

MINOR PROPHETS HOSEA TO MALACHI

TMBC Course #7



Leader's Guide

Dear Bible Study Leader,

It gives me great pleasure to have this personal contact with you as we approach our study of the Minor Prophets because I feel as if these prophets are my “holy friends.” I exhort you to consult my general introduction to the prophets, found in the Leader’s Guide for the Major Prophets, before you begin your study of the Minor Prophets.

The part of the introduction that especially applies to these prophets is the principle “no problem, no prophet”. When the work of God on earth is being blocked by a problem or obstacle, God raises up a prophet who preaches against that problem/obstacle until it is removed and the work of God can move forward. As you approach each minor prophet, always ask yourself the questions, “What problem/obstacle was this prophet addressing by his life, his ministry, and his message?” And “How did God use the life and message of this prophet to remove that problem/obstacle so His work could continue again?”

As you study these prophets, in addition to asking the questions above, try to get to know these prophets until they become your “holy friends” too. As you focus on their message, realize that even though there is much doom and gloom and judgment, their primary subject is often the love of God. For example, the opening words of Malachi are “The message of God through Malachi ‘I love you says the Lord!’”

The fact that Jonah wrote his prophecy makes the statement that while he was in the city of Nineveh, God showed him that He loved that city and the people who lived there, even though Jonah hated them.

While you are studying these prophets, also ask yourself these questions: “What did the message of this prophet say?”, “What did that message mean?”, and “What does that message mean to me and to those I am teaching?”

I am praying for our Lord’s richest blessing upon you, your family and your ministry and that the experience of leading this study will continue to help you in your journey and establish you in your faith as you continue to grow in your spiritual life and lead others in their spiritual journey.

In His love,

Dick Woodward
Pastor and author of the Mini Bible College

Leading the Bible Study Group

The Mini Bible College has prepared this devotionally practical survey of the foundational books of the Bible. Your role as leader is to guide your group through the study sessions and exercises, helping them to understand the truth, discover the eternal principles, and, most importantly, apply them to their lives. This is a survey study that will take about four months and is designed to be more than just a course. This study is part of a strategic plan to provide you with the tools to nurture and grow personally and to help your church grow both spiritually and numerically.

To help you, we have provided the following tools:

- This Leader's Guide
- Report forms
- Audio of Hosea – Malachi (Audio Lessons Old Testament 74-90)
- A study booklet on Hosea through Malachi
- A set of workbooks for the students

GETTING STARTED

Before class

- Personally start inviting people to come to this spiritual banquet. “Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.’ So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests” (Matthew 22:9-10).
- Prepare yourself in prayer for those who will attend. If possible, pray for them by name. Only God can change the hearts of people, and prayer is the most powerful tool. “Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up” (Luke 18:1).
- Ask for help. Do not try to do everything yourself. Invite one or two people to help with music, singing, greeting, and keeping records for the class.
- Review the lesson and understand the lesson objective.
- Become familiar with the material; listen, read, and study each lesson and memorize the Bible verse before class time.
- Be sure all materials are ready for each class.
- Make sure the meeting area is adequate and comfortable for the class.

During class

(Remember to try to keep the class time to one hour and a half.)

- Greet everyone as they arrive. Remember how nice it is when you are welcomed? Extend God's welcome to all. Have someone serve as the greeter and introduce people to one another if they are not already acquainted.
- Open with a time of worship and prayer, asking God to help you and each one understand and apply the God's Word to your lives.
- Recite the memory verse.
- Listen to the audio lesson.

- Work through the workbook, inviting discussion with a focus on application. We trust the questions will raise interesting discussion and understanding that will lead to application. If the group is large (more than 10), consider dividing it into smaller groups of three or four people to encourage discussion. Be sure to monitor the time and be careful that the conversation does not detract from the focus of the lesson and the study of God's Word.
- Thank all for coming and encourage attendance to the next class.
- Challenge the students to invite others to join the Bible study.
- Encourage the students to memorize the biblical passages of the lessons each week.

After each class

- Gather up all materials.
- Restore the meeting room to the proper order. Leave things more orderly than you found them.
- Fill out and file report forms.
- If you are meeting in someone's home, be sure to thank them for their hospitality.

Special Instructions for Teaching Auditory Learners

It is important to remember that those who cannot read and write learn and retain information differently than those of us who are literate. The auditory learners learn from listening and telling what they have heard. Illiteracy was not an obstacle in Jesus' day. It is good to remember and even tell those in your class that most of the disciples and the majority of the people who first shared and spread the Gospel could not read or write.

In many ways, auditory learners have a greater capacity to learn what they hear than we who must write something down to remember it. Take the time, therefore, to allow your students to hear the Scripture and the lessons, pausing the message and even going back to listen again to a portion if it was not understood, and then allow them to respond to questions. When auditory learners can "story back"—tell in their own words what they have heard and learned—it indicates that they have properly grasped the principle. Therefore, use the study questions to guide the study time as it will help in the learning process. Ask the questions out loud and encourage all to participate. This will lead them into a deeper understanding of God's Word and a stronger relationship with His Son, Jesus the Christ.

An Agonizing Allegory

Chapter 1

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 74



Objective: To understand the message of the prophet Hosea and how he is an example of God's love for Israel.



Come, let us return to the LORD; ... He will set us on our feet again, to live in His kindness. Oh, that we might know the LORD! Let us press on to know Him, and He will respond to us as surely as the coming of dawn or the rain of early spring.

—Hosea 6:1-3

The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. Those who know your name will trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.

—Psalm 9:9-10

We now begin studying the twelve minor prophets of the Old Testament, called minor because their books are shorter. It is helpful to understand when each prophet lived and preached. Biblical Hebrew history can be divided into seven major periods: 1) Kingdom, 2) Divided Kingdom, 3) Assyrian conquest of Northern Kingdom, 4) Extinction of Northern Kingdom, 5) Babylonian captivity of Judah, the Southern Kingdom, 6) Persian conquest of Babylon and 7) Judah returns from captivity.

Hosea was commissioned by God to be the prophet of the love of God to the ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel during the divided kingdom. The people of Israel had turned away from God and were worshiping idols, and God considers this to be spiritual adultery. God called Hosea to marry a prostitute who, after bearing children, would return to her life of adultery. Hosea was led to love her unconditionally as a living illustration of God's love and acceptance for his people.

As a consequence of their spiritual unfaithfulness, worshipping other gods and idols, Israel would be taken into captivity. Though these ten tribes would never become a nation again, Hosea prophesied their spiritual return to God one day. As a faithful husband who loves his wife, God would respond to them with mercy and forgive their sins, just as he does with us when we repent of our sins.



1. True or **false**? The last 12 prophetic books of the Old Testament are called “minor prophets” because they are not as important as other books.
2. True or **false**? Hosea understood exactly why God told him to marry a prostitute.
3. **True** or false? Unlike most prophets, Hosea ministered to the northern kingdom of Israel.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What was Hosea’s primary message about?
 - a. The destruction of Assyria
 - b. The coming judgment of God
 - c. The love of God**
 - d. The future Messiah
5. When did Hosea preach?
 - a. Before Israel’s captivity by Assyria**
 - b. After Israel’s captivity by Assyria
 - c. After Judah’s captivity by Babylon
 - d. During the reign of David
6. In what way were Israel’s people like an adulterous wife?
 - a. They did not believe in marriage.
 - b. They were unfaithful to God by worshiping idols.**
 - c. They were unfaithful to their king by serving other countries.
 - d. They were unloved by God.
7. How many other prophets preached of God’s unfailing love?
 - a. None. Hosea was the only one.
 - b. One—only Jeremiah.
 - c. Two or three.
 - d. Most of them.**

8. How does the Bible describe Hosea's love for Gomer?
- a. **He loved her unfailingly, like God loves his people.**
 - b. He only loved her when she was faithful to him.
 - c. He never really loved her because he knew she would betray him.
 - d. He only loved her after she came back to him.
9. Who did Hosea blame for Israel's spiritual problems?
- a. God
 - b. Himself
 - c. The king
 - d. **The priests**
10. What did Hosea say about Israel's future?
- a. They would never want to return to the Lord again.
 - b. God would never accept them again.
 - c. **They would one day be spiritually restored.**
 - d. They would be restored immediately.
11. What did God want from Israel's people?
- a. Their sacrifices
 - b. Their offerings
 - c. Their work
 - d. **Their love**



Have you ever felt that you are not good enough for God's love? How does Hosea's message encourage you? In what ways has God shown you his love?



Thank God for his unfailing love. Ask him to help you love Him faithfully and to love other people with the love He has shown you.



Going Deeper

1. An allegory is a story that may be true or fiction, in which the people, places and things have a deeper meaning. Describe how God has allowed you to experience a personal agonizing allegory so that you, like Hosea, could speak in the first-person a message God has given you to bless and edify His people. _____

2. How many books do you have in your library about the love of God? Since the book of Hosea is a book about the love of God, what would be a profile of the love of God as preached by Hosea? _____

3. In what ways are the first three verses of the sixth chapter of the book of Hosea an eloquent expression of the love of God? _____

4. What are several ways that Hosea demonstrated the spiritual adultery of the people? _____

5. Try reading the book of Hosea in the Living Bible. When you read the hard-hitting sermons of this great prophet in a translation you can more easily understand, which is your favorite of all his sermons? _____

6. Each prophet addresses an obstacle that is blocking the work of God, until that obstacle is removed and the work of God is on track again. What obstacle that was blocking the work of God was addressed by the Prophet Hosea? _____

7. What did the book of Hosea mean to you personally? _____

The Day of the Lord and the Locusts

Chapter 2

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 75



Objective: To understand the personal and devotional application of the message of the prophet Joel.



