

## Lesson 40: Crazy for God, The Minor Prophets, pt. 3

### A. Introduction

**Who were the Minor Prophets?**—sometimes called “the Twelve”—and what were they prophesying about? Is anything they wrote still relevant for us today?

The [Holy Bible](#) is unlike any other book ever written, as it claims that its writers were directly inspired by God. It is a book that people can read and study for an entire lifetime and continue to learn from and be inspired by. But how much do we really know about its contents? Do we just read certain parts of the Bible and neglect other parts—like the Minor Prophets—because we are unfamiliar with them or because they seem out of date?

The apostle Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 3:16: *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.”*

What exactly can we learn in the form of doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness from these ancient prophets? The Minor Prophets are probably the least understood or read in the Bible. They might be considered the white pages in the Bible, as opposed to the Yellow Pages in an old phone book. Most people spend much more time reading the Psalms and the Gospels and so often neglect the Minor Prophets. However, they gave us wide-ranging prophecies that greatly impacted Christianity and the world as we’ll see in this lesson. I want to briefly acquaint you with the Minor Prophets. In this lesson, we’ll look at the first six: Amos, Habakkuk, Haggai, Hosea, Joel and Malachi (out of order, because I want to devote a bit more time to Jonah in Lesson 41). And in our last lesson here on the prophets, Lesson 41, we’ll look at **Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Obadiah, Zechariah and Zephaniah.**

### B. Who are the Minor Prophets?

The Minor Prophets, in alphabetical order are:

- Amos,
- Habakkuk,
- Haggai,
- Hosea,
- Joel,
- [Jonah](#),
- Malachi,
- Micah,
- Nahum,
- Obadiah,
- Zechariah, and
- Zephaniah.

## Here's what I want you to see: Jesus Christ used all the prophets

Jesus Christ Himself used *all the prophets* to explain the things about Himself. "And beginning at Moses and *all the Prophets*, He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself" (Luke 24:27).

Jesus also said, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me.' And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures" (Luke 24:44-45).

If these weren't very important books for us to read and understand, why would God cause 12 different writers to record certain prophecies and teachings in their books? And why would Jesus Christ say that He explained all the things about Himself by using all the prophets?

### C. What we can learn from the Minor Prophets

Here is what the reader will discover as he or she looks more deeply into the pages of the Minor Prophets:

- Each wrote under inspiration of God.
- The messages of the 12 Minor Prophets are for all people in all ages and have application to our daily lives.
- Christian principles on how to live our lives can be found in all the prophets' writings.
- Events in history are there for our instruction today.
- The Minor Prophets give us a greater awareness of God's presence in history.
- They provide inspiring examples of people of faith during very difficult times.
- They give an understanding of cause and effect in human events.
- They provide deeper insight into God's judgments and mercy.

In our last lesson, I covered the definition and role of a prophet. A prophet was called by God and most people considered it a fate worse than death because prophets were never popular. Their messages went unheeded and prophets were subject to all kinds of physical abuse and generally led pretty lonely lives. Their one true friend was God Himself.

We said that some of the most common tasks biblical prophets performed included:

- **Predicting the future.** Predicting future events.
- **Advising leaders.** A true prophet would tell the king what God really thought about his plans.
- **Enacting change.** Prophets worked hard to get people to change their behavior and beliefs.
- **Performing symbolic acts.** Because "a picture is worth a thousand words," sometimes prophets conveyed messages by dramatic action such as Isaiah walking around naked for 3 yrs.
- **Declaring oracles.** The prophet delivered God's messages. They were the ones who would speak for Almighty God and were known for saying, "The Lord says..."

## D. Hosea:

Hosea lived in the northern kingdom of Israel during the latter half of 8<sup>th</sup> century BC. Hosea's ministry spanned several decades, beginning near the end of the reigns of Uzziah of Judah (ca. 790-739 B.C.) and Jeroboam II of Israel (ca. 793-753 B.C.) and concluding in the early years of Hezekiah's reign. These were turbulent years for Israel because several kings were assassinated, and it seemed to be just a matter of days before an expanding Assyrian empire would destroy the nation.

