

T H E M I N O R P R O P H E T S

Ministerial Refreshing Program
Session V

Lecturer: Don Ward

AN OVERVIEW OF THE MINOR PROPHETS

- I. Today I want to discuss four of the principal themes of the Minor Prophets (the Twelve).

- II. The four themes are:
 1. The Israel of God is the Church (we are RUHAMAH and AMMI).
 2. The building of the restoration temple pictures the building of the spiritual temple, the Church of God. The true temple is the Church.
 3. The messengers to the spiritual temple the Church.
 4. Exercising judgment, mercy and faith.

- III. We should keep in mind that there are two phases to the Kingdom of God:
 1. Spiritual phase consisting of God, Christ and the saints.
 2. Physical phase consisting of Israel and other nations who will be converted and become the Church of God and the Israel of God in the Millennium.

- IV. A brief overview of the Minor Prophets:
 1. Israel was God's chosen nation (Amos 3:2).
 2. He loved them and delivered them from physical bondage and established them in the promised land (Exo. 19:3-4).
 3. God entered into a covenant with them. They were to be a kingdom of priests and an holy nation (Exo. 19:6). God intended to use them to bring other nations into a relationship with Him.
 4. Israel was unfaithful to their husband and committed whoredom (Hos. 1:2).

5. God gave Israel a bill of divorcement (Hos. 2:2; Jer. 3:8) and they became Lo-Ruhamah (not having obtained mercy) and Lo-Ammi (not my people) (Hos. 1:6-9).
6. God punishes them with other nations resulting in captivity. Eventually God allows them to go into the great tribulation (Hos. 5:15; Jer. 30:1-7).
7. The building of Zerubbabel's temple pictures the building of the spiritual temple. The restoration of Israel begins with the Church.
8. God's messengers to His temple are described.
9. The summary of the twelve--Mic. 6:8.
10. In tribulation Israel begins to repent and exercise faith in Christ (Hos. 6:1-3). As a result, they are grafted back in and become a part of the Israel of God (Rom. 11:21-24).
11. God punishes the nations who punished Israel because they inflicted affliction upon Israel greater than God intended (Zech. 1:15-21).
12. On the day of Pentecost 31 A.D., the Church became the Israel of God. The way into the Israel of God is by faith in Christ and has been made available to the other nations (Gal. 3:26-29; Rom. 9:7-8, 25). The Church is now ". . . a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light (I Pet. 2:9).
13. The resurrected saints and repentant ones from all nations will work with God and Christ to bring all nations into the Israel of God (Zech. 8:20-23; Isa. 66:19-21).

V. Now that I have given you the overview, let's note how the Twelve support the overview.

VI. Hosea = Save

1. Hosea, a type of Christ, marries a whore. Hos. 1:2.
2. However, when Christ married Israel, Israel had been cleaned up. Christ did not marry a whore initially, Israel became a whore (Ezek. 16:8-9, 14, 15, 22, 59-63).
3. Hos. 1:4 First child Jezreel, meaning "God sows"--first God sows destruction, after Israel repents, God will sow restoration (Hos. 2:23).
4. Hos. 1:6 Not having obtained mercy. Unrepentant Israel today.
5. Hos. 1:8-9 Not my people (Hos. 2:1-3; Jer. 3:8).
6. Hos. 1:10, 11, 2:23; Rom 9:25-26. The Israel of God begins with the Church (Rom 9:3-9, 15-16, 10:19-21, 11:1-7, 25-29; I Pet. 2:9-10).
7. They (Israel and Judah) shall obtain mercy (RUHAMAH) after they repent, and they shall become once again God's people (AMMI).
8. Note Hos. 5:15 - 6:1-2 describes this repentance along with Ezek. 34:22-31.
9. Hosea sets the tenor and tone for what is wrong with Israel and Judah (Hos. 4:1, 6; Zech. 7:8-14). Failure to exercise judgment, mercy and faith. The requirement for Israel is summarized by Micah 6:8.
10. Hos. 14:1-9. God's eloquent plea for Israel to return unto Him. Upon their return to Him they are restored.

VII. Joel = The Eternal (God) is God

1. Joel 1:6-7 A nation is come upon my land.
2. Joel 2:12-17 The responsibility of God's people.
3. Joel 2:17-20 God intervenes after His people fulfill their responsibility.
4. Joel 2:25-26, 32 Restoration promised.
5. Joel 3:1-3 Nations judged.
6. Joel 3:16-18 Restoration.

