

*Stella D. Fowler
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Elements of Truth

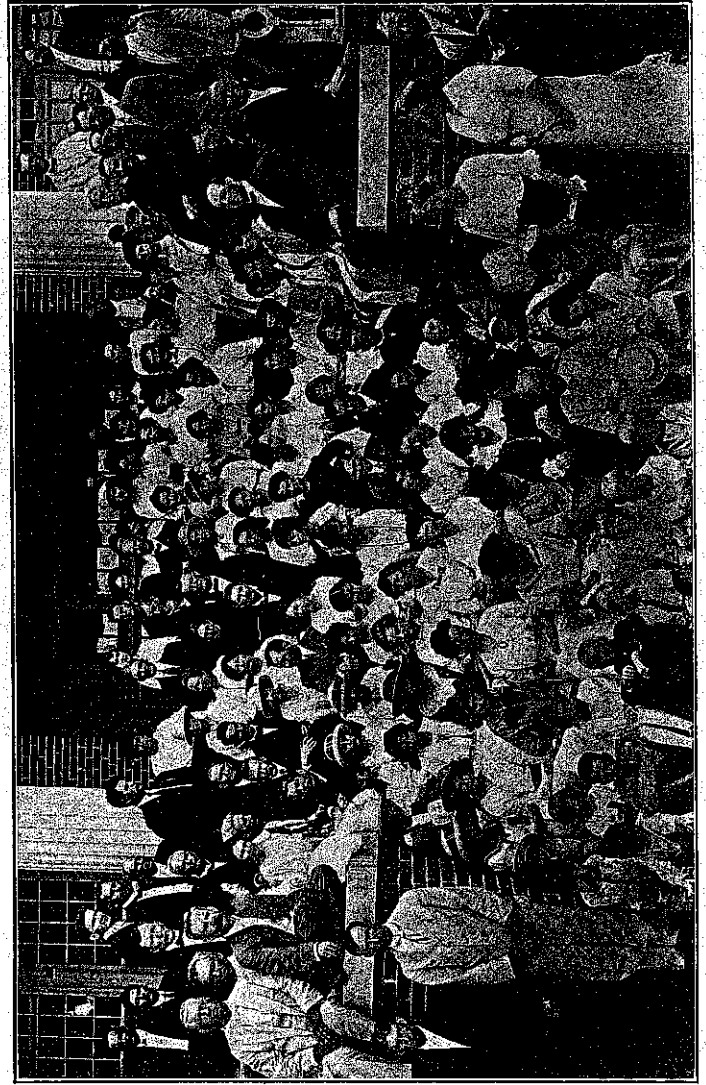
ADDRESSES DELIVERED AT
Synod's Training School
JUNE 16 to 26, 1914

AT
Belhaven College
JACKSON, MISS.

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BY EMINENT LEADERS AND WORKERS OF
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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CHRISTIAN WORKERS SCHOOL, JUNE 16-26, 1914.

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The Church and the Nations

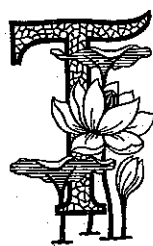
"Is this the time, O Church of Christ, to sound
Retreat? To arm, with weapons cheap and blunt,
The men and women who have borne the brunt
Of truth's fierce strife, and nobly held their ground,
Is this the time to halt, when all around
Horizons lift, new destinies confront,
Stern duties wait our nation, never wont
To play the laggard, when God's will was found?
No! Rather strengthen stakes and lengthen cords,
Enlarge thy plans and gifts, O thou elect,
And to thy kingdom come for such a time!
The earth with all its fullness is the Lord's,
Great things attempt for Him, great things expect,
Whose love imperial is, Whose power sublime.

INDIVIDUAL EVANGELISM.

"And he brought him to Jesus."—John 1:42.

To their band of Home
Missions and Sun-
day School Workers
whose praise and re-
ward are meager on
earth but shall be
great above, this book is af-
fectionately dedicated by the
Synod of Mississippi

Proem



THE PURPOSE of this Volume is to put in permanent form the Addresses given at Synod's Training School for Christian Workers, June 16-26, 1914.

We desire the instruction and inspiration, which came to those who attended this School, to be extended to that larger circle in our Synod and in the Church, who came not up to this Mount of Privilege.

