

Survey of the Minor Prophets

by
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Survey of the Minor Prophets

**A study of the books of the Minor Prophets for
Small Group or Personal Bible Study**

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Survey of the Minor Prophets

Small Group or Personal Study Course

Introduction

This is a small group Bible study course to help you grow in your understanding of the books of the Minor Prophets. This study will be most effective as you get together with a small group to share the answers that each of you has written in your personal study. This can also be used as a personal study course to help you grow in your understanding of the books of the Minor Prophets. This course is designed to help you grow in three ways. Throughout the course you will read a paragraph to help you grow in your knowledge of the verses that you will be reading. After each paragraph you will usually have three questions. These three questions will focus on three things: Knowledge, Understanding and Application.

The first question will ask you to find the answer to some question in the verses that you are reading. This question is to help you pick out a key fact in those verses to help you grow in your knowledge of those verses. The answer to this question will usually be found in the verses as you read them.

The second question will ask you a question that will help you to think through the verses to understand the meaning of the group of verses being discussed. As you read this question, pray that the Lord will give you understanding of the passage as well as knowledge of the facts.

The third question will ask you a question that will help you to apply what you have learned from those verses both to your own and to your service for Christ. It is as we understand and apply the Scripture to our lives that the Lord really begins to change and transform our lives.

At the end of each lesson there will be an opportunity to write down something that you have learned for your own life through the study of those verses. Our prayer is that as you work through these lessons that three things will happen in your life:

1. First, you will grow in your knowledge of the Bible.
2. Second, you will grow in your understanding of the verses that you have studied.
3. Third, you will learn how to apply the Word of God to your life.

The basic material in each of these lessons was originally written in one of six Bible Survey texts written between 1969 and 1974 that covered the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. We are making this material available in this new form to help you grow in your knowledge, understanding and application of the Bible to your life. The Lord willing, we will continue to make other books available as we have time to prepare them in this new form.

May the Lord bless you as you learn His Word.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

	Page
Introduction	ii
1. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Hosea 1:1-4:19	1
2. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Hosea 5:1-9:17	5
3. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Hosea 10:1-14:9	9
4. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Joel 1:1-3:21	13
5. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Amos 1:1-4:13	17
6. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Amos 5:1-7:17	21
7. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Amos 8:1-Obadiah 1:21	26
8. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Jonah 1:1-4:11	30
9. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Micah 1:1-4:13	34
10. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Micah 5:1-7:20	38
11. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Nahum 1:1-3:19	42
12. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Habakkuk 1:1-3:19	46
13. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Zephaniah 1:1-3:20	50
14. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Haggai 1:1-2:23	54
15. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Zechariah 1:1-3:10	59
16. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Zechariah 4:1-7:14	63
17. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Zechariah 8:1-11:17	68
18. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Zechariah 12:1-14:21	73
19. Survey of the Minor Prophets - Malachi 1:1-4:6	77

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 1

Hosea 1:1-4:19

Today we are beginning a study of the Minor Prophets. This study will cover the books of Hosea through Malachi. The book of Hosea was written shortly before the time that the book of Isaiah was written. In this book the Lord used certain events that happened in the life of Hosea as an example for the nation of Israel. These events show how unfaithful the nation of Israel had been to the Lord. However, even though Israel was an unfaithful nation, God gave the nation of Israel certain promises to show what the Lord is going to do for the nation of Israel in the future. These promises and the example of Hosea and the way that he treated his wife give us some real examples of the greatness of the love of God.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain the meaning of the names of the children of Hosea.
- Explain how the wife of Hosea provided an example of the nation of Israel.
- Give a summary of the history of the nation of Israel.
- Explain what sins Israel was committing at the time of Hosea.

Hosea married a woman that became a very unfaithful and sinful wife. The Lord allowed this marriage and used the unfaithfulness of this woman as a living example of unfaithfulness to God by the nation of Israel. The Lord warned Hosea that his wife would not be faithful. Later the woman that Hosea had chosen to take as his wife became a prostitute. This was why she provided a very clear example of the unfaithfulness of Israel. Gomer became unfaithful to Hosea just as Israel continued to be unfaithful to the Lord. In fact at that time the nation of Israel had completely departed from the Lord.

1. Read Hosea 1:1-11 and write the name of the woman that Hosea took as his wife.
2. Explain why the Lord used the unfaithfulness of the wife of Hosea to show the unfaithfulness of the nation of Israel.
3. Explain why you think that the Lord warned Hosea that his wife would not be faithful to her marriage vows.

Three children were born to Hosea and Gomer. Each of these children was given a name that would be a sign to the nation of Israel. The first son was called "Jezreel". This was a sign to Jeroboam II that God was going to judge the sins of the family of Jehu and also judge the entire nation of Israel in the valley of Jezreel. The second child born to Hosea and Gomer was a daughter. She was given the name of Lo-Ruhamah. Her name means "not pitied". This was a sign that the time had come for the judgment of the nation of Israel. God was showing that he would no longer show pity to Israel. The name of the third child means "not my people". This was the condition of the nation of Israel as long as they failed to trust in the Lord.

4. Read Hosea 1:1-11 and write the name that was given to the third child of Hosea and Gomer.
5. Explain what lessons you learn from the names that were given to the children of Hosea and Gomer.
6. Explain why you think that God told Hosea what to name each of the children so that he could use those names as signs to the people of Israel.

Although the people of Israel were not recognizing the Lord as their God at the time of Hosea, the Lord still gave a promise for Israel about the future. There will always be a future for Israel because of the unconditional covenant that the Lord made with Abraham. God promised Abraham that one day the nation of Israel would have so many people that they would be like the sand of the seashore. God said that at that time they would be known as the sons of the living God. At that time in the future the nations of Israel and Judah will become one nation

again. They will be the people of God because they are going to obtain pity from God in that day.

7. Read Hosea 1:1-11 and write what day the Lord said would be great in the future.

8. Explain why it is important to understand that the Lord will never forget the covenant that He made with Abraham.

9. Explain why you think that God says that there will come a time in the future when the people of Israel will be known as the sons of the living God.

As we study chapter two of this book, we are given a real picture of the sinfulness of the nation of Israel. In this chapter the nation of Israel is pictured as the wife of God while the individual members of the nation are pictured as children. The nation of Israel was committing spiritual adultery with the idols of the land. As a result, God promised that He would make the nation of Israel naked and show the terribleness of her sinful condition. Israel had chosen to follow idols because the nation thought that those idols were supplying her food, her clothing and her luxuries. However, Israel did not realize that the Lord was the One that was supplying all of these things.

10. Read Hosea 2:1-23 and write what God said would happen when Israel went seeking her lovers.

11. Explain why the Lord calls the worship of idols spiritual adultery and said that He would show Israel the terribleness of her sinful condition.

12. Explain why you think that the people chose to follow idols and say that those idols were supplying their need for food, clothing and luxuries.

God said that He was going to bring famine and great need to the nation to cause the people of Israel to realize that God was their true husband. God was the One that had supplied all of the needs of Israel and not Baal even though the people were worshiping Baal. Now God was the One that was going to bring both physical and spiritual judgment on the nation of Israel. God was going to bring famine and uncover the spiritual nakedness of Israel in front of her idols. God said that He would cause happiness in Israel to cease. God said that He would do this by bringing judgment on Israel for all of the time that the nation had followed Baal.

13. Read Hosea 2:1-23 and write who the nation of Israel had forgotten when she went after her lovers.

14. Explain why God said that it was necessary for Him to judge the nation of Israel because of their worship of idols.

15. Explain why you think that the people of Israel failed to realize and understand that God was the One that was supplying all of their needs.

Even though Israel had forgotten the Lord, the Lord promised to speak kindly to the nation of Israel and bring the nation back to Himself. God promised that the Valley of Achor would be a door of hope to Israel just as it had been a door of hope when Israel had come out of Egypt and entered into the land. The Valley of Achor was the place where Achan and all that belonged to his family had been stoned to death because of the sin of Achan. After judging the sin of Achan in the Valley of Achor, the Lord was able to bless the rest of the nation of Israel. God also said that Israel would one day call the Lord my husband instead of my master.

16. Read Hosea 2:1-23 and write what God promised to take out of the mouth of the nation of Israel.

17. Explain why the Valley of Achor is called a door of hope even though it was the place where Achan and his family were stoned to death.

18. Explain why you think that judgment can be followed by blessing if people will turn from their sin and turn to the Lord.

God promised that the day would come in the future when Israel would have peace and no more enemies would come against the nation. In that day God said that He will woo Israel like a pure

virgin instead of looking at her as an adulterous wife. In that day Israel will become a faithful and pure wife. In that day the nation of Israel will be the people of God. They will have obtained pity in the sight of God. God said that in that day the nation would obtain mercy even though there would be a day of judgment that would come first. God said that the nation will be called the people of God in that day. The people will also recognize the Lord as their God.

19. Read Hosea 2:1-23 and write how long God said that the nation of Israel would be betrothed to God.

20. Explain what this chapter teaches about the fact that God will one day change the judgment of Israel into blessing.

21. Explain why you think that the Lord said that He would woo Israel like a pure virgin even though the people served idols for many years.

The wife of Hosea had been a prostitute before she had married Hosea. After the birth of her three children, she returned to her life of prostitution. Although she had gone back to her old ways, the Lord encouraged Hosea to continue to love her. Then Hosea was instructed to go and buy his wife back out of her life of prostitution. God said that the wife of Hosea was a picture of the nation of Israel. The people of Israel had turned away from the Lord to follow other gods. They had loved the cakes of raisins that were used in the heathen feasts as sacrifices to idols.

22. Read Hosea 3:1-5 and write how much money Hosea paid to buy his wife back from her life of prostitution.

23. Explain why the Lord encouraged Hosea to continue to love his wife even though she had gone back to her life of prostitution.

24. Explain why you think that God told Hosea to go and buy his wife back out of her life of prostitution.

Fifteen pieces of silver was half the normal price for a slave. The wife had so lowered and destroyed herself that she was of very little value even as a slave. The food that Hosea gave along with the silver was the food that was normally fed to horses. This again speaks of the complete worthlessness that goes along with sin. When Hosea brought his wife back, he told her that she would live with him for many days. However, she would not live with him as his wife because of her sin. God told Hosea to do this because He said that the wife of Hosea was an example of the nation of Israel and what would happen to that nation.

25. Read Hosea 3:1-5 and write how long God said that the nation of Israel would be without a king.

26. Explain why the price that Hosea paid to buy back his wife from sin showed that she had little value left in herself.

27. Explain why you think that God sent Christ who had a life of infinite value to buy us back from our sin that had destroyed our value.

Here we see an amazing prophecy that is still true of the nation of Israel even today. Israel has been without a king or a prince for more than 2500 hundred years. They have been without a sacrifice or even a land for almost 2000 years. In spite of these things, the people of Israel have continued to maintain their identity as a group of people. During this entire time they have not followed idols even though they have not served the Lord either. Here we see that the Lord is giving them a promise that Israel will return to Him in the latter days and again serve Him. Although that day has not come yet for the nation of Israel, that day is coming soon. Then the entire nation of Israel will again serve the Lord.

28. Read Hosea 3:1-5 and write what God said that the nation of Israel would experience in the latter days.

29. Explain what you learn about the nation of Israel from what happened to the wife of Hosea.

30. Explain why you think that God has preserved Israel as a nation for almost 2000 years even though they had no land of their own during that time.

As we come to chapter four, we are given a summary of the sins of Israel that has made it necessary for God to leave the nation of Israel like a wife without a husband for these many years. This summary will be expanded throughout the rest of the book of Hosea. God began this charge against Israel by pointing out the fact that the nation of Israel had rejected the Word of God. As a result, the people of Israel had broken all of the commandments of the Lord. This sin had involved all of the people including their priests and their false prophets.

31. Read Hosea 4:1-19 and write why God said that His people were being destroyed.
32. Explain why God shows that there are serious consequences for any person or nation that rejects the Word of God.
33. Explain why you think that even the priests of Israel had become involved in the sinful practices of the nation.

The people of Israel had chosen to reject the knowledge that they had been given by the Lord in His Word. They had forgotten the law of God. This is the reason why God said that there would be no priest among them. The people were all guilty of sin. This included the priests as well as the people. They had all set their hearts to do evil. Now God said that the people would eat but they would not be satisfied. God said that the people had committed spiritual prostitution by following idols so God said that the people would not increase. In addition, this spiritual prostitution had led to all forms of moral impurity and drunkenness.

34. Read Hosea 4:1-19 and write what these things do to the heart.
35. Explain why spiritual prostitution will also lead people to commit all forms of moral impurity and drunkenness.
36. Explain why you think that God said that the nation of Israel would have no priest among them.

Romans chapter one describes the way that these sinful practices lead to greater and greater sin. When the people began to follow their idols, every form of sin came along with that idol worship. Their daughters became prostitutes. The men began to live in adultery. The people were offering sacrifices and incense to their idols on the tops of all of the mountains and hills. The men would go together with these prostitutes to offer incense to their idols and then they would commit various acts of immorality together. This is something that has always been a part of idol worship.

37. Read Hosea 4:1-19 and write how God said that Israel had slid back.
38. Explain what you learn about the dangers of idol worship for this chapter.
39. Explain why you think that immorality always becomes a part of idol worship among any people.

As Hosea spoke of the sinful ways of the people of Israel, he warned Judah not to follow in these same sinful ways. Israel had become like a heifer that refused to be led. Israel had joined itself to idols so that it was beyond the point where it would return to the Lord. For this reason the people of Judah were warned to completely avoid the people of Israel so that they would not fall into these same sinful practices that were being committed by the nation of Israel. The people of Israel had reached the point where their sinful practices did not satisfy them and so they had now chosen to go after other forms of sin and shame.

40. Read Hosea 4:1-19 and write how Hosea said that the people of Israel would one day feel because of their sacrifices to idols.
41. Explain why Judah was warned to completely avoid the people of Israel so that they would not turn to the same sins.
42. Explain why you think that the sinful practices of people do not satisfy them so they turn to greater forms of sin and shame.

Reread Hosea 1:1-4:19 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

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Lesson 2

Hosea 5:1-9:17

In our last lesson we learned how the nation of Israel had become like an unfaithful wife and had turned away from the Lord to worship idols. God said that such unfaithfulness would certainly bring judgment. Today we will be learning more about the judgment that was promised to the nation of Israel because of their idol worship and sin. God said that the people of Israel had sown to the wind. Now God said that they were going to reap the whirlwind. This judgment or whirlwind would certainly come because of the sinful condition of the people of Israel. They would not be able to escape when the Lord brought this judgment on them.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain what the Lord meant when He said that His face would be withdrawn from Israel.
- Explain the additional things that you learn about the sins of Israel.
- Explain the results of sowing to the wind.
- Explain what the Lord said about the judgment that would come.

As we begin this lesson, we see that God warned the people of Israel that judgment would certainly come. This warning was to the priests, the people and to the king of Israel because they were all guilty of sin. This judgment would come because of the idol worship at Mizpah and Tabor as well as in other places. The leaders of Israel had led the people away from the Lord so that they all started serving idols. Then the people had worshiped these idols for so long that they would not return to the Lord. They had been blinded by their pride. Now God said that this pride would one day cause them to fall. In fact the Lord warned that this pride would also cause the nation of Judah to fall in the future.

1. Read Hosea 5:1-15 and write why the people would not find the Lord when they began to seek for Him.
2. Explain why the Lord said that judgment would come on all of the people in the land of Israel including the priests.
3. Explain why you think that God said that the people of the land of Israel had been blinded by their pride.

The people of Judah were just as guilty of sin as the people of Ephraim (Israel). Their leaders were guilty of moving the property boundaries so that they could take part of the land of their neighbors. As a result, the people of Judah would feel the judgment of God just as Ephraim would feel the judgment of God. When the people of Israel and Judah realized their terrible condition, they turned to other nations for help instead of turning to the Lord. This was the reason why God said that judgment must come on both nations. However, God gave a wonderful promise to the people even in their sin. God said that there would come a day in the future when the people of Israel and the people of Judah would seek him and return to Him.

4. Read Hosea 5:1-15 and write why the people would seek God early.
5. Explain why the Lord said that judgment would come on both the nation of Israel and the nation of Judah.
6. Explain why you think that God gave a wonderful promise about the future at the very time that He was telling them that judgment would come in the present.

God saw that when the people of Israel realized the terribleness of their judgment that the day would come when all of the people will decide to return to the Lord. The people will realize that the Lord can heal them just as He had judged them. The fourteenth verse of chapter five points out that God would tear them like a lion. Now we see that God is the One that will heal

those wounds. When God heals the nation of Israel, He will make Israel a blessed and fruitful nation. This is pictured by the fact that God will send the early and latter rain. Rain at both periods of time produced the best crops.

7. Read Hosea 6:1-11 and write what God said that the goodness of Israel was like.
8. Explain why it was important that the promise of God also told Israel that they would receive both the early and the latter rain when He restored them as a nation.
9. Explain why you think that God said that He would heal the wounds of the nation of Israel.

There had been times in the history of Israel when the people had followed the Lord. However, those times were like the dew or a morning cloud. Each time the people only followed the Lord for a short time and then they had gone back to their evil ways. God had sent prophets to warn the people but the people had not listened to the Word of God. Instead the people had put on an act by offering sacrifices when their hearts were not right with the Lord. God says that mercy is more important than sacrifice. The knowledge of the Word of God is more important than burnt offerings.

10. Read Hosea 6:1-11 and write the name of the city that God named for their iniquity.
11. Explain why God desires people that have hearts that are right with Him more than He desires sacrifices.
12. Explain why you think that many people are like Israel and want to give the appearance of serving God when their hearts are actually far from Him.

The people of Israel were guilty before God in many different ways. They had broken the covenant that they had made with the Lord to obey His commandments. They had shed much blood of innocent people. They had also committed many other forms of evil in their sin and rebellion against the Lord. Even their priests had joined themselves into groups to murder and rob others. The people were guilty of many forms of immorality. We also see that Judah had followed the actions of the people of Israel. As a result, Judah was doing these same evil things so a time of judgment was coming for Judah also. God wanted to heal His people but the people chose to continue to follow their evil ways.

13. Read Hosea 7:1-16 and write what the thieves and robbers were doing.
14. Explain why the people continued to follow their evil ways even though it was the desire of the Lord to heal them.
15. Explain why you think that the people of Israel found many different ways to sin to show their rebellion against their covenant with the Lord.

A person that was a thief came into the houses of other people to take their possessions. Groups of robbers waited to attack those who were traveling and take the things that they had with them. The people thought that they were committing their evil actions in secret. They did not realize that God knew everything that they were doing. Their king and their leaders were so evil that they were glad when they saw the people doing evil. The people were all guilty of continuing adultery and other forms of immorality. Their evil lusts were like the fire of a baker. The people were continually looking for opportunities to satisfy their lusts.

16. Read Hosea 7:1-16 and write what the princes did on the day of the birthday of the king.
17. Explain why people that are controlled by their sinful lusts will continually be looking for ways to satisfy those lusts.
18. Explain why you think that the people thought that they were committing their evil acts in secret and that God did not know what they were doing.

On an important day like the birthday of the king or the day that he was anointed as the king, the king and the princes would become so drunk that they would act like insane men instead of leaders. Their sins were like a flaming fire that was out of control. Many of the kings of Israel were murdered. Not a single one of the kings of Israel had followed the Lord. The people of Ephraim were like a pancake that was cooked on one side and raw on the other. They were

losing their strength to others without realizing it. They were filled with pride and did not seek the Lord or return to Him.

19. Read Hosea 7:1-16 and write what the people had done even though God had redeemed the people.

20. Explain what you learn about the sins of the people of Israel from this chapter.

21. Explain why you think that the leaders became so drunk that they would act like insane men instead of leaders.

God said that the people of Israel were like a silly dove. They were depending on other nations. First they depended on Egypt and then they depended on Assyria. As a result, God said that it would be necessary for Him to spread His net of judgment over them. God said that the evil of Israel would certainly bring judgment on the people. When God finally did bring judgment on the people, they did not cry to the Lord and ask Him to forgive them. Instead they cried and complained about the terribleness of their judgment. They deceived themselves like deceitful bows that shot arrows that always missed their target.

22. Read Hosea 7:1-16 and write what God said would happen to the princes of Israel.

23. Explain why the people of Israel chose to depend on the other nations for help instead of turning to the Lord for help.

24. Explain why you think that the people complained about the terribleness of their judgments instead of crying to the Lord for mercy.

The Lord went on to list some of the other sins that the people of Israel had committed. They continued to break the commandments of the Lord. At the same time that they were breaking the commandments, the people said that they knew God. Today many people that are religious also say that they know God but they refuse to place their trust in Christ and ask Him to forgive their sins. Israel showed its rejection of the Lord by casting off those things that were good. They chose their kings and their princes without ever asking God for His choice.

25. Read Hosea 8:1-14 and write what the people of Israel did with their silver and their gold.

26. Explain why people in rebellion against God want to choose their own leaders without ever asking God to lead them in their choice.

27. Explain why you think that many people will say that they know God at the same time that they are breaking His commandments.

The people had chosen to follow idols even though God had warned them that such actions would bring judgment to them. God also said that the idols of Israel would be judged at the same time that the people were judged. Then God gave a very clear picture of what the judgment of Israel would be like. By their evil actions the people of Israel were actually sowing to the wind. God said that such sowing would certainly bring a harvest. God said that the people of Israel would receive judgment and that their judgment would be like the whirlwind. In fact the nation of Israel would be destroyed and swallowed up by the other nations.

28. Read Hosea 8:1-14 and write who Israel had forgotten.

29. Explain why God told the people that they were sowing to the wind by their evil actions.

30. Explain why you think that God told the people that they would reap the whirlwind as their harvest.

Instead of turning to the Lord and trusting in Him, Israel had hired the nation of Assyria to help the people of Israel fight their battles. However, the Lord said that their hired lovers would be used to judge Israel. God was going to allow Israel to be judged by Assyria because the people of Israel had made altars to idols instead of following the law of God. Although the people offered sacrifices to God at the same time, He refused to accept those sacrifices because the people did not humble their hearts and turn from their sin. The people of both Israel and Judah had forgotten their Maker.

31. Read Hosea 8:1-14 and write what God said He would do to the cities and palaces of the nation of Israel.
32. Explain why true faith in the Lord will cause people to humble their hearts and turn from their sin.
33. Explain why you think that the people were offering sacrifices to God at the same time that they were offering sacrifices to idols.

God told the people of Israel not to rejoice in their evil actions. He warned that the day would soon come when the Lord would take away all joy from the people of Israel. The people of Israel had committed spiritual adultery by following after idols instead of following the Lord. They had worshiped their idols on every threshing floor and praised these idols for supplying their crops. Now God said that their crops would no longer supply their needs. Instead the people would be taken out of the land of Israel and taken to the countries of Egypt and Assyria. Then they would not have the opportunity to offer sacrifices to the Lord or to go to the temple.

34. Read Hosea 9:1-17 and write where the people would be buried.
35. Explain why God chose to allow the very nations that Israel had turned to for help to be the nations that took the people out of the land.
36. Explain why you think that God compares the worship of idols to spiritual adultery.

The people that were taken to the land of Egypt would be buried in Egypt. They would not be able to return to their own land. Thorns and nettles would grow and cover the buildings where the people had worshiped their idols. The people had so completely rejected the Lord that they were calling the prophets and godly men fools and crazy men. The people had so corrupted themselves that they did not know the difference between right and wrong. They had become like the people of Gibeah that had lived during the time of the Judges. Here we see that constant sin causes people to eventually become so confused that they do not know what is right and wrong.

37. Read Hosea 9:1-17 and write where God said that the people of Israel would wander.
38. Explain why the people were calling those who were godly leaders fools and crazy men.
39. Explain why you think that constant sin will cause people to become so confused that they do not know what is right and what is wrong.

In addition to losing their joy and being taken out of the land, God warned the people that they could also expect other forms of judgment. Because the people had chosen to follow the sinful ways of Baal and loved the sin that went along with the worship of Baal, God said that He would cut down the birthrate of the people. The children that the people raised would die at an early age. The women would suffer many miscarriages before they were ready to give birth. Israel would become like a dried up root that could produce no fruit. God would cast them out because of their sin.

40. Read Hosea 9:1-17 and write what the people would become when they were cast out of their land.
41. Explain why God said that Israel would become like a dried up root that could produce no fruit.
42. Explain why you think that the people had reached a point where they loved the sin that went along with the worship of Baal.

Reread Hosea 5:1-9:17 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 3

Hosea 10:1-14:9

As we have studied the book of Hosea, we have seen that the Lord compared the nation of Israel to an unfaithful wife. We have seen how the Lord gave an example of His love by the love that Hosea had shown for his wife even though she had been unfaithful. Today we will see that the love of the Lord for Israel is an everlasting love that will not be broken. God will never forget His promise to Abraham. There is still a future for the nation of Israel. In our study today we will learn about some of the promises that God gave to the people of Israel about their future.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

Explain why Israel is called an empty vine.

Tell about the love that God has shown to Israel in the past.

Explain what God said about the continuing sin of Israel.

Explain the promises that God has given about the future for Israel.

Israel was a rich nation during the time of Hosea. The lands of the people were producing good crops and good harvests. However, the people of Israel were using these increased riches to build additional altars to their idols and fancy images on their altars. Although Israel was a rich vine physically, God said that it was an empty vine spiritually because the people were depending on their idols instead of placing their trust in the Lord. As a result, God said that He would destroy their idols and their images. In that day the people would realize that no king could help them because they were not depending on the Lord. The calves that the people had worshiped would be taken away and the joy of the people would be turned into mourning.

1. Read Hosea 10:1-15 and write where the golden calves would be taken.
2. Explain why God said that the nation of Israel was like an empty vine spiritually.
3. Explain why you think that many people are deceived by their riches and think that is a sign of approval by their false gods.

The golden calves that Israel had made as their gods would be taken to Assyria as a present to the king of Assyria. The king of the ten tribes that made up the nation of Israel would also be destroyed and the ten tribes would never have their own king again. The idols would also be destroyed and their altars would become covered with thorns and thistles. The people would even want the mountains to cover and hide them from the judgment of the Lord. The people were guilty of sins like the people of Gibeah had practiced in the days of the book of Judges when Gibeah was destroyed. This was the reason why it was necessary for God to bring judgment upon the land of Israel.