VIII. Amos = Burden

1. Amos 1:3-2:3 Punishment of Syria, Philistines, Edom, Ammon and Moab.
2. Amos 2:4-7 Punishment of Judah.
3. Amos 7:7-11; 9:8-10 Punishment of Israel.
4. Amos 9:11-12 Restoration begins with Church (Acts 15:14-19).
5. Amos 9:13-15 Restoration.

IX. Obadiah = Servant of God

1. Obad. 7-16 Edom and the nations confederate with him are punished.
2. Obad. 17 Deliverance and restoration.

X. Jonah = Dove

1. Jonah 4:10-11 God determines to whom He will grant repentance. He is not a respecter of persons and is not willing that any should perish.

XI. Micah = Who is like God

1. Micah 1:2-5; 3:10-12 Israel and Judah indicted.
2. Micah 4:1-4 Restoration promised.
3. Micah 6:8 The great summary statement of the 12.
4. Micah 6:13-16 Punishment described.
5. Micah 7:18-20 Restoration.

XII. Nahum = Compassionate Counselor

1. Nah. 1:1-7 God is compassionate and will avenge Israel's enemies.
2. Nah. 1:15 Israel delivered.

XIII. Habakkuk = Embrace

1. Hab. 1:1-4 Habakkuk, the questioning prophet, asks God how long are the wicked going to be allowed to triumph.
2. Hab. 1:5-6, 12 God uses the Chaldeans to punish Judah.
3. Hab. 2:4 In the face of evil the just shall live by faith.
4. Hab. 2:8 The spoiler is punished.
5. Hab. 2:14 Kingdom of God prophesied.
6. Hab. 3 God punishes Israel's enemies, then delivers and embraces Israel.

XIV. Zephaniah = Hidden of God

1. Zeph. 1:2-7 Day of the Lord prophesied.
2. Zeph. 2:3 Keys to being hidden during the Day of the Lord
3. Zeph. 2:4-3:11 God pours out His indignation on the nations.
4. Zeph. 3:12 Description of repentant Israel.
5. Zeph. 3:14-20 Restoration.

XV. Haggai = My Festival

1. Judah had been in captivity for 70 years in Babylon--they were looking forward to keeping the feast in the restored temple in Jerusalem.
2. Hag. 1:3-14 Command to build God's house.
3. Hag. 2:3, 8-9 Glory of latter house (Church) exceeds glory of former house (Solomon's Temple).
4. Five things were missing in Restoration Temple, all of which are fulfilled in the spiritual temple, the Church of God.
 - a. Shekinah Glory--God dwells in us (I Cor. 3:16; II Cor. 6:16).
 - b. Ark of Covenant--Law is written by the holy spirit in fleshy tables of the heart (II Cor. 3:3; Heb. 8:10).
 - c. Urim and Thumin--We may consult the word of God and God's ministers (II Pet. 1:19-21; Ps. 119:105).
 - d. Sacred fire--We are to offer up spiritual sacrifices (I Pet. 2:5; Rom. 12:1).
 - e. Spirit of Prophecy--We have a more sure word of prophecy (II Pet. 1:19-21) and Christ in us to help us understand (I John 5:10-12).

XVI. Zechariah = Remembered of God

1. Building of the spiritual temple and the administration of it.
2. Zech. 1:12-17 Command to build the temple.
3. Zech. 3:8 Joshua's work a sign for us. Christ, the Branch, builds the true temple (Heb. 8:2). The Church is the habitation of God.

4. John 4:20-24; Acts 7:44-49; Zech. 4:1-10 Zerubbabel's work in building the restoration temple a type of Christ's building of the spiritual temple.
5. Mt. 16:18
6. Eph. 2:20-22
7. Heb. 8:1-2 God is building temple through His spirit
8. Ps. 127 Unless God builds the house, the builders toil in vain.
9. Zech. 6:12-15; Heb. 7:1-2 Christ and saints fulfill the office of Joshua and Zerubbabel--priest and king.
10. The coming of God's Kingdom to the earth (Zech. 14:9).

XVII. Malachi = My Messenger

1. Mal. 1:1 Malachi = my messenger.
2. Mal. 2:7 Priests were messengers.
3. Mal. 3:1 John the Baptist, messenger who prepares way (Mark 1:1-8). Jesus the messenger of the covenant.
4. Mal. 4:4-6--The messenger before the end of the age.
5. Rev. 1:20, 2:1 = aggelos, Mark 1:1-5; Mt. 17:9-11.
6. Mt. 24:15--Rom. 10:14-17--Mt. 28:20 = Our part.
7. Luke 1:15-17 Prepare a people for the Lord so flesh will be saved alive.

