

Supplemental Notes:

*The Books
of
Jonah, Nahum
& Obadiah*

*compiled
by
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Acknowledgments

These notes have been assembled from speaking notes and related materials which had been compiled from a number of classic and contemporary commentaries and other sources detailed in the bibliography, as well as other articles and publications of Koinonia House. While we have attempted to include relevant end notes and other references, we apologize for any errors or oversights.

The complete recordings of the sessions, as well as supporting diagrams, maps, etc., are also available in various audiovisual formats from the publisher.

Audio Listing

Jonah 1

Introduction and Background Information. Jonah Flees His Mission. Jonah's Punishment and Deliverance.

Jonah 2

Jonah's Prayer of Thanksgiving. Sheol, Hades and Gehenna: the Underworld. A Man of the Word.

Jonah 3

Jonah's Renewed Commission and Obedience. The Endangered Ninevites' Repentant Appeal to the Lord. Their Repentance Acknowledged.

Jonah 4

Jonah's Deliverance and Rebuke. The Vine, Worm, and East Wind. Subsequent History. Types.

Nahum 1

Nahum, Nineveh's Judge. The Lord's Kindness and Sternness; Nineveh's Overthrow and Judah's Joy.

Nahum 2 - 3

Nineveh Besieged. Her Desolation Contrasted with Her Former Glory. Nineveh's Sins and Her Doom.

Obadiah

Edom's Destruction Announced. Her Destruction Reaffirmed. The Day of the Lord.

The Next Holocaust

Jonah

“The Mystery Book”

The Gospel Defined

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that he was buried; And that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.

1 Cor 15:3-4

According to *which* Scriptures?

3rd Day?

- New Life on the 3rd Day Gen 1:9-13
- The Wedding at Cana John 2:1
- Abraham's Offering Isaac Gen 22:4 ; Heb 11:19
- Jonah and the Great Fish Jonah 1:17

Jonah is the most maligned book of the Bible!

Jonah

The Reluctant Prophet

Chapter 1

Some find this book “fishy”; some, “hard to swallow” . . . But in it we will find the God of the Second Chance.

Question: Is everything you read in the Bible true?

Nicodemus saith unto them, (he that came to Jesus by night, being one of them,) Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth? They answered and said unto him, Art thou also of Galilee? Search, and look: for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet.

Jn 7:50-52

In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash king of Judah Jeroboam the son of Joash king of Israel began to reign in Samaria, and reigned forty and one years. And he did that which was evil in the sight of the LORD: he departed not from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who made Israel to sin. He restored the coast of Israel from the entering of Hamath unto the sea of the plain, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which he spake by the hand of his servant Jonah, the son of Amittai, the prophet, which was of Gath-hepher.

2 Kgs 14: 23-25

“No Prophet from Galilee?” (Jn 7:52). Jonah, a servant of the Lord from Gath Hephher, a town in the tribe of Zebulun (2 Kgs 14:25); called Gittah-hepher in Josh 19:10-13.” (Also, Nahum was from Galilee.)

Jonah's ministry had some parallels to his immediate predecessors, who ministered to Israel and also were called to Gentile missions in Phoenicia and Aram: Elijah (1 Kgs 17-21; 2 Kgs 1-2) and Elisha (2 Kgs 2-9; 13).

Jonah lived when Jeroboam II of the Northern Kingdom was king (793-753 B.C.); 2 Kgs 14:23-25. He was contemporary with Hosea and Amos (Hos 1:1; Amos 1:1). The Prophet Jonah's prediction that Israel's boundaries would extend under Jeroboam came true (2 Kgs 14:25).

Jonah, whose name means “dove” (first mention: Gen 8:8; bringing message of blessing...) was the only Old Testament prophet who attempted to run from God. He is one of only four Old Testament prophets whose ministries were specifically referred to by Christ (Mt 12:41; Lk 11:32). The other three are Elijah (Mt 17:11-12), Elisha (Lk 4:27), and Isaiah (Mt 15:7).

Some have suggested that Jonah was not the author of the book because he is referred to in the third person. This is not a strong argument: Moses, author of the Torah, often used the third person when describing his own actions. Also Isaiah and Daniel sometimes wrote of themselves in the third person. However, since *all* of the Book of Jonah is in the third person some scholars believe this book was written by a prophet other than Jonah soon after the events.

But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonah: For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here.

Matthew 12: 39-41

This is an evil generation: they seek a sign; and there shall no sign be given it, but the sign of Jonah the prophet. For as Jonah was a sign unto the Ninevites, so shall also the Son of man be to this generation. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and, behold, a greater than Jonah is here.

Luke 11:29, 30, 32

Authenticity

Jesus recognized the historicity of Jonah (Mt 12:41; Lk 11:29-32). He called him a prophet (Mt 12:39). Jesus assented to the miracle of Jonah's recovery from the fish (Mt 12:40) and He based His call to repentance in His day on the validity of Jonah's message of repentance (Mt 12:41; Lk 11:29-32).

Historical Setting

Jeroboam II was the most powerful king of the Northern Kingdom (2 Kgs 14:23-29). Earlier the Assyrians had established supremacy in the Near East and secured tribute from Jehu. However, after crushing the Arameans, the Assyrians suffered a temporary decline because of internal dissension. Israel's Jeroboam was able to expand his nation's territories to their greatest extent since the time of David and Solomon by occupying land that formerly belonged to Aram (northeast toward Damascus and north to Hamath).



Prophetic Setting

So Assyria, then in temporary decline, would awaken like a sleeping giant and devour the Northern Kingdom of Israel as its prey. This

prediction was fulfilled in 722 B.C. when Sargon II carried the Northern Kingdom into captivity (2 Kgs 17). These prophecies of Hosea and Amos may explain Jonah's reluctance to preach in Nineveh: *He feared he would be used to help the enemy that would later destroy his own nation.*

God sent both Hosea and Amos to warn of His impending judgment. Due to Israel's lack of repentance, the nation would fall under God's chosen instrument of wrath, a Gentile nation from the east. Amos warned that God would send Israel "into exile beyond Damascus" (Amos 5:27). Hosea specifically delineated the ravaging captor as Assyria: "Will not Assyria rule over them because they refuse to repent?" (Hosea 11:5). [Parallel to America? See our briefing, "Hosea *Can You See.*"]

Implicit Paradoxes

It seemed strange to Kimchi, a Jew himself, that the Book of Jonah is among the Scriptures, as the only prophecy in it concerns Nineveh, a heathen city, and makes no mention of Israel, which is referred to by every other prophet.

The reason seems to be: a tacit reproof of Israel is intended; a heathen people were ready to repent at the first preaching of the prophet, a stranger to them; but Israel, who boasted of being God's elect, repented not, though warned by their own prophets at all seasons. This was an anticipatory streak of light before the dawn of the full "light to lighten the Gentiles" (Lk 2:32).

Jonah is himself a strange paradox: a prophet of God, and yet a runaway from God: a man drowned, and yet alive: a preacher of repentance, yet one that repines at repentance. Yet Jonah, saved from the jaws of death himself on repentance, was the fittest to give a hope to Nineveh, doomed though it was, of a merciful respite on its repentance. The patience and pity of God stand in striking contrast with the selfishness and hard-heartedness of man.

- 1] Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,
- 2] Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

Nineveh, the "Great" City

The city of Nineveh was located on the east side of the Tigris River, about 550 miles northeast of Samaria. That distance required a journey of more

than a month, if Jonah traveled the normal distance of 15-20 miles a day. The great city was second in size only to Babylon.

- “great city” Jonah 1:2; 3:2; 4:11
- “great wind” 1:4
- “great storm” 1:12
- “greatly feared” 1:16
- “great fish” 1:17
- “greatly displeased” 4:1
- “very [‘greatly’] happy” 4:6

Nineveh was the capital of the Assyrian Empire, which dominated Palestine and much of the ancient world from around 930 to 612 B.C., counterbalanced in the south by Egypt. It was this people who, in 722 B.C., swept down on the Northern Kingdom of Israel. The Assyrians battered down the walls of Samaria, Israel’s capital, and took the people away, resettling them away from the Promised Land.

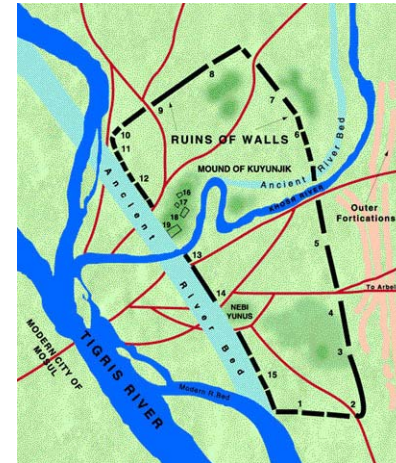
The Bible has much to say about this terrible, warlike pagan nation. Isaiah particularly contains many passages that foretell Assyria’s doom (cf. Isa 10:5-19; 17:12-14; 18:4-6; 30:27-33; 37:21-35; Hos 4-14. (Cf *Hosea Can You See* Briefing Package.) It was destroyed by the Medes and Persians in 612 B.C.

Additional Warnings?

Before Jonah arrived at this seemingly impregnable fortress-city, two plagues had erupted there (in 765 and 759 B.C.) and a total eclipse of the sun occurred on June 15, 763 B.C. These were considered signs of divine anger and may help explain why the Ninevites responded so readily to Jonah’s message, around 759 B.C.

Nineveh: Awesome City

Nineveh means “the residence of Ninus,” that is, Nimrod (Gen 10:11, where the translation ought to be, “*He* (Nimrod) went forth *into Assyria* and builded Nineveh.”) Nineveh was large and, like Babylon, was protected by an outer wall and an inner wall: the inner wall was 50 feet wide and 100 feet high; three chariots abreast raced on top. It had 1200 towers, each 200 ft high. It was 60 miles in circumference and the population of 600,000 was supported by internally grown crops. (See map, next page.)



Nineveh: Awful City!

Nineveh was well known in the ancient Near East for the brutal atrocities it inflicted on its war captives.

The Assyrian king acknowledged that his people’s ways were “evil” and characterized by “violence” (Jonah 3:8), and they were “care-free,” thinking themselves invincible (Zeph 2:15).

The Prophet Nahum also wrote about their crimes (Nah 3:1, 4, 16).

Assyrian Worship

This city was also known for its idolatry; it had temples dedicated to the gods Nabu, Asshur, Adad, and Dagon, the fish god—the Mitre is a pagan symbol even today (an “ichthus” on your car is not the witness God is seeking...)

- 3] But Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD, and went down to Joppa; and he found a ship going to Tarshish: so he paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish from the presence of the LORD.

Tarshish

Motivated by *patriotic duty that clouded religious obligation*, and knowing God’s forgiving mercy (cf. 4:2), Jonah shirked his responsibility. Instead of traveling northeast he fled by sea in the opposite direction. He boarded a ship at Joppa (modern Jaffa) on Israel’s coast, about 35 miles (2-3 day’s journey) from Samaria and about the same distance from Jerusalem. It was the seaport nearest to the central part of Palestine, and, in ancient times, one of the few places along the eastern coastline of the Mediterranean Sea where a port could be established (cf. 1 Kgs 5:9; 2 Chr 2:16).

Tarshish was a distant port from which silver, iron, tin, lead, ivory, monkeys and peacocks were brought to Israel (1 Kgs 10:22; Jer 10:9; Ezek 27:12). From Akkadian, *rašašu*, “to be smelted.”

“Beyond the Pillars of Hercules”: beyond the Mediterranean... (Herodotus 4:152). Tarshish had strong ships capable of long voyages (Isa 60:9).

