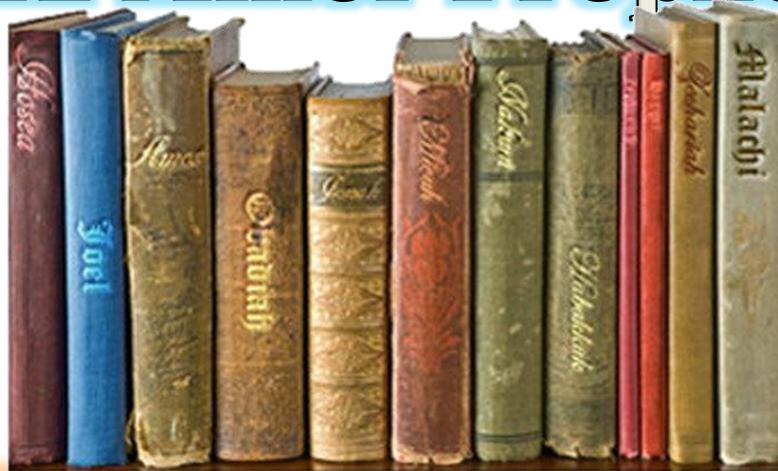




What Do You Know About The 12 Minor Prophets?



2020 YOUTH CALENDAR

† My Beloved children, st. Bakhomios youth group.

Peace and grace to you from our Lord God and Saviour Jesus Christ hoping you are all well. Year 2019 is ending, congratulate you for receiving year 2020; Praying to be a year full of love, peace, success and blessing in your lives while growing more firm in our Lord and in the church.

+ The theme of your calendar this year is something new to most of you. It is about the twelve young prophets in the Holy Bible which not many of you know about them; will take one of them for each month. Here I would like to highlight an important thing; the word young prophet does not mean that there is a young prophet or a big prophet. They are all prophets and servants to our Lord God, and they are all equal. The expression young & big comes from the size of the prophecy. For example the prophecy of Isaiah is 66 chapters while the prophecy of Obedia is one chapter. Here we will take a quick outlook on each prophecy, the main aim for each prophecy, the important points mentioned in it, then a spiritual benefit of the prophecy to apply in our lives as the Lord said "The words I speak to you, they are spirit and life" (John 6:63). The blessing of our fathers the prophets be with you all Amen.

+ Happy New Year To You All, Please Pray For me

21 Koiahk 1736 Martyrs

+ Tuesday 31 December 2019 AD

+ Departure of st. Barnabas, one of the seventy Apostles.

Fr. John Sorial
Fr. Bakhomios Erian
Fr. Tadros EL-Bakhomani

2020

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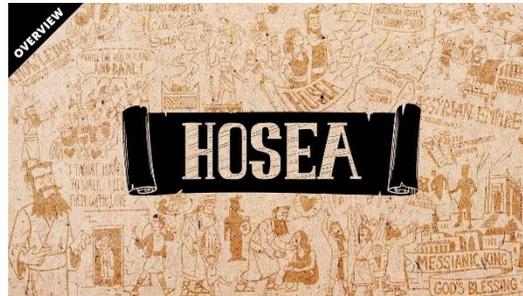
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JANUARY



BE FAITHFUL

- ✚ Hosea means 'Jehovah saves' and from it came the name of 'Joshua' and 'Jesus'. The Lord ordered him to marry a harlot woman, whose name was Gomer and got from her two sons and a daughter: Jezreel, Lo-Ammi and Lo-Ruhamah. The wife was the daughter of Diblaim, who was an idol worshiper and his name means 'a double cake' (which used to be a double layer cake of figs and sultanas, which used to be offered for 'baal'- the idol). The name of the wife 'Gomer' means, 'total failure' and the three children, their names mean: Jezreel ('the Lord sends punishments') the second daughter Lo-Ruhamah (means, 'I will not have mercy') and the third son Lo-Ammi (means, 'you are not my people').
- ✚ Here, the Lord is expressing that committing sin and separating from God is considered to be spiritual adultery, as the Lord sees my soul being His true bride and He is the true Groom of my soul (2Cor 11:2): **"For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to One husband, that I present you as a chaste virgin to Christ"**. Accordingly, my sin is considered to be adultery against the Lord, and it separates me from the Lord, just as the adultery of the woman separates her from her husband. Hosea's prophecy expresses the status of religious and moral corruption of the people and because of that, the Lord punished the people, blaming them strongly for leaving Him behind and worshipping idols.
- ✚ The Lord in His love to mankind, firstly talks and debates with us (through the Holy Bible, confession father, guidance in different ways, sermons etc...) and if we do not repent, He starts punishing so that we wake up to ourselves, but while He is setting the punishments, He is opening to us door of repentance and that is why we find in the last chapter, it expresses that the Lord is ready to forgive, accept and restore everything back when they repent.