NAME: Hosea

HEBREW NAME AND MEANING: HOSHEA, means "Save!" or, salvation

THEME: Salvation

DATE WRITTEN: ca. 765-725 B.C.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Israel, the Northern Kingdom

HISTORICAL SETTING: The Israelites were surrounded by enemies, but instead of driving them out as God had commanded, they formed alliances with them. Because of this, these nations (particularly the Philistines) became a stumbling block to the Israelites. The principal nations and enemies with whom alliances were formed were Assyria, Syria, Moab, Ammon, Edom, Philistines and later, Egypt. Because of these alliances, there was a continual changing of the confederation of nations. Most of the strife in Israel came from territorial disputes--often with Judah. When the prophet Hosea came on the scene, Israel was enjoying the greatest peace and prosperity since the time of their division into two separate nations. They were living in luxury and splendor.

SUMMARY: God had a marriage relationship with Israel, but Israel turned to other gods, made alliances with other countries and took on their pagan culture. As a result, physical Israel became Loruhamah (not having obtained mercy from God) and Loammi (not God's people). In other words, they were cut off from God--divorced. Today, the Church of God is the Israel of God and we have become Ruhamah (having obtained mercy) and Ammi (God's people). Physical Israel is commanded to repent and turn to God, but this will not happen until toward the end of the great tribulation. At that time, God will have mercy on all Israel. Through the Israel of God, the Gentiles will also enter into a marriage relationship with God and then all the world will have obtained mercy, be God's people and will call God "my husband" (Ishi).

NAME: Joel

HEBREW NAME AND MEANING: The "Jo-" of Joel comes from YHWH, or Yahweh, a term which mistakenly came to be spelled "Jehovah." The "-el" is another name of God, emphasizing His strength. Joel means "The Eternal is God."

THEME: The Day of the Lord, all nations begin to learn that the Eternal is God.

DATE WRITTEN: ca. 830-750 B.C.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Primarily Israel, from a Jerusalem perspective, although the message pertains to both Israelites and Gentiles today.

HISTORICAL SETTING: Judah, possibly during the reign of Joash (837-803 B.C.).

SUMMARY: God is calling all of Israel to hear His words and never forget them. They are to pass His words on to future generations because there will never be another time like this, the ultimate dark Day of the LORD. The judgment is inflicted upon Israel by a nation from the north. They will come and totally consume the land leaving only a remnant of people behind. This remnant will have no thank offering to give to God, neither physical (because of famine) nor spiritual (because God's people will be mourning). In view of this, Joel warns Israel to repent, fast and turn to God, and He will be merciful. They are to give thanks and praise to God because He will restore His people, bless them (physically and spiritually) and judge the nations who have done evil against God's people. Then, God will dwell with His people as He has always desired to do.

NAME: Amos

HEBREW NAME AND MEANING: Amos means "burden"

THEME: The Day of the Lord, God raises up the tabernacle of David, the Church of God, so that all nations might come to it (Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:15-17).

DATE WRITTEN: ca. 760 B.C.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: First to Israel, then to Judah and Benjamin, but in effect for all nations.

HISTORICAL SETTING: Israel was not keeping the law and the commandments:

- 1) they were oppressing the poor,
- 2) actively participating in idolatry,
- 3) while themselves living in great luxury and splendor and forgetting God.

SUMMARY: God called Amos (literally "burden"), a shepherd, to prophesy to Israel and Judah, and all the nations that oppressed Israel. Captivity and destruction were prophesied on the nations who spoiled Israel and Judah after their captivity (Syria, Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon, and Moab). Since Judah refused to obey God's law, punishment was also prophesied on her. Amos prophesied that Israel would be punished with famine (physically of food, and spiritually of the word of God), captivity, and destruction because of their oppression of the poor and righteous, and their immorality and idolatry. The remnant of Israel would be restored from captivity and blessed physically. God would raise up the tabernacle of David and bless this remnant and all nations spiritually (Amos 9:11-12; Acts 15:15-17). This sequence has begun with the Church, and will also include the Gentiles.

NAME: Obadiah

HEBREW NAME AND MEANING: OBADJAH--serving Jah
Obadiah means "servant of the Eternal" or "worshiper of the Eternal"

THEME:

- 1) Day of the Lord
- 2) Destruction of Edom, Israel's principal enemy for all ages
- 3) Israel's restoration and eventually the restoration of all nations

DATE WRITTEN: No date given. It is believed that Obadiah prophesied during the reign of Jehoram (851-843 B.C.) in Judah. (Notice II Kings 8:20-22; II Chronicles 21:8-20.)

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Obadiah is a prophecy against Edom.

