

in v. 5 6, "Therefore I will make Samaria a heap of rubble, a place for planting vineyards, I will pour her stones into the valley and lay bare her foundations." Somebody in this x century going to Jerusalem will find people from all over the world. You find there many interesting remains from ancient times. You have much that shows Jerusalem to be one of the most important cities from an historical viewpoint in the world.

But in Samaria 50 years ago, you would just have this open hill. (I guess a little more than 50 years ago). Just this hill top, a place for planting vineyards, a heap of rubble and on this rubble the weeds have grown up. Part of it was used for farms. You think of the difference between these two great cities. Jerusalem though it departed far from God, and Samaria departed sooner and further. And you see the difference between the two.

So Micah here, about 730 B.C., predicted what would happen in 721 B.C. "Therefore I will make Samaria a heap of rubble, a place for planting vineyards. I will pour her stones into the valley and lay bare her foundations." He goes on for 2 more vv. telling about the fate of Samaria.

In 1:8 he begins a section where he comes back to Judah. You (Samaria) has this terrible fate, but Judah also will have great troubles ahead. We won't have time to look at details of the rest of this ch., it is a ch. that is much more interesting if read in the Heb. than in the Eng. because it has more plays on words than anything else in the Bible. Here he mentions about a dozen cities and towns W SW of Jerusalem. In connection with each one of them he makes a play on words "Tell it not in Gath, weep not at all." The word Gath is similar to the Heb. word "to tell". You might say, "Tell it not in Tell Town." Then in Beth Ophrah (a word that sounds like dust, (Heb.) roll in the dust), and pass on in nakedness and shame you who live in Shaphir (beautiful or pleasant). You who live in a town called beautiful and pleasant, you will have nakedness and shame. So he deals with these towns in this beautiful poetry, making a play on the name of each of them as he shows the punishment he has in store for the people.

That goes on to the end of the ch. Ch. 2 begins with the theme of the iniquity of the people: "Woe to those who plan iniquity, to those who plot evil on their beds. . . . Then v. 5 starts the punishment: Therefore the Lord says, I am planning disaster against this people from which you cannot save yourselves." In v. 6 he starts telling about the prophets, the false prophets. "Do not prophesy," the prophets say Do not prophesy about these things, disgrace will not overtake us." This reminds us that the prophets the Bible contains writings from were by no means unique in Israel and Judah. There were many who claimed to be prophets. There were many who declared that what they said was the Lord's will. We find Jeremiah and others having direct meetings with these prophets and having them say the very opposite that the prophet of God said.

It was rather common to find people in those days claiming to be prophets. But the task of the believer was to determine which were the true prophets. All these prophets wrote books, we can be quite sure of that. The books in our Bible are not all the literature of the prophets of ancient times. There were many false prophets who doubtless wrote books too. But God led the people of God to know which were the true books, which were the books that He had inspired. Those were preserved. The others, most of them, have been lost.