The high merit, superior worth, and deep spirituality of those addresses preclude the necessity for any apology for their publication, while the wide-spread distribution of the literature of false teachers filled with vicious doctrines makes an imperative call to the Church to send forth a literature filled with those truths which make for the redemption and uplift of man, and the glory of God.

Sincerely yours,
COMMITTEE OF SYNOD.

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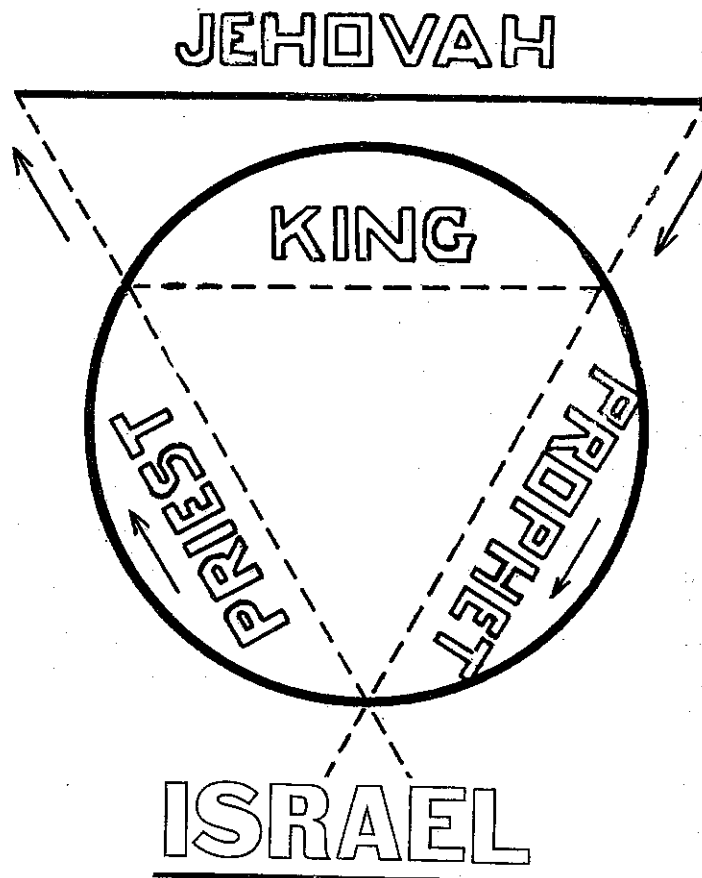


REV. A. W. BLACKWOOD, D.D.
Pittsburgh, Pa.
Prophecy

Bird's Eye View of the Prophets

—
ADDRESS BY

ANDREW W. BLACKWOOD, D. D.
PITTSBURG, PA.

**BIRD'S-EYE VIEWS OF THE PROPHETS.**

ANDREW W. BLACKWOOD, D.D., PITTSBURG, PA.

THE PROPHETS MEN GREATER THAN KINGS.

THE prophets were the greatest men of old; greater than the kings, and far greater than the priests. There seems to have been an unbroken succession of prophets from Samuel to Malachi; now and again a large school arose; and false prophets abounded. True prophets were peculiar, not so much in appearance and dress as in ability and in dedication. The word translated prophet means one who utters what he has heard; he was an ambassador; not only a preacher of righteousness, but a statesman, a reformer, a historian, a poet. He was absolutely dependent upon Jehovah, as a study of the various titles will show, and hence he was relatively independent of the people. He represented Jehovah before His people, whereas the priest represented the people before Jehovah.

The prophet was no mere rain forecaster or fortune teller, but he predicted coming events, both general and particular, especially concerning the Messiah. The Promise in the Old Testament corresponds to the Gospel in the New. But the larger element in prophecy was teaching, teaching about past, present and future, based ever on the law. This teaching contained three main truths: God is the covenant God of Israel. He demands holiness, and when He does not find it, He will redeem His people.

The true prophet was distinguished from the false, not only by miracles, which were rare in the golden age of prophecy, but by fulfillment of prediction, which usually came after the prophet was dead, but by the self-evidencing power of the truth. Because they spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit; they were stoned, were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword; of whom the world was not worthy.