✚ The Benefit:

- ✚ The Lord loves us and considers us His own, as the husband considers his wife his own and wants us to be for Him on earth, that we are with Him forever in Heaven. As the sin of adultery is something very big in the eyes of the husband, the same exactly is my sin so big in the Eyes of the Lord God, as it separates us from the Lord God because He is holy and the sin does not fit with His holiness.



FEBRUARY



BE CAUTIOUS

- ✚ Joel means 'Jehovah is God' and he is the son of Pethuel, which means, 'God reveals'. He is from the prophets before the capture of the Jews to Babylon.
 - ✚ He talks about the sins of the people, then them drifting from the Lord God and the Lord is setting punishments; firstly by sending locusts to consume everything, then secondly by arising enemies against them to destroy their country and capture them, while at the same time, showing His readiness to accept and forgive them if they return and repent.
 - ✚ He prophesied about the descending of the Holy Spirit upon the holy Apostles on the 50th day after the Resurrection of our Lord and he prophesied about the short time before the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (e.g. the darkness of the sun, the moon etc...). He also prophesied about the judgement day, where the Lord will sit on His throne to judge and give everyone according his/ her deeds.
 - ✚ Joel in his prophecy, used things from nature in the life of the people, to express the punishment of the Lord and at the same time, it carries spiritual meanings about how the sin starts and then grows to the maximum. When he spoke about the punishment by the locusts, he mentioned 4 stages, which are: - the chewing locusts, the crawling locusts, the swarming locusts and the consuming locusts. To understand this; the chewing locusts; they are the locusts that just come out of the egg and start to move, which expresses the sin in the beginning and how it creeps slightly to the soul. The crawling locusts are the locusts, when they start to crawl on the ground to eat the green grass and this expresses the sin, when it finds an open door and starts to crawl inside, it brings other sins with it. The swarming locusts are the locusts with 2 small wings, that start to fly to consume the low plants, and this expresses the sin how it grows and becomes as if a resident inside the soul. Then the consuming locusts are the full big ones, who can fly and destroy the low plants and the trees. This is when the sin fully occupies the person and becomes habitual. Here the person is in a spiritual danger!
- ✚ The Benefit:
- ✚ My beloved children, be very cautious from the small sins when it is just little and creeps in. Be sure that if you don't run to your confession father to deal with it on the spot, it will grow and become a habit. I always say in the meetings, "the sin is like a chain, you give the first ring of the chain to the devil, he will pull the rest". Remember what the Lord said in the Holy Bible: **(Song of Solomon 2:15): "Catch for us the foxes, the little foxes that spoil the vines, For our vines have tender grapes"**.



