

land, and now the people are to realize that no dependence can be placed upon that idolatrous country. To *ride upon horses* would indicate a favor granted under the protection of a ruling power. There was a time when Israel might have expected to receive such favors from Assyria, but that will have been shown to be a vain thing. *Work of our hands* refers to the idols the people had made out of wood, stone or metal. They were to be convinced that such gods are vain and unable to bestow any blessings upon their worshipers. Instead, *in thee* (the Lord) the poor and helpless find mercy.

Verse 4. *Will heal their backsliding* is a prediction of the effect the captivity was to have upon the practice of idolatry. The anger of God is always caused by the unrighteous conduct of man, and when that is changed for the better the anger also will be reversed and the mercy of God will be shown.

Verse 5. The laws of vegetation under the conditions of nature are used for comparison. After a sultry day has caused the plants to droop, the dew of the night appearing in the morning will cause them to revive and lift up their heads. Likewise, after the scorching effect of the captivity, the dew of the release will rekindle hope again in the hearts of the people of Israel.

Verse 6. This is more on the same thoughts as the preceding verse.

Verse 7. The laws and procedure of vegetation are continued to be used to compare the favorable experiences of Israel. *His shadow* means the Lord's shadow or protection from the scorching heat of enemy fire. Under the soothing effect of the shade and the enlivening help of the renewed seasons of the "early and latter rain," the plant of God (Israel) was to take on new life.

Verse 8. This verse is a direct prediction of the cure of idolatry that was to be accomplished by the captivity. The historical quotation that shows the fulfillment of this prediction is shown in connection with Isaiah 1: 25, volume 3 of this COMMENTARY.

Verse 9. This verse is a general statement that would be appropriate at any time and place. A wise man will understand the ways of the Lord because such will "consider" what has been said. Israel had not done so previously and hence this great trouble came upon the nation (Isaiah 1: 3).

JOEL 1

Verse 1. There were a great many men bearing the name of Joel in the Old Testament time, hence it was proper for the writer of our book to designate which one was meant. The statement that the word of the Lord came to Joel is equivalent to saying that the book is inspired of the Lord.

Verse 2. The idea of this verse is that the condition about to be described was without a likeness, either in the present or the following days.

Verse 3. *Tell ye your children* is a general instruction to spread the information to all generations both present and future.

Verse 4. The subject that is referred to in the foregoing verses is now introduced in this. I have consulted various books on the subject of these pests as to whether they were literal or figurative, and there is left still the uncertainty among them as to the true answer. However, the purposes of the lesson to be derived will be the same, whether the literal or figurative view be taken. We know from Deuteronomy 28: 38, 39; 1 Kings 8: 37; Leviticus 26: 16 and such other passages, that the Lord did afflict the land with literal pests at times as a chastisement of the people. And we also know that the country was short of being as true to God as it should have been when Joel lived, and was deserving of some kind of judgment from the Lord for the same. It was also true that God intended to punish his people by the hand of a foreign army, and the pests could have reference to that. Or, the locusts and other insects could have been literal, and then used by the Lord as a type of the invading army that was to be let loose upon the land to take away all its wealth. I shall leave this question to the consideration of the reader, and proceed to comment on the several chapters and verses in their order, explaining the various terms as they are used.

Verse 5. The leaders of the nation were selfish and indulged themselves in the luxuries of the land to the detriment of the people. *Weep . . . because of the new wine* means for them to weep because it was to be cut off from their mouth. This would have been true whether literal pests were to destroy the products of the land, or they were to be cut off by an invading army.

Verse 6. The language of this verse is a strong indication that the Lord means an army from a heathen coun-

try, for the descriptive terms certainly apply to such.

Verse 7. The grammatical form of this verse is in the past or present tense, but that is a common thing to find among prophetic writings. As the fruit-bearing plants would be rendered barren by being treated as it is here described, so the invasion by a foreign army would destroy the products of the land as far as their moral and political usefulness was concerned.

Verse 8. The nation of Israel has always been compared to a companion in the marriage relation. The word *virgin* might seem to be contradictory of a woman who is supposed to be a wife. The word is from *BETHUWLAH*, which Strong defines, "Feminine past participle of an unused root meaning to separate; a virgin (from her privacy); sometimes (by continuation) a bride." The idea is to compare Israel to a woman who was put away from her husband in their early married life, and compelled to live alone as if she were a virgin. The fulfillment of it was to be when Israel was sent away from the husband's home (Palestine) and made to live among strangers. A young woman in such a situation would follow the custom of the day and clothe herself with this coarse material which we know as common sacking.

