



THE MINOR PROPHETS

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Thanks
for
Reading
This
Work

HOSEA

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c Ministry of the Saviour

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SOME SEE THE MESSAGE OF THE PROPHETS OF OLD AS HISTORY LONG PAST WITHOUT A RELEVANT MEANING FOR TODAY. THE TRUTH IS THAT THE WORD OF GOD IS AS CURRENT AS THE BREATH THAT YOU ENJOY AT THIS MOMENT! LOOK AT HOSEA AND SEE WHAT GOD SAYS TO AMERICA AND YOU TODAY.

God gave this message to Hosea during the times that Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were kings of Judah and Jeroboam was king of Israel. The Lord said to Hosea, go and marry a prostitute for this will illustrate the way my people have been untrue to me and openly commit adultery against the Lord by worshiping other gods. Hosea married Gomer and the first child was a son that was named Jezreel because God was ready to punish the king for murders committed at Jezreel. The second child was a daughter named, Not Loved, because God would no longer show love or forgive the people of Israel. The third child was the second son named, not my people, for Israel is not my people and I am not their God.

I have prospered
your land and you
have worshiped
prosperity!

To America God says I will avenge the murder of the unborn and the shedding of innocent blood. You have turned away from me and worship false gods of pleasure, worldly entertainment, and riches. I will no longer love the people of America or forgive them. But there is a remnant in the land and I am the Lord their God and I will show them love and I will personally free them from their enemies by my spirit without guns or armies. I have prospered your land and you have worshiped prosperity.

Now I call America to account for she is no longer my wife and I am no longer her husband. Take off your makeup and suggestive clothing and stop playing the prostitute or I will strip you naked as you were on the day that you were born. I will leave you to die in the desert and the dry barren wilderness. I will not love your children as I love my own because they are not my own children. They were conceived in adultery. Their mother was a shameless prostitute and became pregnant in a shameful way. She sold herself for food, clothing and fine things but I shall cause her to not be able to catch or find her lovers and when she searches and cannot find them, she will say I might as well return to my husband for I was better off with him than I am now. She did not realize that it was I the Lord that gave her everything that she has, even the wealth that she used to chase after false gods. Now I will take back all that I so generously gave to her and strip her naked in public while her lovers look on. I will destroy her wealth that she claims her lovers gave her and punish her for all the times she deserted me and worshiped Baal and went out looking for lovers says the Lord.

I will win her back again! I will lead her into the desert and speak tender things to her. I will return her wealth to her. I will make the valley of trouble into the gateway of hope. She will give herself to me as she did in the beginning and I will set her free from captivity. In that day says the Lord, you will call me my husband instead of my master. I will cause you, America, to forget the names of your other gods and their names will no longer be spoken. I will keep wild animals from harming you and remove all weapons of war. I will show you unfailing love and compassion and you will know me as lord. In that day, I will answer the pleading for clouds in the sky to rain upon the thirsty earth. At that time, I will plant the crops of America and raise them for myself. I will show love to the "not loved" and those I call "not my people."

Then the lord said to me, go get your wife again. Love her even though she loves adultery because the Lord loves America even though the people have turned to other gods. I bought her for fifteen pieces of silver, five bushels of barley and a measure of wine. I told her you must live in my house and not play the harlot. There is a falling away where for many days the Spirit did no work on the hearts of men but in the last days, Men will come with trembling in awe to the Lord and He shall give good gifts and work many wonders in the last days.

Hear the word of the Lord, America, there is no faithfulness, no kindness, no knowledge of God in the land. You curse, kill, steal, and commit adultery with violence following violence. You preachers should not point your fingers at someone else! You and your false prophets shall stumble in the daytime and I will destroy your nation! My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge because you, America, have rejected knowledge, I have rejected you. Because you have forgotten my law, I have forgotten to bless your children. The more preachers there are, the more they sin against me. I will change their glory into shame. The preachers are happy when the people sin because they place a sin offering in their hand. When the preachers are wicked, the people are wicked too. My people seek counsel of wood, stars, and oracles from the evil one and they are drawn away. Your daughters commit adultery and your daughters in law play the harlot and you fathers and husbands have turned aside to prostitutes. Your worship is nothing but pretense. You are as a cow so the Lord will put you out to pasture. Your love for shame is greater than your love for honor. A mighty wind is coming. The resistless wind of God's wrath will blow them away and they shall die in their shame.

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You shall repent and want to turn to the Lord when you are torn to pieces.

Hear this you pastors and all of America's leaders. Listen, every person in political office from the president to the mayor. You are doomed! You have led the people to worship false gods, consult psychics, you have killed the unborn and called the life that I give a non life to cover your sins, you have stolen, you have lied, you have committed adultery, you have given approval of unnatural affections and allowed homosexuality to thrive openly, while you have persecuted those who would have prayer to speak to me in public places. You have spread abortion all over the world by forcing nations to accept your sin in order to do trade with you. Your deeds will not let you return to God! From the spirit of harlotry within, you cannot know the Lord. This nation shall fall and then you will seek the Lord but it will be too late. You will not find God for He will have withdrawn from you and then you will be alone! Your false religion will not be able to help you. Know this, when your day of punishment comes, you will be a pile of rubble. You will turn to Japan, the common market, and the U.N. but none will be able to help. I will rip you apart like a lion rips it's kill and listen for you to return to me knowing that as soon as the trouble comes, you will search for me.

I wanted to heal America but her sins were too great!

You shall repent and want to return to the Lord after you are torn into pieces. America what shall I do with you? Your love vanishes like dew on the grass in the morning. You do not listen to my prophets. My judgment will strike as surely as day follows night. It is not your religion that I want or your traditions that you have set up but I desire that you know me, I desire that you know God and in knowing me have a close and personal relationship with a bond of love. You have planted the seed and a harvest of punishment awaits you. But, what I desire is to restore my people and to prosper them.

I wanted to heal America but its sins were too great. Do you not know that I watch you and your sinful deeds and I see them all. The president is happy at the wickedness of the people. Those in high offices live in lust with their hearts afire with evil desire. They kill others but no one cries to me for help. My people in America have compromised with godless foreigners picked up their evil ways and their false gods and now you are as useless as a half baked cake. Terrible is the day that my people deserted me. Instead of crying out to me, they sit on their padded sofa weep. I made them strong but they plot evil against me. They search every where for solutions to all of the problems of the nation, everywhere except to heaven to the Most High God! If the gun barrel is crooked, the bullet always the target. Wisdom that does not come from God is as a crooked barrel and it will never fix the problems of the nation. The people of Iraq and Cuba and Russia shall laugh at you.

Sound the alarm! The enemy shall come in as an eagle against the house of the Lord because they have transgressed My covenant and rebelled against my law. America pleads with me "help up for you are our God" but it is too late. The people have rejected what is good and the enemy shall pursue them. They did not seek my consent for the politicians that they set to rule over themselves. They used wealth to buy idols which have brought about their own destruction. The image that you worship was made by your own hands, it must be smashed to pieces.

You have planted the wind and will harvest the whirlwind. The stalks of wheat and corn wither in the field producing no grain and the grain that they do produce, foreigners will eat. America has sold itself to many lovers and to many nations as a prostitute and it is time for some distress and sorrow from the great King. You have built many churches to take away your sins but these places have become places for sinning. I gave you all my laws but you act as though you think that these laws do not apply to you! Each group loves their rituals and traditions but these traditions are meaningless to me! I will call my people into account for their sins and they shall be punished. Because America has built great church buildings and glorious cities but have forgotten their maker that I am the Lord, I will send a fire upon their cities and on their great church buildings.

People of America, do not rejoice as others do. You have gone whoring after other gods like prostitutes forsaking your God for a harlot's hire. Therefore, your harvest will not put away your hunger! The wine that you make will not take away your thirst! You will be carried off into captivity as slaves. Briers will take over your treasures and weeds will grow up in your houses. The time of America's punishment has come, the day of payment is almost here. The burden of sin is so great in the land that the nation shows only hatred toward those who love God and live according to his law. My true prophets face hostility even in the house of God. The things that those who are called by my name do are de-prayed and God will not forget, He shall surely punish them for their sin. America, you have deserted me. You have become as vile as the sin that you worship. The glory of America has vanished like a bird. Your children will perish in the womb or die at birth and for those who do survive to grow up, I will take away from you. I will drive you from the land because of your sin. I will love you no more because of the rebellion of your heart. My God will reject the people of America because they will not listen or obey. Your finances will dry up and you will know hunger and the crops will not produce and my protection shall be removed from

SOUND
THE
ALARM

WAR
IS
COMING

America the land of prosperity where even the poor are rich and the more wealth the people got, the more they turned away from God. It was not enough that they should go to theaters to view the altar of sin, each had a box to look upon the idol of lust and violence and the greater one's wealth, the larger the tube to look upon and worship sin. The Lord shall break your box and smash your tube and spoil your reception for by it you have given your children over to strange gods and you have found new ways to sin. Your heart is set upon things and wealth and your feet run to evil all day long and, yea, even at night you chase after the lusts of the flesh. You do not fear the president because you do not even fear God. What can that government do to me when God has not lifted his hand to cut off my ways? Your mouth pours out empty words and you make promises you never intended to keep. Is there no honest and upright man in all of the land who has not played the whore? Justice in the land and in the hearts of men is perverted by the evil intent of your minds and shall be as a poison in good food. The people of Islam fear their god and fall upon their face and worship him, a dead man, and walk uprightly for they fear him. They minister in the name of a dead man and win converts! You allow weeds to grow on your alters and in your churches, is there no shame that you have failed to serve the true and living God?

From the time of the civil war, there has been only sin and more sin. You have not made any progress and in these last days have you not become more perverted and your hearts harder than all generations before you? I, says the Lord, will call out the armies of the nations to punish you for your multitude of sins! I will chasen you for your two great sins, one, you rebelled against me, and two, you turned to idols. You have been complacent and happy to sit in pews of churches where I am not and think that all is well with me and I prosper and you love your traditions of man and take joy in your religious words and the very form of it has become as an idol to you. You must now turn to the hard work of pulling the plow to break up new ground. Plant the good seeds of righteousness that you may harvest the crop of love. Plow up the hard ground of your hearts for the time has come to seek the Lord while he may be found that He may pour out righteousness upon you. You have planted and cultivated the seeds of wickedness and raised a thriving crop of sins. You have eaten the fruit of lies because you have trusted in your own way, and in the greatness of your army. Now the terrors of war shall arise among your people and all your fortifications will fall and mothers and children shall be killed. When the day of judgment dawns, the leaders of America will be totally and completely destroyed.

When America was a child, I loved him and called my son out of Europe. But the more I call to him, the more he rebelled so that he did not follow me but worshiped the god of things and of money. It was I who taught America how to walk, leading them by the hand. Now, they do not know or care that it was I who took care of them. I led America with my ropes of kindness and love. I lifted the yoke from their necks and it was I who fed them. But since my people refuse to return to me, they will be servants and pheasants again. War will sweep through their cities and their countrysides and the enemy shall destroy them and trap them in their own evil plans. For my people have set their mind and determined to desert me. They call me the most high but they don't truly honor me and none would exalt me.

America, how shall I give you up? How can I destroy you? My heart torn within me and my compassion overflows. I will not punish you as much as my justice tells me to and completely destroy you. Someday, the people will follow the Lord. I will roar like a lion and my people will return to me with fear and trembling.

The people of America feed on the wind and the lies and desolation increase every day. You make alliances with the former Communist and you cut deals with China and your oil comes from the Islamic nations. The Lord has this complaint against you and will punish the deceivers according to the deception that has been done by you. You will receive according to the seed that you have planted. It is time to seek the Lord God Almighty and meet Him face to face as Jacob did. Come back to your God, Act in love and justice and plant good seeds. Always live in total dependence on your God confident that He shall meet your needs.

People are crafty and dishonest but have not been caught and say I am a self made man and I am rich and have gotten it by my work and effort. But I am the Lord who rescued you from slavery and poverty and brought you to this great land and made you to prosper and live in big houses but I will make you live in tents again! America is filled with people who worship idols and your sins rise up as a stink before the Lord and have provoked Him to sentence them to death for their sins.

In the past, when America spoke, the people shook with fear for you were strong but the people have sinned and have worshiped other gods and have by this sealed your destruction. And you keep on sinning. I am your God and there is no other savior. I brought you out of poverty and hunger and when you had eaten and were full, you forgot me and rose up in pride. I will attack you like a lion and devour you and tear you apart like a hungry lion. You are about to be destroyed, America, though I am your helper in time of trouble. You asked for the leaders that you elected, now let them save you!

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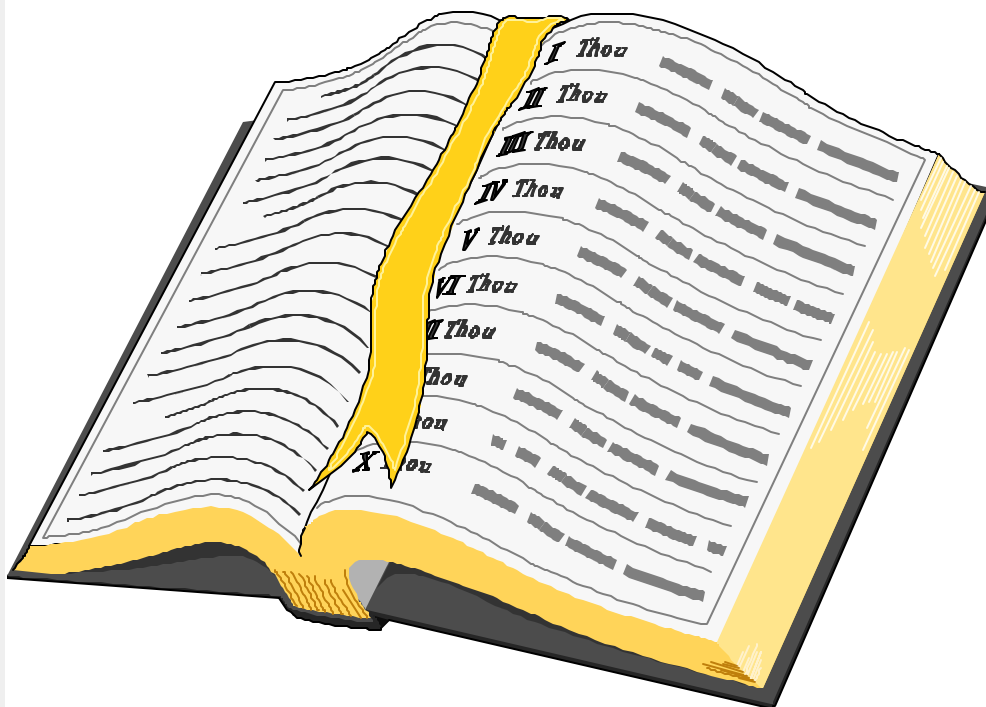
RETURN
TO THE
LORD
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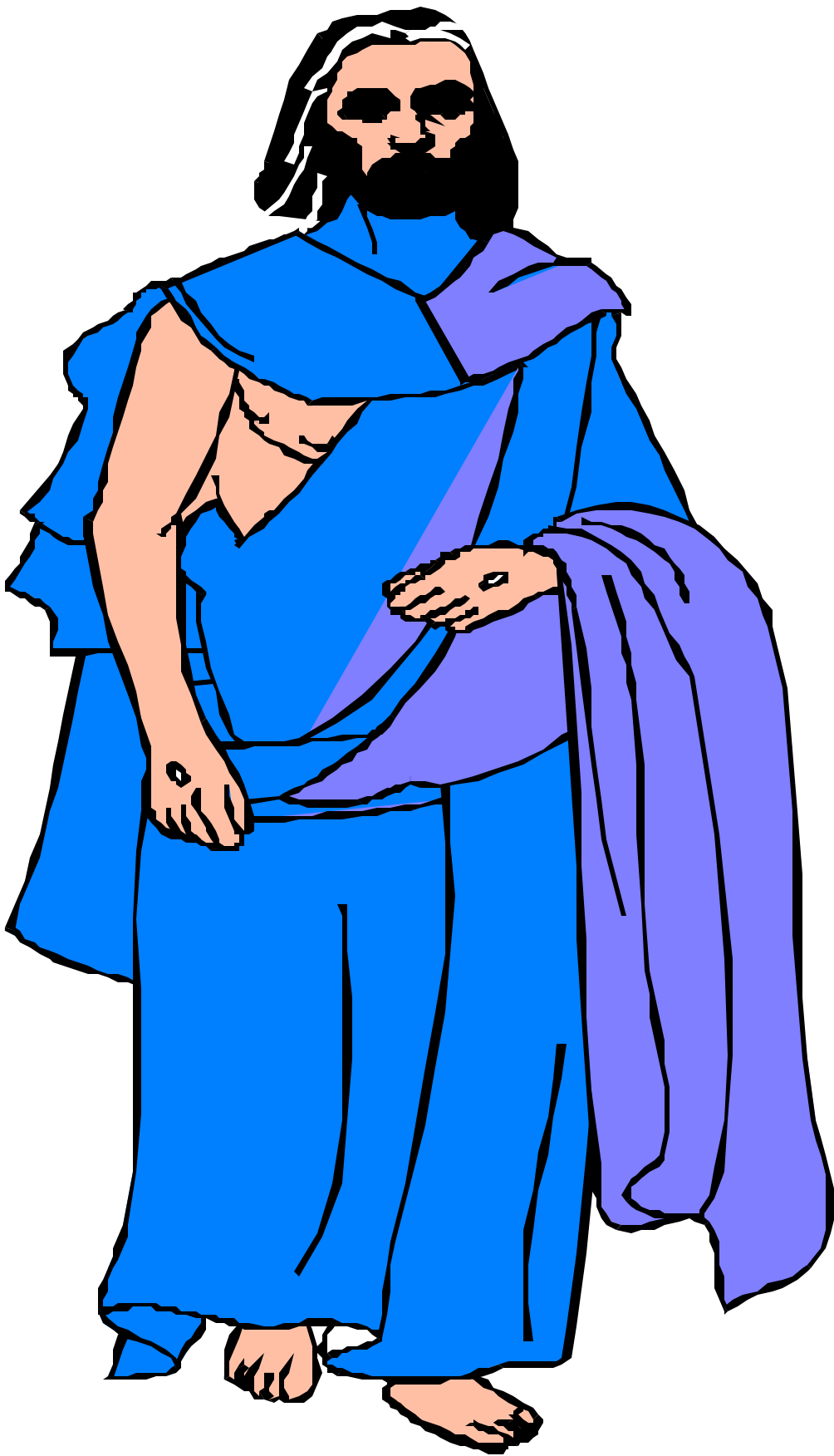
The sins of America have been collected and stored away for the time of punishment. You people have been offered new birth through the blood sacrifice of Jesus upon the cross but you resist being born. How foolish you are. I have ransomed them from death and the grave but they will not be born into the kingdom. Death, bring forth your terrors. Grave, bring forth your plagues. I the Lord will blow hard against your land and dry up your grain and crops and your rivers and wells will disappear. Every thing that you count of value will be plundered and carried away.

