

Old Testament Outlines and Summaries

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The Bible opens with the Pentateuch, or five books, of Moses. There is a spiritual completeness about the Pentateuch. In Genesis, we have ruin through the sin of man. In Exodus, we see redemption through the blood of the lamb and by the power of the Holy Spirit. In Leviticus, we have atonement as the basis for fellowship. In Numbers, we have guidance and direction according to the will of God. In Deuteronomy, we see God's faithfulness in providing for His people and by bringing them to His predetermined destination.

The following outlines and comments are meant to give you a rough study guide that may be used, along with the "O.T. Bible Chart", to increase your knowledge of the Old Testament. These outlines were used, along with the chart, to preach a series of sermons throughout the Old Testament. They were deliberately kept brief and were meant to give an overview that would permit more detailed study. They are the result of extensive study from many sources.

GENESIS

It is impossible to understand the rest of the Bible without first understanding Genesis. It gives us the origin and explanation of all that follows. Genesis, the first book of the Bible, and Revelation, the last book of the Bible, complement each other. There can be no understanding of one without the other. Genesis answers the question, "How did all begin?" Revelation answers the question, "How will all end?" Between them is development from one to the other. In Genesis sin enters, the curse begins, and paradise is closed. However, in Revelation grace has saved, the curse is removed, and paradise is opened. Genesis is where death, sorrow, and tears begin while in Revelation death, sorrow, and tears are no more. Another contrast between Genesis and Revelation is that fellowship with God is broken in Genesis but is restored forever in Revelation.

GENESIS OUTLINE

- I. Beginnings - History (Chapters 1-11)
 - A. The Creation
 - B. The Fall
 - C. The Flood
 - D. Babel Crisis (Nimrod)

- II. Patriarch History (Chapters 12 - 50)
 - A. Abraham -- Supernatural Call
 - B. Isaac -- Supernatural Birth
 - C. Jacob -- Supernatural Care
 - D. Joseph -- Supernatural Control

EXODUS

Exodus contains the outgoing of Israel from Egypt. In Exodus, we see Israel being brought to a new condition of freedom; and in the giving of the law, to a new constitution of theocracy. With the construction of the Tabernacle, Israel is given a new concept of true worship of God. In the exodus, we see liberty obtained and then responsibility emphasized through the law. The privilege of fellowship with God is emphasized by the Tabernacle worship.

EXODUS OUTLINE

- I. The Exodus (Chapters 1 - 18)
 - A. Deliverer - God through Moses
 - B. Resistor - Satan through Pharaoh
 - C. Effected by the Power of God

- II. The Law (Chapters 19-24)
 - A. Moral
 - B. Social
 - C. Religious

- III. The Tabernacle (Chapters 25-40)
 - A. Designed
 - B. Delayed
 - C. Completed

LEVITICUS

Leviticus was written to show Israel how to live as a holy nation in fellowship with God. It reveals the divine, holy nature of God. The Lord Jesus Christ referred to this book many times. Separation of Israel from other nations is emphasized, and Levitical laws are intended to insure this separation and to prepare this nation for its high calling. Leviticus also points to the one all-atoning sacrifice for the coming of Christ.

LEVITICUS OUTLINE

Israel is taught the holiness of God in the following three ways:

- 1. By a sacrificial system which shows that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sin.

- 2. By the requirement of the law which show one divinely revealed standard for character and conduct.

3. By the penalties attached to the violation of the law which show the consistent nature of divine holiness.

NUMBERS

Numbers covers approximately 40 years. The emphasis is not on the extent of time but rather on significant events within that time. Israel consists of over two million people at this time, and the camp is strategically distributed around the Tabernacle to facilitate orderly mobility. Numbering of Israel determines military strength and the Levi tribe is appointed to Tabernacle service. All are ready for the advance to Canaan's border and the march is led by God in a pillar of cloud and fire. Finally, with Canaan in sight, unbelief sets in (10 spies) and Israel rebels. The judgment of God falls on the nation and 40 years of wandering begins. The elders die and a new generation is numbered and advances to possess the land of Canaan.

NUMBERS OUTLINE

- I. The Old Generation (Chapters 1-14)
 - A. Numbering (1-4)
 - B. Instructing (5-9)
 - C. Journeying (10-14)
- II. The Wandering Era (Chapters 15-20)
- III. The New Generation (Chapters 21-36)
 - A. Journeying (21-25)
 - B. Numbering (26-27)
 - C. Instructing (28-36)

DEUTERONOMY

Deuteronomy is a book of the words of Moses to Israel. The book reviews the history and legislation of the earlier books, but it does so only as the basis for the words of admonition which are now recorded as spoken to the new generation. Remember, the new generation had grown up in the wilderness and now were on the verge of entering the land of Canaan. Thus, in Deuteronomy we have a new expounding and explaining of the law already given to prepare them for entering Canaan. Here we have a new generation entering a new land and being faced with a new life and experiences. To prepare them, they are given a new awareness of God and His love for them.

DEUTERONOMY OUTLINE

- I. Looking Backward (Chapters 1-11)
 - A. Review of the Way Since Sinai (1-3)
 - B. Review of the Law From Sinai (4-11)
- II. Looking Forward (Chapters 12-34)
 - A. Final Rules and Warning to Israel (12-30)
 - B. Final Words and Actions of Moses (31-34)

JOSHUA

The first five books of the Bible lead Israel up to Canaan. Now Joshua leads Israel into Canaan. Joshua covers a period of about 25 years and covers the conquest of Canaan.

JOSHUA OUTLINE

- I. Entering the Land (Chapters 1 - 5)
 - A. Joshua Charged (1)
 - B. Jericho Spied (2)
 - C. Jordan Crossed (3-4)
 - D. Gilgal Occupied (5)
- II. Overcoming the Land (Chapters 6 - 12)
 - A. Fall of Jericho (6)
 - B. Sin of Achan (7)
 - C. Sack of Ai (8)
 - D. Gideon (9)
 - E. Rout of Foes (10-12)
- III. Occupying the Land (Chapters 13-24)
 - A. Division of Canaan (13-19)
 - B. Cities of Refuge (20)
 - C. Portion of Levites (21)
 - D. Altar of Witness (22)
 - E. Farewell to Joshua (23-24)

JUDGES

Judges covers roughly the first 350 years of Israel's history in Canaan. It is a period of time when God rules directly over Israel and is Israel's "invisible king". The Judges, as described in

this book, were not a regular succession of governors but rather occasional deliverers raised up and empowered by God to rescue Israel from oppression and to administer justice. The new generation that crossed over the Jordan River in Joshua's day were, to a degree, courageous and faithful, but now began to spiritually decline. They had failed to drive out all of the Canaanites and began to make leagues with them. This led to intermarriage with them and ultimately to idolatry. The author is not named, but probably was Samuel.

JUDGES OUTLINE

- I. Decline Through Compromise (Chapters 1 & 2)
- II. Apostasy, Servitude, and Deliverance
 - A. Servitude to King of Mesopotamia (3:5-11)
 - B. Servitude to King of Moab (3:12-31)
 - C. Servitude to King of Canaan (4:1 - 5:31)
 - D. Servitude to Midianites (6:1 - 8:35)
 - E. Servitude to Ammonites - Deliverance by Jephthan (10:6 - 12:7)
 - F. Servitude to Philistines - Deliverance by Samson (13:1 - 16:31)
- III. Low Spiritual Conditions of This Period (Chapters 17:1 - 21:25*)

*Note: Especially Chapter 21:25

RUTH

The historical story of Ruth takes place during the time of the Judges. It was a time when the general conditions of Israel was one of moral deterioration, but the story of Ruth was like a light in darkness. In studying this book, you will find the amazing fact that Ruth, a Moabite woman (see Genesis 49:37), is an ancestor of David and thus in the lineage of Christ. The book is a love story that demonstrates the influence of a mother on her widowed daughter-in-law and the result of the surrender of that daughter-in-law to her mother-in-law's God and people. I believe that Christ is typified in this story by Boaz as our Kinsman/Redeemer.

RUTH OUTLINE

- I. The Resolve of Love (Chapter 1)
 - A. Ruth chooses to cleave to Naomi
- II. The Actions of Love (Chapter 2)
 - A. Ruth gleanes in the field
 - B. God guides Ruth to Boaz's field
- III. The Request of Love (Chapter 3)

- A. Ruth appears to Boaz as her Kinsman/Redeemer
- IV. The Reward of Love (Chapter 4)
- A. Ruth becomes wife of Boaz
 - B. Ruth becomes Mother of Obad, the Father of Jesse
 - C. Jesse was Father of David

I SAMUEL

I Samuel begins with the birth of Samuel, the last Judge; and ends with the death of Saul, the first King. It covers a period of about 115 years. It is a transition book from the theocracy in the time of the Judges to the Monarchy.

In I Samuel, three powerful personalities are presented to us: Samuel, Saul, and David. Although David's 40 year reign is covered in II Samuel, his early history and rise to prominence is covered in I Samuel

I SAMUEL OUTLINE

- I. Samuel: The Last of the Judges (Chapters 1 - 7)
 - A. His Birth and Youth (1-2)
 - B. His Call and Office (3)
 - C. His Acts (4-7)

- II. Saul: The First of the Kings (Chapters 7 - 15 and 31)
 - A. His Appointment (8-10)
 - B. His Beginning (11-12)
 - C. His Failures (12-15)
 - D. His Rejection (15:23-35)
 - E. His Death (31)

- III. David: The Anointed Successor (Chapters 16 - 30)
 - A. His Anointing (16:1-13)
 - B. His Service (16:14 - 20)
 - C. His Years as a Fugitive (21-30)

II SAMUEL

II Samuel is distinctively the book of David's reign. It covers a period of approximately 40 years. It was probably written by the two prophets, Nathan and Gad. The first 24 Chapters of I Samuel is believed to have been written by Samuel while the remainder of I Samuel and all of II Samuel is believed to have been written by these two prophets. [see I Chronicles 29:29] Under

David, the monarchy was firmly established and his dynasty continued on the throne of Judah right up to the captivity. The importance of his reign is emphasized by the fact that the promised Messiah was to come through his lineage. The book of II Samuel is clearly divided by the victories before David's sin and the failures after his sin.