Verse 9. It was true that the services of the altar had been literally neglected and abused, but as a prophecy the time was coming when such practices would be stopped altogether, for God would not permit his people to attempt them in a heathen country.

Verse 10. This verse is a prediction of the condition to come upon the land after the invasion of the Babylonian army.

Verse 11. The leaders of the nation are likened to *husbandmen* and *vine-dressers*. But they had abused their position in the Lord's vineyard and hence were destined to be deprived of all their privileges. *Be ye ashamed* is a prediction of the humiliation that was to be imposed upon them by the power of a foreign army.

Verse 12. There is nothing new in this verse, but it is a repetition of the devastation awaiting the unfaithful nation to be effected by the hand of Babylon.

Verse 13. *Gird yourselves* means for them to be prepared in mind for what was to come. It could not indicate that they were to prepare a defence against

the enemy, for it had been declared many times that the invasion was bound to come, and that it would be according to the Lord's decree. The rest of the verse is the same as several of the preceding ones as to the general devastation to come on the land.

Verse 14. The law of Moses did not require fasting as a regular practice, but on special occasions the Lord called for it, and the present is one of them. Most of the gatherings had been turned into mere formalities that left no beneficial results upon the minds of the people. Now the Lord calls for them to *sanctify* a fast, which means to put on a season of fasting that is holy because it is sincere and observed from respect for God. The leaders were to assemble the people in the temple because that was the lawful place for public worship and prayers to God. They were to cry unto the Lord because of the great iniquity of the land, and the distress that it was going to bring upon it as a punishment.

Verse 15. *Day of the Lord* denotes that the calamity about to be inflicted upon the nation would be by the decree of Him.

Verse 16. The word for *meat* is defined in the lexicon as "food" because it refers to anything that may be eaten. The prediction is that there was to be a shortage of necessary supplies. Such a condition would render the exercises of God that were in His house a time of solemnity instead of *joy and gladness*.

Verse 17. These conditions are to be understood in the same light as such verses as 9-12. Whether it was all to come literally or figuratively, the cause of it was the evil conduct of the nation.

Verse 18. This is more along the same line as the preceding verse.

Verse 19. *Hath* ordinarily would denote a condition already present, but whether it was all history or part prophecy, the point is that God was angry because of the iniquity of His people and determined to punish them.

Verse 20. The beasts could not intelligently cry unto God, but their cry would be caused by His visitation of judgment upon the land as a chastisement for the unfaithfulness of its inhabitants.

JOEL 2

Verse 1. The blowing of the trumpet is figurative and expressed in view of the calamity that was to come upon the country. (See Numbers 10: 1-10)

for the significance of trumpets.) In actual practice the people of Israel were to blow the trumpet in alarm when they were to go into battle against another nation. It does not have that meaning in this case because the passage is a prediction of the invasion of the Babylonian army. That event was to occur by the Lord's decree, and the people of Israel were not to resist that attack. Instead, they were advised to submit peacefully to the king of Babylon and thereby lessen their suffering. (See Jeremiah 38: 17, 18.) The thought in the passage here is that the alarm should be to summon the people to a sense of their undone condition, so that they will make what restitution they can for their own personal benefit.

Verse 2. The gloomy picture that is painted is to be the result of the invasion of the foreign nation. *A great people and a strong* refers to the Babylonians who were to be brought against Jerusalem and the people of Israel.

Verse 3. *Garden of Eden before . . . behind a wilderness.* This is a picture of the sad changes that were destined to come into the land of Palestine after the inroads made by the Babylonian army. It was to be a complete overthrow of the great country of Israel, inflicted upon it as a punishment for the evil conduct of the inhabitants in taking up with the idolatrous ways of the heathen.

Verse 4. *Appearance of horses* is literal, for the army of Babylon used that noble animal in its triumphant march through the country.

Verse 5. The horses were used to carry riders in battle array, and they were likewise used to draw the chariots of war which are mentioned in this verse.

Verse 6. *Faces be pained* will be on account of the dreadful appearance of the military forces of the Babylonian Empire. It was one of the most formidable armies ever sent against the Israelites, and well might their faces be drawn in alarm at the approach of such a foe.

