This resulted in a time of wealth for some (cf. Wendell Willis, "Amos the Shepherd Prophet" p. 263.
- 1) 3-6% of the population were rich. They controlled the land, the economy, and the religious life.
 - 2) 80% of the people lived as virtual share croppers, renting everything from the land-holders and going further into debt every year.
 - 3) The ruling class was confident God was with them, after all, THEY were prospering. They kept the feasts and made pilgrimages. They looked forward to the "Day of the Lord" **5:18; 6:1** Woe to you who long for the day of the LORD! Why do you long for the day of the LORD? That day will be darkness, not light. . . Woe to you who are complacent in Zion, and to you who feel secure on Mount Samaria, you notable men of the foremost nation, to whom the people of Israel come!
- II) Amos - the man
- A) Was from Tekoa, a town just south of Jerusalem
- 1) Tekoa was situated on a mountain some 2700 feet high.
 - 2) Situated between two valleys that emptied into the Dead Sea - a long downhill slide to nowhere.
- B) He was not "prophet" material - but a shepherd and a gardener 7:14
- C) He was from the Southern kingdom – but he preached to the North. He mentions Israel 25 times, but Judah only 4.
- D) He was a man of the countryside, but he preached to city people. **Amos 6:4-6**
- 1) Beds of Ivory
 - 2) Choice lambs and calves
 - 3) Play on musical instruments.
- III) Amos - Structure of the Book - centers on "7", though the number does not occur specifically in the book.¹
- A) Israel is as guilty of sin as its neighbors **Chapters 1-2**
- 1) 7 Oracles against Israel's 7 neighbors 1:1 - 2:5
 - 2) 7 clauses depicting Israel's sins 2:6-8
 - 3) 7 clauses depicting inescapable punishment 2:14-16
- B) Punishment is coming **Chapter 3**
- 1) 7 rhetorical questions 3:3-6
 - 2) 7 clauses depicting punishment 3:14-15
- C) God has tried to get Israel to repent **Chapter 4**
- 1) 7 sarcastic imperatives 4:1-5
 - 2) 7 attempts of God to bring about repentance 4:6-13

¹David Dorsey, The Literary Structure of the Old Testament p. 277ff.

- D) Turn from your sins **Chapter 5:1-17**
 - 1) 7 verbs of God's activities 5:8-9
 - 2) 7 verbs of exhortation or praise 5:14-15
 - E) The Woe to come 5:18 - 6:14
 - 1) 7 empty rituals of Israel 5:21-23
 - 2) 7 sins of the wealthy 6:4-6
 - F) Narrative of Amos **7:1 - 8:3** – 7 occurrences of “Israel” (7:9-17)
 - G) Promise of Restoration **8:4 - 9:15**
 - 1) 7 things wealthy people do 8:4-8
 - 2) 7 threats of God 9:1-4
 - 3) 7 good things God will do 9:11-15
- IV) Amos – The Message
- A) Care about people – particularly the under-class
 - 1) In each case of the pagan nations, their condemnation had something to do with cruelty.
 - 2) Judah's irreligious nature is lumped in with them.
 - 3) Israel herself oppressed the poor, and were cruel to the religious – **5:11-12** – You trample on the poor and force him to give you grain. Therefore, though you have built stone mansions, you will not live in them; though you have planted lush vineyards, you will not drink their wine. 12 For I know how many are your offenses and how great your sins. You oppress the righteous and take bribes and you deprive the poor of justice in the courts.
 - B) The coming punishment
 - 1) Will be caused by God 3:6
 - 2) An enemy is coming 3:11
 - 3) There will be little left 3:12
 - 4) It will not be a good time 4:18-20
 - 5) Punishment has been delayed, but is certain 7:1-9
 - 6) It will be a horrible end 8:1-14
 - C) God tried to get them to repent 4:6-11
 - D) But they would not 4:12. No concern for the judgment to come 6:3-7
 - E) Their worship is rejected 5:18-24
 - F) But there will be a restoration – because God continues to love 9:11-15

Conclusion

- A) The message is for all people. God condemns the nations for their inhumanity.
- B) But the message is especially for God's people. He will not hesitate to uproot them.

Amos Outline

Amos - Structure of the Book - centers on "7", though the number does not occur specifically in the book.²

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 - 1) 7 empty rituals of Israel 5:21-23
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- F) Narrative of Amos **7:1 - 8:3** – 7 occurrences of "Israel" (7:9-17)

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²David Dorsey, The Literary Structure of the Old Testament p. 277ff.

Lecture Notes on the Minor Prophets
Lesson 3 – Hosea

Introduction

- A) There are numerous places of significance in the Old Testament – one of them especially important for our time period and this book – the city of Jezreel.
- B) The city
- 1) Was situated just south of where Nain would be during the ministry of Jesus.
 - 2) Was near Mt. Gilboa where the Philistines defeated Israel and where King Saul lost his life.
 - 3) It was where Saul’s son, Ishbosheth was crowned King
 - 4) It was the royal residence of King Ahab and the site of Naboth’s vineyard (1 Kings 21).
 - a) 1 Kings 21:22 – The site of the prophecy of the end of his reign.
 - b) The site of the death of his wife 1 Kings 21:23
 - c) The place of the death of his son 2 Kings 9:21
 - d) All the house of Ahab was killed in Jezreel 2 Kings 10:11
 - 5) It was a place of judgment. Things came to an end in Jezreel.
- C) Jezreel is mentioned by only one prophet: Hosea. The name means “God sows.”
- 1) For Israel, Jezreel is a place of judgment (Hosea 8:7). Hosea 1:4-5 – Then the LORD said to Hosea, "Call him Jezreel, because I will soon punish the house of Jehu for the massacre at Jezreel, and I will put an end to the kingdom of Israel. 5 In that day I will break Israel's bow in the Valley of Jezreel
 - 2) But for God, it is a place of planting. Hosea 2:19-22 – I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in {[19] Or with; also in verse 20} righteousness and justice, in {[19] Or with} love and compassion. 20 I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the LORD. 21 "In that day I will respond," declares the LORD-- "I will respond to the skies, and they will respond to the earth; 22 and the earth will respond to the grain, the new wine and oil, and they will respond to Jezreel. {[22] Jezreel means God plants. 23 I will plant her for myself in the land; I will show my love to the one I called 'Not my loved one. {[23] Hebrew Lo-Ruhamah}' I will say to those called 'Not my people, {[23] Hebrew Lo-Ammi}' 'You are my people'; and they will say, 'You are my God.'"
- I) The ministry of Hosea covered an extensive period of history.
- A) The southern kings during his ministry are Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah. The northern king was Jereboam II, which places Hosea’s work between 793 and 753 BC. Jereboam was the last great monarch of the North. At his death, six kings served over the final 30 years of Israel’s history.
- B) We know almost nothing about Hosea’s life
- 1) Father was Beer, but we don’t know who that was.

- 2) Not married when we meet him, he may have been a young man when he was called into the ministry.
 - 3) Though his message was to both the north and the south, the mention is primarily of the north.
- II) The book of Hosea has three sections
- A) God's relationship with Israel is like that of a husband with an unfaithful wife. But God can make the relationship flourish. **Chapters 1-3**
 - B) Israel's unfaithfulness described (but God can make her flourish) **Chapters 4-10.**
 - C) God's relationship with Israel is like that of a father with a rebellious child, but he can make it flourish **Chapters 11-14.**
- III) The message of Hosea
- A) Is summed up in two figures, one at the beginning and the other at the end.
 - 1) The unfaithful wife.
 - a) Hosea took her to be his wife. He knew what she was – her background – but he loved her anyway.
 - b) She was true to her heritage. She was unfaithful and bore children not Hosea's. ALL she bore him were the children of others **2:4-5**
 - c) She attributed Hosea's gifts to others **2:5,8**
 - d) But Hosea determined to change her and bring her back **2:14-15, 19-20** "Therefore I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the desert and speak tenderly to her. 15 There I will give her back her vineyards, and will make the Valley of Achor {[15] Achor means trouble.} a door of hope. There she will sing {[15] Or respond} as in the days of her youth, as in the day she came up out of Egypt. . . I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you in {[19] Or with; also in verse 20} righteousness and justice, in {[19] Or with} love and compassion. 20 I will betroth you in faithfulness, and you will acknowledge the LORD.
 - e) There would be blessing and fruitfulness 2:21-23
 - f) Against all reason, Hosea took her back. **3:1-3**
 - 2) An unfaithful child
 - a) Called to be the son of God 11:1
 - b) But determined to rebel 11:2,7 – But the more I {[2] Some Septuagint manuscripts; Hebrew they} called Israel, the further they went from me. {[2] Septuagint; Hebrew them} They sacrificed to the Baals and they burned incense to images. . . My people are determined to turn from me. Even if they call to the Most High, he will by no means exalt them.
 - c) They do not acknowledge God 11:3-4 – It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, taking them by the arms; but they did not realize it was I who healed them. 4 I led them with cords of human kindness, with ties of love; I lifted the yoke from their neck and bent down to feed them.

