

A Study of the Minor Prophets

Compiled by
Terry R. Baughman



PO BOX 2030 ▪ GILBERT ARIZONA 85299 ▪ WWW.BAUGHMANGROUPMINISTRIES.COM

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Published by:
Baughman Group Ministries
P.O. Box 2030
Gilbert, AZ. 85299
Phone: 480.219.7043
Fax: 270.897.9556
Email: trbaughman@baughmangroupministries.com
or CLCbaughman@gmail.com

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Some of the notes were taken from a classic text by W. S. Hottel, *Through the Bible Book by Book*. These books were originally published by Union Gospel Press in Cleveland, Ohio and have been out of print for many years. Insights from the original languages and cultural understanding were acquired from classes at Western Seminary, Sacramento, California, taught by Marilyn Hargis. She was an inspiration. Thanks also to Bruce Wilkerson and Kenneth Boa, *Talk Thru the Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1983) for condensing and illustrating a vast amount of biblical history in a manageable format. Many of the charts and outlines are based on their work.

Most of all, thanks be to the Lord Jesus Christ who is the source of all knowledge, wisdom, and understanding. He is worthy of all our efforts to communicate and to compile the truth contained in Scripture.

Terry R. Baughman
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Review from Old Testament Prophets Introduction

There are two common major divisions usually identified when approaching a study of the prophets. They are designated as:

Major Prophets

Minor Prophets

The *Major Prophets* are those who appear to be more *long-winded*. In other words they wrote the *longest* books among the prophets. These include Isaiah, Jeremiah (along with his Lamentations), Ezekiel, and Daniel in our Bibles. The *Minor Prophets* consist of the balance of the prophets.

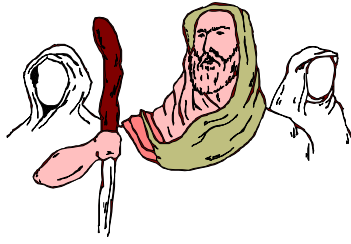
A better division for the classification of the prophets as used in this text relates to their chronology. The prophets are designated as *Pre-Exilic*, or before the Babylonian exile; *Exilic*, during the exile; and *Post-Exilic*, after the exile. The following segregation of the prophets will then be adopted:

- *Pre Exilic* - Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Micah, Isaiah, Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk and Jeremiah (though he lives and continues to prophesy into the time of the exile).
- *Exilic* - Daniel and Ezekiel (in Babylon)
- *Post Exilic* - Obadiah, Joel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi

There is debate on the date of some of the prophets' writing when insufficient information is given as to the historical setting of their times. Joel and Obadiah are among the more difficult to determine an accurate time frame. Some of these considerations will be addressed in the particular chapters of the individual prophets.

Another classification sometimes used in the study of the prophets is to divide them according to their audience of address. Some prophesied to Israel, some to Judah, and yet others to (or concerning) Gentile nations. This designation would result in the following:

- **Israel** - Hosea and Amos
- **Judah** - Micah, Isaiah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Haggai, Zechariah, Joel, and Malachi
- **Nineveh** - Jonah, Nahum
- **Babylon** - Daniel
- **Exiles (in Babylon)** - Ezekiel
- **Edom** - Obadiah



The Book of Amos

Life and Times

Amos means *burden* or *burden-bearer*. It was common for a prophet to speak of the word of the Lord that had come to him as the *burden of the Lord*. Amos carried a burden of judgment for Israel.

Amos is a contemporary of Hosea, Jonah, Micah and Isaiah. Jeroboam II was king in Israel.

Amos was a shepherd-turned-prophet. It is also noted that he was, “a tender of sycamore fruit,” (or sycamore figs, NASB), (Amos 7:14). This was a compatible occupation for shepherds. It was literally the job of a “fig pricker.” The figs had to be pricked before they would ripen. The shepherds would use their time in the fields while watching over their sheep and prick the figs on the trees. They were known as fig “prickers.”

Amos is from Tekoa. Tekoa is in the south, the kingdom of Judah, of the southern tribes. Judah and Israel did not get along. God chose a southerner to go up north and give a prophecy. He was instructed to go to the southern part of the northern kingdom, to Bethel. This immediately places him in conflict with the northerners.

Bethel

First mention in Scripture was in connection with Jacob fleeing home after the deception of his twin brother Esau. Years later he returns (after over twenty years at Laban’s house obtaining wives and cattle). After the ordeal at Shechem he returns to Bethel and calls it “El-Bethel.”

In *Hebrew*:

lxe-tybe lxe - “*the God of the House of God*”

Jeroboam I - at the division of the kingdom, sets up golden calves at Bethel and Dan for the convenience of the people and to prevent them from going to Jerusalem for worship.

Amos - It is here at Bethel, in Israel, Amos cries out against their worship and Canaanite cultic practices. It is a call to repentance.

Hottel Notes:

The ministry of Amos greatly disturbed Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, who reported it to Jeroboam, the king of Israel. This is the message Amaziah brought to the king: “Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel: the land is not able to bear all his words. For thus Amos saith, Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of their own land” (7:10, 11). We may readily believe that the fact that Amos belonged to Judah and yet prophesied in Israel made his ministry and message all the more disturbing. It had never before happened that a Prophet of Judah prophesied in Israel, and for this reason, no doubt, the ministry of Amos attracted wide attention.

From the Record we may infer that Amaziah the priest did not even await the answer of the king to his message, but at once sought to intimidate the Prophet and to drive him out of the land (7:12, 13). Amos, however, was not a weakling and a coward, but a courageous servant of Jehovah and therefore boldly resisted the priest and announced the fate of the priest and his family with no uncertain words (7:14-17).

It is interesting to note that Amos himself refers to himself as being a Prophet (7:8, 14, 15; 8:1, 2).

The prophetic character of Amos is established by the testimony of Stephen in his memorable address, as well as by James at the Council at Jerusalem (Acts 7:42, 43; 15:14-18).

Date of writing

The book of Amos is dated during the reign of Uzziah, king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam II the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake (Amos 1:1).

Amos was called to prophecy two years before an earthquake. In an area used to small quakes (frequently). This was a major quake. It is estimated by those who study such things to have been about 8 on the Richter scale, because of the damage along the fault line from Hazor toward the south.

Hottel Notes:

Amos prophesied nearly two hundred years after Solomon and about one hundred years after Elijah. The period of his prophecy is fixed by the opening verse of the Book. . . . Jeroboam II became king over Israel in the year of the reign of Amaziah, king of Judah (II Kings 14:23), Jeroboam reigned 41 years (II Kings 14:23). Amaziah reigned 29 years in Judah (II Kings 14:2). Since Amaziah was followed by Uzziah (also called Azariah) in the throne of Judah (II Kings 15:1). Jeroboam's reign covered 14 years of the reign of Amaziah and 27

years of the reign of Uzziah. Amos ministered during the time when Uzziah was king in Judah. in the second half of Jeroboam's reign.

Political Scene

It is a period of national optimism. Israel is at peace, the boundaries have been expanded under the leadership of Jeroboam II. Syria is fighting against Assyria and though the threat of this new world power looms on the horizon, Israel thinks all is well and ignore the prophets warnings against their blatant rebellion against God and wholesale adoption of idolatry and its associated immoral practices.

All is not well in Israel. Soul problems abound. Amos comes to Bethel with a message and a burning passion to deliver God's Word to them.

Mission and Message

Theme

There is a *call to repentance*, an appeal to "return."

To Israel (the Northern Kingdom) it is seen as a very negative message, being "from Zion" -- Jerusalem. "The Lord roars from Zion."

Jesus is the *Lion* of the tribe of Judah.

Bethel becomes Beth-Aven "House of Iniquity"

•**Amos 1:5** I will also break the gate bar of Damascus, And cut off the inhabitant from the Valley of Aven, And the one who holds the scepter from Beth Eden. The people of Syria shall go captive to Kir," Says the LORD.

The Call

•**Amos 3:8** A lion has roared! Who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken! Who can but prophesy?

•**Amos 7:14-15** Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: "I was no prophet, Nor was I a son of a prophet, But I was a sheepbreeder And a tender of sycamore fruit.

•Then the LORD took me as I followed the flock, And the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to My people Israel.'

Amos refers to himself as being a prophet and as a spokesman for the Lord. (7:8, 14, 15; 8:1, 2)

Amos fits the normal pattern of the prophets:

It is a Message of Judgment concluding with Hope; a promise of restoration. (Look for the themes of restoration throughout the prophets).

Amos' job was to go up and say, "This is wrong. Judgment is at the door." It was not a message of hope. God would not pass over it.

Hottel Notes:

Amos taught that justice between man and man is one of the Divine foundations of society; this is what Jehovah demands of His people. Amos would have Israel remember that privilege involves responsibility and that failure to recognize responsibility will surely bring judgment. Judgment always follows the exhausted patience of God by human sin (4:6-13).

In the next place, the message of Amos was a message of reproof of Israel for their sins and of judgment that was impending and would surely fall. Judah also is noticed by Amos, though his message concerns chiefly Israel, The different nations surrounding Israel are also reproved and warned of judgment. We learn here that God warns ere He sends judgment. This has been the case in the days of Noah, with Israel and Judah and the Gentile nations which surrounded Israel and Judah.

Finally, Amos also brought a message of hope, a prophecy of blessing in the future (9:8-15). See Acts 15: 14-18.

Overview of the Book of Amos

Chapters	Oracles	Descriptions
1—2	8 prophecies	surrounding nations and Israel (spiral)
3—6	3 sermons	sins of Israel, past, present, and future
7--9:10	5 visions	picture of future judgment
9:11-15	5 promises	restoration of Israel

Three Transgressions and Four

The formula is repeated concerning each of countries addressed in the prophecy of judgment. “. . . For three transgressions . . . , and for four, . . .” The emphasis is on the fourth transgression. Typical indictment -- 3 things and 4. The fourth thing is the real problem. It is like saying, “*Alright, you’ve done it this time!*” It was the last straw before the outpouring of judgment that Amos came to proclaim.

You will find this repeated formula in the following passages of Amos: 1:3; 1:6; 1:9; 1:11; 1:13; 2:1; 2:4; 2:6.

Transgression

This is not the word for “sin.” The usual word for sin is like in the New Testament meaning, “missed the mark” (an archery term). Here the word for “transgression” implies rebellion. It carries an attitude of contempt, “I don’t care what God thinks.”

In Hebrew it is, “Pesah” - fwp -- stubborn rebelling.

In Hebrew, “Iniquity” can be translated from either word, sin or rebellion.

The Eight Prophecies

1. Damascus - Capital of Syria/Aram, 2 Kings 13:3, They lead a military expedition against Gilead. They threshed Gilead, totally shredded it, for that they are in judgment.

•**Amos 1:3** ...”For three transgressions of Damascus, and for four, I will not turn away its *punishment*, Because they have threshed Gilead with implements of iron.”

- Judged for their cruelty...

2. Philistia (Gaza) -- They were involved in slave traffic. For them being in the slave business they were being done in.

•**Amos 1:6** ...”For three transgressions of Gaza, and for four, I will not turn away its *punishment*, Because they took captive the whole captivity To deliver *them* up to Edom.”

- Judged for slave trade...

3. Phoenicia (Tyre) -- Israel’s rival trading partner. Tyre represents all of Phoenicia. Their sin was taking captive whole communities. They did not observe their treaties.

•**Amos 1:9** ...”For three transgressions of Tyre, and for four, I will not turn away its *punishment*, Because they delivered up the whole captivity to Edom, And did not remember the covenant of brotherhood.”

- Judged for being a slave agent...

4. Edom -- Southern Jordan. Area of Petra near the Dead Sea. They sinned against their brethren. They were angry and did not get over it. Some where they violated their kinship obligations.

•**Amos 1:11** ...”For three transgressions of Edom, and for four, I will not turn away its *punishment*, Because he pursued his brother with the sword, And cast off all pity; His anger tore perpetually, And he kept his wrath forever.”

- Judged for unforgiveness...

5. Ammon - North of Edom. Murdering pregnant women in Gilead. This would weaken a nation. Eliminate their future. Eliminate rebellion. The King’s in exile, their days are over.

•**Amos 1:13** ...”For three transgressions of the people of Ammon, and for four, I will not turn away its *punishment*, Because they ripped open the women with child in Gilead, That they might enlarge their territory.”

- Judged for cruelty...

6. Moab - South of Ammon, across the dead sea. Their crime - they burned the king of Edom’s bones to lime. (1) they may have dug up dead bodies (grave robbers), or (2) burned alive -- excessively violent. Treated the body in ways that God reserved for the worst crimes. (burning) Cremation was reserved for people who had committed a certain kind of crime.

•**Amos 2:1** ...”For three transgressions of Moab, and for four, I will not turn away its *punishment*, Because he burned the bones of the king of Edom to lime.”

- Judged for hatred...

7. Judah - Those in Israel were shocked that Amos would give an oracle against his own. Their crime was disobedience. The standard by which they were judged was higher. There are rules for most people, and then there are rules for Christians.

•**Amos 2:4** ...”For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not turn away its *punishment*, Because they have despised the law of the LORD, And have not kept His commandments. Their lies lead them astray, *Lies* which their fathers followed.”
- Judged for despising the Law of God...

Seven times God declares, “*I will send a fire.*” It is a declaration of judgment on the surrounding countries. The spiral of judgment starts on the neighboring nations, narrows to Judah, their southern neighbor, and finally the site is leveled upon Israel.

8. Israel - Now comes the lengthiest description of what’s wrong.

•**Amos 2:6** ...”For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not turn away its *punishment*, Because they sell the righteous for silver, And the poor for a pair of sandals.”
7 They pant after the dust of the earth *which is* on the head of the poor, And pervert the way of the humble. A man and his father go in to the *same* girl, To defile My holy name.
8 They lie down by every altar on clothes taken in pledge, And drink the wine of the condemned *in* the house of their god.
- Judged for corruption and oppression...

Insight

God made them realize that what they condemned in others they are guilty of themselves. Some of our most scathing criticism of others is for faults we find in ourselves. The things we are blind to in ourselves we see clearly in others. Jesus addressed the same attitude in the critics in New Testament times.

•**Matthew 7:3** “And why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but do not consider the plank in your own eye?
4 “Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me remove the speck from your eye’; and look, a plank is in your own eye?
5 “Hypocrite! First remove the plank from your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.

A. Slavery - common practice in antiquity to make yourself or your entire family a servant to clear up a debt. This was an impossible situation. You could never get out of this situation of slavery.

Existence of problems with classes between people can be seen from Archaeology of the period. Normally, basic homes were all the same size, like a track home, but during this period there were big houses and shacks. They were very rich or very poor. This denotes that something was wrong. There was no restoration of rights and no observance of the year of Jubilee.

Those who were made slaves were being sold to third parties. Their lives and families were being uprooted. They had no power over their own future. They were being sold for land.

B. Perverted Justice - partiality

Court systems became corrupt. The injured received no justice. Officials accepted bribes. Implying that everyone is corrupt. Jury was made up of those who congregated at the gates.

C. Father and son used the same woman. This implies a sexual meaning. The Hebrew word “used” is not the normal word for sexual contact.

- indicated temple prostitution
- or sharing a concubine

D. God’s name profaned - using God to justify what they were doing.

Corruption of religion: Religion of Israel was corrupted by those who worshipped Baal. The evidence is of syncretism, the blending of religions and mixing of ritual practices. They adulterated the worship of Yahweh with rituals previously conducted for Baal.

We see the same in areas where other missionaries went and mixed their message with the local religion.

Amos is given a message to preach. Go to Bethel and give the message to the priest. His message can be summed up in one word -- *Righteousness*.

- To be “declared righteous before the Lord”
- Doing what is right! Doing good, right deeds
- You reflect God’s character in what you do.
- God’s response to injustice and unrighteous behavior is to “do right.”

The eight prophecies and their impact on Israel:

- Israel was glad their enemies were finally being destroyed.
- The prophecies could serve to build faith and confidence in God.
- God’s judgment on others was an example and lesson to Israel.

Some may have felt because they were covenant people they would not be affected. The prophets would address this issue. Amos is already warning what will happen to them for their disobedience, corruption and oppression.

Why would God bother to send a prophet if He was determined to destroy them?

He may relent – as in the case of Jonah

Restoration is promised.

God is in charge - He allows some things to happen for ultimate good.

(Romans 8:28)

Three Sermons

Three chapters, each beginning with, “Hear this word.” (3:1, 4:1, 5:1) The sermons detail Israel’s past, present and future:

1. Israel’s iniquities are judged
2. God’s chastening is to bring people back to him
Five times in chapter four He says, “*Yet you have not returned to me.*” (vs. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11)
3. Lists the sins of the house of Israel and calls the people to repentance.

Themes of message

Administration of Justice

Wealth gained by oppression. Money is not the issue but how you get it is!

Worship. Do the right thing that had been written.

Chapter 4

Amos called the women prized, fat, cattle. They oppressed the poor. The women were indicted. He prophesied that they will go out with hooks in their noses.

- Amos 4:1** Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who are on the mountain of Samaria, Who oppress the poor, Who crush the needy, Who say to your husbands, “Bring wine, let us drink!”
- 2 The Lord GOD has sworn by His holiness: “Behold, the days shall come upon you When He will take you away with fishhooks, And your posterity with fishhooks.

“Come and sin here,” he says to Bethel, Gilgal. The people refused to repent.

- Amos 4:4** “Come to Bethel and transgress, At Gilgal multiply transgression; Bring your sacrifices every morning, Your tithes every three days.
- 5 Offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving with leaven, Proclaim and announce the freewill offerings; For this you love, You children of Israel!” Says the Lord GOD.

Chapter 5:1-3 - Funeral song, Lament - “Qinah” (key-naw)

When there is a death this is a song you would sing for a friend or relative. Amos gives the Eulogy, the heart of the funeral. Amos feels grief.