“I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten—the great locust and the young locust, the other locusts and the locust swarm—my great army that I sent among you. You will have plenty to eat, until you are full, and you will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has worked wonders for you; never again will my people be shamed. Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the LORD your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed.

—Joel 2:25-27

Joel prophesied not long after a terrible plague of locusts had invaded the Southern Kingdom. This event is one example of “The Day of the Lord,” an expression used often in the book, but Joel’s prophecy also applies this term to the Babylonian captivity yet to come, as well as to the second coming of Jesus. Like many of the prophets, Joel’s message mixes prophecies about current-day events, coming historical events, and ultimate end-time events.

“The Day of the Lord,” as Joel uses the expression, can refer to a variety of events in which God works: chastisement, judgment, deliverance, blessing, and more. God is always working in our circumstances, even in the most difficult, for the good of those who love Him. Joel exhorts us to realize that each day—past, present, and future—should be considered the day of the Lord. Joel is challenging us to see the hand of God in everything that happens to us. As the apostle Paul said: “All things are working for the good, to all those who love Him, those who have been called according to His purpose.” (Romans 8:28)



1. True or **false**? Joel is a difficult book to date, and without historical perspective, his message is meaningless.
2. **True** or false? Some scholars believe Joel lived at the same time as Elijah or Elisha.
3. True or **false**? All Christians agree on the chronology of events of the end times.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What did Joseph call the plague of locusts that came upon Judah?
 - a. The “attack of Satan”
 - b. A “natural disaster”
 - c. The “day of the Lord”**
 - d. A “sign of Moses’ victory over Pharaoh”
5. What did Joel compare the locusts to?
 - a. A flood
 - b. A storm
 - c. The Exodus
 - d. An army**
6. What did Joel preach that the people of Judah should do?
 - a. Repent**
 - b. Flee
 - c. Plant new crops
 - d. Worship the locust god
7. Besides locusts, what did Joel mean by “the day of the Lord”? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. The future Babylonian captivity**
 - b. Israel’s most important feast
 - c. The Sabbath
 - d. The miracle of Pentecost**
 - e. The day Jesus was born
 - f. The last days**
8. What is the devotional message of the book of Joel?
 - a. Any circumstance in our life can be “the day of the Lord” for us.**
 - b. God always judges His people with locust plagues.
 - c. God never judges His people at all.
 - d. Some situations in our life cannot be redeemed.
9. According to 2 Peter 3:11-12, what is the fate of the earth?
 - a. It will last forever.
 - b. It will melt with intense heat.**
 - c. It will blow up with a huge explosion.
 - d. It will gradually cease to sustain life.

Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought we to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God, and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.

—2 Peter 3:11-12



What events in your life can you call “the day of the Lord”? How does God’s promise to work all things together for good comfort you? What circumstances do you need to trust Him with today?



Thank God that He is Lord of every situation in your life. Ask Him to help you live each and every day understanding that this world will be destroyed when He returns.



Going Deeper

1. Explain this statement: “The primary prophecy of Joel was pre-filled on the Day of Pentecost and will be fulfilled in the end-time.” _____

2. In what sense did Joel mean that the plague of locusts was a day of the Lord? _____

3. When Joel compared the locusts to an army, what was the deeper meaning behind that metaphor? _____

4. How do you feel about the years the locusts have eaten in your life? Explain. _____

5. As you look back over the years of your life, how many events do you think should be labeled a day of the Lord? _____

6. Compare what Joel writes about the Day of the Lord with what Peter writes about it in Second Peter chapter three. In light of what they both wrote, what kind of person should you be? _____

7. What was the obstacle addressed by Joel? _____

The Lion Roars and Amos Sees It

Chapter 3

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 76



Objective: To understand the message of the book of Amos and how appropriate it is today.



Seek good, not evil, that you may live. Then the LORD God Almighty will be with you, just as you say he is. Hate evil, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the LORD God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.

—Amos 5:14-15

“Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.”

—Matthew 6:19-21

Amos was a citizen of the Southern Kingdom who God called to prophecy to the Northern Kingdom about the coming Assyrian captivity. He ministered during a prosperous time in the Southern Kingdom, during the reign of King Uzziah. But his message against the Northern Kingdom would also apply to Judah’s future. All of God’s people, in both north and south, would eventually be judged for disobedience. In fact, the spiritual advantage of God’s people will cause them to be judged by a higher standard than that of pagan nations. Those who know God’s Word and do not obey it are held to a higher degree of accountability.

Like the other prophets, Amos’ message also foretells the restoration of God’s people. Though Israel has been restored politically in our time, its spiritual restoration has not yet happened. According to Amos, the hearts of Israel’s people will one day turn back to their God.



1. True or **false**? Amos was a very influential priest from a very influential family.
2. **True** or false? Only two of the minor prophets were called to preach to the Northern Kingdom.
3. True or **false**? The historical context that the prophets lived and preached in is not important for us to understand at all.
4. **True** or false? The devotional message of the prophets is more important for us than learning the historical events.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Why might God have chosen a farmer from the Southern Kingdom to deliver a message to the Northern Kingdom?
 - a. To start a conflict between the two kingdoms
 - b. Because the prophets of the Northern Kingdom were not preaching God's message**
 - c. Because the Southern Kingdom had always been superior to the Northern Kingdom
 - d. To protect Amos safely in the north while God destroyed the Southern Kingdom
6. When did Amos preach?
 - a. During the reign of David
 - b. Right before Jesus was born
 - c. During the Babylonian captivity
 - d. During the reign of Uzziah, near the time of Isaiah**
7. What was the condition of Israel and Judah during Amos' lifetime?
 - a. Prosperous and safe from enemies**
 - b. Vulnerable to invasion on every side
 - c. In the midst of famine and poverty
 - d. Aggressive and militant
8. In what way was Amos tactful?
 - a. He only preached judgment on Israel's enemies.
 - b. His messages pleased Israel's political leaders.
 - c. He always gave the good news before the bad news.**
 - d. He was not tactful at all, always preaching hard messages of judgment.
9. Why did Amos say that Israel and Judah would be judged more harshly than the pagan nations around them?
 - a. They had a spiritual advantage by knowing God and His Word.**
 - b. They committed greater sins than other nations.
 - c. Other nations were more obedient to God.
 - d. Israel and Judah were God's least favorite nations.

10. Which is most important in our relationship with God?
- a. What we hear
 - b. What we feel
 - c. What we know
 - d. What we do in response to what we know**
11. Which of the following pictures of God's standards did Amos see?
- a. The tablets of the Ten Commandments
 - b. A priest who knew all the laws of God
 - c. Moses and Elijah together
 - d. A plumb line (a builder's tool to make sure the construction is straight)**
12. Who did Amos see standing beside the altar proclaiming judgment?
- a. The Lord Himself**
 - b. The prophet Joel
 - c. King Uzziah
 - d. King David
13. Which of the following are messages of Amos? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. Judgment is coming.**
 - b. Peace will not be disrupted.
 - c. Restoration will follow judgment.**
 - d. God is through with Israel forever.
 - e. God is not finished with His people even when they sin.**
 - f. Both Israel and Judah are invincible and will not be judged.



Have you ever wondered if God has given up on His plan for you, or that you will never be good enough for Him to use you? How does Amos' message encourage you? What hope does God promise for His people and to you?



Thank God that He can and wishes to use anyone. Praise God that He takes much greater pleasure in restoring His people than in punishing them. Ask Him to show His mercy to you, your family, your neighbors, your city, and your country.



Going Deeper

1. In what ways did the spiritual community addressed by Amos resemble or parallel the Church in America today? _____

2. What was the message of Amos to a community that was spiritually and materially advantaged? _____

3. Why would a fruit-picker from the Southern Kingdom travel to the Northern Kingdom to preach powerful sermons warning of a coming judgment of God? _____

4. How does Amos demonstrate the qualifications and the call of a prophet? _____

5. In Amos 3:3, how does this prophet demonstrate the difference between fellowship and serving God together? _____

6. When were the judgments proclaimed by this prophet fulfilled? _____

7. What was the obstacle addressed by this prophet that was holding back the work of God? _____

The Edom Experience

Chapter 4

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 77



Objective: To understand the warning in Obadiah's message.



"The house of Jacob will be a fire and the house of Joseph a flame; but the house of Esau will be as stubble. And they will set them on fire and consume them, so that there will be no survivor in the house of Esau."