II SAMUEL OUTLINE

- I. The Victories of David (Chapters 1 - 12)
 - A. As King over Judah at Hebron [7 year period] (Chapters 1-4)
 - B. As King over all Israel at Jerusalem [33 year period] (Chapters 5-12)

- II. The Failures of David, As Result of Sin (Chapters 13 - 24)
 - A. Family Troubles (Chapters 13-18)
 - B. National Troubles (Chapters 19-24)

I KINGS

The book of I Kings consists of 22 Chapters and may be divided into two sections. The first 11 Chapters cover the 40 year reign of Solomon and ends with his death. The last 11 Chapters cover approximately the first 80 years after the dividing of the Kingdom into Israel (the Northern Kingdom consisting of ten tribes with its capital Samaria) and Judah (the Southern Kingdom consisting of two tribes with its capital Jerusalem). It contains the splendors of Solomon's reign, the building of the Temple, the failures and death of Solomon, and the dividing of the Kingdom, and the ministry of the prophet Elijah to Israel.

I KINGS OUTLINE

- I. Forty Year Reign of Solomon (Chapter 1-11)
 - A. Early History of Solomon (1-4)
 - B. Building of Temple and Solomon's Palace (5-8)
 - C. Fame and Glory of Solomon (9-10)
 - D. Failure and Death of Solomon (11)

- II. First 80 Years of Divided Kingdom (Chapters 12-22)
 - A. Kingdom Splits with Rehoboam (12)
 - B. Judah Kings -- Rehoboam to Jehoshaphat (13-22)
 - C. Israel Kings -- Jeroboam to Ahaziah (13-22)
 - D. Elijah's Ministry to Israel (17-22)

II KINGS

The book of II Kings continues the history of Israel after the dividing of the Kingdom into the Northern Kingdom of Israel and the Southern Kingdom of Judah. It begins with the translation

of Elijah to Heaven and ends with the carrying of the captive Jews (of Southern Kingdom) into Babylon. It is the story of the divided Kingdoms becoming more and more unfaithful to God and slipping into moral degradation. In chapter 17, we see the Northern Kingdom (10 tribes), Israel, going into Assyrian captivity and disappearing from the pages of scripture (at least before Revelation). In Chapter 25, we see Jerusalem attacked, the Temple burnt, and the Southern Kingdom, Judah, going into the Babylonian captivity from which only a remnant returned. The book demonstrates the ultimate consequences of disobeying God. The first 10 chapters of the book are occupied primarily with the Northern Kingdom while Chapters 11-17 deal with both Kingdoms and end in chapter 17 with Israel (the Northern Kingdom) in Assyrian captivity. In Chapters 18-25, we have the history of Judah (Southern Kingdom) only and these chapters end with the passing of Judah into Babylonian Captivity. The book completes the line of kings with a total of 19 kings reigning over Israel (over 250 years) and 20 kings reigning over Judah (over 390 years). All the kings of Judah were of one dynasty -- that of David. The first 10 Chapters of II Kings also deal heavily with the ministry of Elisha. The Old Testament chart will help you in studying I and II Kings.

II KINGS OUTLINE

- I. The Northern Kingdom, Israel (Chapters 1-10)
 - A. The Translation of Elijah
 - B. History of Northern Kingdoms through Jehu, Israel's tenth King
 - C. The Ministry of Elisha

- II. Alternating History of Judah and Israel (Chapters 11-17)
 - A. History of Israel's & Judah's Kings from Athaliah (a woman who usurped authority in Judah) and from Jehoahaz (of Israel) to the captivity of Israel by the Assyrians in Chapter 17
 - B. Prophets to the Northern Kingdom, Israel
 - 1. Jonah
 - 2. Amos
 - 3. Hosea

- III. The Southern Kingdom, Judah (Chapters 18-25)
 - A. History of Judah's Kings from Hezekiah to the Babylonian Captivity
 - B. Prophets to the Southern Kingdom, Judah
 - 1. Isaiah
 - 2. Micah
 - 3. Nahum
 - 4. Habakkuk
 - 5. Zephaniah
 - 6. Jeremiah

I AND II CHRONICLES

The book of I and II Chronicles goes back and covers essentially the same ground as II Samuel and the two books of the Kings. The books are not, however, a mere repetition of the story already told but rather emphasize the religious and spiritual significance of Israel's history. Prominence is given to the Temple and its worship services. When previous books are compared with Chronicles the story of the ten tribes is left out and Judah alone is dealt with. The reason is that Judah alone preserved the divine ordinances. It is solely with Judah and Jerusalem that the Chronicles are concerned because it is that Kingdom and that City which hold the Temple. The reigns of Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, and Josiah are emphasized because of the religious reforms and Temple restorations associated with them.

The author of the Chronicles was probably Ezra, and the books were written after the Babylonian exile and when the remnant had returned to Judah. There is now no King and the people are returning, not to rebuild a throne but rather a Temple. Nehemiah was not sent to rebuild the wall and city until after the rebuilding of the Temple. This revival in any nation begins with God and surely the emphasis in Chronicles is to convince the returning remnant that their only true security and safety lay in their renewed consecration to God.

I CHRONICLES' OUTLINE

- I. Israel's Genealogies (Chapters 1-9)
 - A. Adam to Jacob (1)
 - B. Jacob to David (2)
 - C. David to Zedekiah (3)
 - D. Tribe Genealogies (4-9)

- II. David's Reign (Chapters 10-29)
 - A. Saul's Death (10)
 - B. Mighty Men (11-12)
 - C. Ark of the Lord (13-16)
 - D. Covenant of the Lord (17-21)
 - E. Temple of the Lord (22-29)

II CHRONICLES' OUTLINE

- I. Solomon's Reign (Chapters 1-9)
 - A. Early Reign (1)
 - B. Temple Built (2-7)
 - C. Solomon's Fame and Death (8-9)

- II. Judah's History to the Exile (Chapters 10-36)
 - A. Kingdom Divided (10)

- B. Kings of Judah (11-36)
- C. Exile to Babylon (36:15-21)
- D. Degree of Cyrus (36:22-23)

EZRA

Ezra, along with Nehemiah and Esther, record God's dealings with the Jews after their going into Babylonian captivity. Ezra and Nehemiah deal with the "remnant" which returned to Jerusalem and Judea while the book of Esther has to do with those who stayed in the land of their captivity. These three books complete the seventeen historical books, and go hand-in-hand with the last three prophets of the Prophetic Books; Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. The return of the remnant started about 536 B.C., after the end of the Seventy Years Captivity in Babylon. Jeremiah prophesied both the exile and the return. The remnant that returned was very small compared to the total carried into captivity. The return actually took place in three stages: starting with Zerubbabel and the rebuilding of the Temple, continuing with Ezra and the renewal of worship, and completing with Nehemiah and the rebuilding to the walls and instruction of the people.

Ezra's Outline

- I. Return under Zerubbabel (Chapters 1-6)
 - A. Degree of Cyrus (1:1-4)
 - B. Zerubbabel (1:8 - 2:2)
 - C. Remnant Identified (2:3-65)
 - D. Return to Jerusalem and Beginning of Temple (3:1 - 4:24)
 - E. Prophets Haggai and Zechariah (5:1 - 6:14)

- II. Return Under Ezra (Chapters 7-10)
 - A. Degree of Artaxerxes (7:1-26)
 - B. Ezra (7:1-10)
 - C. Remnant Identified (8:1-20)
 - D. Return to Jerusalem and Ministry of Ezra (8:32 - 9:15)
 - E. Worship Restored (10:1-44)

NEHEMIAH

The book of Nehemiah records the third stage of the return of the Jewish remnant from Babylonian captivity. Approximately 90 years has passed since the original remnant returned under Zerubbabel. Zerubbabel and his contemporaries are now passed away and another generation has filled their place. The Temple has been rebuilt and worship restored (Ezra returned approximately 80 years after Zerubbabel) under Ezra. Now Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem about 12 years after Ezra to rebuild the walls around the city of Jerusalem. The walls and gates were still in ruins and the people were greatly discouraged. The poor were mortgaged

to the richer Jews, Sabbath worship was lax, and moral and spiritual conditions were very poor. Intermarriage with surrounding idolatrous peoples had occurred thus jeopardizing the rising generation.

Nehemiah may be divided into two major sections. First the reconstruction of the walls (Chapters 1-6) and second, the re-instructing of the people (Chapters 7-13). The practical side of the work along with the spiritual thinking of Nehemiah present a spiritual message that is very applicable to our generation. There is no winning without working and fighting the spiritual battle that always goes with accomplishment for God. One man put it this way: "Trust in God, and keep your powder dry".

Nehemiah's Outline

- I. The Reconstructing of the Wall (Chapters 1-6)
 - A. Nehemiah Informed (Chapter 1)
 - B. Nehemiah's Return (Chapter 2)
 - C. Rebuilding Started (Chapter 3)
 - D. Opposition (Chapter 4 - 6:14)
 - E. Rebuilding Completed (Chapter 6:15-19)

- II. Re-instruction of the People (Chapters 7-13)
 - A. Re-registration of Remnant (Chapter 7)
 - B. Reading of Law of God (Chapter 8)
 - C. Consecration of the People (Chapter 9-10)
 - D. Population of City Increased (Chapter 11)
 - E. Dedication of Walls (Chapter 12)
 - F. Correction of Abuses (Chapter 13)

ESTHER

The books of Ezra and Nehemiah deal with the remnant of the Jews which returned to Judea, but the book of Esther deals with the far greater number of Jews who stayed on, in the land of their captivity. The prophecies of Jeremiah and Isaiah foretold of the return of the Jews to Jerusalem (no Jew should have remained in Persia) but many of these Jews, if not most, had been born in captivity and had adjusted to life in the Persian Empire. They loved the comfort and plenty of Persia compared to the leanness of desolated Judea. They were very willing for the remnant to return but rejected the sacrifices involved in their own return. Therefore, in the book of Esther, not only is God not mentioned but the book is silent on anything religious. Surely these Jews cried out to God in the crisis that threatened death to every Jew in the Persian Empire, but God would not allow his name to be mentioned with these worldly Jews. Even the worldly Jew (or believer) is providentially cared for by God. Each event described in this book seems to be the result of natural outworking or circumstances. When all the events of this book

are viewed together, a miraculous providential intervention and care by God is apparent. The demonstration of this to the Jews is the purpose of this book.