HISTORICAL SETTING: Obadiah is very futuristic. Not much can be determined about the historical setting from the book itself, but he prophesied at a time when both Israel and Judah were in a state of decadence and idolatry. The original prophecy may have been uttered at the time of Edom's successful revolt against Judah which had previously dominated it for many years. This Edomite success seems to be related to the prophecy of Genesis 27:40, but as the Soncino Commentary points out, "A sufficient occasion for the outburst against Edom could be found at many points in history when the two peoples came into hostile contact."

SUMMARY: Obadiah prophesied about Edom, the descendants of Esau who lived at Mount Seir. Today many Edomites continue to live in the Middle East. Edom sinned through her continual violence toward Jacob. When Judah was taken captive by Babylon, Edom cheered, and took captive those who had fled south, later selling them. Because of Edom's sin, her confederacy was turned against her, and was prophesied to be destroyed. The prophecy included punishment on the heathen in the Day of the Lord; Israel will be restored; deliverers on Mount Zion will judge and the Eternal will reign.

NAME: Jonah

HEBREW NAME AND MEANING: (YONAH) Jonah means "dove" or "pigeon"

THEME:

- 1) Jonah was a type of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- 2) Jonah was a sign to his generation, just as Christ was a sign to those to whom he preached.
- 3) God determines to whom He will grant repentance.

DATE WRITTEN: The book is not dated, but it was probably written by the Jonah who is mentioned in II Kings 14:25. This would place Jonah's works in the latter half of Jeroboam's reign (780-740 B.C.).

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Nineveh with implications for all peoples.

HISTORICAL SETTING: Assyria was having problems internally and nationally. They had pulled their troops out of Israel. This allowed both Israel and Judah to increase nationally and economically.

SUMMARY: God told Jonah to prophesy to Nineveh, but Jonah fled from God. As a result, he was swallowed by a great fish, and remained in its belly for three days and nights (the sign of Christ's Messiahship) until he called out to God, and the fish vomited him up. Jonah then prophesied to Nineveh and the city repented. Jonah was angry because God had granted Nineveh repentance. Jonah had desired the destruction of Israel's principal enemy. He needed to learn that God grants repentance to whom He will.

NAME: Micah (shortened form of Miykayah)

HEBREW NAME AND MEANING: Micah means "Who is like Jah [YHWH]?"

THEME: The Day of the Lord, punishment, repentance and restoration promised.

DATE WRITTEN: Micah was prophesying between 740-700 B.C.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: First to the capitals of Judah and Israel-- Samaria (where the false religion of Acts 8:9 started) and Jerusalem (where it extended to). Then Micah extends his prophecies to the whole earth.

HISTORICAL SETTING: The historical setting at the time of Micah is the same as for the first five Minor Prophets. Both Israel and Judah were living in debauchery and idolatry. However, King Hezekiah did lead his people to repentance and because of this, God blessed the nation. In spite of this, the nation of Judah could hardly be called a God-fearing nation. Both Israel and Judah were on a fast decline religiously, economically, socially and politically.

SUMMARY: Micah's prophecies center around the economic evils and religious idolatry (the calf-worship set up by Jeroboam which had spread to Judah). They had committed these sins in spite of their blessings and redemption from God, and because of this, they would be punished with famine, war and captivity. The rulers led the people in their sins, even though they had the law and knew that God desired judgment, mercy and faith--not sacrifice. Micah also prophesied a future restoration of Israel (physically and spiritually), and punishment of their enemies. Israel will then set the example of God's way of life as God had originally intended.

NAME: Nahum

HEBREW NAME AND MEANING: Nahum means "consolation" or compassionate, literally "(full of) comfort"

THEME: Vengeance on Nineveh and compassion on Israel. It is a book of judgment--judgment against evil.

DATE WRITTEN: Nahum was probably written between 640-620 during the reign of Josiah but before the destruction of Nineveh. The destruction of No, spoken of in Nahum, occurred in 661 B.C.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Assyrians, primarily the city of Nineveh

HISTORICAL SETTING: Though the House of Israel had gone into captivity, Judah, in general, was not maintaining God's way of life. Politically, Judah was surrounded by enemies (Assyria on one side, and Egypt on the other).

SUMMARY: God used Assyria (of which Nineveh was the capital) to punish Israel with captivity in 721-718 B.C. God had vengeance on Nineveh by totally destroying her, and will have compassion on Israel after she repents.

NAME: Habakkuk

**HEBREW NAME
AND MEANING:**

Habakkuk may possibly be derived from the root "to embrace" and can be translated "embracer." It may suggest one who "wrestled" with God in argument. (There is a similar-sounding word in Assyrian that is the name of a flower, or a garden plant).