(Suggestions: Draw an ellipse to represent prophecy with the two foci mentioned about. Draw a triangle showing the three main teachings of prophecy, and ask yourself which of the three predominates in each of the prophets.)

AMOS: A HERDSMAN FROM THE HILLS.

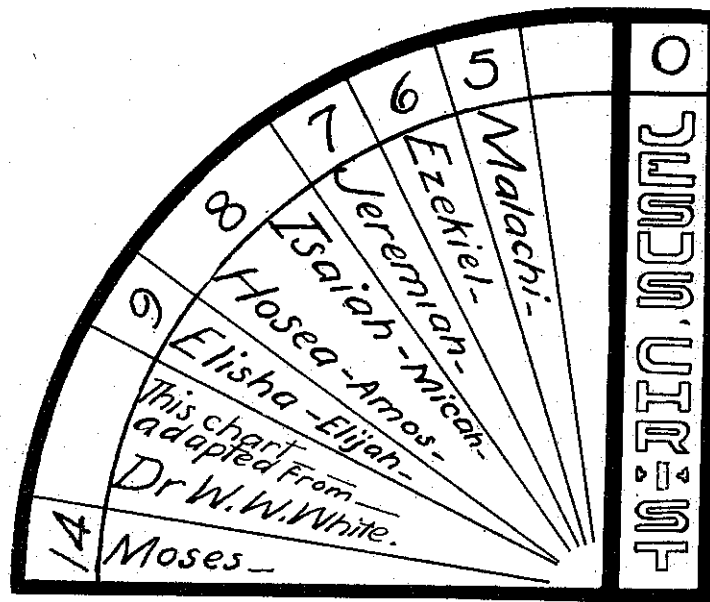
A Native of Judah.

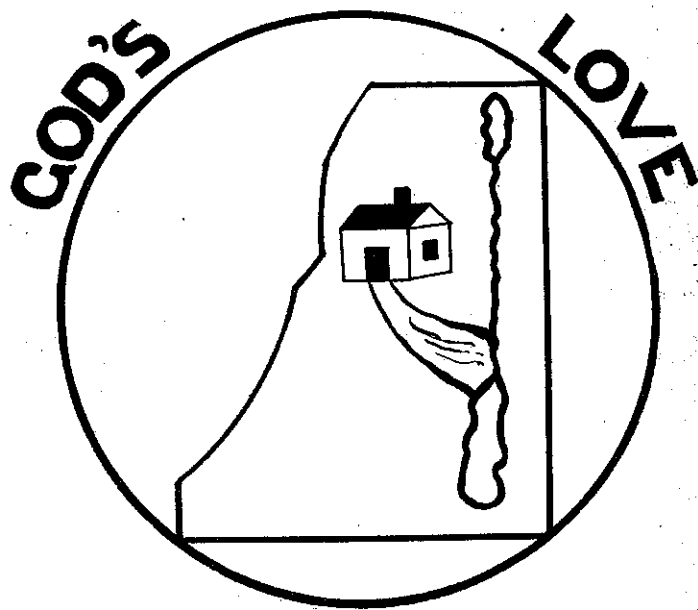
PROPHESED IN ISRAEL, UNDER JEROBOAM II,
ABOUT 760 B. C.

Long years of peace and prosperity had brought sin to Israel, and religion had suffered. On a feast day, when nobles and common folk were assembled at Bethel, the religious capital, Amos appeared. This herdsman, because a foreigner and a foe, could scarcely gain a hearing, but with rare art he began to denounce the sins of the foes of Israel, growing more and more severe as he drew nearer home, until he was soon speaking severely about the sins of his own people, Judah. His hearers must have been almost beside themselves with glee, until Amos reminded them that they were guilty of the same sins. They had no defense; so they demanded his credentials. He told them that he was no professional prophet, no graduate of the schools, and certainly no hireling, but a special messenger from Jehovah. They would not hear him; they expelled him so rudely that he seems to have died from his injuries, but not before he had placed in writing, both direct and forceful, the message which he had not been permitted to speak.