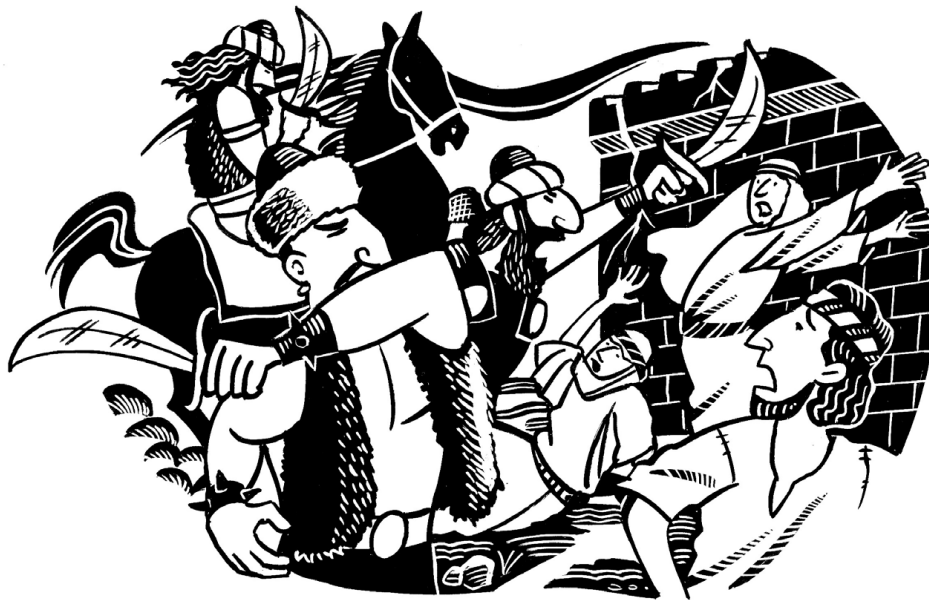
—Obadiah 18

The mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

—Romans 8:6

God spoke through Obadiah to condemn the nation of Edom because its people had rejoiced and gloated when Judah fell. God promised through Obadiah that it would eventually be annihilated because of its arrogance. History has proven the prophecy true, as the nation of Edom was conquered several times and its people no longer exist today. In His dealings with Edom, God demonstrated His covenant with Abraham to *"bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse"* (Genesis 12:3).

The story of the enmity between Israel and Edom goes back to Jacob and Esau. Jacob sought spiritual blessing and became the father of Israel. Esau sold his birthright for a bowl of soup and was rejected by God. These brothers represent for us the difference between those who are spiritual, who seek God and obey His ways, and those only interested in the material world and their selfish desires.



1. **True** or false? Obadiah is the smallest book in the Old Testament.
2. **True** or false? Obadiah's prophecy does not specify the date and historical context in which it was written.
3. **True** or false? The Edomites were known for being aggressive raiders.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. In what book of the Bible do we find the story of the Edomites' origins?
 - a. **Genesis**
 - b. Numbers
 - c. 2 Chronicles
 - d. Obadiah
5. Who did the Edomites descend from?
 - a. Jacob
 - b. **Esau**
 - c. Moses
 - d. David
6. How did Edomites feel about Jews?
 - a. They loved them as brothers.
 - b. They felt inferior to them.
 - c. **They hated them.**
 - d. They never had any contact with them.
7. What role did Edomites play in the fall of Jerusalem?
 - a. **They helped Babylon destroy the city.**
 - b. They helped Jews defend the city.
 - c. They tried to negotiate peace.
 - d. They completely ignored the situation.
8. What was Obadiah's message to Edom?
 - a. He blessed them even though they helped destroy Jerusalem.
 - b. He promised that the Jews would help them if they were attacked.
 - c. He called all of God's people to battle against them.
 - d. **He prophesied that the country would be punished and its people would be wiped out.**
9. What happened to Edom after the fall of Jerusalem?
 - a. It prospered greatly.
 - b. It was immediately destroyed.
 - c. **It was conquered three times—by Babylon, the Jews, and the Romans.**
 - d. Its people have occupied the land of Israel to this day.

10. Which of the following devotional truths can be found in Obadiah? (*choose all that apply*)

- a. Everyone must eventually face the consequences of their life.**
- b. God's judgment only applies to those who are not His people.
- c. We should not envy the way of the transgressor.**
- d. God will fulfill His covenant to bless those who bless His chosen people and to curse those who curse them.**
- e. The nations of Jacob and Esau will eventually reconcile.
- f. God will eventually work all things together for the good of His people.**

No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you are able to bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

— 1 Corinthians 10:13



Jacob and Esau represent the two natures we each have—the spirit and the flesh. Which seems to be stronger in your life? What can you do to ensure that your spiritual nature wins each battle?



Thank God for His faithfulness and that He has given His Spirit to those who love Him. Ask Him to help you always seek eternal spiritual blessing over material blessing.



Going Deeper

1. Who was Edom and why is Obadiah so upset with him? _____

2. How many “*You should not have's*” can you find in this shortest book in the Old Testament?

3. In what ways are they the key to understanding this book? _____

4. Look up the history of the Red Rock City of Petra and relate that history to this prophecy of Obadiah. _____

5. In what ways do Jacob and Esau (Edom) represent the spiritual man and the secular man of the flesh? _____

6. Having visited Petra, I have been deeply impressed to see how the prophecy of Obadiah concerning Edom has been fulfilled. Precisely, what was his prophecy concerning this nation of people? _____

7. Explain how our Jacob potential and our Esau potential can exist in one person. _____

He Is Not Going and He Is Not Coming

Chapter 5

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 78



Objective: To understand the call and ministry of the prophet Jonah.



“When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, LORD, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple. Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs. But I, with a song of thanksgiving, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. Salvation comes from the LORD.”

—Jonah 2:7-9

Nineveh was the capital city of Israel’s worst enemies in the days of Jonah, a dangerous place for any Jew to go. So when God called Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach a message of God’s coming judgment if they didn’t repent, the prophet ran the other way and tried to hide from God. He boarded a ship headed in the opposite direction from Nineveh.

But God made Jonah repent of his stubborn disobedience with a storm that threatened the ship. When the crew found out that the storm was for Jonah’s sake, Jonah told them to throw him overboard. He was swallowed by a great fish for three days. In the belly of that fish, Jonah prayed a very biblical prayer in which he repented and vowed that he would obey and go to Nineveh as God had said.



1. True or **false**? No one really believes a big fish swallowed a prophet for three days.

2. True or **false**? The book of Jonah has very little relevance for us today.
3. True or **false**? The book of Jonah gives clear details of when and where it was written.
4. **True** or false? The people who go for God always have to come to God first.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. What message did God tell Jonah to preach?
 - a. That Nineveh was going to rule over all the earth
 - b. That Nineveh was about to be judged for its sins**
 - c. That Israel was to go to war against Nineveh
 - d. That Nineveh would destroy Israel

If anyone chooses to do God's will, he will find out whether my teaching comes from God or whether I speak on my own.
—John 7:17

6. How can someone prove that the Bible is true?
 - a. By going to seminary and learning the original languages the Bible was written in
 - b. By coming to it looking for truth and being willing to obey what it says**
 - c. By studying the archeological and historical evidence for it
 - d. We cannot really know if it is true or not.
7. What were the Assyrians like?
 - a. They were very cruel.**
 - b. They were known for their compassion.
 - c. They were content to be isolated from the rest of the world.
 - d. They were zealous about protecting Israel.
8. Why did Jonah run from God's call?
 - a. He did not understand anything about God's love.
 - b. He did not believe God would protect him.
 - c. He did not want Nineveh to be forgiven.**
 - d. He was a false prophet.
9. How do we usually act when we have to face a difficult truth?
 - a. We accept it willingly because we know it is good for us.
 - b. We thank God for it and share it with others.
 - c. We try to understand how to apply it to our lives.
 - d. We try to hide from it.**
10. Why did God not force Jonah to obey?
 - a. He does not violate our ability to choose.**
 - b. He always refuses to influence our decisions.
 - c. He knew Jonah was right to be afraid.
 - d. He found someone else to do the job.

11. What happened when Jonah finally went to Nineveh?

- a. He became a martyr for God.
- b. He rejoiced at how pleasant it was to be God's messenger.
- c. The city repented and was spared from judgment.**
- d. He gave them a chance to repent, but they refused and were judged anyway.



Have you ever felt that God gave you a difficult assignment? What was it? Did you choose to obey it? Why or why not? What was the final result? Is God asking you to share His message of love with someone? Who?



Thank God for His patience in leading His people and you. Ask Him to show you if there are any areas of your life in which you have not obeyed Him. Ask Him to help you do whatever He has called you to do. Ask Him where He wants to send you and to help you share the message of His love to even those who might be considered your enemies.



Going Deeper

1. Specifically, why did Jonah not want to go to Nineveh? (Consider Jonah 4:2) _____

2. As far as you can tell, how far was Tarshish from Nineveh? _____

3. Since Jonah had decided he would not go to Nineveh, why did he attempt to flee from the presence of God? Is it possible to flee from the presence of God? (Consider Psalm 139) _____

4. Have you had a meaningful coming to God and are you experiencing a fruitful going for God? Explain. _____

5. What are some examples of meaningful coming to God experiences? _____

6. Give some examples of meaningful going for God experiences. _____

7. What obstacle was the Prophet Jonah addressing that was blocking the work of God in his day? _____

The Prejudiced Prophet

Chapter 6

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 79



Objective: To understand the message of God's love in the book of Jonah.



"The Lord is not really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent."

—2 Peter 3:9

"...I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love, a God who relents from sending calamity."

—Jonah 4:2

The Old Testament prophets followed a pattern in their relationships with God. They had meaningful experiences of coming to God, and then they had fruitful experiences going for God. But Jonah shows us this pattern in reverse. In chapter 1, he did not come to God and he did not go for God. In chapter 2, however, he comes to God, saying "I will" three times in the belly of the fish. After this encounter with God, he goes to Nineveh for God in chapter 3.

The primary theme of the book of Jonah is God's love for all people, even people as hated as the Assyrians in Nineveh were. Though Jonah was very prejudiced and was angry that God would forgive the Ninevites, God patiently showed Jonah His great love for the people of that city.