He sings the funeral song now, before it happens. He sees it as being done.

5:2 - She is fallen. A young maiden who has died. Nothing we can do about it. “Virgin” could mean a land not conquered. A tenth will survive, going into exile.

5:4 - Seek me and live. You will go through it ... with, or without, God.

Key to the book of Amos 5:4-15

CALL TO REPENTANCE

5:18 - The Day of the LORD is introduced. Has a future, end-time connotation. For those who rejoice in the judgment. “Do you know what you are saying?” It is not as God’s day of deliverance, but judgment.

- Amos 5:18** Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good is the day of the LORD to you? It will be darkness, and not light.

The Five Visions

1. Locusts - reminiscent of the plagues of judgment on Egypt
2. Fire - the first two plagues were averted because Amos interceded.
3. Plumb line - measure of judgment
4. Rotten Fruit - Israel is overripe for judgment
5. Stricken Doorposts - Portrayal of judgment

Hottel Notes:

The first vision (7:1-3). God sends grasshoppers to devour the vegetation but Amos intercedes and He stops the plague. This represents the invasion of Pul, who withdrew on payment of tribute (II Kings 15:29). Here judgment was AVERTED by prayer.

The second vision (7:4-6), The Prophet beheld a fire sweeping everywhere before it, even devouring the great deep, the hoods of water. This represents a more severe judgment than the previous one. This judgment was likewise kept back by the intercession of the Prophet. This vision represents the invasion of Tiglath-pileser, who carried away many into captivity (II Kings 15:29). In this instance judgment was RESTRAINED by prayer.

The third vision (7:7-9). Jehovah by the plumbline shows that the time for mercy is past. Amos now plainly foretells the desolation of Israel and that the house of Jeroboam should come to an end with the sword. This vision represents the invasion of Shalmaneser, who put an end to the kingdom (II Kings 17:1-6, 23). Here judgment is DETERMINED. No prayer is PERMITTED, for none would avail. The false worship and the monarchy in Israel will be completely swept away.

A historical episode (7:10-17). The apostate priest at Bethel, Amaziah, who had charge of the idol worship, accused Amos falsely before king Jeroboam. Amaziah further ordered Amos to leave the country. The Prophet informed Amaziah that Jehovah had commanded him to prophesy. He was courageous and stood his ground.

The fourth vision (8:1-14). By the basket of summer fruit Jehovah shows Amos that the limit of His mercy has been reached and that desolation of the land and people will come shortly. Israel is ripe for the threatened affliction, and is also ready to fall. In the closing verses of the chapter a famine for the Word of Jehovah is announced.

The fifth vision (9:1-10). In this final vision the Prophet saw Jehovah standing by the altar, with the people standing before Him. He stands ready to give the stroke of judgment and to scatter all to the winds. This vision represents judgment EXECUTED TO THE FULL. The kingdom is to pass away from the face of the earth; there is no hope for its restoration.

Five Promises

The book of Amos ends with a note of *consolation* rather than the previous theme of *condemnation*. “God promises to reinstate the Davidic line, to renew the land, and to restore the people.”¹

Response and Relevance

Key Insights

Did God hate their Worship or their ritual?

•**Amos 5:21-24** I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies. Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them, Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings. Take away from Me the noise of your songs, For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments. But let justice run down like water, And righteousness like a mighty stream.

Hate (total disgust) your festival, false religion, etc.
God wants justice.

This passage is especially poignant in *The Message*:
Amos 5:21-24 (The Message)

"I can't stand your religious meetings.
I'm fed up with your conferences and conventions.
I want nothing to do with your religion projects,
your pretentious slogans and goals.
I'm sick of your fund-raising schemes,
your public relations and image making.
I've had all I can take of your noisy ego-music.
When was the last time you sang to me?
Do you know what I want?
I want justice—oceans of it.
I want fairness—rivers of it.
That's what I want. That's all I want.

Did Amos' prophecy come to pass?

Yes. Time will vindicate truth. Time is the true test of the prophet. However, there is no comfort in that if the message has not been delivered.

A Call to Repentance

Others have come with the ministry to call to repentance.
John, the Baptist
Jesus - Come to call sinners to repentance
The message of salvation

¹Wilkinson, *Talk Through the Bible*, 248.

Famine for the Word

It is possible to be full and starve to death. Bruce Howell preached at Missions Summit '97 about an oppressive government that began making bread from dirt. It would fill you up but there was no food value and people starved with their stomachs full.

There is a plant in Australia that you can make soup from that is filling but has absolutely no food value.

It is possible to have religious form with no foundation, punctuated preaching with no passion, sensational services with no salvation, and tremendous teaching with no transforming power of the Word.

•2 **Tim 4:3** (NASB) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires;

Prophecy and Fulfillment

<i>OT Prophecy</i>	<i>NT Reference</i>
Amos 8:9 "And it shall come to pass in that day," says the Lord GOD, "That I will make the sun go down at noon, And I will darken the earth in broad daylight;"	Matthew 24:29 "Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken."
Amos 5:25-27 "Did you offer Me sacrifices and offerings In the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel? You also carried Sikkuth your king And Chiun, your idols, The star of your gods, Which you made for yourselves. Therefore I will send you into captivity beyond Damascus, Says the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts."	Acts 7:42-43 "Then God turned and gave them up to worship the host of heaven, as it is written in the book of the Prophets: 'Did you offer Me slaughtered animals and sacrifices during forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? You also took up the tabernacle of Moloch, And the star of your god Remphan, Images which you made to worship; And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.'"
Amos 9:11-12 "On that day I will raise up The tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, And repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, And rebuild it as in the days of old; That they may possess the remnant of Edom, And all the Gentiles who are called by My name," Says the LORD who does this thing."	Acts 15:16-17 "After this I will return And will rebuild the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down; I will rebuild its ruins, And I will set it up; So that the rest of mankind may seek the LORD, Even all the Gentiles who are called by My name, Says the LORD who does all these things."

Devotional Insights

You reflect God's character in what you do. It is not enough to attend church and go through the motions of true Christianity. It must be real and from the heart.

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF AMOS

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers, [PAP]*
by Gary V. Smith, and the Class Notes [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. Amos prophesied during the reign of what king in Israel? (PAP)

2. What were the conditions during Uzziah's reign in Judah? (PAP)

3. Amos' messages indicated that he understood the two socioeconomic groups. Identify them. (PAP)

4. Where was Tekoa located? (PAP)

5. What did the name Amos mean? (CN)

6. Where did Amos go to prophesy? (CN)

7. What is one reason the ministry of Amos attracted wide attention? (CN)

8. What natural event is reckoned in the date of Amos' prophecy? (CN)

9. Did Amos refer to himself as being a prophet? If so, where? (CN)

10. What is the theme of the book of Amos? (CN)

11. What surrounding nations were addressed in the judgment of the prophecy of Amos?

12. The oppressive social policies of neighboring states gave the prophet what kind of opportunity? (PAP)

13. What key theological principle is seen in Amos relative to the sovereignty of God? (PAP)

14. List some of the sins of the nations in the region that Amos addressed? (CN)

15. What "shocking conclusion" did a sermon of Amos come to? (PAP)

16. In Amos 4 how did he label Israel's acts of worship according to Smith? (PAP)

17. Identify briefly each of the five visions of Amos. (CN)

18. What is the New Testament Reference concerning a fulfillment of Amos' prophecy toward the Gentiles? (CN)

19. The book of Amos ends with a note of _____ rather than the previous theme of _____. (CN)

20. What are the Focus and Topics of the chart on Amos?



The Book of Hosea

Life and Times

The Person

Hosea was a younger contemporary prophet of Amos. He is from the Northern Kingdom of Israel and prophesies to his own people. It seems to be about 750-724 B.C. His ministry was one of long service estimated to be anywhere from forty to seventy years in length.

His message could not have been given by Amos, who was an outsider. We know more about Hosea's grief than anything else. What God allowed in his life provided the backdrop.

Hottel Notes:

The name Hosea signifies "Salvation," "Deliverance" and is identical with the early name of Joshua, and with that of the last King of Israel, usually written Hoshea. The name of the Prophet, in its meaning, stands in contrast to his mission, which was the announcement of judgment and ruin. It was, however, in harmony with his vocation and the object of his Book, which was, to proclaim deliverance after judgment. The Book closes with promises and assurance of deliverance, blessing and future glory for Israel.

Hosea's life is his message. He is instructed to marry a harlot. He married Gomer (*Go-mar* means "finished").

She does not remain faithful to the prophet but commits adultery, possibly with numerous men, and she leaves Hosea. He eventually finds her being auctioned in slavery. He bankrupts himself to buy her back.

Hosea's experience is God's illustration of his love for Israel. Because of his unfailing love he is seeking to restore relationship with a people who have been unfaithful to their covenant.

Names of the Children are important.

**Jezreel* (stated he was Hosea's son) means "God plants" (Yahweh Zara) God is going to plant someone who grows up and makes things right.

*The next two children are born without naming the father. The first, a daughter named *Lo-Ruhamah*, meant "no love" (or no compassion).

*The next, a son named *Lo-Ammi*, meant “not my people” God is saying, “I am rejecting these children. They are not mine.”

C. Hassell Bullock translated 1:9 as the cancellation of the covenant of Exodus 3:14, “Call his name NOT-MY-PEOPLE, for you are not my people I am not I-AM to you.”

*Hosea 1:9 Then God said: “Call his name Lo-Ammi, For you are not My people, And I will not be your God.

Gomer leaves Hosea with the kids. She has no compassion. Hosea sought to restore the relationship. Hosea would like to have made a wall high enough she could not go out.

*Hosea 2:6 “Therefore, behold, I will hedge up your way with thorns, And wall her in, So that she cannot find her paths.

Some suggest that it is possible Gomer was not a harlot before their marriage. Because of the typology with Israel. (See 9:10, and 11:1.)

Date

*Hosea 1:1 The word of the LORD that came to Hosea the son of Beeri, in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel.

Hottel Notes:

Hosea began his ministry, probably toward the close of the **reign in Israel** of *Jeroboam II*, whose reign covered a period of 41 years. This was a reign of prosperity.

Zechariah followed Jeroboam II, and he reigned for 6 months only.

Shallum was next, and he reigned but 1 month.

Manahem followed Shallum, and he reigned for a period of 10 years. He was an unspeakably cruel king. He was a puppet of Assyria.

Pekahiah, who came next also reigned for but a short time, covering a period of 2 years only.

After him came *Pekah* whose reign extended over a period of 20 years.

The last and final king of the ten tribes kingdom, the Northern Kingdom, was *Hoshea* whose reign extended over a period of 9 years. The kingdom came to an end under Hoshea in the fall of Samaria.

The duration of the **reigns of the kings of Judah** during whose reigns Hosea ministered were as follows:

Uzziah reigned 52 years. He was a good king, and it was during his reign Hosea began to prophesy.

Jotham followed Uzziah in the throne, and he reigned 16 years. Jotham was a good king.

Ahaz came next, and he reigned for 16 years. Ahaz was a very wicked king. It was under his reign the Assyrians took Damascus.

Hezekiah reigned for 29 years. He was a good king.

Uzziah, king of Judah and Jeroboam II, king of Israel were contemporary sovereigns for a certain length of time. If we compute from the first year of Uzziah to the last of Hezekiah, we have a period of 113 years. Such a period seems too long; and the most probable reckoning is from the last years of Jeroboam II, to the first years of Hezekiah. Thus we have during Uzziah's reign 26 years; Jotham 16 years; Ahaz 16 years; Hezekiah 2 or more years. All told this gives us about 60 years. Some think Hosea prophesied for about 70 years, while others think it was about 60 years. Accordingly, Hosea must have lived to a ripe old age.

Political Scene

There have been four political assassinations in twelve years. It is very unstable time politically. Internal evidence suggests that Hosea is a native of Israel and prophecies to Israel. His message could not have been done by Amos as an outsider. We know more about Hosea's grief than anything else. What God allowed in his life provided the backdrop to his message.

He lived in the midst of religious apostasy.

- Baal worship
- Cult prostitution

They prostituted themselves religiously and politically, they used people to accomplish their objectives.

Mission and Message

Theme

Salvation or Deliverance

What do you think of when you hear the word "Salvation"?

Hottel Notes:

The message of Hosea, however, is also a message of mercy and love as well as of future deliverance and restoration, His entreaties were tearful as his denunciations were fearful. He was the weeping Prophet in Israel, as was Jeremiah of Judah. Some one has aptly said that "his tender expostulations seemed to flow in tears which almost blotted out the threatenings and accusations." Israel's doom was impending which Hosea also knew, but still in spite of this fact he passionately entreated them to return to God, assuring them forgiveness and favor, But the tearful warning, though oft repeated, was in vain, "Ephraim was joined to his idols," and therefore must be left to the Divine judgment which was inevitable. In all his tenderness and passionate pleading, the Prophet himself manifested the love of Jehovah for Israel.

Jehovah's message of love through Hosea also reaches out into the future. He will have mercy upon Israel, deliver and restore her. Such assurances are found throughout the entire prophecy (2:19-23; 3:5; 6:2, 3).

God's love and desire to save Israel is fully and blessedly revealed in chapter 14 of this prophecy. The main idea of this prophecy is "Jehovah's loving faithfulness to Israel and Israel's unfaithfulness to Jehovah." Jehovah remembers His covenant and will finally deliver and restore His people.

••••

Hosea addresses the ten tribes under the title of ISRAEL, of SAMARIA, which had been, since the days of Omri, their capital, and of EPHRAIM, the most distinguished of the tribes, to which Jeroboam, their first king, belonged. This fact is to be carefully observed lest one become confused concerning the address of this prophecy. The people of Israel, the ten tribes as a whole, are addressed by Hosea.

The book of Hosea may be divided into two sections:

- Personal narrative (chaps. 1-3)
- Prophetic discourses (chaps. 4-14)

Chapter 2

Legal accusation (byri - riv)

As in a court. Not to divorce, but to threaten the person into restoration. This is what Hosea was seeking. An order to get together again.

2:7-8 -- Israel is warned. She will not find what she desires by looking elsewhere. You won't find it in Baal.

God will remove the prosperity, the happiness, the easy life. God gave it and he can take it away.

Hebrews 12:6 - principle. Whom he loves. He will not let us get away with what will harm us and Him.

The big theme is RETURN. (God's Loyal Love)

God's Promise of Restoration

1. Triple betrothal -- 2:19-20

*Hosea 2:19 "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me In righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy;

*20 I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, And you shall know the LORD.

Reemphasizes betrothal, restoration. They were going to be disciplined. They needed to hear about the restoration.

- a. restore covenant -- righteousness and justice
- b. restore relationship -- loving-kindness and mercy, "hesed"
- c. restore confidence -- faithfulness "Great is thy faithfulness"

Hosea was the first to use a word picture to illustrate God's relationship with His people that we see in the New Testament. (marriage - Paul in Ephesians 5)

2. Fruitfulness - the famine of judgment is over

*Hosea 2:22 The earth shall answer With grain, With new wine, And with oil; They shall answer Jezreel.

A marriage - a covenant relationship. An obligation, yes, but more passionate devotion. Our relationship with God goes along with

- courtship
- marriage
- fruitfulness

3. Restored Names

*Hosea 2:23 Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, And I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; Then I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they shall say, 'You are my God!'"

Jezreel - God scatters – also, *God plants*

Mercy – instead of *No Mercy*

My People – instead of *Not My People*

Chapter 3

His big heart break: He finds his wife for sale as a slave.

One of the greatest pictures of the wages of sin. It sells you out; body, soul, and spirit. You cannot get yourself out of the situation.

Hosea goes and buys her back. He buys her for 15 shekels of silver and an omer and 1/2 of barley. Transaction is not all money. It took more than the money he had. Everything he had and then his food. He would go without in order to buy her back.

It was an enormous investment. He will fast or go hungry to redeem her. Followed by a period of discipline (no sexual relations).

It could be to determine her purification

or to see if she was pregnant

or a period of time for her to think about where she is coming from, to emphasize a separation

Her true happiness could only be with him. Gomer (and Israel) is told to “Return” twenty-two times in the book.

God had experienced it with Israel:

- repeated unfaithfulness
- left God

- God sought her
- it cost God everything

Your sin offerings provided a livelihood for the priests. The priest fed on your sin.

God doesn't call them Israel, but Ephraim. Something was wrong. Signified it doesn't fit. She was no longer Israel.

Hosea 4:15 is a reference to the Syro-Ephraimite War. Israel joined Syria to make an alliance against Assyria. Asked Judah to join them. Judah refused, so they attacked Judah to make them. Judah went to Assyria to request help. Assyria responds. (Very unwise decisions for Israel and Judah).

When you make a treaty, you accept the gods of the nation you make a treaty with. Judah paid tribute to Assyria to attack Israel and it followed that they accepted their gods.

Chapter 8

- v. 1 -- not an eagle but a "griffin vulture." Slaughter has already happened
- Glory departs
- Several short oracles
- Fruit has rotted and spoiled

Hosea 9:10 -- They became as detestable as the things they loved.

We become what we admire and think on. You will become what you love.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy; meditate on these things.

Chapter 11-12

Love for a wayward child and the fact you cannot let them get away with it. God is torn. "*Love must be Tough*"

There are lessons from History they haven't learned

Chapter 14

Final appeal. v.1 -- Return, Return, Won't you come home!

Response and Relevance

Key Insights

Hesed

God used the word “hesed” -- Love, covenant partner, loyal love (not the idea of being stuck), devoted love. You can mess up and God will restore. Covenant is dependent upon God.

Question:

How do you help someone like Gomer? Leaving a good relationship to court disaster?

Keep loving them -- “hesed” does not quit. There will be consequences to their behavior. Judgment is inevitable.

