

# SEVEN YEAR WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE

Year Three  
Lessons 27-39

Third Quarter  
Lamentations - Habakkuk

Summary of Year III, Quarter 3-----	Page 1
Foreword -----	Page 2
27. The Weeping Prophet - Lamentations -----	Page 5
Memory verse: Matt. 23:37	
28. Ezekiel, The Prophet and the Prophecy - Ezekiel -----	Page 10
Memory verse: Ezek. 3:19	
29. Daniel, The Interpreter of Dreams - Daniel 1, 2 -----	Page 16
Memory verse: Daniel 2:22	
30. An Impossibility - Daniel 3, 4 -----	Page 22
Memory verses: Daniel 3:17, 18	
31. Another Impossibility - Daniel 5, 6 -----	Page 27
Memory verse: Daniel 6:23	
32. A Minor Prophet with a Major Message - Hosea -----	Page 32
Memory verse: Hosea 4:6	
33. The Day of the Lord - Joel -----	Page 37
Memory verses: Joel 2:28, 29	
34. Amos, The Prophet and The Prophecy -----	Page 41
Memory verse: Amos 4:12	
35. Obadiah, The Prophet and Prophecy -----	Page 47
Memory verse: Obadiah 15	
36. Jonah, The Backsliding Missionary -----	Page 52
Memory verse: Matt. 12:40	
37. The Kingdom Age - Micah -----	Page 58
Memory verse: Micah 5:2	
38. The Destruction of Nineveh - Nahum -----	Page 63
Memory verse: Nahum 1:3	
39. Habakkuk's Prayer -----	Page 69
Memory verse: Hab. 2:14	

# FOREWORD

## THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AGE

By Professor Roy McKinney

The Bible is God's Word for the ages. It is majestic, it is wonderful, and it is everlasting. It is celestial music that will enrapture the hearts of men and life their eyes to heaven. Pierson has said concerning the Word, "If God were the Master Musician planning the whole and arranging the parts, then we can understand how Moses' grand anthem of creation glides into Isaiah's Oratorio of the Messiah, by and by sinks into Jeremiah's Plaintive wail, swells into Ezekiel's awful chorus, changes into Daniel's rapturous lyric, and, after the quartet of the evangelists, closes with John's full choir of saints and angels."

The Book we call the Bible is possessed of a wonderful harmony and unity. The story begins in Genesis and ends in Revelation. Thus we have an essential continuity that permeates the whole. The Restoration fathers popularized an ante-Nicaean slogan that expresses this vital relationship of the Testaments, namely, "The Old Testament is the New Testament concealed and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed." This brings us to the problem of the proper use of the Old Testament in this New Testament age.

A popular misconception concerning our use of the Old Testament is expressed in the idea of the level Bible. Semple said, "I aver that the Old and New Testaments are essentially the same as to obligation and stand in the same relation to each other and to us as different parts of the New Testament to each other." It is obvious that no Christian can hold this position in a consistent fashion. To do so would demand that we submit ourselves to laws concerning sacrifices, circumcision, special days, and the eating of meats that are part and parcel of the Jewish economy. Strange to say, this is the exact position of the Judaizers of the New Testament period. One of the most prominent ideas of Paul's writings is that we are not under obligation to Old Testament laws.

The truly grievous error of the level Bible idea is that its principles are applied inconsistently. Those who would advocate certain Old Testament ideas become very selective and say that some Old Testament doctrines must be followed while others are to be set aside. A fine example of this can be found in the contention that it is wrong for women to adorn themselves in men's shirts and Levis. It says plainly in Deut. 2:25 that it is an abomination for a woman to wear a man's apparel. Therefore, such action on the part of women in this New Testament age is ethically wrong. This argument is sound if the principle of the level Bible is sound.

A true understanding of the relationship between the Covenants would remove forever any attempt to apply the principle of the level Bible. The Holy Spirit said that the law was nailed to the cross (Col. 2:14). What can this mean but that the law met its death here? Therefore, we now live under a new Covenant -- a Covenant of Grace. We are living under a covenant that has new obligations and new promises. We may add with all propriety that even the promises of the prophet Malachi met their death at Calvary.

Another misconception concerning the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament age is that it is not to be used or read at all. The popular argument is that all we need to know to be saved is found in the New Testament, therefore, it is a waste of time to read the Old. The invalidity of this argument will be seen as we view the New Testament teaching concerning proper use of the Old Testament today.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AGE By Professor Roy McKinney  
(Continued)

The value of the Old Testament writings is greatly enhanced when we observe the purpose of their composition. Peter writes, "To whom (the Old Testament prophets) it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto you (New Testament Christians), did they minister these things, which now have been announced unto you through them that preached the gospel unto you by the Holy Spirit . . ." I Peter 1:12. As God inspired the Old Testament prophets to write, He did it with the future in mind. The prophets have a deep concern for the problems of their day but they also had their eyes on the distant future. This gives a corrected view of the success of the prophets as ministers. Amos and Hosea warned the people of Israel to repent or perish. They did not repent and they perished. Isaiah and Jeremiah warned the people of Judah to repent or perish. They went into the Babylonian Captivity. However, when we understand that these prophets were ministering to us also they become, not failures, but highly successful agents in God's program for man's redemption. The prophets had the comfort of knowing that their writings were to be used by generations in ages to come. Yet, it is an obvious fact that the prophets cannot minister to us unless we read their writings.

Paul gives added reason why we ought to read the Old Testament. He writes to the Corinthians, "Now these things happened unto them (Moses and the Jews during the Exodus) by way of example; and they were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the ages are come" (I Cor. 10:11). The account of the Exodus was written to admonish Christians! Paul is pointing out to us a forceful example. He is pointing to the fact of sin. One of the basic principles of the Old Testament is that sin will be punished. The Israelites sinned as they came out of Egypt and they died in the Wilderness. Paul is saying that sin will still be punished today even as it was in the days of Moses. As long as we have to reckon with sin, we ought to read the admonitions of the Old Testament.

The Old Testament helps us to define sin. Paul in writing to Timothy said, "But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully." (I Tim. 1:8). The problem before Timothy was that the Judaizers were using the law in an unlawful manner. They were trying to bind its precepts and obligations upon the Ephesian Christians. The context of the passage plainly shows that the lawful use of the law was to define sin. Paul expands the idea in Romans 7:12-13, "So that the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and righteous, and good, did then that which is good become death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might be shown to be sin, by working death to me through that which is good; -that through the commandment sin might become exceeding sinful." One of the grand contributions of the Old Testament is its vivid portrayal of the sinfulness of sin. Concomitant with this is a deepening of our appreciation of the Sacrifice of Christ for sin. If the Mosaic Covenant, a God-given religion, could not produce an adequate sacrifice for sin then no religion under heaven, outside of Christianity, could do so.

Another contribution of the Old Testament is that it prepared the way for the coming of the Messiah. Paul says that the law was a tutor to bring us unto Christ (Gal. 3:24). Those who disparage the reading of the Old Testament accept unknowingly much of the contribution of the Old Testament to the cause of Christianity. They will freely use such expressions as lamb, sacrifice, altar, holiness, priest, high priest, and a host of similar expressions. They will accept on face value such Old Testament concepts as guilt of sin atonement, rewards and punishments the Messiah, and revelation. It is an evident fact that mankind would never have been able to receive Christ if it had not been for the preparatory work of the Old Testament. Thus by reading the Old Testament it becomes possible for us to have a deeper and fuller understanding of the teaching of the New Testament. Proportionate to our belief that the Old Testament is the New Testament concealed and the New Testament is the Old Testament revealed we will read the Old Testament.

THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AGE By Professor Roy McKinney  
(Continued)

The Sacred Writings of the Mosaic age have a major contribution to make in the field of Biblical evidences. God said through Isaiah the prophet, "I am God, and there is none like me; declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done; saying, my council shall stand, and I will do my pleasure" (Isaiah 46:9-10). We are speaking of predictive prophecy. Not only do we have general prediction in the Old Testament, we have precision prophecies. Isaiah calls Cyrus by name (Isa. 44:28). He predicts that Christ is to be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isa. 53:9); Micah predicts that Bethlehem is to be the birthplace of the King (Micah 5:2); Joel predicted the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Joel 2:28), and there are many other examples that could be presented. The only reasonable explanation of Old Testament predictive prophecy, with its New Testament fulfillment, is that the Bible is the Word of God. We must not overlook the devotional value of the Old Testament. Our souls experience a closeness to God as we read the flowing lyrics of the "sweet psalmist." The Old Testament abounds with exalted passages that will bestir the inner man. The Song of Moses and Miriam rises to a mighty crescendo as they majestically sing, "Jehovah shall reign for ever and ever." (Ex. 15:18). Isaiah is shaken to the depths of his being, as he is moved to say, "For mine eyes have seen the King, Jehovah of hosts." (Isa. 6:5). Amos ascends the mountaintop of spiritual experience as he utters, "Let justice roll down as waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." (Amos 5:24). Read the Old Testament and live closer to our Lord!

We say in conclusion that there is definitely a place for the Old Testament in the New Testament age. The Bible, the whole Bible, is God's book for the ages.

"A glory gild the sacred page,  
Majestic like the sun,  
It gives a light to every age,  
It gives, but borrows none."

Cowper-Olney Hymns, No. 30 -- The Gold and Blue, April 1962

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 27 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

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Lesson 27  
Lamentations

Page 1  
Memory Verse: Matthew 23:37

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Memory Verse:

"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" (Matt. 23:37).

Public Reading: Lamentations 1:1-8

### **THE WEEPING PROPHET**

Lamentations is "a funeral dirge over the desolation of Jerusalem." To this day the book is read throughout the world, wherever there are Jews, in the synagogues "in the fourth month (July), in the ninth day of the month" (Jer. 52:6) in remembrance of the destruction of Jerusalem. It is a hymn of sorrow, "every letter written with a tear, every word with the sound of a broken heart."

Jeremiah had done his best to save the city. Lamentations is the prophet's sorrow over the doomed city. Lamentation is defined as "Audible expression of sorrow; a wailing, a lament." The prophet has faith that the city would rise again from its ruins (Lam. 3:21, 31, 32). Jerusalem did rise, and gave its name to the capital of a REDEEMED WORLD OF ETERNAL GLORY (Heb. 12:22; Rev. 21:2).

#### **The Septuagint**

In the Septuagint, the Lamentations are prefixed with the words, "And it came to pass that after Israel had been carried away captive, and Jerusalem made desolate, Jeremiah sat weeping, and lamented this lament over Jerusalem, and said . . ." The last chapter of Jeremiah should read as an introduction to this book.

In the Hebrew Old Testament this book does not follow Jeremiah, as in our Bible, but is in the group called "Hagiographa," or "Writings": Song, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther. These were on separate rolls, because they were read at different feasts.

#### **Jeremiah's Grotto**

This is the name of the place, just outside the north wall of Jerusalem, where tradition says Jeremiah wept bitter tears and composed this sorrowful elegy. This Grotto is under the knoll that is now called "Golgotha," the self-same hill on which the cross of Jesus stood. Thus, the suffering prophet wept where later the suffering Saviour died.

#### **An Alphabetic Acrostic**

The book of Lamentations consists of five poems, four of which are acrostics. Each verse begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet in alphabetic sequence. This was a favorite form of Hebrew poetry, adopted to help the memory. In chapters 1, 2, and 4 there are 22 verses in each, 1 verse to a letter. In chapter 3 there were 3 verses to each letter, making 66 in all. Chapter 5 has 22 verses, but not in alphabetic order.

### When Composed

Lamentations must have been composed in the three months between the burning of Jerusalem and the departure of the remnant to Egypt (Jer. 39:2; 41:1, 18; 43:7), during which the seat of government was at Mizpah (Jer. 40:8). Probably a number of copies were made, some being taken to Egypt, and others being sent to Babylon for the captives to memorize and sing.

Jeremiah for many years had warned Jerusalem that Babylon would destroy her unless Judah repented. The day of grace passed. The people would not repent. They were taken into captivity. The city burned. The prophet had lived to see his predictions fulfilled. There is no exultation over the fulfillment of his predictions. A twofold loyalty runs through the book: First to God in the confession of sin, and then to his people in the expression of sorrow.

A loving parent who has daily warned the wayward son or daughter, does not rejoice when sin's debt has to be paid by that son or daughter!

#### I. The Complete Subjection (Lamentation 1:1-6)

A. As it related to Jerusalem (Lam. 1:1, 2).

"How does the city sit solitary . . ." (Lam. 1:1): II Chron. 36:17-20 describes vividly the desolate city. Jeremiah loves Jerusalem. A person learns to love the city in which he dwells. Christ loved Jerusalem and wept over it (Matt. 23:37, 38). The city was burned, and deserted. The glory of the temple was gone.

Once "full of people," the city is become "as a widow!"

"Her friends have dealt treacherously with her . . ." (Lam. 1:2): Judah had depended on Egypt. Former allies had become enemies (II Kings 24:2, 7; Psa. 137:7). The idols Judah and Jerusalem had loved could not comfort her (Jer. 2:20-25).

B. As it affected the land (Lam. 1:3).

"Judah is gone into captivity . . ." (Lam. 1:3): Only the poorest of the land had been left (II Kings 25:12). Jeremiah's interest did not stop at the city limits of Jerusalem. He grieved over the captivity of Judah.

Dwelling "among the heathen, she findeth no rest."

C. Jeremiah's concern for the spirit of the people (Lam. 1:4-67).

"Her beauty is departed . . . princes . . . without strength" (Lam. 1:6): Under the figure of a widow sitting solitary, the prophet describes the city. Once great, she has become tributary. She is now without a lover and without comfort. Her children like a tender flock are driven away. Her princes, enfeebled by hunger, cannot escape the pursuers, who overtake them and make them prisoners.

America has never been subjugated. In war, we have never been defeated, nor our people carried captive to other lands. These lamentations we do not fully appreciate. If foreign lands housed any of our loved ones as captives, we would understand!

## II. The Conquering Spirit (Lamentations 1:7-2:22)

### A. Judah's transgressions were grievous (Lam. 1:7-11).

"Jerusalem remembered in the days of affliction . . ." (Lam. 1:7): The loss of all her magnificence brings to the remembrance of the sorrowing city, in her trouble, the former days of her now departed glory! What is true of Jerusalem personified as Zion, is true of us all. Living through her days of adversity, Jerusalem thinks of former happy times. This remembrance increases her sorrow. By destroying the temple and Jerusalem, the enemies of the Jews thought they had put an end to the worship of the God of the Jews. They also thought they had conquered the God of Israel as a helpless national deity, and make a mock of Israel's faith in Jehovah as the only true God!

"Jerusalem hath grievously sinned . . ." (Lam. 1:8): Jeremiah emphasizes that the PEOPLE HAD BROUGHT ON THE CAPTIVITY BY THEIR SINS. Read Lam. 1:5, 8, 9, 14, 18, 20, 22. Sin has great ability to multiply itself. Give Johnson grass a single start, and you must fight to keep it from taking the entire field.

### B. Sin leaves its victim without sympathy (Lam. 1:12-22).

"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" (Lam. 1:12): The city, personified, bewails her affliction, appealing to the passer-by, and describing her sorrow. Self-respect departed; popular respect was gone.

"The yoke of my transgressions . . ." (Lam. 1:14): The misfortunes that have befallen Jerusalem are enumerated in a series of images. "The fire into my bones" (verse 13), and the "yoke" (verse 14) represent God as allowing these things to come on the people for their sins. "The Lord hath trodden the virgin. . . as in a winepress" (verse 15).

"For these things I weep . . . there is none to comfort" (Lam. 1:16, 17): The unprecedented sorrow gives way to tears. The grievous sorrow is accentuated by the fact that the weeping one has no one to comfort her (verses 2, 9).

"The Lord is righteous . . . I have rebelled" (Lam. 1:18): Zion confesses her guilt, confesses the justice of the desolation which has overtaken her, and cries to Jehovah for sympathy and deliverance (verses 19-22).

### C. Description of the judgment (Lam. 2:1-10).

"How hath the Lord covered . . . Zion . . . cloud in his anger" (Lam. 2:1): The devastation of Jerusalem is attributed to the righteous anger of God (See verses 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 21, 22). Jerusalem, situated on a mountain, surrounded by mountains, was for physical situation the most beautiful city then known --"The perfection of beauty. The joy of the whole earth" (verse 15), when compared to Babylon, Nineveh, Thebes, and Memphis.

### D. Human comfort is helpless, and the mockery of enemies (Lam. 2:11-16).

"Mine eyes do fail with tears . . ." (Lam. 2:11): The misery that has befallen the people is so fearful, that sorrow over it wears out one's life. The material and spiritual conditions of the people are described (Lam. 2:11, 12, 19; 4:4, 12; 2:20). The people were dwelling in Babylon at the time this book was written (Lam. 1:1-5; 5:1-8; II Chron. 36:15, 21; Jer. 52). The yoke of bondage was galling! Reject God and you'll live to regret it bitterly!

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 27 - PAGE 4

E. In their calamity, the people are urged to pray (Lam. 2:17-19).

F. The prayer that the city has been commanded to pray (Lam. 2:20-22).

### III. The Consequent Sorrow (Lamentations 3:1-11, 40-42; 4:11)

A. The prophet's intense affliction and grief (Lam. 3:1-11).

"I am the man that hath seen affliction . . ." (Lam. 3:1): A sinful people imagine that the prophet among them is exempt from sorrow. On the contrary, his heart is hurt the most (Matt. 23:37). Jeremiah and Jesus could have won the applause of Jerusalem by soft-pedaling their denunciation of sin. They had to speak God's message.

A wee laddie of the old Scotch Covenanters, Jamis Douglas, for refusing to play traitor to the truth was one day held over a steep and rough precipice by a brutal soldier, and given the option of disloyalty or death. With determined eyes and voice he said: "Drop me down, then, if ye must; 'tis ne'er so deep as to hell!"

B. It was shared by the people. (Lam. 3:40-42, 45).

"Let us search . . . our ways" (Lam. 3:40): When Judah in captivity began to suffer for her sins, she began to think of God whom she had forsaken for dumb idols. Prodigal sons who end up with the hogs start thinking of home (Luke 15:12-20). Judah admitted, "We have transgressed and have rebelled" (Lam. 3:42).

C. The judgment was divinely visited (Lam. 4:11).

"The Lord hath accomplished his fury . . ." (Lam. 4:11): God must punish sin in order to be just. A nation that does not punish sin and lawlessness will fall. God's wrath is a terrible thing (Heb. 12:25-29; 10:31).

### IV. The Comforting Assurance (Lamentations 3:21-39, 55-56; 5:21)

A. God is always compassionate (Lam. 3:22, 23, 25).

"It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed . . ." (Lam. 3:22): The prophet strengthens his hope (verse 21) by a consideration of the infinite compassion of God.

The passage is full of beauty. It deals with the tender compassion of God that has never been absent even in the work of punishment. This recognition of mercy ends with an expression of submission of judgment, and a consequent song of hope strong in its confidence.

B. God's ears are always open to penitent cries (Lam. 3:55-57).

"I have called upon thy name . . ." (Lam. 3:55): Jesus taught that "everyone that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 18:9-14). This movement is one wholly of assurance. The prophet from the lowest dungeons he had lifted his cry, and had been heard. Against the devices of his enemies, Jehovah had pleaded his cause.

C. God's power can save (Lam. 5:21).

"Turn . . . and we shall be turned" (Lam. 5:21): God alone was the hope of captive Judah. "Jesus only" is our hope in life and in death (Acts 4:12; I Cor. 3:11). How can YOU any longer reject Him who pleads with you to turn to Him today (Heb. 3:15)?



QUESTIONS

1. Why is this book called "The Lamentations of Jeremiah?"
2. Despite the doom he knew would come on the city, did Jeremiah believe the city would rise again (Lam. 3:21,31,32)? Did it (Heb. 12:22; Rev.21:2)?
3. In the Septuagint, what words prefix our book of Lamentations?
4. What sections of scripture should be read properly to understand "The Lamentations of Jeremiah" (Jeremiah 52:1-30; II Kings 25:1-17; II Chron. 36:15-21)? Why?
5. Where is Jeremiah's Grotto located, and with what place is it connected in the life of our Lord?
6. Of what does the book of Lamentations, consist? Explain.
7. What city is described in chapters 1,2 and 4?
8. Which chapter in this book records the personal sufferings of Jeremiah (Lam. 3:1ff)?
9. Which chapter records the Jews' prayer for deliverance (Lam. 6:1)?
10. Where were the Jews dwelling at the time this book was written (Lam. 1:1-5; 5:1-8; II Chron. 36:15-21; Jer.52:1ff)?
11. How is the city described (Lam. 1:1, 2)? How her friends treated her?
12. After reading these five chapters, can you describe the material and spiritual condition of the people (Lam. 2:11, 12, 19; 4:4, 2:20; 4:10)?
13. Why had this affliction fallen upon them (Lam 1:5,8,22; 4:13,14; 5:7; Deut. 28:15-68)?
14. Did Jeremiah blame the Lord for their suffering (Lam. 1:18! 3:22-42)?
15. What are the seven prominent statements recorded in this book concerning the character of God (Lam. 1:18; 2:17; 3:22,25,33; 5:19,22)?
16. Does Lam.2:9 describe the physical, political and religious Conditions in Jerusalem?
17. With whom is Jeremiah concerned in Lamentations 3:1-21?
18. With whom is he concerned in Lam. 3:22-41? Is he hopeful, and why?
19. With whom is he concerned in Lam. 3:42-66?
20. What is God's attitude toward His children while He chastens them for their sins (Lam. 3:32,33)?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 28 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 28  
Ezekiel

Page 1  
Memory Verse: Ezekiel 3:19

Memory Verse:

"Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul" (Ezekiel 3:19).

Public Reading: Ezekiel 2:1-10.

**EZEKIEL, THE PROPHET AND THE PROPHECY**

Ezekiel was the son of Buzi (Ezek. 1:3). His name means: "God will strengthen."

He was carried captive with king Jehoiachin (597 B. C.) in what he calls "our captivity" (Ezek. 33:21; 40:1). He had a wife (Ezek. 24:15-18), and a home (Ezek. 8:1) in Babylon. This was eleven (11) years before Jerusalem was destroyed in 586 B. C.

**The Assyrian Captivity**

The Assyrian Captivity of Israel had been 120 years before.  
734 B. C.: Galilee and North and East Israel, by Tiglath-pileser.  
721 B. C.: Samaria and the rest of Israel, by Sargon.  
701 B. C.: 200,000 of the inhabitants of Judah by Sennacherib.

**The Babylonian Captivity**

The Babylonian captivity of Judah was accomplished in:  
606 B. C.: Some captives taken to Babylon, including Daniel (II Chron. 36:6-7; Dan. 1:1-3).  
597 B. C.: More captives taken to Babylon, including Ezekiel (II Kings 24:14-16).  
586 B. C.: Jerusalem burned (II Kings 25:8-12; Jer. 52:28-30).  
This captivity lasted 70 years (606-536 B. C.). Ezekiel was there from 597 B. C. to at least 570 B. C.

**Ezekiel and Daniel**

Daniel had been in Babylon nine (9) years when Ezekiel arrived. He had attained to great fame (Dan. 6:14, 20). Daniel lived in the palace. Ezekiel lived in the country. They may have met often.

**Ezekiel and Jeremiah**

Ezekiel may have been the pupil of Jeremiah, as Jeremiah was the older. Ezekiel preached among the exiles, the same things that Jeremiah was preaching in Jerusalem: **THE CERTAINTY THAT GOD WILL PUNISH JUDAH FOR HER SINS!**

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 28 - PAGE 2

### The Book of Ezekiel

"Visions and symbolic actions are characteristic of Ezekiel's book. Some of his symbolic actions were accompanied by the most painful personal sufferings and bitterest sorrows. He had to remain dumb for a long period (Ezek. 3:26; 24:27; 33:22). He lay on his side in one position for over a year (Ezek. 4:5). His wife died suddenly and for her he was to "make no mourning" (Ezek. 24:15-18).

The pivotal point of the book is the destruction of Jerusalem (586 B. C.). His prophecies began six (6) years before that, and continued sixteen (16) years thereafter.

### Outline of Ezekiel

- I. The Destruction of Jerusalem (Ezek. 1-24)
- II. The Overthrow of Surrounding Heathen Nations (Ezek. 25-32)
- III. The Re-establishment and Glorious Future of Israel (Ezek. 33-48)

### Another Outline

- I. Certain Doom for Jerusalem (Ezek. 1-24; 593-587 B. C.)
  - A. Vision and call of Ezekiel (Ezek. 1-3).
  - B. Sins denounced (Ezek. 4-24).
- II. Hope for the Future (Ezek. 25-48; 587-571 B. C.)
  - A. Seven surrounding nations denounced (Ezek. 25-32).
  - B. Israel to be restored and blessed (Ezek. 33-48).
    - 1. Concerning the people (Ezek. 33-39).
    - 2. Concerning worship in the new temple (Ezek. 40-48).
      - 1) The temple (Ezek. 40-43).
      - 2) Who may enter (Ezek. 44-46).
      - 3) Blessings for all (Ezek. 47-48).