1. **True** or false? Jonah knew that God had the love and the power to lead the Ninevites to repentance and spare them from judgment.
2. True or **false**? God usually forces us to do His will.
3. **True** or false? In the belly of the fish, Jonah committed to obey God's will.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. Which of the following did Jonah do while in the belly of the fish? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. He blamed God for his problems.
 - b. He asked God to judge the Ninevites for their sins.
 - c. He quoted Scripture.**
 - d. He sang hymns.**
 - e. He prayed.**
 - f. He asked God to let him die.
 - g. He made vows to obey God.**
 - h. He tried to escape and swim to safety.
5. Why does God often allow His servants to get caught in difficult circumstances?
 - a. To discourage them
 - b. To indicate that He no longer loves them
 - c. To get them to rely on their own resources
 - d. To get the right response from them**
6. What does God do for His servants when they respond correctly in their difficult circumstances?
 - a. He leaves them there for a long time to teach them a lesson.
 - b. He makes them earn their way back into His favor.
 - c. He rescues and restores them.**
 - d. He makes everything easy for them again.
7. How did the people of Nineveh respond when Jonah told them they would be destroyed?
 - a. They repented of their sin and believed.**
 - b. They stoned Jonah.
 - c. They drove Jonah out of the city.
 - d. They ignored him completely.
8. How did God respond to the Ninevites?
 - a. He destroyed the city after 40 days.
 - b. He sent more prophets to them.
 - c. He forgave them and spared them from judgment.**
 - d. He gave them the power to conquer all of their enemies.

9. What did Jonah think about Nineveh's repentance?
- a. He was delighted and praised God for His goodness.
 - b. He did not believe their response was genuine.
 - c. He thought they should be more grateful to him.
 - d. He was angry with God because he hated the Ninevites.**
10. How did God respond to Jonah's anger?
- a. He patiently showed Jonah His concern for the city.**
 - b. He got angry with Jonah and put him back in the fish's belly.
 - c. He apologized to Jonah and sent him back to Israel.
 - d. He decided to destroy Nineveh after all.
11. What kind of people does God love the most?
- a. Jews
 - b. Asians
 - c. Americans
 - d. God loves all people, regardless of their race or status.**
12. What are the most significant messages in the book of Jonah? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. The miracle of the fish swallowing a prophet
 - b. The cruelty of the Ninevites
 - c. The prejudice of human beings**
 - d. The love of God**



Are you prejudiced? Is there any kind of person you have difficulty loving? Why is it hard to love them? How do you think God feels about them? How does God want you to feel about them?



Thank God that He is Love and that His love reaches out to the whole world. Ask Him to give you opportunities to tell others about His love through Jesus Christ. If some of those opportunities are difficult, ask Him to give you the courage to obey Him.



Going Deeper

1. Why did Jonah hate the Ninevites so deeply? (Do some research on the Assyrians, who were the worst enemy the Jews ever had. Especially research their cruel and inhuman practices when they conquered a people.) _____

2. What is the significance of the statement that the Word of the Lord came to Jonah *a second time*? _____

3. What do we learn about the balance between the free will of man and the sovereign will of God, as Jonah prays and three times confesses “I will” in the belly of the great fish? _____

4. What do we learn about who really converted the people of Nineveh by the way Jonah responded to the greatest evangelistic crusade the world has ever known? _____

5. In what way does the reality that Jonah wrote this book, which makes him look rather ridiculous, help us to interpret the meaning and the application of the message of this prophet? _____

6. What obstacle was being addressed by the Prophet Jonah when he wrote this book? _____

7. In what ways does the message of the book of Jonah relate to you personally? _____

The Political Prophet

Chapter 7

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 80



Objective: To understand the messages of the book of Micah.



“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” . . . He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me.”

—Micah 5:2, 4, 7:7

The Book of Micah records three great sermons of the prophet Micah. This prophet was born and raised in farm country, but he was called to preach God’s words to the political and spiritual leaders of the capital cities of both Israel and Judah. He joined many of the other prophets in placing the blame for the moral and spiritual corruption of the people of God on the leaders of both of those Kingdoms.

In his first sermon, Micah invited all the earth to watch as God punished His people of Israel and Judah. Because they had not demonstrated His glory in their works, He would demonstrate His justice in their punishment. Then His glory would be revealed one day in their restoration. In his second and third sermons, Micah addressed the leaders of God’s people and explained how corrupt they had become. The only way they could be rescued from their failures was for God to send a perfect Ruler: the Messiah.



1. True or **false**? Unlike the other prophets, Micah was not a very good preacher.
2. **True** or false? Micah lived before the Babylonian captivity, about the same time as the prophet Isaiah.
3. **True** or false? Micah preached in the capital cities of the northern and southern kingdoms.
4. True or **false**? God always chooses well-educated people to preach to the well-educated, and uneducated people to preach to the uneducated.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. The sermons in the book of Micah blame what kind of people? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. Farmers
 - b. Government and civil leaders**
 - c. Enemies of God's people
 - d. Spiritual leaders**
6. What is the message of Micah's first sermon?
 - a. God will one day destroy the earth.
 - b. God wants to show the world through His people what He is like.**
 - c. The time of the Messiah would soon come.
 - d. Nineveh will be punished for its sins.
7. What does God do with His people when they do not reflect His character?
 - a. He destroys them.
 - b. He overlooks their sin and blesses them anyway.
 - c. He makes them work twice as hard to earn His favor.
 - d. He disciplines them to demonstrate His righteousness.**
8. What is the main subject of Micah's second sermon?
 - a. Governments**
 - b. Assyrians
 - c. Drought and famine
 - d. The end of time
9. What three kinds of leaders did Micah preach about?
 - a. Presidents, lawmakers, and tax collectors
 - b. Teachers, parents, and elders
 - c. Prophets, priests, and civil authorities**
 - d. Kings, military leaders, and police
10. What did Micah say about Israel's leaders?
 - a. They were doing a great job.
 - b. They were corrupt and unjust.**
 - c. They would be voted out of office by the people.
 - d. They needed to rule by force.

11. What did Micah accuse Israel's spiritual leaders of doing?

- a. **Practicing sorcery for money**
- b. Expecting some financial support for their godly ministry
- c. Trying to overthrow the government
- d. Preaching strict morality that the people were unable to obey.



Do you think it is possible for human beings to demonstrate for others what God's character is like? In what ways can we do that? Can you think of any examples of people who have done that for you?



Thank God that He made us in His image so that we could reflect who He is. Ask Him to develop His character in you more and more each day.



Going Deeper

1. Where did Micah place the blame for the moral corruption of the people of God? _____

2. What was his message to the civic or secular leaders of the people of God? _____

3. What was his message to the priests, who were the teachers of God's people? _____

4. What was his message to the prophets, who were to exhort the people to obey the Word of God? _____

5. How did he prophesy the ideal or perfect government of God? (Consider Micah 5:2, 4; 7:7)

6. What was unique about his prophecy of the coming of the Messiah? _____

7. What obstacle did this prophet address that was blocking the work of God? _____

God's Final Solution

Chapter 8

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 81



Objective: To understand the hope found in the book of Micah.



Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression...? You do not stay angry forever but delight to show mercy. You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

—Micah 7:18-19

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.

—Psalm 32:1-2

In Micah's third sermon, God confronted His people as if they were in a courtroom, reminding them of how He has cared for them in the past. What did He require in return for His great works? More than sacrificial offerings, God desires that His people live justly, love mercy, and walk in humility toward Him.

After addressing the failure of government in Israel and Judah, Micah preached a message of hope for the people of God and all the nations of the world through a Messianic prophecy. Where human government had failed in Jerusalem and Samaria, Christ's ultimate authority would not fail, and He would bring true peace to His people. He would be the perfect example of a Prophet, Priest, and King.



1. **True** or false? Micah is the only prophet to tell where the Messiah would be born.
2. True or **false**? Because Micah is one of the minor prophets, his message is not very important.
3. **True** or false? Micah prophesied that the Messiah would rule in the strength of the Lord.
4. True or **false**? The Bible is very specific about the place and time of Jesus' return.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. When did Jesus assume control of Israel's government?
 - a. Immediately after His resurrection
 - b. At the end of the New Testament
 - c. He already tried but failed
 - d. He will at His second coming.**
6. In the reign of the Messiah, who will come to see the mountain of the Lord?
 - a. All nations**
 - b. The entire Middle East
 - c. Israel and Judah
 - d. Only a few Christians
7. What scene does Micah describe for God's conversation with His people in the third sermon?
 - a. A garden
 - b. A valley of dry bones
 - c. A courtroom**
 - d. The rivers of Babylon
8. What does God want most from His people?
 - a. Animal sacrifices
 - b. Financial gifts
 - c. Obedience and pilgrimages
 - d. A right heart**
9. How does Micah's prophecy end?
 - a. With harsh judgment of God
 - b. With a positive message of hope**
 - c. With God abandoning His people
 - d. With Israel's sudden repentance
10. From where will the Messiah rule the earth?
 - a. From far away in heaven
 - b. From Jerusalem**
 - c. From Rome
 - d. From the city with the most Christians in it when He returns

11. What is Micah's final and ultimate message of hope?
- a. Governments will be run by godly people.
 - b. Religious leaders will all be Christians.
 - c. God will send His Salvation, the Messiah, who will rule righteously.**
 - d. There is no hope. The world will be judged by God.



