

**Minor Prophets**  
*Turn Back to Yahweh*  
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**JONAH**

- DATE/ERA:
  - The Fall of Israel (722 BC)
  - Jonah's Ministry (793-753 BC)
  - Prophesied the Expansion of Israel's Borders Under Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:23-25)
- TARGET AUDIENCE:
  - Israel, Northern Kingdom
- TARGET TOPIC:
  - Warning of Divine Judgement Toward Nineveh with a View to Repentance
  - Israel as a Means to Redeem all Peoples
  - In the Previous Century, Assyria Expanded Westward Forcing Israel's Kings to Pay Tribute
- DISTINCTIVE PASSAGES:
  - 4:2 Jonah Flees Because God is Merciful
- MAJOR LESSON/APPLICATION:
  - Jesus Friend of Sinners? Like people from Nineveh, the Assyrians?
  - The Inclusiveness of God's Mercy – "All Nations Will Be Blessed"

**AMOS**

- DATE/ERA:
  - The Fall of Israel (722 BC)
  - Amos's Ministry (767-753 BC)
- TARGET AUDIENCE:

- Northern Kingdom, Israel
- TARGET TOPIC:
  - Social Injustice
  - Oppression/Neglect of the Poor
  - Unparalleled Prosperity for Upper Class due to Jeroboam II's Political Expansion
- DISTINCTIVE PASSAGES:
  - Rhetoric of Entrapment
    - Indictment Against the Other Nations (1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4)
    - Israel Affirms these Indictments and Then BAM (cf. 2:6)
    - NT Examples of Entrapment Rhetoric?
      - Nathan said to David, "You are the man!" (2 Sam 12:1-7)
      - "You who judge practice the same things" (Ram. 2:1-4)
  - Hymns Exalting Yahweh as Divine Warrior (4:13; 5:8-9; 9:5-6)
  - Salvation of Israel (9:7-15)
    - "I will not totally destroy the house of Jacob" (7-10)
    - "I will restore the fallen booth of David" (11-12)
      - Incorporation of Gentiles – All nations will be blessed (Acts 15:16-17)
    - "They will never again be up rooted from the land I have given them (13-15)
- MAJOR LESSON/APPLICATION:
  - The Good Left Undone (James 4:17)
  - Christians Immune to God's Judgement? (1 Peter 4:17)
  - Should Christians Today Be Concerned About Social Injustice?

## HOSEA

- DATE/ERA:
  - Fall of Israel (722 BC)

- Prophetic ministry began during the reign of Uzziah in Judah (792-740 BC) and Jeroboam II in Israel (793-753 BC), extending at least thirty years into the reign of Hezekiah (716-686 BC).
  - So Roughly 750-700 BC
- Although Amos is first chronologically, Hosea being first functions as a thematic introduction to the Book of the Twelve
- TARGET AUDIENCE:
  - Northern Kingdom, Israel
  - Hosea was likely a resident of the Northern Kingdom, Israel
  - Maybe flees destruction in Samaria and finishes ministry in Judah (cf. 1:7; 5:5, 10, 14; 6:4)
- TARGET TOPIC:
  - Indictment against Israel for spiritual adultery (1:2)
- DISTINCTIVE PASSAGES:
  - Shocking Metaphors:
    - God as a ferocious lion in judgement (5:14; 13:7-8)
    - God as a lioness roaring for cubs in mercy (11:10-11)
    - God's faithfulness is like seasonal rains (6:3)
    - God's faithfulness is like nourishing dew to the fields (14:5)
    - Israel's unfaithfulness is as disappointing as a morning mist during drought and as fleeting as morning dew under a searing sun (6:4)
- MAJOR LESSON/APPLICATION:
  - God, the jilted lover