### Dominant Note of Ezekiel

"They shall know that I am God" occurs in sixty-two places in twenty-seven of the forty-eight chapters, for example Ezek. 6:7, 10, 13, 17; 7:4, 9, 27; 11:10, 12; 37:6, 18, 14, 28.

Ezekiel's mission was to explain and justify the action of God in causing or permitting Israel's captivity. The voice of God was rejected, vice multiplied (Ezek. 22), and the day of vengeance came (Ezek. 33:21) as Jerusalem fell.

"By their punishment they would KNOW THAT JEHOVAH IS GOD . . . The Babylonian captivity CURED the Jews of idolatry. Up to that time they would, in spite of everything, be idolaters. From that day to this, whatever other sins the Jews have been guilty of, they have not been idolaters."

### I. Ezekiel's Abode (Ezekiel 1:1-3)

"I was among the captives by the river Chebar. . ." (Ezek. 1:1): Ezekiel had been carried captive with Jehoiachin in 597 B. C., by Nebuchadnezzar (606-561 B. C.). Read II Kings 24:11-16. Chebar was the great

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 28 - PAGE 3

ship canal branching off the Euphrates above Babylon and running through Nippur to the Tigris. Nippur was about fifty miles South East of Babylon, was the same as Calneh, a city built by Nimrod shortly after the flood (Gen. 10:10).

"In the thirtieth year . . . fourth month . . . fifth day": This was in 592 B. C. in July "of the thirtieth year of Ezekiel's age." Levites began their service at age thirty (Num. 4:3). Jesus and John the Baptist began their work at thirty. Ezekiel is very careful in dating his visions, even to the exact day.

"The word of the Lord . . . Ezekiel the priest" (Ezek. 1:3): Verses 2 and 3 are parenthetical and may be treated as a title page. This gives the date, states that the word came expressly to him, and indicates the place in which he saw the visions and heard the voice. Ezekiel was a priest; he was called to prophesy (Ezek. 3:1). He lived at Tel-abib (Ezek. 3:15, 24), near Nippur.

There is in the region of Nippur a village called "Kilfil," the Arabian for "Ezekiel," which, tradition says, was his residence. About forty (40) miles away is Fara, the traditional home of Noah. Eridu, traditional site of the Garden of Eden, was about 100 miles away. Possibly this is what suggested to Ezekiel the frequent mention of the Garden of Eden (Ezek. 28:13; 31:8, 9, 16, 18: 36:35).

### II. Ezekiel's Vision of God (Ezekiel 1:4-28)

#### A. Description of the vision of glory (Ezek. 1:4).

"And I looked . . . out of the north . . . a great cloud" (Ezek. 1:4): The visions were inclusively visions of God. They proceeded in four manifestations. The first was of a cloud swept into sight by a stormy wind, surrounded by brightness, and continually flashing forth in glory.

The cloud from the north clears the atmosphere with the tempestuous wind. The center of the great cloud appears as a lump of fire, which throws around the cloud the brightness of light, and presents in its midst the appearance of glowing metal.

The north is the quarter from which the enemies would break in to execute judgment upon Jerusalem and Judah, according to the usage of speech by the prophets and especially by Jeremiah.

The coming of the divine appearance from the north signifies that it is from the north that God will bring to pass the judgment upon Judah.

#### B. The four living creatures -- Cherubim (Ezek. 1:5-14).

"Out of the midst. . . likeness of four living creatures" (Ezek. 1:5): They are identified as "cherubim" (Ezek. 10:20; see Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:18-20; 26:31; I Kings 6:23, 29; II Chron. 3:14). They stood, one in the middle of each side of a square, their outspread wings touching at the corners of the square.

Each cherub had four faces (verse 6): The face of a man (verse 5), looking outward from the square; on his right, the face of a lion; on his left, the face of an ox; in the rear, looking toward the center of the square, the face of an eagle (verse 10). There were four immense whirling (Ezek. 10:6) wheels, one beside each cherub.

Notice that it does NOT SAY these WERE FOUR LIVING CREATURES. They may have been the picture of great, special truths God wanted the prophet, His people and us to receive.

The creatures were man-like, but excel man in perfection. "Man": God-like intelligence. "Lion": Unlimited strength. "Ox": Patience and endurance. "Eagle": Swift in serving.

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 28 - PAGE 4

### C. The four wheels beside the cherubim (Ezek. 1:15-21).

"Wheel upon the earth . . ." (Ezek. 1:15): Notice the "living creatures" came out of the heavens, and were associated with the clouds. "The wheel" stands "upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces." The wheels appear to be of beryl (verse 16), precious green stone. The rings or rims were "full of eyes" (verse 18). They moved as the "living creatures" moved (verses 20-21). The sense is: The wheels were, in their motion and rest, completely bound by the movements and rest of the creatures, because the spirit which ruled in them was also in the wheels, and regulated their going, standing, and rising upwards.

### D. The throne of Jehovah (Ezek. 1:22-28).

"The likeness of the firmament . . ." (Ezek. 1:22): Above the living creatures was a crystal platform. On the platform, a throne of blue sapphire (verse 26), and on the throne "the likeness as the appearance of a MAN above upon it," in the glow of incandescent light, encircled in a rainbow. It was set within a vast storm cloud, with whirling flashes of fire. God appeared to Ezekiel in this form. It signified His glory, Power, Omniscience, Omnipresence, Omnipotence, Sovereignty, Majesty and Holiness (Psalm 19:1ff). The earth is the place of God's providence. Around it He moves as the wheel might move-with steadiness and regularity. "Wait on the Lord" (Psa. 27:14). He is with us. He gives us victory (Matt. 28:20; I Cor. 15:58). Someday we shall see Him "FACE TO FACE" (I Cor. 13:12).

"The living creatures": Cherubim guarded the entrance to the Tree of Life (Gen. 3:24). Likenesses of Cherubim were placed on the Ark of the Covenant (Ex. 25: 18-20), and embroidered on the Veil of the Tabernacle (Ex. 26:31). They were reproduced in the Temple (I Kings 6:23, 29; II Chron. 3:14). They had been interwoven in Biblical thought from the beginning as angelic attendants of God. In Rev. 4:6, 7; 5:6; 6:1, 6; 7:11; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4 they are intimately connected with the unfolding destiny of the church of our Lord.

Note the effect of the vision on Ezekiel (verse 28). Both Ezekiel and John saw the King of Glory reigning (Rev. 1:13, 14; 4:3).

## III. Ezekiel's Commission (Ezekiel 2:1-3:27)

### A. The voice of God (Ezek. 2:1-3a).

"Son of man, stand upon thy feet" (Ezek. 2:1): Ezekiel is thus addressed 90 times. In Daniel 7:13 it is used of the Messiah. It was the title by which Jesus commonly spoke of himself (see John 1:14). It is the racial name of Jesus as the representative Man in the sense of I Cor. 15:45-47.

As used of Ezekiel, "Son of man" indicates not what the prophet is in himself, but what he is to God: a "Son of man" (a) chosen, (b) endued with the Spirit, and (c) sent of God. All this is true also of Christ who was, furthermore, the representative man-the head of regenerate humanity!

"Stand . . . I will speak" (Ezek. 2:1): God revealed His will to Ezekiel. He spoke to him. "We return to the Bible to find the message there . . . luminous . . . harmonious . . . Divine" (F. F. Horton in "Verbim Dei"). God HAS SPOKEN TO US THROUGH HIS SON (Heb. 1:1-3; II Pet. 1:21; II Tim. 3:16, 17).

"The spirit entered into me . . . I heard" (Ezek 2:2): He was listening when God spoke. The entrance of the spirit enabled him to obey God.

"I send thee to the children of Israel . . ." (Ezek. 2:3a): God commissions Ezekiel to deliver the message of God to the children, who were described as having transgressed against Jehovah, Israel was

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 28 - PAGE 5

God's chosen people through whom the Christ came (Gal 4:4-5). Judah, the southern kingdom, was especially now being warned by the prophet.

### B. The vices of Israel (Ezek. 2:3b-5).

"A rebellious nation. . ." (Ezek. 2:3b): Israel is rebellious, impudent and stiff-necked. This is ancient and modern in its application. Read Acts 7:51-53; II Tim. 3:1-13. Ezekiel 22 enumerates the sins of the nation. The fundamental sins of bloodshed and idolatry were named and denounced; the resultant sins were described such as the oppression of the people by the princes, of despising holy things, profaning the Sabbath, terrible and widespread impurity, and of active, evil greed. The nation had become dross (Ezek. 22:18); prophets, priests, princes and peoples were sin-laden (verses 23-29), and God "sought for a man among them . . . but I found NONE" (Ezek. 22:30)! The nation was ripe for judgment (Ezek. 2:4, 5)!

### C. A Vigorous ministry commanded (Ezek. 2:6-3:27).

"Be not afraid . . ." (Ezek. 2:6): Ezekiel is warned at the outset that he is being called to a life of hardship and persecution.

"Speak my words . . ." (Ezek. 2:7): Ezekiel is to deliver God's message whether they hear, or whether they would forbear.

"Eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel" (Ezek. 3:1): The commission was ratified by the symbolism of a roll handed to Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:8-10). He was to eat and digest the roll, as was John (Rev. 10:9). In his mouth the book was sweet (verses 2, 3), which seems to mean that he found joy in being God's messenger, though the message was a message of woe. Eating the book, whether literally, or only in vision, signified thoroughly that its message would become a part of himself.

"I have made thee a watchman . . ." (Ezek. 3:17): He was to give warning to the nation. He would speak for God the whole message, or the blood of the people will be on the prophet's head (Ezek. 3:18-21; 33:1-20). It is a sacredly solemn responsibility for a minister, elders, deacons, and teachers to give the will of God to the people (Acts 20:26-32). May we be as true to our task as Ezekiel was to his.

"I will make thy tongue cleave to the roof of thy mouth . . ." (Ezek. 3:26): God warns him that at times He would impose silence on him (Ezek. 24:27; 33:32), this being doubtless a caution to Ezekiel to speak, not his own ideas, but only as God commands him to speak.

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 28 - PAGE 6

### QUESTIONS

1. From what land did Ezekiel prophecy (Ezek. 1:3; II Kings 24:11-16), and why is the book called Ezekiel? Who was his father?
2. What two-fold office did he occupy (Ezek. 1:3; 2:5; 37:7)?
3. Did Ezekiel begin his prophesying before the final destruction of Jerusalem (Ezek. 4:7; 15:6)? How many years was he carried to Babylon before Jerusalem was destroyed?
4. Can you give a simple outline to the book of Ezekiel?
5. What is the dominant note of Ezekiel (Ezek. 6:7,10,13,17), and how many times is this note sounded in the book?
6. Of what were the Jews cured by the Babylonian captivity?
7. Where did Ezekiel live in Babylon (Ezek. 1:1)?
8. Can you point out three steps by which God prepared Ezekiel for the prophetic ministry (Ezek. 1:28; 2:2; 3:3,4)?
9. Can you describe the vision of glory, and where did it come from (Ezek. 1:4)?
10. With whom are the living creatures (Ezek. 1:5-14) identified (Ezek. 10:20; Gen. 3:24; Ex. 25:18-20; 26:31; I Kings 6:23,29; II Chron. 3:14)? What was the likeness of their faces (Ezek. 1:5-10)?
11. By what title is Ezekiel called (Ezek. 2:1), and of whom is it used in Daniel 7:13? What is its meaning as applied to Ezekiel, and to Jesus?
12. What three adjectives describe the attitude of the Jews toward Jehovah (Ezek. 2:3,4; Isa. 1:2-6)?
13. What were the fundamental sins of the nations in Ezekiel 22? Enumerate them. What four classes shared in these sins (Ezek. 22:23-31)?
14. To whom does God send Ezekiel – strangers or his own people (Ezek. 2:3-5; 3:4-6)?
15. What was the roll eaten by Ezekiel which was in his mouth as honey for sweetness (Ezek. 3:3; Jer.15:16)? Who had a similar experience in the New Testament (Rev. 10:9)?
16. Did God make Ezekiel responsible for the people's attitude toward the word (Ezek. 2:5-7; II Cor. 2:14-16)?
17. What was the prophet's responsibility (Ezek. 3:17-21; Acts 20:26,27)?
18. How do you explain Ezekiel's uncompromising courage (Ezek. 3:7-9; Num.22:18; Jer.20:9; Acts 4:20,29; I Pet.4:11)?
19. To whom do the dry bones refer (Ezek.37:1-4, 11; Gal.6:16; 3:7-9, 29; Rom.2:28-29; 4:13-14; Psa.3:3; Rom.11:26,27)?
20. What significant name will be given to Jerusalem during "that day" (Ezek. 48:35)?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 29 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 29  
Daniel 1, 2

Page 1  
Memory Verse: Daniel 2:22

Memory Verse:

"He revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him" (Daniel 2:22).

Public Reading: Daniel 1:8-20.

**DANIEL THE INTERPRETER OF DREAMS**

Daniel means "God is my judge." Like Ezekiel, he was a Jewish captive in Babylon. He was of royal blood (Dan. 1:3). The book itself represents Daniel as its author (Dan. 7:1, 28; 8:2; 9:2; 12:4, 5). Zechariah, Ezra, and Nehemiah refer to Daniel. In Christ's day, the Jews accepted Daniel as belonging to the Sacred Canon.

Our Lord mentions Daniel, calling him "the prophet" (Matt. 24:15). Therefore, the book cannot be the work of an unknown author who lived 400 years after the days of Daniel. It is the work of an historical character, Daniel, who as a lad of about twelve or fourteen was carried to Babylon from Jerusalem. "Daniel continued even unto the first year of King Cyrus" (Dan. 1:21). Cyrus overthrew Babylon in 536 B. C., reigning over the Persian Empire 536-529 B. C. Cyrus allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem, 49,897 of whom returned in 536 B. C.

**Purpose of Daniel**

The Hebrew Statesman-Prophet at Babylon "is the indispensable introduction to New Testament prophecy." He is the prophet of "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24). "His vision sweeps the whole course of Gentile world-rule to its end in catastrophe, and to the setting up of the Messianic kingdom.

**Outline of Daniel**

- I. Introduction. Personal History of Daniel from the Conquest of Jerusalem to the second year of Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 1:1-21)
- II. The Visions of Nebuchadnezzar; Their result (Daniel 2:1-4:37).
- III. The History of Daniel Under Belshazzar and Darius (Dan. 5:1-6:28).
- IV. The Visions of Daniel (Daniel 7:1-12:13).

**I. A Prince and His Principles (Daniel 1:1-21)**

- A. A captive prince (Daniel 1:1-4).



## YEAR 3 - LESSON 29 - PAGE 2

"In the third year . . . of Jehoiakim king of Judah . . ." (Dan. 1:1): Jehoiakim was the son of good king Josiah, and was made king of Judah by Pharaoh-Necho. He reigned from 608-597 B. C. He was a wicked king (II Kings 23:34-24:6).

"Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon . . ." (Dan. 1:1): Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylon 606-561 B. C., one of the mightiest monarchs of all time. He reigned 45 years, two of them as co-regent with his father Nabopolassar (625-604 B. C.).

Nebuchadnezzar first came against Jerusalem in 606 B. C., at which time Daniel was carried to Babylon. Read II Chron. 36:6, 7. In 597 B. C., 10,000 captives were taken captive (II Kings 24:14-16). In 587 B. C. the city was burned, and the temple destroyed (Jer. 52:28-30; II Kings 25:8-12). The king wanted only tribute at first as he "besieged" Jerusalem.

"Babylon . . . land of Shinar" (Dan. 1:1, 2): Nebuchadnezzar, who was Daniel's friend, brought Babylon to the zenith of its power and glory in the days of Daniel. "Land of Shinar" is the name of a country (Gen. 10:10; 12:2). In the Biblical story, Shinar is the name of the land in which were located the cities of Babylon, Erech, Accad, and Calneh. It was, therefore, a part of the land of Babylon, and may be roughly spoken of as southern Babylonia.

### **The Size of Babylon**

Ancient historians said that its wall was 60 miles around, 15 miles on each side, 300 feet high, 80 feet thick, extending 35 feet BELOW THE GROUND so enemies could not tunnel under it. It was built of brick one foot square, and 3 or 4 inches thick. One-fourth mile of clear space between the city and the wall ran all the way around it. Wide and deep moats, or canals, filled with water, protected the wall. There were 250 towers were on the wall, with guardrooms for soldiers. There were 100 gates of brass that allowed free entry and exit from the city.

The Euphrates divided Babylon into two almost equal parts. Brick walls guarded both banks all the way, with 25 gates connecting streets and ferryboats. One bridge, on stone piers, one-half mile long, 30 feet wide, with drawbridges that were removed at night. There was a tunnel under the river, 15 feet wide and 12 feet high. Recent excavations have verified the seemingly fabulous accounts of the ancient historians.

### **The Great Temple of Marduk (Bel)**

This temple adjoined the Tower of Babylon (Babel?) and was the most renowned sanctuary in the Euphrates valley. It contained a golden image of Bel and a golden table that together weighed not less than 50,000 pounds. At the top were golden images of Bel and Ishtar, two golden lions, a golden table forty (40) feet long and fifteen (15) feet wide, and a human figure of solid gold eighteen (18) feet high. Isaiah called Babylon a "city of gold" (Tsa. 14:4).

### **Nebuchadnezzar's Palace**

Daniel often went into Nebuchadnezzar's palace. Koldewey (1899-1912) uncovered its vast ruins. The south walls of the Throne Room were twenty feet (20) thick.

Three walls protected the north side of the palace. Just north of them were more walls fifty (50) feet thick. A little further on were still more massive walls, and about a mile further out was the INNER WALL of the city. It consisted of two parallel walls of brick, each about twenty (20) feet thick, forty (40) feet apart,

### YEAR 3 - LESSON 29 - PAGE 3

the space between filled with rubble, a total thickness of eighty (80) feet. A deep and wide canal was on the outside.

#### **The Hanging Gardens of Babylon**

Nebuchadnezzar built the hanging gardens for his Median Queen, beautiful daughter of Cyaxerxes, who helped his father conquer Nineveh. The hanging gardens were on several tiers of arches, one over another, each bearing a solid platform 400 feet square. The terraces and top were covered with flowers, shrubs and trees, with a garden on the roof. Watered from a reservoir at the top, the water was raised from the river by hydraulic pumps. In the arches underneath the gardens were luxurious apartments, the pleasure ground of the palace. The gardens were built while Daniel was chief governor of the wise men of Babylon. Koldewey uncovered arches in the north east corner of the palace that he believed were the HANGING GARDENS.

"The king's seed . . . princes" (Dan. 1:3): Daniel was of royal parentage, and hence of noble blood. Josephus says that Daniel and his three friends were kin to King Zedekiah. That gave them easier entrée to the palace of Babylon.

"Children . . . well favored, and skillful in all wisdom" (Dan. 1:4): "Children" designates youth from about fifteen to twenty years of age. Among the Persians, the education of boys began according to Plato (Alcib. i.2), in their fourteenth year. According to Xenophon (Cyrop. i. 2) such youths were in their seventeenth year capable of entering the service of the king. Ashpenaz the master of Nebuchadnezzar's eunuchs was to choose youths with perfect physique, and unusual mental endowments. This severe training course lasted three years.

In Daniel's day, the city of Babylon ruled was the premier city of the world. It ruled the most powerful empire that had up to that time existed. The empire LASTED SEVENTY (70) YEARS. DANIEL WAS THERE FROM ITS RISE TO ITS FALL. The SEVENTY YEARS of Judah's CAPTIVITY was EXACTLY the SAME SEVENTY (70) YEARS THAT BABYLON RULED THE WORLD. The year that Cyrus, king of Persia, conquered Babylon (536 B. C.), that same year Cyrus authorized the return of the Jews to their own land! History of HIS (God's) STORY!

"And BABYLON, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. Wild beasts of the desert shall lie there. ." (Isa. 13:17-22).

"And Babylon shall become heaps . . . without an inhabitant" (Jer. 51:37-43).

B. A conscientious prince (Dan. 1:5-16).

"The king appointed . . . the king's meat" (Dan. 1:5): Daniel and his friends had special physical attention, and their food and drink were supplied from the king's table. The "king's meat" had been offered in sacrifice to Babylonian idols. Daniel at once manifested his strength of character in purposing to ABSTAIN from such food. He had a conscience. Read Numbers 6:1-4; Lev. 11:1-47.

"The prince of the eunuchs gave names . . ." (Dan. 1:7): This official gave the Hebrew princes new names to mark their new relation. Daniel, "God is my judge," is changed to Belteshazzar, "Protect his life."

"Hananiah," "Whom God hath favoured" to "Shadrack," probably a corruption of Marduk, the city-god of Babylon.

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 29 - PAGE 4

"Mishael," "Who is like God?" was changed to "Meshach." The E1, God, was dropped, and Shak substituted, being the goddess of love and mirth called "Sheshach" (Jer. 25:26; 51:41).

"Azariah," "Whom Jehovah helps," was changed to "Abednego." "Servant of the shining fire." These four youths were DEDICATED TO HEATHEN GODS -- to Bel, the chief god of Babylon; the Sun-god, Earth-god, and Fire-god.

"Daniel purposed in his heart . . ." (Dan. 1:8): Tactfully he requested his superior not to force him to "defile himself." He knew how to disagree without being disagreeable. These handsome and brilliant young men were under the special care of God, and trained of God to bear witness to His name in the heathen court that ruled the world (verse 8).

"Prove thy servants . . . ten days" (Dan. 1:12): Melzar, the steward or chief butler (verses 10, 11) loved Daniel, and gave him vegetable food in general instead of rich meats and wines. Daniel's courteous request for a ten days' test was accepted (verses 13, 14).

"And at the end . . . countenances appeared fairer and fatter" (Dan. 1:15): The test vindicated Daniel's purpose, and he and his friends were allowed to proceed with their training (verse 16). Dr. Lorenz said, "My success depends upon my brain being clear, my muscles firm and my nerves steady. No one can take alcoholic liquor without blunting these physical powers that must be kept on edge. As a physician I must not drink."

### C. The competent prince (Dan. 1:17-21).

"God gave them knowledge and skill . . ." (Dan. 1:17): They were handsome (verse 15), and unmatched mentally in the entire kingdom (verses 19, 20). The four were chosen to stand "before the king" (verse 19), which means they were advanced to a position of favor near the throne.

"Daniel continued . . . first year of King Cyrus" (Dan. 1:21): Daniel was one of the first captives taken from Jerusalem. He lived to see the end of the captivity, living to the "third year of Cyrus" (Dan. 10:1 in 535 B. C.), or about eighty-four (84) years of age.

## II. The Interpreter of Dreams (Daniel 2:1-49)

### A. The forgotten dream: the magi's failure (Dan. 2:1-13).

"In the second year of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar . . ." (Dan. 2:1): His co-reign (606 B. C.), with his father was over. This was in the second year of his sole reign, or 602 B. C. Daniel was still a mere youth, having been in Babylon only three or four years.

"Dreamed . . . spirit was troubled": God gave Nebuchadnezzar the future of his kingdom. When he awakened he could not recall the dream, OR ITS MEANING (verses 2-9). He threatened to kill the wise men if they did not tell him the dream and its interpretation.

"None can show . . . except the gods" (Dan. 2:11): The wise men confessed their failure, and helplessness in reading the PAST OR THE FUTURE. "The king was angry . . . and commanded to destroy all the wise men of Babylon" (verse 12). In this decree, Daniel and his companions were involved (verse 13).

### B. Daniel's prayer for wisdom (Dan. 2:14-18).

"Daniel . . . desire mercies of the God of heaven" (Dan. 2:14-18).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 29 - PAGE 5

Daniel, through the king's captain, sought and obtained an interview with the king, asking for time, and promising to interpret the dream. The request being granted, he at once GATHERED HIS FRIENDS TOGETHER, and began intense prayer. The POWER OF UNITED PRAYER IS SHOWN in this wonderful story. Read Matt. 18:19 and Acts 4:23-31.

### C. The secret revealed to Daniel (Dan. 2:19-30).

"Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel . . ." (Dan. 2:19): God answered the prayer of Daniel and his prayer-partners in a vision at night: In his gratitude, he praised the name of Jehovah in what was practically a psalm full of beauty (verses 20-23). God "revealeth the deep and secret things" (verse 22). God alone knows the past, the present and the future (Deut. 29:29; I Cor. 2:8, 10). Daniel praised God for revealing the secret to him (verse 23).

"Daniel answered in the presence of the king . . ." (Dan. 2:26): He gave God all the credit (verses 26-30). He exonerated the wise men and declared that GOD IN HEAVEN alone can reveal SECRETS (verses 28-30).

### D. The forgotten dream and its interpretation (Dan. 2:31-45).

"Thou, O king, sawest . . . a great image" (Dan. 2:31): The FOUR WORLD EMPIRES here predicted are generally understood to have been the Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman. From the days of Daniel to the coming of Christ, these four empires ruled the world, exactly as Daniel had predicted. In the days of the Roman Empire, Christ our Lord appeared. The Lord Jesus Christ set up a KINGDOM which, starting as a grain of mustard seed, and passing through many things, is now giving every evidence that it will become a UNIVERSAL AND EVERLASTING KINGDOM, blossoming into full glory at our Lord's RETURN (verse 35).