Interestingly, the names Hosea, Joshua, and Jesus are all derived from the same Hebrew word, hoshea, which means "salvation." As God's messenger, Hosea offers salvation to the nation if they will turn from their idolatry and return to the Lord.

### The Theme and Purpose of Hosea:

Hosea was written to demonstrate the steadfast or unfailing love of God for Israel in spite of her continued unfaithfulness. **The Bible for Dummies** written by Jeffrey Geoghegan and Michael Homan, offers us the following insight into the life of Hosea:

God tells his prophet, Hosea, to marry a prostitute. And to make matters even worse, the prostitute's name is Gomer. Can you imagine God telling you to marry a prostitute and to top that, her name is Gomer? The reason God tells Hosea to marry a prostitute is because Israel has been "prostituting" herself by not obeying God's laws and by worshiping other gods. In other words, Israel has other "husbands" besides Yahweh, the One True God. And in keeping with Israel's adultery, Gomer is unfaithful to Hosea, and through all these infidelities, she bears three children: Jezreel, Lo-ruhamah, and Lo-ammi. Just as the marriage, the names of these three children are symbolic:

- Jezreel refers to a famous valley and city in northern Israel where a bloody coup took place under Jehu. The king of Israel during Hosea's life is Jeroboam II, who is a descendant of Jehu, and Hosea predicts that this dynasty will soon come to an end, as will the nation of Israel.
- Lo-ruhamah means "no mercy," and signifies that God will not have compassion on Israel, but will allow Assyria to punish it for its unfaithfulness to Him and its oppression of the poor.
- Lo-ammi means "not my people," and signifies God's rejection of Israel as His people due to their wrongdoing.

Following the birth of their three children, Gomer leaves Hosea. God, however, tells Hosea to go out and rescue Gomer, and bring her back into his home. This is intended to symbolize God's heart toward Israel. Though the Israelites have been unfaithful, God will one day rescue them and bring them home. And, in reversal of God's earlier rejection, Hosea sees a day when God will cleanse "Jezreel" of its bloodguilt, and once again show mercy to Israel calling them, "My people."

### Let's read a few of the passages from Hosea:

3:1. Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by her husband, yet an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the sons of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes."

4:1. Listen to the word of the LORD, O sons of Israel, For the LORD has a case against the inhabitants of the land, Because there is no faithfulness or kindness Or knowledge of God in the land.

4:6. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being My priest. Since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

11:7-9. So My people are bent on turning from Me. Though they call them to the One on high, None at all exalts Him. How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I surrender you, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim? My heart is turned over within Me, All My compassions are kindled. I will not execute My fierce anger; I will not destroy Ephraim again. For I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst, And I will not come in wrath.

**Gomer is our object lesson. Gomer was a picture of Israel. We need to see if we are like Gomer.**

Israel was in pretty bad shape. They had totally forsaken God. We often compare ourselves to them and think we aren't nearly so bad. We certainly haven't totally forsaken God. We certainly don't worship golden calves. Maybe we don't worship golden calves, but we have other false concepts of God and other things we seek after. Maybe we haven't totally forsaken God, but we mix our dependence on God with our dependence on other things.

We see nothing wrong with depending on our own resources and depending on our bank account, our work, our wife, our kids, our ministry to fulfill us. **We only use God as a Force or Genie to help us in our pursuits. Listen to your prayers.** How many times do you ask God to "HELP" you do something? When you do that, are you saying that you can do most of it ... that you just need a little help to finish the task?

The fact is that it's man's natural tendency to want to make it on his own. Our natural tendency is to want to earn our salvation by being good. But even after we recognize that salvation is totally by faith, we still want to have lists of do's and don'ts. We think if we change our behavior we will be able to accomplish what we want, whether it is overcoming depression or some bad habit.

We are determined to pursue our own self-interests, so we redefine God. We have decided what it means to really enjoy life – We have defined what success looks like, and for most of us that is having enough money so we can buy all the things we think will make us happy - so we expect God to bless us.