MARCH



THE REAL POWER

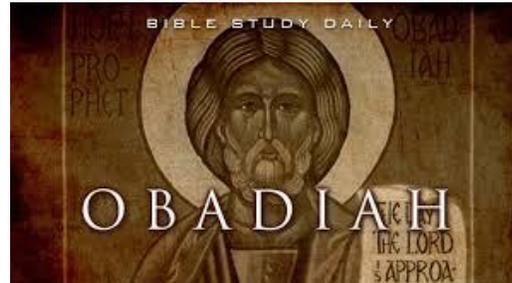
- ✚ Amos means, 'carrying a heavy weight'. He was a shepherd and a farmer, who plants sycamores and sells them. He started his prophecy around year 760 before Christ and at the end of his days, there were the prophets: 'Isaiah', 'Hosea' and 'Jonah'.
- ✚ In his days, the 2 kingdoms of the Jews (Judea in the south and Israel in the north) were well settled and working in merchandising, becoming rich. They then became occupied with the materialistics and left the Lord behind. The rich ones were satisfied by just offering money to the house of the Lord and leaving behind the true spiritual worship, as if saying: "Lord we are paying You the money, what do You want more?". They foolishly thought that being rich is everything, not realising that it is all temporary and can go in a moment! At the same time, the gentiles (the other nations) were going in the wrong way and performing many evils.
- ✚ That is why you see in the book of Amos, the Lord is saying, "He will punish all", Judah (read Amos 2:4), Israel (read Amos 3:9) and the nations (read Amos 1:3).
- ✚ In this book, Amos also mentioned the sin in 4 stages but different from Joel. By expressing it, he starts by 3 stages and it is completed by the 4th stage. The first three stages in his prophecy are sins of the body, soul and spirit and then by continuing in it, it reaches its maximum, which is dragging others with them in the sin. This is the fourth stage, as if on behalf of the humans, who are of the 4 directions of the world. To make it clear spiritually; the sins starts in the thought, then it becomes action, then by continuing in it, it becomes a 'spiritual sickness'. Then when it grows more, it drags others to sin to be like them and this the 4th stage, which gets the top punishment, as the Lord said: "Woe to him from whom the offence comes... (Matthew 18:7) **"Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!"**

✚ The Benefit:

- ✚ My children do not rely on the world and its richness and do not be immersed in its evilness, because it cannot help you and does not last for long. If you fall in your weakness, hasten to repentance before the devil pushes you in the four stages of sin, which will lead you at the end of your life to hell fire, unless you repent and change.



APRIL



BE MERCIFUL

- ✚ Obadiah means, 'the slave or servant of Jehovah' or, 'who worships Jehovah'. The prophecy of Obadiah was just a vision concerning Edom. The Edomites are the cousins of the Israelites, as they are the descendants of Esau, the brother of Jacob Israel. Esau was also called Edom because his body was covered with thick red hair, as the word Edom in its Hebrew origin means, 'bloody' or 'loves bloodshed'.
- ✚ The vision here expresses judgement, that the Lord is judging the children of Edom for their pride, evil and terrible deeds against their brothers the Jews, as they were rejoicing at their afflictions on the day of their calamity when the Babylonians attacked them with a great army. During the attack and conquer of the Israelites, the children of Edom were reproaching them and stirring the Babylonians against them, showing their joy for what was happening to them. More than that, they also shared with the Babylonians in packing and taking the spoil from the Jews. And if any Jew was able to escape to flee for his/her life, they would block the ways in front of them, arrest them and sell them as slaves.
- ✚ Because of their evil, the Lord told them, that He is watching and knowing everything and said in (Obadiah verse 15) that He will repay them for their evils, "For the day of the LORD upon all the nations is near; as you have done, it shall be done to you; your reprisal (evil/wickedness) shall return upon your own head".

✚ The Benefit:

- ✚ My dear son/daughter do not slander on your brethren and do not rejoice over them in their time of disaster or calamity. If in a day, you see that you are strong and able to hurt your brother/sister, remember that the Lord is in heaven above all, seeing everything and records everything (Malachi 3:16). "Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, and the Lord listened and heard them; so, a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the Lord and who meditate on His name". The Lord will in His own time, return the evil upon the heads of those who did the evil. Here I would like to highlight that the Lord examines the hearts and the depths. Even if you rejoice within yourself on your brother/sister without any action, the Lord will see and hear it and will punish you for it.