This prophecy of the FOUR KINGDOMS is further expanded in Daniel 7, the FOUR BEASTS; Daniel 8, the Ram and the He-Goat; Daniel 9, the Seventy Weeks; and Daniel 11, the struggles between the Kings of the North and the Kings of the South.

### E. The promotion of Daniel (Dan. 2:46-49).

"Your God is a God of gods, a revealer of secrets" (Dan. 2:47):

The interpretation God gave Daniel convinced Nebuchadnezzar, who at once recognized the supremacy of God, and rewarded Daniel by setting him over the Province and the wise men.

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 29 - PAGE 6

### QUESTIONS

1. Are these chapters merely an autobiography of Daniel (II Pet. 1:21; II Tim. 3:16)?
2. When, and by whom, was Daniel carried into Babylon (Dan. 1:1-3)? Who was the king of Judah at that time (II Kings 23:34-24:6)?
3. How were Daniel and his three companions qualified by birth for the king's special training (Dan. 1:3; II Kings 20:18)? Was the equipment human only (Dan. 1:17)?
4. What heathen names were given to the youths (Dan. 1:7; 4:8)?
5. Why was the proposed diet a challenge to their faith in Jehovah's true worship (Dan. 1:5, 8; Num. 6:1-4; Lev. 1-47)? Who was the spokesman for the youths (Dan. 8-11)?
6. What does Dan. 1:9 reveal concerning the personality of Daniel (See Gen. 39:21; Acts 7:10)?
7. What reasonable test was suggested and accepted (Dan. 1:11-14; Prov. 3:5,6)? What was the result of this ten-day trial (Dan. 1:15,16)?
8. Before what world monarch was Daniel now called to stand (Dan. 1:18, 19; Psa. 119:46), and what remarkable thing did the king discover (Dan. 1:20)?
9. What title is Daniel given by our Lord (Matt. 24:15)?
10. Did Daniel live to see the first remnant return to Jerusalem (Dan. 1:21; 10:1; Ezra 1:1-3)? Why is King Cyrus given prominence in this book (Ezra 1:1-4)?
11. What impossible demand, humanly speaking, did Nebuchadnezzar make of his wise men (Dan. 2:1-9)? How did their failure affect the king (Dan. 2:10-13)?
12. How did Daniel reveal his confidence in prayer (Dan. 2:14-18)? What did he do when the Lord answered his prayer (Dan. 2:19-23; Heb. 13:15)?
13. Did Daniel show any desire to accept credit for revealing and interpreting the forgotten dream (Dan. 2:24-30; Deut. 29:29; I Cor. 2:9,10)?
14. How many kingdoms are represented by the image (Dan. 2:37-40)?
15. What world empire is represented by the head of gold (Dan. 2:37, 38; Jer. 27:6,7)? The breast and arms of silver (Dan. 2:32,39; II Chron. 36:20; Ezra 1:2; Dan. 5:28; 8:20)? Brass portion of the image (Dan. 2:32,39,8:21)? Legs and feet of iron and clay (Dan. 2:33,40; Luke 2:1)?
16. Why is the period of these four monarchies designated as "the times of the Gentiles" (Luke 21:24; Dan. 2:37-40)? Is the trend of Gentile power toward strength or weakness (Dan. 2:37-43)?
17. Whose kingdom will destroy and supplant these 4 powers (Dan. 2:44; Psa. 2,8,24,72; 89:27-37)?
18. Who is referred to as "the stone... cut out without hands" (Dan. 2:34,35; Matt. 21:42,44)?
19. What did Nebuchadnezzar say concerning Daniel's God (Dan. 2:46,47)?
20. What promotion did Daniel receive, and what Christian grace was observed by Daniel (Dan. 2:48,49; Rom. 12:10)?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 30 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 30  
Daniel 3,4

Page 1  
Memory Verses: Daniel 3:17, 18

Memory Verses:

"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O King. But if not, be it known unto thee, O King, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up" (Daniel 3:17,18).

Public Reading: Daniel 3:10-18.

**AN IMPOSSIBILITY**

This lesson occurred in the eighteenth year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign (606-561 B. C.). Daniel and his friends had been in Babylon about Twenty years (606-586 B. C.), this being the same year that Nebuchadnezzar burned Jerusalem (586 B. C.).

In Chapter one we are introduced to four young men "of the king's seed" (Dan. 1:3) who appear to be on a common level. In chapter 2, Daniel's superiority is seen (Dan. 2:1), and Nebuchadnezzar promotes him to "Premier" in the kingdom (Dan. 2:46-49).

Chapter 3 contains no mention of Daniel. For the moment, he is standing in the shadow of his office as Premier, while his three friends face the king's fury for refusing to obey his command. Daniel is a natural leader of the four (Dan. 1:8; 2:16-18, 49).

Daniel in chapter 4 interprets the king's dream that came true. Chapters 3 and 4 contain AN IMPOSSIBILITY as far as human reason is concerned. HOWEVER, WITH GOD all things are possible.

**I. Nebuchadnezzar's Golden Image (Daniel 3:1-30)**

**A. The image and its dedication (Dan. 3:1-7).**

"Nebuchadnezzar . . . made an image of gold" (Dan. 3:1): Nebuchadnezzar's confession of the supremacy of God (Dan. 2:47) did not prevent him from being a worshipper of idols besides. Men in times of trouble confess God, if they are allowed to KEEP THEIR FAVORITE HEART-IDOLS (Matt. 6:24, 33; 12:30; Josh. 24:15). You can't be for God and for an idol at the same time (I Kings 18:21; Rev. 3:15, 16). The image was sixty feet high, and nine feet in breadth, since in the human figure the length is to the breadth in the proportion of about six to one. The image was probably of Bel, the Babylon chief of god; or could have been of Nebuchadnezzar himself. This is self-deification based on Dan. 2:38. The framework was likely of wood, overlaid with gold.

"Plain of Dura": A plain in the neighborhood of Babylon. There are several localities in Babylon called Duru. There is a river by this name, with Tulul Dura near by.

"The dedication of the image . . ." (Dan. 3:2): This was made an important empire-wide occasion by the king. All those in the "Who's Who" of that day were present (verse 3). Whatever the king approved of, they ALL APPROVE OF!

"Fall down and worship the golden image . . ." (Dan. 3:5-7): When the orchestra played ALL MUST BOW DOWN IN WORSHIP BEFORE THE IMAGE. No nation but the JEWS would object to this. God

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 30 - PAGE 2

FORBADE THE JEWS TO WORSHIP IDOLS (Ex. 20:2-5, 22, 23). We agree with Paul that "they be NO GODS, which are made with hands" (Acts 19:26).

B. The three Hebrews are accused (Dan. 3:8-12).

"Chaldeans . . . accused the Jews" (Dan. 3:8): The Chaldeans immediately denounced Daniel's three friends as transgressors of the king's command, because they refused to fall down before the golden image and pay homage to it (verses 9-12). To the Jews this would be an act of idolatry; such obeisance on their part might have been construed into a recognition of the continuity of the power of Babylon, of which the divine revelation to Daniel had PREDICTED THE DOWNFALL!

"Whoso falleth not down . . . cast into . . . fiery furnace" (Dan. 3:11): This was a common mode of punishment in Babylon. Jeremiah speaks of captives being "roasted in the fire" in Babylon (Jer. 29:22).

After their preface of flattery, the Chaldeans make a cruel accusation (verses 9-12; Acts 24:2-9).

C. Defying the King, the Jews are cast into the furnace (Dan. 3:13-23).

"Nebuchadnezzar . . . IS IT TRUE . . .?" (Dan. 3:14): The accusation of the Jews by the Chaldeans made the king furious (verse 13). They forced him to see he had made a bad political move; his appointments were not popular. They were disloyal to him. The king commands the Jews to be brought before him, and asked if PURPOSELY THEY REFUSED TO SERVE "MY GODS." He gives them an opportunity to excuse their conduct and SAY IT WAS NOT INTENTIONAL by "falling down and worshipping the image which I have made" (verse 15). "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" This is a taunt. No God, the king affirms, can deliver you from the furnace (See II Kings 18:35; Ex. 5:2).

"We are not careful to answer thee . . ." (Dan. 3:1B): With splendid heroism Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego utterly refused to worship the image! Just as God had revealed to Daniel the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and its interpretation, SO NOW GOD PUTS INTO THE HEARTS OF THESE THREE MEN THE FIRM DETERMINATION TO BE TRUE. This is a speech of real men of God. They SAY WHAT THEY MEAN; THEY MEAN WHAT THEY SAY. See Acts 4:19, 20.

"If it be so, our God . . . IS ABLE" (Dan. 3:17): They knew that God had the power to deliver them, and would according to His will. Whether God delivered them from the furnace or not, they bluntly tell the king that "WE WILL NOT SERVE THY GODS, NOR WORSHIP THE GOLDEN IMAGE WHICH THOU HAST SET UP." See Matt. 10:28; II Tim. 4:17, 18.

When the executioner went behind Jerome of Prague to set fire to the pile, Jerome said: "Come here and kindle the fire before my eyes, for if I dreaded such a sight I should never have come to this place when I had a free opportunity to escape." The fire was kindled and he sang a hymn that was soon finished by the encircling flames!

"These three men . . . fell down bound" (Dan. 3:23): After the decided refusal of the accused to worship his gods, Nebuchadnezzar changed his countenance toward the men. He commanded that the furnace should be heated seven times greater than was usual (verse 19), that the rebels be bound and cast into the furnace (verses 20, 21). The furnace was so hot its "flame of the fire slew those men that took up" the three Jews (verse 22) as they tried to throw them into the fire.

D. Their deliverance and the king's decree (Dan. 3:24-30).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 30 - PAGE 3

"I see four men loose, walking" (Dan. 3:25): The three Jews fell bound into the furnace (verse 24), but God honors their faith. The messenger of the covenant was with them, a prelude to His INCARNATION. God never forsakes His own (Heb. 13:5).

"The fire had no power . . ." (Dan. 3:27): Read Isa. 43:2; Heb. 12:20. God alone is a "consuming fire" (Heb. 12:29). The king is convinced. His decree recognizes that GOD ALONE IS TRUE (verses 28, 29). He promotes the three Jews (verse 30). Their faithfulness is rewarded. See Acts 5:29.

The Apocryphal book called the "SONG OF THE THREE HOLY CHILDREN" claims to be the song of praise of these three men for their deliverance from the fiery furnace. Inserted after Daniel 3:23, it embodied a popular tradition, but it was never regarded as a part of the Hebrew Bible.

Oppert, who excavated in the ruins of Babylon in 1854, found a pedestal of a colossal statue that may have been the remains of Nebuchadnezzar's golden image.

### II. Nebuchadnezzar's Proclamation Respecting His Insanity (Dan. 4:1-37)

#### A. The preamble (Dan. 4:1-3).

"Nebuchadnezzar . . . unto all people" (Dan. 4:1): The last story connected with the reign of Nebuchadnezzar consisted of the king's own manifesto, setting forth the dealings of the Most High God with him.

The opening ascription of praise is most remarkable when it is remembered that it expressed the conviction of so mighty a monarch as Nebuchadnezzar. He had not actually subjected the whole earth; he might have done so, and speaks as if he had (Dan. 2:37, 38). He confessed God's greatness, goodness, and eternal dominion (verses 2, 3). Contrast this humility of Nebuchadnezzar with Russia's cosmonaut Gherman Titov, who proclaimed his DISBELIEF IN GOD IN SEATTLE (at the World's Fair, in PEOPLE IN THE NEWS as reported by the Cincinnati Enquirer, Monday, May 7, 1962). "Some people," said Titov, "say there is a God out there. But in my travels around the Earth all day long I looked around and didn't see Him. I saw no God or angels . . . No God helped build our rocket. The rocket was made by our people. I don't believe in God. I believe in man, his strength, his possibilities and his reason."

This is humanism. This atheistic Russian, true to his Godless system, has humanized God and Deified Man! The CREATION is the result of God's power. We worship the CREATOR. We shall SEE HIM, and be like Him, "WHEN HE SHALL APPEAR . . . WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS" (I John 3:2ff).

#### B. His vision of a great tree (Dan. 4:4-18).

"I saw a dream . . ." (Dan. 4:5): This is Nebuchadnezzar's second recorded dream. See chapter 2 for his first one. The wise men could not interpret it (verse 6, 7). The dream came to him in the midst of prosperity and ease in his palace. Daniel is called and the dream is told to him (verses 8-18).

"Hew down . . ." (Dan. 4:14): Read Matt. 3:10; Luke 13:7.

"Stump . . ." (Dan. 4:15): The kingdom is still to be given to Nebuchadnezzar, as a tree stump will send forth shoots and grow again (Isa. 11:1; Job 14:7-9). Barnes interprets the "band of iron and brass" as referring, to the chaining of the royal maniac.

#### C. Daniel's interpretation and advice (Dan. 4:19-27).



### YEAR 3 - LESSON 30 - PAGE 4

"It is thou . . ." (Dan. 4:22): Daniel realized the terrible meaning that he must announce to the king. Courteously he addressed the king (verses 19-21), and in loyalty to truth interprets the meaning to the king. He announces God's decree without compromise (verses 23, 24). He would be driven from his throne until he "knew that the most HIGH RULETH" (Dan. 4:25, 26). Daniel gives a call to repentance to the royal monarch (verse 27).

D. The prediction is fulfilled (Daniel 4:28-37).

"All this came upon the king Nebuchadnezzar" (Dan. 4:28): A year later (verse 29), he was smitten with a mental disease, in which he fancied himself a beast and tried to act like one, roaming among the animals in the parks of the palace grounds. The king would not obey the appeal of Daniel, and WHILE HE WAS BOASTING THAT HE HAD BUILT THE GREAT CITY, BABYLON, BY HIS OWN POWER AND FOR HIS OWN GLORY A VOICE CAME FROM HEAVEN TO TELL HIM THAT THE KINGDOM WAS DEPARTED FROM HIM (verses 30-31).

"Drive thee from men . . . seven times shall pass over thee" (Dan. 3:32): All that Daniel foretold came to pass. "Seven times" means "SEASONS," Rendal Harris says that in Babylon "summer and winter were the only seasons counted," according to which it would be THREE AND ONE-HALF YEARS.

In one of Nebuchadnezzar's inscriptions giving an account of his buildings and accomplishments occurs thus as read by Sir Henry Rawlinson: "For four years the residence of my kingdom did not delight my heart. In no one of my possessions did I erect any important building by my might. I did not put up buildings in Babylon for myself and the honor of my name. In the worship of Merodach my god I did not sing his praise, nor did I provide his altar with sacrifices, nor clean the canals." This is thought by some possibly, to be a euphemistic reference to his insanity, though ancient kings in having their inscriptions made avoided recording such things.

Lenormant states that the Chaldeans had a tradition that Nebuchadnezzar ascended the roof of his palace, and cried, "O Babylonians, there shall come a Persian to impose servitude upon you. A Mede shall be his associate." This, if true, looks like Nebuchadnezzar had absorbed some of Daniel's ideas.

"Mine understanding returned . . . I blessed the most HIGH" (Dan. 4:34): When his reason returned, Nebuchadnezzar recognized the God of heaven (verse 34). He was restored to his kingdom, praising the King of Heaven whose works are true and whose ways are judgment (verses 36, 37).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 30 - PAGE 5

### QUESTIONS

1. When did this lesson occur, and how long had Daniel and his friends been in Babylon?
2. How did Nebuchadnezzar reveal his proud, idolatrous heart (Dan. 3:1-7; 2:46, 47)? Is it possible for men to confess God in times of trouble, and still keep their idols (I Kings 18:21; Rev. 3:16,17; Matt. 6:24,33; 12:30)?
3. When the signal for worship was given, how did the people respond (Dan. 3:7)?
4. Were there any exceptions, and what were the exceptions to the rule (Dan. 3:8-12)?
5. Did they weaken when pressure was put upon them to "serve my gods" (Dan. 3:13-18; Phil. 4:5,7)?
6. What was Nebuchadnezzar's verdict upon the three (Dan. 3:19,20; Psa. 3:6; 118:6; Heb. 13:6)?
7. What notable miracle was performed before the king (Dan. 3:21-25; Isa. 43:2)?
8. How did it change the king's attitude toward Jehovah (Dan. 3:29-4:3; 3:10,11)?
9. Did the king still hold to idols (Dan.4:8,9,19)?
10. Can you describe Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the tree (Dan.4:5-18)?
11. Whom did the tree represent (Dan. 4:20-22)?
12. What did the destruction of the tree foreshadow (Dan. 4:23-25)? Of what truth did the remaining "stump" speak (Dan.4:26, 15:15)?
13. What lesson did God purpose to teach Nebuchadnezzar through this punishment (Dan. 4:25,32,30,31)?
14. Whose kingdom is most conspicuous in the book of Daniel (Dan. 4:17, 25,32; 5:21)?
15. Who has the final authority in the kingdom of men (Dan. 2:21; 4:12, 25,32; 5:21)?
16. How did this punishment affect Nebuchadnezzar's mind (Dan. 4:33-36)? How long did this punishment last, and how was his body affected (Dan. 4:32,33)?
17. What was Nebuchadnezzar's testimony after God had broken his pride (Dan. 4:34-37; Job 34:36; James 4:8; I Pet.5:6)?
18. Has this lesson impressed you with the peril of fleshly pride (Prov. 11:2; Matt. 23:12; James 4:6-10; I Pet. 5:5)?
19. Do you think this was an attempt at political unity or false religious unity (Rev. 13:15)?
20. What terrible person -- still in the future -- is foreshadowed by Nebuchadnezzar (Rev. 13:14-18)?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 31 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 31  
Daniel 5,6

Page 1  
Memory Verse: Daniel 6:23

Memory Verse:

"Then was the king exceeding glad for him, and commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his Gad" (Daniel 6:23).

Public Reading: Daniel 6:16-23.

**ANOTHER IMPOSSIBILITY**

Those of us who accept God as "THE LIVING GOD . . . STEADFAST FOREVER, AND HIS KINGDOM THAT WHICH SHALL NOT BE DESTROYED" (Dan. 6:26) have no difficulty in believing in miracles. They are not impossible to us. To refuse to accept only that which one can understand with the mind would rob us of many blessings.

I do not know how a BLACK cow can eat GREEN GRASS, give WHITE milk from which YELLOW butter is made. Nevertheless, I enjoy the butter on hot biscuits just the same!

Of course, the eternal God can reveal the meaning of the handwriting on the wall to Daniel. God who made the lion can close the mouth of that lion and keep him from eating Daniel!

**I. Belshazzar's Feast (Daniel 5:1-31)**

A. The feast and desecration of the holy vessels (Dan. 5:1-4).

"Belshazzar the king . ." (Dan. 5:1): Until 1853, no mention of Belshazzar was found in Babylonian records. Nabonidus was known to have been the last king of Babylon. Bible critics howled in glee: "DANIEL IS NOT HISTORICAL." However, in 1853 an inscription was FOUND IN A CORNER' STONE OF A TEMPLE BUILT BY NABONIDUS IN UR TO A GOD which said: "May I, Nabonidas, king of Babylon, not sin against thee. And may reverence for thee dwell in the heart of Belshazzar, my first-born, favorite son." Nabonidas was king from 555-536 B. C. From other inscriptions it has been learned that Nabonidas spent much of his time in retirement outside of Babylon, and that Belshazzar was in control of the army and the government. He was CO-REGENT with his father. He is the one who surrendered to Cyrus. This explains how Daniel could be "third ruler" (Dan. 5:16, 29) in the kingdom.

Belshazzar means, "May Bel protect the king." Bel was the god of fire. The king was impious, and cruel. His death ended the first world-empire, the head of gold of Nebuchadnezzar (Dan. 2:38).

"Golden vessels . . . drank in them" (Dan. 5:3): This was an open insult to Jehovah and the temple vessels. It was not an act of necessity for honor's sake. It was an act of reckless profanity. It was an orgy of licentious worship of heathen gods by Belshazzar, the king, "and his princes, his wives, and his concubines" (verse 2), as "They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold . . . silver . . ." (verse 4). The graphic picture of the carousal is set before us which REVEALS WHAT BELSHAZZAR WAS as a man, and was the final manifestation of his sin, and of the consequent judgment of God upon him and his wicked kingdom.

B. The handwriting on the wall (Dan. 5:5-12).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 31 - PAGE 2

"Fingers of a man's hand . . . wrote" (Dan. 5:5): God warns the king, not by a dream as Nebuchadnezzar had been warned (Dan. 4:5ff), nor by a voice, but by the fingers of a hand which wrote a message on the wall against the candlestick, possibly the candlestick taken from the temple in Jerusalem. The "king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him . . . joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another" (verse 6).

"The third ruler in the kingdom" (Dan. 5:7): Nabonidus was the first ruler of the kingdom; Belshazzar had second place; the THIRD PLACE was offered to "Whosoever shall read this writing, and shew me (Belshazzar) the interpretation thereof."

"The queen . . ." (Dan. 5:10): The mother of the reigning king, the widow of his father Nebuchadnezzar, since according to verse 2 the wives of the king were present at the festival. She begins in an assuring manner, since she can give advice that is fitted to allay the embarrassment.

"Nebuchadnezzar thy father . . ." (Dan. 5:11): His forefather, probably his grandfather. Nebuchadnezzar reigned 606-561 B. C.; Evil-merodach, 561-560 B. C.; Neriglissar, 559-556 B. C.; Labask-Masduk, 556-555 B. C.; Nabonidas, 555-536 B. C., and his son, Belshazzar.

"There is a man . . . let Daniel be called" (Dan. 5:11, 12): The queen-mother knows Daniel "will shew the interpretation." Daniel was not now among the wise men, but was called only after the queen had advised it. He was no longer president over the magicians, but on the occasion of a new king ascending the throne had lost that situation, and had been put into another office (See Dan. 8:27).

### C. The interpretation (Dan. 5:13-31).

"Then was Daniel brought in . . ." (Dan. 5-13): If Daniel was twelve to fourteen years old when he was brought captive to Babylon in 606 B. C., he had resided there for SEVENTY (70) years, and was now 82-84 years old. His mind was still keen; his ability was recognized (verses 14-16). The king knew him by reputation as one who can "DISSOLVE DOUBTS" (verse 16), not create them as some modern self-styled wise men delight to do!

"Let thy gifts be to thyself . . ." (Dan. 5:17): Full of dignity and heroic loyalty to God, with clear and incisive words Daniel declined the king's gifts. "Yet I will read the writing unto the king, and make known to him the interpretation." Before he read and interpreted the writing, he reminded the king of the punishment his father Nebuchadnezzar had brought on himself an account of his haughty pride against God (verses 18-21).

"Belshazzar . . . thou knewest all this . . ." (Dan. 5:22): Belshazzar had not sinned through ignorance, but through deliberate contempt of God. He would not profit by the example of Nebuchadnezzar. Daniel tells Belshazzar he has sinned against the God of heaven by desecrating, (verses 2 and 3) the vessels of the temple of the God of Israel. He points to the contrast of the gods formed of dead material, and the living God on whom depends the life and fortune of men (verse 23).

"Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. . ." (Dan. 5:25): Daniel affirms that God to punish Belshazzar had sent the hand to write the mysterious words which he now interprets.

"Mene . . ." : Literally it means "NUMBERED." The word is repeated for emphasis. God had numbered the days of Babylon. The time was up (verse 26; Psa. 90:12; Heb. 9:27).

"Tekel. ": WEIGHED, as in the balances, and "found wanting" (verse 27; I Sam. 2:3; Psa. 62:9; Jer. 6:30). They were deficient in moral worth.

"Upharsin . . ." : DIVIDERS; the active participle plural is used instead of the passive participle singular "DIVIDED" in verse 28.

### YEAR 3 - LESSON 31 - PAGE 3

"PERES . ." (Dan. 5:28): In "upharsin," "Thy kingdom is divided." The meaning is not that the kingdom was to be divided into two equal parts; but PERES is to be divided into pieces, to dissolve the kingdom.

It is the Aramaic, being the singular of the word rendered "Upharsin" by Daniel in verse 26. The Medes and the Persians were named as the conquerors of Babylon (Isa. 13:17-22; Jer. 51:37-43).

"Belshazzar . . . clothed Daniel with scarlet . . . third ruler" (Dan. 5:29): True to his promise, Belshazzar had Daniel promoted with appropriate dress and ceremony to the place of "third ruler in the kingdom."

"Belshazzar . . . slain" (Dan. 5:30): With the death of Belshazzar that very night the interpretation given by Daniel began to be fulfilled. This afforded a certainty that the remaining parts of it would be accomplished sooner or later. Belshazzar was doubtless slain with the sword (Isa. 14:18-20; 21:2-9; Jer. 50:29-35; 51:57).