- d) But God cannot give them up 11:8-11 – "How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel? How can I treat you like Admah? How can I make you like Zeboiim? My heart is changed within me; all my compassion is aroused. 9 I will not carry out my fierce anger, nor will I turn and devastate Ephraim. For I am God, and not man-- the Holy One among you. I will not come in wrath. {[9] Or come against any city}10 They will follow the LORD; he will roar like a lion. When he roars, his children will come trembling from the west. 11 They will come trembling like birds from Egypt, like doves from Assyria. I will settle them in their homes," declares the LORD.
- 3) This is God – one who continues to love despite everything.
- B) Being religious will not save you. Israel was *plenty* religious – nb: “celebrations, yearly festivals, New Moons, Sabbath days, appointed feasts” 2:11.
- 1) “joined to idols” 4:17
 - 2) “intent on persuing idols” 5:11
 - 3) “make idols for themselves” 13:2
 - 4) 6:1-4 – "Come, let us return to the LORD. He has torn us to pieces but he will heal us; he has injured us but he will bind up our wounds. 2 After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will restore us, that we may live in his presence. 3 Let us acknowledge the LORD; let us press on to acknowledge him. As surely as the sun rises, he will appear; he will come to us like the winter rains, like the spring rains that water the earth."4 "What can I do with you, Ephraim? What can I do with you, Judah? Your love is like the morning mist, like the early dew that disappears.
 - 5) 8:11-14 – "Though Ephraim built many altars for sin offerings, these have become altars for sinning. 12 I wrote for them the many things of my law, but they regarded them as something alien. 13 They offer sacrifices given to me and they eat the meat, but the LORD is not pleased with them. Now he will remember their wickedness and punish their sins: They will return to Egypt.14 Israel has forgotten his Maker and built palaces; Judah has fortified many towns. But I will send fire upon their cities that will consume their fortresses."
- C) God characterizes her unfaithfulness as adultery
- 1) Hosea is the first prophet to describe Israel’s relationship with God as a marriage, and no other prophet (but Jeremiah - 9x) mentions unfaithfulness in terms of “adultery” more than Hosea (8x).
 - 2) The adultery is seen in her going after other gods (idols). The worship of the Lord is not just monotheistic - but “God specific.” This is the God who brought them up out of Egypt 11:1; 13:4 – "But I am the LORD your God, [who brought you] out of {[4] Or God ever since you were in}Egypt. You shall acknowledge no God but me, no Savior except me.
 - 3) But it is also seen in her dependence on others for security
 - a) 5:13 – "When Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his sores,

- then Ephraim turned to Assyria, and sent to the great king for help. But he is not able to cure you, not able to heal your sores.
- b) 7:8-13 – "Ephraim mixes with the nations; Ephraim is a flat cake not turned over. 9 Foreigners sap his strength, but he does not realize it. His hair is sprinkled with gray, but he does not notice. 10 Israel's arrogance testifies against him, but despite all this he does not return to the LORD his God or search for him. 11 "Ephraim is like a dove, easily deceived and senseless-- now calling to Egypt, now turning to Assyria.12 When they go, I will throw my net over them; I will pull them down like birds of the air. When I hear them flocking together, I will catch them. 13 Woe to them, because they have strayed from me! Destruction to them, because they have rebelled against me! I long to redeem them but they speak lies against me.
- c) 8:8-9 – 8 Israel is swallowed up; now she is among the nations like a worthless thing. 9 For they have gone up to Assyria like a wild donkey wandering alone. Ephraim has sold herself to lovers.
- d) 12:1 – Ephraim feeds on the wind; he pursues the east wind all day and multiplies lies and violence. He makes a treaty with Assyria and sends olive oil to Egypt.
- e) Including prosperity
- (1) 7:14 – They do not cry out to me from their hearts but wail upon their beds. They gather together {[14] Most Hebrew manuscripts; some Hebrew manuscripts and Septuagint They slash themselves} for grain and new wine but turn away from me.
- (2) 9:1-2 – Do not rejoice, O Israel; do not be jubilant like the other nations. For you have been unfaithful to your God; you love the wages of a prostitute at every threshing floor. 2 Threshing floors and winepresses will not feed the people; the new wine will fail them.
- 4) Seen in that they don't look to God
- a) 4:1-6 – Hear the word of the LORD, you Israelites, because the LORD has a charge to bring against you who live in the land: "There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land. 2 There is only cursing, {[2] That is, to pronounce a curse upon} lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. 3 Because of this the land mourns, {[3] Or dries up} and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying. 4 "But let no man bring a charge, let no man accuse another, for your people are like those who bring charges against a priest. 5 You stumble day and night, and the prophets stumble with you. So I will destroy your mother-- 6 my people are destroyed from lack of knowledge. "Because you have rejected knowledge, I also reject you as my priests; because you have ignored the law of your God, I also will ignore your children.

- b) **7:1-10**
 - c) **8:1-4**
 - d) **10:12-15**
- 5) Seen in the resultant lifestyle
- a) 4:1-3 – Hear the word of the LORD, you Israelites, because the LORD has a charge to bring against you who live in the land: "There is no faithfulness, no love, no acknowledgment of God in the land. 2 There is only cursing, {[2] That is, to pronounce a curse upon} lying and murder, stealing and adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. 3 Because of this the land mourns, {[3] Or dries up} and all who live in it waste away; the beasts of the field and the birds of the air and the fish of the sea are dying.
 - b) 6:8-10 – Gilead is a city of wicked men, stained with footprints of blood. 9 As marauders lie in ambush for a man, so do bands of priests; they murder on the road to Shechem, committing shameful crimes. 10 I have seen a horrible thing in the house of Israel. There Ephraim is given to prostitution and Israel is defiled.
 - c) Hos 7:1-2 – "Whenever I would restore the fortunes of my people, whenever I would heal Israel, the sins of Ephraim are exposed and the crimes of Samaria revealed. They practice deceit, thieves break into houses, bandits rob in the streets; 2 but they do not realize that I remember all their evil deeds. Their sins engulf them; they are always before me.
 - d) 12:7-8 – The merchant uses dishonest scales; he loves to defraud. 8 Ephraim boasts, "I am very rich; I have become wealthy. With all my wealth they will not find in me any iniquity or sin.
- C) God will send punishment
- 1) It will be horrible
 - a) Hos 5:6,10,14-15 – When they go with their flocks and herds to seek the LORD, they will not find him; he has withdrawn himself from them. . . . Judah's leaders are like those who move boundary stones. I will pour out my wrath on them like a flood of water. . . For I will be like a lion to Ephraim, like a great lion to Judah. I will tear them to pieces and go away; I will carry them off, with no one to rescue them. 15 Then I will go back to my place until they admit their guilt. And they will seek my face; in their misery they will earnestly seek me.
 - b) 9:15-17 – "Because of all their wickedness in Gilgal, I hated them there. Because of their sinful deeds, I will drive them out of my house. I will no longer love them; all their leaders are rebellious. 16 Ephraim is blighted, their root is withered, they yield no fruit. Even if they bear children, I will slay their cherished offspring." 17 My God will reject them because they have not obeyed him; they will be wanderers among the nations.
 - c) 10:13-15 – But you have planted wickedness, you have reaped

evil, you have eaten the fruit of deception. Because you have depended on your own strength and on your many warriors, 14 the roar of battle will rise against your people, so that all your fortresses will be devastated-- as Shalman devastated Beth Arbel on the day of battle, when mothers were dashed to the ground with their children. 15 Thus will it happen to you, O Bethel, because your wickedness is great. When that day dawns, the king of Israel will be completely destroyed.

- d) 13:5-8 – I cared for you in the desert, in the land of burning heat. 6 When I fed them, they were satisfied; when they were satisfied, they became proud; then they forgot me. 7 So I will come upon them like a lion, like a leopard I will lurk by the path. 8 Like a bear robbed of her cubs, I will attack them and rip them open. Like a lion I will devour them; a wild animal will tear them apart.
- e) 13:14-16 – "I will ransom them from the power of the grave {[14] Hebrew Sheol}; I will redeem them from death. Where, O death, are your plagues? Where, O grave, {[14] Hebrew Sheol} is your destruction? "I will have no compassion, 15 even though he thrives among his brothers. An east wind from the LORD will come, blowing in from the desert; his spring will fail and his well dry up. His storehouse will be plundered of all its treasures. 16 The people of Samaria must bear their guilt, because they have rebelled against their God. They will fall by the sword; their little ones will be dashed to the ground, their pregnant women ripped open."

- 2) It will be inescapable 9:5-9, 10-13,16 – What will you do on the day of your appointed feasts, on the festival days of the LORD? 6 Even if they escape from destruction, Egypt will gather them, and Memphis will bury them. Their treasures of silver will be taken over by briars, and thorns will overrun their tents. 7 The days of punishment are coming, the days of reckoning are at hand. Let Israel know this. Because your sins are so many and your hostility so great, the prophet is considered a fool, the inspired man a maniac. 8 The prophet, along with my God, is the watchman over Ephraim, {[8] Or The prophet is the watchman over Ephraim, the people of my God} yet snares await him on all his paths, and hostility in the house of his God. 9 They have sunk deep into corruption, as in the days of Gibeah. God will remember their wickedness and punish them for their sins. 10 "When I found Israel, it was like finding grapes in the desert; when I saw your fathers, it was like seeing the early fruit on the fig tree. But when they came to Baal Peor, they consecrated themselves to that shameful idol and became as vile as the thing they loved. 11 Ephraim's glory will fly away like a bird-- no birth, no pregnancy, no conception. 12 Even if they rear children, I will bereave them of every one. Woe to them when I turn away from them! 13 I have seen Ephraim, like Tyre, planted in a pleasant place. But Ephraim will bring out their children to the slayer." and punish them for their sins. Ephraim is blighted, their root is withered, they yield no fruit.

Even if they bear children, I will slay their cherished offspring.

- D) But God will not wipe them out. He will make them fruitful, but they must return to Him.

Conclusion

- A) God calls us to a single minded devotion that trusts and obeys.
- B) Anything less is prostitution.
- C) God will punish, but those who return to Him, God can make fruitful.