4. Read Hosea 10:1-15 and write what kind of a heifer Ephraim (Israel) was like.
5. Explain why God said that the day would soon come when the ten tribes that made up the nation of Israel would never have their own king again.
6. Explain why you think that God said that the idols of Israel would be destroyed and the altars would become covered with thorns and thistles.

The trained heifers were the heifers that had the easy life of treading out the grain when it was harvested. Now God said that a yoke would be placed on the neck of Israel and the people would do the hard work of plowing to break up the hard ground. This hard ground was a picture of the spiritual hardness of the nation of Israel. The people had done evil and now the time had come for them to receive the harvest of their evil deeds. This judgment would be a great judgment. The women would see their children killed in front of them and then they

would be killed. The kings and other leaders would also be completely destroyed.

7. Read Hosea 10:1-15 and write what God said that the people would reap because they had plowed wickedness.

8. Explain what lessons you learn about the judgment of the nation of Israel from this chapter.

9. Explain why you think that the hard ground that Israel would be forced to break up was a picture of the spiritual hardness of Israel.

As we have studied the first ten chapters of Hosea, we have seen the sins that made it necessary for God to bring judgment on the nation of Israel. As we study the rest of the book of Hosea we will see that the love of God is emphasized. When Israel was a young nation, God brought the people out of the land of Egypt. In this same way God brought Christ out of the land of Egypt to pay the penalty for the sins of Israel as well as for the sins of the whole world. However, the people had followed idols when they had come out of Egypt. Then God taught His people. He led them with bands of love. These bands pictured the bands that parents placed around their children so that the children would not get lost. God also provided food for the people of Israel.

10. Read Hosea 11:1-12 and write to what land the Lord said Israel would not return.

11. Explain how God had shown His special love for the nation of Israel when He had brought them out of the land of Egypt.

12. Explain why you think that God taught His people and led His people with bands of love.

God said that the people of Israel would not be able to return to the land of Egypt because they would be taken to be the servants of the king of Assyria. The sword would come against the people of Israel and many of the people would be destroyed. This would happen to the people because they had chosen to follow their own counsels instead of following the Lord. However, God said that He had such a great love for His people that He would not completely destroy them as He had done to Sodom and the cities that were located near Sodom. Even when the people of Israel were living in sin, the Lord still had love and compassion for them.

13. Read Hosea 11:1-12 and write what God said that He would not do.

14. Explain what happens to any people when those people choose to follow their own counsels and ideas instead of following the Lord.

15. Explain why you think that God said that He would not completely destroy the people of Israel even though the people were very evil.

Because of His great love for Israel, God said that He would not bring the total judgment on Israel that the people of Israel deserved. God loved Israel so much that He could not even bear the thought of just casting Israel away. God had a great love for Israel when He first chose Abraham and that love had not changed. God continued to call to that faithful remnant that still followed Him. He still continues to do so. One day in the future God will regather His people from all of the places where they are scattered including the west. Such a regathering has not yet happened to the nation of Israel but God will keep His promise in the future.

16. Read Hosea 11:1-12 and write what the people of Israel were saying as they spoke to the Lord.

17. Explain what you learn about the unchanging love that God has for the nation of Israel.

18. Explain why you think that God promises that in the future He will fulfill the promises that He made to Abraham.

As we have studied the book of Hosea, we have seen how the people of Israel tried to cheat and deceive God. Many other people have also tried to deceive the Lord. Here we see how such efforts by man to deceive God affect the relationship of such men with other men. Israel had become a nation that was following after something that it could not catch. That was the hot, dry east wind that came from the desert. All of their efforts to find happiness produced no satisfaction. The people made covenants with both Assyria and Egypt but they did not keep those covenants. The nation of Judah was as guilty as the nation of Israel.

19. Read Hosea 12:1-14 and write how God said that He would punish the descendants of Jacob.
20. Explain why people do not understand how their efforts to deceive God and other people greatly affect their relationship with other people.
21. Explain why you think that the efforts of people to find happiness apart from the Lord are as useless as chasing a hot dry wind.

God said that the people that came from Jacob must be punished according to their ways. Then God gives us a contrast between Jacob and the two nations that had come from Jacob. Jacob had tried by his own efforts to gain the blessing of God. Israel and Judah did not even want the blessing of the Lord. When Jacob failed by his own efforts, he wept and prayed that the Lord would bless him. At Bethel he saw a vision of God. Later Bethel was the place where he buried the idols of his family. However, Bethel was the place where the nation of Israel set up its idol. As a result, Jacob had received the blessing of the Lord and his descendants were turning away from that blessing. Now the nation of Israel is encouraged to return to the Lord.

22. Read Hosea 12:1-14 and write how Israel was like a merchant.
23. Explain why the choice of Jacob caused him to receive a blessing from God and the actions of Israel caused them to turn away from the blessing of God.
24. Explain why you think that there are many people that turn away from the Lord and reject His blessing.

The people of Israel had become like the Canaanites that were known for their cheating ways. Then the people thought that the riches that they had gained from these evil actions showed that they were innocent before God. However, God said that Israel would be judged for this evil because Israel had not been faithful like Jacob. Jacob had worked faithfully for a wife even when Laban had deceived him. Later the nation of Israel had followed the Lord when the Lord sent Moses to lead them out of Egypt. However, the people had now rejected the Lord and had done evil.

25. Read Hosea 12:1-14 and write what God said that Moses was when He brought the people of Israel out of Egypt.
26. Explain how the nation of Israel had done exactly the reverse of what Jacob had done during his life.
27. Explain why you think that many people think that they are innocent before God because of their riches.

We are given a final summary of the idol worship of Ephraim (Israel). The worship of idols had caused the people to sin more and more. The people even reached the point where they would kiss the golden calves that they worshiped. God said that such sin would cause the people to be like a mere cloud, like the dew or like smoke coming out of a chimney. All of these things last for only a few moments and then they are gone. God said that it would be necessary for Him to bring judgment before the people would return to Him. Four kinds of animals are used to picture the judgment that would come on Israel.

28. Read Hosea 13:1-16 and write who God said was destroying Israel.
29. Explain why God said that the fact that the people of Israel had reached the point where they even kissed the golden calves would cause them to become like a cloud.
30. Explain why you think that the choice by the people to kiss the golden calves was an act of rebellion against God.

Israel was responsible for its own destruction but God stood ready to help the people if they would return to Him as their king instead of following the kings that had led them to worship idols. God had originally given them a king because of their desire to be like the other nations instead of placing their trust in the Lord. As a result, the people would have a time of great sorrow and pain like that of a woman before she gives birth to a son. However, that sorrow

would be turned to joy because God will one day destroy death. God will never forget His promises to Israel.

31. Read Hosea 13:1-16 and write what would happen to Israel even though it was a fruitful nation.

32. Explain why God allowed the people of Israel to have a king so that they could be like the other nations even though that was not His desire for them.

33. Explain why you think that God wants all who follow Him to be different than the people of the world.

The name Ephraim means fruitfulness. Now God said that a hot east wind would come to take away the fruitfulness of Ephraim. Ephraim would become like a dry desert. The people would receive great judgment because of their sin. Again God called His people to return to Him. He asked them to come and ask for forgiveness for their sins and then depend on Him instead of the false gods of other nations. Here we see that the Lord greatly desires to forgive people when they will come to Him in repentance. However, Israel did not return to the Lord and the promised judgment came.

34. Read Hosea 14:1-9 and write what God promised to heal in the future.

35. Explain why the Lord has such a strong desire to forgive people if they will come to Him in repentance.

36. Explain why you think that God allowed the nation of Israel to become like a dry desert because they would not repent of their sin.

In this last chapter God gives many wonderful promises about what He will do for the nation of Israel in the future. He will heal them from their backsliding ways. He will love them with a very great love. God will turn His great anger away from the nation of Israel. Instead God will be like the dew that brings a rich harvest. Israel will grow like a lily and become a fruitful and beautiful nation. Israel will spread out like the branches of a tree. Here we see that the Lord is promising that Israel will experience great blessing when the nation returns to Him. That time is a time that will come in the future to the people of Israel.

37. Read Hosea 14:1-9 and write what the attitude of Ephraim will be toward idols in that day when they return to the Lord.

38. Explain how the Lord will bless the people of the nation of Israel when the people return to Him.

39. Explain why you think that the Lord promises that He will heal the backsliding ways of the people of Israel.

Here we see that the people of Israel will become completely different in that day when they finally place their trust in the Lord. The Lord will cause them to grow like a fruitful vine because of their trust in the Lord. In that day the people will no longer have any desire to serve idols. Instead they will have a great desire to listen to the Lord and then obey Him. Here we see that the people will be changed and transformed when they turn their hearts to the Lord. Hosea closes the book by encouraging the people to listen to the Lord. He says that those who are wise and have an understanding heart will listen to the Lord and turn to Him.

40. Read Hosea 14:1-9 and write what the ways of the Lord are like.

41. Explain why the Lord will change and transform the heart of any person when that person turns his or her heart to the Lord.

42. Explain why you think that it is important in your own life to listen to the Lord and turn to Him.

Reread Hosea 10:1-14:9 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 4

Joel 1:1-3:21

The book of Joel talks about the day of the Lord. Since various prophecies mention different days, we will begin by looking at the time of these various days. The day in which we are living is called man's day. Man's day will last until the day of Christ which is the Rapture when the church is taken off of the earth. Then the day of the Lord (Jehovah) will begin. The day of the Lord includes the seven years of judgment called the tribulation and the thousand year rule of Christ called the millennium. This will be followed by the day of God that begins with the destruction by fire of the heavens and the earth and the creation of a new heavens and a new earth. Then the day of God will last for all eternity.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Tell about the destruction of Judah by locusts.
- Explain how this destruction pictured a greater judgment.
- Explain what we learn about the promise of the Spirit.
- Explain what we learn about the judgment of the Gentile nations.

Joel tells us very little about his own background except for the fact that he was the son of Pethuel. Joel had a message that was to be passed on by the fathers to each of the following generations because it was such an important message. The nation of Judah was invaded by four successive invasions of locusts. By the time these four invasions of locusts ended, nothing that was green remained in the land. Joel used this invasion to warn the drunkards to awake because there were no more grape vines to supply them with their wine. These armies of locusts had eaten and destroyed all of the vines and bark of the trees.

1. Read Joel 1:1-20 and write what the people were told to do.
2. Explain why it is important for every generation of fathers to teach the Word of God and pass the Word on to the next generation.
3. Explain why you think that God allowed four invasions of locusts to destroy everything green in the land of Judah.

The people were told to mourn because of the way that this destruction had affected every part of the life of the people. The priests did not even have any meal or drink offerings to offer to the Lord. The fields were destroyed and had no crops. The farmers were ashamed because their fields were empty. The trees had all dried up and withered. As a result, the trees were unable to produce any fruit. This was the reason why the priests and the people were all told to mourn. They had turned away from the Lord and the Lord had used the locusts to bring judgment on the land. Every person in the land was affected by this judgment.

4. Read Joel 1:1-20 and write what the people were told by the Lord to call.
5. Explain why the fact that the Lord used the locusts to judge Judah shows that the Lord can judge a nation in many different ways.
6. Explain why you think that the Lord will certainly bring judgment on those nations that continue to live in rebellion against Him.

The people and the leaders of the land were called to return to the Lord. They were to have a fast and a solemn assembly to seek the Lord. God had sent a great judgment and the people were warned to return to the Lord or they would experience a much greater judgment. Their seeds had rotted. The food that they had stored had been destroyed. The animals were hungry because they could find no food. Because there were no plants to hold the water in the ground, the streams and the rivers had also become dry. Joel realized that there was only One Person

that could help the people and the land in these terrible conditions. That was the reason why Joel cried out to the Lord.

7. Read Joel 1:1-20 and write how the Lord had also used fire to bring judgment on the land.
8. Explain how God used the locusts to judge the sins of the people of Judah.
9. Explain why you think that the people and leaders of Israel were told to have a fast and a solemn assembly to seek the Lord.

Joel goes on to point out that these locusts are only a small picture of a much greater judgment that will come in the day of the Lord. Even the invasion by the nation of Assyria was only a little picture of the judgment that will come in the day of the Lord when the great northern army will come against Israel. The day of the Lord will be a day of darkness and misery. It will come on the land suddenly. The destruction by the locusts gave a little picture of what that future day will be like. The land became like a desert instead of being like the Garden of Eden. We read that the locusts looked and ran like horses. They made noise like the noise of chariots and a great fire. They were so thick that the land became black with darkness.

10. Read Joel 2:1-17 and write how the locusts ran.
11. Explain why God said that all of the judgments that Judah had experienced were only a little picture of the judgment that will come in the day of the Lord.
12. Explain why you think that the Lord said that the day of the Lord will be a day of darkness and misery.

The locusts had come marching like a mighty army that did not break rank. Every one of the locusts marched in his place. They did not hurt each other as they marched. They went throughout the city. They ran on the walls and entered the houses like a thief. The people of the land could do nothing to stop their terrible invasion. These things were all pictures of what the day of the Lord will be like when God will cause the heavens and the earth to shake and tremble. The sun, moon and stars will not give their light in that day. The Lord will bring this great judgment in that day to discipline the people for their sin.

13. Read Joel 2:1-17 and write how the Lord told the people to turn to Him.
14. Explain why the Lord will cause the heavens and the earth to shake as a part of the judgment that will come in the day of the Lord.
15. Explain why you think that God compared the locusts to a mighty army that did not break rank.

God said that only complete repentance and a return to the Lord could prevent great judgment. Then God called on His people to return to Him. It is never the desire of God to bring judgment. He would much rather show His love and mercy. The priests were told to call all of the people together so that they could seek the Lord and return to Him. Even the bride and the groom were to come and seek the Lord although the law normally allowed them to be excused from most feasts and solemn assemblies. Then the people were to cry to the Lord and ask for mercy.

16. Read Joel 2:1-17 and write what all the people were told to say as they wept before the altar and the porch.
17. Explain why God told the people through Joel that they were to come together and seek the Lord.
18. Explain why you think that God would much rather show His love and mercy rather than bring judgment on any people.

The people in the time of Joel needed to repent in that day. They will also need to repent in the future. Then we go on to read about the ways that the Lord is going to bless the nation of Israel when the nation returns to Him. God is going to judge the northern army that will come against Israel. Then the Lord will do great things for Israel. The animals will have food. The trees will produce much fruit. They will be plenty of rain so that more than enough food will grow. All

of the people of Israel will praise the Lord because of the blessings that God is going to shower on them. The people will no longer be ashamed in that day because the entire nation will have returned to the Lord.

19. Read Joel 2:18-32 and write what God promises that He will do afterward.

20. Explain why the people of Israel will no longer be ashamed when the entire nation turns to the Lord.

21. Explain why you think that the Lord is looking forward to the day when he can shower His blessings on the nation of Israel.

When the day of the Lord comes, the Lord will pour out His Spirit upon all people when they turn to Him. It is uncertain whether this means all of the people of Israel or all of the people on the earth. However, it shows that at least the entire nation of Israel will have turned to the Lord in this time. There will be no differences because of sex, age, position as master and servant or anything else. All of the people will speak through the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the only time in the Bible where it mentions that a servant will prophesy. This shows that there will be many great changes on the earth at that time.

22. Read Joel 2:18-32 and write the places where God will show wonders when these things happen.

23. Explain what it will be like on the earth when all of the people speak through the power of the Holy Spirit.

24. Explain why you think that the Lord promises to pour out His Spirit upon all people when they turn to Him.

The full fulfillment of this promise of the Holy Spirit coming on all men cannot happen until after God shows these great wonders in the heavens and on the earth. In that day there will be blood and fire and pillars of smoke upon the earth. The sun will become dark. The moon will be turned into blood. All of these things will happen before that great and terrible day of the Lord comes. Nothing even close to these great signs has happened on the earth yet. This shows us that these things are still future and will come in the day of the Lord.

25. Read Joel 2:18-32 and write who will be delivered when all of these things happen.

26. Explain why the full fulfillment of the promise of the Holy Spirit coming on all people cannot happen until after God shows great wonders on the earth.

27. Explain why you think that these things are still future and will come in the day of the Lord.

In Acts 2:16-21 Peter quoted this passage in Joel 2:28-32 to help the people understand about the coming of the Holy Spirit. However, Peter never claimed that these verses in Joel were being fulfilled by what happened on the Day of Pentecost. In fact Peter quoted Joel 2:28-32 about the judgment of the heavens and the earth to show that this passage from Joel was not being fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost. Instead what happened on the Day of Pentecost was only a small illustration of what will happen in that future day when the entire world will turn to Christ.

28. Read Joel 2:18-32 and write what the sons and daughters will do in the day when God pours out His Spirit on all flesh.

29. Explain why Peter quoted verses 28-32 in Acts 2:16-21.

30. Explain why you think that we can look forward to a much greater fulfillment of this passage than what happened on the Day of Pentecost.

The book of Joel goes on to talk about the judgment of the Gentile nations. God begins this section by giving the exact time that this judgment will happen. We read that it will happen when the Lord brings the entire nation of Israel back into its own land. Today the Jews are returning to their own land and so we see that the time of this judgment is coming closer. At the time of the judgment of the nations, God is going to bring together all of the enemies of the nation of Israel in one great army. The Lord will judge the nations for scattering His people and

dividing their land. Since the modern nation of Israel became a nation in 1948, there have continued to be wars to divide the nation in various ways between the Jews and the Arabs.

31. Read Joel 3:1-21 and write where God says that He will gather the nations that come to destroy Israel.

32. Explain why God is going to judge the nations that have caused the Jews to suffer during the more than 2500 years that most of them have been out of the land of Israel.

33. Explain why you think that the Lord is beginning to bring the Jews back to the land of Israel from the many countries where they have been scattered.

Jehoshaphat means that Jehovah judges. The Valley of Jehoshaphat is a perfect name to describe the place where the Lord will judge the nations. The evil that the nations have done to the people of Israel will be returned upon their own heads. People of other nations have taken possession of Israel at various times. These nations have sold the people of Israel as servants. Now these other nations will be judged by God for their sin. The other nations will come against Israel with plans to completely destroy the land and the people. This will be an all out war effort.

34. Read Joel 3:1-21 and write what the people will do with their plowshares in that day when the nations come against Israel.

35. Explain why it is important to understand that God is the final judge and that He will judge the nations.

36. Explain why you think that many nations have persecuted the Jews and even sold them as servants to other nations.

The desire of the nations to destroy Israel will be so great that the people of the nations will use every piece of available metal to make weapons of war to use in their fight against the nation of Israel. However, Christ will be waiting at the Valley of Jehoshaphat to serve as the judge of the nations. Great multitudes will be gathered together in that day when God carries out his decision to judge the nations. The sins of the people will be great in the time leading up to the time that God brings this judgment. Even the sun, moon and stars will be affected by this judgment.

37. Read Joel 3:1-21 and write where God says that multitudes of people will be gathered.

38. Explain what you learn about the judgment of the nations in the Valley of Jehoshaphat from this chapter.

39. Explain why you think that God says that even the sun, moon and stars will be affected by this great judgment.

God also gives the nation of Israel a wonderful promise. The Lord says that once this great army from the nations has been judged that no enemies of God will pass through the city of Jerusalem any more. Instead the land will become a rich land with wonderful harvests. There will be so much water that even the Valley of Acacias, a valley that is very dry, will have plenty of water. The nations that were the enemies of Israel will have their lands become dry deserts because they shed the innocent blood of the people of Israel in their hatred.

40. Read Joel 3:1-21 and write how long this blessing on Judah will last.

41. Explain why God promises that He will bring great blessing to the nation of Israel after He has judged the nations.

42. Explain why you think that the Lord says that He will again bless the nation of Israel in the future.

Reread Joel 1:1-3:21 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 5

Amos 1:1-4:13

We see that Amos was not a man that came from a background of being from a rich family or an educated family. Instead Amos was a poor shepherd from the land of Judah. Although Amos was from the southern country of Judah, most of his prophecies deal particularly with the northern land of Israel although mention is made of Judah also. Amos was burdened about the sin of the people of Israel and Judah. In his concern Amos spoke of the judgment of Israel and the surrounding nations. Then Amos went on to give the reasons why this judgment was necessary.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study.

By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

Explain what God said about the judgments of the nations surrounding Judah.

Explain what God said about the judgment of Israel and Judah.

Explain what God said about the guilt of all twelve tribes.

Explain what God said about the sacrifices of Israel.

Although Amos was from the land of Judah, God chose him to prophesy against the nation of Israel. At the time of this prophecy, Israel was a rich and powerful nation. However, we will see that the Lord warned Israel of coming judgment. The Lord had Amos present the message of this judgment in a very interesting way. First, Amos spoke of judgment of the enemies in the surrounding nations. This is followed by the warning about the judgment of those nations that were related to Israel. Then Judah is mentioned and finally Israel. Syria was the first nation that was mentioned. God said that Syria would be judged because of the army of Syria used threshing instruments to cut and destroy the people that lived on the east side of the Jordan River in the land of Gilead. The Lord promised to destroy Syria with war (fire) and break down the gates of the city of Damascus.

1. Read Amos 1:1-15 and write what place is mentioned next.
2. Explain why God said that Syria would be judged for the way that they destroyed the people in the land of Gilead.
3. Explain why you think that God warned that He would judge both the surrounding nations and the nations related to the people of Israel and Judah.

Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon and Ekron were all cities of the Philistines. The cities of the Philistines and the country of Phoenicia of which Tyre was the leading city were all guilty of the same sin. These nations had taken the people of the nations of Israel and Judah and had sold them as servants to other nations. God spoke of the greatness of the evil of Tyre because Tyre had made a covenant with Israel when Hiram was the king of Tyre. Now God said that He would send judgment and destruction against the Philistines and against the city of Tyre. Fire would come against Tyre that would destroy the palaces of Tyre.

4. Read Amos 1:1-15 and write what nation is mentioned after Tyre.
5. Explain why God warned the Philistines and Tyre that He would judge them because they had sold the people of Israel as servants to other nations.
6. Explain why you think that the Lord takes time to list the sins for which certain nations will be judged.

As we come to the final part of the chapter, we come to the nations that were related to Israel. The people of the country of Edom were descendants of Esau while the people of Ammon and Moab both were descendants of Lot. God said that judgment would come on Edom because the country of Edom had chosen to fight against the people of God. Ammon had come and fought

against that part of Israel that was east of the Jordan River in an effort to expand its borders. The people of Ammon had shown no mercy as they destroyed the people of Israel. As a result, God said that Ammon would be destroyed and the people that remained would be taken into captivity.

7. Read Amos 1:1-15 and write the name of the city that was the capital of Ammon that God said that He would burn with fire.

8. Explain what this chapter teaches about the reasons why God said that He would judge the nations that surrounded Israel.

9. Explain why you think that these nations fought against each other so much even though they were descendants from the same family.

We see that God said that the nation of Moab would be judged for a different reason. The nation of Moab was promised judgment because the people of Moab had burned the bones of the king of Edom until they became lime after they had killed the king of Edom. God said that by doing this the people of Moab were showing a spirit of revenge. They were not satisfied merely to kill the enemy. They wanted to show their revenge as well. God said that as a result Moab would be judged by fire and its leaders would be destroyed. Judah was also promised judgment by the Lord. God also gave the reasons why Judah would be judged.

10. Read Amos 2:1-16 and write the reason why God promised that He would bring judgment on the nation of Judah.

11. Explain why God said that He was going to judge the nation of Moab for their spirit of revenge.

12. Explain why you think that the Lord is greatly concerned when anyone shows a spirit of revenge.

The people of Judah had a special blessing that the people of the surrounding nations did not have. They had been given the Word of God to lead and guide them. Instead of following the Word of God, the people of Judah had chosen to follow lies. As a result, the people had walked in the evil ways of their fathers. Now God said that fire would destroy the palaces of Jerusalem. Then God went on to give the sins of the nation of Israel in more detail. God said that the judges had sold the righteous by accepting bribes. They took advantage of the poor until the poor were very poor and then they sold them as servants. God also said that both the father and the son went to the same prostitute.

13. Read Amos 2:1-16 and write what the people did by every altar.

14. Explain why God reminded the people of Judah that He had given them a special blessing by giving them the Word of God to lead and guide them.

15. Explain why you think that God said that He would judge the people for the way that they had treated the poor.

God had said that when a man took the clothes of a poor person as a pledge for something owed that they were to return those clothes to the person before evening because the person might need those clothes to keep the person warm during the night. Instead the people were now using the clothes of others to cover themselves as they lay in their heathen temples. God reminded the people of what He had done for them. God had destroyed the Amorites that had lived in the land even though the Amorites were very strong. God had also brought the people of Israel out of Egypt and had led them for forty years as they traveled through the wilderness.

16. Read Amos 2:1-16 and write what God had done with their sons and their young men.

17. Explain why God was going to judge the people for the way that they treated the poor by using the clothes of the poor to cover themselves in their heathen temples.

18. Explain why you think that God reminded the people of what He had done for them in the past as He had led them through the wilderness.

The prophets and the Nazirites had encouraged the people to return to the Lord. Instead of

listening, the people had forced the Nazirites to drink wine and had told the prophets to keep quiet. Now God promised to bring judgment to Israel. Nothing would escape that judgment. Those who tried to flee would not have the strength to run. Those who tried to fight would not be able to defend themselves. Even those with horses would not be able to escape. In fact the people that said that they were full of courage would also flee in that day.

19. Read Amos 2:1-16 and write what the strong would not be able to do for themselves when the time of judgment came.

20. Explain why God told the people of Israel in this chapter that He would judge them for the way that they had treated the Nazirites.

21. Explain why you think that the people told the prophets to keep quiet instead of listening to them.

Amos now began to speak for a short time to both the nation of Israel and the nation of Judah as he included all of the tribes that had come out of the nation of Egypt under the leadership of Moses. The Lord had a message of judgment for both nations. God began this message by pointing out the fact that Israel and Judah had received great blessing from the Lord because He had chosen them above all of the families of the earth. However, privilege also brings with it responsibility and the Lord said that this was the reason why the people must be punished for their sins. Then Amos asked the people of both nations seven questions.

22. Read Amos 3:1-15 and write the first question that Amos asked the people.

23. Explain why it is important to understand that privilege also bring responsibility to those who are chosen by the Lord.