“Ships of Tarshish”

The large Phoenician ships conducting trade with remote islands become an idiom for all such sea-going vessels, rather than simply a denotative place name... (2 Chr 20:36f; Isa 23:1-14; 1 Kgs 10:22; 22:49).

A proof of the power of YHWH, He breaks the ships of Tarshish with an east wind (Ps 48:7). They are among the lofty objects of power which the terror of the Lord would overtake (Isa 2:16). They were the caravans that bore the merchandise of the “mistress of the sea” (Ezek 27:25). In ships of Tarshish the prophet sees the exiles borne in crowds to Jerusalem (Isa 60:9).

Jonah attempted to go *as far as conceivable in the opposite direction*. [Commonly associated with Tartessus, ancient town of the Guadalquivir River valley in southwestern Spain; it prospered from trade with the Phoenicians and Carthaginians but was probably destroyed by the latter about 500 B.C. The exact site of the town is not known, but archaeological evidence suggests it may have been near present-day Seville.]

However, Tarshish was an island (over one-year distant) which was, among other things, a key source of tin. “Britannia metal” was an alloy composed approximately of 93% tin, 5% antimony, and 2% copper, used for making various utensils, including teapots, jugs, drinking vessels, candlesticks and urns, and for official maces. Similar in color to pewter, “britannia metal” is harder, stronger, and easier to work than other tin alloys. Global commerce from Britain was confirmed by archaeological discoveries at Stonehenge (1500 B.C.): Tin was exported to Europe in large quantities from Cornwall, England, during the Roman period.

- 4] But the LORD sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken.
- 5] Then the mariners were afraid, and cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that *were* in the ship into the sea, to lighten *it* of them. But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay, and was fast asleep.

The principal person in the narrative is God, not Jonah. To accomplish His purposes, God sovereignly controlled various events recorded in the book, overcame Jonah’s rebellion, and opened the Ninevites’ hearts. Here He miraculously altered the direction of His servant’s itinerary.

The seasoned mariners were afraid...it was not a “normal” storm. [Cf. Acts 27...] Jonah was complacent and insensitive. Sleep is not necessary proof of innocence; it may be the fruit of carnal security and a seared conscience. [How different was Jesus’ sleep on the Sea of Galilee! (Mk 4:37-39).]

- 6] So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not.
- 7] And they said every one to his fellow, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil *is* upon us. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

A pagan ship captain had to call Jonah to prayer!

Casting Lots: Proverbs 16:33

- Sin of Achan Josh 7:16
- Division of Land Josh 15:1
- Assigning inheritances Num 26:55; 34:13
- Selecting men for expedition Judg 1:1; 20:10
- Electing a king 1 Sam 10:20
- Jonathan’s trespass 1 Sam 14:36f
- Matthias Acts 1:26
- Goats Lev 16:8
- Cities of Refuge 1 Chr 5:24
- [Urim & Thummim] Ex 28:30

(No examples after Pentecost...)

- 8] Then said they unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil *is* upon us; What *is* thine occupation? and whence comest thou? what *is* thy country? and of what people *art* thou?
- 9] And he said unto them, I *am* an Hebrew; and I fear the LORD, the God of heaven, which hath made the sea and the dry *land*.

The sailors’ barrage of five questions:

“God ... which ... made the sea”: appropriately expressed, as accounting for the tempest sent on the *sea*. The heathen had distinct gods for the “heaven,” the “sea,” and the “land.” Jehovah is the one and only true God of all alike.

Though disobedient to God, Jonah at least knew what He is like. Jonah said that God is the Lord, the covenant-making and covenant-keeping

God of Israel, the God of heaven, the one true Sovereign, the Creator, the One who made the sea and the land in contrast with the sailors' many false gods (cf. Jonah 1:5). The sailors clearly acknowledged this fact in their subsequent question (Jonah 1:11).

- 10] Then were the men exceedingly afraid, and said unto him, Why hast thou done this? For the men knew that he fled from the presence of the LORD, because he had told them.
- 11] Then said they unto him, What shall we do unto thee, that the sea may be calm unto us? for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous.

“What have you done?” was more an exclamation of horror at Jonah's disobedience than a question of inquiry. The pagan sailors seemed to grasp the seriousness of his disobedience more than the prophet did! It may seem strange that Jonah claimed to worship his God when he did not obey Him. [*How often this applies to us!...*]

- 12] And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea; so shall the sea be calm unto you: for I know that for my sake this great tempest *is* upon you.
- 13] Nevertheless the men rowed hard to bring *it* to the land; but they could not: for the sea wrought, and was tempestuous against them.

“...cast me ... into the sea”: Here Jonah is a type of Messiah, the one man who offered Himself to die in order to allay the stormy flood of God's wrath (compare Ps 69:1, 2), which otherwise must have engulfed all other men. [*So Caiaphas by the Spirit declared it expedient that one man should die, and that the whole nation should not perish (Jn 11:50).*] Jonah also is a specimen of true repentance, which leads the penitent to “accept the punishment of his iniquity” (Lev 26:41, 43), and to be more indignant at his sin than at his suffering. The men on the ship tried again to get back to land, but the sailors' meager efforts brought no relief. In fact, the storm intensified. [*How often do we simply try to “row harder... ”?*]

“Rowing Harder”

Our best efforts are “used menstrual cloths” (Isa 64:6). We must not walk after the flesh (Rom 8:3,4) but by the Spirit (Titus 3:5; Rom 4:5); “Yet saved as by fire” (1 Cor 3:15); Cf. Lot (2 Pet 2:7,8).

- 14] Wherefore they cried unto the LORD, and said, We beseech thee, O LORD, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us innocent blood: for thou, O LORD, hast done as it pleased thee.

The sailors feared they would be held accountable for murder. This contrasts sharply with Jonah's lack of compassion for the Ninevites (cf. 4:1-2). Yet those Gentiles, not having the Law of God, instinctively recognized the worth of a human life and pleaded for His mercy on them for killing an innocent man. By their words the sailors were acknowledging His divine sovereignty and providence in the storm (1:4) and in the casting of the lots (v. 7).

“...innocent blood” (compare to Deut 21:8): Pontius Pilate washed his hands and confessed Christ's *innocence*, “I am innocent of the blood of this *just* person.” But whereas Jonah the victim was guilty and the sailors innocent, Christ our sacrificial victim was innocent and Pontius Pilate and all of us were guilty. [But by *imputation* of our guilt to Him and His righteousness to us, the spotless Antitype exactly corresponds to the guilty type.]

- 15] So they took up Jonah, and cast him forth into the sea: and the sea ceased from harrassing.
- 16] Then the men feared the LORD exceedingly, and offered a sacrifice unto the LORD, and made vows.

“sea ceased ... raging”: So too at Jesus' word (Lk 8:24). God spares the prayerful penitent, a truth illustrated now in the case of the sailors, presently in that of Jonah, and thirdly, in that of Nineveh. The sudden calm was an answer to the sailors' prayers (v. 5). Utterly amazed at the sudden calm, they offered a sacrifice in praise to the Lord, (Israel's God) and promised (made vows) to continue their praise. Again the sailors are seen in contrast with their former passenger. Whereas Jonah was disobedient to God, they were making vows and praising Him!

- 17] Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.

“three days and three nights”: Jesus Himself attests to this reality as a prophecy of His own endurance on our behalf...(Mt 12:40).

דָּג	dag	fish (not a whale?!)
κῆτος	large sea creature	[Both LXX and NT quotes]

Ten Miracles

- Storm
- Selection of Jonah as guilty

- Sudden subsiding of the storm
- Great fish: (+ right time and place!)
- Preservation of Jonah
- Ejection—safe & sound—on dry land
- Repentance of the entire city of Nineveh
- The Gourd
- The Worm(s)
- East Wind
- Take the miracles out of the Bible: nothing will be left!

Some Lessons

- How do we really know we are in the will of God?
- In what ways are we without excuse?
- Why do we encounter trials?

Why do Christians have Trials?

- To glorify God Dan 3:16-18, 24-25
- Discipline for known sin Heb 12:5f; James 4:17; Rom 14:23; 1 John 1:9
- To prevent us from falling into sin 1 Pet 4:1-2
- To keep us from Pride. 2 Cor 12:7-10
- To build faith 1 Pet 1:6-7
- To cause growth Rom 5:3-5
- To teach obedience and discipline Acts 9:15f; Phil 4:11f
- To equip us to comfort others 2 Cor 1:3-4
- To prove the reality of Christ in us 2 Cor 4:7-11
- For testimony to the angels Job 1:8; Eph 3:8-11; 1 Pet 1:12

—Hal Lindsey, *Combat Faith*

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) Name two prophets that came out of Galilee.
- 2) Name four prophets specifically referenced by Jesus Christ in the New Testament.
- 3) List three aspects of Jonah's ministry specifically referenced by Jesus Christ.

- 4) Name five prophets that addressed the idolatries of the Northern Kingdom.
- 5) Where was Tarshish? (Justify your answer.)
- 6) Why did Jonah attempt to run from God's assignment?
- 7) What made Nineveh unique and relevant in ancient history?

Discussion Questions

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) Why did God send the Jewish prophet to a Gentile nation?
- 2) In what ways was Jonah a *type* of the Messiah?
- 3) What parallels do you see between the predicament of Nineveh and America? What might this portend for America's future?
- 4) Do you really believe the story of Jonah? Why?
- 5) Contrast worship and obedience in our own lives.
- 6) What are the main *personal* lessons from Jonah 1?

Candidate Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Review the rise, fall, and rediscovery of Nineveh.
- 2) What role will Assyria play in end-time prophecy?

Preparation for the Next Session:

Read Jonah Chapter 2. (Also, Psalm 139.)

Jonah Chapter 2

Hard to Swallow?

Is the Book of Jonah mythical, like *The Iliad*, *Moby Dick*, or *Robinson Crusoe*? Is it allegorical, talking about Jews, in a sea of nations? Or is it historical?

Books that Satan Hates

- Genesis: The Incarnation of Christ.
- Jonah: The Resurrection of Christ.
- Daniel: The Second Coming of Christ.

Authenticity

- Jesus recognized the historicity of Jonah (Mt 12:41; Lk 11:29-32).
 - He called him a prophet (Mt 12:39).
 - He assented to the miracle of Jonah's recovery from the fish (Mt 12:40).
 - He based His call to repentance in His day on the validity of Jonah's message of repentance (Mt 12:41; Lk 11:29-32)
- Specific objections will also be dealt with as we review the text.

Various Reports

- Feb 1891: James Bartley, a whaler on *Star of the East*, near Falkland Islands was lost chasing a sperm whale. The crew caught and killed the whale, to find Bartley inside, unconscious, and alive. He recovered in three weeks, resumed his duties, but his skin was bleached white like parchment...

M. DeParville, ed. *Journal Des Debats*

- An English sailor fell overboard and was swallowed by a fish. A day or two later the fish was seen floating on the surface of the water, and was taken ashore. When it was opened up, the sailors found their shipmate alive. He survived the experience, but his skin had turned a chalky white and remained so for the rest of his life. (Dr. Rimmer talked with him and learned the details of his experience.)

Harry Rimmer, *The Harmony of Science and the Scripture*

Naval Submarines

The first nuclear-powered submarine, the *USS Nautilus*, was launched in 1954 and commissioned the following year. In a trial run conducted in 1955, the *Nautilus* sailed totally submerged from New London, CT, to San Juan, Puerto Rico, a distance of 1350 mi in 84 hours. Its cruising speed submerged was more than 20 knots. Early in August 1958 the *Nautilus* made the first undersea transit of the North Pole, cruising under the polar ice pack from Point Barrow, Alaska, to a point between Spitsbergen, Norway, and Greenland. *If the US Navy can, couldn't the God of the Universe have "prepared a great fish" to do likewise?*

[Today: Ballistic missile subs carry a crew of 163 undersea for months at a time, traveling 400,000 miles without refueling...]