Is it easier for you to give God sacrifices or to have a pure heart toward Him? Which does He want most from you? Why?



Thank God that He sent His son, who was prophesied by Micah, just as He promised, and that one day Jesus will return to rule. Thank God the gift of salvation includes a new heart. Ask Him to fill your heart with love for Him, love for others, and a desire to do His will. Thank God that we have hope that Jesus will come again and will righteously rule all the earth.



Going Deeper

1. Based on the message of Micah, should a follower of Christ have anything to do with the political process? _____

2. According to Micah, what are three things the Lord requires of every God-passionate believer? (Consider Micah 6:8) _____

3. What does it mean to *do justly*, to *love mercy* and to *walk humbly* with our God? _____

4. As we apply *doing justly*, in what ways would that mean that we should step up and stand up for justice and against injustice? _____

5. Since mercy is unconditional love, in what ways should you and I apply the teaching of Micah that we are to *love mercy*? _____

6. Since God is just and the essence of unconditional love, what are the practical applications of *walking humbly* with our God? _____

7. In addition to the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, when does Micah see the providential solution to corrupt governments taking place on the earth? _____

Ho-hum or Nahum

Chapter 9

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 82



Objective: To understand the holiness and love of God in the message of Nahum.



The LORD is good. When trouble comes, he is a strong refuge. And he knows everyone who trusts in him. But he sweeps away his enemies in an overwhelming flood. He pursues his foes into the darkness of night.

—Nahum 1:7-8

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

—Romans 6:23

The Assyrians conquered and enslaved all the nations of the world with indescribable cruelty. As they became a great world empire, the entire world feared their brutality. The capital of the Assyrian Empire was the city of Nineveh. Although this city had repented at the preaching of Jonah, the Assyrians conquered the Northern Kingdom of Israel only 60 years later. Another 60 years after that invasion, Assyria threatened the Southern Kingdom of Judah. It was then that the prophet Nahum spoke words of comfort to Judah: Nineveh the capital city of their enemy would soon be destroyed. Because of His holy and righteous character, God would deal with the Assyrians harshly and punish them for their cruel sins.



1. **True** or false? Like Jonah, Nahum also preached a message about Nineveh.

2. True or **false**? Nineveh's repentance at the time of Jonah lasted for centuries.
3. **True** or false? Nineveh was the dominant city in the world at the time of Nahum.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. Match the three chapters of Nahum with their corresponding themes:
- | | |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| a. Chapter 1 (ii) | i. The doom of Nineveh defended |
| b. Chapter 2 (iii) | ii. The doom of Nineveh declared |
| c. Chapter 3 (i) | iii. The doom of Nineveh described |
5. How long after Nahum's prophecy did Nineveh fall?
- a. 2 weeks
 - b. 3½ years
 - c. **23 years**
 - d. 120 years
6. When did Nahum live?
- a. Soon after the prophet Elijah
 - b. **Before the Babylonian captivity, about the time of Isaiah**
 - c. Around the time of Jesus
 - d. We don't know any details of his life.
7. The prophetic books are sometimes summed up as "the fall of four cities." Which cities were they? (*choose all that apply*)
- a. Rome
 - b. **Jerusalem**
 - c. Damascus
 - d. Susa
 - e. Athens
 - f. **Nineveh**
 - g. **Babylon**
 - h. Gath
 - i. **Samaria**
8. What was Nahum's message to the people of Judah?
- a. **They would no longer have to worry about Nineveh invading them.**
 - b. They would be destroyed along with Nineveh.
 - c. They would be delivered only after Nineveh had held them in captivity for 70 years.
 - d. They would be taken captive and dispersed by Nineveh like the Northern Kingdom.
9. Why did God pour out His wrath on Nineveh?
- a. **They had become unrepentant and committed very cruel atrocities.**
 - b. They were growing too powerful for Him to handle.
 - c. They were not as important as other people.
 - d. He wanted to show off His power.

10. What does Nahum say about the character of God?
- a. God is only loving and never gets angry.
 - b. God is only angry and never expresses love.
 - c. God is both loving and holy, and He is angered by sin.**
 - d. God is not concerned with human affairs.
11. Why is the book of Nahum an important message for us today?
- a. It shows us that God loves only certain people.
 - b. It warns us to pray that our enemies be utterly destroyed.
 - c. It prophesies that Nineveh will be rebuilt in our time to war against God's people.
 - d. It is a study of how the love of God is expressed through His wrath and that helps us understand why He hates sin.**



Why does God hate sin? How does His anger at sin demonstrate that He loves us? Is there a friend or family member that hasn't accepted God's gift of eternal life? How can you share God's love with them?



Thank God that He loves you too much to ignore sin in your life. Ask Him to make you strong against temptation, and ask that He would put His emotions in your heart. Ask God to help you share His message of love with all those who need it.



Going Deeper

1. In what ways were the prophecies of Nahum about the destruction of Nineveh good news to the people of God? _____

2. When you compare the book of Nahum to the book of Jonah, what conclusions must you make about the supernatural salvation of Nineveh through the prophet Jonah? _____

3. What is the devotional and practical application of the book of Nahum to our lives today? _____

4. In what ways does Nahum defend the destruction of Nineveh? _____

5. When you carefully consider the horrible cruelty of the Assyrians, does this book mean that God will only tolerate an evil and wicked empire to a certain point and then He will wipe it out? _____

6. How did the conquest of Nineveh, 23 years after this prophecy was proclaimed, validate Nahum as a prophet? _____

7. What obstacle blocking the work of God was addressed by the prophet Nahum? _____

The Original Talk Show

Chapter 10

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 83



Objective: To understand the message of the book of Habakkuk.



LORD, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, O LORD. Renew them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.

—Habakkuk 3:2

Why are you downcast, O my soul? Why so disturbed within me? Put your hope in God, for I will yet praise him, my Savior and my God.

—Psalm 42:11

Habakkuk was a priest and a minister of worship and music who lived immediately before the Babylonian captivity, when the threat of Babylon's invasion was clear to all. But while Jerusalem's watchmen were in towers looking for the coming army, Habakkuk stationed himself in a spiritual tower to hear from God. He is known for repeatedly asking God "why?" as he wrestles with the questions all of Judah must have been asking. God speaks to him about His purposes, and the prophet encourages Judah to live by faith and to keep their hope. He concludes his message with a wonderful song of praise to God.



1. True or **false**? Habakkuk is known for giving a lot of answers to hard questions.
2. True or **false**? Though the book Habakkuk comes after the book of Nahum in the Bible, Habakkuk lived at least a century before Nahum.
3. **True** or false? Habakkuk preached at the time of the Babylonian invasion.

4. **True** or false? Habakkuk was a priest responsible for music.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. How many times is Habakkuk's most famous verse quoted in the New Testament?

- a. Once
- b. Three times**
- c. 14 times
- d. 22 times

<p><i>... but the righteous will live by faith.</i> — Habakkuk 2:4</p>
--

6. What is one reason Habakkuk might have written in the form of questions?

- a. He did not know any answers because he did not know how to hear God's voice.
- b. He wanted people to figure out the answers themselves.
- c. It was a creative way to present hard truth without actually making statements that could get him killed.**
- d. He thought his writings might help confuse the Babylonians when they invaded Jerusalem.

7. According to the example of Habakkuk, what should we do when we have a crisis? (*choose all that apply*)

- a. Build a tower made of stone.
- b. Get alone with God.**
- c. Ask God all our questions.**
- d. Trust in our own abilities to handle it.
- e. Watch and wait for God to speak.**
- f. Use our own standards of logic.
- g. Choose to live by faith in God.**
- h. Worship God.**

8. How does the book of Habakkuk end?

- a. With his execution
- b. With Babylon's victory over Jerusalem
- c. With a prophecy of the end times
- d. With a hymn of praise**

9. What is the ultimate purpose of a martyr?

- a. To show the world a witness**
- b. To die as quickly as possible
- c. To die in a way that does not embarrass God
- d. To get a greater reward in heaven

10. Where can we find strength and comfort when we are in a crisis?

- a. In our work
- b. In our government
- c. In the money we have saved
- d. Only in God**



Do you have many questions for God? What are some of them? Do you have a place where you meet with God and wait for Him to speak to you? In what ways has He spoken to you?



Thank God that He allows us to ask questions, that He is willing to speak to His people, and thank Him that He is all-powerful and invites us to seek refuge and direction in Him. Ask Him to speak clearly to you in times when you are silent before Him. Ask Him to increase your faith and help you to always worship Him, especially in times of difficulty.



Going Deeper

1. What was the clever literary form chosen by Habakkuk, and why did he choose to present his message the way he did? _____

2. Were the questions he was asking in his watchtower his own questions or questions the people of God were asking as they were about to be conquered by the Babylonians? _____

3. How did this prophet mean for his great statement, “The just shall live by faith,” (2:4) to be applied by the people who heard his questions and answers? _____

4. His basic question was “Why would You use a people more wicked than we are to chastise us?” When God answered that question through Habakkuk, what was His answer as it related to the people of God? _____

5. What was God’s answer through Habakkuk as it related to the wicked who were about to conquer them? _____

6. How does the hymn Habakkuk wrote at the conclusion of his prophecy (Hab 3:16-19) relate to the so-called prosperity theology that is preached by many today, especially since we do not know if this prophet survived? _____

7. What obstacle that blocks the work of God was addressed by the prophet Habakkuk? _____

Clean Sweep From Top to Bottom

Chapter 11

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 84



Objective: To understand the warnings for Judah and us in the message of the prophet Zephaniah.