"And Darius the Median took the kingdom . . ." (Dan. 5:31): He received the kingdom, and reigned until Cyrus took over (Dan. 6:28; 9:1).

The Fall of Babylon is thus related by Xenophon, Herodotus, and Berosus: "Cyrus diverted the Euphrates into a new channel, and, guided by two deserters, marched by the dry bed into the city, while the Babylonians were carousing at a feast of their gods."

Inscriptions found in recent years, state that the Persian army under Gobryas took Babylon without a battle and that he killed the son (Belshazzar) of the king, with Cyrus entering later.

Darius who reigned in Babylon until Cyrus took over (Dan. 6:28; 9:1) is not mentioned in the inscriptions. He is thought to be either Gobryas who was named in the Babylonian tables as conqueror of Babylon, or as Josephus says, he was CYAXARES the Median father-in-law of Cyrus. To have a Babylonian name and a native name was common. Daniel and his friends were given new names, you remember (Dan 1:7). But whether Darius was father-in-law of Cyrus, or one of his generals, he led the army that conquered Babylon, while Cyrus was busy with his northern and western wars. Until the personal arrival of Cyrus, Darius reigned as king of Babylon for probably about two years (538-536 B. C.).

### III. Daniel In the Lions' Den (Daniel 6:1-28)

A. Daniel's promotion and the plot against him (Dan. 6:1-9).

"It pleased Darius . . . three presidents . . . Daniel was first" (Dan. 6:1, 2): Daniel was next to the king himself. In reorganizing the government and distributing the administration among the 120 princes, Darius placed Daniel first of the three presidents. He was so distinguished by the "excellent spirit that was in him" that Darius "thought to set him over the whole realm" (verse 3).

"The presidents and princes sought to find occasion against Daniel . . ." (Dan. 6:4): Daniel's elevation stirred up jealousy among the other presidents and satraps. They could find no "error or fault" in his work. Their testimony regarding his character is remarkable (verse 5; Eccl. 4:4; Prov. 16:7). Daniel walked with God even to walking against the world. How we need such men today in the home, church, state and around the world!

"King Darius, live forever . . ." Dan. 6:6): The presidents and satraps cleverly planned Daniel's downfall. Knowing that they would be unable to find anything against Daniel save his relationship to his God, they induced the king to SIGN A DECREE THAT FOR A PERIOD OF THIRTY DAYS NO ONE SHOULD ASK A PETITION OF GOD OR MAN, SAVE OF THE KING. This was INTENDED TO

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 31 - PAGE 4

FLATTER THE KING, and TO BRING DANIEL INTO DISCREDIT WITH DARIUS for DANIEL'S HABIT OF PRAYER WAS EVIDENTLY WELL KNOWN (verses 7-9).

"Law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not" (Dan. 6.8): The Medes and the Persians regarded the king as the infallible representative of ORMUZD (his incarnation). Any decree, therefore, which the king made could not be changed, modified, or vetoed!

B. Daniel is convicted, and the sentence is executed (Dan. 6:10-17).

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed . . ." (Dan. 6:10): Daniel's loyalty to God never swerved. If Daniel obeyed the edict of Darius, he would not pray to Jehovah for a whole month. That would be a sin against God. Therefore, Daniel disregarded the demand of Darius! He took time to pray -- when it was against the law of the kingdom! A decree against praying did not change his custom of praying. He would not DO IT IN SECRET, but "he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as HE DID BEFORE. See Psa. 55:17; Acts 1:14; 2:42; 10:9; 3:1; 10:30.

"Then these men assembled, and found Daniel praying . . ." (Dan. 6:11): They ran hastily to come upon Daniel and catch him in the act of prayer. They reminded the king of his decree (verse 12), and refer to "THAT DANIEL" (verse 13) as the first to DEFY THE DECREE. Darius is sorry for his hasty action, sees the deception of his princes, and stalls for time (verses 14, 15). Unable to escape from his own decree, the king was reluctantly compelled to commit Daniel to the den of lions (verses 16, 17).

C. Daniel is unharmed; his accusers are thrown to the lions (Dan. 6:18-24).

"My God . . . shut the lions' mouths" (Dan. 6:22): Darius showed his high esteem for Daniel by spending a night of mourning and fasting (verses 18-20). In his answer Daniel declared his innocence which God had recognized, and on that account had sent his angel (see Psa. 34: 7, 8; 97:11; Heb. 11:33; I Pet. 5:8) to SHUT THE MOUTHS OF THE LIONS. Neither had he wronged the king. To make the MIRACLE OF HIS PRESERVATION PLAIN and to show the reason for it, verse 23 states that "NO MANNER OF HURT WAS FOUND UPON HIM, BECAUSE; HE BELIEVED IN HIS GOD!"

"Those men which had accused Daniel . . ." (Dan. 6:24): The destruction which the accusers of Daniel thought to bring upon him fell upon themselves. They were thrown into the den of lions. The condemning to death of the wives and children along with the men was in accordance with Persian custom (Herodotus iii. 119, Amm. Marcell. xxiii. 6. 81), and with the custom of the Macedonians in the case of treason (Curtius, vi. ii), but was forbidden in the Law of Moses (Deut. 24:16).

D. The king's proclamation (Dan. 6:25-28).

"Then king Darius wrote unto all people . . ." (Dan. 6:25): The supremacy of God over all the kings and councils of earth was manifest in the supernatural deliverance of His servant Daniel causes Darius to command all the nations to fear and reverence Daniel's God. Nebuchadnezzar had done the same when Daniel's friends had been delivered from the fiery furnace (Dan. 3:29). Both Darius and Nebuchadnezzar regarded his kingdom as a world-dominion; neither gave up his worship of pagan gods.

"So this Daniel prospered . . ." (Dan. 6:28): The narrative closes the same way as that regarding the deliverance of Daniel's friends (Dan. 3:30), only it is stated that Daniel continued in office until the reign of the Persian Cyrus. The succession of the reign of Cyrus the Persian to that of Darius the Median does not show the diversity of the two kingdoms, but only that the rulers of the kingdom were of different races.

**Outline of Daniel**

- I. The Historical Section (Daniel 1-6)
  - A. Keeping the faith (Daniel 1).
  - B. The dream of great empires and the interpretation (Daniel 2).
  - C. The fiery furnace and the faithful three (Daniel 3).
  - D. The great tree and the stricken king (Daniel 4).
  - E. The impious feast of Belshazzar (Daniel 5).
  - F. The mouths of lions stopped (Daniel 6).
- II. The Prophetic Section: The Visions of Daniel (Daniel 7-12)
  - A. The vision of the four beasts (Daniel 7).
  - B. The ram and the goat (Daniel 8).
  - C. The seventy weeks (Daniel 9).
  - D. The last vision (Daniel 10-12).

**QUESTIONS**

1. Who was the last king of Babylon (Dan. 5:30, 31)?
2. How did Belshazzar show his disregard for Jehovah (Dan. 5:1-3)?
3. What happened in 1853 to the critics who said: "Daniel is not historical" and derided the very existence of Belshazzar?
4. What gods did Belshazzar worship (Dan. 5:4)?
5. How did the mysterious hand of God close the drunken, lustful feast (Dan. 5:5-9)?
6. What forgotten prophet was called in to interpret the writing (Dan. 5:10-13)?
7. What was the estimate of the queen-mother to the character of Daniel (Dan. 5:11,12)?
8. In what favorable way was Daniel known to Belshazzar (Dan. 5:13-16), and what reward did the king promise if he made known to him the interpretation of the handwriting?
9. What is the meaning of third ruler (Dan. 5:16,29)?
10. With what two-fold sin did Daniel charge Belshazzar (Dan. 5:22,23)?
11. Can you give from memory the words written by the hand, and their meaning as interpreted by Daniel (Dan. 5:25-28)?
12. In the light of God's message (Dan. 5:28), why was Daniel's promised reward carried out (Dan.5:29)?
13. What allied nations conquered Babylon (Dan. 5:28; 2:39a; 7:5; 8:1-4, 20)?
14. By whom was the kingdom of Babylon founded (Gen. 10:9,10)?
15. To what important post did the new ruler, Darius, assign Daniel (Dan. 6:1-3), and what envious scheme did his fellow workers concoct despite his unimpeachable character (Dan. 6:4-9)?
16. How did Daniel show his faith in God (Dan. 6:10,11)? In the light of Daniel's heroism and steadfastness in prayer, do your excuses from staying away from mid-week prayer meetings and Sunday night worship times seem valid?
17. How did God reward Daniel (Dan. 6:22,23), and what happened to those who wrongly accused Daniel (Dan. 6:24)?
18. What far-reaching results followed Daniel's steadfastness (Dan. 6:25-27)?
19. Did Darius give up his faith in his pagan gods despite his decree (Dan. 6:25,26)?
20. If anyone should follow YOUR EXAMPLE, would you lead him or her away from God or TO GOD AND HIS WORD (Matt. 5:13-16; John 1:40-42)?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 32 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 32  
Hosea

Page 1  
Memory Verses: Hosea 6:1

Memory Verses:

"Come, let us return unto the Lord: for he hath torn and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up" (Hosea 6:1).

Public Reading: Hosea 4:1-9

**THE SIN, FORGIVENESS, AND RESTORATION OF ISRAEL**

Hosea heads the list and is the longest of the Minor Prophets. Hosea means "Salvation." He was a prophet of the Northern Kingdom, or Israel. The message of Hosea in one line: Jehovah, disowned by Israel, will one day BE GOD OF ALL NATIONS.

Some notable verses of this book: Hosea 4:1, 2, 6, 8, 9, 17; 3:4; 6:6; 7:8; 8:7; 9:17; 10:12; 11:7; 13:14; 14:1, 9.

**Hosea's Date**

Hosea's date is placed "in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel" (Hosea 1:1).

**Kings of Israel, the Northern Kingdom**

Jeroboam II, 790-749 B. C., year reign. Bad. Reign of great prosperity. Hosea BEGAN HIS MINISTRY in this reign.

Zechariah, 748 B. C. Reigned 6 month. Bad king. Killed by Shallum.

Shallum, 748 B. C. Reigned one month. Bad king. Killed by Menahem.

Menahem, 748-736 B. C. Reigned 10 years. Bad king. Cruel. He was a puppet of Assyria.

Pekahiah, 738-736 B. C. Reigned 2 years. Bad king. Killed by Pekah.

Pekah, 748-730 B. C. Reigned 20 years. Bad. Killed by Hoshea. Galilee captivity in 734 B. C.

Hoshea, 730-721 B. C. Fall of Samaria in 721 B. C. End of Northern Kingdom. Hosea prophesied and witnessed this event.

**Kings of Judah, the Southern Kingdom**

Uzziah (same as Azariah), 787-735 B. C. Reigned 52 years. A good king. HOSEA BEGINS HIS MINISTRY DURING THIS REIGN.

Jotham, 749-734 B. C. A good king. 16 years. Good.

Ahaz, 741-726 B. C. 16 years. Wicked.

Hezekiah, 726-697 B. C. The BEST of the 20 kings of Judah, some think. FALL OF SAMARIA came in this reign in 721 B. C.



## A Long Ministry

Hosea's ministry extended over a period of fifty to sixty years. It was a period of great sin and violence. Israel, the Northern Kingdom, was in its death throes. Some 200 years before his time the kingdom had divided (I Kings 12:17) under Rehoboam, Solomon's foolish son (933-916 B. C.) and successor in Judah. Jeroboam was made king by the Ten Tribes over the Northern Kingdom, or Israel (933-911 B. C.) He set up the calf as the official god (I Kings 12: 25-33). The Northern Kingdom had sunk deeper and deeper in the evil practices of idolatry.

### I. Hosea's First Prophecy (Hosea 1:1-3: 5)

A. The marriage and children of Hosea (Hosea 1:1-10).

"The word of the Lord . . . unto Hosea" (Hosea 1:1): He was the son of Beerai, of the tribe of Issachar, and born in Beth-shemesh. He prophesied chiefly to Israel, or the Ten Northern Tribes or Kingdom.

"In the days of Jerobaam. . ." (Hosea 1:1): This is Jeroboam II. See the first part of this lesson for the table of kings of both the Northern and the Southern Kingdoms. Jeroboam II died in the fifteenth year of Uzziah's reign of 41 years. It was a time of great prosperity and great evil.

"God, take . . . a wife of whoredoms" (Hosea 1:2): "The beginning of the word of the Lord by Hosea" is a declaration of Hosea long after the events. Looking back, Hosea understood that the impulse, which resulted in the heart agony, was also part of the divine method of teaching. There is no reason to believe that Gomer was OUTWARDLY IMPURE in the days when Hosea married her. If impurity were in her heart, Hosea did not know it, and it was not apparent during the early days of their marriage.

Hosea was commanded to take Gomer as wife. Israel, as Jehovah's bride (Ezek. 16:8-15), HAD FORSAKEN GOD, GIVING HERSELF TO THE WORSHIP OF OTHER GODS, AS A MARRIED WOMAN YIELDING HERSELF TO ANOTHER MAN WHO IS NOT HER HUSBAND. The WHOLE NATION HAD GIVEN ITSELF TO SPIRITUAL ADULTERY, that is, the worship of idols instead of being true to God.

"Gomer . . . daughter of Diblaim" (Hosea 1:3): the name means "Complete," one completely given up to sensuality. Hosea's wife, if she was chaste when he married her, afterwards proved unfaithful, left him (Hosea 2:5), and became the companion of another man. The prophet still loved her and bought her from a life of slavery (Hosea 3:2).

"Son. . . Jezreel" (Hosea 1:3, 4): Jezreel means "God sows," or "God will scatter" (Zech. 10:9). Jezreel was the royal city of Ahab. Here Jehu exercised his greatest cruelties (II Kings 9:16, 25, 33; 11, 14, 17). Jezreel means that God would "avenge the blood of Jezreel," and punish sinful Israel (verse 5).

"Daughter . . . Lo-ruhamah" (Hosea 1:6): "Call her name Unloved," "not an object of mercy." Israel had sinned away her day of grace Judgment is now to come. If Judah repents (verse 7) God will save her. Israel was NEVER RESTORED FROM ASSYRIA, BUT JUDAH RETURNED FROM BABYLON AFTER SEVENTY YEARS! The daughter of Hosea is named to show that God's wrath will fall on Israel.

"Son . . . Lo-ammi (Hosea 1:8, 9): Lo-ammi means "Not my people," or cast out. The third child of the prophet is named to show that Israel was once God's people, but because of sin was NOW NOT GOD'S PEOPLE. It was a time of great material prosperity, but not of great piety.

"It shall come to pass . . . Ye are the sons" (Hosea 1:10): While the outlook was dark, the section ends with words which show that in spite of all contradictory appearances, the prophet's faith in the FINAL FULFILLMENT OF THE FIRST DIVINE PURPOSES WAS UNSHAKEN. He looks to the future

### YEAR 3 - LESSON 32 - PAGE 3

restoration of Israel. At the return of Judah from Babylon many believing Israelites joined with Judah. Spiritually, GENTILES AS WELL AS JEWS ARE NOW GOD'S SONS (John 1:12; Rom. 9:25, 26; I Pet. 2:10; I Jno. 3:1). "Whosoever will" may BECOME A SON OF GOD TODAY (Rev. 22:17). The Gospel is FOR JEW AND GENTILE (Acts 10:34, 35; Mark 16:15, 16).

"The day of Jezreel" (Hosea 1:11): The time of God's special visitation of him, either in wrath or in mercy. Here "Jezreel" is in a different sense from that in verse 4. Here it is "God will sow," not "God will scatter." They shall be the SEED OF GOD, planted by him in their own land (Jer. 24:6).

B. The chastisement of adulterous Israel (Hosea 2:1-23).

"Ammi. . . Ruhamah" (Hosea 2:1): "Say to your brother, 'My people', and to your sister, 'Beloved'." The speaker here is the Lord. He is addressing the whole nation. "Plead with your mother, plead": for . . .

"She is not my wife . . ." (Hosea 2:2): God disowns Israel as His wife. Yet, God wants to restore Israel and will do so IF SHE REPENTS. The threatening and announcement of punishment extends from verse 2 to verse 13. The proclamation of salvation commences with verse 14 and reaches to the close of verse 23.

The command to get rid of the whoredoms is addressed to the Israelites who are represented as the children of the adulterous wife. The children are to reason with the mother to give up her adultery. Just as there were 7,000 who had not bowed the knee to Baal in, Elijah's day, so in Hosea's day there were many individuals in the corrupt mass of the nation who hearkened to the voice of the Lord and abhorred idolatry. The children had reason to plead, because the mother WAS NO LONGER THE WIFE OF JEHOVAH, and Jehovah was no longer her husband, that is, because SHE HAD DISSOLVED HER MARRIAGE with the Lord.

"I will go after my lovers . . ." (Hosea 2:5): Jehovah charged Israel with the worst form of infidelity, harlotry, which is sinning FOR A PRICE. Gomer at first faithful to the prophet, afterwards prayed unfaithful to him, left him, and BECAME THE PARAMOUR OF A MAN WHO COULD BETTER SATISFY HER FONDNESS FOR LUXURY. Israel fell into the false belief that they owed all the products of the soil to the Baals, the pagan gods of Canaan, all fertilization to be due to their bounty.

"Therefore . . . I will hedge up thy way" (Hosea 2:6): God will "hedge up" the way or transport Israel into a situation in which she could no longer continue her adultery with the idols. Distress and tribulation will come and teach the worthlessness of idols (Deut. 4:30; Job 3:23; 19:8; Lam. 3:7; Hosea 5:15).

"Thou are my people . . . Thou are my God" (Hosea 2:23): In verses 14 through 23 the divine attitude is tender. In the valley of Achor, God will lead them into a door of Hope. The prophet's confidence that Israel will yet answer, as in the days of her youth, that her betrothal to Jehovah would be forever, and that she would be described as Ruhamah instead of Lo-ruhamah, as Ammi instead of Lo-Ammi.

C. God's undying love for Israel (Hosea 3:1-5).

"So I bought her to me . . ." (Hosea 3:2): Hosea's wife Gomer had forsaken him for other lovers who could satisfy her demands for luxurious and lustful living. Her lust and sin brought her to slavery and shame, as it did the prodigal son (Luke 15:13-18). The prophet was commanded to love, find, and restore his sinning and wandering bride. Through his obedience, he entered into fellowship with the AMAZING TENDERNESS OF GOD, and was thereby prepared to deliver the message which followed. It must have been a startling command: "Go ye, love a woman . . . an adulteress," but its explanation was found in the words, even as "the Lord loveth the children of Israel." Hosea was commanded to exercise love in spite of his wife's sin, in order that he might learn God's attitude toward Israel.

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 32 - PAGE 4

Hosea obeyed. The price he paid for Gomer was the price of a slave, which she had become by this time. A "homer" is nearly EIGHT (8) bushels.

"Thou shalt abide far me many days . . ." (Hosea 3:3): The covenant he made with her was that she should enter on a period of SECLUSION, in which she would be neither harlot nor wife, and that he would be so toward her. The NATIONAL INTERPRETATION of this covenant was that during Israel's time of penitence she would be deprived of both the TRUE and the FALSE, the king or prince, sacrifice or pillar, ephod or teraphim. The ultimate issue would be ISRAEL'S RETURN TO ALL THE HONORS AND BLESSINGS OF UNION WITH GOD (verses 4, 5).

Thus equipped, the prophet was prepared to deliver his messages, all of which sounded the notes of SIN, LOVE, AND JUDGMENT!

### II. Hosea's Other Prophecies (Hosea 4:1-14:9)

- A. State of morals (Hosea 4:1,2; 6:6-10).
- B. Political apostasy (Hosea 5:13; II Kings 15:19; Hosea 7:11, 7.2; 8:9,10; 12:1).
- C. Allusions to false worship (Hosea 4:13,14,17; 8:5-7).
- D. Prediction of a resurrection (Hosea 6:1-3).
- E. Captivity predicted (Hosea 9:11-17; 10:5-8).
- F. God's reluctance in punishment (Hosea 11:8-11).
- G. Graphic description of Israel's career (Hosea 13:1-16).
- H. Invitation to return to God (Hosea 14:1-9).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 32 - PAGE 5

### QUESTIONS

1. Who heads the list and is the longest book of the Minor Prophets?
2. Under which of Israel's kings did Hosea prophesy (Hosea 1:1; Isa. 1:1; Amos 1:1)? How many of the kings were evil (II Kings 14:24; 15:3, 34; 16:2; 18:3)?
3. What judgment fell upon the ten tribes during the time of Hosea's prophecies (II Kings 17:4-6)? What was the moral and spiritual condition of Israel (II Kings 17:7-34)?
4. What humanly offensive thing was Hosea commanded to do (Hosea 1:2)? Why was he told to do this (Hosea 1:2; Deut. 31:16; Ezek. 23:4-7)?
5. What truths are presented by the unfaithful wife who is chastened (Hosea 1:4, 6, 9)?
6. What truths are represented by the unfaithful wife who is chastened and restored to fellowship (Hosea 2:1-23; Isa. 54:5-8; Jer. 31:32)?
7. What did God command Hosea to do in Hosea 3:1, 2, and what did this show on God's part for Israel?
8. Why did the children of Israel lack knowledge (Hosea 4:6; Rom. 1:28)?
9. What is God's solemn verdict concerning Israel (Hosea 4:17; I Cor. 5:1-5)? Why were their sacrifices just cause for shame (Hosea 4:19)?
10. What divine tragedy is predicted in Hosea 5:6 (Deut. 32:20; Job 27:8, 9)? When did Jehovah promise His return to Israel (Hosea 5:15; Zech. 12:10-13; John 1:11; Heb. 10:28)?
11. Who speaks in Hosea 6:1-3 (Isa. 1:9; 10:10-22; Ezek. 6:8-10; Zech. 8:6-8)? When will Jehovah respond to Israel's repentant cry (Hosea 6:4-11)? Does God's undying love for Israel (Isa. 49:14-16) and for Christians remain unchanged (John 13:1; Rom. 5:6-8; I John 4:10)?
12. To what is Israel likened (Hosea 7:8,11; 8:8,9; 10:1,7,11)?
13. How had Ephraim (another name for the TEN NORTHERN TRIBES) sinned when he mixed himself with other people (Hosea 7:8; Ex. 33:16; Lev. 20:23-26; I Kings 8:53; Rom. 12:2; II Cor. 6:17, 18)? What was Ephraim's attitude toward the worship and word of Jehovah (Hosea 8:11,12)?
14. Had Israel been equally corrupt since God first called to her (Hosea 9:10; Num. 25:1-3)?
15. What foreshadowing do you find of Christ in Hosea 11:1 (Matt 2:14, 15)?
16. What attribute of God is again before us in Hosea 11:8,9?
17. Who is the prophet (Hosea 12:13) who brought Israel out of Egypt (Psa.77:20; Isa.63:12; Deut.18:15)?
18. Did Jehovah first leave Israel, or vice versa (Hosea 14:1; James 1:17; I Sam. 15:17; 9:21)?
19. Will you study the prayer that the Lord urged Israel to offer (Hosea 14:2,3)?
20. What promise did God make to Israel upon her return to Him (Hosea 14:4-?)? Who would know and understand these things (Hosea 14:9)?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 33 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 33

Page 1

Joel

Memory Verses: Joel 2:28, 29

Memory Verses:

"And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" (Joel 2:28, 29).

Public Readings: Joel 3:9-21.

**THE DAY OF THE LORD: JOEL**

The name Joel occurs fourteen (14) times in the Old Testament. It is compounded of two divine names, Jehovah (Yahweh), El, and means "Jehovah is God." He probably lived in Judah during the reign of good king Joash (843-803 B. C.)

The seventy-three (73) verses of Joel are written in "rhythmical, elegant impassioned style." The people had FORGOTTEN GOD. God was chastening them. Joel is a preacher of repentance. He calls the people to prayer and repentance (Joel 1:1-2:17). If they repent, God promises to remove the plague, bestow prosperity, and give rich spiritual blessings (Joel 2:18-3:21).

**I. Devastation: The Sign of Judgment (Joel 1:1-2:11)**

A. The introduction (Joel 1:1-3).

"The ward of the Lord that came to Joel. . ." (Joel 1:1): Joel is called the "son of Pethuel" to distinguish him from the other thirteen Joels in the Old Testament. Nothing is known of the circumstances of his life.

"Hear this, ye old man . . . Hath this been?" (Joel 1:2): This was a spirited call to attention. Has there ever been so TERRIBLE A CALAMITY BEFORE IN JUDAH (see Ex. 10:14)? He asks the old men whose memory went back farthest, whether they had ever experienced SUCH A CALAMITY, or heard "even in the days of your fathers?" It was a judgment inflicted of God on a wicked nation.

"Tell ye your children of it . . ." (Joel 1:3): This will instill into the children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren proper reverence and fear for God (Psa. 78:6-8; Ex. 13:8; Josh. 4:7).