You people who call yourself Christians must bear the consequences of your sin, guilt and rebellion against your Holy God. You will be killed by an invading army. The little ones will be dashed to death against the ground and your pregnant women ripped open by swords.

Return, America, to the Lord your God because your sins have brought you down and caused you to fall. Call upon the Lord in prayer and ask God to forgive your sins and receive you back to Himself. No treaty, no army can save you, repent from falling away from the true and living God and call upon His mercy.

The Lord says I will heal your lack of faith and I will love you freely for my anger is turned away from you. When you return to me, I will be as the due and your land shall blossom and grow roots and branches to spread out, and you will have safety and your crops and grain shall flourish and there shall be plenty. I the one who cares for you daily through out the entire year tell you stay away from idols and things that become idols. If you are wise then you will listen and understand. The path that the Lord leads you in is true and right and righteous people live by walking in them. But sinners stumble and fall along the way.





JOEL

THE WORD OF THE LORD GIVEN TO JOEL

And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.

Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the people of the land into the house of the Lord and cry unto Him in Penitent pleadings.

Hear this you leaders and everyone listen. Nothing like this has happened in your history and tell your children until the third generation. Locust shall come from the north, south, east, and west and shall take away all crops. Awake drunkard and weep because all the grapes are ruined and all your new wine is gone. The hethern and hostile nations have invaded the land and are mighty and without number and have the teeth of a lion and the jaw of a lioness. *Revelation 9:7: And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men.*

8: And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. They have destroyed my grapevine and fruit trees taking away the fruit, leaves and even stripping away the bark to the white bare branches. Weep with sorrow like a bride girded with sackcloth for the husband of her youth. Meat and drink offerings are cut off from the House of the Lord. The pastors mourn because there are no offerings. Every tree and vine that bears fruit has dried up and joy has dried up with them. Pastors dress yourselves in sackcloth. Come spend the night in sackcloth you ministers of God. Sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the people of the land into the house of the Lord and cry unto Him in Penitent pleadings. The judgment of the day of the Lord is at hand when destruction comes from the Almighty! We watch our food disappear from before our eyes. There is no joyful celebrations in the House of our God. The seeds die in the parched ground and the grain crops fail. Barns are empty and abandoned. The cattle have no grass to eat and the sheep bleat because of thirst. Lord help us! For fire has consumed the pastures and the trees. Even the wild animals cry out unto you.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, sound an alarm on My holy Mount. Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble in fear because the day of the Lord is upon us. A day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick mists and darkness like that of dawn spread upon the mountains a heathen army appears such as have never been seen before and never will be seen again. Fire burns in front of them in every direction and behind them a flame burns. A land like the garden of Eden in front of them and behind them a desolate wilderness and none has escaped the ravages of the devouring army. They leap across mountains in chariots that make the sound of a great fire burning stubble. Fear grips the people. The attackers march like warriors and scale walls like trained solders and march straight forward and never break rank. No weapon can stop them. The earth quakes before them, the heavens tremble, the sun and moon are darkened and the stars withdraw their shining.

Revelation 9:2: And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3: And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Revelation 16:14: For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

That is why the Lord says Turn to me now while there is time! Give me your hearts. Come with fasting and weeping and mourning. Don't tear your clothing in your grief instead tear your hearts. Return to the Lord your God for he is gracious and merciful. He is not easily angered. He is filled with kindness and is eager to not punish you. Who knows, perhaps He will give you a reprieve and send you a blessing instead of this curse and leave a blessing behind even giving you the means by which to serve Him.

Blow the trumpet in Zion, announce a fast, call a solemn assembly. Bring everyone in from the children to the elderly and sanctify the congregation. Let the pastors stand before the people and minister in the Lord's presence weeping, let them pray, Spare your people Lord! They belong to you so don't let them become an object of mockery. Don't let their name become a proverb of unbelieving foreigners who say. Where is the God of Israel? He must be helpless.

Then the Lord will pity his people and return unto them grain, wine, and oil and you will no longer be a mockery to other nations. I will remove these armies from the land and send them far away and into the wastelands from which they came. The stench of their rotting bodies will rise over the land.

Don't be afraid, my people, be glad and full of joy for the Lord has done great things. Rejoice for the rains He sends are an expression of His grace. I will restore for you the years that the locust has eaten. It was I who sent the great army among you. Once again you will have food and you will praise the Lord who has done these miracles for you and never again will my people be disgraced like this. Then you will know that I am here among my people and that I alone am the Lord your God.

I will pour out my Spirit upon all the people. Your sons and your daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions. In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on servants, men, and women alike. I will cause wonders in the heavens and on the earth. Blood, fire and pillars of smoke. The sun will be turned into darkness and the moon will turn blood red before the great and terrible day of the Lord. And anyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. In Mount Zion in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, for among the remnant shall be those whom the Lord calls.

That is why the Lord says Turn to me now while there is time! Give me your hearts. Come with fasting and weeping and mourning. Don't tear your clothing in your grief instead tear your hearts. Return to the Lord your God for he is gracious and merciful.

I will pour out my Spirit upon all the people.

In those days I will pour out my Spirit even on servants, men, and women alike.

Water shall flow through dry places and the land shall prosper but the lands which attacked Judah shall be as a wilderness.

J u d a h shall remain forever and my people for all generations.

At that time, when I restore the prosperity of Judah and Jerusalem I will gather the armies of the world into the valley of Jehoshaphat, Says the Lord. There I will judge them for harming my people and scattering my inheritance among the nations and dividing up my land. You carried my silver and gold off to your pagan temples and sold my people. But I will bring them back and I will return your deed upon your head for retaliation. I will sell your sons and daughters to a nation far off for the Lord has spoken! Prepare for war. Let all the nations be called to arms. Let them march to the valley of Jehoshaphat. There I, the Lord, will sit to pronounce judgment on them all. The stored up wickedness of these people is overflowing. Thousands wait in the valley of decision which is close to the day of the Lord. The Lord will thunder and roar from Zion and the heavens and earth shall shake but the Lord shall be a refuge for His people and a stronghold for His children. So shall you know that I am the Lord your God dwelling in Zion my holy mountain. Strangers and foreigners not born into the family of God shall no longer pass through it. Water shall flow through dry places and the land shall prosper but the lands which attacked Judah shall be as a wilderness.

Judah shall remain forever and my people for all generations. I will pardon my people's crimes that I have not yet pardoned and I the Lord will make my home with my people.





AMOS

The words of Amos, who was among the herdmen of Tekoa, which he saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

They have sinned again and again and I will not forget it;

This is a report of what he saw and heard, The LORD will roar from His temple in Mount Zion, and utter his voice as thunder from Jerusalem; and the habitations of the shepherds shall mourn for the green pastures shall dry up, and all the grass of Carmel shall wither and die.

But I will send a fire into the house...

Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof they have sinned again and again and I will not forget it; because they have beat down my people in Gilead with threshing instruments of iron: But I will send a fire into the house of King Hazael, which shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad. I will break also the gates of Damascus, and cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven, and him, the ruler, that holds the sceptre from the house of Eden: and the people of Syria shall go into captivity unto Kir, saith the LORD. Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four they have sinned again and again, I will not turn away the punishment thereof; because they carried away captive selling them as slaves, to deliver them up to Edom: But I will send a fire on the wall of Gaza, which shall devour the palaces (fortresses) thereof: And I will cut off (destroy) the inhabitant from Ashdod, and him that holds the sceptre from Ashkelon, and I will turn mine hand against Ekron: and the remnant of the Philistines shall be killed, saith the Lord GOD, I the Sovereign Lord have spoken!.

And their king shall go into captivity, he and his princes together, saith the LORD, I the Lord hath spoken..

Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Tyrus, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof they have sinned again and again; because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, and remembered not the brotherly covenant: But I will send a fire on the wall of Tyrus, which shall devour the palaces (fortresses) thereof. Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof they have sinned over and over; because he did pursue his brother with the sword, and did cast off all pity, and his anger did tear perpetually, and he kept his wrath for ever and showed no mercy: But I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall destroy the (fortress) palaces of Bozrah.

Thus saith the LORD; For three transgressions of the children of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment thereof they have sinned over and over; because they have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border: But I will kindle a fire in the wall of Rabbah, and it shall devour the palaces thereof, with shouting in the day of battle, with a tempest in the day of the whirlwind: And their king shall go into captivity, he and his princes together, saith the LORD, I the Lord hath spoken..

This is what the LORD says: "For three sins of Moab, even for four the people have sinned over and over, I will not turn back. Because he burned, as if to lime, the bones of Edom's king, I will send fire upon Moab that will consume the fortresses of Kerioth. Moab will go down in great tumult amid war cries and the blast of the trumpet. I will destroy her ruler and kill all her officials with him," says the LORD, I the Lord have spoken.

This is what the LORD says: "For three sins of Judah, even for four the people have sinned over and over, I will not turn back. Because they have rejected the law of the LORD and have not kept his decrees, because they have been led astray by false gods, the gods their ancestors followed, I will send fire upon Judah that will consume the fortresses of Jerusalem."

This is what the LORD says: "For three sins of Israel, even for four the people have sinned over and over, I will not turn back. They sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals. They trample on the heads of the poor as upon the dust of the ground and deny justice to the oppressed. Father and son sleep with the same girl and so profane my holy name.

They lie down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge from their debtors. In the house of their god they drink wine purchased with stolen money.

Think of all I have done for you, "I destroyed the Amorite before them, though he was tall as the cedars and strong as the oaks. I destroyed his fruit above and his roots below. "I brought you up out of Egypt, and I led you forty years in the desert to give you the land of the Amorites. I also raised up prophets from among your sons and Nazirites from among your young men. Is this not true, people of Israel?" Declares the LORD. "But you made the Nazirites sin by drinking wine and commanded the prophets not to prophesy.

"Now then, I will crush you as a cart crushes when loaded with grain. The swift will not escape, the strong will not muster their strength, and the warrior will not save his life. The archer will not stand his ground, the fleet-footed soldier will not get away, and the horseman will not save his life. Even the bravest warriors will flee naked on that day," the most courageous fighting men will drop their weapons and run for their lives. I, the Lord have spoken, declares the LORD.



Because they have rejected the law of the LORD and have not kept his decrees, because they have been led astray by false gods, the gods their ancestors followed, I will send fire

In the house of their god they drink wine purchased with stolen money

Even the bravest warriors will flee naked on that day," the most courageous fighting men will drop their weapons and run for their lives. I, the Lord have spoken, declares the LORD.

Listen to this message, Hear this word which the LORD has spoken against you, sons of Israel, against the entire family which He brought up from the land of Egypt, "You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth; therefore, I will punish you for all your iniquities."

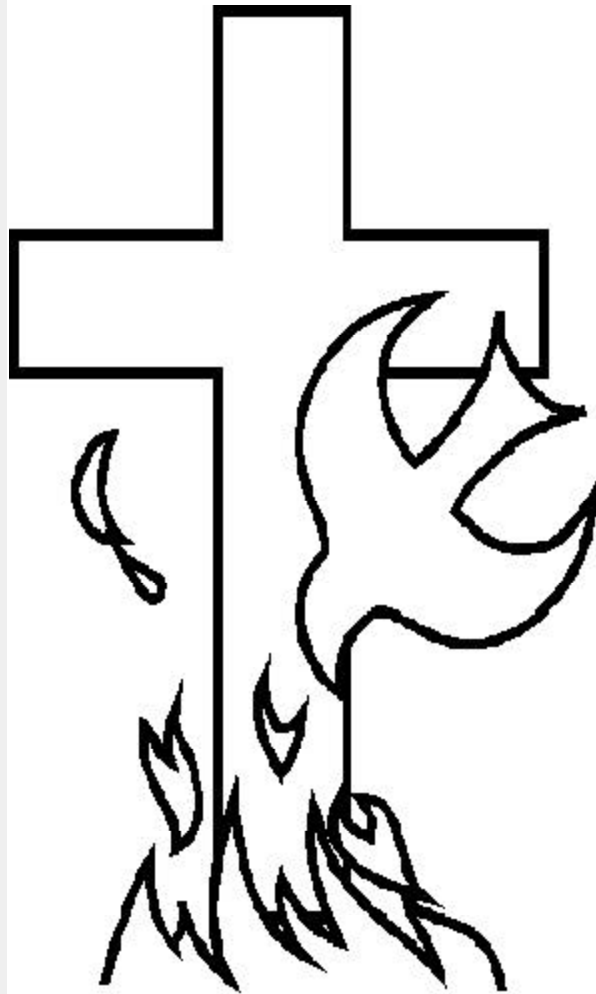
Do two men walk together unless they have made an agreement on the direction? Does a lion roar in the forest when he has no prey?

Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground when there is no bait in it?

Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel and warning To His servants the prophets. A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy? The Sovereign Lord has spoken, I dare not refuse to proclaim his message.

Do two men walk together unless they have made an agreement on the direction? Does a lion roar in the forest when he has no prey? Does a young lion growl from his den unless he has captured something? Does a bird fall into a trap on the ground when there is no bait in it? Does a trap spring up from the earth when it captures nothing at all? If a trumpet is blown in a city will not the people tremble? If a calamity occurs in a city has not the LORD done it? Surely the Lord GOD does nothing Unless He reveals His secret counsel and warning To His servants the prophets. A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy? The Sovereign Lord has spoken, I dare not refuse to proclaim his message, Proclaim on the citadels in Ashdod and on the citadels in the land of Egypt and say, "Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria and see the great tumults within her and the oppressions in her midst. "But they do not know how to do what

is right," declares the LORD, "these who hoard up violence and devastation in their citadels." Therefore, thus says the Lord GOD, "An enemy, even one surrounding the land, will pull down your strength from you and your citadels will be looted." Thus says the LORD, "Just as the shepherd snatches from the lion's mouth a couple of legs or a piece of an ear, so will the sons of Israel dwelling in Samaria be snatched away--with the corner of a bed and the cover of a couch! "Hear and testify against the house of Jacob," declares the Lord GOD, the God of hosts. "For on the day that I punish Israel's transgressions, I will also punish the altars of Bethel; the horns of the altar will be cut off, and they will fall to the ground. "I will also smite the winter house together with the summer house; the houses of ivory will also perish and the great houses will come to an end," declares the LORD.