For others, success might be that perfect relationship with the opposite sex, because we think that person will be able to fill our deep longings, so we expect God to bring along the perfect mate. And when He does, and the marriage is not perfect like we had planned, What do we do? What do you do? When you pray for something and you don't get it, who do you blame? Do you blame God?

What is God's reaction to Israel forgetting Him in vs 13? Let's read:

**Hosea 2:13-23 (ESV)**

13 And I will punish her for the feast days of the Baals when she burned offerings to them and adorned herself with her ring and jewelry, and went after her lovers and forgot me, declares the LORD.

**But then, Look at God's response in vs. 14-23:**

14 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak tenderly to her.

15 And there I will give her her vineyards and make the Valley of Achor a door of hope. And there she shall answer as in the days of her youth, as at the time when she came out of the land of Egypt.

16 "And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me 'My Husband,' and no longer will you call me 'My Baal.'

17 For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more.

18 And I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety.

19 And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy.

20 I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD.

21 "And in that day I will answer, declares the LORD, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth,

22 and the earth shall answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel,

23 and I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God.'"

After describing their sin and bringing them to the wilderness, **vs 14-23 show that God is also merciful and now he is enticing them back to Him. God uses these wilderness experiences to bring us closer to Himself. Even in our ugliness and our ugly ways, God perfectly accepts us and draws us back to Himself. Hosea is a story of God's relentless love.**

## **E. Joel**

Because the prophet Joel offers no clues as to when this book is written, dates for this prophet range from the ninth to the fifth-century B.C.

Joel writes at length about an upcoming "great and terrible day of the Lord."

The book consists of three separate sections: the lament over a great locust plague and a severe drought, the promise of future blessings and finally the coming judgment on God's enemies and the vindication of Israel.

Joel's prophecies concern the Jews. Some might laugh at such a simple statement since Joel is found in the Old Testament, but Zola Levitt reports that at a lecture of his on the Old Testament a listener interrupted him and said, "Enough about the Jews, lets get back to the Bible."

This prophecy is primarily about spiritual Israel, but because that includes the Jews too, it includes secular Israel as well. This prophecy is about their past (chap. one), and their future (chap. 2-3.) in these last days. When the Jews come to understand the metaphors and other symbolisms of this prophecy,

they will be very near to its glorious fulfillment, even to be worthy of the presence of Jehovah (a City Celestial: 3:17,21).

This prophecy begins by describing how Israel (the vine) was destroyed by wave after wave of enemies, analogous to how hordes of locusts, one after another, could destroy the "branches of the vine." Their destruction,, described in chapter one, began when they turned their backs on Jehovah, the Lord God Almighty, and began worshiping false gods. It continues up to the present time.

He then goes on to make the comparison of this army of locusts with another "army" that is to come-"In that day of the Lord" (2:1,11,21,31). This time it will be an army representing Him. His army (2:11) is also described like one would describe a swarm of locusts, but their power will result in Israel coming to a knowledge of Him (2:27).

They come much like the enemies did before, in multitudes, but this time they only destroy the wicked; and not by death and slavery but through their sharing of the gospel truths. They are missionaries bringing the truth about Jesus Christ and His saving gospel. His swarming army will destroy the wicked by conversion to the truth. It is this second swarming army and the pivotal changes that they bring to Israel, on God's behalf, that is Joel's main subject.

Joel writes about the hope of deliverance that remains if Israel changes its present course and returns to God.

#### **Joel 2:13-14 (GW)**

13 Tear your hearts, not your clothes. Return to the LORD your God. He is merciful and compassionate, patient, and always ready to forgive and to change his plans about disaster.

14 Who knows? He may reconsider and change his plan and leave a blessing for you. Then you could give grain offerings and wine offerings to the LORD your God.

The message of Joel can be summarized in three simple statements.

(1) Calamities are God's warning of judgment to come.

(2) Heed these warnings, and return to God with all your heart.

(3) When you return to God, God's fullest blessings will be poured out on you and on all people.