1. Justice (mishpat) -- Bigger than our word (right punishment), rather, all the stipulations of the covenant.
2. Compassion -- Not just based on relationship. Love is based on relationship, assumes a relationship. *Compassion assumes no relationship.* Not just mercy. It’s what you would feel spontaneously when you see someone small, hurt or cuddly.
3. Faithfulness (Nmx - amen) -- God’s reliability as a prop or a foundation. It’s what holds you up; faithfulness.

Knowledge

*Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; Because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

There are 13 references to knowledge (or know) in the book of Hosea. God desired a people who would know him. It was more than intellectual acknowledgment, but a relationship. Perhaps it could be likened to Paul’s desire to “know” Christ:

•Phil 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

The other references of knowing in Hosea are as follows:

- Hosea 2:8 For she did not **know** That I gave her grain, new wine, and oil, . . .
- Hosea 2:20 . . . And you shall **know** the LORD.
- Hosea 4:1 “There is no truth or mercy Or **knowledge** of God in the land.
- Hosea 4:6 [above]
- Hosea 5:3 I **know** Ephraim, And Israel is not hidden from Me; . . .
- Hosea 5:4 . . . And they do not **know** the LORD.
- Hosea 6:3 Let us **know**, Let us pursue the **knowledge** of the LORD. . . .
- Hosea 6:6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the **knowledge** of God more than burnt offerings.

- Hosea 7:9 Aliens have devoured his strength, But he does not **know** it; . . .
- Hosea 8:2 Israel will cry to Me, ‘My God, we **know** You!’
- Hosea 11:3 “I taught Ephraim to walk, . . . But they did not **know** that I healed them.
- Hosea 13:4 . . . And you shall **know** no God but Me; For there is no Savior besides Me.
- Hosea 14:9 Who is wise? Let him **understand** these things. Who is prudent? Let him **know** them. For the ways of the LORD are right; The righteous walk in them, But transgressors stumble in them.

Hosea	Chap. 1-3	Chap. 4-14
Focus	Adulterous Wife and Faithful Husband	Adulterous Israel and Faithful Lord
Topic	Marriage of Hosea	Message of Hosea
	Personal	National
Place	Northern Kingdom of Israel	

Insights

Prophecy and Fulfillment

OT Prophecy	NT Reference
<p>Hosea 1:10 Yet the number of the children of Israel Shall be as the sand of the sea, Which cannot be measured or numbered. And it shall come to pass In the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There it shall be said to them, 'You are sons of the living God.'</p>	<p>Romans 9:25-27 As He says also in Hosea: "I will call them My people, who were not My people, And her beloved, who was not beloved." And it shall come to pass in the place where it was said to them, 'You are not My people,' There they shall be called sons of the living God. And it shall come to pass in the place Isaiah also cries out concerning Israel: "Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, The remnant will be saved."</p>
<p>Hosea 2:23 Then I will sow her for Myself in the earth, And I will have mercy on her who had not obtained mercy; Then I will say to those who were not My people, 'You are My people!' And they shall say, 'You are my God!'</p>	<p>1 Peter 2:10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.</p>
<p>Hosea 6:6 For I desire mercy and not sacrifice, And the knowledge of God more than burnt offerings.</p>	<p>Matthew 9:13 "But go and learn what this means: 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' For I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Matthew 12:7 "But if you had known what this means, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice,' you would not have condemned the guiltless."</p>
<p>Hosea 10:8 Also the high places of Aven, the sin of Israel, Shall be destroyed. The thorn and thistle shall grow on their altars; They shall say to the mountains, "Cover us!" And to the hills, "Fall on us!"</p>	<p>Luke 23:30 "Then they will begin 'to say to the mountains, "Fall on us!" and to the hills, "Cover us!"' Revelation 6:16, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!"</p>
<p>Hosea 11:1 When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.</p>	<p>Matthew 2:14-15 When he arose, he took the young Child and His mother by night and departed for Egypt, and was there until the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt I called My Son."</p>
<p>Hosea 13:14 I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death. O Death, I will be your plagues! O Grave, I will be your destruction! Pity is hidden from My eyes.</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 15:55 "O Death, where is your sting? O Hades, where is your victory?"</p>
<p>Hosea 14:2 Take words with you, And return to the LORD. Say to Him, "Take away all iniquity; Receive us graciously, For we will offer the sacrifices of our lips."</p>	<p>Hebrews 13:15 Therefore by Him let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.</p>

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF HOSEA

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers, [PAP]*
by Gary V. Smith, and the Class Notes [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. What does the name "Hosea" mean in Hebrew? (CN)

2. At the beginning of the prophecy of Hosea, who reigned as king in Israel and in Judah?

3. Hosea was a younger contemporary to which prophet? (CN)

4. Where is Hosea from and who does he prophesy to? (CN)

5. What do the frequent references to Ephriam and other northern cities of Israel indicate? (PAP)

6. What does Hosea claim concerning himself? (PAP)

7. According to Hottel, what was the length of time Hosea prophesied? How long does Smith determine?

8. While Jezreel means "God planted" or "God scattered", what does the names of Lo-Ruhamah and Lo-Ammi mean? (CN)

9. Besides judgment the message of Hosea is also a message of _____ and _____ as well as of future _____ and _____.
10. What similarity does Hosea have to Jeremiah? (CN)

11. What two other names are sometimes used by the prophet for the ten tribes of Israel? (CN)

12. What two major sections may the book of Hosea be divided into? (CN)

13. What are the three parts of the triple betrothal? (CN)

14. Hosea indicated that "knowledge" was to be more than intellectual acknowledgment, what was it rather to be?

15. What is the Focus and Topics of the chart on Hosea?



The Book of Jonah

Life and Times

The Person

Jonah was the “*son of Amittai*” (Amittai means *truth*) and was from the area of Galilee, from the town of Gath-Hepher. Gath-Hepher was right over the hill from Nazareth in the territory of Zebulun just a few miles to the north (Jonah 1:1; II Kings 14:25).

Jonah means *dove* in Hebrew. The meaning of his name better describes the early part of his ministry than the portion of ministry depicted in his writing. During his early ministry there was peace in Israel while Syria was occupied with the attack of Assyria on their opposite borders. Jonah was a successful prophet, quite happy to be living with the reputation of a true prophet.

Technically the book of Jonah is anonymous, but *logically* he either wrote it or dictated it.

In modern usage the dove is associated with peace. Symbolically, in the New Testament the dove is representative of the Holy Spirit. The dove “rested” on Christ.

***Matthew 3:16 (NKJV)** “When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him.”

The religious order of Jesus’ day questioned Nicodemus concerning Jesus being a prophet. They denied any prophet coming from the region of Galilee (see John 7:41-52).

***John 7:41** Others said, “This is the Christ.” But some said, “Will the Christ come out of Galilee?”

***John 7:52** They answered and said to him, “Are you also from Galilee? Search and look, for no prophet has arisen out of Galilee.”

***Matthew 21:11** So the multitudes said, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth of Galilee.”

In answer to the question concerning Jesus, there WAS a prophet from Galilee. Jesus verified that Jonah was a prophet from Galilee. Isaiah says “*Galilee of the Gentiles*” (Isaiah 9:1). It is the “*ringed*” in area around Galilee during the reign of Jeroboam II. No wonder there was an affinity of Jesus with the prophet Jonah. It may also be noted that the Galileans were among those who received Jesus.

***John 4:45** So when He came to Galilee, the Galileans received Him, having seen all the things He did in Jerusalem at the feast; for they also had gone to the feast.

Jesus' remarks give us insight to Jonah, Luke 11:29-32

***Luke 11:29** And while the crowds were thickly gathered together, He began to say, "This is an evil generation. It seeks a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of Jonah the prophet."

***30** "For as Jonah became a sign to the Ninevites, so also the Son of Man will be to this generation."

***31** "The queen of the South will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and condemn them, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."

***32** "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, for they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here."

The book of Jonah has been widely criticized for the miraculous tale of the prophet being swallowed by a big fish. Some try to allegorize or explain it away as a parable, a fable or as prose. As if anticipating the skepticism of later eras Jesus speaks repeatedly concerning the prophet and never offers an excuse for the fantastic tale of his dilemma. Rather, Jesus offers the experience of Jonah as a sign of his own miraculous resurrection after three days in the grave.

***Matthew 12:39 (NKJV)** "But He answered and said to them, "An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah."

40 "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

41 "The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here."

Jesus made no distinction between the realities of the judgment, resurrection, the great fish, or the repentance of the Ninevites. Apparently the Lord accepted the veracity of the historical account of Jonah. The book of Jonah was placed among the sacred writings and in the canon of Scripture under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

While the ability of a man to survive three days being swallowed by a whale has been debated it may be noted that the, "Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah" (Jonah 1:17). In the New Testament the KJV translates the Greek word *khtouj* (transliterated *ketous*) as "*whale*". Perhaps the word was chosen as representative of the greatest of fish known to man. In the New King James it is translated "*great fish*" and in the New American Standard it is translated "*sea monster*".

Hottel Notes:

The Book of Jonah is one of those books of Sacred Scripture, along with several others, which has been widely attacked by critics. Naturally, because of the account about the fish swallowing Jonah, the unbelieving mind objects to accepting it as factual. They call it fiction, or an allegory, or a parable, or a prose

poem, and what not. Unbelief always stumbles at that which displays the supernatural and demonstrates the miraculous.

That this Book is a strictly historical narrative is manifestly evident, for a few reasons. In the first place, this is evident from the simple and plain meaning of the language employed. The account is given in a straightforward way and without any fanciful and ambiguous words. In the next place, this fact is also evident from the manner in which the existence and ministry of this Prophet, together with the main facts of his history, are referred to by our Lord (Matt. 12:39-41; Luke 11:29, 30).

We note that our Lord called the experience of Jonah a “sign” of His own resurrection. He speaks in one breath of the fish the repentance of the Ninevites, His own resurrection and the judgment day, not distinguishing either one from the other. He most certainly spoke of REALITY when He spoke of His resurrection and the judgment day. Yes, our Lord accepted without a question the story of Jonah as being a true and authentic history. . . .

Date

Jonah may have been the earliest of the writing prophets. He is seen as a *transitional* prophet representing the change from the unwritten prophets, like Elijah and Elisah, and the other writing prophets. Jonah’s tale is more of a *biography* where other writers leave a written record of their prophecies.

Hottel Notes:

Jonah prophesied during the reign of Jeroboam II, which fact itself shows that he lived in the days of that king. The history of those days is very interesting. Elisha had wept because Hazael, whom God had commanded him to anoint king of Syria, was to be commissioned of God to afflict Israel and take away much of their territory (II Kings 8:12; 10:32; 13:22).

In the days when Jeroboam II reigned over Israel, Jonah prophesied that a large portion of the land lost to Syria should be regained, which also came to pass during the prosperous reign of Jeroboam II. (II Kings 14:23-27).

Jonah is the prophet of 2 Kings 14:23-25.

***2 Kings 14:23** In the fifteenth year of Amaziah the son of Joash, king of Judah, Jeroboam the son of Joash, king of Israel, became king in Samaria, and reigned forty-one years.

***24** And he did evil in the sight of the LORD; he did not depart from all the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat, who had made Israel sin.

***25** He restored the territory of Israel from the entrance of Hamath to the Sea of the Arabah, according to the word of the LORD God of Israel, which He had spoken through His servant Jonah the son of Amittai, the prophet who was from Gath Hopher.

Jonah stands alone as the only prophet to actually be sent to a nation outside of Israel or Judah. Though other prophets delivered their message concerning other nations, Jonah was the only to be sent to deliver his message to Gentiles in person.

Political Scene

Assyria made its rise as a world power about the time of the division of the kingdom of Israel following the death of Solomon. “The Assyrian Empire was a world-empire for about 300 years, 900-607 BC.”²

Assyria was the newest military threat. They were the rising world power. As they made their advance across the fertile crescent, Syria, the near neighbor and enemy to the northeast, was forced to turn their attention to the Assyrian threat to their territories.

During this reprieve the borders of Israel were enlarged under the reign of Jeroboam II and in fulfillment of the prophecy of a prophet named Jonah. Much of the territory lost to Syria and King Hazael was regained during the prosperous reign of Jeroboam II.

Hottel Notes:

Despite the enlargement and prosperity of Israel under Jeroboam II the conquests and growth of Assyria made her an antagonist to be feared and respected. Nineveh, the capital of the empire, was one of the oldest, largest and strongest cities of that day. It was founded by Nimrod (Gen. 10:11), was ninety miles in circumference, and contained a population of approximately 600,000. It might be called a “garden city,” for it enclosed gardens and pastures, thus providing food for both man and beast within its walls, which, according to Heroditus, were one hundred feet high.

Mission and Message

The Call

The book of Jonah begins in a manner consistent with several other prophetic books, “the word of the LORD came to . . .” (Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah).

***Jonah 1:1** Now the word of the LORD came unto Jonah the son of Amittai, saying,

***Jonah 1:2** Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

The book of Jonah is evenly divided between chapters one and two, and chapters three and four. The first section begins with the first call of Jonah. The second section begins with a second and duplicate call.

***Jonah 3:1** Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying,

²W.S. Hottel, *Through the Bible Book by Book*.

***Jonah 3:2** “Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you.”

God had not changed his mind. Jonah did. Jonah’s first response was, “*But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the LORD. . . .*” (1:3) but after God got through with him he changed his response, “*So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD*” (3:3).

God is a second-chance God. He loved Nineveh and he loved Jonah and desired him to obey the call.

Nineveh was one of three main cities in the Assyrian empire. Sennacherib made it a capital city. Nineveh was approximately 500 miles northwest of Jonah’s home. Tarshish was west in the opposite direction 2000 miles, thought to be in the region of Spain. Tarshish was known for its tin and metals, a “*smelting place.*” Other references are found in Ezekiel and Jeremiah:

***Ezek 27:12** “Tarshish was your merchant because of your many luxury goods. They gave you silver, iron, tin, and lead for your goods.

***Ezek 27:25** “The ships of Tarshish were carriers of your merchandise. You were filled and very glorious in the midst of the seas.

***Jer 1:9** Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: “Behold, I have put My words in your mouth.

Why did Jonah initially refuse the call of God?

At first reading we would assume that he was fearful of the Assyrians and with cause. They were a brutal and violent culture who were reputed to host contests in torture with their captives to see who could keep their victim alive the longest while being brutalized. On the relief of the walls of Nineveh there are depictions of amputations, beards, ears and tongues being removed, decapitations, and crucifixions. The Romans were not the original nation to use crucifixion. It was practiced by the Assyrians years earlier. Jonah had every right to be fearful of preaching righteousness and judgment to this heathen nation.

In the last chapter (4:2) it is revealed that Jonah was more concerned with God being merciful to the heathen than that they would be merciful to him. He felt that Assyria deserved the judgment of God. When given the message that they would be destroyed in 40 days, Jonah probably said, “*Good!*” We might have a similar response if we were to be told that God was going to destroy a Moslem Terrorist state or a sinful city of our modern world.

Hottel Notes:

Jonah knew that God was merciful, and that, therefore, should Nineveh repent upon his delivery of the message of God to them, God would forgive them and the king and the city would be spared. He knew that he was called of God to prolong the life of the nation which was already in the process of exterminating his own nation. The preservation of Nineveh meant the eventual conquest and destruction of Israel. No wonder he fled in the opposite direction. . . . Jonah

loved his people and his country. He was patriotic and hated idolatry, and, for this reason his mission was distasteful to him. And why should he seek to prolong the life of a people who were the enemy of his own country?

Jonah almost naturally had little sympathy for the Gentiles or heathen. He, no doubt, was possessed of the spirit of prejudice. To be commanded to “go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before Me” (1:2), was contrary to his personal idea and feeling. This command awakened and stirred his prejudice, and he determined not to obey the command. He had no sympathy with God’s plan to save a Gentile nation.

Theme

Jonah is a book about repentance. If you repent God will restore. He is merciful to all people who will call on Him in repentance. It is a book that is more about God than it is about Jonah. Though the only quote from God is five words in Hebrew to Nineveh, the character of God and his response to repentance is the theme of the message in the book.

The saving acts of God are witnessed in the book of Jonah:

1. God saves the sailors from death in the storm.
2. God saves Jonah from death in the sea through the great fish he prepared and the deliverance from the fish on the shore.
3. God saves Nineveh when they respond to the message of judgment with repentance.
4. God patiently responds to Jonah when he angrily wishes for the judgment of God on this heathen city.

The prevailing theme of Jonah is God’s compassion. His compassion is evidenced upon Gentile sailors, a Gentile city, Nineveh, and an individual, Jonah himself.

God uses Jonah to change two foreign groups of people and their ideas about God. He was able to contextualize the message outwardly but failed to internalize this truth.

Response and Relevance

The irony of the story is that Jonah helped two foreign groups to change their concepts about God; the sailors and the Ninevites. Though he was successful in communicating an international God Jonah continued to have strong nationalistic prejudice. He was unable (or unwilling) to internalize the new concept Yahweh was using him to communicate, *Yahweh is Lord over all and has compassion on all kinds of people.*

God does not take pleasure in the destruction of the wicked. Even though the Assyrians were a violent culture against others, God desired to see them, and all people, come to truth and repent of their evil ways. It may cause us to ask, “Why does God show compassion on those we do not believe desire mercy?”

Why would God care about Nineveh?

Why would God care about any sinful people? Though the people of Israel enjoyed favorable status with God as his chosen people many illustrations throughout the Old Testament give evidence of the grace God would show among the Gentiles. The future expansion of the kingdom and the inclusion of all nations in it is a subject we may watch for throughout the study of the Old Testament prophets. God cares for *all* people!