Verse 7. *Not break their ranks* denotes the orderly conduct of the soldiers of the king of Babylon. *Shall climb the wall* refers to the ability of the soldiers to mount over the walls that were erected as a barrier against an attacking foe. These barricades were to be no effective hindrance to the success of the invading army.

Verse 8. Sometimes the soldiers of

an army became confused and attacked each other, and at other times they would interfere with each other's position in the battle formation; the Babylonians were not to do this. And even when they came in contact with a sword it would not injure them seriously, because the Lord will be using them as His agents to chastise the people of Israel.

Verse 9. The prevalence and success of the Babylonians is meant here.

Verse 10. This is a figurative description of the depression that will settle down upon Jerusalem and the inhabitants of Judah when the army of Nebuchadnezzar takes up the siege. The king of Israel and his leading men will be debased, which is likened to the dimming of the sun and other heavenly bodies.

Verse 11. The army of Babylon is called the Lord's because He will use it to carry out the purposes against the unfaithful people of Israel. *He is strong that executeth his word.* Since the king of Babylon will be executing the decree of the Lord, He will make that king strong enough to accomplish the task set before him. Without the Lord's support the Babylonian army could never have succeeded as it did; for later, when it was God's will that the same nation should be overthrown, it was accomplished by the Persians who were said to be "inferior to thee" (Daniel 2: 39).

Verse 12. In view of the coming disaster, the people of Israel were exhorted to repent and manifest a proper attitude toward God. We are again reminded of an apparent disagreement in the declarations of the Lord as to the fate of his people. At one time they are exhorted to repent and seek the favor of the Lord, and at another they are told that nothing could be done to prevent the downfall of the kingdom and the captivity of its people. The reader should see the long note on this subject in the comments for 2 Kings 22: 17, volume 2 of this COMMENTARY.

Verse 13. *Rend your heart and not your garments.* It was a customary action in times of great distress or anxiety for a person to grasp his garment and tear it. This performance was acceptable to God when it was done with sincerity of heart. But since it was purely a physical or mechanical movement, a man could perform it as successfully while his heart was corrupt, as he could when he was pure in heart. Hence the exhortation of the

words italicized, which means to correct the heart before going through the outward motion of rending the garment.

Verse 14. This verse is explained at verse 12 and the note cited there.

Verse 15. This verse is virtually the same as verse 1.

Verse 16. For comments on this verse, see those on chapter 1: 14, also the note cited at verse 12 of the present chapter.

Verse 17. The outstanding corruption of the nation of Israel was idolatry. In Ezekiel 8: 16 the sun worshipers are shown as standing "between the porch and the altar," and thus were showing disrespect for the true God. Now the prophet Joel bids them go to that place to lament over the situation that their iniquity had created. And instead of serving a false god, they were to appeal to the true God on behalf of the people whom their corrupt leadership had betrayed. Of course we understand this to be a prophetic picture of the state of mind that would be experienced after they got down in the land of captivity. This is described in strong terms in Psalms 137 where it is prophecy, and in Ezekiel 37: 11 where it is history.

Verse 18. From this verse through 27 the passage is a prediction of the return from Babylonian captivity. The sending of Israel into a foreign country was not from an outburst of ill feeling for His people, but because their own good as well as the honor of the holy name of God demanded the chastisement. That is why it is said that He will be jealous for the land, because the Babylonians took too much personal satisfaction out of the distress of the people whom they had brought under their domination.

Verse 19. The Lord was to make these provisions for his people by returning them from the captivity so they could reap the products of the home land. It was a great reproach upon the nation of Israel to be held captive in a heathen land, but that was to be reversed and never again be repeated.

Verse 20. The *northern army* was the Babylonian army that had taken the people of Israel into captivity. At the time the captivity was to be ended, the Babylonian army would be in their own country. But it had come down from the north in order to take its inhabitants into captivity; and reversing the condition of bondage would be equivalent to removing the northern

army from the land. And in making such a forced retreat toward his own country, the Babylonian king would be heading toward the desert of Arabia, and his back would be toward the *utmost sea* which means the Mediterranean.

Verse 21. Such inanimate things as *land* cannot literally rejoice, yet the language is directly addressed to it. In that respect it is like the passage in Ezekiel 36: 6-15. The thought is to be transferred to the people who are to inhabit and enjoy the land, and who will be able to rejoice because of the benefits that the Lord promises to bestow upon it.