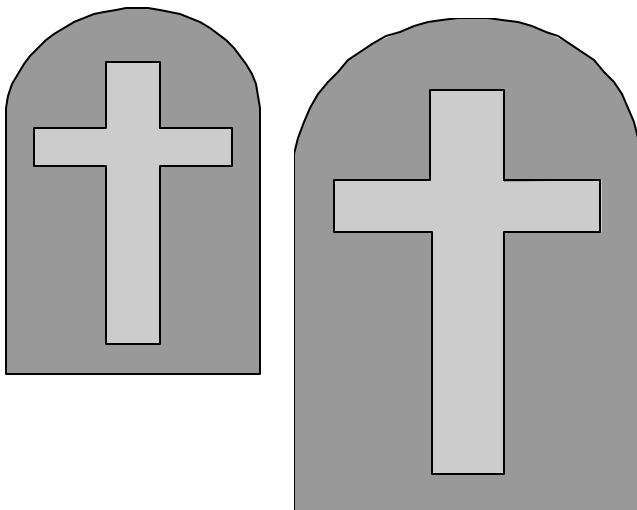


Amos 4

Hear this word, listen to me you fat cows of Bashan who are on the mountain of Samaria, who oppress the poor, who crush the needy, who say to your husbands, "Bring now, that we may have another drink!" The Sovereign Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness, "Behold, the days are coming upon you when they will take you away with meat hooks, and the last of you with fish hooks. "You will go out through breaches in the walls, each one straight before her, and you will be cast to out of your fortresses," I the Lord have spoken, declares the LORD. "Enter Bethel and transgress; keep on disobeying me, your sins are mounting up, in Gilgal multiply transgression! Bring your sacrifices every morning, your tithes every three days. "Offer a thank offering also from that which is leavened, and proclaim freewill offerings, make them known. For so you love to do, you sons of Israel," declares the Sovereign Lord GOD. "But I gave you also cleanness of teeth in all your cities and lack of bread in all your places, yet you have not returned to me," 'I brought hunger to every city and famine to every town but you still would not return to me, declares the LORD. "And furthermore, I withheld the rain from you while there were still three months until harvest. Then I would send rain on one city and on another city I would not send rain; One part would be rained on, while the part not rained on would dry up. "So two or three cities would stagger to another city to drink water, but would not be satisfied; yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD. "I smote you with scorching wind and mildew; and the caterpillar was devouring your many gardens and vineyards, fig trees and olive trees; yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD. "I sent a plague among you after the manner of Egypt; I slew your young men by the sword along with your captured horses, and I made the stench of your camp rise up in your nostrils; yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD. "I overthrew you as God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah, and you were like a firebrand snatched from a blaze; yet you have not returned to me," declares the LORD. "Therefore, thus I will do to you, O Israel; because I

Behold the day is coming when they will take you away with meat hooks.

Prepare to Meet your God!
O Israel



shall do this to you, prepare to meet your God, O Israel." For behold, He who forms mountains and creates the wind and declares to man what are His thoughts, He who makes dawn into darkness and treads on the high places of the earth, the LORD God of hosts, The Lord God Almighty, is His name.

THE WISE
SHALL
KEEP
QUIET
FOR IT
IS AN
EVIL TIME

I delight
in your
solemn
assemblies

Hear this word which I take up for you as a dirge or funeral song, O house of Israel.

The virgin Israel has fallen,
she will not rise again
She lies neglected on her land;
there is none to raise her up.

For thus says the Sovereign Lord GOD, "The city which goes forth to battle, a thousand strong will have a hundred men left, and the one which goes forth a hundred strong will have ten men left to the house of Israel." For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel, "Seek Me, come back to Me, that you may live. "But do not resort to Bethel, and do not come to Gilgal, nor cross over to Beersheba; for Gilgal will certainly go into captivity, and Bethel will come to trouble. "Seek the LORD that you may live, lest He break forth like a fire, O house of Joseph, and it consume with none to quench it for Bethel, For those who turn justice into wormwood and cast righteousness down to the earth." He who made the stars the Pleiades and Orion and changes deep darkness into morning, who also darkens day into night, who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the surface of the earth, the LORD is His name. It is He who flashes forth with destruction upon the strong, so that destruction comes upon the fortress. They hate honest judges who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him who speaks with integrity. Therefore, because you impose heavy rent on the poor and exact a tribute of grain from them, though you have built houses of well-hewn stone, yet you will not live in them; you have planted pleasant vineyards, yet you will not drink their wine. For I know your vast number of transgressions are many and your sins are great, you who distress the righteous and accept bribes, and turn aside the poor in the gate and deprive them of justice. Therefore, at such a time the prudent person keeps silent, for it is an evil time.

Seek good and not evil, that you may live; and thus may the LORD God of hosts be with you, just as you have said! Hate evil, love good, and establish justice in the gate! Perhaps the LORD God of hosts may be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. Therefore, thus says the LORD God of hosts, the Lord, "There is wailing in all the plazas, and in all the streets they say, 'Alas! Alas!' They also call the farmer to mourning and professional mourners to lamentation. "And in all the vineyards there is wailing, because I shall pass through the midst of you AND DESTROY THEM ALL," says the LORD. Alas, you who are longing for the day of the LORD, for what purpose will the day of the LORD be to you? It will be darkness and not light; As when a man flees from a lion, and a bear meets him, or goes home, leans his hand against the wall, and a snake bites him. Will not the day of the LORD be darkness instead of light, even gloom with no brightness in it? "I hate, I reject your festivals, nor do I delight in your solemn assemblies. "Even though you offer up to me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them; and I will not even look at the peace offerings of your fatlings. "Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not even listen to the sound of your harps. "But let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. "Did you present Me with sacrifices and grain offerings in the wilderness for forty years, O house of Israel? "You also carried along Sikkuth your king and Kiyun, your images, the star of your gods which you made for yourselves. "Therefore, I will make you go into exile beyond Damascus," says the LORD, whose name is the Sovereign Lord God Almighty, God of hosts.

Woe to those who lounge in luxury and think you secure and are at ease in Zion, and to those who feel secure in the mountain of Samaria, the distinguished men of the foremost of nations, the popular and famous to whom the people of the house of Israel comes for help.

Go over to Calneh and look, see what happened there and go from there to Hamath the great, then go down to Gath of the Philistines. Are they better than these kingdoms, or is their territory greater than yours and see how they were destroyed? Do you put off the day of calamity, and would you bring near the seat of violence? Those who recline on beds of ivory and sprawl on their couches, and eat lambs from the flock and calves from the midst of the stall, Who improvise to the sound of the harp, and like David have composed songs for themselves, you sing idle songs and think yourselves to be great musicians. Who drink wine from sacrificial bowls while they anoint themselves with the finest of fragrance oils, yet they have not grieved over the ruin of Joseph, you care nothing that your nation is going to ruin. Therefore, they will now go into exile at the head of the exiles, and the sprawlers' banqueting will pass away.

The Lord GOD has sworn by himself, the LORD God of hosts has declared: "I loathe the arrogance of Jacob, and I detest his citadels; therefore, I will deliver up the city and all it contains.-- I despise the pride and false glory and I hate their beautiful homes. I will give this city and everything in it to their enemies" And it will be, if ten men are left in one house, they will die. Then one's uncle, or his undertaker, will lift him up to carry out his bones from the house, and he will say to the one who is in the innermost part of the house, "Is anyone else with you?" And that one will say, "No one." Then he will answer, "Keep quiet. For the name of the LORD is not to be mentioned." For behold, the LORD is going to command that the great house be smashed to pieces and the small house to fragments. Do horses run on rocks? Or does one plow rocks with oxen? You say that, that is stupid, Yet that is how stupid you are because you have turned justice into poison, and have made bitter the sweet fruit of righteousness as wormwood, You who rejoice in Lo-debar, and say, "Have we not by our own strength taken Karnaim for ourselves?" "For behold, I am going to raise up a nation against you, O house of Israel," declares the LORD God of hosts, "And they will afflict you from the entrance of Hamath in the north to the brook of the Arabah in the south."

You care
nothing
that your
nation
is going
to ruin.

I despise
the pride and
false glory and
I hate
their beautiful
homes.
I will give
this city and
everything in it
to
their enemies"

"I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet; for I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs. "But the LORD took me from following the flock and the LORD said to me, 'Go prophesy to My people Israel.'

Thus the Sovereign Lord GOD showed me, and behold, He was forming a locust-swarm when the spring crop began to sprout. And behold, the spring crop was after the king's mowing. And it came about, when it had finished eating the vegetation of the land, everything that was green, that I said, "Lord GOD, please pardon! How can Jacob stand, for he is small?" The LORD changed His mind about this. "It shall not be," said the LORD. Thus the Lord GOD showed me, and behold, the Lord GOD was calling to contend with them by fire, and it consumed the great deep and began to consume the farm land.

Then I said, "Lord GOD, please stop! How can Jacob stand, for he is small?" The LORD changed His mind about this. "This too shall not be," said the Lord GOD. I despise the pride and false glory and I hate their beautiful homes. I will give this city and everything in it to their enemies" I despise the pride and false glory and I hate their beautiful homes. I will give this city and everything in it to their enemies" Thus He showed me, and behold, the Lord was standing by a vertical wall, with a plumb line in His hand.

And the LORD said to me, "What do you see, Amos?" And I said, "A plumb line." Then the Lord said, "Behold I am about to put a plumb line In the midst of My people Israel. I will spare them no longer. "The high places of Isaac will be desolated And the sanctuaries of Israel laid waste. Then shall I rise up against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."

Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent word to Jeroboam, king of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the midst of the house of Israel; the land is unable to endure all his words. "For thus Amos says, 'Jeroboam will die by the sword and Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.'" Then Amaziah said to Amos, "Go, you seer, flee away to the land of Judah, and there eat bread and there do your prophesying! "But no longer prophesy at Bethel, for it is a sanctuary of the king and a royal residence." Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, "I am not a prophet, nor am I the son of a prophet; for I am a herdsman and a grower of sycamore figs. "But the LORD took me from following the flock and the LORD said to me, 'Go prophesy to My people Israel.' "And now hear the word of the LORD: you are saying, 'You shall not prophesy against Israel nor shall you speak against the house of Isaac.' "Therefore, thus says the LORD, 'Your wife will become a harlot in the city, your sons and your daughters will fall by the sword, your land will be parceled up by a measuring line, and you yourself will die upon unclean soil. Moreover, Israel will certainly go from its land into exile.'"

Thus the Sovereign Lord GOD showed me, and behold, there was a basket of summer fruit. And He said, "What do you see, Amos?" And I said, "A basket of ripe summer fruit." Then the LORD said to me, "The time is ripe, the end has come for My people Israel. I will spare them no longer. "The songs of the palace will turn to wailing in that day," declares the Lord GOD. "Many will be the corpses; in every place they will cast them forth in silence." Hear this, you who trample the needy, to do away with the humble of the land, saying, "When will the new moon be over, so that we may sell grain, and the sabbath, that we may open the wheat market, to make the bushel smaller and the shekel bigger, and to cheat with dishonest scale. So as to buy the helpless for money and the needy for a pair of sandals, and that we may sell the refuse of the wheat?" The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob, "Indeed, I will never forget any of their deeds. "Because of this will not the land quake and everyone who dwells in it mourn? Indeed, all of it will rise up like the Nile, and it will be tossed about, and subside like the Nile of Egypt. "And it will come about in that day," declares the Lord GOD, "That I shall make the sun go down at noon and make the earth dark in broad daylight. "Then I shall turn your festivals into mourning and all your songs into lamentation; and I will bring sackcloth on everyone's loins and baldness on every head. And I will make it like a time of mourning for an only son, and the end of it will be like a bitter day. "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "When I will send a famine on the land, not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, but rather for hearing the words of the LORD. "And people will stagger and run from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, but they will not find it. "In that day the beautiful virgins and the young men will faint from thirst. "As for those who swear by the guilt of Samaria, who say, 'As your god lives, O Dan,' and, 'As the way of Beersheba lives,' they will fall and not rise again."

"And people will stagger and run from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east; they will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, but they will not find it.



"In that day I will raise up the fallen kingdom of David, and wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old;

I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and He said, "Smite the capitals so that the thresholds (strike the tops of the Columns so hard that the foundation) will shake, and break them on the heads of them all! Then I will slay the rest of them with the sword; they will not have a fugitive who will flee, or a refugee who will escape.

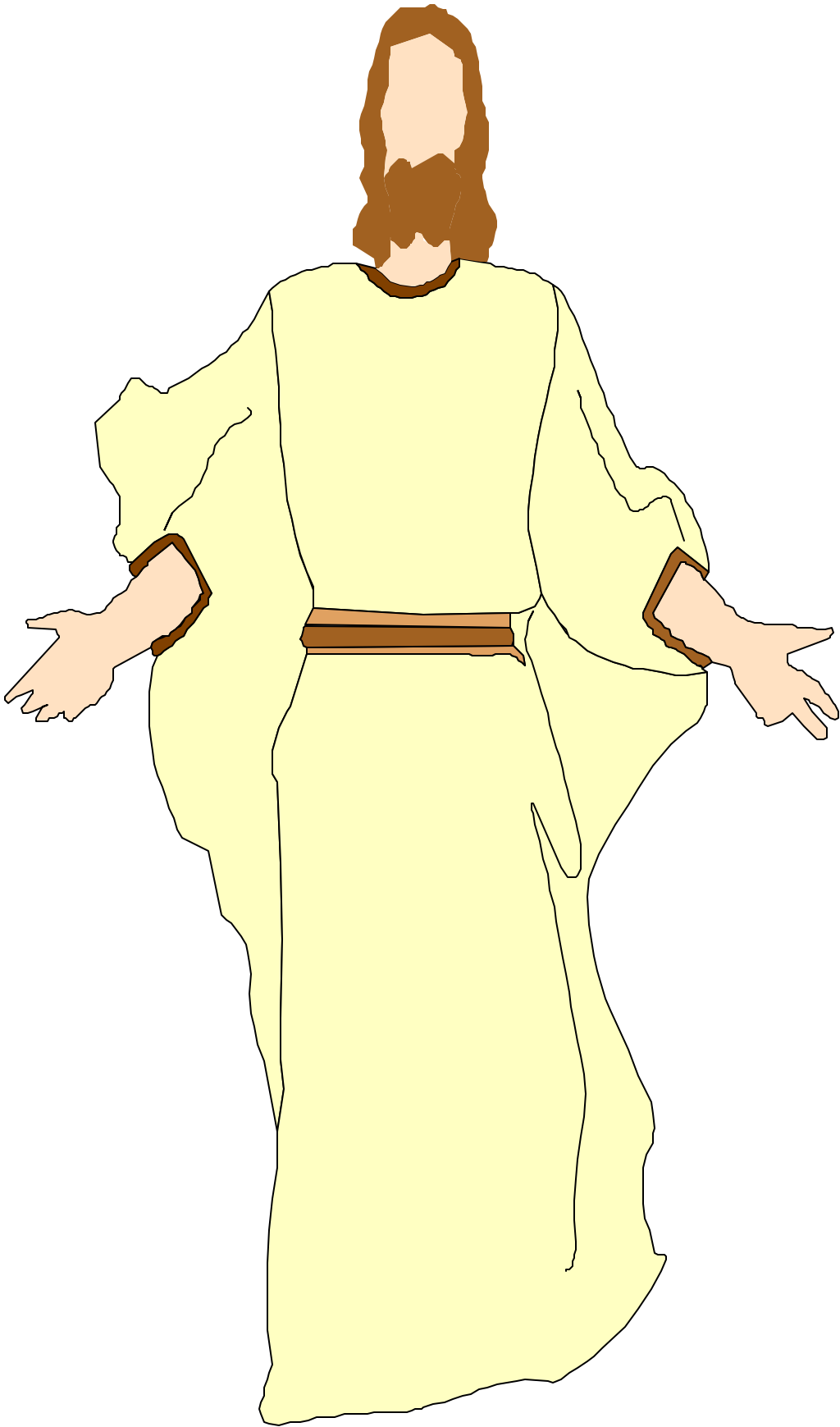
"Though they dig into Sheol, from there shall My hand take them; and though they ascend to heaven, from there will I bring them down. "And though they hide on the summit of Carmel, I will search them out and take them from there; and though they conceal themselves from My sight on the floor of the sea, from there I will command the serpent and it will bite them. "And though they go into captivity before their enemies, from there I will command the sword that it slay them, and I will set My eyes against them for evil and not for good."

And the Lord GOD of hosts, the One who touches the land so that it melts, and all those who dwell in it mourn, and all of it rises up like the Nile and subsides like the Nile of Egypt; The One who builds His upper chambers in the heavens, and has founded His vaulted dome over the earth, He who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the face of the earth, the LORD is His name.

"Are you not as the sons of Ethiopia to me, O sons of Israel?" Declares the LORD. "Have I not brought up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Arameans from Kir? "Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are on the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the face of the earth; nevertheless, I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob," declares the LORD. "For behold, I am commanding, and I will shake the house of Israel among all nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, but not a kernel will fall to the ground. "All the sinners of My people will die by the sword, those who say, 'The calamity will not overtake or confront us.'

"In that day I will raise up the fallen kingdom of David, and wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old; That they may possess the remnant of Edom And all the nations who are called by My name, "Declares the LORD who does this. "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "When the grain and the vineyards will grow faster than they can be harvested, When the plowman will overtake the reaper And the treacher of grapes him who sows seed; when the mountains will drip sweet wine, and all the hills will be dissolved. "Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel, and they will rebuild the ruined cities and live in them, they will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, and make gardens and eat their fruit.

"I will also plant them on their land, and they will not again be uprooted from their land which I have given them," says the LORD your God.



OBADIAH

"The pride and arrogance of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, in the loftiness of your dwelling place, who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to earth?'"

"Do not gloat over your brother's day, the day of his misfortune."

This is the vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom-- We have heard a report from the LORD, and an envoy has been sent among the nations saying, "Arise and let us go against her for battle"--

"Behold, I have made you small among the nations; you are greatly despised. "The pride and arrogance of your heart has deceived you, you who live in the clefts of the rock, in the loftiness of your dwelling place, who say in your heart, 'Who will bring me down to earth?' "Though you build high like the eagle, though you set your nest among the stars, from there I will bring you down," declares the LORD. "If thieves came to you, if robbers by night-- Oh how you will be ruined!-- Would they not steal only until they had enough? If grape gatherers came to you, would they not leave some gleanings? "Oh how Esau (Edom) will be ransacked, and his hidden treasures searched out!