Esther's Outline

- I. Sentenced to Death (Chapters 1 - 5)
 - A. Queen Vashti Removed (Chapter 1)
 - B. Esther Becomes Queen (Chapter 2)
 - C. Haman Plots Massacre (Chapter 3)
 - D. Mordecai Requests Help (Chapter 4)
 - E. Esther's Aid (Chapter 5)

- II God Overrules (Chapters 6 - 10)
 - A. Mordecai Honored (Chapter 6)
 - B. Haman Executed (Chapter 7)
 - C. Jews Avenged (Chapter 8)
 - D. Purim Instituted (Chapter 9)
 - E. Mordecai Exalted (Chapter 10)

ISAIAH

Isaiah begins the section of the scriptures which are sometimes referred to as the prophetic portion of the Bible. This was a time in which God raised up various men to warn and prophesy to His people. The call of Isaiah is recorded in Chapter 6:8. Isaiah was a married, well-educated man who prophesied to the Royal Family and upper classes of Judah. He prophesied in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, all Kings of Judah. His ministry continued at least 60 years, and he probably lived into Manasseh's reign and was then martyred. At the time he prophesied, the Northern Kingdom, Israel, was nearing its end. The Assyrian Empire was now casting its shadow over Judah.

The book of Isaiah has been called a miniature Bible. There are 66 books in the Bible, and Isaiah has 66 Chapters. The Old Testament consists of 39 books which contains the law of God, and the first 39 Chapters of the book of Isaiah are concerned with the thought of judgment on the covenant people because of their disobedience to the law. The New Testament consists of 27 books which present the message of grace and salvation, and the last 27 Chapters of the book of Isaiah also present a message of divine grace, comfort, and coming salvation.

Isaiah's Outline

- I. Law, Judgment of God for Disobedience (Chapters 1-35)
 - A. (Chapters 1-6) Concerned with Judah and ending in Chapter 6 with a vision of Jehovah as reigning King in Heaven.

- B. (Chapters 7-12) Concerned with Israel (Northern Kingdom) and ending with a vision of Jehovah as reigning King on Earth (Future Kingdom).
 - C. (Chapters 13-23) Succession of burdens with all but one being on surrounding Gentile nations.
 - D. (Chapters 24-27) In these Chapters, we have the "Day of Jehovah" in relation to the whole world. Isaiah's message has progressively expanded to include the whole world.
 - E. (Chapters 28-33) Consists of six "Woes" -- essentially concerning Jerusalem and Judah, although worded in a way that includes Ephraim and Assyria.
 - F. (Chapters 34-35) Chapter 34 speaks of the vengeance of God upon all nations and prophesies "The Great Tribulation". Chapter 35 prophesies the coming millennium reign and Kingdom of Christ.
- II. Historical Interlude (Chapters 36 - 39)
- A. These Chapters provide a transition from the first section of Isaiah to the final section and are a divinely inspired addendum. They note the transfer of power from Assyria to Babylon.
 - B. (Chapters 36 - 37) are about the invasion of Judah by Assyria (after which Assyria declines to her end.
 - C. (Chapters 38 - 39) are about Hezekiah's illness, recovery, and contact with Babylon.
- III. Grace - - Salvation of God (Chapters 40 - 66)
- A. (Chapters 40 - 48) Presents comfort which comes only through God's divine servant. Jehovah is presented as supreme in attributes, redemption, and punishment of sin.
 - B. (Chapters 49 - 57) Presents salvation which comes only through God's divine servant, Christ.
 - C. (Chapters 58 - 66) Presents glory of God which comes only through the suffering of God's divine servant.

JEREMIAH

The ministry of Jeremiah occurred in the darkest days of the history of Judah. He prophesied in the days of the last five kings of Judah; Josiah, Jehohaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. In this period, every event was rushing the way to the final, terrible judgment of God on this nation.

Jeremiah's ministry occurred some 80 to 100 years after Isaiah's death and continued for over 40 years. During this ministry, Jeremiah never saw any response. The nature of the prophet was such that he intensely felt each message as he delivered it and each prediction of judgment was delivered with tears. The fact that he continued so long without response but rather persecution

from his people shows the faithfulness and perseverance of the prophet. The compassion of the prophet and his perfect fellowship with God pictures God's long-suffering in the present of sin.

The chapters and messages of this book are not in chronological order and do not seem to be arranged by subject. This makes any outline of the book hard. We can make several observations that will help. First, Chapters 1 through 39 all occur before the fall of Jerusalem. In Chapter 1, we have the prophet's call and commission. In Chapters 2 through 20, we have a series of prophecies which are general and undated, although some are said to have occurred in Josiah's reign. In Chapters 21 through 39, we have prophecies that are particular and dated. They are stated to have occurred in connection with various happenings or historical events.

Chapters 40 through 52 occur after the fall of Jerusalem. In Chapters 40 through 44, we have Jeremiah's ministry to the Jews after the fall of Jerusalem. Chapters 45 through 51 are prophecies grouped by themselves and are concerning surrounding Gentile nations. Chapter 52 is the conclusion of the whole book in which we see Judah's kings dethroned, made captive, the city sacked, and the temple burned -- all as prophesied by Jeremiah.

Key verses which summarize the book are Jeremiah 26:12-13 and 30:15-18.

JEREMIAH'S OUTLINE

- I. Before the Fall of Jerusalem (Chapters 1-39)
 - A. Jeremiah's Call (1)
 - B. Prophecies, General and Undated (2-20)
 - C. Prophecies, Particular and Dated (21-39)

- II. After the Fall of Jerusalem (Chapters 40-52)
 - A. Prophecies, To Jew After the Fall of Jerusalem (40-44)
 - B. Prophecies, Upon Gentile Nations (45-51)
 - C. Conclusion -- Jerusalem Overthrown (52)

Expanded Outline of Jeremiah

- I. Before the Fall of Jerusalem (Chapters 1 - 39)
 - A. The call of Jeremiah (Chapter 1)
 - B. Prophecies, General and Undated (Chapter 2-20)
 - 1. First Message; to Jerusalem (Chapter 2:1 - 3:5)
 - 2. Second Message; (in days of Josiah); the unfaithfulness of Israel and resultant judgment (Chapter 3:6 - 6:30)
 - 3. Third Message; (At Temple Gate); call of repentance and judgments resulting from not repenting (Chapter 7:1 - 10:25)
 - 4. Fourth Message; concerning broken Covenant and resulting judgment (Chapter 11:1 - 12:17)

5. Fifth Message; sign of Linen Girdle (Chapter 13:1 - 13:27)
6. Sixth Message; drought and resultant famine; judgment on Judah and lying Prophets; promises to Jeremiah (Chapter 14:1 - 15:21)
7. Seventh Message; sign of the unmarried Prophet (Jeremiah forbidden to marry); pending judgment as a result of Judah's sin (Chapter 16:1 - 17:18)
8. Eighth Message; delivered at City Gate: concerning keeping the Sabbath holy and results of disobedience (Chapter 17:19 - 17:27)
9. Ninth Message; sign of the Potter's vessel; God is Sovereign in the rise and fall of nations (Chapter 18:1 - 18:23)
10. Tenth Message; sign of Potter's earthen vessel; illustrating desolation of Judah and Israel; Jeremiah's complaint (Chapter 19 - 20)

C. Prophecies, particular and dated (Chapters 21 - 39)

1. First prophecy; to Zedekiah (Chapter 21-23)
2. Second prophecy; after first deportation; basket of good and evil figs (good are those carried captive and bad are those that remain for destruction (Chapter 24)
3. Third prophecy; in fourth year of Jehoiakim; the coming Babylonian captivity (Chapter 25)
4. Fourth prophecy; in early reign of Jehoiakim; Jeremiah exhorts to repentance and is seized (Chapter 26)
5. Fifth prophecy; in early reign of Jehoiakim; under sign of bonds and yokes, Jeremiah prophecies the subjection of the Kings to Nebuchadnezzar and exhorts them to yield (Chapter 27-28)
6. Sixth prophecy; to captives of first deportation (Chapter 29); prophecies concerning tribulation (Chapter 30) and restoration (Chapter 31)
7. Seventh prophecy; in tenth year of Zedekiah, Jeremiah is imprisoned; buys property showing faith in restoration; prophecies concerning Kingdom (Chapter 32-33)
8. Eighth prophecy; during Babylonian siege; prophecies of destruction of Jerusalem and captivity of Zedekiah (Chapter 34)
9. Ninth prophecy; in days of Jehoiakim; obedience of Rechabites (Chapter 35)
10. Tenth prophecy; in fourth year of Jehoiakim; Jehoiakim destroys God's Word. (Chapter 36)
11. Eleventh prophecy; concerning siege of Jerusalem; Jeremiah's imprisonment; Jerusalem's fall (Chapter 38-39)

II. After the Fall of Jerusalem (Chapters 40 - 52)

A. Prophecies to Jew (Chapter 40-44)

1. Jeremiah freed by Nebuchadnezzar; Gedaliah appointed governor of land, but is killed by Ishmael (Chapter 40-41)
2. Remnant asks Jeremiah to inquire of the Lord; Jeremiah warns remnant

- not to go into Egypt (Chapter 42)
 - 3. Jeremiah carried to Egypt by remnant and Jeremiah prophecies the conquest of Egypt by Babylonians (Chapter 43)
 - 4. Second message to remnant in Egypt; desolation of Judah because of idolatry; rejection of message by remnant, prophecy of fall of Egypt (Chapter 44)
 - 5. Prophecy to Baruch in reign of Jehoiakim (Chapter 45)
- B. Prophecies upon Gentile Nations (Chapters 46-51)
- 1. Prophecies to Egypt (Chapter 46)
 - 2. Prophecies to Philistines (Chapter 47)
 - 3. Prophecies to Moab (Chapter 48)
 - 4. Prophecies to Ammon, Edom, Damascus, Kedar, Hazor, and Elam (Chapter 49)
 - 5. Prophecies concerning the destruction of Babylon and redemption of Israel (Chapter 50-51)
- C. Conclusion; Jerusalem overthrown (Chapter 52)
- 1. Zedekiah rebels against Babylon
 - 2. Jerusalem is besieged and taken
 - 3. Remnant taken into captivity (third deportation)

LAMENTATIONS

This book consists of five lamentations written as if for a national funeral, portraying the capture and destruction of Jerusalem. It is written in an acrostic form, that is, each verse (or group of verses in Chapter 3) begins, in order, with one of the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. Chapters 1, 2, 4, and 5 each have 22 verses. Chapter 3 has 66 verses what are grouped into 3 verses per letter of the Hebrew alphabet.