MAY



BE REPENTANT

✚ **Jonah from the Hebrew word means, 'dove'. He is the son of the widow of Zeraphath of Sidon, whom Elijah the prophet stayed at her house during the days of the famine when he prayed to stop the rain. It happened that her only son Jonah died, and Elijah arose him with his prayer. So, when he grew up, he followed Elijah, became a disciple to him and eventually became a prophet and servant of the Lord.**

✚ **Without repeating, I believe we all know the story of Jonah and how the Lord called him to go to preach to the city of 'Nineveh' for repentance and what happened with the ship, storm and whale. The book of Jonah shows the stupidity of the human when he/she uses his/her brains against the will of the Lord and in his/her silly mind, he thought he knew more than the Lord God. Here when the Lord out of His love for the salvation of the people of Nineveh, ordered him to preach to the city Nineveh for repentance to warn them that if they do not repent, their city will be destroyed. Being a prophet, he knew that the Lord God is merciful and that if they repent, the Lord God will forgive them, then his words to the people will become of no benefit. So his pride led him to think of disobeying the Lord and escape to another place, which shows the peak of stupidity.**

✚ **By Jonah doing this, the Lord punished him and showed him that the nature and the animals are better than him, as they obey the word of the Lord, while he being a prophet did not. Also, the Lord used his disobedience to make the unbelieving sailors of the ship believe in the Lord and it ended that he was forced to go to preach to Nineveh. The people there responded to his message and the Lord forgave them. This made Jonah very angry and requested his death. The merciful Lord still wanted Jonah's salvation and gave him another lesson by the tree, which grew over his head overnight, then it died the next day being hit by the sun. He then became more angry and asked earnestly for his death and here the Lord spoke to him to teach him his wrong way to make him understand:**

(Jonah 4:11) "And should I not pity Nineveh, that great city, in which are more than one hundred and twenty thousand persons, who cannot discern between their right hand and their left—and much livestock?"

✚ **The Benefit:**

✚ **We the humans so many times reject the good will of the Lord and think that what we will for ourselves is better. The fact is that we always forget that the Lord loves us more than what we love ourselves and does good for us more than we do for ourselves. We see this fact clearly in the book of Jonah. If the Lord accepted his request to die, he would have been in hades now, then later to hell. But the merciful God, was patient with him and taught him a good lesson, which saved his soul from perishing. Let us my children learn to submit to the will of the Lord and if we are in trouble, the first thing to do is to cry to the Lord in prayer, as Jonah cried with prayer in the belly of the whale.**



JUNE



HAVE HOPE

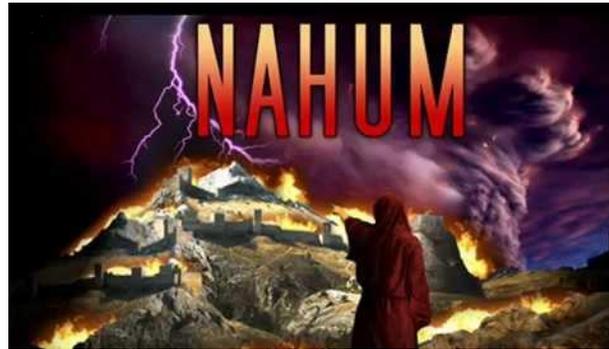
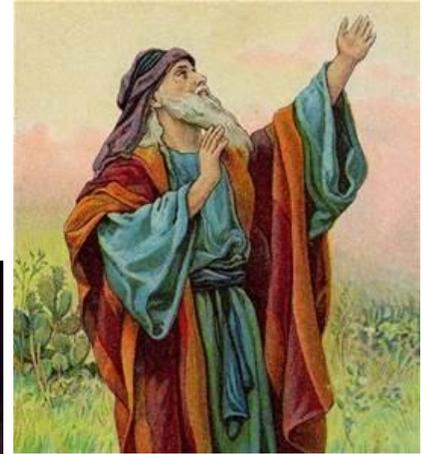
- + Micah is from the word, 'Michael', which means 'who is like God', so Micah means, 'who is like'. We see in the prophecy of Micah three main things:
 1. Prophecy about the punishments of God to His people because of their sins, iniquities, straying from the Lord, worshipping the idols and building temples for them. At the time of Micah, there was already the southern nation 'Judea' with its capital 'Jerusalem' and the northern nation 'Israel' and its capital 'Samaria'. That is why in this prophecy, the Lord mentions punishments for both Jerusalem and Samaria by the other nations, who will come against them, capture them, take their women and steal all their goods unless they repent. As at that time, the religious and political leaders of the people strayed, sought after the money and twisted the truth in judgements.
 2. In this book, there is the mention of the prophecy of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ in Bethlehem and that He is the eternal God, Who is before all ages and will come in the fullness of time, incarnating to save the humans from the judgement of death because of sin.
 3. The book of Micah gives strong understanding and strong hope for the sinners to repent. And that the Lord God will accept them, open a wide door of hope in front of any sinner, as in the verse which says: **(Micah 7:8) "Do not rejoice over me, my enemy; when I fall, I will arise; when I sit in darkness, The LORD will be a light to me"**. Also, the Lord makes it clear that He will have mercy in Jerusalem and Samaria when they repent and sends them a good shepherd, who will judge with truth and lead them to salvation.