Verse 22. The *beasts of the field* are animate creatures, yet they cannot intelligently respond to the Lord's promise of blessings upon the fields. However, they can enjoy those blessings and thrive upon them, which would enable them to yield benefits for the enjoyment of their owners.

Verse 23. The foregoing comments are verified by the first sentence of this verse; it is the *children of Zion* who are actually to rejoice. And the reasoning is made still clearer by the rest of the verse, for it specifies the favors that were promised to be shed upon the land that would enable it to produce the things necessary for man's enjoyment. *Moderately* is an unusual word as it is used in this place, and it is derived from an original that Strong defines as "righteous." The simple meaning is that God was to bestow the right seasons upon the land so that it could produce the crops for its citizens.

Verse 24. *Floors* refers to the places where the grain was beaten out of the husk and the chaff separated from the kernel by the wind. The *fats* means the vats or large tubs into which grapes were placed so that the juice could be pressed out.

Verse 25. I have commented at length on the subject of this verse, in chapter 1: 4, which the reader should see now before going further in the study of this passage. With those comments in mind, he may think of this verse as a part of the prediction of the return from the Babylonian captivity. We know that when that event occurred, the effects of former misfortunes (whether literal armies of locusts or that of the Babylonians), were to be reversed by the returning productivity of the land.

Verse 26. This is more along the

line of the blessings promised to come to the people after being brought back to their own land. *My people shall never be ashamed* applies only to the idea of a national and bodily removal into a foreign country; it was never to happen again.

Verse 27. *Shall know . . . Lord your God, and none else.* This is very significant, for the main iniquity of Israel was their worship of false gods. But the captivity was destined to cure them permanently of that spiritual disease as predicted here. The historical quotation that shows the fulfillment of this prediction is given at Isaiah 1: 25 in volume 3 of this COMMENTARY.

Verse 28. This verse begins a noted prophecy which includes the rest of the chapter. It was quoted by the apostle Peter as recorded in Acts 2: 17-21, where he repites to the false statements of the Jews in his audience. *Afterward* is a somewhat indefinite term as to time, merely meaning "at some time later." Peter makes it more definite by saying "in the last days," meaning the last days of the Jewish Dispensation. It is not uncommon for an Old Testament prophet to pass immediately from some good event concerning fleshly Israel to one pertaining to spiritual Israel. So in the present case, Joel goes from the return from captivity to the starting of the church that was to embrace all nations in spiritual Israel. The meaning of *all flesh* is that the spirit of God was to bring blessings upon all, whether they were Jew or Gentile. These blessings would need to be introduced into the world in a miraculous manner, and it was to be accomplished by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, using various ranks of society for instruments, hence the mention of *sons and daughters, old and young* men upon whom the outpouring was to come.

Verse 29. *Servants and handmaids* are named to show that the blessings of the Gospel will be for all classes of mankind, whether high or low, rich or poor.

Verse 30. *Blood, fire, etc.,* is figurative and refers to the disturbances that were to occur in close connection (as to time) with the outpouring of the Spirit.

Verse 31. This verse is still figurative but is more specific than the preceding one. It was fulfilled when Jesus was on the cross and the sun was prevented from showing its light for three hours (Matthew 27: 45). This was

only 50 days before the giving of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles, which would give to the language here the meaning as if it said the event would occur "just before" the day of the Lord. *Terrible* is from the Hebrew word *YARE*, one of whose meanings is "to be revered"; and certainly that can truly be said of the day when the Lord gave to the world the kingdom that was to "stand for ever."

Verse 32. *Shall be delivered* is expressed by "shall be saved" in Acts 2: 21, which shows that the two expressions mean the same. To *call on the name of the Lord* means to look to Him for the means of salvation. (See Acts 22: 16; Romans 10: 13.) *Mount Zion and Jerusalem* are named together because the former was a special spot in the latter city. *Deliverance* means the same as "be saved" in Acts 2: 21. *Remnant* is from *SARIV*, which Strong defines "a survivor." It is said with reference to the Jews who were to be still serving God at the time the Spirit was to be given. It is true that the benefits of the Gospel were for all nations, but the Jews were given the first opportunity of receiving them. (See Acts 13: 46; Romans 1: 16; 2: 10.)