*Jonah - Gentile Grace*³
Teny R. Baughman

The universality of God’s love, His grace, and His will are graphically demonstrated in the book of Jonah. Throughout Scripture there is the emerging theme of God’s concern or those excluded from the covenant promises of His chosen. The grand plan of the ages finds shelter under the umbrella of eternal purpose for all people. While individuals within the nation of Israel found favor and interaction with God, His ultimate desire is reflected in the special occasions of His grace given to Gentiles.

Rahab and Ruth appeal to the provision of promise and their faith transcends time and taps into the resource of future grace. They are ushered into the lineage of the Messiah and become participants in the bloodline of hope for all nations.

Naaman, the Syrian, and a nameless widow of Zarephath, share a common benefit of breaching the boundaries of God’s favored focus on a select people. Dotted throughout the Holy Writ there is ample evidence of God’s approval that some would sneak behind the veil of future possibilities and claim a provision He had planned for a later date.

Through the book of Jonah our narrow focus of God’s personal plan must be broadened to the greater perception of His program to effect world events, national expansion, and the prevailing purpose of His sovereign will. The lesson driven home in the entire scope of the book is, “Let God be God. “ The moment “us Jonah’s” try to put him in the small container of our own concept of prejudice and selectivity, we will surely be disappointed by the unlimited range of His mighty acts and expanse of effective ingenuity.

Surprisingly, we see grace given to the Phoenician sailors who called on Yahweh in a desperate storm. So vital is the message God has for Nineveh Jonah is given a second call with the same message, “*Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you*” (Jonah 3:2).

More than ever before it is easy to empathize with Jonah and identify with his recalcitrance. When I see myself in a circumstance with the propensity to produce conflict and a negative reception, I also want to run and hide.

When faced with the violent, the vile, and the vocal, it is easier to avoid them than to seek them out to deliver an unpopular message. I can even understand the frustration of Jonah when the message he preached caused a temporary change in their behavior and allowed them to escape the predicted judgment. *Some people deserve to be punished a little before they receive grace!* But, God doesn’t seem to think so.

³*Jonah - Gentile Grace* originally written as a Theological Reflection for a class in Old Testament Studies at Western Seminary, by Terry R. Baughman.

God will go to such great extremes to initiate the salvation process. No one is beyond His reach or outside of His desire. The book of Jonah demonstrates God’s desire to save the most vile and violent. Hope is given to the world by the past record of His faithful love.

The greatest revival in the entire Bible, among Jew or Gentile, was conducted in the most unlikely circumstances in Nineveh. Without the preparation of a prayer meeting, promotional campaign, or a program, one prophet preached a short message on a three day journey that turned an entire gentile city on its face toward God. Other prophets recognized the role God was taking toward the Gentiles. Isaiah 42:6,7 says,

*“I, the LORD, have called You in righteousness, And will hold Your hand;
I will keep You and give You as a covenant to the people, As a light to the Gentiles.
To open blind eyes, To bring out prisoners from the prison, Those who sit
in darkness from the prison house.”*

In the New Testament the promise of the Spirit is given, “to all who are afar off,” certainly giving us all hope to believe. Peter, after a disturbing vision, realizes the broader import of God’s design and declares it in the house of Cornelius, an Italian gentile, in Acts 10:34-35,

*“Then Peter opened his mouth and said: “In truth I perceive that God
shows no partiality.
“But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is
accepted by Him.”*

To have the kind of response to the message of God seen in Nineveh, there must be a single-minded devotion of unequivocal commitment to do whatever God may ask us to do and leave the results in His hands. Perhaps, if we can recognize His sovereignty, and submit to His instruction, we too will see that kind of revival in our day where “gentile grace” is no mystery and the call to respond is to, “whosoever will.” Because of Nineveh, we have hope.

Key Insights

A key verse in the book of Jonah is 4:2:

***Jonah 4:2 (NKJV)** “So he prayed to the LORD, and said, “Ah, LORD, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish; for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness, One who relents from doing harm.”

Prophecy And Fulfillment

OT Prophecy	NT Reference
<p>Jonah 1:17 Now the LORD had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights.</p> <p>Jonah 3:5-6 So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.</p> <p>Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes.</p>	<p>Matthew 12:39-41 But He answered and said to them, “An evil and adulterous generation seeks after a sign, and no sign will be given to it except the sign of the prophet Jonah.”</p> <p>“For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.”</p> <p>“The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here.”</p>
	<p>Also see Luke 11:29-30</p>

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF JONAH

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers, [PAP]*
by Gary V. Smith, and the Class Notes [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. What does the names, "Jonah" son of "Amittai" mean? (CN)

2. What was Jonah's hometown and where was it located? (CN) (PAP)

3. Whom did Jesus identify as being a prophet from Galilee? (CN)

4. To what event in the life of Christ is identified as being related to Jonah's experience in the belly of a great fish? (CN)

5. What proof may be offered that Jesus accepted the story of Jonah as a historical account? (CN)

6. How did Jonah come to be placed among the Sacred Writings? (CN)

7. How was the Greek word translated *whale* in the KJV, translated in other versions? (CN)

8. How is the book of Jonah described by those who do not believe the account to be factual? (CN)

9. Why is Jonah referred to as a transitional prophet?

10. What was Jonah's prophecy that is referred to in 2 Kings 14:23-27?

11. In what way is Jonah unique?

12. What nation is the world power and prominent aggressor during the prophecy of Jonah? (CN)

13. To whom was Jonah commanded to deliver God's message? (CN)

14. Where was Nineveh located? (CN)

15. What was Tarshish known for? (CN)

16. What nation before the Romans used crucifixion as a mean of execution? (CN)

17. . What fact about God did Jonah know concerning Nineveh's repentance? (CN)

18. What did the preservation of Nineveh mean to Israel? (CN)

19. To whom is God merciful? (CN)

20. What two foreign groups are changed as a result of Jonah's life? (CN) (PAP)

21. What cultural identifying markers did Jonah recognize in his worldview? (PAP)

22. Of what culture were the sailors possibly from? (PAP)

23. What was the army of Nineveh renowned for? (PAP)

24. Who was more in tune with the behavior God desired than Jonah? (PAP)

25. To what did Jonah show compassion? (PAP)

26. What are the Focus, Topics, and Place of the chart on Jonah?



The Book of Micah

Life and Times

The Person

Micah means “*Who is like Yahweh.*” He was from Moresheth Gath, in the foothills of Judah (1:14). He was a southerner from the countryside of Judah about twenty-five miles southwest of Jerusalem.

Living in a time when Israel is already being besieged by the Assyrians. Samaria was besieged for three years. He was living close to Lachish and witnesses the fall of this city.

Date

Micah’s prophecy begins just prior to the fall of Samaria and the northern kingdom of Israel to the domination of Assyria. He prophesies during the reign of Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, Kings of Judah. He was a contemporary of the prophets Hosea in Israel and Isaiah in Judah. While Micah is considered primarily a prophet of Judah, he addresses the fall of Samaria and the overthrow and Assyrian captivity of Israel before the destruction of 722 B.C.

Hottel Notes:

Micah prophesied in west Judah while Isaiah prophesied in Jerusalem and Hosea in the Northern Kingdom. Micaiah’s message was to both Israel and Judah, and addressed primarily to the capitals of the two respective kingdoms, Samaria and Jerusalem. Samaria was the capital of Israel, and Jerusalem was the capital of Judah. He was the only Prophet who addressed his message to both Israel and Judah.

Political Scene

When Assyria came down into the country of Israel they took the north in their first campaign. Samaria would fall then they proceeded down the coastal plain taking every city in their path. They continued toward Jerusalem and lay siege against it. Jerusalem was spared, but they took the coast and the foothills. Forty-six cities were taken. Micah’s village was taken as well as many of the people of the south that will be exiled or die with him.

Hezekiah refuses to pay tribute to Assyria (705 BC). For four years he is let go. Sennacherib (701) makes his appointed trip toward Jerusalem. Hezekiah withstands the siege against them calling on Yahweh for assistance. With divine intervention Sennacherib is called back to his home with a domestic problem and Judah is spared destruction by the Assyrians. Micah foresees another enemy and predicts the destruction of Jerusalem by the Babylonians before they became a force to be reckoned with or feared.

***Micah 4:10** (NKJV) Be in pain, and labor to bring forth, O daughter of Zion, Like a woman in birth pangs. For now you shall go forth from the city, You shall dwell in the field, And to Babylon you shall go. There you shall be delivered; There the LORD will redeem you From the hand of your enemies.

Assyrian rulers referenced in the Scripture:

- Tiglath Pileser III (TP3) – 2 Kings 15:29; 2 Kgs. 16:7, 10
- Shalmaneser – 2 Kings 17:3; 18:9
- Sargon II – Isaiah 20:1
- Sennacherib – 2 Kings 18 & 19; 2 Chr 32; Isaiah 36 & 37
- Esarhaddon – 2 Kings 19:37; Ezra 4:2; Isaiah 37:38

Mission and Message

The Call

Though little is known of Micah's personal life he had a clear sense of calling in his ministry as evidenced in Micah 3:8:

***Micah 3:8** (NKJV) But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD, And of justice and might, To declare to Jacob his transgression And to Israel his sin.

We know nothing of his occupation or his family.

Hottel Notes:

Micah's mission was to proclaim to Israel and Judah that judgment was at hand. He graphically depicts Jehovah coming forth out of His place amid awful convulsions of nature (1:1-4). The sins of the house of Israel and the transgressions of Jacob have called Him forth.

In the opening part of his prophecy Micah mentioned no less than ten towns and villages in the neighborhood of his home, warning them of approaching calamities (1:10-15). But while he thus lingers for a time near his birthplace, Samaria and Jerusalem form the chief subject of his prophecy (1:1), because the corruption of each kingdom streamed forth from them. The sins which he rebukes are chiefly those of the capital. The second and third chapters are a bill of particulars in support of the general indictment.

Theme

Micah predicts the fall of Samaria. The enemy is approaching Jerusalem. Jerusalem is thought to be indestructible. Micah says judgment will come against Judah and Jerusalem will be taken.

***Micah 3:12** Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed like a field, Jerusalem shall become heaps of ruins, And the mountain of the temple Like the bare hills of the forest.

Ends with condemnation and consolation (6:1).

“Let the hills be witness and the mountains be jury.”

Restoration and return from exile are also predicted by Micah.

***Micah 7:18** (NKJV) Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy.

Another important theme is found in Micah 6:8. Some have called this verse the “*golden rule*” of the Old Testament.

***Micah 6:8** He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?

Response and Relevance

Herein is the essence of true religion.

There are 613 precepts in the Law

They may be summarized in:

Eleven principles in Psalm 15

*****Psalm 15** (NKJV) LORD, who may abide in Your tabernacle? Who may dwell in Your holy hill? {2} He who walks uprightly, And works righteousness, And speaks the truth in his heart; {3} He who does not backbite with his tongue, Nor does evil to his neighbor, Nor does he take up a reproach against his friend; {4} In whose eyes a vile person is despised, But he honors those who fear the LORD; He who swears to his own hurt and does not change; {5} He who does not put out his money at usury, Nor does he take a bribe against the innocent. He who does these things shall never be moved.

Six commands in Isaiah 33:15

****Isaiah 33:15** (NKJV) He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, He who despises the gain of oppressions, Who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, Who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, And shuts his eyes from seeing evil:

Three directives from Micah 6:8

1. Do justly,

-Remain Honest in all you do

2. To love mercy,

-Cherish compassionate faithfulness

3. Walk humbly with your God
-Commit yourself to live in submission
to your God⁴

Justice (Right Actions)

***Micah 3:1** (NKJV) “And I said: “Hear now, O heads of Jacob, And you rulers of the house of Israel: Is it not for you to know justice?”

***Micah 3:8** (NKJV) “But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD, And of justice and might, To declare to Jacob his transgression And to Israel his sin.”

***Micah 3:9** (NKJV) “Now hear this, You heads of the house of Jacob And rulers of the house of Israel, Who abhor justice And pervert all equity,”

***Micah 7:9** (NKJV) “I will bear the indignation of the LORD, Because I have sinned against Him, Until He pleads my case And executes justice for me. He will bring me forth to the light; I will see His righteousness.”

Love Mercy

hesed (chesed, Strong's #2617)

Kindness, mercy, loving kindness: etc... occurs 250 times in Bible. Most often is used for God's mercy. In Psa. 136 the phrase “His *mercy* endures forever” occurs 26 times

***Micah 7:18** (NKJV) “Who is a God like You, Pardoning iniquity And passing over the transgression of the remnant of His heritage? He does not retain His anger forever, Because He delights in mercy.”

***Micah 7:20** (NKJV) “You will give truth to Jacob And mercy to Abraham, Which You have sworn to our fathers From days of old.”

The Walk

Negative Aspect

***Micah 2:3** (NKJV) “Therefore thus says the LORD: “Behold, against this family I am devising disaster, From which you cannot remove your necks; Nor shall you walk haughtily, For this is an evil time.”

***Micah 2:11** (NKJV) “If a man should walk in a false spirit And speak a lie, saying, ‘I will prophesy to you of wine and drink,’ Even he would be the prattler of this people.”

***Micah 6:16** (NKJV) “For the statutes of Omri are kept; All the works of Ahab's house are done; And you walk in their counsels, That I may make you a desolation, And your inhabitants a hissing. Therefore you shall bear the reproach of My people.”“

Positive Aspect

***Micah 4:2** (NKJV) “Many nations shall come and say, “Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we

⁴Excerpt from The Spirit-Filled Life Bible

Prophecy And Fulfillment

OT Prophecy	NT Reference
Micah 5:2 “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting.”	Matthew 2:5-6 So they said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet: ‘But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, Are not the least among the rulers of Judah; For out of you shall come a Ruler Who will shepherd My people Israel.’”
	John 7:42 “Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the seed of David and from the town of Bethlehem, where David was?”
Micah 7:6 For son dishonors father, Daughter rises against her mother, Daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; A man’s enemies are the men of his own household.	Matthew 10:34-36 Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. For I have come to “set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law”; and “a man’s enemies will be those of his own household.”
	Mark 13:12 Now brother will betray brother to death, and a father his child; and children will rise up against parents and cause them to be put to death.
	Luke 12:53 “Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”

Prophecies of the Messiah

Tribe of Judah - *Genesis 49:10*

“The scepter shall not depart from Judah, Nor a lawgiver from between his feet, Until Shiloh comes; And to Him *shall be* the obedience of the people.”

House of David - *2 Samuel 7:26*

“So let Your name be magnified forever, saying, ‘The LORD of hosts *is* the God over Israel.’ And let the house of Your servant David be established before You.”

Time announced - *Daniel 9:25*

“Know therefore and understand, *That* from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, *There shall be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times.”

Place of Birth - *Micah 5:2*

“But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, *Though* you are little among the thousands of Judah, *Yet* out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth *are* from of old, From everlasting.”

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF MICAH

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers, [PAP]*
by Gary V. Smith, and the Class Notes [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. What is the meaning of the Hebrew name, "Micah"? (CN)

2. During what kings of Judah did Micah prophesy? (CN)

3. Who were the contemporary prophets of Micah and in which kingdom did each prophesy?

4. Though Micah prophesied in the southern kingdom, whom did he address? (CN)

5. Who did Micah identify as the people which would destroy Jerusalem? (CN)

6. The mission of Micah was what?

7. What may be referred to as the "golden rule" of the Old Testament? (CN)

8. In what three ways may the essence of true religion, and the 613 commandments of the Law be summarized? (CN)

9. What are the three directives of Micah 6:8? (CN)

10. What are the two aspects of "the walk" in the prophecy of Micah? (CN)

11. Give the four great prophecies of the coming of Messiah.

- In Genesis 49:10 - the _____ of Judah
- In 2 Samuel 7:26 - the _____ of David
- In Daniel 9:25 - the _____ was announced
- In Micah 5:2 - the _____ which was _____

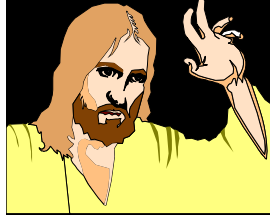
12. What is the Focus, Topics, and Place of the chart on Micah?

13. What were the messages of Micah based on? What characterized his delivery? and what was his goal? (PAP)

14. How did Micah begin his preaching? (PAP)

15. What response of Micah gave him credibility in the eyes of his audience? (PAP)

16. Micah presented the illustration of a lawsuit against the people for violating the covenant. What cultural patterns were followed? (PAP)



The Book of Nahum

Life and Times

Nahum means “*Comforter or Consolation.*” His message was one of consolation to Judah in that her enemy Assyria (Nineveh) was doomed to destruction by the judgment of God. For nearly two centuries Assyria had been the oppressor and hated enemy of Israel and Judah. It must have been comforting for Judah to know that the destruction of Nineveh was soon to take place.

•**Nahum 1:7** The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.

•**Nahum 1:15** Behold, on the mountains The feet of him who brings good tidings, Who proclaims peace! O Judah, keep your appointed feasts, Perform your vows. For the wicked one shall no more pass through you; He is utterly cut off.

The name of this prophet is only mentioned in this book (1:1). All we know of him is found in this verse: “*The burden against Nineveh. The book of the vision of Nahum the Elkoshite.*”

Three locations are suggested for his home:

1. Al-Kish - about 24 miles north of the ancient site of Nineveh.
2. Helkesei or Elkese, in Galilee. Some have credited Capernaum as his hometown. Capernaum means “*village of Nahum.*” This village became the focus and center of the ministry of Jesus.

•**Matthew 4:13-16** And leaving Nazareth, He came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is by the sea, in the regions of Zebulun and Naphtali, {14} that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: {15} “The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles: {16} The people who sat in darkness have seen a great light, And upon those who sat in the region and shadow of death Light has dawned.”