+ **The Benefit:**

- + Usually, the devil makes us fall in sin, then fights us with despair, losing hope and makes it seem that there is no benefit of repentance, as we will fall again. By this, he makes us lose hope in the mercy of our Lord and His acceptance to us. That is why in this book Micah, the Lord made it very clear that there is a big door of hope for acceptance and forgiveness for any sinner. We are on earth in the time of mercy by the sacrament of 'Repentance and Confession'. Let us always benefit from this great sacrament till the end of our life, which will guarantee our heavenly inheritance.



JULY



GOD EXISTS

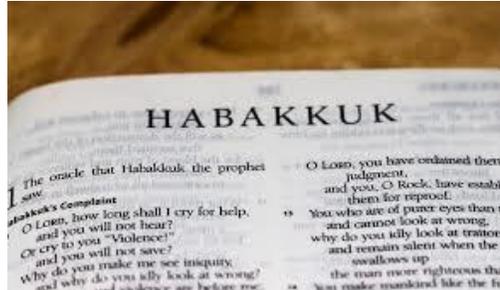
✚ Nahum means, 'repose or comfort'. He started his prophecy or his vision saying that, "the Lord is a zealous God, Who never accepts the evil and avenges for it". It showed that the Lord is slow in anger, while He is Mighty and capable for all things; He stays patient but never justifies the wrong thing and if the person does not repent, the Lord will punish. The book of Nahum is a prophecy on the great city Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrians, which was at that time, the strongest among the other nations. Early in the years, the Lord sent Jonah the prophet to Nineveh and they repented at his preaching and the Lord forgave them. But after some years from the time of that king who responded to the preaching of Jonah, they forgot about the Lord God and returned back to the evil and sin. They have been highly puffed up and trusted in their military power and ability of conquering the other nations. The prophecy of Nahum came around 150 years after the repentance by the preaching of Jonah. Nahum prophesied about the full destruction of Nineveh, which took place about 85 years after the prophecy had been written, because in their pride and slander, they humiliated the people of the nations they conquered and they shed a lot of blood, which destroyed those nations. They were not satisfied by taking all the fruits of the plants there, but they also broke all the stems and the trees, so that they don't give any more fruits, which means leaving the city all destroyed. The Lord warned them, but they didn't listen. Their city was puffed up, being on the banks of the river Daghlah, which gave Nineveh a great merchandising position and it is recorded that the Lord ordered a great flood, which drowned the whole city and it all disappeared from on the earth.

✚ **The Benefit:**

✚ St. Paul the Apostle said in (Romans 2:4-6): "Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart, you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Who will render to each one according to his deeds". We the humans know the commandment of the Lord God and realise when we are going wrong. We hear a lot about His warnings to us, but we forget and only think that our Lord is merciful and loving BUT He is also a just Judge, Who never accepts the evil. Let us my children not take our Lord's mercy for granted to let it be a green light for loose life but let us hasten for repentance, before the anger of the Lord comes upon us.