24. Explain why you think that God had chosen the people of Israel and Judah above all of the nations of the earth.

Amos asked the nations if two people could walk together if they were not in agreement about where they were going. He said that the Lord could no longer walk with Israel because the people had chosen to walk and follow a different way. The people did not want to enjoy fellowship with the Lord. Like a lion, God would not threaten unless He planned to bring judgment. When God judged, He would judge the guilty. He would not place a snare where no snare was needed. One day a trumpet of war would sound that would fill the hearts of the people with fear. The Lord had revealed to His prophets that He was going to bring judgment so that the prophets could warn the people.

25. Read Amos 3:1-15 and write where the Lord told the people of the other nations to assemble.

26. Explain why the Lord said that He could no longer walk with the people of Israel since they had chosen to walk and follow a different way.

27. Explain why you think that God said He would not threaten the people unless He planned to bring judgment.

The people of the nations were called to come and see the judgment that the Lord was going to bring upon the nation of Israel. This judgment was coming because the people of Israel had done evil. They had filled the palaces of Samaria with the possessions that they had robbed from other nations. Now God said that the enemies would destroy Israel and those palaces would become an empty waste. God said that only a tiny group of people in the nation would not be destroyed. This tiny remnant of people would be like a leg or a piece of an ear that a shepherd had rescued from a lion.

28. Read Amos 3:1-15 and write how God said that He would judge the altar of the idol at Bethel.

29. Explain why the privileges that Israel had received from the Lord also placed a great responsibility on Israel.

30. Explain why you think that the Lord said that the palaces of Israel would become an empty waste.

The Lord went on to compare the women of Israel to fat cows like the fat cows that lived in the land of Bashan. The women of Israel wanted much money so that they could satisfy their sinful lusts with pleasure. As a result, they would push their husbands to take advantage of the poor and needy. God said that these women would be judged by the enemy. That enemy would come and lead them captive by putting rings in their noses so that they could be led like cattle. Like a fish on a hook, they would be helpless to resist.

31. Read Amos 4:1-13 and write where the people were told to come if they wanted to experience such judgment.

32. Explain why God spoke about the actions of the women that would push their husbands to take advantage of the poor and needy.

33. Explain why you think that the desire for money and the sinful pleasures that could be bought with money would cause the women to experience a severe judgment.

Bethel was the place where the people had chosen to set up their idols that they had chosen to worship instead of the Lord. The people were offering their sacrifices and tithes exactly as they had been commanded to do in the law. However, they were offering those sacrifices to idols instead of offering them to the Lord. They were eager to offer these sacrifices to idols. As a result, the Lord told the people the five kinds of judgment that He would send upon Israel because of the sins of the people. The first form of judgment that the people would experience was a lack of food. God said that judgment would cause the people to have clean teeth because they would have no food to make their teeth dirty.

34. Read Amos 4:1-13 and write the phrase that is repeated five times in these verses.

35. Explain why the people chose to offer their sacrifices and tithes to the idols instead of offering them to the Lord.

36. Explain why you think that God said that the first form of judgment that Israel would experience was a lack of food.

The Lord promised that there would be four other forms of judgment that would come on the people of Israel. Some cities would suffer from a lack of rain while other cities did not. Drought would cause blight and mildew to form on the trees. War would cause so many of the men to die that the smell could be smelled for a great distance. God said that he would destroy some of the cities just as He had destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. In spite of all of these judgments, the people of Israel did not turn from their sinful ways. They continued to follow their sinful ways.

37. Read Amos 4:1-13 and write who Israel was told to prepare to meet.

38. Explain why the people of Israel refused to turn from their sinful ways and turn to the Lord.

39. Explain why you think that God warned the people that the judgment of God would affect both the people and the land.

Because the people had refused to listen to God, He gave them a final warning. The people were told to prepare to meet God. If the people failed to prepare their hearts to serve God as their Lord and Master, they would meet God as their judge. This same warning is still true today. People have only the time that they live on this earth to choose how they want to meet God. If people fail to prepare their hearts to meet the Lord, they will meet Him. However, they will meet Him as their judge. The One that all people will meet in the Day of Judgment will be the Creator that created all things.

40. Read Amos 4:1-13 and write the name of the One that is the creator of all things.

41. Explain why people today need to be warned to prepare to meet God and recognize Him as their Lord and Master or they will meet Him as their judge.

42. Explain why you think that it is important to help others understand that they only have the time of this earth to decide which way they want to meet God.

Reread Amos 1:1-4:13 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 6

Amos 5:1-7:17

As we studied the first four chapters of Amos, we saw that God warned the people of Israel that they would be judged because they had chosen to turn away from the Lord and follow idols. The Lord had brought several forms of judgment on the people but they had still refused to return to Him. As we begin our lesson today, we will see that the Lord is pleading for His people to return to Him. Here we see that the Lord did not want it to become necessary for Him to bring judgment on them because they refused to repent. Even though the righteousness of God demanded payment for sin, the love of God caused Him to beg His people to return to Him.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain why the Lord begged His people to return to Him.
- Explain what God told the people about false worship.
- Explain what God said about those that chose to live in pleasure.
- Explain the vision of the plumb line.

The Lord had a great love for the nation of Israel even though the people of Israel had repeatedly rebelled against Him. It was true that Israel was going to be judged for this sin and rebellion. In fact nine out of every ten people would be destroyed. God knew that the people would not continue to follow Him even if they did turn to Him for a short time. However, the Lord still had some wonderful promises for the people. God told the people that they would live if they would turn to Him. God would delay His promised judgment if the people would seek Him and follow Him. Although God has promised that there will be judgment for sin, today He still offers life to all those who will place their trust in Him.

1. Read Amos 5:1-15 and write what the people were told not to seek.
2. Explain why God promised that He would delay judgment if the people would just seek Him and follow Him.
3. Explain why you think that the Lord chose to offer life to all that will place their trust in Him.

Bethel, Gilgal and Beersheba were all places where the people were worshiping their false gods at the time that Amos wrote this book. God said that these cities would be destroyed and their people would be taken into captivity. However, the people were given a choice. The people could turn to the Lord and live. God was offering the people of that day a choice just as He offers us a choice today. God would forgive the people even though they had turned justice into bitterness by taking advantage of others instead of doing the things that the Lord had commanded them to do. The people were encouraged to seek the Lord that had made the stars and placed those stars in their patterns.

4. Read Amos 5:1-15 and write the name of the One that made the day and placed the waters in their places.
5. Explain why God always gives people the freedom to choose either to accept Him or reject Him.
6. Explain why you think that even though the Lord gives people the opportunity to make a choice that it is always His desire that people would turn to Him.

God is the One that offers strength to those who place their trust in Him. However, the people of the nation hated the people that had their trust in the Lord. They tried to turn aside those who did right at the gates. The people took brides to enrich themselves. They took advantage of the poor as they took what belonged to the poor. As a result, the Lord said that they would not

enjoy their riches. The day would come when the people would not longer receive these warnings. It would be too late in the time of judgment to receive these warnings. In our day we also have evil people living around us. It is our responsibility to warn them to turn to the Lord before the time for their judgment comes.

7. Read Amos 5:1-15 and write what the people were told to seek if they wanted to live.

8. Explain why it is our responsibility to warn men of their need to seek the Lord while they have the opportunity.

9. Explain why you think that the people that are the richest will often take advantage of those who are poor.

God knew the hearts of the people. He knew that they would not turn to Him. As a result, the Lord told the people what the Day of Judgment would be like. God said that there would be great sorrow both in the city and in the country. Even the person that was a farmer would be filled with sorrow because part of his family would be killed. The professional mourners would have plenty of work because so many people would be killed. The people said that they wanted the day of the Lord to come. However, God warned the people that the day of the Lord would be a day of judgment and not a day of rejoicing.

10. Read Amos 5:16-27 and write what God said about the feast days of the people of the nation of Israel.

11. Explain why God said that there would be great sorrow both in the city and in the country when the Day of Judgment came.

12. Explain why you think that the people said that they wanted the day of the Lord to come even though their hearts were far from God.

The day of the Lord is still future. That day will be a time of great judgment and not a time of happiness. People may escape judgment once or even twice. However, they will not escape the third time. Even if people flee to their own houses, they will die in their houses. God goes on to tell why this will happen. The people of Israel were actually very religious. They had feast days and days of fasting. They offered sacrifices. They sang songs. In every way the people were religious and acted like they were serving the Lord. However, the Lord was not happy with all of these things that the people were doing as a part of their religious activities.

13. Read Amos 5:16-27 and write what God said about the feast days of the people of the nation of Israel.

14. Explain why people can be very religious and participate in many different religious activities and yet not please the Lord.

15. Explain why you think that many people deceive themselves by participating in religious activities.

God hated the worship of the people of Israel. The reason that God hated their worship was due to the fact that the people of Israel were worshiping false gods at the same time that they were claiming to worship the Lord. That was the reason that God said that He would bring great judgment on them. Today many people are just like the people of Israel. They try to worship God and worship other things at the same time. However, they have not made God the Lord and Master of their lives. As a result, God hates their false worship and will one day bring judgment.

16. Read Amos 5:16-27 and write how God told the people that they should let justice and righteousness run down.

17. Explain why God hates the worship of those who claim to worship the Lord while actually worshiping other things at the same time.

18. Explain why you think that many people think that God will be pleased if they worship Him even though they are also worshiping other things.

During the time of Amos the people of Israel were living in ease and luxury. The people felt

that they were very strong and could trust in their own strength. They were certain that the city of Samaria could not be captured. The leaders of Israel had no concern for the poor and the needy. Instead they were quick to take advantage of the poor. They forgot about the cities of the surrounding nations that had been judged because of their evil actions. The people of Israel did not think that evil could touch them. Instead they thought that they could continue to enjoy their riches.

19. Read Amos 6:1-14 and write what kind of beds the rich people of Israel were using at that time.

20. Explain why many people are so focused on their riches that they do not even think about the fact that judgment will one day come to them.

21. Explain why you think that many people do not think that evil will touch them even though they see other nations that are being judged.

The rich people had fancy furniture in their homes. Some even had beds of ivory. They were well supplied with the most expensive foods. The people were enjoying much music as they satisfied their evil desires. Instead of producing music that honored the Lord as David had done when he was the king, the people were using their music for evil purposes. The people were so anxious to follow their drunken ways that they used bowls instead of glasses so that they could drink even more. They used the most expensive ointments to anoint themselves. The people were doing all of these things when they should have been mourning for the sins of the people.

22. Read Amos 6:1-14 and write when God said that these rich people would be taken as captives.

23. Explain why many people are so focused on their own pleasure that they never think about their sins.

24. Explain why you think that many people are always looking for additional ways to satisfy their own desires.

God said that those who were living in riches and pleasure would be the first to be judged when judgment came on the nation of Israel. Their feasts and celebrations would suddenly come to an end. In that day the palaces and great houses of Samaria would be destroyed. God would bring His judgment on the city. In the great houses where ten men lived, all of them would be destroyed. There would be so many dead people that it would be necessary to burn their bodies rather than bury them because there would not be enough people left to bury the people. This is a reminder of how complete the judgment would be.

25. Read Amos 6:1-14 and write how God said that He would smite the houses.

26. Explain why God said that the judgment would be so complete that it would be necessary to burn the bodies of the dead.

27. Explain why you think that God said that all of the times of celebration and living for pleasure would suddenly come to an end.

God said that when He judged the houses of the city of Samaria that the large houses would have holes in them and the small houses would have cracks in them. As a result, they would all be destroyed. God said that it was impossible to bless Israel as long as the people were doing evil. In fact God said that it was just as impossible for Him to bless Israel in its sinful state as it would be for horses or oxen to plow rocks. The people of Israel were trusting in their own strength. However, their own strength would not help the people when the Lord brought another nation against the nation of Israel to bring judgment on it.

28. Read Amos 6:1-14 and write what God said the nation would do to Israel that the Lord would raise up against Israel.

29. Explain what happens when people are more concerned about satisfying themselves than they are about doing the work of the Lord.

30. Explain why you realize that the Lord cannot bless those who are practicing evil and living in sin.

As we come to chapter seven, we see that the Lord gave Amos three visions. Each of the three visions was a vision of judgment. After each of the first two visions, Amos prayed for the people of Israel. The Lord heard the prayers of Amos and He did not bring the judgments that were promised to the nation of Israel in those visions. Here we have an example of the power of prayer. Because God is a holy God, He must bring judgment on sin. However, in His mercy the Lord is eager to hear the prayers of those who are right with Him and postpone that judgment.

31. Read Amos 7:1-17 and write what Amos saw in the third vision.

32. Explain what you learn about the power of prayer from the fact that God did not bring the first two promised judgments on the nation of Israel.

33. Explain why you think that the Lord is eager to hear the prayers of those people that are in a right relationship with Him.

In the first vision Amos had seen three invasions of grasshoppers. These grasshoppers destroyed the crops of the land at three different stages in the growth and harvesting of the crops. The second vision was a warning of destruction by fire. However, the vision of the plumb line was the vision that showed the greatness of the destructions that would come on the nation of Israel. A plumb line is a string with a weight on the bottom that is used to show whether a wall is straight. The plumb line showed that Israel would soon be measured by the standard of God. Then God would destroy the places where the people of Israel were following their false worship. In addition, the family of the king would also be destroyed.

34. Read Amos 7:1-17 and write the name of the priest that spoke against Amos.

35. Explain why it is important for all people to realize that they will be judged by the standard of God and not by their own standard.

36. Explain why you think that it is important in your own life to seek to please the Lord rather than seeking to please other people.

Amaziah was the name of the priest that led the people Israel in their false worship as they worshiped the golden calf at Bethel. Amaziah told King Jeroboam that the land of Israel could not stand to have a prophet like Amos in the country of Israel. Amaziah told Amos to go to the land of Judah if he wanted to prophesy. Here we see the same attitude that many religious leaders have today. They do not want to hear the Word of the Lord because the Word of God brings conviction to their lives. As a result, they want those who teach the Word of God to stop speaking in the area where they live so that they will not have to hear what God says.

37. Read Amos 7:1-17 and write what Amos said that the wife of Amaziah would become.

38. Explain why many religious leaders do not want to listen to people that are speaking the Word of God.

39. Explain why you think that Amaziah told King Jeroboam that the land of Israel could not stand a prophet like Amos.

Amos also gives us an important lesson from his own life. Amos was not a professional religious leader. Instead Amos was a shepherd that was willing to leave his flocks and go and speak the Word of God to those who needed to hear the Word of God. The need in the time of Amos is still a need that is present today. The Lord is still looking for people that are willing to speak the Word of God to those who need to hear the Word. Then Amos gave a prophecy about Amaziah. Amos said that the wife of Amaziah would become a prostitute. The children of Amaziah would be killed and his land would be divided among other people. Amaziah, himself, would be killed in a foreign land.

40. Read Amos 7:1-17 and write what Amos said would happen to the nation of Israel.

41. Explain why the Lord is still looking for people that will speak the Word of God whether or not people are willing to listen.

42. Explain why you think the Lord wants all Christians to speak His Word regardless of how they earn their living.

Reread Amos 5:1-7:17 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 7

Amos 8:1-Obadiah 1:21

Today we will be studying the final chapters of the book of Amos and then the book of Obadiah. The book of Obadiah tells about the judgment that the Lord promised would come on the nation of Edom because of their sin. The people of Edom were related to the people of Israel. Edom was the nation that had come from Esau, the brother of Jacob. We will see that the Lord promised to bring judgment on the nation of Edom because of what it had done when the nation of Judah was destroyed. As a result, this book is a real warning to any nation that chooses to do evil to the people of God.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain what God promised about the coming captivity for Judah.
- Explain what Amos said about the future of the nation of Israel.
- Explain what you learn about the pride of the nation of Edom.
- Explain why God said that the nation of Edom would be destroyed.

As we finished our last lesson, we studied three visions that the Lord gave to Amos. As we begin our study of today, we will study a fourth vision that was given to Amos. In this vision we read that Amos saw a basket of summer fruit. This summer fruit pictured the fact that the judgment that was going to happen to the nation of Israel was going to happen very soon. God was not going to pass by Israel any longer. When this judgment came, the songs of the people would be turned into mourning because so many of the people of Israel would be killed. This warning came particularly to the rich that were taking advantage of the poor. We read that the rich would even use their scales to cheat the poor.

1. Read Amos 8:1-14 and write what the Lord had sworn about the works of the people of Israel.
2. Explain why God used the fourth vision of Amos as a way to warn the people that their judgment was going to come very soon.
3. Explain why you think that God said that He could not pass by or ignore the sins of Israel any longer.

God promised that He would not forget the evil works of the people of Israel. God said that He would bring judgment on both the land and the people because of the sins of the people. Even the sun would be darkened in that Day of Judgment. In that day God promised that there would no longer be any feasting or celebrations by the people. Instead all joy would be turned into sorrow. That day would be a very bitter day for the people of Israel. God also said that the time of that judgment would be a time of famine in the land. However, that famine would not be an ordinary famine.

4. Read Amos 8:1-14 and write what kind of a famine God promised that there would be in the land.
5. Explain why God gave many warnings to the people of Israel before He finally brought judgment on the people.
6. Explain why you think that God said that the Day of Judgment would be a bitter day for the people of Israel.

The people of Israel had rejected the Word of God many times. Now God said that the people would not be able to find the Word of God when the time of judgment came. Instead there would be a famine for the words of the Lord. The people would wander from place to place seeking the Word of the Lord. Even the strongest young men and women would wander from

place to place as they were seeking the Word of the Lord. This would happen because the people had chosen to follow false gods during the time when they had previously had the opportunity to hear the Word of the Lord.

7. Read Amos 8:1-14 and write where the people would go as they tried to find the Word of God.

8. Explain why God said that the famine that He would bring on Israel was a spiritual famine because the people would no longer be able to hear the Word of God.

9. Explain why you think that in many places that there is also a famine for hearing the Word of God today.

As we come to the final chapter of Amos, we see the Lord standing at the altar. Usually the altar was the place where sacrifice was made for a covering for sin and pointed to the fact that Christ is the true sacrifice for sin. However, as the Lord stands at the altar here, He is standing in judgment. God ordered the complete destruction of the temple in Samaria. The fall of the temple would kill many people. Those who escaped the destruction of the temple would be killed by the sword. Even if men could dig a hole to sheol (hell) or climb up to heaven, they would not be able to escape the judgment of God. If they hid in the caves on Mount Carmel or in the sea, they would not be able to escape the judgment of God.

10. Read Amos 9:1-15 and write how God said He would set His eyes on the nation of Israel.

11. Explain why God warned the people that there would be no place to escape His judgment when He brought that judgment on the land.

12. Explain why you think that every person on the earth needs to hear that there is a final judgment for every person.

When the Lord touched the land Israel, there would be no way to escape. The Lord had judged many nations by removing the people from their lands and taking them to other lands. Now God said that He was going to destroy the people of Israel. However, He would not destroy the people completely. Instead the Lord promised to sift the people of Israel as a person sifts wheat. The people of Israel would be scattered throughout the earth. All those who were practicing evil would be destroyed. Only a few people would be kept alive. They would be like kernels of wheat.

13. Read Amos 9:1-15 and write what the Lord promised that He would raise up for the nation of Israel in the future.

14. Explain why God said that He would not kill all of the people of Israel but would scatter them throughout the earth.

15. Explain why you think God said that He would sift the people of Israel just like a person that sifts wheat.

God had promised David many years earlier that One from his family would rule forever. However, many of the members of the family of David committed evil and as a result, the Lord took away the ten tribes from the family of David. The tribes that remained under the leadership of the family of David became more and more evil. Now God promised that One would come from the fallen family of David that would re-establish the kingdom of David. This is promise about what Christ will do in the future when He returns to rule the earth. In that time in the future Christ will rule all of the nations of the earth.

16. Read Amos 9:1-15 and write who will cause all of these things to happen.

17. Explain why God is going to keep His promise to David even though many from His family did not follow the Lord.

18. Explain why you think that it is important to understand that Christ will one day fulfill the promise that was made to David.

In that day when Christ becomes the ruler of the whole earth, the Lord will bring such great blessings upon the nation of Israel that the person that is harvesting the crops will almost catch

up with the person that is planting the fields. The people will be regathered into the land and the cities will be rebuilt. The people will plant gardens and enjoy the fruit of those gardens. When that day comes, the Lord gave a promise that the people of Israel would never again be taken out of their land. Instead they will be planted firmly in their land by the Lord.

19. Read Amos 9:1-15 and write what the Lord said would happen to the cities of Israel in the day when the people are regathered.

20. Explain what you learn that the Lord promises will happen to the nation of Israel from this chapter.

21. Explain why you think that the Lord is eagerly looking for to the day when Israel returns to Him so that He can bring blessing upon them.

As we come to the book of Obadiah, we see that this book told what would happen in the future to the land of Edom. The people of Edom were very proud people. The people of Edom thought that it would be impossible for any nation to destroy them. This is a perfect example of the results of pride. Pride will always cause people to be deceived so that they think that they are great in their own strength. The cities of Edom were built in the rocks so the people thought that these cities could never be destroyed. Their main city was Petra which had been carved from the rocks so that a very few men could protect it from a great army.

22. Read Obadiah 1:1-9 and write how the people of Edom were exalting themselves in their pride.

23. Explain why the pride of the people of Edom caused them to be deceived and depend on their own strength.

24. Explain why you think that pride causes people to have an attitude that nothing evil will ever happen to them.

The people of Edom said that they were like an eagle. Their kingdom was greater than the stars. However, God said that He would bring the nation of Edom down regardless of how strong the people thought that their nation was. This destruction would be complete. Even a robber leaves some things when he robs a house. Those who gather grapes also miss some of the grapes. However, the Lord said that He would not leave anything when He brought judgment on the nation of Edom. The Lord said that He would find and destroy everything that the people of Edom had hidden. Their possessions would not be hidden from God even though they had been able to hide them from the other nations.

25. Read Obadiah 1:1-9 and write what men in Edom the Lord promised to destroy.

26. Explain why God said that the people of Edom would not be able to hide their possessions from Him when He brought judgment on them.

27. Explain why you think that God said that the judgment of Edom would be so complete that nothing would be left of the nation.

The nation of Edom was known for its wise men. Because the main trade routes went through Edom, the people of Edom had the opportunity to learn the wisdom of many other nations.

Edom was also known for its men of great strength. God promised that both the wise men and also the strong men would be destroyed. The nations that Edom considered to be their friends would join with the enemies of Edom to help destroy Edom. As a result, the Lord said that all of the people of Edom would be destroyed by these nations.

28. Read Obadiah 1:1-9 and write what the Lord said would happen to the mighty men of the land of Edom.

29. Explain what you learn about the pride of the nation of Edom from Obadiah.

30. Explain why you think that the people of Edom felt that they could depend upon their own wisdom and strength.

Although Edom was proud, the Lord said that the reason that Edom would experience complete destruction was its treatment of the people of Israel. Its judgment would be in two parts. First Edom would be taken into captivity. Later the people of Edom would be completely destroyed.

This would happen because Edom had joined with other nations to destroy the people of God even though Jacob and Esau had been brothers. The people of Edom thought only of gaining riches for themselves when Jerusalem was destroyed. They captured the Jews that tried to escape and turned them over to the people of Babylon.

31. Read Obadiah 1:10-21 and write what God said would be done to Edom.

32. Explain what will happen to any person or group of people that think only of gaining riches for themselves.

33. Explain why you think that God said that Edom would be completely destroyed for the way that they had treated the people of Judah and Jerusalem.

The people of Edom had also taken some of the riches of Jerusalem when they had joined together with the enemies of Judah. In fact they had done everything possible to try and destroy the family of Jacob. As a result, the Lord said that Edom would be treated exactly the same way that the people of Edom had treated the chosen people of God. The day of the Lord would be a day of judgment for the people of Edom. In that day Edom would become like a nation that had never existed. Here we are given a picture of the completeness of the judgment of Edom.

34. Read Obadiah 1:10-21 and write what is promised deliverance in the day that Edom is judged.

35. Explain why God said that Edom would reap exactly what they had sown when the Lord brought judgment against the people of Edom.

36. Explain why you think that God said that the judgment of Edom would cause it to become like a nation that had never existed.

Throughout the Major and the Minor Prophets, we are reminded of the fact that the Lord has not forgotten the people of Israel. They are His people because He chose them to be the nation that received His special blessings. One day the Lord will rule over His people. In that day there will be a rule of holiness. God is a holy God and He will rule with holiness. The people of Israel will possess their own land in that day. The nation of Israel will be like a fire and the nation of Edom will be like stubble in the Day of Judgment. The nation of Edom will be completely destroyed in that day. None of the people will remain.

37. Read Obadiah 1:10-21 and write what the Lord promised would happen to Mount Zion in that day.

38. Explain what you learn from this book about the reasons why the Lord promised to completely destroy Edom.

39. Explain how you think that the conditions in Jerusalem will be changed in that day when the Lord rules in holiness.

The people of Israel have been scattered to many parts of the world. Most of the people have been out of the land for more than 2500 years. However, that does not mean that the Lord has forgotten the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. God promises that all of these people will be brought back to their own land. Those who come from different areas will possess different parts of the land. Together the people will possess all of the land that was promised to Abraham. The Lord will lead the men that serve as the saviors of the people of Israel to also serve as the judges of the people of Edom.

40. Read Obadiah 1:10-21 and write to whom this kingdom will belong.

41. Explain why God promised that the day would come that the people of Israel would possess all of the land promised to Abraham.

42. Explain why you think that the Lord has preserved the descendent of Jacob as a separate people even though they have been out of the land for 2500 years.

Now reread Amos 8:1-Obadiah 1:21 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 8

Jonah 1:1-4:11

Today we will be studying one of the better known books of the Minor Prophets. The book of Jonah gives us a tremendous picture of the concern that the Lord has for the people of the nations that do not know Him. God was so concerned for the people of Nineveh that He kept speaking to Jonah until Jonah finally became willing to go to the city of Nineveh. During this time we see that Jonah knew much Scripture that he was not applying to his own life. We also see the lack of concern that Jonah had for the people of Nineveh. As a result, the life of Jonah gives us many examples of the reasons why we often fail to have spiritual victory in our own lives.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

Explain why Jonah wanted to go to Tarshish.

Explain how we know that Jonah had a good knowledge of Scripture.

