

The Twelve Minor Prophets

The goal of this Bible Class is to give the students a working knowledge of the whole *book of The Twelve, the Minor Prophets*. It is based on an expository approach to teaching the Bible, preparing the students for the worship of our Savior. The various lessons are to be viewed by the teacher as thematic suggestions to help with preparation. While the lessons are not intended to be read to the class word for word, the main ideas should be the substance of what is taught. The teacher, in preparation for the class, should consider reading through the whole curriculum before beginning the class, as well as each of the Minor Prophets several times. This will provide the instructor with a broad and comprehensive understanding the book of the Twelve as it is being taught. At the end of the course, the class will be concluded with a Bible Knowledge Evaluation. The instructor should be sure to review the material sufficiently that the students are able to correctly answer the questions on the evaluation at the end of the course.

It is important that the instructor be not only knowledgeable about the material, but also able to teach it with enthusiasm and conviction. Students best learn from teachers that are themselves excited about the scriptures. The use of maps, diagrams, white boards etc. is extremely helpful. Some of these have been provided in the curriculum. It is suggested that the class be conducted in an interactive manner. This can be accomplished by having them read short portions of the scripture texts, asking them questions, and wholeheartedly encouraging them to ask questions. All students should be encouraged to bring a Bible to class.

The inclusion of the Westminster Shorter Catechism as part of the curriculum is designed to help the students acquire a broad understanding of Christian doctrine along with the specific Bible teaching. The Elders of the church will coordinate the specific questions and answers to be used in the class.

It will become evident to the teacher that this course curriculum, while not dealing with every verse and concept in the Minor Prophets, is comprehensive and deeply theological. It is designed to help the students understand the book of the Twelve in its wider biblical context, with emphasis on its place in the redemptive history of God's covenant people. The students will be confronted with and asked to understand and remember fairly difficult concepts. It should be remembered that children are able to comprehend much more than we often give them credit for.

While this class will be a challenge for both the teacher and the students, the rewards for the efforts of those in the class will be surprising and exciting.

Suggested Resources:

Dorsey, David A. *The Literary Structure of the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Baker Books, 1999), pp. 265-324.

Leithart, Peter, *A House for My Name: A Survey of the Old Testament*, (Moscow, ID, Canon Press, 2000).

Lesson One: A Historical Introduction To The Twelve

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

There are a group of books in the Bible called the Twelve Minor prophets. Who can tell me where these books are found? [At the end of the Old Testament.] Many Christians do not read the Old Testament much, and even fewer have read what is sometimes known as the book of the Twelve. Much of the message of these prophetic books of the Old Testament deal with the coming of the Lord in judgement upon His people for their sins. For many people, it seems hard to know how to understand these books of the Bible in connection the whole story of the Bible, and even harder still to apply them to our lives as Christians. But if we work hard in studying the Minor Prophets, we will better understand what God doing in the world.

Whenever you begin a study of a book of the Bible it is helpful to begin by looking back to the beginning of God's revelation to see how the theology would help you understand what you are reading. This is particularly true of the book of the Twelve and the book of Revelation that we will be studying this year.

In the Garden of Eden God commanded Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply and have dominion over the earth. The idea of dominion is an important concept in the Bible. God established the pattern for world dominion in the Garden of Eden, which Adam was to take out into the rest of the world. Adam was to live in obedience and faith in God, and teach the righteousness of faith to his children. After the fall, God promised that the seed of the woman would crush the head of the serpent, but because of their sin they were sent out of the garden. They were driven out (exiled) and cherubim were placed at the east of the garden with a flaming sword to guard the way to the tree of life, which Adam sought impatiently apart from obedience to the Lord. Remember: to move spatially to the east means in biblical language to move away from the presence of God. After Cain killed his brother Abel he was cursed by God and cast out of the presence of the Lord in the land and dwelt east of Eden. After this a new and godly line of men arose, the Sethites, from which came Noah (Gen. 4:25-5:32). Noah walked with God, but the earth was corrupted by the violence of men (even the line of Seth was corrupted by the intermarriage of the sons of God and the daughters of men (see Gen. 6:1-13). Noah was a prophet sent to preach righteousness (2 Pet. 2:5) to the world, but men would not hear and were cast out of the world. [Use the charts on the handout at the end of this lesson to illustrate the spread of sin and death.]

The Spread of Sin and Death

Place	Sinner	Sin	Judgment	Virtue
Garden	Adam	Eats fruit	Cast out of Garden	Patience
Land	Cain	Kills Brother	Cast out of land	Brotherly kindness
World	Sons of God	Marry Unbelievers	Cast out of World	Holiness

(Peter Leithart, *House For My Name*, p. 56)

The flood is the end of the old world, and the beginning of a new world, with Noah being a new Adam. But just as sin ruined the old world, so now sin continued to ruin the world. But as we saw the grace and mercy of God to Adam, there is hope in the New World. Noah was given the same command to be fruitful and multiply on the earth, and a new covenant was established with him (Gen. 9:1-17). From Noah, the descendents of Shem became the new and righteous line, from which the Messiah would eventually come. What we see next (Gen. 10) is a list of the 70 nations of the new world. In chapter 11 we see another fall of man at the tower of Babel. At that time there was only one language on the earth. Nimrod (of the unrighteous line of Ham) settled in the east and built his kingdom of Babel. The righteous line of Shem joined Nimrod on the plain of Shinar to build a tower at Babel. This tower was a temple to connect heaven and earth. But this tower is a sign of rebellion against God because they were seeking to reach up to heaven and make a name for themselves, lest they be scattered throughout the world. Instead of taking on the name of God and obey His command to “fill the earth,” they wanted to stay together in one place. The tower, which they thought was so great and mighty, reaching up into heaven, is in reality so far from heaven that God has to “come down” to see it. When God does come down to see it, He brings His judgments against man by confusing their language so that they are scattered even more widely throughout the world than they were before. The name “Babylon” means, “Gate of God” (which is where Babel was originally), but this effort to build a house/temple that reaches to God is only confusion and foolishness. God will later in history use this city in His plan for Israel. It is to Babylon that Yahweh takes His people into exile, and which the prophets warned God’s people about.

The story of mankind does not end with the fall at Babel. The line of Shem continued on, and in Genesis 11:27ff we see that God raises up another new Adam, Abraham. God made another new covenant, this time with Abraham, and makes Him the father of the righteous line from which the Messiah would come. He made three promises to Abraham: 1) A seed/a great nation (remember Gen. 3 where God promised to provide a seed that would crush the head of the serpent); 2) A land (which would later be the Promised Land); 3) The nations would be blessed. These covenant promises were repeated to Isaac and Jacob. Wherever they went, these fathers of the faith built altars and worshipped God faithfully throughout the land.

When Jacob was leaving the land to escape from his brother he saw a vision of a “ladder” reaching to heaven with angels going up and down on it (Gen. 28). Unlike the tower that the men at Babel tried to build, the ladder was made by God. Jacob called the place the “gate of heaven,” which reminds us of the Babylonian “Gate of God.” Jacob later renamed the place “Bethel,” which means “house of God.” At Bethel, Yahweh revealed His answer to Babel: **He** will build a way to connect earth and heaven; **He** will build it in the land through Jacob’s descendents.

Eventually, Joseph, one of the sons of Jacob, is taken to Egypt by the wickedness of his brothers. Through the providence of God, Joseph became the ruler of the Egypt after the conversion of Pharaoh (see Gen. 37:2; 41:46-47; 45:6). Eventually, the Hebrews grew into a great nation while they were under the care of the Egyptians (they were fruitful and multiplied, according to the covenant promise, Gen. 12:1-03; cf. Ex. 1:7). After more than 400 years, there arose a Pharaoh that did not remember Joseph, and he oppressed and enslaved the Hebrews. The suffering of the people of God was so great that God remembered His promises to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and raised up another deliverer: Moses. God powerfully delivered His enslaved people so that they could worship Him and return to the land promised to them. In the book of Exodus we see that God not only delivered them from Egypt, but also gave them His law and the tabernacle. The law taught them how to live as the people of the covenant. By making covenant with the people at Sinai, Yahweh made Israel His bride. In order to remain faithful to her Husband, Israel needed to keep His law and worship Him alone at the tabernacle.

After being given these blessings of the law and tabernacle, Yahweh led them to the Promised Land. But Israel rebelled against the Lord, and Yahweh judged them by causing them to wander in the wilderness for 40 years. During this wilderness wandering the rebellious people died, preparing a new Israel to enter the land under Joshua.

After the wilderness wandering for 40 years the people crossed over the Jordan River from the east, signifying that they were moving away from the world and into the favor and presence of the Lord again. After Israel had gone into the land, they conquered the land under the leadership of Joshua and renewed covenant with Yahweh in the land. The tabernacle was erected as the central place of worship in Shiloh, by direction from Yahweh. Israel was commanded by Yahweh to utterly destroy the inhabitants of the land so that they would not take up their way of life and begin to worship the gods of the land. But as the book of Judges demonstrates, they did not remain faithful to Yahweh, and instead of conquering the inhabitants of the land, Israel began to live with them and worshipped their gods. Israel committed spiritual adultery by worshipping the gods of the land. What is worse, it was the Priests and Levites that were leading the people astray. Yahweh repeatedly

brought invaders in to enslave Israel again. Each time the people repented of their sin, God sent judges (“Spirit-Empowered Deliverers”) to deliver them again. The cycle of sin, judgment, repentance and deliverance was repeated over and over again to teach Israel to be faithful to Her Husband Yahweh.

Turn to 1 Samuel 8, where we see that Samuel’s sons were much like the sons of Eli. They were judges in the land, but v. 3 tells us that “they turned aside after dishonest gain, took bribes, and perverted justice.” The result was that the people were unhappy with the government of Israel, and asked for a king in Israel to judge them, *like all the nations* (v. 5). The people came to believe that their problems with the nations around them was because they didn’t have a king, when in reality, the problem was that they repeatedly refused to obey Yahweh their true King. Had they remained faithful to Him, He would not have sent invaders to trouble them. Now they were engaging in the sin of political idolatry, thinking that Yahweh had not been a good enough King. They wanted a human king. God granted them their request – as a judgment against them. Because of their rejection of God as their King (v. 7), they would be oppressed (as they were during the judges), but this time not by Egypt, Ammon or Philistia, but by one of their brethren, the king they chose. Samuel explained in vv. 11-18 that the king would take their sons and daughters as his servants, the produce of their lands, and even take a tenth of what they owned (a tithe equal to God’s). They would become like slaves in their own land under their own king. But Israel insisted on having a king to go out and fight their battles for them. Having a king in Israel was not necessarily a bad thing. In Deuteronomy 17 God established laws that governed the kings in Israel. The kings were not to multiply gold, wives or chariots. God intended to give Israel kings when they had matured enough to have them. But they were seeking a king for the wrong reasons: to be like the nations. Israel was to be different from the nations, a holy nation of priests before the Lord.

Eventually Saul was anointed king. But Saul was not a godly man and did not obey the Lord. The kingdom was taken away from Him and given to David. As we all know, David was a man after God’s own heart. God established a covenant with the house of David, and promised that his kingly line (his house) and kingdom would be established forever, and David’s son (Solomon) would build a temple (house) for Yahweh (2 Sam. 7). The Messiah, Jesus, was of the line of David, and His Kingdom would endure forever. Under the rule of David, the enemies of Israel were subdued, and Israel prospered.

After the death of David, Solomon was made king of Israel. Solomon loved Yahweh and walked in the ways of his father David (1 Kings 3). He asked God for wisdom to rule His people according to the knowledge of good and evil. Solomon, as a new a better Adam, was given wisdom and was given the ability to discern

good and evil. During Solomon's reign, God kept his promises to Abraham and David. Solomon is a blessing to the nations (1 Kings 5:7; 10:9, 23-25). During his reign the people lived in the land in peace and safety, with the borders of Israel extending to the places promised to Abraham (1 Kings 4:21; cf. Gen. 15:18). The people of Israel was a great nation, as numerous as the sand by the sea (1 Kings 4:20). Most importantly, Solomon built the temple (1 Kings 6-8). After the temple was completed and dedicated, God appeared to Solomon again and told him that if he would keep the word of the Lord, Yahweh would establish his throne forever as promised to David (1 Kings 9:1-5). But if his sons turn from the Lord and do not obey and worship other gods, then Israel will be cut off from the land (be exiled), and the temple (the house of God) will be cast out of His sight. If this happens, when the nations ask why this happened, they will answer that it was because they had forsaken Yahweh and embraced other gods. If Israel became unfaithful to her Husband and was not a good witness to the nations around them; God would destroy them as a witness to the nations that Yahweh is the righteous God in Israel.

Although Solomon began well as a righteous and wise man, he became foolish and sinful. Solomon did the three things kings were command not to do: he multiplied for himself gold, chariots and wives who turned his heart from Yahweh to idols (Deut. 17:14-20 cf. 1 Kings 10:14-29; 11:1-8). Because of Solomon's sin, Yahweh divided the nation into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. During the next three hundred years, both kingdoms go back to Canaanite and Egyptian worship. Eventually, both Israel and Judah are driven out of the land. In 722 BC, the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel, and 117 years later, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, captured Jerusalem, destroyed the temple and took many from Judah to Babylon. The books of Kings tell this story, and the books of Chronicles tell the same story with an emphasis on the Southern Kingdom of Judah.

“Although both David and Solomon were great, there must be some greater King coming, a King who would sit on David's throne forever ruling in faithfulness, a King who will truly bring rest to His people, and a King who will build a temple that would never be destroyed. Both in his glory and in his failures, Solomon points us to the greater Son of David, Jesus Christ” (Leithart, A House for My Name, p. 157).

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of 1 Chronicles. Pay especial attention to the reign of King David and his preparations for the building of the Temple by Solomon.

Lesson One: A Historical Introduction To The Twelve

I. From Creation Through the Tribal Period

The Spread of Sin and Death

Place	Sinner	Sin	Judgment	Virtue
Garden	Adam	Eats fruit	Cast out of Garden	Patience
Land	Cain	Kills Brother	Cast out of land	Brotherly kindness
World	Sons of God	Marry Unbelievers	Cast out of World	Holiness

(Peter Leithart, *House For My Name*, p. 56)

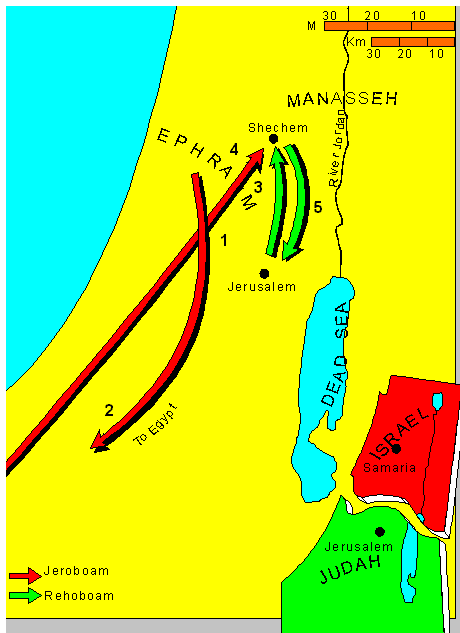
II. The Kingdom Period

Creation	Fall	Initial Judgment	Decline	Final Judgment	Recreation
Creation	Fall	Gen. 3	Gen. 4	Flood	Noah
Exodus	Kadesh	No Entry	40 Years	Death 1 st Generation	Conquest
Conquest	Failure to Conquer	Nations Remain	Judges	Capture of Ark	Return of Ark
David/ Solomon	Solomon	Division	Divided Kingdom	Exile	Return
Return	Jews Reject Jesus	Turn to Gentiles	Jews Reject Apostles	Jerusalem, A.D. 70	Church

(Peter Leithart, *House For My Name*, p. 38)

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of 1 Chronicles. Pay especial attention to the reign of King David and his preparations for the building of the Temple by Solomon.

The Kingdom Divided & World Empires



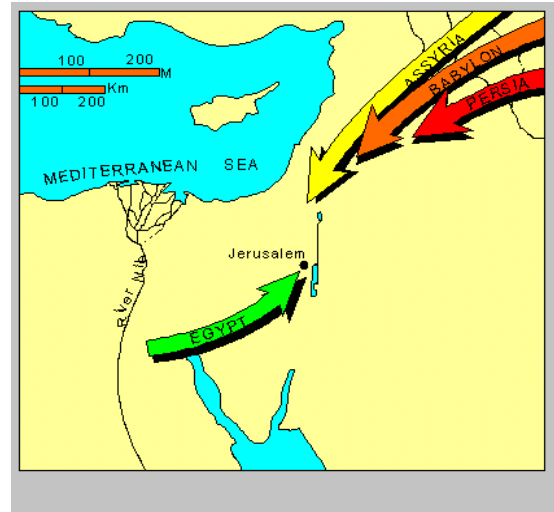
Solomon's kingdom is broken in two.

- 1 Jeroboam, an official of Solomon's (in charge of slave labor), is met by a prophet. He is told that he will become ruler of the 10 northern tribes.
- 2 Jeroboam either plans a coup against Solomon, or is suspected of it. Solomon tries to kill him, and he flees to Egypt.
- 3 Solomon dies. His son Rehoboam travels to Shechem to be proclaimed king.
- 4 Jeroboam arrives in Shechem and leads a northern revolt against Rehoboam.
- 5 Rehoboam sends a messenger to Jeroboam but he is stoned to death. Rehoboam runs for his life back to Jerusalem. He plans for war against the northern tribes, but never attempts it.

Inset: The northern tribes become Israel; the southern tribes, Judah.

During the period of the Old Testament, six superpowers turned their unwelcome attention on Palestine:

Egypt The great southern power in the Old Testament, Egypt was in gradual decline. This was occasionally halted by a number of powerful kings, some of whom invaded Palestine and challenged the northern superpowers. Judah and Israel were often tempted to form alliances with Egypt against the north.



Assyria The

Assyrians were the first of a succession of empires that swallowed up parts of Palestine. They exiled Israel and subdued Judah. The empire collapsed when Nineveh fell to the Babylonians in 612 BC.

Beginning with the Exile of the Southern Kingdom, the Jews were under the control and oversight of 4 Gentile Empires:

Babylon. The Babylonian Empire took over where the Assyrians left off in 605 BC. They took Judah into exile and successfully invaded Egypt. But their power was eroded by a series of weak rulers. In 539 BC Cyrus the Persian took over the empire with little opposition.

Persia. The Persian Empire was larger than the empires before it. It was also more humane in returning exiles (Judah among them) to their homelands. The Persian Empire was overrun by Alexander the Great around 331 BC. Alexander's **Greek** Empire was followed by the **Roman** Empire of New Testament times.

Lesson Two: A Theological Introduction To The Twelve

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

Last week we saw that from the beginning, God intended man to fill the earth and take dominion for Him. What man learned in the Garden of Eden about living in obedience to God, man would spread throughout the world. Adam's sin in the Garden involved impatiently seizing the forbidden fruit, instead of trusting God in faith to give it to him as he grew in maturity and experience. Before man was cast out of the Garden for his sin, God promised that there would be one of the seed of the woman that would crush the head of the serpent. Men continually moved away from God (to the east) and sinned against one another (Cain and Abel), and failed to remain holy (by intermarriage). What is important to note about the first few chapters of Genesis is the development of the family lines: The godly lines of Seth and Shem vs. the ungodly lines of Cain and the other sons of Noah. The 70 nations were corrupted, but God in His mercy made a covenant with Abraham, through whom He would bless His people by giving them the land, make them a great nation, and bless the nations through them. Eventually God brought His people out of Egypt and at Mt. Sinai renewed His covenant with them, taking Israel to be His Bride. He gave Her His law and taught them how to faithfully worship Him. He promised that if they remained faithful to Him, He would continue to bless them; but if they became an unfaithful Bride, He would cast her away into exile. Israel began as an unfaithful wife, and God purified Her by causing Israel to wander in the wilderness for 40 years. Then He brought her into the land and renewed covenant with her again. Through the period of the judges, Israel went through repeated cycles of sin/unfaithfulness, repentance and restoration – only to sin by rejecting Her true King by asking for human kings. Instead of sending foreign invaders to oppress His people for their sins, God began to use the bad kings of Israel to judge His people. God had made a promise to David that the Messiah (the one who would crush the Serpent's head) would be one of his descendents. But for the Davidic monarchy (kings in family of David) to continue in blessing, they needed to rule faithfully for Yahweh. As you will read in 2 Chronicles, these kings did not walk as their father David did. As we saw last week, the kingdom of Israel was split into two [see in the handout given last week]. Although Solomon began well as a righteous and wise man, he became foolish and sinful (Deut. 17:14-20 cf. 1 Kings 10:14-29; 11:1-8). Because of Solomon's sin, Yahweh divided the nation into the Northern Kingdom of *Israel* and the Southern Kingdom of *Judah*. During the next three hundred years, both kingdoms went back to Canaanite and Egyptian worship. Eventually, both Israel and Judah are driven out of the land.

I. The decline of Israel

During this time Israel and Judah fought against one another, as well as those from outside of the land. Most of the kings in both Israel and Judah were bad. Only a few kings in Judah walked in the ways of their father David and did what was right in the sight of the Lord. In both the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah we see a downward slide away from the Lord and into the two major sins of Israel during the kingdom period: idolatry/worship of false gods and social injustice. Throughout this period God sent His prophets as covenant lawyers/prosecutors to convict Israel and Judah of their sins and to preach repentance to them. But these prophets of God were almost universally ignored and persecuted because the kings and the people did not want to repent. They continued to decline until finally God sent Israel into permanent exile by the Assyrians. God gave Judah one last chance by giving them a godly king named Josiah, whose chief advisor was the prophet Jeremiah (also the prophets Zephaniah and Habakkuk). But Judah became more oppressive socially, keeping their fellow Jews in continuous slavery, which was forbidden in the law. Jeremiah said that God would bring Nebuchadnezzar and the Babylonians to conquer Judah because Israel had become like Egypt (cf. Jer. 34).

At the beginning of Nebuchadnezzar's reign he conquered Jerusalem and took some smart young guys to study in the university in Babylon (Daniel/Belteshazzar, Hannaniah/Shadrach, Mishael/Meshach and Azariah/Abed-Nego). Several years later Jerusalem rebelled further and Nebuchadnezzar came back and conquered Jerusalem again, taking a whole bunch more people, including Ezekiel and a number of the nobility. In both of these cases, people are being delivered from Egypt-Jerusalem because the nobility had enslaved many of their fellow Israelites (like Pharaoh had) and persecute the prophets (treating Jeremiah terribly).

During the exile it was a time of wilderness wandering (after coming out of Israel/Egypt) where the people were delivered. Jeremiah 34 tells us that the primary reason for the exile is that they were keeping people in unending slavery. V. 8f tells us that the people were to proclaim "liberty" to the captives, no longer keeping their Hebrew slaves in perpetual slavery. They repented after this prophecy, but then went back to their sin of slavery. Immediately after they repented, Nebuchadnezzar had a problem with Egypt and went off to fight them. Israel took back the slaves, then God sent Nebuchadnezzar back to take them off to Babylon because Jerusalem had become a new Egypt. Nebuzaradan, the Babylonian general, got Jeremiah out of prison and freed the slaves and gave their land back. For the faithful, the exile was a deliverance.

Thus: 70 years after the exile begins the people returned to the land; 70 years after the destruction of the temple, it was rebuilt. This involves a new conquest period. The exile can be viewed as not taking place in a new Egypt or captivity. It is taking place in the new wilderness situation after deliverance and before they came back into the land. Out of Jerusalem/Egypt and into the wilderness and then into the promise land. The first wilderness was for 40 years, this time it is 70 years, then back into the land.

What the book of Twelve shows us is that fact that the True King of Israel, Yahweh, is jealous to keep His Bride faithful to Him. He will not allow His Bride to remain unfaithful and disgrace Him before the nations. Rather, Yahweh delivered His faithful people and takes them to Babylon to be protected from the wicked people in Judah. While there, Yahweh blesses the nations through His people and demonstrates that He is the Lord of all nations and all of history.

II. The Unfaithful Bride

As we have noted, Israel was the Bride of God. She remained faithful to Her Husband by maintaining Her relationship to Yahweh in devoted worship to Him alone. From the time of the Golden Calf incident in the wilderness (Ex. 32), through the period of the Judges and Kings, Israel struggled to remain a devoted Bride. Turn to Ezekiel 16, which prophetically details the marriage to the Lord, and Israel's fall into idolatry/adultery. Ezekiel 16:1-14 describes the glory of being married to Yahweh. Vv. 15-34 describes her adultery. Vv. 35-43 discuss declares God's judgment on His Bride. [Teacher: read portions of this passage.] Isaiah 57:7-9 also describes the sin of idolatry & adultery of Israel. Is. 57:14-21 promises that God will restore Her.

