

THE "MINOR PROPHETS"

INTRODUCTION TO OUR STUDY

I. INTRODUCTION.

- a. "Minor" prophets?
 - i. Not minor as to the writers themselves.
 - ii. Not minor as to the messages they deliver.
 - iii. Minor only in the sense of the length of what they wrote.

- b. Some of the statements made by these "minor" prophets:
 - i. Amos 3:1-8.

 - ii. Hosea 4:6, 9 and 8:12.

 - iii. Micah 4:1, 2 and 6:6-8.

 - iv. Malachi 1:6-10 and 3:10.

II. WHAT KIND OF MEN WERE THESE PROPHETS?

- a. They were human.
- b. Uncompromising.
- c. Conscious of their divine call.
- d. Conscious of God's authority.
- e. Usually men of a certain ruggedness of body and character.
- f. Men of prayer and communion with God.
- g. Clean and consecrated in life and character.
- h. Outspoken critics of specific evils in the social order.
- i. God's representatives in revealing the future.

III. WHAT WAS THEIR MISSION? (SPOKESMEN FOR GOD)

- a. See Exodus 4:10-16 and & 7:1.

- b. See Jeremiah 1:1-10, 17 and Ezekiel 3:4-12.
 - i. For judgment.
 - ii. For salvation (hope).

IV. BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR UNDERSTANDING THE PROPHETS.

- a. A prophet is a man moved by the Holy Spirit. (II Peter 1:20-21)

- b. A prophet cannot introduce strange things. (Deut. 13:1-5) His function was to call men back to God.

- c. The true prophet is the man whose oracles (teachings/prophecies) come to pass. (Deut. 18:20-22)

- d. Sometimes prophecy is conditional:
 - i. Jonah and the city of Nineveh.
 - ii. Jeremiah 18:5-10
 - iii. I Kings 21:20.
 - iv. A threat may be delayed or not carried out due to repentance.
- e. Most of the prophets lived immediately before and after the Assyrian and the Babylonian captivities.
 - i. Threats fulfilled in exiles. (Zech. 1:5 and 6)
 - ii. Promises of “return” fulfilled in return from Babylonian captivity.
- f. Christ’s first coming and the beginning of the church are important subjects of Old Testament prophecy.
 - i. Romans 1:1-3.
 - ii. Acts 3:24-26.
 - iii. I Peter 1:10-12.
 - iv. Christ, the ideal King:
 - 1. Isaiah 9:6, 7 and 11:1-5
 - v. Christ, the suffering servant—Isaiah 53.
 - vi. Church--- Kingdom, God’s house, God’s mountain, temple and sheepfold are all used in referring to the church that Christ “purchased with his own blood” (Acts 20:28).
- g. God’s final revelation is made in His Son—Hebrews 1:1-2.

V. THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND WHEN STUDYING THE WORDS OF THE PROPHETS. (Quoted from Homer Hailey book)

- a. Necessary to understand the political, moral, social, and religious conditions in which the prophet lived and preached, and how he proposed to meet these conditions.
- b. Observe what the prophets consider is God’s relationship to the heathen nations with whom the Jewish people came in contact. It should be noted that God directs the destiny of these and it is He who judges all men.
- c. A final point, note the prophets’ teaching of a future Kingdom and King to be fulfilled in One who was to come “in the fullness of time”.