THEME: God will destroy Israel's enemies and embrace Israel.

DATE WRITTEN: The book's content would suggest that it was probably written during the reign of Jehoiakim (608-597 B.C.). The Northern Kingdom, Israel, had already gone into captivity and the Southern Kingdom, Judah, was now being chastened by God through the rising power of the Chaldeans.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Babylon with implications for all peoples.

HISTORICAL SETTING: The histories of Assyria and Babylon are closely intertwined. Nebuchadnezzar's father gained independence from Assyria in 625 B.C. At the time of Habakkuk's writing, Babylon was rising in power and beginning to subjugate the other peoples of the ancient Near East.

SUMMARY: The book begins with Habakkuk's asking why do the wicked prosper. God replies that the Chaldeans will be raised up to punish Israel. This seemed strange to Habakkuk since the Chaldeans were as sinful as Israel in Habakkuk's mind. But God responds with "the just shall live by faith" and that Israel's enemies would be destroyed. Israel would eventually be restored and "embraced" by God.

NAME: Zephaniah

**HEBREW NAME
AND MEANING:**

(TSEPHANJAH--Jah has secreted) Zephaniah means "hidden of the Eternal," or "whom the Eternal has hidden." It may be translated "the Eternal has hidden" or "the Eternal has protected." The Bible takes special note of Zephaniah's family tree, which probably was of the royal line.

THEME: The Day of the Lord. Three areas are emphasized:

- 1) God's indignation devours the earth with the fire of His jealousy (Zeph. 3:8).
- 2) Who may be hidden during the Day of the Lord (Zeph. 2:3).
- 3) Israel repents, God saves them and dwells with them (Zeph. 3:11-20).

DATE WRITTEN: Zephaniah, probably the great-great grandson of King Hezekiah, is believed to have prophesied during the days of Josiah, between 640 B.C. and 609 B.C. He foretold the fall of Nineveh which occurred in 612 B.C.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Judah, Jerusalem (all Israel), and all peoples (1:4,6) pointing out their sins and warning them of the coming day of the Lord.

HISTORICAL SETTING: Jeremiah, Zephaniah and Habakkuk were all contemporaries. Israel was already in captivity by this time. Babylon was plaguing Assyria, and they had already captured Haran. Assyria was allied with Egypt. Judah was surrounded by enemies. Josiah, the king of Judah, was slain in Megiddo. Egypt was soon destroyed at the Battle of Carchemish, leaving Judah to the mercy of the Babylonians. Of course, God had determined that the Babylonians were going to punish Judah.

SUMMARY: Zephaniah prophesies destruction on Israel, Judah and all of the world for their spiritual fornication. This will occur on the Day of the Lord when God will intervene and bring judgment on mankind. His message is to seek God with all your heart that you may be hidden during the Day of the Lord. Those that do seek Him will be part of the remnant. After God gathers all nations to punish them, He will then restore Israel (spiritually and physically), and through her bless the other nations.

NAME: Haggai

HEBREW NAME AND MEANING: Haggai means "my feast," "my festival" or "festal." It may be a shortened form of "Festival of Yah."

THEME: The restoration temple points to the Church

DATE WRITTEN: ca. 520 B.C.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Zerubbabel (civil governor), Joshua (high priest) and the returned remnant of Judah.

HISTORICAL SETTING: There was a tremendous political upheaval during the period just before the book was written due to the fact that two men claimed the throne after the death of Cambyses. A pseudo-Smerdis claimed to be a "secret son" of Cambyses with rights to the throne. Darius also claimed the throne. Civil war resulted. Some Jews might have thought that the horrible end-time events that had been prophesied were then coming to pass. They might have believed that the end was near. Darius I did receive the throne however, and the land settled into semi-peace once again. There was opposition to the rebuilding of the temple from the Samaritans, Persians and even some Jews.

SUMMARY: Haggai begins by telling the Jews that the cause of their economic depression is that while they have built their houses, they have not finished God's house, excusing themselves saying "the time is not come." God made it clear through Haggai that the time had indeed come. The people obeyed and finished the temple, but this physical restoration temple was not the ultimate fulfillment of the prophecy. This restoration temple pictured the greater spiritual reality to come--the Church of God. The first law of success is to have the right goal. The Jews of Haggai's day had lost their sense of what were the true priorities. There are five occurrences of the expression translated "consider," which Charles L. Feinberg's Commentary on the Minor Prophets explains as "a command to self-judgment."