Explain how the Word of God changed the city of Nineveh.

Explain why Jonah was unhappy when God spared the city of Nineveh.

One day the Lord spoke to Jonah and told him to go to the city of Nineveh and warn the people of that city that they were facing immediate judgment. At that time the city of Nineveh was probably the largest city in the world with at least 600,000 people living in that city. The wall around the city was sixty miles in length. When the Lord told Jonah to go east to the city of Nineveh, Jonah chose to go west instead. He went to the city of Joppa and found a ship that was going to the city of Tarshish far to the west. In fact the city of Tarshish was either in the land that is now Spain or Sardinia. Jonah paid his fare and went down into the ship.

1. Read Jonah 1:1-17 and write what Jonah was doing when the ship started across the Mediterranean Sea.
2. Explain why the Lord wanted Jonah to go and warn the people of Nineveh that they were facing immediate judgment.
3. Explain why you think that Jonah chose to go the opposite way when the Lord told him to go and preach to the city of Nineveh.

One interesting fact that we notice is the fact that the conscience of Jonah did not bother him because he had chosen to disobey the will of God. In fact he was able to sleep right through a great storm that was endangering the ship. We will realize that the Lord had sent this storm because of the sin and disobedience of Jonah. The storm was such a great storm that the ship was in danger of being destroyed. The crew of the ship dumped part of the cargo into the Mediterranean Sea in an effort to save the ship. When that did not help the ship, the captain of the ship woke Jonah and told him to pray to his God. The crew of the ship also cast lots to see who had done evil and caused the storm. The lots showed that Jonah was the person that was guilty. Then the crew of the ship asked Jonah about his background.

4. Read Jonah 1:1-17 and write who Jonah said that he was.
5. Explain why the events that happened in the life of Jonah show the danger of disobedience to the Lord.
6. Explain why you think that Jonah could sleep so soundly even though he was being disobedient to the Lord.

Jonah told the men of the ship about God and told them how he was trying to run away from God. He told the men on the ship that the storm was the result of his disobedience. Then the men of the ship wanted to know what to do to stop the storm. These men realized that God was the One that had caused the storm. That meant that only God would be able to stop the storm.

Jonah told the men that the only way to stop the storm was to throw him overboard. However, the men showed more concern for Jonah than he had shown for Nineveh. They men were certain that Jonah would die if they threw him into the Mediterranean Sea.

7. Read Jonah 1:1-17 and write what the men did first in an effort to try and save the life of Jonah.

8. Explain why the sailors on the ship realized that God was the only One that could stop the storm since He was the One that had caused the storm.

9. Explain why you think that Jonah was willing to tell the sailors on the ship that the storm was the result of his disobedience.

The concern of these men for Jonah was so great that they tried to row as hard as they could to try and bring the ship to land. They had a much greater concern for Jonah than Jonah had for the people of Nineveh. In the same way, the Lord sometimes has to use people that are not Christians to teach Christians certain lessons. Finally the men of the ship could see that they would all be destroyed if they did not throw Jonah overboard. The men realized that God was the judge and they were only fulfilling the will of God by throwing Jonah overboard. As soon as Jonah was thrown overboard, the sea became calm. The men on the ship recognized the power of God and offering a sacrifice to the Lord.

10. Read Jonah 1:1-17 and write what God had prepared to preserve the life of Jonah.

11. Explain what you learn about the results of disobedience to the Lord from this chapter.

12. Explain why you think that the sailors on the ship had a much greater concern for Jonah than Jonah had for the people of Nineveh.

Here we see that the Lord had a great love for the people of Nineveh. God was going to make certain that the people of Nineveh had the opportunity to turn from their sin and turn to the Lord. The Lord also had a great concern for Jonah. As a result, the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah when the sailors threw him overboard. The fish swallowed Jonah and Jonah was alive inside the fish for three days. During these three days Jonah had plenty of time to think about what things in life are most important. He had time to realize that the Lord had a great concern for the people of Nineveh. However, Jonah was a very stubborn man.

13. Read Jonah 2:1-10 and write what Jonah finally did after the Lord had kept him alive inside the fish for three days.

14. Explain why God shows that He has a great concern for the people in all cities by the concern that He had for the people in Nineveh.

15. Explain what you think that Jonah thought about during those three days that he was in the belly of the fish.

Although Jonah was a disobedient prophet, the prayer of Jonah showed that he had great faith in the power of the Lord. As Jonah was thinking inside the belly of the fish, he realized that the Lord had shown His power and had also shown His great love to Jonah. This caused Jonah to realize that the Lord was going to give him deliverance from the fish. The faith of Jonah in the Lord was so great that His prayer spoke of the deliverance that the Lord was going to bring to his life as if that deliverance had already happened. In his prayer Jonah even spoke of the fact that he would worship the Lord again in the temple. The prayer also showed that Jonah knew the Scriptures.

16. Read Jonah 2:1-10 and write what Jonah did when his soul fainted.

17. Explain why Jonah realized that the Lord was going to give him deliverance even while he was in the belly of the great fish.

18. Explain why you think that Jonah chose to be disobedient to the Lord even though he had great faith in the power of God.

As we read the prayer of Jonah, we see a very important lesson from the prayer of Jonah.

Almost the entire prayer of Jonah is quotations from the book of Psalms. Jonah had a

wonderful knowledge of the Word of God. He had memorized it so that the Word was in his mind. In fact we will see that he had tried to run away from the will of God because the Word of God had shown him that God is a God of mercy and Jonah did not want to see God show mercy to the people of Nineveh. However, the Word of God in his mind and thoughts also brought conviction to the life of Jonah.

19. Read Jonah 2:1-10 and write what God did when Jonah finished his prayer.

20. Explain why the verses in this chapter show that it is important to memorize the Word of God.

21. Explain why you think that Jonah did not want the Lord to show mercy to the people of the city of Nineveh.

As we come to chapter three, we see another picture of the mercy of the Lord. First the Lord caused the fish to vomit Jonah out on the dry land. Second, the Lord showed mercy to Jonah by giving him a second opportunity to be obedient and go to Nineveh. Even though Jonah had failed once, the Lord was willing to give him another opportunity to serve the Lord. This time Jonah obeyed the Lord and went to the city of Nineveh. There Jonah began to preach the message of judgment that the Lord had given him. Jonah warned the people of Nineveh that they would be destroyed in forty days because of their sinfulness.

22. Read Jonah 3:1-10 and write what the people of Nineveh did when they heard the message of Jonah.

23. Explain why Jonah warned the people of Nineveh that they were going to experience the judgment of the Lord.

24. Explain why you think that the Lord gave Jonah a second opportunity to go and preach to the people of Nineveh.

Here we come to the greatest miracle in the entire book of Jonah. Everyone in the entire city from the king to the lowest servant repented and turned from their sins. They all fasted and put on sackcloth to show their sorrow for their sins. This is the only time in recorded history that an entire city turned to the Lord. This was the reason why the Lord wanted Jonah to go to Nineveh. God knew that the people would turn to Him if someone would warn them of coming judgment. This is one very good reason why we should also warn people of coming judgment. Some of them will listen to our message and turn to the Lord.

25. Read Jonah 3:1-10 and write why the king told everyone to cry to God.

26. Explain why you think that the entire city of Nineveh repented of their sin and turned to the Lord.

27. Explain why you think this tells us to warn those who do not know the Lord that judgment is coming so that they will also have the opportunity to turn to the Lord.

The king did not know whether God would spare the people Nineveh when he encouraged the people to turn from their evil ways and cry to God. He only knew that the people must cry to the Lord or there would be no hope at all. The Lord heard the prayers of the people of Nineveh. As a result, God was able to show His mercy to them instead of bring His judgment. Because the people turned to the Lord, it was one hundred years before God destroyed the city of Nineveh. Because God is a holy God, He must judge sin. Because He is also a God of mercy, He can show mercy to those who repent and confess their sin.

28. Read Jonah 3:1-10 and write what God did when the people of Nineveh turned from their evil way

29. Explain what this chapter teaches you about the mercy of the Lord.

30. Explain why you think that God wanted to show mercy to the people of the city of Nineveh.

If this book were written by the inspiration of a person, it would probably stop at the end of chapter three. However, some of the most important lessons in this book are found in chapter four. God included chapter four because He knew that we need to learn the lessons that are in

this chapter. Jonah was very angry when he saw the people of Nineveh turn to the Lord. Jonah had such a dislike for the people of Nineveh that he wanted to see those people destroyed. He admitted that he had tried to go to Tarshish because he was afraid that God would show mercy to the people of Nineveh. He had no concern for the spiritual needs of the people of Nineveh.

31. Read Jonah 4:1-11 and write what Jonah said about his own life.

32. Explain why it is possible for people that have trusted in the Lord to have no concern for the people that need to hear about the Lord.

33. Explain why you think that Jonah was so angry with the people of Nineveh that he wanted to see God destroy them.

Jonah gives us a picture of the attitudes that it is possible for us to have in our own lives. Many times we have little or no concern for the people that do not belong to our tribe or our particular ethnic group. The Lord has to teach us some hard lessons when we have this lack of concern.

That was what happened to Jonah. The Lord asked Jonah if he had a right to be angry because God had shown mercy to the people of Nineveh. Then Jonah went out of the city and made a booth for himself where he could watch and see what happened to the city.

34. Read Jonah 4:1-11 and write what God prepared to provide shade for Jonah as he sat outside the city.

35. Explain why the Lord has to deal with our own attitudes when we do not have a concern for people of other ethnic groups.

36. Explain why you think that it is important for you to examine your own life to see what attitudes you have in your heart toward people of other ethnic groups.

Jonah was very glad for the shade that the gourd provided. However, the Lord wanted to use that gourd to teach Jonah a lesson. That night the worms ate the gourd so that there was no more shade the next morning. Then the next morning the Lord sent a hot east wind. Jonah became very angry because the gourd had died. Then God began to speak to Jonah. God pointed out the fact that Jonah had a greater concern for a plant that would die than he had for people that were facing eternal judgment. Today many Christians are also more concerned about the things that they have than they are about the spiritual needs of people without Christ.

37. Read Jonah 4:1-11 and write the question that God asked Jonah after He sent the hot east wind.

38. Explain why it is important for all Christians to examine their own hearts about the inner attitudes that they have toward others.

39. Explain why you think that many Christians are more concerned about the things that they possess than they are about the spiritual needs of people.

Jonah had done nothing to help that gourd grow. However, he had a great concern for that gourd. God has shown much concern for each person that is on the earth. Certainly the concern of the Lord for those that He has created is very great. The Lord had a great concern for the people of Nineveh just as He has a great concern for all people. As Christians, the things that are the concern of the Lord should also be our concern. As we have seen here, the concern of God is for the spiritual needs of people. He wants all people to have the opportunity to hear how to have eternal life. We need to ask ourselves if that is our concern also.

40. Read Jonah 4:1-11 and write how many young children lived in the city of Nineveh.

41. Explain why all Christians need to develop a concern for people of all of the nations of the earth.

42. Explain why you think that it is important to help those to whom you minister develop a concern for people of other nations and ethnic groups.

Now reread Jonah 1:1-4:11 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from this book.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 9

Micah 1:1-4:13

Like most of the rest of the books written by the prophets, the book of Micah is a book about judgment. However, it is also a book about the future. Each time that Micah speaks of judgment, he concludes with a promise about the future. Micah lived during the time of Isaiah. As a result, certain parts of the book of Micah are similar to the book of Isaiah. Today we will learn about certain judgments that God promised would come on the nations of Israel and Judah. We will also learn about the reasons that the Lord said that He would bring these judgments.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Tell about the judgments that the Lord promised to Israel and Judah.
- Explain the reasons for these judgments.
- Explain what God said about the leaders of the people.
- Explain what we learn about the future.

The book of Jonah showed the love of God for the people of all nations. In contrast, the book of Micah shows the judgment of God that is necessary because He is a holy God. We will see that this judgment is applied to both Israel and Judah as the main cities of both nations are mentioned many times. Micah warned the people that the Lord would soon bring judgment against both nations. He said that when the Lord came against Samaria that the mountains, the hills and the valleys would be unable to stand. God said that they would be like wax in a fire. This would happen because of the sins of the people. God said that the sins of the people of both nations were very great.

1. Read Micah 1:1-16 and write what the Lord said that He would do to Samaria, the capital of Israel.
2. Explain why God said that He would bring judgment on both the nation of Israel and the nation of Judah.
3. Explain why you think that even the mountains, the hills and the valleys would be unable to stand when He brought judgment.

The city of Samaria was located on the top of a high hill. God said that the stones of the buildings and the foundations of the wall would all be dumped into the valley. Then the area of the city would become a vineyard again. The idols of the people would be destroyed and the riches that had been offered to the idols and religious prostitutes would be returned to the heathen again. However, the Lord warned that judgment would not stop with just the city of Samaria and the country of Israel. There would also be judgment for the nation of Judah. That judgment of Judah would come to the edge of the gates of the city of Jerusalem.

4. Read Micah 1:1-16 and write where this judgment was not to be mentioned.
5. Explain how God described the judgment that would come on the city of Samaria as the capital of the nation of Israel.
6. Explain why you think that God said that He was going to completely destroy the city of Samaria.

The city of Gath was one of the cities of the Philistines. The promise of judgment on Judah was not to be mentioned to the Philistines because that judgment would cause them to boast. The Lord said that twelve cities of Judah were to be judged when the enemies came against Judah and came to the gates of the city of Jerusalem. One of these cities was Lachish. The people of Lachish had been the first people in Judah to begin to follow the evil ways of Israel. They had led the other people of Judah to join them in idol worship. Now God said that Lachish would

be in the first group of cities of Judah that would be judged.

7. Read Micah 1:1-16 and write what the inhabitant of Maroth would receive instead of something good.

8. Explain why God said that the city of Lachish was one of the first cities of Judah that would be judged.

9. Explain why you think that God said that Lachish would be judged.

After saying that Israel and Judah would be judged, God went on to tell the reasons why Israel and Judah would be judged. The people of both nations were so evil that they would lie in their beds and plan evil. Then they would carry out that evil the next day. They felt that the power that they had in their lives gave them the right to do whatever they chose. If they desired the fields or the houses of their neighbors, they would take what belonged to their neighbors by force. These sinful people did not care about the fact that the Lord had said that such actions were evil. Instead they were quick to do evil to a man and his family.

10. Read Micah 2:1-13 and write what God said that He would do to the families of such men.

11. Explain what the people of Judah and Israel would do the next day after they had planned evil while laying on their beds.

12. Explain why you think that the people of both Israel and Judah were quick to take advantage of their own neighbors.

God said that the people had done evil for long enough. Now God said that He was planning to bring judgment on them for their evil. This judgment would be like a yoke that could not be removed. In that day the enemies would mock the people when they cried in their misery. The lands of the people would be divided. However, those lands would not be divided the way that the people wanted those lands divided. Instead the enemies would divide the land for themselves so that the people of Israel and Judah would be left with nothing.

13. Read Micah 2:1-13 and write what the people were saying to the prophets of God instead of listening to them.

14. Explain why God said that the enemies would divide the lands of Israel and Judah among themselves and leave nothing for Israel and Judah.

15. Explain why you think that the enemies would mock the people of Israel and Judah when they cried out in misery.

At this time there were many false prophets in the lands of Israel and Judah. These false prophets had arisen because the people had rejected the words of the true prophets and had told the true prophets to keep quiet. As a result, many false prophets arose. These false prophets told the people what the people wanted to hear instead of telling the people the truth. Today many people are just the same. They would rather hear something that tickles their ears instead of listening to the truth. The lack of hearing the Word of God in these lands was the fault of the people and was not the fault of the Lord.

16. Read Micah 2:1-13 and write what kind of a prophecy the false prophets promised to the people.

17. Explain why false prophets and teachers will always arise in any land where the people reject those who teach the Word of God.

18. Explain why you think that many false teachers will tell people what they want to hear instead of telling them the truth.

The people of Israel and Judah had become so evil that they would steal from an innocent man as he walked down the road. They also took the houses of widows and orphans because the widows and orphans had no one to protect them. The Lord said that such actions would cause the people of these two nations to be taken out of their lands and many of the people would be destroyed. However, even in this message of judgment, the Lord promised that He would one day gather the people of Israel that remained and bring them back into their own land.

19. Read Micah 2:1-13 and write who will be at the head when the Lord regathers the people.

20. Explain why God especially promised judgment to those who took advantage of the widows and the orphans.
21. Explain why you think that the people of Israel and Judah liked the messages of the false prophets.

As we come to chapter three, we see that the Lord began to speak of the sins of the leaders of the people. First the rulers and the judges are mentioned. These men were to be the leaders that led the people in the right way. They were to lead the people with righteousness and make just decisions. Instead these leaders hated what was good and right and loved what was evil. They took everything that belonged to the people in order to increase their own possessions. However, the Lord said that one day all of these evil leaders and judges would be rewarded for their evil actions. In that day God said that the leaders would cry to Him for help but He would not listen to them.

22. Read Micah 3:1-12 and write what group of leaders is mentioned next.
23. Explain why God said that one day all of the evil leaders and judges would be rewarded for their evil actions.
24. Explain how you think any land will be affected if that land has leaders that hate what is right and good and love what is evil.

The Lord spoke next about the false prophets that were telling the people what they wanted to hear instead of telling them the truth. When the people gave money to the false prophets, the false prophets promised peace. When no money was given to them, the false prophets said that war would come. Their only concern was to gain riches for themselves. God said that darkness would soon cover these false prophets. Then they would cover their mouths in their shame. In contrast, a true prophet would be able to speak boldly because he spoke in the power of the Spirit of the Lord. As a result, a true prophet warned the people of coming judgment.

25. Read Micah 3:1-12 and write what these leaders had done to Zion by their evil.
26. Explain why the false prophets promised that there would be peace when money was given to them.
27. Explain why you think that people want false prophets who will tell them what they want to hear instead of telling the truth.

The leaders of Judah were filling Jerusalem with evil and blood because of their evil actions. The judges were accepting bribes. The priests would only teach if the people would pay them. The false prophets would only speak when they were paid and then their prophecies were false. At the same time all of these false leaders claimed that they were serving the Lord. God said that the evil actions of these leaders would cause judgment to come on the city of Jerusalem. Here we see that these false leaders were going to reap as they had sown and would also cause the other people to experience the judgment of the Lord with them.

28. Read Micah 3:1-12 and write how Zion would be treated when this time of judgment came.
29. Explain why evil leaders sometimes try to claim that they are serving God even as they are doing evil.
30. Explain why you think that false teachers and evil leaders always want the people to pay them money.

Suddenly we move from the judgment that God said that He would soon bring on His people to the last days when the people would be brought back to their land and Christ would rule. Here we see that God was reminding the people that He would keep His promises and would never forsake His people. In that future day the kingdom of Christ will be established. All of the nations of the earth will be ruled by Christ. The leaders and the people of all of the nations will come to the city of Jerusalem so that they can learn the will of God for their lives. The Lord will teach the people His laws so that they will be able to live in the right way.

31. Read Micah 4:1-13 and write what the people will do with their swords in that day.

32. Explain why God promises that the people of all the nations will want to learn the will of God for their lives in the last days.

33. Explain why you think that the people will want to learn and follow the laws of God in the last days.

In the future time when Christ rules on the earth for a thousand years, there will no longer be any need for weapons of war. The people will be serving the Lord instead of learning how to make war. Everyone will be safe with his own possessions. No one will be afraid any longer because the entire earth will be under the rule of Christ. He will be the Lord of all of the nations. Today men are still worshiping their idols. This will only last for a short time longer. Idols can never bring lasting peace to anyone because they have no life to help those who are trusting in them. However, in that day when Christ rules things will be very different because all people will be serving the eternal God and Christ will rule forever.

34. Read Micah 4:1-13 and write who God promises to gather in that day.

35. Explain what the earth will be like when there is no longer any need for weapons of war.

36. Explain why you think that Christ will remove fear from the hearts of the people when He rules the entire earth.

Before Christ begins His rule in Jerusalem, He will regather His people from all of the places where they have been scattered because of their sin. The people of Israel have been like a person that is crippled. However, when the people of Israel are brought back into their own land, God will again make them a strong nation. Then the Lord will rule over His people forever. In that day the city of Jerusalem will become the capital of the entire earth because that is where Christ will rule. Christ will also rule the earth in righteousness when He rules.

37. Read Micah 4:1-13 and write what many nations will do and say just about Israel just before Christ comes to rule on the earth.

38. Explain what this chapter teaches about the way that things will be very different when Christ rules on the earth.

39. Explain why you think that it will be a wonderful time in the city of Jerusalem when Christ rules the whole earth from that city.

In the time of Micah, there were still many things that had to happen before Christ could come to rule on the earth. Micah warned the people of Jerusalem that God was going to use the nation of Babylon to judge the people and take them out of their land. From that time until the time when the Lord gathers the nations of the world to come and try to destroy Jerusalem just before Christ comes to rule, God said that the people of Israel would be scattered. That is still the condition of Israel today. The day is coming soon when God will gather the nations to come against Jerusalem and in that day the nations will be destroyed.

40. Read Micah 4:1-13 and write what the people of Israel will do with the possessions of these nations.

41. Explain why it was necessary for God to scatter the Jewish people among the nations of the world.

42. Explain why you think that God told Micah to warn the people that they would be judged and taken out of their land because of their sin.

Reread Micah 1:1-4:13 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 10

Micah 5:1-7:20

As we studied the first part of the book of Micah, we saw that the Lord promised the people of Israel and Judah that judgment would soon come on them. In our study today we will learn more about the judgment that was promised to the people of God. However, we will also learn about several great promises that the Lord made to the people of Israel through Micah. One of these promises was the promise that was explained to the wise men when they came to Jerusalem looking for the Christ. The birth of Christ in Bethlehem fulfilled that promise.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain what will happen to Israel before Christ returns to rule as King.
- Explain what the Lord requires of people.
- Explain how Micah described the people of Israel and Judah.
- Explain how Micah described the mercy of God.

As we studied the last part of chapter four of Micah, we saw that God said that He was going to use Babylon to punish Judah. As we begin chapter five, we see what the soldiers of Babylon did to the king of Judah. They hit him on the cheek with a rod. This was one of the most shameful things that could happen to a king. The leader of Judah was punished with shame. This only pointed out the great contrast as we come to the promise about the birth of Christ. The family of David had become rulers in Jerusalem even though David had come from the small town of Bethlehem. When the ruler from the family of David was hit across the face, that action ended the leadership of the family of David in Jerusalem in that time. That leadership will not be reestablished until Christ comes to rule.

1. Read Micah 5:1-15 and write where Christ was to be born.
2. Explain why the Lord ended the rule of the family of David until the time when Christ comes to rule the earth.
3. Explain why you think that the Babylonian soldiers chose to do one of the most shameful acts that they could to the king of Judah.

Bethlehem was one of the smallest villages in the land of Judah. Yet that was the place that God chose for Christ to be born. In fact the Lord used the Roman government to help get Mary and Joseph in the right place when it was time for Christ to be born. We see many wonderful things about Christ in this chapter. Although Christ was born physically in Bethlehem, He has always existed. His works had existed clear back into eternity. Now Micah prophesied that He was going to come as the Savior that would save a remnant of His people. As a shepherd, He would feed and lead His people. At the same time Micah said that Christ would also be the judge of the surrounding nations that had done evil to the people of Israel. This judgment would bring peace to the people of God.

4. Read Micah 5:1-15 and write what the remnant of Jacob would be in that day.
5. Explain why it is important to understand that Christ has always existed and that His works exist clear back into eternity past.
6. Explain why you think that it is important that Micah said that Christ would both feed and lead His people.

We first see a picture of the various ministries of Christ from the time of His birth until the time when He will begin to rule on the earth. This is followed by a picture of the ministry of Israel in that day. During the time of the tribulation the nation of Israel will be used by the Lord to bring the message of life to the other nations. At the same time this message of life will also be

a message of judgment to those who refuse to accept the eternal life that Christ has made available through His death and resurrection. All people will have to make a choice to accept or reject that message.

7. Read Micah 5:1-15 and write what kind of an animal Israel will be like to those who reject the message of life.

8. Explain why the message of Christ is a message of life to those who accept Christ and a message of judgment to those who reject Him.

9. Explain why you think that it is important for you to help all of your family and friends understand that they have a choice to either accept or reject Christ.

However, before Israel can be used to judge the other nations, Israel must first be cleansed. The people of Israel were and still are depending on their own military strength. God said that He would destroy this military strength so that the people of Israel will be forced to depend on Him instead of military power. God also said that He will destroy those who have led Israel in the worship of evil. The idols would also be destroyed. God said that only after Israel is cleansed from her own sin could Israel be used by the Lord to bring judgment on the other nations.

Cleansing must always come before ministry.

10. Read Micah 5:1-15 and write what the Lord said that He would do to the images and idols of the people of Judah.

11. Explain why our lives must also be cleansed from sin if we want to be effective as we do the work of the Lord.

12. Explain why you think that the Lord said that He would remove the military power of Judah to help the people realize their need to trust in Him.

Because Israel must be cleansed before the nation can be used by the Lord, Micah now began to speak again about the present condition of Israel and Judah during the time that he was alive. God called the mountains and the hills to be witnesses of His message to Israel. God asked His people what He had done that had caused them to become tired of following Him. Then God reminded the people of the fact that He had brought them out of the land of Egypt. When Baalim had tried to curse them, God had turned that curse into a blessing instead. God had turned that curse into a blessing for a very important reason.

13. Read Micah 6:1-16 and write why God had turned that curse into a blessing.

14. Explain why it was important for God to remind the people of Israel and Judah how He had brought them out of Egypt.

15. Explain why you think that God said that the people were showing that they had become tired of following Him.

The Lord was very unhappy with the sacrifices that the people of Israel and Judah were offering to Him. These sacrifices meant nothing because the people had a wrong attitude in their hearts. They were offering their sacrifices as a way to try and work their way to heaven. Of course it is impossible for any person to work his way to heaven because every person has sinned and no person can pay for his or her own sin. God says that all have sinned and come short of His glory. Only when a person has a right heart attitude toward God will he be able to do what is right. Such a person will love mercy and will be able to walk humbly before with God. Since the people were not right with God, their sacrifices meant nothing to the Lord.

