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The Prophets' Punishing End-Times' Message!



By Steven J. Hogan

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The prophets’ punishing message is particularly relevant as we think about what’s now happening to the United States? The border is being overrun, there’s two-tiered justice, massive debt problems, unchecked crime, the fentanyl crisis, evil rulers, families falling apart, children under attack, homelessness, human trafficking, socialism, communism, countries turning against us, etc.

Habakkuk 1:3-4 sums up what I know many of you have been thinking: *“Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. The law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.”* It’s the prophets that explain why all this terrible but justified evil is now occurring in our country!

The news media surely doesn't give you any answers. The real problem isn't the economy, the schools, the government, the border, the climate, etc. You must get past the surface to the heart of the problem, and it's the prophets that tell you our root problem is spiritual in nature – it's sin, it's turning from God to idols. And what you are now witnessing in our country are the consequences of our sin, God's righteous judgment of our wicked ways. *"The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness."* Romans 1:18-32

The prophets, from Isaiah to Malachi, make up one fourth of the Bible, a major portion of God's word, and they need to be read to understand this present time. They illustrate the sinful condition of countries and cities and how God punished them. Thus, they give us wisdom, enabling us to see and sort out what's now going on in our own country and in our own cities. *"Jerusalem has sinned greatly… Her foes have become her masters; her enemies are at ease. The Lord has brought her grief because of her many sins."* Lamentations 1:8,5

The prophets tell us that sin, at its core, is two sins – it's rejecting God and turning to false gods, it's forsaking God and loving other gods. *"They went far from Me and walked after emptiness and became empty… My people have committed two evils; they have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water"* (Jer. 2:5, 13). *"Nations will be gathered against them to put them in bonds for their double sin."* Hosea 10:10

This double sin, this root sin, results in many other sins. There's drunkenness (Is. 5:22), denying justice for a bribe (Is. 5:23), rebellion, stubbornness (Jer. 5:23), arrogance, overeating (Ezek. 16:49), cursing, lying, stealing, murder, adultery (Hos. 4:2), idolatry (Hos. 4:12), disobedience (Jonah 1:3), rejecting God's law (Amos 3:4), laziness (Amos 6:1), love of food, wine, and music (Amos 6:4-6), coveting, defrauding (Mic. 2:2), hating good and loving evil (Mic. 3:2), divorce (Mal. 2:14-16), robbing God (Mic. 3:8), etc., etc. The sins that took place

over 2500 years ago are, for the most part, the same sins now being committed in our own country.

God must punish all sins for He is holy – He can't just let them go. *"I will punish you for all your iniquities"* (Amos 3:2). And the prophets specifically tell us how He punished these sins. Here are some examples: *"a lion from the forest will slay them"* (Jer. 5:6); *"sickness and wounds"* (Jer. 6:7); *"their houses shall be turned over to others"* (Jer. 6:12); *"I'm bringing disaster on this people"* (Jer. 6:19); *"neighbors and friends will perish"* (Jer. 6:21); *"an army is coming – they are cruel and show no mercy"* (Jer. 6:22-23); *"I will ruin her vines and fig trees"* (Hos. 2:12).

"I will ignore your children" (Hos. 4:6); *"a nation has invaded my land"* (Joel 1:6); *"the people's joy is withered away"* (Joel 1:12); *"the seeds shrivel… the grain is dried up… herds of cattle wander aimlessly"* (Joel 1:17-18); *"I will send fire"* (Amos 1:4); *"I will destroy the king"* (Amos 1:5); *"I gave you empty stomachs"* (Amos 4:6); *"I will send you into exile"* (Amos 5:27). In the past, God punished sinners in many ways, and now we are watching God's diverse and dreaded judgment of the United States. By reading the prophets you can understand what's taking place, that we are greatly sinning and are being greatly punished by God.

Man's sin and God's judgment of his sin are God's primary messages in the prophets, but there are many other themes. They tell you about God's identity, that He's the Lord (Is. 26:4), the Rock (Is. 26:4), the Judge (Is. 33:22), the Lawgiver (Is. 33:22), the Shepherd (Is. 40:11), the Creator (Is. 43:1), the Savior (Is. 43:3), the King (Is. 44:6), the Redeemer (Is. 44:6), the Holy One (Is. 45:11), the Servant (Is. 52:13), and our Husband (Is. 54:5).

The prophets tell you about God's character, that He's holy (Is. 6:1-3), wise (Is. 11:2), supreme, powerful (Is. 40:12-31), just, loving, righteous

(Jer. 9:24), true, living, eternal (Jer. 10:10), sovereign (Dan. 4:34-35), compassionate and forgiving (Micah 7:19).

The prophets tell you about Christ's 1st coming, that He would be born of a virgin (Is. 7:14), would suffer (Is. 50:6), would be pierced (Is. 53:5), would die to pay for our sins (Is. 53:4-12), would proclaim the good news (Is. 61:1), would be born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2), and would ride into Jerusalem on a donkey (Zech. 9:9).

The prophets tell you the good news, that God shows you mercy if you repent of your sin and believe that His Son is the Messiah, the Christ who died to pay for your sin. Yes, God is judging this sinful country, but know that He judged His own Son so you could be forgiven, have hope, and be eternally loved. Isaiah 53, Ezekiel 37:23, Micah 7:18-20

The prophets also tell you about Christ's 2nd coming, and the amazing hope God has for all His people. This is an extremely, eternally important message of the prophets. Sad to say, many people, even believers, don't see it this way. They believe the truths about Christ's first coming but not the truths about His 2nd coming, many which are found in the prophets. Much that is said about this hope is easily discovered on the pages of the prophets, but some, like hidden treasure, must be searched for. Here are some verses about this hope: Gen. 12:1-3, 17:4-8; Is. 2:2-4, 4:2-6, 9:6-7, 54:5-8, 61:2b-11, 65:17-25; Jer. 23:5-6, 32:37-44; Ez. 37:22-23; Dan. 2:44-45, 7:13-14; Hosea 1:10-11; Joel 3:16-21; Amos 9:14-15; Micah 5:4; Hab. 2:14; Zeph. 3:14-17; and Zech. 14:9-11.

