

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ◆ **No REFUGE**— Next Wednesday, Nov 23—Happy Thanksgiving!

BIBLE STUDY OUTLINE

“A Time for Divorce?”

Ezra 9:1-4; 10:1-4

What comes to your mind when you hear the word “Divorce?”

Divorce may have negative connotations, but there is also a good side to it.

1. God desires for his people to have a degree of SEPARATION from the world.

Read Ezra 9:1-4

All kinds of people were involved in it. PRIESTS, LEVITES, and PEOPLE

It was not a skin color, language, or nationality issues → DETESTABLE PRACTICES

The Israelites marriages with the nations around influenced them.

How does the world INFLUENCE you?

“have mingled the holy race” v. 2—How has Christianity been mingled?

“the leaders and officials have led the way in this unfaithfulness” v. 2

Do you realize how your actions influence other Christians?

When you realize how you have been influenced by the world, how do you react?

“tore my tunic,” “pulled hair from head,” “sat appalled” v. 4

2. God desires people to make the CHANGES that help themselves.

Getting right involves:

A prayer RELATIONSHIP to God. v.1

WORDS, not just emotions

“confessing” - asking God for forgiveness.

Be specific—what are you asking God to forgive you of?

ACTIONS, not just talk.

“Now let us make a covenant before our God” v.3

They DIVORCED their new wives LEGALLY and sent them back home.

How does God want you to **SEPERATE** from the world and **CHANGE** tonight?

THE BIG PICTURE

November 17 - November 23, 2016

Read: Obadiah 1 and Micah 1-8

Understanding What You Are Reading

You will read through these 9 chapters and 2 Minor prophets quickly but don't miss the message that God used these two prophets to speak Israel/Judah and the Edomite neighbors to their southeast. Remember minor prophets are called “minor” only because of the amount of material was written by the prophets.

Obadiah was a prophet to the people of Edom which was the nation to the south east of Judah. The Edomites were descendants of Esau, the twin brother of Jacob. God sent Obadiah to pronounce judgment on Edom because they refused to help their “brothers” when Judah was attacked by Babylon (Obadiah 1:10-14). God tells Edom that he will judge them for their lack of action and like a thief that comes through and steals crops (Obadiah 1:5-6), God will also “pillage” the land of Edom.

Micah is a prophet that spoke to the nation of Israel and Judah. Much of the language in Micha takes on a courtroom type feel where God is judging the nation. God accuses the people of having insincere religion and a corrupt political system. The book opens “Hear you peoples, all of you, listen, earth and all who live in it, that the Sovereign Lord may bear witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple” (Micah 1:2).

Micah 1 opens with a judgment against Samaria and Jerusalem. These were the two places where worship took place in Israel. **Micah 2 & 3** are judgments against the false prophets, leaders, and prophets of Israel.

The beginning of **Micah 4** the “**mountain of the Lord**” is discussed as a symbol for the temple of Jerusalem where all the people will go one day to worship God. God will draw the nations there together (v.3). There is an analogy of a pregnant woman giving birth and going through birth pains as a comparison to distress for Israel's coming days of judgment. **Micah 5** holds one of the well know prophecies about Jesus in it. A future king will be born in Bethlehem “**whose origins are from old, from ancient times**” (v.2).

Micah 6 picks back up with the courtroom language and God makes his closing arguments against Israel and announces their sentence. **Chapter 7** describes their misery that Israel will face in judgment. **Micah 8** ends on a high note, where God promises that Israel will rise and a remnant will survive and God will show his mighty power through this group of people.

THE BIG PICTURE is to see despite God's righteous judgment, He will always provide redemption and hope to His people, this goes for us today.

Journal Ideas: (Some suggestions) Write a one sentence summary of each chapter. Write about a time when you could have helped another Christian but maybe you stayed silent.

Pray: (Some suggestions) Review and revise your weekly prayer list in your journals. Pray for our nation and out leaders to heal in this political season. Pray for the people of America, for their revival.