Lecture Notes on the Minor Prophets
Lesson 4 – Joel

Introduction

- A) Hosea played on the place “Jezreel,” a real city whose history was synonymous with “endings” but whose name actually mean “God sows.” Hosea is the only prophet who mentions this city.
 - B) Joel mentions another place, the Valley of Jehoshaphat, which is likewise not mentioned elsewhere in the Old Testament. The Valley, however, is wholly unknown (3:2,12).
 - 1) Jehoshaphat means “God Judges.”
 - 2) The valley is also known as the “Valley of decision.”
 - C) This is the place where God renders a verdict – a verdict for the people of God against her enemies and her neighbors. The great judgment is the “Day of the Lord,” a phrase mentioned more in this book than any other in the Old Testament.
- I) The book of Joel
- A) Is written by Joel, about whom we know less than Amos or Hosea. His father was Pethuel, but his father is unmentioned anywhere else in scripture. The name “Joel” is a common Old Testament name.
 - 1) Refers to one of Samuel’s sons 1 Samuel 8:1
 - 2) A descendant of Aaron and a leader of a priestly group 1 Chronicles 15:4ff.
 - 3) A commander in the army of King David 1 Chronicles 27:20
 - 4) It appeared to be a popular name among the priesthood.
 - 5) But we do not know where he is from or his occupation. He just “appears.”
 - B) We also do not have a date for his book.
 - 1) It has been dated from the 9th century B.C. (making it the earliest of the writing prophets) to the 4th century B.C. (making it one of the latest).
 - 2) Perhaps the date doesn’t matter, but the contents of the book give us a feel for the time.
 - a) There is mention of “Jehoshaphat” who served as a king of Judah for 25 years (872 - 848 B.C.).
 - (1) His reign begins in 1 Kings 15 and extends to 2 Kings 8 (15 chapters).
 - (2) Of all Judah’s Kings in Chronicles, only Hezekiah’s reign gets more press than Jehoshaphat’s.
 - b) There is no mention of Babylon or Assyria, which might lead us to suspect that this book occurs before these nations are “players.”
 - c) Instead, Judah’s enemies are Phoenicians (Tyre and Sidon), Philistia, Edom and Egypt (3:4,19), all of whom were troubling to Judah in the 8th century.
 - C) Background

- 1) Shishak, King of Egypt attacked Judah during the reign of Jereboam and took the treasures of the temple back to Egypt (1 Kings 14:25 – In the fifth year of King Rehoboam, Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem. 26 He carried off the treasures of the temple of the LORD and the treasures of the royal palace. He took everything, including all the gold shields Solomon had made. 27 So King Rehoboam made bronze shields to replace them and assigned these to the commanders of the guard on duty at the entrance to the royal palace.)
- 2) Asa was the great-grandson of Solomon. 25 years after his great-grandfather
 - a) He was a good king who did right in the sight of God.
 - b) He had political problems with the Cushites – N. Africa.
 - c) He also had problems with the Israelites to the North and paid protection money to the Syrians to keep Israel off his back. He paid it with furnishings from the Temple (2 Chronicles 16:2-3 – Asa then took the silver and gold out of the treasuries of the LORD's temple and of his own palace and sent it to Ben-Hadad king of Aram, who was ruling in Damascus. 3 "Let there be a treaty between me and you," he said, "as there was between my father and your father. See, I am sending you silver and gold. Now break your treaty with Baasha king of Israel so he will withdraw from me.).
 - d) NOTE Joel 3:4-6 – `Now what have you against me, O Tyre and Sidon and all you regions of Philistia? Are you repaying me for something I have done? If you are paying me back, I will swiftly and speedily return on your own heads what you have done. 5 For you took my silver and my gold and carried off my finest treasures to your temples. 6 You sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks, that you might send them far from their homeland.
- 3) Jehoshaphat, his son, was also a good and great king.
 - a) The Philistines made peace with him as did the Arabs - the descendants of Ishmael (2 Chronicles 17:10-11)
 - b) But he made an unholy alliance with Israel 2 Chronicles 19:1-2 – When Jehoshaphat king of Judah returned safely to his palace in Jerusalem, 2 Jehu the seer, the son of Hanani, went out to meet him and said to the king, "Should you help the wicked and love {[2] Or and make alliances with} those who hate the LORD? Because of this, the wrath of the LORD is upon you. 3 There is, however, some good in you, for you have rid the land of the Asherah poles and have set your heart on seeking God
 - c) The Moabites made war against him, as did the Edomites, but they were defeated.
- 4) Jehoram followed Jehoshaphat and the Edomites, Arabs and Philistines made war against Judah. These were all defeated 100 years later during the time of Hezekiah. Note Psalm 83:1-8 – O God, do not keep silent; be not quiet, O God, be not still. 2 See how your enemies are astir, how your foes rear their heads. 3 With cunning they conspire against your

people; they plot against those you cherish. 4 "Come," they say, "let us destroy them as a nation, that the name of Israel be remembered no more." 5 With one mind they plot together; they form an alliance against you-- 6 the tents of Edom and the Ishmaelites, of Moab and the Hagrites, 7 Gebal, {[7] That is, Byblos} Ammon and Amalek, Philistia, with the people of Tyre. 8 Even Assyria has joined them to lend strength to the descendants of Lot. Selah

- 5) Thus we have mention of all the same players as were operative in the 7th century B.C.
- 6) All of this is to say that Judah was, politically, picked on and vulnerable.
- 7) If these difficulties were not enough, there was a plague – particularly in the days of Joel: a locust plague.
 - (1) “In the Spring of 1915, Jerusalem, Palestine, and Syria were subjected to terrible devastation as a consequence of an influx of locusts. At the end of February, great clouds of locusts began flying into the land from a northeasterly direction so that ‘attention was drawn to them by the sudden darkening of the bright sunshine.’ They came in enormous numbers, settling on the fields and hillsides. They laid their eggs in vast numbers (it was calculated that some 60,000 locusts could come from eggs planted in 39 square inches of soil, and that figure involved a 30% loss rate). Once hatched, the new broods started crawling across the ground at the rate of 400 to 600 feet per day, devouring every scrap of vegetation in their path” (Peter Cragie, “Joel” in Twelve Prophets (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster, 1984) I.86).
 - (2) **1:2-12**

II) Joel’s Message

- A) Judah has experienced a Tragedy **1:13-20**.
- B) But it is only a precursor to more tragedy to come – an invading army. It is an army led by God himself. **2:1-11**
- C) God’s judgment is coming on Judah. She must change – and urgently 2:12-17
- D) When Judah changes, God will bless them. It will be awesome 2:18-32
- E) Then there will be judgment against all the nations who have afflicted God’s people and they will be judged in the Valley of Jehoshaphat.
 - 1) God’s threat 3:1-8
 - 2) God’s taunt 3:9-11
 - 3) God’s judgment 3:12-16
 - 4) God’s promise 3:17-21

III) Application

- A) Why the calamity on the people of God?
 - 1) Hosea has reasons

- a) Idolatry
 - b) No acknowledgment of God 4:1; 5:4; 7:7 “None of them calls on me.”
 - c) Arrogance 5:5
 - d) Unwillingness to submit to God except momentarily and in time of crisis. 6:1-4
 - e) Unwillingness to trust God 7:7,14
- 2) Amos has reasons – cruelty to the weak. 2:6-8; 5:11
- B) Joel doesn’t give reasons like this. He is more subtle.
- 1) Joel refers to all the things an agrarian society treasures – the harvest. He calls it the “joy of mankind” (1:12,16).
 - 2) You would think that the people, with all these troubles, would turn to God. But even the priests have to be urged to call people to God. 1:13-14 – Put on sackcloth, O priests, and mourn; wail, you who minister before the altar. Come, spend the night in sackcloth, you who minister before my God; for the grain offerings and drink offerings are withheld from the house of your God. 14 Declare a holy fast; call a sacred assembly. Summon the elders and all who live in the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD.
 - 3) Everything got between them and God. God calls on them to cut it out and pay attention to him. 2:15-17 – Blow the trumpet in Zion, declare a holy fast, call a sacred assembly. 16 Gather the people, consecrate the assembly; bring together the elders, gather the children, those nursing at the breast. Let the bridegroom leave his room and the bride her chamber. 17 Let the priests, who minister before the LORD, weep between the temple porch and the altar. Let them say, ‘Spare your people, O LORD. Do not make your inheritance an object of scorn, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’

Conclusion

- A) We often think what turns God against his people are their despicable sins.
- B) But here, God’s wrath is stirred just because His people pay no attention to Him,
- C) He loves his people above all the rest **3:1-8, 21**
- D) He will bless his people above all others, but he will not spare them for ignoring Him.

Lecture Notes on the Minor Prophets
Lesson 5 – Jonah

Text: Jonah 3:1-10

Introduction:

- A) Earlier this year (2003), the atrocities at the Abu Ghraib prison in Iraq captured the attention of the world. **Our** political leaders were chagrined. Our military leaders were embarrassed. And so were we all who take pride in our American citizenship and values.
- B) But what if President Bush had issued the following statement: “The scenes of torture and humiliation taken at Abu Grahb are simply samples of the sort of treatment our enemies are receiving. I want you to know that this sort of treatment is striking fear into the heart of the enemy but I also want you to know that it is nothing compared to what’s really going on. Our enemy is suffering horribly, but it’s producing results. We intend to keep this treatment up until those who seek our harm either change their way, or die the most horrible deaths obliterating them from the face of the earth.”
- C) We’d be taken back at such a statement. It’s just not us. It doesn’t sound civilized. But consider this real statement by a very successful ruler after one of his own military campaigns: “On the 13th day of the month I left [our capital city of] Nineveh and approached the city of Burmarana and conquered it. We conquered the city and took their soldiers captive. Later we executed 300 of them with a sword. I built up pillars of the skulls of their dead at the entrance to the city. From there we moved to the area of Pakaruhbuni and we turned the cities of that area into ruins. We covered the wide plain with the corpses of their warriors and executed 1300 of their soldiers with the sword. . . . I piled up the dead of the city in a moat around the town. I died the mountains of the land red with the blood of our dead enemies.” (Annals of Shalmanezzer, in Ancient Near Eastern Texts (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1955) p. 277).
- D) This is the statement of just one king of Assyria. Other statements could be read to see that, in the 8th century B.C., in the days of Jonah, The Assyrians were perhaps the cruelest people in the ancient world. One writer put it like this: “Assyria was a nation largely geared for aggressive war. Its atrocities were proverbial as the records and art left by its kings make clear. Though it could conquer the world, it proved unable to rule it. Its victims lay prone under tryanny, but no national spirit breathed in the corpus. No peace organization of any kind existed to keep the whole together. Assyria saw men and nations as tools to be exploited to graityfy the lust of conquest and commercialism. Assyria existed to render no service to mankind” (Jack P. Lewis, The Minor Prophets (Henderson, TN: Hester Publications, 1998) p. 55).