- Our unfaithfulness hurts God deeply
- Think about how it would feel if someone you loved was unfaithful to you e.g. betrayal from a close friend, infidelity within a marriage, rejection from a parent or sibling. The deep hurt you would feel parallels how God feels when His children run from Him to other things for comfort, peace, and joy.
- Hosea calls not only Israel and Judah to renew their “covenantal vows” to the Lord, but also all God’s people.
- Tension between God’s justice and mercy
- Children will come home (1:11; 2:23; 3:5), submission to one (1:11), one God (2:23), and one Lord (3:5), no Baal (2:17).
- Sin of Idolatry is spiritual adultery
- Grace of God (1:10-11; 2:14-23)
- Renewed Relationship with the Lord

## **MICAH**

- DATE/ERA:
  - The Fall of Israel (722 BC)
  - Micah’s Ministry (740-690 BC)
  - Assyrians Ruled Over Fertile Crescent
- TARGET AUDIENCE:
  - Judah, Southern Kingdom
- TARGET TOPIC:
  - Warns of How the Lord Would Use Assyrians to Bring Judgement Against Israel and Judah
    - Even After The Fall of Israel, Assyrian Expansion Westward Also Negatively Affected Judah – King Ahaz Assyrian Vassal
- DISTINCTIVE PASSAGES:
  - 4:3 Future Day of Peace “Swords into Plows” and “Spears into Pruning Hooks”

- 6:8 “Seek justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God”
  - 6:9-16 Social Injustice of Judah – “Short Measure,” “Wicked Scales,” “Deceitful Weights,” “Rich Men Are Full of Violence,”
- MAJOR LESSON/APPLICATION:
  - Is the Future Establishment of God’s Kingdom Your Daily Hope and Longing?
  - Do We Earnestly Anticipate the City “Whose Architect and Builder is God” (Heb. 11:10)? If Not, Why Not?

## **NAHUM**

- DATE/ERA:
  - The Fall of Israel (722 BC)
  - The Fall of Judah (586 BC)
  - Nahum’s Ministry (663-626 BC)
  - Assyrian Power At Its Zenith
- TARGET AUDIENCE:
  - Nineveh, The Capital City of The Assyrians (Doom)/Judah (Hope)
- TARGET TOPIC:
  - Death, Doom, and Destruction For Nineveh
  - No Room For Repentance – The Exact Opposite of Jonah
- DISTINCTIVE PASSAGES:
  - 1:13 Yahweh Will Break The Yoke of Assyrian Oppression of Judah
  - 2:1; 3:3 Short Staccato Repetition That Overwhelms The Senses
  - 3:19 “All Will Clap Their Hands Over You”
- MAJOR LESSON/APPLICATION:
  - God Will Triumph Over His Enemies – Good Will Prevail Over Evil.
  - Do You Ever Feel That Good Will Not Prevail? That God Will Let Evil Go Unpunished (1:3)? If So Why?

## ZEPHANIAH

- DATE/ERA:
  - The Fall of Israel (722 BC)
  - The Fall of Judah (586 BC)
  - Zephaniah's Ministry During the Reign of Josiah But Before His Reform (640-628 BC)
  - Preached to Judah In The Years Following the Disastrous Reign of Manasseh (2 Kings 21:1-18)
  
- TARGET AUDIENCE:
  - Judah, Southern Kingdom
  
- TARGET TOPIC:
  - Bread and Butter of Writing Prophets Most Reflected in Zephaniah:
    - Announcements of Judgement
    - A Call to Repentance
    - Promise of Salvation
  
- DISTINCTIVE PASSAGES:
  - 1:17 God Pours Out His Enemies' Blood "Like Dust" and Discards Their Flesh "Like Refuse"
  - 1:18 He Sweeps Away Everything "By The Fire of His Jealousy" and makes "a Horrifying End of All the Inhabitants of the Earth"
  - 3:12-20 God Will Rescue and Bless a Faithful Remnant of Israel
  - The Day of the Lord (1:7-8, 14, 18; 2:2-3)
    - See 1:17-18 For Eschatological Judgement of All Humanity
  
- MAJOR LESSON/APPLICATION:
  - Could Zephaniah's Message Function as a Warning for the Worldly Church (1:4-9) Today that Lies Complacent in Attitude and Action (1:12-13)?
  - Could Zephaniah's Message Function as a Beacon of Hope and