B. The devastated land (Joel 1:4-14).

"Palmerworm . . . locust. . . cankerworm. . . caterpillar" (Joel 1:4): The appalling famine was caused by an unprecedented plague of locusts, followed by a prolonged drought, which devastated the land. The locust is an insect, resembling a large grasshopper. The four different names indicate different species of locusts, or different stages of growth. See Lev. 11:22. The gnawing locust, swarming locust, the licking locust, and the consuming locust -- forming a climax to the most destructive kind. The consuming locust is often three inches long, has two antennae, each an inch long. It has six feet, the two hinder legs larger than the rest, specially adapted for leaping. Locust years in Kansas and Nebraska show that Joel's language is not exaggerated. The Kentucky Times-Star of August 6, 1948, carried a picture of W. L. Bailey, large Pendleton

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 33 - PAGE 2

County landowner, surveying grasshopper damage in his cornfield. Ten acres of his crop were devastated, and fit only for silage. Fifteen acres of tobacco were a complete loss.

"Awake, ye drunkards. . . (Joel 1:5): Singling out the drunkards, the worshippers, the husbandmen (verse 11), Joel reminds all classes of the completeness of the devastation and how it affected them. The prophet first summons the winebibbers to sober themselves, and observe the visitation of God. The locusts, like a hostile army, had devastated the land; the branches of the vine have become white through the eating off of the bark (verse 7). The whole nation is to mourn (verses 8-12).

"Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests. . . fast" (Joel 1:13, 14): The affliction is not removed by mourning and lamentation, but **ONLY THROUGH REPENTANCE AND SUPPLICATION TO THE LORD, WHO CAN TURN AWAY ALL EVIL.**

The priests were to set the example by turning to God in genuine repentance. In the name of God he calls them to 'repentance (Joel 2:15, 16; I Sam. 7:5). The people had sinned. They had lots of form, of outer show, but **LITTLE GENUINE RELIGION.** God was chastening them, even as He does His erring ones now (Heb. 12:5, 6, 8). The people were responsible for their recovery before God.

### C. A type of the "day of the Lord" (Joel 1:15-20).

"The day of the Lord is at hand . . ." (Joel 1:15): This is the great day of judgment upon all ungodly powers, when God as the almighty, ruler of the world, brings down and destroys everything that has exalted itself against Him. See Isa. 13:9; Zeph. 1:7, 15. The devastation of the land because of the plague of locusts and the drought is a foretaste of the coming day of the Lord as Judge of all men. It is a picture of **WORSE CALAMITIES YET TO COME ON JUDEA**, of which the locusts are but the prelude. The innocent brutes share the punishment of guilty man (verses 16-20; Ex. 12:29; Jonah 3:8; 4:11). When wickedness is in the land, then the people **MUST REPENT**, or be destroyed (verse 15; Luke 13:3-5). They are to turn to God (verse 19; Acts 17:28). Shams and hypocrites will not stand in "the day of the Lord."

### D. The day of the Lord (Joel 2:1-11).

#### 1. Joel depicts the sight of this army of God (Joel 2:1-3).

"Blow ye the trumpet in Zion. . . ' (Joel 2:1): By blowing the far-sounding horn, the priests are to make known the coming of the judgment, and to gather them together in the temple to pray. To sound an alarm of coming war was a function of the priests (Num. 10:1-10; Hosea 5:8; Amos 3:6). The **DAY OF THE LORD RUNS THROUGHOUT THE HISTORY OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**, so that it occurs in each particular judgment. Joel now proclaims the coming of that day in its full completion, on the basis of the judgment already experienced, **AS THE APPROACH OF A TERRIBLE ARMY OF LOCUSTS THAT DARKEN THE LAND**, at the head of which Jehovah is riding in all the majesty of the **JUDGE OF THE WORLD.** As the swarms of locusts hid the sunlight (Joel 2:2), so the coming horde of Assyrians laid waste the land (Isa. 37:18, 20, 21, 36). An Eden was transformed into a "desolate wilderness" (verse 3).

#### 2. The appearance and advance of this mighty army (Joel 2:4-6).

#### 3. Its irresistible power and the devastation wrought (Joel 2:7-11).

## II. Supplication: The Call to Repentance (Joel 2:12-17)

"Turn ye even to me . . . fasting . . . weeping" (Joel 2:12): God Himself urges the Jews in the land to repent. There is still time to avert the completion of judgment by sincere repentance and mourning, for God is merciful and ready to forgive the penitent.

"Rend your heart . . . God . . . is gracious" (Joel 2:13): This was a genuine, inner repentance, not the mere outward manifestation of it (Josh. 7:6; II Cor. 7:9, 10). True repentance will gain for them the blessings of God (verse 14).

"Blow the trumpet . . . Gather the people" (Joel 2:15, 16): The nation was guilty of forsaking God. The whole nation (ALL AGES) WAS TO COME BEFORE GOD IN HUMILITY AND REPENTANCE (See Num. 10:3; II Chron. 30:13, 22-27).

"Let the priests . . . weep . . . Spare thy people . . ." (Joel 2:17): The priests were to intercede for the people. The saying, "WHERE IS THEIR GOD?" is a sneer at the covenant relation of Jehovah to Israel. To this Jehovah could offer no inducement, since the reproach would fall back upon Himself. Genuine humility and a cry for MERCY would find Jehovah ready to RESPOND IN GRACE!

## III. Restoration: The Vision of Blessing (Joel 2:18-3:21)

A. The promise of deliverance (Joel 2:18-27).

"Then will the Lord . . . pity his people" (Joel 2:18): When God sees that the people have genuinely repented (II Pet. 3:9), he will send great material blessing (verse 19), destroy or "remove far off from you the northern army" (verse 20), "do great things" (verse 21), and remove their fear (verse 22).

"Former rain . . ." (Joel 2:23): The autumnal rain, from the middle of October to the middle of December. It was necessary for the fall planting.

"Latter rain . . ." The rain in March and April. It was required to mature the young crop.

"I will restore . . ." (Joel 2:25): If the nation would repent, God promised to RESTORE in super-abundant harvests that which the locusts "hath eaten"! God is more eager to bless us than we are to receive His blessings (verses 24, 26, 27).

B. The promise of the Spirit (Joel 2:28-32).

"Afterward . . ." (Joel 2:28): The great word introducing the section is "afterward." Some of the things foretold have now been fulfilled, some are still in the future.

Peter's hearers on Pentecost (Acts 2:1ff) knew he could not speak in foreign languages he had NEVER LEARNED. Only DIVINE POWER COULD ENABLE HIM AND HIS BRETHREN THUS TO SPEAK! This promise is NOT FOR THE SELECTED FEW (Num. 11:29), but FOR MANY AFTER PENTECOST (Acts 2:39; 21:9; I Cor. 11:5; Acts 9:10; 16:9). All TRUE CHRISTIANS ARE "PRIESTS" and "MINISTERS" of God (Isa. 61:6) and have the SPIRIT OF GOD (Ezek. 36:26, 27; Acts 2:38; 5:32)!

"All flesh" obviously means persons of all nationalities, not every human being.

"Wonders in the heavens . . . terrible day of the Lord" (Joel 2:31): This great and terrible day has been variously understood. Some refer it to the destruction of Jerusalem, some to the Day of Judgment, and some even to the day of Pentecost itself.

"Whosoever shall call . . ." (Joel 2:32): Those who pray and accompany it with faith and obedience will be saved (Heb. 5:9).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 33 - PAGE 4

- C. The judgment of the nations in prophecy (Joel 3:1-16).
  - 1. Israel reinstated (Joel 3:1).
  - 2. The nations judged (Joel 3:2, 3).
  - 3. Phoenicia and Philistia condemned (Joel 3:4-8).
  - 4. The call of arms and the judgment (Joel 3:9-16).
- D. Millennial blessing in prophecy (Joel 3:17-21).
  - 1. Jerusalem's ascendancy (Joel 3:17).
  - 2. Judah's prosperity (Joel 3:18).
  - 3. Egypt and Edom's desolation (Joel 3:19).
  - 4. Explanation of Jerusalem's exaltation (Joel 3:20, 21).

### QUESTIONS

1. Who was Joel (Joel 1:1)? In which kingdom did he live (Joel 2:1,15, 23,32; 3:1,6,8,18-21)? What is the meaning of his name?
2. What three words sum up the message of Joel in outline form?
3. What had caused extreme desolation when Joel prophesied (Joel 1:4-12)?
4. How did it compare with other national calamities (Joel 1:2,3)?
5. To what future day did Joel compare this day of distress and ruin (Joel 1:12; 2:1,11,31; 3:14)?
6. Were there four different species of locusts or different stages of growth in one species (Joel 1:4-7)?
7. Can you give a local illustration of crop devastation by grasshoppers?
8. Who is called to repentance (Joel 1:5,11,13) and what were the priests to do (Joel 1:13,14)?
9. How does the "day of the Lord" differ from the "day of Christ" (I Cor. 1:7,8; II Cor. 1:14; Phil. 1:6,10; 2:16 VS. Isa. 2:12; 13:9-11; Amos 5:18-20; Zeph. 1:14-18)?
10. What terrible battle will introduce the "day of the Lord" (Joel 2:1-10; Isa. 26:10; Isa. 26:21; Rev. 16:14-16; 19:11-21)?
11. What tender call does God make to His people in the land (Joel 2:12-18), and what were the priests to do, and why (Joel 2:17)?
12. If the nation repents genuinely, what specific promise does God make (Joel 2:25)?
13. Have all the promises of Joel 2:28-31 been completely fulfilled (Acts 2:16-21)? To whom did Peter apply these words of Joel?
14. How has "the terrible day of the Lord" been understood (Joel 1:31)?
15. What disturbances of the heavens and earth will precede "the day of the Lord" (Joel 2:10, 31; Isa. 13:9, 10; Matt. 24-29; Acts 2:20)? In what Person and place will salvation be found at that time (Joel 2:32; Zech. 2:11)?
16. Where will judgment upon the Gentile nations take place (Joel 3:2, 12, 14)? For what sins will the nations be judged (Joel 3:2-8; Matt 25:40, 45)?
17. How will God deal with His repentant people (Joel 3:16; Hab. 3:2)? Give Old Testament instances where God protected His people while punishing their enemies (Ex. 8:21, 22; 9:23-26; 14:22-28)?
18. What kingdom blessings are repeated in Joel 3:18 (See Psa. 46:4; Ezek. 47:1, 2; Zech. 14:8; Rev. 22:1).
19. What is the supreme blessing of the kingdom (Joel 3:21; Ezek. 48:35; Rev. 21:1-7)?
20. Are YOU READY for that great day of the Lord? If not WHY NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL and BE BAPTIZED INTO JESUS CHRIST FOR THE REMISSION OF YOUR SINS RIGHT NOW (Acts 16:31ff; 2:38; 8:37ff; 22:16)?



**YEAR 3 - LESSON 34 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 34

Page 1

Amos

Memory Verse: Amos: 4:12

Memory Verse:

"Therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel: and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (Amos 4:12).

Public Reading: Amos 7:10-17.

**AMOS, THE PROPHET AND THE PROPHECY**

Amos means "Bearer of a burden." He was a prophet who lived in Tekoa, a small village about ten miles south of Jerusalem in the land of Judah (Amos 1:1; 7:12). He prophesied in Samaria the capital of the Northern Kingdom in the reigns of Uzziah (787-735 B.C.) of Judah, and Jeroboam II of Israel (790-749).

The "earthquake" (Amos 1:1) according to Josephus was simultaneous with the imposition of Uzziah's leprosy (II Chron. 26:1&21). This was the beginning of Jotham's co-regency (749 B.C.) with his leprous father. Amos' prophecy, therefore, was about 751 B. C.

**Inside Israel**

Jeroboam II was a great, prosperous king (II Kings 14:23-29). Prosperity was at high tide. Morally the people were at low tide. Israel was morally rotten: Swearing, stealing, injustice, oppression, robbery, adultery, murder were common! Moreover, the majority approved such things. Calf worship (II Kings 12:2&33) and Baal and abominable Canaanite idolatry held sway. The nation was fast on the way to ruin. God sent Amos in an effort to "stay the nation in its mad dash for death."

"If he (Amos) had a tongue like a whip for the oppressor, it spoke out of a heart of love for the oppressed. He was fierce because he was loving. His prophecy is molten metal heated in the furnace of pity" (Walker, MEN UNAFRAID, page 32, Abingdon Press). He was a plain, simple, humble shepherd. His preaching was blunt, direct, and courageous. His righteous soul burned with anger when he saw the poor oppressed. He was a crusader for God and all good. He was from the backwoods, but he was not ashamed to speak for God on the boulevards of Bethel or Samaria.

Amos 1:2 gives the KEY TO THE BOOK. Jehovah declared Himself in judgment!

**The Book Outlined**

- I. The Condemnation of Heathen Nations (Amos 1, 2).
- II. The arraignment and Doom of Israel (Amos 3-6).
- III. Five Visions and a History (Amos 7-9).
  - A. The first vision (Amos 7:1-3).
  - B. The second vision (Amos 7:4-6).
  - C. The third vision (Amos 7:7-9).
  - D. Historical episode (Amos 7:10-17).
  - E. The fourth vision (Amos 8).
  - F. The fifth vision (Amos 9:1-10).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 34 - PAGE 2

Conclusion:

A. The restoration and the Messianic Kingdom (Amos 9:11-15).

1. Amos predicted the Assyrian captivity and destruction of the house of Jeroboam, the return of the remnant and the setting up of the Messianic Kingdom.

### I. The Prophet's Neighbors Condemned (Amos 1:1-2:3)

A. Introduction: Judgments against the nations for their crimes (Amos 1:1, 2).

"The words of Amos . . ." (Amos 1:1): Amos was a country preacher who knew psychology. He used a keen approach to the assembled multitude at Bethel. It was a sacred feast day. The people would enjoy hearing him "Let the neighbors have it right between the eyes." He belonged to the shepherds of Tekoa, in Judah, about ten (10) miles south of Jerusalem. God sent him to the Northern Kingdom, with "words . . . concerning Israel." Today he would be called a layman. He was not a priest.

"In the days of Uzziah king of Judah": 787-735 B. C. He reigned 52 years. He was a good king.

"Jeroboam . . . king of Israel": He reigned 41 years (790-749 B. C.). He was a bad king.

"Two years before the earthquake": The earthquake must have been very severe, for it was remembered for 200 years (Zech. 14:5), and likened unto Judgment Day.

"The Lord will roar from Zion . . ." (Amos 1:2): Jehovah declares His wrath shall discharge itself. Beginning at the farthest going from Israel, the prophet delivered his message to the nations as such. Each in turn passes before Jehovah, and receives sentence. When God tells man to speak, it's time to start talking, regardless of the cost (II Tim. 4:2-5). Each judgment is introduced with: "THUS SAITH THE LORD." Judgment is inevitable.

"For three transgressions of Damascus . . ." (Amos 1:3): In the formula which is repeated in the case of every people, "for three transgressions, and for four," the numbers merely serve to denote the multiplicity of the sins, the exact number of which has no bearing upon the matter. The numbers indicate a large number of crimes, or "ungodliness at its worst." Judgment is irrevocable. The sin of Syria was cruelty. "They have threshed Gilead with . . . instruments of iron." This took place at the conquest of the Israelite land to the east of the Jordan by Hazael during the reign of Jehu (II Kings 10:32, 33; see 13:7), when the conquerors acted so cruelly towards the Gileadites they crushed prisoners to pieces with iron threshing machines. Jerome says it was "a kind of car with toothed iron wheels underneath, which was driven about to crush the straw in the threshing-floors after the grain has been beaten out."

Damascus as the capital of Syria and the palaces of Hazael and Benhadad are to be destroyed. Hazael was the murderer of Benhadad I, to whom the prophet Elisha foretold that he would reign over Syria, and predicted the cruelties he would practice against Israel (II Kings 8:7ff).

"For three transgressions of Gaza" (Amos 1:6): Gaza is regarded as a representative of Philistia. The sin of Philistia was the slave trade. God's patience is exhausted. Philistia would be visited with the devouring flame, her inhabitants cut off, and even the remnant would perish. Not a single captive escaped who was carried off by the Philistines, and sold to the Edomites, the archenemies of Israel (see II Chron. 21:16, 17). Gath is the only capital city of Philistia not mentioned.

"Tyrus . . ." (Amos 1:9): Phoenicia's special guilt was that in spite of a covenant made, she had acted as a slave agent in slave traffic. Only the capital city is mentioned. It will be destroyed (verse 10).

"For three transgressions of Edom. . ." (Amos 1:11): Edom was doomed for heartless conduct, for determined and revengeful unforgiveness. Edom, Ammon, and Moab were related to Israel by lineal descent.

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 34 - PAGE 3

Amos does not condemn any particular sin of Edom, but simply its unforgiving, mortal hatred towards its brother nation Israel that broke out at every possible opportunity.

"For three transgressions of Moab . . ." (Amos 2:1-3): Moab's children of Ammon were specially denounced for cruelty based upon cupidity. "They have ripped up the women with child of Gilead, that they might enlarge their border." The occasion on which the Ammonites were guilty of such cruelty toward Israel is not recorded in the historical books of the Old Testament. For the cruelty, their capital is to be burned (verse 14), "And their king shall go into captivity" (verse 15).

"For three transgressions of Moab . . ." (Amos 2:1-3): Moab's chief wickedness has been her shocking and vindictive hatred. Moab did not put the king of Edom to death, but dug up the bones of the king of Edom from the grave and heaped insults upon them by burning them into ashes. Moab would be laid waste herself by the fire of war, and its capital burned down (verses 2, 3).

What a wonderful preacher Amos was. God said: "I will send a fire" upon these sinful nations. The people were wild with enthusiasm. The clear-cut style of the preacher strikes home.

### II. The Prophet's Nations (Amos 2:4-6:13)

#### A. Judgment against Judah (Amos 2:4,5).

"For three transgressions of Judah . . ." (Amos 2:4): Amos was a native of Tekoa in Judah (Amos 1:1). He turned suddenly from denouncing the neighbors to a condemnation of his own nation of Judah (the Southern Kingdom). Remember he was preaching to Israel (the Ten tribes or Northern Kingdom). Judah, he affirms, was disloyal to God!

"They despised the law of the Lord . . .": Because Judah had despised the law of God and not kept his statutes, she would share the doom of the other nations. Their fathers walked after the "lies" of idolatry even in the desert (Amos 5:25, 26). As a punishment, Jerusalem would be reduced to ashes, and Nebuchadnezzar carried it out.

#### B. Judgment against Israel (Amos 2:6-16).

"For three transgressions of Israel . . ." (Amos 2:6): Finally, Amos spoke to Israel. All the foregoing had been in preparation for this. He described the sins of Israel in detail and with startling directness. Now Amos spoiled the sermon for his hearers. He HIT THEM! They unjustly treated the innocent in their administration of justice, they longed to see the poor in such a state of misery that they scatter dust upon their head (verse 7a), they profaned God by shameless immorality (verse 7b), they desecrated the sanctuary by drinking carousals (verse 8). Amos points out the PERIL OF PRIVILEGE. Israel had seen the Amorites destroyed before them for the VERY SINS WHICH THEY THEMSELVES HAD SUBSEQUENTLY COMMITTED (verse 9). They had been "brought up from the land of Egypt" (verse 10). They KNEW THE POWER and PROVISION OF GOD! They had raised up their sons for false prophets and young men for Nazarites, and had silenced the TRUE PROPHETS (verses 11, 12). God will visit them with severe punishment (verses 13-16).

#### C. The necessity for judgment on Israel (Amos 3:1-15).

"Hear this word . . . YOU ONLY HAVE I KNOWN" (Amos 3:1, 2): God had favored Israel above all nations. God's intimate relations with his people make their responsibilities all the heavier. "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required; and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more" (Luke 12:48). Sonship does not insure against chastisement (Heb. 12:5-8). "I will punish you for all your iniquities."

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 34 - PAGE 4

"Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos 3:3): In view of the probability that people would object to his message the prophet defended himself. In a series of SEVEN QUESTIONS he illustrated a principle which may thus be stated-AN EFFECT PROVES A CAUSE. In illustrations summarized: (1) Communion proves agreement (verse 3); (2) the lion roaring proves the prey (verse 4a); (3) the cry of the young lion proves the prey possessed (verse 4b); (4) the fall of a bird proves the bait (verse 5a); (5) the springing of the snare proves the bird to be taken (verse 5b); (6) the trumpet proves alarm (6a); (7) CALAMITY IN THE CITY PROVES JEHOVAH (verse 6b)! From this principle Amos deduced an application: JEHOVAH HATH ROARED, therefore FEAR; Jehovah HATH SPOKEN, THEREFORE PROPHECY (verses 7, 8).

"The mountains of Samaria . . ." (Amos 3:9): Samaria, the capital of the Northern Kingdom, was situated on a hill 300 feet high. Surrounded by mountains on three sides, Samaria has a great view to the west. The palatial residences had been built out of the blood of the poor (Amos 2:6, 7; 3:10; 5:11; 8:4-7), with a heartlessness that would shock the heathen Egyptians and Philistines (verses 9, 10).

"I will also visit . . . Bethel" (Amos 3:14): This was the religious center of the Northern Kingdom where Amos was speaking (Amos 7:13), twelve (12) miles north of Jerusalem where Jeroboam I set up a Golden Calf (II Kings 12:25-33) which was still there (Hosea 13:2). To this degenerate center of idolatry came Amos with FINAL WARNING.

D. Oppression, idolatry, and impenitence denounced (Amos 4:1-13).

"Ye kine . . ." (Amos 4:1): The women were like beasts in their conduct. Their conquerors would lead them away, like beasts, "with hooks" (verse 2; Gal. 6:7, 8). Of course, the women then didn't enjoy being called "cows!" They WANTED TO SIN; they didn't WANT TO THINK OF JUDGMENT.

"Came to Bethel . . ." (Amos 4:4): Outwardly Israel was religious. Inwardly, they were pitiless in their cruelty, yet intensely religious. What a satire on religion (verse 5)!

"Ye have not returned unto me . . ." (Amos 4:6): God's repeated efforts to save them had been in vain. Time for the nation to meet its God had come: "PREPARE TO MEET THY GOD, O Israel" (Amos 4:12). YOU MUST MEET GOD SOMEDAY! Why not be prepared to meet Him by obeying the Gospel today (II Cor. 6:2; Heb. 3:15)?

E. Israel is doomed because of oppression, formal worship and vicious living (Amos 5:1-6:14).

"Seek ye the Lord . . ." (Amos 5:6): Gad pleads, but the people reject him (verses (14, 15), and they will face a terrible day of the Lord (Amos 5:16-20).

"I hate . . . your feast days" (Amos 5:21): The people had a form of religion. God hated their hypocrisy (verses 21-26), and would cause them "go into captivity beyond Damascus" (verse 27).

"Woe to them that are at ease in Zion . . ." (Amos 6:1): The idle rich stuffed themselves "upon beds of ivory" (verse 4), and FELT NO CONCERN FOR THE POVERTY, DRUNKENNESS, CRIME and INJUSTICE around them. "We have plenty," they said. "Let the other fellow worry about conditions." Many Americans are like them today. Ruin was coming; they refused then to get ready Amos 6:13, 14).

### III. The Prophets Opponents and His Prediction (Amos 7:1; 9:10)

A. The first vision (Amos 7:1-3): The grasshoppers.

B. The second vision (Amos 7:4-6): The fire.

C. The third vision (Amos 7:7-9): The plumbline.

D. Historical episode: Amaziah opposes Amos (Amos 7:10-17).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 34 - PAGE 5

"Amaziah. . . Go, flee . . . land of Judah" (Amos 7:12): The false prophet advised Amos, the true prophet of God, to return to his home in Judah.

"The Lord took me . . . (Amos 7:15): God called Amos to prophesy. God's Word must be preached. Note the terrible end of the false priest, the people he had deceived, and the awful sin into which his wife fell (verses 16, 17).

E. The fourth vision (Amos 8:1-14): The basket of summer fruit.

"The Lord God shewed unto me . . . basket of summer fruit" (Amos 8:1): This vision indicated the sinful kingdom was RIPE FOR RUIN. The causes for the ruin were reiterated. There is no way to escape the consequences of PERSISTENT SIN.

"A FAMINE . . . of hearing the words of the Lord" (Amos 8:11): The final judgment would be a famine of hearing the words of the Lord, as a result of which there would be eager and fruitless search for SUBSTITUTES, followed by the fainting of the youth of LACK (verses 12-14).

F. The fifth vision (Amos 9:1-10): No symbol, or sign.

"I saw the Lord standing . . ." (Amos 9:1): The final vision was of judgment executed. We hear the manifesto of Jehovah Himself. It is an awe-inspiring vision. Judgment is announced -- it is irrevocable and irresistible (verses 1b-8). Within thirty years, it came to pass, and the apostate kingdom ceased to exist.

"I will sift the house of Israel . . ." (Amos 9:9): God's sifting process must go on. NO GRAIN OF WHEAT WILL PERISH. The DIVINE REASON OF THE DIVINE JUDGMENT IS NOT REVENGE,

BUT in conclusion:

A. The RESTORATION and the Messianic kingdom (Amos 9:11-15).

"In that day I will raise up . . . build . . . bring again . . . plant" (Amos 9:11-15): Divine judgment, not revenge, is necessary to usher in the new order.