In discussing the affairs of the nation (i-iv:3), the herdsman was wiser than the statesmen, who could see no menace from Assyria, and no internal weakness due to sin. Amos was wiser, too, than the devotees of a religion which consisted of ritual instead of righteousness, which is the keynote of this book (4:4-5:17). He insisted that judgment must come when the law is ignored (5:18-14). Instead of trusting that the God Who had blessed would continue to bless, Israel ought to argue that unless the goodness of God lead to repentance, doom will follow. "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." Amos enforced this lesson by a number of visions, showing that the illustrated sermon is no modern innovation. This stern prophet of law has a message for America today.

(Suggestion: Prepare a chart showing the geographical relation of the foes of Israel denounced by Amos.)



**HOSEA: THE PROPHET OF LOVE.**

Israel: Eighth Century B. C.

Gomer, once the wife of Hosea, has become a prodigal, and has fallen so low that her lover has sold her for a pittance, to be redeemed by her husband. He says that God commanded him to marry this impure woman, but how could a holy God do that? A few scholars insist that the tale is an allegory, but that is unfair. Dr. G. A. Smith suggests that Hosea writes from the plane of his later years, when he has learned that all these things have been working together for good. Without such an experience he could never have written this sad, sweet tale of love divine.

Judging from the names given by Hosea to his children, the lapse of Gomer must have been gradual. He was ever loyal, but his silly wife could not know his worth and she fell an easy prey to the wiles of a shallow lover. Hosea suffers as only a holy man can suffer, and his sufferings make him still more holy. He learns to sympathize with the many broken hearts about him, and slowly he learns to sympathize with Jehovah, Whom he pictures as the husband of Israel. Jehovah has been true to His covenant vows, but His bride has turned to Baal, and has used in his honor the gifts which Jehovah has showered upon her. As a result, a generation has arisen which knows not Jehovah. Is not that a daring conception?

Hosea learns in time the deeper truth that Jehovah will forgive Israel, and is waiting for her to come back. Three words indicate the prophet's message here: know, love and turn. And at last he learns that he must forgive Gomer. From his own sufferings he has learned to sympathize with those of Jehovah, and from Jehovah's forgiveness of His church Hosea learns his own duty of forgiveness. Thus his experience closes where it began, in the home. His tale should impress upon our hearts the awful sin of being unfaithful to our spiritual vows; if unbelief is fornication, unfaithfulness is adultery. But even for this there is forgiveness with Jehovah. Hosea is the Apostle John of the Old Testament.

CALL OF	MOSES	SAMUEL	AMOS	ISAIAH	JEREMIAH	EZEKIEL	PAUL
P R	Home	Good	Humble	Noble?	Good	Good	Good
E P	Education	Good	Poor	Good	Good	Good	Good
C	Age	80	?	Youth	Youth	30	Prime
A	Manner	Bush	Voice	Vision	Voice	Vision	Vision
L	Reply	Unworthy	Willing	Unworthy	Unworthy	Unworthy	Willing
L	Commission	Success	Failure	Failure	Failure	Failure	—
W O	Length	40	Brief	40	41	22?	32?
R K	Close	Sad	Martyr?	Martyr	Martyr	Martyr?	Martyr

ISAIAH: THE SAINTLY INSURGENT.

Latter Part of the Eighth Century, B. C.

Isaiah was the most versatile of the prophets; he was a master of theology, of ethics, of history, of secular learning, of literary art, of local politics and of foreign statecraft. Conditions in his day were much like our own; irreligion abounded; long years of peace and prosperity had brought widespread corruption; land and money had fallen largely into the hands of the few; many were destitute, but the idle rich made vulgar display in dress and ran to every excess of riot. And yet men wondered how the prophet could see danger within the holy city! Even the professional politicians could not see with Isaiah that there was danger from without: On one hand was Egypt, on the other was Assyria, each mightier by far than Judah and each waiting for a pretext to devour her. And yet Judah felt so secure that her leaders objected to the gloomy forebodings of the prophet; they wished him to speak only about the theory of religion and to leave to them the conduct of the state.

Men said that Isaiah was inconsistent, and that he was always on the unpopular side. Early in his career he predicted the doom to come from Assyria, a supposed friend. A little later, when foes sprang up nearby, he pleaded with Judah to keep free from Assyria. Again he failed. After Judah had worn this yoke for a generation and had determined to throw it off, he urged her to bide God's hour. Once more he failed. But at last, when extinction appeared inevitable, because she had refused his counsel, he foretold complete deliverance. It came in wondrous fashion, and even his enemies could see that he had been God's messenger to guide the nation through its first collision with a world power. Had Judah afterwards followed the principles taught by this man of God, she would have become an enduring state.