Seek the LORD, all you humble of the land, you who do what he commands. Seek righteousness, seek humility; perhaps you will be sheltered on the day of the LORD's anger.

—Zephaniah 2:3

The LORD has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm. .. The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing.”

—Zephaniah 3:15-17

Zephaniah prophesied about the Day of the Lord. Though the prophet Joel prophesied about the Day of the Lord in the past, present, and future, Zephaniah focused entirely on the final day when Jesus returns and God judges the earth. He described an event that would affect every man and beast in the world. Because this event would come about as a result of the sin of the nations, Zephaniah urged repentance and faithfulness. No ungodly nations will survive this day, but God will always preserve and care for those who are faithful to Him. In the end, every person on earth will acknowledge the Lord as God.



1. True or **false**? No one knows exactly when Zephaniah lived.
2. **True** or false? About the time of Zephaniah there was a revival of interest in the Hebrew scripture.
3. **True** or false? Zephaniah used the phrase “Day of the Lord” more than any other prophet.
4. True or **false**? Unlike many other prophets, Zephaniah never prophesied to the spiritual and political leaders of God’s people.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. Which “Day of the Lord” does Zephaniah speak of most often?
 - a. The Babylonian captivity
 - b. A plague of locusts
 - c. The final return of the Lord**
 - d. The release of the captives in Babylon
6. What is the primary message of Zephaniah?
 - a. The Day of the Lord will be final and cataclysmic.**
 - b. Only Jerusalem will be affected by the Day of the Lord.
 - c. Every day is the Day of the Lord.
 - d. The Day of the Lord will come about 7 years from now.
7. What does Zephaniah prophecy about those who worship false idols?
 - a. God will honor their religious faithfulness.
 - b. God will punish them and destroy their idolatry.**
 - c. God will treat them in the same way He treats those who worship Him alone.
 - d. God will give them many, many years to realize their error.
8. What does Zephaniah urge the people of God to do?
 - a. Repent while there is time.**
 - b. Attack the Babylonians before they have a chance to invade.
 - c. Bring all of their idols to the temple to celebrate religious diversity.
 - d. Pray for God to expand their territory.
9. What does Zephaniah prophecy about the nations surrounding Jerusalem?
 - a. They will be blessed while Judah is cursed.
 - b. They will be cursed while Judah is blessed.
 - c. They will be taken captive by Judah.
 - d. They will be judged and made desolate.**

10. According to Zephaniah, which of the following are catalysts for the Day of the Lord?
(choose all that apply)

- a. Material prosperity**
- b. Zeal
- c. Indifference**
- d. Rebellion**
- e. Nuclear war
- f. Unbelief**
- g. Monetary crisis
- h. Disobedience**

11. According to Zephaniah, what is God's final solution for government?

- a. Democracy
- b. Zealous nationalism
- c. A new set of rulers to replace the old ones
- d. The rule and reign of the Messiah**

12. What will result from the Day of the Lord?

- a. Global famine
- b. A new heaven and new earth**
- c. An improved society
- d. Total annihilation



Are there any areas of your heart that you have not completely given over to God yet?
What are they? What would God have you do in response? What are you seeking after?



Thank God that He will create a new heaven and a new earth filled with righteousness.
Ask Him to establish His kingdom within you so that when Jesus returns, you will not
be shaken but be part of His everlasting kingdom.

"So do not worry, saying 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' For the pagans run after all these things, and your Heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first His kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

—Matthew 6:31-34



Going Deeper

1. Since the Second Coming of Jesus Christ involves a series of events, how does the Day of the Lord relate to those other events? _____

2. Relate the book of Zephaniah to the third chapter of Second Peter. How do these two descriptions of the Day of the Lord agree regarding this event? _____

3. When Zephaniah writes that no man or beast will survive, how does that compare to the Mount Olivet Discourse of Jesus when He speaks of the great tribulation, which no flesh would survive without divine intervention (Matthew 24)? _____

4. Since Zephaniah and Joel both speak of the Day of the Lord, compare and contrast their presentations of this awesome event. _____

5. Every time the Scriptures teach us about this Second Coming and the end of the world, they always have devotional and practical applications as their reason for telling us about these things. What were the devotional and practical applications of Zephaniah for his preaching about the Day of the Lord? _____

6. According to Zephaniah, what is the extent of the devastation this event will cause on the earth? _____

7. What obstacle that is blocking the work of God is addressed by the prophet Zephaniah? _____

God First

Chapter 12

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 85



Objective: To understand the prophet Haggai's message of the importance of having proper priorities.



"You expected much, but see, it turned out to be little. What you brought home, I blew away. Why?" declares the LORD Almighty. "Because of my house, which remains a ruin, while each of you is busy with his own house. Therefore, because of you the heavens have withheld their dew and the earth its crops. I called for a drought on the fields and the mountains, on the grain, the new wine, the oil and whatever the ground produces, on men and cattle, and on the labor of your hands."

—Haggai 1:9-11

Haggai was one of three prophets to preach after the Babylonian captivity. This prophet preached to the first group of exiles to return to Jerusalem. These former exiles found people in their land who did not fear God and who strongly opposed their efforts to rebuild the temple. Because of the hostility of those around them, the people of Judah stopped their reconstruction project for 15 years, and instead selfishly focused on building their own homes. "Give careful thought to your ways," Haggai told them. He cried out for God's people to remember their priorities, to regain the proper perspective, to be motivated to continue their mission, and to stop fearing the nations that intimidated them. His words remind us of our need to stay focused on God's mission and His will for our lives.



1. True or **false**? Haggai chose to remain in Babylon while God's people returned to Jerusalem from their exile.

2. **True** or false? Exiles were allowed to return to Jerusalem when Babylon was conquered by the Medes and Persians.

3. **True** or false? Persecution and threats caused the children of God to become distracted from their mission.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. How did the people of Judah appear when they returned from exile?

- a. Strong and powerful
- b. Rich and lazy
- c. Poor and ragged**
- d. Exactly like Babylonians

5. What was the primary purpose of the first return of exiles?

- a. To rebuild the temple**
- b. To rid the Promised Land of ungodly people
- c. To make Jerusalem a strong city
- d. To escape the wrath of Persia

6. How did the inhabitants of the land respond when Jews returned from Babylon?

- a. They welcomed them enthusiastically.
- b. They gathered weapons and warriors to fight them.
- c. They ran from them in fear.
- d. They harassed and persecuted them.**

7. How did the returning Jews react to their enemies? (*choose all that apply*)

- a. They stopped building the temple.**
- b. They fought their enemies courageously.
- c. They lost their zeal and courage.**
- d. They focused on building their own homes.**
- e. They praised God for the opportunity to demonstrate faith.
- f. They ignored the past and pressed on with a vision of the future.

8. Which of the following is a good summary for Haggai's message?

- a. Future judgment
- b. Past sins
- c. God first**
- d. Wait

9. What did God do to teach His people not to put themselves or other things before Him?

- a. He sent them back into captivity immediately.
- b. He kept them from ever having enough until they put Him first.**
- c. He sent a plague on them.
- d. He abandoned His people completely.

10. How did the people respond to Haggai's preaching?
- a. They ignored him.
 - b. They stoned him.
 - c. They repented, got their priorities right, and they began working on the temple again.**
 - d. Their hearts were jealous of the ungodly and they abandoned God.
11. What did God promise when the people set their priorities right?
- a. He would bless them with plenty.**
 - b. He would give them as much power, wealth, and health as they wanted.
 - c. He would tell them how well they were doing.
 - d. He would make their punishment less severe.



How are your values reflected in the way you spend your time, your money, and your skills and talents? Is there anything more important to you than God's kingdom? If so, what is it? What can you do to focus your priorities more on God?



Thank God that He loves us enough to teach us what is most important in life. Ask Him to help you put Him First, love Him more than anyone or anything else and to help you be a good steward of His gifts. Ask Him to help you live your life according to His priorities and not your selfish desires.



Going Deeper

1. When Haggai preached “*Consider your ways,*” what ways did he want the people to consider?

2. When God speaking through Haggai preached “Consider My ways,” what ways of His did God want the people to consider? _____

3. How can you apply the hard reality that according to this prophet, based on the way the people were spending their time, talents and money on their own homes and not working on God’s house, who was first in their lives? _____

4. Can you apply personally the ways of God that are graphically and eloquently described by Haggai as putting a hole in their sock or blowing away their money when they spread it out to make it go around? _____

5. In the 11th verse of the first chapter, Haggai says that God sometimes calls for a drought on men as well as their crops. If you ever had dry spells that could be explained by this verse, describe them. _____

6. In what other ways can you personally apply the message of this prophet? _____

7. What was the obstacle addressed by Haggai that was blocking the work of God? _____

Focus Your Faith

Chapter 13

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 86



Objective: To learn through Haggai how we can overcome our fears and do the Lord's work with courage and zeal.



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

—Haggai 2:6-9

Cast all your anxiety on him because He cares for you.

—1 Peter 5:7

The prophet Haggai shows us how to set our priorities for life. To those who are going through a spiritual drought or who find that their work is not being blessed by God, Haggai says to "Consider your ways" and to "Consider God's ways." God wants us to focus on the work He is doing today and that He plans to do in the future. We are to let our faith focus our priorities, our perspective, our motives, and our fears.