1. Preliminary: "I will raise up . . . that they may possess (verses 11,12).
2. Progressive: "I will bring again the captivity . . . they shall build the waste cities . . . plant vineyards. . . make gardens" (verse 14).
3. Permanent: "I will plant them . . . they shall no more be plucked up" (verse 15).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 34 - PAGE 6

### QUESTIONS

1. Who is Amos, what is the meaning of his name, and when did he prophesy (Amos 1:1)?
2. Can you describe the character and call of Amos (Amos 1:1; 7:14, 15; compare Exodus 3:1-10; Judges 6:11-14; I Sam. 16:11-13; Matt. 4:18,19)?
3. Upon what six Gentile nations did God predict Judgment (Amos 1:3,6,9,11,13; 2:1), what was the sin of each?
4. Were God's own guilty people to escape punishment (Amos 2:4-16)?
5. Of what sins was each of these two nations guilty?
6. In his series of seven questions, what does Amos prove (Amos 3:3-8)?
7. What present-day sin is similar to the one committed by Israel (Amos 2:11,12)?
8. Why did the Jews carry more responsibility before God than the Gentiles (Amos 3:2; Luke 12:47,48; John 15:22; Rom. 9:4,5; I Pet. 2:9-12)? IS there PERIL IN PRIVILEGE?
9. To what were the women of Samaria likened (Amos 4:1), and what would be their fate (verses 2,3)?
10. Do you see the divine irony in Amos 4:4,5(See I Kings 18:37; Isa. 47:12-15; Amos 5:5)?
11. What phrase recorded five times (Amos 4:6-11) reveals the stubborn heart of Israel?
12. What awful meeting is set before Israel (Amos 4:12, 13)? Do we Christians have an important meeting we shall make one day (Heb. 9:27; Romans 14:11)?
13. After the prophet's lamentation for the sins of Israel (Amos 5:1-13), what hope did he offer (5:14, 15)?
14. What great day is again before us in Amos 5:16-20?
15. For what sin did God say He would send Israel into captivity Amos 5:21-27; Acts 7:41-43)?
16. Were the people alarmed over this predicted judgment (Amos 6:1-14; Rev. 9:20,21; 16:9,11)?
17. What four visions were given to Amos in chapters 7 and 8? What solemn truth did each vision symbolize?
18. Does every Amos have his Amaziah (Amos 7:10-17)? What are we to do when people oppose the preaching and teaching of the truth (Acts 4:17-31; 5:40-42)?
19. Can you describe the opposition of Amaziah, and its effect on the prophet (Amos 7:10-17)?
20. Who was standing at the altar (Amos 9:1)? What did He propose to do to Israel (Amos 9:11), and what preliminary, progressive and permanent things will God do (Amos 9:11-15)?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 35 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

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Lesson 35  
Amos

Page 1  
Memory Verse: Amos: 4:12

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Memory Verse:

"For the day of the Lord is near upon all the heathen; as thou hast done it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head" (Obadiah 15).

Public Reading: Obadiah 15-21.

**OBADIAH, THE PROPHET AND THE PROPHECY**

The prophecy of Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament. George Adam Smith calls it "AN INDIGNANT ORATION." The message of the book: It is a solemn warning against the PERILS OF PRIDE (see Prov. 16:18) and anti-Semitism. The key verse is our memory verse.

**The Prophet**

Absolutely nothing is known of the author of this book. Several Obadiah's are mentioned in the Old Testament, but there is nothing to indicate that any of them wrote this book. His name means "The Servant," or "The Worshipper of Jehovah." It is difficult to locate the time when the book was written, but verses 10-14 "clearly prove that it must have been written AFTER THE FALL OF JERUSALEM," or 586 B. C. (II Chron. 36:17-21).

**The Book**

- I. Edom's Punishment (Obadiah 1-9).
- II. Edom's Guilt (Obadiah 10-14).
- III. Guilt of Heathen Nations (Obadiah 15-16).
- IV. Promise of Restoration for Israel (Obadiah 17-21).

From the tone of the book, we know the prophet was a pious, patriotic, sensitive resident of Judah who put into words something of the flaming indignation of his soul against the heartless hating of Edom against the Jews.

**I. The Doom of Edom Is Prophesied (Obadiah 1-9)**

- A. The Lord at work influencing the nations or "heathen" against Edom (Obadiah 1).

"The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord God . . ." (verse 1): These words form the introduction to the prophecy. What Obadiah saw as a word of the Lord was the tidings heard from the Lord, and the divine message sent to the nations to rise up for war against Edom. God declared war against Edom (Jer. 49:14; Amos 1:11).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 35 - PAGE 2

"Concerning Edom . . .": Edom means "Red," and was the name given to Esau after he bartered his birthright for a mess of RED POTTAGE (Gen. 25:30). Edom stands also collectively for the Edomites, as well as for their country, called also Idumaea.

Edom was the rocky range of mountains east of the ARABAH. It stretches about 100 miles north and south, and about 20 miles east and west.

It was well watered, with abundant pasture. Petra is the capital of Edom. The name is from the Greek word *petra*, "rock," the Hebrew "Sela". The rock-cut city of Petra was a noted pagan center, where there were many pillar cults. It was also a notable fortress and stronghold. George Robinson in his "Sarcophagus of Ancient Civilization" gives a description and study of the Petra High Place.

The people were proud, bitter, resentful and ever seeking to harm Jacob's descendants (Gen. 25:30; 36:1, 8, 19). They never forgot that although Esau sold his birthright, Jacob stole the blessing. They were in their golden age when Israel came out of Egyptian bondage.

Being a trading, warring people, they would make raids on neighboring peoples and retreat to their impregnable strongholds.

B. Edom was despised by the "heathen" nations (Obad. 2).

"I have made thee small . . . greatly despised" (Obad. 2): When the Lord has made Edom small, it will be very much despised.

C. They would be dragged out of their impregnable refuge (Obad. 3, 4).

"The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee . . ." (Obad. 3): Its lofty towers will not preserve it from the overthrow which has been decreed by the Lord, and which He will carry out through the medium of the nations. Edom has therefore been deceived by its proud reliance upon these rocky towers.

Petra (Sela), Teman, and Bozrah were fortified citadels that served as places of security in war. Petra was one of the wonders of the world. Massive cliffs more than 700 feet high sheltered a narrow ravine a mile in length. The buildings of pink stone carved out of solid rock still stand. The purple cliffs of iron and manganese defy description.

What are rocks, allied nations, fortresses, mighty leaders and atomic or hydrogen bombs when they meet a just and angry God (Obad. 4)?

D. They would be despoiled, but not as by thieves (Obad. 5, 6).

"How art thou cut off!" (Obad. 5): In order more vividly to exhibit the complete cleaning out of Edom, Obadiah supposes two cases of plundering in which there is still something left, and then shows that the enemies IN EDOM WILL ACT MUCH WORSE THAN THIS (verse 6). Petra, Edom's capital, was a great commercial center of the Syrio-Arabian trade. Many valuables were stored there. With the loss of these riches, the prosperity and power of Edom were destroyed.

E. Their allies would break their agreement and rend them (Obad. 7).

"Men that were at peace . . . have deceived thee" (Obad. 7): In the midst of her calamity, Edom will be forsaken and BETRAYED BY HER ALLIES. "The men of thy confederacy have brought thee even to the border": Her allies will not receive the Edomitish fugitives, but will drive them back to the frontier, so that



### YEAR 3 - LESSON 35 - PAGE 3

they fall into the hands of the enemy. Allies will not entangle themselves in the fate of Edom.

Any agreement with another nation would be a "SCRAP OF PAPER." Germany and Russia had an AGREEMENT NOT TO FIGHT, BUT GERMANY WITHOUT WARNING ATTACKED RUSSIA! Therefore, Edom's allies would turn on her. In consequence of her calamity that thus bursts upon the Edomites, they lost their discernment. They neither know WHAT TO DO, or HOW TO HELP THEMSELVES (verse 7d).

F. Her wise men and brave soldiers would fail (Obad 8, 9).

"I . . . destroy the wise men . . . and understanding" (Obad. 8): The wise men will be destroyed AS WISE MEN BY THE WITHDRAWAL OR DESTRUCTION OF THEIR WISDOM. With this withdrawal of wisdom and discernment, even the BRAVE WARRIORS LOSE THEIR COURAGE (verse 9). Great men, who do not give God the GLORY, shall die in dishonor, as did Herod (Acts 12:2Q-23).

#### II. The Destruction of Edom Is Justified (Obadiah 14.16)

A. Edom was guilty of "violence against thy brother Jacob" (Obad. 10)

"For thy violence against thy brother Jacob shame . . . cut off forever" (Obad. 10): "Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite; far he is thy brother" (Deut. 23:7). Jacob was commanded NOT to HATE THE EDMITES. Nevertheless, the descendants of Esau HATED AND HELD MALICE AGAINST Jacob's descendants (II Chron, 21:8, 16, 17; 25:11, 12, 23, 24; 28:16-21; Amos 1:6). Hate destroys the hater ultimately. This is the CAUSE OF THE RUIN of the Edomites.

B. Edom refused help and acted as the conquerors (Obad. 11).

"Strangers carried away captive . . . even thou wast as one of them" (Obad. 11): Wrong is all the more terrible when it is committed against a brother. The fraternal relation in which Edom stood towards Judah is still more sharply defined by the name Jacob, SINCE ESAU AND JACOB WERE TWIN BROTHERS. Instead of acting like a brother toward Judah, they acted just like the enemy.

C. They rejoiced at the Jews' defeat and jeered at them (Obad. 12).

"Thou shouldst not have . . . rejoiced over the children of Judah" (Obad. 12): The "day" of verse 11 denotes the day of the capture of Jerusalem. In verse 12 "day" is the period after the capture. Obadiah warns the Edomites "not to rejoice in Judah's troubles." This is a warning against MALICIOUS PLEASURE in the defeat of the Jews.

D. They had a share in looting (Obad. 13).

"Thou shouldst not . . . have laid hands on their substance" (Obad. 12): When Nebuchadnezzar captured Jerusalem, Edom rejoiced over the city's downfall, and took part in the plundering and massacre. "Remember, O Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, 'Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof'" (Psa. 137:7).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 35 - PAGE 4

E. Edom hunted the fugitive Jews and turned them over to the enemy (Obad. 14).

"Neither shouldest thou have delivered up . . ." (Obad. 14): The worst crime of all was when Edom seized upon the Judean fugitives for the purpose of murdering them, or delivering them up to the enemy. "The crossway": The place where the roads break or divide, the crossroads. This atrocious conduct filled Edom's cup of iniquity. Condemnation and annihilation would come upon them for hating and harming the Jews (Ezek. 25:12-14).

F. Edom's verdict announced (Obad. 15, 16).

"Thy reward shall return upon thine head" (Obad. 15): As the Edomites had sowed cruelty and injustice against Judah, she would receive the same treatment (Gal. 6:7). Obadiah regards Edom as a type of the nations that had been hostile to the Lord and His people and were judged by the Lord consequently. So that what he says of Edom applies to all nations that assume the same or a similar attitude towards the people of God.

A Haman who plots to hang an innocent Mordecai shall, in the end, hang there himself (Esther 7:10).

A French king who wanted some new instrument to torture his prisoner was told by one of his favorites to build a cage not long enough to lie down in and not high enough to stand up in. The king accepted the suggestion. Just as he finished building the torture device, the favorite offended the king, was the first man to know its horror, and for fourteen years endured the cruel device!

### III. The Deliverance of Zion Is Certified (Obadiah 17-21)

A. Israel shall be delivered, sanctified, enriched, destroy Edom, and possess the land of Edom (Obad. 17-20).

"Jacob shall be a fire . . . the house of Esau for stubble" (Obad. 18): Mt. Zion is the seat of the kingdom of Jehovah. There the Lord is enthroned to bring "deliverance, and . . . holiness" (verse 17). The drinking carousals of the Edomites will no more desecrate the city. The heathen will no more dare to tread it or defile it. Like a fire, which destroys straw, so "the house of Jacob" shall destroy "the house of Esau."

"There shall not be any remaining . . .": Obadiah predicted that the Edomites would be "cut off forever" and "be as though they had not been" (verses 18, 16, 10). Within four years after Jerusalem was burned, Edom was raided and desolated (582 B. C.) by the very same Babylonians whom they had AIDED AGAINST JERUSALEM. Nabathaeans took over Edom. The few Edomites that were left were confined to a region in south Judea, where for 400 years they continued to exist, as active enemies of the Jews. In 126 B.C. they were subdued by John Hyrcanus, one of the Maccabean rulers, and were absorbed into the Jewish state. When the Romans conquered Palestine in 63 B. C., the Herods, an Edomite (Idymean) family, were placed in control of Judah. This was the last of the Edomites. With the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D. they disappeared from history.

C. The glorious end: "The kingdom shall be the Lord's" (Obad. 21).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 35 - PAGE 5

### QUESTIONS

1. With what nation is this book chiefly concerned (Obad. 1; see Jer. 49:7-22; Ezek. 25:12-14; 35:1-14)?
2. What does George Adam Smith call Obadiah?
3. What do we know of Obadiah, what is the meaning of his name, and when was his book written?
4. Can you outline the book?
5. From what man did the nation of Edom descend (Gen.36:1,9,43)?
6. What then is their relationship to the Jews (Gen.25:25,26)?
7. What had been Edom's attitude toward the Israelites (Num.20:14-21; Psa.137:7; Amos 1:1)?
8. What attitude of mind and heart prompted Edom's sin (Obad.3,4; Prov.16:18)?
9. Before whom will God humiliate Edom in the future (Obad.2)?
10. What was the crowning sin of the Edomites (Obad.10; Ezek. 25:12, 13)?
11. Did Edom try to prevent the captivity of Israel (Obad. ll. 12)?
12. How did Edom profit through the Jews' calamity (Obad.13; Gen. 12:3)?
13. How will the Lord deal with Edom in the "day of the Lord" (Obad.15)?
14. Who will one day possess Edom's territory during the kingdom (Obad.17)?
15. Through what nation will God punish Edom (Obad. 18)?
16. Will Edom be completely and permanently destroyed in this judgment (Obad. 10,18; Jer. 49:13,17,18)?
17. What other names are used in Scripture to designate the land of Edom (Gen. 36:8; Ezek.35:15)?
18. What should this lesson teach the nations regarding their attitude toward the Jews (Gen.15:13,14; Matt.25:45,46)?
19. Why have the Gentile nations been given the place of national leadership (Deut. 28:13-15, 36, 37, 63-68; Jer.27:4-11)?
20. What is the Gentiles' grave danger in the light of this book (Rom. 11:20,21)?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 36 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 36  
Jonah

Page 1  
Memory Verse: Matthew 12:40

Memory Verse:

"For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth" (Matthew 12:40).

Public Reading: Jonah 1:1-9

**JONAH THE BACKSLIDING MISSIONARY**

Jonah means, "Dove." He is fifth in Order of the Minor Prophets, the son of Amittai, and was born in Gath-hepher, in the tribe of Zebulun (II Kings 14:25), a little over an hour's journey (four miles) north of Nazareth.

The key verse of the book is Jonah 4:2. The message of the book is that God is the GOD OF THE GENTILE AS WELL AS OF THE JEW (See Ram. 3:29), and that God's GRACE WENT BEYOND 'THE BOUNDARIES OF ISRAEL TO EMBRACE THE NATIONS!

Jonah is placed among the Minor Prophets because the experience and the career of Jonah are prophetic of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ and the consequent blessing upon the Gentiles.

**The Prophet**

He was a popular preacher, and a narrow patriot (II Kings 14:25), who did not understand HOW GOD COULD SHOW MERCY TO WICKED NINEVAH (Jonah 4:2). He began his ministry as Elisha closed his. Some ancient Jewish authorities say Jonah was the widow's son of Zarephath whom Elijah raised from the dead. II Kings 14:25-27 shows him to be a thoroughly accredited prophet of God in the reign of Jeroboam (790-749 B. C.), king of Israel.

**Is the Book Historical?**

Driver in his INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT declares that "No doubt the outlines of the narrative are historical."

The book is historical. It is real. It is not fiction, or an allegory, or a parable, or a prose poem. JESUS REGARDED IT AS AN HISTORICAL FACT (Matt. 12:39-41). He declared Jonah was a type of His own burial and resurrection, and that the people of Ninevah constitute an example of true repentance.

The great German scholar Cornill says of the book: "I cannot take up this marvelous book, or even speak of it, without the tears rising in my eyes."

**Jonah Outlined**

- I. The Call of Jonah (Jonah 1, 2).
  - A. His mission (Jonah 1:1, 2).
  - B. His flight (Jonah 1:3).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 36 - PAGE 2

- C. The storm (Jonah 1:4-17).
- D. His prayer (Jonah 2:1-10).

### II. The Preaching of Jonah (Jonah 3:1-10).

- A. His second call (Jonah 3:1-2).
- B. His obedience (Jonah 3:3-5).
- C. Ninevah repents (Jonah 3:6-9).
- D. God's gracious answer (Jonah 3:10).

### III. The Angel of Jonah and the Mercy of God (Jonah 4:1-11).

- A. Jonah is angered (Jonah 4:1-4).
- B. Jonah is reproved (Jonah 4:5-11).

### **I. Disobedience: Running from God (Jonah 1:1-17)**

- A. The prophet's commission (Jonah 1:1, 2).

"Now the word of the Lord came . . ." (Jonah 1:1): The book begins abruptly. This indicates that this was a continuation not a beginning of his ministry. The narrative commences with "Now," as Ruth 1:1, I Samuel 1:1, and others do.

"The word of the Lord came unto Jonah . . . : Jonah means "Dove." See Gen. 8:8, 9, where the dove seeks in vain for rest after flying from Noah and the ark. Therefore, Jonah found that rest comes only as one OBEYS GOD, not in flying away from God. "The son of Amittai": Amittai means "Truth," or "truth-telling," an appropriate name for a prophet!

"Arise, go to Ninevah" (Jonah 1:2): Ninevah was a "great city."

### **Ninevah "That Great City"**

Ninevah proper was 3 miles long and 1.5 miles wide. Greater Ninevah included Calah 20 miles to south, and Khorsabad 10 miles to north. The triangle formed by the Tigris and the Zab was included in the fortifications of Ninevah.

Calah, south outpost of Ninevah, covered 1000 acres. Here Layard and Loftus uncovered palaces of Assurbanipal, Shalmaneser and his Black Obelisk, Tiglath-pileser, and Esarhaddon.

Khorsabad, north outpost of Nineveh, was built by Sargon, who destroyed Israel, 721 B. C., and whose palace, second to that of Sennacherib, was most magnificent of all.

The "Jonah" Mound. The second largest mound in the ruins of Nineveh is called "Yunas." "Yunas" is the native word for "Jonah." The mound covers 40 acres, and is 100 feet high. It contains the reputed tomb of Jonah. This was one of the indications to Rich that these were the ruins of Nineveh, and led to their identification. This tomb is so sacred to the natives that no large-scale excavation has been permitted in the mound. Layard uncovered the ruins of the palace of Esarhaddon. It is hoped that some day the secrets of this palace may be explored.

### Ninevah and Her Kings

Nineveh was capital of the Assyrian Empire. The Assyrian Empire was a World-Empire for about 300 years, 900-607 B. C. It began its rise to world power about the time of the Division of the Hebrew Kingdom at the close of Solomon's reign. It gradually absorbed and destroyed the Northern Kingdom of Israel. Assyrian kings who had to do with Israel and Judah were:

Shalmaneser II" 860-825 B. C. Began to "cut off Israel."  
Adad-Nirari, 808-783. Took tribute from Israel. Jonah's visit?  
Tiglath-pileser III, 747-727. Deported most of Israel.  
Shalmaneser IV, 727-722. Besieged Samaria.  
Sargon II, 722-705. Carried rest of Israel captive. Isaiah.  
Sennacherib, 705-681. Invaded Judah. Isaiah.  
Esar-haddan, 681-668. Very powerful.  
Assur-banipal, 668-626. Most powerful and brutal. Nahum?  
Two weak kings, 626-607. The giant empire fell, 607 B. C.

Thus, Jonah was called of God to prolong the life of the enemy nation that was already in the process of exterminating his own nation. No wonder he fled in the opposite direction, in patriotic dread of a brutal and relentless military machine which was closing in on God's people.

"Go . . . cry against it": Great wickedness must be punished. The report or tidings of its great corruption had penetrated to God in heaven (See Gen. 18:21; I Sam. 5:12; Rev. 18:5).

#### B. The prophet's disobedience (Jonah 1:3-17).

"But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish . . ." (Jonah 1:3): Jonah sets out upon his journey, NOT TO NINEVAH, but to flee to Tarshish, thought to have been Tartessus, a Phoenician port in Spain. Jonah was making for the utmost bounds of the then known world. Jonah knew he could not flee from the presence of the Lord (Psalm 139:7, 9 10), so HE RESIGNED HIS OFFICE AS PROPHET. God gave him a difficult assignment. Jonah deliberately disobeyed the Lord. Jonah quit. Are you a quitter, too?

"Jonah . . . paid the fare": We always have to "pay" when we disobey God. God sent a violent wind into the sea (verse 4). "The ship was like to be broken," or dashed to pieces in a wreck.

"Jonah . . . was fast asleep" (Jonah 1:5): The seamen cried for help, "every one to his own god." Having seared his conscience, Jonah fell "fast asleep" (See Eph. 5:14), in the lower room of the ship. At the height of the danger, the shipmaster awakens Jonah (verse 6). To sleep in sin is not to keep it secret (verse 7; Gal. 6:7, 8). Judgment comes to Jonah (verses 8-16), and he is "cast into the sea: and the sea ceased from her raging" (verse 15). This showed that the storm had come entirely on Jonah's account, and that the sailors had not shed innocent blood by casting him into the sea. The sailors "feared Jehovah with great fear, and offered sacrifice to Jehovah" (verse 18) and "vowed vows" that they would offer Him further sacrifices on their safe arrival at their destination.

"Now the Lord had PREPARED A GREAT FISH . ." (Jonah 1:17): This does not mean to create, but to determine, or to appoint. God prepared four things in this book (read also Jonah 4:6-8). Is God able to prepare a fish that would accommodate a man and keep him alive for seventy-two hours? If God cannot, he is inferior to man. Recently some men (See Rimmer, THE HARMONY OF SCIENCE AND SCRIPTURE,

page 174ff) built an iron fish. Twenty men entered this iron fish and stayed there twelve days and nights. At the end of this time, the fish came to the surface to replenish their supply of food and oxygen. The men landed on dry land for rest and relaxation. They then entered this fish and submerged. This man-made fish is a SUBMARINE! Today's atom powered submarine makes Rimmer's illustration as obsolete as a T-model Ford. When we see evidence of man's power to work these so-called miracles, HOW CAN ONE DENY THE SAME DEGREE OF POWER TO GOD?

"Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights": The "fish" was not a whale, which has too small a throat to swallow a man. It was a large shark, or sea dog, "canis carcharias," or "squalus carcharias," which is very common in the Mediterranean, and has so large a throat, that it can swallow a living man whole. Jonah was kept alive for three days in the shark's belly, and vomited unhurt upon the land. The three days and three nights are not to be regarded as fully three times twenty-four hours, but are to be interpreted according to Hebrew usage, as signifying that Jonah was vomited up again on the third day after he had been swallowed.

J. W. McGarvey in "Jesus and Jonah" reminds us that Jesus made this miracle a "sign" or type of Jesus' own burial and resurrection (Matt. 12:38-42). Jesus and Jonah STAND TOGETHER, or THEY FALL TOGETHER!

## **II. Prayer: Running to God (Jonah 2:1-10)**

### **A. The prophet's prayer (Jonah 2:1-10).**

"Then Jonah prayed unto the Lord . . ." (Jonah 2:1): This was the prayer of one in great trouble, and in a strange place! "His God": God was still "his," although Jonah had fled from doing his will. Prodigals have a way of getting away from their fathers (Luke 15:18). "No place is amiss for prayer." Jonah must have been accustomed to praying in the words of the Psalms, so like this beautiful prayer (see Psa. 18:7; 120:1). When we "hide" God's word in our hearts, we have real strength when testing days come!

"I cried by reason of mine affliction . . ." (Jonah 2:2): It takes trials and troubles to turn some to God (see Psa. 46:1; 77:2; 120:1; Rom. 8:28). Jonah prayed out of the "belly of hell," or Sheol, the unseen world, which the belly of the fish resembled (verse 3).

"I am cast out of thy sight . . ." (Jonah 2:4): He was out of God's favor. He was disobedient, having turned his back on God. God turns His back on Jonah (Gen. 6:3; Isa. 55:6, 7). The fish took Jonah to the hidden depths of the sea (verses 5, 6).

"I remembered the Lord . . ." (Jonah 2:7): Perhaps the most remarkable note about the prayer is ITS NOTE OF TRIUMPH. It is an expression of absolute CONFIDENCE IN GOD AND HIS DELIVERANCE. Thank God we can triumph in Him (see Psa. 73:26; 42:6). By faith Jonah turns in prayer to God in the "holy temple" (verses 7, 4).