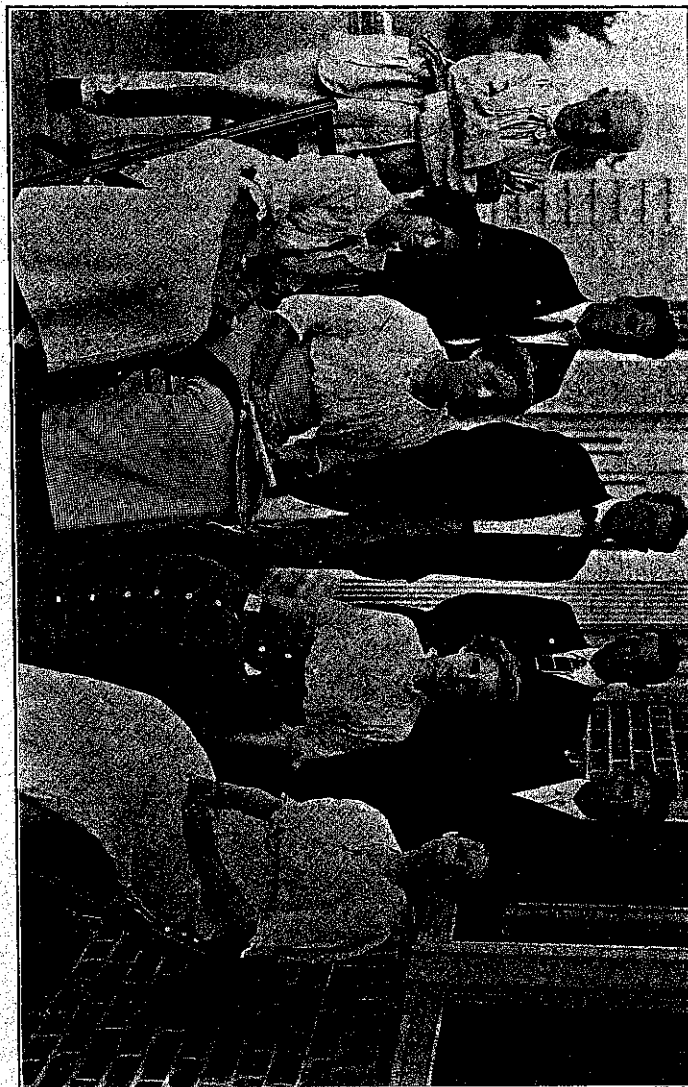
Isaiah was primarily a religious teacher, because even his political messages were based upon religion. He re-

vealed Jehovah, majestic in holiness, in glory and in redemptive work. With such a God, sustaining a peculiar relation to Judah, the prophet could call upon her to be holy, and since she was not, he could only point to coming doom. But he was no pessimist; Zion was to remain inviolate, a remnant was to survive, and above all, the Messiah was to come. Clearer and clearer grew his visions of the Messiah, until his hearers must have been able almost to see the Christ.

With such an author and such a theme, is it any wonder that the style often soars, and that the book is precious most of all to those who have seen the Christ of whom the prophet spoke and sang?

(Suggestion: Prepare a chronological chart showing the three or four periods of Biblical history in which miracles were frequent, and note that the great prophetic era was marked by few miracles.)

Sunshine Haver, Rev. E. F. Newcom, Rev. R. L. Wilsom, Wm. T. Washburn, Jr.
CONFERENCE LEADERS, JUNE 16-26, 1914.



MICAH: PROPHET OF THE COMMON PEOPLE.

Judah, Eighth Century B. C.

Unlike Isaiah, who seems to have been a city man of noble birth, Micah was probably a rural prophet of lowly rank; his horizon did not extend beyond his own land; and his style was less lofty than that of his brilliant contemporary. In the best sense he was the prophet of the common folk.