"All the men allied with you will send you forth to the border, and the men at peace with you will deceive you and overpower you. They who eat your bread will set an ambush for you. (There is no understanding in him.) "Will I not on that day," declares the LORD, "Destroy wise men from Edom and understanding from the mountain of Edom? "Then your mighty men will be dismayed and terrified, O Teman, in order that everyone may be cut off from the mountain of Esau by slaughter (cut down in slaughter).

Why? "Because of violence to your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame, and you will be cut off forever. "On the day that you stood aloof refusing to lift a finger to help, while the foreign strangers carried off his wealth, and foreigners entered his gate and cast lots for Jerusalem-- you too were as one of them.

You should not have done this. "Do not gloat over your brother's day, the day of his misfortune. You should not have plundered the land of Israel when they were suffering such calamity. And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah in the day of their destruction; yes, do not boast in the day of their distress. "Do not enter the gate of My people in the day of their disaster. Yes, you, do not gloat over their calamity in the day of their disaster. And do not loot their wealth in the day of their disaster. "And do not stand at the fork of the road to cut down their fugitives; and do not imprison their survivors in the day of their distress.

"For the day of the LORD draws near when I, the Lord, will judge the acts of all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head. "Because just as you swallowed up My people on My holy mountain, all the nations will drink continually. They will drink and swallow the punishment that I pour out on you, and become as if they had never existed. "But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape, and it will be holy. And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions.

"Then the house of Jacob will be a raging fire and the house of Joseph a raging flame; but the house of Esau will be as dry stubble. And they will set them on fire and consume them, so that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau (Edom)," for the LORD has spoken.

Then those of the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau (Edom), and those of the Shephelah the Philistine plain; also, they will possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria, and Benjamin will possess Gilead. And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel, who are among the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad will possess the cities of the Negev. The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion to judge the mountain of Esau, and the kingdom will be the LORD'S. And the Lord Himself will be the King!



"For the day of the LORD draws near when I, the Lord, will judge the acts of all the nations.

They will drink and swallow the punishment that I pour out on you, and become as if they had never existed.

"Then the house of Jacob will be a raging fire and the house of Joseph a raging flame; but the house of Esau will be as dry stubble.

JONAH

But Jonah ran away from the LORD

Get up and call on your god!

While God was speaking, where were the preachers and religious people? If God needed a missionary today to go to an unfavorable people, could He send the church or would he have to look elsewhere?

When we disobey God, it affects other people around us too.

The word of the LORD came to Jonah son of Amittai: "Go to the great city of Nineveh and preach against it, because its wickedness has come up before me."

But Jonah ran away from the LORD and headed for Tarshish. He went down to Joppa, where he found a ship bound for that port. After paying the fare, he went aboard and sailed for Tarshish to flee from the LORD. Then the LORD sent a great wind on the sea, and such a violent storm arose that the ship threatened to break up.

All the sailors were afraid and each cried out to his own god. And they threw the cargo into the sea to lighten the ship. But Jonah had gone below deck, where he lay down and fell into a deep sleep. The captain went to him and said, "How can you sleep? Get up and call on your god! Maybe he will take notice of us, and we will not perish." Then the sailors said to each other, "Come, let us cast lots to find out who is responsible for this calamity." They cast lots and the lot fell on Jonah.

So they asked him, "Tell us, who is responsible for making all this trouble for us? What do you do? Where do you come from? What is your country? From what people are you?" He answered, "I am a Hebrew and I worship the LORD, the God of heaven, who made the sea and the land." This terrified them and they asked, "What have you done?" (They knew he was running away from the LORD, because he had already told them so.) The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So they asked him, "What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?"

"Pick me up and throw me into the sea," he replied, "and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you." Instead, the men did their best to row back to land. But they could not, for the sea grew even wilder than before. Then they cried to the LORD, "O LORD, please do not let us die for taking this man's life. Do not hold us accountable for killing an innocent man, for you, O LORD, have done as you pleased." Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. At this the men greatly feared the LORD, and they offered a sacrifice to the LORD and made vows to him.

While God was speaking, where were the preachers and religious people? If God needed a missionary today to go to an unfavorable people, could He send the church or would he have to look elsewhere? What is it that you would do if God called you to the Niveveh down the street, would you run for the opposite end of the earth? For those who disobey and run away, calamity comes in their life. Jonah's ship is not coming in, it is going down. He brags about his line of work, I am a believer in Almighty God but I am running away from Him. Now some sailors got saved because Jonah shared his knowledge of the Lord with them and they signs and wonders happen. Good happened even though he was in the wrong place at the wrong time. When we disobey God, it affects other people around us too.

But the LORD provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights.

From inside the fish Jonah prayed to the LORD his God. He said: "In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me. From the depths of the grave I called for help, and you listened to my cry. You hurled me into the deep, into the very heart of the seas, and the currents swirled about me; all your waves and breakers swept over me. I said, 'I have been banished from your sight; yet I will look again toward your holy temple.' The engulfing waters threatened me, the deep surrounded me; seaweed was wrapped around my head. To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you brought my life up from the pit, O LORD my God.

"When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, LORD, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple. Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs. But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the LORD." And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

Did you ever notice that when you are not in good fellowship with the Lord and obedient to Him in all things, He still gets you out of trouble even if it is not just the way that you would have Him do it. When one has been through the storm, swallowed by a fish and are being digested at the bottom of the sea, it is so easy to remember the Lord! I would to God that I could remember Him in that same way when everything is going good and I am not hurting. Jonah had a growing moment! Praise God that He allows happenings in our lives that remind us that we still need Him! The way that man is causes him to forget the Lord when all is going well, if health is good and there is money in the bank, and all seems to be going well, focus on the God who mad it so. If it isn't, no one will have to tell you to focus on Him. Throw away your hope in yourself and what you can do and praise the Lord and fulfil your vows to Him and remember that your hope and your salvation comes from the Lord.. When one's earnest prayer rises to God, the results can be seen. Humble yourself, pray, and seek the Lord and He will will be with you and hear you, no matter where you are or what you have been doing. When He gave Jonah relief, not only did he get out of the fish but he was not in the middle of the sea, he was on dry ground. The Lord told the fish to spit up Jonah on the beach and it did as God told it to. Praise God that He allows happenings in our lives that remind us that we still need Him! Now if we would just listen like a fish!

"In my distress I called to the LORD, and he answered me.

"When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, LORD, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple.

Praise God that He allows happenings in our lives that remind us that we still need Him!

Now if we would just listen like a fish!

Now when
God said to
Jonah, go
to
Nineveh,
Jonah
obeyed the
Lord.

Jonah's
Sermon:
"Forty more
days and
Nineveh will be
overturned."

The greatest
blessing that we
will ever have is
while walking in
obedience to
God in the place
and time that He
would have us
there!

The Lord spake to Jonah a second time. "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you." Jonah obeyed the word of the LORD and went to Nineveh. Now Nineveh was a very important city-- a visit required three days to walk through it all.

After one goes through a great storm and is close to death and finally realizes that God is really God and knows all and even though man may not see the whole story and understand the entire situation and realize that anything is possible if it is God doing the planning and giving the increase and meeting the needs. What may be a poor idea in the flesh, is a fantastic idea if it was God's idea and is moved into being by the work of the Holy Spirit. Now when God said to Jonah, go to Nineveh, Jonah obeyed the Lord. Had he already obeyed the Lord, he could have been there and on the way home but he like us wish to find a hard way of learning instead of making it our lifestyle to obey the Lord the first time and every time and just in His time.

On the first day, Jonah started into the city. He proclaimed: "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overturned." The Ninevites believed God. They declared a fast, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. When the news reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. Then he issued a proclamation in Nineveh: "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Do not let any man or beast, herd or flock, taste anything; do not let them eat or drink. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." It is amazing what God can do with an eight word sermon when He has an obedient servant bringing the words. What Jonah did to lead the revival was captured in one sentence! The whole rest of the book is God preparing his "believer" to go to the place that He had sent him and say the Word that He had given him to say. The book of Jonah teaches that when the word of God is given to the gentile people, they can have a great revival but for the most part, the book of Jonah teaches that the "believer" must believe so that he is ready to do God's will without running away and without passing judgment on what God is doing. It is not for believers to make the day, it is for believers to hear and obey. For in obedience to God's will, God works great and mighty works that cannot be even imagined in the minds of men.

When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he had compassion and did not bring upon them the destruction he had threatened.

This was a revival where the entire city which could have been as many as 600,000 people living in spiritual darkness came to the Lord! Was that one happy preacher? No. Actually, he thought the sinners deserved to die! Amazing how the attitudes of people have not changed in so many years! There is a principle that if one is doing things for God, it may not fill the pockets until one walks the streets of Gold. The greatest blessing that we will ever have is while walking in obedience to God in the place and time that He would have us there!

But Jonah was greatly displeased and became angry. He prayed to the LORD, "O LORD, is this not what I said when I was still at home? That is why I was so quick to flee to Tarshish. I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity.

Can you imagine that Jonah was sad because he knew of the grace and compassion of an all loving God who is slow to anger? You must not allow your worst enemy to steal your blessing by your becoming angry or wishing harm to come to him. Join in the grace, mercy and love of the Lord!

Now, O LORD, take away my life, for it is better for me to die than to live." But the LORD replied, "Have you any right to be angry?"

Depression comes when you are unable to control life that is happening around you and make it do what you want it to do. Because of what Jesus did on the cross, no believer has the right to be angry! Can I say that again? Because of what Jesus did on the cross, no believer has the right to be angry!

Jonah went out and sat down at a place east of the city. There he made himself a shelter, sat in its shade and waited to see what would happen to the city. Then the LORD God provided (appointed) a vine and made it grow up over Jonah to give shade for his head to ease his discomfort, and Jonah was very happy about the vine. But at dawn the next day God provided (appointed) a worm, which chewed the vine so that it withered. When the sun rose, God provided (appointed) a scorching east wind, and the sun blazed on Jonah's head so that he grew faint. He wanted to die, and said, "It would be better for me to die than to live."

When there is no man that hears the word of the Lord, the Lord is not bound, He can appoint a vine, a worm, and the wind to do His good will. Praise God for His mighty power that cannot be comprehended or stopped.

But God said to Jonah, "Do you have a right to be angry about the vine?" "I do," he said. "I am angry enough to die." But the LORD said, "You have been concerned about this vine, though you did not tend it or make it grow. It sprang up overnight and died overnight.

But Nineveh has more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who cannot tell their right hand from their left above twelve years old, and many cattle as well. Should I not be concerned about that great city?"

"Religious" people are prejudice against all who are not in "their little group". God said to his people for the first time, I am more concerned about the souls of men than your traditions and the evil exclusions and desires of your evil hearts. Shall people who have no heart for the salvation of the lost and desire only comfort for themselves enter into the Kingdom of Heaven?

Because of what Jesus did on the cross, no believer has the right to be angry!

But the LORD replied, "Have you any right to be angry?"

God said to his people for the first time, I am more concerned about the souls of men than your traditions and the evil exclusions and desires of your evil hearts.

MICAH

Because of
this I will
weep and
w a i l ,
mourn and
lament; I
will go
a b o u t
barefoot
and naked
in sorrow
a n d
shame.

The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah-- the vision he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. Hear, O peoples, all of you, attention, listen, O earth and all who are in it, that the Sovereign LORD may witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple.

Look! The LORD is coming from his dwelling place His throne in Heaven; he comes down and treads the high places of the earth. The mountains melt beneath him and the valleys split apart, like wax before the fire, like water rushing down a slope. All this is because of Jacob's transgression, because of the sins of the house of Israel. What is Jacob's transgression? Is it not Samaria? What is Judah's high place? Is it not Jerusalem?

"Therefore I will make Samaria a heap of rubble, her streets will be plowed up, a place for planting vineyards. I will pour her stones into the valley and lay bare her foundations. All her idols will be broken to pieces; all her temple gifts and sacred treasures will be burned with fire; I will destroy all her images. Since she gathered her gifts from the wages of prostitutes, as the wages of prostitutes they will again be used."

Because of this I will weep and wail, mourn and lament; I will go about barefoot and naked in sorrow and shame. I will howl like a jackal and moan like an owl. For her wound is incurable; it has come to Judah. It has reached the very gate of my people, even to Jerusalem itself.

Tell it not in Gath; weep not at all. In Beth Ophrah, you people roll in the dust to show your anguish and despair. Pass on in nakedness and shame, you who live in Shaphir. Those who live in Zaanan will not come out. Beth Ezel is in mourning; its protection is taken from you.

Those who live in Maroth writhe in pain, waiting for relief, because disaster has come from the LORD, even to the gate of Jerusalem. You who live in Lachish, harness the team to the chariot. You were the beginning of sin to the Daughter of Zion, for the transgressions of Israel were found in you.

Therefore you will give parting gifts to Moresheth Gath; for there is no hope of saving it. The town of Aczib will prove deceptive to the kings of Israel. I will bring a conqueror against you who live in Mareshah. He who is the glory of Israel will come to Adullam. Shave your heads in mourning for the children in whom you delight; make yourselves as bald as the vulture, for they will go from you into exile to distant lands.

Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who lie awake at night to plot evil on their beds! At morning's light they rise and hurry to carry out their wicked schemes because it is in their power to do it. They covet fields and seize them, and houses, and take them. They defraud a man of his home, a fellowman of his inheritance. No one's family or inheritance is safe with you around!

Therefore, the LORD says: "I am planning disaster against this people, I will reward you evil for evil; from which you cannot save yourselves or escape. You will no longer walk proudly, for it will be a time of calamity. In that day men will ridicule you; they will taunt you with this mournful song:

'We are utterly ruined;
my people's possession is divided up.
He takes it from me!
He assigns our fields to traitors.'

Therefore you will have no one in the assembly of the LORD to divide the land by lot, others will set your boundaries and you will have no say in how the land is divided.

"Do not prophesy," the people say. "Do not prophesy about these things; disgrace will not overtake us." Should it be said, O house of Jacob: "Is the Spirit of the LORD angry? Does he do such things?" "Do not my words do good to him whose ways are upright? If you do right, you will find my words to be good.

Lately, to this very hour, my people have risen up like an enemy. You strip off the rich robe from those who pass by without a care, like men returning from battle. You steal the shirts off the backs of those who trusted you making them ragged as men returning from war!

You drive (evicted) the women of my people from their pleasant homes. You take away my blessing (God given rights) from their children forever. Get up, go away! For this is not your resting place, because it is defiled, it is ruined, beyond all remedy.

If a liar and deceiver comes and says, 'I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer,' he would be just the prophet for this people!

"I will surely gather all of you, O Jacob; I will surely bring together the remnant of Israel. I will bring them together like sheep in a pen, like a flock in its pasture; the place will throng with people. One who breaks open the way will go up before them; they will break through the gate and go out. Their king will pass through before them, the LORD at their head, the LORD himself will guide you."

"Do not prophesy," the people say. "Do not prophesy about these things; disgrace will not overtake us."

You steal the shirts off the backs of those who trusted you making them ragged as men returning from war!

If a liar and deceiver comes and says, 'I will prophesy for you plenty of wine and beer,' he would be just the prophet for this people!

Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel. Should you not know justice (RIGHT FROM WRONG),

But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to...

Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money.

Then I said, "Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel. Should you not know justice (RIGHT FROM WRONG), you are the very ones who hate good and love evil; who tear the skin from my people and the flesh from their bones; who eat my people's flesh, strip off their skin and break their bones in pieces; who chop them up like meat for the pan, like flesh for the pot?"

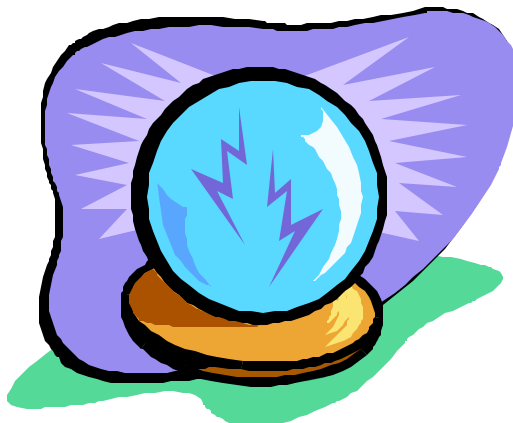
Then they will cry out to the LORD for help in times of trouble, but he will not answer them. At that time he will hide his face from them because of the evil they have done (after all the evil that you have done, He won't even look at you.) This is what the LORD says: "As for the prophets who lead my people astray, if one feeds them, they proclaim 'peace'; if he does not, they prepare to wage war against him.

Therefore night will come over you, without visions, and darkness, without divination making it impossible to see the future. The sun will set for the prophets, and the day will go dark for them. The seers will be ashamed and the diviners disgraced. They will all cover their faces because there is no answer from God."

But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin and rebellion. Hear this, you leaders of the house of Jacob, you rulers of the house of Israel, who despise justice and distort all that is right; who build Zion with bloodshed, and Jerusalem with wickedness (you build the foundations of Jerusalem on violence and bloodshed; murder and corruption).

**Her leaders judge for a bribe,
her priests teach for a price,
and her prophets tell fortunes for money.**

Yet they lean upon the LORD and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No disaster will come upon us." Therefore because of you, Zion will be plowed like a field, Jerusalem will become a heap of rubble, the temple hill a mound overgrown with thickets.