- 1] Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly,
- 2] And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, *and* thou heardest my voice.

"Hell"

- Used 53 times: 32 times in the Old Testament and 21 in the New.
- שְׁאוֹל *Sheol* (Hebrew)
Ἅδης *Hades* (Greek)
γέεννα *Gehenna*
(11 of 12 by the Lord Himself)

שְׁאוֹל *Sheol*

- Not the "grave" (which is the destination of the body)
- The location of departed souls; the abode of the dead (both good and bad)
- 1st occurrence is in Gen 37:35: Jacob assumes that his son was still conscious after death and he would be united with him. The word could not mean "grave" because Joseph was supposedly devoured by an animal. He was still his son; still retained his identity
 - "go down": implies geocentric metaphor.
- Grave: *kever*, opposite, not synonymous (Isa 14:19).
- LXX: *Sheol* is never translated *mneema*; always *hades*.
- Always contrasted, never equated (Ps 16:8-11).
- *Sheol*: "Under the earth," "underworld" "lower parts of the earth." (Ps 63:9; Isa 14:9; 44:23; Ezek 26:20; 31:14,16,18; 32:18,24.)
 - sepulchres were above the earth or in caves.
- Opposite of heaven (Ps 139:8).

שְׁאוֹל *Sheol* vs. קֶבֶר *Kever*

- Verb *kebar* (to bury) never used of *Sheol* (Gen 23:4,6,9,19,20; 49:30, 31, etc.)
- *Kever* can be pluralized; *sheol* is never pluralized.
- A grave is located at a specific site; *sheol* is never localized; accessible at death no matter where death takes place. No grave is necessary to go to *Sheol*.
- One can purchase or sell a grave; *Sheol* is never spoken of as being purchased or sold (Gen 23:4-20).
- You can own a grave as personal property; nowhere is *Sheol* owned by man (Gen 23:4-20).
- Bodies are unconscious in the grave; those in *Sheol* are conscious (Isa 14:4-7; 44:23; Ezek 31:16; 32:21; Lk 16:19ff).

ᾍδης *Hades*

- Classic Greek: Hades or Pluto, the god of the lower regions; Orcus, the netherworld, the realm of the dead.
- Biblical Greek: the infernal regions, a dark and dismal place in the very depths of the earth, the common receptacle of disembodied spirits (idiomatically, a geocentric concept).

γέεννα *Gehenna*

- This was originally the Valley of Hinnom, south of Jerusalem, where the filth and dead animals of the city were cast out and burned;
- The “lake of fire” that is the ultimate destiny of the unsaved temporarily held in Hades or *Sheol*.
- Topologically, the opposite of Hades: in the outer darkness (Mt 8:12; 22:13; 25:30).

There’s only one who has returned from the grave: He alone “has the floor.” But here is one of the few reliable passages on this subject. Notice that this is *not* a parable: these are real historical characters with names:

There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth

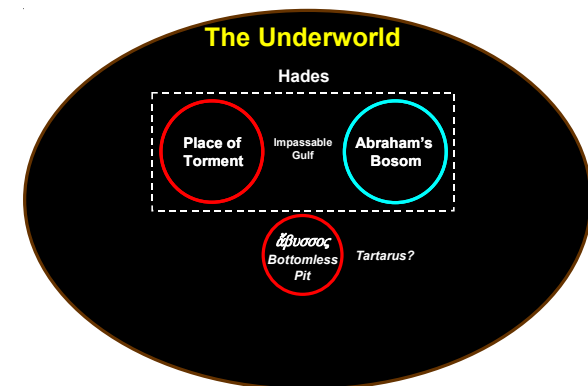
Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father’s house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Luke 16:29-31

[It is interesting that one named Lazarus *did* come back from the dead...]

The Underworld: Some Insights

- The man in Hades was fully conscious: memory; speaking; pain; desires.
- His eternal destiny was irrevocably fixed
- He knew that what he was experiencing was fair and just. He also knew what his brothers needed to do to avoid his own fate: *repent*
- (He was not yet in Hell, but only Hades.)



This is the OT picture. After the Cross, Jesus came, declared His victory and took those in “Abraham’s Bosom” with Him (Mt 27).

- 3] For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me.
- 4] Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.

As the currents of the Mediterranean swirled about Jonah, he knew that God controls the waves and breakers (Jonah called them “Thy”; cf. Ps 88:7). It was no mere chance, but *the hand of God* which sent them. Compare Job’s similar recognition of God’s hand in calamities (Job 1:21; 2:10) and David’s (2 Sam 16:5–11).

Jonah’s prayer incorporates many phrases and figures of speech from the Psalms (3:8; 18:4–6, 7, 15; 30:2; 31:6, 22; 39:9; 42:7; 69:1, 2; 116:17, 18; 120:1; 142:3;). Jonah was a man who knew God’s Word

A Man of the Word

- Jonah 2:2 Psalm 120:1
- Jonah 2:3 Psalm 42:7
- Jonah 2:4 Psalm 31:22
- Jonah 2:5 Psalm 69:1
- Jonah 2:7 Psalm 142:3; 18:6
- Jonah 2:8 Psalm 31:6;
- Jonah 2:9 Psalm 116:17, 18, 3:8

- 5] The waters compassed me about, *even* to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head.
- 6] I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars *was* about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God.

“...bottoms of ... mountains”: Their *extremities* where they *terminate* in the hidden depths of the sea. Compare Ps 18:7, “the foundations of the hills” (Ps 18:15).

שחַת *shachath* corruption: or, the pit. Cf. Korah’s rebellion (Num 16:31–35). Hezekiah seems to have incorporated Jonah’s very words in his prayer (Isa 38:17), just as Jonah appropriated the language of the Psalms.

Jonah’s “Downers”

- Down to Joppa;
- Down into the ship;
- Down into the sides of the ship;
- Down into the fish’s gullet;

- Down to the “Bottoms of the mountains”;
- Down to *Sheol*...

- 7] When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.
- 8] They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy.
- 9] But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay *that* that I have vowed. Salvation *is* of the LORD.

“...observe lying vanities”: Regard or reverence idols, powerless to save (Ps 31:6). We become like the gods we worship (Ps 135:18).

- 10] And the LORD spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry *land*.

Questions

- Why was Jonah reluctant?
- What personal lessons can we learn from this account?
- Who is the key person in the narrative?
- What can we learn from *him*?
- What is the purpose of prayer?

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) How do we know the famous story of Jonah and the “whale” is true?
- 2) Why do some scholars believe that Jonah actually died and was resurrected?
- 3) Describe at least five distinctions between *Sheol* (or Hades) and the grave.
- 4) How does *Gehenna* differ from *Hades* (or *Sheol*)? How are they topologically opposites?
- 5) Where do we learn the most about what happens when we die? (References?)
- 6) How was the worship of Dagon among the Ninevites relevant the narrative?
- 7) What does Jonah’s prayer reveal about his (change of) attitude?

- 8) Who is the key person in this narrative?
- 9) List six miracles that have occurred so far in this narrative.

Discussion Questions

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) How is the current US Navy submarine technology relevant to the Book of Jonah? Or is it?
- 2) Is the Rich Man still waiting for his "fingertip of water" today?
- 3) Did Jonah really die in the fish? (Why?)
- 4) How does prayer change things?
- 5) List (as many as you can) reasons that Christians have trials. Add examples from your own experience.

Candidate Research Projects (For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Compile modern reports of events involving people surviving after being swallowed by large aquatic creatures (fish or whales).

Preparation for the Next Session:

Read Jonah Chapter 3.

Jonah

Chapter 3: The Mission to Nineveh

Nineveh

- Capital of the Assyrian Empire under Sennecherib;
- Dominated the ancient world (930 to 612 B.C.); it was conquered and eliminated the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 B.C.;
- Doom foretold (Isa 10:5-19; 17:12-14; 18:4-6; 30:27-33; 37:21-35; Hosea 4-14); destroyed by Medes and Persians 612 B.C.

- 1] And the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the second time, saying,

Abraham denied Sarah	Gen12:15; (2X) Gen20:2;
Moses murdered a man	Ex2:12;
David: adultery & murder	2 Sam 11:4,15;
Peter denied Christ	Mt26:74;
Mark abandoned Paul & Barnabas	Acts 13:13.

The God of the Second Chance. Israel also:

Called the second time	Isa 11:11f; 61:5f; Rom 11:15;
	Ezek 36:24f;
Deposited in their own land	Zech 8:20-23;
Called to the Gentiles	Gen 12:3; Isa 43:10f; Ex 19:5-6;
(Both Peter and Jonah called from Joppa)	
Failure; consequences	Deut 28:64, 65;
Preserved Supernaturally	Deut 30:1-5;

- 2] Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.

Initially [1:2] "arise": "*cry* against it." vs. (before his resurrection).
Now [3:2] "arise": "*preach* unto it." (after his resurrection).

Grace, through His death: Gal 2:21; 3:10, 13, 17, 18.

Three times Nineveh is described as a *great city* (1:2; 3:2; 4:11; cf. "very large city," 3:3). As noted earlier, the city was surrounded by an inner wall and an outer wall: The huge inner wall (50 feet wide and 100 feet high) was about eight miles in circumference while the outer wall encompassed fields and smaller towns (viz., Rehoboth Ir, Calah, and Resen; cf. Gen. 10:11-12). The words "great city" probably included the city of Nineveh proper and its administrative environs. Jonah was to travel those 550 miles to *Nineveh* and preach...

- 3] So Jonah arose, and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceeding great city of three days' journey.

"Three Days": For 600 years, Jonah was "just a fish story"; until Mt 12:39-40 (Cf. Mk 8:31; Mt 27:63; 1 Cor 15:4; Jon 1:17). Sabbaths: Lev 23. Evening and morning, *erev* and *boker* (Gen 1:4, 5, 8, 13, 19...).

- 4] And Jonah began to enter into the city a day's journey, and he cried, and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!"

40 Days (Testing; Probation)

- The Flood Gen 7:17
- Moses on the Mount Ex 24:18
- Wanderings (40 years) Num 14f
- Elijah: flight to Horeb 1 Kgs 19:8
- Temptation of Christ Mt 4:2
- *Yours!* 1 Thess 5:6-9; Heb 9:27; Jn 5:24

- 5] So the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them even to the least of them.

Outward symbols of inward contrition and humiliation: they fasted (cf. 1 Sam 7:6; 2 Sam 1:12; Neh 1:4; Zech 7:5); and put on sackcloth (cf. Gen 37:34; 1 Kgs 21:27; Neh 9:1; Est 4:1-4; Lam 2:10; Dan 9:3; Joel 1:8).

- Jonah was a *sign* to the Ninevites:
- They worshipped Dagon, the fish god; *oannes*; (with an “I,” Jonah in N.T.)
- Assyrian mound, *Nebi Yunas* = “Prophet Jonah,” found by Botta, an archaeologist; connects with Jonah and Nineveh; he also discovered the walls of the old city!

- 6] For word came unto the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered *him* with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.
- 7] And he caused *it* to be proclaimed and published through Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste any thing: let them not feed, nor drink water:
- 8] But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that *is* in their hands.
- 9] Who can tell *if* God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?

