

University Heights Messenger

Volume 4--Number 44

October 21, 2012

GOSPEL PLAN OF SALVATION

- Hear the gospel (Romans 10:17)
- Believe Jesus is the Christ (John 3:16)
- Repent from sins (Luke 13:3)
- Confess faith in Jesus (Romans 10:9-10)
- Be baptized for remission of sins (Acts 2:38)
- Live worthy of the calling (Ephesians 4:1)

IN NEED OF PRAYERS

Recent Additions:

Barbara Matheny (mother of Pence Matheny) has been diagnosed with breast cancer. While the outlook is good, let us keep her and the family in our prayers. **Dawn Rutledge** is suffering with acute leukemia. **Norman Hurt** (grandfather of Allison Haste) recently went through quadruple bypass surgery. His spirits have been down so let us pray to God for complete healing.

List:

Our members: Jeff Howerton, Glenn Kimberlin, Paul Atkisson, Julie and the babies

Others: Lenny Shepperson, Jan Hogen, Taylor Osterling, David Morrow, Debbie Parker, Rita Pagan, Vina Krassow, Courtney and Aubrey Reeves, John Bennett, Robert and Sarah Brundige, Donald Dawson, Jean Gartland, Gail Stein, Michael Poynter, Sandy Childress, Mary Wilson, Charlie Little, Doris Baker, Edith Tirey, Bill Childress, Susie Burton, Fred Dalton

<u>WEEKLY READING</u>	<u>LEADERSHIP</u>		<u>SERVICES</u>
Sun: Ps 47, 2 Sam 7, Ez 7, Lk 11:37-12:12	<u>ELDERS</u>	<u>DEACONS</u>	<u>Sunday</u>
Mon: Ps 48, 2 Sam 8, Ez 8, Lk 12:13-48	Garry Banks	Troy Antle	Bible Study: 9:45 AM
Tue: Ps 49, 2 Sam 9, Ez 9, Lk 12:49-13:9	David Collins	Richard Brundige	Worship: 10:45 AM; 6:00 PM
Wed: Ps 50, 2 Sam 10, Ez 10:1-11:13, Lk 13:10-35	John Thompson	Neal Erickson	<u>Wednesday</u>
Thu: Ps 51, 2 Sam 11, Ez 11:14-25, Lk 14		Adam Litmer	Bible Study: 7:30 PM
Fri: Ps 52, 2 Sam 12, Ez 12, Lk 15	<u>EVANGELIST</u>	Bill Morelan	<u>1st Fri. of Month</u>
Sat: Ps 53, 2 Sam 13, Ez 13, Lk 16:1-17:10	Adam Litmer	Jim Parsons	Singing: 7:30 PM
		Pat Seabolt	<u>3rd Fri. of Month</u>
		Matt Thompson	Bible Study: 7:00 PM
			(Ask for location)

Considering The Prophets--3

There were certain marks, or characteristics, about the prophets that really served to distinguish

“Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, ‘I believed, and so I spoke,’ we also believe, and so we also speak.” 2 Corinthians 4:13

them from their brethren. First, these men were always conscience of a divine call. Samuel heard God calling to him very clearly when he was just a boy back in 1 Samuel 3:8. I love what Jeremiah says about his prophetic call in Jeremiah 20:9. *“If I say, ‘I will not mention him, or speak any more in his name,’ there is in my heart as it were a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I am weary with holding it in, and I cannot.”* What an application modern Christians can make from this verse! Was Jeremiah feeling this burning in his bones simply because he knew that God wanted him to spread this message and knew that he was not fulfilling his obligation by withholding it, or could it possibly be (as some maintain) that God literally caused Jeremiah to feel physical, bodily pain that could only be relieved when he spoke God’s message to the people? The second interpretation makes me wonder about 1 Corinthians 14:32 where Paul said, *“the spirit of prophets are subject to prophets.”* Contextually, he is speaking of a prophet having the ability to remain silent and wait his turn to speak. However, does that mean that a prophet could remain silent forever when the Spirit intended for him to speak and could simply ignore the Spirit’s prompting?