- E) In the ancient world, about everyone thought the best thing that could happen to Assyria was that it be defeated. No one would mourn its passing and if all its people died, no one would miss them. It was precisely to such a people and at such a time, that the prophet Jonah was called to leave the northern Kingdom of Israel and go to Nineveh to preach a message of salvation.
- 1) Note that it was not a salvation that allowed them intimate access to God.
 - 2) It was not a salvation that would bring them into the fold of the people of God.
 - 3) It was a salvation from retribution, a chance to save themselves from the annihilation.
 - 4) The book has
 - 1) Four chapters, each with its own theme.
 - 2) One message.
- F) Background to the book:
- 1) Amos was a citizen of the southern Kingdom who preached to the northern kingdom. Jonah is a citizen of the northern kingdom who preached to the Assyrians. Jonah was a citizen of Gath-Hepher, a town 3 miles north of where Nazareth would be in Galilee.
 - 2) He was the son of Amittai, but we know nothing more about his father.
 - 3) He was a recognized prophet during the days of Jereboam II of Israel in the northern kingdom.
 - 1) The northern kingdom had gone wholesale away from God.
 - 2) God had done horrible things to the northern kingdom to get them to change, but they would not - Amos 4:6-11 – "I gave you empty stomachs {[6] Hebrew you cleanness of teeth} in every city and lack of bread in every town, yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD. 7 "I also withheld rain from you when the harvest was still three months away. I sent rain on one town, but withheld it from another. One field had rain; another had none and dried up⁸ People staggered from town to town for water but did not get enough to drink, yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD. 9 "Many times I struck your gardens and vineyards, I struck them with blight and mildew. Locusts devoured your fig and olive trees, yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD.10 "I sent plagues among you as I did to Egypt. I killed your young men with the sword, along with your captured horses. I filled your nostrils with the stench of your camps, yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD. 11 "I overthrew some of you as I {[11] Hebrew God} overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. You were like a burning stick snatched from the fire, yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD.
 - 3) God had every reason to destroy them, but he did not. 2 Kings 14:26-27 – 26 The LORD had seen how bitterly everyone in Israel, whether slave or free, was suffering; there was no one to help them. 27 And since the LORD had not said he would blot out the

name of Israel from under heaven, he saved them by the hand of Jeroboam son of Jehoash.

- 4) He sent the prophet Jonah to him to preach a message of success. 2 Kings 14:25 – He was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel from Lebo {[25] Or from the entrance to} Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, {[25] That is, the Dead Sea} in accordance with the word of the LORD, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hopher.

I) Jonah Runs From God – Chapter 1

- A) Jonah may have bought into the notion that he could escape from God. Ancient people believed that gods were localized. There were gods of nations, gods of hills, gods of valleys (see 1 Kings 20:1-28).
- B) But running from God is costly. Note the text specifically says he “paid the fare.”
 - 1) “Tarshish Ships” were the “ocean liners” of the ancient world. “It has been estimated that their journey via many ports of call could have taken as long as a year, so when Jonah paid his fare he is likely to have parted with a considerable sum of money. Jonah had to ahve his own way and pit himself against the Almighty, cost what it may.”
 - 2) The Hebrew text says Jonah “paid her price,” that is, the ship’s price. Jewish commentators write that Jonah bought the vessel. “To flee from God, Jonah must have sold his home, left everything behind, and set off at the risk of his life.”
- B) But whether Jonah thought that or not, the point of the text was that once Jonah decided NOT to do what the Lord wanted, his life was on a down hill slide.
 - 1) He goes “down” to Joppa
 - 2) He goes down into the ship
 - 3) He goes below deck
 - 4) He ends up in the deep.
- C) Only God can save.
 - 1) The sailors cried out to their gods, but it did no good.
 - 2) They asked Jonah to cry out to his god.
 - 3) Jonah refused. He knew better. He knew he had done wrong. His God was the only one who could save, for His God made the sea.
 - 4) Jonah was pretty convincing. After a while, the sailors confessed belief. Note that when they toss Jonah overboard, they address their prayers to the LORD, the specific name of the God of the Hebrews.

II) Jonah runs to God – Chapter 2

- A) Jonah was swallowed by a great fish.

³Information from this section comes from Joyce Baldwin, “Jonah” in An Exegetical and Expository Commentary on the Minor Prophets (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993) p. 553.

- B) Did Jonah deserve to be swallowed by a fish? If no, then God was unjust in having him swallowed.
 - C) Did Jonah deserve to be swallowed by a great fish? If yes, why would he expect God to hear his prayers? Jonah cries not because he deserves mercy, but because of what he knows about God. This will be evident in chapter 4.
 - D) God answered his prayers.
- III) Jonah runs with God – Chapter 3
- A) Once rescued, God’s requirements did not change. Jonah still had to go to Nineveh.
 - B) This time, Jonah did as he was told. And he did it with all the power at his disposal, for the King and his subjects changed.
- IV) Jonah runs ahead of God – Chapter 4
- A) Jonah was angry with God. Here we discover why Jonah thought God would hear his prayer from the belly of the fish: “He is a gracious, compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.”
 - B) Jonah was angry that the Assyrians were getting off so easily.
 - C) God gives Jonah a little relief from the sun, then takes the relief away. Jonah is angry again.
 - D) God’s point and the point of the book: Jonah fell in love with shade. Couldn’t God love humanity?

Conclusion

- A) Jonah *knew* the will of the Lord, refused to do it, suffered, and expected God’s forgiveness.
- B) The Assyrians *didn’t* know the will of the Lord, were in danger of suffering, and Jonah would have denied them God’s forgiveness.
- C) We often appreciate the fact that is a gracious God when *we* want grace. We are not so easily inclined to offer that grace to others – particularly those we don’t like. But God *is* so inclined, and to be his children, we must become so inclined. To be the children of God, we must seek the welfare of others – even those we hate. Even those who deserve to be hated.

Lecture Notes on the Minor Prophets
Lesson 6 - Micah

Introduction

- A) The prophecy of Micah took place during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah.
- 1) Note that Uzziah, mentioned by Hosea and Amos, has dropped out of the picture.
 - 2) The current reigns encompass 750 - 686 BC - if Micah lasted the entirety of hezekiah's reign.
 - 3) He mentions the end of Samaria (722 B.C.) - Micah 1:6-7 – "Therefore I will make Samaria a heap of rubble, a place for planting vineyards. I will pour her stones into the valley and lay bare her foundations. 7 All her idols will be broken to pieces; all her temple gifts will be burned with fire; I will destroy all her images. Since she gathered her gifts from the wages of prostitutes, as the wages of prostitutes they will again be used." The prophet would have seen Samaria's end.
 - 4) The Northern Kingdom was ruled by Pekah and Hoshea.
- B) Political climate
- 1) Assyria had been the dominant world power from 858 to 824 B.C. under Shalmaneser III.
 - a) His "Monolith Inscription" (British Museum) names Ahab the Israelite as one of his armies. In war against a coalition of his enemies, Ahab had the larger army with 2000 Chariots and 10,000 soldiers.
 - b) The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser III depicts Jehu of Israel giving him tribute.
 - 2) But at the end of his reign, the kingdom began to fray until 745 B.C. and the reign of Tiglath Pileser III (aka "Pul" in the Old Testament).
 - 3) During this time
 - a) The North allied itself with Syria to defeat Assyria.
 - b) The North tried to force the South to join the coalition. The South appealed to Assyria.
 - c) You can see the story in **2 Kings 16**
 - (1) There is an abandonment of the Lord.
 - (2) There appears to be no direction
 - (3) And so, God hauls his people into court in a "Covenant Lawsuit" – Micah 6:1-2 – Listen to what the LORD says: "Stand up, plead your case before the mountains; let the hills hear what you have to say. 2 Hear, O mountains, the LORD's accusation; listen, you everlasting foundations of the earth. For the LORD has a case against his people; he is lodging a charge against Israel.
- C) The 8th century was a most prophetic time in the Old Testament.
- 1) Joel, Hosea, Isaiah, Jonah and Micah all did their work during this period.

- 2) As time went on, there were fewer prophets.
 - 3) Could it be that God sent fewer spokesmen because there were fewer hearers?
 - 4) But the fact that God was speaking at all was a good thing. When heaven is silent, it is an ominous sign.
 - a) Psalm 74:9 – We are given no miraculous signs; no prophets are left, and none of us knows how long this will be.
 - b) Proverbs 29:18 – Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; but blessed is he who keeps the law.
 - c) Amos 8:11-12 – "The days are coming," declares the Sovereign LORD, "when I will send a famine through the land-- not a famine of food or a thirst for water, but a famine of hearing the words of the LORD. 12 Men will stagger from sea to sea and wander from north to east, searching for the word of the LORD, but they will not find it.
- D) Micah was from the town of Moresheth, a small town about 20 mi south-west of Jerusalem.
- 1) Not much else is know about him.
 - 2) But his book, and the book of Jeremiah, help us to see him as a prophet who, when he spoke, spoke from the heart and everybody knew it.
 - 3) He saw the disintegration of the northern kingdom, recognized it as a cancer, and saw it spread south to his own nation. Micah 1:8-9 – Because of this I will weep and wail; I will go about barefoot and naked. I will howl like a jackal and moan like an owl. 9 For her wound is incurable; it has come to Judah. It has reached the very gate of my people, even to Jerusalem itself.
- E) The book is easily divided into three parts, each beginning with the call to “hear” or “listen.”⁴
- 1) 1:1 - 2:13 – Israel is threatened with exile for her sins, but will return.
 - 2) 3:1 - 5:15 – Jerusalem, dismantled for failed leadership, will be given new leadership.
 - 3) 6:1 - 7:20 – A spiritually bankrupt nation will be forgiven⁵

⁴John T. Willis, The Structure, Setting, and Interrelationships of the Pericopes in the Book of Micah PhD Dissertation. Vanderbilt University, 1966.

⁵Adapted from Bruce Waltke, “Micah” in An Exegetical and Expository Commentary on the Minor Prophets (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993) II.594-595.

