

Restoration in the Prophets

I. Introduction

Scattered throughout the prophetic writings are calls to repentance. The prophet speaks as God's representative to the people telling them to *get right with God before it's too late*. Thus, the coming wrath and judgment of God represent a threat to the nations of the world and Israel in particular. To those who listened to the prophets this inspired fear. To those who did not listen mockery and persecution was the result. Fear, though it certainly is indispensable as a motivating factor, is not the only impetus God provides for his people to change.

God is a dreamer. He envisioned the perfect world in the beginning and then brought it into existence by powerful utterances. Then that world corrupted itself, it went bad when his creatures chose to disobey. Even so, God is not defeated he will again achieve his vision for the world. Yahweh shares his ambition for the future with the prophets in a myriad of verses in which he proclaims that one day he will bring about the restoration of all things. So at the same time that the people are threatened into conformity with God's way by the coming wrath, they are wooed by the revelation of a coming age of perfection, beauty, truth, justice, and peace to live righteously in the present. Not everyone will enjoy the coming age of joy, just those who decide to respond to the message of the prophet. This small group of godly people features in the restoration passages of the prophets and is often called the remnant.

The second theme, the restoration, will be the focus of the passages below. In each case the section quoted follows the corresponding proclamation of doom in the previous lecture.

II. Isaiah

Isaiah 25:1-9 O LORD, You are my God; I will exalt You, I will give thanks to Your name; For You have worked wonders, Plans *formed* long ago, with perfect faithfulness. ² For You have made a city into a heap, A fortified city into a ruin; A palace of strangers is a city no more, It will never be rebuilt. ³ Therefore a strong people will glorify You; Cities of ruthless nations will revere You. ⁴ For You have been a defense for the helpless, A defense for the needy in his distress, A refuge from the storm, a shade from the heat; For the breath of the ruthless Is like a *rain* storm *against* a wall. ⁵ Like heat in drought, You subdue the uproar of aliens; *Like* heat by the shadow of a cloud, the song of the ruthless is silenced. ⁶ ¶ The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, *And* refined, aged wine. ⁷ And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering

which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations. ⁸ He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken. ⁹ ¶ And it will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation."

III. Joel

Joel 2:18-23, 3:16-21 ¹⁸ Then the LORD will be zealous for His land And will have pity on His people. ¹⁹ The LORD will answer and say to His people, "Behold, I am going to send you grain, new wine and oil, And you will be satisfied *in full* with them; And I will never again make you a reproach among the nations. ²⁰ "But I will remove the northern *army* far from you, And I will drive it into a parched and desolate land, And its vanguard into the eastern sea, And its rear guard into the western sea. And its stench will arise and its foul smell will come up, For it has done great things." ²¹ Do not fear, O land, rejoice and be glad, For the LORD has done great things. ²² Do not fear, beasts of the field, For the pastures of the wilderness have turned green, For the tree has borne its fruit, The fig tree and the vine have yielded in full. ²³ So rejoice, O sons of Zion, And be glad in the LORD your God; For He has given you the early rain for *your* vindication. And He has poured down for you the rain, The early and latter rain as before...^{3:16} The LORD roars from Zion And utters His voice from Jerusalem, And the heavens and the earth tremble. But the LORD is a refuge for His people And a stronghold to the sons of Israel. ¹⁷ Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, And strangers will pass through it no more. ¹⁸ And in that day The mountains will drip with sweet wine, And the hills will flow with milk, And all the brooks of Judah will flow with water; And a spring will go out from the house of the LORD To water the valley of Shittim. ¹⁹ Egypt will become a waste, And Edom will become a desolate wilderness, Because of the violence done to the sons of Judah, In whose land they have shed innocent blood. ²⁰ But Judah will be inhabited forever And Jerusalem for all generations. ²¹ And I will avenge their blood which I have not avenged, For the LORD dwells in Zion.