(Ch. 1-3.) After an introductory warning of judgment to come and a word of personal grief over sin, Micah rebukes the oppressors of the common people; the idle rich, especially the landowners, who lie awake at night to plot evil; the rulers, other than the king, who conspire with the idle rich, and the false prophets, who for gain misrepresent the Lord.

(Ch. 4-5.) Micah promises much to the common people: First of all, peace, flowing from world-wide religion, with Jehovah as Arbitrator, and all men ceasing from war; then prosperity, with comfort for the peasant; and, best of all, the Messiah, of rustic and popular origin, Who is to bring victory and cleansing. It is fitting that these promises should come through Micah.

(Ch. 6-7.) The prophet demands that the people, including his own class, shall be worthy. He represents Jehovah as in controversy with His people (6:1-8). (Watch the change of speakers here.) This dramatic passage reaches its climax in 6:8, one of the noblest passages in the Bible. The remaining verses may be viewed as a development of the theme of this verse—what is religion? Jehovah demands honesty, manhood and trust.

(Suggestions: Compare this three-fold social message with that of Jesus. Prepare two charts, showing the Promises of Micah and the Demands.)



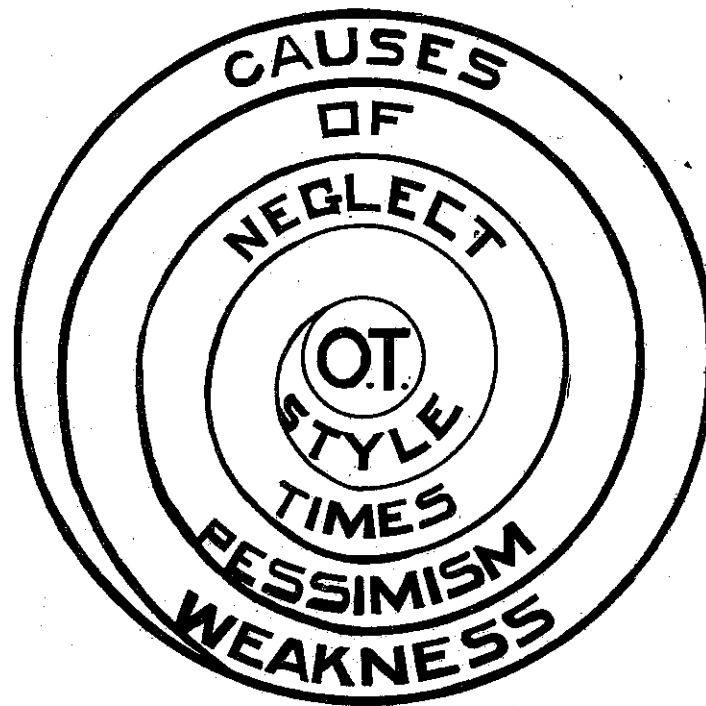
JEREMIAH: PESSIMIST OR PATRIOT?

Judah, Seventh and Sixth Centuries B. C.

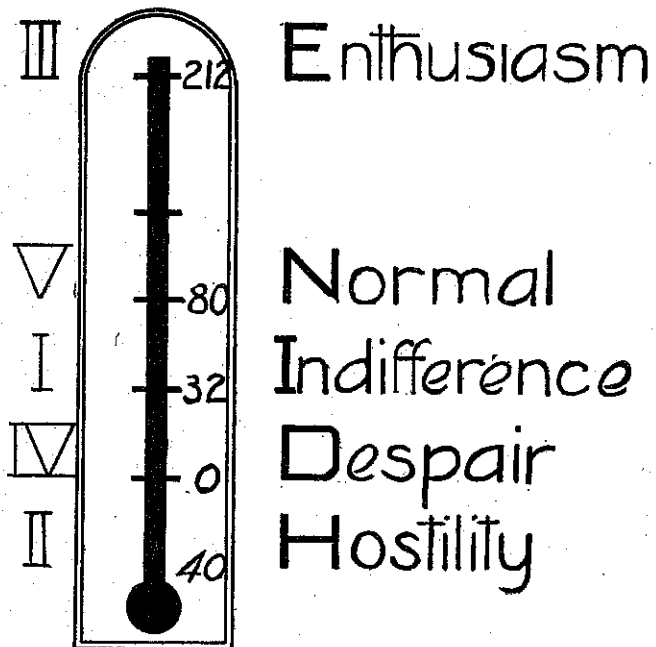
The longest book in the Bible composed by a single author is one of the most sadly neglected, partly because it is found in the Old Testament, which is not now so popular as of yore. But even with those who think well of Isaiah and Ezekiel, Jeremiah is little known and loved, because of the style of his book, which seems like a long and barren stretch between two mountain ranges. Deeper than any of these objections is our failure to understand the man and his times, although his life may be known more fully than that of almost any other Old Testament prophet. He lived when idolatry and vice had sapped the strength of Judah so that she could not stand alone, and despite his pleadings she turned for support to Egypt. In 582 B. C. she fell, as he had predicted, and she was carried captive to Babylon. Unless we remember all of this and more, we find the book a puzzle.