16. Read Micah 6:1-16 and write what kind of balances the people were using.

17. Explain what these verses teach about the importance of having a right heart attitude toward the Lord.

18. Explain why you think that it important to understand that those who love the Lord will love mercy and will walk humbly before the Lord.

The people were using false weights on their scales so that they could make extra money. In addition, the rich were willing to use violence and lies to try and increase their riches. For these

sins the Lord said that the people must be judged. The people would eat but they would not have enough to satisfy their hunger. They would be killed by the sword. The crops that they planted would fail to grow or they would be taken by the enemies. All of these things were going to happen because the people of Israel had chosen to follow the evil actions of Omri and Ahab.

19. Read Micah 6:1-16 and write what the Lord said He would do to Israel because they walked in the counsels of Omri and Ahab.

20. Explain why God said that their crops would either fail to grow or would be taken by their enemies.

21. Explain why you think that the rich had reached a point that they were willing to use violence and lies to increase their riches.

As Micah listened to the judgment that God was promising to the nation of Israel, he spoke as one of the few people in the land that was godly and confessed that all of the things that the Lord had done were right. At that time it was almost impossible to find people in the land that really trusted in the Lord. It was harder to find such a person than it was to glean grapes. It was just as if righteous people no longer existed on the earth. Instead all of the people were looking for opportunities to do evil to others. They hunted their brothers just as they hunted for wild animals.

22. Read Micah 7:1-6 and write how the people were doing evil.

23. Explain why God said that it was easier to glean grapes than it was to find a righteous person in Israel.

24. Explain why you think that there were so few people that were godly and followed the Lord at the time of Micah.

The people were so filled with evil that they were even looking for more ways to do evil. The princes would offer bribes to the judges and the judges would accept the bribes in exchange for making the decisions that the princes asked them to make. The princes, the judges and the great men were all plotting together to satisfy their evil desires. Even the best people in the land were as bad as a thorn or a brier. They would catch and cut others like a hedge of thorns. The evil men were even worse. As a result, Micah realized that God was doing what was right when He promised to bring judgment on the people for such evil actions.

25. Read Micah 7:1-6 and write who the people could not trust.

26. Explain why God said that even the best people in the land of Israel were as bad as a thorn or a brier.

27. Explain why you think that people can become so evil that they will spend their time looking for more ways to do evil.

Here we come to a real picture of the results of sin. Sin destroys the values of a person so completely that a man cannot even trust his close friends. In fact a man cannot even trust his own wife when their lives are both controlled by sin. Sin also leads to fighting and distrust between members of a family. Children fail to respect their parents and parents fail to trust their children. The situation becomes so bad that people become enemies of others in their families. Here we see the way that sin destroys the relationship even within families.

28. Read Micah 7:1-6 and write who Micah said were a man's enemies.

29. Explain what these verses teach about the fact that sin has a very serious effect on family relationships.

30. Explain why you think that trust is one of the most important things for people to develop in any relationship.

Today we are living among people that are very similar to those who lived in the time of Micah. People do not trust each other. This is true even within families. However, the condition of the people that lived around Micah did not cause him to become discouraged. Instead Micah was

filled with joy because his trust was in the Lord. He want look to the Lord for his strength rather than looking to the people around him. He knew that he could depend on the Lord because he knew that the Lord would hear his prayer. In the same way, we can know that the Lord will always hear and answer our prayer to Him.

31. Read Micah 7:7-20 and write why Micah told his enemies not to rejoice against him.
32. Explain how Micah could be filled with joy even though there were few people around him that he could trust.
33. Explain why it is important to you to know that the Lord will always hear you when you pray.

Micah realized that there would be failures in his life because he was not perfect just as we are not perfect. He knew that it would be necessary for God to discipline him if he allowed sin to remain in his life. However, he also knew that the Lord would show mercy to him after he had been disciplined for his sin. The Lord would bring him back to the light so that he could see the righteousness of the Lord. As a nation, Israel could also rest in these promises of the Lord. As Micah looked into the future, he knew that one day the Lord would rebuild the nation of Israel and that all of these promises would apply to the nation just as they applied to Micah.

34. Read Micah 7:7-20 and write what would happen to the wall in that day.
35. Explain why Micah understood that his life was not perfect and that there were times when the Lord needed to discipline him.
36. Explain why it is important to you to know that even when you sin that the Lord will show mercy to you after He has disciplined you.

God said that in the day when Israel will be completely rebuilt that people will come to Israel from all of the surrounding nations and even from the ends of the earth. In that day the Lord will feed His people as a shepherd feeds his sheep. They will enjoy all of the riches of the land. The land will once again become a very rich land. The Lord had done great things when He brought the nation of Israel out of the land of Egypt. Here God promises that He will again do great and wonderful things for Israel in that day when He returns to be the Shepherd of His people.

37. Read Micah 7:7-20 and write what God does to the sins and iniquities of those who trust in Him.
38. Explain what these verses promise about the future of the nation of Israel.
39. Explain why you think that the Lord promises to do great and wonderful things for the nation of Israel when they turn to Him as their Shepherd.

The rest of the nations will be amazed when they see what the Lord does for the nation of Israel in the future. In that day the nations will be filled with fear as they see the works of the Lord. Everyone will realize that there is no one that can be compared to the Lord. Just as it grieved the Lord to judge His people for their sin, He will be filled with joy because He can show mercy to His people in that future day. He will forgive the sins of His people and bury their sins in the deepest sea. God will do all of these things because of the promises that He made to Abraham and Jacob.

40. Read Micah 7:7-20 and write when God made these promises to Abraham and to Jacob.
41. Explain why it is important to understand that God has said that He will bury the sins of Israel in the deepest part of the sea.
42. Explain why you think that the other nations will be filled with fear when they see the works of the Lord.

Reread Micah 5:1-7:20 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 11

Nahum 1:1-3:19

As we studied the book of Jonah, we saw that God promised that the city of Nineveh would be judged. However, the people of Nineveh listened to the message of the Lord and turned from their sin when Jonah warned them of coming judgment. As a result, God did not bring judgment on the city of Nineveh at that time. After the generation that repented at the preaching of Jonah died, the people of Nineveh returned to their evil ways again. The people of Nineveh became worse and worse. As we study the book of Nahum, we will learn about the final judgment that God promised would come to the city of Nineveh. This judgment came about one hundred years after the preaching of Jonah.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain what you learn about the holiness of God.
- Explain why God promised to judge the enemies of His people.
- Explain what God said about the judgment of Nineveh.
- Explain the reasons why God said that Nineveh would be judged.

As we begin the book of Nahum, we begin by learning much about the character of God. First we see that God is a jealous God. However, the jealousy of God is not like the jealousy of people. Instead the jealousy of God could be described as a zeal for righteousness. When God sees evil, He has a strong desire to see that evil is punished and that the things that are right are honored. Because God is a jealous God, He will bring judgment on those who do evil and do not repent of their sin. Evil people will experience the wrath of God when He shows His anger against sin.

1. Read Nahum 1:1-8 and write how quickly the Lord is to show His anger against sin.
2. Explain why when the Bible describes God as a jealous God it means that He has a zeal for righteousness.
3. Explain why you think that because God is a holy God that He must punish all those who do not repent of their sin.

The Lord is not quick to bring judgment on those who continue to practice evil. Because the city of Nineveh turned to the Lord during the time of Jonah, the Lord spared that city for 100 years before He finally brought judgment on the city of Nineveh. However, the Lord also has all power and will not allow sin to go unjudged because He is a holy God. The Lord is the One that controls the whirlwind and the storm. The Lord is the One that controls the seas and the rivers. When God speaks the word, the rivers become dry and they have no water in them. When this happens, even the best pasture lands become like a dry desert. The mountains and the hills as well as all other things are under the complete control of the Lord.

4. Read Nahum 1:1-8 and write what people are not able to stand before.
5. Explain why it is important to understand that everything in the entire creation is under the control of the Lord.
6. Explain why you think that God showed His mercy to Nineveh by sparing that city for an additional one hundred years.

No person can stand before the anger of the Lord against sin. People cannot escape His judgment through their own efforts. His anger against sin is like the fire that cannot be stopped. It will destroy each thing that it touches. Although the Lord shows His great anger against evil, He also shows His great love to all those who place their trust in Him. The Lord knows each of those who place their trust in Him. He is a protection to them in their times of trouble. However, Nahum warned that the judgment of God would be like a flood to the city of

Nineveh. In fact God promised that His judgment would completely destroy the city of Nineveh.

7. Read Nahum 1:1-8 and write how Nahum describes the way that the fury of the Lord against sin is poured out.

8. Explain what you learn about the character of God from these verses.

9. Explain why you are thankful that the Lord shows His great love to all those who place their trust in Him.

When a person studies the book of Isaiah, we see that Isaiah gives a very clear picture of the pride of the Assyrian leaders when they came to fight against the city of Jerusalem. Nineveh was the capital city of the Assyrians and so God is speaking of both the city and the nation as He warned about the judgment that would come on the Assyrians. The Assyrian leaders thought that they could boast against God. Now God said that He would completely destroy the nation of Assyria. God said that the Assyrian area would be like an army that was entangled in thorns. Like drunken men, the people would not be able to escape the judgment of the Lord. Instead the people of Assyria would be destroyed like dry grass.

10. Read Nahum 1:9-15 and write what kind of a leader had imagined evil against the Lord.

11. Explain why God said that He would completely destroy Nineveh and the land of Assyria.

12. Explain why you think that leaders in the world think that they can boast against the Lord because of their own power.

Sennacherib was the name of the ruler of the nation of Assyria. He was a very evil ruler. We see that he planned to do evil against the Lord and against the people of the Lord. God warned that even though the Assyrians made plans together to fight against God and Israel that they would be destroyed. God promised that He would break the power of the Assyrians so that they would not cause the people of God to suffer any more from the power of the Assyrians. Once the Lord destroyed the power of the Assyrians, that nation would never become strong again. In fact the city of Nineveh was completely destroyed and became an empty waste.

13. Read Nahum 1:9-15 and write what God promised to do the house of the gods of the people of Nineveh.

14. Explain why God warned that Assyria would be completely destroyed even though they made plans against God and against His people.

15. Explain why you think that God said that He would break the power of Assyria so that they would be completely destroyed.

God promised that He would destroy the house of the idols of the Assyrians. He also promised that He would destroy the idols that were in that house. God also made it clear that the city of Nineveh would be completely destroyed. At the same time that God promised judgment for the city of Nineveh, He promised deliverance for the people of God. This message of deliverance was a message of joy and gladness to the people of Judah. As the Lord spoke to the people of Judah, He instructed the people of Judah to obey the Word of God because the Assyrians would not be able to judge Judah any more after the Lord brought His judgment on them.

16. Read Nahum 1:9-15 and write what kind of a message the person that would come on the mountains would bring to Judah.

17. Explain why God promised that He was going to destroy the nation of Assyria and the city of Nineveh.

18. Explain why you think that the message of deliverance was a message of joy and gladness to the people of Judah.

After giving Judah a promise that the nation of Assyria would not attack Judah any more, God began to speak of the judgment of the city of Nineveh. God said that the enemy would soon come and fight against the city of Nineveh and destroy it. The people of Nineveh were told to prepare for the invasion that would soon come against their city. The Lord told the people of

Nineveh to make the city as strong as possible. However, the Lord also warned the people of Nineveh that they would not be able to defend the city regardless of how strong they made the city. God said that Nineveh would be completely emptied of all of its riches just as it had emptied many other cities of their riches.

19. Read Nahum 2:1-13 and write what color the shields of the enemy would be painted that would come against the city of Nineveh.

20. Explain why God said that the people of Nineveh would not be able to defend their city regardless of how strong they made the city.

21. Explain why you think that God said that Nineveh would be emptied of all of her riches just as she had emptied other cities of their riches.

The Medes and the Babylonians were both very fond of the color red. They used red on their shields as well as on their clothes. The Assyrians were known for the fact that their chariots were the fastest of any chariots of that day. God said that these chariots would fight in the streets of Nineveh. However, they would not be victorious. The nobles that would be leading the armies of Nineveh would stumble and fall as they fought. The enemies that would come and fight against the city of Nineveh would be very strong. However, that was not the reason why the city of Nineveh would be defeated and destroyed. Instead it would be God that won the victory.

22. Read Nahum 2:1-13 and write what God said would happen to the gates of the river.

23. Explain why God wanted the people of Nineveh to know that God was the One that would win the real victory over Nineveh.

24. Explain why you think that God warned the leaders of Assyria that their chariots would not be able to protect them in the day that they were judged.

God promised that He would use the flood waters of the Tigris River to break down the wall of the city of Nineveh and destroy the palaces of that city. The destruction of Nineveh happened just exactly as God had promised. God said that the voices of the young women would be filled with sorrow and that they would beat on their breasts as they were led away as captives. The leaders of Assyria would shout to their armies to stand firmly but the soldiers would be running so fast to escape that they would not even turn to listen to their leaders. All of the treasures of the city of Nineveh would be captured by the enemy.

25. Read Nahum 2:1-13 and write what God said the city would be like after the enemy had gone through the city.

26. Explain why the voices of the young women would be filled with sorrow as they were led away as captives by their enemies.

27. Explain why you think that God said that He would use the waters of the Tigris River to break down the walls of the city of Nineveh.

God said that the city of Nineveh would be so completely destroyed that there would be no people left in the city. The Assyrians made many lions in their sculptures and their drawings. As a result, God used lions to give a picture of what would happen to Nineveh. God said that the city would be completely destroyed and torn apart just like a lion tears an animal that it captures. God said that all of these things would happen to Nineveh because He was against the city. The judgment that God brought against the city would be complete.

28. Read Nahum 2:1-13 and write the name that the Lord calls Himself as He said that He was against Nineveh.

29. Explain what you learn from this chapter about the judgment that God brought against the city of Nineveh.

30. Explain why you think that God said that the city of Nineveh would be torn apart like a lion tears apart her prey.

As we come to chapter three, we see the reason why God destroyed the city of Nineveh. The

city of Nineveh is called a bloody city because its people destroyed many other cities. They were always looking for another city to capture and destroy. The people of Nineveh never kept their treaties that they made with other nations. God said that now they would hear the noise of the whip as the enemy hurried its horses through the city to destroy the city. They would hear the rattling of the wheels of the chariots. They would see the swords of the enemy. Large numbers of people would be killed and others would stumble over their dead bodies.

31. Read Nahum 3:1-19 and write what kind of a mistress the city of Nineveh is called.

32. Explain why one of the things that God said about Nineveh was that they were always looking for another city to destroy.

33. Explain why you think that the Lord described the city of Nineveh as a bloody city.

God said that the city of Nineveh was like a prostitute. The people were unfaithful and did not keep the promises that they made. They would use witchcraft to deceive and take advantage of their enemies. As a result, God said that He was against Nineveh. He would uncover her and fill her with shame in front of her enemies. Their city would be so thoroughly judged that other people would look at the city in amazement. However, the other nations would all be glad to see the destruction of Nineveh because the people of Nineveh were so cruel.

34. Read Nahum 3:1-19 and write to what city Nineveh was compared with.

35. Explain why the use of witchcraft was one of the things that the people of Nineveh were using to deceive and take advantage of their enemies.

36. Explain why you think that all of the other nations would be glad as they saw the destruction that the Lord brought on the city of Nineveh.

Thebes had been the capital city of the land of Egypt. Many other nations had also helped to defend Thebes. However, the Assyrians had still been able to destroy Thebes. The Assyrians killed the children of Egypt in the streets. They gambled to decide who would take the prisoners as slaves. Now God said that Nineveh would be destroyed in the same way that it destroyed Thebes. This destruction would happen while they were having their last drunken celebration. They would fall like ripe figs when someone shakes a fig tree. The city would be wide open to the enemy and its gates and walls would be destroyed by fire.

37. Read Nahum 3:1-19 and write how the city of Nineveh had multiplied the numbers of its traders and merchants.

38. Explain how the destruction of the city of Nineveh showed that both people and the nation reaped what they sowed.

39. Explain why you think that God said that the time of the destruction of Nineveh would be during the time of their last drunken celebration.

God said that the judgment of the city of Nineveh would be complete. Nineveh was once the center of world trade. There were many merchants in the city. Trade caravans came to the city from other places. However, God said that all of these things would be destroyed. God said that the city would be burned with fire and the people of the city would be killed. When the city was destroyed, it was so completely destroyed that its location was unknown for many years. Its leaders were destroyed and the people that remained were scattered.

40. Read Nahum 3:1-19 and write what God says about the future of Nineveh.

41. Explain why God said that the city would be burned with fire and most of the people of Nineveh would be killed.

42. Explain why you think that the city of Nineveh was so completely destroyed that it took many years to even find the location where the city had been.

Reread Nahum 1:1-3:19 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from this book.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 12

Habakkuk 1:1-3:19

The book of Habakkuk is very different than most of the Minor Prophets. Most of the Minor Prophets have a message of the judgment that will come on the nations. Although Habakkuk does speak of judgment, his main message in this book is a message of faith. Habakkuk asked certain questions of the Lord. As the Lord answered these questions, we can see growth in the faith of Habakkuk. By the time we come to the final chapter, we will see a tremendous lesson on faith as we see the faith of Habakkuk and how that faith developed.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain why Habakkuk was concerned because sin was unjudged.
- Explain why God used an evil nation to judge Judah.
- Explain what it means for the just to live by faith.
- Explain what you learn about the development of the faith of Habakkuk.

As we begin our study of the book of Habakkuk, we see that Habakkuk asked the Lord a question. He asked how long people could go on in their sin without God judging that sin. To Habakkuk it seemed that the Lord was blessing the people that were evil while the people of God were suffering. It seemed to Habakkuk as though God did not hear the prayers of the godly when they asked him to judge the sinful people around them. Instead the people around them just continued on in their sinful ways. They did not obey the commandments of the Lord. The judges and rulers twisted the laws so that they could increase their own riches instead of doing what was right.

1. Read Habakkuk and write when the Lord promised to work and answer the prayer of Habakkuk.
2. Explain why it often seems that the people that are living in sin do not seem to be experiencing any judgment.
3. Explain why you think that the Lord waited so long to bring judgment on the sinful people of Judah.

The Lord promised Habakkuk that judgment would soon come on the evil people. God would work in such an amazing way that even Habakkuk would not be able to believe what the Lord was doing. God said that He was going to use the Babylonians (Chaldeans) to judge the people of Judah. The army of the Babylonians would march through the land of Judah and take possession of it even though the land did not belong to them. The Chaldeans would bring a terrible judgment on the land of Judah. The Chaldeans did not recognize God and so they made their own laws and acted as they chose. God said that the Chaldeans would do anything that they chose to do as they went through the land.

4. Read Habakkuk 1:1-11 and write what the horses of the Chaldeans were like.
5. Explain why God warned that the Chaldeans would do anything that they wanted to do as they brought judgment on the land of Judah.
6. Explain why you think that God told Habakkuk that He would work in an amazing way that would be hard to believe.

The Chaldeans would bring very great judgment on the land of Judah. They would be more dangerous than wolves. They would come from a great distance to judge Judah. They would be like an eagle that is looking for food to eat. The Chaldeans were known for their violence in war. They would kill many people and capture many captives. Nothing would stand before them as they came through the land. They would laugh at any kings or princes that thought that they could escape judgment. Every city would be destroyed and would become like a heap of

dust. However, God would also judge and destroy the king of the Chaldeans because the king thought that he was so powerful that he was a god.

7. Read Habakkuk 1:1-11 and write how they would gather captives as they conquered the land.

8. Explain why no one would be able to escape the violence of the Chaldeans as they came through the land.

9. Explain why you think that God would choose to use such a violent nation to bring judgment on the nation of Judah.

Suddenly Habakkuk was faced with a new problem. The Chaldeans were even more evil than the people of Judah. Habakkuk began his questions this time by stating that God is the everlasting God. He knew that the people of God would not be completely destroyed. God had chosen the nation of Israel so God would not completely destroy the nation even though He had to judge the nation for its sin. The reason God has to judge sin is due to the fact that God is a holy God and cannot look on any sin by any nation or person with favor. As a result, Habakkuk was wondering how God could look at the Chaldeans and use them to judge the people of God when they were even more evil than the people of God.

10. Read Habakkuk 1:12-2:1 and write to what the Chaldeans compared men.

11. Explain why it is important the Habakkuk brought his questions to the Lord since he did not understand what God was doing.

12. Explain why you think that Habakkuk found it difficult to understand how God could use the very evil Chaldeans to judge the nation of Judah.

The Chaldeans had so little respect for others that they treated them as fish or creeping things that could not protect themselves. They would catch people with their armies just as a man catches a fish with his net. The Chaldeans were filled with happiness because they could do evil to others. They were so proud of their military strength that they worshiped their military power. They worshiped their military power because it was that military strength that had helped them to destroy many other nations and gain their riches. This was the real goal of their desire to destroy. They thought only of finding ways to satisfy themselves.

13. Read Habakkuk 1:12-2:1 and write the final question that Habakkuk asked the Lord in this section.

14. Explain why the Chaldeans were filled with happiness when they could do evil to other nations.

15. Explain why you think that many people today are also filled with happiness when they can do evil to others.

In his question to the Lord Habakkuk asked the Lord if He would allow the Chaldeans to continue on in their evil ways without stopping them. Although Habakkuk could not understand how God could use such an evil nation to judge the people of God, we see that Habakkuk was certain that God would be able to answer this question just as God had answered his first question. Because Habakkuk believed that God would answer his question, he prepared his heart to receive the answer that the Lord would give him. Here we see a great example for our own lives. We also need to prepare our hearts to receive the answer to the questions that we ask Him.

16. Read Habakkuk 1:12-2:1 and write where Habakkuk said that he would wait for the answer of the Lord to his question.

17. Explain why it is important to prepare our hearts for the answers that the Lord wants to give us to our questions.

18. Explain why you think that God chose to use a very evil nation to judge the sins of the nation of Judah.

Because Habakkuk was willing to wait for the answer of the Lord, the Lord was quick to give

him an answer. First the Lord told him to write on clay tablets the answer that he received so that everyone would be able to read the answer. The Lord also told Habakkuk that this vision would be fulfilled according to the time and plan of God. Even though it might seem like the Lord was slow in fulfilling His plan, the Lord told Habakkuk that His plan would certainly come to pass. The pride of the Chaldeans or any other group of people would not allow them to stand. Throughout the Old and New Testaments we see that there is only one way to live.

19. Read Habakkuk 2:2-20 and write how the just shall live.

20. Explain why the Lord told Habakkuk to write the answer of the Lord on clay tablets so that everyone could read the answer.

21. Explain why you think that it is important to trust the Lord when He is patient and slow to judge sin.

Here we see that the only way that people can live is by faith in the Lord. It is completely impossible for any person to try and earn his salvation by his own efforts. The pride of the Chaldeans would only lead them to a certain death. Pride always leads to death because it is not based on faith. The Chaldeans spent their time drinking and destroying other nations to satisfy their own evil desires. As a result, the rest of this chapter gives us five reasons why God said that judgment (woe) would come on the Chaldeans. Although the Chaldeans would be used by God to judge the people of God, God promised that He would also send judgment on the Chaldeans.

22. Read Habakkuk 2:2-20 and write the first woe that the Lord promised would come on the Chaldeans.

23. Explain why God will always judge those who are controlled by pride even though He may not judge them immediately.

24. Explain why it is important to you in your own life to learn to walk by faith and live by faith.

The Chaldeans had taken property and possessions that did not belong to them. God said that they would be destroyed and their possessions would be taken from them. God pronounced the second woe on them due to the fact that the Chaldeans had desired the possessions of others so that they could make themselves greater. To get what they wanted for themselves, the Chaldeans had destroyed many nations. The third woe was promised to the Chaldeans because they were very cruel as they shed the blood of others in order to gain what they wanted for themselves. Again God promised that He would bring destruction on them.

25. Read Habakkuk 2:2-20 and write what God promises will also happen on the earth in the future.

26. Explain why God said that one of the reasons that He would judge the Chaldeans was due to the fact that they had shed the blood of many people of other nations.

27. Explain why you think that God took the time to explain the various reasons why the Chaldeans would be judged.

At the same time that God was warning of the judgment of the Chaldeans, the Lord also gave a promise of what He is going to do in the future. One day in the future the whole earth will know about the glory of the Lord. Next God promised woe on the Chaldeans because they caused their weaker neighbors to become drunk in order to take advantage of them. The final woe that the Lord promised to the Chaldeans was due to the fact that they thought that their idols of wood and stone would teach them. Because the Chaldeans were trusting in their idols, there was no hope for the people because their idols had no life in them.

28. Read Habakkuk 2:2-20 and write what Habakkuk said that the people of the earth should do since the Lord is in His holy temple.

29. Explain why God pronounced these five woes on the Chaldeans.

30. Explain why you think that God wanted the people to understand that idols are without life and cannot teach any person.

Habakkuk had listened to the Lord as the Lord answered his questions about evil men and about the reason why God would use evil men to judge the nation of Judah. Now Habakkuk was glad to wait in faith and watch how the Lord worked out His plan to judge Judah through the Chaldeans and then judge the Chaldeans. Habakkuk prayed to the Lord and his prayer expressed his faith. Most of the prayer talked about the way that the Lord had worked for Israel when the Lord brought Israel out of the land of Egypt. When Israel came out of the land of Egypt, God had appeared to Israel in the wilderness. His glory filled the heavens and the earth was filled with His praise.

31. Read Habakkuk 3:1-19 and write what the brightness of God is like.

32. Explain why Habakkuk spent much of his prayer thanking the Lord for the way that that Lord had worked in the past.

33. Explain why you think that Habakkuk gives you a real example of the way for you to wait for the Lord to answer your prayers.

The brightness of God is very bright. His brightness hides His power and strength. God is the One that measures the earth and makes the mountains shake. When Israel came out of the land of Egypt, the people of Cush and Midian were filled with fear as they sat in their tents. God opened a path for Israel through the Red Sea. Later He opened a path for them across the Jordan River. God used the Red Sea to destroy the army of Egypt. He also used his strength to protect Israel from its enemies as the people traveled through the desert.

34. Read Habakkuk 3:1-19 and write what the sun and moon did because of the power of God.

35. Explain why the prayer of Habakkuk talked about the way that the Lord had defeated the army of Egypt in the past as Habakkuk waited for God to judge the Chaldeans.