God is jealous for His bride [Read Ex. 20:4-6; 43:19; Deut. 4:24; 6:15; 32:21; Josh. 24:19; Ps. 78:58; Ezek. 8:3; Nahum 1:2; 1 Cor. 10:22]

Israel's Husband, Yahweh performs the inspection of jealousy in the book of the Twelve. This is especially true of Hosea (illustrated by the unfaithful/adulterous wife → Judgment and Restoration) and Malachi (unfaithful marriages --. Judgment is coming → Jesus is coming). Numbers 5:11-31 deals with the inspection/ordeal of jealousy. [Read portions of Num. 5:11-31 to explain this law.] A wife suspected of unfaithfulness is put to God's test where He draws near to inspect her. If she has been faithful she will bear children. If she had been unfaithful, her belly would swell in a mock/false pregnancy and her thigh or genitals would waste away. Accompanying this inspection is the memorial bread – tribute offering from Leviticus 2. When this offering is made God is called upon to draw near to inspect his people and He responds in blessing or judgment.

III. The Day of the Lord

A final theme in the Twelve for us to keep in mind as we go through our study is the repeated use of the phrase, “The Day of the Lord.” The phrase is used 2x in Isaiah 13, 2x in Ezekiel, and 0x in Jeremiah. It occurs thirteen times in the Twelve (Joel 1:15; 2: 1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18, 20; Obadiah 15; Zephaniah 1:7, 8, 18; 2:2; Malachi 4:5).

Zephaniah is the center of the Twelve – declaring absolute judgment (“day” = 9x in Zeph. 1:14-15) of the entire world.

Just before he was put to death by the Jews as the first Christian martyr, Stephan in Acts 7:42-43 quoted Amos 5:25-27, saying in effect, “the day of the Lord has come.” The Jews refused to think of the judgments of the Twelve as applying to them.

“The day” is found 14x in Zech. 14.

Day = Time of light. You need light to judge things – Inspection. The light of the lampstands in the holy place shown down upon the face bread (which represented the people of God). When God comes in glory and light, sin exposed.

Day of the Lord is crisis time vs. ordinary time.

Day of the Lord = The Lord’s Day (Same Hebrew words).

As we study the Twelve Minor prophets, we need to understand that God has always kept an eye on His people, His Bride. He is a jealous God, and faithfulness to Him and His word is what He is looking for. He expects us to faithfully worship Him and to obey His word to us. The warnings we read in the Twelve apply to us as well as to them. He will inspect our church and our lives as we come to Him in worship and take the Lord’s Supper before Him. If we are faithful to confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins (1 Jn. 1:8-9). If we eat the Lord’s Supper in fellowship with God, having faithful hearts and lives, God will bless us in our relationship with Him. But if we are unfaithful as we come to the table, as He inspects us, the Lord will come to us in judgment. As you go now to worship Him, honestly and sincerely confess your sins, knowing that He loves you and desires to bless you. Hear and learn from His word, and become faithful members of His Bride, the Church.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of 2 Chronicles. Make sure you understand how the kingdom of Israel was divided between Israel in the north and Judah in the south (Ch. 1-11). Also notice the work of the various prophets during this period of history.

Lesson Two: A Theological Introduction To The Twelve

I. The decline of Israel

The two major sins of Israel and Judah during the kingdom period:

1)

2)

God sent the prophets to be: _____

Israel as Egypt

II. The Unfaithful Bride

Ezekiel 16 & Isaiah 57

God is jealous for His bride (Ex. 20:4-6; 43:19; Deut. 4:24; 6:15; 32:21; Josh. 24:19; Ps. 78:58; Ezek. 8:3; Nahum 1:2; 1 Cor. 10:22)

Numbers 5:11-31 & Leviticus 2

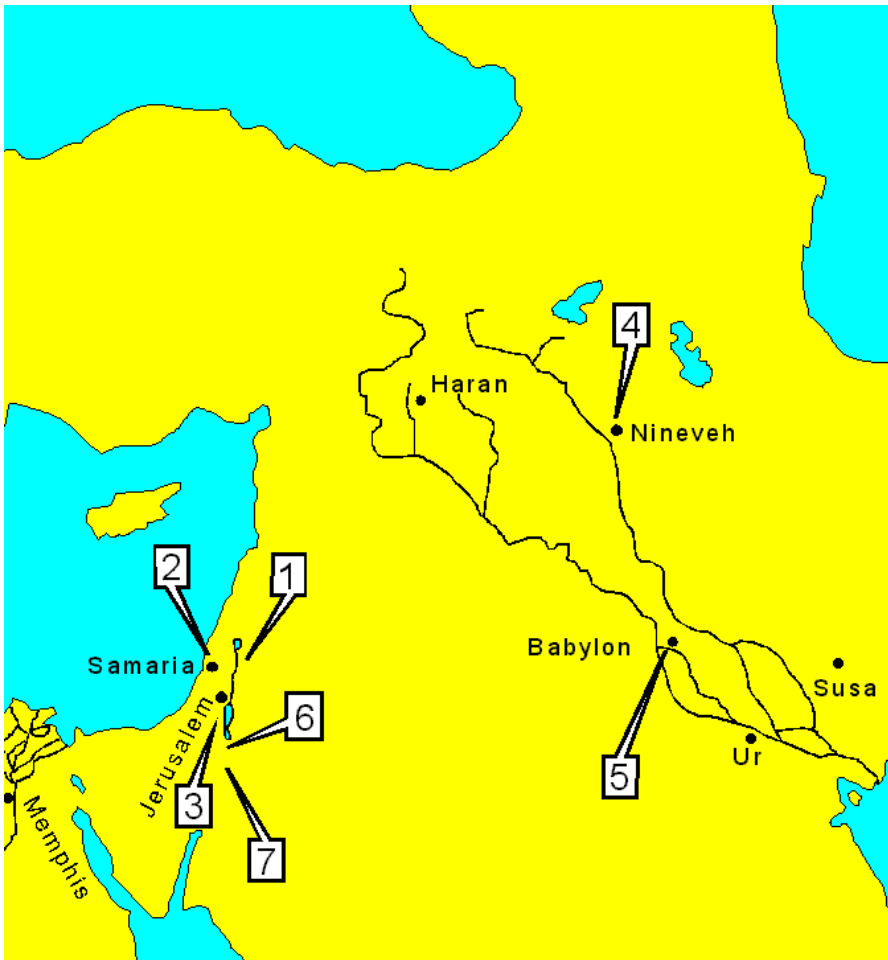
III. The Day of the Lord

The phrase, "The Day of the Lord" occurs thirteen times in the Twelve (Joel 1:15; 2: 1, 11, 31; 3:14; Amos 5:18, 20; Obadiah 15; Zephaniah 1:7, 8, 18; 2:2; Malachi 4:5).

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The Prophets Speak

1 UNITED MONARCHY. **Samuel** acted as prophet in the time of Saul, around 1050 BC, anointing both Saul and David king.



2 NORTHERN KINGDOM

Elijah and **Elisha** prophesied in the 9th century BC. The 8th century prophets **Hosea** and **Amos** denounced the social injustices of Israel.

3 SOUTHERN KINGDOM.

Joel (9th century BC) promised hope after a plague of locusts.

Isaiah son of Amoz spoke in Jerusalem in the 8th century,

Jeremiah and **Zephaniah** in the 7th. They warned that God would judge the faithless city. **Micah** spoke out against both north and south in the time of Isaiah.

4 NINEVEH.

(Capital of the Assyrian Empire) The book of **Jonah** is about a message of doom preached to Nineveh, and its repentance. **Nahum** celebrated the destruction of the city by the Babylonians.

5 BABYLON.

(Capital of the Babylonian Empire) **Habakkuk**, at the end of the 7th century BC, asked why God had allowed this cruel empire to succeed. **Ezekiel**, exiled in Babylon in the 6th century BC, spoke to his fellow-prisoners about their future return to Israel. **Daniel** was in exile at the same time.

6 EDOM.

Obadiah foretold of the doom of Edom after this country had taken advantage of Judah in the 9th century BC.

7 AFTER THE EXILE

Haggai and **Zechariah** spurred the returned exiles to rebuild the Jerusalem temple. **Malachi** called Israel to be faithful as God's people.

Lesson Three: Literary Structure of the Twelve

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

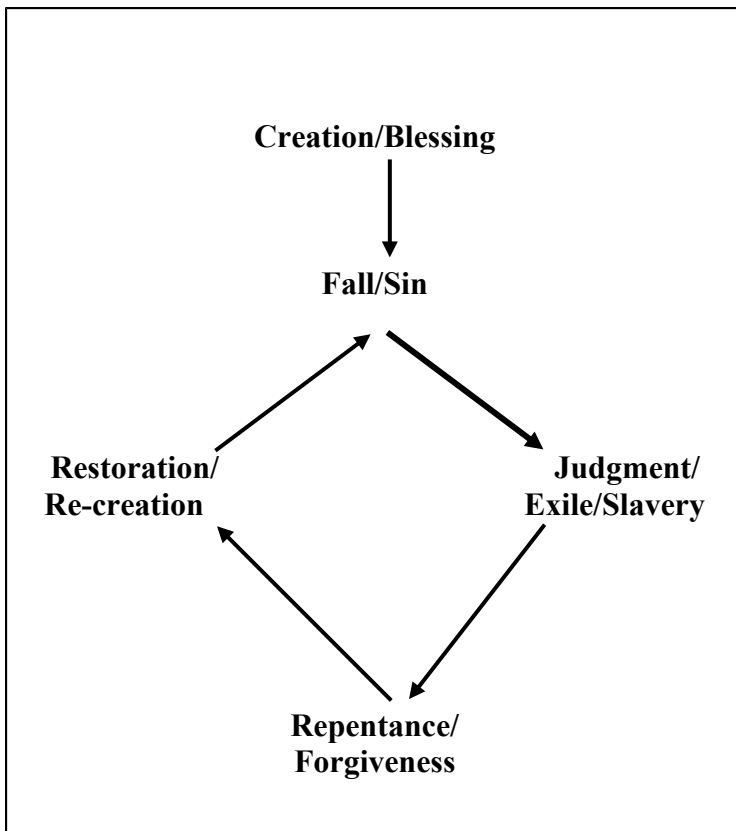
❖ Review

As we have seen, the history of man is largely characterized by rebellion and moving away from God, true worship and obedience to His Word. In Genesis we see the three falls: Adam's sin of impatience in the Garden; Cain's sin of failing to love his brother in the land; and the failure of the Sons of God to remain holy in the world. In each case, God granted mercy and salvation after the judgment He imposed. We also saw in Genesis the three recoveries: Abraham's patience; Jacob's love for his brother; and the holiness of Joseph.

Even after God took Israel to be His Bride at Mt. Sinai, and was given the law and the Tabernacle, and exalted above all the nations, Israel rebelled against Her

covenant Lord, Her Husband. Although God has graciously given Israel the Promised Land, she fell into the sins of making unholy covenants with the unbelievers around them, and committed adultery by worshipping false Gods. The Covenant Cycle illustrated in the period of the Judges is also found throughout the Old Testament age. This same cycle was played out during the kingdom period as well. It was most often the leaders of the people (kings, Priests and Levites) that led God's people into sin.

It is important to remember that when His Bride was unfaithful and fell into sin, Yahweh sent



prophets to warn them to repent of Her sins and to return to Him. Amos 3:7 says: "Surely the Lord God does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets." Israel often reject and abused the prophets. When she refused to repent, God used bad kings and foreign nations to judge His people. Whenever Israel did repent and seek forgiveness, Yahweh was faithful to His covenant promises and forgave her sins. What becomes clear is that God is slow to anger,

and is quick to forgive. But Yahweh was not willing to allow Israel to continue this cycle forever. In Deuteronomy (28:15-68) God told Israel that their sin would get so great that He would remove them from the land as the great and final climax of judgment. But, as we see so clearly in the prophets, the exile was not a final and ultimate judgment upon Israel. He promised also to restore His Bride. It was His plan to eventually send His Son, the Messiah, to come and purify His people and be the Godly leader they needed. He would come as the faithful prophet, the Perfect Priest, and the eternal King of the world. He would put an end to the covenant cycle, and usher in a new covenant age that would not only be a time of salvation for Israel, but for the whole world. He would use His wayward people to evangelize the nations while they were scattered among the nations. This would prepare the world for the coming of the Christ.

The Book of the Twelve is situated historically between what became known as the “former days” (i.e. the period of time from the creation through the kings of Israel) and the “later days” (i.e. from the time of the exile to the coming and reign of Christ). The former days were coming to an end, and the “later days” were beginning to dawn on Israel. Nine of the twelve books were written before the exile, and the last three were written after the exile. God made it clear that He would no longer endure the unfaithfulness of His Bride, but He would not cast her off forever. Through her He would bring salvation to the world.

The Minor Prophets are one scroll – 1 Book. The ancient extra-biblical (Apocrypha) Hebrew book known as Ecclesiasticus (written between the Minor Prophets and the coming of Jesus) refers to the 12 prophets as one book. Stephen in Acts 7:42 refers to “the book of the prophets” and quotes Amos 5:22-27.

Several of the minor prophets are connected one to another by themes, highlighting the idea that the Book of the Twelve should be thought of as one literary unit.

- 1) Hosea 14:7 speaks of a return of the blessing of grain (bread) and wine.
Joel 1:4-11 speaks of judgment in terms of wine and grain.
- 2) Joel 3:16 says that Yahweh will roar from Zion
Amos 1:2 says that Yahweh roars from Zion
- 3) Amos 9: 12 Israel will possess Edom
Obadiah prophesies against Edom
- 4) Obadiah concludes in vv. 15-21 with the nations being judged and the kingdom shall be the Lord's.
Jonah begins with God sending Jonah to the nation of Assyria.
- 5) Haggai and Zechariah both begin by dating their books by the reign of Darius the Mede.
- 6) Zechariah 14:21 ends by referring to the holiness of the people of the "Lord of Hosts."
Malachi 1:4 begins with a word from the "Lord of Hosts" who condemns His people for their unholiness.

You will need to memorize the names of the 12 Minor Prophets in order. [Teacher: It may be a good exercise to write these on the board, and one by one begin to erase these as the students recite them to help them memorize them during this lesson. Then practice reciting them during many of the next lessons until they have them memorized.]

[Teacher: Give the students the handouts at the end of this lesson and briefly explain how to use them. The title lines of each of the 12 Minor Prophets should be memorized by the end of year.]

Just as God showed Himself to be slow to anger and eager to show mercy to Israel, He loves us and is willing to forgive our sins as well. Although Christ has broken the covenant cycle as the dominant principle of man, there is the need to remember that when we sin (individually and as the Church), we need to turn to the Lord in repentance, knowing that He will forgive our sin and restore us to blessing. God is, through Christ, bringing salvation to the entire world. We need to be faithful to Him, our covenant Husband, showing the world around us how to love Him as a faithful Bride should.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Hosea. Begin to memorize the names of the Twelve Minor Prophets in order. Learn how to spell each one.

Lesson Three: Literary Structure of the Twelve

The “Former Days”: From _____ to the period of the _____

The “Later Days”: From the _____ to the coming of _____

The minor prophets are one scroll – 1 Book.

Many of the books are connected one to another by themes.

- 1) Hosea 14:7 speaks of a return of the blessing of grain (bread) and wine.
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Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Hosea. Begin to memorize the names of the Twelve Minor Prophets in order. Learn how to spell each one.

	Theme	Kingdom/ Empire	Years	Audience	Biblical Context
Hosea	Idolatry as Adultery	Israel/Assyria	755-710 BC	Pre-exile Israel	1 Kings 14:23-18:12; Rom. 9:25
Joel	Day of Yahweh	Judah/Assyria	835 BC	Pre-exile Judah	2 Kings 12:1-21; 2 Chr. 24:1-27; Acts 2:16
Amos	Judgment on Israel	Nations & Israel	760-750 BC	Pre-exile Israel	2 Chron. 26:1-23; 2 Kings 14:23-15:7; Amos 5:25-27 & Acts 7:42-43; Amos 9:11-12 & Acts 15:16-17
Obadiah	Judgment on Edom	Edom	848-841 BC	Pre-exile Edom	2 Kings 8:16-24; 2 Chr. 21:1-20
Jonah	Failure to witness/Prep for exile – Gentile Salvation	Assyria Warning to Israel & Judah	782-753	Pre-exile Israel	2 Kings 13:10-25; 14:23-29; Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Lk. 11:29-32
Micah	Injustice of Judah	Israel & Judah Judah more prom/ Assyria	735-750 BC	Pre-exile Judah	Jer. 26:18; 2 Kings 15:32-20:21; 2 Chr. 27:1-32:33; Mic. 5:2 & Matt. 2:6;
Nahum	Doom to Assyria for apostasy after Conversion	Assyria	664-654 BC	Pre-exile Assyria	2 Kings 21:1-18; 2 Chr. 33:1-20
Habakkuk	Judah's doom is sealed	Judah/Babylon	609-605 BC	Pre-exile Judah	2 Kings 23:31-24:7; 2 Chr. 36:1-8; Hab. 1:5 & Acts 13:41; Hab. 2:4 & Rom. 1:17; Gal. 3:11-12; Heb. 10:37-38; Hab. 2:14 & Is. 11:9
Zephaniah	Wrath against Judah & Promise	Judah/ Babylon	640-609 BC	Pre-exile Judah	2 King 22:1-23:37; 2 Chr. 34:1-35:27;
Haggai	Resurrection of the Temple	Persia	520 BC	Restoration Returnees	Ezra 5:1-6:15
Zechariah	New Covenant- Restoration Covenant Future Blessing	Persia	520-480 BC	Restoration Returnees	Ezra 5:1-2; 6:14
Malachi	Fall of Restoration Cov.	Persia	432-424 BC	Restoration Returnees	Neh. 13:1-31

Outline to be Memorized (Only the BOLD numbered lines)

I. Coming Crisis for Israel and Judah

1) Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

- I. Adulterous wife and Faithful Husband (1-3)
- II. CENTER: Israel not repented and returned (4-7)
- III. Adulterous Israel and Faithful Yahweh (8-14)

2) Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

- I. Judah's Day of Yahweh – Locusts (1-2:11)
- II. CENTER: Call to repentance & Restoration (2:12-32)
- III. The Day of Yahweh in the Future (3)

3) Amos: Yahweh roars against Israel

- I. 8 Judgment against all the nations Yahweh will judge (1-2)
- II. 3 Sermons of Judgment against Israel (3-6)
- III. 5 Visions of judgment against Israel (7-9)
- IV. 3 Promises of restoration (9)

4) Obadiah: Edom's Fall and Judah's Rise

- I. Judgment of Edom (1:1-14)
- II. Israel's possession of Edom (1:15-21)

5) Jonah: Yahweh – Savior of the Nations (Assyria)

- A. Jonah's 1st commission (1:1-3)
- B. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16)
 - C. Jonah's grateful prayer (1:17-2:10)
- A' Jonah's 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3)
 - B' Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10)
 - C' Jonah's resentful prayer (4:1-4)
 - CLIMAX: Yahweh's lesson for Jonah (4:5-11)

6) Micah: Judgment and Restoration of Judah

- I. Prediction of judgment on the people and leaders of Judah (1-3)
 - CENTER: Prediction of restoration (4-5)
- II. Call to repentance of the people and leaders of Judah (6-7)

II. Before the destruction of Jerusalem

1) Nahum: Judgment on fallen Assyria

- I. Destruction of Nineveh declared (1)
- II. Destruction of Nineveh described (2)
- III. Destruction of Nineveh deserved (3)

2) Habakkuk: The Justice of God Against Judah and Babylon

- A. Habakkuk's 1st complaint about justice (1:1-4)
- B. Yahweh's 1st answer – Babylon (1:5-11)
 - C. Habakkuk's 2nd complaint about justice (1:12-2:1)
 - D. CENTER: Wait – The righteous will live by faith (2:1-5)
 - C' Yahweh's 2nd answer – Justice will be done (2:6-20)
- B' Psalm - Yahweh's final answer – Babylon will be judged (3:1-15)
- A' Psalm - Habakkuk will joyfully wait in faith (3:16-19)

3) Zephaniah: The Day of the Lord is Near

- A. The coming judgment on the wicked of Jerusalem (1:2-6)
 - B. The coming judgment of corrupt leaders (1:7-13)
 - C. Yahweh's judgments of all nations (1:14-18)
 - D. Center: Call to repentance (2:1-3)
 - C' Yahweh's judgment of all nations (2:4-15)
 - B' The coming judgment of corrupt political leaders (3:1-7)
 - A' The restoration of Jerusalem (3:8-20)

III. Restoration Covenant – Returnees from exile. Connected with Ezra-Nehemiah

1) Haggai: Rebuild the Temple

- I. Complete the 2nd Temple (1)
- II. The Glory of the 2nd Temple (2:1-9)
- III. Present blessings of obedience (2:10-19)
- IV. Future blessings through promise (2:20-23)

2) Zechariah: Yahweh the King to return to His people

- I. Call the repentance (1:1-6)
- II. 8 night visions (1:7-6: 8)
- III. Crowning of Joshua (6:9-15)
- IV. Message about fasting (7-8)
- V. Israel's future restoration (9-14)

3) Malachi: Be Faithful! The Day is coming!

- A. Yahweh is Just – He loves Israel (1:1-5)
 - B. Priests and people have cheated Yahweh in offerings (1:6-14)
 - C. Past Levi served in righteousness (2:1-9)
 - D. CENTER: Stop being unfaithful to Yahweh and wives (2:10-16)
 - C' Future Levite will come as Yahweh's messenger (2:17-3:6)
 - B' People have robbed Yahweh of tithes and offerings (3:7-12)
 - A' Yahweh is Just – He will reward the righteous and judge the wicked (3:13-4:3)
 - Conclusion: Day of Yahweh (4:4-6)

Lesson Four: Hosea 1-3

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

- I. Adulterous wife and Faithful Husband (1-3)
- II. CENTER: Israel not repented and returned (4-7)
- III. Adulterous Israel and Faithful Yahweh (8-14)

The name “Hosea” means “salvation,” and comes from the same Hebrew root word for Joshua and Jesus (which words also include the additional idea: “Yahweh is Salvation”).

Hosea prophesied in both the North and South, but the book of Hosea focuses on the judgments to come upon Northern Israel (5:1), often called Ephraim, after the largest tribe (5:3, 5, 11, 13). He wrote about the same time as Amos, another prophet in the northern kingdom, as well as Isaiah and Micah who were prophets in the southern kingdom. His ministry was from about 755 BC to about 710 BC (approximately 40 years).

The Northern Kingdom of Israel during this time was enjoying a time of prosperity and growth; but the people were filled with corruption and spiritual adultery. Hosea was instructed by God to marry a woman who was a prostitute, named Gomer, and found his life to be a tragic dramatization of the unfaithfulness of God’s people. Gomer has children by adultery – not by Hosea (note the names). Like Israel, Gomer is sent away – then received back. Ch. 4-6 God speaks to both Judah and Israel about the spirit of harlotry. Ch. 7-14 declares that because of northern idolatry, judgment is coming.

Opening Narrative: Sign of Hosea’s unfaithful wife and their three children

The first section of Hosea is written in the first person, telling the story of how God commanded Hosea to marry a woman that would be a harlot (a woman that took money to sleep with men that are not her husband). God would use Hosea’s marriage as a sign against Israel. It is likely that this really happened in Hosea’s life. After he took her to be his wife, she bore him 3 children in her adultery.

1:4-5: Son named Jezreel – “God sows”

The meaning of this name in Hosea’s prophecy is that God will scatter Israel as seed is scattered/sown upon the ground. The name of his first born son is a sign to Israel that they will be carried away by the Assyrians because of

their sin. This relates to the stories of King Jehu when God judged the house of Ahab, killing his wife Jezebel in Jezreel (2 Kings 9-10).

1:6-7: Daughter named Lo-Ruhamah – “No mercy”

The meaning of this name in Hosea’s prophecy is that God will not have mercy upon Israel, but will surely take them away into captivity. God will have mercy on the southern kingdom of Judah. This statement in v. 7 would have been very frustrating to the northern kingdom of Israel.

1:8-9: Son named Lo-Ammi – “Not My people”

Throughout the Old Testament, the covenant that God made with His people is commonly described as: “I will be your God, and you will be my people” (cf. Gen. 17:7-8; Jer. 30:22; 31:31-34; 32:38; Ezek. 11:20; 37:27; Zech. 13:9; Rev. 21:3, 7). Similar language is used in Hosea 1:9, but in this case God declares that Israel has become not His people, and they He is not their God because they have broken covenant with Him by adultery. The meaning of this name in Hosea’s prophecy is that God will utterly reject Israel because she had forsaken his covenant.

But vv. 10-12 tell us that Israel would be restored as the people of God because mercy will be shown. This is an important lesson for us. Although people can be brought into covenant with God through Jesus Christ, their sin can cause them to be rejected by God. If we live as those who are not Christians, God may cut them off. But if they repent and turn again to the Lord, He will show them mercy.

a. Yahweh’s first punishment

In 2:1-5 God calls upon Israel’s “children,” exhorting them to confront their adulterous mother, or He will withhold his love from both her and her children and will turn her land into a desert.

b. Yahweh’s second punishment

In 2:5b-7 we see that Israel decides to go after “other lovers.” But Yahweh prevents her from doing this, and she decides to come back to Him. The judgment of God is really a form of salvation – In some cases He does not allow His people to go off in their sin, but makes it hard for them to do what is sinfully in their hearts. This is God’s way of turning His people back to Him.

c. Yahweh’s third punishment

In 2:8-13 Yahweh plans to take away the gifts He has given to His Bride, which she used in adultery with Baal. Because Israel “forgot Me,” Yahweh says that He will punish Israel. This is a very important Biblical theme. When we forget God, and fail to keep loving and obeying Him, He comes in judgment in our lives to

bring us back to Him. He remembers us and the covenant He had made with us, and because of His love for us, He will not allow us to sin against Him without disciplining us.

d. Turning Point: Yahweh will woo Israel back

In 2:14-15 we have the turning point in this section. It begins with the word, “Therefore,” showing that the prophecy is changing. God loves Israel as a faithful Husband and is determined to win her back. The statement of hope, reminding the people of the Valley of Achor is a reference to Joshua 7:26, where the people of God were restored to God’s favor after the sin of Achan was taken away when He was judged. When Israel is judged by God for Her sins of adultery, God will restore Her again as He did so long ago under Joshua.