And it will come about in the last days: The Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem will become the most important place on earth. The mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, and the peoples will stream to it. And many nations will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD and to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us about His ways and that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

And He will judge between many peoples and render decisions for mighty, international, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they train for war. All wars will stop and all military training will end. And each of them will live quietly in his own home in peace and prosperity and sit under his vine and under his fig tree, with no one to make them afraid, for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. Though all the peoples walk each in the name of his god, as for us, we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.

"In that day," declares the LORD, "I will assemble the lame, and gather the outcasts, even those whom I have afflicted. "I will make the lame a remnant, and the outcasts a strong nation, and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on and forever. "And as for you, tower of the flock, hill of the daughter of Zion, to you it will come-- even the former dominion will come, the kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem. "Now, why do you cry out loudly? Is there no king among you, or has your counselor perished, that agony has gripped you like a woman in childbirth? "Writhe and labor to give birth, daughter of Zion, like a woman in childbirth, for now you will go out of the city, dwell in the field, and go to Babylon. There you will be rescued; there the LORD will redeem you from the hand of your enemies.

"And now many nations have been assembled against you calling for your blood who say, 'Let her be polluted, and let our eyes gloat over Zion.' "But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD, and they do not understand His purpose or plan; for He has gathered them like sheaves to the threshing floor. "Arise and thresh, daughter of Zion, for your horn I will make iron and your hoofs I will make bronze, that you may pulverize many peoples, that you may devote to the LORD their unjust gain and their wealth to the Lord of all the earth.

The Temple of the Lord in Jerusalem will become the most important place on earth.

...and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on and forever.

But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

"In that day," declares the LORD, "I will destroy your (weapons)

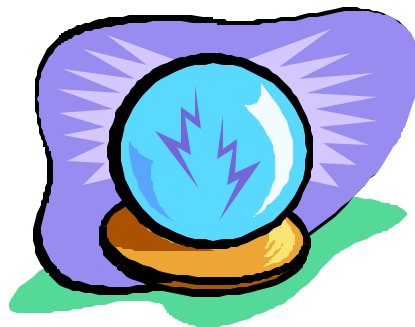
I will destroy the cities of your land and tear down all your strongholds. I will destroy your fortune-tellers witchcraft and you will no longer cast spells. I will destroy your carved images and your sacred stones from among you; you will no longer bow down to the work of your hands.

Marshal your troops, O city of troops, for a siege is laid against us. They will strike Israel's ruler on the cheek with a rod. 'But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.' Note that the birthplace of Jesus was given.

Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor gives birth to her son. Then at last, the rest of his brothers return from exile to join the Israelites in their own land. He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. And he will be their peace.

When the Assyrian invades our land and marches through our fortresses, we will raise against him seven shepherds, even eight leaders of men. They will rule the land of Assyria with the sword, the land of Nimrod with drawn sword. He will deliver us from the Assyrian when he invades our land and marches into our borders. The remnant of Jacob will be in the midst of many peoples like dew from the LORD, like showers on the grass, which do not wait for man or linger for mankind. The remnant of Jacob will be among the nations, in the midst of many peoples, like a lion among the beasts of the forest, like a young lion among flocks of sheep, which mauls and mangles as it goes, and no one can rescue.

Your hand will be lifted up in triumph over your enemies, and all your foes will be destroyed. "In that day," declares the LORD, "I will destroy your (weapons) horses from among you and demolish your chariots. I will destroy the cities of your land and tear down all your strongholds. I will destroy your fortune-tellers witchcraft and you will no longer cast spells. I will destroy your carved images and your sacred stones from among you; you will no longer bow down to the work of your hands. I will uproot from among you your Asherah poles and demolish your cities. I will take vengeance in anger and wrath upon the nations that have not obeyed me."



Hear now what the LORD is saying, "Arise, plead your case before the mountains, and let the hills hear your voice. "Listen, you mountains, to the indictment of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth, because the LORD has a complaint and a case against His people; even with Israel He will dispute. "My people, what have I done to you, and how have I wearied you? Answer me. "Indeed, I brought you up from the land of Egypt and ransomed you from the house of slavery, and I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. "My people, remember now what Balak king of Moab counseled and what Balaam son of Beor answered him, and from Shittim to Gilgal, in order that you might know the righteous acts of the LORD."

With what shall I come to the LORD and bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? Does the LORD take delight in thousands of rams, in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my first-born for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

O people, the Lord has already told you what is good,
and this is what He requires:
to do what is right, to love mercy,
and to walk humbly with your God

The voice of the LORD will call to the city-- and it is sound wisdom to fear Thy name: "Hear, O tribe. Who has appointed its time?

"Is there yet a man in the wicked house, along with treasures of wickedness, and a short measure that is cursed? "Can I justify wicked scales and a bag of deceptive weights? "For the rich men of the city are full of violence, her residents speak lies, and their tongue is deceitful in their mouth. "So also I will make you sick, striking you down, desolating you because of your sins. "You will eat, but you will not be satisfied, and your vileness will be in your midst. You will try to remove for safekeeping, but you will not preserve anything, and what you do preserve I will give to the sword. "You will sow but you will not reap. You will tread the olive but will not anoint yourself with oil; and the grapes, but you will not drink wine.

"The statutes of Omri and all the works of the house of Ahab are observed; and in their devices you walk. Therefore, I will give you up for destruction and your inhabitants for derision, and you will bear the reproach of My people."

With what shall I
come to the LORD
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Concerning evil, both hands do it well. The prince asks, also the judge, for a bribe, and a great man speaks the desire of his soul; so they weave it together.

But as for me, I will watch expectantly for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me. I am confident that He will save me.

Who is a God like Thee, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession?

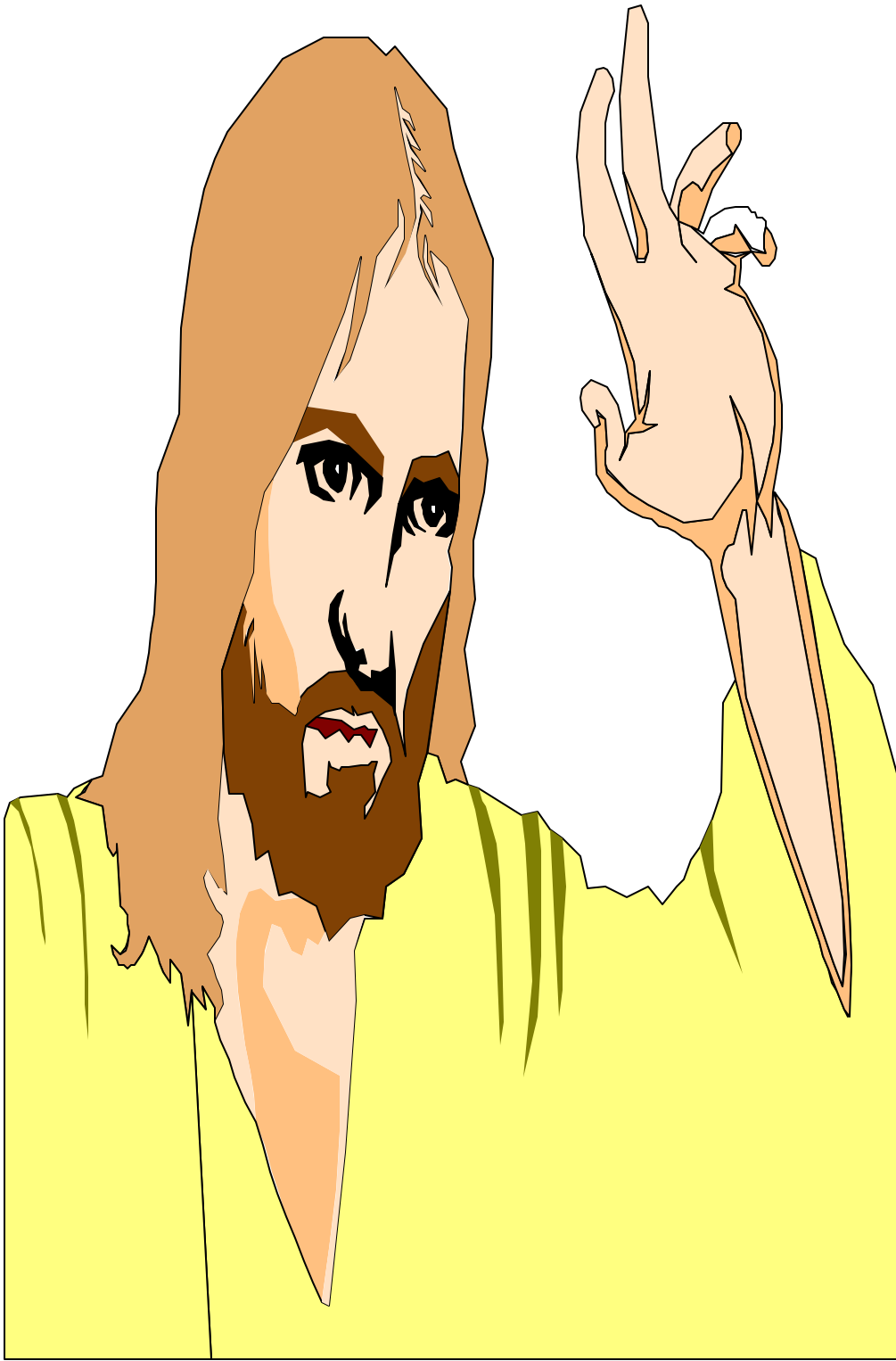
Woe is me! What misery I feel. For I am like the fruit pickers and the grape gatherers. There is not a cluster of grapes to eat, or a first-ripe fig which I crave. The godly person has perished from the land, and there is no upright person among men. All of them lie in wait for bloodshed; each of them hunts the other with a net.

Concerning evil, both hands do it well. The prince asks, also the judge, for a bribe, and a great man speaks the desire of his soul; so they weave it together. The best of them is like a briar, the most upright like a thorn hedge. The day when you post a watchman, your punishment will come. Then their confusion will occur. Do not trust in a neighbor; do not have confidence in a friend. From her who lies in your bosom guard your lips. For son treats father contemptuously, daughter rises up against her mother, daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; a man's enemies are the men of his own household.

But as for me, I will watch expectantly for the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me. I am confident that He will save me. Do not rejoice over me, O my enemy. Though I fall I will rise; though I dwell in darkness, the LORD is a light for me. I will bear the indignation of the LORD because I have sinned against Him, until He pleads my case and executes justice for me. He will bring me out to the light, and I will see His righteousness. Then my enemy will see, and shame will cover her who said to me, "Where is the LORD your God?" My eyes will look on her; at that time she will be trampled down, like mire of the streets. It will be a day for building your walls. On that day will your boundary be extended. It will be a day when they will come to you from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, from Egypt even to the Euphrates, even from sea to sea and mountain to mountain. And the earth will become desolate because of her inhabitants, On account of the fruit of their deeds.

Shepherd Thy people with Thy scepter, the flock of Thy possession which dwells by itself in the woodland, in the midst of a fruitful field. Let them feed in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old. "As in the days when you came out from the land of Egypt, I will show you miracles." Nations will see and be ashamed of all their might. They will put their hand on their mouth, their ears will be deaf. They will lick the dust like a serpent, like reptiles of the earth. They will come trembling out of their fortresses; to the LORD our God they will come in dread, and they will be afraid before Thee.

Who is a God like Thee, who pardons iniquity and passes over the rebellious act of the remnant of His possession? He does not retain His anger forever, because He delights in unchanging love. He will again have compassion on us; He will tread our iniquities under foot. Yes, Thou wilt cast all their sins Into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt give truth to Jacob And unchanging love to Abraham, which Thou didst swear to our forefathers from the days of old. You will show us your unfailing love and faithfulness as you promised Abraham and Jacob long ago.



NAHUM

An oracle concerning Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.

The LORD is a jealous and avenging God; the LORD takes vengeance and is filled with wrath. The LORD takes vengeance on his foes and maintains his wrath against his enemies. The LORD is slow to anger and great in power; the LORD will not leave the guilty unpunished. His way is in the whirlwind and the storm, and clouds are the dust of his feet. He rebukes the sea and dries it up; he makes all the rivers run dry. Bashan and Carmel wither and the blossoms of Lebanon fade. The mountains quake before him and the hills melt away. The earth trembles at his presence, the world and all who live in it. Who can withstand his indignation? Who can endure his fierce anger? His wrath is poured out like fire; the rocks are shattered before him.

The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He knows and cares for every one of those who trust in him, but with an overwhelming flood he will make an end of; he will pursue his foes into the darkness of night.

The LORD is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He knows and cares for every one of those who trust in him,

Whatever they plot against the LORD he will bring to an end; trouble will not come a second time. Why are you scheming against the Lord? He will destroy you with one blow. They will be entangled among thorns and drunk from their wine; they will be consumed like dry stubble. From you, has one come forth who plots evil against the LORD and counsels wickedness.

This is what the LORD says: "Although they have allies and are numerous, they will be cut off and pass away. Although I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no more. Now I will break their yoke from your neck and tear your shackles away."

The LORD has given a command concerning you, Assyrians in Nineveh: "You will have no descendants to bear your name. I will destroy the carved images and cast idols that are in the temple of your gods. I will prepare your grave, for you are vile."

Look, there on the mountains, the feet of one who brings good news, who proclaims peace! Celebrate your festivals, O Judah, and fulfill your vows. No more will the wicked invade you; they will be completely destroyed.

Nineveh, you are already surrounded. An attacker advances against you., Guard the fortress, watch the road, brace yourselves, marshal all your strength! The LORD will restore the splendor of Jacob like the splendor of Israel, though destroyers have laid them waste and have ruined their vines.

The shields of his soldiers are red; the warriors are clad in scarlet. The metal on the chariots flashes on the day they are made ready; the spears of pine are brandished. The chariots storm through the streets, rushing back and forth through the squares. They look like flaming torches; they dart about like lightning. He summons his picked troops, yet they stumble on their way. They dash to the city wall; the protective shield is put in place. The river gates are thrown open and the palace collapses.

It is decreed that Nineveh be exiled and carried away. Its slave girls moan like doves and beat upon their breasts. Nineveh is like a pool, and its water is draining away. "Stop! Stop!" they cry, but no one turns back.

Plunder the silver! Plunder the gold! The supply is endless, the wealth from all its treasures! She is pillaged, plundered, stripped! Hearts melt, knees give way, bodies tremble, every face grows pale. Where now is the lions' den, the place where they fed their young, where the lion and lioness went, and the cubs, with nothing to fear? The lion killed enough for his cubs and strangled the prey for his mate, filling his lairs with the kill and his dens with the prey.

"I am against you," declares the LORD Almighty. "I will burn up your chariots in smoke, and the sword will devour your young lions. I will leave you no prey on the earth. Never again will you bring back plunder from conquered nations. The voices of your proud messengers will no longer be heard."

It is decreed that Nineveh be exiled and carried away.

Plunder the silver!
Plunder the gold!
The supply is endless, the wealth from all its treasures! She is pillaged, plundered, stripped! Hearts melt, knees give way, bodies tremble, every face grows pale.

Never again will you bring back plunder from conquered nations.



"Behold, I am against you," declares the LORD of hosts;

No one anywhere will regret your destruction.

There is no relief for your breakdown, your wound is incurable and fatal.

Woe to the bloody city, completely full of lies and pillage; Her prey never departs. The noise of the whip, the noise of the rattling of the wheel, Galloping horses, and bounding chariots! Horsemen charging, swords flashing, spears gleaming, many slain, a mass of corpses, and countless dead bodies-- they stumble over the dead bodies! All because of the many harlotries of the harlot, the charming one, the mistress of sorceries, who sells nations by her harlotries and families by her sorceries.

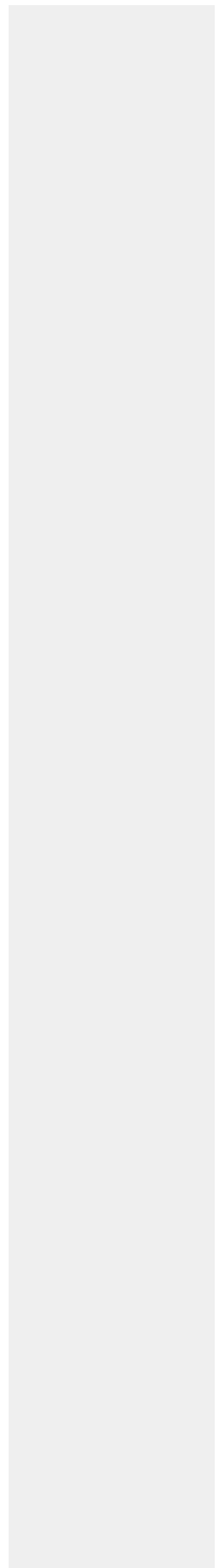
"Behold, I am against you," declares the LORD of hosts; "And I will lift up your skirts over your face, and show to the nations your nakedness and to the kingdoms your disgrace. "I will throw filth on you and make you vile, and set you up as a spectacle. "And it will come about that all who see you will shrink from you and say, 'Nineveh is devastated! Who will grieve for her?' Where will I seek comforters for you?" No one anywhere will regret your destruction.