He had fled from God's mercy and mission, a backsliding missionary, to heathen lands where men trusted in "lying vanities," or idols (verse 8). His experience CURES HIM (verse 9). The fish "vomited out Jonah upon the land" (verse 10). Jonah must have HIT THE BEACH RUNNING -- toward Ninevah.

## **III. Preaching: Running With God (Jonah 3:1-10)**

### **A. The prophet re-commissioned (Jonah 3:1-3).**

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 36 - PAGE 5

"And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time . . ." (Jonah 3:1): What a joy to know that God does not cast us off or out, for faithlessness and disobedience IF WE ONLY REPENT AND TURN

TO HIM (John 6:37; Psa. 86:5-7; Luke 15:20-24, 32). Note that Jonah is to proclaim the proclamation that "I bid thee" (verse 2). His mission is unchanged. It is dangerous to tamper with God's message -- then or now (Gal. 1:8, 9; Rev. 22:18, 19).

B. The prophet's success (Jonah 3:4-10).

"And Jonah began . . . Yet forty days . . ." (Jonah 3:4): The circumference of the great city Ninevah in the broadest sense was "nearly ninety English miles, not reckoning the smaller windings of the boundary; and this would be just three days' traveling for a good walker on a long journey." Jonah begins to go a day's journey into the city, then preaches, and the preaching reaches the ears of the king (verses 5, 6). The main point of his preaching was that Nineveh should be destroyed in forty days. "Destroyed" means overturned, destroyed from the very foundations! The people of Nineveh heard; they believed; they were filled with fear, and repented, from the greatest to the least (verses 7-9). Their repentance was answered by the repentance of God, so that the doom was averted and the city spared (verse 10).

### IV. Complaints: Running Ahead of God (Jonah 4:1-11)

A. Jonah is angered (Jonah 4:1-4).

"But it displeased Jonah exceedingly . . . very angry" (Jonah 4:1): Jonah is greatly displeased and shows his lack of spiritual maturity when he finds that the city is not to be destroyed. In his wrath to which he gives way he charges God with BEING GRACIOUS, merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness." He prayed that his life be taken (verse 3; cf. I Kings 19:4). Jehovah asks: "Is thine anger justly kindled?"

B. Jonah is reproved (Jonah 4:5-11).

"Jonah . . . make him a booth" (Jonah 4:5): The prophet went out of the city, and in distress and resentment sat in a booth of his own making to watch the course of events.

"And the Lord God prepared a GOURD . . . WORM . . . EAST WIND" (Jonah 4:6-8): Again the overruling of Jehovah was manifested in the PREPARED GOURD, the PREPARED WORM, and the PREPARED sultry EAST WIND. So great were the anger and anguish of the prophet that he fainted, and asked again that he might die. Jehovah repeated His question, but with a new application, "Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd?" He who had been angry that the city was NOT DESTROYED, WAS ANGRY THAT THE GOURD WAS DESTROYED! Moreover, Jonah answered the inquiry by affirming, "I do well to be angry, even unto death" (verse 9).

"Thou hast had pity on the gourd . . . should not I spare Nineveh . . . ?" (Jonah 4:10, 11). Thus, the last picture we have of Jonah is of a man still out of harmony with the tender mercy of God. The last vision of Jehovah is of a God FULL OF PITY and COMPASSION even for a CITY SUCH AS NINEVEH, and WILLING TO SPARE IT IF IT RETURNED TO HIM IN PENITENCE.



## YEAR 3 - LESSON 36 - PAGE 6

### QUESTIONS

1. What is the meaning of Jonah? Where was he born? Who was his father (II Kings 14:25)?
2. What was Jehovah's commission to Jonah (Jonah 1:1,2)?
3. What was Jonah's response to this commission (Jonah 1:3), and did Jehovah accept Jonah's resignation from the commission (Jonah 1:4)? Do you think God will accept your resignation from the job He has given you?
4. How was Jonah able to go "fast asleep" in the great storm (Jonah 1:5)?
5. What led Jonah to confess his identity (Jonah 1:6-11), and what did he tell the men to do (1:12-16)?
6. What four things did the Lord prepare (Jonah 1:14; 4:6-8)?
7. What is the meaning of "three days and three nights" (Jonah 1:17)?
8. With what glorious declaration did Jonah close his prayer (Jonah 2:1-9)?
9. How was Jonah a type of Christ (Matt. 12:39,40)?
10. Did Jehovah change Jonah's commission when He repeated it (Jonah 3:2)?
11. Will God compromise and alter our commission if we refuse to do His revealed will (Mal. 3:5; Matt. 28:18-20; Gal. 1:8, 9; Rev. 22:18, 19)?
12. How did the people respond to Jonah's preaching (Jonah 3:5-9)?
13. Did the people repent because they believed in Jonah (Jonah 3:5; Acts 27:25; Rom. 3:3,4)?
14. What evidence of true repentance do you find in Jonah 3:10?
15. Did the king as well as the people fast and put on sackcloth (Jonah 3:7, 8)?
16. How did Jonah react when Jehovah spared Ninevah (Jonah 4:1)? What did God provide for his discouraged prophet (Jonah 4:6; I Kings 19:4-8; I Cor. 10:13)?
17. What truth did the Lord teach Jonah through his experience with the gourd (Jonah 4:7-11)?
18. Did the mariners call upon Jehovah, the true God, before Jonah confessed his sins (Jonah 1:5-16; Matt. 5:16)?
19. How would you answer the critic who says a WHALE COULD NOT SWALLOW JONAH (Jonah 1:17)?
20. Do you believe that God loves and seeks the salvation of all people (John 3:16; Mark 16:15,16; Jonah 4:10,11; 3:10)? Does this include "Red and yellow, black and white, ... precious in His sight ...?"

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 37 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 37  
Micah

Page 1  
Memory Verse: Micah 5:2

Memory Verse:

"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah 5:2).

Public Reading: Micah 4:1-7.

### **THE KINGDOM AGE**

Micah is a contraction of Micaiah. It means: "Who is like Jehovah?" The prophet was a native of a small village, twenty miles southwest of Jerusalem, on the Maritime Plain, called Mosesheth of Gath (Mic. 1:1, 14, 15). Micah prophesied in the regions of Jotham (749-434 B. C.), Ahaz (741-726 B. C.), and Hezekiah (726-697 B. C.). Ahaz was very wicked; the other two kings were good. The international highway between Assyria and Egypt ran through the valley in full view.

### **Prophet to Israel and Judah**

Micah's message was given both to Israel and Judah, primarily to their capitals, Samaria and Jerusalem. He was a younger contemporary of Isaiah. Micah was a man who saw and felt keenly the social wrongs of his age (Micah 2, 3), and sympathized deeply with the common people. He prophesied about 735-725 B. C.

Three main ideas of his message were: Their sins, their destruction, and their restoration. George Adam Smith said: "While Micah spoke he had wasted lives and bent backs before him-pinched, peasant faces peer between all his words."

### **Sins Micah Scored**

1. Oppression of the poor (Micah 2:2, 8, 9; 3:1-4).
2. The wrong use of money (Micah 2:1f; 3:10).
3. The lack of integrity (Micah 6:12; 7:2-6).
4. The reckless scorn of religion (Micah 3:5-8; 5:12-14).
5. False prophets (Micah 3:5, 7, 9-11).
6. Greedy corruption in worship and state (Micah 7:3).

### Chief Prophecies of Micah

1. Destruction of Israel (Micah 1:6-7).
2. Desolation of Jerusalem and the temple (Micah 3:12; 7:13).
3. Carrying the Jews to Babylon (Micah 4:10).
4. Return from exile (Micah 4:1-8; 7:11-17).
  - 1) Peace and prosperity (Micah 4:1-8).
  - 2) Spiritual primacy of Israel (Micah 7:11-17).
5. A ruler in Zion (Micah 4:8; 5:1, 2).

### Micah Outlined

- I. Judgment for National Sins (Micah 1, 2).
- II. Judgment for Social Sins (Micah 3-5).
- III. Judgment for Covenant Breaking (Micah 6, 7).

#### I. The Doom of Samaria and Jerusalem (Micah 1:1-2:13)

- A. The two capitals must be destroyed (Micah 1:1-16).

"The word of the Lord that came to Micah . . ." (Micah 1:1): This is God's message to God's man of the hour (II Pet. 1:21). Micah was "full of power by the Spirit of the Lord" (Micah 3:8). Such a man is worthy, bold champion of the poor. He has courage and power to deliver God's message.

"Micah the Morasthite": Micah is an abbreviated form of Micaiah, "Who is like Jehovah?" The Morasthite denotes that he came from Moresheth-Gath in the plain of Judah (Micah 1:14), and to distinguish him from the elder prophet Micah the son of Imlah (I Kings 22:8ff). He was a Judaeon. His message was to both Israel and Judah, addressed primarily to their capitals, Samaria and Jerusalem.

"Hear ye, all ye people; hearken . . ." (Micah 1:2): God was not asleep. He is displeased with the sins of the nations. He is coming in wrath against "you, the Lord from his holy temple." The first message of Micah consists of a summons, a proclamation; and a prophetic message based on the proclamation.

"The Lord cometh . . ." (Micah 1:3): God is coming in wrath against giant wrongs and rank injustices (verses 4, 5). For "the sins of the house of Israel" Jehovah is coming in judgment.

"I will make Samaria as an heap . . ." (Micah 1:6): This is a definite prediction of the destruction of the capital of Israel. Shalmanezar IV (727-722 B. C.) besieged the city of Samaria. He died in the siege. Sargon II (722-705 B. C.) completed the destruction of Samaria and Israel's captivity in 721 B. C. Captivity came for Jeroboam's Northern Kingdom or Israel after 209 years.

"For her wound is incurable . . ." (Micah 1:9): The terrible picture of destruction in verses 7-9 came true. The rulers were directly responsible for the prevalent national corruption (verse 5). Since their apostasy from God over 200 years before, they had adopted CALF worship, Baal worship, and other Canaanite, Syrian and Assyrian idols and idol practices. God had sent Elijah, Elisha and Amos to turn them back from

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 37 - PAGE 3

idols. They were about ripe for the DEATHBLOW. Micah lived to see his words came true. In 734 B. C., the Assyrians carried away ALL OF NORTH ISRAEL, and in 721 B. C. Samaria itself became a "heap." The wound was incurable!

"Declare ye it not at Gath . . ." (Micah 1:10-15): These places were in west Judah, in Micah's home territory. The Assyrians overran them in the fall of Samaria.

"Make thee bald . . ." (Micah 1:16): Shaving the head bald, or shaving a bald place, was a sign of mourning, which had been known as a traditional custom in Israel, in spite of the prohibition in Deut. 14:1 (see Lev. 19:28). The passage is a strange mixture of grief and satire. The prophet is grieved at the calamity. Because of the SIN HE WAS ANGRY. This merging of agony and anger flashes in satire. Consult a Bible dictionary for a translation of the proper names to discover the remarkable play on words running through it.

### B. Causes of the captivity (Micah 2:1-11).

"Woe to them that devise iniquity . . . work evil. . . practice it" (Micah 2:1): Such leaders deliberately planned and worked evil (see Prov. 23:7). The cause of the coming judgment CONSISTED IN DEVISING EVIL AT NIGHT AND PRACTICING IT IN THE MORNING, and the abuse of authority. The ruling classes had it "in the power of their hand!" MIGHT, not RIGHT, regulated their conduct. They misused their power. "They covet fields" (verse 2; I Kings 21:1-16); they mercilessly oppressed the poor (verses 2-9).

"I devise an evil . . . for this time is evil" (Micah 2:3): Micah pictures God as Judge (Micah 1:3, 6; 3:12); a God of ethical righteousness (Micah 6:8; 2:1, 2; 3:2, 3, 10, 11; 7:2). God hates the evil, and will punish those who practice it (Micah 2:3, 10).

"If a man . . . do lie . . . I will prophesy" (Micah 2:11): The false religious leaders charged Micah not to prophesy, protesting against his message, basing their objection to his announcement of judgment on the fact of GOD'S GOODNESS. Micah in the name of Jehovah answers that the CHANGED ATTITUDE OF HIS PEOPLE TOWARD HIM ACCOUNTS FOR JEHOVAH'S CHANGE TOWARD THEM. HIS PEOPLE HAD RISEN UP AS HIS ENEMY. Such teaching could not give the people rest; he satires the people who allow themselves to be misled by false prophets. They were not inspired of God (see Ezek. 13:3; Hosea 9:7; Jer. 5:31).

### C. A restoration promised (Micah 2:12, 13).

"Assemble . . . thee . . . remnant" (Micah 2:12): After the captivity, Gad promises to assemble them again. See Micah 4:6, 7. "All of thee": The restoration of all Israel is still future (see Rom. 11:26). This is one of Micah's abrupt transitions. God is pictured as marching at the head of His people (verse 13). The burden of this first message is evidently future deliverances, but as to detail, it is undefined.

## II. From Devastation to Exaltation (Micah 3:1-5:15)

### A. The corrupt and godless rulers and prophets (Micah 3:1-12).

"Princes . . . eat the flesh of my people" (Micah 3:1, 3): What a terrible picture of the oppression of the poor. The inhuman cruelty of the rulers makes one's blood run cold. God will not hear their cry (verse 4).

"Prophets . . . make my people err" (Micah 3:5): They knowingly mislead the people. They did not denounce their sins. See Luke 12:47, 48; James 3:1. Many preachers today cry: "PEACE," but there is no peace outside Christ. Their sacred office was exercised for their own welfare (verses 5-7, 11).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 37 - PAGE 4

"I am full of power . . ." (Micah 3:8): Micah is a true prophet of God. He delivers God's message of judgment. Note verses 9-11. "They build up Zion with blood, and Jerusalem with iniquity" (verse 10).

"Therefore shall Zion . . . be plowed as a field" (Micah 3:12): Micah predicts the doom of Jerusalem as he had pronounced the doom of Samaria (Micah 1:6).

### B. The Messiah's future Kingdom (Micah 4:1-5:15).

1. He predicts the beginning of the New Testament church (Micah 4:1, 2).

"But in the last days . . ." (Micah 4:1): Note Joel 2:28, 32. Consider Jesus' statement (Luke 24:46, 47), and the fulfillment (in part) at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-21, 39; Mark 16:15, 16). The law has gone forth from Jerusalem and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem since Pentecost following the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ!

2. A kingdom of peace and prosperity (Micah 4:3-5).

"They shall beat their swords in plowshares . ." (Micah 4:3): In these days of atomic war scare, it is good to see God's ageless vision of a people sitting about God's Messiah in PEACE, when "neither shall they learn war anymore." ONLY when DIVINE AUTHORITY IS ESTABLISHED WILL WARS CEASE. AND PEACEFUL POSSESSION OF THE LAND, WITH ALL ITS BENEFITS, TAKES PLACE.

As long as our national adversaries are not subjected to Christ, we can never expect peace. There might have been no Berlin crises had there been less cocktail sipping and liquor drinking at Yalta and Potsdam. "Disputes, differences, wars, hatred and misunderstandings will be OUT OF THE QUESTION WHEN HE TEACHES, JUDGES AND DIRECTS OUR LIVES. He will be able to bring about a condition of mind that will MAKE UNIVERSAL PEACE POSSIBLE."

3. Israel will be re-gathered (Micah 4:6-8), the intervening Babylonian captivity (Micah 4:9, 10), the setting up of the kingdom and the Battle of Armageddon (Micah 4:11-13), and the kingdom-age (Micah 5:4-15).

4. Messiah will be born in Bethlehem (Micah 5:1-3; Matt. 2:5-12; Luke 2:4, 11; John 7:42).

### III. The Divine Controversy With Israel (Micah 6:1-7:20)

A. The history of God's past graces (Micah 6:1-5).

B. God's requirements (Micah 6:6-8).

C. God's way will prevail (Micah 6:9-7:20).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 37 - PAGE 5

### QUESTIONS

1. Who is Micah? What is the meaning of his name, and where did he live (Micah 1:1)?
2. When did he prophesy (Micah 1:1)?
3. Against what nation is Micah's lamentation (Micah 1:1-5)?
4. What did God promise would happen to Samaria (Micah 1:6)? When did this occur?
5. What were some sins that Micah scored?
6. Can you name five prophecies of Micah?
7. Upon what two classes of people did Micah pronounce judgment (Micah 2:1-11; 3:1-6)?
8. Who provided power for Micah's brave testimony (Micah 3:8; Zech 4:6)?
9. For what did the priests and prophets minister (Micah 3:11; Rom. 16:18)?
10. To whom is deliverance promised in Micah 2:12,13?
11. What does "Mountain" symbolize (Micah 4:1; Dan. 2:35,44; Isa. 2:24)?
12. From what place will the kingdom blessings flow (Micah 4:2; Joel 2:28,32)?
13. What did Jesus state about the gospel which fulfills this prophecy (Luke 24:46,47; Acts 2:1-21, 39; Mark 16:15,16)?
14. Why will wars be impossible when His will prevails (Micah 4:3; Matt. 12:25)?
15. What four prominent truths concerning Christ are recorded in Micah 5:1,2; Matt. 26:67; 27:30; John 7:42; Zeph. 3:15; Rev.1:8)?
16. What two enemies will come against Israel in the last days (Micah 5:6; Gen. 10:11)? In what respect will the REMNANT OF JACOB be "dew from the Lord" and "a lion of the forest" upon the nations (Micah 5:7,8; Isa. 62:2,3; Micah 4:13)?
17. What sins will be removed from Israel as predicted in Micah 5:10-14?
18. Which questions does the Lord ask? Which do the people ask (Micah 6:1-8)?
19. Can you describe the sins of the people and the justice of God (Micah 7:1-14)?
20. Does the PEACE OF GOD dwell in YOUR HEART TODAY (John 14:27; Rom. 5:1; Phil. 4:9)? If not, why not?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 38 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 38

Page 1

Nahum

Memory Verse: Nahum 1:3

Memory Verse:

"The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked: the Lord hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet" (Nahum 1:3).

Public Reading: Nahum 1:1-7.

**THE DESTRUCTION OF NINEVEH**

Nahum has but a single theme: THE DESTRUCTION OF NINEVAH. The Assyrian Empire stood in the eye of the Jews as the most brutal type of abominations. The monuments have confirmed their opinion. The kings of Assyria boasted of their cruelty.

Assur-nasipal II (885-860 B. C.) tells us how he "DYED the mountains of Nairi with blood like wool; how he flayed captive kings alive and walled up others while still living, and impaled them on stakes; how he burned boys and girls in the fire, put out eyes, cut off hands, feet, noses, and ears."

Colonists from Babylon under NIMROD founded Assyria before 2000 B. C. shortly after the Flood (Gen. 10:11-12).

A writer says: "No power more useless, more savage, more terrible, ever cast its gigantic shadow on the page of history."

**Nahum Outlined**

- I. The Doom of Nineveh Pronounced (Nahum 1).
- II. The Assault Upon Nineveh (Nahum 2).
- III. The Utter Ruin of Nineveh (Nahum 3).

**The Relevance of Nahum**

In a day when rogue nations threaten to engulf the world in World War III, the prophet Nahum brings us a refreshing message. "Nahum's book is a terrific arraignment of a nation that SEEKS GLORY BY WAR AND OPPRESSION. God still hates brutality, violence and wrong."

Think of Hitler's end! And Mussolini's! And Joe Stalin is gone, too.

"Any nation that deliberately sets itself to DEFY GOD and TRAMPLE UPON INNOCENT PEOPLES MUST FEEL THE TERRIBLE TOUCH OF THE DIVINE HAND." Communist Russia DENIED GOD. Malotov said: "I DO NOT PRAY." Russia's cosmonaut, Gherman Titov, proclaimed his disbelief in God May 6, 1962, in Seattle at the World's Fair news conference. "Some people say there is a God out there. But in my travels around the Earth all day long I looked around and didn't SEE HIM. I saw NO GOD or angels . . . No GOD helped build our rocket. The rocket was made by our people. I DON'T BELIEVE IN GOD. I believe in man, his strength, his possibilities and his reason." Communist Russia defied man, and humanized God! Could that be the USSR is no more? Psalm 14:1 is still true!

**I. The Verdict of Vengeance (Nahum 1:1-15)**

A. The judge (Nahum 1:1-7).

"The burden of Nineveh" (Nahum 1:1): This is the DOOM OF NINEVEH. Here is the awful doom of the apostate. This is the single theme of Nahum. Jonah (about 785 B. C.) and Nahum (about 630 B. C.) had to do with Nineveh. Jonah's way of dealing with NATIONS: prolonging the DAY OF GRACE, and in the end visiting them with PUNISHMENT FOR PERSISTENT SIN!

Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire. Founded by Nimrod, shortly after the Flood (Gen. 10:11-12), it had from the first been a rival of Babylon. Babylon was in the south part of the Euphrates valley, and Nineveh in the north part of the Euphrates valley. The two cities were about 300 miles apart.

Nineveh rose to world power about 900 B. C. Soon after it began to "Cut off" Israel. Shalmanezar II (860-825 B. C.) was the first Assyrian king to come to conflict with Israel. Ahab fought him. Jehu paid him tribute. Read II Kings 18:9-35; 19:4, 14-19, 35-37 to see how blasphemous the Assyrians were. God accepted their haughty challenge and sent Nahum to predict the final overthrow and doom of Nineveh and her empire built by violence, and cruel oppression.

About 785 B. C., God sent Jonah to Nineveh in an effort to turn it aside from its path of brutal conquest. By 721 B. C., the Assyrian armies had completed the destruction of the Northern Kingdom of Israel (10 tribes). For another 100 years Nineveh continued to grow more and more powerful.

At the time of Nahum's prophecy, Nineveh was the QUEEN CITY OF THE EARTH. Limitless wealth from the ends of the earth poured into its coffers. Nahum likens it to a DEN OF RAVAGING LIONS, feeding on the BLOOD OF NATIONS (Nahum 2:11-13).

**Greater Nineveh**

Greater Nineveh was about 30 miles long and about 10 miles wide. Five walls and 3 moats, or canals, built by the forced labor of unnumbered thousands of foreign captives, protected it. Jonah's mention of 120,000 babes (Jonah 4:11), suggests it might have had a population of near a million.

The inner city of Nineveh proper, about 3 miles long, and 1.5 miles wide, was built at the JUNCTION OF THE TIGRIS AND KHOSER RIVERS, was protected by walls 100 feet high, and broad enough at the top to hold FOUR CHARIOTS DRIVEN ABREAST, 8 miles in circuit.

At the height of Nineveh's power, on the eve of its sudden overthrow, Nahum appeared with this prophecy, called by some NINEVEH'S DEATH SONG and a "CRY OF HUMANITY FOR JUSTICE."

"God is jealous . . . revengeth" (Nahum 1:2): We are jealous only of those we love. God will have all of us or He will have none of us (Matt. 6:33; I Cor. 16:22; II Cor. 11:2). Vengeance belongs to God; He will repay (Rom. 12:19). The enemies of God's people are God's enemies (II Kings 19, 20).

"The Lord is slow to anger . . ." (Nahum 1:3): A section dealing wholly with Jehovah precedes the verdict of vengeance. As to His character, God is a God of vengeance, and yet the central fact of His nature is that HE IS SLOW TO ANGER.

Under the figure of a storm, the prophet sets forth the overwhelming majesty of Jehovah. The storm moves in two sections: a HURRICANE in the SEA, and a STORM OVER THE LAND.

The very nature of God will not permit Him to acquit or hold guiltless the wicked.

"He rebuked the sea, and maketh it dry . . ." (Nahum 1:4): God dried up the Red Sea and rolled back the Jordan to help HIS PEOPLE (verses 4-7).



## YEAR 3 - LESSON 38 - PAGE 3

"The Lord is good . . ." (Nahum 1:7): Moses declared this centuries before Nahum (Ex. 34:5-7). He is good to those who trust Him. And because the Lord is a refuge to His people, He will put an end to the oppressor of His people, namely Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, and that with an overwhelming flood (verse 8).

### B. The verdict (Nahum 1:8-15).

"He will make an utter end of the place . . ." (Nahum 1:8): Verses 8 and 9 condemn Nineveh to extinction. Addressing himself to Nineveh, the prophet inquired, "What do ye imagine against the Lord?" This hints at the DEEPEST SIN OF NINEVEH, namely that she had set herself up WILLFULLY AGAINST THE POWER OF GOD. Nahum affirmed the irresistible nature of the judgment which must fall on the city. He finally made his CENTRAL CHARGE AGAINST her, "There is one gone forth out of thee that imagineth EVIL AGAINST THE LORD, that COUNSELLETH WICKEDNESS" (verse 11). This charge, in all probability, referred to the blasphemous boasts of Sennacherib (Isa. 30:18-20; 37:10-13).