In each of the next three remaining sections are introduced by the phrase, “in that day.” These “Days of the Lord” describe the steps Yahweh will take to restore Israel as His wife, and match the first three sections in reverse order.

c’ Yahweh’s action is response to third punishment

In “day of the Lord” in 2:16-17 Yahweh will not allow Israel to speak of Her former lovers, the Baals. Even when she speaks of Yahweh she will only use the term ish (Hebrew “husband”) for husband, not the word ba’al (Hebrew for “husband” or “lord”). How we speak to one another is very important, and what words we use of each other can honor or shame each other. This is especially important between a husband and wife.

b’ Yahweh’s action is response to second punishment

In section b. (2:5b-7) Yahweh blocked Israel from going to her lovers so that she would return to Him. Now in 2:18-20 Yahweh will take Her back and remarry Her. Before He used nature (thorns) to block her way to her lovers; now he will use nature to provide for her prosperity.

a’ Yahweh’s action in response to first punishment

In section a. (2:1-5) God withheld Israel’s material blessings; now he command that these be restored in 2:21-23. In the place of parched land and thirst (2:3); the skies are called upon in 2:21 to respond to the earth (i.e. to provide rain). In the place of His threat to “make her a desert,” Yahweh now promises to “plant her for myself in the land” (2:23). This section reverses what was said to Israel through the sign of the names of Hosea’s children. It says that Yahweh will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy (Lo-Ruahmah). He will say to those who were not my people (Lo-Ammi), you are my people. God shows Himself to be a merciful God to those who repent from their sin, and takes us back as His beloved people.

Closing Narrative: Sign of Hose's unfaithful wife and his taking her back

Yahweh loves Israel as a husband loves his wife. But she has betrayed Him as a faithless wife betrays her husband. He plans to punish her, but after that He will attempt to woo her back. The remainder of the book fills in the details.

Lessons from this lesson:

- Marriage in the Bible is a picture of God's relationship with His people. When we do not take care to have godly relationships with our husbands or wives, it gives the world a wrong picture of how we are to be properly related to God. Faithfulness to God should be illustrated to the world by our faithfulness in the family. As you grow up and get married, remember the book of Hosea and the terrible consequences of unfaithfulness.
- We need to be careful to use the gifts God has given us in His service.
- God is not content to allow us to continue in our sin. He sometimes makes it hard for us to sin, which is a reminder to us to forsake our sin and return to Him. Hosea 1:9-10 is quoted in Rom. 9:25-26 to show that God will restore His people as they turn to Him, and the Lord will also cause the Gentiles, who were not His people, to come to Him as well.
- Hosea 1:10 is quoted in 2 Cor. 6:18 to command us not to be unequally yoked with unbelievers. This means not only that we should not marry an unbeliever, but that we should be careful not to have fellowship with and become like the unbelievers around us.
- The book of Hosea teaches us how much God really loves us. We need to respond to His love by loving Him in return, and being faithful to Him.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Hosea. Begin to memorize the names of the Twelve Minor Prophets in order. Learn how to spell each one.

Lesson Four: Hosea 1-3

The name “Hosea” means “salvation,” and comes from the same Hebrew root word for Joshua and Jesus (which words also include the additional idea: “Yahweh is Salvation”).

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

- I. Adulterous wife and Faithful Husband (1-3)
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Opening Narrative: Sign of Hosea’s unfaithful wife and their three children

a. Yahweh’s first punishment

b. Yahweh’s second punishment

c. Yahweh’s third punishment

d. Turning Point: Yahweh will woo Israel back

c’ Yahweh’s action is response to third punishment

b’ Yahweh’s action is response to second punishment

a’ Yahweh’s action in response to first punishment

Closing Narrative: Sign of Hosea’s unfaithful wife and his taking her back

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Hosea. Begin to memorize the names of the Twelve Minor Prophets in order. Learn how to spell each one.

Lesson Five: Hosea 4-7

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

- I. Adulterous wife and Faithful Husband (1-3)
- II. CENTER: Israel not repented and returned (4-7)
- III. Adulterous Israel and Faithful Yahweh (8-14)

Briefly review the outline, emphasizing that it will be on the Student Evaluation.

What does the name Hosea mean? [Salvation]

Who was the primary audience that Hosea wrote to? [Northern kingdom of Israel, sometimes known as Ephraim.]

What were the approximate dates of Hosea's ministry? [755 BC to about 710 BC (approximately 40 years)]

What were the two main sins that God sent the prophets to preach to the people about? [Social injustice and idolatry – spiritual adultery.]

The opening of the book of Hosea tells the story of Hosea's sad marriage to Gomer, and dramatically engages the attention of Israel about her sins against the Lord. Yahweh loves Israel as a husband loves his wife. But she has betrayed Him as a faithless wife betrays her husband. He plans to punish her, but after that He will attempt to woo her back.

I. Israel's Adultery and Harlotry (4:1-5:7)

As we have said before, the prophets were covenant lawyers sent by Yahweh to convict His people of their sins. Hosea 4 begins with the word of the Lord against Israel – *bringing a charge against* the inhabitants of the land. The emphasis is against Israel's adultery and prostitution. Her shameful sinful behavior (vv. 1-2) cause her to stumble and be destroyed.

The sins of injustice, violence, adultery (actual) and prostitution will destroy Israel because she did not "know" the Lord (vv. 1, 6). Knowledge of the Lord is essential to obeying and worshipping God in a way that pleases Him. V. 6 says that they had forgotten Him. But how could Israel have forgotten Yahweh, and how could they have lacked knowledge of Him? Remember, northern Israel had stopped going down to the Temple for worship when the kingdoms divided. Not only so, we see in this section that the priests of Israel were involved in the unfaithfulness of Israel (4:4, 6, 7, 9; 5:1). When the spiritual leaders of the people are unfaithful to Yahweh, the people will follow. Whenever the priesthood is corrupt, the people

will be corrupt. Back in the book of Judges it was the Priests and Levites that led the people into sin. And it was the sins of Eli's sons in the book of Samuel that were corrupt, leading to the people demanding a king like the nations around them. Throughout the prophets we will see how terrible it is when the priest lead the people astray. We need to have godly leaders in the church if we are to remain faithful to the Lord.

Because of the sins of the priests, the people turned to idols to ask counsel (4:11-12). By offering sacrifices, they were committing adultery against the Lord (4:11-19). Just as a man and woman "knows" each other when they sleep together, so the Lord wants to be known by His Bride Israel. He wants her to be intimate with Israel (5:4). But she has gone out to other lovers and played the harlot against their God (4:12). She had become defiled by her idolatry (5:3). The result is that the people have dealt treacherously with Yahweh, and have begotten pagan (strange-children not believing in the Lord) children (5:7). This is a theme that will be repeated again. Turn to Malachi 2:13-16. Here we see that God seeks a godly offspring from godly marriages. But the people of God were unfaithful to their husbands and wives, treacherously divorcing one another and breaking the marriage covenant. So too, in Hosea we see that the unfaithfulness of the people led to having children that did not know Yahweh, and were themselves unfaithful children. For all of these sins, God proclaimed judgment upon them (5:1).

II. Condemnation of Israel for Corruption and Injustice (5:8-6:11)

In the next section, 5:8-6:11, we see a bit of a change in the prophecy. Here Yahweh speaks to both northern Israel (Ephraim) and southern Judah, both of whom will be judged (5:8-15). Yahweh will pour out His wrath like water (5:10), He would cause them to be sick (5:13), and tear them up like a lion (5:14).

But in 6:1-3 Yahweh called on them to repent ("let us return to Yahweh"). Hosea promises the people that if they repent and return to the Lord, Yahweh will heal them, even though He had torn them apart and stricken them. 6:2 is speaks of Israel being raised up (i.e. resurrection from the dead). Just as Israel had forgotten God, and lacked knowledge of Him, now in 6:3 Hosea calls upon the people to know the Lord, and pursue knowledge of Yahweh. When the people return to Him, Yahweh promises to come to them and give them life like rain.

But 6:4-11 tells us that neither Israel nor Judah was willing to repent. 6:5 tells us that Yahweh had cut them down by His prophets. He slew them by the words of His mouth. By prophesying, the prophets told the people what God expects of them: they should be merciful (as opposed to false swearing, lying, killing,

stealing, committing adultery and shedding blood – 5:2) and know the Lord as revealed in His word. He prefers these things to sacrifice. When people are sinful in daily their lives, their sacrifices are just hypocrisy to God, who knows what they are really like (5:3). 6:7 tells us that Israel and Judah had broken covenant with the Lord, just as Adam had. The word for “men” in v. 7 is *adam*, and teaches us that God made a covenant with Adam in the Garden. But just as Adam dealt treacherously and ate the forbidden fruit, so too, Israel and Judah broke covenant with the Lord.

III. Israel’s Failure to Return to Yahweh (7:1-16)

In the final section part of Hosea, 7:1-16, it becomes clear that Israel had refused to return to Yahweh. He had promised to heal Israel, but they failed to consider their hearts and do what is right before the Lord (7:1-2). Their adultery caused them to be heated up like bread in the oven because of their lust (7:3-7). Israel had mixed themselves among the peoples so that they were not a holy people unto the Lord. Because of their pride, they refused to turn to the Lord (7: 8-10). It is as if they were ashamed of living for God before the unbelievers around them. They trusted the nations around them (7:11-13). Very often in the history of Israel, they turn to other nations for help when they were in trouble, instead of turning to the Lord (7:13-18). This is often a problem for God’s people. They feel like God is unable to help them, and are embarrassed about the Lord when they are around unbelievers. But God will not allow them to be successful in their rejection of Him. In His righteous judgments, God said that He would make them a derision to the unbelievers, and they will be ridiculed by the nations (7:16). God will not be mocked, but will make His people a mockery in the sight of the unbelievers when they turn from Him to seek help elsewhere.

Lessons from this lesson:

- Corrupt priests lead the people away from the Lord, causing them to forget the Lord and to lack knowledge. We need godly pastors in our churches to lead us faithfully. In the life of the Church, there is nothing more important than having good Elders and Deacons.
- When the Lord judges us for our sins, He will come to us with forgiveness when return to Him.
- When we come to worship, we must do so having been merciful and godly during the week. He desires mercy and knowledge to characterize our lives when we come to Him in worship. If we try to hide our sin when we worship the Lord, He will see and judge us as we come near to Him. But if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins.

- When we live for the Lord, we trust in Him. But when we forget the Lord by not remembering His goodness to His people, we tend to look to other people for help we have troubles. Christians must always trust in the Lord, and remember that He is the one person that can help us in our times of need.
- Never allow yourselves to become embarrassed about being a Christian. If you do, you will run away from the Lord so that you can look good to those around you. But God judges those who reject Him. But He promises to meet our needs if we trust in Him.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Hosea.

Lesson Five: Hosea 4-7

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

- I. Adulterous wife and Faithful Husband (1-3)
- II. CENTER: Israel not repented and returned (4-7)
- III. Adulterous Israel and Faithful Yahweh (8-14)

I. Israel's Adultery and Harlotry (4:1-5:7)

II. Condemnation of Israel for Corruption and Injustice (5:8-6:11)

III. Israel's Failure to Return to Yahweh (6:11-7:16)

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Hosea.

Lesson Six: Hosea 8-14

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

- I. Adulterous wife and Faithful Husband (1-3)
- II. CENTER: Israel not repented and returned (4-7)
- III. Adulterous Israel and Faithful Yahweh (8-14)

Briefly review the outline, emphasizing that it will be on the Student Evaluation. What does the name Hosea mean? [Salvation]. Who was the primary audience that Hosea wrote to? [Northern kingdom of Israel, sometimes known as Ephraim]. What were the approximate dates of Hosea's ministry? [755 BC to about 710 BC (approximately 40 years)]. What were the two main sins that God sent the prophets to preach to the people about? [Social injustice and idolatry – spiritual adultery.]

I. Condemnation of Israel's Political Faithlessness and Corruption 8:1-9:7

8:1 begins with a call to sound the trumpet of alarm because judgment was coming to Israel. Especially important in this section is the idolatry of Israel with the calf idols, (cf. 8:4-6, probably at Bethel and Dan, cf. 1 Kings 12:25-33). This calf worship began with Aaron in Exodus 32, and continued to be a problem for God's people. V. 9 tells us that Israel went to Assyria to hire lovers, which is to say that they went after the false gods of Assyria. Vv. 10-11, they made many altars for sin, but these altars were the very places of their sin because they were not worshipping Yahweh. Why would Israel go after the gods of Assyria? Because Assyria had become a great political power and was conquering the nations around Israel, and was beginning to invade various cities in Israel. Fear of Assyria led to fear of the gods of Assyria. Israel turned from trusting the Lord (especially through her kings), and the Lord sent the Assyria to punish her. But instead of turning back to Yahweh, Israel went after the false gods of the Assyrians in hopes that they would be saved. This political compromise is seen clearly in 2 Kings 15:19, 29; 16:1-18; 17:3-18, 24-41.

The Lord gave them His Word, but Israel considered the great things of His law to be a strange thing to them. They continued to offer sacrifices to Yahweh, but He did not accept them because they were offered not according to His word. Because Israel forgot the Lord, He will remember to judge them for their sins.

In 9:1-9 it becomes clear that Israel has played the harlot, like Hosea's wife Gomer. Israel did this because she thought that if she worshipped the gods of the

nations around her, she would be more acceptable and would be safer. But they are not safe – Yahweh declared in v. 7 that the days of punishment had come because the people had become deeply corrupted.

II. Israel’s History of Spiritual Prostitution – 9:7-10:15

In the next section we see that Israel has a long history of the sin of idolatry, going back to the time of Moses and the Judges. Various references are given to specific cities where Israel sinned, in the past and present.

A. Sins at Bethel 9:7-8

At the end of v. 8, the phrase the “house of his God” can also be translated “Bethel.” If this is correct, Hosea may be referring to Jeroboam in 1 Kings 12:25-33 who built places to worship golden calves in Bethel and Dan so that his people did not want to go down to Judah to worship in Jerusalem.

B. Sins at Gibeah 9:9

The reference to Gibeah in 9:9 referred back to the terrible sin committed by the people of Gibeah in the book of Judges. In Judges 19 the concubine of an unfaithful Levite was brutally murdered by the men of Gibeah. The result was that God sent the rest of the tribes to go and destroy Gibeah and the Benjaminites that sided with them. Israel was so corrupted that they were like the Gibeonites that were judged by God so long ago.

C. Sins at Baal-Peor 9:10-14

In Number 25:1-9, while the people of God were wandering in the wilderness on the way to the Promised Land after they came up from Egypt, the people began to commit harlotry with the women of Moab. These women seduced the people into worshipping their gods, Baal of Peor, and to have idolatrous religious festivals with them. God judged those people at 24,000 of them were killed. Here in Hosea 9:10-14 God is saying that Israel had again become so sinful that she could be compared to the people who were judged by God in the wilderness.

D. Sins at Gilgal 9:15-10:4

In Joshua 4:19-24 we learn that after God brought the people through the Jordan River into the Promised Land, they set up a monument of twelve stone to remind them that God had delivered them from Egypt and kept His covenant promises to them. It was the base camp for Israel in the book of Joshua as they conquered the land for the Lord. It was an important place in Israel’s history in part because you often see the faithful prophets there. But now Gilgal had become a place of idolatry and shame.

C' Sins at Beth-Aven 10:5-8

Joshua 7:1 tells us that Ai was also named Beth-Aven, near Bethel. Ai was the second place that the people conquered after they came into the land (only after they dealt with the sin of Achan). Because it was so near to Bethel, Beth Aven was also associated with the calf worship as an important part of the northern kingdom. The judgment of God will be so great that the people will call on the mountains and hill to fall on them. 10:8 is quoted in Lk. 23:30; Rev.6:16 to describe the judgments of God against the wicked Jews in the first century.

B' Sins at Gibeah 10:9-10

Just as God raised up the people of Israel to judge the inhabitants of Gibeah in Judges, so now God intends to gather peoples against Israel.

A' Sins at Bethel 10:11-15

In vv. 11-15 God calls upon Israel, like a farmer to sow righteousness, and to reap mercy and to seek the Lord. He likens Israel to a farmer that has plowed, sowed and harvested sin. Because Israel had trusted in their own ways instead of trusting God, they will be destroyed.

III. Yahweh's Wayward Son – 11:1-14:9

A. Israel's Son, Israel, has Refused to Return 11:1-11

When Israel was a child, God loved him and called his son out of Egypt. (Hosea 11:1 is quoted in Mt. 2:14-15 with reference to Jesus.) But because God's son, Israel, refused to return to the Lord, God will return him to slavery and judgment. Because they had failed to repent, God would send the Assyrian king to dominate them. It is interesting in v. 7 that they call on God, the Most High, but they do not exalt Him above all other gods.

But the mercy and love of God for Israel is such that He cannot give up on him. He will not utterly destroy his people. The greatness of God's love is that He will bring His son back.

B. The Deceitful Son 11:12-12:8

In Genesis 25 we learn about the birth of Jacob, the twin brother of Esau. Gen. 25:26-27 tells us that when Jacob was born, he took hold of Esau's heel, and so he was named Jacob, which means "One who takes the heel," meaning that Jacob would supplant/replace Esau through deception. Jacob's name was later changed by God to Israel. Here in Hosea 11 we see a reference to this as a background to the deceptiveness of Israel because he looked to other nations for help.

C. Yahweh is the one who led Israel up from Egypt 12:9-14

12:9 begins with the same words at the opening of the 10 Commandments. Because Israel had forsaken the Lord who saved them for Egypt so long ago, punishment is coming.

D. Center: Yahweh's case against Israel 13:1-3

The sin of Israel only increases, therefore God will take them away in judgment.

C' Yahweh is the one who led Israel up from Egypt 13:4-9

Israel had forgotten God, even though He is the only savior of His people. Therefore, judgment is coming.

B' The foolish Son 13:10-16

Like a foolish child who would not come to the opening of the womb (as opposed to Jacob at his birth, who was aggressive in his coming out of the womb), Israel refused to turn to Yahweh for help. Israel continues to look to the other nations of help. 13:14 is quoted in 1 Cor. 15:55, when the power of death is removed for believers because of the resurrection.

A' Yahweh's invitation to his orphaned son: Return to Yahweh 14:1-8

Despite Israel's unwillingness to return to the Lord, He offers to take his orphaned son back. The Lord will turn away His anger, and show His love to Israel. 14:2 is quoted in Heb. 13:5. This section ends with God promising to restore Israel. V. 7 says that she will "be revived like grain and grow like the vine." Israel will be restored reconciled to God, and brought back into true communion with Him. When people sin, the faithful church will cut them off from the bread and wine of Lord's Supper. When they repent, they are restored to the Table of fellowship with God and the church. Hosea ends with the prediction that Israel will say with a repentant heart, "What have I to do anymore with idols?"

The book of Hosea concludes with a challenge for Israel to hear the words of the prophecy and to understand and be wise to the fact that the ways of Yahweh are right. The righteous walk in the ways of the Lord, but the transgressors stumble in them. Those who love the Lord and are righteous understand that the judgments of God are good for His people. But those who have a hardened heart toward God are frustrated by His ways. May we be a people who love the Lord and His ways, and are able to remain faithful to Him.

Lessons from this lesson:

- In times of political trouble in a nation, it is important for God's people not to compromise with the world. God will bless His people with prosperity and security only so long as they remain faithful to Him. If there are political troubles in our land, it is because we have not been faithful to him. Turning to the gods and the ways of the world will not save us. It will only bring on more judgment from the Lord.
- We need to not only remember the goodness and faithfulness of God in the past, but we should also remember the times that we have not been faithful to him so that we do not repeat the sins of the past.
- We should always remember that God loves us and forgives our sin.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Joel.

Lesson Six: Hosea 8-14

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

- I. Adulterous wife and Faithful Husband (1-3)
- II. CENTER: Israel not repented and returned (4-7)
- III. Adulterous Israel and Faithful Yahweh (8-14)

- I. Condemnation of Israel's Political Faithlessness and Corruption – 8:1-9:7
2 Kings 15:19, 29; 16:1-18; 17:3-18, 24-41

- II. Israel's History of Spiritual Prostitution – 9:7-10:15
 - A. Sins at Bethel (1 Kings 12:25-33)
 - B. Sins at Gibeah (Judges 19-20)
 - C. Sins at Baal-Peor (Number 25:1-9)
 - D. Sins at Gilgal (Josh. 4:19-24)
 - C' Sins at Beth-Aven (Josh. 7:1; 1 Kings 12:28-29)
10:8 quoted in Lk. 23:30; Rev.6:16
 - B' Sins at Gibeah
 - A' Sins at Bethel

- III. Yahweh's Wayward Son – 11:1-14:9
 - A. Israel's Son, Israel, has Refused to Return
 - B. The Deceitful Son (Gen. 25:26-27)
 - C. Yahweh is the one who led Israel up from Egypt
 - D. Center: Yahweh's case against Israel
 - C' Yahweh is the one who led Israel up from Egypt
 - B' The foolish Son
13:14 is quoted in 1 Cor. 15:55
 - A' Yahweh's invitation to his orphaned son: Return to Yahweh
14:2 is quoted in Heb. 13:5

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Joel.

Lesson Seven: Joel – The Day of the Lord In Judah

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

- I. Judah's Day of Yahweh - Locusts (1-2:11)
- II. CENTER: Call to repentance & Restoration (2:12-32)

Today we begin our studies in the book of Joel, who was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah. Joel's name means "Yahweh is God." We don't know anything about the prophet, other than what is written in the book written by him. Conservative scholars believe that Joel wrote about the time of king Joash (2 Kings 11-14; 2 Chron. 22-24), which would be about 835 BC.

I. The Coming Day of the Lord

The most important theme of the book of Joel is the coming "Day of the Lord." This phrase occurs in Joel 1:15; 2:1-2, 11, 31; 3:14, 18, and becomes an important theme in other prophets and into the New Testament. Daytime is a time of light. You need light to judge things – It is a time of God's inspection. When God comes in glory and light to inspect His people, sin exposed. In the Tabernacle and Temple there were two rooms. In the Holy of Holies was the Ark of the Covenant, the footstool of the throne of God. It was also known as the "mercy-seat," from which the people understood that God would send His mercy upon them. In the next room were three pieces of furniture: the altar of incense, the lampstand and the table of showbread (lit. "Face Bread") (Ex. 25). The light of the lampstands in the holy place shown down upon the face bread. The bread on the table represented God's people, whom God, from the Ark of the Covenant, watched over by the light of the lampstand.

As you should remember, we talked about the Inspection of Jealousy in Numbers 5 to describe God's inspection of His people when He knows that she has been unfaithful to Him. In Numbers 5:11-31 we saw that a wife suspected of unfaithfulness is put to God's test where He draws near to inspect her. If she has been faithful she will bear children. If she had been unfaithful, her belly would swell in a mock/false pregnancy and her thigh or genitals would waste away. Accompanying this inspection is the memorial bread – tribute offering from Leviticus 2. When this offering is made God is called upon and draws near to inspect his people and He responds in blessing or judgment. Israel's Husband, Yahweh performs the inspection of jealousy in the book of the Twelve. This is especially true of Hosea (illustrated by the unfaithful/adulterous wife → Judgment

and Restoration) and Malachi (unfaithful marriages -- Judgment is coming → Jesus is coming).

The Day of the Lord is a time of light when God comes to inspect His people to see if they have been faithful to Him. Day of the Lord is crisis time vs. ordinary time. During the crisis of the Day of the Lord, the people should humbly submit to the inspection of the Lord, and if they have sinned, should repent and turn to the Lord. If God's people do not repent, the Day of the Lord will be a time of judgment.

As we study the Twelve Minor prophets, we need to understand that God has always kept an eye on His people, His Bride. He is a jealous God, and faithfulness to Him and His word is what He is looking for. He expects us to faithfully worship Him and to obey His word to us. The warnings we read in the Twelve apply to us as well as to them. He will inspect our church and our lives as we come to Him in worship and take the Lord's Supper before Him. If we are faithful to confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive our sins (1 Jn. 1:8-9). If we eat the Lord's Supper in fellowship with God, having faithful hearts and lives, God will bless us in our relationship with Him. But if we are unfaithful as we come to the table, as He inspects us, the Lord will come to us in judgment.