## Salvation for the Persecuted Church (3:9-13)

### **HABAKKUK**

- DATE/ERA:
  - The Fall of Israel (722 BC)
  - The Fall of Judah (586 BC)
  - Habakkuk's Ministry (622-605 BC)
- TARGET AUDIENCE:
  - Judah, Southern Kingdom
- TARGET TOPIC:
  - Why Does God Delay His Justice in Judah?
  - Why Does The Good Man Die and The Bad Man Thrive?
    - Zeph. 1:12 The People Think God is Impotent or Unwilling to Act
- DISTINCTIVE PASSAGES:
  - 1:6 Chaldeans As God's Instrument of Judgment Over Judah
- MAJOR LESSON/APPLICATION:
  - Is Questioning God's Goodness and Justice Ever Okay?

### **OBADIAH**

- DATE/ERA:
  - The Fall of Judah (586 BC)
  - Obadiah's Ministry (586 - 553BC)
    - 1:10-14 Edom Allies With Babylon Against Judah
- TARGET AUDIENCE:
  - Edom
- TARGET TOPIC:
  - Brotherly Conflict between Jacob (Israel/Judah) and Edom (Esau's

- Descendants)
  - God will utterly destroy Edom and ultimately restore Israel
  - Amos Condemns Edom for violence Against Judah (1:11-12)
- **DISTINCTIVE PASSAGES:**
  - 1:10-14 Edom Allies with Babylon Against Judah
  - Malachi References Edom's Destruction by Nabonidus, the final Neo-Babylonian king in fulfillment of Obadiah's prophecy (Mal. 1:1-4)
- **MAJOR LESSON/APPLICATION:**
  - Vengeance is of the Lord (Romans 12:19)
  - Hope for God's Justice – All Accounts will be Settled, This Allows Us to Release those who have wronged us from our anger

## **JOEL**

- **DATE/ERA:**
  - Difficult to Date: Ranges from 900 – 400 BC
  - Most likely around the Fall of Judah (586 BC)
  - Joel's Ministry Begins roughly 500 BC
  - Traditionally 800-700 BC Connected to Invasion by Assyria
- **TARGET AUDIENCE:**
  - Southern Kingdom, Judah
- **TARGET TOPIC:**
  - Locust Plague (Ch. 1 & 2)
  - Human Armies (Ch. 1 & 2)
  - Locust Plague (Ch. 1) / Human Armies (Ch. 2)
  - National Calamity – Will it Bring the People to Repentance?
- **DISTINCTIVE PASSAGES:**
  - The Model of Repentance God Desires (2:12-17)
    - “Rend Your Heats and Not Your Garments” (2:13)



- God's Response to Repentance (2:18-27).
  - 2:18-19 are the verbs indicating past or future events? Did the people repent?
  - "the day of the Lord" (1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; 3:14)
- MAJOR LESSON/APPLICATION:
  - The seriousness of obedience for those who live in a covenant relationship with the Lord.
    - Obeying the Lord is a matter of life and death (Deut. 30:15)
    - Blessing and Cursing (Lev. 26; Deut. 28).
  - However, the church today does not live under the same "deal" the Israelites did, but the blessings and cursings in Deut. 28 provide a powerful illustration of the general spiritual principle of sowing and reaping (see Gal. 6:7-9).
  - The Lord is merciful and willing to forgive those who turn back to Him.
  - Lord's compassion in turning judgement to blessing in Joel's day anticipates the full and final restoration of Israel in the last days.

~~Jonah 793-753 BC~~

~~Amos 767-753 BC~~

~~Hosea 750-700 BC~~

~~Micah 740-690 BC~~

~~Nahum 663-626 BC~~

~~Zephaniah 640-628 BC~~

~~Habakkuk 622-605 BC~~

~~Obadiah 586-553 BC~~

~~Joel 500 BC (Commentary) or 800-700 BC (Les)~~