Are you better than No-amon, which was situated by the waters of the Nile, with water surrounding her, whose rampart was the sea, whose wall consisted of the sea? Ethiopia was her might, and Egypt too, without limits. Put and Lubim were among her helpers. Yet she became an exile, she went into captivity; also her small children were dashed to pieces at the head of every street; they cast lots for her honorable men, and all her great men were bound with fetters.

You too will become drunk, you will be hidden. You too will search for a refuge from the enemy. All your fortifications will fail, they are like fig trees with ripe fruit-- when shaken, they fall into the eater's mouth. Behold, your people are women in your midst! The gates of your land are opened wide to your enemies; fire consumes your gate bars.

Draw for yourself water for the siege! Strengthen your fortifications! Go into the clay and tread the mortar! Take hold of the brick mold! There fire will consume you, the sword will cut you down; it will consume you as the locust does. Multiply yourself like the creeping locust, multiply yourself like the swarming locust. You have increased your traders more than the stars of heaven-- the creeping locust strips and flies away. Your guardsmen are like the swarming locust. Your marshals are like hordes of grasshoppers settling in the stone walls on a cold day. The sun rises and they flee, and the place where they are is not known.

Your shepherds are sleeping, O king of Assyria; your nobles are lying down. Your people are scattered on the mountains, and there is no one to regather them. There is no relief for your breakdown, your wound is incurable and fatal. All who hear about you will clap their hands over you, for on whom has not your evil passed continually?



HABAKKUK

I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told.

My God, my Holy One, we will not die. O LORD, you have appointed them to execute judgment;

The oracle that Habakkuk the prophet received from the Lord in a vision.

How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, "Violence!" but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

"Look at the nations and watch-- and be utterly amazed. For I am going to do something in your days that you would not believe, even if you were told. I am raising up the Babylonians, that ruthless and impetuous people, who sweep across the whole earth to seize dwelling places not their own. They are a feared and dreaded people; they are a law to themselves and promote their own honor.

Their horses are swifter than leopards, fiercer than wolves at dusk. Their cavalry gallops headlong; their horsemen come from afar. They fly like a vulture swooping to devour; they all come bent on violence. Their hordes advance like a desert wind and gather prisoners like sand. They deride kings and scoff at rulers. They laugh at all fortified cities; they build earthen ramps and capture them. Then they sweep past like the wind and go on-- guilty men, whose own strength is their god."

O LORD, are you not from everlasting? My God, my Holy One, we will not die. O LORD, you have appointed them to execute judgment; O Rock, you have ordained them to punish. Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrong. Why then do you tolerate the treacherous? Why are you silent while the wicked swallow up those more righteous than themselves? You have made men like fish in the sea, like sea creatures that have no ruler. The wicked foe pulls all of them up with hooks, he catches them in his net, he gathers them up in his dragnet; and so he rejoices and is glad. Therefore he sacrifices to his net and burns incense to his dragnet, for by his net he lives in luxury and enjoys the choicest food. Is he to keep on emptying his net, destroying nations without mercy?

I will stand at my watch and station myself on the ramparts; I will look to see what he will say to me, and what answer I am to give to this complaint.

Then the LORD replied: "Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets so that a herald may run with it. For the revelation awaits an appointed time; it speaks of the end and will not prove false. Though it linger, wait for it; it will certainly come and will not delay.

"See, he is puffed up and proud; his desires are not upright-- but the righteous will live by his faith-- indeed, wine betrays him; he is arrogant and never at rest. Because he is as greedy as the grave and like death is never satisfied, he gathers to himself all the nations and takes captive all the peoples. "Will not all of them taunt him with ridicule and scorn, saying, "'Woe to him who piles up stolen goods and makes himself wealthy by extortion! How long must this go on?' Will not your debtors suddenly arise? Will they not wake up and make you tremble? Then you will become their victim. Because you have plundered many nations, the peoples who are left will plunder you. For you have shed man's blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them.

"Woe to him who builds his realm by unjust gain to set his nest on high, to escape the clutches of ruin! How terrible it will be for you who get rich by unjust means. You have plotted the ruin of many peoples, shaming your own house and forfeiting your life. The stones of the wall will cry out, and the beams of the woodwork will echo it. "Woe to him who builds a city with bloodshed and establishes a town by crime! Has not the LORD Almighty determined that the people's labor is only fuel for the fire, that the nations exhaust themselves for nothing? For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

"Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbors, pouring it from the wineskin till they are drunk, so that he can gaze on their naked bodies. You will be filled with shame instead of glory. Now it is your turn! Drink and be exposed! The cup from the LORD's right hand is coming around to you, and disgrace will cover your glory. The violence you have done to Lebanon will overwhelm you, and your destruction of animals will terrify you. For you have shed man's blood; you have destroyed lands and cities and everyone in them.

"Of what value is an idol, since a man has carved it? Or an image that teaches lies? For he who makes it trusts in his own creation; he makes idols that cannot speak. Woe to him who says to wood, 'Come to life!' Or to lifeless stone, 'Wake up!' Can it give guidance? It is covered with gold and silver; there is no breath in it. But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him."

Then the Lord replied:

"Write down the revelation and make it plain on tablets

For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

But the LORD is in his holy temple; let all the earth be silent before him."

Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign LORD is my strength;

A prayer of Habakkuk the prophet. On shigionoth.

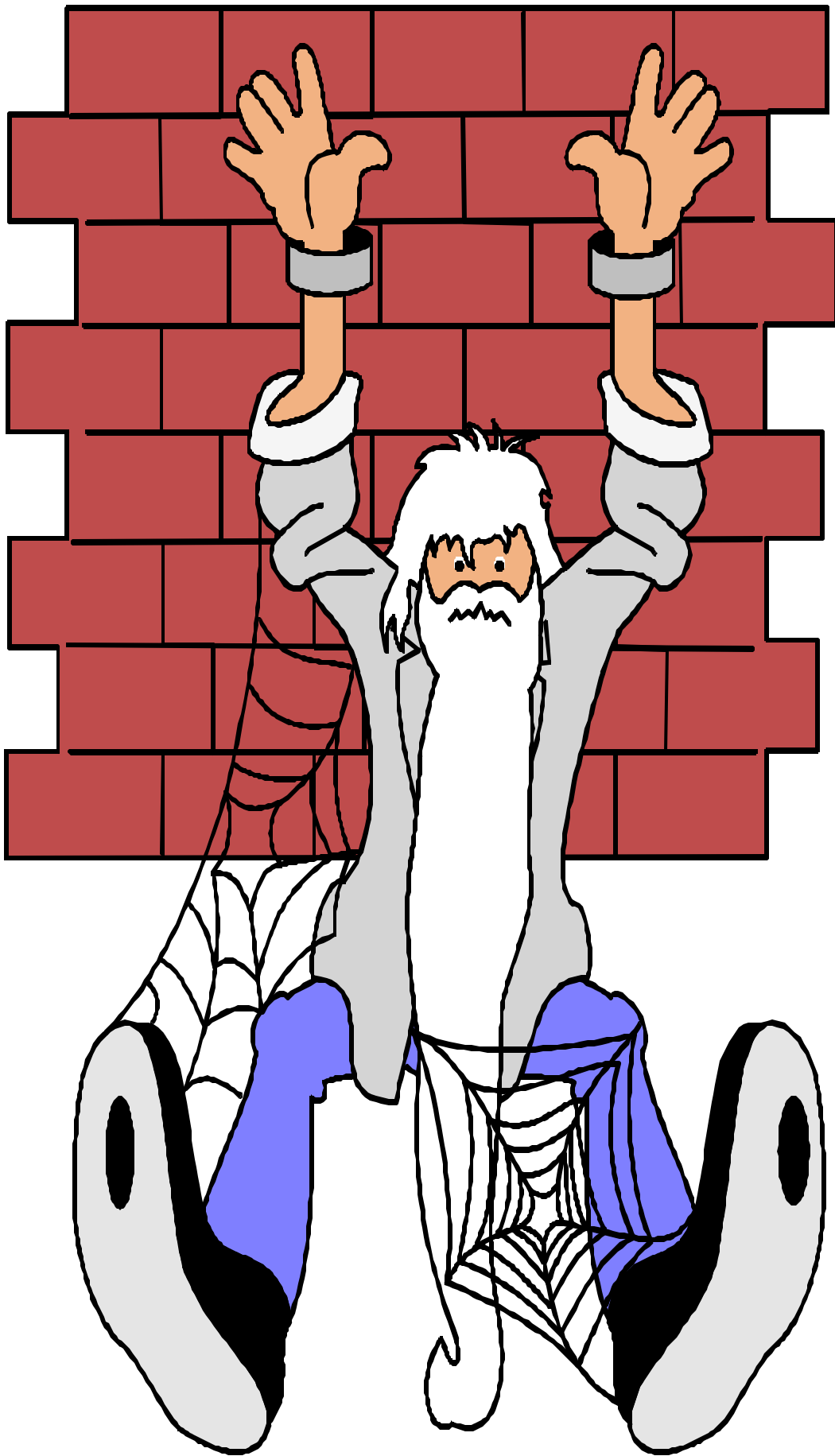
LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O LORD. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy. God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His glory covered the heavens and his praise filled the earth. His splendor was like the sunrise; rays flashed from his hand, where his power was hidden. Plague went before him; pestilence followed his steps. He stood, and shook the earth; he looked, and made the nations tremble. The ancient mountains crumbled and the age-old hills collapsed. His ways are eternal. I saw the tents of Cushan in distress, the dwellings of Midian in anguish.

Were you angry with the rivers, O LORD? Was your wrath against the streams? Did you rage against the sea when you rode with your horses and your victorious chariots? You uncovered your bow, you called for many arrows. Selah You split the earth with rivers; the mountains saw you and writhed. Torrents of water swept by; the deep roared and lifted its waves on high. Sun and moon stood still in the heavens at the glint of your flying arrows, at the lightning of your flashing spear.

In wrath you strode through the earth and in anger you threshed the nations. You came out to deliver your people, to save your anointed one. You crushed the leader of the land of wickedness, you stripped him from head to foot. Selah With his own spear you pierced his head when his warriors stormed out to scatter us, gloating as though about to devour the wretched who were in hiding. You trampled the sea with your horses, churning the great waters.

I heard and my heart pounded, my lips quivered at the sound; decay crept into my bones, and my legs trembled. Yet I will wait patiently for the day of calamity to come on the nation invading us. Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights.

For the director of music. This prayer is to be accompanied by stringed instruments.



ZEPHANIAH

The word of the LORD which came to Zephaniah son of Cushi, son of Gedaliah, son of Amariah, son of Hezekiah, in the days of Josiah son of Amon, king of Judah,

I will punish the men who are stagnant in spirit, who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good or evil!'

"I will completely remove all things From the face of the earth," declares the LORD. "I will remove man and beast; I will remove the birds of the sky And the fish of the sea, and the ruins along with the wicked; and I will cut off man from the face of the earth," declares the LORD. "So I will stretch out My hand against Judah and against all the inhabitants of Jerusalem. And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, and the names of the idolatrous priests along with the priests. "And those who bow down on the housetops to the host of heaven, and those who bow down and swear to the LORD and yet swear by Milcom, And those who have turned back from following the LORD, and those who have not sought the LORD or inquired of Him."

Be silent before the Lord GOD! For the day of the LORD is near, for the LORD has prepared a sacrifice, He has consecrated His guests. "Then it will come about on the day of the LORD'S sacrifice, that I will punish the princes, the king's sons, and all who clothe themselves with foreign garments. "And I will punish on that day all who leap on the temple threshold, who fill the house of their lord with violence and deceit.

And I will bring distress on men, so that they will walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the LORD;

"And on that day," declares the LORD, "There will be the sound of a cry from the fish Gate, a wail from the second quarter, and a loud crash from the hills. "Wail, O inhabitants of the Mortar, for all the people of Canaan will be silenced; all who weigh out silver will be cut off. "And it will come about at that time that I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the men who are stagnant in spirit, who say in their hearts, 'The LORD will not do good or evil!' "Moreover, their wealth will become plunder, and their houses desolate; yes, they will build houses but not inhabit them, and plant vineyards but not drink their wine."

Near is the great day of the LORD, near and coming very quickly; listen, the day of the LORD! In it the warrior cries out bitterly. A day of wrath is that day, a day of trouble and distress, a day of destruction and desolation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, A day of trumpet and battle cry, against the fortified cities and the high corner towers.

And I will bring distress on men, so that they will walk like the blind, because they have sinned against the LORD; and their blood will be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to deliver them On the day of the LORD'S wrath; and all the earth will be devoured in the fire of His jealousy, for He will make a complete end, indeed a terrifying one, of all the inhabitants of the earth.

Gather together, gather together, O shameful nation, before the appointed time arrives and that day sweeps on like chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the LORD's wrath comes upon you. Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD's anger.

Gaza will be abandoned and Ashkelon left in ruins. At midday Ashdod will be emptied and Ekron uprooted. Woe to you who live by the sea, O Kerethite people; the word of the LORD is against you, O Canaan, land of the Philistines. "I will destroy you, and none will be left." The land by the sea, where the Kerethites dwell, will be a place for shepherds and sheep pens.

It will belong to the remnant of the house of Judah; there they will find pasture. In the evening they will lie down in the houses of Ashkelon. The LORD their God will care for them; he will restore their fortunes.

"I have heard the insults of Moab and the taunts of the Ammonites, who insulted my people and made threats against their land. Therefore, as surely as I live," declares the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel, "surely Moab will become like Sodom, the Ammonites like Gomorrah-- a place of weeds and salt pits, a wasteland forever. The remnant of my people will plunder them; the survivors of my nation will inherit their land."

This is what they will get in return for their pride, for insulting and mocking the people of the LORD Almighty. The LORD will be awesome to them when he destroys all the gods of the land. The nations on every shore will worship him, every one in its own land.

"You too, O Cushites, will be slain by my sword." He will stretch out his hand against the north and destroy Assyria, leaving Nineveh utterly desolate and dry as the desert. Flocks and herds will lie down there, creatures of every kind. The desert owl and the screech owl will roost on her columns. Their calls will echo through the windows, rubble will be in the doorways, the beams of cedar will be exposed.

This is the carefree city that lived in safety. She said to herself, "I am, and there is none besides me." What a ruin she has become, a lair for wild beasts! All who pass by her scoff and shake their fists.

Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD's anger.

**The LORD
will be
awesome
to them**



The LORD within her is righteous; he does no wrong. Morning by morning he dispenses his justice, and every new day he does not fail, yet the wicked, unrighteous know no shame. The LORD within her is righteous; he does no wrong. Morning by morning he dispenses his justice, and every new day he does not fail, yet the wicked, unrighteous know no shame.

The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save.

Woe to the city of oppressors, rebellious and defiled! She obeys no one, she accepts no correction. She does not trust in the LORD, she does not draw near to her God. Her officials are roaring lions, her rulers are evening wolves, who leave nothing for the morning. Her prophets are arrogant; they are treacherous men. Her priests profane the sanctuary and do violence to the law. The LORD within her is righteous; he does no wrong. Morning by morning he dispenses his justice, and every new day he does not fail, yet the wicked, unrighteous know no shame.

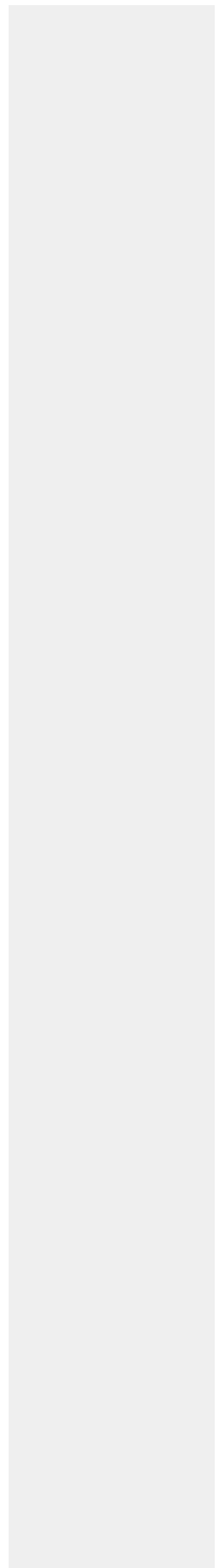
"I have cut off nations; their strongholds are demolished. I have left their streets deserted, with no one passing through. Their cities are destroyed; no one will be left-- no one at all.

I said to the city, 'Surely you will fear me and accept correction!' Then her dwelling would not be cut off, nor all my punishments come upon her. But they were still eager to act corruptly in all they did. Therefore wait for me," declares the LORD, "for the day I will stand up to testify. I have decided to assemble the nations, to gather the kingdoms and to pour out my wrath on them-- all my fierce anger. The whole world will be consumed by the fire of my jealous anger.

"Then will I purify the lips of the peoples, that all of them may call on the name of the LORD and serve him shoulder to shoulder. From beyond the rivers of Cush my worshipers, my scattered people, will bring me offerings. On that day you will not be put to shame for all the wrongs you have done to me, because I will remove from this city those who rejoice in their pride. Never again will you be haughty on my holy hill. But I will leave within you the meek and humble, who trust in the name of the LORD. The remnant of Israel will do no wrong; they will speak no lies, nor will deceit be found in their mouths. They will eat and lie down and no one will make them afraid."

