

Week 1: Hosea

Objective:

- Hosea's Unfaithful Wife
- Hosea's family
- God's Continuing Love for Israel
- Fruits of repentance

Resources:

- Fr Tadros Y Malaty Commentary
- Catena Bible Commentary
- Fr Dawoud Lamie Bible study (Arabic)
- Minor Prophets SUSCOPTS
- Metropolitan Youssef - Hosea

Activity for every week: Can you recite the 12 minor prophets?

Reading:

- Hosea 1
- Hosea 2:6-7, 14-23
- Hosea 6:1-3
- Hosea 11
- Hosea 14

Key verse(s):

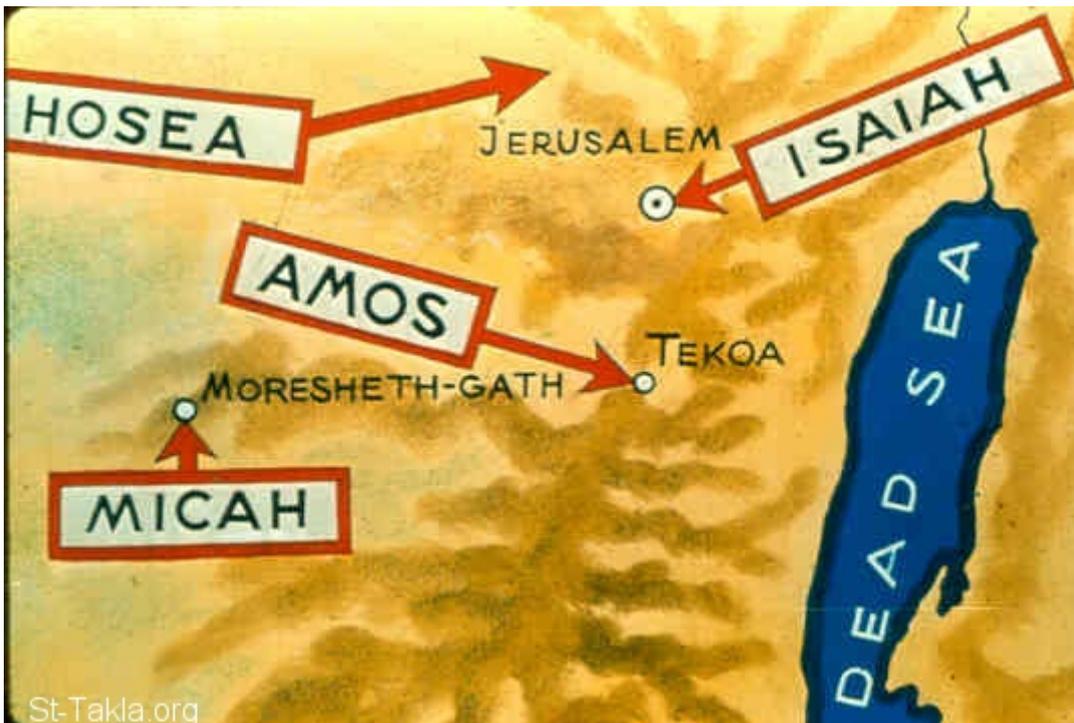
“When Israel was a child, I loved him, And out of Egypt I called My son.” Hosea 11:1

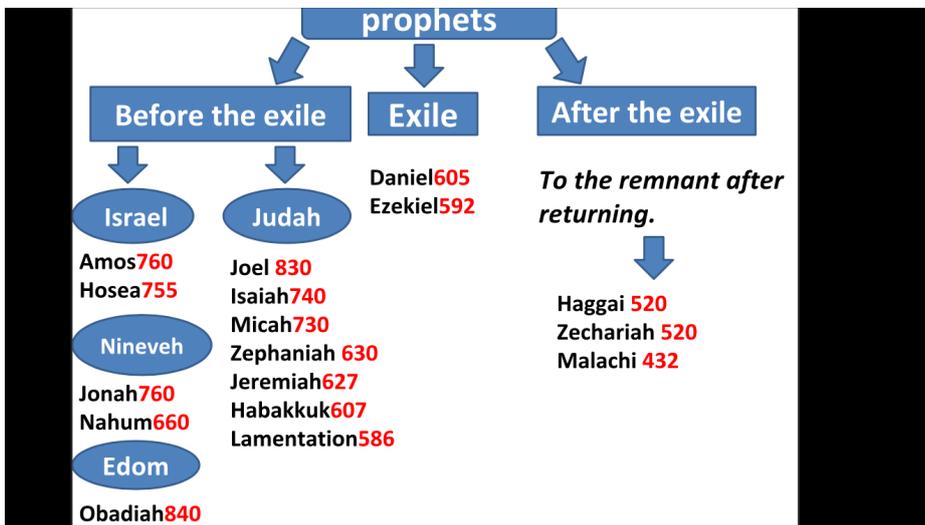
NOTE TO SERVANT:

- Please plan to ask and review these questions every week:
 - Who are the minor prophets? Can you recite them?
 - The theme for last week's minor prophet
 - Highlight Messianic prophecy

Minor Prophets introduction:

- The Major and Minor Prophet division of the Holy Bible does not denote the importance or rank of the writing prophets, but the length of the Holy Books which bear their prophecies.
 - Ex: Jonah 4 chapters - Isaiah 66 chapters
- There are 12 minor prophets and 4 major prophets (5 books including Lamentations)
- In the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible), all these books were listed under "prophets". In the Septuagint and Vulgate translations, this classification of major and minor was mentioned.
- The prophet in the OT was someone who passed God's message to the people. A prophet in the NT is also someone who passes God's message or news (God's love and salvation for all mankind).
- In the OT, there were many prophets (Moses, David, Elijah, Elisha, etc.), but when we refer to the "Prophets", we refer to the ones who recorded their prophecy.
- All prophecies had one goal: Repentance!
- Recorded prophecies were split into three groups: Before, during, and after the exile.
 - Before: Repent so God doesn't bring the exile
 - During: Repent so God can end the exile and take us back to our land
 - After: Repent because the Messiah is coming
- The books of the prophets are rich with Messianic prophecies. Our Lord fulfilled all.
- The meaning of the names of the prophets is usually the message of their writings.
- The prophetic books always start with a strong tough message and then end with a joyful promising message.
- All books have different themes. All books have the same message (repentance).





<i>Minor Prophets (in biblical order)</i>	<i>Main Themes of their Writings</i>
Hosea	Salvation
Joel	The Day of the Lord
Amos	God's Judgment, The Day of the Lord , Israel's redemption
Obadiah	The destruction of Edom, The Day of the Lord
Jonah	Serving the Lord, His mercy
Micah	Injustice, oppression
Nahum	Judgement on Nineveh, comfort to Israel
Habakkuk	God embracing Judah, the destruction of Chaldea
Zephaniah	God's anger, The Day of the Lord , Israel repents and is spared
Haggai	Restoration of the Temple
Zechariah	The building of the Temple, the coming of God's Kingdom
Malachi	The messenger to come, The Day of the Lord

Introducing THE MAJOR & minor PROPHETS

The Major and Minor Prophets is a collection of books within the Christian Old Testament compiled from the writings of notable ancient Hebrew authors known as prophets. This section of the Christian Bible follows the section of the Jewish Bible known as the Latter Prophets which features a nearly identical list of books with the exception of Daniel and Lamentations (these two books are found in a different section of the Jewish Bible). The Latter Prophets, together with the Former Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel & Kings), form the division of the Jewish Bible called the Nevi'im (Prophets). Prophets are distinct from other Biblical authors in that their writings center around oracles, laments, visions, proclamations, and warnings that have less emphasis on narrative or chronology and more emphasis on God's direct message to his people. Promises of hope, judgment of sin, future restoration, God's sovereignty, and the end of days are all common themes found in prophetic literature. In their day a prophet was a highly respected religious figure who acted as the mouthpiece of God to the tribes of Israel and neighboring countries. A prophet was a frequent visitor to both the courts of kings and to the streets of villagers.



Isaiah is noteworthy for being the most quoted of the prophets in the New Testament. Many passages are Messianic in nature, even predicting events in the life of Christ such as the virgin birth (Isaiah 7:14). His writings cover a long period of time and a wide variety of topics.

Jeremiah was heavily persecuted for his prophecies during the Babylonian Siege. He often used metaphors such as the potter and clay (Jeremiah 18:1-7) to illustrate God's message to the people. Known as the weeping prophet, he is also believed to be the author of Lamentations.

Ezekiel prophesied during Israel's captivity in Babylon. He often received elaborate visions from God such as the Vision of Dry Bones where skeletons come to life to form a great army. Almost every aspect of his life served a symbolic purpose, from how he cooked his food to the way he slept at night.

Daniel was taken captive to Babylon at a young age. His gift to translate dreams gave him favor with kings. He often received prophetic visions of his own about the distant future. On one occasion he was thrown into a den of lions for serving God exclusively, but the Lord rescued him.



Hosea was chosen by God to be an example to the people of Israel. His wife was unfaithful, but just like God he never stopped loving her and always looked for her whenever she left him.