AUGUST

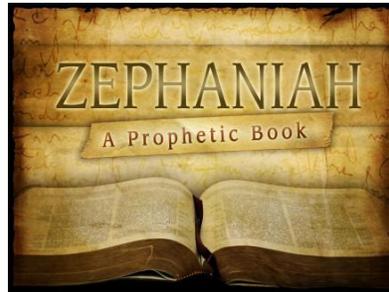


TASTE THE SWEETNESS

- ✚ Habakkuk means, 'the one who embraces'. Habakkuk started his prophecy by asking the Lord, "why does He not interfere to stop the evil that is happening", as in his time, most of the people have strayed from following their leaders, who left behind the truth and practised iniquity and also left the law of the Lord and did all what appealed to them. Habakkuk the prophet was sighing in sadness in himself and cried to the Lord because of the iniquity and corruption, which was happening in both Judea and Israel.
- ✚ The Lord spoke to Habakkuk and told him that He will chastise the people by the Chaldeans, who will come with a great army, occupy Jerusalem and humiliate the people, until they repent. Here Habakkuk the prophet, being a shepherd, expresses his cry in tears and pain for his people and for what will come upon them of punishment because of their evil deeds, sins and not seeking repentance.
- ✚ Then the Lord announced to Habakkuk that He is a 'zealous God', Who never accepts the wrong and that those evil people, who slander and oppress the poor and the weak, are all seen and known by the Lord and He will punish for all what is happening. Here the Lord is not avenging for Himself but for the poor and the oppressed of His people, to announce that He never accepts the sin.
- ✚ Then Habakkuk sees with the eye of prophecy, that the people will regret their evil deeds, repent and the Lord will forgive them and push the Chaldeans away from them and will also punish the Chaldeans for their pride; as they forgot that the Lord is the One, Who allowed them to hurt His people and they thought it was by their own might and power with which they oppressed the people of God. Then in the last chapter, Habakkuk sees the salvation coming and sets a beautiful praise to the Lord.
- ✚ **The Benefit:**
- ✚ The beauty of the life with the Lord God is that in so many times with our negligence and laziness, we cause trouble to ourselves, but just we repent, regret the sin and return to God, He is merciful and a true lover of mankind and will forgive and accept us. Here we praise Him for His great love and mercy. The beautiful thing here is that the majority of the Holy Bible is in the spirit that the human in doing the sin, causes the trouble for him/her but in the middle of the trouble, if he/she prays, he/she will see the salvation of the Lord coming, as Jonah the prophet prayed while he was in the belly of the whale.



SEPTEMBER



BE TRUTHFUL

- ✚ Zephaniah means, 'Jehovah covers'. Zephaniah the prophet was from the royal family of the tribe of Judah, as his great grandfather was Hezekiah - the king of Judea and his grandfather was the younger brother of 'Manasseh' the king, the son of Hezekiah, who was doing the right thing before the Lord.
- ✚ Like all the other prophets; in his days the people strayed from the true way of the Lord and left behind the worship of the Lord to worship idols, like the other nations. As a result for that, Zephaniah was warning them that the Lord has been long suffering and the day of His wrath is coming soon to punish and destroy all and also that it will be difficult days. He explained this in the last 5 verses of the first chapter. The prophecy of Zephaniah also applies on the short time before the end of the world and the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- ✚ In the second chapter, Zephaniah makes it clear that the only way for the Lord to have mercy and lift away the evil from the people, was repentance and returning to the Lord with humility and a broken soul.
- ✚ Then in the third chapter, he explained that the Lord will also punish the other nations for their evils, then prophesied about their repentance, believing in the Lord and that they will be accepted. In this, Zephaniah prophesied about the Jews rejecting our Lord Jesus Christ, His salvation and that the Lord will open the door for the nations, who will believe, repent and become of the flock of the Lord. As the Lord mentioned in **(John 10:16)**, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they will hear my voice; and there will be one flock and one Shepherd".
- ✚ Then in the 4th chapter, it follows the same spirit of the whole bible, showing that in the middle of the punishment and destruction, Zephaniah can see with the eye of prophecy, the salvation of the Lord coming and puts a beautiful praise of thanksgiving for His holy Name.
- ✚ **The Benefit:**
- ✚ As the Lord said in the Gospels and also St. John the Baptist said, that it's not just because you being a Jew are a son of Abraham and have salvation, but you have to prove it by your deeds. The same thing applies on every single Christian of us. It's not just because you have been baptised and had become Christian is enough for your salvation and entering heaven but you have to walk according to the truth of the holy bible to the end of your life, as the Lord said, **(Matthew 24:13)** "But he who endures to the end shall be saved".