- I) God's Complaints and Threats
- A) The Focus of His people is on evil, and their tendency to hurt one another.
- 1) 2:1-3 – Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it. 2 They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them. They defraud a man of his home, a fellowman of his inheritance. 3 Therefore, the LORD says: "I am planning disaster against this people, from which you cannot save yourselves. You will no longer walk proudly, for it will be a time of calamity.
- B) They will not listen to the truth of God.
- 1) 2:6-7 - "Do not prophesy," their prophets say. "Do not prophesy about these things; disgrace will not overtake us." 7 Should it be said, O house of Jacob: "Is the Spirit of the LORD angry? Does he do such things?" "Do not my words do good to him whose ways are upright?"
 - 2) 2:11 – If a liar and deceiver comes and says, 'I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer,' he would be just the prophet for this people.
 - 3) 3:5 – 5 This is what the LORD says: "As for the prophets who lead my people astray, if one feeds them, they proclaim 'peace'; if he does not, they prepare to wage war against him. 6 Therefore night will come over you, without visions, and darkness, without divination. The sun will set for the prophets, and the day will go dark for them. 7 The seers will be ashamed and the diviners disgraced. They will all cover their faces because there is no answer from God."
- C) They steal and cheat
- 1) In Amos, the rich are oppressing the poor. In Micah, the poor are hitting back. 2:8 – Lately my people have risen up like an enemy. You strip off the rich robe from those who pass by without a care, like men returning from battle.
 - 2) 6:9-12 – Listen! The LORD is calling to the city-- and to fear your name is wisdom-- "Heed the rod and the One who appointed it. {[9] The meaning of the Hebrew for this line is uncertain.} 10 Am I still to forget, O wicked house, your ill-gotten treasures and the short ephah, {[10] An ephah was a dry measure.} which is accursed? 11 Shall I acquit a man with dishonest scales, with a bag of false weights? 12 Her rich men are violent; her people are liars and their tongues speak deceitfully. 13 Therefore, I have begun to destroy you, to ruin you because of your sins. 14 You will eat but not be satisfied; your stomach will still be empty. {[14] The meaning of the Hebrew for this word is uncertain.} You will store up but save nothing, because what you save I will give to the sword. 15 You will plant but not harvest; you will press olives but not use the oil on yourselves, you will crush grapes but not drink the wine.
- D) Leadership is corrupt.
- 1) 3:1-4 – Then I said, "Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of the

house of Israel. Should you not know justice, 2 you who hate good and love evil; who tear the skin from my people and the flesh from their bones; 3 who eat my people's flesh, strip off their skin and break their bones in pieces; who chop them up like meat for the pan, like flesh for the pot?" 4 Then they will cry out to the LORD, but he will not answer them. At that time he will hide his face from them because of the evil they have done.

- 2) 3:9-11 – Hear this, you leaders of the house of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel, who despise justice and distort all that is right; 10 who build Zion with bloodshed, and Jerusalem with wickedness. 11 Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they lean upon the LORD and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No disaster will come upon us." 12 Therefore because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.

- E) Summary 7:1-6 – The godly have been swept from the land; not one upright man remains. All men lie in wait to shed blood; each hunts his brother with a net. 3 Both hands are skilled in doing evil; the ruler demands gifts, the judge accepts bribes, the powerful dictate what they desire-- they all conspire together. 4 The best of them is like a brier, the most upright worse than a thorn hedge. The day of your watchmen has come, the day God visits you. Now is the time of their confusion. 5 Do not trust a neighbor; put no confidence in a friend. Even with her who lies in your embrace be careful of your words. 6 For a son dishonors his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law-- a man's enemies are the members of his own household.

- F) God's people are, in God's mind, at this present stage, irredeemable.

- 1) 1:8-9 – Because of this I will weep and wail; I will go about barefoot and naked. I will howl like a jackal and moan like an owl. 9 For her wound is incurable; it has come to Judah. It {[9] Or He} has reached the very gate of my people, even to Jerusalem itself.
- 2) 2:10 – Get up, go away! For this is not your resting place, because it is defiled, it is ruined, beyond all remedy.

II) What God is going to do

- A) Send inescapable disaster and calamity. 1:3; 2:3
- B) Hide from his people and not answer their call 3:4, 7
- C) Devastate their land 1:6-7; 3:12
- D) Send them famine, ruin and sword 6:13-15
- E) Have them carted off to Babylon 4:10 – Writhe in agony, O Daughter of Zion, like a woman in labor, for now you must leave the city to camp in the open field. You will go to Babylon;

- III) What does God want? God has told you (“He has showed you what is good”) Micah 6:6-7 – With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?
- A) To acknowledge Him alone as God. 4:1-5 – In the last days the mountain of the LORD's temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. 2 Many nations will come and say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths." The law will go out from Zion, the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.3 He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. 4 Every man will sit under his own vine and under his own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid, for the LORD Almighty has spoken. 5 All the nations may walk in the name of their gods; we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever.
- B) Not ritual, nor gifts.
- C) But correct behavior 6:8 – He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.
- 1) Governor Mario Cuomo of New York tells the story of Fishhooks McCarthy, the right hand man to Al Smith who served 5 terms as Governor in the 1920's..
 - 2) Fishhooks began each day the same way. He went each morning to St. Mary's Church behind the Court of Appeals in Albany and prayed the same prayer: “O Lord, give me health and strength; I'll steal the rest” (Mario Cuomo, Keynote presentation, Pew Forum Conference: “Religion on the Stump: Politics and Faith in America” (October 2, 2002).
 - 3) Does not mean “Do what is right for you.”
 - 4) Means to do what God says is the right thing.
 - 5) The focus is to do what is right for others. What is the right way to treat those who work for you/ with you? What is the right way to treat the poor – looking out for their best interests.
- D) To be in love with Mercy.
- 1) Not just to be merciful
 - 2) But to be in love with mercy.
 - 3) Peter asked: “How many times should I Forgive?”
 - 4) God calls is to be in love with being merciful.
 - 5) This is the way God is: Micah 7:18 – Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy.
 - 6) How else can we explain God allowing Israel to survive?

- E) To walk humbly with God
- 1) In submission
 - 2) With appreciation
- IV) What Does God Promise?
- A) It is important to ask: "What is God like?"
- 1) He is a God with a high sense of morality. Do no harm to others. Your life is not what you have – or lack.
 - 2) He is a God who intends you act as He directs.
 - 3) He is a God who will punish disobedience.
- B) He promises retribution for all of those who are disobedient. Note that this includes those NOT His people. 5:10-15 – "In that day," declares the LORD, "I will destroy your horses from among you and demolish your chariots. 11 I will destroy the cities of your land and tear down all your strongholds. 12 I will destroy your witchcraft and you will no longer cast spells. 13 I will destroy your carved images and your sacred stones from among you; you will no longer bow down to the work of your hands. 14 I will uproot from among you your Asherah poles {[14] That is, symbols of the goddess Asherah} and demolish your cities. 15 I will take vengeance in anger and wrath upon the nations that have not obeyed me."
- C) But his love is such that he cannot stay angry forever 7:18-20 – Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. 19 You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea. 20 You will be true to Jacob, and show mercy to Abraham, as you pledged on oath to our fathers in days long ago.
- D) He will restore His people
- 1) 2:12-13 – "I will surely gather all of you, O Jacob; I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people. 13 One who breaks open the way will go up before them; they will break through the gate and go out. Their king will pass through before them, the LORD at their head."
 - 2) 4:6-8 – "In that day," declares the LORD, "I will gather the lame; I will assemble the exiles and those I have brought to grief. 7 I will make the lame a remnant, those driven away a strong nation. The LORD will rule over them in Mount Zion from that day and forever. 8 As for you, O watchtower of the flock, O stronghold {[8] Or hill} of the Daughter of Zion, the former dominion will be restored to you; kingship will come to the Daughter of Jerusalem."
 - 3) 5:2-5 – "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans {[2] Or rulers} of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins {[2] Hebrew goes out} are from of old, from ancient times. {[2] Or from days of eternity}" 3 Therefore

Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor gives birth and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites. 4 He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. 5 And he will be their peace. When the Assyrian invades our land and marches through our fortresses, we will raise against him seven shepherds, even eight leaders of men.

- E) And vindicate them in the sight of all.
- 1) 4:11-13 – But now many nations are gathered against you. They say, "Let her be defiled, let our eyes gloat over Zion!" 12 But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD; they do not understand his plan, he who gathers them like sheaves to the threshing floor. 13 "Rise and thresh, O Daughter of Zion, for I will give you horns of iron; I will give you hoofs of bronze and you will break to pieces many nations ." You will devote their ill-gotten gains to the LORD, their wealth to the Lord of all the earth.
 - 2) 7:8-13 – Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will rise. Though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light. 9 Because I have sinned against him, I will bear the LORD's wrath, until he pleads my case and establishes my right. He will bring me out into the light; I will see his righteousness. 10 Then my enemy will see it and will be covered with shame, she who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?" My eyes will see her downfall; even now she will be trampled underfoot like mire in the streets. 11 The day for building your walls will come, the day for extending your boundaries. 12 In that day people will come to you from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, even from Egypt to the Euphrates and from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain. 13 The earth will become desolate because of its inhabitants, as the result of their deeds.

Conclusion

- A) Is it possible that people are irredeemable?
- B) At any one point in time, it is. But God doesn't abandon his people. He disciplines them. He expects some not to survive. But those who do, and who recognize their sin, can come to God. He forgives the remnant.
- C) We want to be sure we are among the remnant. We do not want to make our bed with the doomed.
- D) And the goal is to share our God with others, who see the greatness of his way.
- E) But time continues to run out. If there are few prophets then, there is only silence now.