36. Explain why you think that it is important to realize in your own life the greatness of the power and strength of the Lord.

At the command of God, the entire universe stood still so that Israel could win a great victory over its enemies. God was the One that actually destroyed the nations that lived in the land of Canaan and gave the land to Israel as an inheritance. Now Habakkuk was certain that God would one day judge the Chaldeans just as He had judged the nations that had lived in Canaan. Here we see a beautiful example of faith. Habakkuk was certain that God would keep His Word even though it might be a long time before the Chaldeans were actually destroyed.

37. Read Habakkuk 3:1-19 and write what Habakkuk said that he would do even if the fig trees did not blossom or the vines produce fruit.

38. Explain why it is also important for us to have faith in the promises of God even though we do not yet see how God is going to fulfill those promises.

39. Explain why it is important for you in your own life to know that the Lord will always keep His Word.

Habakkuk had heard the promises of the Lord and was ready to rest in those promises as He waited for the Lord to fulfill them. Even though the fig trees, the grape vines and the olive trees of Judah were destroyed, the trust of Habakkuk was still in the Lord. This trust would continue even when the flocks and the herds were destroyed. Whatever happened, Habakkuk would be filled with joy. Today we also need to be filled with joy regardless of what happens around us. We will have this joy if our trust is in the Lord and not in our own strength.

40. Read Habakkuk 3:1-19 and write where Habakkuk received his strength because he trusted in the Lord.

41. Explain why it is important to let the Lord fill our lives with joy regardless of what is happening around us.

42. Explain what lessons you learn for your own life from the faith and trust that Habakkuk had in the Lord.

Reread Habakkuk 1:1-3:19 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 13

Zephaniah 1:1-3:20

Zephaniah lived in the land of Judah just a few years before the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by the Babylonians. During the time of Zephaniah, the people of Judah were not serving the Lord. As a result, the Lord used Zephaniah to warn the people of Judah that judgment would soon come to them because of their sin. Zephaniah said that the people of Judah would be taken as captives to a foreign land. The Lord also uses this promise of coming judgment on the land of Judah to give a picture of the greater judgment that will come in the Day of the Lord. Finally the book concludes by telling about the things that will happen when Christ returns to rule the earth.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Tell about the judgment that the Lord promised to Judah.
- Tell about the judgment promised to the surrounding nations.
- Explain why Judah was promised judgment.
- Explain what will happen to Israel when Christ returns to rule.

Zephaniah is one of the few prophets whose family background is given. Zephaniah came from the family of King Hezekiah. Hezekiah was one of the good kings of the land of Judah. As we begin our study of the book of Zephaniah, we see that the book begins with a promise of coming judgment. God promised to completely destroy everything in the land of Judah. This included the people, the animals, the birds, the fish and also the idols that the people were worshiping. God said that He would completely destroy the worship of Baal along with the priests that led in that evil worship. There would be no people left to worship Baal and the idols would be destroyed so that Baal would not be worshiped in the future.

1. Read Zephaniah 1:1-18 and write where the people were worshiping all the host of heaven (the sun, moon and stars).
2. Explain why God said that He would completely destroy the worship of Baal along with the priests that led the people in that worship.
3. Explain why you know that God will bring judgment on all of the idols that people worship on the earth.

The people were worshiping the stars on the flat roofs of their houses. God said that all of the people that participated in such worship would be destroyed. Those who were pretending to worship God but were not true worshipers would be destroyed along with the worshipers of Molech. There would be judgment for every single person that did not trust in the Lord. Suddenly the picture changes to an even greater judgment. This Lord used this warning about the immediate judgment of Judah as a picture of the much greater judgment that will come in the Day of the Lord. Even though the judgment of Judah was great, the future judgment that will come in the Day of the Lord will be a much greater judgment.

4. Read Zephaniah 1:1-18 and write what group of people is promised judgment first.
5. Explain why God said that all of the people that were not true worshipers would be destroyed by the Lord.
6. Explain why you think that the Lord said that the judgment of Judah gives a picture of a much greater judgment in the Day of the Lord.

The leaders of any nation have a great responsibility to lead those who follow them in the right way. Since the leaders of Judah were leading the people in idol worship, God promised that the leaders would experience judgment first. Then God promised judgment to those who broke into the houses of the poor in order to increase the riches of their masters. God also told how the

city of Jerusalem would be captured section by section until all of the strongholds of the city had been captured. The people that thought that God would not judge them would suddenly discover that all of their possessions had been destroyed.

7. Read Zephaniah 1:1-18 and write when God said that the great Day of the Lord would come.
8. Explain why God warned that the judgment of the city of Jerusalem would be very complete and include both the people and the city itself.
9. Explain why you think that God said that judgment would come first on the leaders of Judah that were leading the people in idol worship.

The Day of the Lord is a day of great judgment for all of the people that do not have their trust in the Lord. That judgment will affect all of the people of the earth and not just the people of the land of Judah. The tribulation is the first part of the Day of the Lord. For those who do not trust in the Lord, the tribulation will be a time of great judgment. Men will be like blind men because of their sin. They will be killed and their blood will be poured out like dust. In that day their riches will not be able to protect them from judgment. Judgment will come on all evil people whether those people are rich or poor. None will escape that judgment.

10. Read Zephaniah 1:1-18 and write the various words that the Lord used to describe what the day of judgment would be like.
11. Explain what you learn will happen to all of those who do evil in the Day of the Lord from these verses.
12. Explain why you think that God said that the riches of the people would not be able to protect the people in the day of judgment.

Although gold and silver could not save the people of Judah from the coming judgment that God had said would come on their land, there was one way that the people could be saved from that judgment. Zephaniah gave a call to the people to come together and seek the Lord before that day of judgment came. He said that the day of judgment would certainly come and the only way to be protected from the anger of the Lord was to turn to the Lord and trust in Him. The message that Zephaniah gave in that day is still the same message that we are to tell others today. People can only escape eternal judgment by placing their trust in the Lord.

13. Read Zephaniah 2:1-15 and write what God said would happen to the area of Gaza.
14. Explain why Zephaniah told the people that the only way that the people could be saved from the day of judgment was to seek the Lord.
15. Explain why you think that it is important that you also warn people that the only way they can escape eternal judgment is to seek the Lord.

After warning the people of Judah to trust in the Lord in order to escape the coming judgment, Zephaniah began to speak of the judgment that would come to the nations that surrounded Judah. First God named several of the cities of the Philistines that would be destroyed. God said that these cities would be so completely destroyed that none of their people would remain. Instead their land would become the possession of the people of Israel after God had punished His people for their sins. Here we see that the Lord promised that the land of the Philistines will one day belong to Israel. The nations of Moab and Ammon were also promised judgment.

16. Read Zephaniah 2:1-15 and write what cities God said Moab and Ammon would become like when God brought judgment upon them.
17. Explain why God said that the judgment of the Philistines would be so complete that none of the people would remain.
18. Explain why you think that God promises that the land of the Philistines will one day become the possession of the people of Israel.

Sodom and Gomorrah were both completely destroyed by the Lord. Now God said that the lands of Moab and Ammon would become like those cities and would be completely destroyed. God said that this judgment would come on these two nations because of their pride. God also

said that the Ethiopians and the Assyrians would be destroyed. Nineveh would be destroyed so completely that only the wild animals would live where the city had previously been located. Again pride would be the cause of this total destruction. As we have studied the Old Testament, we have seen the pride of man judged many times. This is a warning of the dangers of pride.

19. Read Zephaniah 2:1-15 and write what the people of Nineveh were saying about themselves in their hearts.

20. Explain why the Lord warns us many times of the dangers of pride in the heart of any person or nation.

21. Explain why you think that the Lord judged pride so severely in the past and will continue to judge pride in the future.

After telling about the surrounding nations that would be judged, God goes on to give us a more detailed description of the sinful condition of Judah. Jerusalem was called a filthy and polluted city. It was given this title because the city was filled with sin and was polluted with idols. The people in the city did not listen to the voice of the Lord. They refused to be corrected when the Lord punished them for their sins. This happened because the people did not have their trust in the Lord. The people did not want to enjoy fellowship with the Lord or experience His presence in their lives.

22. Read Zephaniah 3:1-7 and write how God described the princes of the nation of Judah.

23. Explain why God chose to call the city of Jerusalem a filthy and polluted city.

24. Explain why you think that the city of Judah refused to be corrected when the Lord punished them for their sins.

In these verses we see that the princes were destroying others to get what they wanted for themselves. The judges were so greedy that they took everything that they could get and left nothing for others. The prophets that were speaking to the people were false prophets. They encouraged the people to go their own way instead of following the Lord. These false prophets were unfaithful to the Lord even though they claimed to represent Him. The priests were no better than the false prophets. They changed the meaning of the law to satisfy their own desires. Then the priests filled the temple with their evil deeds.

25. Read Zephaniah 3:1-7 and write who was in the middle of this evil nation in spite of the sins of the people.

26. Explain why the false prophets were encouraging the people to follow their own desires instead of following the Lord.

27. Explain why you think that God said that the priests that led the people in worship were no better than the false prophets.

Although the nation of Judah was very sinful, the Lord is very different. The Lord is the One that is just. He is the One that does all things right and never fails. Because God is just, He is the One that will judge the nations and destroy their power. The cities of the nations will be destroyed. The people were given the opportunity to fear the Lord and receive instruction from Him. However, the people refused to listen to the instructions of the Lord. They chose to do evil even when the Lord punished them. They had no desire to walk in the ways of the Lord.

28. Read Zephaniah 3:1-7 and write why God said that the people of Judah and Jerusalem rose up early.

29. Explain what you learn about the spiritual condition of the people of Judah from these verses.

30. Explain why you think that the people of Judah refused to listen to instruction or walk in the ways of the Lord.

After giving the reasons why Judah would be punished, God went on to tell about the things that would happen to Israel in the future during the time of the Day of the Lord. In that day the Lord will gather the nations and judge them because of the evil that they have done to the

people of Israel. In that day the nations will feel the great anger of the Lord against sin. None of those nations will be able to stand in the day when God judges them. The Lord will also do something to the language of the people that remain in that day. Their language will no longer be the same. Instead the Lord will give the people a different kind of language.

31. Read Zephaniah 3:8-20 and write what kind of a language God promises to give to the people in that day.

32. Explain why God promises that He will one day gather the nations and judge them because of the evil that they have done to the people of Israel.

33. Explain why you think that God has given the nations a long time to repent before bringing judgment on them.

After God judges the nations in the Day of the Lord, all of the people that remain on the earth will be people that have placed their trust in the Lord. The people will speak the right way because of the fact that their trust is in the Lord. The people of other nations will use their money to help the people of the nation of Israel. No longer will any of the people on the earth be proud. Instead the people that are alive in that day will all have their trust in the Lord. They will not do evil or speak lies. They will not try to deceive others. Instead the Lord will meet their needs. Here we see that there will be great changes in the hearts of the people when Christ comes to rule on the earth. People will be changed by the work of Christ in their lives.

34. Read Zephaniah 3:8-20 and write who will make the people afraid in that day.

35. Explain what the earth will be like when all of the people trust in Lord and speak in ways that are pleasing to the Lord.

36. Explain why you think that the earth will be very different when the people are no longer controlled by pride.

Throughout the history of the Jews, the people have had much fear because the people of other nations have tried to destroy them many times. However, when Christ begins His rule on the earth, the people of Israel will not be afraid any longer. This will happen because the Lord will destroy the enemies of Israel. In addition, the Lord will be living among His people. Christ will be the king of Israel as well as the king of the entire earth. As a result, the people of Israel will not see or experience evil any more in that day when Christ rules.

37. Read Zephaniah 3:8-20 and write what will be said in Jerusalem and Zion in the day that Christ reigns as King.

38. Explain what you learn about the Day of the Lord from these verses.

39. Explain how you think that the people of Israel will feel when Christ is living among His people as He rules them.

Fear is one of the things that most people experience most of the time. In fact most people are driven by fear. Just like Israel in the future, we do not need to have fear in our lives today. We know that the Lord is with us. Just like Israel, we can rest in His love. Then we will be led by the love of the Lord instead of driven by the fear of man. God promised to show His love for Israel by encouraging the sorrowful and helping the suffering. God promised to change the suffering of Israel to praise. That praise will fill every land where Israel has been treated with shame.

40. Read Zephaniah 3:8-20 and write when the Lord will make Israel a name and a praise among all of the peoples of the earth.

41. Explain what the earth will be like when all of the nations of the earth are filled with praise.

42. Explain why you are thankful in your own life that you can be led by the love of the Lord instead of driven by the fear of man.

Now reread Zephaniah 1:1-3:20 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 14

Haggai 1:1-2:23

As we come to the final three books of the Old Testament, we will be studying about the period of time after Israel returned from their captivity in Babylon. We will see that the book of Haggai gives us a real picture of the attitude of the people that had returned from Babylon to the land of Judah. This book also shows what will happen when men of God speak the Word of God to the people of God. Sometimes Christian leaders are tempted to tell the people what they want to hear instead of telling them what they need to hear from the Word of God. We will see that the book of Haggai gives us a message that all of us need to hear.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study.

By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

Explain how God disciplined His people for disobedience.

Explain what happened when Haggai gave the people a message from the Lord.

Explain what God said about the future temple.

Explain why cleansing is necessary for blessing.

As we begin our study of the book of Haggai, we see that part of the people of Judah had returned from exile in Babylon back to the city of Jerusalem. In fact the people had been back in the land of Judah for about fifteen years. The people had started to build the foundation of the temple but had stopped building when their enemies had opposed them. Instead the people were now saying that the time had not yet come to rebuild the temple. Here we see an attitude that is very common in every generation. Many Christians put off doing the work of the Lord because they are busy satisfying their own desires. They feel that they can do the work of the Lord at a later time. Their focus has become their own desires instead of the work of the Lord.

1. Read Haggai 1:1-6 and write who spoke to Haggai about this self centered attitude of the people.
2. Explain why the people of Judah had decided that it was not yet the time to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem.
3. Explain why you think that many Christians put off doing the work of the Lord because they are so busy satisfying their own desires.

Although most of the people were not interested in doing the work of the Lord by rebuilding the temple in Jerusalem, there was a small group of the people that had placed the Lord first in their lives. One of these people was Haggai. He was willing and ready to speak the Word of God to the people. The people were now living in paneled houses similar to the houses owned by rich people. They were very concerned to make fancy houses for themselves even though it meant that they were choosing not to make time to rebuild the temple of the Lord. God warned the people to consider their ways. He warned that those who were putting their own desires ahead of the will of the Lord could not be blessed by God.

4. Read Haggai 1:1-6 and write what happened when the people sowed their crops.
5. Explain why God has always preserved a small group of people that wanted to put the Lord first in their lives.
6. Explain why you think that it is important to understand that you cannot be blessed by the Lord when you put your own desires ahead of the will of the Lord.

Here we see one of the results of placing our own desires ahead of our obedience to the Lord. Regardless of what they people did, they were not satisfied. They sowed much seed but when the time of harvest came, they received very small crops. When they ate and drank, they were not satisfied. Even when they earned wages, it seemed like they were putting their money into

a bag that had holes. Today we see the same thing happening around us. Many people are not satisfied with the things that are happening in their lives. They try first one thing and then another but nothing brings them satisfaction in their lives.

7. Read Haggai 1:1-6 and write what the Lord of hosts told the people to do.

8. Explain why people cannot be satisfied with the things that they have when they put their own desires ahead of their obedience to the Lord.

9. Explain why you think that it seems like you do not have enough when you are not putting the Lord first in your life.

The Lord reminded the people of Judah again that they needed to consider their ways. God had already said that it was past the time to start to rebuild the temple. Now the Lord encouraged the people to go to the mountains and cut trees so that they would have the trees and lumber needed to rebuild the temple. God said that He would be glorified if the people would rebuild the temple. We also bring glory to the Lord when we are obedient to the will of the Lord in our own lives. The people were expecting great crops but they were receiving very little. The people were also experiencing problems when they brought their crops to their homes.

10. Read Haggai 1:7-15 and write what God did when the people brought their crops to their homes.

11. Explain why the Lord allowed the people to harvest small crops when they were expecting a great harvest.

12. Explain why you know that obedience to the Lord in your life will bring glory to the Lord.

Even when the people did gather their crops into their barns, God use the wind to destroy their barns and scatter their crops. The Lord was judging the people because they had placed their own desires ahead of the Lord. God also judged by the people by stopping the dew and the rain. As a result of the lack of water for their crops, nothing would grow properly. This lack of water affected the people and the animals as well as the crops. Here we are reminded of a principle that is emphasized throughout the Old and New Testaments. The Lord will supply our needs when the Lord is first in our lives. However, the Lord will discipline us when our own desires are more important to us than doing the will of the Lord.

13. Read Haggai 1:7-15 and write what the people did when they heard the words of Haggai.

14. Explain what these verses teach us about the fact that the Lord will sometimes use the weather to bring judgment for sin.

15. Explain why you are thankful for the fact that the Lord supplies your needs when you place the Lord first in your life.

Here we see that Haggai was willing to obey the Lord and tell the people of Judah why they were being disciplined. He showed them the importance of making obedience to the Lord the most important thing in their lives. As a result, the people became willing to obey the Lord. Here we see that the Lord will work in the hearts of people when we are willing to speak the Word of God. The people were filled with fear as they heard the words of Haggai. The Lord knew the inner attitude of the people as they listened to Haggai. As a result, the Lord immediately had a message of encouragement for the people when He saw that the people were willing to obey Him.

16. Read Haggai 1:7-15 and write the message of encouragement that the Lord had for the people.

17. Explain why it was important for Haggai to obey the Lord and tell the people of Judah why they were being judged.

18. Explain why you are thankful that the Lord does work through your life when you are willing to speak the Word of God to others.

The Lord began His work in the hearts of the people by stirring up the spirits of the leaders. Then the spirits of the people were also stirred up so that both the leaders and the people came

together to begin rebuilding the temple of the Lord. The same thing will happen today. When the leaders of any group of people will allow the Lord to work in their lives, the Lord will also work in the lives of those who follow those leaders. This places a great responsibility on the people that are in positions of leadership. We also see that when the people and the leaders all began to work together to rebuild the temple that the work went forward.

19. Read Haggai 1:7-15 and write how long Darius had been the ruler when the Lord stirred up the hearts of the people to begin working on the temple.

20. Explain why it is important for us to speak the Word of God to the people of God that He has given us to lead.

21. Explain why it is important to let the Lord work in your heart if you want to be an effective leader for the Lord.

In chapter one, the Lord used Haggai to rebuke the people because the people had chosen to build houses for themselves and failed to rebuild the temple. As we come to chapter two, the people had been working to rebuild the temple for about a month. The Lord knew that the people now needed a message of encouragement to encourage them in their work for the Lord. Some of the older people remembered the greatness of the temple that had been built by Solomon. In comparison, this new temple was very small. However the Lord wanted the people to realize that the size and appearance of the building was not the important thing.

22. Read Haggai 2:1-9 and write what the Lord said the Zerubbabel.

23. Explain why it was important for the Lord to help the people realize that the size and appearance of the temple was not the important thing.

24. Explain why you think that it is important to realize when people need to be encouraged and encourage them with the Word of God

Zerubbabel was the governor of the land of Judah. The Lord now encouraged the governor, the high priest and the people to be strong because the Lord was with them. Today we can also be strong as Christians as we do the work of the Lord because we also know that the Lord is with us. God had promised the people of Israel that He would never break His promises that He had made to them when they came out of the land of Egypt. The Lord will always keep all of the promises that He has made to those who have placed their trust in Him. This means that those who trust in the Lord do not need to be afraid or fearful. Even when things may look very difficult to us, the Lord will change things in a very little while.

25. Read Haggai 2:1-9 and write what the Lord promised that He would do in the future to all nations.

26. Explain why it will help people to be strong when they realize that the Lord is with them.

27. Explain why you think that people are strengthened when they are reminded of the various ways that the Lord has worked in the past.

The Lord spoke to the people through Haggai and promised to shake the heavens, the earth, the sea, the dry land and all of the nations of the earth in just a little while. The Lord said that when that shaking came that the Lord would cause the people of all nations to come to the temple and worship Him. The Lord said that in that day that the temple would again be filled with the glory of the Lord. The Lord also promised that in that day the glory of the temple will be much greater than it was during the temple of Solomon. In that day the Lord will make the temple a place of peace because He is the Prince of Peace.

28. Read Haggai 2:1-9 and write to whom the silver and the gold belong.

29. Explain what these verses teach us about the future greatness of the glory of the temple in that day.

30. Explain why you are thankful for the fact that the Lord promises that a day will come in the future when people of all nations will come to Jerusalem to worship the Lord.

The Lord also wanted to show the people of Jerusalem what they needed to do if they wanted to experience the blessing of the Lord. The Lord told Haggai that he should ask the priests certain

questions in order to teach this lesson to them. First Haggai asked the priests if food or other things would become holy just because they touched something holy. Of course the answer was no. Then Haggai asked if these same things would become unclean if they touched something that was unclean. The priests answered that a thing would become unclean if it was touched by something unclean. After asking these questions, Haggai was prepared to tell the people why they were not enjoying the blessing of the Lord.

31. Read Haggai 2:10-23 and write what the things that the people were offering to the Lord were like.

32. Explain why it is important for all people to realize that nothing can become holy just by touching something that is holy.

33. Explain why you think that it is important for us to realize that our lives must be cleansed of sin if we want to experience the blessing of the Lord.

The people had allowed sin to remain in their lives. They could not become clean just because they brought their sacrifices to the Lord. Instead the people were causing their sacrifices to become unclean. This was happening because the people were not right in their hearts with the Lord. They were allowing unconfessed sin to remain in their lives. It did no good to have an outward show of religion when the hearts were not right with God. That was the reason why the people were not experiencing the blessing of the Lord. In the same way we cannot expect the blessing of the Lord if our hearts are not right with the Lord.

34. Read Haggai 2:10-23 and write what the Lord promised to do from that day because the people had placed Him first in their lives.

35. Explain why God said that the people were causing their sacrifices to become unclean because the people were not right in their hearts with the Lord.

36. Explain why you think that the Lord continues to emphasize the importance of having a right heart attitude with the Lord.

Today many Christians are not experiencing the blessing of the Lord in their lives. The reason is the same reason why the people of Jerusalem were not experiencing blessing. We cannot be blessed by the Lord as long as we allow unconfessed sin to remain in our lives. We will not experience inner joy or peace. Nothing that we do in our own strength will bring true happiness and satisfaction. That is why it is important to confess our sins so that we can experience the cleansing that the Lord promises us in I John 1:9. Only when we make Christ first in our lives will we experience His peace.

37. Read Haggai 2:10-23 and write what the Lord told the people to do before they laid a single stone for the foundation of the temple.

38. Explain why it is impossible for people to do things in their own strength that will bring true happiness and satisfaction.

39. Explain why you think that we need to confess our sins to the Lord as soon as we realize that we have sinned so that we can continue to experience His peace.

The Lord also had a personal promise for Zerubbabel, the governor. God said that He would destroy the armies and nations of the people that opposed His chosen people. The Lord said that this would happen in the day when the Lord shakes the heavens and the earth. The Lord promised that He would destroy the strength of those nations. In that day the Lord promised to make Zerubbabel as a signet. A signet was the ring of the person that was the king. This is actually a promise that Christ would come from the family of Zerubbabel. In Matthew and Luke we see that Zerubbabel is mentioned in the family line of Christ.

40. Read Haggai 2:10-23 and write why the Lord said that He made this promise to Zerubbabel.

41. Explain why it is important to understand that Zerubbabel was promised that Christ would come from his family.

42. Explain why you think that the Lord said that He will destroy the strength of the nations in the day that He shakes the heavens and the earth.

Reread Haggai 1:1-2:23 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 15

Zechariah 1:1-3:10

The books of Haggai and Zechariah were written very close to the same time. Although the book of Zechariah is not a very long book, it tells us many things about both the first and the second comings of Christ to this earth. This book also tells us much about the future of the nation of Israel. The first six chapters give us a series of eight visions. The Lord gave these visions to Zechariah to bring comfort to the people of Jerusalem. These visions remind us that God still has a future for His chosen people, the nation of Israel. God will never forget the nation that He chose but will fulfill all of the promises that He made to Abraham.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Tell about the warning that the Lord gave to the people.
- Explain the vision of the man on the red horse.
- Explain the vision of the man with the measuring line.
- Explain how the nation of Israel will serve as the priests of God.

The Lord began the book of Zechariah with a warning to the nation of Israel. As we have studied the Old Testament, we have seen how the nation of Israel turned away from the Lord many times. God begins this book by telling the people that lived in Jerusalem at the time of Zechariah that He had been very unhappy with their fathers. Because God is a holy God, He has a perfect hatred for sin although He loves the sinner with a great love. As a result, the Lord can never be pleased with sin in the lives of His people. This is the reason why the book of Zechariah begins with a warning to the people to turn from their sin. The Lord begged the people to return to Him.

1. Read Zechariah 1:1-6 and write what God promised the people He would do if they would return to Him.
2. Explain why it is important to understand that God hates sin but He loves the sinner that is committing the sin.
3. Explain why you think that it is important in your own life to love sinners even though you do not love the sins that they are committing.

The Lord has a great desire to see people turn from their sin and turn back to Him. In fact the Lord is always waiting for people to turn to Him and place their trust in Him. God gave a promise that He will turn to His people when they turn to Him. Then God described why the fathers of the people had been judged. The Lord had sent prophets to warn the people to turn from their evil ways. However, the people refused to listen to the prophets that the Lord had sent to them. Instead they had rejected the message of the Lord. This was the reason why it had become necessary for the Lord to judge the nation that He had chosen.

4. Read Zechariah 1:1-6 and write the question that the Lord asked the people about their fathers.
5. Explain why it was important for the people to have the promise of God that He would turn to His people when they turned to Him.
6. Explain why you think that the Lord had previously sent many prophets to warn Israel and Judah to turn from their evil ways.

The fathers had died because they had rejected the message of the prophets that the Lord had sent to them. Now the prophets that had brought this message of warning to the people were also gone. However, the people could look around them and see what had happened because their fathers had rejected the message of God. The people could see that the Lord had kept His

promise to judge their fathers when the people refused to return to the Lord. Now the people that were living in the time of Zechariah were faced with a choice. They could return to the Lord and obey Him or they could expect the Lord to bring further judgment.