3. In the southern part of Judah. The ancient town of Elkosh.

Insight Verses: Nahum 1:7-8

•**Nahum 1:7-8** The LORD *is* good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him. {8} But with an overflowing flood He will make an utter end of its place, And darkness will pursue His enemies.

Insight Theme: Judgment on Nineveh

He addresses Nineveh in the sum of his prophecy. He seems to be writing to Judah but the conversation is either to Nineveh or about Nineveh between Nahum and Yahweh.

He writes after the capture of Thebes (No-Amon) in Egypt (3:8-9) which fell in 663 B.C. and prior to the fall of Nineveh in 614 B.C. For our reference we will place the date at 660 B.C.

A king is not named in the text. Some assume by this that Manasseh may have been King in Judah. Due to his disdain for the things of God and his propensity to destroy prophets, he is not spoken of favorably by the prophets.

Hottel Notes:

There is one passage in the Book which furnishes rather specific information. The passage is chapter 1:11, which reads: "There is one come out of thee, that imagineth evil against the Lord, a wicked counsellor". And who was this wicked counselor, who imagined evil against the Lord? The prophecy, it will be noted, has reference to Assyria; it is from thence this wicked counselor shall come. Since this is the case it is not difficult to identify him. It was none other than Rabshakeh, the messenger of Sennacherib, king of Assyria. Rabshakeh defied, insulted and blasphemed the God of Israel. He was impudent and insolent, and gave vent in his words to the wickedness of Sennacherib the king, as well as to his own wickedness. The account of this defiant and blasphemous speech is found in II Kings 18: 17-35. There can scarcely be any doubt but that Nahum had this Assyrian villain in mind in this passage.

Political Setting

Hottel Notes:

Assyria had reached the zenith of its power. Shalmaneser II had carried the Northern Kingdom into captivity and levied a heavy tribute on the Southern Kingdom (II Kings 17:4-6; 18:13-16).

Sennacherib, the successor of Shalmaneser II, would have taken Jerusalem, in the days of Hezekiah, but for a Divine intervention in response to Hezekiah's prayer (Is. 37:14-37).

Sennacherib the king of Assyria, who had sent the expedition against Jerusalem was murdered by his own sons (Is. 37:38).

Later, Ezarhaddon I led a victorious army into Egypt and enroute stopped at Jerusalem long enough to make the impious king Manasseh his prisoner (II Chron. 33:11-15).

Assurbanipal, the next king, was even more distinguished than any of his predecessors in extending and strengthening his dominion. During his reign the ancient and great capital of Upper Egypt was captured, which is mentioned by Nahum (Nah. 3:8-10).

After Assurbanipal Assyria declined. He was followed by Asshur-etil-ilani and Sin-shar-ishkun, and finally Assyria and its great proud capital were conquered by Nabopolassar, the father of Nebuchadnezzar and Cyaxares. . . .

Nineveh the capital of Assyria had become the center of the world's commerce, but its ill-gotten wealth was mostly acquired by the plunder and destruction of its rivals. Its sin could not forever go unpunished. And although the walls of Nineveh were 100 feet high, and in all human calculation it seemed impregnable, it fell and was destroyed. At the very zenith of its power, and on the eve of its sudden overthrow, came Nahum with his prophecy concerning its destruction. Let the nations beware; the God of Heaven and earth is still on the throne, and the cry of humanity for justice will be heard by Him in due time.

The surrounding nations suffered so severely under the reign of the wicked kings of Assyria that when finally Assyria fell the nations rejoiced over her destruction.

•**Nahum 3:19** Your injury *has* no healing, Your wound is severe. All who hear news of you Will clap *their* hands over you, For upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually?

Mission and Message

Many of the prophets spoke to the nations in their oracles. Only three prophesied exclusively to a foreign nation. Jonah was sent to Nineveh. Nahum addressed the judgment on Nineveh 100-150 years later. Obadiah prophesies to Edom. Notice the following contrast between Jonah and Nahum.

Jonah	Nahum
The Mercy of God	The Judgment of God
c. 760 B.C.	c. 660 B.C.
Repentance of Nineveh	Rebellion of Nineveh
Emphasis on the Prophet	Emphasis on the Prophecy
Disobedient Prophet	Obedient Prophet
Obedient Nation	Disobedient Nation
Deliverance from Water	Destruction by Water
The Great Fish	The Great Fulfillment

God's Righteous Judgment

After the revival in Nineveh under the preaching of Jonah where the entire city responds in repentance, there is an eventual return to the violence and wickedness indicative of their earlier reputation. Their humility turned to arrogance. Their worship turned to wickedness. They reach the summit of being the most

powerful nation in the world. They execute their carnage on surrounding nations including Israel and parts of Judah.

In time God will judge all nations, so the time came for Nineveh to suffer the judgment of righteousness for their iniquity. Hottel said, “Any kingdom or nation that is built on fraud, force and cruelty will be judged and punished by God. Sin brings its own ruin.” Nahum graphically details the destruction that will come upon this city and the nation of Assyria.

1. Destruction of Nineveh Decreed (Chap. 1)

Yahweh is a God of righteousness, and vengeance (1:2)

He is also a God of patience and power (1:3-6)

God is holy and Nineveh is condemned because of sin
(1:9-14)

Nothing will stop this judgment, this is comfort to the nation
of Judah (1:15)

2. Destruction of Nineveh Described (Chap. 2)

Assyria will be conquered, Judah will be restored (2:1-2)

The siege of Nineveh is described (2:3-7)

Vivid description of Destruction (2:8-13)

3. Destruction of Nineveh Deserved (Chap. 3)

The city of cruelty and corruption is detailed as evidence for
the deserved judgment (3:1-7)

As Assyria destroyed the Egyptian Capital (No Amon)
Assyria’s capital (Nineveh) will be crushed (3:8-10)

Destruction seems impossible for the massive city of Nineveh,
Nahum declares it is inevitable. Nothing can now stop the
coming judgment (3:11-19).

Though Nineveh gloried in her triumphs, the strength and glory of her walls and towers and gates, the coming judgment would bring her down to destruction. God combined the forces of nature (rain, floods of water, and fire) and the growing dominance of the nations of the Babylonians and the Medes to execute His will of judgment on Nineveh.

Hottel Notes:

There was an old prophecy that the city should not be taken until the river became its enemy. Continual rains caused it to swell and overflow, breaking down the walls for 20 furlongs. Then the King (Saracus), thinking the oracle fulfilled, built a large funeral pile in the palace, and collecting all his wealth, concubines and eunuchs, set fire to it and burnt all. The enemy (after two years’ siege) entered by the breach in the wall and took the city.

Response and Relevance

Key Insights

The awesome fulfillment of judgment on Nineveh causes one to confront the provisions of future judgment in Scripture. Once the recipient of grace in response to the preaching of Jonah, the Assyrians found themselves the object of judgment after their repentance wore off and they returned to their violent practice of sin.

While we enjoy the tremendous benefit of a day of grace and the privilege of universal blessing there is the future promise of judgment awaiting those who refuse to repent and continue in their rebellion against God's provision of salvation. As certain as we are of God's forgiveness and willingness to restore the wayward we may also be assured of certain judgment on the "nations that forget God" and individuals who reject God's abundant grace.

Prophecy And Fulfillment

OT Prophecy	NT Reference
<p>Nahum 1:15 Behold, on the mountains The feet of him who brings good tidings, Who proclaims peace! O Judah, keep your appointed feasts, Perform your vows. For the wicked one shall no more pass through you; He is utterly cut off.</p>	<p>Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"</p>
<p>Nahum 1:7 The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble; And He knows those who trust in Him.</p>	<p>2 Timothy 2:19 Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: "The Lord knows those who are His," and, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity."</p>
<p>Nahum 3:12 All your strongholds are fig trees with ripened figs: If they are shaken, They fall into the mouth of the eater.</p>	<p>Rev. 6:12-13 I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.</p>

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF NAHUM

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers, [PAP]*
by Gary V. Smith, and the Class Notes [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. What does the name of *Nahum* mean in Hebrew? (CN)

2. What is the message of Nahum? (CN)

3. What are three possible locations for the home town of Nahum? (CN)

4. What is the insight theme for the book of Nahum?

5. What are two important political events that help to date the writing for the book of Nahum?

6. Who is assumed to be the "wicked counselor" of Assyria referenced in Nahum 1:11?

7. What principle city did Assurbanipal of Assyria capture that Nahum mentioned in his prophecy of the overthrow of Nineveh?

8. What do we know about the walls of Nineveh that made it seem impregnable?

9. Why did the surrounding nations rejoice over the destruction of Assyria?

10. Which prophets prophesied exclusively to a foreign nation and what were the nations?

11. What are the four of the contrasts between the prophets Nahum and Jonah?

12. According to Hottel what will happen to the nation that is built on fraud, force and cruelty?

13. Although destruction of Nineveh seems impossible, what does Nahum say about it?

14. God combined what two things to execute His will of judgment on Nineveh?

15. What old prophecy caused the King of Nineveh to build a funeral pile to burn his wealth, concubines and eunuchs?

16. What does the awesome fulfillment of judgment on Nineveh cause one to do?



The Book of Zephaniah

Life and Times

The Person

From the opening verse of the prophecy we learn who Zephaniah was. His genealogy is traced back for four generations. He was the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah. The name Hizkiah is the same as Hezekiah in the Hebrew. His genealogy is therefore traced back to Hezekiah, the pious king of Judah. This means that he was the great-grandson of Hezekiah, and that he was of the royal house of Judah.

Zephaniah is supposed to have been a youth, His name means “Hidden of Jehovah,” or, “Jehovah hath guarded,” and is seen in his message 2:1-3). See Psalms 27:5; 83:3.

Zephaniah’s CLAIM to inspiration and authority is seen in the words “The word of the Lord which came unto Zephaniah” (1:1), and the oft-repeated words “Thus saith the LORD” (1:2, 3, 10; 2:9; 3:8, 20).

Date

The time when he prophesied is given in verse 1. He prophesied in the days of Josiah the king of Judah, about 640-608 B. C. He was a contemporary of Jeremiah, ministering during the early days of Jeremiah. It was now already a hundred years since Israel, the Northern Kingdom had been carried away by Assyria, and the desolation of Nineveh, the Assyrian capital was not far distant (2:13). Moreover, in twenty years the first captives from Judah would be carried into Babylon, and in forty years Jerusalem would be destroyed.

As to the exact time during the reign of Josiah in which Zephaniah prophesied, we may be quite certain that it was during the time of the reformation instituted by the king, which took place between the twelfth and eighteenth year; yet the reformation was still in process and not yet fully completed (II Kings 22; 23).

It must be remembered that Josiah was preceded in the throne Judah by two corrupt and idolatrous kings, Manasseh and Amon. During their reign Jerusalem became a hotbed of evil. The abuses in the kingdom seem to have continued

during the early years of the reign of Josiah. Zephaniah was a preacher of righteousness and denounced the evils of his age in unsparing terms. By this preaching it is believed that both people and king were moved to better things; so that when “the book of the Law of the Lord was found in the Temple” (II Kings 22:8), matters were ready for the great and sweeping reformation which followed. This return to the Law and a more orderly way of living stayed for a while the threatened judgment, The captivity, however, was impending, and Zephaniah points out that the moral state of Judah which, because of the reformation under Josiah was outwardly improved nevertheless was not deep and sincere enough to avert it (Jer. 2:11-13; Zech. 3:1-7).

Political Scene

After fifty-five years of corrupt leadership the boy king, Josiah, comes to the throne at eight years of age. At age sixteen his heart was turned to seek after God. His first reform began at the age of twenty in the twelfth year of his reign.

•2 **Chronicles 34:3-7** For in the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, he began to seek the God of his father David; and in the twelfth year he began to purge Judah and Jerusalem of the high places, the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images. {4} They broke down the altars of the Baals in his presence, and the incense altars which *were* above them he cut down; and the wooden images, the carved images, and the molded images he broke in pieces, and made dust of them and scattered *it* on the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. {5} He also burned the bones of the priests on their altars, and cleansed Judah and Jerusalem. {6} And *so he did* in the cities of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, as far as Naphtali and all around, with axes. {7} When he had broken down the altars and the wooden images, had beaten the carved images into powder, and cut down all the incense altars throughout all the land of Israel, he returned to Jerusalem.

The declining years of Assyria allowed Josiah freedom from the heavy taxation of tribute to this foreign power. There would be a brief reprieve before the oppression of the Babylonians would begin.

Mission and Message

The Call

If indeed Zephaniah is the great-great grandson of King Hezekiah he is the only prophet to have a royal lineage. He is familiar with Jerusalem and probably an inhabitant of the city. He is a contemporary prophet of Jeremiah and Habakkuk.

Though the reforms initiated by Josiah may have been ignited by the preaching of Zephaniah, there was not a total conversion to affect the heart of the nation. It was “too little, too late” to avert the coming judgment.

The *universal impact* of judgment is seen in 2:4-15.

The *future aspect* of judgment and restoration may be noted in 3:9-20.

Insight Verse: Zephaniah 2:3

•Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden In the day of the Lord's anger.

Insight Theme: *The Day of the Lord*

Zephaniah makes numerous references to the coming “Day of the Lord”; twenty-three times in his three short chapters. It may have been the forceful preaching of Zephaniah that precipitated the revival that occurs during Josiah’s reign.

Zephaniah predicts judgment on the surrounding nations, neighbors of Judah, much the way Amos prophesied in Israel. Zephaniah looks in all four directions. To the west, Philistia, Moab and Ammon are to the east, to the south is Ethiopia, and Assyria is addressed in the north. Finally, he nails Judah. Jerusalem in the focus of the prophecy.

Zephaniah moves from general to specific with his message. This pattern was noticed by Wilkerson and Boa who divided the message into three sections:

1. From Universal Judgment to judgment on Judah. (1:1 – 2:3)
2. From judgment on the nations to judgment upon Jerusalem (2:4 – 3:7)
3. From judgment and cleansing of all nations to restoration of Israel (3:8 – 3:20)

Response and Relevance

Key Insights

As has been noted throughout the prophets there runs a thread of restoration. This is also to be seen in Zephaniah as he nears the end of his prophecy.

Hottel Notes:

Three times the Prophet speaks of a remnant being saved (2:3-7; 3:12, 13).

Twice the Prophet predicts a return from Captivity (2:7; 3:20).

The prophecy closes with a glorious promise of future restoration for the chosen people. They shall be saved and gathered (13:17, 18) and restored to Palestine (vs. 20), and all that afflicted them will be punished (vs. 19). In that day “the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity” (vs. 13), and in consequence it will be a day of rejoicing, for “the Lord hath taken away thy judgments” (vs. 15).

“Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem” (3:14).

Prophecy And Fulfillment

Zephaniah is not directly quoted in the New Testament but two allusions to his message may be indicated by Jesus in the book of Matthew (noted in the following chart). The prophecy concerning the “day of the Lord” certainly is seen in future eschatological implication in the book of Revelation.

OT Prophecy	NT Reference
<p>Zephaniah 1:3 “I will consume man and beast; I will consume the birds of the heavens, The fish of the sea, And the stumbling blocks along with the wicked. I will cut off man from the face of the land,” Says the LORD.</p>	<p>Matthew 13:41 “The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness,</p>
<p>Zephaniah 1:15 That day is a day of wrath, A day of trouble and distress, A day of devastation and desolation, A day of darkness and gloominess, A day of clouds and thick darkness,</p>	<p>Matthew 24:29 “Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.</p>

Divisions of the book

ZEPHANIAH	Chapters 1 - 3:8	Chapters 3:9-3:20
Focus	Judgment in the Day of the Lord	Salvation in the Day of the Lord
Topics	Day of Wrath	Day of Joy
	Judgment on Judah	Restoration for Judah
Place	Judah and the nations	

Insights

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF ZEPHANIAH

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers, [PAP]*
by Gary V. Smith, and the Class Notes [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. Zephaniah was a descendent of what king of the royal house of Judah?

2. What does the name Zephaniah mean in Hebrew?

3. Who was a contemporary prophet with Zephaniah?

4. How long had it been since Israel had been taken into captivity when Zephaniah prophesied?

5. Who was the last good king of Judah? What two corrupt kings preceded him?

6. What is noted about the reforms under Josiah?

7. At what age did Josiah become king and at what age did he initiate his first reforms?

8. What aspect of judgment is seen in Zephaniah 2?

9. What does the *future aspect* concern in chapter 3 of Zephaniah?

10. What is the insight theme of Zephaniah frequently referred to in his prophecy?

11. In what way was the message of Zephaniah in Judah similar to the prophecy of Amos in Israel?

12. In what three ways does Zephaniah's prophecy moves from the *general* to the *specific*?

13. How many times does the prophet speak of a remnant being saved?

14. How often does the prophet predict a return from captivity?

15. Explain the Focus and Topics of the chart on Zephaniah.



The Book of Habakkuk

Life and Times

The prophet gives no information about his lineage or his location within the prophecy. He identifies himself as “Habakkuk the prophet.” He probably comes from a priestly family and is acquainted with temple worship.

•**Habakkuk 3:19** The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s *feet*, And He will make me walk on my high hills. To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.

Habakkuk - his name means “*embrace*”

Hottel Notes:

The Habakkuk has a twofold meaning, namely, “to embrace” and “being embraced.” He embraced Judah, his own people in the arms of prayer and Jehovah in prayer, and, God embraced him and answered his prayer. Habakkuk also embraced Judah to comfort them with assurance.

Times

The Book does not reveal the time or period when Habakkuk prophesied. We are not informed as to what king or kings reigned, either in Judah or Israel. The only explicit time reference is to the imminent invasion of Babylon (1:6; 2:1; 3:16).

The most likely date is the early part of Jehoiakim’ reign (609-597 BC) after the partial reforms under King Josiah, there is a steady slide downward to destruction.