1. True or **false**? According to Haggai, faith does not have much effect on our lives.
2. **True** or false? One of our tendencies as human beings is to let the past negatively affect us now.
3. True or **false**? God wants us to learn His will by comparing ourselves to other people and wishing we were like them.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. How does Satan try to keep us from receiving God's best for our lives? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. He tempts us to do evil things.**
 - b. He tempts us to do good things instead of the best things.**
 - c. He tries to discourage us.**
 - d. He tries to distract us.**
 - e. He tries to focus our attention on past regrets.**
5. What was the most important aspect of the temple God's people were building?
 - a. Its gold and silver
 - b. The stones in its foundation
 - c. Its size
 - d. Its spiritual value as a place filled with God's glory**
6. Why did God not bless the rebuilding of the temple at first?
 - a. The people were not using enough gold.
 - b. The motives of the people were mixed with sinful attitudes.**
 - c. He wanted them to wait longer.
 - d. He did not think He needed a temple.
7. How did Haggai encourage the people to keep building?
 - a. He assured them that God would bless their work because of their repentance.**
 - b. He warned them that God would punish them severely if they stopped to rest.
 - c. He bribed them with gold and silver.
 - d. He told them God would grant His favor if they sacrificed 1,000 animals.
8. How can we become holy?
 - a. By being close to holy people and holy places
 - b. By wearing a holy amulet
 - c. By going to a temple or church every day
 - d. By God's grace as we set ourselves apart for Him**
9. How does faith affect our fears?
 - a. It causes us to focus on God and on His plan.**
 - b. It causes us to fear God's wrath and obey Him like slaves.
 - c. It magnifies our fears of wars and social crises.
 - d. It makes us so godly that we never fear anything.

10. Who did Haggai usually focus on in his preaching?

- a. His closest friends
- b. The oppressors of God's people
- c. The leaders of the country**
- d. The temple construction workers



Is God blessing your work? What are your motives for serving God? Do you serve Him because it is right and because you love Him? When you find selfish motives within you, what can you do to get free from them?

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God... God is love. This is how God showed His love among us; He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment.

—1 John 4:7-10, 18



Thank God that He is more powerful than any problem or threat we can ever experience. Ask Him to replace your fear with faith and to help you love and serve Him with a pure heart.



Going Deeper

1. How can you apply the preaching of Haggai that challenged the people to overcome their fear with their faith? _____

2. How do you apply the message Haggai gave the people, to overcome their discouragement because the foundation of the second Temple was as nothing compared to the glory of the first Temple? _____

3. What is your personal application of the sermon in which Haggai gave his prophecy about God shaking everything in this world until only the unshakable will be left? (Haggai 2:6-7)

4. If you think of your priorities as a target with a bull's-eye and a dozen circles surrounding the bull's-eye, what would your priority target look like, based on the first message of this great prophet? _____

5. How do you personally apply the message of Haggai that tells us how easily sin or infection is transmitted, compared to the way holiness, or spirituality can be transmitted? _____

6. What evidence is there in these two short chapters that Haggai must have been a very powerful and persuasive preacher? _____

7. How does Haggai serve as a model of the role of a prophet to address the obstacle that is blocking the work of God, so that the work of God will be on track again as a result of his preaching? _____

Apocalypse Now

Chapter 14

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 87



Objective: To introduce the message and ministry of the prophet Zechariah.



The LORD was very angry with your forefathers. Therefore tell the people: “This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘Return to me,’ declares the LORD Almighty, ‘and I will return to you,’ says the LORD Almighty.”

—Zechariah 1:2-3

Come near to God and He will come near to you.

—James 4:8

The book of Zechariah contains eight visions the prophet saw and shared with the exiles who had returned to Jerusalem. He believed the survivors of the captivity needed a vision of an omnipotent God who would work on behalf of His people to defend them, fight for them, establish them in His promises, and give them His blessings. His primary message was that if the people returned to God, God would return to the people. Through Zechariah’s preaching, God was calling His people not just to a city or a temple but return to their spiritual “homeland” of a relationship with Him. Zechariah is one of the most important prophet books, containing more detailed prophecies of the coming Messiah than any book other than Isaiah. Zechariah prophesies that God would give His people His Spirit and bless them forever.



1. **True** or false? Zechariah was much younger than Haggai, but they preached at about the same time.
2. **True** or false? Like Haggai, Zechariah was concerned about the rebuilding of the temple.
3. **True** or false? The exiles who had first returned to Jerusalem had low morale and little hope.
4. True or **false**? Zechariah is a very unusual name in the Bible.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. What does the name “Zechariah” mean?
 - a. God judges
 - b. God remembers**
 - c. God has forsaken
 - d. Full of joy
6. Which of these terms occurs 53 times in the book of Zechariah?
 - a. “The Lord Almighty”**
 - b. “Not My people”
 - c. “Sins of the fathers”
 - d. “By My Spirit”

7. Which of the following words would you use to describe each prophet? (*some words may be used for both prophets*)

Haggai:

(pragmatic, hopeful, direct, brief, encouraging, easy to understand)

Zechariah:

(visionary, hopeful, literary, encouraging, Messianic, inspiring, difficult to understand)

Pragmatic
Visionary
Hopeful
Direct
Literary
Brief
Encouraging
Messianic
Inspiring
Easy to understand
Difficult to understand

8. How did the people in Jerusalem generally feel about the difficult situation they were in?
 - a. Courageous
 - b. Optimistic
 - c. Discouraged**
 - d. Angry
9. Whom does God speak to?
 - a. Only prophets
 - b. Only priests
 - c. Only His armies of angels
 - d. All of His people, if they will listen**

10. How were Zechariah's visions relevant to the people?
- a. They gave instructions for the architecture of the temple.
 - b. They addressed difficult problems the people faced.**
 - c. They gave the people strategies for defeating their enemies.
 - d. They enabled the people to escape all of their difficulties.



Is there a problem making you discouraged? How does knowing that God is working behind the scenes help you endure difficult problems? In what ways has God encouraged you to persevere? How can you encourage others who are facing hardships?



Thank God that He speaks to His people and that He encourages us when we are discouraged. Ask Him to teach you to depend on the strength of His Spirit in everything you do. Pray that He would help you understand how He is working in your life and give you faith to trust Him until you do.



Going Deeper

1. Although Zechariah and Haggai were partners and worked together, in what ways were they different? _____

2. As with Ezra and Nehemiah, how did their differences complement and supplement one another? (“If two of us are exactly alike, one of us is unnecessary!” –Dick Woodward) _____

3. What was the preaching method and what was the literary form used by Zechariah? _____

4. What strategy did Zechariah use to call God’s people to return to a relationship with their God? _____

5. In that context, why did he refer to the Messiah as the Branch? (Consider John 14:6) _____

6. What is one of the great themes of the 14 chapters of Zechariah that makes him, as a prophet, second only to Isaiah? _____

7. What obstacle that was blocking the work of God is addressed by the prophet Zechariah? _____

What You See Is What You Get

Chapter 15

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 88



Objective: To understand the context and the messages of Zechariah's visions.



"Shout and be glad, O Daughter of Zion. For I am coming, and I will live among you," declares the LORD. "Many nations will be joined with the LORD in that day and will become my people. I will live among you and you will know that the LORD Almighty has sent me to you."

—Zechariah 2:10-11

"Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit," says the LORD Almighty.

—Zechariah 4:6

God gave eight visions to Zechariah to encourage and strengthen people who were powerless and discouraged. The exiles who had returned to Jerusalem had few weapons, lots of enemies, and an enormous task in front of them. They were focused on their problems and could not see how they would ever rebuild the temple with so many obstacles before them. But Zechariah's visions pulled back the veil and showed them how God was working to accomplish His purposes. His prophecies gave hope and strength to God's people.



1. **True** or false? God has the power to do anything to solve our problems and help us grow in the process.
2. True or **false**? Not even a prophet like Zechariah can see God working behind the veil.
3. **True** or false? Faith is, among other things, the evidence of what is unseen.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What is the source of the strength of God's people?
 - a. Their own courage
 - b. Government funding
 - c. Words of encouragement
 - d. The Spirit of God**
5. Why is it important for those who serve God to see Him?
 - a. When we see how powerful He is, we learn to depend on His strength.**
 - b. Seeing God makes us superior to others.
 - c. Those who see Him will never have enemies again.
 - d. We cannot see Him because He does not reveal Himself.
6. What was Zechariah's normal pattern for telling his visions?
 - a. He described them in language no one could understand.
 - b. He wrote them down and sent them only to the priests.
 - c. He focused on a problem and then pulled back the veil to reveal God working on that problem.**
 - d. He focused on God and then told the people they should be spiritual enough to see the same visions.
7. What does God do when His people are not in the place He wants them?
 - a. He only blames them for the trouble they have caused.
 - b. He is able to deliver and move them to exactly the right place.**
 - c. He gives up on them and chooses another people.
 - d. He tells them they have missed their opportunity and can never be restored.
8. What was the purpose of Zechariah's first vision?
 - a. To stir up God's people for battle
 - b. To encourage God's people in a time of transition**
 - c. To show God's people how much danger they were in
 - d. To point out which laws God's people had disobeyed
9. What message did God give His people in Zechariah's vision of the four horns?
 - a. That they would become more powerful than the four nations
 - b. That they would become herders of cattle and sheep
 - c. That He would place them between four mountains.
 - d. That He would overthrow the mighty nations that had scattered Judah.**

10. What did Zechariah prophesy of the future Jerusalem?
- a. **That it would be very great and need no walls**
 - b. That it would one day be conquered and never again restored
 - c. That it would be ruled by Zechariah himself
 - d. That only people who lived in Jerusalem could be saved

11. How did Satan try to make the returned exiles lose heart?
- a. He tempted them to eat of forbidden trees.
 - b. **He accused the high priest of still being stained with sin.**
 - c. He sent a vast army to intimidate and destroy them.
 - d. He caused a famine in the land.