Lecture Notes on the Minor Prophets

Lesson 6

Nahum - God Judges All

Text: Nahum 1:1-8

Introduction

- A) From the days of Joel, through those of Hosea, Amos and Micah – nearly a century – God had been warning the Northern Kingdom of His people of the need to change their lives. He continued to warn them up until the last minute – until finally, it was too late. There was “no remedy” (Micah 2:10).
- B) The nation of Assyria, led by Tiglath-Pileser, came against Israel just as God had warned and deported the people into captivity (1 Chronicles 5:26; Hosea 11:5).
- C) It was a traumatic event leaving God’s people in His Southern Kingdom wondering just exactly what was happening to them.
 - 1) If the Northern Kingdom, stronger, bigger, and richer than the Southern, could not stand against Assyria, what was to happen to the South?
 - 2) If Assyria could defeat the People of God, what did that say about God’s ability to protect His people?
- D) It is during this period of uncertainty that God raised up another nobody from nowhere to speak his words – Nahum the Elkoshite.
 - 1) This is the only time Nahum is mentioned in the Bible. He is quoted only one time in the New Testament (compare Nahum 1:11; Romans 10:15).
 - 2) Elkosh is unknown.
- I) Nahum says: “The Assyrians are not all that strong. God is going to destroy them.
 - A) The Assyrians were an immensely cruel people. F.W. Farrar described them this way: “Judged from the vaunting inscriptions of her kings, no power more useless, more savage, more terrible, ever cast its gigantic shadow on the page of history as it passed on the way to ruin. The kings of Assyria tormented the miserable world. They exult to record how “space failed for the corpses”; how unsparing a destroyer is their goddess Ishtar; how they flung away the bodies of soldiers like so much clay; how they made pyramids of human heads; how they burned cities; how they filled populous lands with death and devastation; how they reddened broad deserts with carnage of warriors; how they scattered whole countries with the corpses of their defenders as with chaff; how they impaled “heaps of men” on stakes, and strewed the mountains and choked the rivers with dead bones; how they cut off the hands of kings and nailed them on the walls, and left their bodies to rot with bears and dogs on the entrance gates of cities . . . how they cut down warriors like weeds, or smote them like wild beasts in the forests, and covered pillars with the flayed skins of rival monarchs.” (F.W. Farrar, The Minor Prophets pp. 147-148 cited by Homer Hailey, The Minor Prophets (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1972) p. 251).

- B) You get a picture of this from the book itself.
- 1) Nahum 1:14 – "You will have no descendants to bear your name. I will destroy the carved images and cast idols that are in the temple of your gods. I will prepare your grave, for you are vile."
 - 2) Nahum 3:1-4 – Woe to the city of blood, full of lies, full of plunder, never without victims! 2 The crack of whips, the clatter of wheels, galloping horses and jolting chariots! 3 Charging cavalry, flashing swords and glittering spears! Many casualties, piles of dead, bodies without number, people stumbling over the corpses-- 4 all because of the wanton lust of a harlot, alluring, the mistress of sorceries, who enslaved nations by her prostitution and peoples by her witchcraft.
 - 3) Nahum 3:19 – Nothing can heal your wound; your injury is fatal. Everyone who hears the news about you claps his hands at your fall, for who has not felt your endless cruelty?
- C) For this cruelty, God determined to destroy her. Nahum has a natural division into seven parts⁶:
- 1) **God roars into view** 1:2-10 (vss. 5-6 – The mountains quake before him and the hills melt away. The earth trembles at his presence, the world and all who live in it. 6 Who can withstand his indignation? Who can endure his fierce anger? His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are shattered before him.
 - 2) **Nineveh is to be destroyed** 1:11-15 (1:14a – The LORD has given a command concerning you, [Nineveh]: "You will have no descendants to bear your name . . .)
 - 3) **The Fall is described** 2:1-10 (vss. 7-10 – It is decreed that [the city] be exiled and carried away. Its slave girls moan like doves and beat upon their breasts. 8 Nineveh is like a pool, and its water is draining away. "Stop! Stop!" they cry, but no one turns back. 9 Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold! The supply is endless, the wealth from all its treasures! 10 She is pillaged, plundered, stripped! Hearts melt, knees give way, bodies tremble, every face grows pale.
 - 4) **It is God's judgment** 2:11-13 (vs. 13 – "I am against you," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will burn up your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour your young lions. I will leave you no prey on the earth. The voices of your messengers will no longer be heard.")
 - 5) **No one will rise to her defense** 3:1-7 (3:6-7 – I will pelt you with filth, I will treat you with contempt and make you a spectacle. 7 All who see you will flee from you and say, 'Nineveh is in ruins--who will mourn for her?' Where can I find anyone to comfort you?)
 - 6) **She will be as defenseless in the face of God as the cities she conquered** 3:8-13 (vss. 8-10 – Are you better than Thebes, situated on the Nile, with water around her? The river was her defense, the waters her wall. 9 Cush and Egypt were her boundless strength; Put and Libya

⁶Adapted from David A. Dorsey, A Literary Structure of the Old Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999) pp. 301-305

were among her allies. 10 Yet she was taken captive and went into exile. Her infants were dashed to pieces at the head of every street. Lots were cast for her nobles, and all her great men were put in chains.

- 7) **The destruction will be permanent** 3:14-19 (vss. 18-19 – O king of Assyria, your shepherds slumber; your nobles lie down to rest. Your people are scattered on the mountains with no one to gather them. 19 Nothing can heal your wound; your injury is fatal. Everyone who hears the news about you claps his hands at your fall, for who has not felt your endless cruelty?)

II) Lessons

- A) Every nation, as a nation, is answerable to God for their crimes against humanity
- 1) Slavery in the 17th and 18th centuries.
 - 2) The genocide of the Cambodian people by the Khmer Rouge.
 - 3) The ethnic cleansing of Bosnia and Croatia.
 - 4) Hitler's attempt to exterminate the Jewish people.
- B) God is not confined to his people. He demands all people live in peace and harmony. Those who are not his people may have no access to promises. God never promised the Assyrians anything. He never made a covenant with them. He only sent them one prophet at one time that we know of. But their future, and the future of all nations, is in His hands. Don't tick Him off!
- C) Nothing can stop the judgment of God.

Conclusion – God did not address this prophecy to the Assyrians. He gave it to His people.

Why?

- A) So they would know that no matter how things looked, God is in control.
- B) So they would not be too attracted to the world. It might "look" successful, but it has no future without God.
- C) So they would know their future lay in allegiance with a God who had for them tremendous promises.
- 1) Enemies would be stopped 1:12-13
 - 2) Everything the Assyrians had taken from them would be restored. 2:2
- D) This message is still for us.

Lecture Notes on the Minor Prophets

Lesson 7

Zephaniah

Haggai – God of Conditional Promises and Enduring Grace

Text: Haggai 1:7-11

Introduction:

A) Distant background

- 1) For two hundred years God warned his people that, unless they changed their ways, he was going to scatter them.
 - a) Ezekiel 5:11-12 – Therefore as surely as I live, declares the Sovereign LORD, because you have defiled my sanctuary with all your vile images and detestable practices, I myself will withdraw my favor; I will not look on you with pity or spare you. 12 A third of your people will die of the plague or perish by famine inside you; a third will fall by the sword outside your walls; and a third I will scatter to the winds and pursue with drawn sword.
 - b) Jeremiah 9:15-16 – Therefore, this is what the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, says: "See, I will make this people eat bitter food and drink poisoned water. 16 I will scatter them among nations that neither they nor their fathers have known, and I will pursue them with the sword until I have destroyed them."
- 2) The closer they came to the end of that two hundred year period, the more sure the punishment was for their sins. Micah 2:10 – Get up, go away! For this is not your resting place, because it is defiled, it is ruined, beyond all remedy.
- 3) God scattered the Northern Kingdom of his people (Israel) in 722, hoping the Southern Kingdom (Judah) would take note. But they did not.
- 4) And so, between 609 and 586 BC, God brought the Babylonian army led by Nebuchadnezzar against His own people. In 586, the Babylonians marched against Jerusalem for the last time, breaking down her walls, destroying the temple, and carrying off the last of the people of God to Babylon as captives.
- 5) The oppression of God's people was to last 70 years. At the end of that time, the Babylonian empire fell to the Persians, just as God said it would (Jeremiah 25:12-14).

B) Immediate background.

- 1) In 539 BC, 70 years after the death of Josiah and the beginning of the end, The Persians did overcome the Babylonians and in the first year of the first king of the new world order, Cyrus decreed that God's people could go home.
- 2) Some did not return. People like Mordecai, Esther, and Nehemiah had made their homes in Babylon. That's where their jobs were, and that's where they stayed.
- 3) But others did return and their first object was to rebuild the temple of the Lord and re-institute the worship of God as He would have it.
- 4) It is interesting to note that they did not return poor. In addition to the 43,360 people of Israel, there was another 7,337 servants. In addition,

when the returnees gave a contribution for the rebuilding of the temple, they gave 1,100 lbs. of gold and 3 tons of silver (Ezra 3:64-67). God had blessed his people even in a disciplining captivity.

- 5) They immediately set about to rebuild the temple.
 - a) Leading them in laying the foundation was a man named Zerubbabel, a descendant of King David, grandson of Jehoiachin, King of Judah.
 - b) Zerubbabel became a leader in Jerusalem and later governor of the land.
 - c) Within about a year, the foundation of the temple was laid.
 - 6) But they met fierce opposition from the people surrounding them and the work, despite the urging of Zerubbabel, came to an end for 17 years (521 BC).
- C) The people of God, having turned from the will of the Lord again, found themselves in difficult times. It was just then that God raised up two prophets, Haggai and Zechariah to encourage the leadership of his people and motivate the people of God to action. The book is marked off in 5 units, each beginning with a date and all the book occurs in the second year of the Persian King Darius..
- 1) 2nd year, 6th month, 1st day – Haggai 1:1-11
 - 2) 2nd year, 6th month, 24th day. – Haggai 1:12-15
 - 3) 2nd year, 7th month, 21st day – Haggai 2:1-9
 - 4) 2nd. year, 9th month, 24th day – Haggai 2:10-19
 - 5) 2nd year, 9th month, 24th day – Haggai 2:20-23
- I) God's rebuke to His people. 1:1-11
- A) His house was not rebuilt.
- 1) The people said it wasn't the right time.
 - 2) Yet they had time not only to build themselves homes, but to build themselves "nice" homes (that's the meaning of "paneled" in 1:4).
 - 3) They had taken care of themselves, but given no thought to God. All very well to give money, but not of themselves.
- B) As a result, their expectations had not been realized.
- 1) They had worked hard but for little profit.
 - 2) What they had earned, inflation had eaten away. (Note: God controls all prosperity. Just because everyone has a job and is making money doesn't mean the money will be worth anything).
- C) This rebuke stirred them to action 1:12-15 (vs. 14 – So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the LORD Almighty, their God . . .).