Here are some final points about reading the prophets and our future:
1. The prophets focus primarily on the Jewish people. There's nothing specifically in the prophets about the church age. But there are important lessons for all believers, ones that will help you grow in your relationship with God, and in faith, holiness, and hope.
2. The prophets, in general, are predictive. Some of the passages are

about their present time and / or the years following. Some are about Christ's 1st coming. Some are about Christ's 2nd coming and the kingdom age. Others have a near and a far perspective.

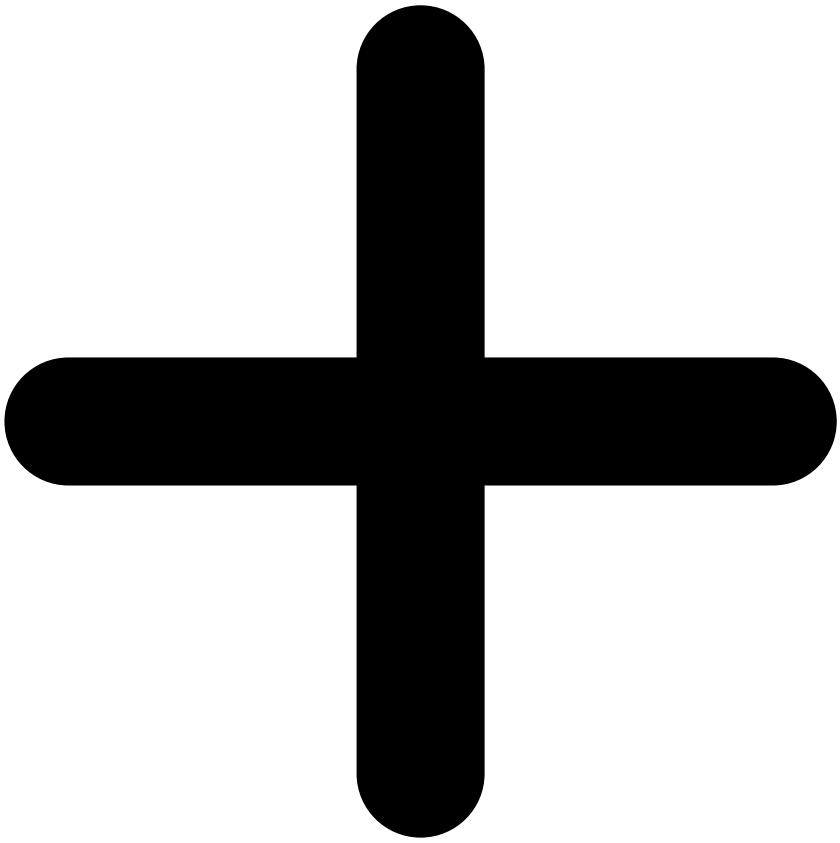
3. If you have not read any of the prophets, I'd recommend you start with the minor ones, like Hosea, Amos, Micah, Joel, Jonah, and then move on to the major ones, like Isaiah and Jeremiah. I will admit, they are not always easy to understand, but ask God to teach you as you read them, and He will.
4. Be looking for the primary subjects in the prophets – God, man's sin, God's judgment, the Jews, Christ's 1st coming, salvation, Christ's 2nd coming, and hope.

5. I suggest that you write down the passages that talk about the hope of the Jews. That's because your hope, your future blessing as a Christian, is in many ways tied to the hope of the Jews. For example, both Jews and Christians will inherit the earth (Ps. 37:11, Matt. 5:5), and together they will be glorifying the Lord. Romans 15:8-12
6. This world is on a fast track to the end of this age, at which time the church will be raptured and the nations will be righteously judged. It's not just the United States that falls under the judgment of God, but all nations in the world. Psalm 9:17-20; Zeph. 1; Rev. 6:12-17, Rev. 7:9-14, Rev. 8-9

7. One reason why the United States needs to be judged and lose its position as the #1 power in the world is to make way for the Antichrist and his kingdom. I don't believe it will be long before this takes place, and the Antichrist is ruling this earth, but only for a very short time. Then Jesus Christ will come back to rapture the church, judge the world, save a remnant of Jews, and reign on earth. 2 Thessalonians 1:1-10, Psalm 47
8. It is true that the United States is being judged and is going downhill. But remember the story of Jonah, and how God had mercy on that wicked city of Nineveh. As Habakkuk 3:2 says, *"In wrath remember mercy."* Pray that God would bring revival. Might Daniel 9:4-19 be our

prayer – *“We have sinned, committed iniquity, acted wickedly and rebelled, even turning aside from your commandments* (vs. 4)*… O Lord, hear! O Lord, forgive! O Lord, listen and take action! For Your own sake, O my God, do not delay* (vs. 19)*.*

P.S. I pray that you are awake, alert, and watching. We must not be asleep in times like these. We must be like the men of Issachar who understood the times and knew what they should do, and like John the Baptist who was preparing the way of the Lord. I suggest you read these two posts: *“The Downfall of the United States Before the Return of Christ”*, and *“The Day of the Lord: the Wrath of God on Earth.”*





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