Hottel Notes:

Habakkuk probably prophesied during the reign of Josiah, that is in the closing years of his reign, and a few years before Nineveh was destroyed, which elevated the Babylonians to the place of power. It was with the rising and triumphant kingdom of the Chaldeans that Habakkuk had to deal. The political condition was critical. The tottering Southern Kingdom must have recognized the impending danger of the new world conqueror. Already Nebuchadnezzar had carried away into captivity Daniel and many of the nobles of Jerusalem (606 B. C.), and that deportation was followed by a second, in 597 B. C., and the final destruction of the city in 586 B. C. It is thought that in his description Habakkuk alludes to all three.

The prophecy of Habakkuk, we may, therefore, readily believe falls late in Josiah's reign, or early in that of Jehoiakim. Looking into this history we find that Josiah died on the battlefield, and after his son Jehoahaz had reigned three months, Pharaoh-necho, who had slain Josiah, made Eliakim, the son of Josiah, king of Judah, and gave him the name of Jehoiakim (II Kings 23:28-37).

Mission and Message

Habakkuk questions why the LORD would let iniquity go unpunished. He struggled in his faith when he saw men flagrantly violate God's law. When God revealed that justice would be done and judgment was coming at the hands of the Babylonians, Habakkuk was even more disturbed. Why would God use a more wicked people to bring judgment against His people?

The writer of Psalms 73 expresses this sentiment.

•**Psalms 73:2-3** But as for me, my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. {3}
For I *was* envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked.

•**Psalms 73:16-18** When I thought *how* to understand this, It *was* too painful for me; {17}
Until I went into the sanctuary of God; *Then* I understood their end. {18} Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction.

Habakkuk stands on a watchtower to wait for God's answer:

God's reply is of five woes

1. greed and aggression (2:5-8)
2. exploitation and extortion (2:9-11)
3. violence (2:12-14)
4. immorality (2:15-17)
5. idolatry (2:18-20)

God's Answer to Habakkuk (2:20)

"But the LORD is in His holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him."

- You can trust God regardless of the Circumstances
- God's way is perfect. His sovereign Will, will come to pass
- God is the Lord of history and the Ruler of the nations.
- Justice may seem slow but it is sure.

The lesson is -- You can have Faith in God!

Habakkuk's Praise

For the Person (3:1-3)
For the Power (3:4-12)
For the Plan (3:13-19)

Insight Theme: *FAITH*

Insight Verses: Habakkuk 2:4 & 3:17-19

•**Habakkuk 2:4** “Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.

•**Habakkuk 3:17-19** Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls; {18} Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. {19} The LORD God is my strength; He will make my feet like deer’s *feet*, And He will make me walk on my high hills. To the Chief Musician. With my stringed instruments.

Jonah and Habakkuk contrasted

Jonah	Habakkuk
God called on Jonah	Habakkuk called on God
Jonah ran from God	Habakkuk ran to God
Prayer and trouble (ch.2)	Prayer after trouble (ch.3)
End in foolishness	Ends in faith
Salvation of God to the Gentiles	Sovereignty of God over the Gentiles
In the fish	On the watchtower (2:4)

Response and Relevance

The Transitions of Habakkuk

- from burden to blessing
- from wondering to worship
- from restlessness to rest
- from complaint to consolation
-

“The more he knows about the Planner, the more he can trust His plans.”

Habakkuk prophesies about the earth being filled with the glory of the Lord (2:14). *“The earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea”*. This is found in three other Books of the Old Testament (Num. 14:21; Ps. 72:19; Is. 6:3; 11:9).

New Testament Usage

Insight and devotional topics in the book of Habakkuk.

The Just shall live by Faith (Habakkuk 2:4)

Romans 1:17 (NKJV)

“For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”“

Galatians 3:11

“But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.”

Hebrews 10:38

*“Now the just shall live by faith;
But if anyone draws back,
My soul has no pleasure in him.”*

A work you will not believe ... (Habakkuk 1:5)

Acts 13:40-41

*“Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you:
‘Behold, you despisers,
Marvel and perish!
For I work a work in your days,
A work which you will by no means believe,
Though one were to declare it to you.’”*

Call for Revival (Habakkuk 3:2)

Modern quoted theme

“O LORD, I have heard your speech and was afraid; O LORD, revive Your work in the midst of the years! In the midst of the years make it known; In wrath remember mercy.”

Purpose to Rejoice (Habakkuk 3:17-18)

“Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls;”

“Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.”

Philippians 4:4 (NKJV)

“Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!”

Insights

Prophecy And Fulfillment

OT Prophecy	NT Reference
Habakkuk 2:4 “Behold the proud, His soul is not upright in him; But the just shall live by his faith.	Romans 1:17 For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “The just shall live by faith.”
	Galatians 3:11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for “the just shall live by faith.”
	Hebrews 10:38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if <i>anyone</i> draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him.”
Habakkuk 1:5 “Look among the nations and watch; Be utterly astounded! For <i>I will</i> work a work in your days <i>Which</i> you would not believe, though it were told <i>you</i> .	Acts 13:40-41 “Beware therefore, lest what has been spoken in the prophets come upon you: {41} “Behold, you despisers, Marvel and perish! For I work a work in your days, A work which you will by no means believe, Though one were to declare it to you.”
Habakkuk 3:17-18 Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls; {18} Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation.	Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice!

Divisions of the book

Habakkuk	Chap. 1-2	Chap. 3
Focus	Problems of Habakkuk	Praise of Habakkuk
Topic	Faith Troubled	Faith Triumphant
	What God is Doing	Who God Is
Place	The Nation of Judah	

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF HABAKKUK

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers, [PAP]*
by Gary V. Smith, and the Class Notes [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. How does Habakkuk refer to himself?

2. What conclusions may be reached from the last phrase of Hab. 3:19?

3. What is the two-fold meaning of the name of Habakkuk?

4. What is the only explicit time reference in the book of Habakkuk?

5. What political event elevated the Babylonians to the place of power?

6. In what year was the final destruction of the city of Jerusalem?

7. What was Habakkuk's question to the LORD?

8. After God revealed that judgment was coming at the hands of the Babylonians, what was Habakkuk's question?

9. Where does Habakkuk wait for an answer from God?

10. What is the lesson seen in God's answer to Habakkuk?

11. What three things are objects of Habakkuk's praise in chapter 3?

12. What is the insight theme of Habakkuk?

13. What is the essence of the two passages identified as insight verses in Habakkuk?

14. What are the first two contrasts given between Jonah and Habakkuk?

15. What New Testament passage correlates with Habakkuk in the purpose to "*rejoice in the Lord*"?

16. In what three NT books do we find a phrase from Habakkuk, "*The just shall live by faith*"?

17. Explain the Focus and Topics of the chart on Habakkuk.



The Book of Joel

Life and times

Joel means “Yahweh is God.” Little else is known about the prophet or his background.

There is controversy concerning the date of this prophecy. Evidence gleaned from the writing would suggest two prominent theories:

1. During the reign of Joash (835-796 BC), others suggest the reign of Josiah (641-610 BC).
2. Post-Exilic (around 500 BC)

Mission and Message

Insight Theme: *The Day of the LORD*

The book falls into two divisions:

1. The Day of the LORD in **Retrospect** — 1:1-20

The past plagues of locusts and the devastation of drought.

2. The Day of the LORD in **Prospect** — 2:1-3:21

The imminent judgment on the land and the conditional promise of deliverance. Then the Ultimate Day of Judgment when “I will also gather all nations, And bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat” (3:2).

Response and Relevance

Embedded in the message of judgment comes the dynamic prophecy of Pentecost and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all Flesh. Every nation will be affected by the judgment and blessed with the Promise of the “last days.”

In Peter's quotation of the verses of Joel 2:28-32 he includes the descriptions of the Day of the Lord that have yet to be fulfilled (i.e. the sun darkened, the moon turned to blood, etc.). This is an illustration of partial fulfillment or *pre-fulfillment*. Another example is Jesus reading from the scroll of Isaiah in the synagogue in Nazareth (Luke 4:18-20) where he stops his reading in the middle of the verse (of Isaiah 61:1-2) just before the passages on future judgment. This demonstrates the precedent for a partial fulfillment of a prophetic message.

The book in true form to the other prophets includes a message of restoration; both provisional (2:25) and ultimate restoration for the nation (3:17-21).

Joel 3:20

- But Judah shall abide forever, And Jerusalem from generation to generation.

Divisions of the book

JOEL	Chapter 1	Chapters 2-3
Focus	Day of the Lord in Retrospect	Day of the Lord in Prospect
Topic	Historical Invasion	Prophetic Invasion
	Past Judgment on Judah	Future Judgment and Restoration of Judah
Place	Southern Kingdom of Judah	

Insights

JOEL

The Little Prophet with a Big Voice⁵

Introduction

“*Yah(weh) is God*” (lxvy-Yo-el) is the literal meaning of the name of this Old Testament prophet. Here, Joel is considered a “*little*” prophet because of his short writing of only three chapters, but “*big*” of voice due to the eternal significance of his message and the impact he makes on New Testament writers. Often quoted, this small book, tucked between the Old Testament “*minor*” prophets Hosea and Amos, speaks with a volume comparable to other “*major*” players in the prophetic role.

A nondescript man, known only as the “son of Pethuel,” yet he is seen as a powerful prophet in Judah who likely prophesied in Jerusalem. His writing provides a broad range outline of God’s judgment (the current devastation of locusts and the future “*day of the Lord*”) and mercy (God’s promises of future fulfillment) where other prophets deal more with specific sins and predicted judgment. His prophetic messages include: themes of repentance, salvation and deliverance to those who call upon the name of the LORD, the promised outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:17-18) and other events associated with the “*day of the Lord,*” i.e. coming judgment of the last days (Acts 2:19-20).

Determining the Background Setting

Early pre-exilic conditions were vastly different than the times of the remnant that regathered in Jerusalem following seventy years of captivity. These are the range of conditions that could have provided a backdrop for the prophecies of Joel. In order to identify the background setting for this prophet, it will be necessary to establish an approximate date for the writing of this book. While a definite date cannot be ascertained with absolute assurance, various evidences for the selected date will be proposed before proceeding with the explanation of the times in which Joel prophesied.

Setting a Date for the Prophecy

Depending on the resource consulted, dates for the life and writing of Joel vary from the 9th century BC to the Maccabean era. Those who contend for dual (or composite) authorship identify apocalyptic elements of the book as views of a time as late as 200 BC. Many conservative scholars continue to defend a very early date

⁵“*Joel - The Little Prophet with a Big Voice,*” a research paper prepared for a course at Western Seminary by Terry R. Baughman, 1997.

around the late 800's BC In John H. Walton's Chronological Charts, he places this prophet ca. 500 and as a contemporary of Obadiah (Walton, 1994, 52).

Because of the various arguments presented below it must be concluded that Joel is either very early or very late in his prophetic ministry. "Joel is perhaps the very earliest or the very last or among the last of the writing prophets" (Robertson, 1939, 1690). However, the later date one assigns to Joel the more the cause for skepticism. A late date would have been known by more scribes and scholars who would have had reason to preserve the record of their origin and authorship. (Robertson 1939, 1690).

The final three books of the Old Testament canon are without dispute postexilic and are placed there together. There must be more reasoning for the positioning of the book of Joel in the Hebrew canon between two of the earliest "writing prophets," than the length of his written oracles. According to R.K. Harrison, "Hebrew Tradition placed Joel between the 8th century BC writers Hosea and Amos, whereas the canon of the LXX located it in fourth place after Micah in the group of short writings known to the Hebrews as the Twelve Prophets" (Harrison, 1976, 3:621-622). Though both favor an early position in the canon, some feel the inconsistency between the Hebrew text and the Greek translation exhibits an element of uncertainty even at this early date and an inconclusive agreement as to the time of the writing of this prophecy. However, "It cannot be without significance that Joel has found a place so high up in the collection" (Robertson, 1939, 1690).

After reviewing many sources, there is still no absolute certainty with which we can assign a date. "The most reasonable estimate appears to place the book in the minority of King Joash, about 830 BC, at a time when Jehoiada the high priest was regent in Judah" (Harrison, 1976, 3:621). In agreement with this date during the reign of the boy king Joash (837-800), the following reasons are stated by John B. Graybill:

1. The enemies of Judah that are mentioned -- the Philistines and Phoenicians (Joel 3:4), Egypt and Edom (3:19) -- are those of the preexilic period (2 Kings 8:20-22; 2 Chronicles 21:16-17) rather than the Assyrians and Babylonians, who later troubled Judah.
2. Amos, a prophet during this time, seems to have been acquainted with Joel's prophecies (3:16; cf. Amos 1:2; 3:18; cf. 9:13).
3. The fact that the elders and priests are mentioned rather than the king would seem to point to the time of Joash's minority (2 Kings 11:21). [Other prophets also do not mention a king; Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum and Habakkuk (Freeman 1968, 148).]
4. The location of the book between two early prophets and its style, quite different from that of the postexilic prophets, also argue for a preexilic date" (Graybill, 1987, 530-531).

In addition to these points there are additional arguments for an early date prophecy:

5. “We find, what we should expect on the supposition of Joel being the first prophet to Judah, only a grand outline of the whole terrible scene, which was to be depicted more and more in detail by subsequent prophets.” (McClintock & Strong, 1969).
6. “The sins denounced by Amos and Hosea are not mentioned here, nor is the sin of idolatry touched upon at all.” (Feinberg, 1948, 71). This lends credence to the view that he prophesied during the time of religious revival under the regency of Jehoiada, the priest and guardian of the boy king, Joash.
7. “The mention of the Grecians [3:6] (Javan) this early is not impossible, since they are mentioned in archaeological records dating from the eighth century BC” (Freeman 1968, 149).
8. In the final oracle of Joel is the phrase, “The *LORD* also will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem...” (Joel 3:16). The identical phrase is quoted by Amos as he begins his prophecy (Amos 1:2). This allows a flow of continuity between these two prophets and suggests a knowledge of Joel’s writing at the time Amos wrote.
9. Finally, the theme of turning “*plowshares and pruning hooks*” into “*swords and spears*” for preexilic militancy is transposed in Isaiah 2:4 and Micah 4:3 as they anticipate the peaceful postexilic posture and foresee a peaceful millennial reign of the Messiah.

- “Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, ‘I am strong’” (Joel 3:10).

One argument presented in support of a late date is the synonymous interchange of the terms Israel and Judah. However, when compared with some other preexilic prophets similar synonymous usage can be found. The following examples are from Isaiah:

- “For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, And the men of Judah are His pleasant plant” (Isaiah 5:7).
- “He will set up a banner for the nations, And will assemble the outcasts of Israel, And gather together the dispersed of Judah From the four corners of the earth” (Isaiah 11:12).
- “Hear this, O house of Jacob, Who are called by the name of Israel, And have come forth from the wellsprings of Judah; Who swear by the name of the LORD, And make mention of the God of Israel, But not in truth or in righteousness;” (Isaiah 48:1)

Similar references are found in Jeremiah.

- “Thus says the LORD: “Against all My evil neighbors who touch the inheritance which I have caused My people Israel to inherit; behold, I will pluck them out of their land and pluck out the house of Judah from among them” (Jeremiah 12:14).

Additionally, there are thirteen references to Judah where Jeremiah quotes the “*God of Israel*” speaking (19:3; 24:5; 27:21; 31:23; 33:4; 34:2; 35:13; 35:17; 37:7; 42:15; 44:2; 44:7; 44:11).

The Messianic birthplace reference found in Micah (740-700) speaks of Judah and Israel as a singular nation.

- “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, Though you are little among the thousands of Judah, Yet out of you shall come forth to Me The One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, From everlasting” (Micah 5:2).

The unified nation is a theme of several Old Testament prophets who saw the reuniting as the divine providence of God being fulfilled. These references may be found in preexilic and postexilic prophecies.

- “Then the children of Judah and the children of Israel Shall be gathered together, And appoint for themselves one head; And they shall come up out of the land, For great will be the day of Jezreel!” (Hosea 1:11).
- “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Surely I will take the stick of Joseph, which is in the hand of Ephraim, and the tribes of Israel, his companions; and I will join them with it, with the stick of Judah, and make them one stick, and they will be one in My hand’” (Ezekiel 37:19).

In spite of the divergent views concerning the date of prophecy and the views of authorship, the canonicity of this book has never been debated. (McClintock & Strong, 1969).

The Times of Joel

Assuming a time frame of 835 to 796 BC, Joel prophesies during the reign of Joash. The high priest Jehoiada protected the infant Joash from extermination by his wicked grandmother Athaliah. When Joash was but seven years old Jehoiada crowns him king, has Athaliah slain when she enters the temple, and serves as regent while Joash grows into maturity. Jehoiada led the nation in religious revival through his own initiative and undoubtedly the instruction and influence he exercised on the young king. The strong priestly influence affected the prophet, who may himself have been a priest, and a portion of his message was addressed to the priests.

Message of Joel

Apparently, a devastating plague of locusts invaded the region Joel prophesied in. So incredible was the destruction it was stated there had never been such devastation and implied it might never be so bad in the future.

- “Has anything like this happened in your days, Or even in the days of your fathers?
- Tell your children about it, Let your children tell their children, And their children another generation.” (Joel 1:2-3)

Historical records recall such plagues where the astronomical multiplication of the insects cause them to swarm into an area devouring all vegetation as they travel. “They have been know to devour over an area of almost ninety miles every green herb and every blade of grass, so that the ground gave the appearance of having been scorched by fire” (Feinberg, 1948, 72). Due to the vivid description and the factual documentation of such plagues there is no reason to take this incident as other than an actual event.

- “A fire devours before them, And behind them a flame burns; The land is like the Garden of Eden before them, And behind them a desolate wilderness; Surely nothing shall escape them” (Joel 2:3).