"Thou art vile . . ." (Nahum 1:14): The power of Nineveh will be destroyed, and break the yoke upon Judah (verses 12-14). The completeness and strength of her army will be of no help to Nineveh. "I will break his yoke from off thee" refers NOT to the people of the ten tribes who were pining like slaves in exile, for Nahum makes no allusion to them, BUT TO JUDAH (Nahum 1:15). It was upon Judah that the Assyrians HAD LAID THE YOKE OF TRIBUTE from the time of Ahaz. This was first shaken off in the reign of Hezekiah, through the overflow of Sennacherib. It was only broken when Nineveh was overthrown. Jehovah had prepared A GRAVE FOR THE PEOPLE AND IDOLS OF NINEVEH, because they have been found light when WEIGHED IN THE BALANCE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS.

"The feet of that . . . publisheth peace!" (Nahum 1:15): The verdict of vengeance on Nineveh was good news to Judah. When Judah hears the glad tidings that Nineveh is utterly destroyed, it is joyful news!

## II. The Vision of Vengeance (Nahum 2:1-13)

"He that dasheth in pieces is come . . ." (Nahum 2:1): The leader of the hosts of Babylon, God's battle ax to smash Nineveh, is Nabopolassar who became king of Babylon in 626 B. C. Nothing Nineveh could do in a material way would save her. He describes the process of vengeance. "The HAMMER" is "come" against Nineveh. Ironically, he advises Nineveh to "fortify thy power mightily."

"Turned away the excellency of Jacob . . ." (Nahum 2:2): Israel had suffered enough from the Assyrian rod; it was now her turn to be cast into the fire.

### A. The conflict (Nahum 2:3-5).

"The shield of his mighty men is made red . . ." (Nahum 2:3): The picture of the conflict is graphic. The attacking army outside the walls, then the defending host inside the city is described. The chariots "go mad" in the streets. The Assyrians can not repel the attack (verse 5).

### B. The conquest (Nahum 2:6-9).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 38 - PAGE 4

"The gates of the rivers shall be opened . . . palace . . . dissolved" (Nahum 2:6): The conquest of the city is secured by the act of God. Ctesias in profane history records that while a drunken feast (Nahum 3:11) was going on, the flood gates of the city were swept away for twenty furlongs by a sudden rise of the river, thus causing the palace foundations to crumble. The Medo-Babylonians had been besieging the city for nearly three years. The DRUNKEN SOLDIERS COULD NOT DEFEND THE CITY (Nahum 1:10).

### The Fall of Nineveh 612 B. C.

Within about 20 years after Nahum's prediction, an army of Babylonians and Medes closed in on Nineveh. After 2 years of siege a rise of the river washed away part of the walls. Nahum had predicted that the "river gates would be opened" for the destroying army, 2:6. Through the breach thus made, the attacking Babylonians and Medes swept in to their work of destruction. Prancing horses, cracking whips, rattling wheels, bounding, raging chariots, flashing swords, great heaps of dead bodies, 2:3-4; 3:1-7. It all came to pass exactly as Nahum had pictured it; and the bloody vile city passed into oblivion.

Its destruction was so complete that even its site was forgotten. When Xenophon and his 10,000 passed by 200 years later, he thought the mounds were the ruins of some Parthian city. When Alexander the Great fought the famous battle of Arbela, 331 B. C. near the site of Nineveh, he did not know there had ever been a city there.

When the Ruins of Nineveh were discovered, all traces of the glory of the Assyrian Empire had disappeared. So much so, that many scholars had come to think that the references to it in the Bible and other ancient histories were mythical. In 1820, an Englishman, Claude James Rich, spent 4 months sketching the mounds across the Tigris from Mosul, which he suspected were the ruins of Nineveh. In 1845, Layard definitely identified the site; and he and his successors uncovered the ruins of the magnificent palaces of the Assyrian kings. These names have now become household words, and hundreds of thousands of inscriptions in which we read the history of Assyria as the Assyrians themselves wrote it, and which to a remarkable degree confirm the Bible.

Koynujik is the name of the principal mound. It is east of the Tigris, just across from the modern city Mosul. It covers about 100 acres, and is on an average about 90 feet high. It contains the palaces of Sennacherib and Assurbanipal. Sennacherib was the king who raided Judah. His palace was the grandest of them all. It was uncovered by Layard in 1849-50. It was about the size of three large city blocks.

Library of Assur-banipal was perhaps the most epochal archaeological discovery ever made. Layard, Rassam, and Rawlinson uncovered it in 1852-54 in the palace of Sennacherib. It originally contained 100,000 volumes. About a third of it has been recovered and is in the British Museum. Assurbanipal was something of an archaeologist; he had his scribes search and copy the libraries of ancient Babylon, of an age 2000 years before his day. Thus to him we are indebted for preserving knowledge of primitive Babylonian literature.

"And Huzzab shall be led away captive . . ." (Nahum 2:7): The Hebrew "nasab" is wrongly rendered as a proper name in the King James --"Hussab." After predicting the overthrow of the city, he cries out, as if against objectors, "IT IS ESTABLISHED," or determined of God! Nineveh the queen or mistress of the nations will be covered with shame. The proud, and wicked city, though herself forever established and DEFIED GOD. The fall comes, they flee, and the enemy captures the spoil.

C. The consummation (Nahum 2:10-13).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 38 - PAGE 5

"She is empty, and void, and waste . . ." (Nahum 2:10): The utter collapse of the people was set in figurative language. The prophet then broke into exaltation. The den of the lions was gone, all the cruelty of Nineveh was at an end. Moreover, the prophet recognized this as the righteous act of God. It was His act of vengeance. He was against Nineveh (verse 13), therefore the overthrow was complete.

### III. The Vindication of Vengeance (Nahum 3:1-19)

#### A. The victor and the vanquished (Nahum 3:1-7).

"Woe to the bloody city!" (Nahum 3:1): The last part of the prophecy is devoted wholly to the vindication of Jehovah's action against Nineveh, and is a fitting defense of the declarations concerning His character. He describes Nineveh as "the bloody city," evil and cruel. Why did judgment fall on Nineveh? Because it was a city "full of lies and robbery" (verse 1), which loves war and the oppression of the weak and innocent will perish (verses 2, 3). Uncleanness, prostitution and sorcery were openly carried on and linked with the worship of demon gods (verse 4). God said: "I am against thee . . . I will shew the nations . . . thy shame . . . cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile" (verses 5, 6; I Pet. 3:12). Such vice demands vengeance. Jehovah's righteousness in bringing justice on Nineveh is described in "Who will bemoan her? Whence shall I seek comforters for thee?" (verse 7).

#### B. The certainty of this judgment (Nahum 3:8-10).

"Art thou better than populous No-Ammon . . ." (Nahum 3:8): The Hebrew has "No-Ammon," the Egyptian name for Thebes in Upper Egypt. Amon-re, the sun god, was represented as a human figure with a ram's head seated on a chair. The argument was that No-amon or Thebes was not so corrupt as Nineveh, but he had been destroyed, notwithstanding her strength. How much more certain then, in view of her greater corruption was the destruction of Nineveh (verse 9). Nineveh's corruption had canceled her strength. Vengeance is sure, and terrible (verse 10).

#### C. Other particulars of Nineveh's siege (Nahum 3:11-19).

"Thou also shall be drunken . . . be hid" (Nahum 3:11): Nineveh's last night was spent in a drunken orgy. Remember Pearl Harbor? Do you want to remember that our boys were recovering after a Saturday night drunk? Dazed brains HEARD DETECTORS SAY AN AIR FLEET WAS APPROACHING. OUR BOYS THOUGHT OUR OWN SCOUTING PLANES WERE RETURNING! They were mistaken! Like "first ripe figs they fell" (verses 12, 13), and were eaten as locust destroys green leaves (verses 16, 17). Saracus, grandson of Esar-haddon, Assyria's last king, with the nobles and his people were killed (verses 18, 19). Nineveh with her guilt and sins will never be numbered among the living until that day that . . .

"When the sun is old and the stars are cold . . . And the leaves of the judgment-book unfold."

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 38 - PAGE 6

### QUESTIONS

1. Against what great city is Nahum's prophecy written (Nahum 1:1; 3:7)?
2. What is the single theme of Nahum? Who had prophesied more than 100 years before Nahum (Jonah 3:1-4)? How does this book prove Nineveh's repentance under Jonah to be temporary?
3. What do we know about Nahum?
4. When and by whom was Nineveh founded (Gen. 10:11, 1)? Of what nation was it the capital (II Kings 19:36; Isa. 37:37; Zeph. 2:13)?
5. Can you give an outline of Nahum?
6. Is the book of Nahum relevant for our day? Illustrate.
7. What proved that God was able to execute judgment upon Nineveh (Nahum 1:3-6; Rom. 1:20)?
8. Why must God hate and judge willful sin (Psa. 145:17; Isa. 6:3; Hab. 1:13; Rev. 4:8)? When did God show His hatred for our sins (Isa. 53:1b-12; II Cor. 5:21; Heb. 9:28; I Pet. 2:24; 3:18)? What does God's jealousy (Nahum 1:2) demand of His people and bring upon His enemies (Ex. 20:5; 34:14; Deut. 4:25; 5:9)?
9. Upon whom does God execute vengeance and wrath (Nahum 1:2,3; II Thess. 1:8)?
10. What did God say of Nineveh (Nahum 1:8-15)?
11. What things are said of the Lord in Nahum 1:7(cf. verses 2,3)?
12. Who was to "dash in pieces" the city of Nineveh (Nahum 2:1)?
13. What was the chief sin of Nineveh (Nahum 1:14; 3:4)?
14. Can you give a picture of the conflict when Nineveh fell (Nahum 2:3-5)?
15. What is the meaning of Nahum 2:6?
16. What is the correct translation of "Huzzab" (Nahum 2:7)?
17. In Nahum's vindication of vengeance, why did judgment fall on Nineveh (Nahum 3:1-7)?
18. What city in Egypt is alluded to in showing the certainty of judgment on Nineveh (Nahum 3: 8-10)?
19. Have drunken soldiers and citizens held a city or a nation in any land for very long (Nahum 3:11-19)? What happened at Nineveh? Pearl Harbor?
20. Does this book have an application for our modern cities and nations (Prov. 14; 34; I Pet. 3:12)?

**YEAR 3 - LESSON 39 - PAGE 1**  
**WHOLE BIBLE STUDY COURSE**

**Year III**

**Third Quarter**

Lesson 39

Page 1

Habakkuk

Memory Verse: Habakkuk 2:14

Memory Verse:

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Habakkuk 2:14).

Public Reading: Habakkuk 3:1-6, 17-19)

**HABAKKUK'S PRAYER**

This book is unique in that quite two-thirds of it is a conversation between the prophet and His Lord. Habakkuk (pronounce it ha-bak'uk) has been called the "free-thinker among the prophets" and the "father of Israel's religious doubt."

Habakkuk is from a Hebrew root meaning "To embrace," denoting a "favorite" (namely, of God) and a "struggler" (for his country's good). Some think the prophet belonged to the tribe of Levi, a chorister in the temple (Hab. 3:19). All we know of the prophet is what is in the book. He was a prominent citizen of Jerusalem, having the respect and confidence of the leaders of that city.

The key word of this book: "WHY?" (Hab. 1:3).

**Date of Habakkuk**

This prophecy most likely belongs to the period between 625 and 606 B. C., probably about 607 B. C., early in Jehoiakim's reign. The Chaldeans (Babylonians) were sweeping westward (Hab. 1:6), but had not yet reached Judah (Hab. 3:16). Chronology of the period:

639-608 B. C.: Josiah, king of Judah. Great reformation (II Kings 22:1-23:30. Zephaniah.

626 B. C.: Assyria was greatly weakened by the Scythian invasion.

625 B. C.: Babylon declared its INDEPENDENCE OF ASSYRTA.

612 B. C. (some think 607 B. C.): Babylonians destroyed Nineveh.

608 B. C.: Jehoahaz reigned 3 months. Taken to Egypt (II Kings 23:31-33).

608-597 B. C.: Jehoiakim. A very wicked reign. Habakkuk?

606 B. C.: Babylonians invaded Judah. Took captives.

605 B. C.: Babylonians defeated Egypt at Carchemish.

597 B. C.: Jehoiachin reigned 3 months. Taken to Babylon (II Kings 24:8-16).

597-586 B. C.: Zedekiah. A weak, wicked king. Taken to Babylon (II Kings 24:17-25:21).

586 B. C.: Jerusalem burned, and the land desolated.

**Purpose of Book**

To answer the question of WHY WICKEDNESS SEEMS TO TRIUMPH, and to vindicate God's righteousness the prophecy is thrown into the form of a DRAMATIC DIALOGUE BETWEEN HABAKKUK and Jehovah. "God is boldly and reverently challenged to defend His action in the government of the world."

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 39 - PAGE 2

This is the old problem of Job, of the Psalms, and of Ecclesiastes with this difference: there it is individual, HERE IT IS NATIONAL.

Habakkuk was a man of clear faith and powerful hold on God. He could not square his belief in a GOOD AND RIGHTEOUS GOD with the FACTS OF LIFE as he sees them! He was troubled with the "WHY?" He clung to God, poured out his soul in prayer, and waited patiently (Hab. 2:1) for the Divine explanation. His faith was not in vain. Twentieth century man will learn the relevance of Habakkuk, or collapse in ruin!

### I. The Prophet's Hard Problems (Habakkuk 1:1-11)

A. Why are my prayers unanswered (Hab. 1:1, 2)?

"The burden which Habakkuk the prophet did see" (Hab. 1:1): This contains the heading not only to chapter 1 and 2, but also to the whole book. The prophet calls his writing a "massa", or burden, because it announces heavy judgments upon the covenant nation and the imperial power. He was perplexed with the silence and forbearance of God in permitting evil to continue, and pours out his soul to God.

"O Lord, how long shall I cry . . ." (Hab. 1:2): The Lord apparently had neglected to answer his prayers. Many before and since Habakkuk have asked such a question. All of us at some point in life have asked why God lets our prayers go unanswered. Many of us have vexed our souls, as did Habakkuk, at the apparent INDIFFERENCE OF JEHOVAH both to prayer and PREVAILING EVIL.

B. Why is iniquity permitted (Hab. 1:3, 4)?

"Why dost thou shew me iniquity?" (Hab. 1:3): Similar language is used of the Chaldeans (verses 9, 13), as it is here used of the Jews. They sinned by violence and injustice. They shall be punished in the same way (Prov. 1:31; Gal. 6:7). God not only lets the prophet SEE INIQUITY, but EVEN LOOKS AT IT HIMSELF!

"Therefore the law is slacked . . ." (Hab. 1:4): The law was chilled, or benumbed. It has not authority and secures no respect. Men raised up strife and contention (Hab. 1:1), oppressed righteous people (verses 2, 13), lived in open sin (Hab. 2:4, 5, 15, 16) WORSHIPPED IDOLS (Hab. 2:18, 19), oppressed the poor and defenseless (Hab. 1:4, 14, 15). It was a dark day of sin, strife, lawlessness, and imminent invasion. Great disasters were ahead of God's people in Judah. Sounds modern, does it not?

C. God's first answer (Hab. 1:5-11).

"I will work at a work . . . ye will not believe" (Hab. 1:5): God answers Habakkuk's complaint by stating his silence did not mean ignorance or indifference, but that He was about to punish Judah.

God told Habakkuk he was about to do something incredible. Paul quoted this verse at Antioch of Pisidia, when warning the Jews of the DANGER OF NEGLECTING THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST (Acts 13:40, 41). None WOULD BELIEVE THE WORLD OF GOD'S GRACE ON CALVARY'S CROSS, though it was preached unto them!

"I raise up the Chaldeans . . ." (Hab. 1:5): God promises to raise up the Chaldeans, "that bitter and hasty nation," to chastise Judah for her sins. They were relentless and terrible warriors. They would override Judah and then in pride give the glory for the victory to their false gods (Hab. 1:7-11).

### II. The Second Conversation (Habakkuk 1:12-2:20)

### YEAR 3 - LESSON 39 - PAGE 3

The Lord's reply to the first conversation with Habakkuk, though it solved one difficulty, raised another, namely: HOW A PURE GOD COULD CHASTISE HIS PEOPLE BY A NATION FAR WORSE THAN THEMSELVES. The prophet declared his difficulty in believing that ...

A. The Holy God could use an UNHOLY NATION to chasten His sinful people (Hab. 1:12-17).

"We shall not die . . . ordained them for judgment" (Hab. 1:12): The Holy God had chosen the Chaldeans to correct or chastise Judah. God will not suffer them to DESTROY ALL THE JEWS.

"Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil . . ." (Hab. 1:13): God is displeased when he beholds evil. HOW, asks the prophet, CAN GOD CHASTEN A SINFUL PEOPLE BY A PEOPLE YET MORE SINFUL? The Chaldeans would "catch" the Jews as "fishes of the sea" (verses 14, 15). God compares the world to the sea, men to fishes, and Nebuchadnezzar to a fisherman (verses 15-17).

"Shall they therefore empty their net . . . not spare . . .?" (Hab. 1:17): The prophet wants to know IF THE BABYLONIANS shall be allowed without interruption to enjoy the fruits of their violence. Many have asked the same thing of Hitler, Stalin, and Khrushchev the atheistic, Russian butcher of million!

B. The prophet's patience (Hab. 2:1).

"I will stand . . . watch" (Hab. 2:1): This verse contains the prophet's conversation with himself. After he has poured out his trouble at the judgment announced, in a lamentation to the Lord (Hab. 1:12-17), he encourages himself-after a pause, which we have to imagine after Hab. 1:17-to WAIT FOR THE ANSWER FROM GOD. The prophet will stand upon the watch post, any place where he would withdraw his soul from worldly things, and FIX IT UPON HEAVENLY THINGS. It is a hard thing to "WAIT UPON THE LORD (Psa. 27:14; 37:34; II Thess. 3:5). When you have doubts, wait upon the Lord. Do not run to a doubter, or both of you will be damned in doubt!

C. The Lord's reply (Hab. 2:2-20).

"And the Lord answered me . . . Write" (Hab. 2:2): The Lord answered immediately. The prophet was first commanded to "Write" and to make his writing plain for easy reading. The vision granted to him was state in the words, "Behold, his soul which is lifted up IS NOT UPRIGHT IN HIM: but the just shall live by faith" (Hab. 2:4). That is the central revelation of the prophecy. It is a contrast between the "puffed up" and the "JUST." The "puffed up" is NOT UPRIGHT, and is therefore condemned. The latter ACTS ON FAITH, and THEREFORE LIVES! The first is self-centered, and therefore DOOMED. The second is God-centered, and therefore PERMANENT. This was the DECLARATION OF A GREAT PRINCIPLE, which the prophet was left to work out in application to all the problems by which he was surrounded.

From this point, the prophecy becomes a PROCLAMATION OF THE CONTRAST, and therefore AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH IN SPITE OF APPEARANCES.

"The just shall live by faith" is used by Paul in Romans 1:16, 17 and Gal. 3:11 and in Hebrews 10:38.

"He is a proud man . . . cannot be satisfied" (Hab. 2:5): Like the grave, the Babylonians are greedy for mere conquest. "Puffed up" people and nations are haughty, ambitious, conquering. Note the "woes" pronounced against such.

"Woe unto him that increaseth that which is not his . . ." (Hab. 2:6, 9, 12, 15, 19): In considering the "woes," note the progress. The first was against ambition, which was described. The judgment pronounced against it was a REVOLT OF THE OPPRESSED, and retribution in kind (verses 7,8).

The second was against covetousness, that lust for possession at the expense of others. Judgment was to be the subjugated people rising against the oppressor, the stones and beams of the house testifying (verses 9-11).

## YEAR 3 - LESSON 39 - PAGE 4

The third was against violence, the infliction of cruel sufferings on the subjugated. Judgment was that the **VERY CITIES SO BUILT SHOULD BE DESTROYED** (verses 12-14).

The fourth was against insolence, the brutal act of making a man drunk, and then making sport of him. Its judgment was to retribution in kind (verses 15-18).

The fifth was against idolatry, the description of which was completely satirical. Its judgment was declared to **BE UN-ANSWERING GODS** (verse 19).

"But the Lord is in his holy temple . . . earth keep silence" (Hab 2:20): Here the contrast is drawn between the **DUMB LIFELESS IDOLS** and the **LIVING GOD**, who is enthroned in His holy temple, not the earthly temple at Jerusalem, but the heavenly temple as the throne of the divine glory (Isa. 66:1). The whole earth is to be still before Him, and submit silently to Him, and wait for His judgment!

### III. The Prophet's Hymn and Doxology (Habakkuk 3:1-19)

A. The title (Hab. 3:1).

"A prayer . . . upon Shigionoth" (Hab. 3:1): "Shigionoth" is the plural of "shiggaion," meaning not certain. It signifies reeling, and in the terminology of poetry a reeling song, that is, a **SONG DELIVERED IN THE GREATEST EXCITEMENT**, or with a rapid change of emotion.

This psalm may be called an **ECHO OF THE TWO ANSWERS** which the prophet had received from the Lord to his complaints in Hab. 1:2-4 (answer in Hab. 1:5-11) and Hab. 1:12-17 (answer in Hab. 2:2-20).

He was deeply agitated by the revelation he had received of Jehovah concerning the terrible judgment, which the Lord would execute first of all upon Judah, through the wild and cruel Chaldean nation, and **THEN UPON THE CHALDEANS BECAUSE THEY HAD DEFIED THEIR OWN POWER**.

B. Initial request (Hab. 3:2).

"O Lord, revive thy works . . ." (Hab. 3:2): Habakkuk prays that the Lord will carry out this work of His "within years," and in the revelation of His wrath still show mercy. He recognizes the divine interference, and his consequent fear.

C. A theophany (Hab. 3:3-15).

"God came from Teman, and the Holy one from mount Paran . . ." (Hab. 3:3): Teman is used for Idumaea generally. Paran was the wilderness region located in the East central region. of the Sinaitic Peninsula. As the Lord God came down to His people at Sinai, when they had been redeemed at Sinai, to establish the covenant of His grace with them, and make them into a kingdom of God, **SO WILL HE APPEAR IN THE TIME TO COME IN THE TERRIBLE GLORY OF HIS OMNIPOTENCE. HE WILL LIBERATE THEM FROM THE BONDAGE OF THE WORLDLY POWER, AND DASH TO PIECES THE WICKED WHO SEEK TO DESTROY THE POOR**. The prophet celebrates the **GREATNESS OF JEHOVAH** as manifest in His dealings with His ancient people (Hab. 3:3-15).

D. An undying faith (Hab. 3:16-19).

"Rest in the day of trouble . . . The Lord God is my strength" (Hab. 3:16-19): This last section of the psalm expresses the fear and the **FAITH OF THE JUST**. The contemplation of the judgment of the "puffed up" had filled him with fear, yet **HE TRIUMPHED IN GOD**. His faith was undying. Describing circumstances of utter desolation, he declared his determination to rejoice, and announced his reason for this determination.



## YEAR 3 - LESSON 39 - PAGE 5

### QUESTIONS

1. Between what two individuals does the conversation of this book take place?
2. Does Habakkuk prophesy before or after the Babylonian captivity (Hab.1:6)?
3. During whose reign did he probably prophesy?
4. What problem greatly perplexed Habakkuk (Hab. 1:2-4)?
5. What is the key word of Habakkuk (Hab. 1:3; see Jer. 9:1-3)?
6. To whom did Habakkuk rightly go with his perplexity (Hab. 1:2; Phil. 4:6,7)?
7. What incredible work did the Lord reveal to his prophet (Hab. 1:5, 6)?
8. What New Testament preacher used this text (Acts 13:40,41)?
9. Did the fact that this wicked nation, Babylon, should be used to chasten Israel disturb Habakkuk's faith (Hab.1:12, 13; Rom.9:14; 11:33-36)?
10. What was Habakkuk's attitude while waiting upon the Lord (Hab.2:1; Psa. 27:14; 37:32; II Thess. 3:5)?
11. What was the responsibility of those who read the vision (Hab. 2:2; Zech.2:4; II Cor.5:19)?
12. Was Habakkuk's vision to be fulfilled immediately (Hab.2:3; see Heb.10:37; Phil.3:20; I Pet.1:10-12; I Thess.1:10)?
13. What redemptive demand is made upon Jews and Gentiles alike in all ages (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:16, 17; Gal. 3:11; Heb. 10:37; 11:6)?
14. Who must appear before the knowledge of the glory of the Lord covers the earth (Hab. 2:14; Matt. 24:30; 25-31; Luke 9:26; II Thess. 2:8)?
15. Upon what five kinds of transgressors did Habakkuk pronounce woes (Hab. 2:6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 19).
16. To which of Israel's past deliverances did Habakkuk refer in his prayer (Hab. 3:1-15; Josh. 10:12, 13)?
17. Did Habakkuk depend upon temporal prosperity for his joy (Hab. 3:18-19)?
18. Is it possible for the present-day believer to say what Habakkuk said (Hab. 3:17-18; Job 13:15; Acts 13:50-52; Phil. 4:4; Col. 1:24; I Thess. 1:6; Heb. 12:11; James 1:2).
19. In the light of your study of Habakkuk, what is the purpose of the book?
20. When bitter and hasty nations today threaten to "bury us," what is the right attitude to take in the light of this lesson?