OCTOBER



PUT GOD FIRST

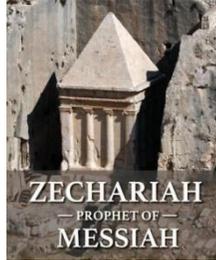
- ✚ Haggai means, 'feast' - maybe because he was born on a feast day. He wrote his prophecy year 520 before Christ in the days of 'Darius'- the king of Babylon, when the people returned from the capture led by 'Zerubbabel' - the ruler and 'Joshua' the son of 'Jehuzadak'- the high priest. The main reason that the king allowed the people to return from the capture to Jerusalem, was so that they can rebuild the house of God, as the Spirit of the Lord inspired king Korash, who was before king Darius to re build the house of the Lord in Jerusalem and that is why the royal decree came for them to return.
- ✚ Very sadly, when the people returned, they became busy in building their own homes and left behind the house of the Lord destroyed; so the Lord sent them the prophecy through Haggai the prophet, who blamed them for leaving behind the house of the Lord destroyed and caring for their own homes. Because of this, God will punish them by stopping the rain, also cause very hot weather to kill all the plants; the blessing will be less in their life and they will hardly find what to eat.
- ✚ The words of 'Haggai' made 'Zerubbabel' - their ruler with 'Jehuzadak'- the priest, move and push the people to work strongly in building the house of the Lord. As they started, some of the elders of the people moved by the devil, started to put down their enthusiasm in building saying: "what you are building is nothing compared to the glory of the original house of the Lord". Here the Lord sent strong words on the mouth of Haggai, rebuking those elders, and he kept encouraging the people to continue, until they finished the house of the Lord.

✚ **The Benefit:**

- ✚ This my children is my continuous wonder! 'why is it that always the people are very busy and keen for their own affairs and neglect the service of the Lord and His church?'. I see that the majority of humans, all his/her concern is in his/her own life, work, hobbies, sports, music, dancing, soccer, parties etc...and they leave behind the church of God in need for servants and service. They forget about the blessing of serving the church of the Lord in their life and how it will compensate them doubles of blessing far much more than what they do by their own muscles! My children let us care to give to the Lord and His church firstly all His dues and He will bless everything else in our life and also we will inherit eternal life in heaven. Here I remind you with what the Lord said in (Matthew 6:33-34): "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble".



NOVEMBER



THE RIGHT CHOICE

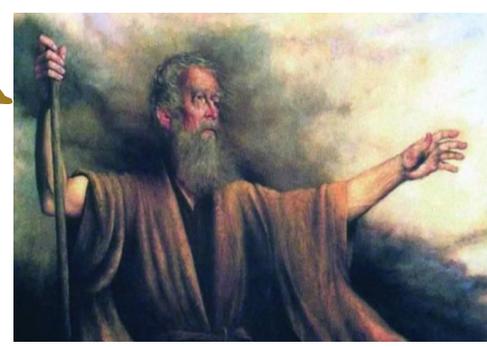
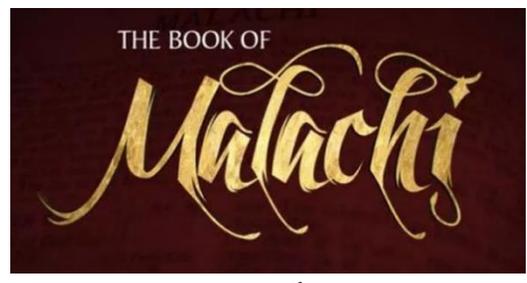
- ✚ Zechariah means, 'Jehovah remember'. Zechariah prophesied at the same time of 'Haggai' the prophet and they were very close friends or spiritual brothers. It is said that Zechariah was buried next to Haggai.
- ✚ The prophecy of Zechariah is mainly a few visions, that is full of different prophecies, but we will take from it three important things:
- ✚ When king Korash of Babylon set his decree for the Jews to return from the capture year 538 before Christ; many of the Jews already owned businesses in Babylon and became rich. In spite of them knowing that they are captured in a foreign land, away from the house of the Lord, the worship and the sacrifices. They preferred to stay in Babylon for the sake of the money, instead of returning to Jerusalem to restart again. It ended that those who returned were only 50,000 from the whole lot.
- ✚ This book shows the honour of the priesthood before the Lord, that the Lord defends His servants when they are doing the right thing and makes sure they are in the proper way when they stand before His holy alter to offer the service.
- ✚ Zechariah prophesied about few things, which happened with our Lord Jesus Christ when He incarnated for our salvation. He prophesied about Him entering Jerusalem as a great King, riding on a donkey and a colt- the foal of a donkey, he prophesied about the betrayal of the Lord with 30 pieces of silver, also about His sufferings, piercing Him with a spear and that He will come to open the kingdom of heaven for everyone who will accept the Lord, believe in Him and follow the true path of the Lord.

