

and read the vv., I think you will see how exactly it fits the description of the people God had so blessed, giving them His law, giving them His wonderful revelation, and then they turned away from Him, neglected His law and He sent them off into captivity.

So you have this picture of God's judgment upon the people in these 12 vv. ending with the words (as KJV says) "in the city is left desolation and the gates smitten with destruction." You see how much better that fits one country--it is the city rather than taking it as describing the whole country. But now God does not in the prophets simply give you gloom and destruction and calamity. God often starts the prophetic messages with that. In fact in all of our evangelism we have a great need of bringing people to understand their need. To see their rebellion against God. To see their failure to understand the world apart from recognition of God.

We need to bring the problem before them in most cases before we can get ==give them a full understanding of the wonderful solution that God offers of salvation thru the Lord Jesus Christ. In many of the prophets this is the common way that over and over begins with God's punishment of sin, and then goes on to show that that is not the end. That God still has wonderful purposes in mind, and He has not cast His people aside.

So we find he continues in v. 13 where it says, "So will it be on the earth and among the nations" (NIV). I think KJV is better: "When it shall be in the midst of the land among the people" and KJV says "it shall be as the shaking of an olive," and as the gleaning of grapes when the vintage is done. The NIV has "when an olive tree is beaten or when gleanings are left . . ." Here we have the first note of hope in the chapter. God destroys the land, drives the people into exile, gives this terrible punishment for sin but that's not the end! There are still the gleanings--when the gleaning grapes are left. God has His own people no matter how a nation turns against Him, no matter how the world may turn against the gospel, God still has His own like the gleaning of grapes when the harvest is done.

There is a remnant of grace that is left. So in v. 14 he speaks about this remaining, this gleaning of grapes, those who are left after judgment has come. He says about them (v.13), "(14 rather) "They raise their voices and shout for joy. From the west they proclaim the Lord's majesty." What a wonderful statement in v. 14. "They will lift up the voice, they will sing for the majesty of the Lord. They shall cry aloud from the sea." It shows the gleaning of grapes only suggested in the previous verse. They remnant of grace, not cowering and fearing and thinking they are going to be wiped out and keeping ~~xx~~ quiet, but lifting their voice. Proclaiming the Gospel, presenting the truth. Singing for the majesty of the Lord. Crying aloud. The KJV says "from the sea." NIV says "from the west" they proclaim the Lord's majesty. Well, in Palestine they looked out to the west and saw the sea. ~~xx~~ When they wanted to refer to the west they would say "toward the sea." "Soward the sea" is a literal translation.