The king repented on “speculation!” Wow. Contrast this with the Israelites: they claimed to be God’s people; many (of their own) prophets were ignored; they *didn’t* repent.

Pagan people; this prophet was a stranger; they *did* repent!

- 10] And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did *it* not.

נָחַם *nacham*: to sigh, groan; thus: lament, grieve, pity. Can God repent? [Repentance(OT): 40X!]

Ten Miracles

- Storm
- Selection of Jonah as guilty
- Sudden subsiding of the storm
- Great fish: (+ right time and place!)
- Preservation of Jonah
- Ejection—safe & sound—on dry land
- Repentance of the entire city of Nineveh
- The Gourd
- The Worm(s)
- East Wind

Addenda:

The Northern Kingdom Their Predicament God’s Solution (Hosea 4 - 14)

*It was the best of times and
it was the worst of times.*

—Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*

- Their standing army had recovered all of the territory previously lost;
- They enjoyed unparalleled *material* prosperity...
“It was the best of times...”

God’s Indictment

- They had exchanged their loyalty to their heritage for idol worship
- Results: the lowest ebb of immorality:
 - Social injustice
 - Violent crime
 - Religious hypocrisy
 - Political rebellion
 - Selfish arrogance
 - Spiritual ingratitude

Hosea’s Message

Although a loving and caring God had provided their abundance and prosperity; their sin, disloyalty and abandonment of Him will force Him

to vindicate His justice with judgment. Thus, *God is going to use their enemies as His instrument of judgment*. Shortly they will be history.

American Parallels?

- We murder babies that are socially inconvenient;
- Homosexuality is just an “alternative lifestyle”;
- We change marriage partners like a fashion statement;
- We have abandoned the sanctity of commitments in all of our relationships;
- God rebuked Israel for their brutality, murder, and warfare;
- We have had Waco and Columbine High School;
- New York City has recorded more crimes than England, Scotland, Wales, Ireland, Switzerland, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, Norway, and Denmark, combined!

Index of Leading Cultural Indicators

Over the last 30 years:

- 560% increase in violent crime
- 400% increase in illegitimate births
- 400% increase in the divorce rate
- 300% increase in single-parent homes
- 200% increase in teenage suicides
- 75% drop in SAT scores

— Heritage Foundation, 1993

Each Day in America

- 2,795 teen pregnancies
- 1,106 teen abortions
- 4,219 teenagers contract a sexually transmitted disease
- Every 64 seconds a baby is born to a teenage mother; 5 minutes later, a baby will have been born to a teenager *who already has a child*. Ten hours later, 560 babies will have been born to teenagers . . .

The New Restrictions

- Creationism cannot be taught because it requires a belief in God.
- Morality cannot be taught because it requires reference to the Bible.
- Traditional history cannot be taught because it speaks of the important place of God and our religious values throughout the entire record of human affairs.

A Measure of Distress

Every man did that which was right in his own eyes...

Deut 12:8; Judg 17:6; 21:25; Prov 12:15; Prov 21:2

= Absolutely no fear of God.

Itremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; and that His justice cannot sleep forever.

— Thomas Jefferson, 1781

The Cycle of Nations

“from bondage to spiritual faith;
from spiritual faith to great courage;
from courage to liberty;
from liberty to abundance;
from abundance to complacency;
from complacency to apathy;
from apathy to dependency;
from dependence back again into bondage.”

— Alexander Tyler, 1750

America’s Only Hope

The only hope for America is a grass roots revival...

Robert Bork, *Slouching Towards Gomorrah*

2 Chronicles 7:14

If my people, who are called by my name, shall *humble themselves*; and *pray*; and *seek my face*, and *turn from their wicked way* **then** will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

A Provocative Insight

*So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: **it shall not return unto me void**, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.*

Isaiah 55:11

Next Time

- Why didn’t this book end with chapter 3?
- Because God’s objective for *you (and me)* *hasn’t been accomplished yet...*

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) Name six people that could testify of our God being the “God of the Second Chance.”
- 2) List the parallels of the story of Jonah and the story of Israel.
- 3) In what ways was the story of Nineveh a *rebukey* to Israel?
- 4) Contrast the response of Nineveh to Jonah’s message with that of the Northern Kingdom of Israel to Hosea’s.

Discussion Questions

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) What made the repentance of the king of Nineveh so unique?
- 2) In what ways was the predicament of the Northern Kingdom of Israel a parallel to America? In what ways was Nineveh?
- 3) Where is America in the “cycle of nations”?
- 4) In what ways did *Hosea*’s message bear fruit? (Cf. Isaiah 55:11)

Candidate Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Explore the role of “40” (days, years, etc.) in the Bible. What justifiable conclusions can you draw?
- 2) Review any (or several) of the classic studies of the life cycle of nations. (Cf. Toynbee; Jim Black, *When Nations Die*; Alexander Tyler, et al.)

Preparation for the Next Session:

Read Jonah Chapter 4, and explain why it is included in the Bible.

Jonah

Chapter 4: The Vine, Worm, and East Wind

Why is this chapter here? Because God’s purpose (for you and I) hasn’t been accomplished yet...

- 1] But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry.
- 2] And he prayed unto the LORD, and said, I pray thee, O LORD, *was* not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou *art* a gracious God, and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repentest thee of the evil.
- 3] Therefore now, O LORD, take, I beseech thee, my life from me; for *it is* better for me to die than to live.
- 4] Then said the LORD, Doest thou well to be angry?
- 5] So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.
- 6] And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made *it* to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

Guaranteed depression: remove yourself from the people...

“Gourd”: *Palma Christi*, Castor bean plant (*Ricimum communis*); it has huge leaves (8-10 ft); grows in India, Middle East, and Africa, and very quickly; 12-18"/day. Symbolic; used of salvation (1 Kgs 7:24; used in the Temple).

- 7] But God prepared a worm when the morning rose the next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered.
- 8] And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, that he fainted, and wished in himself to die, and said, *It is* better for me to die than to live.

Worm(s); (could be plural).

- 9] And God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry for the gourd? And he said, I do well to be angry, *even* unto death.

Why was Jonah angry? God’s attitude, Mt 18:23-25 vs. our heart, Jer 17:9.

- 10] Then said the LORD, Thou hast had pity on the gourd, for the which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow; which came up in a night, and perished in a night:
- 11] And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and *also* much cattle?

Heart for *missions*; 120,000 children... [Cf. Gen 18: not one righteous...]

Gourd = comforts of home. ***“Come out of your gourd” for God!***

Genesis 18:17-33 The Three Visitors

Abraham recognized Them:

- Abraham hurried to them v.2
 - He hurried back to the tent v.6
 - He ran to the herd v.7
 - His servant hurried v.7
- Abraham bowed low before them v.2
- He got water to wash their feet v.4
- He served them
 - freshly baked bread v.6
 - a choice calf v.7
 - curds and milk v.8
- He stood while they were eating v.8; cf. vv.1-2

All this suggests that he perceived who his visitors were.

- 17] And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do;
18] Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?
19] For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.

- 20] And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous;
21] I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.
22] And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.
23] And Abraham drew near, and said, Wilt thou also destroy the righteous with the wicked?
24] Peradventure there be fifty righteous within the city: wilt thou also destroy and not spare the place for the fifty righteous that *are* therein?

A very important principle is laid down here. [Abraham intercedes for the righteous—including Lot.]

- 25] That be far from thee to do after this manner, to slay the righteous with the wicked: and that the righteous should be as the wicked, that be far from thee: Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?
26] And the LORD said, If I find in Sodom fifty righteous within the city, then I will spare all the place for their sakes.
27] And Abraham answered and said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord, which *am but* dust and ashes:
28] Peradventure there shall lack five of the fifty righteous: wilt thou destroy all the city for *lack of* five? And he said, If I find there forty and five, I will not destroy *it*.
29] And he spake unto him yet again, and said, Peradventure there shall be forty found there. And he said, I will not do *it* for forty's sake.
30] And he said *unto him*, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak: Peradventure there shall thirty be found there. And he said, I will not do *it*, if I find thirty there.
31] And he said, Behold now, I have taken upon me to speak unto the Lord: Peradventure there shall be twenty found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for twenty's sake.
32] And he said, Oh let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak yet but this once: Peradventure ten shall be found there. And he said, I will not destroy *it* for ten's sake.

A very important principle: *The two angels will spend an entire chapter (Gen 19) getting Lot out of there before they can accomplish their assigned mission!* [What does this imply regarding the church and the Tribulation?]

- 33] And the LORD went his way, as soon as he had left communing with Abraham: and Abraham returned unto his place.

Subsequent History

- In 722 B.C., the next generation (~37 years later) destroyed Israel (the Northern Kingdom);
- Nahum: sent to Judah (the Southern Kingdom);
 - 185,000 Assyrians slaughtered; Sennacherib never tries again; in 612 B.C. Assyria falls to a coalition Medes, Scythians, and Babylon...

Types

- Messianic (Mt 12:40);
- National (Israel:
 - 1) Great Missionary Book of the OT (read at Yom Kippur).
 - 2) Chosen of God (Deut 14:2; Ezek 20:3)
 - 3) Commission (Isa 43:10-12; 44:8)
 - 4) Disobedient to Will of God (Ex 32:1-4; Jdg 2:11f; Ezek 6:1f; Mk 7:6f)
 - 5) Found among Gentiles (Deut 4:27; Ezek 12:15)
 - 6) Heathen come to know God (Rom 11:11)
 - 7) Miraculously preserved (Hos 3:3; Jer 30:11; 31:35f; Deut 28:58f)

8) Prayer (Deut 4:29)

9) Promises (Jer 16:14f; 23:7f; 33:25f; Ezek 28:25f)

- The most practical of all...

Jonah = Type of Us

- Backslidden;
- *Yet*, Resurrected;
- *Then* Fruitful.

How is God Preparing *You*?

- Blessing you with good things you don't deserve?
- Taking from you things which would limit your perspective?
- Allowing you to go through windstorms which show you where your heart is?
- Is it time to "get out of your gourd" for God?

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) What was wrong with Jonah's attitude throughout this book?
- 2) What are the main lessons of the "gourd," the worm(s), and the east wind?
- 3) Did God love the Ninevites? (How do we know?) Why did He pronounce judgment upon them?
- 4) Why was this chapter included in the Book of Jonah?

Discussion Questions

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) Did God scold Jonah for his bad attitude? Why? How did God deal with it?
- 2) Are there "gourds, worms, and the east wind(s)" in our own personal lives? How do we deal with *them*?
- 3) What are the eschatological implications of the removal of Lot prior to the judgment on Sodom and Gomorrah?

Candidate Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Compile a list of comparable examples of "gourds," the worms, and the east wind(s), elsewhere in the Bible. (Answer the "so what" question for each.)

Preparation for the Next Session:

Read the Book of Nahum and contrast it with Book of Jonah.

Nahum Echo of Jonah Chapter 1

- Unfinished acrostic poem? (Nahum 1:2-11)
- A review of the history, and the repentance from Jonah's message...
- The point of no return? For nations... For individuals...
- A message of the *justice* of God. [Contrast with the capriciousness of "Allah" ...]