Sing, O Daughter of Zion; shout aloud, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O Daughter of Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm. On that day they will say to Jerusalem, "Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands hang limp. The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing."

"The sorrows for the appointed feasts I will remove from you; they are a burden and a reproach to you. At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you; I will rescue the lame and gather those who have been scattered. I will give them praise and honor in every land where they were put to shame. At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honor and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes," says the LORD.



HAGGAI

"Give careful thought to your ways.

"I am with you," declares the LORD.

In the second year of King Darius, on the first day of the sixth month (August 29, 520 B.C.), the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest: This is what the LORD Almighty says: "These people say, 'The time has not yet come for the LORD's house to be built.'"

Then the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai: "Is it a time for you yourselves to be living in your paneled houses, while this house remains a ruin?" Now this is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it."

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways. Go up into the mountains and bring down timber and build the house, so that I may take pleasure in it and be honored," says the LORD. "You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house. Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the oil and whatever the ground produces, on men and cattle, and on the labor of your hands."

Then Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the whole remnant of the people obeyed the voice of the LORD their God and the message of the prophet Haggai, because the LORD their God had sent him. And the people feared the LORD. Then Haggai, the LORD's messenger, gave this message of the LORD to the people: "I am with you," declares the LORD. So the LORD stirred up the spirit of Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and the spirit of Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and the spirit of the whole remnant of the people. They came and began to work on the house of the LORD Almighty, their God, on the twenty-fourth day of the sixth month in the second year of King Darius.

On the twenty-first day of the seventh month (October 17, 520 B.C.), the word of the LORD came through the prophet Haggai:

"Speak to Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, to Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest, and to the remnant of the people. Ask them, 'Who of you is left who saw this house in its former glory? How does it look to you now? Does it not seem to you like nothing? But now be strong, O Zerubbabel,' declares the LORD. 'Be strong, O Joshua son of Jehozadak, the high priest. Be strong, all you people of the land,' declares the LORD, 'and work. For I am with you,' declares the LORD Almighty. 'This is what I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt. And my Spirit remains among you. Do not fear.'

"This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all nations, and the desired of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD Almighty. 'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty. 'The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the LORD Almighty. 'And in this place I will grant peace,' declares the LORD Almighty."

On the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month (December 18, 520 B.C.), in the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to the prophet Haggai: "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Ask the priests what the law says: If a person carries consecrated meat in the fold of his garment, and that fold touches some bread or stew, some wine, oil or other food, does it become consecrated?'" The priests answered, "No."

Then Haggai said, "If a person defiled by contact with a dead body touches one of these things, does it become defiled?" "Yes," the priests replied, "it becomes defiled." Then Haggai said, "'So it is with this people and this nation in my sight,' declares the LORD. 'Whatever they do and whatever they offer there is defiled. "Now give careful thought to this from this day on-- consider how things were before one stone was laid on another in the LORD's temple. When anyone came to a heap of twenty measures, there were only ten. When anyone went to a wine vat to draw fifty measures, there were only twenty. I struck all the work of your hands with blight, mildew and hail, yet you did not turn to me,' declares the LORD.

'From this day on, from this twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, give careful thought to the day when the foundation of the LORD's temple was laid. Give careful thought: Is there yet any seed left in the barn? Until now, the vine and the fig tree, the pomegranate and the olive tree have not borne fruit. "From this day on I will bless you."

The word of the LORD came to Haggai a second time on the twenty-fourth day of the month (December 18, 520 B.C.): "Tell Zerubbabel governor of Judah that I will shake the heavens and the earth. I will overturn royal thrones and shatter the power of the foreign kingdoms. I will overthrow chariots and their drivers; horses and their riders will fall, each by the sword of his brother. "'On that day,' declares the LORD Almighty, 'I will take you, my servant Zerubbabel son of Shealtiel,' declares the LORD, 'and I will make you like my signet ring, for I have chosen you,' declares the LORD Almighty."

Be strong, all you people of the land,' declares the LORD, 'and work. For I am with you,' declares the LORD Almighty.

I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD Almighty. 'The silver is mine and the gold is mine,' declares the LORD Almighty. 'The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house,' says the LORD Almighty.

I have chosen you,' declares the LORD Almighty."

ZECHARIAH

In the eighth month of the second year of Darius (October 520 B.C.), the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo:

LORD Almighty says: 'Return to me,' declares the LORD Almighty, 'and I will return to you,' says the LORD Almighty.

"The LORD was very angry with your forefathers. Therefore tell the people: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Return to me,' declares the LORD Almighty, 'and I will return to you,' says the LORD Almighty. Do not be like your forefathers, to whom the earlier prophets proclaimed: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Turn from your evil ways and your evil practices.' But they would not listen or pay attention to me, declares the LORD. Where are your forefathers now? And the prophets, do they live forever? But did not my words and my decrees, which I commanded my servants the prophets, overtake your forefathers? "Then they repented and said, 'The LORD Almighty has done to us what our ways and practices deserve, just as he determined to do.'"

a man riding a red horse!

On the twenty-fourth day of the eleventh month, the month of Shebat, in the second year of Darius (February 15, 519 B.C.), the word of the LORD came to the prophet Zechariah son of Berekiah, the son of Iddo. During the night I had a vision-- and there before me was a man riding a red horse! He was standing among the myrtle trees in a ravine. Behind him were red, brown and white horses. I asked, "What are these, my lord?" The angel who was talking with me answered, "I will show you what they are." Then the man standing among the myrtle trees explained, "They are the ones the LORD has sent to go throughout the earth." And they reported to the angel of the LORD, who was standing among the myrtle trees, "We have gone throughout the earth and found the whole world at rest and in peace."

Behind him were red, brown and white horses.

And the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem,' declares the LORD Almighty.

Then the angel of the LORD said, "LORD Almighty, how long will you withhold mercy from Jerusalem and from the towns of Judah, which you have been angry with these seventy years?" So the LORD spoke kind and comforting words to the angel who talked with me. Then the angel who was speaking to me said, "Proclaim this word: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'I am very jealous for Jerusalem and Zion, but I am very angry with the nations that feel secure. I was only a little angry, but they added to the calamity.' "Therefore, this is what the LORD says: 'I will return to Jerusalem with mercy, and there my house will be rebuilt. And the measuring line will be stretched out over Jerusalem,' declares the LORD Almighty. "Proclaim further: This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'My towns will again overflow with prosperity, and the LORD will again comfort Zion and choose Jerusalem.'"

Then I looked up-- and there before me were four horns! I asked the angel who was speaking to me, "What are these?" He answered me, "These are the horns that scattered Judah, Israel and Jerusalem." Then the LORD showed me four craftsmen.

Four horns

I asked, "What are these coming to do?" He answered, "These are the horns that scattered Judah so that no one could raise his head, but the craftsmen have come to terrify them and throw down these horns of the nations who lifted up their horns against the land of Judah to scatter its people."

Four craftsmen

Then I lifted up my eyes and looked, and behold, there was a man with a measuring line in his hand. So I said, "Where are you going?" And he said to me, "To measure Jerusalem, to see how wide it is and how long it is." And behold, the angel who was speaking with me was going out, and another angel was coming out to meet him, and said to him, "Run, speak to that young man, saying, 'Jerusalem will be inhabited without walls, because of the multitude of men and cattle within it. 'For I,' declares the LORD, 'will be a wall of fire around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.'"

Measuring line

"Ho there! Flee from the land of the north," declares the LORD, "for I have dispersed you as the four winds of the heavens," declares the LORD. "Ho, Zion! Escape, you who are living with the daughter of Babylon." For thus says the LORD of hosts, "After glory He has sent me against the nations which plunder you, for he who touches you, touches the apple of His eye. "For behold, I will wave My hand over them, so that they will be plunder for their slaves. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me.

Dispersed to
the four winds

"Sing for joy and be glad, O daughter of Zion; for behold I am coming and I will dwell in your midst," declares the LORD. "And many nations will join themselves to the LORD in that day and will become My people. Then I will dwell in your midst, and you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent Me to you.

I am coming

"And the LORD will possess Judah as His portion in the holy land, and will again choose Jerusalem. "Be silent, all flesh, before the LORD; for He is aroused from His holy habitation."

The High priest and Satan before the throne.

'If you will walk in My ways, and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts,

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan the accuser and adversary standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the LORD said to Satan, "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! Indeed, the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?" Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and standing before the angel. And he spoke and said to those who were standing before him saying, "Remove the filthy garments from him." Again he said to him, "See, I have taken your iniquity away from you and will clothe you with festal robes."

Then I said, "Let them put a clean turban on his head." So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him with garments, while the angel of the LORD was standing by. And the angel of the LORD admonished Joshua saying, "Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'If you will walk in My ways, and if you will perform My service, then you will also govern My house and also have charge of My courts, and I will grant you free access among these who are standing here.

'Now listen, Joshua the high priest, you and your friends who are sitting in front of you-- indeed they are men who are a symbol, for behold, I am going to bring in My servant the Branch. 'For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua; on one stone are seven eyes. Behold, I will engrave an inscription on it,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. 'In that day,' declares the LORD of hosts, 'every one of you will invite his neighbor to sit under his vine and under his fig tree.'"



Then the angel who was speaking with me returned, and roused me as a man who is awakened from his sleep. And he said to me, "What do you see?" And I said, "I see, and behold, a lampstand all of gold with its bowl on the top of it, and its seven lamps on it with seven spouts belonging to each of the lamps which are on the top of it; also two olive trees by it, one on the right side of the bowl and the other on its left side."

Then I answered and said to the angel who was speaking with me saying, "What are these, my lord?" So the angel who was speaking with me answered and said to me, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord." Then he answered and said to me, "This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts.

'What are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you will become a plain; and he will bring forth the top stone with shouts of "Grace, grace to it!"'"

Also the word of the LORD came to me saying, "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this house, and his hands will finish it. Then you will know that the LORD of hosts has sent me to you. "For who has despised the day of small things? But these seven will be glad when they see the plumb line in the hand of Zerubbabel-- these are the eyes of the LORD which range to and fro throughout the earth."

Then I answered and said to him, "What are these two olive trees on the right of the lampstand and on its left?" And I answered the second time and said to him, "What are the two olive branches which are beside the two golden pipes, which empty the golden oil from themselves?" So he answered me saying, "Do you not know what these are?" And I said, "No, my lord."

Then he said, "These are the two anointed ones, who are standing by the Lord of the whole earth."

A graphic picture of the believer being the light of the world and that light is being supplied the oil of the Holy Spirit by the Father and the Son.



a lampstand
all of gold

'Not by
might nor by
power, but
by My
Spirit,' says
the LORD of
hosts.

"I see a fly-
ing scroll,
thirty feet
long and
fifteen feet
wide."

A woman
in
a basket

I looked again-- and there before me was a flying scroll!

He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a flying scroll, thirty feet long and fifteen feet wide."

And he said to me, "This is the curse that is going out over the whole land; for according to what it says on one side, every thief will be banished, and according to what it says on the other, everyone who swears falsely will be banished.

The LORD Almighty declares, I will send it out, and it will enter the house of the thief and the house of him who swears falsely by my name. It will remain in his house and destroy it, both its timbers and its stones."

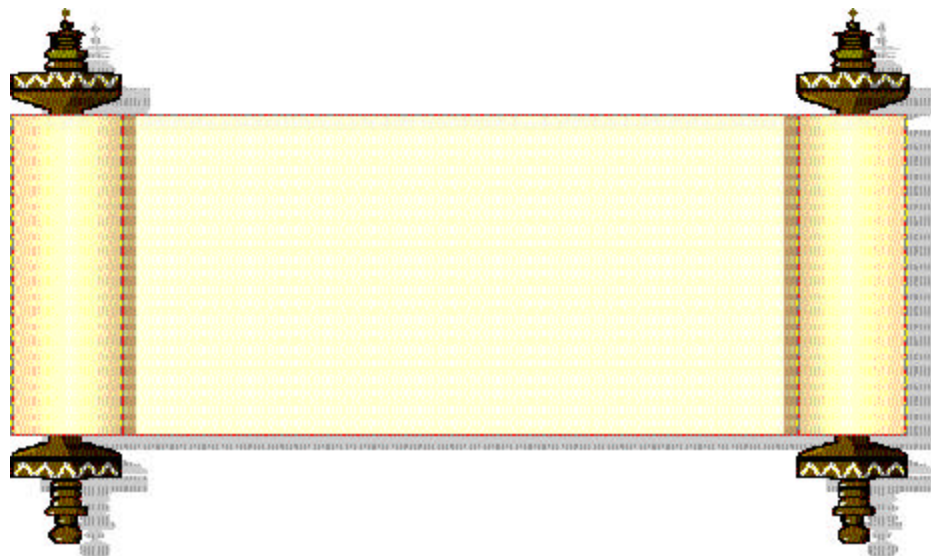
Then the angel who was speaking to me came forward and said to me, "Look up and see what this is that is appearing."

I asked, "What is it?" He replied, "It is a measuring basket." And he added, "This is the iniquity of the people throughout the land."

Then the cover of lead was raised, and there in the basket sat a woman! He said, "This is wickedness," and he pushed her back into the basket and pushed the lead cover down over its mouth.

Then I looked up-- and there before me were two women, with the wind in their wings! They had wings like those of a stork, and they lifted up the basket between heaven and earth. "Where are they taking the basket?" I asked the angel who was speaking to me.

He replied, "To the country of Babylonia to build a house for it. When it is ready, the basket will be set there in its place."



looked up again-- and there before me were four chariots coming out from between two mountains-- mountains of bronze!

The first chariot had red horses, the second black, the third white, and the fourth dappled-- all of them powerful.

I asked the angel who was speaking to me, "What are these, my lord?"

The angel answered me, "These are the four spirits of heaven, going out from standing in the presence of the Lord of the whole world.

The one with the black horses is going toward the north country, the one with the white horses toward the west, and the one with the dappled horses toward the south."

When the powerful horses went out, they were straining to go throughout the earth. And he said, "Go throughout the earth!" So they went throughout the earth.

Then he called to me, "Look, those going toward the north country have given my Spirit rest in the land of the north."

The word of the LORD came to me:

"Take from the exiles Heldai, Tobijah and Jedaiah, who have arrived from Babylon. Go the same day to the house of Josiah son of Zephaniah.

Take the silver and gold and make a crown, and set it on the head of the high priest, Joshua son of Jehozadak.

Tell him this is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Here is the man whose name is the Branch, and he will branch out from his place and build the temple of the LORD.

It is he who will build the temple of the LORD, and he will be clothed with majesty and will sit and rule on his throne. And he will be a priest on his throne. And there will be harmony between the two.'

The crown will be given to Heldai, Tobijah, Jedaiah and Hen son of Zephaniah as a memorial in the temple of the LORD.

Those who are far away will come and help to build the temple of the LORD, and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you. This will happen if you diligently obey the LORD your God."

FOUR
CHARIOTS
PULLED BY

HORSES OF

RED
BLACK
WHITE
DAPPLED

FOUR
SPIRITS
OF
HEAVEN



'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, was it really for me that you fasted?

"When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,' says the LORD Almighty.

In the fourth year of King Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah on the fourth day of the ninth month, the month of Kislev.

The people of Bethel had sent Sharezer and Regem-Melech, together with their men, to entreat the LORD by asking the priests of the house of the LORD Almighty and the prophets, "Should I mourn and fast in the fifth month, as I have done for so many years?"

Then the word of the LORD Almighty came to me: "Ask all the people of the land and the priests, 'When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months for the past seventy years, was it really for me that you fasted? And when you were eating and drinking, were you not just feasting for yourselves?"

Are these not the words the LORD proclaimed through the earlier prophets when Jerusalem and its surrounding towns were at rest and prosperous, and the Negev and the western foothills were settled?"

And the word of the LORD came again to Zechariah: "This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other.'

"But they refused to pay attention; stubbornly they turned their backs and stopped up their ears.

They made their hearts as hard as flint and would not listen to the law or to the words that the LORD Almighty had sent by his Spirit through the earlier prophets. So the LORD Almighty was very angry.

"When I called, they did not listen; so when they called, I would not listen,' says the LORD Almighty.

'I scattered them with a whirlwind among all the nations, where they were strangers. The land was left so desolate behind them that no one could come or go. This is how they made the pleasant land desolate.'"



Again the word of the LORD Almighty came to me. This is what the LORD Almighty says: "I am very jealous for Zion; I am burning with jealousy for her." This is what the LORD says: "I will return to Zion and dwell in Jerusalem. Then Jerusalem will be called the City of Truth, and the mountain of the LORD Almighty will be called the Holy Mountain." This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Once again men and women of ripe old age will sit in the streets of Jerusalem, each with cane in hand because of his age.

The city streets will be filled with boys and girls playing there."

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "It may seem marvelous to the remnant of this people at that time, but will it seem marvelous to me?" declares the LORD Almighty.

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "I will save my people from the countries of the east and the west. I will bring them back to live in Jerusalem; they will be my people, and I will be faithful and righteous to them as their God."

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "You who now hear these words spoken by the prophets who were there when the foundation was laid for the house of the LORD Almighty, let your hands be strong so that the temple may be built. Before that time there were no wages for man or beast. No one could go about his business safely because of his enemy, for I had turned every man against his neighbor.

But now I will not deal with the remnant of this people as I did in the past," declares the LORD Almighty.