JOEL 3

Verse 1. The prophet drops back to fleshly Israel and again refers to the return from captivity. *Judah and Jerusalem* are named because the former was the 2-tribe kingdom that had Jerusalem for its capital, and it was the part of the Jewish nation that went last into the captivity.

Verse 2. *Valley of Jehoshaphat* is a figure of speech intended to mean the judgment of God upon the nations that had oppressed His people. Moffatt renders the term *valley of Jehoshaphat* by "Judgment Valley," and that agrees with the figurative sense of the term attributed to it above.

Verse 3. This verse pertains to the disrespect that the heathen nations had imposed on the people of God. They treated them as if they were mere items of personal property which could be handled solely for their value in a business transaction.

Verse 4. *Tyre and Zidon* were among the lesser cities that had mistreated the people of Israel. *Will ye render me a recompense* is a way of saying that the wicked cities could never fully repay the Lord for the injustices they had heaped upon His people. *If ye recompense me* means that even if

these cities thought they could make things right by some temporal offer, it would not meet the just demands of the case. Were they to attempt any such offer their worthless articles would be rejected.

Verse 5. It is bad enough to take from another his personal possessions unlawfully, but it is much worse when it is done with the intention of making an evil use of them. These heathen cities had stolen the precious metals out of the land of Israel and used them in their idolatrous worship.

Verse 6. Almost all countries dealt in slaves in ancient times. These cities had kidnapped the young people of Jerusalem and sold them for service to the Greeks who were located near the coast of the Mediterranean Sea.

Verse 7. All of God's people who had been enslaved were promised their freedom. *Return your recompense* denotes some kind of judgment that would be sent upon these wicked cities for their mistreatment of the Lord's people.

Verse 8. Again we see that slavery was a traffic in those times, and these wicked cities are threatened with being "paid with their own coin" by having their children sold as slaves. The Sabeans were a people living a great distance south of Asia, hence the prediction means to warn these cities that when their own children were taken from them, they would be sold and transported far away.

Verse 9. The preceding chapter followed a prediction of the return of fleshly Israel from captivity, by one of the introduction of the Gospel. The present chapter does about the same thing, for the verse of this paragraph begins a highly figurative prophecy of the Gospel Era, and it is the subject through verse 18. *Prepare* is rendered "sanctify" in the margin, and Strong's lexicon agrees with it. The thought is that a holy war was to be proclaimed, not one to be waged with literal steel weapons.

Verse 10. This verse might seem to disagree with the foregoing comments, but it will be seen that it is a figurative description of the conflict. Men who had been interested only in temporal pursuits such as agriculture or carnal warfare, were to turn their energies into another direction. *Let the weak say I am strong*. This is the very thing that Paul tells Christians to be as we read in Ephesians 6: 10. Under the Gospel administration, those who might be regarded as weaklings

in temporal activities, may be able to feel strong by the spiritual help from the Lord.

Verse 11. *All ye heathen* is an invitation for all nations to come and partake of the blessings offered by the Lord of heaven and earth. *Cause thy mighty one* is rendered "the Lord shall bring down" in the margin, which agrees with the thought in the general context of the passage.

Verse 12. *Valley of Jehoshaphat* is explained at verse 2. The *heathen* or nations in general were to be brought under the rule of the Lord, put forth through the Gospel that is intended for both Jew and Gentile.

Verse 13. A *sickle* and *wine press* are instruments used to gather and make use of the products of the land. When used figuratively it denotes that an important ingathering is going to take place, and in the present case it means the harvest of souls gathered by the reapers for the Gospel system. These souls were to be rescued from a life of wickedness which was great, and that can be reversed only by divine truth.

Verse 14. *Valley of decision* is virtually the same as "Jehoshaphat" in verse 2. Sinners of all nations were to be called upon to submit to the decision or judgment of God against all doers of unrighteousness.

Verse 15. This appearance among the heavenly bodies identifies the whole passage as a prediction of the church (chapter 2: 31 and Acts 2: 20).

Verse 16. A roaring voice usually impresses us with being something fierce or savage; but it also means a voice that is strong and reassuring. Such was to be the kind of voice the Lord would utter from *Jerusalem*. This place is a contrast with that from which the Jewish law was given which was Mt. Sinai. Zion was a particular spot in Jerusalem that was the seat of the government and where David had his headquarters. *Heavens and earth shake* refers to the general shake-up among the nations that was to be caused by the introduction of the Gospel. This shaking was to cease and leave behind it a *kingdom which cannot be moved* (Hebrews 12: 28), and it was to be the hope of the people of God.