#### **Joel continues with God's blessing on His people Israel. Let's read Joel 2:26-27 (GW)**

26 You will have plenty to eat, and you will be full. You will praise the name of the LORD your God, who has performed miracles for you. My people will never be ashamed again.

27 You will know that I am in Israel. I am the LORD your God, and there is no other. My people will never be ashamed again.

Then, Joel prophesies this great announcement from the Lord:

### **Joel 2:28-32 (GW)**

28 "After this, I will pour my Spirit on everyone. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions.

29 In those days I will pour my Spirit on servants, on both men and women.

30 I will work miracles in the sky and on the earth: blood, fire, and clouds of smoke.

31 The sun will become dark, and the moon will become as red as blood before the terrifying day of the LORD comes."

32 Then whoever calls on the name of the LORD will be saved. Those who escape will be on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem. Among the survivors will be those whom the LORD calls, as the LORD has promised.

That's prophecy was partially fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost which we'll look at in greater detail in Lesson 63. And this prophecy continues in its fulfillment right up to today. God is pouring out His Spirit on people the world over with old men dreaming dreams and young men seeing visions. God is pouring out his Spirit today on men and women, and whoever calls upon the name of the Lord is being saved.

### **F. Amos**

Amos was one of the poor that the wealthy in Israel despised. Amos was a citizen of neighboring Judah, where he worked caring for sheep and a stand of sycamore trees. We know that Amos was poor, for sycamores were to the poor what figs were to the rich.

Though neither a prophet nor the son of a prophet, Amos responded to God's call and trudged in his rags across the border into Israel.

There he must have visited the cities that had grown up around the worship centers at Bethel and Dan. He must have walked past the great houses, seen the luxury goods in stores outside of which the poor crouched. Walking through the market he must have noticed merchants mix chaff with the grain they sold, or slyly exchange honest weights for lighter ones when they measured out the purchases of the poor.

Angered by the heartlessness and the materialism, Amos boldly identified the sins for which God was about to judge the Northern society. In his rebuke we can hear God's evaluation of man's greed, and a powerful expression of the divine values that had been expressed for centuries in the Law.

Amos writes that Israel will be judged for its crimes against the poor:

### **Amos 2:6-8 (GW)**

6 This is what the LORD says: Because Israel has committed three crimes, and now a fourth crime, I will not change my plans. The people of Israel sell the righteous for money and the needy for a pair of sandals.

7 They stomp the heads of the poor into the dust. They push the humble out of the way. Father and son sleep with the same woman. They dishonor my holy name.

8 Beside every altar, they spread themselves out on clothes taken as security. In the temples of their gods, they drink the wine that they bought with fines.

And it continues in chapter 5

**Amos 5:11-13 (GW)**

11 You trample on the poor and take their wheat from them for taxes. That is why you build houses from hand-cut stones, but you will not live in them. You plant beautiful vineyards, but you will not drink their wine.

12 I know that your crimes are numerous and your sins are many. You oppress the righteous by taking bribes. You deny the needy access to the courts.

13 That is why a wise person remains silent at such times, because those times are so evil.

**But Amos ends on a positive note with this prophetic promise from the God Almighty.**

**Amos 9:13-15 (NLT)**

13 “The time will come,” says the LORD, “when the grain and grapes will grow faster than they can be harvested. Then the terraced vineyards on the hills of Israel will drip with sweet wine!

14 I will bring my exiled people of Israel back from distant lands, and they will rebuild their ruined cities and live in them again. They will plant vineyards and gardens; they will eat their crops and drink their wine.

15 I will firmly plant them there in their own land. They will never again be uprooted from the land I have given them,” says the LORD your God.

And God brought the Jews back from all over the world starting May 12, 1948 when Israel became a nation, and since that time, Jews are moving from all over the world to make Israel their home, and God is firmly planting them in their own land, and God is blessing and prospering Israel among all the nations because Israel has blessed the world with the Messiah, the Deliverer, and God says in Zechariah 2:8 that “whoever touches you (Israel), touches the apple of His eye.” In other words, don’t mess with Israel because they are God’s special people living in God’s special land which He has deeded to the Jews as he says here in Amos 9:15, “...They will never again be uprooted from the land I have given them,” says the Lord your God.