The book teaches two important spiritual truths. Sin always brings about suffering. God loves you and I, and therefore, He chastises us as a result of sin. Also, God suffers with those whom He chastises.

Lamentations' Outline

- I. Lamentation One, Jerusalem's Plight (Chapter 1)
 - A. Prophet bewails it (verses 1-11)
 - B. City bemoans it (verses 12-22)
- II. Lamentation Two, Jehovah's Anger (Chapter 2)
 - A. Anger described (verses 1-12)
 - B. City exhorted (verses 12-22)

- III. Lamentation Three, Jeremiah's grief (Chapter 3)
 - A. Affliction, yet hope (verses 1-39)
 - B. Prayer, appeal to God: national and personal (verses 40-66)
- IV. Lamentation Four, Jehovah's anger, defended (Chapter 4)
 - A. Contrasts between former glory of Israel with their present misery (verses 1-11)
 - B. On-looking Gentile nations (verses 12-22)
- V. Lamentation Five, Jerusalem's prayer (Chapter 5)
 - A. Plea resulting from Jerusalem's misery (verses 1-18)
 - B. Plea to a Sovereign God for restoration (verses 4-22)

EZEKIEL

Of the five major prophetic books and twelve minor prophetic books, twelve are pre-exile and five are post-exile. The five post-exile are Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Ezekiel is the first of these post-exile books, although Daniel entered captivity before Ezekiel. The fall of Judah to the Babylonians occurred in three stages (see our chart) with Daniel being taken captive in the first stage and Ezekiel being taken captive in the second stage. Jerusalem had not yet fallen and Jeremiah, though an old man, was a contemporary of both Daniel and Ezekiel. Ezekiel was a priest (Ezekiel 1:3) but was carried into captivity before serving in that office. In captivity, Ezekiel and those with him were located along the rivers of Babylon while Daniel, in the first deportation, was carried into the court of the King of Babylon. Jeremiah, who had remained with the remnant in Jerusalem before its fall was carried by the remnant into Egypt. So while Ezekiel, Daniel, and Jeremiah were contemporaries, they probably did not have any contact with each other after Judah's fall.

The time of the second deportation was at the beginning of the reign of Zedekiah, Judah's last king and eleven years before the fall of Jerusalem (II Kings 24:11-18, Ezekiel 40:1). Ezekiel began to prophesy five years after being taken captive and so he prophesied six years before the fall of Jerusalem. When Ezekiel gives the dates of his visions or prophecies, he dates them from the year he was taken captive (Ezekiel 33:21, 40:1). The latest date he gave of any prophecies was in Chapter 29:17 which states "And it came to pass in the seven and twentieth year..." this would mean that Ezekiel prophesied about 22 years (starting in the fifth year of his captivity at 30 years old).

To understand ministry to the exiles, you must first consider the spiritual condition of the people themselves. Two of the three stages of the fall of Judah had already occurred and the cream of Judah's leaders and craftsmen were in captivity. Yet, instead of reading in these things God's demand for repentance, they foolishly considered their captivity very temporary and

continued in their idolatry, superstition, and immorality. They believed, with the support of false prophets among them, that God would not let Jerusalem fall. Both the Jews in Jerusalem and those in captivity could not believe that sin had sealed the end of Judah. Yet Jeremiah had written a letter to them (Jeremiah 29) telling them to settle down quietly and seek the good of that land.

The fate of Jerusalem and Judah was sealed.

Because the people were despondent, indifferent, and would not listen but rather believed on the false hope given by the false prophets, Ezekiel resorted to a new method for getting their attention. He did this, partially, because God stayed his speech to the exiles because of their terrible spiritual condition. (Ezekiel 3:26-27, 24:27, 33:21-22) He acted out his prophecies. Note also that much of the language recording the visions of Ezekiel was highly symbolic. The key message of Ezekiel which is repeated over and over is "That they shall know that I am Jehovah". God demonstrates this truth in every judgment and prophecy concerning both Israel and surrounding nations.

Ezekiel's Outline

- I Visions and Call of Ezekiel (Chapters 1 - 3)
 - A. Vision of Cherubims (Chapter 1)
 - B. Ezekiel's Call and Commission (Chapter 2)
 - C. Preparation of Ezekiel (Chapter 3)

- II. Judgments Prophesied on Jerusalem (Chapters 4 - 24)
 - A. Prophecies and signs of immediate judgment (Chapters 4-7)
 - B. Visions of Temple and City (sin within) and departure of Shekinah Glory (Chapters 8-11)
 - C. Further prophecies and sign sermons of judgments on Israel (ends with death of Ezekiel's wife and beginning of final siege by Nebuchadnezzar) (Chapters 12-24)

- III. Judgment of God on various nations and prophecies concerning their future destinies (Chapters 25 - 39)
 - A. Judgments on various Gentile nations (Chapters 25-32)
 - B. Prophecies concerning restoration of Israel (also concerning Ezekiel as watchman and reproving shepherds of Israel) (Chapters 33-37)
 - C. Prophecies of destruction of Gog and Magog (Chapters 38-39)

- IV. Prophecies of Millennial Temple, Worship, and City (Chapters 40 - 48)
 - A. Millennium Temple and Glory of God (Chapters 40 - 43:12)
 - B. Worship in this period (Chapters 43:13 - 47:12)
 - C. Land re-divided among Twelve Tribes (Chapters 47:13 - 48)

DANIEL

Written from Babylon, Daniel was one of a small band of Jewish captives carried off from Jerusalem by a young Babylonian conqueror, Nebuchadnezzar. This was the first of three deportations of Jews to Babylon and occurred in the third year of Jehoiakim's reign over Judah. It was about eight years before Ezekiel was also carried captive to Babylon and about 19 years before the destruction of Jerusalem. Daniel was very young when taken into captivity (perhaps 18 to 20 years old) and lived in captivity for over 72 years (perhaps longer). Our last glimpse of him is in his old age in the third year of Cyrus, the Media-Persia King. Throughout all of this time, Daniel was consecrated to God. As a youth, he refused to defile himself with the King's meat and wine; and as an old man, he refused to forgo his life-long practice of daily prayer and was cast into the lion's den. His fame and great faith were already widely known by the time Ezekiel prophesied and he makes mention of Daniel several times.

The book of Daniel contains numerous miracles which are a sign from God to both Israel and the Gentiles. When the Earthly Sovereignty and Kingship were transferred from Israel to Nebuchadnezzar, God raised up Daniel to represent Him at the Babylonian court so that through his lips and by these miracles, he might teach Nebuchadnezzar and the Gentile world empires the delegated nature of their authority and their accountability to the one true God. Israel was to learn that God was still with them and watching over them. The impact of the miracles and prophecies of the Babylonian captivity was that Israel was cured of their addiction to idolatry and became the most monotheistic people in the world and are so, even unto this day.

The book of Daniel is essential to our understanding of end-time prophecy concerning the anti-Christ, his seven-year reign, the tribulation, the second coming of Christ, etc. Christ quoted from Daniel numerous times and both Paul's teaching on the anti-Christ and the book of Revelation are linked to Daniel's prophecies.

Daniel has 12 Chapters which may be divided into two equal parts. The first six Chapters are historical and the remaining six are prophetic. The key thought in Daniel is expressed in Chapter 4:17, 25, 32 --- "That the living may know that the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will"

Daniel's Outline

- I. Historical Events - - Six Moral Conflicts (Chapters 1 - 6)
 - A. Pagan self-indulgence vs. conscientious abstinence in promoting health (Chapter 1)
 - B. Interpretation of dreams (Gentile domination) - pagan magic vs. Godly wisdom (Chapter 2)
 - C. Fiery Furnace - Idolatry vs. Godly consecration (Chapter 3)
 - D. Nebuchadnezzar humbled - pagan King's pride vs. divine Sovereignty (Chapter 4)
 - E. Belshazzar, Handwriting on the Wall - sacrilege vs. reverence (Chapter 5)
 - F. Daniel in Lion's Den - pagan plotting vs. providence of God over His people

(Chapter 6)

- II. Visions and Prophecies (Chapters 7 - 12)
 - A. Vision of four beasts and coming Messiah (Chapter 7)
 - B. Vision of the ram and the goat (Chapter 8)
 - C. Daniel's prayers for his people and God's prophecy of 70 weeks (490 years) of national chastisement on Israel (Chapter 9)
 - D. End-time prophecies and visions (Chapters 10-12)

HOSEA

Hosea was a prophet to the ten northern tribes known as Israel or Ephraim. He was a contemporary with Amos, another prophet to the northern kingdom and also with Micah and Isaiah. He was to the northern kingdom what Jeremiah was to the southern kingdom. Jeremiah warned that the southern kingdom, Judah, would go into captivity and he lived to see it.

Hosea lived in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam II, king of Israel. His prophesying began near the end of Jeroboam's reign and lasted until the Assyrian invasion which took place while Hezekiah reigned in Judah. This period was Israel's final awful plunge into confusion and moral and spiritual chaos. Hosea, along with others, may have become a refugee in Judea and thus his prophetic writings have come down to us.

God used tragedy in the prophet's personal life to symbolically demonstrate the relationship between Jehovah and Israel. Hosea's wife, Gomer, becomes unfaithful. Children are born in this home, some of which Hosea may or may not have been the father. The names of the children and their meanings tell the story. The first child's name was Jezreel which speaks of impending judgment (God will scatter). The second child's name was Lo-Ruhamah which means "She-that-never-knew-a-father's-love". The third child's name was Lo-Ammi which means "not-my-people" or "not my child". In his compassion, Hosea pleaded and warned but finally separation was necessary. After this, Gomer apparently sold herself for money and finally ended up in slavery. She was then redeemed by the still compassionate Hosea but reunion was impossible without a process of discipline, chastisement and repentance.

In this story, we see the whole history of Israel symbolically presented. Gomer is the nation Israel. The children are the people of that nation. Hosea's compassion, etc. represents the love of God towards sinning Israel. In his relationship with Gomer, Hosea came to realize that Israel's sin was spiritual adultery. To see it in this light is to see it in its ugliest reality and at the same time to realize the suffering which it causes to the heart of God.