II. The Locust and the Day of Yahweh Joel 1:1-2:11

The occasion for Joel's prophecy is a plague of locusts that was so severe that 1:2-3 tells us that it was worse than any such locust plague that has come upon God's people before. Locusts are insects that look like very large grasshoppers and come by the thousands and eat all the plant life they can find. Because there are so many it is hard to kill them and there is nothing that people can do about such a plague. They just have to wait until the locusts leave, and then deal with the devastation when they are gone. Locusts were one of the plagues of Egypt (Ex. 10:12-15). Deuteronomy 28:38, 42 says that if God's people were unfaithful to Him and His marriage covenant with them, He would judge them with locusts (cf. Lev. 26:17, 25-39 where God is said to send enemies that will consume them for disobedience). The plague of locusts in Egypt lasted but for a few days; this may have continued for four years successively (as some think), because here are four sorts of insects mentioned (v. 4); or it could have been a single locust plague with four kinds of insects, one destroying what the other left (some commentators think they came all in one year). This locust plague was so bad that it would be spoken of for generations to come.

It is not clear if the locusts were still plaguing the land, or that it is something that happened in the recent past. In any case, God uses the locusts to describe His coming to them in judgment (a crisis time of the Day of Yahweh) when He will

send an invading army if Judah does not correct her relationship to God. The locusts are described in 1:6 as “a nation [that] has come up against My land, strong and without number.”

What is interesting about the way Joel describes the effects of this locust plague is that he does not primarily focus on the economic impact that it had, but rather, he uses the financial crisis to call various parts of Judah’s society to repentance. Last week we saw the book of Hosea ends with God restoring His people to fellowship with Him. Hosea 14:7 says that Israel would “be revived like grain and grow like the vine.” Israel will be restored reconciled to God, and brought back into true communion with Him. Joel takes up where Hosea left off. Joel 1:5-11 tells us that the locusts had eaten the vines that make wine and the grain that makes bread. Fellowship was broken with God by the sins of Judah. Isaiah 5 describes Judah as His vineyard, His vine that had been well cared for by Him but was not producing fruit for Him. It was a vineyard ready for judgment. What becomes clear in 1:5 is that the sin was a drifting into coldness in relation to God. It says, “Awake, you drunkards, and weep; And wail, all you drinkers of wine, Because of the new wine, For it has been cut off from your mouth.” The people of God had become drunkards (literally) and lazy in their relationship to God. Because of the plague, not only do the farmers wail because their crops are destroyed (1:11), but also the priests wail because there were no longer adequate supplies for Tribute offerings (1:9, 13).

The locust plague was not just an act of “nature,” or the way of these insects. It was a day of the Lord event in which Yahweh sent the locusts against his people. The response that God calls the people to is not just to plant new crops, but in vv. 13-20 He calls the priests, the leaders and the people to sackcloth and fasting, and to call out to the Lord. Joel explained in 1:15-16 that the Day of the Lord was coming as destruction from the Almighty. For this reason joy and gladness was cut off from the House of God (the Temple). The people could no longer take joy in their worship of the Lord because they were clearly under His judgment. The only proper response to the locust plague, Joel said, was repentance. 1:19-20 says, “O Yahweh, to You I cry out.”

The theme of the Day of Yahweh becomes even more clear in 2:1-11. 2:1 says that the people should blow the trumpet of alarm from the holy mountain, the Temple because the day of the Lord is coming. Vv. 2-10 says that day is described in terms of darkness, gloominess and clouds, and a coming of a great and mighty people who are a mighty army of terrible destruction. What is interesting is that just after Joel talks about the locust plague, he begins to describe an army of people. We are left wondering if he is talking about the day of the Lord in terms of an invading

army of locusts or people. He is telling Judah that if they did not repent, the locust plague would not be the worst that would happen to them. [Read 2:1-11] 2:11 tells us that this unbeatable army would be commanded by Yahweh Himself – it is said to be His army. “The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it.”

In 2:10 (cf. 2:31; 3:15) we read, “The earth quakes before them, The heavens tremble; The sun and moon grow dark, And the stars diminish their brightness.” What do you think it means to say that the sun and moon are darkened, and the stars diminish in their brightness? When a locust plague comes to a place there are so many of them that, literally, a great cloud of darkness comes over the land. But in order to fully understand these words we have to be reminded of the fourth day of creation in Genesis 1:14-18. The sun, moon and stars were given as a way of dividing between the day and night, and to set the seasons of years for the creation. It also tells us that they were placed in the firmament to “rule over the day...and night.” The sun, moon and stars are symbols of rulers on earth. For these to grow dark means that the rulers of the nation were losing their power and authority, and God was affecting some kind of change in rulership in the world. This prophecy of Joel is a warning that God was changing the world of Judah, and if His people did not repent and turn to Him, Yahweh would cause the nation to undergo a change of leadership that may include being ruled by invaders sent by God. Indeed, “The day of the Lord is great and very terrible; who can endure it.”

Applications from this lesson:

- As Christians, we need to understand and remember that God is sovereign over everything. He controls whatsoever comes to pass. Both blessing and cursing are from the Lord. When we fall on difficult times, we should not just think that such times just naturally happen, but are from the Lord. He uses such times not only to discipline us to correct us and make us more righteous; but also, He tests us to make us stronger in faith and prepares us for His service.
- Our first response to trials should be to humble ourselves and to call upon the Lord. When our joy and gladness is gone, we are to gather with the people of God and look to God in worship.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Joel, and see how the Day of the Lord is described in terms of the nations.

Lesson Seven: Joel – The Day of the Lord In Judah

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

- I. Judah's Day of Yahweh - Locusts (1-2:11)
- II. CENTER: Call to repentance & Restoration (2:12-32)

Joel's name means "Yahweh is God."

Joel was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judah.

Joel wrote about 835 BC, probably during the time of king Joash (2 Kings 11-14; 2 Chron. 22-24).

I. The Coming Day of the Lord

Inspection of Jealousy (Num. 5:11-31; Ex. 25)

II. The Locust and the Day of Yahweh Joel 1:1-2:11

Exodus 10:12-15; Deuteronomy 28:38, 42

2:10 (cf. 2:31; 3:15) Sun, Moon and Stars darkened – Genesis 1:14-18

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Joel, and see how the Day of the Lord is described in terms of the nations.

Lesson Eight: Joel – The Day of the Lord In History

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

- I. Judah's Day of Yahweh - Locusts (1-2:11)
- II. CENTER: Call to repentance & Restoration (2:12-32)

What does the name Joel mean? ["Yahweh is God"]

To whom did Joel prophecy? [The southern kingdom of Judah.]

Joel wrote about 835 BC, probably during the time of king Joash (2 Kings 11-14; 2 Chron. 22-24).

What does the phrase, "The Day of the Lord" mean? It is a time when God inspects His people and comes to them in either judgment or blessing. It is often spoken of a dreadful time that should cause the people to fear God and to repent from sin. But it is also a time of salvation for God's people. When Yahweh judges the wicked, at the same time, He saves His faithful people from the social injustices that come from the sin of the wicked. Just as Hosea 14:9 tells us that "The ways of the Lord are right; and the righteous walk in them, but the transgressors stumble in them," so too, the Day of Yahweh is something that the righteous can rejoice in.

In our last lesson we learned that Judah experienced the terrible affects of a devastating locust plague. Most disturbing of all was fact that it was an invading army send by God. It was described by Joel in terms of the great and terrible day of Yahweh.

I. Yahweh's call to repentance & Restoration Joel 2:12-32

In Joel 2:12-17 we have the central section of the book. Here Yahweh calls upon Judah to repent. Interestingly, we do not see a list of specific sins that they are to repent of (unlike what we saw in the book of Hosea). Rather, He calls on them to turn to Him with their whole heart. Instead of tearing their clothing (which was a biblical symbol of death, i.e. having your life torn from you), they were to rend (tear) their hearts and not their garments (2:13). It was not enough to take care of the outside of ones life, the people of God needed to return to the Lord in their hearts and minds. They had grown cold toward God in their hearts. Because "the Lord God is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and great in kindness," He is willing to turn away His judgments, and bless them. The blessing is spoken of in

terms of a grain offering and drink offering (bread and wine – Communion). Yahweh would restore the broken fellowship He had with His people, just as He demonstrated the break in fellowship by attacking the vine and grain with the locusts (1:4-11).

In 2:15-17 we see again the call to blow the trumpet of alarm (cf. 2:1) to gather the people together, to set aside a time of fasting, and to pray to the Lord to spare His people (cf. 1:13-14). V. 17 says specifically that the priests were to pray that God would not make His people a reproach to the nations, and that the nations should not rule over them. Joel does not want the nations to mock the God of Judah, saying, ‘Where is their God?’ The implication is that if the people do not repent and they are judged, God’s reputation among the nations would be diminished because he is associated with His people (cf. 2:26). But if they repented, they had the hope that God would turn away from His judgments and the nations would know that He was among them.

Joel 2:18-31 describes the Lord’s blessings on His people if they return to Him. He will not just turn away from His judgments, but 2:18 says that Yahweh will be zealous for His land. He will positively and actively bless His people. He would restore to them grain, new wine and oil, which the locusts had eaten. And Judah would no longer be a reproach (a joke) among the nations. He would remove far from them the “northern army,” which would refer to not only the locusts, but also the threat of invading nations from the north, like Assyria and Babylon. If His people repented of their sin, God would judge the nations that had invaded the Land (2:20).

God’s mercy would replace His judgments, and the people would not have cause for fear, and would be made glad and rejoice because the Lord would restore what He destroyed by the locusts (2:21-26). By dealing so graciously with His people, they would know that God was with them, and that so long as they remained faithful, they would never be put to shame as a nation (v. 27).

In 2:28-32 we have a very important text in which God promises to pour out His Spirit on *all flesh*. Specifically, it says that *after* the time of God’s restoration of His people from His judgments by invading armies, God would pour out His Spirit. It was a promise that the mercy of Yahweh would extend not only to His people, but also He says, “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved” (2:32). This section is quoted by Peter in His sermon on the Day of Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples in Jerusalem and they spoke in tongues. Turn briefly to Acts 2. Before Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father in heaven to rule as the messianic King of the world, Jesus commanded the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the baptism of the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-8). There were people from

all over the world in Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of Pentecost at the time of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Peter said in Acts 2:16-21 that what was happening at Pentecost was the fulfillment of this prophecy of Joel 2:28-32. In the last days of the old covenant, the New Kingdom of Jesus would be established when the Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh. We see again that the sun, moon and stars are darkened (cf. 2:10, 31). The Kingdom of Jesus would rule the kingdoms of the world, and whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. The promise of blessing was not limited to Israel, but would be extended by Jesus to all nations (cf. Acts 2:39). The true fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel did not take place until Jesus had come as the Savior of the world, and was raised by God to rule the nations. The good news that Jesus has become the Savior and ruler of the world has gone out to the nations. Paul in Romans 10:13 quoted Joel 2:32 to say that “Whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

II. The Day of the Lord in the Future Joel 3

Turn now to Joel 3. In 3:1 we see that at some time in the future that God would bring judgment against His people. It says that Judah would be taken captive. We know that this happened in history about 200 years after the writing of the book of Joel by the Babylonians. 3:1 promises that he would return the captives from exile. After they return to the Land, the nations would be judged for having scattered the Yahweh’s people (3:2-3). V. 2 (also v. 12) says that the Lord would gather the nations at the valley of Jehoshaphat to judge them. We do not know the location of a valley by that name, and it could be a play on the meaning of the name, which is “Yahweh Judges.” Because of what the nations had done to God’s people, and because their wickedness was great (3:13), God would punish them. The Phoenicians and Philistines are condemned in 3:4-8 because they sold God’s people to the Greeks. They themselves would be sold.

This great gathering of the nations for war against the Lord would be a harvest of destruction (3:9-13). Because Yahweh would come to war against them, nations are called upon to convert their farming tools into weapons of war. This is of course the opposite of what we are used hearing, that weapons of war are converted to tools of peace and productivity (Is. 2:4; Micah 4:3).

Joel 3:14-16 says that the gather multitudes of the nations at the valley of decision would be judged on the day of the Lord. As we have said, the Day of the Lord is a time when God comes near in judgment so that His faithful people will be saved. In 2:10, 31 the sun, moon and stars are said to be darkened as God’s people are ruled by the rulers of the nations. Now, in 3:15, we see that God removes the rulers of the nations with the same symbolic description of the sun, moon and stars being darkened. This is accomplished by the Lord who roars from Zion in Jerusalem,

where He rules from His Temple. While God comes on the Day of Yahweh in judgment against the nations, the Day of Yahweh means safety and strength for His people (v. 16). In this way, God's people know that Yahweh is their God, and that He dwells among them on His holy mountain of Zion, the Temple.

The book of Joel concludes with promises of destruction for Egypt and Edom, and a great future for God's people (3:19-21) because Yahweh dwells in Zion. Historically, the fulfillments of these promises were not completed right after the return of the exiles from captivity. The return of the Lord to dwell and rule the world from Zion was something that the Jews were still hoping for at the coming of Jesus. The outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh so that the nations would not only be judged, but also saved had not fully happened by the time of Christ's coming. The prophecies of the Day of the Lord, in Joel and the other prophets, were not truly fulfilled until the coming of Jesus. During His life and ministry He came to Israel declaring the coming of the Kingdom of God, and preparing the people for entrance in His kingdom. At the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, He was hailed as the messianic King. By His death on the cross, resurrection from the dead, and ascension to the right hand of the Father in heaven, the Kingdom of God had come. He sent the Holy Spirit, and now dwells with us and rules us by His Spirit. Because the nation of Israel at the time of Jesus rejected Him as the Messiah, Jesus came to them in AD 70 as another Day of the Lord, which was a final judgment for Israel's rebellion (see Matt. 24:29; Mk. 13:24; Lk. 21:11, 25-26; Rev. 6:12-17). The result of this day of the Lord was that the true Judah and Jerusalem, the Church, was established forever, as it says in Joel 3:20. The Day of the Lord for Judah was the coming of Jesus the Messiah to judge those who rejected Him, but to save all who call on the name of the Lord. Now the blessings of God flow to the whole world from Christ our Lord.

Applications from this lesson:

- When God's people turn from Him in sin, He institutes Days of the Lord times to bring them to repentance. His judgments are often difficult and horrifying (like locusts, economic hardship, etc). But God is "gracious and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness; and He relents from doing harm" (2:13). He makes a way for His people to be restored again to Him.
- We can be confident that when He uses wicked men to judge us, after we are restored to Him He will judge the wicked. But even in this, it is a judgment that will save the nations. He has poured out His Spirit on all flesh, and will save whoever calls upon His name.

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Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Amos.

Lesson Eight: Joel – The Day of the Lord In History

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

- I. Judah's Day of Yahweh - Locusts (1-2:11)
- II. CENTER: Call to repentance & Restoration (2:12-32)

I. Yahweh's call to repentance & Restoration Joel 2:12-32

II. The Day of the Lord in the Future Joel 3

Joel 2:28-32 is quoted in Acts 2:16-21; Rom. 10:13

Matt. 24:29; Mk. 13:24; Lk. 21:11, 25-26; Rev. 6:12-17

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Amos and 2 Chron. 26:1-23; 2 Kings 14:23-15:7

Lesson Nine: Amos – Yahweh Roars Against Israel, Ch. 1-2

Amos: Yahweh Roars Against Israel

- I. 8 Judgments against all the nations Yahweh will judge (1-2)
- II. 3 Sermons of Judgment against Israel (3-6)
- III. 5 Visions of judgment against Israel (7-9)
- IV. Promises of restoration (9)

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism**

❖ **Review**

Briefly review the outlines for the **First Six Books of the Twelve – Crisis is coming. Focus is on the sins of both Israel and Judah.**

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

Amos' name means "Burden-Bearer" (from Heb. "to lift a burden, to carry")

Amos was a prophet to the Northern kingdom of Israel.

1:1 tells us that Amos wrote during the time of Uzziah/Azariah the king of Judah, and Joash and Jeroboam II, kings Israel, which was about 760-755 BC (2 Chron. 26:1-23; 2 Kings 14:23-15:7).

The only appearance of the name Amos is in this book. Amos says in 7:14,

Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: "I *was* no prophet, Nor *was* I a son of a prophet, But I *was* a sheepbreeder And a tender of sycamore fruit.

He came from a rural area of Tekoa in Judah, 12 miles south of Jerusalem. He delivered his message in Bethel because it was the residence of the king of Israel and a center of idolatry. His main attack against the greed, injustice and self-righteousness of the people of the Northern Kingdom made his words unpopular. Astronomical calculations indicate that a solar eclipse took place in Israel on June 15, 763 BC. This event was probably fresh in the minds of Amos' hearers (8:9).

During the time of Amos, Uzziah reigned as king in Judah, and was a good king (2 Chron. 26:4-5). He fortified Jerusalem and fought against the Philistines, Ammonites and the Edomites. In the Northern Kingdom of Israel, Jeroboam II reigned and did evil in the sight of the Lord (2 Kings 14:24). Economic and military circumstances created prosperity, but also increased materialism, immorality and injustice among the people (Amos 2:6-8; 3:10; 4:1; 5:10-12). During these years, Assyria, Babylon, Syria and Egypt were relatively weak. The people of Israel probably found it difficult to imagine the coming disaster predicted by Amos. However, it was only a short time later Assyria took that Israel captive.

The basic theme of Amos is the coming judgment of Israel because of the holiness of Yahweh and the sinfulness of His covenant people. God is gracious and patient, but His justice and righteousness will not allow sin to go unpunished forever. The

sins of Israel are heaped as high as heaven: empty ritualism, oppression of the poor, idolatry, deceit, self-righteousness, arrogance, greed and hard-heartedness. The people have repeatedly broken every aspect of their covenant relationship with God. Nevertheless, God’s mercy and love are evident in His offer of deliverance if the people will only turn back to Him. God graciously sent Amos as a covenant lawyer to convict Israel of her sin, and as a reformer to warn the people of their judgment to come if they refused to repent. But they rejected his plea, and the course of judgment could not be altered.

8 Judgements Against All The Nations Yahweh Will Judge

The book of Amos begins where the book of Joel ends. Joel 3:16 says that Yahweh will roar from Zion against the enemies of His people. Amos 1:2 says that Yahweh roars from Zion (cf. 3:4, 12; 5:19). Amos lists all the nations God will judge – because of their cruelty and slavery. The warning is to both Judah and Israel for their same sins. Amos gives a sign of the coming judgment – an earthquake. Fulfilled 2 years later (cf. Zechariah 14:5). The proportion of judgment compared to hope and blessing is higher in Amos than in the other prophets. Only the last 5 verses offer a word of hope, comfort and promise. Amos wrote at about the same time as Hosea, who also lived in Israel. The chart below is a general comparison between Hosea and Amos:

Hosea	Amos
Preaches against idolatry	Preaches against social injustice
Commands the people to know God	Commands the people to seek God
Focuses on Israel’s worship of God	Focuses on their daily walk with God
“I don’t delight in your sacrifices”	“I hate your offerings”
Majors on image worship	Little attention given to image worship
Describes Israel as a privileged people	Describes Israel as a privileged people
Much about the loyal love of God	Little about the loyal love of God
Called for repentance	Aroused the conscience
Addresses Israel as a family (wife/son)	Addresses Israel as a state/nation
Deals with his homeland (Israel)	Deals with foreigners
A message to Israel	A message to the nations
Refers much to the past	Refers little to the past
Grace of God	Righteousness and justice of God
Lovingkindness of God	Wrath of God

Amos was called by God to leave his homeland in Judah to preach a harsh message of judgment to Israel. Each of his 8 prophecies in Amos 1-2 begins with the statement, “For three transgressions of...and for four.” The fourth transgression is

equivalent to the last straw; the iniquity of each of the eight countries is full. Amos began with the nations surrounding Israel and his list of judgments gradually comes down to Israel herself. 7 times God declares, “I will send a fire” of judgment (1:4, 7, 10, 14; 2:2, 5).

1) Judgment on Damascus 1:3-5

Damascus was the ancient capital of the pagan nation of Syria. In Is. 7:8 8:4 17:1 Jer 49:23-27 Zech. 9:1 we see other prophets announcing the judgment of God on Syrian Damascus. 2 Kings 8:12; 10:32,33 13:3,7 gives us background information about what the Syrians were doing to Israel, and how God was ruling over the events going on through his prophets. Of particular importance is the horrific way in which Hezeal of Damascus waged the war against Israel (2 Kings 8:12).

During the reign of Jeroboam II, Damascus was restored as a part of Israel. Eventually, king Rezin of Damascus and Pekah the king of Israel together tried to get Ahaz, the king of Judah to form an alliance against Assyria. In 732 Assyria destroyed Damascus. It was on the road to this Damascus that the Apostle Paul was converted to Christianity several centuries later.

2) Judgment on Gaza 1:6-8

Gaza was one of the five important cities of the Philistines on the Mediterranean coast of Palestine. The peculiar sin of the Philistines was carrying away “captive the whole captivity,” either of Israel or Judah. Some think this refers to that inroad made upon Jehoram when they took away all the king’s sons and all his substance (2 Chron. 21:17). It may refer to their seizing those that fled to them for shelter when Sennacherib invaded Judah, and selling them to the Greeks (Joel 3:4-6) or to the Edomites, who were always sworn enemies to the people of God. They spared none, but carried off all they could lay their hands on, designing, if possible, to cut off the name of Israel. Gaza was later conquered by the Assyrians about the same time Israel was taken captive in 722 BC. It was finally destroyed by Alexander the Great of Greece in 332 BC.

3) Judgment on Tyre 1:9-10

Tyre was a famous city of wealth and strength, that was itself a kingdom, on the Mediterranean coast north of Israel. Tyre is often associated with another nearby city/kingdom, named Sidon. The peculiar sin of Tyre is delivering up the whole captivity to Edom. This means that they sold into slavery to the Edomites those of Israel that fled to them for shelter, or in any way fell into their hands; not caring what hardships they put upon the. Herein they forgot the brotherly covenant, the league that was between Solomon and Hiram king of Tyre (1 Kings 5:12), which was so intimate that Hiram called Solomon his brother (1 Kings 9:13).

4) Judgment on Edom 1:11-12

Edom is the land given to and possessed by the descendents of Esau, Jacob's brother. Their peculiar sin was an unmerciful, unwearied, pursuit of the people of God, and their taking all advantages against them to do them a mischief, v. 11. He pursued his brother Israel with the sword, not only of old, when the king of Edom took up arms to oppose the children of Israel's passage through his border (Num. 20:18), but ever since upon all occasions. The Edomites did not have the strength and courage to face them in the field of battle, but, whenever any other enemy had put Judah or Israel to flight, then the Edomites set in with the pursuers, fell upon the rear, slew those that were half dead already, and they cast off all pity.

5) Judgment on Ammon 1:13-15

Ammon is the land given to and possessed by the descendents of Lot by his daughter (Gen. 19:38). Ammon had been an enemy of God's people since they came into the land. The violence of Ammon against God's people is seen in v. 13 by God's condemnation of them for ripping open women with children, simply to get more land. (See also, Jer 49:1-6 Ezek. 25:2-7 Zeph. 2:8; 2 Kings 24:2; 2 Chron. 20:1,10). The Ammonite king and his princes would be taken into captivity, carried away by the king of Babylon, not long after Judah was in 605 BC.

6) Judgment on Moab 2:1-3

Moab was on the southeastern boarder of Judah by the Dead Sea. The Moabites were also the descendents of Lot by his other daughter (Gen. 19:37). Moab also had been an enemy of God's people since they came into the land. Moab's transgression, as was cruelty. The king of Moab burnt the bones of the king of Edom into lime. We find there was war between the Edomites and the Moabites, in which the king of Moab, in distress and rage, offered his own son for a burnt-offering, to appease his deity (2 Kings 3:26, 27). It seems that later he, or some of his successors, in revenge, seized him alive and burnt him to ashes, or slew him and burnt his body, or dug up the bones of their dead king. (See also, Is. 11:14; 15:1-16:14; 25:10; Jer 48:1-47; Ezek. 25:8,9; Zeph. 2:8,9).

7) Judgment on Judah 2:4-5

Judah, of course, was also is a near neighbor to Israel. Progressively, the judgments of God are getting closer to Israel, so that Judah can be said to be a nation that has made itself like the pagans. "For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof." Their sins are as many as the sins of other nations. Their greatest sin is despising and rejecting the law of Yahweh, and not keeping his commandments. (See also, 2Kings 17:19; Jer 9:25,26; Lev. 26:14,15; 2

Sa 12:9,10 2Ki 22:11-17 2Ch 36:14-17 Ne 1:7 9:26,29,30 Is.5: 24,25; Jer 8:9; Ezek. 16:1-63; 20:13,16,24).

8) Judgment of Israel 2:6-16

The final and greatest judgments are against Israel. If all the nations around Israel must be punished for their sins, how much more Israel? The judges of Israel perverted justice, selling into slavery even the righteous. The people of Israel oppressed the poor, practiced great wickedness and committed idolatry against Yahweh. (See also, 2 Kings 17:7-18; 18:12; Ezek. 23:5-9). The clear message to Israel is that they are as wicked and sinful as her neighbors.