Joel describes the onslaught of the plague as being “*like a strong people set in battle array.*” He describes their appearance as being like “*horses; And like swift steeds, so they run*” (Joel 2:4). He goes on to say the accompanying noise is, “*like chariots Over mountaintops they leap, Like the noise of a flaming fire that devours the stubble*” (Joel 2:5). If it were to be taken allegorical the references would normally be the opposite. They would liken the army to a plague of locusts. Because of the usage it is clearly symbolic.

“The image of the locust plague was also used to symbolize being overwhelmed by a large and powerful army (Judg. 6:5; Isa. 33:4; Jer. 46:23; 51:27; Joel 2:20; Nah. 3:15). Similar imagery is used in other Ancient Near Eastern literature” (Holman, 1991).

This severe plague of locusts denudes the countryside of all agricultural fruitfulness and results in a critical time of famine. If this wasn't bad enough this tragedy is followed by a drought. Without a harvest there is no grain or drink offerings to present to the Lord, “*Let the priests, who minister to the LORD, Weep between the porch and the altar*” (Joel 2:17). There is no food for the animals, “*The beasts of the field also cry out to You, For the water brooks are dried up, And fire has devoured the open pastures*” (Joel 1:20). There is no wine for the drunkards, who protested loudly, “*Wail, all you drinkers of wine, Because of the new wine, For it has been cut off from your mouth*” (Joel 1:5).

Against this backdrop of unprecedented devastation the prophet calls them to repentance and predicts that this experience is symbolic of the “*great and very terrible,*” “*Day of the Lord*” in a future context. (Holman, 1991). He speaks of judgment on the nation as being the “*day of the LORD*” and uses the term, at least five times (1:15; 2:1, 11, 31; and 3:14) (Hottel, 1948, 6:18). A time of judgment, whether imminent or in reference to the apocalyptic “*end of time,*” can be referenced as “*the day of the LORD.*”

Apparently, there was a return to God and a response for Joel's national call to prayer. As a result the message turns to restoration for the nation. The promise is that the years destroyed by the various stages of the locusts will be restored. The rain will be restored abundantly; “*He has given you the former rain faithfully, And He will cause the rain to come down for you; The former rain, And the latter rain in the first month*” (Joel 2:23). Restoration is promised to Judah from the immediate plague of locusts and symbolically from the future dispersion, as well as restoration to the nations through the outpouring of God's Spirit on all flesh.

Israel and Judah's preexilic enemies, Phoenicia, Philistia, Edom, and Egypt, were all the objects of prophesied judgment. Assyrian and Babylonian threats are not yet pending so they are not mentioned in the prophecy. However, future judgment is predicted on all the nations when they will be gathered in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, literally meaning “*the Lord Judges.*” (Holman 1991).

Contemporary Significance of the Message

Joel calls on his generation to turn their hearts to the Lord,

- “With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning. So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He is gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. Who knows if He will turn and relent, And leave a blessing behind Him.” (Joel 2:12-14).

In response to the repentance of the people there is promise of abundant restoration. All the devastation of the land will be replaced with fruitfulness. Their national enemies will be destroyed and prosperity will come to Judah. An abundant rainfall, so vital to their survival, is also promised.

Yahweh reaffirms His covenant with His people, “*Then you shall know that I am in the midst of Israel: I am the LORD your God And there is no other.*” (Joel 2:27).

Following the prophecy that foretells the outpouring of God’s Spirit on all flesh and events of nature signifying the terror of the “Day of the Lord,” he begins to relate the return of Judah from captivity and the judgment of the nations that will take place. Though there is prefillment in the return from Babylonian captivity, the greater picture is seen in the regathering from the dispersion and the gathering of the nations to Armageddon in apocalyptic fulfillment (Hottel, 1948, 19).

Influence in the New Testament Era

Joel’s *big voice* is heard in the New Testament by several writers quoting the words of his prophecy. He is quoted in the Gospels, Acts, the Epistles, and Revelation. Luke 21:11 concurs with his assessment of end time events (Joel 2:30-31) and adds: “*and there will be fearful sights and great signs from heaven.*”

- “And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring;” (Luke 21:25).

In the book of Revelation, this description fits the unveiling of the sixth seal of the unfolding judgments.

- “I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood.” (Revelation 6:12)

The similes are descriptive, “*black as sackcloth*” and “*moon became like blood.*” With the use of these terms we can assume Joel is not speaking of the moon becoming literal blood, but rather the appearance of red coloration due to the eruption of judgments on earth filling the atmosphere with such a dense cloud that all the heavenly lights were greatly diminished and discolored.

This is the passage (Joel 2:32) quoted in the New Testament by Paul in the book of Romans.

- “For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. For ‘whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.’” (Romans 10:12-13).

The most significant and perhaps the largest passage of any Old Testament prophet quoted was used as a text for Peter’s message on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2. Because of its significance it will be addressed in the Application to follow.

The expression of Moses’ desire in the book of Numbers is identified and future fulfillment is prophesied by Joel.

- Oh, that all the Lord’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!” (Numbers 11:29).

This is exactly what the Lord plans for the “latter times.”

- “And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.”
- “And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days” (Joel 2:28-29).

Prophetic Fulfillment

Since A.D. 1524 the traditional Hebrew text identifies Joel 2:28-32 as a separate chapter three, and the final chapter as four (Murphy, 1983, 34). The passage can certainly stand alone in its content. It is clearly signifying events that will take place “*afterwards*.” The passage is presented in poetic form and delivers themes of spiritual blessing and phenomena, prophetic events of salvation to those who call on the name of the Lord, and deliverance to the remnant in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem. There are powerful promises and prophetic predictions for the latter days concerning all nations.

Application

Joel is often called “*the prophet of Pentecost*.” Primarily because of the quotation from the book of Joel used by Peter in the book of Acts chapter two.

- “But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:
 - ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.
 - And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.
 - I will show wonders in heaven above And signs in the earth beneath: Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.
 - The sun shall be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the coming of the great and awesome day of the LORD.
 - And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.’
- (Acts 2:16-21)

“This is that!” Peter quotes the entire passage and gives it as evidence for the Scriptural prophecy of the events taking place on the Day of Pentecost, just days after the ascension of Christ. This is a momentous day. Messiah has come, paid a terrible price for all of His good works, confirmed that His purpose was fulfilled in all the injustice done to him, and then ascended into heaven with a promise that He would return again. The followers were instructed to wait in Jerusalem until they, *“are endued with power from on high”* (Luke 24:49).

According to Acts 2 they were assembled together waiting for the promise of the Father (Acts 1:4-5) to be revealed when there was a miraculous manifestation of the Spirit of God.

- *“And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.*
- *Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.*
- *And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance”* (Acts 2:2-4).

As the news of this unusual event began to be heard, people from surrounding nations, in Jerusalem for the feast day, gathered with curiosity and heard members of this group speaking many different languages and dialects, and reported, *“we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God”* (Acts 2:11).

Others accused them of being drunk on wine. Peter’s defense began there as he refuted that statement, *“For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel”* (Acts 2:15-16). He continued his message taking his text from the passage in Joel. In application, Peter declares that Jesus, *“whom you crucified,”* is risen and has ascended to heaven.

- *“Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear”* (Acts 2:33).

Peter declared this to be the Spirit that Joel prophesied would be poured out on all flesh. When many of the hearers believed the words of Peter and recognized that they had crucified the Lord of Glory, they asked, *“what shall we do?”*

- Then Peter said to them, *“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit”* (Acts 2:38).

The far-reaching effects of this message were not realized by the disciples, not even Peter. This is evidenced in the fact that before he was approached to go to Cornelius’ household (the Gentiles) in Acts 10, he had to be prepared by God for this bold step with a heavenly vision. Through this divine vision he recognized the outpouring of the Spirit *“on all flesh”* was more than *“all Jewish flesh.”*

He acknowledged to Cornelius, “*You know how unlawful it is for a Jewish man to keep company with or go to one of another nation. But God has shown me that I should not call any man common or unclean*” (Acts 10:28). As he addressed the group assembled there he further stated, “*In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him*” (Acts 10:34-35). He continued to preach about Jesus to them. While he was speaking, the Holy Spirit was poured out on these Gentiles.

- “And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.
- For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God” (Acts 10:45-46).

The message was, and *is*, to “*whosoever will.*” The promise of a spiritual outpouring has continued into the present and the 2,800 year old message of Joel is still relevant today. God’s promises are *sure*; to *every* generation and to *all* people.

- “For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call” (Acts 2:39).

The LORD is not the only one who, “*will roar from Zion, And utter His voice from Jerusalem*” (Joel 3:16). The “*little*” prophet is still speaking loud and clear!

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Study Questions

THE BOOK OF JOEL

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers*, [PAP] by Gary V. Smith, and the *Class Notes* [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. What does the name of Joel mean? (CN)

2. What is the insight theme for the book of Joel? (CN)

3. What is the earliest suggested date for the writing of Joel? (CN)

4. Embedded in the abundance of Joel's prophecy of judgment what dynamic prophecy is made? (CN)

5. Portions of Joel's prophecy quoted by Peter have not come to pass. What is this an illustration of? (CN)

6. What other message is contained in Joel making it true to the form of other prophets? (CN)

7. Joel outlines a broad range of God's judgment seen in what two extents? (CN)

8. Besides Joel's prophecy of Pentecost and judgments concerning the "day of the Lord" what other prophetic themes are addressed? (CN)

9. What is the range of dates offered for the life and writing of Joel's prophecy? (CN)

10. In spite of varying views concerning the authorship and date of writing for the book of Joel, what is one thing that has not been debated? (CN)

11. What evidence might be offered to say that the plague of locusts described in Joel was an actual event? (CN)

12. What is the immediate and symbolic references to restoration in Joel? (CN)

13. What is The most significant and perhaps the largest passage of any Old Testament prophet quoted? (CN)

14. What passage in the book of Joel is set apart as a separate chapter in the Hebrew text?

15. Why is Joel sometimes referred to as the "prophet of Pentecost"? (CN)

16. Under what king does Joel prophesy? (PAP)

17. What is Smith's "better alternative" for the date of writing for Joel and why? (PAP)

18. What changed the behavior of the drunkards? (PAP)

19. How was Joel's prophetic role in Jerusalem unique?

20. What traditional literary forms of speech did Joel use to communicate his ideas? (PAP)

21. What was Joel's goal in preaching about the plague of locusts? (PAP)

22. What would be the result if the people would truly turn to God? (PAP)

23. (True or False) Judgment on Judah meant the end of God's plans for His people. (PAP)

24. In the message of Joel, how would the Spirit outwardly manifest His presence? (PAP)

25. How did many Old and New Testament preachers motivate people to repent? (PAP)

26. Who preached "positive words" among the prophets? (PAP)



The Book of Obadiah

Life and times

Obadiah means “*Worshipper of Yahweh*” or “*Servant of Yahweh*” (usually rendered servant today)

Word study of dbAxA

To worship or to serve

Mission and Message

I. Obadiah pronounces judgment on Edom

One of the strongest messages of judgment in the Old Testament (compare with Nahum’s message for Nineveh)

- there are no pleas to “return” no offer of repentance.
- there are no words of consolation or hope.
- no conditions for possible deliverance

• *Their crime* - They refused to allow Israel to pass through their land on the way to Canaan. They continually opposed Israel, at times being subdued and again being victorious.

- They opposed Saul and were subjugated by David and Solomon.
- They fought Jehoshaphat and Jehoram
- They were subdued by Amaziah (of Judah) and rebelled under Ahaz.

• *They opposed God’s people and were contrary to God’s plan.*

• Edom was the descendants of Esau. Edom means “*red*” - reference the “*red stew*” Jacob bargained with for the birthright.

- The man who found no repentance begat a nation of like kind.

Hebrews 12:16-17 (NKJV)

- “lest there *be* any fornicator or profane person like Esau, who for one morsel of food sold his birthright.”
- “For you know that afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears.”

- Mount Seir (region south of the Dead Sea)
- Became known as the Idumaeans. Herod the Great, was an Idumaeen and became the king of Judea under Rome in 37 BC
- They rejoiced over the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 BC and died trying to defend it in A.D. 70.

Psalms 137:7 (NKJV)

- “Remember, O LORD, against the sons of Edom The day of Jerusalem, Who said, “Raze *it*, raze *it*, To its very foundation!”“

- The Idumaeans joined in the rebellion against Rome in Jerusalem and suffered the defeat of Titus in A.D. 70. They were completely destroyed and were never heard of again just as Obadiah predicted.

Obadiah 1:10 (NKJV)

- “For violence against your brother Jacob, Shame shall cover you, And you shall be cut off forever.”

-There will be no survivors

Obadiah 1:18 (NKJV)

- “The house of Jacob shall be a fire, And the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau *shall be* stubble; They shall kindle them and devour them, And no survivor shall remain of the house of Esau,” For the LORD has spoken.”

Response and Relevance

II. Obadiah pronounces restoration for Israel

• Throughout the prophets is the tread of continuity, the restoration of the people of God. Even through the messages of judgment there are the continual reminders of God’s greater plan of redemption and restoration.

• Part of the judgment on Edom will be the possession of their territory by Israel.

Obadiah 1:19-21 (NKJV)

- “The South shall possess the mountains of Esau, And the Lowland shall possess Philistia. They shall possess the fields of Ephraim And the fields of Samaria. Benjamin *shall possess* Gilead.”
- “And the captives of this host of the children of Israel *shall possess the land* of the Canaanites As far as Zarephath. The captives of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad Shall possess the cities of the South.”

• “Then saviors shall come to Mount Zion To judge the mountains of Esau, And the kingdom shall be the Lord’s.”

- Compared to a day in court
 - arraignment
 - indictment
 - sentence

It is the supreme court of heaven and there is no appeal. Nothing will avert God’s complete judgment on Edom.

This is a difficult concept for us to understand as we live in the day of grace. It is a preamble of judgment to come.

- Repentance is not a right, it is a privilege afforded by God.
 - Grace is an extension of that privilege.
 - Whosoever will, let him come . . .
 - It is the seeking and finding of forgiveness.
 - Confess and forsake sins . . .

1 John 1:9 (NKJV)

• “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Hebrews 4:16 (NKJV)

• “Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Divisions of the book

OBADIAH	Verses 1-18	Verses 19-21
Focus	Judgment of Edom	Restoration of Israel
Topic	Defeat of Israel	Victory of Israel
	Prediction of Judgment	Prediction of Possession
Place	Edom and Israel	

Insights

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF OBADIAH

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers*, [PAP] by Gary V. Smith, and the *Class Notes* [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. What does the name Obadiah mean? (CN)

2. Who is the object of Obadiah's strong message of Judgment? (CN)

3. To what other prophet is the message of Obadiah comparable? (CN)

4. What was the crime of Edom for which they were being judged? (CN)

5. Who were the Edomites descendants of? (CN)

6. What does the name Edom mean and what does it refer to? (CN)

7. What ruler over the land of Israel was a descendent of the Edomites? (CN)

8. What was the ironic twist of fate concerning the descendants of the Edomites (the Idumaeans) in A.D. 70, who had rejoiced at the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C? (CN)

9. How was the restoration of Israel a part of the judgment on Edom? (CN)

10. To what is the judgment on Edom compared? (CN)

11. If Repentance is not a "right" what is it? (CN)

12. What is the parallel prophecy of Obadiah and Ezekiel that present an argument for the book of Obadiah being written a few years after the fall of Jerusalem (586 BC)? (PAP)

13. Where was the land of the Edomites located? (PAP)

14. What did the political security of Edom lead to? (PAP)

15. As anarchy reigned and social norms were abandoned, how did the Edomites treat the Judeans of Jerusalem? (PAP)

16. According to Smith who was Obadiah? (PAP)

17. As God's messenger, what message of Obadiah brought comforting news? (PAP)

18. Obadiah recounted what four things that God would take away from the proud Edomites? (PAP)

19. What did the Edomites do to cause God to cut them off? (PAP)

20. What are the two lasting principles in Obadiah's message that relate to acts of oppression and violence? (PAP)

21. From the contemporary application of Obadiah's message, what is the worldview that will not escape God's punishment? (PAP)



The Book of Haggai

Life and times

Haggai - His name probably comes from the word for feast or festival - “Håg”. We will assume his name means “Festive” -- *party!*

Outside of the book of his prophecy he is mentioned in Ezra (5:1 & 6:14), with the latter mention being in conjunction with Zechariah.

In 538 BC Cyrus issued the decree allowing the Jews to return to their land and rebuild their temple. Just as there were three stages of the exile taking thousands into Babylonian captivity, there are three phases of repatriation where groups are led back to the land of Israel to rebuild their lives in what now is a strange place and no longer feels like home.

Outside years of captivity -- Seventy years - 606 BC -- 536 BC - the first exile to the work on the temple beginning.

Another way to mark the 70 years of exile is from the destruction of the temple in 586 BC to the completion of the second temple in 516 BC

Three returns from Exile

1. A Remnant returns to Jerusalem under Zerubbabel. In 536 BC work on the temple began. About 50,000 exiles return to Jerusalem.
2. Ezra leads a contingent of Jews back to Jerusalem about 458 BC. There were about 1,700 in this group.
3. Nehemiah is appointed governor and allowed to lead a return and the rebuilding of the walls beginning 444 BC

After an initial burst of enthusiasm and interest in rebuilding the temple, they are discouraged with the sheer difficulty of the task, the desolation of the land, crop failure, and the opposition by the inhabitants of the land. After two years the building

on the temple ceased (534 BC). They became preoccupied in their own building projects and neglected the construction of the house of the Lord.