"The seed will grow well, the vine will yield its fruit, the ground will produce its crops, and the heavens will drop their dew. I will give all these things as an inheritance to the remnant of this people.

As you have been an object of cursing among the nations, O Judah and Israel, so will I save you, and you will be a blessing. Do not be afraid, but let your hands be strong."

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Just as I had determined to bring disaster upon you and showed no pity when your fathers angered me," says the LORD Almighty, "so now I have determined to do good again to Jerusalem and Judah. Do not be afraid.

These are the things you are to do: Speak the truth to each other, and render true and sound judgment in your courts; do not plot evil against your neighbor, and do not love to swear falsely. I hate all this," declares the LORD.

Again the word of the LORD Almighty came to me.

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "The fasts of the fourth, fifth, seventh and tenth months will become joyful and glad occasions and happy festivals for Judah. Therefore love truth and peace."

This is what the LORD Almighty says: "Many peoples and the inhabitants of many cities will yet come, and the inhabitants of one city will go to another and say, 'Let us go at once to entreat the LORD and seek the LORD Almighty. I myself am going.'

These are the things you are to do:

Speak the truth to each other

render true and sound judgment in your courts;

do not plot evil against your neighbor,

do not love to swear falsely.

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

But I will defend my house against marauding forces. Never again will an oppressor overrun my people, for now I am keeping watch.

Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

The word of the LORD is against the land of Hadrach and will rest upon Damascus-- for the eyes of men and all the tribes of Israel are on the LORD-- and upon Hamath too, which borders on it, and upon Tyre and Sidon, though they are very skillful.

Tyre has built herself a stronghold; she has heaped up silver like dust, and gold like the dirt of the streets. But the Lord will take away her possessions and destroy her power on the sea, and she will be consumed by fire.

Ashkelon will see it and fear; Gaza will writhe in agony, and Ekron too, for her hope will wither. Gaza will lose her king and Ashkelon will be deserted. Foreigners will occupy Ashdod, and I will cut off the pride of the Philistines.

I will take the blood from their mouths, the forbidden food from between their teeth. Those who are left will belong to our God and become leaders in Judah, and Ekron will be like the Jebusites.

But I will defend my house against marauding forces. Never again will an oppressor overrun my people, for now I am keeping watch. Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! Shout, Daughter of Jerusalem! See, your king comes to you, righteous and having salvation, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.

I will take away the chariots from Ephraim and the war-horses from Jerusalem, and the battle bow will be broken. He will proclaim peace to the nations. His rule will extend from sea to sea and from the River to the ends of the earth.

As for you, because of the blood of my covenant with you, I will free your prisoners from the waterless pit. Return to your fortress, O prisoners of hope; even now I announce that I will restore twice as much to you. I will bend Judah as I bend my bow and fill it with Ephraim. I will rouse your sons, O Zion, against your sons, O Greece, and make you like a warrior's sword.

Then the LORD will appear over them; his arrow will flash like lightning. The Sovereign LORD will sound the trumpet; he will march in the storms of the south, and the LORD Almighty will shield them. They will destroy and overcome with slingstones. They will drink and roar as with wine; they will be full like a bowl used for sprinkling the corners of the altar.

The LORD their God will save them on that day as the flock of his people. They will sparkle in his land like jewels in a crown.

How attractive and beautiful they will be! Grain will make the young men thrive, and new wine the young women.

Ask the LORD for rain in the springtime and He will give it; for it is the LORD who makes the storm clouds. He gives showers of rain to men, and plants of the field to everyone.

The idols speak deceit, household gods give false advice, diviners see visions that lie; they tell dreams that are false, they give comfort in vain. Therefore the people wander like sheep oppressed for lack of a shepherd.

"My anger burns against the shepherds, and I will punish the leaders; for the LORD Almighty will care for his flock, the house of Judah, and make them like a proud horse in battle. From Judah will come the cornerstone, from him the tent peg, from him the battle bow, from him every ruler. Together they will be like mighty warriors in battle, trampling their enemies in the muddy streets in battle. Because the LORD is with them, they will fight and overthrow the horsemen.

"I will strengthen the house of Judah and save the house of Joseph. I will restore them because I have compassion on them. They will be as though I had not rejected them, for I am the LORD their God and I will answer them.

The Ephraimites will become like mighty men, and their hearts will be glad as with wine. Their children will see it and be joyful; their hearts will rejoice in the LORD. I will signal for them and gather them in. Surely I will redeem them; they will be as numerous as before. Though I scatter them like seeds among the peoples, yet in distant lands they will remember me. They and their children will survive, and they will return. I will bring them back from Egypt and gather them from Assyria. I will bring them to Gilead and Lebanon, and there will not be room enough for them. They will pass through the sea of trouble; the surging sea will be subdued and all the depths of the Nile will dry up. Assyria's pride will be brought down and Egypt's scepter will pass away.

I will strengthen them in the LORD and in his name they will walk," declares the LORD. I will make my people strong in my power and they will go wherever they wish by my authority. I, the Lord, have spoken!

Though I scatter them like seeds among the peoples, yet in distant lands they will remember me

I will make my people strong in my power and they will go wherever they wish by my authority. I, the Lord, have spoken!



So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages.

Then the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them." So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

Woe to the worthless shepherd Who leaves the flock!

Open your doors, O Lebanon, that a fire may feed on your cedars. Wail, O cypress, for the cedar has fallen, because the glorious trees have been destroyed; wail, O oaks of Bashan, for the impenetrable forest has come down.

There is a sound of the shepherds' wail, for their glory is ruined; there is a sound of the young lions' roar, for the pride of the Jordan is ruined.

Thus says the LORD my God, "Pasture the flock doomed to slaughter. "Those who buy them slay them and go unpunished, and each of those who sell them says, 'Blessed be the LORD, for I have become rich!' And their own shepherds have no pity on them. "For I shall no longer have pity on the inhabitants of the land," declares the LORD; "but behold, I shall cause the men to fall, each into another's power and into the power of his king; and they will strike the land, and I shall not deliver them from their power."

So I pastured the flock doomed to slaughter, hence the afflicted of the flock. And I took for myself two staffs: the one I called Favor, and the other I called Union; so I pastured the flock. Then I annihilated the three shepherds in one month, for my soul was impatient with them, and their soul also was weary of me.

Then I said, "I will not pasture you. What is to die, let it die, and what is to be annihilated, let it be annihilated; and let those who are left eat one another's flesh." And I took my staff, favor, and cut it in pieces, to break my covenant which I had made with all the peoples. So it was broken on that day, and thus the afflicted of the flock who were watching me realized that it was the word of the LORD.

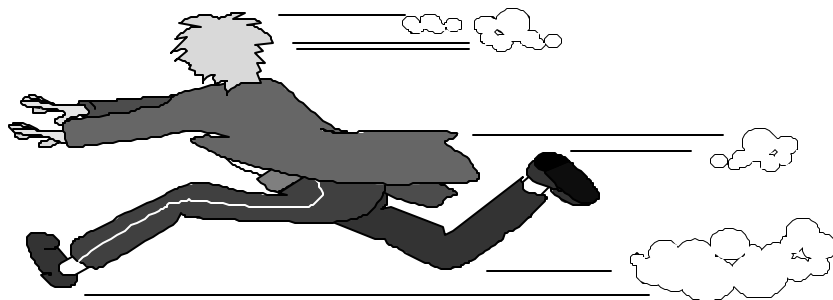
And I said to them, "If it is good in your sight, give me my wages; but if not, never mind!" So they weighed out thirty shekels of silver as my wages.

Then the LORD said to me, "Throw it to the potter, that magnificent price at which I was valued by them." So I took the thirty shekels of silver and threw them to the potter in the house of the LORD.

Then I cut my second staff, Union, in pieces, to break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel. And the LORD said to me, "Take again for yourself the equipment of a foolish shepherd.

"For behold, I am going to raise up a shepherd in the land who will not care for the perishing, seek the scattered, heal the broken, or sustain the one standing, but will devour the flesh of the fat sheep and tear off their hoofs.

"Woe to the worthless shepherd Who leaves the flock! A sword will be on his arm And on his right eye! His arm will be totally withered, and his right eye will be blind."



The burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel. Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him,

"Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem like an intoxicating drink that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and to come to siege against Jerusalem, and it will also be against Judah.

"And it will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone a burden for the world for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

"In that day," declares the LORD, "I will strike every horse with bewilderment, and his rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness. "Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, 'A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the LORD of hosts, their God.'

"In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem.

"The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first in order that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem may not be magnified above Judah.

"In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them.

"And it will come about in that day that I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

"And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him, like the bitter weeping over a first-born.

"In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the (valley) plain of Megiddo.

"And the land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Levi by itself, and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself, and their wives by themselves; all the families that remain, every family by itself, and their wives by themselves.

"Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem like an intoxicating drink that causes reeling to all the peoples around;

"And it will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone a burden for the world for all the peoples;

"In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem,

"And I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication,

"In that day a fountain will be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a fountain to cleanse them from all sin and for impurity and defilement.

"And it will come about in that day," declares the LORD

1. I will cut off the names of the idols from the land,

2. I will also remove the false prophets and the unclean spirit from the land.

3. no one will be boasting then of a prophetic gift

"And it will come about in that day," declares the LORD of hosts, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land, and they will no longer be remembered; and I will also remove the false prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. "And it will come about that if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who gave birth to him will say to him, 'You shall not live, for you have spoken falsely in the name of the LORD'; and his father and mother who gave birth to him will pierce him through when he prophesies.

"Also it will come about in that day that the prophets will each be ashamed of his vision when he prophesies, and no one will be boasting then of a prophetic gift, and they will not put on a hairy robe in order to deceive and fool people; but he will say, 'I am not a prophet; I am a tiller of the ground, a farmer, for a man sold me as a slave in my youth.'

"And one will say to him, 'What are these wounds between your arms?' Then he will say, 'Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.'

"Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, and against the man, My Associate," declares the LORD of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered; and I will turn My hand against the little ones.

"And it will come about in all the land," declares the LORD, "That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; but the third will be left in it. "And I will bring the third part through the fire, refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"



Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you will be divided right in front of you.

For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished, and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle. And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south. And you will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. And it will come about in that day that living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter.

And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one. All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. And people will live in it, and there will be no more curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security.

Now this will be the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth. And it will come about in that day that a great panic from the LORD will fall on them; and they will seize one another's hand, and the hand of one will be lifted against the hand of another.

And Judah also will fight at Jerusalem; and the wealth of all the surrounding nations will be gathered, gold and silver and garments in great abundance. So also like this plague, will be the plague on the horse, the mule, the camel, the donkey, and all the cattle that will be in those camps.

Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. And if the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.

In that day there will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD." And the cooking pots in the LORD'S house will be like the bowls before the altar. And every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the LORD of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts in that day.

For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle

Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations,

and it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

the plague with which the LORD will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet,

MALACHI

the LORD says. "Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated and rejected,

"Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you," says the LORD Almighty, "and I will accept no offering from your hands.

Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord.

An oracle: The word of the LORD to Israel through Malachi.

"I have loved you," says the LORD. "But you ask, 'How have you loved us?' "Was not Esau Jacob's brother?" the LORD says. "Yet I have loved Jacob, but Esau I have hated and rejected, and I have turned his mountains into a wasteland and left his inheritance to the desert jackals." Edom may say, "Though we have been crushed, we will rebuild the ruins." But this is what the LORD Almighty says: "They may build, but I will demolish. They will be called the Wicked Land, a people always under the wrath of the LORD.

You will see it with your own eyes and say, 'Great is the LORD-- even beyond the borders of Israel!'

"A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If I am a father, where is the honor due me? If I am a master, where is the respect due me?" says the LORD Almighty. "It is you, O priests, who show contempt for my name. "But you ask, 'How have we shown contempt for your name?' "You place defiled food on my altar. "But you ask, 'How have we defiled you?' "By saying that the LORD's table is contemptible.

When you bring blind animals for sacrifice, is that not wrong? When you sacrifice crippled or diseased animals, is that not wrong? Try offering them to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you?" says the LORD Almighty.

"Now implore God to be gracious to us. With such offerings from your hands, will he accept you?"-- says the LORD Almighty.

"Oh, that one of you would shut the temple doors, so that you would not light useless fires on my altar! I am not pleased with you," says the LORD Almighty, "and I will accept no offering from your hands.

My name will be great among the nations, from the rising to the setting of the sun. In every place incense and pure offerings will be brought to my name, because my name will be great among the nations," says the LORD Almighty.

"But you profane it by saying of the Lord's table, 'It is defiled,' and of its food, 'It is contemptible.'

And you say, 'What a burden!' and you sniff at it contemptuously," says the LORD Almighty. "When you bring injured, crippled or diseased animals and offer them as sacrifices, should I accept them from your hands?" says the LORD.

"Cursed is the cheat who has an acceptable male in his flock and vows to give it, but then sacrifices a blemished animal to the Lord. For I am a great king," says the LORD Almighty, "and my name is to be feared among the nations.

"And now, this commandment is for you, O priests.

"If you do not listen, and if you do not take it to heart to give honor to My name," says the LORD of hosts, "then I will send a terrible curse upon you, and I will curse your blessings; and indeed, I have cursed them already, because you are not taking it to heart. "Behold, I am going to rebuke your offspring, and I will spread refuse on your faces, the refuse of your feasts; and you will be taken away with it.

"Then you will know that I have sent this commandment to you, that My covenant may continue with Levi," says the LORD of hosts.

"My covenant with him was one of life and peace, and I gave them to him as an object of reverence; so he revered Me, and stood in awe of My name.

"They passed on to the people True instruction from his mouth, and unrighteousness was not found on his lips; he walked with Me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many back from iniquity. "For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. "But as for you, you have turned aside from the way; you have caused many to stumble into sin by the instruction; you have corrupted the covenant of Levi," says the LORD of hosts.

"So I also have made you despised and abased before all the people, just as you are not keeping My ways, but are showing partiality in the instruction. deal treacherously each against his brother so as to profane the covenant of our fathers? "Do we not all have one father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously each against his brother so as to profane the covenant of our fathers?

"Judah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination has been committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah has profaned the sanctuary of the LORD which He loves, and has married the daughter of a foreign god. "As for the man who does this, may the LORD cut off from the tents of Jacob everyone who awakes and answers, or who presents an offering to the LORD of hosts.

"And this is another thing you do: you cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand. "Yet you say, 'For what reason?' Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously, though she is your companion and your wife by covenant. "But not one has done so who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then, to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth. "For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel, "and him who covers his garment with wrong," says the LORD of hosts. "So take heed to your spirit, that you do not deal treacherously."

You have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet you say, "How have we wearied Him?" In that you say, "Everyone who does evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and He delights in them because he does not punish them," or, you have wearied the Lord by asking "Where is the God of justice?"

Listen preachers
this command is
for you.

"For the lips of a priest should preserve knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth; for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.

you cover the altar of the LORD with tears, with weeping and with groaning, because He no longer regards the offering or accepts it with favor from your hand.

'For what reason?' Because the LORD has been a witness between you and the wife of your youth

For I hate divorce," says the LORD, the God of Israel,

"I the LORD do not change

Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?

Will a man rob God? 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings.

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse,

Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it.

"See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty.

But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years.

"So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me," says the LORD Almighty.

"I the LORD do not change. So you, O descendants of Jacob, are not destroyed.

Ever since the time of your forefathers you have turned away from my decrees and have not kept them. Return to me, and I will return to you," says the LORD Almighty. "But you ask, 'How are we to return?'

"Will a man rob God? Yet you rob me. "But you ask, 'How do we rob you?' "In tithes and offerings. You are under a curse-- the whole nation of you-- because you are robbing me.

Bring the whole tithe into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house. Test me in this," says the LORD Almighty, "and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it. I will prevent pests from devouring your crops, and the vines in your fields will not cast their fruit," says the LORD Almighty. "Then all the nations will call you blessed, for yours will be a delightful land," says the LORD Almighty.

"You have said harsh things against me," says the LORD. "Yet you ask, 'What have we said against you?' "You have said, 'It is futile to serve God. What did we gain by carrying out his requirements and going about like mourners before the LORD Almighty?'

But now we call the arrogant blessed. Certainly the evildoers prosper, and even those who challenge God escape."

Then those who feared the LORD talked with each other, and the LORD listened and heard. A scroll of remembrance was written in his presence concerning those who feared the LORD and honored his name.

"They will be mine," says the LORD Almighty, "in the day when I make up my treasured possession. I will spare them, just as in compassion a man spares his son who serves him. And you will again see the distinction between the righteous and the wicked, between those who serve God and those who do not.

"For behold, the day is coming, burning like a furnace; and all the arrogant and every evildoer will be chaff; and the day that is coming will set them ablaze," says the LORD of hosts, "so that it will leave them neither root nor branch." The day of judgment is coming, burning like a furnace. The wicked will be burned like straw. They will be consumed like a tree, roots and all.

"But for you who fear My name the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth leaping for joy and skipping about like calves from the stall.

"And you will tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I act, which I am preparing," says the LORD of hosts.

"Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him in Horeb for all Israel. "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD.

"And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, otherwise, I will come and smite the land with a curse."

The day of judgment is coming, burning like a furnace.

The wicked will be burned like straw.

Remember the law of Moses My servant, even the statutes and ordinances which I commanded him