Applications of this lesson:

- God views the nations in relationship to His people. In the promise made to Abraham God announced His intentions to bless the nations through His people (Gen. 12:2-3). In that promise He said that He would bless those who bless us, and curse those who curse us. In Amos we see the cursings of God against those who sought the harm and destruction of His people. We can be assured that God deals with unbelieving people in their relationships to us, the Church.
- God's judgments against the wicked around us should make us mindful of our own sin and need to fear the Lord. We must never be self-confident, arrogantly thinking that God will forever overlook our sin.
- We, the Church, have received from God the blessing of being in covenant with Him, salvation, His Word and Spirit. We are held to a higher standard of righteousness, and are more accountable for rebellion.
- The result of God's judgments against the nations and His rebellious people will be the establishment of righteousness and salvation of all the nations.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Amos.

Lesson Nine: Amos – The Day of the Lord In History, Ch. 1-2

Amos: Yahweh Roars Against Israel

- I. 8 Judgments against all the nations Yahweh will judge (1-2)
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Refers much to the past	Refers little to the past
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8 Judgements Against All The Nations Yahweh Will Judge Amos 1:3-2:16

- 1) Judgment on Damascus 1:3-5
Is. 7:8 8:4 17:1 Jer 49:23-27 Zech. 9:1
- 2) Judgment on Gaza 1:6-8
2 Chron. 21:17; Joel 3:4-6
- 3) Judgment on Tyre 1:9-10
1 Kings 5:12
- 4) Judgment on Edom 1:11-12
Num. 20:18
- 5) Judgment on Ammon 1:13-15
Jer 49:1-6 Ezek. 25:2-7 Zeph. 2:8; 2 Kings 24:2; 2 Chron. 20:1,10
- 6) Judgment on Moab 2:1-3
Is. 11:14; 15:1-16:14; 25:10; Jer 48:1-47; Ezek. 25:8,9; Zeph. 2:8,9
- 7) Judgment on Judah 2:4-5
2 Kings 17:19; Jer 9:25,26; 2Ki 22:11-17 2Ch 36:14-17 Is.5: 24,25; Jer 8:9; Ezek. 16:1-63; 20:13,16,24
- 8) Judgment of Israel 2:6-16
2 Kings 17:7-18; 18:12; Ezek. 23:5-9

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Amos.

Lesson Ten: Amos – Prophetic Sermons Against Israel, Ch. 3-6

Amos: Yahweh Roars Against Israel

- I. 8 Judgments against all the nations Yahweh will judge (1-2)
- II. 3 Sermons of Judgment against Israel (3-6)
- III. 5 Visions of judgment against Israel (7-9)
- IV. Promises of restoration (9)

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Amos' name means "Burden-Bearer" (from Hebrew "to lift a burden, to carry")

Amos was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

Amos wrote about 760-755 BC, during the time of Uzziah/Azariah the good king of Judah, and Joash and Jeroboam II, bad kings Israel (2 Chron. 26:1-23; 2 Kings 14:23-15:7).

Last week we saw that Yahweh pronounced judgments on the nations surrounding Israel to demonstrate that Israel was no better. We noticed that the judgments were based on the justice of God, each beginning with the statement, "For three transgressions of...and for four..." This week focuses on the sins and judgments that were to come upon Israel. This section of Amos has three distinct parts or sermons given by God's prophet, Amos. Each sermon begins with Israel being called upon to, "Hear this word..." (3:1; 4:1; 5:1). As we saw last week, Amos begins in 1:2 saying, "The Lord roars from Zion" (having continued Joel's statement in 3:16). This theme of a roaring lion continues in this section of Amos (see 3:4, 12; 5:19).

I. Hear this word of Yahweh: Yahweh Will Punish Israel – Amos 3

a. Hear: Yahweh will punish Israel for its sins (vv. 1-2)

The first sermon reminds the people that God graciously saved them by bringing them up from Egypt in the Exodus. This was to remind Israel that they were a special chosen people, whom God uniquely favored. This Exodus theme is important to Amos. 5:25 reminds the people of their sinful idolatries during the 40 years of wilderness wanderings. Now, because of their sins, Yahweh said He would punish them. This threat of punishment is repeated in vv. 13-15.

b. Coming disaster declared by prophets – lion & prey (v. 3-8)

The sermon continues in vv. 3-8 with a series of rhetorical/symbolic questions. Can two people walk together unless they are agreed? No. Although God had been good to them, Israel had broken covenant with Him, yet still expected Him to walk with them and give them assurance of peace and fellowship.

Does a lion roar when he has no prey? No. The roaring Yahweh did against Israel through His prophets was a certain warning to them that they would be His prey as He came in judgment against them (see v. 7 on the importance of the prophets). Can a bird be ensnared where no trap was set for it? No. Israel's own wickedness was the cause of the coming judgments. It was their own sin that ensnared them. Will a snare spring up from the earth if it has caught nothing? No. The snare has caught Israel for her sins, and nothing but repentance can remove them from it.

If a trumpet is blown in a city, shouldn't the people be afraid? Yes! The blowing of the prophetic word should have been enough to make Israel afraid. If there is disaster in a city/nation, it has come by the hand of the Lord as His judgment. Yahweh reveals His judgments through His prophets. The Lion has roared, and the people should fear the Lord.

c. Foreign palaces called against Israel (v. 9)

In v. 9 the Lord calls upon foreign palaces/kings (Philistines and Egypt, the old enemies of Israel) to come against Israel as His tools of judgment.

d. Center: Israel does not know how to do right (v.10)

The judgment will come because Israel does not know how to do right. This failure to do right is explained as violence and robbery in the palaces of Israel.

c' Israel's palaces will be destroyed (v.11)

Because of the foreign enemies, the palaces of Israel will be plundered. Israel's palaces will be robbed, just as her injustice had been through violence and robbery of the people. Even the well guarded palaces of Israel cannot protect what she had stolen.

b' Coming of near-total disaster – lion & prey (v.12)

Just as a lamb in the mouth of lion, there will be no escape for Israel. Israel cannot hide in the corner of a bed or a couch, no matter how secure they feel.

a' Hear: Yahweh will punish Israel for its sins (vv.13-15)

Although Israel feels secure in her wealth and power, even her great houses will be brought to an end because of her sin. God's punishment was surely coming. The destruction of the altars of Bethel (3:14; 4:4; 5:5; 7:10) is probably a reference to a prophecy against the altar of Bethel in 1 Kings 13:1-10, which was fulfilled in 2 Kings 23:15-18.

II. Hear this word of Yahweh: Israel: Prepare to meet your God – Amos 4

a. Condemnation: Wickedness of Israel’s wealthy women (vv. 1-3)

In Ch. 4 Amos begins to declare the specific sins for which the great houses would be judged. He begins with injustices done to the poor and needy, calling Israel cows of Bashan. Historically, these cows were large and strong, especially if fed on the mountains of Samaria. Israel had gotten wealthy by oppressing the poor. Women of Israel called out to their husbands to “bring wine and let us drink,” presumably by the wealth they crushed out of the needy. Because of the holiness of the Lord, judgment would come in the form of exile.

b. Condemnation: Israel’s religious hypocrisy (vv. 4-5)

Israel did not neglect religious practices. In addition to idolatry, they continually offered sacrifices that God was not pleased with. They loved being religious, but it was just a show that God did not accept. This resulted in a false confidence in their own righteousness, “God is with us” (5:14), and, “No evil will befall us” (9:10).

c. Israel’s 1st failure to return to Yahweh -lack of bread (v. 6)

In vv. 6-13 God complains, declaring woes against Israel because she did not repent and turn by to Him. He caused them to lack bread and they did not repent.

d. Israel’s 2nd failure to return to Yahweh -lack of water (v. 7-8)

God withheld rain, and they did not return to Him.

e. Israel’s 3rd failure to return to Yahweh -crop failure (v. 9)

God caused their crops to fail, and they did not return to Him.

f. Israel’s 4th failure to return to Yahweh -plagues & war (v. 10)

God sent plagues like Pharaoh experienced before the Exodus, and killed their young men in war, and they did not return to the Lord.

g. Israel’s 5th failure to return to Yahweh -fire (v. 11)

God sent judgments like He had against Sodom and Gomorrah, some only narrowly escaping, and still they did not return to the Lord.

Conclusion – Prepare to meet your God (vv. 12-13)

Because God had done all of these things, and was prepared for more judgments, God declares that Israel should prepare to meet their God. They should prepare to meet their Maker.

III. Hear this word of Yahweh: Call to repentance & Coming Judgment – Amos 5-6

In the final sermon of this section, there are two separate parts, each structured chiastically: a call to repentance and an announcement of coming judgment.

Call to repentance (5:1-17)

a. Lamentation over fallen Israel (vv. 1-3)

A lamentation is an expression of great sorrow and grief. The Lord Himself laments for Israel's coming judgment.

b. Call to repentance-seek me and live (vv. 4-6)

Although the judgment is certain, there is still hope for those who would seek Yahweh. They could survive the judgment and live. He cautions them not to seek Him through false worship in Bethel, Gilgal or Beersheba.

c. Condemnation of Israel's injustice (vv. 6-7)

Israel's injustice and rejection of righteousness is the cause of the judgment.

d. Center: Hymn of Yahweh's power (vv. 8-9)

Vv. 8-9 changes to poetic, hymn-like praise to Yahweh, the Maker of the heavens and earth. Because of His great power, He has the ability to rain ruin and judgment down even upon the strong.

c' Condemnation of Israel's injustice (vv. 10-13)

Vv. 10-13 returns to accusing Israel for her injustices of rejecting the judgments of the elders in the gate, oppression of the poor with heavy taxation, and take brides to pervert justice. It was an evil time.

b' Call to repentance-seek good, not evil, so that you may live (vv.14-15)

Yet Yahweh still holds out hope to those who would repent by seeking good and not evil so that they might live. If Israel were to stop her injustice, hate evil and love good, He may yet be gracious to them.

a' Coming lamentation (vv. 16-17)

Because of all of these things, Yahweh says that there will come wailing, mourning and lamentation because He would pass through the nation in judgment.

Coming Judgment (5:18-6:14)

a. Coming disaster (5:18-20)

There were some that looked forward to the day of Yahweh, as if it would be a time of salvation from their enemies. He declared that it would be a day of darkness for them; a time of woe. It would be a time like having a lion chasing them, or a serpent biting them.

b. What Yahweh hates (5:21-24)

Yahweh hated their religious observances, and did not accept them. He would rather have them stop offering sacrifices and do what is just and righteous.

c. Threat of exile (5:25-27)

Just as Israel wandered for 40 years in wilderness, now she would be carried away in exile.

d. Center: Declarations of woe (6:1-6)

In 6:1-6, God pronounces sadness and despair on Israel for her sins.

c' Threat of exile (6:7)

Again God declares that Israel will be exiled.

b' What Yahweh hates (6:8-10)

Yahweh God hates the pride of Israel and her reliance upon the strength of her kings and their palaces.

a' Coming disaster (6:11-14)

The sin and pride of Israel has brought Yahweh to give the command to bring down the house of Israel. He will raise up a nation against Israel, and she will be afflicted.

Applications of this lesson:

- We must be willing to hear God speak to us by His Word, even when it convicts us of our sin. We cannot have fellowship with God when we do not live by His word.
- God is only pleased with our worship when we are living righteous lives every day. When we act wickedly during the week, and then come to worship as if everything is right with us, God does not accept our worship. When we come to worship, we must repent of our sin, and seek Him according to His word. If we are humble before Him and confess our sin, He promises to be faithful and just to forgive our sin.
- We must be careful to walk justly and do righteousness in our lives. Perverting justice, oppressing people, living hypocritically is an affront to God in worship.
- We must be careful not to think that God will not judge us, simply because we go to church and worship Him. If we sin against Him and one another, God will certainly punish us if we refuse to return to Him.
- When God sends judgments on our nation or those around us, if we seek Him, He will save us and give us life.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Amos.

Lesson Ten: Amos – Prophetic Sermons Against Israel, Ch. 3-6

Amos: Yahweh Roars Against Israel

- I. 8 Judgments against all the nations Yahweh will judge (1-2)
- II. 3 Sermons of Judgment against Israel (3-6)
- III. 5 Visions of judgment against Israel (7-9)
- IV. Promises of restoration (9)

I. Hear this word of Yahweh: Yahweh Will Punish Israel – Amos 3

- a. Hear: Yahweh will punish Israel for its sins (vv. 1-2)
- b. Coming disaster declared by prophets – lion & prey (vv. 3-8)
 - c. Foreign palaces called against Israel (v. 9)
 - d. Center: Israel does not know how to do right (v.10)
 - c’ Israel’s palaces will be destroyed (v.11)
 - b’ Coming of near-total disaster – lion & prey (v.12)
- a’ Hear: Yahweh will punish Israel for its sins (vv.13-15)

II. Hear this word of Yahweh: Israel: Prepare to meet your God – Amos 4

- a. Condemnation: Wickedness of Israel’s wealthy women (vv. 1-3)
 - b. Condemnation: Israel’s religious hypocrisy (vv. 4-5)
 - c. Israel’s 1st failure to return to Yahweh-lack of bread (v. 6)
 - d. Israel’s 2nd failure to return to Yahweh -lack of water (v. 7-8)
 - e. Israel’s 3rd failure to return to Yahweh -crop failure (v. 9)
 - f. Israel’s 4th failure to return to Yahweh -plagues & war (v. 10)
 - g. Israel’s 5th failure to return to Yahweh -fire (v. 11)
- Conclusion – Prepare to meet your God (vv. 12-13)

III. Hear this word of Yahweh: Call to repentance & Coming Judgment – Amos 5-6

Call to repentance (5:1-17)

- a. Lamentation over fallen Israel (vv. 1-3)
- b. Call to repentance-seek me and live (vv. 4-6)
 - c. Condemnation of Israel’s injustice (vv. 6-7)
 - d. Center: Hymn of Yahweh’s power (vv. 8-9)
 - c’ Condemnation of Israel’s injustice (vv. 10-13)
 - b’ Call to repentance-seek good, not evil, so that you may live (vv.14-15)
- a’ Coming lamentation (vv. 16-17)

Coming Judgment (5:18-6:14)

- a. Coming disaster (5:18-20)
- b. What Yahweh hates (5:21-24)
- c. Threat of exile (5:25-27)
- d. Center: Declarations of woe (6:1-6)
- c’ Threat of exile (6:7)
- b’ What Yahweh hates (6:8-10)
- a’ Coming disaster (6:11-14)

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Amos.

Lesson Eleven: Amos – Judgments and Promises for Israel, Ch. 7-9

Amos: Yahweh Roars Against Israel

- I. 8 Judgments against all the nations Yahweh will judge (1-2)
- II. 3 Sermons of Judgment against Israel (3-6)
- III. 5 Visions of judgment against Israel (7-9)
- IV. Promises of restoration (9)

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism**

❖ **Review**

Briefly review the outlines for the **First Six Books of the Twelve** – Crisis is coming. Focus on the sins of both Israel and Judah.

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

Amos' name means "Burden-Bearer" (from Hebrew "to lift a burden, to carry")

Amos was a prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

Amos wrote about 760-755 BC, during the time of Uzziah/Azariah the king of Judah, and Joash and Jeroboam II, kings Israel (2 Chron. 26:1-23; 2 Kings 14:23-15:7).

Last week we saw that Yahweh pronounced judgments on Israel specifically in three sermons. In these sermons Yahweh roared like a lion against Israel through His prophet Amos. Although the Lord repeatedly did things to bring Israel to repentance, His people refused to return to Him. Therefore, the Day of Yahweh would come as a day of woe and sorrow for His people.

In the final sections of the book of Amos we see that Amos uses a different style of writing to emphasize the certain judgment that was to come. In this section we will see a series of visions and then conversations between Yahweh and Amos. In these conversations Yahweh consults with His prophet, and listens to the pleas of Amos for Israel and Judah. Not only so, as with so many of God's prophets, Amos is persecuted for the message he brings from the Lord.

I. 5 Visions of Judgment

All but the last of the five visions begin with, "Thus Yahweh showed to me: Behold..." and the last says, "I saw Yahweh standing by the altar." These statements are followed by what Amos *saw*; each of the visions getting shorter and shorter. Also after the first two visions, Amos prays for Yahweh God to forgive and to cease His judgments, which the Lord does. Unlike the first two visions, visions 3 & 4 are not followed by a request from Amos for Yahweh to relent, and

we do not see Yahweh saying that He will change His plan. Thus, there is a progression from potential judgment to certain judgment. After the second two visions see that Yahweh asked Amos a question, Amos responded and Yahweh explained the vision.

Between the third and fourth vision is the telling of an incident between Amaziah, the priest of Bethel (false priesthood of false worship), and Amos (7:10-17). The fifth and final vision describes the certainty of the judgment to come on Israel. None of the sinners will be allowed to escape. The fourth and fifth visions emphasize again the coming of the “day” of Yahweh (8:9, 11; 9:7, 8, also in the section of Promise, 9:12, 13).

A. Vision of the Locusts (7:1-3)

Which of the other prophets talked about locusts in the Book of the Twelve? [Joel]. Amos would have known about the prophecy of Joel against Judah (because Amos wrote later), making this a powerful reminder of the judgment of God. In this vision, Amos saw that the locusts came after the harvest of the king, showing the mercy of God even in His judgments. This may have reference to the fact that when Jeroboam II began to reign, Israel had been laid waste during the reign of his father Joash. Israel had already seen what God’s wrath could do (symbolized here by locusts), and now God was giving them time for repentance.

Repeatedly in the Bible, prophets are given special knowledge of what God intended to do in judgment (see Amos 3:7), and the prophet often prays for the people and God changes His revealed plan. It is part of the prophetic office to be taken into God’s counsel, and to call upon the Lord to be merciful to His people because of His covenant love. Abraham did this (Gen. 18), as did Moses the great prophet. Now we see this same intercession by the prophet Amos, who asked God to forgive, so that Jacob/Israel may stand, because he is small (cf. 7:5). Jacob is said to be small, not only in size but also because they had already fallen under the judgments of God. Although at one time they were a great people, Israel had become small and insignificant. 7:3 tells us that Yahweh relented concerning this. “It shall not be,” said Yahweh.

B. Vision of the Fire (7:4-6)

In the second vision, Yahweh showed Amos “a conflict by fire” that “consumed the great deep and devoured the territory.” It is unclear what this threat refers to, but clearly it represents further judgment. Like the fire that God rained down upon Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:24-25, which Amos referred to in 4:11), and against Egypt (Ex. 9:23-24) and in other judgments of God against even His own people (Lev. 10:2; Num. 16:35), so now God threatened His people with fire. But again, Amos prayed for Israel that God would relent, and Yahweh did.

C. Vision of the Plumb Line (7:7-9)

Beginning with the third vision the judgments become more certain, and God does not relent, nor does Amos even ask God to. Amos saw Yahweh standing on a wall with a plumb line in His hand. A plumb line is used by builders to make something straight. The Lord explained the vision by saying that He holds the plumb line in the midst of Israel, meaning that He had measured Israel, and was setting a fixed line of judgment against His people because of their sins of idolatry. The reason that God uses the name Isaac for the people is that they had built places of false worship where righteous Isaac had worshipped God. They pretended to follow their forefather Isaac in worship, but were in reality rejecting the God of Isaac. The places of false worship would be destroyed, and the sword would come specifically against the house of Jeroboam the king. This prophecy was literally fulfilled in 2 Kings 15:8-10, where the son of Jeroboam, Zechariah, was murdered in front of the people after reigning only six months.

D. Amaziah's Opposition (7:10-17)

Following the prophecy against the house of Jeroboam we have a small section inserted that describes an incident where Amaziah, priest of Bethel (false priest of false golden calf worship), tries to stop Amos in his prophetic ministry. Amaziah sent a message to king Jeroboam saying that Amos had conspired against Jeroboam, implying that Amos was not a true prophet. This often happened to the prophets, because the false priests & prophets did not want their false worship to be diminished before the people. Amaziah also spoke directly to Amos, telling him to get out of ("flee") Bethel and to return to Judah. The reason Amaziah gives is that Israel is ruled by Jeroboam, and that Bethel is the king's sanctuary and royal residence. Just as the Temple in Jerusalem is both His sanctuary and palace, here in 7:13, rebellious king Jeroboam (through his false Priest), claims that he is not subject to the words of Yahweh's prophets because he has his own sanctuary and palace. But Amos defended himself to Amaziah by saying that the Lord had commanded Him to prophesy against Israel, and that God would curse Amaziah and his family, as well as Israel as a whole. Amaziah and Jeroboam were fighting against the Lord, not Amos.

E. Vision of the Summer Fruit (8:1-14)

In the fourth vision Yahweh showed Amos a basket of summer fruit (the Hebrew word is *kitz*). "The end (the Hebrew word is *ketz*) has come upon My people Israel..." (8:2). Israel was ripe (like the fruit) for the awful harvest of God's judgment. There is a word play between the words for summer fruit and the end, meaning that the time has come for an end to Israel just as there is an end to the growing season of fruit. The end will be sorrowful and violent.

The reason for judgment is made clear: Israel swallowed up the poor and needy (8:4) by the injustices of dishonest business practices (8:5), and enslaving them (8:6). Because of their pride and refusal to obey the word of Yahweh, the day of judgment was coming, which would include the removal of the word of the Lord from them.

F. Vision of the Stricken Doorposts (9:1-10)

With the fifth vision, the judgment against Israel becomes revealed as certain. Amos saw the Lord standing by the bronze altar of burnt offering in the Temple in Jerusalem. Yahweh said to Amos, “Strike the doorposts, that the thresholds may shake” (9:1). He is saying that by breaking down the doors to God’s house it is a symbol that God is desolating and leaving his Temple so that the judgment will come upon the people. This is interesting because Amos is writing to Israel, not Judah. Israel should have been worshipping Yahweh in Jerusalem, not calf idols in Bethel. Thus, from Jerusalem where He dwells, Yahweh is condemning His wayward son, Israel. There is no escape, even if they dig down into hell, or climb into heaven, or hide on Mt. Carmel, or at the bottom of the sea or be taken captive. Yahweh God of armies will pursue His people and judge them (9:2-6). Israel was not just any nation in the world. They were His special people of grace, which He delivered from Egypt, and other enemies, and yet they rebelled against Him. Now His eyes are especially on Israel, the sinful kingdom. He will destroy that kingdom from the face of the earth, even those who say that it would not happen, as Amaziah and Jeroboam said in 7:7-17 (9:8-10).

II. Promises to Israel of Restoration (9:11-15)?

The last section of the prophecy of Amos holds out hope for the world and Israel after the judgment.

Before the Temple was built, David brought the Ark of the covenant to Jerusalem and placed it in a Tabernacle/Tent in Jerusalem on Mt. Zion (a mountain near Mt. Moriah where the temple would later be built, see 1 Chron. 16). There David commanded that offerings of praise and singing be offered to God (not bloody sacrifices since the altar was not there). At the Tabernacle of David both Jews and God-fearing Gentile offered these sacrifices of praise to God. In 9:11-12 Yahweh said that the tabernacle of David would be rebuilt and the Gentiles will be saved. These verses are quoted by James Acts 15:16-17 to say that God is saving the Gentiles through the preaching of the Apostles after the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus. There were Jewish Christians that thought the Gentiles need to be circumcised and keep the Jewish law in order to be come Christians. But James said that God was fulfilling His promise through Amos and saving the Gentiles by faith, apart from the works of the law.

Amos went on to say in 9:13-15 that Yahweh would restore His people to the land, and would make them prosper again. Although, historically, the people were allowed to return to the land after the exile, they continued to wait for these promises to be completely fulfilled when Jesus came. Jesus brought the true fulfillment of these promises. By His death He took upon Himself the full judgment of the Father for the sins of Israel and the rest of the world. By His resurrection He demonstrated His power to overthrow the power of death and judgment. By His ascension to the right hand of the Father in heaven, Jesus became the King of the world, and sent His Spirit to save the world. Since that time the Kingdom of Christ has continued to grow and will bring blessing to the world so that the promises of blessing given in the last two verse of Amos would surely be fulfilled.

Applications of this lesson:

- God has given us a sure word of prophecy in His word, and has revealed to us all that is necessary for us to live before Him prosperously in His kingdom. By His Spirit, we are the new covenant prophets that must, like Amos and the Apostles, declare God's word to the world. We prophetically declare the good news that by the death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus is both Savior and King of the world.
- Our prophetic ministry in the world will be opposed by the world because we are proclaiming that the Lord Jesus is transforming the world by His Spirit through His Church and Word.
- Our prayers to God for the Church and the world are heard by Him, and will He will respond with salvation in the Church and in the world around. There may be times of judgment throughout history, but He over time call all men (Jews and Gentiles) into His kingdom. History is the story of God saving the world, our place in that story is to pray for the salvation of the nations.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Obadiah. Who is the book written against?

Lesson Eleven: Amos – Judgments and Promises for Israel, Ch. 7-9

Amos: Yahweh Roars Against Israel

- I. 8 Judgments against all the nations Yahweh will judge (1-2)
- II. 3 Sermons of Judgment against Israel (3-6)
- III. 5 Visions of judgment against Israel (7-9)
- IV. Promises of restoration (9)

I. 5 Visions of Judgment

A. Vision of the Locusts (7:1-3)

Amos 3:7; Gen. 18:16ff

B. Vision of the Fire (7:4-6)

Gen. 19:24-25; Ex. 9:23-24; Lev. 10:2; Num. 16:35

C. Vision of the Plumb Line (7:7-9)

2 Kings 15:8-10

D. Amaziah's Opposition (7:10-17)

E. Vision of the Summer Fruit (8:1-14)

F. Vision of the Stricken Doorposts (9:1-10)

II. Promises to Israel of Restoration (9:11-15)?

1 Chron. 16; Acts 15:16-17

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Obadiah. Who is the book written against?