*The Lord is my strength
and my shield; my heart
trusts in him, and I am
helped. My heart leaps
for joy and I will give
thanks to him in song.
—Psalm 28:7*

12. What was the message of the flying scroll?
- a. God's Word is hard to understand.
 - b. The Bible is a supernatural book.
 - c. **God knows about evil and will deal with it.**
 - d. God will send His Word to those who need it.



What situations in your life are too difficult for you to deal with? Who does God want you to depend on for strength? What does His Word say to encourage you?



Thank God that He is always working in your life, even when you cannot see what He is doing. Ask Him to show you more of His power and His promises.



Going Deeper

1. What is the devotional and practical application for you personally of the literary form used by Zechariah, when he focuses a problem and then pulls back the veil, showing how God is working behind the scenes of that problem to provide a solution? _____

2. How do you apply the first vision of Zechariah, which shows God working behind the scenes to help His people through a difficult time of transition? _____

3. Of the eight times Zechariah does this in his prophesy, which one meant the most to you, and why? _____

4. Since Haggai had addressed the same problem of finishing the second Temple so successfully, why did Zechariah believe the same obstacle needed to be addressed again? _____

5. In what ways was his message and method different from that of Haggai? _____

6. Why did Zechariah prophesy the coming of the Messiah more than any other prophet except Isaiah? _____

7. What was the dynamic to which Zechariah directed the discouraged, impotent people of God who had no military, or weapons of any kind with which to defend themselves (Consider 4:6)? _____

Back Chat

Chapter 16

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 89



Objective: To understand the message of the book of Malachi.



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

—Malachi 3:17-18

Malachi is the last prophet in the Old Testament. He preached after the time of Nehemiah, when the people of God had a form of religion that lacked substance and denied the reality of a relationship with God. Their problem was they had religion but no relationships. The message of Malachi's heart was that God wanted to have a love relationship with His people, but the priests and the people of Judah were not interested in knowing and loving God. They did the rituals they thought God had commanded, but they were spiritually cold and apathetic. Like Hosea, Malachi believed the people of God were committing spiritual adultery with this world. He became a messenger of repentance whom God used to draw His people back to Him. His prophecy was a warning to the spiritual leaders of the people of Judah that the outward practice of religion without the inner life of true faith was far from what God intended for His love to accomplish.



1. **True** or false? Malachi prophesied about 100 years after Haggai and Zechariah.
2. **True** or false? Nehemiah and Malachi addressed many of the same problems.
3. True or **false**? After the Jews came back from Babylon, they returned to the same idolatry and immorality they had done before the captivity.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. What was the main spiritual problem of the Jews of Malachi's time?
 - a. Worshipping idols
 - b. Extreme immorality
 - c. Falling away, or apostasy**
 - d. Heresy, or false doctrine
5. According to Malachi's literary style, how did the people respond to his message?
 - a. They talked back, or argued with him.**
 - b. They accepted everything he said.
 - c. They grieved over their sins.
 - d. They picked up stones to throw at him.
6. What is the first message in the book of Malachi?
 - a. God loves His people.**
 - b. God is still very angry.
 - c. God does not care who or how we worship.
 - d. Judah will overthrow the Persian government.
7. Why is it important for us to know that God loves us?
 - a. If we know His love, we will never sin.
 - b. If we know His love, He will never discipline us.
 - c. If we know His love, we will become very wealthy and influential.
 - d. Without His love, we have no hope.**
8. How did the people of Judah dishonor the Lord's name?
 - a. They told other nations that God had mistreated them.
 - b. They gave unworthy offerings and sacrifices to God.**
 - c. They taught their children that God did not exist.
 - d. They said Abraham was their father, not God.
9. How does God feel about divorce?
 - a. He hates it because it opposes His plan for couples and children.**
 - b. It pleases Him for us to change partners because He wants us to be happy.
 - c. It angers Him so much that He will never forgive someone who is divorced.
 - d. He prefers for us to marry additional partners rather than replace the ones we have.
10. How is it possible to rob God?
 - a. By taking something from His temple
 - b. By eating animals sacrificed to Him
 - c. By withholding tithes and offerings due to Him**
 - d. By stealing Bibles

"Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love another."

—1 John 4:11



How well do you think you know God's love? Do you believe that He knows you personally? Why or why not? How should your belief about God's love affect how you live?



Thank God that He knows you perfectly and loves you completely. Ask Him to let you see more and more of His love and give you opportunities to share His love with others. Ask God to keep you from practicing ritual without the reality of relationship with Him, and to help you always worship Him in spirit and truth.



Going Deeper

1. What was the literary form of the prophet Malachi? _____

2. In what ways did the prophet Malachi and the great leader Nehemiah address the same problems of the people of God? _____

3. What was the opening and primary message of the prophet Malachi? _____

4. How did the people of God respond to that message, and how did Malachi respond to their response? _____

5. If you believe Almighty God loves you personally, how do you know that is true? _____

6. How does God feel about divorce, and why does He feel that way? _____

7. What obstacle that was blocking the work of God was addressed by the prophet Malachi? _____

Seven Blueprints for a Burnout

Chapter 17

Audio Lesson: Old Testament number 90



Objective: To understand the symptoms of a heart that no longer loves God and how to return to Him.



“I have loved you,” says the Lord... “Surely the day is coming; it will burn like a furnace...For you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go out and leap like calves released from the stall.

—Malachi 1:2, 4:1-2

“But you, dear friends, build yourselves up in your most holy faith and pray in the Holy Spirit. Keep yourself in god’s love as you wait for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to bring you to eternal life.”

—Jude 20-21

The literary form of Malachi is question-and-answer; the prophet makes a true statement, quotes the argument of the people, and then answers their argument with an explanation. There are seven examples of the people of God talking back to Malachi. These seven dialogues can be called, “Seven Whispers of a Heart Growing Cold Toward God,” because they describe the symptoms of people who have lost a love relationship with God. The mission of Malachi was to restore this relationship. The book concludes by telling us that Malachi achieved his objective because God’s people repented of their indifference.

The last chapter of the Old Testament also records God’s response to the repentance and revival of His people. Malachi presents the Second Coming of Christ, when the Son will rise with healing in His wings for the faithful, but severe judgment for the cold-hearted. He also introduces John the Baptist, the prophet who will come before Jesus and introduce Him as the Messiah.



1. **True** or false? Malachi's message deals primarily with spiritual indifference.
2. True or **false**? The opposite of love is always hatred. (**The opposite is apathy or indifference.**)
3. True or **false**? God is more interested in how well we behave than how well we know and love Him.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

4. How does spiritual coldness usually begin?
 - a. With blatant idolatry
 - b. With long sermons
 - c. With deceivers who preach falsehood
 - d. With a lack of worship**
5. Which of the following are evidence of a heart that is indifferent toward God? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. Humility
 - b. Serving others
 - c. Doubting God's love**
 - d. Lack of motivation for God's work**
 - e. Broken commitment to people**
 - f. Loss of moral absolutes**
 - g. Dishonesty with money**
 - h. Leaving the faith**
 - i. False teachings**
6. When should a husband and wife be committed to each other?
 - a. Only when they feel very loving toward each other
 - b. Only when everything in life is going well for them
 - c. Only when their children are behaving well
 - d. In every kind of circumstance**
7. Which of the following are absolute truth—things that are true for everyone—according to God? (*choose all that apply*)
 - a. The Bible**
 - b. Cultural customs
 - c. Morality**
 - d. God's love**
 - e. Consequences of sin**
 - f. Dietary decisions
8. Which of the following does God say He hates most?
 - a. Accidental mistakes
 - b. Lack of understanding
 - c. Pride**
 - d. Weakness

9. How does the book of Malachi end?
- a. With the destruction of Jerusalem
 - b. With a messianic prophecy**
 - c. With the dedication of the new temple
 - d. With a genealogy of Jesus
10. What other New Testament character did Malachi prophesy about?
- a. The apostle Paul
 - b. Herod the Great
 - c. John the Baptist**
 - d. Matthew



How would you describe the level of God's love for you? What is your level of love toward God? What are some things you can do to increase your love for God? What are some things you can do to show your love for God?



Thank God for His Word and this opportunity you have had to study through the Minor Prophets. Thank Him for learning that His greatest desire for you is for you to have a love relationship with Him. Ask Him to keep your heart from growing cold and to help your love for Him grow each day, and for you to share His love with others.



Going Deeper

1. How do you personally apply "The Blueprint for a Burnout" profiled by the literary form of Malachi? _____

2. How can doubting God's love lead to a negative attitude toward God's name and God's work?

3. How can doubting God's love have a negative impact on our commitments to God? _____

4. How can a lack of commitment to God lead to a lack of commitment to our marriage partner?

5. How can this lack of commitment impact the teaching of Scripture to give God the first tenth of all that we have? _____

6. How can this spiritual burnout lead to a life of denial? _____

7. In what ways have you ever devised a relative morality so you could live with a lifestyle you knew was immoral? _____