7. Read Zechariah 1:1-6 and write what the fathers had not done with the words and statutes of the Lord.

8. Explain why the Lord warned the people to turn from their evil ways and return to Him instead.

9. Explain why you think that God wanted the people to understand that He had only brought judgment on their fathers after the fathers rejected the message of God.

The Lord gave Zechariah eight visions to encourage the people that lived in the city of Jerusalem. In the first vision, a man came riding a red horse. Behind that horse there were other horses that were red, sorrel and white that followed the red horse. The rider on the red horse was the Lord. Zechariah asked the angel to explain the various things that he saw in the vision. Because of the time when this vision was given, we know that the people of Israel were scattered among the nations. Although Israel was scattered, God had not forgotten His people. We see that the riders on the other horses were to walk through various parts of the earth.

10. Read Zechariah 1:7-21 and write what these riders found as they rode about the earth.

11. Explain why the Lord had scattered the people of Israel and Judah among the nations of the world.

12. Explain why you think that God had not forgotten His people even though they were scattered among the nations.

Here we see the love of the Lord for the people that He had chosen. It had been necessary for God to judge the nation of Israel because of their sin. However, the Lord still showed His concern for His people by watching over them in all of the places where they had been scattered. The angel asked God when He was going to show mercy to the city of Jerusalem. God answered the angel by giving a message that provided real comfort to the people that lived in Jerusalem. Just as God was concerned about the people of Israel that were scattered among the nations, God had this same great concern for the people in the city of Jerusalem.

13. Read Zechariah 1:7-21 and write how the Lord expressed His concern for Jerusalem and the people of Jerusalem.

14. Explain why it is important to understand that God has been watching over the Jews in all of the nations where they have been scattered to keep them from being completely destroyed.

15. Explain why you think that God is still concerned for the Jews and is watching over them wherever they are in the world.

God had a very great concern for the city of Jerusalem and its people. He was very unhappy with the way that the nations had treated Jerusalem. As a result, the Lord promised that He would show mercy to the city of Jerusalem. God promised that the temple would be rebuilt in the city. The Lord is always anxious to show mercy to His people when they are ready to put Him first in their lives. In addition, God promised that He would bless all of the cities of Judah. The Lord would give comfort to Zion. Jerusalem was still the chosen city of God.

16. Read Zechariah 1:7-21 and write what Zechariah saw in his next vision.

17. Explain why God reminded the people of Jerusalem that the city of Jerusalem was still the chosen city of God.

18. Explain why you think that the Lord is always anxious to show mercy to His people when they place Him first in their lives.

The Lord gave Zechariah a vision of four horns. When Zechariah saw these four horns, he asked the angel what these horns were. The angel answered that the four horns were the nations that had scattered the people of God and would continue to scatter the people of God. These four world empires that scattered Israel were the empires of Babylon, Persia, Greece and Rome.

God also showed Zechariah the four workmen that God said He would use to judge the four empires that had scattered the people of Judah. Although these empires had made the people of the Lord suffer, God promised that these empires would be judged.

19. Read Zechariah 1:7-21 and write what God said that the four workmen would do.

20. Explain what lessons you learn from these first two visions.

21. Explain why you think that the Lord said that He would judge the four world empires that had scattered the people of Judah.

In chapter one the Lord said that He would stretch out a line upon the city of Jerusalem. As we come to chapter two, we have a vision of a man with a measuring line in his hand. God had sent this angel to measure the length and the width of the city of Jerusalem. In this vision the Lord was showing the people that the city of Jerusalem would one day be completely rebuilt. God also gave a great promise about the future of the city of Jerusalem. The Lord said that the city would outgrow its wall so that people and animals would live outside the city walls.

22. Read Zechariah 2:1-13 and write what kind of a wall the Lord promised to be to the city of Jerusalem in that day.

23. Explain why it was important for the people of Jerusalem to know that one day their city would be completely rebuilt.

24. Explain why you think that God promised that the city of Jerusalem would outgrow the wall of their city.

Here we see that the promises that the Lord made about the city of Jerusalem have not yet been fulfilled. God protected His people from the Egyptians by a pillar of fire when the people of Israel came out of the land of Egypt. Here we see that God promises that the day will come when He will protect the city of Jerusalem in the same way. In that day the glory of the Lord will be in the middle of the city. Here the Lord warned the people of Israel to flee from the land of Babylon and return to the land of Judah. God was going to judge the city of Babylon because of what the people of Babylon had done to the people of God.

25. Read Zechariah 2:1-13 and write what Babylon had done when Babylon made the people of God suffer.

26. Explain why God warned the people to flee from the city of Babylon and return to the land of Judah.

27. Explain why you think that Jerusalem will be like when the glory of the Lord is in the center of the city.

Here we see a phrase that speaks of the love of the Lord for the nation of Israel. The apple of His eye spoke of the people that the Lord greatly loved. God was going to punish the nations that had made the people of Israel suffer so that the nations would know that Israel was the chosen nation of God. God also had a message of joy for the people of Israel. The people could be filled with joy because the Lord promised that He would come and live among His people. This is a promise about the future when Christ will rule on the earth. We read that many nations will be joined to the Lord in that day when Christ rules.

28. Read Zechariah 2:1-13 and write what the Lord promised to do with Jerusalem in the future.

29. Explain what it means when it says that Israel is the apple of God's eye.

30. Explain why you think that God said that many nations would be joined to the Lord in the day when Christ rules.

In the day when Christ rules on the earth, all of the nations will serve the Lord. Christ will rule the entire earth from the city of Jerusalem. He will live among His people in that day. The people will also serve the Lord in that day when He lives among them. The Lord will choose Jerusalem as the city where He will rule just as He chose that city originally. As we realize what the Lord is going to do for the nation of Israel, we see that God has not forgotten the nation that He chose in the time of Abraham. He will keep His promises to Abraham.

31. Read Zechariah 3:1-10 and write the name of the high priest that Zechariah saw in the next vision.
32. Explain what the city of Jerusalem will be like when the people of the city are all serving the Lord.
33. Explain why you think that it is important that the Lord has promised to live among His people in the future.

God had shown Zechariah that there was still a future for the nation of Israel. However, the nation must be cleansed before God could bless Israel. This cleansing had to begin with the high priest because he was the spiritual leader of the people. As the high priest stood before the Lord, Satan was also there to accuse him. The Lord said that He would rebuke Satan because the Lord was the One that had chosen Jerusalem. In the same way we can look to the Lord to answer when Satan tries to accuse us. Here we see that God was going to rescue Israel from the judgment because God still has a future plan for the nation of Israel.

34. Read Zechariah 3:1-10 and write what kind of clothing Joshua was wearing in this passage.
35. Explain why the God said that the cleansing of Israel must begin with the high priest because he was the spiritual leader of the people.
36. Explain why you think that it is important to realize that the Lord will speak for us when Satan tries to accuse us.

Here Joshua gives us a picture of the spiritual condition of Israel as well as the spiritual condition of all people before they placed their trust in Christ. However, we are also told how to be cleansed of our filthy condition. The Lord is the One that must cleanse people from their sin. The Lord said that He would clothe Joshua in new clothing so that he would be pure as he stood before the Lord. After the Lord had clothed Joshua with new clothes, the Lord told him to walk in the ways of the Lord. The Lord promised Joshua that he would be blessed as he continued to walk in the ways of the Lord.

37. Read Zechariah 3:1-10 and write how quickly the Lord said that He would remove the iniquity of the land.
38. Explain what you learn about the importance of both personal and national cleansing of sin from these verses.
39. Explain why it is important for you in your own life to understand that the Lord clothed you with a robe of righteousness when you placed your trust in Him.

This need for cleansing did not happen in the time of Zechariah. God goes on to give the time that this cleansing will happen in the lives of the Jewish priesthood. This cleansing will happen at the time when Christ comes to rule the earth. Christ is the One that is the true servant. He is also called the BRANCH. In addition, Christ is also called the stone. Christ left heaven to become the suffering servant. That is what made it possible for us to have life through His death and resurrection. Finally we see that He is our foundation. When Christ comes to rule on this earth, He will remove the sin of the land and give peace to the people.

40. Read Zechariah 3:1-10 and write who the people will call their neighbors in that day when Christ rules.
41. Explain why it is important to know that Christ is the One that is the true servant.
42. Explain what it means to you in your own life to know that Christ is your foundation.

Reread Zechariah 1:1-3:10 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 16

Zechariah 4:1-7:14

In our last lesson we mentioned that the first half of the book of Zechariah contains a series of eight visions that the Lord gave to Zechariah. We studied a few of those visions. Today we will be studying several more of those visions. The purpose of these visions was to help the people of Jerusalem realize that God had not forgotten the people of Judah. Even though it was necessary for the Lord to punish His people because of their sin, God still loved His people with an unchanging love. Today we will be learning the meaning of several of the messages that were given to comfort the people that were living in the city of Jerusalem.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study.

By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain the vision of the golden lampstand and the two olive trees.
- Explain the vision of the flying scroll.
- Explain the vision of the four chariots.
- Explain what the Lord said about fasting with a wrong attitude.

In the last chapter that we studied, we saw that the Lord promised to cleanse the priest so that he could perform his ministry of leading the people in the worship of God. As we come to this chapter we see that the Lord spoke about the one that was the governor of the nation of Judah. God began this message for Zerubbabel by giving Zechariah a vision of a golden lampstand with two olive trees beside the lampstand. The golden lampstand had seven branches with a lamp on the end of each of the seven branches. Each of the lamps had seven pipes that supplied oil for the light. The angel asked Zechariah if he understood the meaning of this vision. Zechariah said that he did not understand the meaning of the vision and so he asked the angel to explain the meaning of the vision to him so that he could understand.

1. Read Zechariah 4:1-14 and write how the Lord said Zerubbabel would receive strength in his life.
2. Explain why the Lord gave these various visions to encourage the people of Judah.
3. Explain why you think that God had a message for both the spiritual leader and the political leader of the nation of Judah.

Zerubbabel was the governor of the people of Judah. He had been working for many years to try and lead the people to rebuild the temple. Now the Lord told Zerubbabel how the work of the Lord must be done. Zerubbabel learned that he could not depend on human strength or power to do the work of the Lord. Such a dependence on human strength would only lead to additional failures. In order to do the work of the Lord, it is necessary to depend on the Holy Spirit instead of our own human efforts. Just as this was the key to success for Zerubbabel and the people of Judah, this is also the key for success in our own lives. We are promised that we will have victory as we depend on the power of the Holy Spirit.

4. Read Zechariah 4:1-14 and write who God said would finish the temple that Zerubbabel had started.
5. Explain how verse six of this chapter applies to your own life.
6. Explain why you think that it is necessary for us to depend on the Holy Spirit instead of our own strength to do the work of the Lord.

The Lord promised that the Holy Spirit would give Zerubbabel victory over all of the problems that he faced as he was building the temple. Because the Lord is the One that has all power and strength, the Lord could promise Zerubbabel that he would be the person that finished the temple just as he had started the building. God also warned that we are not to despise the day of

small things. Even though something may seem small, it is not for us to question the way that the Lord is working. God said that the lamp would be a witness to the whole earth. This is actually a promise that God would use Israel to be a witness to the entire earth.

7. Read Zechariah 4:1-14 and write what kind of oil the two olive trees gave.

8. Explain why the Lord often chooses to work in ways that people cannot understand through human understanding.

9. Explain why you think that the Lord warns us that we are not to despise the day of small things.

Here we see that God goes on to explain the purpose of the two olive trees. God said that the two olive trees are two witnesses. These trees empty the golden oil out of themselves. These trees were to use their lives to present the ministry of the Holy Spirit to the world. The witness of Joshua, the high priest, and Zerubbabel, the governor, were a testimony of the fact that Christ would be the great witness to the entire world. They represent the fact that Christ is both our Great High Priest and also the King of kings. As we live in this world, we are also to let the Holy Spirit work through our lives as we present Christ to the world around us.

10. Read Zechariah 4:1-14 and write where the Lord said that the anointed ones would stand.

11. Explain why it is important for every follower of the Lord to understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit to the world.

12. Explain why you think that it is important to know that Christ is both our Great High Priest and also the King of Kings.

In the next vision Zechariah saw a flying scroll. This scroll was fifteen feet by thirty feet in size. That was almost the exact size of the holy place in the original tabernacle that was built in the wilderness. God used this size for a purpose. This scroll was to tell of the curses that are on all people as a result of their sin. Here we see that every person is responsible for his own sin. God used two laws to summarize the entire Ten Commandments. In this passage God spoke first of the part of the Ten Commandments that deals with man's relationship to other men. God then spoke secondly about the part of the law that deals with man's relationship to God. Those who are guilty of sin either against other people or against God will be destroyed along with all that belongs to them.

13. Read Zechariah 5:1-11 and write what Zechariah saw in the next vision.

14. Explain why the Lord used this scroll to tell the people the curses that are on all people as a result of sin.

15. Explain why you think that it is important for every person to realize that he or she is guilty before God because of personal sin.

An ephah (basket) was the size of the largest measuring basket that the people of Israel and Judah used in the time of Zechariah. It was a little larger than a bushel basket. In this vision we see that God is still speaking of judgment. In the first part of the chapter, God warned that people would be personally judged for their own sins. Here we see that the sins of the people were very many. The Lord warned that all forms of sin would be gathered together and judged. This basket was a picture of the gathering together of all of those sins. When the lid of the ephah basket was lifted, God showed Zechariah a woman that He said was a picture of wickedness.

16. Read Zechariah 5:1-11 and write what came to carry the ephah basket away.

17. Explain why all people will be personally judged for their own sins unless they accept the payment of Christ for their sins.

18. Explain why you think that the Lord used the largest measuring basket to show that the sins of the people are very many.

God showed Zechariah two women. God had equipped these two women with wings so that they could fly while they carried the ephah basket away. Zechariah immediately asked the Lord

where the two women were taking the ephah. God replied that the ephah basket was to be taken to the land of Shinar where a house would be built for it. Shinar (Babylonia) was the place where the Tower of Babel was built in the book of Genesis. Here God shows that He will one day remove sin from the land of Israel and send it to the place of judgment. Just as God judged the people at the Tower of Babel, there will be a future judgment for all those who reject the gift of God which is eternal life.

19. Read Zechariah 5:1-11 and write what the wings of these two women were like.

20. Explain what these verses teach about the judgment of sin.

21. Explain why you think that God said that the basket full of sins would be taken to the land of Shinar.

As we come to the last of the eight visions, we see that Zechariah saw four chariots that were being pulled by horses of different colors. God said that these horses and chariots are the four spirits of the heavens. As we read about these four spirits that are pictured as horses in other books of the Bible, we see that they are messengers of judgment. They are the ones that will judge the Gentile nations before Christ comes back to rule the earth for a thousand years. The final group of horses walked from place to place throughout the earth. This is a warning that war and bloodshed will be present throughout the earth in the time of the judgment.

22. Read Zechariah 6:1-15 and write what those who went toward the north country accomplished.

23. Explain why these visions help you to understand that there will be war and bloodshed throughout the earth until Christ returns to rule the earth,

24. Explain why you think that God showed Zechariah that the Gentile nations would be judged before Christ comes back to rule the earth.

The angels of God that He sends out to bring judgment will accomplish His purpose of judging the nations of the earth. The Lord told Zechariah to go to the house of Josiah and place silver and gold crowns on the head of Joshua. Joshua was the son of the high priest of Judah at that time. Here we see that God was using Joshua as a symbol of Christ and His work after the judgment of the nations. Zechariah obeyed the Lord and went and placed the crowns of gold and silver on the head of Joshua. We also see that three men that had just returned from Babylon to Jerusalem went with Zechariah to place these crowns on the head of Joshua.

25. Read Zechariah 6:1-15 and write what name is given to Christ in these verses.

26. Explain why the Lord had Zechariah use Joshua as a symbol of Christ and His work after the judgment of the nations.

27. Explain why you think that the Lord used this way to teach about the rule of Christ on this earth.

When Christ comes to rule on this earth, He will be both Priest and King. This was the reason for the two crowns. Christ is the One that will rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. However, Christ will not rebuild the temple alone. We see that even the nations that are far away will also come to help rebuild the temple of the Lord. Christ is the One that will then sit on the throne in Jerusalem and rule as both the Priest and the King. The fact that the nations will come to Jerusalem and help to rebuild the temple is a promise that all of the nations will serve the Lord in that day. They will help in the building of the temple as a part of their desire to serve the Lord. In that day all of the people will know that Christ is the Lord of hosts.

28. Read Zechariah 6:1-15 and write the ministry that Christ will carry out as He sits on the throne.

29. Explain what you learn about the ministry of Christ when He rules the earth from these verses.

30. Explain why you think that it is important to understand that the nations will all join in helping to rebuild the temple.

One day a group of Jews came to Jerusalem to ask the priests and the prophets some questions about fasting. The Jews had begun to observe four different fasts as a result of the destruction of Jerusalem. The people of Judah had observed these fasts throughout the seventy years that they were captives in the land of Babylon. Now these men wanted to know if the people should continue to observe these fasts now that part of the people of Judah had returned to the city of Jerusalem. Here we see that the people were observing these fasts as a duty and not because of their sorrow for their sin. We see that these fasts had nothing to do with their spiritual life.

31. Read Zechariah 7:1-14 and write what the Lord asked the people about their fasting during the seventy years in Babylon.

32. Explain why the people wanted to know if they needed to continue to observe these various fasts.

33. Explain why you think that many people begin to do things as a religious duty instead of as an act of worship to God.

The Lord knew the inner attitudes of the people. He knew that the people had not been fasting because of their sorrow for their sin. Instead the people had fasted to try and prove to the Lord that they were righteous. Their fast meant nothing because the people did not have a right attitude toward the Lord. Today many people are doing the same kind of thing that the Jews were doing in that day. They attend church regularly to make other people think that they are good. However, they have a wrong inner attitude toward the Lord and so they actually have an empty religion. They can be no true worship when any person has wrong inner attitudes.

34. Read Zechariah 7:1-14 and write what the Lord told the people that they needed to do instead of just observe fasts.

35. Explain why God says that acts that people do to try and show that they are righteous have no value.

36. Explain why you think that many religious people today perform religious activities that mean nothing because they have wrong inner attitudes toward the Lord.

The people could not understand why God did not answer their prayers even though the people were fasting. As a result, the Lord told they people why their prayers were not being answered. The people were not showing love and mercy to others. They were taking advantage of those who had no one to protect them. The people were planning evil in their hearts. They refused to listen to the words of the Lord. Their hearts were as hard as stone. The people did not want to obey the law of God. They refused to listen to the prophets that God sent to speak to them. Instead they plugged their ears instead of listening to the prophets.

37. Read Zechariah 7:1-14 and write how the people had made their hearts toward the words that the Lord had sent to the people by the former prophets.

38. Explain what God thinks of the fasting of people when those people have a wrong heart attitude.

39. Explain why you think that it is important to help people realize that when they have right heart attitudes toward the Lord that they will show love and mercy to others.

The Lord sent judgment on the people because of their rebellion against Him. In fact the Lord had brought great wrath on the people because of their continuing rebellion against Him.

Because the people refused to listen to the commandments of the Lord, He refused to listen to their prayers when they cried to Him for help. Instead God had scattered the people of Israel and Judah among the nations. Only a small part of the people had returned to their own land. The Lord had made their land an empty land because of the sins of the people.

40. Read Zechariah 7:1-14 and write what happened to the pleasant land.

41. Explain why God said that the continuing rebellion of the people was shown by the fact that they refused to listen to the commandments of the Lord.

42. Explain why you think that the Lord said that He will not listen to the prayers of those who refuse to obey His commandments.

Reread Zechariah 4:1-7:14 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 17

Zechariah 8:1-11:17

As we concluded our last lesson, we saw the reasons why the people of Israel and Judah had been scattered among the nations of the earth. However, that scattering did not mean that the Lord had forgotten the people of Israel. Instead we see that God had been punishing the people of Israel so that the people would return to Him. The day will soon come when the people of Israel will return to the Lord as an entire group of people. Today we will be studying about some of the ways that the Lord will bless the nation of Israel when the people return to the Lord.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study.

By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain why the people are encouraged to listen to the prophets.
- Explain what God promises about future deliverance for His people.
- Explain how God says He will strengthen His people.
- Tell what you learn about Christ.

God has such a great love for the people of Israel that He was filled with anger as He saw the way that the nations have done evil to His chosen people. Throughout history since the time of Zechariah the nations have continued to do evil to the people of Israel. As a result, the Lord speaks of the way that He is going to bless Israel when they return to Him as if that has already happened. The Lord promises that the day will come when He will live in the city of Jerusalem and that city will be called the city of truth. It will be a city set apart for God. Because the city will be controlled by the Lord, both the old and the young people will be safe in the streets. People will be amazed as they see the Lord bringing the people of Israel back to the land from both the east and the west.

1. Read Zechariah 8:1-23 and write to whom the people will belong when they return to the land.
2. Explain why it is important to understand that the city of Jerusalem will one day be called the city of truth.
3. Explain why you think that the Lord is filled with anger as He sees the way that the nations have done evil to His chosen people.

Because God wants to bless His people, He encourages them to hear the words that He is speaking to them. The Lord was speaking to the people through the prophets. At the very time the people were rebuilding the temple, God had sent the prophets to encourage the people as they built the temple. God said that He was the One that had punished the people. Now He would be the One that would bless them. God said that He would again cause the dew to fall so that the ground would produce rich crops. God was going to save and bless His people.

4. Read Zechariah 8:12-23 and write what God said about the hands of the people as He spoke to them.
5. Explain why it is important to understand that the way that God chose to speak to the people of Israel was through the prophets.
6. Explain why you think that the God used the prophets to encourage the people that were rebuilding the temple.

Here we see that anyone that is doing the will of the Lord does not need to be afraid because the Lord will provide strength. He will give strength to the hands of the people that are trusting in Him. Just as God had done evil to Jerusalem when the people continued in sin, God said that He now planned to do good to the people of the city. God encouraged the people to speak the

truth and do what was right. He warned them against planning to do evil to their neighbors. The people were also warned not to speak false oaths because God hates all forms of evil. After telling the people what they should do, God then answered the question that the people had asked about fasting back in chapter seven.

7. Read Zechariah 8:1-23 and write what God said should replace the fasts that the people had been observing.
8. Explain why it is important to know that we do not need to be fearful or afraid when we are doing the will of the Lord.
9. Explain why you think that is also important for us to encourage people to speak the truth and do what is right if they want to be blessed by the Lord.

When the hearts of people are right with God, then they can be filled with joy and happiness. As a result, God said that they would experience a feast of joy instead of fasting. The Lord also went on to tell the people what will happen to the city of Jerusalem in the future. The people of all nations will want to come to Jerusalem to pray to the Lord. Men of all nations will want to go with the Jews because they will realize that the Lord is with the Jews. Jerusalem will become the center of worship for the entire earth in the future. This will happen when the Lord completes His judgments and the people return to the Lord.

10. Read Zechariah 8:1-23 and write what the people of other nations will say to the Jews in the day when Jerusalem becomes the center of worship for the entire earth.
11. Explain why the Lord said that the fasts that the people had been observing would be replaced with feasts.
12. Explain why it is important to you in your own life to gather together with other people to pray to the Lord.

As we come to chapter nine, we see that the Lord predicted the way that Greece under the leadership of Alexander the Great would defeat the cities that surrounded Judah. Damascus and the cities surrounding it are mentioned first. This is followed by the description of the destruction of the cities of Tyre and Sidon. Tyre was a very rich city that had silver and gold as plentiful as the dust. However, God said that Tyre would be destroyed by fire and the city would be pushed into the sea. The Lord also promised destruction for the cities of the Philistines. God did say that those who lived in the cities of the Philistines would put their trust in the Lord at a later day. This gives us a picture of the mercy of God.

13. Read Zechariah 9:1-17 and write how the king of Jerusalem would one day enter the city of Jerusalem.
14. Explain why God told how the army of Greece would defeat the cities that surrounded the land of Judah.
15. Explain why you think that God said that He would judge the cities and lands that surrounded the land of Judah.

Alexander the Great was going to be used by the Lord to bring destruction and judgment on the nations that surrounded the land of Judah and the city of Jerusalem. However, the first coming of Christ would be just the opposite. Christ would come as the One that was just and righteous. He would also come to provide salvation. As Christ came into the city of Jerusalem several hundred years later, He came in peace riding on the back of a young donkey. Just as Christ came in peace, He will one day provide peace for His chosen people. The Lord will destroy all of the weapons of war and will rule the entire earth from one end to the other. After promising this future peace, God again returned to the subject of war.

16. Read Zechariah 9:1-17 and write how the sons of Zion would be in the battle against Greece.
17. Explain why it is important that when Christ came the first time that He came to the earth as the One that is just and righteous.
18. Explain why you think that Christ chose to ride into the city of Jerusalem on a young

donkey when He came the first time.

During the time between the end of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New Testament, the nation of Greece gained control of the land of Judah. However, God promised His people in advance that He would strengthen them and give them victory over the army of Greece. This happened during the time of the Maccabees. The Lord also told the people that they would not win this battle in their own strength. The Lord was the One that was going to defend them and give them joy in their victory. Here is an important lesson for our own lives. We need to be very careful that we do not try to take the credit for the blessings that the Lord gives us.

19. Read Zechariah 9:1-17 and write how the Lord said that He would save the people in that day when Greece came against them.

20. Explain why we should thank the Lord for all of the blessings that He gives us in our lives and not try to take the credit ourselves.

21. Explain why you think that it is important to give the Lord all of the credit for the blessings that He brings into our lives.

The Lord went on to encourage the people of Judah to pray to Him and ask Him to supply their needs. The Lord was anxious to give the people of Judah that rain so that their crops would grow. He wanted to supply both their physical and their spiritual needs. However, God warned the people not to return to the idols that they had followed or to the people that told lies. It was due to the fact that the people were following idols that God had judged His people at an earlier time. At that time the Lord had punished both the leaders and the people. Just as God had judged His people, He now told them that He wanted to bless His people and give them victory over all of their enemies.

22. Read Zechariah 10:1-12 and write what kind of men God said that the people would be like in that day when they trusted Him.

23. Explain why it had been necessary for the Lord to judge the people when they had chosen to follow idols.

24. Explain why you think that the Lord wanted to supply both the physical and the spiritual needs of the people of Judah.