NAME: Zechariah

**HEBREW NAME
AND MEANING:** (ZECARJAH--The Eternal has remembered)
Zechariah means "remembrance of the Eternal."

THEME: The coming of God's Kingdom to the earth
(notice Zechariah 14:9) preceded by the
building of His spiritual temple, the Church,
foreshadowed by the Temple completed during
the time of Zechariah.

DATE WRITTEN: ca. 520 B.C.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Joshua and Zerubbabel and the returned
remnant of Judah.

HISTORICAL SETTING: Same as for Haggai

SUMMARY: Zechariah prophesied punishment on Israel
because of her sin. However, even though she
will be taken into captivity, God will
neither forget nor forsake her--she will
eventually become "remembered of God" again.
The nation that captured Israel will then be
punished. Jesus Christ, the Branch, will
build His ultimate spiritual temple (of which
the physical temple was a type). Then He
will come again and "sit and rule upon His
throne; and He shall be a priest upon His
throne: and the counsel of peace shall be
between them both" (Zech. 6:12-13). God's
kingdom will come to the earth, and all
families of the earth will come to worship
the King, the Lord of Hosts (Zech. 14:9,17).

NAME: Malachi

HEBREW NAME AND MEANING: MALAKH, meaning "messenger"--either human or divine. The name can be translated "my messenger" as in Malachi 3:1, or may be a shortened form of "Messenger of Yah."

THEME: Be prepared for the messenger who is to come to the restored temple and the end time messenger, Elihah, who comes before the great and terrible day of the Lord.

DATE WRITTEN: Perhaps around 435 B.C., perhaps earlier, about 460 B.C., as a prelude to the reforms of Ezra and Nehemiah. The Church has traditionally leaned towards the dates of ca. 420-400 B.C. since the books of Ezra and Nehemiah make no mention of a prophet in their time. Ezra and Nehemiah dealt with problems similar to those mentioned in the book of Malachi, but the problems surfaced again in the inter-testamental period.

AUDIENCE ADDRESSED: Israel (all twelve tribes)--including the Israel of God today.

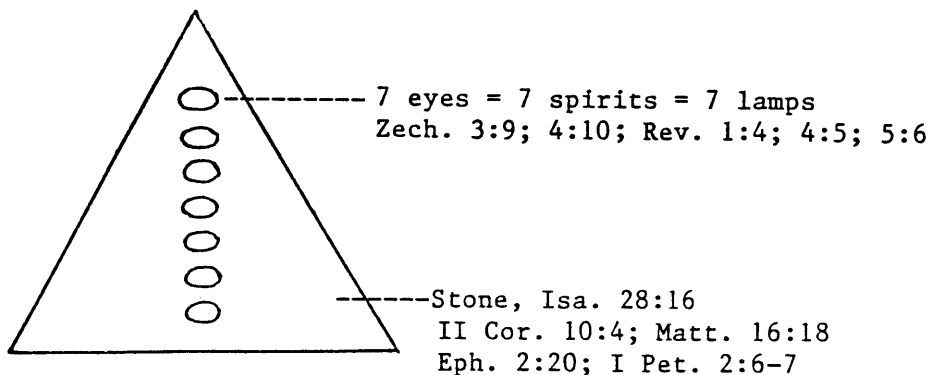
HISTORICAL SETTING: The city of Jerusalem had been restored and the temple rebuilt. At the time of Malachi's writing, worship of God had declined. The people gave inferior sacrifices and withheld some of their tithes. The priests had corrupted the covenant of Levi.

SUMMARY: Malachi is the book of messengers. Five messengers are mentioned:

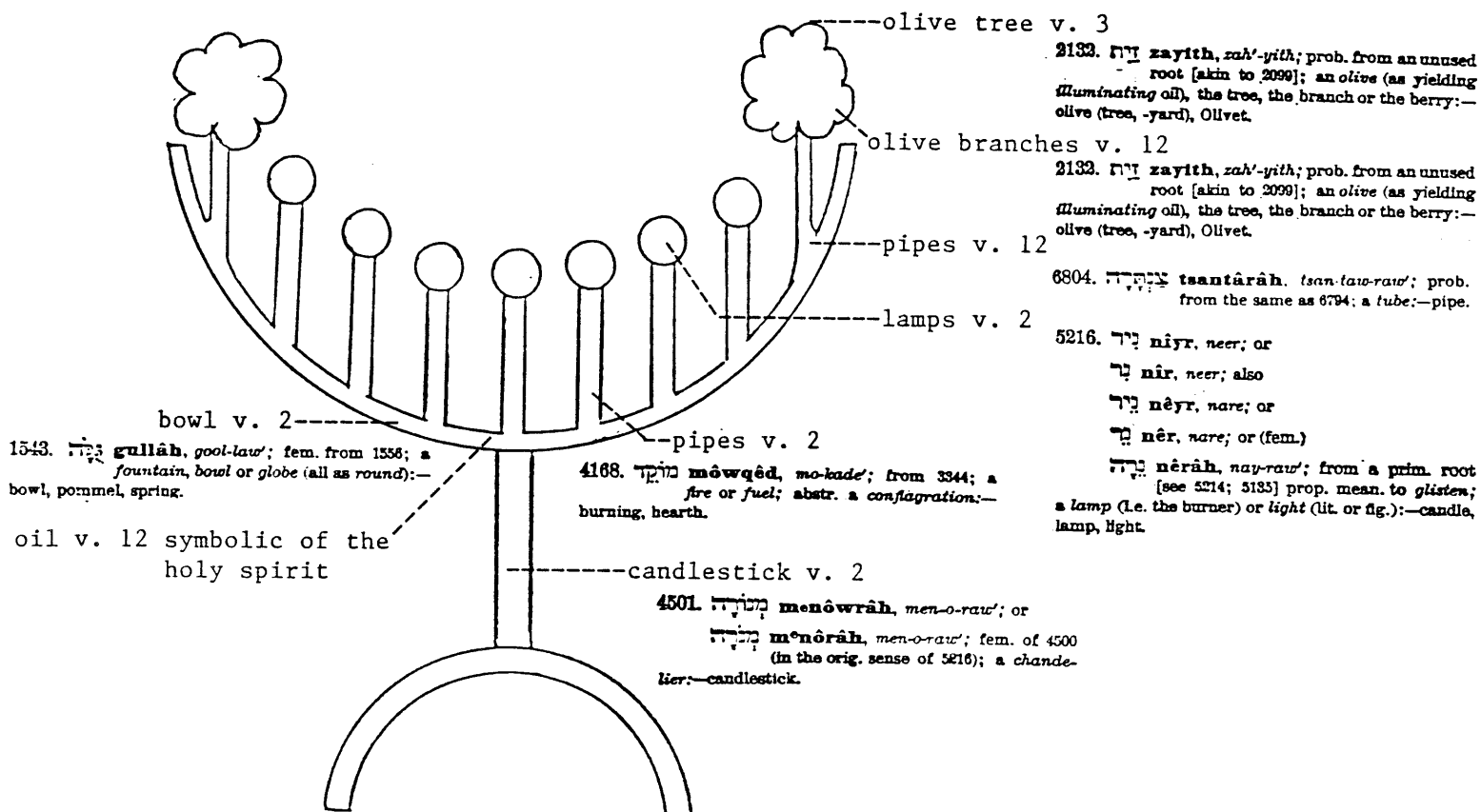
- 1) The prophet, Malachi, was one of God's messengers.
- 2) The priests who had failed to execute their office as God had commanded (Mal. 2:7, 4-10).
- 3) The Messenger, John the Baptist, who prepares the way for the messenger of the covenant (Mal. 3:1).
- 4) The messenger of the covenant, Jesus Christ, who comes to the restored temple and later to His spiritual temple (Mal. 3:1).
- 5) Elijah who comes before the great and terrible day of the Lord to prepare a people for Christ's coming to His spiritual temple (Mal. 4:5-6).

The book also deals with people who say, "yes God, we love You, we have obeyed You," but who also cry "Where is the God of Judgment?" They are accusing God of forsaking them, when they themselves are being unfaithful. God prophesies the fate of those who will not repent, and gives a stern end-time warning to all of us: Be prepared for the return of Christ, otherwise you may be destroyed too.

ZECHARIAH 3

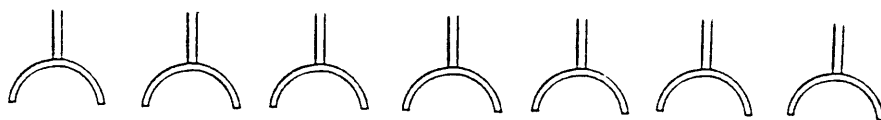


ZECHARIAH 4



REVELATION 1

Christ walks among the seven lampstands with seven stars in His hand.
Christ is the uniting spirit in all of the churches (I Cor. 12:3, 12-13;
I John 5:11-12).



lampstands v. 20

3057. λυχνία luchnia, lookh-nee'-ah; from 3088; a lamp-stand (lit. or fig.):—candlestick.

angels v. 20

32. ἄγγελος aggélōs, ang'-el-os; from ἄγγελλω aggéllō [prob. der. from ἴδω; comp. 34] (to bring tidings); a messenger; esp. an "angel"; by impl. a pastor:—angel, messenger.