We think of Jeremiah as "a pessimistic old man"; he denounces sin in high places and in low; he teaches the unpopular truth that God reigns; he insists on Sabbath observance and personal piety; he preaches the gospel of things as they are. But against this gloomy background he portrays the blessings of the new covenant—one of the brightest pictures in the Bible. We sneer at him as "the weeping prophet"; but why did he weep? Not because of his own sins or sufferings or fears, but like his coming Redeemer he wept for the sins and the woes of his fatherland. What patriot would not have wept?

Turning away from Michael Angelo and Sargent, with their splendid portraits of a gloomy weakling, let us behold in Jeremiah a prophecy of the coming Messiah: not only in his teaching, both destructive and constructive, but much more in his life, this man foreshadowed the coming of Christ. Sanctified from his mother's womb, a life-long celibate, unpopular with the leaders of church and state, rejected in his home village and in Jerusalem, a "man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," Jeremiah was exalted by his God to be a prophecy of the Saviour of the World.



A MISSIONARY THERMOMETER



ANDREW W. BLACKWOOD

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JONAH: IS THE WHALE THE HERO?

Israel; About 800 B. C.

This book was written, not as a joke, or as an illustration of the truth about miracles, or even as a series of object lessons on repentance, but primarily to teach a missionary lesson. The outstanding figure is a selfish prophet who hears a call to Nineveh, but refuses to go. Perhaps he tells himself that he is needed at home, where he is influential; that it is useless to preach in Nineveh; that he does not like the people there (4:2); that he fears them, and that there is no precedent for such an undertaking. Such excuses, in any case, are often heard to-day, and it is significant that the one book of the Old Testament which is most entirely individual shows a selfish prophet.

Jehovah is the loving God. He loves Jonah so much that He calls him to this high task, follows him out upon the sea, brings the storm upon him, prepares the great fish to swallow him, spares his life, and at last gives him a second chance to go to Nineveh. This same God loves that wicked city, age-long enemy of His chosen people, and, by inference, He loves the world. This book stands as a rebuke to "the unloving exclusiveness" of Jews and of Christians.

That wicked city was saved, in the only way that any city can be saved; saved through the foolishness of preaching, the old-fashioned preaching which demands repentance. Despite the doubts and even the wishes of the prophet, that city was saved, but not for long. It was evangelized in one generation, but where is it today?