Mission and Message

Insight Theme: *Reconstruction of the Temple*

I. Completion of the Temple (Chapter 1)

Haggai and Zechariah are called to encourage the people to complete the building of the temple. After fourteen years of neglect the work on the temple was resumed in 520 BC and completed in 516 BC (Ezra 6:15)

II. The Glory of the Latter Temple (2:1-9)

Haggai 2:7 (NKJV)

- ‘and I will shake all nations, and they shall come to the Desire of All Nations, and I will fill this temple with glory,’ says the LORD of hosts.
- ‘The silver *is* Mine, and the gold *is* Mine,’ says the LORD of hosts.
- ‘The glory of this latter temple shall be greater than the former,’ says the LORD of hosts.
- ‘And in this place I will give peace,’ says the LORD of hosts.”

Herod the Great spent a fortune enlarging and enriching this temple. Its true glory was the presence of God incarnate each time Jesus made his appearance there. Jesus is the “Desire of All Nations” and the “Prince of Peace”

The elders remember the glory of Solomon’s Temple and weep. The youth rejoice. It’s the only temple they have known.

III. The Present Blessing of Obedience (2:10-19)

Obedience and holiness bring the blessing of God presently. The contamination of sin blocks the blessings of God.

Haggai 2:18-19

- 18 ‘Consider now from this day forward, from the twenty-fourth day of the ninth month, from the day that the foundation of the Lord’s temple was laid; consider it:
- 19 ‘Is the seed still in the barn? As yet the vine, the fig tree, the pomegranate, and the olive tree have not yielded *fruit*. *But* from this day I will bless *you*.’”

IV. The Future Blessing of Promise (2:20-23)

Zerubbabel foreshadowed the Messiah in the merging of the two branches of David; from the Solomonic lineage and from Nathan. In this he was as a signet ring; completing the circle.

Haggai 2:23 (NKJV)

• ‘In that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, ‘I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel,’ says the LORD, ‘and will make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you,’ says the LORD of hosts.”

Response and Relevance

In the Lineage of Joseph

Matthew 1:12 (NKJV)

• And after they were brought to Babylon, Jeconiah begot Shealtiel, and Shealtiel begot Zerubbabel.

In the Lineage of Mary

Luke 3:27 (NKJV)

• *the son of Joannas, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Shealtiel, the son of Neri,*

Divisions of the book

HAGGAI	Chapter 1	Chapter 2:1-9	Chap. 2:10-19	Chap. 2:20-23
Focus	Completion of the Latter Temple	Glory of the Latter Temple	Present Blessing of Obedience	Future Blessing Through Promise
Topic	Temple of God		Blessing of God	
	First Rebuke	First Encouragement	Second Rebuke	Second Encouragement
Place	Jerusalem			

Insights

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF HAGGAI

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers*, [PAP] by Gary V. Smith, and the *Class Notes* [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. From what does the name Haggai probably come? (CN)

2. In which other Old Testament book is Haggai mentioned? (CN)

3. How many phases of repatriation are there? (CN)

4. What occurred 70 years after the destruction of the temple in 586 B.C.? (CN)

5. Who is the primary leader of each of the three returns from Exile? (CN)

6. What things discouraged the settlers of Jerusalem and caused them to cease the construction of the temple after two years? (CN)

7. What became their preoccupation? (CN)

8. What is the insight theme of Haggai? (CN)

9. What are Haggai and Zechariah called to do? (CN)

10. How many years had the construction of the temple been neglected and how long did the completion of the project require? (CN)

11. What was the true “glory of the latter temple”? (CN)

12. Who is the “Desire of All nations” and the “Peace” that Haggai prophesied concerning? (CN)

13. Why did the elders weep and the youths rejoice over the completion of the second temple? (CN)

14. What blocks the blessing of God? (CN)

15. In what way did Zerubbabel foreshadow the coming Messiah? (CN)

16. What did Haggai challenge the people to think about? (PAP)

17. What did the benevolent Persian Empire allow and provide to the people in Jerusalem? (PAP)

18. What changed the priorities of the people who had hoped to worship God in the rebuilt temple?

19. Along with the Spirit’s work what rhetorical skills were employed by Haggai? (PAP)

20. Why did the rebuilding of the temple not make sense? (PAP)

21. Was it right or wrong to conclude that the drought and financial struggles were a reason not to rebuild the temple? (PAP)

22. What was the content of Haggai's last sermon? (PAP)



The Book of Zechariah

Life and times

Zechariah means “*God Remembers*” - A name shared by at least 29 other Old Testament individuals.

He was born of a priestly lineage in Babylon. He returned to Jerusalem with the exiles under Zerubbabel. He was a younger contemporary of Haggai. His ministry begins two months after Haggai begins. (See introduction in Haggai 1:1 and Zechariah 1:1.)

The Prophets Haggai and Zechariah Contrasted

HAGGAI	ZECHARIAH
Older Activist	Younger Visionary
Present Concern	Future Concern
Exhortation	Encouragement
Concise	Expanded
More Concrete	More Abstract

Zechariah’s Call to Repentance (1:1–6)

Coronation of Joshua the High-Priest (6:9–15)

Basic Outline for the book of Zechariah

- 1 - Eight Visions
- 2 - Four Messages
- 3 - Two Burdens

Visions of Zechariah

- Vision 1—Man among the myrtle trees (1:7–17),
God promises prosperity to Israel.
- Vision 2—Four horns and four craftsmen (1:18–21),
God judges the nations who attacked Israel.
- Vision 3—Man with a measuring line (2:1–13),
God rebuilds Jerusalem.
- Vision 4—Cleansing of the High-Priest (3:1–10),
God purifies both High-Priest and people.
- Vision 5—Golden lampstand and two olives trees (4:1–14),
God rebuilds the temple.
- Vision 6—Flying scroll (5:1–4),
God removes imparted sin/idolatry.
- Vision 7—Woman in basket (5:5–11),
God removes the system of false religion.
- Vision 8—Four chariots (6:1–8),
God brings peace and rest to Israel. ⁶

Four Messages of Zechariah

Question about Fasting (7:1–3)

Four Responses (7:4–8:23)

1. Rebuke for wrong motives (7:4–7)
2. Repentance required (7:8–14)
3. Restoration of favor (8:1–17)
4. Fasts become feasts (8:18–23)

Two Burdens of Zechariah

Messiah's Rejection at First Advent (9:1–11:17)

Messiah's Acceptance at Second Advent (12:1–14:21)

Mission and Message

Sometimes referred to as the “Apocalypse of the Old Testament,” Zechariah is the most eschatological of the OT. While it is visionary in its composition, primarily the book is a prophecy about Jesus Christ, focusing on His coming glory as

⁶MacArthur, J. 1997, c1997. *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Electronic ed.) . Word Pub.: Nashville, TN

a means to comfort Israel (see 1:13, 17). Zechariah is second only to Isaiah in number of Messianic passages. Christ is portrayed in both advents; Servant and King, God and Man.

Insight Theme: *Preparation for the Messiah*

Zechariah 8:3 (NKJV)

- “Thus says the LORD: ‘I will return to Zion, And dwell in the midst of Jerusalem. Jerusalem shall be called the City of Truth, The Mountain of the LORD of hosts, The Holy Mountain.’

Zechariah 9:9 (NKJV)

- “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey, A colt, the foal of a donkey.”

Response and Relevance

Some of Zechariah’s explicit prophecies of Christ:

- the angel of the Lord (3:1-2)
- the righteous Branch (3:8; 6:12-13)
- the stone with seven eyes (3:9)
- the King-Priest (6:13)
- the humble King (9:9-10)
- the cornerstone, tent peg, and bow of battle (10:4)
- the good shepherd, rejected and sold for 30 shekels of silver, the price of a slave (11:4-13)
- the pierced One (12:10)
- the cleansing fountain (13:1)
- the smitten Shepherd who is abandoned (13:7)
- the coming Judge and righteous King (14)

Divisions of the book

ZECHARIAH	Chapters 1-6	Chapters 7-8	Chapters 9-14
Focus	Eight Visions	Four Messages	Two Burdens
Topic	Pictures	Problems	Predictions
	Israel’s Fortune	Israel’s Fasting	Israel’s Future
Place	Jerusalem		

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF ZECHARIAH

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers*, [PAP] by Gary V. Smith, and the *Class Notes* [CN] compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. What was Zerubbabel's identity according to God's view? (PAP)

2. What does the name Zechariah mean in Hebrew? (CN)

3. What prophet was the older contemporary of Zechariah? (CN)

4. What is the insight theme of Zechariah? (CN)

5. Which is the only other prophetic book that has more numerous messianic passages than Zechariah? (CN)

6. List three sets of contrasts according to the notes that distinguish between Haggai and Zechariah.

7. Give the basic outline for the book of Zechariah. (CN)

8. List 8 explicit prophecies of Christ from the book of Zechariah. (reference not required) (CN)

9. How was Jewish life affected by the differences between King Cyrus and the satrap over the “province beyond the river”? (PAP)

10. What did Zechariah challenge of the leaders in Jerusalem? (PAP)

11. What else happened in the same year Zechariah gave his sermons? (PAP)

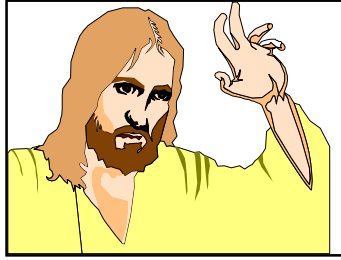
12. Zerubbabel and many other Jews may have doubted what? (PAP)

13. What was Zechariah’s question concerning the fasts of the people? (PAP)

14. How did Zechariah persuade his listeners to see the future? (PAP)

15. In the first burden of Zechariah what will the central figure accomplish? (PAP)

16. The book of Zechariah teaches us that God’s people need good leaders for what purpose? (PAP)



The Book of Malachi

Life and times

Malachi – In the Hebrew means “*My Messenger*” - maybe a shortened form of “*Messenger of Yahweh*”

Malachi was probably written during the Persian rule over Israel during the days of Nehemiah. His message may have been presented during Nehemiah’s absence when he returned to the Persian court between 432 BC and 425 BC

After the time of rebuilding the temple and the construction of the walls of Jerusalem Malachi addresses social and moral problems interfering with the covenant relationship with Yahweh. They were cured of their idolatry after the captivity but the sin problem remained. Malachi points to the coming Messiah and kingdom when the answer to the sin problem comes.

Similar conditions to Nehemiah

- corrupt priests (1:6-2:9; Neh. 13:1-9)
- neglect of tithes and offerings (3:7-12; Neh. 13:10-13)
- intermarriage with pagan wives (2:10-16; Neh. 13:23-28)

Mission and Message

Insight Theme or theme: *Appeal to Backsliders*

The last book of the Old Testament concludes with a dramatic prophecy of the coming of the Lord and the messenger.

Malachi 3:1 (NKJV)

• “Behold, I send My messenger, And he will prepare the way before Me. And the Lord, whom you seek, Will suddenly come to His temple, Even the Messenger of the covenant, In whom you delight. Behold, He is coming,” Says the LORD of hosts.”

Isaiah 40:3 (NKJV)

• “The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Prepare the way of the LORD; Make straight in the desert A highway for our God.”

I. The Privilege of the Nation (1:1-5)

A Reminder of their special and unique covenantal relationship to Yahweh.

- “Yet Jacob (Israel) I have loved; But Esau (Edom) I have hated”

Contrast the fate of these two nations to understand the obvious love God had for Israel.

II. The Pollution of the Nation (1:6--3:15)

God withholds his blessing from Israel because of their disobedience to the covenant. Diseased and imperfect animals were being offered on the altar. Better care was given to their governor than to God.

Malachi 1:7-8 (NKJV)

- “*You* offer defiled food on My altar. But say, ‘In what way have we defiled You?’ By saying, ‘The table of the LORD is contemptible.’
- “And when you offer the blind as a sacrifice, *Is it* not evil? And when you offer the lame and sick, *Is it* not evil? Offer it then to your governor! Would he be pleased with you? Would he accept you favorably?” Says the LORD of hosts.”

Insincere Worship and observance by the Priests

Malachi 2:2 (NKJV)

- ... “I will send a curse upon you, And I will curse your blessings. Yes, I have cursed them already, Because you do not take *it* to heart.”

Divorce and Remarriage - Taking of Foreign Wives

Malachi 2:15-16

- ... And let none deal treacherously with the wife of his youth.
- “For the LORD God of Israel says That He hates divorce, For it covers one’s garment with violence,”

Robbing God - Missed Blessings

Malachi 3:8-11 (NKJV)

- “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.”
- “You are cursed with a curse, For you have robbed Me, *Even* this whole nation.”
- “Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, That there may be food in My house, And try Me now in this,” Says the LORD of hosts, “If I will not open for you the windows of heaven And pour out for you *such* blessing That *there will not be room enough to receive it.*”
- “And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, So that he will not destroy the fruit of your ground, Nor shall the vine fail to bear fruit for you in the field,” Says the LORD of hosts;

III. The Promise to the Nation (3:16--4:6)

The wicked will be judged and those who fear the Lord will be blessed.

It is not in vain to serve the Lord:

Malachi 3:14 (NKJV)

- “You have said, ‘It is useless to serve God; What profit *is it* that we have kept His ordinance, And that we have walked as mourners Before the LORD of hosts?’”

Blessing

Malachi 3:16-17 (NKJV)

- “Then those who feared the LORD spoke to one another, And the LORD listened and heard *them*; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the LORD And who meditate on His name.”
- “They shall be Mine,” says the LORD of hosts, “On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him.”

Judgment

Malachi 4:1 (NKJV)

- “For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up,” Says the LORD of hosts, “That will leave them neither root nor branch.”

Response and Relevance

Conclusion of the Old Testament.

A bitter ending; “*curse.*” The effects of sin are still evident. There is a looking forward to the purpose and plan of God.

Malachi 4:5 (NKJV)

- “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD.”
- “And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.”

The New Testament begins with Jesus Christ.

Matthew 1:1 (NKJV)

- “The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham:”

Six Disputations in Malachi

1. Disputation about Love (1:2-5)

- 2 “I have loved you,” says the LORD. “Yet you say, ‘In what way have You loved us?’”

- God loves Israel - The unconditional love of Yahweh for Israel is seen in this special relationship.

2. Disputation about honor (1:6-2:9)

- 6 “A son honors *his* father, And a servant *his* master. If then I am the Father, Where *is* My honor? And if I *am* a Master, Where *is* My reverence? Says the LORD of hosts To you priests who despise My name. Yet you say, ‘In what way have we despised Your name?’”

- A son honors his father -

3. Disputation about faithlessness (2:10-16)

- 10 Have we not all one Father? Has not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously with one another By profaning the covenant of the fathers?

- We have one father -

4. Disputation about divine justice (2:17-3:5)

- 17 You have wearied the LORD with your words; Yet you say, “In what way have we wearied Him?” In that you say, “Everyone who does evil Is good in the sight of the LORD, And He delights in them,” Or, “Where is the God of justice?”

- Where is the God of Justice? -

5. Disputation about repentance (3:6-12)

- 6 “For I *am* the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.
- 7 Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept *them*. Return to Me, and I will return to you,” Says the LORD of hosts. “But you said, ‘In what way shall we return?’
- 8 “Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me! But you say, ‘In what way have we robbed You?’ In tithes and offerings.

- The unchanging God still calls for repentance. -

6. Disputation about serving God (3:13-4:3)

- 13 “Your words have been harsh against Me,” Says the LORD, “Yet you say, ‘What have we spoken against You?’
- 14 You have said, ‘It is useless to serve God; What profit *is it* that we have kept His ordinance, And that we have walked as mourners Before the LORD of hosts?’

- Your words have been strong against the Lord

Divisions of the book

Malachi	Chap. 1:1--1:5	Chap. 1:6--3:15	Chap. 3:16--4:6
Focus	Privilege of the Nation	Pollution of the Nation	Promise to the Nation
Topic	Past	Present	Future
	Care of God	Complaint of God	Coming of God
Place	Jerusalem		

Study Questions

THE BOOK OF MALACHI

From *An Introduction to the Hebrew Prophets: The Prophets as Preachers*, [PAP] by Gary V. Smith, and the *Class Notes* [CN]
compiled by Terry R. Baughman

1. What does the name of Malachi mean in Hebrew? (CN)

2. The book of Malachi may have been written during the Persian rule over Israel during the days of what other biblical writer? (CN)

3. What types of problems does Malachi address? (CN)

4. What is the answer to the sin problem? (CN)

5. What three conditions exist in the time of Nehemiah that the prophecy of Malachi also notes? (CN)

6. What is the insight theme in the book of Malachi? (CN)

7. What is the “privilege” of the nation of Israel according to Malachi? (CN)

8. Why does God withhold his blessing from Israel in the book of Malachi? (CN)

9. What types of animals were being offered on the altar of God? (CN)

10. In what way had Israel robbed God? (CN)

11. In the “Promise” to the nation of Israel, who would be judged and who would be blessed?(CN)

12. What is the “bitter ending” of the Old Testament? (CN)

13. How many disputations are noted in the book of Malachi? (CN)

14. What subjects are addressed by Malachi’s disputations? (CN)

15. How did Malachi address the problem of mixed marriages differently than Ezra and Nehemiah? (PAP)

16. Malachi addressed a people who were more concerned with *what* secular view rather than worrying about what God wanted? (PAP)

17. What was the response of Israel to Malachi’s claim that God Loved them? (PAP)

18. What was the result when the priests rejected their role as God’s messenger and turned the people away from God with their instruction and legal decisions? (PAP)

19. What profaned the sacred covenant with God and threatened to destroy the unity of the group? (PAP)

20. What did Malachi suggest that God would send before He came back to rule His kingdom? (PAP)

21. What are three ways people are affected with battling the forces of secularism? (PAP)

22. What bold suggestion did Malachi make concerning the temple? (PAP)