SEVEN PERIODS OF ADMINISTRATION (DISPENSATIONS, Eph 1:10; 3:2, Greek oikonomia: administration, governor, steward, overseer, period of time. One can identify from the Bible, at least seven distinct periods in which God dealt with man or will deal with man.)

THE FIRST ADMINISTRATION: Innocency (Gen. 2:25; 3:7)

Man was created in innocency, placed in a perfect environment, subjected to an absolutely simple test, and warned of the consequence of disobedience.

I Tim. 2:14 The woman was deceived, thus sinned, but the man sinned deliberately.

Gen. 3:24 The administration of innocency ended in the judgment of the Expulsion.

THE SECOND ADMINISTRATION: Conscience (Gen. 3:22)

By disobedience man came to a personal and experimental knowledge of good and evil--of good as obedience, of evil as disobedience to the known will of God. Through that knowledge conscience awoke. Expelled from Eden, man became the judge of good and evil.

Gen.4:4; Heb.11:4 Man could approach God through sacrifice. The result of this second testing of man is stated in Gen. 6:5, and the administration ended in the judgment of the Flood.

THE THIRD ADMINISTRATION: Human Government (Gen. 9:1-12)

Under Conscience, as in Innocency, man utterly failed, and the judgment of the Flood marks the end of the second administration and the beginning of the third. This administration subjected man to a new test. Its distinctive feature is the institution of human government--the government of man by man (eye for an eye, etc. Gen. 9:5). The highest function of government is the judicial taking of life. All other governmental powers are implied in that. It follows that the third administration is distinctively that of human government.

THE FOURTH ADMINISTRATION: Promise (Gen. 12:1-3)

Gen. 15:18 For Abraham and his descendants it is evident that the Abrahamic Covenant made a great change. They became distinctively the heirs of promise. That covenant is wholly gracious and unconditional. In Egypt they lost their blessing, but not their covenant.

Exo. 19:8 The Administration of Promise ended when Israel entered into the Law Covenant with God.

Exo. 19:4 God prepared a deliverer (Moses), provided a sacrifice for the guilty, and by divine power brought them out of bondage. Promise extends from Gen. 12:1 to Exo. 19:8, and was exclusively Israelitish.

(The administration must be distinguished from the covenant. The former is a mode of testing; the latter is everlasting because it is unconditional).

Gal. 3:15-18 The law did not abrogate the Abrahamic Covenant, but was an intermediate disciplinary dealing "till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made" (Gal. 3:19-29; 4:1-7). Only the administration, as a testing of the Fathers, ended at the giving of the law.

THE FIFTH ADMINISTRATION: Law (Exo. 24:3-8)

This administration extends from Sinai to the crucifixion of Christ. The history of Israel in the wilderness and in the land is one long record of the violations of the law. The testing of the nation by the law ended in the judgment of the captivities, but the administration itself ended at the crucifixion of Christ.

- 1) Israel's responsibility (Exo. 19:5-6; Rom. 10:5)
- 2) Israel's failure (II Kings 17:7-17,19; Acts 2:22; Heb. 8:7-8)
- 3) The judgment (II Kings 17:1-6, 20; 25:1-11, Matt. 23:37-39)

THE SIXTH ADMINISTRATION: Grace (Eph. 3:2)

As an administration, grace begins with the death and resurrection of Christ (Rom. 3:24-26; 4:24-25). The point of testing is acceptance

or rejection of Christ as outlined by the seven Basic Doctrines of Hebrews 6:1-2.

Rom. 3:31 Grace establishes the law.

THE SEVENTH ADMINISTRATION: The Fullness of Times (Eph. 1:10)

This, the seventh and the last of the administrations mentioned in the Bible which condition human life on the earth gathers into itself under Christ all past "times":

Isa. 11:3,4 The time of oppression and misrule ends by Christ taking His kingdom.

Matt. 25:31-46; Acts 17:30-31; Rev. 20:7-15

The time of testimony and divine forbearance ends in judgment.

II Thes. 1:6-7 The time of toil ends in rest and reward.

Rom. 8:17-18 The time of suffering ends in glory.

5) Rom. 11:25-27; Hos. 5:15-6:3; 1:10-11; 2:23

The time of Israel's blindness and chastisement ends in repentance and restoration.

6) Dan. 2:34-35; Rev. 11:15; 19:15-20:4

Human government ends in the smiting of the image and the setting up of the kingdom of the heavens.

7) Gen. 3:17; Isa. 11:6-8; Rom. 8:19-21

The time of creation's thralldom ends in deliverance at the manifestation of the sons of God.