## **G. Habakkuk**

**The Book of Habakkuk** explores the question of why—and whether—God permits evil to exist unpunished. It is best to place this prophet, unknown except through his book, in the days of Josiah (639-597 B.C.). Habakkuk was troubled by the sins he saw in Judah despite the religious revival. God showed the prophet that He was about to bring the Babylonians down on His people as a punishment.

But Habakkuk raised another question: How can the holy God use a wicked people as a tool?

This small book has great value for us today. We too see the wicked apparently flourish, and may have questions about God's justice. If we do, we find God's striking answer in Habakkuk!

We also find something else: the secret of survival when national or personal troubles come.



The king had come to the throne of Judah at age 8. At 16 he began to seek the Lord, and at 20 purged idolatry from Jerusalem. In the process of repairing the temple, Hilkiah the priest had discovered a copy of the Book of the Law—that Book which God had given Israel through Moses, and which had been lost during the rule of a series of evil kings. When Shaphan, the scribe, read the book, he hurried to Josiah ([2 Kings 22:10](#)).

The Book had a tremendous impact on the king. It contained not only the history of the nation's call by God, but also gave explicit instructions on how to live. And at the end of the lost Book, in the section we call Deuteronomy, was a list of curses that God would call down on Israel if His people forsook Him and His Law.

King Josiah required everyone to hear the Book read, and that very year he reinstated the Feast of the Passover. Josiah led all Judah to keep it, with great rejoicing.

Habakkuk and the people of Judah were now exposed to the Word of God. Simply knowing the Law did not produce holiness. God's people were not obeying the commands of their God.

To Habakkuk this situation was intolerable. Here was Judah, a people called by the name of God, blessed with the Law of God, daily bringing shame on His holy name by flagrant disregard of what was right. They twisted and perverted the Law, and even did violence against those who tried to walk by it.

This is Habakkuk's burden when we turn to the first chapter of his book. He opens his heart and mind to us, and expresses a complaint that must have been constantly on his lips. He opens up his book with this complaint:

How long, O Lord, must I call for help, but You do not listen? Or cry out to You, "Violence!" but You do not save? Why do You make me look at injustice? Why do You tolerate wrong? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds. Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted.

**In Habakkuk 2:4 (ESV), the prophet states this great truth hundreds of years before the Apostle Paul writes this in Galatians 3:11.**

<sup>4</sup> "Behold, his soul is puffed up; it is not upright within him, **but the righteous shall live by his faith.**

**And another one of my favorite verses is found in Habakkuk 2:14:**

<sup>14</sup> For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

And Habakkuk ends his book with this most awesome declaration:

**Habakkuk 3:17-18 (ESV)**

<sup>17</sup> Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls,

<sup>18</sup> yet I will rejoice in the LORD; I will take joy in the God of my salvation.

In other words, the prophet was not going to be a victim of circumstances. Whether he had food or not, no matter what situation he found himself in, he was going to rejoice in the Lord and take joy in the God of his salvation. And I especially like the last verse, **Habakkuk 3:19 (NKJV)**

<sup>19</sup> The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer's *feet*, And He will make me walk on the high hills.

## H. Haggai

Haggai lived during the Persian Period shortly after the first group of Judean exiles returned to Jerusalem, around 520 BC. The main focus of his prophecies is to motivate the Judeans to rebuild God's Temple. To this end, Haggai chastises the people for neglecting the Temple while beautifying their own homes:

### Haggai 1:4-8 (ESV)

<sup>4</sup> "Is it a time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, while this house lies in ruins?"

<sup>5</sup> Now, therefore, thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider your ways.

<sup>6</sup> You have sown much, and harvested little. You eat, but you never have enough; you drink, but you never have your fill. You clothe yourselves, but no one is warm. And he who earns wages does so to put them into a bag with holes.

<sup>7</sup> "Thus says the LORD of hosts: Consider your ways.

<sup>8</sup> Go up to the hills and bring wood and build the house, that I may take pleasure in it and that I may be glorified, says the LORD.