- II) God's promise to his people 2:1-9
- A) A month later, it was obvious that the temple would never be what it had been during the reign of Solomon.
 - B) But the important thing was that God was present with them. 2:4-5
 - C) He made a further promise that the "desired of all nations" would come and in that place would be peace.
- III) A Lifestyle reminder – Holiness is not contagious. Sinfulness is. Both have to do with the blessings of God. Haggai 2:10-19
- A) Holiness cannot be passed on by contact.
 - B) But sinfulness can.
 - C) God's blessings are dependent on holiness.
- IV) The assurance of God's determined grace.
- A) God had made a promise to David – 2 Samuel 7:12,16 – When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. . . . 16 Your house and your kingdom will endure forever before me; your throne will be *established forever.*"
 - B) Yet, 400 years later, Jehoiachin, a descendant of David, was such a horrible king that God said: Jeremiah 22:24-30 – "As surely as I live," declares the LORD, "even if you, Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim king of Judah, were a signet ring on my right hand, I would still pull you off. 25 I will hand you over to those who seek your life, those you fear--to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and to the Babylonians. 26 I will hurl you and the mother who gave you birth into another country, where neither of you was born, and there you both will die. 27 You will never come back to the land you long to return to. . . . Record this man as if childless, a man who will not prosper in his lifetime, for none of his offspring will prosper, none will sit on the throne of David or rule anymore in Judah."
 - C) It would appear that God's promise to David was to be retracted. But Zerubbabel was such a good leader that God changed His mind once again and if you check the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew 1, you will see that Jesus is a descendant of Jehoiachin through Zerubbabel.

Conclusion

- A) The first lesson from this book is God's blessings are conditional. When His people trust Him and put Him first, blessings come. When they don't, the blessings seem but a mirage.
- B) But we should not think God a hard task master ready to fire anyone for the slightest transgression.

- C) Rather, he loves His people and looks for opportunities to bring people back to Him. 2 Samuel 14:14 – Like water spilled on the ground, which cannot be recovered, so we must die. But God does not take away life; instead, he devises ways so that a banished person may not remain estranged from him.
- 1) That's what you see in his message to His people in Haggai.
 - 2) That's what you see in his message to Zerubbabel.
- D) God has not changed. He is still the same way today. Won't you come back to Him? Won't you put Him first in your life?

Zechariah: Jesus from a Distance

Text: Zechariah 9:9-10

Introduction:

- A) Four hundred years after Jesus rose from the dead, a man named Origin called the book of Zechariah the longest and “most obscure” of the twelve Minor Prophets – and the book itself seems to admit this difficulty.
 - 1) More than any other Minor Prophet, this book presents “visions” from God.
 - 2) The visions are so difficult, God provides an angel to explain them.
 - a) Zechariah was not only a prophet, he was a priest, a descendant of iddo who was one of the first Jews to return to Jerusalem after Babylonian captivity.
 - b) As a priest, he was a student of the Bible. But his studies did not prepare him for visions from God.
 - c) He needed help. The second major section of this book (1:7 - 6:8) contains 7 visions. In this section, Zechariah asks: “What does this mean?” God gives him an angel to explain things.

- B) But difficult or not, New Testament writers loved this book and saw Jesus at every turn. When the Gospel writers wrote of Jesus’ death, they quoted most often from the book of Zechariah.⁷ It is cited some 71 times in the New Testament.⁸

- C) Why was it so difficult? If your idea of a nation is one that occupies land with borders, how do you describe a Kingdom without borders? God puts His message in terms the people can understand to give the readers hope. But it would take Jesus to make the finer points of the message plain.

- I) Background to Zachariah
 - A) After 70 years of exile, God’s people, 43,000 of them, returned to Jerusalem to reconstitute the nation of the people of God.

 - B) But progress was slow.
 - 1) 17 years after their return, only the foundation of the temple had been rebuilt.
 - 2) Nearly 100 years after their return, Jerusalem still wasn’t much of a city. The city wall hadn’t been rebuilt.

 - C) The people struggled with the same old sins.
 - 1) God wasn’t an important part of their lives. Zechariah 7:1-3 – In the

⁷P Lamarche, Zacharie i-xiv: Structure, Litteraire, et Messianisme (Paris: Gabalda, 1961) pp. 8-9.

⁸According to the “Index of Quotations” in The Greek New Testament 2nd. ed. (Wurtttemberg Bible Society: Stuttgart, Germany, 1968) p. 918.

fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, the month of Kislev. 2 The people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-Melech, together with their men, to entreat the LORD 3 by asking the priests of the house of the LORD Almighty and the prophets, "Should I mourn and fast in the fifth month, as I have done for so many years?"

- a) When Jerusalem fell to the Babylonians, it was such a traumatic time that the Jews instituted religious fast days so they would never forget. Fast days were in the
 - (1) 4th month to remember the conquest of Jerusalem,
 - (2) the 5th month to remember the destruction of Jerusalem,
 - (3) the 7th month for the murder of Gedaliah,
 - (4) 10th month for the siege of Jerusalem (see Zechariah 7:18-19)
- b) But in the days of Zechariah, the people were tired of remembering those events and asked if they were still necessary.
- c) God said they never observed them correctly because they never remembered Him 7:4-6 – Then the word of the LORD Almighty came to me: 5 "Ask all the people of the land and the priests, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, was it really for me that you fasted? 6 And when you were eating and drinking, were you not just feasting for yourselves? . . . as evidenced by the fact that . . .

2) Still were not living correctly

- a) 7:8-14 – And the word of the LORD came again to Zechariah: 9 "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. 10 Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other.' 11 "But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and stopped up their ears. 12 They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry. "'When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,' says the LORD Almighty. 14 'I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, where they were strangers. The land was left so desolate behind them that no one could come or go. This is how they made the pleasant land desolate.'"
 - b) 8:9-10 – This is what the LORD Almighty says: "You who now hear these words spoken by the prophets who were there when the foundation was laid for the house of the LORD Almighty, let your hands be strong so that the temple may be built. 10 Before that time there were no wages for man or beast. No one could go about his business safely because of his enemy, for I had turned every man against his neighbor.

D) Prosperity and blessing were far off.

- E) God raised up Haggai and Zechariah
- 1) Both encouraged the people to put God back in their lives.
 - 2) Both encouraged the people to rebuild the temple.
 - 3) Both promised God's blessing
 - 4) But of the two, Zechariah's vision of the future blessing was further reaching.
- II) The Message of Zechariah.
- A) Outline consists of 7 parts, all beginning with the phrase "The Word of the Lord came . . ."
- 1) 1:1-6 – Return to God.
 - 2) 1:7-6:8 – Visions for the future.
 - 3) 6:9 - 15 – Israel's future ruler: Priest and King.
 - 4) 7:1 - 8:23 – A Great Day Coming
 - 5) 9:1 - 11:3 – The Priority of Israel
 - 6) 11:4 - 17 – The Need for Change among God's People.
 - 7) 12:1 - 14:21 – The Destruction of God's enemies and the reign of the Lord.
- B) God's people have priority with God. 2:7-9 – "Come, O Zion! Escape, you who live in the Daughter of Babylon!" 8 For this is what the LORD Almighty says: "After he has honored me and has sent me against the nations that have plundered you--for whoever touches you touches the apple of his eye-- 9 I will surely raise my hand against them so that their slaves will plunder them. Then you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me.
- C) But God's people have sin in their lives
- 1) 1:1-6 – In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo: 2 "The LORD was very angry with your forefathers. 3 Therefore tell the people: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Return to me,' declares the LORD Almighty, 'and I will return to you,' says the LORD Almighty. 4 Do not be like your forefathers, to whom the earlier prophets proclaimed: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Turn from your evil ways and your evil practices.' But they would not listen or pay attention to me, declares the LORD. 5 Where are your forefathers now? And the prophets, do they live forever? 6 But did not my words and my decrees, which I commanded my servants the prophets, overtake your forefathers? "Then they repented and said, 'The LORD Almighty has done to us what our ways and practices deserve, just as he determined to do.'" 7 On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh
 - 2) 5:1-4 – I looked again--and there before me was a flying scroll! 2 He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll, thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide. {[2] Hebrew twenty cubits long and ten cubits wide (about 9 meters long and 4.5 meters wide)}" 3 And he said to me, "This is the curse that is going out over the whole land; for according to

what it says on one side, every thief will be banished, and according to what it says on the other, everyone who swears falsely will be banished. 4 The LORD Almighty declares, 'I will send it out, and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of him who swears falsely by my name. It will remain in his house and destroy it, both its timbers and its stones.'"

3) **11:4-17**

4) **13:1-8**

- B) They need forgiveness – even the priests – and God will give it 3:1-5 – Then he showed me Joshua {[1] A variant of Jeshua; here and elsewhere in Zechariah} the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan {[1] Satan means accuser.} standing at his right side to accuse him. 2 The LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?" 3 Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. 4 The angel said to those who were standing before him, "Take off his filthy clothes." Then he said to Joshua, "See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put rich garments on you." 5 Then I said, "Put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the LORD stood by. God stands ready to forgive.
- C) God will destroy the enemies of His people. **9:1-8**
- D) He will send a new, different, and better king to rule. The King will also be a priest. Zechariah 6:9-15 – The word of the LORD came to me: 10 "Take [silver and gold] from the exiles Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon. Go the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah. 11 Take the silver and gold and make a crown, and set it on the head of the high priest, Joshua son of Jehozadak. 12 Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD. 13 It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.' 14 The crown will be given to Heldai, {[14] Syriac; Hebrew Helem} Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen {[14] Or and the gracious one, the} son of Zephaniah as a memorial in the temple of the LORD. 15 Those who are far away will come and help to build the temple of the LORD, and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the LORD your God.
- E) His kingdom will be without borders 2:1-4 – Then I looked up--and there before me was a man with a measuring line in his hand! 2 I asked, "Where are you going?" He answered me, "To measure Jerusalem, to find out how wide and how long it is." 3 Then the angel who was speaking to me left, and another angel came to meet him 4 and said to him: "Run, tell that young man, 'Jerusalem will be a city without walls because of the great number of men and livestock in it.
- F) The lives of the people will be characterized by a high moral standard.