Nineveh

- 1st Mention (Gen 10:11-12).
- **Hammurabi** (1792-1750 B.C.) referred to Nineveh.
- **Shalmaneser III** (859-824 B.C.) made the city of Nineveh a base for military operations.
- **Ashur-dan III** (772-754 B.C.) Jonah preached to the Ninevites.
- **Tiglath-Pileser III** (745-727 B.C.) Azariah, king of Judah (790-739 B.C.), paid tribute to Tiglath-Pileser III (745-727 B.C.). Menahem, king of Israel (752-742 B.C.), did the same (2 Kgs 15:14-23). In 731 B.C. Ahaz, king of Judah (732-715 B.C.), became a vassal of Tiglath-Pileser III, and Assyria invaded Damascus in the Syro-Ephraimite war.
- **Shalmaneser V** (727-722 B.C.) besieged Samaria and defeated it in 722 B.C., thus defeating the Northern Kingdom (2 Kgs 17:3-6; 18:9-10).
- **Sennacherib** (705-681 B.C.) 21 years later (in 701 B.C.), Sennacherib (705-681 B.C.) invaded Judah and destroyed 46 Judean towns and cities. After encircling Jerusalem, 185,000 of Sennacherib's soldiers were killed overnight and Sennacherib returned to Nineveh (2 Kgs 18:17-18; 19:32-36; Isa 37:36).

Therefore thus saith the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with

shield, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the LORD. For I will defend this city, to save it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. And it came to pass that night, that the angel of the LORD went out, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh.

2 Kgs 19:32-36

- **Esarhaddon** (681-669 B.C.) regarded Judah as a vassal kingdom, for he wrote in a building inscription, "I summoned the kings of the Hittite land [Aram] and [those] across the sea, Ba'lu, king of Tyre, Manasseh, king of Judah . . ." (Daniel David Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*. 2 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1926-7, 2:265).
- **Ashurbanipal** (669-612 B.C.) In 669 B.C. Ashurbanipal succeeded his father Esarhaddon as king of Assyria. He may have been the king who released Manasseh king of Judah (2 Chr 33:10-13). Ashurbanipal defeated Thebes in Egypt in 663 and brought treasures to Nineveh from Thebes, Babylon, and Susa. He established an extensive library at Nineveh. The city of Nineveh fell to the Babylonians, Medes, and Scythians in August 612 B.C.

Chronological Summary

- 903 B.C. Rise of Nineveh
- 759 B.C. The warning of Jonah
- 722 B.C. Destruction of Northern Kingdom
- 709 B.C. The Invasion of Sennacherib
- 663 B.C. The Prophecy of Nahum
- 625 B.C. The Destruction of Assyria

This book was written in Jerusalem (soon after 709 B.C.) where Nahum witnessed the invasion of Sennacherib and the destruction of his host (2 Kgs 19:35). It is believed to have been written between 663 – 612 (cf. 3:8).

The subject of this prophecy is the approaching complete and final destruction of Nineveh, the capital of the great and, at that time, flourishing Assyrian empire. Assur-bani-pal was at the height of his glory. Nineveh was a city of vast extent, and was then the center of the civilization and commerce of the world, a "bloody city all full of lies and robbery" (Nahum 3:1) for it had robbed and plundered all the neighbor-

ing nations. It was strongly fortified on every side, bidding defiance to every enemy; yet it was to be utterly destroyed as a punishment for the great wickedness of its inhabitants.

Jonah had already uttered his message of warning, and Nahum was followed by Zephaniah, who also predicted (Zeph 2:4-15) the destruction of the city, predictions which were remarkably fulfilled (625 B.C.) when Nineveh was destroyed—apparently by fire—and the Assyrian empire came to an end, an event which changed the face of Asia.

Nineveh: The City (see pages 7-9)

Prophecies Fulfilled

- 1) The Assyrian fortresses surrounding the city would be easily captured (Nahum 3:12). The fortified towns in Nineveh's environs began to fall in 614 B.C., including Tabris, present-day Sharif-Khan, a few miles NW of Nineveh. (*Babylonian Chronicle*.)
- 2) The besieged Ninevites would prepare bricks and mortar for emergency defense walls (Nahum 3:14). "To the south of the gate, the moat is still filled with fragments of stone and mud bricks from the walls, heaped up when they were breached." [A.T. Olmstead *History of Assyria*, Chicago University of Chicago Press, 1951, p.637.]
- 3) The city gates would be destroyed (Nahum 3:13). "The main attack was directed from the northwest and the brunt fell upon the Hatamti gate at this corner... within the gate are traces of the counterwall raised by the inhabitants in their last extremity." [A.T. Olmstead *History of Assyria*, Chicago University of Chicago Press, 1951, p.637.]
- 4) In the final hours of the attack the Ninevites would be drunk (Nahum 1:10; 3:11). "The Assyrian king... distributed to his soldiers meats and liberal supplies of wine and provisions... while the whole army was thus acrousing, the friends of Arbakes learned from some deserters of the slackness and drunkenness which prevailed in the enemy's camp and made an unexpected attack by night" [Diodorus Siculus, *Bibliotheca Historia* 2.26.4.]
- 5) Nineveh would be destroyed by a flood (Nahum 1:8; 2:6, 8). In the third year of the siege, heavy rains caused a nearby river to flood

part of the city and break art of the Walls [*Bibliotheca Historia* 2.26.9; 2.27.13.] Xenophon referred to terrifying thunder (presumably with a storm) associated with the city's capture [Xenophon *Anabasis*, 3.4.12.] Also the Khosr River, entering the city from the NW at the Ninlil Gate and running through the city in a SW direction may have flooded because of heavy rains, or the enemy may have destroyed its sluice gate.

- 6) Nineveh would be destroyed by fire (Nahum 1:10; 2:13; 3:15). Archeological excavations at Nineveh have revealed charred wood, charcoal, and ashes. "There was no question about the clear traces of burning of the temple (as also in the palace of Sennacherib), for a layer of ash about two inches thick lay clearly defined in places on the southeast side about the level of the Sargon pavement." [R. Campbell Thompson and R. V. Hutchinson, *A Century of Exploration at Nineveh*, London, 1929.]
- 7) The city's capture would be attended by a great massacre of people (Nahum 3:3). "In two battles fought on the plain before the city the rebels defeated the Assyrians... So great was the multitude of the slain that the flowing stream, mingled with their blood, changed its color for a considerable distance." [Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historia*, 2.26.6-7.]
- 8) Plundering and pillaging would accompany the overthrow of the city (Nahum 2:9-10). Babylonian Chronicle: "Great quantities of the spoil from the city, beyond counting, they carried off. The city [they turned] into a mound and ruin heap" [Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, 2.420.]
- 9) When Nineveh would be captured its people would try to escape (Nahum 2:8). "Sardanapalus (another name for King Sin-shar-iskun) sent away his three sons and two daughters with much treasure into Paphlagonia, to the governor of Kattos, the most loyal of his subjects." [Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historia*, 2.420.]
- 10) The Ninevite officers would weaken and flee. Babylonian Chronicle: "[The army] of Assria deserted [lit. ran away before] the king" [Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, 2.420.]
- 11) Nineveh's images and idols would be destroyed (Nahum 1:9,14). "The statue of the goddess Ishtar lay headless in the debris of

Nineveh's ruins" [R. Campbell Thompson and R. W. Hutchinson, *Annals of Archeology and Anthropology*, 19, pp. 55-6.]

- 12) Nineveh's destruction would be final (Nahum 1:9,14). Many cities of the ancient Near East were rebuilt after being destroyed (e.g., Samaria & Jerusalem) but not Nineveh.

Nahum 1

The Comfort to Judah

The coming judgment on Nineveh (in return for her terrible atrocities on various nations including Israel, the Northern Kingdom, in 722 B.C.) would bring great comfort to the afflicted Judah (1:12). Judah had felt the threat of the Assyrian Empire breathing down her neck. In fact, Assyria had defeated much of Judah and had even surrounded Jerusalem in 701 B.C. And during much of Manasseh's reign Judah had to pay tribute to Assyria.

The purpose of Nahum's book is to announce the fall of Nineveh and thereby comfort Judah with the assurance that God is in control.

- 1] The burden of Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.
- 2] God *is* jealous, and the LORD revengeth; the LORD revengeth, and *is* furious; the LORD will take vengeance on his adversaries, and he reserveth *wrath* for his enemies.

"Nahum" = "consolation" or "comfort," appropriate for his ministry to Judah.

"Elkoshite": His hometown was Elkosh, but is unknown. Jerome said it was in Galilee; some, Capernaum ["village of Nahum"?]

"...Jealous": "exact[ing] exclusive devotion." (Websters) Cf. Ex 20:3-6 (avengeth, not "revengeth.")

- 3] The LORD *is* slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit *the wicked*: the LORD hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds *are* the dust of his feet.
- 4] He rebuketh the sea, and maketh it dry, and drieth up all the rivers: Bashan languisheth, and Carmel, and the flower of Lebanon languisheth.
- 5] The mountains quake at him, and the hills melt, and the earth is burned at his presence, yea, the world, and all that dwell therein.

God is the *moral* ruler of the universe; and He is a *righteous* judge. Penalties must be paid...

- 6] Who can stand before his indignation? and who can abide in the fierceness of his anger? his fury is poured out like fire, and the rocks are thrown down by him.
- 7] The LORD *is* good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.
- 8] But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies.
- 9] What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.
- 10] For while *they be* folden together *as* thorns, and while they are drunken *as* drunkards, they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry.
- 11] There is *one* come out of thee, that imagineth evil against the LORD, a wicked counsellor.

“...a wicked counsellor”: Heb. “a counsellor of Belial.” Senecherib’s invasion: (3X) 2 Kgs 18-29; 2 Chr 32, Isa 36-37.

- 12] Thus saith the LORD; Though *they be* quiet, and likewise many, yet thus shall they be cut down, when he shall pass through. Though I have afflicted thee, I will afflict thee no more.
- 13] For now will I break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder.

“...quiet and likewise many...”: Long forgotten Assyrian legal formula, discovered on Assyrian legal tablets: “Even though your entire nation joins as one person to resist me, nevertheless I shall overcome you.” [*New Scofield Reference Bible*, pp.950-951.]

- 14] And the LORD hath given a commandment concerning thee, *that* no more of thy name be sown: out of the house of thy gods will I cut off the graven image and the molten image: I will make thy grave; for thou art vile.
- 15] Behold upon the mountains the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace! O Judah, keep thy solemn feasts, perform thy vows: for the wicked shall no more pass through thee; he is utterly cut off.

“...feet of him...”: cf: Isa 52:7; Rom 10:13-15

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) Construct a rough time line which includes
 - a) the rise of Nineveh,
 - b) the warning of Jonah,
 - c) the destruction of the Northern Kingdom,
 - d) the attempted invasion of the Southern Kingdom,
 - e) the prophecy of Nahum, and
 - f) the final destruction of Assyria.

- 2) What were the military and strategic advantages of Nineveh? The weaknesses?
- 3) List 12 prophecies of Nahum that were fulfilled from the known history of Nineveh.
- 4) Nahum means “comfort.” To whom and how?
- 5) Why can’t a righteous judge let a guilty person “off the hook”?
- 6) Senecherib’s invasion is mentioned 3 times in Scripture (2 Kgs 18-29; 2 Chr 32, Isa 36-37). What was the result and how was it achieved?

Discussion Questions

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) What does it mean that God is “jealous”? (Ex 20:3-6)
- 2) Should husbands and wives be jealous?
- 3) Contrast the messages and contexts of Jonah and Nahum.

Candidate Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

Compile other prophecies of Gentile nations and their fulfillment in confirmed (archeological and other) history.

Preparation for the Next Session:

Read Nahum Chapters 2 and 3.

Nahum 2 The Judgment upon Nineveh

- 1] He that dasheth in pieces is come up before thy face: keep the munition, watch the way, make *thy* loins strong, fortify *thy* power mightily.
- 2] For the LORD hath turned away the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel: for the emptiers have emptied them out, and marred their vine branches.
- 3] The shield of his mighty men is made red, the valiant men *are* in scarlet: the

chariots *shall be* with flaming torches in the day of his preparation, and the fir trees shall be terribly shaken.