Despite their initial opposition to Haggai's message, the people eventually rebuilt the Temple, completing it in the spring of 515 BC.

## I. Malachi

Malachi is the next to last of the Old Testament prophets...the last actually being John the Baptist who links the Old Testament with the New Testament. Haggai ministered in Judah between 460 and 430 B.C.

The temple had been completed, and the people worshiped there, following the prescribed rituals and offering the required sacrifices. Haggai and Zechariah were gone, and the religious enthusiasm these prophets stimulated had now drained away.

The Book of Malachi begins with an affirmation: " 'I have loved you,' says the Lord" ([Malachi 1:2](#)). What a starting point in our relationship with God! It is not that we loved God. He loved us and, acting in love, He delivered His people.

Yet the people of Malachi's day replied with a plaintive whine: "How have You loved us?" It is as though a child, used to plenty, complains because he's been denied some new toy. With all the evidence of history and with all their present prosperity, Judah could still claim to be uncertain of God's love!

God's answer is to point to the fact that He *chose* their ancestor Jacob over his twin Esau (who was the ancestor of the people who even then surrounded Judah). God's love was demonstrated primarily in that He chose to establish a relationship with His people; love draws us to Himself.

In chapter 2, the God tells Judah why He won't answer their prayers. It's because of divorce. Men divorcing their wives for younger women and still worshiping God as though nothing is wrong.

**Here's what God says:**

**Malachi 2:13-16 (NLT)**

<sup>13</sup> Here is another thing you do. You cover the LORD's altar with tears, weeping and groaning because he pays no attention to your offerings and doesn't accept them with pleasure.

<sup>14</sup> You cry out, "Why doesn't the LORD accept my worship?" I'll tell you why! Because the LORD witnessed the vows you and your wife made when you were young. But you have been unfaithful to her, though she remained your faithful partner, the wife of your marriage vows.

<sup>15</sup> Didn't the LORD make you one with your wife? In body and spirit you are his. And what does he want? Godly children from your union. So guard your heart; remain loyal to the wife of your youth.

<sup>16</sup> "For I hate divorce!" says the LORD, the God of Israel. "To divorce your wife is to overwhelm her with cruelty," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies. "So guard your heart; do not be unfaithful to your wife."

**Malachi closes with these words:**

**Malachi 4:2-4 (NLT)**

<sup>2</sup> "But for you who fear my name, the Sun of Righteousness will rise with healing in his wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy like calves let out to pasture.

<sup>3</sup> On the day when I act, you will tread upon the wicked as if they were dust under your feet," says the LORD of Heaven's Armies.

<sup>4</sup> "Remember to obey the Law of Moses, my servant—all the decrees and regulations that I gave him on Mount Sinai for all Israel.

Here Malachi is promising that there will come a day when all those who believe in Yeshua, the Messiah, The Lord Our Righteousness—will go free and will tread on the wicked. This most likely occurs during the thousand year reign of Jesus here on earth. Also, notice that the Sun of Righteousness rises with healing in His wings and I believe that "going free" and "leaping with joy" refers to being healed by the Lord. Here's what my take-away is from these verses. Our Lord is a God who heals and He has healing for His children. It's his character, His desire to heal us. Part of his character of the God we worship is that He is the God who heals. So, in our need to be healed, we need to separate ourselves from sinfulness and uncleanness and draw near to Him, asking Him to heal us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**Finally, Malachi predicts that Elijah will return to earth in order to prepare the people for God's coming.**

**Malachi 4:5-6 (NLT)**

<sup>5</sup> "Look, I am sending you the prophet Elijah before the great and dreadful day of the LORD arrives.

<sup>6</sup> His preaching will turn the hearts of fathers to their children, and the hearts of children to their fathers. Otherwise I will come and strike the land with a curse."

- And we see that John the Baptist fulfilled this prophecy by being the forerunner to Jesus.

**In Lesson 41, Crazy for God, the Minor Prophets, pt. 4,** we'll finish up the Minor Prophets and look at Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Obadiah, Zechariah and Zephaniah.