

STUDIES IN THE MEGILLOTH

I. Some Introductory Notes:

I can only hope the title does not scare anyone. The term "Megilloth" is the Hebrew designation for five books in the Old Testament: Ruth, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, and Esther. These books are grouped in the third section of the Old Testament...a section called "the writings". They are all very important in the life of Israel but they are often overlooked in our studies--especially Lamentations and Ecclesiastes. Ruth and Esther are better known and the Song of Solomon gets a good deal of attention in an allegorical sense. All have strong messages for us as well as for times past and my intention is to treat them in this series of talks. In the morning messages I will talk about the books and the teachings that are informative and helpful. In the evenings I will tie the books into the New Testament teachings along the same line. How well this may be done....well, we will wait and see but that is the intention as I work with the subjects.

Approaching a study such as this, one must remember that the Old Testament is foundational to the New. It's prophetic character is easily recognized and its didactic nature is seen in the teaching of the Lord Jesus and the Apostles. The term "old" does not mean inferior, it simply means it has been in practical usage longer. We probably all know that but.....

The thirty nine books of the Old Testament are divided into three sections: the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings. The Prophets are divided into "Former" and "Latter" prophets and the Writings are given three divisions: Poetry, Rolls (Megilloth) and Histories. They were mostly written in Hebrew....there are some brief Aramaic sections in the writings and some Aramaic phraseology in other places (if you wish to know more about that, ask me!) Hebrew is a beautiful language and moves with its own rhythmic style. Hebrew poetry is different from our poetic expressions but the feeling, emotion, zeal, and ideology is not much different. Hebrew poetry does not rhyme but it sings with a melodic concept that is only appreciated when read aloud. It moves the heart and allows a maximum of expressions of the best known emotions of mankind. You can see that I enjoy it. Some forms are grim but most are uplifting and --although it is dangerous to offer this--if you think I am exaggerating....come and hear my memorized recitation of Psalm 23, in Hebrew. Poetry is found in all parts of the Old Testament as well as the poetic books in the Writings. We will not study it, however, we will concentrate on the books.

I think you must know the cliches that are used to define the relationships such as "the New is the Old concealed, the Old is in the New revealed" so I will not press on this emphasis. No part of the Bible should be overlooked, hence this study.