Verse 17. *Mountain* in symbolic language means a government, and in the present passage it means the government of Christ. *No strangers pass through* means literally that the nation would not be bodily taken over

by a foreign army as it was done by Babylon. Spiritually it denotes that no stranger (one of the outside world) would enter this kingdom until he renounced his past relationship and became a fellow citizen (Ephesians 2: 19).

Verse 18. All of these figures of speech refer to the spiritual blessings to be given through the kingdom of Christ. They were to be as water in a thirsty land, and their fountain will reach even to the valley of *Shittim*. Funk and Wagnalls Standard Bible Dictionary says the following of this place: "Some dry, thirsty valley where acacias (a desert plant) were known to flourish is meant." The point is that the fountain of the water of life will be so full that it will flow and reach even to the regions formerly very dry.

Verse 19. The passage resumes briefly the subject of ancient Israel and the countries that mistreated them. These persecuting groups were destined to feel the weight of God's wrath for their mistreatment of His people.

Verse 20. *Judah* has the meaning of spiritual Israel, and it is a repetition of the prediction that the new kingdom was to "stand for ever" (Daniel 2: 44).

Verse 21. *Cleanse their blood* means the cure of idolatry if applied to fleshly Israel, and to the remission of sins when applied to spiritual Israel.

AMOS 1

Verse 1. Amos was not a prophet "professionally" (chapter 7: 14); that is, he was not devoting his life among the group of men classed as prophets, but was a shepherd by occupation. But the Lord can call upon a man from any walk of life to receive instruction and directions to whatever work is needed. For instance, the Lord called Moses from this very same occupation to take upon him the great work that was to engage him all the rest of his life (Exodus 3: 1, 2). Likewise, Amos was called upon to receive a prophetic message and write it down to become a part of the Bible. *Israel* and *Judah* mean the 10-tribe and 2-tribe kingdoms which were in power when Amos was called. The time of his call is specifically indicated by naming the kings who were reigning over the Jews, and the date is made still more definite by its relation to an earthquake that is recorded in history. I shall give the reader the information of this very unusual circumstance: "While Uzziah was in this state [condition of pros-

perity and power], and making preparations for futurity, he was corrupted in his mind by pride, and became insolent, and this on account of that abundance which he had of things that will soon perish, and despised that power which is of eternal duration (which consisted in piety toward God, and in the observation of his laws); accordingly, when a remarkable day was come, and a general festival was to be celebrated, he put on the holy garment, and went into the temple to offer incense to God upon the golden altar, which he was prohibited to do by Azariah the high priest. In the meantime, a great earthquake shook the ground, and a rent was made in the temple, and the bright rays of the sun shone through it, and fell upon the king's face, insomuch that the leprosy seized upon him immediately; and before the city, at a place called Erpge, half the mountain broke off from the rest of the west, and rolled itself four furloughs, and stood still at the east mountain, till the roads, as well as the king's gardens, were spoiled by the obstruction." — Josephus, Antiquities, Book 9, Chapter 10, Section 4. This was not the first and only time where God expressed his attitude toward a situation by some interference with the established order of things in creation. He caused the sun to stand still for Joshua (Joshua 10: 13), and the shadow to go backward for Isaiah (2 Kings 20: 11). The difference in the cases being that the two mentioned last were to show His approval of what was being done, while the one of our verse was to demonstrate His disapproval. It is all in keeping with the thought in Hebrews 1: 1.

Verse 2. See the comments on Joel 3: 16 for the various meanings of "roar." In the present case it signifies the intensity of the Lord's feelings against the wrongs of the heathen nations, as well as those of some of His own people. Jerusalem is named as the place from which the voice of the Lord will sound, because that was the capital of his kingdom on earth. *Carmel shall wither* implies that it would be a remarkable event for such a place to fail. I shall quote what Funk and Wagnalls Standard Bible Dictionary says: "It [Carmel] was also famed in literary composition for natural beauty. Together with Sharon, Lebanon, and Bashan it is one of the points of Palestine which especially show God's favor to Israel in bestowing such a country upon it. Its devastation is, therefore,