Joel prophesied during a time when the land of Israel had suffered from a great plague of locusts. Joel proclaims this as a sign from God and a precursor to the Day of the Lord.

Amos was a sheep breeder and a vinder of fig trees by trade, but God used him to bring a powerful word of correction to Israel and the surrounding nations.

Obadiah is the shortest book in the Old Testament with only 21 verses. The book is a proclamation of judgment against Edom for siding the Babylonians in their siege against Jerusalem.

Jonah is the most famous of the minor prophets because a giant sea animal was used to set him back on course after going astray. His mission was to tell the people of Nineveh to repent of their ungodliness.

Micah in 1:8 lamented without wearing clothes in order to illustrate the severity of the destitution and captivity that was coming. This method was also used by Isaiah at times (Isaiah 20:2-3).



Nahum predicts the destruction of Nineveh, the great capital of the Assyrian empire. Evidently the reforms introduced by Josiah did not last long.

Habakkuk identifies himself as a prophet. His complaint to God is answered by a promise of redemption and grace to be played on stringed instruments by the temple worship leaders.

Zephaniah contains a series of stern judgments directed toward Israel, Judah, and her neighbors for permitting idolatry and other sins in the land.

Haggai made his chief concern restoring the temple of the Lord. Despite the Hebrews' return from captivity, the temple had not yet been fully rebuilt.

Zechariah like Ezekiel received vivid prophecies in the form of highly symbolic visions. Some revelations include things like a flying scroll, olive trees, and women with wings. Several of the passages are Messianic in nature.

Malachi is a reformer who directs his message toward corrupt priests and those who withhold their offerings from the Lord. Malachi is the last book before the New Testament.

Major or Minor? The designation of Major or Minor prophet is not determined by the greatness of a prophet's ministry, but simply by the amount of surviving writings. Comparison by number of words in the 1971 King James Bible

Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel
Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

Where did they prophesy?

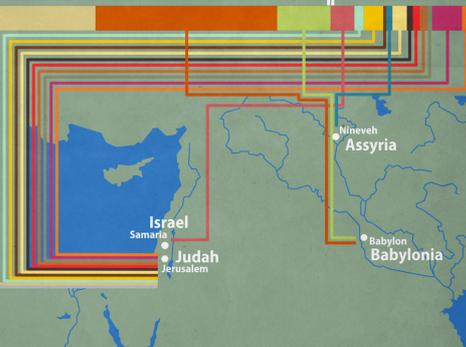
Following the reign of Solomon the nation of Israel divided into two kingdoms. The Northern Kingdom retained the name Israel and made Samaria the capital. The Southern Kingdom came to be known as Judah and possessed the city of Jerusalem as its capital. Because the temple remained in Jerusalem the majority of the prophets centered their ministry in Judah.

When did they prophesy?

The books of the prophets cover a time span from about 800 BC to about 400 BC. In 586 BC the Babylonians completed the conquest of Israel and Judah that started in 597 BC and led the captive Israelites away to Babylon. After almost 60 years in captivity the Jews were released by the Persian King, Cyrus, to return to their homeland and rebuild Jerusalem. Many of the prophets provide very specific dates for their years of active ministry by mentioning contemporary rulers. Others are more difficult to pinpoint, but clues can often be found in their subject matter.

Timeline

All dates approximate



The Minor Prophets

1. [Obadiah](#) - "Servant of Jehovah" (845 BC)
2. [Joel](#) - "Jehovah is God" (830 BC)
3. [Jonah](#) - "Dove" (780 BC)
4. [Amos](#) - "Burden-bearer" (755 BC)
5. [Hosea](#) - "Salvation" (750-725 BC)
6. [Micah](#) - "Who is like the Lord?" (740-700 BC)
7. [Zephaniah](#) - "Jehovah Hides" (625 BC)
8. [Nahum](#) - "Consolation" (630-612 BC)
9. [Habakkuk](#) - "Embrace" (612-606 BC)
10. [Haggai](#) - "Festive or Festival" (520 BC)
11. [Zachariah](#) - "Whom Jehovah Remembers" (520-518 BC)
12. [Malachi](#) - "My Messenger" (445-432 BC)

Minor Prophets		
Before Assyrian Captivity Directed to the North Kingdom	After Assyrian and before Babylonian captivities Directed to the South Kingdom	After Captivity
1. Hosea 2. Joel 3. Amos 4. Obadiah (Edom) 5. Jonah	6. Micah 7. Nahum (Nineveh) 8. Habakkuk 9. Zephaniah	10. Haggai 11. Zechariah 12. Malachi