Here we see that the Lord went on to talk about a time that is still future for the nation of Israel. This is shown by the fact that God promises that He will make the people as though they had never been taken out of the land. Although there was a short time when Israel was free from the control of other nations, most of the people were still scattered in other lands. God also promises that there will be other blessings in the day that He makes the people as though they had never been taken out of the land. God says that in that day the people will increase as they increased during the time that the nation of Israel was in the land of Egypt.

25. Read Zechariah 10:1-12 and write where the people will be when they remember the Lord.

26. Explain why the people of Israel will be filled with joy when the Lord makes the people as though they had never been taken out of the land.

27. Explain why you think that the Lord continued to promise the people of Israel that there is still a future for them.

Even though God had scattered His people among the nations, God said that He would cause His people to increase. Here God said that the day will come when the people will remember Him in the countries where they have been scattered. Then the Lord promises to regather them and bring them back to the land of Lebanon and Gilead. Here is another indication that this regathering is still future. Gilead is the land east of the Jordan River and it has not yet been repossessed by the nation of Israel. God also promised that He will remove all hindrances so that it will be easy for the people to return to the land. God also promises that He will strengthen the people when they all begin to serve Him.

28. Read Zechariah 10:1-12 and write what the Lord promises to do when the people walk up and down in His name.
29. Explain what you learn from this chapter about the future regathering of the nation of Israel.
30. Explain why you think that God promised that the day will come when He will remove all hindrances so that it will be easy for the people to come back to the land.

Here we see that God has promised the people of Israel that one day He will regather the entire nation of Israel. However, the Lord goes on to tell the people of Israel that there will be great judgment before the time of regathering comes. God began to describe this picture of great judgment by picturing the destruction of the trees. God said that all of the trees would be destroyed from the north end of the land to the south end of the land. God also said that there will be great sorrow among the leaders of the people. The reason for this sorrow will be the destruction of their glory and their power.

31. Read Zechariah 11:1-17 and write what God said will happen to the pride of the Jordan.
32. Explain why God warned the people of Israel that judgment must come before there would be a regathering of the people.
33. Explain why you think that God said that this great destruction would include the removal of all of the trees throughout the land.

God said that He would destroy the pride of the people because of their sin. God said that He would show no pity when He destroyed their pride. Instead God said that He would deliver the people to their enemies. However, the Lord promised to feed the poor and the humble of the flock that had their trust in Him. God said that He would have two sticks (staves) as He fed the flock. In the land of Israel the shepherds normally had two sticks as they cared for the flocks. One stick was used to protect the sheep from wild animals while the other was used to rescue the sheep that got into trouble. Here we see that God promises to provide both protection and help to His sheep.

34. Read Zechariah 11:1-17 and write what these sticks are called.
35. Explain why pride is such a destructive sin that God said that He would show no pity when He destroyed their pride.
36. Explain why it is important for you to understand that the Lord provides both protection and help to all those who follow Him.

We go on to see why God said that judgment was going to come on the nation of Israel. God said that this judgment would come on the people because of their rejection of Christ when He came the first time. In fact God said that the people would have such a low value of Christ that they would sell Him for thirty pieces of silver. That was the price of an injured slave. As a result, God said that He would no longer protect the people from the enemies that surrounded them. God also said that He would no longer help the people when they were in need. God said that this judgment would last until the time came when the people returned to Him.

37. Read Zechariah 11:1-17 and write to where Christ said the money that was paid for the betrayal of Christ would be cast.
38. Explain why God broke the sticks (staves) that were called Beauty and Bands.
39. Explain why you think that Christ was betrayed for the price that was normally paid for an injured slave.

Since the people did not want to have the Lord as their shepherd, God said that He would allow a foolish shepherd to rule over them. This is a warning about the antichrist that will come in his own name in the future. He will not come to help the people that are in need. Instead this foolish shepherd will come to destroy. He will tear the people in his efforts to destroy them. He will set himself up as an idol. He will leave the flock because he does not care for the people of Israel. Even his looks as he looks at the people will be for the purpose of destruction.

40. Read Zechariah 11:1-17 and write what his right eye will be like.

41. Explain what this passage teaches about what the antichrist will do to the Jews in the future.
42. Explain why you think that the antichrist will have such a great hatred against the Jews when he rules.

Reread Zechariah 8:1-11:17 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets
Lesson 18
Zechariah 12:1-14:21

In our last lesson we saw that the Lord promised that there is still a future for the nation of Israel. We saw that God promised that one day He will regather His people from all of the nations where they have been scattered. Today we will be learning some additional things that will happen to Israel in the future. The enemies of God will try to destroy the nation of Israel. However, God will protect His people so that they will not be destroyed. God will also pour out His Spirit upon the nation of Israel. Once the Lord has cleansed His people, Christ will return to be their ruler.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study.

By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

- Explain how the Lord will deliver His chosen nation.
- Explain why the false prophets will be ashamed.
- Explain what this book teaches about the return of Christ to the earth.
- Explain what you learn about the kingdom of Christ.

As we come to the final three chapters of the book of Zechariah, we come to a series of prophecies whose fulfillment is still future. These prophecies deal with the turning of Israel to the Lord and the return of the Lord to rule the earth. Before Israel finally turns to the Lord, the nation will experience a time of great suffering. We read that all of the nations of the earth will be gathered together to come and fight against Israel and the city of Jerusalem. However, in that day the Lord will fight for Jerusalem. Suddenly there will be great fear and trembling among the nations as they feel the wrath of God. The armies of the nations will be cut to pieces in that day.

1. Read Zechariah 12:1-14 and write what God will smite when He smites the enemies of Israel.
2. Explain why the Lord warns that before He returns to rule that all of the nations of the earth will come and fight against Israel first.
3. Explain why you think that the Lord will let all of the nations gather against Israel and at that very time He will come and fight for Jerusalem.

We read that God will cause the people in the armies of the nations to become insane. This will speed their deaths and their destruction because they will destroy each other in their efforts to escape from the wrath of the Lord. However, the people of Israel will also be changed in that day. The leaders of Israel will realize that the only reason that they are being victorious is due to the fact that the Lord is the One that is giving them victory. In addition to overpowering the enemy, the Lord will also strengthen His people so that they will be able to fight with supernatural strength. The people of Israel will win a complete victory on all sides because the Lord is fighting for them.

4. Read Zechariah 12:1-14 and write what the feeble people of the nation of Israel will be like in that day.
5. Explain why it is important that the leaders of Israel will realize that the only reason that they are victorious is due to the fact that the Lord is giving them victory.
6. Explain why you think that the Lord will strengthen the people of Israel with supernatural strength in that day.

God will show His great power by protecting the tents of the people of Israel first. A tent offers no protection to those who are inside the tent so God says that He will provide the needed protection. This way the people will know that they are not being saved through their own efforts even though God says He will make them very strong. In that day God will destroy all

of the nations that come against the city of Jerusalem. God also promises to pour out His spirit upon the people of Israel in that day. This will happen to all of the people of the nation.

7. Read Zechariah 12:1-14 and write what the people will do as they look at the One that they pierced.

8. Explain why God promises that He will pour out His Spirit on the people of Israel in that day.

9. Explain why you think that God will cause the people to realize that they have not been saved by their own efforts.

Here we see that the day will come when all of the people of the nation of Israel will recognize Christ as their Lord. They will be filled with sorrow as they realize that they rejected Him the first time that He came to this earth. All of the people will be mourning in that day. This will happen among the descendents of David, the descendents of the priests and among all of the rest of the people of the nation of Israel. The people will be filled with such great sorrow as they realize their sin that even the husbands and the wives will want to be alone as they pray their prayer of confession to the Lord.

10. Read Zechariah 12:1-14 and write what the Holy Spirit is called in this chapter.

11. Explain what will happen in the hearts of the people of Israel when God protects His people from the armies of the nations.

12. Explain why you think that the hearts of the people of Israel will be filled with sorrow when they realize that they rejected Christ the first time He came to the earth.

When people are willing to confess their sins to the Lord, He is anxious to forgive them and show His love to them. We see that the Lord promises that there will be a fountain of cleansing for the people so that they can be cleansed of their sin and their uncleanness. In that day the Lord promises that the names of the idols will be cut off so that they will not be remembered any more. The Lord also promises that He will remove the false prophets and the unclean spirits from the land. Because the people will be following the Lord in that day, they will obey the instructions of the Lord about destroying all of the false prophets.

13. Read Zechariah 13:1-9 and write what the parents will say when they have a son that is a false prophet.

14. Explain why the Lord promises that in that day there will be a fountain of cleansing so that the people can be cleansed of their sin and their uncleanness.

15. Explain why you think that the Lord promises that the idols will be completely removed so that they will not be remembered any more.

The parents will take the leadership in destroying their children that are false prophets. As a result, the false prophets will be ashamed of the fact that they have tried to deceive the people and cause the people to think that they are prophets. In fact these false prophets will say that they are farmers and not false prophets. They will say that they have been so busy caring for their cattle that they have not had the time to be false prophets. They will also say that the wounds that they have on their bodies were made by their friends.

16. Read Zechariah 13:1-9 and write what Zechariah said would happen at the time that the Shepherd (Christ) was smitten.

17. Explain why the false prophets will be ashamed as they think of the way that they tried to deceive the people.

18. Explain why you think that the false prophets in the land will suddenly try to deny that they are false prophets.

When the True Prophet and Shepherd of Israel was killed, the people of Israel were scattered among the nations. However, God promises to regather the little ones in a future day. This is another promise that the people of Israel will be regathered to their own land. Before Christ can return to rule, those who refuse to believe in Christ must be destroyed. Then those who remain

will be refined as silver and gold are refined so that their lives will be pure when Christ comes to rule. Today we also need to let the Lord refine our lives and cleanse us from sin so that we can be effective as we do the work of the Lord.

19. Read Zechariah 13:1-9 and write what percentage of the people will turn to the Lord and be refined like silver and gold.

20. Explain the importance of cleansing in the life of any person.

21. Explain why you think that it is important to regularly ask the Lord to cleanse you from sin so that you can be effective as you do the work of the Lord.

As we come to the final chapter of the book of Zechariah, we come to the time that Scripture calls the Day of the Lord. The Day of the Lord is a day of judgment for all those who do not turn to God and place their trust in Christ. God says that He will gather all of the nations to come and fight against the city of Jerusalem. At first this great army of the nations will win a great victory. In fact they will capture the city of Jerusalem. Then they will take the possessions of the people and rape the women. Half of the people will be taken out of the city as captives. However, all hope is not lost because the Lord is the One that is in control.

22. Read Zechariah 14:1-8 and write who will go out and fight against the armies of the nations.

23. Explain why the Day of the Lord will be a day of great judgment for all of the people of the earth that reject the Lord.

24. Explain why you think that the Lord will allow the nations to capture the city of Jerusalem before He takes control and gives victory.

The Lord will never forget the promises that He made to Abraham more than four thousand years ago. In that day when the nations think that they are finally going to destroy the people of Israel, Christ will return to fight for His chosen people. When Christ returns to this earth, His feet will touch the Mount of Olives. Then the Mount of Olives will split from the east to the west. Half of the mountain will move north and the other half will move south forming a very large valley in the middle. This valley will provide a way of escape for the people of Jerusalem.

25. Read Zechariah 14:1-8 and write how the people will flee in that day.

26. Explain why the feet of Christ will touch the Mount of Olives when He comes to make a way of escape for the people of Jerusalem.

27. Explain why you think that the Lord will wait until this very last moment to provide a way of escape for the people of Jerusalem.

One thing that causes people to become very fearful is an earthquake because people realize that they have no way to control what the earthquake will do. The Lord is also going to perform many other miracles in that day. During the day the light will not be clear. At night the night will not be dark. Christ will also cause living waters to go out from Jerusalem. Half of these waters will flow toward the Mediterranean Sea and the other half will flow toward the Dead Sea. Because this water is living water, it will bring life to the Dead Sea as well as bringing life to the entire area that surrounds the Dead Sea.

28. Read Zechariah 14:1-8 and write to what earthquake this future earthquake is compared.

29. Explain what you learn about some of the events that will happen in the Day of the Lord from these verses.

30. Explain why you think that the Lord will cause living waters to flow out of the city of Jerusalem.

We go on to read about some of the other things that will happen in the day of the Lord. That period begins with the tribulation but will also include the one thousand year reign of Christ on the earth called the millennium. We see that Christ will become the king of the entire earth. According to Revelation, Christ will then rule as king of the earth for a period of one thousand years. The Lord will bless the land that surrounds Jerusalem so that it will become a very rich

land in that time. When this happens, the people of God will also be able to live in Jerusalem in safety because Christ will protect the city so that no one can ever come and destroy the city again.

31. Read Zechariah 14:9-21 and write what the Lord will send on all of the people that fought against Jerusalem.

32. Explain why it is important to understand that Christ will rule the entire earth from Jerusalem for a period of one thousand years.

33. Explain why you think that the Lord promises to greatly bless the land that is around the city of Jerusalem during the time that He rules.

The Lord will judge all of the people that fought against the city of Jerusalem by sending a plague that will cause their flesh to rot. This plague will also cause their eyes and their tongues to rot. At the same time the Lord will also cause great confusion among these people so that they will begin to fight against each other. The people of Judah will also join in this fight against their enemies and their enemies will be completely destroyed. Then the Lord will reward the people of Judah. They will receive all of the riches of these enemies.

34. Read Zechariah 14:9-21 and write what those who remain from the enemy nations will do each year.

35. Explain why the Lord will make certain that all of the enemies will be completely destroyed when He comes to rule.

36. Explain why you think that the Lord will cause the enemies to experience great confusion when He comes.

The people of all of the nations of the earth will come to Jerusalem each year to worship Christ and keep the Feast of Tabernacles. The Feast of Tabernacles was the feast of thanksgiving that came after the harvest season each year. As the people gather each year for this feast, they will be expressing their thanks to the Lord. We also see that all those who refuse to come to that feast will be judged by the Lord. Here we see that even when Christ lives on the earth that there will be some that sin and rebel against God. The Lord will stop the rain on those who rebel so that their crops will not grow.

37. Read Zechariah 14:9-21 and write what nation God says will have the rain stopped if it does not come to Jerusalem for this feast.

38. Explain some of the changes that will happen in the land of Israel during the time that Christ rules the earth.

39. Explain why you think that some of the people will rebel against the Lord even when He is physically present to rule the earth.

During the thousand year period of time when Christ will rule on the earth, it will be a time of holiness. Sin will be judged immediately by Christ. Even the bells of the horses will say, HOLINESS TO THE LORD. During that time everything in the temple will be holy including all of the pots and pans. In fact all of the pots and pans of the people of Judah will also be holy during that time. As a result, any of the pots in the city of Jerusalem can be used for boiling sacrifices.

40. Read Zechariah 14:9-21 and write who not enter into the temple at Jerusalem during that time.

41. Explain why God says that He will make all of the pots and pans of the people of Jerusalem holy during the time that Christ rules.

42. Explain what you think the earth will be like when Christ rules and the earth experiences a time of holiness.

Reread Zechariah 12:1-14:21 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.

Survey of the Minor Prophets

Lesson 19

Malachi 1:1-4:6

The book of Malachi was written about one hundred years after the books of Haggai and Zechariah were written. That means that Malachi was the last of the Old Testament books to be written. It was written about four hundred years before Christ was born. The people that had returned to Jerusalem had lost their desire to serve the Lord between the time of Zechariah and the time of Malachi. As a result, they developed a religion that was not centered in the worship of God. They were like many churches today. They felt that they could serve God in their own way instead of obeying the Word of God. The book of Malachi will talk about the sins of the people as a result.

As you study this lesson, you should use the following objectives to guide you in your study. By the time you complete this lesson, you should be able to:

Tell about the sins of the priests.

Explain what God said about the marriages to foreign women.

Explain why God said that the people had robbed Him.

Explain what you learn about the coming Day of the Lord.

The Lord began the book of Malachi by telling of His love for the nation of Israel. Immediately the people answered the Lord back by asking how God had loved them. Eight times in this book we see that the people show their lack of respect for God by challenging the things that He says to them. The Lord was very patient and answered their questions. God reviewed for the people the way that He had shown His love for the nation that came from Jacob instead of showing that love to Esau, the older brother. God said that even though the family of Esau would try to rebuild their nation that God would destroy that nation again. However, the Lord promised that the nation of Israel would be magnified by the Lord.

1. Read Malachi 1:1-14 and write what God said that a son normally did to his father.
2. Explain why you think that the people showed their lack of respect for God by challenging the things that He said eight times.
3. Explain why you think that the Lord showed His love to Israel by patiently explaining how He had shown His love to the people.

God said that normally sons honored their fathers. He said that servants normally honored their masters. However, both the people and the priests of the nation of Israel were refusing to honor God as either their father or their master. The priests were showing their lack of respect for the Lord by offering polluted bread. They were offering animals that had blemishes as sacrifices. They did not think that it mattered whether they offered blind, crippled and sick animals as sacrifices to God even though they knew that their rulers would not accept such animals. As a result of this sin, Malachi begged the people to ask the Lord to forgive them.

4. Read Malachi 1:1-14 and write what God said about accepting these sacrifices and offerings by the people.
5. Explain why the priests were showing their lack of respect for the Lord when they offered polluted bread and animals with blemishes as sacrifices.
6. Explain why you think that the people and priests of Israel were refusing to honor the Lord as either their father or their master.

The priests of Israel had such a lack of respect for the Lord that they would not even close the doors of the temple or build a fire without pay. Here we see that their whole focus was on themselves. As a result, the Lord said that He would not accept their offerings. If Israel would have offered pure offerings to the Lord, the nation would have been a great nation throughout

its history. However, the people had profaned the altar of the Lord by offering sacrifices that were not acceptable to the Lord. God said that the people that had done such things would be cursed because of their evil actions. They would experience the judgment of the Lord.

7. Read Malachi 1:1-14 and write what the Lord calls Himself in this chapter.

8. Explain what you learn from this chapter about the way that the Lord felt about the people offering polluted sacrifices.

9. Explain why you think that the priests had become so selfish that they wanted to be paid for everything that they did.

The Lord went on to explain what would happen to the priests because of the choices that they were making. God promised the priests that He would send a curse on them if they would not listen to His Word and give glory to Him. The Lord also warned that He would cause the seed to spoil that would provide the people and the priests with their crops that provided them with food. Then God compared the priests in the time of Malachi with the priests of the tribe of Levi during the time of Moses. It was the men of the tribe of Levi that stood with Moses at the time when the people were worshiping the golden calf. At that time the men from the tribe of Levi had stood for the truth and had not followed evil ways.

10. Read Malachi 2:1-17 and write what the priests had done to the covenant of the tribe of Levi.

11. Explain why God warned the priests that He would bring a curse on them if they would not listen to His Word and give glory to Him.

12. Explain why you think that God compared the priests in the time of Malachi with the Levites in the time of Moses.

The priests were supposed to be the messengers of the Lord. They were supposed to be teaching the Word of God to the people. Instead the priests were causing the people to stumble. This was the reason why the Lord said that it would be necessary for the priests to be punished. They had not kept the commandments of the Lord. They had not provided an example for the other people to follow. Instead their actions had caused the other people to lose respect for God. As a result, the people had also lost their respect for the priests. The priests and the other men had also committed other sins against the rest of the people, particularly sins against the women of Israel.

13. Read Malachi 2:1-17 and write what the Lord promised to do to the men of Israel for committing this sin.

14. Explain why God said that He would punish the priests because they had not taught the Word of God and had failed to provide an example for the people to follow.

15. Explain why you think that two of the most important responsibilities of any spiritual leader are to teach the Word of God and provide an example for other people to follow.

The men of Judah had done evil against the Lord by divorcing their wives and marrying foreign women. God had told the people many times through their history that the nation of Israel was to be a holy nation. The people had been told that they were not to marry foreigners from other nations. Now God said that the men that had done this evil would be cut off. God said that the women that they had divorced had covered the altar with their tears. As a result, God said that He refused to respect the offerings of these men that had done evil to their wives by divorcing them. God would not allow their sins to escape His judgment.

16. Read Malachi 2:1-17 and write who God said would be a witness against these men and judge between them and their wives.

17. Explain why God said that He would cut off the men that had divorced their wives and married women from foreign nations.

18. Explain why you think that the Lord had told the people of Israel that they were not to marry women from other nations.

Here we see a real picture of the hatred of the Lord against divorce. The Lord says that He will be a witness against those who seek to divorce their partners. God desires men and women that are faithful to the partners that they have married in their youth. The men of Israel normally covered their wives with their coats to show their protection of their wives. Now the men of Israel were using their coats to try and cover their evil actions. Of course there was no way that they could hide their evil actions from the Lord because the Lord knows all things. God also said that He was tired of hearing the people say that they were doing what was right when they were actually doing evil.

19. Read Malachi 2:1-17 and write what the Lord said that the people had done with their words.

20. Explain what these verses teach about the attitude of the Lord toward divorce.

21. Explain why you think that the Lord feels so strongly about those who choose to sin and divorce the wives of their youth.

Chapter two ends with the question, Where is the God of justice? As we begin chapter three we see that God immediately answers this question by telling the people that He would send His messenger, who we know is John the Baptist, to go before Christ and tell people to prepare their hearts for the coming of Christ. However, God warned that none of the people would be able to stand before Christ. He would come to cleanse the world just as a fire was used to refine precious metals or soap was used for cleansing. We also have a promise that when Christ comes again that He will begin His work on this earth by cleansing the sons of Levi. As a result, in the day that the Lord comes to rule the earth, the offerings that will be offered to the Lord in that day will be pleasing to the Lord.

22. Read Malachi 3:1-18 and write to what period of time these offerings will be compared.

23. Explain why God said that He would send His messenger to prepare the way for the coming of Christ.

24. Explain why you think that the Lord said that it would be necessary for Him to cleanse the people of the earth.

The sacrifices that will be offered during the millennium when Christ rules on the earth will be memorials to remember the death of Christ on the cross. Christ will also come as a judge when He comes to rule. He will quickly judge the sorcerers, the adulterers, those who speak lies and those who cheat the worker, the widow or those without fathers. All of the people that do not fear the Lord will be judged. The Lord will bring this judgment because He is unchangeable and must judge sin. God reminded the people that they were failing to obey His commands just as their fathers had done in previous days. This was the reason why their fathers had been judged and removed from the land of Israel. In spite of these failures God still promised that He would show kindness to the people if they would return to Him.

25. Read Malachi 3:1-18 and write how the people had robbed God.

26. Explain why the Lord said that he would judge those who cheated the worker, the widow or those without fathers.

27. Explain why you think that it is important to understand that the sacrifices that will be offered during the millennium will be memorials to remember the death of Christ.

God said that the entire nation of Israel was guilty of robbing God because they were not giving Him their tithes. The Jews actually had three tithes that together amounted to a little over 23% of their income. God promised the people that if they would put Him first in their lives and pay their tithes that He would reward the people with great blessings. In fact these blessings would be so great that the people would not be able to receive them. Their trees and their vines would produce a good harvest. All of the other nations would also recognize that Israel was blessed by the Lord.

28. Read Malachi 3:1-18 and write where the Lord promised to write the names of the people that feared the Lord and turned to Him.

29. Explain what these verses teach about the importance of putting the Lord first in our giving.
30. Explain why you think that the Lord promises to bless those who place Him first in their giving.

In chapter two we saw that the priests were speaking against the Lord. By chapter three we saw that the people had joined with the priests by speaking stout words against God. The people were saying that it was useless to serve the Lord. They said that they had walked the way that God had commanded them and that He had not blessed them. Actually God knew that their hearts were not right with God and so He could not bless them. Although most of the people were not serving the Lord, there was still a small group of the people that were faithful and were serving the Lord. God said that this small group obeyed the commandments of the Lord and feared Him.

31. Read Malachi 3:1-18 and write what kind of a book God said that He has about those who serve Him.
32. Explain why the people that had hearts that were not right with God said that it was useless to serve the Lord.
33. Explain why you think that God has always had a small group of people that obeyed His commandments and feared Him.

Here we see that the Lord will never forget those who are faithful and serve Him. They are the possession of the Lord and will be remembered by the Lord. The final chapter of the Old Testament shows the great contrast between the final end of those who serve the Lord and those who choose to reject Him. God warned Israel that all those who are proud and reject the Lord will be judged. They will be burned like straw in a furnace of fire. According to the book of Revelation, all those who reject Christ will be cast into a lake of fire and brimstone where they will burn forever. None of the people that reject Christ will escape this judgment.

34. Read Malachi 4:1-6 and write who will appear to those people that have chosen to fear the Lord.
35. Explain why both the Old Testament and the New Testament conclude by contrasting the final end of those who reject the Lord and those who serve Him.
36. Explain why you think that it is important to help every person realize that the choice that they make on this earth will determine where they spend eternity.

Christ is the One that is the Sun of righteousness. He will provide spiritual healing to all those who place their faith and trust in Him. They will be perfect in the sight of God because He has blotted out their sin. Those who trust in the Lord will grow up like young calves that are kept in a stall where they are given the best of care. In that day those who are right with God will no longer need to fear the wicked because the wicked will be like ashes under the feet of the righteous. The Lord says that the righteous can rest in this promise because the Lord has given His Word.

37. Read Malachi 4:1-6 and write what the Lord promises to send to the people of Israel in the future.
38. Explain what the book of Malachi teaches about the difference between the final end of the righteous and the final end of the wicked.
39. Explain why the Lord promises that He will provide the best of care to those who have placed their trust in Him.

The people of Israel were given a reminder to remember the commandments the Lord that were given to Moses at Mount Horeb. God also promised that Elijah would come before that great and terrible Day of the Lord. Revelation 11 tells more about the coming of Elijah. He will come with a message that will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to the fathers. The early chapters of Genesis showed that it was necessary for God to punish sin. As we end the Old Testament, we see that this punishment is still present. Only

the coming of Christ could take away this punishment for those who place their trust in Him.

40. Read Malachi 4:1-6 and write with what the Old Testament ends.

41. Explain why God said that the message of Elijah would turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to the fathers.

42. Explain why you think that the fact that the Old Testament begins and ends with punishment shows that there was a need for Someone to come to set us free from sin.

Reread Malachi 1:1-4:6 and write down the three most important lessons that you learned from these chapters.