Hosea's Outline

- I. Hosea's Personal Life (Chapters 1 - 3)

- A. Marriage of Hosea and Gomer (Chapter 1)
 - B. Gomer's unfaithfulness (Chapter 2)
 - C. Hosea commanded to take Gomer again (Chapter 3)
- II. Prophecy Concerning Israel (Chapters 4 - 14)
 - A. Israel's sins (Chapters 4-8)
 - B. Israel's coming punishment (Chapters 9-11)
 - C. Israel's repentance and restoration (Chapters 12-14)

JOEL

Joel was a prophet to Judah and prophesied in Jerusalem. He was one of the earlier prophets and probably prophesied about the time of the reign of Joash, King of Judah. As one of the first writing prophets, he probably knew Elijah and Elisha. The prophecy of Joel is one which extends from his own time to the time of Israel's restoration and blessing in the day of the Lord. He may be well called "The Prophet of the Lord's Day". He mentions this day five times: 1:15, 2:1, 2:11, 2:31 and 3:14. The great theme is "The Day of the Lord", which is the coming day when the Lord is manifested, when the enemies of Israel are judged, and when the Lord restores and redeems Israel. As used in Joel, "The Day of the Lord" speaks of judgment which had immediate and local application (as in the locust plague and drought), but also of that future, final "Day of the Lord" which I believe will end with the Battle of Armageddon.

Chapter One of Joel deals primarily with the immediate and local judgments of the locusts and drought. In Chapter Two, the priests are to sound the trumpet of alarm to warn the people of coming judgment. The language of this chapter also seems to indicate the appearance of an army that is referred to as the Lord's Army (2:11) and is an army of Gentile Nations being used by God to bring judgment upon sin. In 2:15, the priests are again to sound the trumpet to call an assembly. The purpose of this assembly was to allow the people the opportunity to hear God's message and to repent

Joel's Outline

- I. Day of Judgment - The Locust Plague and Drought (Chapter 1:1-20)
- II. The Day of The Lord - Prophetic (Chapter 2:1-17)
- III. Restoration and Blessing - Prophetic (Chapter 2:18-32)
- IV. The Day of The Lord (Chapter 3:1-21)
 - A. Tribulation ending with the Battle of Armageddon (Chapter 3:1-15)
 - B. The Millennium Reign of Christ (Chapter 3:16-21)

AMOS

Amos' prophetic ministry took place during the reigns of Jeroboam II, King of Israel, and Uzziah, King of Judah. Amos was contemporary with Jonah and Hosea who were prophets to the Northern Kingdom of Israel and with Isaiah and Micah who were prophets to the Southern Kingdom of Judah. Amos presents God as ruler of this world, and all nations are responsible to Him.

Amos was of rural background. He was a herdsman of Tekoa and a cultivator and gatherer of sycamore fruit. The country in which he lived was in Judea and was where David once kept his sheep. Tekoa is about six miles south of Bethlehem, which is about six miles south of Jerusalem. It is the so-called "wilderness of Judea". God called this man who was not a prophet nor the son of a prophet. What this means is that he had not been trained in any of the schools of the prophets and therefore was not, in the usual sense, a member of the recognized prophetic order. Amos, although a native of Judea, was called to prophesy in the Northern Kingdom of Israel. This is, in effect, like sending a country boy to preach in a big city church. His messages reflected his rural background and contained many illustrations connected with country life. Amos was probably widely accepted at first because he began his prophesying by announcing coming judgments on surrounding nations, but soon began to declare impending judgment on Israel. His popularity quickly declined.

In Chapters 1 and 2, we find eight prophetic burdens or messages concerning eight Palestinian nations: Syria, Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Judah, and Israel. Each of these burdens is prefaced by "for three transgressions and for four...". This is equivalent to saying that these nations had sinned once too often. Also in each of these burdens, the symbol of judgment is fire. The destructiveness of fire connects with the seriousness of sin and its consequences.

In Chapters 3 through 6, we have three short sermons, each of which begin with "Hear this word...". Each of these messages are divided by the word "therefore" indicating that the judgment decreed is, in truth, the judgment deserved. Israel had great privilege and thus great responsibility. Israel's past, present, and future sins are dealt with in these messages and the intensity of punishment increases as each warning is ignored.

In Chapters 7 through 9, we have five visions warning of impending judgment, the last of which is the Lord Himself, executing that judgment. Chapter 9 ends with a promise to Israel of an ultimate regathering and restoration

Amos' Outline

- I. Eight Prophetic Burdens Proclaiming Judgment on Palestinian Nations (Chapters 1 - 2)
 - A. Judgment on Damascus, Syria for cruelty (Chapter 1:3-5)
 - B. Judgment on Gaza, Philistia for slavery (Chapter 1:6-8)
 - C. Judgment on Tyre, Phoenicia for breaking of treaty (Chapter 1:9-10)

- D. Judgment on Edom for revengeful unforgiveness (Chapter 1:11-12)
 - E. Judgment on Ammon for violent cruelty (Chapter 1:13-15)
 - F. Judgment on Moab for hatred and injustice (Chapter 2:1-3)
 - G. Judgment on Judah for despising the Law (Chapter 2:4-5)
 - H. Judgment on Israel for immorality, injustice and blasphemy (Chapter 2:6-16)
- II. Three Discourses Pronouncing Judgment on Israel (Chapters 3 - 6)
- A. Israel, a privileged people deserving of punishment (Chapter 3)
 - B. Israel's sin (even in worship) and God's judgments (Chapter 4)
 - C. Lamentation over Israel and its cause (Chapter 5 - 6)
- III. Five Visions of Judgment With a Historical Interlude (Chapters 7:10 - 17)
- A. Vision of grasshoppers (Chapter 7:1-3)
 - B. Vision of fire (Chapter 7:4-6)
 - C. Vision of Plumb line (Chapter 7:7-9)
 - D. Historical Interlude - Prophet's personal experience (Chapter 7:10-17)
 - E. Vision of basket of summer fruit (Chapter 8)
 - F. Vision of Lord and worldwide dispersion (Chapter 9:1-10)
- IV. Promise of Re-gathering and Restoration (Chapter 9:11-15)

OBADIAH

Obadiah is the shortest and probably the earliest of the writing Hebrew prophets. He was a prophet of Judah, the Southern Kingdom, but the subject of his prophecy was judgment on one nation, Edom. We know nothing of this personal life. The date of Obadiah is a matter of dispute among Bible scholars. Since there is no personal history of Obadiah, it is impossible to fix the date accurately. The only way of setting a general date is by looking at internal evidence within the book and also looking at parallel passages of scripture in Jeremiah, Joel, and other books. The questions seems to revolve around verse 11, concerning the conquering of the city of Jerusalem. Some Bible scholars believe this is referring to the fall of the city to the Babylonians and Nebuchadnezzar around 587 B.C. and thus date Obadiah as a prophet who was probably contemporary with Jeremiah. Others believe this verse refers to the much earlier fall of Jerusalem to the Philistines and Arabians as described in II Chronicles 21: 16-17. This would make Obadiah one of the earlier prophets. Several factors make me favor the earlier date. One, is the position of the Book in the Canon of the bible. This is, by no means, a sure test but at least gives an indication. Another reason is that verses in Joel (2:23--3:19), Amos (9:12), and later Jeremiah (49:7-22) seem to be quotes from Obadiah. Some disagreement exists over whether Obadiah is quoting from these prophets or whether these prophets are quoting from Obadiah. But a study indicates that the later prophets were probably expanding on Obadiah's prophecies. The date is really not necessary for us to understand this book.

The Edomites were descendants of Esau, Jacob's brother, and their country was a rugged mountainous region called Mount Seir. They were a proud, cruel, profane people who persistently exercised a vengeful spite towards Israel. It was for this conduct towards Israel (Judah) that Obadiah prophesied against Edom. The attitude of Edom towards Israel was one of perpetual hostility which began with the trouble between Esau and Jacob. At the time of the exodus, the Edomites refused to permit the Israelites to pass through their territory and then continued in this state of hostility after the occupation of Canaan. They never lost an opportunity to show their dislike for the descendants of Jacob. It is this hatred which found expression in the time of Obadiah in their rejoicing at Israel's calamities for which Obadiah prophesied their ultimate end. The key verse is verse 15 -- "As thou has done, it shall be done unto thee". In others words, what you sow, you reap. The end of these people came in stages with a small final remnant being massacred at the siege of Jerusalem. God always keeps his word.

OBADIAH'S OUTLINE

- I. The Destruction of Edom (Verse 1-16)
 - A. Certainty of Judgment (1-9)
 - B. Reason for Judgment (10-14)
 - C. Justice of Judgments (15-16)

- II The Restoration of Israel (Verse 17-21)
 - A. The Promise of It (17-18)
 - B. The Fullness of It (19-21)

JONAH

Jonah was a prophet to Israel, the ten Northern Tribes. He was a son of Amittal and dwelt in, a city of Zebulun. He is first mentioned in II Kings 14:25 where he prophesied the success of Jeroboam II in his war with Syria. This fixes the time of his ministry in the later years of Joash and the earlier years of Jeroboam II. He was contemporary with Hosea and Amos.

The purpose of the book of Jonah is not to just tell the story of Jonah, but to reveal the love of God for all people. It reveals that God desires the salvation of all people and that salvation is of the Lord. In this book, Jonah foreshadows the history of his own nation, Israel. He typically anticipates the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and is a type of Christ as God's sign messenger. Christ referred to Jonah in Matthew 12:39-41 and Luke 11:29-30.

To understand Jonah, you have to understand why he fled from the presence of the Lord and what that meant. First, to "flee from the presence of the Lord" was not to go where God was not, but to renounce his prophetic standing before God. It was equivalent to saying I will just quit preaching if I have to preach to that people (Nineveh). Now why did Jonah feel this way?

First, I am sure that Jonah knew that Assyria (Nineveh was its capital) was the nation that God would use to judge his people, Israel. Isaiah had prophesied of this fact some 30 or 40 years earlier. Also, I believe he knew of the hideous cruelty of the Assyrians to people that they conquered. Jonah knew that God was a merciful God and he believed that if he preached to Nineveh and they repented, God would spare them. Jonah did not want God to spare Nineveh (4:2). He was willing to forfeit this prophetic office and flee into exile, even to give up his life rather than have Nineveh spared.