IV. Amos

Amos 9:11-15 ¹¹ "In that day I will raise up the fallen booth of David, And wall up its breaches; I will also raise up its ruins And rebuild it as in the days of old; ¹² That they may possess the remnant of Edom And all the nations who are called by My name," Declares the LORD who does this. ¹³ "Behold, days are coming," declares the LORD, "When the plowman will overtake the reaper And the treader of grapes him who sows seed; When the mountains will drip sweet wine And all the hills will be

dissolved. ¹⁴ "Also I will restore the captivity of My people Israel, And they will rebuild the ruined cities and live *in them*; They will also plant vineyards and drink their wine, And make gardens and eat their fruit. ¹⁵ "I will also plant them on their land, And they will not again be rooted out from their land Which I have given them," Says the LORD your God.

V. Obadiah

Obadiah 1:17-21 ¹⁷ "But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape, And it will be holy. And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions...¹⁹ Then *those of* the Negev will possess the mountain of Esau, And *those of* the Shephelah the Philistine plain; Also, possess the territory of Ephraim and the territory of Samaria, And Benjamin *will possess* Gilead. ²⁰ And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel, Who are *among* the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, And the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad Will possess the cities of the Negev. ²¹ The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion To judge the mountain of Esau, And the kingdom will be the LORD'S.

VI. Micah

Micah 4:1-8 And it will come about in the last days That the mountain of the house of the LORD Will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, And the peoples will stream to it. ² Many nations will come and say, "Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD And to the house of the God of Jacob, That He may teach us about His ways And that we may walk in His paths." For from Zion will go forth the law, Even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. ³ And He will judge between many peoples And render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, And never again will they train for war. ⁴ Each of them will sit under his vine And under his fig tree, With no one to make *them* afraid, For the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. ⁵ Though all the peoples walk Each in the name of his god, As for us, we will walk In the name of the LORD our God forever and ever. ⁶ "In that day," declares the LORD, "I will assemble the lame And gather the outcasts, Even those whom I have afflicted. ⁷ "I will make the lame a remnant And the outcasts a strong nation, And the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion From now on and forever. ⁸ "As for you, tower of the flock, Hill of the daughter of Zion, To you it will come-- Even the former dominion will come, The kingdom of the daughter of Jerusalem.

VII. Nahum

Nahum 1:12-15 ¹² Thus says the LORD, "Though they are at full *strength* and likewise many, Even so, they will be cut off and pass away. Though I have afflicted you, I will afflict you no longer. ¹³ "So now, I will break his yoke bar from upon you, And I will tear off your shackles." ¹⁴ The LORD has issued a command concerning you: "Your name will no longer be perpetuated. I will cut off idol and image From the house of your gods. I will prepare your grave, For you are contemptible." ¹⁵ Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings good news, Who announces peace! Celebrate your feasts, O Judah; Pay your vows. For never again will the wicked one pass through you; He is cut off completely.

VIII. Zephaniah

Zephaniah 3:8-20 ⁸ "Therefore wait for Me," declares the LORD, "For the day when I rise up as a witness. Indeed, My decision is to gather nations, To assemble kingdoms, To pour out on them My indignation, All My burning anger; For all the earth will be devoured By the fire of My zeal. ⁹ "For then I will give to the peoples purified lips, That all of them may call on the name of the LORD, To serve Him shoulder to shoulder. ¹⁰ "From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia My worshipers, My dispersed ones, Will bring My offerings. ¹¹ "In that day you will feel no shame Because of all your deeds By which you have rebelled against Me; For then I will remove from your midst Your proud, exulting ones, And you will never again be haughty On My holy mountain. ¹² "But I will leave among you A humble and lowly people, And they will take refuge in the name of the LORD. ¹³ "The remnant of Israel will do no wrong And tell no lies, Nor will a deceitful tongue Be found in their mouths; For they will feed and lie down With no one to make them tremble." ¹⁴ Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion! Shout *in triumph*, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all *your* heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! ¹⁵ The LORD has taken away *His* judgments against you, He has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; You will fear disaster no more. ¹⁶ In that day it will be said to Jerusalem: "Do not be afraid, O Zion; Do not let your hands fall limp. ¹⁷ "The LORD your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy. ¹⁸ "I will gather those who grieve about the appointed feasts-- They came from you, *O Zion*; *The reproach of exile* is a burden on them. ¹⁹ "Behold, I am going to deal at that time With all your oppressors, I will save the lame And gather the outcast, And I will turn their shame into praise and renown In all the earth. ²⁰ "At that time I will bring you in, Even at the time when I gather you together; Indeed, I will give you renown and praise Among all the peoples of the earth, When I restore your fortunes before your eyes," Says the LORD.