✚ **The Benefit:**

- ✚ Many of us humans seek after money, much profit and a better life. For this they move to different places, without considering if there is a church in this place or not! and by living far away, will they be able to continue in their spiritual life? Nor do they think about the spiritual condition of their children! They remind me of Lot- the Nephew of Abraham, the father of fathers, who did not consider the blessing of being with his uncle Abraham the priest, who would always set up the alter and offer sacrifices to the Lord. He rather chose to stay in 'Sodom' because of the black soil and richness, regardless of knowing that their people were evil. For him, the money was more important than the blessing and it ended that he lost all the money, his wife and lived with his 2 daughters in a cave on a mountain and it didn't end good. Here I remind you what the Lord said: **(Mark 8:36) "For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?"** My beloved children, I advise you before any move, to think firstly of your salvation, your spiritual life and that of your children.



DECEMBER



FULFILL YOUR DUTIES

- ✚ The name Malachi means, ‘my angel’ or ‘my messenger’. When king Artaxerxes, the king of Babylon allowed Nehemiah to return to Jerusalem year 433 before Christ, to rebuild the broken wall of Jerusalem, Nehemiah returned back to the king. At that time Malachi was in Jerusalem and wrote his prophecy.
- ✚ In this prophecy, the Lord blamed the priests and the people harshly. The priests became negligent in the service of the Lord. They were accepting improper sacrifices, opposite to the law of the Lord given to them by Moses the arch prophet and they neglected practising the rituals and the ordinances of the Lord. For the people, all their concern was working, collecting money and left behind the commandments of the Lord; they divorced their Jewish wives and married foreign women for the sake of money and they stopped paying their first fruits, tithes and offerings to the house of the Lord. So, the Lord sent this prophecy by Malachi, is full of blaming and rebuking to the people and telling them to repent before His punishment comes upon them.
- ✚ In spite of the terrible actions of the people and priests, the Lord was blaming them in a gentle way saying in **(Malachi 1:6), “A son honours his father, and a servant his master. If then I am the Father, where is My Honour? and if I am a Master, where is my respect?”**
- ✚ In this prophecy, we find the Lord is highlighting the importance of paying the first fruits, tithes and offerings; describing neglecting this to be, “robbing the Lord Himself” and it will bring a curse on those who do it. On the other hand, the Lord explains that by paying their dues to the House of the Lord, He will bestow upon them multiple blessing **(please read Malachi 3:7-12).**
- ✚ **The Benefit:**
- ✚ Many of us say that, “‘God is love’ and we are His children, He will never destroy us in hell fire”. They rely on this and do nothing, they never care about their spiritual life or care for paying their dues to the church of the Lord and here they forgot the fair judgement of the Lord and His main rule, that as He always gives us, we also should give to Him from what is His own originally. People think in paying their donations, they are giving to the Lord but the reality is that we give to the Lord from what He has formally given to us, as the verse says: “From Your hand we give You ...”. My beloved children, we are now coming to the end of the year. Let us sit down, set accounts with ourselves and examine how we respect the Lord in our life. We always pray in the prayer of thanksgiving and say, “to live all our life in peace with Your fear”. Let us review ourselves! have we payed our dues and tithes to the Lord or not? lest the curse mentioned in this prophecy come upon us. God loves us and we claim that we love Him but love has to be shown practically and also needs to go along parallel with the fear of God, as He is the Master and Creator and we are the servants, whom He in His love made us to be His children.