Lesson Twelve: Obadiah – The Judgment of Edom

Obadiah: Edom’s Fall and Judah’s Rise

I. Judgment of Edom (1:1-14)

II. Israel’s possession of Edom (1:15-21)

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

Briefly review the outlines for the **First Six Books of the Twelve** – Crisis is coming. Focus on the sins of both Israel and Judah.

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

Amos: Yahweh roars against Israel

Today we begin to study Obadiah, the fourth of the Book of the Twelve. It is the shortest book in the Old Testament. Remember that the twelve are one book with twelve parts. Just as we have noticed with all of the books of the Twelve so far, the books are connected thematically, Obadiah is connected with Amos. Amos ends with a promise that Israel would possess Edom (9:12). Obadiah is a prophecy against Edom (Obadiah. 1:1).

Obadiah’s name means “Worshiper or Servant of Yahweh.” There are 13 men in the Old Testament named Obadiah, but there is no evidence to identify any of them with the prophet.

Obadiah prophesied in Judah against Edom in about 848-841 BC, and was the earliest of the writing prophets. There is strong evidence that the prophets Joel, Amos and Jeremiah made use of Obadiah. Other prophets also speak of Edom’s doom: Is. 21; 34; Jer. 9; 25; 27; 49; Ezek. 25; 35-36; Joel 3; Amos 1; 9; Malachi 1. Obadiah is not quoted in the New Testament.

I. Who was Edom?

Does anyone know who the Edomites were?

Edom was the descendants of Esau, the son of Isaac. Turn to Gen. 25:20-34. Here we learn that Isaac had twin sons, Esau and Jacob. While in the womb, these two brothers struggled together. This struggle between the brothers continued between them throughout most of their lives. Because he did not care about the covenant of God, Esau sold his birthright to Jacob, and was eventually cut off from all the family inheritance (Gen. 27:30f). Esau hated Jacob and wanted to kill him. It was not until many years later that the two brothers were reconciled (Gen. 32-33). Esau settled by Mt. Seir and took over the land of the Horites. His descendants became known as Edom (which means “red,” probably because of the red stew that Jacob

made for him and/or because the red rocks in that region, see Gen. 36). Edom grew into a great nation, and had kings before Israel did.

The struggle between the descendants of Esau and the nation of Israel continued in history. At the time of the Exodus, Israel sought permission to travel by the king's highway, but the request was refused (Num. 20:14–21; 21:4; Judg. 11:17–18). Notwithstanding this discourtesy, Israel was forbidden to abhor his Edomite brother (Deut. 23:7–8). In those days Balaam predicted the conquest of Edom (Num. 24:18).

Joshua allotted the territory of Judah up to the borders of Edom (Jos. 15:1, 21), but did not encroach on their lands. Two centuries later King Saul fought against the Edomites (1 Sa. 14:47) although some of them were in his service (1 Sa. 21:7; 22:9, 18). David conquered Edom and put garrisons throughout the land (2 Sa. 8:13–14). There was considerable slaughter of the Edomites at this time (2 Sa. 8:13), and 1 Kings. 11:15–16 speaks of Joab, David's commander, remaining in Edom for six months 'until he had cut off every male in Edom.' Some must have escaped, for Hadad, a royal prince, fled to Egypt and later became a trouble to Solomon (1 Kings. 11:14–22). This conquest of Edom enabled Solomon to build a port at Ezion-geber, and to exploit the copper-mines in the region (1 Kings. 9:26–28).

In Jehoshaphat's time the Edomites joined the Ammonites and Moabites in a raid on Judah (2 Ch. 20:1), but the allies fell to fighting one another (vv. 22–23). Jehoshaphat endeavored to use the port at Ezion-geber, but his ships were wrecked (1 Kings. 22:48). At this time Edom was ruled by a deputy, who acted as king (1 Kings. 22:47). This 'king' acknowledged the supremacy of Judah and joined the Judah-Israel coalition in an attack on Mesha, king of Moab (2 Ki. 3:4–27). Under Joram (Jehoram), Edom rebelled, but, although Joram defeated them in battle, he could not reduce them to subjection (2 Ki. 8:20–22; 2 Ch. 21:8–10), and Edom had a respite of some 40 years. Amaziah later invaded Edom, slew 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt, captured Sela their capital and sent 10,000 more to their death by casting them from the top of Sela (2 Ki. 14:7; 2 Ch. 25:11–12). Uzziah, his successor, restored the port at Elath (2 Ki. 14:22), but under Ahaz, when Judah was being attacked by Pekah and Rezin, the Edomites invaded Judah and carried off captives (2 Ch. 28:17). After the fall of Judah, Edom rejoiced (Ps. 137:7). The prophets foretold judgment on Edom for her bitter hatred (Jer. 49:7–22; La. 4:21–22; Ezek. 25:12–14; 35:15; Joel 3:19; Am. 9:12).

The struggle between Israel and the Edomites may have been primarily because of economic reasons. The trade route from the south to the north of the region was known as "the kings highway," which ran through Edom (1 Kings 9:26–28; 10:22;

22:47-48). It was also in this area that the copper industry of ancient Palestine was found. The mining industry contributed greatly to Edomite wealth. David conquered the territory (2 Sam. 8:14) and Solomon used this wealth (1 Kings. 9:26–28).

Eventually, Edom was conquered by the Assyrians and the Babylonians, just as Israel and Judah were. Later, they were conquered by the Arabs, and came to live in Judah and became known as the Idumaeans. In this period between the end of the writing of the Old Testament and the coming of Jesus there were a group of Jews that were revolutionaries against the Greeks who had invaded the Promised Land. These revolutionaries were not good men, but were important in the history of Israel. Judas Maccabaeus subdued the Edomites/Idumaeans (1 Maccabees 5:65), and John Hyrcanus compelled them to be circumcised and incorporated into the Jewish people. Herod the Great, an Idumaeans, was made King of Judea by the Romans in 37 BC. We will learn more about the importance of the line of the Herod kings next week because it is important to see the fulfillment of Obadiah's prophecy with the coming of Jesus the true King.

II. The Judgment of Edom vv. 1-14

A. The Pride of Edom vv. 3-9

Turn now to Obadiah 1-14, where we see that God declares the Edom will be judged and destroyed because of all the trouble they had caused His people. There is no hope for Edom – the coming judgment is certain. Vv. 3-4 tells us that it was the pride of Edom that was the cause of her downfall. Edom felt secure, thinking that they could not be harmed. The capital city on Mt. Seir is Petra, and a narrow canyon that prevented invasion protected it by an army. But God said that He would bring Edom down. Even a thief does not take everything, but when God destroys Edom it would be totally plundered (vv. 5-6). Vv. 7-9 says that those whom Edom thought would protect them by the alliances they made with the nations around them would not help them. Yahweh would destroy them in a great slaughter. [See also Jer. 49:7-22]

B. The Sins of Edom vv. 10-14

Vv. 10-14 describes Edom's major sin and shame: Doing violence against his brother Jacob and looking on while the people of Israel were defeated by her enemies. They gloated and rejoiced when the children of Judah were under distress and destroyed by enemies (v. 12). Edom should have been allies with Israel and Judah, but instead became aggressors and enemies. This may be connected historically to events in 2 Kings 8:16-24; 2 Chronicles 21:1-20.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Obadiah.

Lesson Twelve: Obadiah – The Judgment of Edom

Obadiah: Edom’s Fall and Judah’s Rise

I. Judgment of Edom (1:1-14)

II. Israel’s possession of Edom (1:15-21)

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

Amos: Yahweh roars against Israel

Obadiah’s name means “Worshiper or Servant of Yahweh.”

Obadiah prophesied in Judah against Edom in about 848-841 BC, and was the earliest of the writing prophets. Edom was the descendents of Esau, the son of Isaac.

I. Who was Edom?

Is. 21; 34; Jer. 9; 25; 27; 49; Ezek. 25; 35-36; Joel 3; Amos 1; 9; Mal.1

25:20-34; 27:30f; Gen. 23-33; Num. 20:14–21; 21:4; Judg. 11:17–18; Deut. 23:7-9; Num. 24:18

II. The Judgment of Edom vv. 1-14

A. The Pride of Edom vv. 3-9

Jer. 49:7-22

B. The Sins of Edom vv. 10-14

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Obadiah.

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Obadiah prophesied in Judah against Edom in about 848-841 BC, and was the earliest of the writing prophets. Edom was the descendents of Esau, the son of Isaac.

Why was Edom to be judged by Yahweh? [Because of the lack of brotherly kindness Edom showed when Judah was attacked by other nations (vv. 10-12). Instead of helping Judah, Edom gloated over the calamity of Judah, and refused to give aid when Judah was plundered. In fact, Edom joined in with the attackers to take the possessions of Judah (v. 13). Edom stood at the crossroads to kill the refugees that were trying to escape from their attackers (vv. 10-11, 14).]

The first part of Obadiah describes the pride of Edom (vv. 3-4), thinking that they could not be attacked or defeated because of their security in the mountains of Seir, especially in Petra (which was protected by a narrow canyon that would make attack from foreigners very difficult). Although they thought themselves safe, God would bring them down from their high fortress and destroy them. Although they thought their possessions were safely kept in their mountain, God would search out and take them (vv. 5-6). Edom thought that they had secure alliances with other nations that would keep them safe, God says that Edom would be betrayed by those whom Edom thought they were at peace with (v. 7). Yahweh says that on His day, the men wisdom and understanding, the mighty men, indeed everyone from Edom would be destroyed in a slaughter (vv. 8-9).

I. The Day of the Lord for Edom vv. 15-16

In the final section of Obadiah we see the coming of “the day of the Lord” (v. 15). As we have said before, the Day of Yahweh is a day of both judgment against God’s enemies (either the wicked among God’s people or the wicked nations

around), and a day of salvation for the righteous. For all people, the Day of Yahweh should be a time of repentance and fearing the Lord to do His will. Obadiah 15 says that the day of the Lord is directed against the nations. Edom and the nations would be punished in the same manner for what they had done against God's people. This judgment is described in terms of Edom being made to drink the cup of God's wrath (v. 16). This same prophetic figure is used by other prophets to describe the judgment of God (cf. Ps. 75:8-9; Jer. 25:15-16, 27-29; 49:12). This theme of the cup of God's wrath is continued in the New Testament (cf. Matt. 20:22; 26:39, 42; Mk. 10:38-39; 14:35-36; Lk. 22:42; Jn. 18:11; Rev. 14:10). Jesus took upon Himself the cup of God's wrath for us. It was a day of the Lord that brought upon Jesus the judgment for our sin, providing for us salvation and life.

II. The House of Jacob over the House of Esau vv. 17-21

Obadiah continues by showing that the Day of Yahweh is a day within history, after which history will continue for God's people. The future of Israel (i.e. Jacob) is compared with the future of Edom. There is a fivefold contrast between these two "houses." The house of Jacob would burn the house of Esau as stubble and there will be no survivor for Esau (vv. 17-18). The future of Edom is completely dark. Yahweh has spoken – Edom's dooms is declared and will certainly come to pass as God works out His plan in the future.

In vv. 19-21 we see that the future for Israel and Judah is one of promise and victory over her enemies. This victory is seen by the declarations that Israelites from various regions in the future would take possession of neighboring lands. Israel and Judah would not only possess their own lands, but also the lands of the Philistines and Edom. V. 21 says that saviors will come to Mt. Zion. In the Day of Yahweh, God will cause those who come in judgment against Edom to be at the same time saviors for His people. The Day of the Lord is both a time in history that judges but also saves. The book ends (v. 21) with the declaration that "the kingdom shall be the Lord's." God demonstrates His sovereign rule over the world by the days of His judgment and salvation in the world.

III. Edom/Idumaea in the New Testament

As we learned last week, the Edomites were conquered by the Assyrians and the Babylonians, just as Israel and Judah were. This is the first fulfillment of the prophecy of Obadiah. Later, they were conquered by the Arabs (312 BC), and came to live in Judah and became known as the Idumaeen people (notice the similarity of the sound of the Edom and Idumaeen). In the period between the end of the writing of the Old Testament and the coming of Jesus there were a group of Jews, the Maccabees, that were revolutionaries against the Greeks who had

invaded the Promised Land. These revolutionaries were not good men, but were important in the history of Israel. Judas Maccabaeus subdued the Edomites/Idumaeans (1 Maccabees 5:65), and in 125 BC John Hyrcanus compelled the Idumaeans to be circumcised because they were children of Abraham and incorporated into the Jewish people. The Idumaeans were despised by the Jews because of the long history of struggle between them.

Julius Caesar appointed Antipater, an Idumaeen, as the governor of Judah in 47 BC, which made the Jews hate both Antipater and the Romans because they were being ruled by an Idumaeen. The son of Antipater, Herod the Great, was made King of Judea by the Romans in 37 BC. Herod was a violent and murderous man, and was hated by the Jews, not only because of the wicked things he did to the Jewish people, but because he was an Idumaeen imposed upon them by the Romans. It was Herod the Great that sought to have Jesus killed when he slaughtered the children in Bethlehem (Matt. 2:1-19). There were a series of “Herods” that are written about in the New Testament. Herod Antipas was the son of Herod the Great, and ruled the northern area of Palestine (Lk. 3:1), and was the Herod that John the Baptist preached against. Herod Antipas is also the Herod that Jesus was sent to by Pilate because Pilate heard that Jesus had come from the region Herod ruled. The grandson of Herod the Great was Herod Agrippa I, and eventually replaced his uncle, Herod Antipas, to become king of the Jews. Herod Agrippa persecuted the church and killed James the apostle (Acts 12). In his pride and wickedness, Herod Agrippa died a sudden and violent death (eaten by worms) by the judgment of God (Acts 12:20-24). His son, Herod Agrippa II was eventually to become a ruler as well, and eventually the apostle Paul was brought before him to testify about Jesus (Acts 26:24-32). After this time, nothing is written about the Edomites/Idumaeans in the New Testament. At the time just before the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD, the Idumaeans revolted against the Romans and were completely destroyed from the pages of history.

With the coming of Christ, the true King of the world, we see the final fulfillment of the judgments of God against the Edomites/Idumaeans, which Obadiah prophesied. The Herods fought against Christ and the apostles, only to be destroyed as God said they would be. Herod the Great and Herod Antipas persecuted Jesus. But by His death, Jesus was made the King of kings. The apostles followed Jesus in the book of Acts to be persecuted by the Herods, but their testimony caused the Church to grow in the world. The Herodians were judged by God, and as Obadiah concludes, “The Kingdom shall be the Lord’s.”

Lessons from Obadiah:

- Christians should be mindful of the problems of other brothers in the Lord and not turn a blind eye to their struggles, like the Edomites did. We need to be involved with the problems of others.
- It may appear to people that they are safe and secure in their wickedness and sin, but God can and often does judge those who seem most secure against disaster. Pride is a sin that makes one feel as if he is beyond the judgments of God, but God will oppose such pride with his righteous judgments in time.
- The judgments of God often in the Bible take a long time to manifest themselves in history. But God justice judgments will happen according to Him wise providence. We do not know why God waited several hundred years to finally destroy Edom, but we do know that it did happen at the best possible time in the best possible way.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Jonah.

Lesson Thirteen: Obadiah – The Judgment of Edom

Obadiah: Edom’s Fall and Judah’s Rise

- I. Judgment of Edom (1:1-14)
- II. Israel’s possession of Edom (1:15-21)

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

Amos: Yahweh roars against Israel

Obadiah’s name means “Worshiper or Servant of Yahweh.”

Obadiah prophesied in Judah against Edom in about 848-841 BC, and was the earliest of the writing prophets. Edom was the descendents of Esau, the son of Isaac.

I. The Day of the Lord for Edom vv. 15-16

II. The House of Jacob over the House of Esau vv. 17-21

III. Edom/Idumaea in the New Testament

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Jonah.

Lesson Fourteen: Jonah – Jonah’s 1st Commission

Jonah: Yahweh – Savior of the Nations

- A. Jonah’s 1st commission (1:1-3)
 - B. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16)
 - C. Jonah’s grateful prayer (1:17-2:10)
 - A’ Jonah’s 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3)
 - B’ Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10)
 - C’ Jonah’s resentful prayer (4:1-4)
- CLIMAX: Yahweh’s lesson for Jonah (4:5-11)

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism**

❖ **Review**

Briefly review the outlines for the **First Six Books of the Twelve** – Crisis is coming. Focus on the sins of both Israel and Judah.

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

Amos: Yahweh roars against Israel

Obadiah: Edom’s Fall and Judah’s Rise

I. The Historical Context of Jonah

Today we begin our studies in the 5th book of the *Book of the Twelve*, Jonah. The story of Jonah and the great fish is one of the best known stories of the Bible. What is not often taught is the whole book of Jonah in its historical context. To fully understand what God is doing in Jonah, we need to understand the teaching of the Bible (i.e. theology) from Genesis to Jonah.

At the center of the Garden of Eden were two sacramental trees (representing to man the importance of worshipping God, having fellowship with and receiving life from Him). Also at the center of Eden was Adam, the first son of God, who received communications from God, who passed them on to his wife. No sacrifice was needed because sin had not entered the world. Man was to follow the four rivers that flowed out of Eden in the world and develop godly civilizations (cities and nations), kingdom of God on earth. With the entrance of sin came the desire of men to develop a kingdom apart from God. This is first seen in the city building works of Cain, who “went out of the presence of the Lord” (Gen. 4:16-17), who built Enoch. The development of humanistic cities eventually resulted in the destruction of the world in the flood, when God cast men from His presence in the world. After the flood, once again we learn that sinful men sought to build civilizations apart from God. The next great city builder was Nimrod, who built not only Babel (later to become Babylon), but also Nineveh. Both Cain’s city (Enoch)

and Nimrod's cities (Babel and Nineveh) are the first cities after judgments by God (Gen. 10:8-11). But God was not content to allow men to develop their rebellion to the point that it had before the fall. He confused their languages/religions and spread them out in the world.

God raised up new Adams in the course of history to develop the kingdom of God to save the world. Abraham was God's covenant man that would become the father of all those who trust in God. What were the three promises made to Abraham? [Yahweh promised Abraham that he would be blessed with 1) the land of Palestine, 2) that Abraham's name would be great and would become a great nation, 3) all the nations of the world would be blessed through him.] To be a blessing to the nations is part of the mission of God's people.

Eventually Israel was formed into a nation. Having been saved by God's grace from slavery in Egypt, God made covenant with His people at Sinai, giving them His law and the Tabernacle. As the Bride of God, Israel was commanded to be faithful to her Husband Yahweh. As we have seen, throughout the Old Testament, unfaithfulness to Yahweh is often called harlotry (e.g. Hosea; Is. 1:21; Ezek. 16 & 23). Just before the people went into the land of promise, Moses sang a song about the future of Israel in Deuteronomy 32. [Read vv. 15-21]. In these verses we see that the unfaithfulness of Israel by worshipping foolish idols made God jealous as a husband is for his wife. Because of His jealousy for Israel, He would provoke/make Israel jealous by having a relationship with another nation (a foolish nation, v. 21). This is to be an act of mercy to Israel to bring her back to her true husband. Once Israel sees how the Lord has blessed the Gentiles, she may be stirred up to return to Yahweh [see Leithart, pp. 181-182].

Israel was always supposed to be faithful to Yahweh, and to preach to the nations, bringing them into the kingdom of God. Instead, Israel had been influenced by the nations around her to worship false gods and to play the harlot with them. Now Yahweh used His prophet Jonah to preach repentance to the ancient rebellious city of Nineveh to stir up jealousy in His bride, Israel. The wonderful thing about the story is that Nineveh, the capital city of Assyria, repented and submitted to Yahweh. The strange thing about the story is the reaction of Jonah, who portrays himself as opposing the plan of God throughout the book. Jonah is the villain of the story that he tells. The reason he depicts himself this way is because he represents Israel throughout the book. Jonah should have been eager to see the nations repent and become believers in Yahweh, just as Israel should have been ministering to the nations. Just as Jonah was "asleep on the job" on board a ship full of pagans, so too, Israel was "asleep on the job" by not serving to the nations. The reason that she failed to preach to the nations about Yahweh is because Israel had turned from Him to the false gods of the nations. She had compromised her

witness. By turning His saving intentions to Nineveh, Yahweh was provoking Israel to jealousy in hopes of having Israel repent. Throughout the story, Jonah is a picture of Israel.

Jonah (whose name means, “Dove”) was written about 782-753 BC, during a time when Israel and Judah were fairly prosperous (just before Hosea and Amos). Jonah 1:1 identifies Jonah as the prophet that preached in the Northern Kingdom during the reign of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25) who predicted victories over Syria (not Assyria). Because Jonah was expecting Israel to be victorious over Syria, he probably also expected that God would protect Israel from the growing threat of Assyria. For Yahweh to command Jonah to preach repentance to Assyria probably made Jonah feel disloyal to his own nation. But since God intends to use the Church as the means of saving the nations, we must never put our own national pride and loyalty before the mission that God has given to us. Turn now to Jonah 1.

II. The 1st Commission of Jonah – Jonah and the pagan sailors

If you look at the outline on the top of your handout you will see that the book is structured by the two commissions (sendings) of Jonah to preach to Nineveh. These are two matching stories about Jonah and the pagans – sailors and the Ninevites.

A. Jonah’s 1st commission (1:1-3)

In Jonah 1:1-2 Yahweh commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it because of their sins. Jonah knows that the Lord is “gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm” (4:2). He knows that if Yahweh has compassion on Assyria, Israel is in bigger trouble if she does not repent. Jonah loves Israel, in spite of her sins, and does not want to help the enemy of his people. He knows that Yahweh will be merciful, and this makes him angry and afraid. Jonah is focused more on politics than on what God is doing in history in the world.

Jonah’s response was to flee from the presence of the Lord (1:3), which is symbolized in the text by going “downhill” from God. In vv. 3-5 we see Jonah going “down.” He went down to Joppa to catch the boat (v. 3), went down into the boat (v. 3), and then he went down below in the boat and fell asleep (v. 5). Eventually, he was thrown down into the sea (1:5; 2:2). Jonah was fleeing from the presence of Yahweh because the Old Testament prophets are pictured as “standing before the Lord” as members of His counsel (1 Kings 17:1; Is. 6:1ff). Jonah was resigning as a prophet because he did not want to help the Assyrians. But Yahweh did not accept his resignation, and made sure that he went to Nineveh.

B. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16)

In fleeing from Yahweh, Jonah went to Joppa (a seaport on the Mediterranean Sea in Philistine territory to the west of Jerusalem) to go the Tarshish (an unidentified city, possibly in Spain). Nineveh is 500 miles to the east of Palestine (see map handout previously given); thus, Jonah is fleeing in the opposite direction of where God send him. Jonah cannot escape from Yahweh who sent a great wind to stop him (1:7), and a great fish to pick him up in what would be a watery grave (1:17). The storm was so great that the pagan sailors were terrified and every man cried out to his god (which are worthless and are not able to help them), except for Jonah who was sound asleep in the bottom of the boat (v. 5). Jonah was awakened by the pagan sailors to pray for them. When they learned that Jonah had fled from Yahweh they were “exceedingly afraid (vv. 6-13). After they threw Jonah into the sea, the seas became calm and the sailors “feared Yahweh exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice and took vows” (vv. 14-16). They are no longer serving their own gods, but have turned to Yahweh in faith.

The conversion of the pagan sailors is parallel to what happens later with the Ninevites. After the judgment of God comes to them by the prophet, the sailors (1:5-16) and the Ninevites (3:1-10) respond to the warnings of God, cry out to Him, and the leader (captain and King) led the people in faith to hope that God may show mercy and relent. With both the sailors and Nineveh, God shows them mercy and does not destroy them.

C. Jonah’s grateful prayer (1:17-2:10)

In his dealings with the pagan sailors, Jonah gets a picture of what God is going to do in Nineveh. After he is thrown into the sea, 1:17 tells us that Yahweh had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah, where he stayed three days and three nights. While there in the belly of the fish, Jonah prayed to Yahweh in 2:1-10. Although at first the prayer looks like a humble submission to Yahweh, it is really a proud, mean-spirited prayer. He prays about God deliverance of him from his distress. But at the end of the prayer he boasts that “Those who serve worthless idols forsake the possibility of mercy from Yahweh. BUT I will sacrifice and pay vows” (vv. 8-9). While the rebellious prophet is making these self-righteous boasts and promises from the belly of the fish, the praiseworthy sailors in the boat the ones who have been blessed with salvation and are in faith offering sacrifice and making vows to the Lord (1:16). In the way Jonah wrote the story, he demonstrates how hypocritical he was and how poor his attitude was. The ending of the prayer demonstrates that Jonah now recognized that Yahweh is salvation for those who turn from worthless idols and is ready to obey the Lord and preach repentance to Nineveh. In 2:10 Yahweh spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Lessons from this story:

- Yahweh's power extends throughout the earth, and all people are accountable to Him.
- Yahweh wants all men and nations to serve him. Sinners, when confronted with Yahweh's coming judgment, should respond with repentance.
- Yahweh will relent from His judgments and show mercy to those who turn to Him in faith.
- We should never allow our national loyalties or our political concerns be more important to us than God's plan of saving the nations. Our first concern must be for the kingdom of God.
- Whereas God is said to provoke His children, Israel, to move them with anger as a means of correcting them, we are not to do so with our own children (Eph. 6:4; Col. 3:21 – The same Greek word used only in these two passage in the NT is also used in the LXX of Deut. 32:21). Rather, we are to bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Jonah.