IX. Zechariah

Zechariah 14:6-11 ⁶ ¶ In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. ⁷ For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light. ⁸ ¶ And in that day living waters will flow out of Jerusalem, half of them toward the eastern sea and the other half toward the western sea; it will be in summer as well as in winter. ⁹ ¶ And the LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be *the only one*, and His name *the only one*. ¹⁰ ¶ All the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. ¹¹ People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security... ²⁰ ¶ In that day there will be *inscribed* on the bells of the horses, "HOLY TO THE LORD." And the cooking pots in the LORD'S house will be like the bowls before the altar. ²¹ Every cooking pot in Jerusalem and in Judah will be holy to the LORD of hosts; and all who sacrifice will come and take of them and boil in them. And there will no longer be a Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts in that day.

X. Malachi

Malachi 4:2-3 ² "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall. ³ "You will tread down the wicked, for they will be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day which I am preparing," says the LORD of hosts.

XI. The Restoration

The enemies will be driven away and destroyed (Joel 2.20). No longer will the people be a reproach among the nations and never again will they ever be put to shame again (Joel 2.19, 26, 27). Now that the Lord has washed away the filth and purged the bloodshed of Jerusalem by a spirit of judgment and burning, everyone that remains in Jerusalem will be called holy (Isaiah 4.2-3). There is rejoicing and gladness because of the great things Yahweh has done for his people (Joel 2.21). The people praise God for how he has dealt wondrously (Joel 2.26).

Yahweh will be zealous for his land (Joel 2.18). The land will again flourish: the mountains will drip with sweet wine, the hills will flow with milk, the brooks will flow with water, and a spring will go from the house of Yahweh to water the valley (Joel 3.18). The fruit of the earth will be the pride and adornment of the survivors of Israel (Isaiah 4.2). The pastures will turn green, the

trees will bear fruit; there will be plenty of figs and grapes (Joel 2.22). Drought ceases because the rains again fall in their appointed time (Joel 2.23). He will cause grain, wine, and oil to increase so that the people will be satisfied (Joel 2.19). The threshing floors will be full and the vats will overflow with new wine and oil (Joel 2.24). People will have plenty to eat and be satisfied (Joel 2.25).

In the last days the mountain of Yahweh's house will be established and exalted as the chief of the mountains (Isaiah 2.2). The nations will stream to it to be taught in the ways of God (Isaiah 2.3). The law will go forth from Zion (Isaiah 2.3). Judgment will be passed between nations and right decisions will be made (Isaiah 2.4). Jerusalem will be holy with no stranger passing through it (Joel 3.17). Jerusalem will be inhabited forever, for all generations (Joel 3.20). On this city and in the whole area of Mount Zion, Yahweh will create a cloud by day and a flaming fire by night so that over all the glory there will be a canopy (Isaiah 4.5-6). God will be in the midst of Israel on Zion and all will recognize that Yahweh is God and no other (Joel 2.27; 3.17, 21). God will be known as the savior who deserves thanksgiving and praise (Isaiah 12.2-4). For great in your midst is the Holy One of Israel! (Isaiah 12.6).

A shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse to rule the people (Isaiah 11.1). The government will rest on his shoulders (Isaiah 9.6). He will reign on the throne of David, establish a government of peace and uphold it with justice and righteousness for ever (Isaiah 9.7). The spirit of Yahweh will rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, strength, knowledge, and the fear of Yahweh (Isaiah 11.2). He will delight in the fear of Yahweh and will make decisions not based on what he sees and hears but according to the insight God gives him (Isaiah 11.3). He will judge the poor with righteousness and fairness (Isaiah 11.4). He will wear righteousness and faithfulness like a belt around his waist. Yahweh of hosts will be the zealous underwriter of this Davidic king (Isaiah 9.7).