Another factor that will help in understanding Jonah is that the mariners, after throwing Jonah overboard, probably turned back to Joppa. They had thrown their cargo overboard in the storm and it is possible that their ship was damaged. If they did turn back, you can imagine the report they gave concerning the loss of Jonah. Luke 11:29-30 states that Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites. You can imagine the impact of Jonah as he entered the city preaching the word of the Lord.

Critics of the Bible attack the swallowing of Jonah by a great fish and his ultimate survival. Honest research indicates that this is possible even if God had not prepared a special fish for this purpose. This fish was not just a judgment from God, but rather a deliverance of God for Jonah. The prayer of Jonah within the fish was not just a petition but rather a prayer of thanksgiving and rededication. He says, "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord".

Nineveh is described as an exceeding great city of three day's journey. The six score thousand persons that cannot discern their right and left hands if probably referring to infants. Some Bible scholars estimate the population of the city at over one million. Within the city were gardens, orchards, and even pastures and corn fields. The city was surrounded by high walls. The impact of Jonah's preaching was that the entire city, lead by their king, repented; and the Lord stayed His judgment. This displeased Jonah and he was very angry. To him the future of Israel was sealed

by this sparing of Nineveh. God prepared three things to correct and instruct Jonah; the gourd, the worm, and a vehement east wind. These things were meant to reveal to Jonah the heart of God. This is the purpose of the book of Jonah. Verses 10 and 11 of Chapter 4 reveal the compassion of God towards penitent sinners of all nations, towards the resentful prophet, and even towards the cattle.

Jonah's Outline

- I. Jonah and the Storm --Fleeing from God (Chapter 1)
- II. Jonah and the Fish -- Praying to God (Chapter 2)

III. Jonah and the City -- Speaking for God (Chapter 3)

IV. Jonah and the Lord -- Learning of God (Chapter 4)

MICAH

Micah was a younger contemporary of Isaiah, who prophesied to Judah, and also with Hosea and Amos during the part of their ministry in Israel. He was a native of Moresheth, a small town of Gath, and prophesied during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, Kings of Judah. He prophesied, however, to both Israel and Judah. As compared with Isaiah, he was a simple countryman, born of obscure parentage, and recognized as one of the peasant classes; while Isaiah was a city prophet of high social standing and a counselor of Kings. Micah did, however, prophesy to the cities of Israel and Judah as the centers affecting national thought and action. The sins he condemns were sins rampant in the cities: oppression and violence; corruption of the princes, prophets, and priests, bribery, robbery, dishonesty, immorality, and pride.

The central thought in Micah is that of present judgment because of Israel's sin and unfaithfulness, but also of future blessing because of God's promises and faithfulness. Both judgment and redemption are presented in this book. Although Micah gave three messages, each beginning with the injunction, "Hear", the book can be broken down into four points: the impending calamity (Chapter 1); the sins that have brought on this calamity (Chapters 2 and 3); the promised restoration and glory (Chapters 4 and 5); and God's controversy with Israel (Chapters 6 and 7)

Micah's Outline

- I. Impending Judgment because of sin (Chapters 1 - 3)
 - A. First Message: Directed against both Israel and Judah but for all people (Chapter 1)
 - B. Second Message: The sins that have brought judgment (Chapter 2)
 - C. Third Message: The sins of the Leaders, Princes, and Prophets of Israel (Chapter 3)

- II. Promised Restoration and Glory (Chapters 4 - 5)
 - A. The Millennial Reign of Christ (Chapter 4:1-8)
 - B. Babylonian Captivity (Chapter 4:10)
 - C. Tribulation Ending in Armageddon (Chapter 4:11-13)
 - D. The First Coming of Christ, and Where Born (Chapter 5:2)
 - E. The Last Days, The Tribulation, and The Millennium (Chapter 5:2-15)

- III. God's Controversy with Israel (Chapters 6 - 7)
 - A. God's Plead for Repentance (Chapter 6)
 - B. Israel's (through Micah) Confession and God's Pardon (Chapter 7)

NAHUM

The message of the book of Nahum is the approaching fall of Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. It was written to Judah and was meant to comfort God's people who had been so long harassed by Assyria. The only thing we know about Nahum is that he was a native of Elkosh, but we do not know the location, with certainty, of this town. The date of the prophecy seems to be set by a reference to No in Chapter 3:8 which seems to be a reference to No-Amon, the Egyptian city of Thebes. The overthrow of this city occurred around 664 B. C. which would place this prophecy in the days of Manasseh, a wicked King of Judah, and probably in close connection with his return from captivity (which changed him) near the end of his reign. The ten Northern Tribes (Israel) had already been conquered and dispersed and Judah was under the constant threat of Assyria.

At the time of this prophecy, Assyria was at the height of its prosperity. No close enemy was left un-subdued. Egypt, Phoenicia and Cyprus had all submitted; Judah paid annual tribute; this Assyria had drawn the riches of all the nations into it. No one would have suspected the soon fall of this empire. Yet, about 50 years after this prophecy the end came. Nineveh was a very cruel and arrogant city and felt it could not be defeated. It was surrounded by walls 100 feet high and so broad that three chariots could be driven abreast on them. The walls were fortified with 1,500 towers each 200 feet high. It has been estimated to be 60 miles around the walls and within were gardens, orchards, pastures, and grain fields. It was a self-sustaining city. The means of the fall of this city was a direct fulfillment of prophecy (Chapter 2:6). An unusually heavy flood of the Tigris River carried away a large section of the wall and thus allowed the enemy to force their way into the city and to destroy it.

Nahum strongly presents the sovereignty of God over nations and history. God is slow to anger (as Jonah also said) but also great in power and will not at all acquit the wicked (Chapter 1:3). A nation that persists in sin will ultimately be judged of God. No power can resist that judgment for God has His way in the whirlwind and in the storm and the clouds are the dust of His feet (Chapter 1:3-6). It is God that rules this world and He acts according to His own will and time table.

Nahum's Outline

- I. The doom of Nineveh proclaimed (Chapter 1)
 - A. Burden of Nineveh and Vision of Nahum (Chapter 1:1)
 - B. Character and Majesty of God (Chapter 1:2-8)
 - C. Address to Nineveh with Closing to Judah (Chapter 1:9-15)

- II. The Siege and Fall of Nineveh (Chapter 2)
 - A. The Judgment of God (Chapter 2:1-2)
 - B. Instruments of God in Fall of City, Attacking Army and Flood (Chapter 2:3-13)

- III. The Sins of Nineveh (Chapter 3)
 - A. Nineveh: A Bloody, Cruel City (Chapter 3:1-3)
 - B. Sins Described and God's judgment (Chapter 3:4-7)
 - C. Sins of Nineveh greater than Sins of Thebes (No-Amon) which was destroyed (Chapter 3:8-10)
 - D. Thus Nineveh shall be destroyed (Chapter 3:11-19)

HABAKKUK

The book of Habakkuk is an unusual book in that it is a discourse between God and the prophet. He is not addressing his own countrymen or a foreign people, but rather his speech is to God alone. Of Habakkuk himself, we know only his name and from the context that he was a prophet of Judah. The time of this prophecy (from internal evidence) was near the end of Josiah's reign or in the early years of Jehoiakim's reign. We are plainly told that the Chaldeans (Babylonians) were rising to power (Chapter 1:5-11). This did not occur until after the fall of Nineveh (Assyrian Empire) and Josiah's death. Since Jehoahaz only reigned three months, the prophecy was probably in the early days of Jehoiakim's reign. The only problem is that one of the reforms brought about by Josiah are mentioned. The people, however, quickly turned back to their old sins after the death of Josiah, Judah's last good king. Habakkuk was probably contemporary with Zephaniah and Jeremiah.

In this book, the prophet puts into words the struggle of a man of faith with events being witnessed (Judah's sin) and then with God's revelation of impending judgment (by the Chaldeans). The book starts with a cry for understanding (Chapter 1:2) and ends with the joyous triumph of faith (Chapter 3:19). At first Habakkuk cries out to God about the sins of Judah (that have not been judged) and then when God reveals the impending judgment to be brought by the Chaldeans, he cries out (Chapter 1:13) "How can God allow the wicked (the Chaldeans) to devour the man (Judah) more righteous (even in their sins) than he?" God answers this cry with a prophecy of the fall of the Babylonian (Chaldeans) Empire.

The key verse of Habakkuk is Chapter 2:4; "the just shall live by faith". This verse is quoted three times in the New Testament (Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; and Hebrew 10:38). In the context of Habakkuk, God is saying that "even though I am using them as an instrument of judgment, the Chaldeans are wicked and will perish, but the righteous who are saved by faith shall never perish as will yet be seen for the earth shall yet be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord. Habakkuk set a watch (Chapter 2:1) and waited upon the Lord. We may not understand many things, but we, like Habakkuk, are to wait upon the Lord. He will keep every promise including the hope that "the earth shall yet be filled with the glory of the Lord".

Habakkuk's Outline

- I. The Burden of the Prophet (Chapter 1)

- A. Why does God permit evil (Chapter 1:1-4)
 - B. God's answer - Chaldeans impending judgment (Chapter 1:5-11)
 - C. Why would God permit wicked to judge a more righteous nation? (Even in Sin) (Chapter 1:12-17)
- II. Vision from God (Chapter 2)
- A. Prophet waits on the Lord (Chapter 2:1)
 - B. Vision from the Lord (Chapter 2:2-3)
 - C. Two classes of people (Chapter 2:4)
 - D. Judgments upon Babylonians (Chapter 2:5-20)
- III. Prayer and Assurance of Faith (Chapter 3)
- A. Prayer of Habakkuk (Chapter 3:1-2)
 - B. Deliverance of the Lord (Chapter 3:3-17)
 - C. Rejoicing of the Prophet (Chapter 3:18-19)

ZEPHANIAH

Zephaniah, unlike some of the other prophets, gives his lineage all the way back to his great, great grandfather. He is the great, great grandson of King Hezekiah (*Hizkiah* in text) of Judah and therefore, of the "House of David". He prophesied in the days of Josiah, king of Judah, and was a contemporary of the prophet Jeremiah, although Jeremiah would outlive him. He was also contemporary with Habakkuk. His influence and backing aided in the religious reforms and revival during the reign of Josiah.