Comments:

Theme of Hosea: God's salvation

Messianic Prophecy: The Lord's entry to Egypt (11:1)

- Hosea is one of the minor prophets.
- The book of Hosea was written for the Northern Kingdom of Israel
- Outwardly, the nation was enjoying a time of prosperity and growth; but inwardly, moral corruption and spiritual adultery permeated the lives of the people.
- The prophet Hosea was instructed by God to marry an unfaithful woman, and he found in his own life a vivid illustration of the unfaithfulness of God's people and the faithfulness of God.
- Hosea repeatedly echoes his threefold message: God abhors the sins of His people; judgment is certain; but God's love stands firm.
- Hosea, whose name means "Salvation."
- The book of Hosea is a story of one-sided love and faithfulness that represents the relationship between Israel and God.

- As Gomer is married to Hosea, so Israel is betrothed to God. Both relationships gradually disintegrate—Gomer runs after other men, and Israel runs after other gods.
- Israel's spiritual idolatry is illustrated by Gomer's physical adultery. The development of the book can be traced in two parts: the adulterous wife and faithful husband (ch. 1-3), and the adulterous Israel and faithful Lord (ch. 4-14).
- Hosea's message reflects the terrible fascination of Israel with Baal worship.
- Baal means "husband" or "lord," and his worship involved fertility rites that included ritual prostitution. Baal was the other lover to whom the unfaithful Israel often turned.
- Hosea provides one of the Old Testament's most eloquent expressions of God's mercy.
- Chapter 1:
 - God asked Hosea to marry Gomer. She gave birth to three children. Each child's name was a message from God.
 - First Child: Boy: Jezreel - God sows/scatters. What God sows from hardships/punishments are the seeds of our actions.
 - Second Child: Girl: Lo-Ruhamah - No mercy. When man doesn't stop sinning and takes advantage of God's patience, he doesn't receive mercy, but judgment.
 - Third Child: Boy: Lo-Ammi - Not my people. If many can't separate from sin, how can they belong to God? Therefore, sin leads to separation from God and not being from his people.
- Chapter 2:
 - V6-7: God builds walls of thorns around us sometimes so we don't go back to our pleasures and lusts. Things happen and people come and go, which are ways of God's protection for us
 - V14-23: A symphony of love and hope after all the tough messages.
 - V.15: "Valley of Achor" is where Achan cheated and stole (Joshua 7). This area became known for cheating and disobedience. God will use this same area to make it a door of hope if His people repent.
 - V.19: Betrothal or engagement days tend to be the most romantic and the couple love each other a lot. God used this metaphor a lot in the Bible to symbolize His relationship to humanity. "Forever" means the strong love will be forever and the second coming will be the "wedding."
 - V.23: Strong message of hope. The message has NT tone.
- Chapter 6:
 - Another message of hope.
 - V.2: Hosea with the prophetic spirit spoke about the "third day"
 - Former rain: Comes early to help after seed sowing. Latter rain: Comes towards the end to help with budding and producing fruits. God's blessings come at the beginning and end and are countless.
- Chapter 11:
 - Verse 1 Talks about how God saved his people a long time ago with Moses from Egypt. The number was small (child) and now they are a big nation (adult).
 - Verse 1: Prophecy that God will flee to Egypt
 - St. Matthew linked this verse to Christ's entry to Egypt (Matt. 2:15)
 - Egypt was a symbol of idolatry and sin. This is a prophecy that God will accept the Gentiles and Egypt will become sanctified (Isaiah 19.)
- Chapter 14:

- Fruits of the repentance
- V.1-3: Human's role in repentance
- V.4-9: God's role in sanctification

Review/recap questions:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. What are the meanings of these names: Hosea, Jezreel, Lo-Ruhamah, Lo-Ammi?
2. Why did God ask Hosea to take for himself a wife of harlotry?
3. Why did God say to the House of Israel "You are not My people and I will not be your God"?
4. What did God promise the people of Israel?
5. Find a prophecy in this book and when it was fulfilled. Give verses.

Homework:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. Hosea's wife was called _____.
2. The number of the children of Israel shall be as:
 - a) the stars b) the sand of the sea c) the waves of the ocean
3. When Israel was a _____, I loved him, and out of _____ I called My _____.
4. I will not execute the _____ of My anger; I will not again _____ Ephraim. For I am God, and not man, the _____ One in your midst; and I will not come with _____.
5. I will be like the _____ to _____; he shall grow like the _____, and lengthen his _____ like Lebanon. 2. Who walks in the ways of the Lord? a) the poor b) transgressors c) the righteous

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