- G) There would be peace for God's people
- 1) Zechariah 3:8-10 – Listen, O high priest Joshua and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch. 9 See, the stone I have set in front of Joshua! There are seven eyes {[9] Or facets} on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,' says the LORD Almighty, 'and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day. 10 "In that day each of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and fig tree,' declares the LORD Almighty."
 - 2) Zechariah 8:4-8 – This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age. 5 The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there." 6 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "It may seem marvelous to the remnant of this people at that time, but will it seem marvelous to me?" declares the LORD Almighty. 7 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "I will save my people from the countries of the east and the west. 8 I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be my people, and I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God
 - 3) 8:12- "The seed will grow well, the vine will yield its fruit, the ground will produce its crops, and the heavens will drop their dew. I will give all these things as an inheritance to the remnant of this people. 13 As you have been an object of cursing among the nations, O Judah and Israel, so will I save you, and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong." 14 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Just as I had determined to bring disaster upon you and showed no pity when your fathers angered me," says the LORD Almighty, 15 "so now I have determined to do good again to Jerusalem and Judah. Do not be afraid. 16 These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; 17 do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this," declares the LORD. 18 Again the word of the LORD Almighty came to me. 19 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "The fasts of the fourth, fifth, seventh and tenth months will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace.
- H) People of the world would be drawn to it.
- 1) 2:10-13 – "Shout and be glad, O Daughter of Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you," declares the LORD. 11 "Many nations will be joined with the LORD in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. 12 The LORD will inherit Judah as his portion in the holy land and will again choose Jerusalem. 13 Be still before the LORD, all mankind, because he has roused himself from his holy dwelling.
 - 2) 8:20-23 – This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will yet come, 21 and the inhabitants of one city will go to another and say, 'Let us go at once to entreat the LORD and

seek the LORD Almighty. I myself am going.' 22 And many peoples and powerful nations will come to Jerusalem to seek the LORD Almighty and to entreat him." 23 This is what the LORD Almighty says: "In those days ten men from all languages and nations will take firm hold of one Jew by the hem of his robe and say, 'Let us go with you, because we have heard that God is with you.

- 3) 14:9 – The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name.
- 4) 14:16-20 – Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. 17 If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain. 18 If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The LORD {[18] Or part, then the LORD} will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. 19 This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. 20 On that day HOLY TO THE LORD will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, and the cooking pots in the LORD's house will be like the sacred bowls in front of the altar. 21 Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the LORD Almighty, and all who come to sacrifice will take some of the pots and cook in them. And on that day there will no longer be a Canaanite {[21] Or merchant} in the house of the LORD Almighty.

III) The Relevance of Zechariah

- A) Jesus is seen throughout this book.
 - 1) He is the King, righteous and having salvation who rode into Jerusalem on a colt, the foal of a donkey (9:9-10; Matthew 21:5).
 - 2) He is the shepherd who tried to protect the sheep of God but was bought for 30 pieces of silver (11:12-13; Matthew 26:15; 27:9-10).
 - 3) He is the God who was pierced by the sins of His people (12:10; John 19:34-37).
 - 4) He is the leader whose death scattered his people (13:7; Matthew 26:31).
 - 5) He makes forgiveness possible for the undeserving (3:1-4; 13:1ff). Joshua was forgiven, though he did not merit it.
 - 6) He provides living water 13:8; John 7:38-39 – Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." 39 By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified.
- B) God is not just the God of his people, but the God of all people and he wants all people to come to Him.

Conclusion

- A) When Zechariah wrote his book, I feel God had the following thought in mind:

“You’re not going to understand all this now. What you *will* understand is that something good is coming.”

- B) When Jesus came, those who had learned the message recognized him – “This is the one the prophets spoke of.”
- C) They yielded their lives to Him.
- D) Will you yield yours? The glorious new age has arrived. It awaits your participation.

Minor Prophets
Lesson 13 - Summary

Introduction

- A) Prophets are mentioned 464 times in the Bible. They are mentioned most often in
- 1) Kings - 85x
 - 2) Jeremiah - 86x
 - 3) Matthew - 37x
 - 4) Luke-Acts - 61x
 - 5) Only mentioned 2x in the Psalms
- B) We know only a few prophets by name
- 1) Abraham
 - 2) Samuel - 1 Samuel 9:9ff
 - 3) Gad - 1 Samuel 22:5 (also known as David's Seer).
 - 4) Nathan - 2 Samuel 7:2
 - 5) Ahijah - 1 Kings 14:2 (told Jereboam he would become King).
 - 6) Elijah and Elisha
 - 7) Shemaiah - prophet to Rehoboam 2 Chronicles 12:5
 - 8) Iddo - called a Seer (2 Chronicles 13:22). He and Shemiah wrote the chronicles of kings 2 Chronicles 9:29.
 - 9) Azariah son of Oded was a prophet to Asa, King of Judah - 2 Chronicles 15
 - 10) All the writing prophets
- C) But there were many more.
- 1) When Saul was anointed King, 1 Samuel 10:2- When you leave me today, you will meet two men near Rachel's tomb, at Zelzah on the border of Benjamin. They will say to you, 'The donkeys you set out to look for have been found. And now your father has stopped thinking about them and is worried about you. He is asking, "What shall I do about my son?"' 3 "Then you will go on from there until you reach the great tree of Tabor. Three men going up to God at Bethel will meet you there. One will be carrying three young goats, another three loaves of bread, and another a skin of wine. 4 They will greet you and offer you two loaves of bread, which you will accept from them.5 "After that you will go to Gibeah of God, where there is a Philistine outpost. As you approach the town, you will meet a procession of prophets coming down from the high place with lyres, tambourines, flutes and harps being played before them, and they will be prophesying. 6 The Spirit of the LORD will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person. 7 Once these signs are fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you.
 - 2) When David fled from Saul after saying good-bye to his wife Michal. 1 Samuel 19:17ff - When David had fled and made his escape, he went to Samuel at Ramah and told him all that Saul had done to him. Then he and Samuel went to Naioth and stayed there. 19 Word came to Saul: "David

is in Naioth at Ramah"; 20 so he sent men to capture him. But when they saw a group of prophets prophesying, with Samuel standing there as their leader, the Spirit of God came upon Saul's men and they also prophesied. 21 Saul was told about it, and he sent more men, and they prophesied too. Saul sent men a third time, and they also prophesied. 22 Finally, he himself left for Ramah and went to the great cistern at Secu. And he asked, "Where are Samuel and David?" "Over in Naioth at Ramah," they said.23 So Saul went to Naioth at Ramah. But the Spirit of God came even upon him, and he walked along prophesying until he came to Naioth. 24 He stripped off his robes and also prophesied in Samuel's presence. He lay that way all that day and night. This is why people say, "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

3) Jezebel killed off the prophets but Obadiah saved 100 of them - 1 Kings 18:4

D) It was the work of the prophets

- 1) To deliver the message of God. This was the message they were to speak.
- 2) To interpret the world through the eyes of God, to give the world God's perspective on things.
- 3) To speak God's word to God's people.

E) What was God's message through the Minor prophets?

I) God is God. – Leviticus 19

A) The will of God is not based on what is best for people.

B) The will of God is based on who God is and what kind of being God is.

II) This God is serious about wanting to be noticed and respected. He does not want people to ignore him.

A) Haggai 1:1- 11

B) Zechariah 14:17 - 19 – If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain. 18 If the Egyptian people do not go up and take part, they will have no rain. The LORD {[18] Or part, then the LORD} will bring on them the plague he inflicts on the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles. 19 This will be the punishment of Egypt and the punishment of all the nations that do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

III) God wants to be remembered in worship, but that remembrance can become unacceptable if our lifestyle is not according to his will.

A) Note Leviticus 18:1-6 – The LORD said to Moses, 2 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: `I am the LORD your God. 3 You must not do as they do in Egypt, where you used to live, and you must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices. 4 You must obey my laws and be careful to follow my decrees. I am the LORD your God.

5 Keep my decrees and laws, for the man who obeys them will live by them. I am the LORD. 6 "No one is to approach any close relative to have sexual relations. I am the LORD.

B) Note Leviticus 19

- 1) Respect for parents
- 2) Welfare system
- 3) Handicapped assistance

C) This comes out in the prophets

- 1) Amos 2:6-8 – This is what the LORD says: "For three sins of Israel, even for four, I will not turn back [my wrath]. They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. 7 They trample on the heads of the poor as upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed. Father and son use the same girl and so profane my holy name. 8 They lie down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge. In the house of their god they drink wine taken as fines.
- 2) Amos 4:1-3 – Hear this word, you cows of Bashan on Mount Samaria, you women who oppress the poor and crush the needy and say to your husbands, "Bring us some drinks!" 2 The Sovereign LORD has sworn by his holiness: "The time will surely come when you will be taken away with hooks, the last of you with fishhooks.
- 3) Amos 5:21-24 – "I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. 22 Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, {[22] Traditionally peace offerings} I will have no regard for them. 23 Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. 24 But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream!
- 4) Micah 6:6-8 – With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? 7 Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 8 He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

IV) God wants his people to trust him even in bad times, when the world is a Chaos.

A) Habakkuk 2:4 - "See, he is puffed up; his desires are not upright-- but the righteous will live by his faith {[4] Or faithfulness}-- 5 indeed, wine betrays him; he is arrogant and never at rest. Because he is as greedy as the grave {[5] Hebrew Sheol} and like death is never satisfied, he gathers to himself all the nations and takes captive all the peoples.

B) Habakkuk 3:16-18 – I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait

patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us. 17 Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, 18 yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.

V) God loves all people.

VI) God's love is relentless.

Conclusion

A) Notice 1 Kings 22

B) Churches get the kind of preaching they want.

C) But if they want to hear the word of the Lord, they should be ready to hear anyone who speaks it, and those who speak it must speak only the word of God. **Amos 7:10-17**