To understand Zephaniah, you must first understand that the reforms in the days of Josiah were more outward reformation than true spiritual revival (read II Kings 22:15-20). Zephaniah does not mention any of the reforms instituted by King Josiah. He saw the true condition of the hearts of the people and, therefore, the true condition of the nation. He exposes the sins and pollution of Judah and warns that "the day of the Lord" is fast approaching. God, who loves His People, will not overlook sin, and the resultant judgment is a demonstration of that love.

Although the emphasis in the book of Zephaniah is upon judgment, the final passages of this book present the glorious truth of re-gathering, restoration, and blessing of Israel. Christ will return and will rule this earth.

Zephaniah's Outline

- I. Judgment of Judah and Jerusalem (Chapter 1 - 2:3)
- A. Judgment proclaimed (Chapter 1:1-6)
 - B. Day of the Lord is at hand (Chapter 1:7-18)
 - C. Call to repentance (Chapter 2:1-3)

- II. Judgment of all Nations (Chapter 2:4 - 3:8)
 - A. Philistia, Moab, and Ammon (Chapter 2:4-11)
 - B. Ethiopia and Assyria (Chapter 2:12-15)
 - C. Jerusalem (Chapter 3:1-8)

- III. Restoration, Blessing and Kingdom established (Chapter 3:9-20)
 - A. People turned to the Lord (Chapter 3:9)
 - B. Restoring of Covenant People (Chapter 3:10-15)
 - C. Kingdom Established (Chapter 3:16-20)

HAGGAI

Haggai is one of three prophets who prophesied to the returned remnant after the Babylonian captivity. He was born in Babylon and was one of those who returned from captivity under Zerubbabel. He was the first prophet called to prophesy to Jews after captivity. He prophesied in the second year of Darius (Hystaspes), the king in the sixth month (520 B.C.). Before the captivity, the prophets tied the dates of their writings to the reign of either a king of Israel or a king of Judah or both. But now, since both Israel and Judah were without kings, the post-captivity prophets began to date their prophecies according to the reign of Gentile rulers.

The subject of Haggai is the rebuilding of the Temple. Sixteen years before Haggai's prophecy the Persian emperor, Cyrus, had issued a decree for the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem and the "remnant" (about fifty thousand) under the leadership of Zerubbabel, had returned to Judea to carry out this decree. Two years later the foundation of the Temple had been laid and the prospects for rebuilding seemed bright. But enemies (Samaritans) of the remnant had caused much trouble all during the reign of Cyrus, and this had resulted in a complete suspension of the project. Now 14 years later (16 from original decree) the foundations were covered by debris and overgrown with weeds. The returned Jews seem to have accepted this situation and may have believed that the time for rebuilding the Temple (according to prophecy) had not yet arrived (see Haggai 1:2). But Haggai 2:15-19 indicates that the time of blessing had arrived and that they should be rebuilding the Temple. Haggai rebuked the people for the delay in rebuilding and encouraged them in the project. Haggai was contemporary with Zechariah.

The state of the people in Haggai's day was like a community without a church. They had started to build one, then became discouraged and stopped. Under these conditions, they then turned to make themselves comfortable with the very materials intended for use in building the Lord's church. Needless to say, God had cut off their blessing.

Haggai's Outline

- I. First message: Neglect of Lord's House and need to renew rebuilding (Chapter 1:1-15)
 - A. Date (Chapter 1:1)
 - B. Excuses (Chapter 1:2)

- C. God's answer (Chapter 1:3-11)
 - D. Results (Chapter 1:12-15)
- II. Second message: Call to Remembrance (Chapter 2:1-9)
- A. Date and persons addressed (Chapter 2:1-2)
 - B. Call to remembrance (Chapter 2:3)
 - C. Message "I am with you" (Chapter 2:4-9)
- III. Third message: Appeal to the Law (Chapter 2:10-19)
- A. Date (between this and previous message, Zechariah has spoken - see Zechariah 1:1-16) (Chapter 2:10)
 - B. Appeal to Priests and admonitions (Chapter 2:11-18)
 - C. Promise of the Lord (Chapter 2:19)
- IV. Fourth message: Promises (Chapter 2:20-23)
- A. Date and person addressed (Chapter 2:20-21)
 - B. Kingdoms of heathen destroyed -- tribulation ending in Armageddon (Chapter 2:22)
 - C. Lineage of Christ through both David and Zerubbabel - Christ to rule (Chapter 2:23)

ZECHARIAH

Zechariah was the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo who was a priest (Nehemiah 12:4) that returned from Babylon with Zerubbabel and Jeshua. Zechariah was born in Babylon, and from Nehemiah 12:12 and 16, we learn that Zechariah was also a priest. Thus Zechariah was both priest and prophet. He was a co-laborer with Haggai and began his work two months later than Haggai in the second year of Darius, the Media-Persian King. The conditions of the time were the same as those described in Haggai. The government of Israel might be broken down into three main periods. First, from Moses to Samuel we have Israel under the judges. Second, from Saul to Zedekiah we have Israel under the kings. Third, from the return of the remnant to the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70 we have the priest taking the lead in the nation. Thus, from Zechariah's day, the priests are more or less taking the lead.

The book of Zechariah can be broken down into two main parts with a historical interlude concluding the first part. The first part consists of the first eight Chapters with Chapter 7 and 8 being the historical interlude. These Chapters were written during the building of the Temple, and the first six are mainly vision prophecies. The last six Chapters are direct prophecies and were probably written after the rebuilding of the Temple. The first Chapters had both prophetic and immediate application to the Jewish remnant which is now back in the land while the remaining six Chapters look to the ultimate future of Israel and to the Gentile nations. The first eight Chapters are carefully dated, while the remaining six Chapters are not dated. In the first Chapters, Zechariah urges the remnant to that which was of supreme importance to them -- the

building of the Temple -- by the prophecies which show the far reaching effects of this work concerning the coming of the Messiah and His Kingdom. In the later Chapters, he deals more in detail with certain aspects of the future of Israel and of the Kingdom.

The vision prophecies of Chapters 1-6 show God again moving on behalf of His people. He is jealous for Jerusalem (Chapter 1:14-16) and angry with the Gentile nations that oppress her. He warns that the judgment of God will fall on these nations. The visions look beyond the small remnant to the final restoration, cleansing and blessing of Israel, and are given to encourage the remnant to rebuild the Temple and consecrate themselves to God.

In the first vision, that of the four horses and their riders (Chapter 1:8-17), Zechariah sees an angel patrol viewing the nations and reporting to God that the nations are "at ease" while the remnant suffers hardship. The myrtle tree in this vision is a symbol of the nation Israel and the man on the red horse is probably the Lord Jesus Christ before His incarnation. Note that he is referred to as the "angel of the Lord" in Verses 11 and 12. The other horses, I believe, had angel riders that the Lord sent to watch over the Earth. This vision indicates that God is watching and that judgment is about to fall on the nations that oppress Israel.

In the second vision of the four horns and four carpenters (Chapter 1: 18-21), the four horns were the nations which have scattered Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. The four carpenters were Jehovah's agencies of judgment against these nations. The four Gentile powers that scattered Israel were

Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The four carpenters (God's agencies of judgment) were as follows: the first carpenter was the Media-Persia Empire which conquered Babylon. The second carpenter was the Greek Empire which conquered the Media-Persia Empire. The third carpenter was the Roman Empire which conquered the Greek Empire. The fourth horn, which was Rome, was never truly conquered but disintegrated from within, and according to Bible prophecy, will one day be restored by the Antichrist.. Thus the fourth carpenter is Christ who will conquer the Antichrist and his empire upon His return at the end of the Great Tribulation.

The third vision (Chapter 2:1-13) sees a man with a measuring line going to measure Jerusalem. A measuring line used by God indicates that God is getting ready to move on behalf of that which He is measuring. The man doing the measuring is probably the Lord (Chapter 6:12). This vision, I believe, had applications to the remnant in Zechariah's day, but it's real fulfillment looks to the day Christ will rule (the Millennium) on this earth. In that day, Israel will be restored and greatly blessed. In that day, Jerusalem will be inhabited as a city without walls because God, Himself will be Jerusalem's wall. Note Verses 6 and 7 warn Israel to get out of the land of Babylon (applicable to Zechariah's day and to the last days) because the judgment of God is about to fall on Babylon.

In the fourth vision (Chapter 3:1-10), we see Joshua, who was the high priest of the returned remnant, as a representative of his people clothed in filthy garments. The filthy garments

represent the iniquity of his people. Under the law, no high priest could serve in such garments. Joshua is standing before the angel of the Lord (preincarnate Christ). Satan is rebuked by the Lord and the question is asked "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" He is speaking of Jerusalem as a city miraculously restored after it lay in dust and ashes for 70 years. The importance of this small remnant's return and rebuilding of the Temple was that the chosen nation was practically dead but now restored and thus making possible the coming of the Messiah. My servant, the branch, is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ who will return and who will cleanse that nation in one day (chapter 3:9). The stone with seven eyes also represents the Lord Jesus and His complete knowledge and wisdom. Only the Lord can insure the continuation of Israel. Only when He rules will peace and safety come to that land.

The fifth vision, that of the golden candlesticks and the two olive trees (Chapter 4:1-14) was a special encouragement to Zerubbabel, the civil leader of the remnant, as the preceding vision was to Joshua, the religious leader. In the vision, the candlestick (actually the seven branched lamp stand which stood in the Holy place) is a symbol of the nation Israel. There is a bowl which acts as a reservoir or oil tank over the seven lamps so that oil flows by gravity into the lamps. The candlestick speaks of Christ (the light of the world) and the oil speaks of the Holy Spirit. As a symbol of the nation Israel, the nation was to be a light bearer (lift up Christ) to the world. The two olive trees are identified as Zerubbabel who was in the line of David (civil ruler) and Joshua, the High Priest (religious leader). They would be the two instruments used of God to bring light back into the nation Israel and to make them a light to the world. They typify Christ and the office of Priest and King is merged in the person of Christ. The vision had immediate application as well as prophetic application to the last days (see Revelation 11:3-4). In the Tribulation, God will again raise up two witnesses, but the immediate application was meant to encourage the returned remnant. Zerubbabel was to rebuild the Temple but he faced resistance both from within and without. The vision would strengthen the faith of Zerubbabel and reveal to him that by God's power, he would finish the rebuilding of the Temple. The mountain of opposition would not stop the work.