Lesson Fourteen: Jonah – Jonah’s 1st Commission

Jonah: Yahweh – Savior of the Nations

- A. Jonah’s 1st commission (1:1-3)
 - B. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16)
 - C. Jonah’s grateful prayer (1:17-2:10)
- A’ Jonah’s 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3)
 - B’ Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10)
 - C’ Jonah’s resentful prayer (4:1-4)
 - CLIMAX: Yahweh’s lesson for Jonah (4:5-11)

I. The Historical Context of Jonah

Cain – Enoch (Gen. 4:16-17); Nimrod – Babel & Nineveh (Gen. 10:8-11)

Deuteronomy 32:15-21

Jonah’s name means “Dove,” and wrote about 782-753 BC. He was a prophet in the Northern Kingdom during the reign of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:25) predicting victories over Syria (not Assyria).

II. The 1st Commission of Jonah – Jonah and the pagan sailors

A. Jonah’s 1st commission (1:1-3)

B. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16)

C. Jonah’s grateful prayer (1:17-2:10)

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Jonah.

Lesson Fifteen: Jonah – Jonah’s 2nd Commission

Jonah: Yahweh – Savior of the Nations

- A. Jonah’s 1st commission (1:1-3)
 - B. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16)
 - C. Jonah’s grateful prayer (1:17-2:10)
 - A’ Jonah’s 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3)
 - B’ Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10)
 - C’ Jonah’s resentful prayer (4:1-4)
- CLIMAX: Yahweh’s lesson for Jonah (4:5-11)

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism**

❖ **Review**

Briefly review the outlines for the **First Six Books of the Twelve** – Crisis is coming. Focus on the sins of both Israel and Judah.

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

Amos: Yahweh roars against Israel

Obadiah: Edom’s Fall and Judah’s Rise

All of the [Minor] Prophets were written to Israel and Judah because of their sins against Yahweh. 2 Kings 17:13 says:

Yahweh testified against Israel and against Judah, by all of His prophets, namely, every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways, and keep My commandments and My statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by My servants the prophets.”

2 Kings 17:15 goes on to say that His people “went after the nations who were all around them,” and began to be like them by worshipping false gods and living like they did. Instead of being faithful to Yahweh and witnessing to the nations (being a blessing to the nations (Gen. 12:3), His people became like the nations. Although Jonah doesn’t even refer to Israel or Judah, he wrote the book to warn God’s people that Yahweh is jealous and that they should repent and return to Him, just as the pagans in the story did. It could be argued that the nations (Assyria) were under the threat of judgment because Israel was unfaithful to Yahweh by not witnessing to the nations about the mercy and justice of God in the world.

The book of Jonah is the story of Yahweh’s salvation of the nations (pictured in the deliverance of the pagan sailors and Nineveh from the judgment of God). Whereas Israel refused to hear the many warnings of the prophets and repent, the sailors converted when they heard just a few words from a single prophet. Israel was more hard-hearted than the pagans were.

Jonah himself was a picture of Israel, being more politically minded than eager to see all men saved by Yahweh. He was, like Israel, hypocritical and judgmental. But God was merciful to Jonah and rescued him from death by being swallowed by the big fish and raising him up again to dry land. This is a picture of Yahweh's promise to Israel if they would repent, as Jonah did (Jonah 2:2-9). Not only so, the conversion of the sailor shows what Yahweh can and will do through Israel if she would repent. If a reluctant, fleeing prophet can convert a boatload of pagan sailors (and the city of Nineveh), what could Israel do if she would serve the Lord faithfully in the world? [See Leithart, pp. 179-186]

As you can see from the outline on the handout, Jonah is structured by the telling of two matching stories involving Jonah and the pagans. Both stories are followed by Jonah's two prayers.

A' Jonah's 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3)

The first section of the book ends with Jonah's repentance and commitment to serve Yahweh, and Yahweh's response by resurrecting Jonah back onto dry land. Read Jonah 3:1-3. Here Yahweh repeats His commission of Jonah to go to Nineveh to preach to "that great city" (cf. 1:2; 3:2-3; 4:11). Nineveh was great because of its size and because it was the capital of the Assyrian empire. The phrase "great city" is important in biblical prophecy. Later, Jeremiah used it to refer to the coming judgment on Jerusalem (Jer. 22:8). Jerusalem, "the great city," would be destroyed because of her sins. The nations would see what God had done to it and ask why Yahweh had done so. It is also used 7 times in the book of Revelation to refer to the coming judgment on Jerusalem (also symbolically referred to as Babylon) in 70 AD. Cities/nations in rebellion against God seem powerful and safe from harm. But the Almighty God rules all cities by His sovereign power and justice.

This time, instead of fleeing from the presence of God (as in 1:3), 3:3 says that "Jonah arose and went to Nineveh" in obedience to the word of the Lord.

B' Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10)

Jonah 3:3 goes on to say that Nineveh is "an exceedingly great city, a three day journey in extent." Archaeologists have found the ancient city and determined that the circumference of the wall is 7 ½ miles and a journey of 1 ½ miles would take one to the center of the city. Since it would not take three days to walk around the city, we are not sure precisely what this verse means. V. 4 tells us that Jonah went into the city on the first day's walk. What appears to be the case is that Jonah has been sent as a representative of God, a covenant lawyer, to do an inspection of Nineveh. As 1:2 tells us, the wickedness of the city has come up before Yahweh, and he is ready to judge it. Now, Jonah, having seen the wickedness is ready to

“cry out” against it. With just eight words, Jonah proclaimed the coming judgment of God. “Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown.” He doesn’t declare the possibility of God relenting from His judgments. He does not plead with them to repent. He doesn’t reason with them, trying to get them to see their wickedness and repent. He merely tells them what God had told him to say. But Jonah knew that Yahweh is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm (4:2). In his first prayer while in the belly of the fish Jonah spoke of those who forsake their own means of obtaining mercy because they serve worthless idols (2:8).

The surprising thing in the story is that “the people of Nineveh *believed God*” (3:5). With only 8 words of warning, the people repented in sackcloth and ashes (3:5-6), which is a symbol of being dead/destroyed. They symbolically killed themselves by putting sin to death. It was not just a few people that repented. Rather, it was everyone from the least to the greatest. The King of Assyria (like the pagan sea captain in 1:6) arose from his throne and laid aside his robe (throne and robe being symbols of authority) and clothed himself with humility (symbolized by sackcloth and ashes). He was submitting the Assyrian Empire to the authority of Yahweh. He believed God’s word and responded in humility and faith. In 3:7-9 we learn that he commanded everyone in the city to fast in sackcloth (including the animals) and to “cry mightily to God; yes, let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?” Clearly this was a full and true repentance. It was not just a response of fear of being destroyed, but a turning to the God of Israel. Just as the sailors had cried out to God for mercy, so too, Nineveh cried out. Like the pagan sea captain led the sailors to hope that God may show mercy, the pagan King of Nineveh let the people in repentance. As God spared the sailors and made the raging sea calm (1:16), now the Lord spared the Ninevites and did not destroy them.

God, who is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, One who relents from doing harm (4:2), saw their works and that they had turned from their evil way (3:10). God relented from the disaster He declared against them, and did not do it. Just as the sailors had cried out to God for mercy, so too, Nineveh cried out. Like the pagan sea captain led the sailors to hope that God may show mercy, the pagan King of Nineveh let the people in repentance. As God spared the sailors and made the raging sea calm (1:16), now the Lord spared the Ninevites and did not destroy them.

C' Jonah's resentful prayer (4:1-4)

As we saw last week, Jonah's first prayer is a mixture of thankfulness and submission to Yahweh on the one hand, and a proud, mean spirited prayer on the other hand. Jonah prayed gratefully about God's deliverance from death. But at the end of the prayer he boasts that "Those who serve worthless idols forsake the possibility of mercy from Yahweh. **BUT I** will sacrifice and pay vows" (vv. 8-9). While the rebellious prophet is making these self-righteous boasts and promises from the belly of the fish, the praiseworthy sailors in the boat are the ones who have been blessed with salvation and are in faith offering sacrifice and making vows to the Lord (1:16). The first prayer began and ended by Jonah's praises of Yahweh's kindness to him. After the first prayer Jonah joyfully vowed to serve Yahweh.

Now, in the second prayer, Jonah is clearly angry (4:1-4) that Yahweh has spared many thousands (4:11) of innocent children, as well as people who had sincerely repented. This second prayer begins and ends with Jonah's anger *at Yahweh* for sparing the Ninevites. The second prayer ends with Jonah's desire for Yahweh to take him life. Instead of being joyful about the mercy and lovingkindness of God shown to sinners, Jonah is angry that God would spare the enemies of His people. Jonah is more concerned about politics and national pride than he is about the Kingdom of God.

As we said earlier, the book of Jonah was written for the sake of Israel and Judah. The city became a sign to Israel to repent like the Gentile/pagan city of Nineveh. Jonah (like Israel) didn't learn until later that God's plans for His kingdom often do not work out the way we think they will. Sadly, as we will see in the book of Nahum, the Assyrians later had forsaken their previous repentance and became a bloody city again, and would be judged by Yahweh and destroyed by Babylon. But in the mean time, God was bringing sinners into the kingdom. The message to Israel and Judah was that if they did not repent, as the sailors and Ninevites did, they too would be destroyed.

Lessons from this story:

- By the simple declaration of God's word He can and often does cause sinners to unexpectedly turn to Himself.
- Yahweh wants all men and nations to serve him. Sinners, when confronted with Yahweh's coming judgment, should respond with repentance.
- Yahweh will relent from His judgments and show mercy to those who turn to Him in faith.
- We should never allow our national loyalties or our political concerns be more important to us than God's plan of saving the nations. Our first concern must be for the kingdom of God.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Jonah **and** the following New Testament verses:
Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Lk. 11:29-32

Lesson Fifteen: Jonah – Jonah’s 2nd Commission

Jonah: Yahweh – Savior of the Nations

- A. Jonah’s 1st commission (1:1-3)
 - B. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16)
 - C. Jonah’s grateful prayer (1:17-2:10)
- A’ Jonah’s 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3)
 - B’ Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10)
 - C’ Jonah’s resentful prayer (4:1-4)
 - CLIMAX: Yahweh’s lesson for Jonah (4:5-11)

A’ Jonah’s 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3)

B’ Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10)

C’ Jonah’s resentful prayer (4:1-4)

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Jonah **and** the following New Testament verses:
Matt. 12:39-41; 16:4; Lk. 11:29-32

Lesson Sixteen: The Message of Jonah in History

Jonah: Yahweh – Savior of the Nations

- A. Jonah's 1st commission (1:1-3)
 - A. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16)
 - B. Jonah's grateful prayer (1:17-2:10)
 - A' Jonah's 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3)
 - B' Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10)
 - C' Jonah's resentful prayer (4:1-4)
- CLIMAX: Yahweh's lesson for Jonah (4:5-11)

❖ **Westminster Shorter Catechism**

❖ **Review**

Briefly review the outlines for the **First Six Books of the Twelve** – Crisis is coming. Focus on the sins of both Israel and Judah.

- Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel**
- Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah**
- Amos: Yahweh roars against Israel**
- Obadiah: Edom's Fall and Judah's Rise**

As you can see from the outline on the handout, the book of Jonah is structured to make clear the similarities between the two stories of Jonah's encounters with the pagan sailors and Ninevites. By looking at the structure of the book we can see both the similarities and differences between the stories. In A. & A' Jonah was sent by Yahweh to go to Nineveh. In the first story he fled from the presence of the Lord, but in the second he obeyed and went to the great city. In B. & B' we see how God was judging the pagans. In the first story it was because of Jonah that the pagans were threatened with judgment, leaving us to believe that it was because of Israel not properly witnessing to the nations that Nineveh was threatened with judgment.

<p>A. Jonah's 1st commission (1:1-3) Arise, go to Nineveh, great city-Jonah arose to flee</p> <p>B. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16) Yahweh threatens judgment-pagan ship Sailors respond immediately with conviction Sailors cry out The captain involved-God may show mercy Yahweh spares the humble pagans on ship</p> <p>C. Jonah's grateful prayer (1:17-2:10) Jonah prayed to Yahweh Jonah boasts about Yahweh's love That pagans forsake Jonah grateful that his life & soul are saved</p>	<p>A' Jonah's 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3) Arise, go to Nineveh, great city-Jonah arose and went</p> <p>B' Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10) Yahweh threatens judgment-pagan city Sailor respond immediately with conviction Ninevites cry out The king involved-God may show mercy Yahweh spares the humble pagans of the city</p> <p>C' Jonah's resentful prayer (4:1-4) Jonah prayed to Yahweh Jonah complains about Yahweh's love Because pagans spared Jonah wishes that his life & soul be taken</p>
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We also see that when Jonah faithfully witnessed the pagans repented and served the Lord. In C. & C' we are given the prayers of Jonah. In the first prayer Jonah was grateful for his deliverance from death, but at the same time, demonstrated a sinful pride that hypocritically made himself better than the now converted sailors, who were faithfully sacrificing to the Lord and paying vows to Him. Clearly, he felt the same way following the conversion of Nineveh, who did not forsake the mercy of Yahweh (1:8). He was angry with Yahweh for being a God of grace, mercy and lovingkindness to non-Israelite sinners. He did not learn the lesson of the first story. In his bitter resentful prayer, he not only expressed his displeasure and anger at the Lord, but also said that he wished that God would take his life. If the Assyrians were not going to be judged by Yahweh, death would be better than living.

I. The Climax of Jonah: Yahweh's Lesson for Jonah (4:5-11)

The setting (v. 5)

In the final section of the book (4:5-11) see that that Jonah went out of the great city (now great in faith) and sat down to pout and see what would happen. He made himself some kind of shelter and sat there to see what God would do with the city. Notice on your handout that this section alternates between what God says and does and Jonah's responses.

A. Yahweh prepared a plant for Jonah (v. 6a)

Just as Yahweh had "prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah" (1:17), so now, Yahweh "prepared a plant and made it come up over Jonah" to shade and deliver him from his misery (4:6). In both cases, Jonah was removed from the pagans, and God protected him. We do not know what kind of plant this was, but clearly it is meant to remind of God's deliverance of Jonah from harm. Remember that Jonah is a picture of Israel and Judah. God had been taking care of His people and sheltering them from harm since He brought them out of Egypt. Now, by saving the Ninevites, God was taking care of His people again.

B. Jonah's response: He rejoices (v. 6b)

Jonah's response is much like his first prayer: Literally in the Hebrew, he rejoiced with great joy. Somehow his own shelter that he made was not as good as the shade he received by the plant God caused to grow for him.

A' Yahweh destroyed the plant: Caused hot wind to blow on Jonah (vv. 7-8a)

Just as Yahweh had "sent out a great wind on the sea, and there was mighty tempest" (1:4), so now, Yahweh prepared a worm to kill the plant and prepared a strong east wind that blew in the heat of the sun onto Jonah, making him miserable

(vv. 7-8a). Assyria was potentially a hot judgment from the east as God may remove His protection of His people.

B’ Jonah’s response: He is angry (v. 8b)

Again, Jonah became angry with Yahweh. Just as he wished to die after God spared the Ninevites, so now, he wished to die because of the heat.

A’ Yahweh questioned Jonah: Should you feel badly about this plant? (v. 9a)

In v. 9, Yahweh begins to help Jonah to understand what He is trying to teach Jonah. “Is it right for you to be angry about the plant?” Yahweh implies that Jonah should not be angry. It is merely what God is doing in his life. Jonah should put his trust in Yahweh who does all things well. Not everything that God is doing was about Jonah or Israel. Yahweh is building His kingdom, which includes the salvation of the nations.

B’ Jonah’s response: Yes, I should feel badly enough to die (v. 9b)

Jonah responded by saying that it was right for him to be angry, even angry enough to die. Jonah thought himself justified at being angry with the Lord, simply because Yahweh was not doing what Jonah thought was right. Jonah was saying that he knew better than Yahweh.

C’ Climax: Yahweh’s lesson (vv. 10-11)

In the climax of the book, Yahweh makes clear to Jonah what He is doing in history. The story about the plant illustrates that God is doing something in history that Jonah does not understand and does not control. Yahweh said, in effect, you were happy because the plant grew and helped you. Although you had built a shelter, it did not shade or deliver you as well as the plant I made to grow for you. You did nothing to make the plant grow. You were unhappy that it died because it no longer met your needs, as you wanted it to. It came up in a night, and perished in a night. You should have pitied the poor plant simply because it died, not just because it did not continue to shade you.

Yahweh directly applied the lesson to Jonah and Nineveh in v. 11. Yahweh asked Jonah, “Should I not have pity on Nineveh, the great city, in which are more than 120,000 persons who cannot discern between their right hand and their left [good and evil]? The Ninevites had not been taught the law of God and did not know how to discern between good and evil because Israel and Judah had not faithfully ministered to them. By sending Jonah to them, God had taught the pagans how to discern the good of Yahweh and the evil of their sins (cf. 3:8-9). Just as Yahweh pitied the Ninevites, so too, Israel should pity the nations around her. By witnessing to the nations, Israel would find herself shaded and preserved by the

nations, just as Jonah was shaded and preserved by the plant (4:6). The lesson of the book of Jonah is that Israel and Judah needed to be a witness to the nations, converting them to faith in Yahweh, and in so doing would be shaded and protected by Yahweh.

II. The Sign of Jonah & the coming of the One greater than Jonah

Although there is no specific prophecy in the book of Jonah concerning the coming of the Messiah, Jesus used Jonah as a way of calling upon Israel of His day to repentance. Turn now to Matthew 12. In vv. 33-37, speaking to the leaders of the Jews, Jesus said that a good tree bears good fruit; for a tree is known by its fruit. Men are judged by God by the words they speak, which is the fruit that comes out of their hearts. In vv. 38-42 the Jewish leaders asked Jesus for a sign. Jesus said that only an evil and adulterous generation asks for a sign, and no sign would be given except the sign of Jonah. 3 days and nights Jonah was in the belly of the great fish, so the Son of man [Jesus] would be buried for 3 days and nights. When the people of that generation here that Jesus was buried, and then raised up after three days, as Jonah was, it would be a sign to them that they should repent from their sins and trust in Jesus for salvation. Those who refused to believe in Jesus would be condemned by the Ninevites because they repented when they heard the message of Jonah, the reluctant prophet. But now, Jesus, the One greater than Jonah had come, and they still forsook their own mercy (Jonah 1:8). Those who turned from their sins to faith in Jesus would be saved, like the pagan sailors and the Ninevites were. But those who rejected the words of Jesus would suffer judgment, even condemnation from the Ninevites who did repent. The same message is also recorded in 16:4; Lk. 11:29-32.

Lessons from this story:

- Yahweh's power extends throughout the earth, and all people are accountable to Him.
- Yahweh wants all men and nations to serve him. Sinners, when confronted with Yahweh's coming judgment, should respond with repentance and faith in Jesus.
- Yahweh will relent from His judgments and show mercy to those who turn to Him in faith.
- We should never allow our national loyalties or our political concerns be more important to us than God's plan of saving the nations. Our first concern must be for the kingdom of God.
- The mercy of God to sinners stands against those who forsake His mercies (1:8; cf. Matt. 12:39; 16:4; Lk. 11:29-32).

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Micah.

Lesson Sixteen: The Message of Jonah in History

Jonah: Yahweh – Savior of the Nations

<p>A. Jonah's 1st commission (1:1-3) Arise, go to Nineveh, great city-Jonah arose to flee</p> <p>B. Jonah and pagan sailors (1:4-16) Yahweh threatens judgment-pagan ship Sailors respond immediately with conviction Sailors cry out The captain involved-God may show mercy Yahweh spares the humble pagans on ship</p> <p>C. Jonah's grateful prayer (1:17-2:10) Jonah prayed to Yahweh Jonah boasts about Yahweh's love That pagans forsake Jonah grateful that his life & soul are saved</p>	<p>A' Jonah's 2nd commission to Nineveh (3:1-3) Arise, go to Nineveh, great city-Jonah arose and went</p> <p>B' Jonah and the pagan Ninevites (3:3-10) Yahweh threatens judgment-pagan city Sailor respond immediately with conviction Ninevites cry out The king involved-God may show mercy Yahweh spares the humble pagans of the city</p> <p>C' Jonah's resentful prayer (4:1-4) Jonah prayed to Yahweh Jonah complains about Yahweh's love Because pagans spared Jonah wishes that his life & soul be taken</p>
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I. The Climax of Jonah: Yahweh's Lesson for Jonah (4:5-11)

The setting (v. 5)

A. Yahweh prepared a plant for Jonah (v. 6a)

B. Jonah's response: He rejoices (v. 6b)

A' Yahweh destroyed the plant: Caused hot wind to blow on Jonah (vv. 7-8a)

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B' Jonah's response: Yes, I should feel badly enough to die (v. 9b)

C' Climax: Yahweh's lesson (vv. 10-11)

II. The Sign of Jonah & the coming of the One greater than Jonah

Matt. 12:39; 16:4; Lk. 11:29-32

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Micah.

Lesson Seventeen: Micah – The Coming Judgment on Judah (1-3)

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

Briefly review the outlines for the **First Six Books of the Twelve – Crisis is coming**. Focus on the sins of both Israel and Judah.

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

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Micah: Judgment and Restoration of Judah

- I. Prediction of judgment on the people and leaders of Judah (1-3)
- II. Center: Prediction of restoration (4-5)
- III. Call to repentance of the people and leaders of Judah (6-7)

A. The Coming Defeat and Destruction (1:1-16)

We have learned that there were two main sins committed by God’s people that the prophets spoke against. What were these? [Idolatry and social injustice.] The book of Micah describes in detail the collapse of the society of God’s people in Judah and Israel because of the injustices of the people and the leadership. Micah begins by dealing with the sins of both Israel and Judah, but the focus of the book is Judah. Their sins eventually led to destruction and exile. But in the midst of the message of judgment is the hope of restoration [Teacher: Make note of the outline on the handout.]

Micah was a prophet that lived in the rural countryside of Judah. His name means, “Who is like Yahweh?” (Cf. 7:18). In 1:1 Micah tells us when his ministry was: “Word of the Lord came to Micah in the days of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem” (the capital cities of Israel and Judah). He wrote during the same time as Amos, Hosea (in Israel) and Isaiah (in Judah), at about 750 BC (Amos 1:1; Hos. 1:1; Is. 1:1). [Background reading that should be studied to best understand what is happening in Micah: 2 Kings 15:32-20:21; 2 Chron. 27-32; Jer. 26:18.] During this period, Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria overthrew the Northern Kingdom of Israel and took the people into exile (as Hosea and Amos prophesied). Eight years later, Sennacherib, the next king of Assyria attacked the southern kingdom of Judah, and King Hezekiah of Judah was forced to pay tribute (taxes) to the Assyrians. Hezekiah repented of his sins, and did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, just

as his father David had done (2 Kings 18:3-4), and defeated Sennacherib. More than a hundred years later during the time of Jeremiah, we learn that it was because of the prophetic preaching of Micah that the people repented and Jerusalem was spared from the Assyrians (Jer. 26:18).

1. Yahweh's terrifying and destructive approach (1:2-4)

The prophecy begins with "Hear all you peoples" (cf. 3:1; 6:1). Yahweh called on all the earth to hear what He is about to do in judgment on Israel and Judah. In vv. 2-4 we see that Yahweh is a witness "from His holy temple" against His people. He is not only speaking words of condemnation, Yahweh is "coming out of His place" to execute His judgments. He is described as "coming down to tread on the high places of the earth." At the touch of His foot, the mountains melt under Him, the valleys split like wax before the fire, and His judgment is like a rushing torrent of water rushing down a hill. Hills and mountains often represent the strength of kingdoms in the Bible. We see here that the mountains of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah are coming under the judgment of Yahweh. Although we know that Yahweh used foreign invaders (Assyria and Babylon) to accomplish this, He wanted His people to understand that it was He that was executing this terrible and destructive judgment. He leaves His holy temple to do battle Himself. God sinlessly uses sinners (like Assyria and Babylon) to do His will on the earth (as we will see in Habakkuk).

2. Reason for Yahweh's coming action (1:5)

V. 5 tells us the reason for this terrible (terrifying) approach of Yahweh was the sins of Jacob/Israel in Samaria, and of Judah in Jerusalem. By the specific reference to the capital cities of Israel and Judah, Yahweh is condemning the leaders of these nations. Specifically, the high places are cited as the sin for which the judgment was coming. High places were the worship centers for idolatry in the ancient world.