“He...”: or, the disperser, or, hammer. Cyaxares and Nabopolassar: Medo and Babylonian forces destroy it in 612 B.C.

- 4] The chariots shall rage in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like the lightnings.
- 5] He shall recount his worthies: they shall stumble in their walk; they shall make haste to the wall thereof, and the defence shall be prepared.
- 6] The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be dissolved.

The Tigris overflowed, took out a section of the wall, and the city became like a pool of water... 2 ½ miles of wall were along the Tigris.

- 7] And Huzzab shall be led away captive, she shall be brought up, and her maids shall lead *her* as with the voice of doves, tabering upon their breasts.
- 8] But Nineveh *is* of old like a pool of water: yet they shall flee away. Stand, stand, *shall they cry*; but none shall look back.
- 9] Take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold: for *there is* none end of the store *and* glory out of all the pleasant furniture.
- 10] She is empty, and void, and waste: and the heart melteth, and the knees smite together, and much pain *is* in all loins, and the faces of them all gather blackness.
- 11] Where *is* the dwelling of the lions, and the feedingplace of the young lions, where the lion, *even* the old lion, walked, *and* the lion's whelp, and none made *them* afraid?
- 12] The lion did tear in pieces enough for his whelps, and strangled for his lionesses, and filled his holes with prey, and his dens with ravin.
- 13] Behold, *I am* against thee, saith the LORD of hosts, and I will burn her chariots in the smoke, and the sword shall devour thy young lions: and I will cut off thy prey from the earth, and the voice of thy messengers shall no more be heard.

Nahum 3

The Reasons Why

God loved Nineveh: it was His closing comments to Jonah. But both individuals and nations can cross a line too far...

- 1] Woe to the bloody city! *it is* all full of lies *and* robbery; the prey departeth not;
- 2] The noise of a whip, and the noise of the rattling of the wheels, and of the prancing horses, and of the jumping chariots.
- 3] The horseman lifteth up both the bright sword and the glittering spear: and *there is* a multitude of slain, and a great number of carcasses; and *there is* none end of *their* corpses; they stumble upon their corpses:

No wonder Nahum called Nineveh “the city of blood” (3:1), a city noted for its “cruelty”! (3:19).

Violence & Cruelty

- **Ashurnasirpal II** (883-859 B.C.) boasted, “I stormed the mountain peaks and took them. In the midst of the mighty mountain I slaughtered them; with their blood I dyed the mountain red like wool. . . . The heads of their warriors I cut off, and I formed them into a pillar over against their city; their young men and their maidens I burned in the fire.”
- Regarding one captured leader, he wrote, “I flayed [him], his skin I spread upon the wall of the city”
- He also wrote of mutilating the bodies of live captives and stacking their corpses in piles.
—Luckenbill, *Ancient Records of Assyria and Babylonia*, 1:148, 146
- **Shalmaneser II** (859-824 B.C.) boasted of his cruelties after one of his campaigns: “A pyramid of heads I reared in front of his city. Their youths and their maidens I burnt up in the flames”
- **Sennacherib** (705-681 B.C.) wrote of his enemies, “I cut their throats like lambs. I cut off their precious lives [as one cuts] a string. Like the many waters of a storm I made [the contents of] their gullets and entrails run down upon the wide earth. . . . Their hands I cut off”
- **Ashurbanipal** (669-626 B.C.) described his treatment of a captured leader in these words: “I pierced his chin with my keen hand dagger. Through his jaw . . . I passed a rope, put a dog chain upon him and made him occupy . . . a kennel”
- In his campaign against Egypt, Ashurbanipal also boasted that his officials hung Egyptian corpses “on stakes [and] stripped off their skins and covered the city wall(s) with them”

- 4] Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.
- 5] Behold, *I am* against thee, saith the LORD of hosts; and I will discover thy skirts upon thy face, and I will shew the nations thy nakedness, and the kingdoms thy shame.
- 6] And I will cast abominable filth upon thee, and make thee vile, and will set thee as a gazingstock.
- 7] And it shall come to pass, *that* all they that look upon thee shall flee from thee, and say, Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? whence shall I seek comforters for thee?

- 8] Art thou better than populous No [Amon], that was situate among the rivers, *that had* the waters round about it, whose rampart *was* the sea, *and* her wall *was* from the sea?

In 3:8 ff the prophet speaks of the capture and destruction of No-amon, the Egyptian Thebes, as an accomplished fact. The expedition of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria, against Egypt, which resulted in the fall of Thebes, occurred about 663 B.C. Hence, the activity of Nahum must be placed somewhere between 663 and 607 B.C.

- 9] Ethiopia and Egypt *were* her strength, and *it was* infinite; Put and Lubim were thy helpers.
- 10] Yet *was* she carried away, she went into captivity: her young children also were dashed in pieces at the top of all the streets: and they cast lots for her honourable men, and all her great men were bound in chains.
- 11] Thou also shalt be drunken: thou shalt be hid, thou also shalt seek strength because of the enemy.
- 12] All thy strong holds *shall be like* fig trees with the firstripe figs: if they be shaken, they shall even fall into the mouth of the eater.
- 13] Behold, thy people in the midst of thee *are* women: the gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies: the fire shall devour thy bars.
- 14] Draw thee waters for the siege, fortify thy strong holds: go into clay, and tread the mortar, make strong the brickkiln.
- 15] There shall the fire devour thee; the sword shall cut thee off, it shall eat thee up like the cankerworm: make thyself many as the cankerworm, make thyself many as the locusts.
- 16] Thou hast multiplied thy merchants above the stars of heaven: the cankerworm spoileth, and flieth away.
- 17] Thy crowned *are* as the locusts, and thy captains as the great grasshoppers, which camp in the hedges in the cold day, *but* when the sun ariseth they flee away, and their place is not known where they *are*.
- 18] Thy shepherds slumber, O king of Assyria: thy nobles shall dwell *in the dust*: thy people is scattered upon the mountains, and no man gathereth *them*.
- 19] *There is* no healing of thy bruise; thy wound is grievous: all that hear the bruit of thee shall clap the hands over thee: for upon whom hath not thy wickedness passed continually?

Nineveh has come to a place where there is no healing for her people. There is a line that people—and nations—cannot cross without the inevitability of judgment...

A Measure of Distress

Every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

Deut 12:8; Judg 17:6; Judg 21:25; Prov 12:15; Prov 21:2
= Absolutely no fear of God.

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) Who ultimately defeated Assyria and how?
- 2) What were the attendant circumstances to the fall of Nineveh?
- 3) Which ones were beyond the control of either the attackers or defenders?
- 4) How did Nineveh “sell nations through her whoredoms and families through its witchcrafts”? (3:4)
- 5) How is the express comparison with Thebes (“No-Amon”) relevant?
- 6) Is America over due for judgment? Why or why not.

Discussion Questions

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) Why was Nineveh destroyed? Is there a parallel with America?
- 2) What does the repeated phrase, “Every man did that which was right in his own eyes” mean, and how is it relevant to America today?
- 3) Why does America appear overdue for judgment? Why hasn’t it occurred? Will it? When?

Candidate Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

Research various viewpoints on the following questions: Why does America appear overdue for judgment? Why hasn’t it occurred? Will it? When?

Preparation for the Next Session:

Read the Book of Obadiah.

Obadiah

The Doom of Edom

The Destruction of Jerusalem

- The time: 586 B.C.
- The place: Jerusalem.
- The event: the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonian armies.

We see the angry soldiers as they wreck the walls, slay the people, and burn the city. But we see something else: we see a group of neighboring citizens as they stand on the other side and encourage the Babylonians to ruin the city. “Raze it! Raze it!” they are calling. “Dash their little children against the stones and wipe out the Jews!”

Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Raze it, raze it, even to the foundation thereof. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones.

Psalm 17:7-9

Who are these people who desire such terrible things to happen to their neighbors? They are brethren to the Jews: The Edomites were the descendants of Esau, Jacob’s older brother (Gen 25:21–26).

And these are the generations of Isaac, Abraham’s son: Abraham begat Isaac: And Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to wife, the daughter of Bethuel the Syrian of Padanaram, the sister to Laban the Syrian. And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.

Genesis 25:19-21

And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to enquire of the LORD. And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger. And when her days be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.

Genesis 25:22-24

And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau. And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau’s heel; and his name was called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them. And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man, dwelling in tents. And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.

Genesis 25:25-28

Esau

Fascinating wordplays were used to describe the first twin. The name Esau (‘*esaw*’) has a loose connection with the word “Seir” (‘*sie’ir*’), the early name for Edom to the southeast of the Dead Sea, where Esau later lived (Gen 32:3; 36:8). The Hebrew word “red” (‘*admoni*’) is related to the word “Edom” (‘*edom*’; cf. 25:30); and “hairy” (‘*sie’ar*’) is similar to “Seir.” Those words were carefully chosen to portray in the lad the nature of Edom, a later archrival of Israel.

Jacob

The second twin was born *grasping Esau’s heel* (v. 26). In view of the oracle the parents had received (v. 23) it seemed appropriate to give this child a name that would preserve the memory of this event.

The name Jacob (‘*ya’aqob*’, meaning “may He [God] protect”) was selected because of its connection in sound and sense to the noun “heel” (‘*aqeb*’). The verb ‘*aqab*’ means “to watch from behind”; ‘*aqob*’ means “deceitful, sly, insidious.” Thus, “one who grabs the heel” or “one who trips up.” As with Esau, so Jacob’s name would also take on a different sense later in life as his deceptive nature became evident. So the twins’ births had great significance for later events in their lives.

(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

Romans 9:11-13

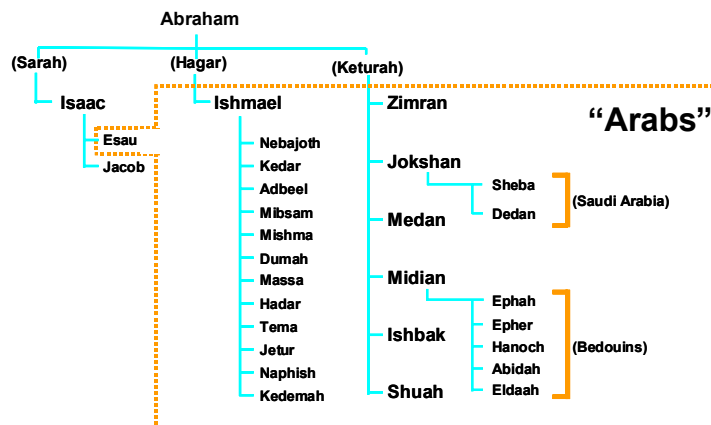
God’s fulfillment of His promise to Abraham was carried out by His election of Jacob (later, the nation Israel). From the outset the birth of the nation of Israel was supernaturally superintended. Paul noted that before the twins’ births the younger was chosen over the elder (Rom

9:11-12). God often reverses man's natural order, for His ways are not man's ways.

By-Pass of the Firstborn

Seth	Cain
Shem	Japheth
Isaac	Ishmael
Jacob	Esau
Judah, Joseph	Reuben
Moses	Aaron
David	All his brothers

Descendents of Abraham



Esau took wives including Nebajoth's sister; his descendants, Ishmael's, and Keturah's, all intermarried... no tribal distinctions were maintained...