The sixth vision, that of a flying roll (scroll) (Chapter 5:1-4), represents the judgment of God against evil practiced in the land but applies to the whole world. The roll was in the form of a scroll (thirty feet by fifteen feet) and was unrolled and open to all. It represents the word of God applied to the covetous actions of the remnant in lying, cheating, and stealing to accumulate wealth in this world. Before restoration and blessing can occur, this evil must be removed from the land. This vision, along with the next vision, indicated that the influence of the Babylonians had, to some degree, corrupted the remnant.

The seventh vision, that of the Ephah (Chapter 5:5-11) speaks of the judgment of God against evil in the land. The returned remnant had a great desire for money and material wealth which led to great sin on their part. The Ephah (a dry measure unit equal to a little more than a bushel) in the form of a large container represent the commercial wickedness that was being practiced in the land. Inside is a woman representing the nation given over to this wickedness. With impending judgment upon Babylon, the woman is prevented from escape by the leaden weight.

The two women with wings of a stork (an unclean bird) represent evil agencies used by God to move this Godless, heartless commercialism out of the land of Palestine and back into the land of Shinar (Babylon) where it will be destroyed (see Revelation 18 where we see the final judgment of God on commercial Babylon).

In the eighth and final vision (Chapter 6:1-15) and in the symbolic crowning of Joshua, we again see the coming of judgment of God on Gentile Nations and the restoration of Jerusalem. The four chariots represent the swift coming of divine judgment on the Gentile nations and the four angel drivers are the four spirit which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the Earth. These chariots with four angels probably correspond to the judgments revealed in Chapters 6 and 7 of Revelation (four horsemen and four angels standing on four corners of the Earth). They are in charge of the judgments which will be coming upon the Gentile nations. Judgment will go out of Israel both to the north and to the south. Here Joshua pictures Christ who is now our Great High Priest but who also will return to establish His Kingdom as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is described in Zechariah Chapter 6:12, as the branch who will build the temple of the Lord. This was meant to encourage the remnant who looked upon the Temple they were building as small and insignificant, but in the eyes of God, all the Temples were as one (although consisting of several) and were to be honored as the Lord's house.

Chapters 7 and 8 consist of a historical interlude. A delegation from Bethel (house of God) located in the area of the Northern Kingdom came down to Jerusalem to ask a question of the priests. I believe a small remnant of all the tribes returned to various areas from Babylonian captivity, although the remnant that Zechariah is dealing with are those that returned to Judea. Remember, I believe some fled the Northern Kingdom before the Assyrians conquered the ten Northern tribes and fled to Judea before Babylonian captivity. This delegation from Bethel was still practicing the ritual of weeping and fasting that they had begun in the Land of Babylon. The question they asked was, "Is a ritual right or is a ritual wrong?" I like McGee's discussion of this question. God gave a threefold answer. First, if the heart is right, the ritual is right (Chapter 7:4-7). Second, when the heart is wrong, the ritual is wrong (Chapter 7:4-14). Third, the purposes of God concerning Jerusalem (and Israel) is unchanged by any ritual (Chapter 8). The last part of Chapter 8 looks forward to the final restoration of Israel and the Millennial Reign of Christ.

In Chapter 9, the first eight verses speak of the judgment of God on Gentile nations. The instrument of God in accomplishing this judgment was Alexander the Great. These verses, written by Zechariah during the Media-Persia Empire, prophesied the rise of the Greek Empire and the coming of Alexander. But Verse 8 prophesies that God would protect Jerusalem and the Temple from Alexander. Secular history indicated that God did this by giving Alexander a dream that warned him against attacking Jerusalem. Verses 2-4 prophesy the destruction of Tyrus by Alexander. The old site of the city of Tyrus had already been destroyed but not scraped as prophesied by Isaiah and Ezekiel. The new site was located on an island and Alexander scraped the old site to build a causeway to the island and thus destroy the relocated

Tyrus. Zidon, mentioned in Verse 2, surrendered and the Philistine cities mentioned in Verses 5-7 were destroyed.

In Chapter 9:9, we have a prophecy of the first coming of the Lord with Verse 10 looking all the way to His second coming and the Millennial Reign. In Verses 11-17 and Chapter 10:1, we have prophecy concerning the defeat of the Greeks by the Maccabees (see Verse 13), but these verses also look to the final coming of the Lord and the blessings of His Millennial Reign.

In Chapter 10:2-3, God reveals the nature of Israel's sin that brought the judgment of God. Her prophets had turned to idols (household gods) to seek guidance. They used divination (form of the occult) to determine what they claimed was the will of God and were in reality false shepherds.

In Chapter 10:4-12, we have prophecy concerning the re-gathering and strengthening of Israel which looked to the coming of the Lord but had partial fulfillment in the deliverance accomplished by the Maccabees. Notice that Joseph and Ephraim (names that God applied to the ten Northern Tribes) are mentioned here and indicate that remnants of all twelve tribes are in existence and not some lost.

Chapter 11 brings us to prophecy concerning the coming Roman Empire and the rejection of Christ as King of Israel. Although God would restore and bless this small remnant that returned from Babylonian captivity, Zechariah (as a true prophet), warned them of future conquerors and empires. First came Alexander the Great and subsequently the Roman Empire. Chapter 11:12-13 are amazing prophecies concerning the first coming of the Lord, Jesus Christ. The fulfillment of these prophecies concerning Jesus is positive scriptural proof that He was "the Christ". But Zechariah also warns of the coming of a foolish shepherd (Chapter 11:16-17) who I believe to be the Antichrist. Zechariah did not realize (and God did not reveal it to him) the time lag (this period of grace) that was to exist between Christ's first coming and the coming of this false shepherd.

Chapters 12-14 are totally prophetic. They look forward to the second coming of the Lord, to the judgment of nations that oppress Israel, to the cleansing and restoration of Israel, and to the establishment of the Lord's Kingdom on the Earth. Chapter 12 looks to the Tribulation when all the nations of the Earth will gather against Jerusalem (and Israel), when Israel shall finally see Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, and when God intervenes and defends His people.

Chapter 13 deals with the cleansing of Israel from sin, idolatry, and false prophets. It looks to the Millennium but describes the horrors of the Tribulation (Chapter 13:8-9) that proceeds the Millennium. Note Verses 6 and 7 are about the Lord, and the Lord applied Verse 7 to Himself in Matthew 26:31.

Chapter 14 summarizes much of what has already been presented; the Lord is coming, and He will fight against those nations which have gathered to battle at Jerusalem. Chapter 14:16-21

described the Kingdom of Christ on this earth. He will put down all unrighteousness and rebellion. All, in that day, will be used for the glory of the Lord. All hypocrites will look back to the death of Christ in payment for sin.

Zechariah's Outline

- I. Vision Prophecies and Interlude, given during building of Temple and dated (Chapters 1-8)
 - A. Introduction and warning (Chapter 1:1-6)
 - B. First Vision - Four Horses (Chapter 1:8-17)
 - C. Second Vision - Four Horns & Four Carpenters (Chapter 1:18-21)
 - D. Third Vision - Man with measuring line (Chapter 2:1-13)
 - E. Fourth Vision - Joshua, the High Priest (Chapter 3:1-10)
 - F. Fifth Vision - Golden Candlesticks & two Olive trees (Chapter 4:1-14)
 - G. Sixth Vision - Flying Roll (Chapter 5:1-4)
 - H. Seventh Vision - Ephahs and Woman (Chapter 5:5-11)
 - I. Eighth Vision - Four Chariots (Chapter 6:1-15)
 - J. Historical Interlude (Chapters 7 & 8)

- II. Prophecies given after the building of the Temple and undated (Chapters 9-14)
 - A. Prophecy of coming of Alexander the Great, but looking beyond to the Millennial Reign of Christ (Chapter 9:1 - 10:1)
 - B. Prophecy concerning the defeat of the Greeks (Antiochus Epiphanes) by the Maccabees and looking beyond to the ultimate of Israel (Chapter 9:13, Chapter 10:4-12)
 - C. Prophecy concerning the coming Roman Empire and Israel's rejection of Christ (Chapter 11:1-11)
 - D. Prophecy concerning the Lord (Chapter 9:9; 11:12-13; 13:6-7)
 - E. Prophecy concerning the foolish shepherd (antichrist) (Chapter 11:15-17)
 - F. Prophecy concerning Israel in Tribulation (Chapter 12)
 - G. Prophecy concerning the cleansing of Israel during the Tribulation and looking to the Millennium (Chapter 13)
 - H. Prophecy from the Tribulation to the Millennial Reign of Christ (Chapter 14:1-21)

MALACHI

Malachi is the last of the Old Testament prophets. Four hundred years of silence follows his prophecies. The time of these prophecies is not given but was probably a little later than the days of Nehemiah. The message of Malachi was an appeal to Israel to repent of sin and to return to God. This appeal carried with it the promise of blessing and the warning of judgment if they refused. He dealt with both the priest and the people. They outwardly obeyed but inwardly were very corrupt. The book reveals a people who imagine that they are all right but

really are all wrong. They question every prophetic utterance. Thus, no inspired utterance was given to Israel for the next four hundred years. The love of God for these people is revealed and yet that love is rejected and questioned. In their eyes, the prophetic promises for the exaltation of Israel had not come to pass and they did not recognize their sin as the reason. The term "wherein" appears seven times and reflects the sad spiritual condition of this people. There is, however, a small godly remnant, even in that day, that were are very precious to God. This book and the Old Testament closes with this godly remnant quietly encouraging one another with that great hope "He is coming". If He came the first time per His prophetic Word, He will come the second time according to His Word. The many prophecies fulfilled in His first coming 2000 years ago are the greatest conceivable guarantee that the prophecies concerning His second coming and reign on this earth will also be fulfilled.

Malachi's Outline

- I. God's love for Israel (Chapter 1:1-5)
- II. Rebuke and appeal to the Priests (Chapter 1:6-9)
- III. Rebuke and appeal to the people (Chapter 2:10-17)
- IV. The Coming One (Chapter 3:1-6)
- V. Appeal to the nation (Chapter 3:7-15)
- VI. The Godly remnant (Chapter 3:16-18)
- VII. The coming day (Chapter 4:1-3)
- VIII. Closing words (Chapter 4:4-6)