3. Coming disaster in Samaria (1:6-7)

First of all we see a future prediction of the fall of Samaria (the capital of sinful Israel). This part of the prophecy must have happened early in the ministry of Micah because we know that the city actually fell during the time Micah prophesied. As we have seen in the books of Hosea and Amos, Israel had been unfaithful to her Husband, Yahweh, and played the harlot with other gods. Now Samaria would be destroyed, along with her idols. The reason that Israel went after the gods of the nations was to try to secure peace and prosperity with the nations. Now, the pay she received (peace and prosperity with the nations) will be burned up, and both she and her idols would be destroyed.

4. Coming disaster in Jerusalem (1:8-9)

The judgments against the Northern Kingdom would come also to Judah, even to Jerusalem. The wound inflicted by the Lord on Israel would also include Jerusalem (cf. v. 12). Even as the sin of Israel has come to Jerusalem, so too, the judgment that would befall Israel would come to the Southern Kingdom as well.

5. Coming disaster in ten towns in Micah's region (1:10-15)

What follows this broad announcement of the coming judgment is Micah's mourning over what will happen to several cities outside of Jerusalem. These cities would suffer, in part, because the national leaders were leading the nation into judgment by their idolatry and injustices. Micah, in his mourning over Judah, laments the coming judgment on the cities of Judah in vv. 10-15. In v. 10 Micah provides a quotation of David's words in 2 Samuel 1:19-20 after the defeat of Israel on Mt. Gilboa by the Philistines and deaths of Saul and Jonathan. David said, "Your glory, O Israel, lies slain on your heights, How the mighty have fallen."

What follows is a series of play on words with the names of the cities.

- 10: Beth Ophrah (sounds like "dust") will roll in the dust, as in mourning.
- 11: Shaphir (sounds like "beautiful") will instead be naked and ashamed.
- 11: Zaanah (sounds like "go out") will not be able to go out to face the enemy
- 11: Beth Ezel (means "the nearby city") will be so troubled by the disaster that it will not be able to aid the other cities.
- 12: Maroth (means "bitterness") will desire good, but will only receive bitterness.
- 13: Lachish (famous for chariots and horses) will harness the horses to the chariots to flee, not to fight.
- 14: Moresheth (sounds like "betrothed") will give wedding gifts as she takes on a new and cruel husband, the invader.
- 14: Aczib (sounds like "deceitful/disappointing") will be deceitful to the kings of Israel.
- 15: Mareshah (related to the word "possessor/heir") will be possessed by someone else.
- 15 Adullam (means "refuge") was the place that the leaders of Judah would take refuge during the coming judgment.

6. Call to mourning (1:16)

Ch. 1 ends with a call to mourn for the children because they would be separated from their families during the captivity. Cutting one's hair and being bald was a sign of shame and mourning.

B. Corruption of the people (2:1-13)

In Ch. 2 Micah begins to describe more of the sins that caused Yahweh to judge His people: social injustices. They devised evil plans while in their beds, and get up in the morning to put them into action because they have the power to do so. Specifically, v. 2 says that they forced poor men off their lands so that they can have large estates. Women and children were forced from their homes (v. 9). In the law it was forbidden to sell the land of your inheritance forever, and every fifty years the lands were to be returned to their owners (Lev. 25:10-18, 19-55; 27:16-25). There is no biblical evidence that this law was ever kept in Israel's history, and is one of the specific reasons given in the prophets for the Babylonian captivity (Jer. 34:8, 13-17). Such greed and violence against the poor was also spoken of by Amos (2:6-7; 5:7, 10, 12; 8:4-6). The wealthy were made rich by injustice, deceit and fraud.

In 2:6-11 we see that there were lying prophets in the land. The religious leaders did not condemn the wickedness of the wealthy and corrupt leaders of the nation. Instead, they defended them and denounced Micah and the other righteous prophets. Amaziah oppressed Amos (Amos 7:10-17), and now the prophets of Judah were now oppressing Micah the same way, telling him to go away and to stop his prophecies (2:6-7). These false prophets called into question the word of Yahweh, claiming that it is not of the character of Yahweh to say such things as Micah was. They claimed that Yahweh would not say that He is angry. In vv. 7-8, God answered the false prophets by saying that indeed He does good to the righteous, but they had become an enemy against Him by the way they were treating His people.

Micah 2:12-13 ends with a statement of hope for the people: they would be restored after the exile. Yahweh would gather the remnant of Israel and make them again His flock. The Lord Himself would lead the people back into the land.

C. Corruption of the leaders (3:1-12)

In the final chapter of this section, Micah 3 is the condemnation of corrupt leaders of the nation.

1. Civil leaders (3:1-4)

It is the responsibility of civil (government) leaders to know the law of God and to rule justly over the people. In vv. 1-4 Yahweh calls on the leaders of the people to hear Him because they have ruled unjustly. They hated good and loved evil. When the people cried out for justice to the judges, they only received injustice in court. They used their power to do wickedness and violence against the people.

2. Prophets (3:5-8)

In 3:5-8 we see that the prophets (preachers of that day) were proclaiming peace to the people, saying that all is well. Instead of preaching against the injustices done to the poor, and calling for righteousness in the land, the prophets were saying that everything was fine. Therefore, God would no longer use them to communicate to His people. They would no longer see visions in the night, or be able to see what God would do in the future. God would no longer answer them when they consulted with Him.

3. Civil leaders (3:9-12)

Unlike the false prophets of his day, Micah was full of power by the Spirit of Yahweh to declare the justice and might of God, and to denounce the sins of Israel. He boldly called upon the leaders to hear what he had to say. He accused them directly for their sins:

Heads and rulers of Israel hate and pervert justice, not treating people equally under the law.

They build up Zion (the worship of Yahweh in Jerusalem) in bloodshed, and sinful develop society in Jerusalem by sin.

The judges take bribes to pervert justice.

The priests teach for pay, not because of a love for God and His word. They are greedy from money and teach what people want to hear.

The prophets only say what people want to hear so that they can get paid. They claim to be leaning (trusting) on Yahweh, and say, “Is not Yahweh among us?”

Because of these sins, the Lord said that Jerusalem would be judged and destroyed. Even Zion and the mountain of the temple of the Lord would be destroyed. These wicked leaders were trusting not in Yahweh, but in themselves and their own way of life apart from God and His word.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Micah.

Lesson Seventeen: Micah – The Coming Judgment on Judah (1-3)

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

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- I. Prediction of judgment on the people and leaders of Judah (1-3)
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Micah = “Who is like Yahweh?” (7:18); written about 750 BC

A. The Coming Defeat and Destruction (1:1-16)

Background reading: 2 Kings 15:32-20:21; 2 Chron. 27-32; Jer. 26:18

1. Yahweh's terrifying and destructive approach (1:2-4)
2. Reason for Yahweh's coming action (1:5)
3. Coming disaster in Samaria (1:6-7)
4. Coming disaster in Jerusalem (1:8-9)
5. Coming disaster in ten towns in Micah's region (1:10-15)
6. Call to mourning (1:16)

B. Corruption of the people (2:1-13)

C. Corruption of the leaders (3:1-12)

1. Civil leaders (3:1-4)
2. Prophets (3:5-8)
3. Civil leaders (3:9-12)

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Micah.

Lesson Eighteen: Micah – The Glorious Future Restoration (4-5)

Micah: Judgment and Restoration of Judah

- I. Prediction of judgment on the people and leaders of Judah (1-3)
- II. Center: Prediction of restoration (4-5)
- III. Call to repentance of the people and leaders of Judah (6-7)

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Amos: Yahweh roars against Israel

Obadiah: Edom's Fall and Judah's Rise

Jonah: Yahweh – Savior of the Nations

As we learned last week, Micah wrote in the mid-700's BC against both Israel and Judah, but focused his attention against the Judah and Jerusalem. Because of the sins of idolatry and social injustices, Yahweh would come down out of His place in His holy Temple to judgment His people (1:2-4). It was because of corruption of both the people of Judah and the leaders in Jerusalem that the terrible judgments would come. The corruption of the people took the form of the wealthy trying to take people's land and not return it to them, oppressing the poor by unjust business practices. The corruption of the leaders included false prophecy and persecution of the prophets of God (including Micah), as well as perverting justice and the leaders of the tribes using their power to oppress the poor financially and with violence. For all of these reasons, Israel, and especially Judah, would be judged and exiled from the land.

The central section of the book of Micah shows clearly the most important point that Yahweh wanted to communicate to His people: There is hope for Israel and the world. Micah 3:12 speaks of the terrible judgment to come on Jerusalem, the temple and the surrounding hill (mountains & hill being symbols of rulership and authority) because of the sins of the wicked leaders of the people.

A. Establishment of Yahweh's reign over all the nations (4:1-5)

The Old Testament prophets gave messages to God's people about what would happen in the passing of time, from one period to another. They spoke of the former days and the latter days. The former days (from Sinai through the kingdom period, cf. Zech. 8:11) were passing away. The latter days (the period from the exile to the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70, cf. Is. 2:2; Hos. 3:5; Jer. 23:20;

30:24; 48:47; 49:39; Ezek. 38:16; Dan. 2:28; 10:14) would begin shortly. God's promise to Abraham that the nation that came from him would become a blessing to the nations was something that God would bring about, even if His people were not faithful to witness as they should. As Yahweh brought His judgments on His people, they would be dispersed throughout the nations of the world, and they would be forced to witness and become a blessing to the world. Micah 4:1-5 talks about the result of God sending His people among the nations. This section is almost exactly like Is. 2:2-4, and describes the period of the latter days when Yahweh would return the exiles to the land, and the temple would become the center of the world. All nations would come to Yahweh's house to worship Him and to learn His ways (the law). Yahweh would at that time bring peace between the nations and they would turn their instruments of war into tools for farming and productivity.

The fulfillment of this began with the return of the exiles into the land. Certainly the nations were influenced during the time of exile and some of the Gentile kings were converted to the true religion. But this prophecy was not fulfilled until the coming of Christ and the destruction of the Temple in 70 AD.

B. Good news for the exiles, the remnant (4:6-8)

Following the promise that the nations would be converted and submit themselves to Yahweh, Micah says that there would be blessing for those who return from exile: the remnant. This group of returnees is characterized as the lame and outcast, afflicted by Yahweh. But He would make them a nation again, the kingdom that Yahweh Himself would rule over. They would be taken into exile because they had turned from Him to idols, and rejected His reign over them. But now they would be restored. Historically, when the people returned to the land the Temple was rebuilt and Yahweh was worshipped and obeyed by the people. But it was not until the coming of Jesus that the kingdom was truly established.

C. Rulership (4:9-10)

During the time that God's people were in exile in Babylon they had no king in their midst. They would be like a woman in the pain of labor, waiting for the deliverance from her pain while she is in Babylon. But when she is delivered, Yahweh would save her from her enemies. This happens finally with the coming of Jesus, the Messiah.

D. Israel's present hopeless situation reversed (4:11-:5:1)

In the center of this section we see that God will reverse His judgments against the people. Although many nations rose up against God's people to defile her and put her to shame (both before and after the exile), they are encouraged to let her eye

look upon Zion, where the Lord is worshipped and trusted. Although her enemies sought to destroy God's people, they did not know the thoughts of God, which were to eventually destroy those who sought evil against Him and His people. The spoils gained by the people of God as they came out of captivity would be devoted to the Lord, and brought into the sanctuary as an offering to the Lord of the whole earth.

C' Ruler – Bethlehem (5:2-5a)

In 5:2-5 we have one of the most famous quotations of the Old Testament: the prediction that the Messiah would come from Bethlehem. Whereas in 4:9-10 there was no king for Israel during the exile, Micah tells God's people that "the One to be the ruler in Israel" would come from such a small town as Bethlehem. Matthew 2:4-6 shows that this prophecy was fulfilled at the birth of Jesus, the ruler of Israel. The fact that this was not fulfilled until the time of Jesus teaches us that the latter days (4:1) were not just the days following the exile, but extended until Christ came to establish the Kingdom of God. It was not an event that was universally received. As you know, Herod (the Idumaeon) sought to have this new king of Israel killed, and Jesus was persecuted and eventually killed by the Jewish leaders and the descendants of Herod. But Jesus was indeed the ruler "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (5:2). The exile was not fully finished, and the remnant had not fully returned (5:3) until Christ had made an end of it. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, established His kingdom, then, the nations came streaming into the church because Jesus the Messiah was on the throne at the right hand of the Father.

The word Bethlehem in the Hebrew means "House of Bread." Coming from this house of bread, 5:4 tells us that He would stand and feed His flock in His strength and in the majesty of the name of God. His people would abide/live by the bread He feeds them and would give them peace. Jesus, the promised Messiah would bring salvation and the final end to the exile of God's people as He established the Church.

B' Goodnews for the remnant (5:5b-9)

When Assyria would come into the Northern Kingdom of Israel/Jacob, they would be taken captive and removed from their land. The remnant of Jacob (Israel) would be taken among the Gentiles. But Judah would be spared from that judgment. Before Assyria is able to conquer Judah, the Babylonians conquered them. Because of the prophetic preaching of Micah, the people repented and Jerusalem was spared from the Assyrians (Jer. 26:18). 5:9 says that their enemies would be cut off.

A' Establishment of Yahweh's control over the nations (5:10-15)

The section ends where it began: In that day (the day of Yahweh, the latter days), Yahweh would put an end to the warring of the nations against His people and bring peace. The wickedness of sorcery and soothsaying (demonic prediction of the future) would be stopped. Idolatry and false worship would be cut off. By God's judgments, true religion would be established in the land. Those nations that refused to hear the good news that Christ is the ruler of the world come under the vengeance and anger of the Lord.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Micah.

Lesson Eighteen: Micah – The Glorious Future Restoration (4-5)

Micah: Judgment and Restoration of Judah

- I. Prediction of judgment on the people and leaders of Judah (1-3)
- II. Center: Prediction of restoration (4-5)
- III. Call to repentance of the people and leaders of Judah (6-7)

- A. Establishment of Yahweh's reign over all the nations (4:1-5)
 - B. Good news for the exiles, the remnant (4:6-8)
 - C. Rulership (4:9-10)
 - D. Israel's present hopeless situation reversed (4:11-:5:1)
 - C' Ruler – Bethlehem (5:2-5a) (cf. Matt. 2:4-6)
 - B' Goodnews for the remnant (5:5b-9)
 - A' Establishment of Yahweh's transforming control over the nations (5:10-15)

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Micah.

Lesson Nineteen: Micah –Future Repentance and Restoration (6-7)

❖ Westminster Shorter Catechism

❖ Review

Briefly review the outlines for the **First Six Books of the Twelve – Crisis is coming**. Focus on the sins of both Israel and Judah.

Hosea: Come Home, Unfaithful Israel

Joel: The Day of the Lord for Judah

Amos: Yahweh roars against Israel

Obadiah: Edom’s Fall and Judah’s Rise

Jonah: Yahweh – Savior of the Nations

Micah: Judgment and Restoration of Judah

- I. Prediction of judgment on the people and leaders of Judah (1-3)
 - A. The coming defeat and destruction
 - B. Corruption of the people
 - C. Corruption of the leaders
- II. Center: Prediction of restoration (4-5)
- III. Call to repentance of the people and leaders of Judah (6-7)
 - C’ Corruption of the leaders
 - B’ Corruption of the people
 - A’ Reversal of defeat and destruction

What does Micah’s name mean? [Who is like Yahweh?] About when was the book written, and what other prophets were writing at the same time? [About 750 BC, Amos, Hosea and Isaiah] What was the major World Empire that was threatening Israel and Judah at the time? [Assyria] Why do we say that Micah is primarily written to Judah? [Because chapter 1 speaks about specific judgments on cities in Judah around Jerusalem]

From the chiasmic outline on the handout we can see that the last section is parallel to the first section. The first section is devoted to the coming judgement of Yahweh against His people because of the corruption of the people and leaders. The last section corresponds to the first by against highlighting the corruption of the people and leaders, but offers the hope of rebuilding and forgiveness, which is predicted in the central section. This literary structure indicates that Micah is a message of hope designed to encourage Yahweh’s people, not to dishearten. As we have seen, Jeremiah 26:18-18 indicates that because of Micah’s prophecy, King Hezekiah repented of his sins, and Yahweh relented concerning the doom He pronounced against Judah.

C' Corruption of the leaders 6:1-16

Turn now to Micah 6. In the section dealing with the corruption of the leaders (corresponding to Ch. 3) there is another chiasmic arrangement. The theme of this section is Yahweh's case against Israel.

a. Introduction: Yahweh's case against Israel (6:1-2)

In vv. 1-2 Yahweh calls upon the mountains (symbolic of the strength of kingdoms) to hear His complaint against His people. The assumption is that when the world hears about the case against Israel from God's perspective, the nations will understand the justice of His actions against her.

b. Yahweh's past acts of kindness (6:3-5)

Was the sinfulness of Yahweh's people His fault? Had He done things to oppress them? If so, they should testify against Him (v. 3). Yahweh makes the case that instead of being guilty of unkind and oppressing His people, He brought them out of bondage in Egypt, gave them good leaders like Moses, Aaron and Miriam, and saved them from enemies so that they may "know the righteousness of Yahweh" (vv. 4-5). Indeed, Yahweh's actions toward His people have always been gracious, righteous and just.

c. Israel's questions about forgiveness (6:6-7)

In vv. 6-7 we see Israel (or an Israelite like Micah) asking questions about how to secure Yahweh's forgiveness of sins. Does the High God require offerings of calves, or thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil? Does God require them to give their firstborn sons as offering for their sins? Does Yahweh require impossible and burdensome religious services of His people to secure His forgiveness and blessing?

d. Center: Yahweh's requirements (6:8)

The answer is that God has already shown to His people what is good and what He requires. Yahweh requires, we, His people to "do [act] justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God." Remember, this section corresponds to the first section of the book that condemns the unjust leadership of the leaders of the people. Far from acting justly and loving mercy, the leaders were perverting justice and oppressing the poor who were in need of mercy. In every way, they were proud before the Lord, and refused to listen to His prophets who were explaining to them the need for repentance. By rejecting the prophets and their message (preferring instead the lying prophets), the leaders and the people were arrogantly rejecting Yahweh Himself. Pleasing Yahweh, and being blessed with forgiveness

and safety is as simple as “doing [acting] justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with our God.” The same is true for us today.

c’ Yahweh’s questions about whether He can forgive (6:9-11)

As long as the leaders of the city (Jerusalem and the nation of Judah) continue to do wickedly, will the Lord forgive? The answer is clearly NO! The social injustices of robbing people in business (i.e. the short measure, wicked balances and deceptive weights = saying, for example, they are selling a gallon of milk when it is only $\frac{3}{4}$ of a gallon). This is called an abomination. Should God just overlook this injustice? NO! Such deceit makes devalues the whole society, and dishonors the Lord.

b’ Yahweh’s future acts of judgment (6:12-15)

The rich are full of violence as they wickedly oppress the people. The whole society is characterized by lying. The judgment pronounced upon such a people is that they would become sick (as God threatened in the Law: Lev. 26:16; Deut. 28:21-22). Their food, gotten by theft and trickery, would not satisfy them (as God threatened in the Law: Lev. 26:26) and they would be given over to the sword. They would labor and not receive the reward from the Lord (as God threatened in the Law: Lev. 26:20; Deut. 28:38-40). God will not bless a wicked society, and will cause their lives to be frustrated.

a’ Conclusion: Summary of accusation and punishment (6:16)

This condemnation of the leaders of the people is concluded with specific references to Omri and Ahab (Cf. 1 Kings 16:25-33), who did wickedly before the Lord and promoted idolatry and did much to promote the social injustices the society. For this reason, Yahweh would make a desolation of the land. God will not be mocked – He will judge those who do wickedly, even though for a time they seem to prosper.

B’ Corruption of the people (7:1-7)

Micah goes on to talk again about the corruption of the people. The society has become so corrupt that in v. 2 the prophet laments that there are no faithful and upright men left in the land. Violence has become the way of the people. The leaders take gifts and bribes, and great men make conspiracies against people. A society as corrupt as what is described here leaves everyone mistrusting everyone else. You cannot trust your friends or family members. A man’s enemies are found in his own house. Micah says in v. 7 that he will look to Yahweh for salvation from the wickedness he see, knowing that the Lord will hear him.

A' Reversal of Defeat and Destruction (7:8-20)

The concluding section of the book ends with hope. Again, this is a chiastic arrangement.

a. I will bear God's anger (7:8-9)

Because of his trust in Yahweh (7:7), he knows that he can bear the anger of the Lord. He confesses his own sin, as a representative of the people. He does so knowing that God will forgive, and will execute justice for him. He will see the righteousness that he longs for.

b. My enemies will see, and shame will cover them (7:10)

When the enemies of God's people see the judgment of God, they will say, "Where is your God?" But Yahweh will put them to shame. When God's people repent of her sins, God will reverse His judgments and turn His judgments against their enemies.

c. Promise of restoration (7:11-13)

Salvation would not come until after the land has been desolated. But vv. 11-13 say that Israel and Judah will be restored when God sends out His decree. The walls would be rebuilt, and the captives would be returned to the land. This promise began to be fulfilled with the return of the captives back into the land under Ezra and Nehemiah. But it was not fully fulfilled until the time of Christ, when the Church is established.

d. Center: Prayer to Yahweh (7:14)

In the center of this final section we see a prayer for Yahweh to Shepherd His people.

c' Promise of restoration (7:15)

The return of the people to the land and blessing of the Lord is likened to the exodus from Egypt.

b' The nations shall see and be ashamed (7:16-17)

When God restores His people, the nations would see what He was doing in history and be put to shame. V. 17 says that they would lick the dust like a serpent, showing that they were Satanically inspired in their wickedness towards God's people. Just as Adam and Eve were promised that the Serpent in the Garden would be defeated by the seed of the woman (Christ), Yahweh promised His people that the Satanic nations would be crushed and shamed by Yahweh.

a. God does not stay angry forever; He will forgive sin (7:18-20)

The book concludes with praise for Yahweh because of His willingness to forgive their sins. He does not remain angry forever because He delights in mercy/lovingkindness. Not only will he have compassion on His people, but will take dominion over their sinfulness, making them a righteous people. Yahweh is the covenant keeping God, who remembers His promises to the fathers of the faith. The restoration given to His people through Jesus is the fulfillment of His promises to the patriarchal fathers.

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Nahum and 2 Chron. 33:1-20.

Lesson Nineteen: Micah –Future Repentance and Restoration (6-7)

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 - C' Corruption of the leaders
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 - A' Reversal of defeat and destruction

C' Corruption of the leaders (6:1-16)

- a. Introduction: Yahweh's case against Israel (6:1-2)
 - b. Yahweh's past acts of kindness (6:3-5)
 - c. Israel's questions about forgiveness (6:6-7)
 - d. Center: Yahweh's requirements (6:8)
 - c' Yahweh's questions about whether He can forgive (6:9-11)
 - b' Yahweh's future acts of judgment (6:12-15)
- a' Conclusion: Summary of accusation and punishment (6:16)

B' Corruption of the people (7:1-7)

A' Reversal of Defeat and Destruction (7:8-20)

- a. I will bear God's anger (7:8-9)
 - b. My enemies will see, and shame will cover them (7:10)
 - c. Promise of restoration (7:11-13)
 - a. Center: Prayer to Yahweh (7:14)
 - c' Promise of restoration (7:15)
 - b' The nations shall see and be ashamed (7:16-17)
- a. God does not stay angry forever; He will forgive sin (7:18-20)

Homework assignment: Read the whole book of Nahum and 2 Chron. 33:1-20.

Mid-Term Student Evaluation

Student Name _____ Date _____

The two major sins of Israel and Judah during the kingdom period:

1) _____

2) _____

The “Former Days”: From _____ to the period of the _____

The “Later Days”: From the _____ to the coming of _____

The First Six Books of the Twelve focus on the sins of _____ and _____

Match the letter to the right on the correct line that corresponds to it.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------|
| 1) Northern Kingdom _____ | A. Nineveh |
| 2) Edom _____ | B. Idumaeans |
| 3) Capital City of Judah _____ | C. Judah |
| 4) Southern Kingdom _____ | D. Samaria |
| 5) Capital City of Assyria _____ | E. Israel |
| 6) Capital City of Israel _____ | F. Jerusalem |

A Crisis is coming

Hosea: Come Home, _____

Joel: The _____ **of the Lord for** _____

Amos: Yahweh roars against _____

Obadiah: _____’s Fall and _____’s Rise

Jonah: Yahweh – _____ of the _____

Micah: Judgment and Restoration for _____

Mid-Term Student Evaluation Answer Key

The two major sins of Israel and Judah during the kingdom period:

- 1) Idolatry
- 2) Social Injustices

The “Former Days”: From Exodus/Sinai through the period of the Kings

The “Later Days”: From the Exile to the coming of Christ

The First Six Books of the Twelve focus on the sins of Israel and Judah

Match the letter to the right on the correct line that corresponds to it.

- | | |
|---|--------------|
| 1) Northern Kingdom (E) <u>Israel</u> | A. Nineveh |
| 2) Edom (B) <u>Idumaeans</u> | B. Idumaeans |
| 3) Capital City of Judah (F) <u>Jerusalem</u> | C. Judah |
| 4) Southern Kingdom (C) <u>Judah</u> | D. Samaria |
| 5) Capital City of Assyria (A) <u>Nineveh</u> | E. Israel |
| 6) Capital City of Israel (D) <u>Samaria</u> | F. Jerusalem |

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