

**I. Israel's Sin (v 1).**

- A. Israel's sinned against the Lord
- B. What is sin? (*Shorter Catechism* 14)
- C. Against whom is our sin? — The LORD (Rom 3:23)
- D. What is the root causes of our sins?
  - 1) Our sinful nature
  - 2) Our pride, idleness, and discontent
- E. Uses from the Text
  - 1) Learn how to fight temptation before the hour of temptation.
  - 2) Know yourself, as well as your enemy.
  - 3) Be busy doing good, beware idleness (Pr 24:30-31; Song 4:16).
  - 4) Always be content, but never complacent.
  - 5) Be armed with the Scriptures in your heart (Psa 119:11-12)

**II. The Lord's Judgment Upon Israel Through Midian (vv 2-6).**

- A. The mercy of God even in judgment upon the Church
- B. The Church fleeing in fear
  - 1) Should they not have looked to the Lord in faith!
  - 2) Use, Christian, you are always to fight the good fight, even when you will likely lose! The reason for this is three-fold:
    - a) The Law of God commands our obedience, not our circumstances or self-assurances
    - b) The Lord is able to grant victory to the smallest remnant
    - c) The Church, through the power of Christ the Victorious King, will have victory.
    - d) Let us not fear, but with faith look to the Lord, repenting of our own sins and calling upon His holy name (Psa 123:1)
- C. The Lord thwarts all Israel does
  - 1) Why are the enemies of God not content with their own prosperities, but always come after the Church in particular?
    - a) Because of their own covetousness (Phil 3:19)

- b) Because the wicked cannot abide the prosperity of the Church (Psa 68:15-16)

- 2) This is a common manner of God's discipline
- 3) What are the means that God uses to thwart the Church? (a) Our enemies; (b) Ourselves; (c) Creation
- 4) Why does the Lord often discipline His children by thwarting the efforts of His Church?
  - a) Lack of attention to the public worship of God (Hg 1:4-7)
  - b) Lack of attention to family worship and prayer.
  - c) Lack of attention to private prayer (Jms 4:2)
  - d) Abuse of the Lord's Day (Isa 58:13-14)
  - e) Negligence in tithing unto the Lord (Mal 3:8-10)
  - f) Because of idolatry and persistent sin (Jsh 7).
  - g) Habitual or heinous laziness or covetousness (Pr 13:4)
- 5) Uses from the Point
  - a) Consideration of rather than consternation in God's providence.
  - b) Full and free confession of and repentance to God.
  - c) Rejoice that God is disciplining you as sons
- D. The purpose of God's chastisement and judgment

**III. The Lord Prepares His People for Deliverance through a Prophet (vv 7-10).**

- A. God sends a prophet, and the pattern of redemption history
- B. The message given to God's people (vv 8b-10)
- C. Uses from the Point
  - 1) We need the Word of God
  - 2) We need the Word of God preached (Rom 10:14-15, 17)
  - 3) We need the sting of the Law
  - 4) We need the proclamation of the Gospel
  - 5) These two (the Law and the Gospel) meet in faith in Jesus Christ and repentance unto life (Zech 12:10)
  - 6) We need the assurances of the Gospel in the character of God
  - 7) We need the hope of the end of the story (Isa 33:22)