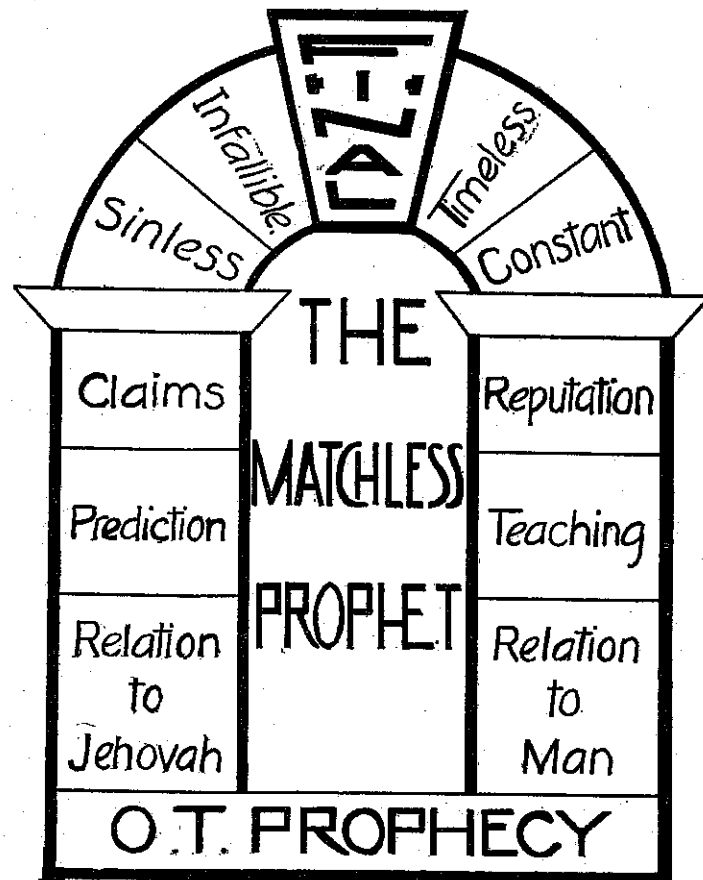
In our zeal for maintaining the historicity of this book, we must not let the whale obscure vital truth concerning the selfish church, the loving God and the saved city. Let us rather use this record to measure our own enthusiasm for missions, and that of our congregations.

JESUS CHRIST: THE MATCHLESS PROPHET.

Jesus gathered up in Himself all the predictions concerning the coming Redeemer, and He showed to the world its one ideal prophet. He was absolutely dependent upon God; He had the prophetic vision, the personal holiness and the direct communication with Jehovah. And in the best sense He was independent of mankind. As priest He was one of us, but as prophet He came to us with a message from God and He was responsible only to God.

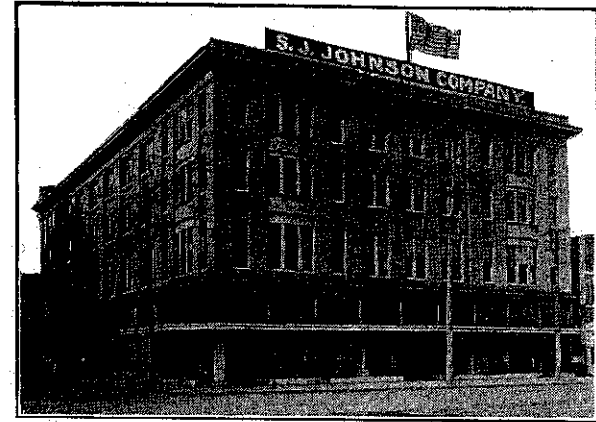
This message is two-fold, consisting of prediction and teaching. Prediction here corresponds to the Promise in the older prophets. He foretells the nature of the kingdom on earth and in glory; the future of the material world, and especially Jerusalem; as well as His own experiences and those of other men. He knows what is in man. But the larger and more vital part of His message is teaching, which corresponds to the Law in the Old Testament, but on a higher plane. Intimately blending religion and ethics, this teaching concerns principles rather than rules; it is based upon the solid rock, even Christ; and it reveals a God of Whom the world has scarcely dreamed; a kingdom which Christ is to make possible, a cross which shall save the world, a new value for the soul of the weak and the worthless, and a new law, even the law of love. What a message!

Jesus claimed to be a prophet. At the beginning of His public work, throughout its course, and at its close, He welcomed such recognition. He furnished infallible proofs, including miracles of every sort, exact fulfillment of specific predictions, and above all else, the self-evidencing power of the truth. Even his foes recognized the justice of this claim; at the beginning of His public life, throughout its course, and at its close, the Jews saw in Him a prophet; Mohammed later styled Him "only a prophet;" and the modern world without dissent enrolls Him among the seers.



Jesus Christ was the matchless prophet. Other men spoke at intervals, but His prophetic work was constant. Other prophets were liable to private error, but never He. Other men depended largely upon their words, but if He had never uttered a syllable, His life would have been eloquent for God. Other men spoke to their own times, but He to every age. Other men prepared for Him, and still others have unfolded the truth as it lay in His life and speech, but in the highest sense He was God's last word to man. Sinless, constant, infallible, timeless and therefore final, He is the matchless prophet. Hear Him!

(Suggestion: Refer to Christ the charts suggested in the first study).



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