And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint: And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore was his name called Edom. And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

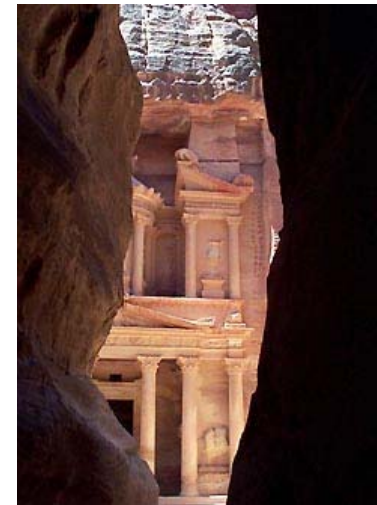
Genesis 25:29-31

And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.

Genesis 25:32-34

Esau

The word Esau appears to be a dialectical variation of the Arabic *atha*, to be covered with hair; whence *athai*, hairy, in allusion to the circumstance of his being covered with red hair at his birth.



The inaccessibility of Mount Seir had made that mountain a refuge for the Edomites many times. It is a granite range, with a width of 15 – 20 miles, oriented north and south, having cliffs as much as 2,000 feet in height. Its stronghold is a lofty, flat-topped rock called *Sela* in the Old Testament but more popularly known now as **Petra**.

The stronghold could be approached only through a narrow, rock-walled ravine (see photo, left).

Edom

- Name derives from Esau, "red" (Gen 25:30; 36:1). It is the name of the land occupied by Esau's descendants; formerly the land of Seir. It stretched from the Wadi Zered to the Gulf of Aqabah, extending to both sides of the Arabah, the great depression connecting the Dead Sea to the Red Sea.
- Esau had already occupied Edom when Jacob returned from Haran (Gen 32:3; 36:6-8; Deut 2:4, 5; Josh 24:4).
- Edom Refused Israel passage by the King's Highway (Num 20:14-21; 21:4; Judg 11:17-18).
- Israel forbidden to abhor his Edomite brother (Deut 23:7-8).
- Balaam predicted the conquest of Edom (Num 24:18).
- Joshua allotted the territory of Judah up to the borders of Edom, but did not encroach on their lands (Josh 15:1, 21).
- Two centuries later King Saul was fighting the Edomites (1 Sam 14:47).
- David conquered Edom and put garrisons throughout the land (2 Sam 8:13-14).
- Solomon built the port of Ezion-Geber.

- In Jehoshaphat's time, Edomites joined Ammonites and Moabites in a raid on Judah, but the allies fell to fighting one another (2 Chr 20:1).
- Under Jehoram, Edom rebelled, but he could not reduce them to subjection (2 Kgs 8:20-22; 2 Chr 21:8-10). Edom had a respite of some 40 years.
- Amaziah later invaded Edom, slew 10,000 Edomites in the Valley of Salt, captured Sela their capital and sent 10,000 more to their deaths by casting them from the top of Sela (2 Kgs 14:7; 2 Chr 25:11-12).
- Uzziah, his successor, restored the port at Elath (2 Kgs 14:22).
- But under Ahaz, when Judah was being attacked by Pekah and Rezin, the Edomites invaded Judah and carried off captives (2 Chr 28:17).
- Judah never again recovered Edom.
- Assyrian inscriptions show that Edom became a vassal-state of Assyria after 736 B.C.
- After the fall of Judah, Edom rejoiced (Ps 137:7).
- The prophets foretold judgment on Edom for her bitter hatred (Jer 49:7-22; Lam 4:21-22; Ezek 25:12-14; 35:15; Joel 3:19; Amos 9:12; Obad 10ff).



Obadiah's Message

- God's Vengeance on Esau vv. 1-16
- God's Victory for Jacob vv. 17-21

This little Book of Obadiah (the shortest book of the Old Testament: 21 verses) deals with these two brothers, Esau and Jacob—Edom and Israel. The prophet presents a two-fold message... a powerful message about the justice of God—His righteousness demanded vengeance on Edom, Israel's perennial enemy—and the dangers of pride and arrogance.

Judgment against Edom is mentioned in more Old Testament books than it is against any other foreign nation (cf. Isa 11:14; 34:5-17; 63:1-6; Jer 9:25-26; 25:17-26; 49:7-22; Lam 4:21-22; Ezek 25:12-14; 35; Joel 3:19; Amos 1:11-12; 9:11-12; Obad; Mal 1:4).

- 1] The vision of Obadiah. Thus saith the Lord GOD concerning Edom; We have heard a rumour from the LORD, and an ambassador is sent among the heathen, Arise ye, and let us rise up against her in battle.

[At least 12 Old Testament men were named Obadiah including an officer in David's army (1 Chr 12:9), Ahab's servant (1 Kgs 18:3), a Levite in the days of Josiah (2 Chr 34:12), and a leader who returned from the Exile with Ezra (Ezra 8:9).]

God's Vengeance on Esau (vv. 1-16)

In Jer 49:7-22, Jeremiah had already announced the doom of Edom; in fact, there are some quotations from his prophecy here in Obadiah. This is the "rumor" or "report" that Obadiah had heard: God would avenge Israel and destroy Edom. Why? Because of her sins. What were these sins?

The Sins of Edom

- Pride vv. 3-4
- Confederacy v. 7
- Violence v. 10
- Rejoicing v. 12
- Looting v. 13
- Hindering Jews from escaping v. 14
- Drunken celebration v. 16

- 2] Behold, I have made thee small among the heathen: thou art greatly despised.
- 3] The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation *is* high; that saith in his heart, Who shall bring me down to the ground?
- 4] Though thou exalt *thyself* as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.

Edom was a small nation, but she boasted of her achievements. Edom was actually cut out of the rocks; the people literally “nested” in the rocks (v. 4). Edom’s chief city, Petra, was carved out of the sides of the mountains, and the fortress seemed impregnable. Compare Isa 14:12–15.

- 5] If thieves came to thee, if robbers by night, (how art thou cut off!) would they not have stolen till they had enough? if the grapegatherers came to thee, would they not leave *some* grapes?
- 6] How are *the things* of Esau searched out! *how* are his hidden things sought up!
- 7] All the men of thy confederacy have brought thee *even* to the border: the men that were at peace with thee have deceived thee, *and* prevailed against thee; *they that eat* thy bread have laid a wound under thee: *there is* none understanding in him.

Instead of sharing the burden of their brothers in Israel, the Edomites allied with the surrounding nations to oppress Jerusalem.

- 8] Shall I not in that day, saith the LORD, even destroy the wise *men* out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?
- 9] And thy mighty *men*, O Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter.

“Teman” takes its name from a grandson of Esau and is located in the southern portion of Edom.

- 10] For *thy* violence against thy brother Jacob shame shall cover thee, and thou shalt be cut off for ever.

The Edomites assisted in the wrecking of Jerusalem. How? By doing nothing to prevent it, and by encouraging those who actually did the damage. They stood “on the other side” (v. 11) and refused to stand with the Jews. This reminds us of the priest and Levite in Christ’s Parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:31–33). We may not actually lift a hand to hurt another, *but by watching and doing nothing, we are sharing in the crime.*

- 11] In the day that thou stoodest on the other side, in the day that the strangers carried away captive his forces, and foreigners entered into his gates, and cast lots upon Jerusalem, even thou *wast* as one of them.

- 12] But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother in the day that he became a stranger; neither shouldest thou have rejoiced over the children of Judah in the day of their destruction; neither shouldest thou have spoken proudly in the day of distress.

Edom should have been weeping over his brother’s calamity, but instead he was rejoicing and jeering. See Prov 24:17–18.

- 13] Thou shouldest not have entered into the gate of my people in the day of their calamity; yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction in the day of their calamity, nor have laid *hands* on their substance in the day of their calamity;

They took advantage of the plight of the Jews and robbed the city of its wealth. This plundering was seen by God even though the thieves escaped.

- 14] Neither shouldest thou have stood in the crossway, to cut off those of his that did escape; neither shouldest thou have delivered up those of his that did remain in the day of distress.

Some of the Jews tried to escape and protect their families, but the Edomites blocked the way. They even helped capture those who did escape and returned them to the Babylonians.

- 15] For the day of the LORD *is* near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee: thy reward shall return upon thine own head.
- 16] For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain, *so* shall all the heathen drink continually, yea, they shall drink, and they shall swallow down, and they shall be as though they had not been.

The Edomites got to the wine supplies and held a great celebration. At last, their enemy was defeated. But note v. 15: God would treat them just the way they treated the Jews. See Ps 137:8-9 also. They were traitors to the Jews; therefore, their own confederates would betray them (v. 7). They plundered and looted, so their nation would be robbed (vv. 5-6). Edom was violent, so they would be cut off completely (vv. 9-10). Edom wanted the Jews to be destroyed, so she would be destroyed by Babylon (vv. 10, 18). Edom would reap what she sowed. See also Isa. 34:5-15; Ezek. 25:12-14; 35:1-15; Amos 1:11-12.

The Great Tribulation

- **Little Apocalypse:** Isaiah 24:1-27:13
- **The Day of YHWH:**
- Isaiah 2:12-22; 13:6-16

- Ezekiel 30:1-9
- Joel 1:15-20
- Obadiah 10-20
- Zephaniah 1:14- 18
- 2 Peter 3:10-12
- Revelation 6-19

17] But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.

God's Victory for Jacob (vv. 17–21)

That little word “but” in v. 17 marks the turning point. God promises deliverance and cleansing for Mt. Zion. Yes, Israel had sinned, and the temple was destroyed because of their sins, *but* God would cleanse and restore “the house of Jacob” and not the house of Esau (the Edomites).

- 18] And the house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau for stubble, and they shall kindle in them, and devour them; and there shall not be *any* remaining of the house of Esau; for the LORD hath spoken *it*.
- 19] And *they of* the south shall possess the mount of Esau; and *they of* the plain the Philistines: and they shall possess the fields of Ephraim, and the fields of Samaria: and Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.

Note in v. 18 that there is reunion as well as restoration, for the house of Joseph (the southern tribes) and the house of Jacob will both be as a fire against Edom. The day will come when the Jews will “possess their possessions”—their land, their temple, their city, and their kingdom

- 20] And the captivity of this host of the children of Israel *shall possess* that of the Canaanites, *even* unto Zarephath; and the captivity of Jerusalem, which *is* in Sepharad, shall possess the cities of the south.
- 21] And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S.

The key word in vv. 17-20 is “possess.” Certainly Israel owns the land because of God's promise to Abraham. She owns her city, too. But she does not fully possess them, for her land has been overrun by the Gentile nations for centuries. There is coming the day, however, when Jesus Christ will return to give Israel back her possessions that she might enjoy them and use them to the glory of God.

“And the kingdom shall be the Lord's”: What a wonderful way to end this brief book! Today, the King has been rejected, and David's throne

is empty in Jerusalem. The Jews are in the sad condition described in Hosea 3:4-5, without king, priest, sacrifice, or priesthood. But when Christ returns, the nation will look upon the One they pierced, they will be cleansed and forgiven, and the Kingdom will be established.

Daniel saw Christ, the Stone, come down and crush all the kingdoms of the world (Dan 2:44-45). No matter what may happen to the affairs of Israel as the Gentile nations seek to control her or capture her, you may be sure that God will watch over His people and one day give them their promised kingdom.

The Flesh vs. The Spirit

- | | | |
|------------|-----|----------|
| • Cain | vs. | Abel |
| • Ishmael | vs. | Isaac |
| • Esau | vs. | Jacob |
| • Manasseh | vs. | Ephraim |
| • Reuben | vs. | Joseph |
| • Haman | vs. | Mordecai |

The struggle between Esau and Jacob, flesh and Spirit, runs all through the Bible. The Herods of the NT were Edomites. One of them killed the Jewish babies in his attempt to destroy Christ (Mt 2:16-18). Another Herod murdered John the Baptist; another one killed James the brother of John (Acts 12). The struggle between the Israelis and the Arabs today is but a continuation of this same battle that started in Gen 25:21-26.