Regardless, while we are not inspired prophets today; we *are* disciples of Christ and as such have the same obligation as Jeremiah to take God’s message to a lost and dying world. I very much appreciate the way that Paul stated it in 2 Corinthians 4:13. *“Since we have the same spirit of faith according to what has been written, ‘I believed, and so I spoke,’ we also believe, and so we also speak.”* Paul was motivated by the same spirit of faith

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as the psalmist, whose words he borrows. His deep and abiding faith gave him the courage and desire to speak the words of God even in threatening situations. To Paul it was a simple thing: if one believes the Word of God and in His ability to save souls, then they will speak out about it. I suppose that it is safe to ask whether a Christian who refuses to speak out about his or her faith really has saving faith to begin with?

The prophets were also aware of the fact that they were speaking by inspiration. In other words, these were God's actual words that they were conveying to the people. It has been estimated that we read the phrase "*Thus says the Lord*" more than 1500 times coming from the mouths of the prophets. Considering that we have only a sample amount of these individuals and their prophecies, it becomes even more impressive. We need to also note that these men knew whom to give the credit for their words and, when they were able to perform them, their miracles.

Another common mark of the prophets was that they were uncompromising individuals. When a prophet was sent among the people rarely was it to pat them on the back and tell them to keep up the good work. When a prophet was sent among the people it was to tell them, to borrow a term from my father, "to straighten up and fly right." More often than not, the people did not like to be told that they were wrong. Notice an interesting exchange between Amaziah who was priest of Bethel, and the prophet Amos in Amos 7:11-17. In verse 10 Amaziah is essentially tattling on Amos, then we come to verse 11 and see what has him upset. "*For thus Amos has said, 'Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel must go into exile away from his land.'* And Amaziah said to Amos, '*O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, and eat bread there, and prophecy there, but never again prophecy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom.'* Then Amos answered and said to Amaziah, '*I was no prophet, nor a priest's son, but I was a herdsman and dresser of sycamore figs. But the Lord took me from following the flock* (recognition of his divine call, AL), *and the Lord said to me, 'Go, prophecy to my people Israel.'* Now therefore hear the word of the Lord. '*You say, 'Do not prophecy against Israel, and do not preach against the house of Isaac.'* Therefore thus says the Lord: *Your wife shall be a prostitute in the city, and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword, and your land shall be*

divided up with a measuring line; you yourself shall die in an unclean land, and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land." Certainly God had told Amos to speak but wouldn't it have been easier for Amos to soften the force of God's words to him just a bit? Amaziah was a priest with some influence, he had just contacted the King to tell him that Amos had prophesied that he would die and his kingdom would go into exile, he had just warned Amos to go away and never again prophecy in Bethel. So what did Amos do? He unflinchingly and uncompromisingly stood his ground before this priest and spoke to him the words of Jehovah. All fear of consequences aside, Amos did his job as spokesman for God to a people who did not want to hear what God had to say to them.

Something that has always caught my attention as I have studied the prophets is that they are men of near spotless character. Man has not changed at all from their time until now. Whenever man develops enemies he can rest assured that his enemy will try to bring out his moral and character flaws. However, as you study the prophets you see that they were nearly free of aspersions. Nearly every time something derogatory is said of them it is directed at their *message*, not their *behavior*. In this we find an example to emulate. Take a moment to read 1 Peter 3:13-17. God's children ought to live a life of purity and transparency. If they are slandered for doing wrong by the enemies of Jehovah, it will not be a difficult thing for their innocence to be proven and then the one's who slandered them will be put to shame. However, even should a child of God be killed because of his unwillingness to compromise the truth of God's Word, what of it? He will simply go to be with his Master, and the one who took his life, provided he does not repent and turn from his wickedness, will answer for his actions against a child of God.

I sincerely hope that these articles are encouraging you to consider studying the prophets perhaps more than you have. We will conclude this brief study in the next article. AL

Sermons: (AM) John Thompson preaching (PM) Ralph Fox preaching
Reading: (AM) Luke 10:21-42 (PM) Luke 11:1-23