Peace will reign supreme in that day. So extensive will the peace be that nations will hammer their swords into plowshares. Never again will there be any standing armies, stockpiles of weapons, boot camps, or academic training in war. No one will hurt or destroy on the holy mountain for the earth will be full of the knowledge of Yahweh as waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11.9). Even the animals will be affected by this peace: the wolf will dwell with the lamb, the leopard with the young goat, the calf and the young lion, and so on. Children have fantasized about this age for millennia, wishing to have a pet lion, or leopard. The animals will not just be well tamed, for if this were the case, parents wouldn't allow their children near these powerful beasts, but since the very instinct to harm will be completely removed even little boys will be permitted to interact with these wonders of creation and a nursing child will freely play near the cobra (Isaiah 11.7-8).

XII. The Kingdom in Daniel

The book of Daniel is different than many of the other prophetic books. Rather than talking about the punishment for the wicked everything is seen from the perspective of the righteous. The themes of judgment and restoration are present but they are seen from this unique perspective as persecution and inheriting the kingdom. The idea of the kingdom in Daniel makes its debut in chapter two when Nebuchadnezzar has a dream that Daniel interprets for him. Below is the end of the dream and its interpretation.

Daniel 2:34-35 ³⁴ "You continued looking until a stone was cut out without hands, and it struck the statue on its feet of iron and clay and crushed them. ³⁵ "Then the iron, the clay, the bronze, the silver and the gold were crushed all at the same time and became like chaff from the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away so that not a trace of them was found. But the stone that struck the statue became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.

Daniel 2:44-45 ⁴⁴ "In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which will never be destroyed, and *that* kingdom will not be left for another people; it will crush and put an end to all these kingdoms, but it will itself endure forever. ⁴⁵ "Inasmuch as you saw that a stone was cut out of the mountain without hands and that it crushed the iron, the bronze, the clay, the silver and the gold, the great God has made known to the king what will take place in the future; so the dream is true and its interpretation is trustworthy."

The kingdom coming in the end will destroy all other kingdoms and reign supreme. In addition this kingdom will last forever because God is the one who will establish it.

The second vision is found in chapter seven in which Daniel sees various kingdoms represented by beasts. The last kingdom is a terrible beast that defies description. This last beast is run by a person called "the little horn." In the end though, God (the Ancient of Days) acts in a decisive moment of judgment to annihilate the power of the little horn.

Daniel 7:7-11, 16-17, 19-26 ⁷ "After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns. ⁸ "While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts. ⁹ "I kept looking Until thrones were set up, And the Ancient of Days took *His* seat; His vesture was like white snow And the hair of His head like pure wool. His throne was ablaze with flames, Its wheels were a burning fire. ¹⁰ "A river of fire was flowing And coming out from before Him; Thousands upon thousands were attending Him, And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, And the books were opened. ¹¹ ¶ "Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking; I kept looking

until the beast was slain, and its body was destroyed and given to the burning fire...¹⁶ "I approached one of those who were standing by and began asking him the exact meaning of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things: ¹⁷ 'These great beasts, which are four *in number*, are four kings *who* will arise from the earth...¹⁹ "Then I desired to know the exact meaning of the fourth beast, which was different from all the others, exceedingly dreadful, with its teeth of iron and its claws of bronze, *and which* devoured, crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet, ²⁰ *and the meaning* of the ten horns that were on its head and the other *horn* which came up, and before which three *of them* fell, namely, that horn which had eyes and a mouth uttering great *boasts* and which was larger in appearance than its associates. ²¹ "I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them ²² until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One...²³ ¶ "Thus he said: 'The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the *other* kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. ²⁴ 'As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings. ²⁵ 'He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time. ²⁶ 'But the court will sit *for judgment*, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever.

Also, throughout the vision is the repeated admonition that the kingdom will be given to the Son of Man and the saints of the Most High.

Daniel 7:13-14, 18, 21-22, 26-27 ¹³ "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. ¹⁴ "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed...¹⁸ 'But the saints of the Highest One will receive the kingdom and possess the kingdom forever, for all ages to come.'... ²¹ "I kept looking, and that horn was waging war with the saints and overpowering them ²² until the Ancient of Days came and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom...²⁶ 'But the court will sit *for judgment*, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. ²⁷ 'Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of *all* the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom *will be* an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

Three times it is repeated that the saints will inherit the kingdom. The reward of the righteous is to be installed as the rulers of the final government forever.