Next Session

- What is the prophetic role of Ammon, Moab, and Edom (now known as Jordan)?
- What is the purpose of the Great Tribulation?
- *Where* does Jesus return? On the Mount of Olives or in Bozrah?

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) List the examples of the elder son being bypassed by a younger son in the Bible.
- 2) Name three countries that will elude subjection to the Antichrist.
- 3) Which sin does God hate the most? Why?

- 4) List examples (“types”) in the Bible that reflect the struggles between the “flesh” and the “Spirit”.

Discussion Questions

(“Where two people agree, one is redundant.”)

- 1) How do the sins of Edom parallel those in our own life?
- 2) Discuss practical examples in our own lives of the struggles between the flesh and the spirit.

Edom The Next Holocaust & The Refuge in Edom

- What is the purpose of the Great Tribulation?
- What is the prophetic role of Ammon, Moab, and Edom —now known as Jordan (see map below and the one on page 48)?
- *Where* does Jesus return? On the Mount of Olives or in Bozrah?

He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon.

Daniel 11:41



Jordan

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is not an ancient kingdom, but rather a European creation of 1946. Prior to WWI, the region was populated by unaffiliated Arabic Bedouin tribes. Major T. E. Lawrence organized the “Arab Revolt” against the Ottoman Turks, allies of Germany. The League of Nations awarded the British “Mandate” in 1920.

In 1921 an aggressive young man named Abdallah, the son of Sharif Hussein of Mecca in Arabia, moved into the land east of the Jordan river with his troops. The British Colonial Secretary (an upcoming fellow named Winston Churchill) recognized Abdallah as the “Emir (chieftain) of Trans-Jordan.” Abdallah then consolidated his control with his British-trained “Arab Legion.” After the war, in 1946, Abdallah was crowned King of Trans-Jordan. Jordan joined the attack on Israel in the 1948 War of Independence and the 1967 Six-Day War.

Ammon

- Descendants of BenAmmi, younger son of Lot from incest with his daughter (Gen 19:38).
 - Regarded as relatives; to be treated kindly (Deut 2:19).
 - Joined with Moabites in hiring Balaam to curse Israel (Num 22-24).
 - Forbidden to enter congregation (Deut 13:3-6).

Moab

- Son of Lot by incest with his elder daughter (Gen 19:37).
- Moab refused Israel passage (Judg 11:17).
- Moses forbidden to attack (Deut 2:9).
 - Excluded from Israel (Deut 23:3-6; Neh 13:1).
- Balak counselled by Balaam: Israel seduced by Midianite women (Num 25).
- During the period of the Judges, Eglon, King of Moab oppresses for 18 years (Judg 3:12-30).
- Elimelech’s sons marry Moabite women; Ruth marries Boaz (Ruth 4:18-22).
- Saul warred with Moabites (1 Sam 14:47).
- David lodged parents there while a fugitive (1 Sam 22:3,4).
- Subdued by David (2 Sam 8; 1 Chr 18). After Solomon’s death, they broke free but were later subdued by Omri, King of Israel. [Moabite Stone] But there were frequent raids, subjections, etc.

- Ceased to exist as a nation; continued to be known as a race (Ezra 9:1; Neh 13:1).
- Divine judgments pronounced (Isa 15-16; 25:10; Jer 9:26; 25:21; 27:3; Ezek 25:8-11; Amos 2:1-3; Zeph 2:8-11).

Edom

- Some Edomites pressed into southern Judah and settled to the south of Hebron.
- Edom proper fell into Arab hands during the 5th century B.C.
- In the 3rd century B.C. was overrun by the Nabateans.
- Through these centuries yet other Edomites fled to Judah.

Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.

Isaiah 63:1-6

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Matthew 23:37-39

- **The Purpose of All History:** ...how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings...
- **The Tragedy of All History:** ...and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.
- **The Triumph of All History:** ...Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord.

Matthew 24

- 3] And as he sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?
- 4] And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you.
- 5] For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many.
- 6] And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all *these things* must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

“...for the end is not yet...”

- 7] For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places.
- 8] All these *are* the beginning of sorrows.
- 12] And because iniquity shall abound, the **love** of many shall wax cold.

“...love”: **הַפְּאֻנָּה** *agape*.

- 13] But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.
- 14] And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come.
- 15] When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)
- 16] Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:
- 17] Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house:
- 18] Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes.
- 19] And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!
- 20] But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day:
- 21] or then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.
- 22] And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

*I will go and return to my place, till they acknowledge their offence, and seek my face: in their affliction they will seek me **earnestly**.*

Hosea 5:15

שָׁחַר *shachar*, “earnestly, diligently.”

Time of Jacob's Trouble

- Israel is “God’s first born” (Ex 4:22).
- Therefore she receives a double portion (Deut 21:17; Isa 40:1-2; Jer 16:16-18).
- General description of Israel in the Tribulation (Isa 3:1-4:1).
- Day of YHWH passages: Ezek 13:1-7; Zech 13:2-6; Joel 2:1-11;

Amos 5:18-20; Joel 3:14-17 (note “time of refuge”); Zeph 1:7-13 (note focus on Jerusalem).

Old Testament Terms

- | | |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| • The Time of Jacob’s Trouble | Jer 30:7 |
| • The 70th Week of Daniel | Dan 9:27 |
| • Jehovah’s Strange Work | Isa 28:21 |
| • Jehovah’s Strange Act | Isa 28:21 |
| • The Day of Israel’s Calamity | Deut 32:35; Obad 12-14 |
| • The Tribulation | Deut 4:30 |
| • The Indignation | Isa 26:20; Dan 11:36 |
| • The Overflowing Scourge | Isa 28:15, 18 |
| • The Day of Vengeance | Isa 34:8; 35:4; 61:2 |
| • The Year of Recompense | Isa 34:8 |
| • The Time of Trouble | Dan 12:1; Zeph 1:15 |
| • The Day of Wrath | Zeph 1:15 |
| • The Day of Distress | Zeph 1:15 |
| • The Day of Wasteness | Zeph 1:15 |
| • The Day of Desolation | Zeph 1:15 |
| • The Day of Darkness | Zeph 1:15; Amos 5:28, 20; Joel 2:2 |
| • The Day of Gloominess | Zeph 1:15; Joel 2:2 |
| • The Day of Clouds | Zeph 1:15; Joel 2:2 |
| • The Day of Thick Darkness | Zeph 1:15; Joel 2:2 |
| • The Day of the Trumpet | Zeph 1:16 |
| • The Day of Alarm | Zeph 1:16 |

New Testament Terms

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| • The Day of the Lord | 1 Thess 5:2 |
| • The Wrath of God | Rev 15:1,7; 14:10,19; 16:1 |
| • The Hour of Trial | Rev 3:10 |
| • The Great Day of the Wrath of the Lamb of God | Rev 6:16-17 |
| • The Wrath to Come | 1 Thess 1:10 |
| • The Wrath | 1 Thess 5:9; Rev 11:18 |
| • The Great Tribulation | Mt 24:21; Rev 2:22; 7:14 |
| • The Tribulation | Mt 24:29 |
| • The Hour of Judgment | Rev 14:7 |

And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will

bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Zechariah 13:8-9

The Remnant

- Those that flee into (which?) mountains (Mt 24:15ff).
- These are the “non-many” (Dan 9:27).
- The “escaped” ones of Isa 10:20-23; 28:22; Isa 4:2, 37:31-32; Joel 2:32; Obad 17.
- God protects them and provides for them (Isa 41:8-20).

Bozrah

- Sela, now Petra, located in the region of Mount Seir, on the western side of Edom in southern Jordan (Micah 2:12).
- Bozrah means “sheepfold.” (John 10)

And he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.

Luke 4:16-21

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn...

Isaiah 61:1-2

Armageddon

- 1) The Assembling of the Armies of the Antichrist (Rev 16:12-16).
- 2) The Destruction of Babylon.

- 3) The Fall of Jerusalem (Zech 12:1-9; 14:1; Micah 4:11-5:1).
- 4) The Armies at Bozrah (Jer 49:13-14; Micah 2:12).
- 5) The National Regeneration of Israel (Zech 12:10).
 - The required confession and the pleading for the Messiah (Lev 26:40-42; Jer 3:11-18; Hos 5:15).
 - Inaugurates the final three days of the campaign (Hos 6:1-3; Isa 53:1-9; Rom 11:25-27; see also Zech 12:10-13:9; Joel 2:28-32; Isa 64:1-12; Ezek 20:33f; Ps 79:1-13; 80:1-19.)
- 6) The Second Coming of Christ (Isa 34:1-7; 63:1-6; Hab 3:1-19; Micah 2:12-13; Rev 19:1-18; Mt 16:27; Ps 18:8-16; Zech 12:7
- 7) From Bozrah to the Valley of Jehoshaphat (Bozrah to Megiddo = 176 miles; 1600 furlongs; Rev 14:20).
- 8) The Victory Ascent upon the Mount of Olives (Zech 14:3-4; Rev 16:17-21; Mt 24:29; Joel 3:14-17).

Ezekiel 38 vs. Armageddon

- 1) Invasion comes from the north; Armageddon from the whole earth;
- 2) Definite armies from the north; not all nations of the world;
- 3) Egypt not involved (vs. King of the South in Dan 11:40);
- 4) Magog invasion for spoil; Armageddon to destroy the Jews;
- 5) 7-month cleanup inconsistent with Israel's flight;
- 6) Cleansing may be preparation for rebuilding the Temple;
- 7) Seven years' energy requirement would carry into the Millennium.

Study Questions

(For the diligent student.)

- 1) What is the Purpose of all history? ...The Tragedy of all history? ...The Triumph of all history?
- 2) What happened to the land that the League of Nations had allocated for a Jewish homeland?
- 3) To whom is Jesus Christ addressing in Matthew Chapter 24? Why?
- 4) Who (and why) are "those who are in Judea" to flee unto (which mountains)?
- 5) What is the *purpose* of the Great Tribulation?
- 6) What is the primary *precedent* condition for the Second Coming of Christ? (Give references)

- 7) What are the main events that will *precede* the Battle of Armageddon?
- 8) What are some of the reasons that some scholars believe that the Magog Invasion (Ezekiel 38 & 39) occurs *before* the 70th Week of Daniel?
- 9) What is the "Abomination of Desolation"? Has it ever happened in past history? When? How do we know? What was Jesus Christ referring to?

Discussion Questions

("Where two people agree, one is redundant.")

- 1) Will the Church go through the Great Tribulation? Why, or why not?
- 2) Why is land of Ammon, Moab, and Edom exempted from the dominion of the Antichrist?

Candidate Research Projects

(For the truly dedicated.)

- 1) Who are the nations referred to in Ezekiel 38?

Preparation for the Next Session:

Study for the next book on your schedule.

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About The Cover Design

(on the tape cassette volumes)

The “Front” cover:

The Greek border: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8).” The center design element symbolizes the Word of God Incarnate, illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

The “Back” cover: (the “front” to the Jewish reader)

The Hebrew border: “Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (from the Sh’ma, Deut 6:4-5).”

The center design represents the Burning Bush, made up of Hebrew letters which proclaim “the Eternal One cannot lie.”

The Spine:

The spine includes a Menorah from the Old Testament, a Maranatha Dove suggesting the New Testament, and the Koinonia House logo at the base.



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