

Week 5: Jonah

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Objective:

- Jonah's Disobedience
- Jonah Thrown into the Sea
- Jonah's Prayer and Deliverance
- The Ninevites' repentance
- Jonah's Anger and God's Kindness

Resources:

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

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

Reading:

- Jonah 1-4

Key verse(s):

"I have been cast out of Your sight, Yet I will look again toward Your holy temple."

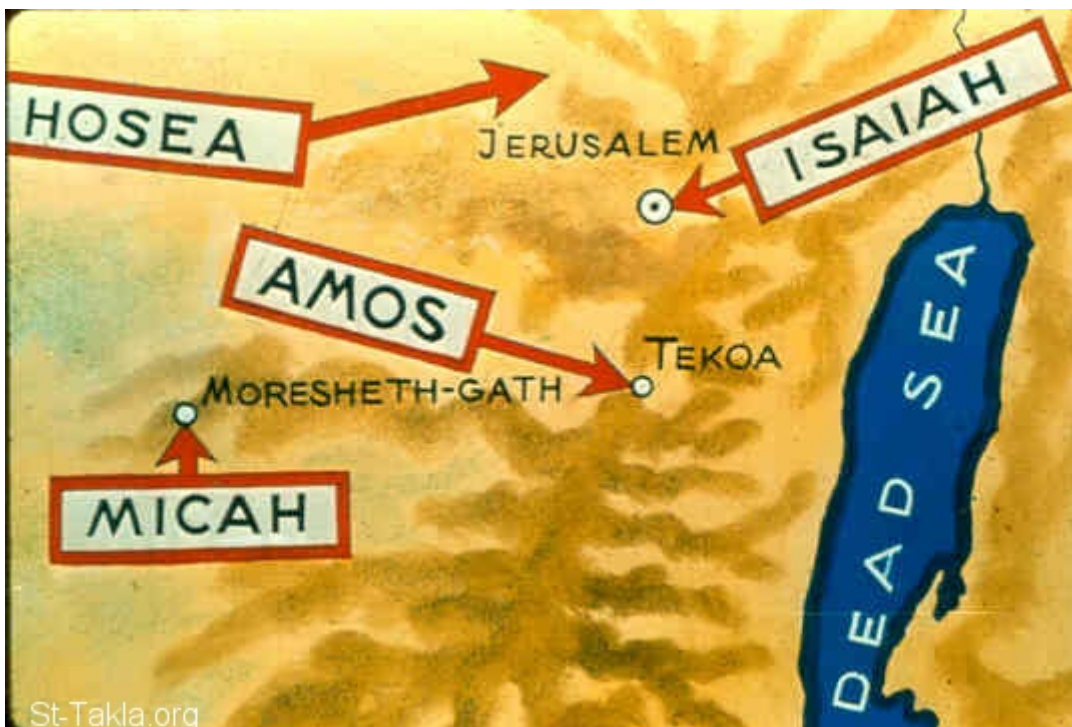
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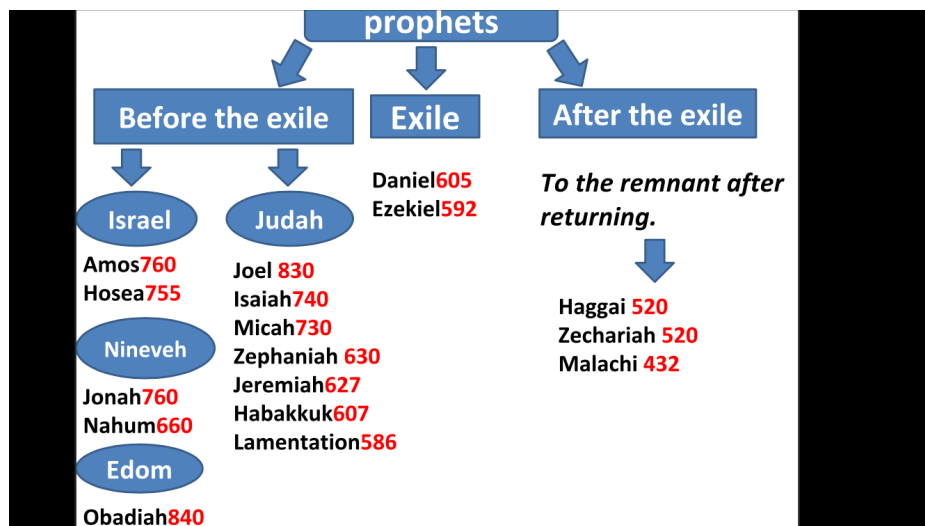
- Please plan to ask and review these questions every week:
 - Who are the minor prophets? Can you recite them?
 - The theme for last week's minor prophet
 - Highlight Messianic prophecy

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.

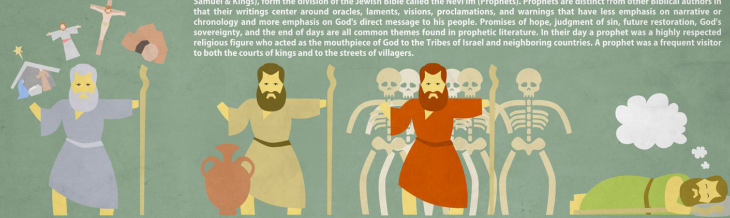
- Ex: Jonah 4 chapters - Isaiah 66 chapters
- There are 12 minor prophets and 4 major prophets (5 books including Lamentations)
- In the Tanakh (Hebrew Bible), all these books were listed under "prophets". In the Septuagint and Vulgate translations, this classification of major and minor was mentioned.
- 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).





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 like Christ entering 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 vendor 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.



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



Habakkuk identifies himself as a prophet from Judah, and his book with a hymn 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.



Hagai makes his chief concern restoring the temple of the Lord. Despite the Hebrew's 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 1911 King James Bible

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.

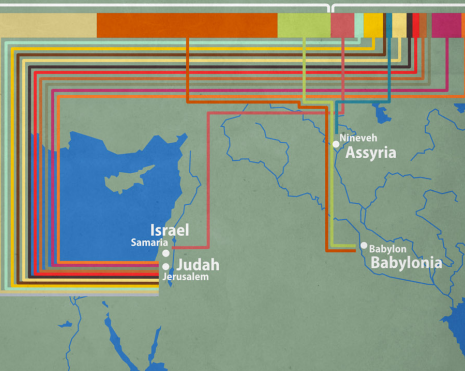
Timeline

All dates approximate



Major Prophets

Minor Prophets



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<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

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	After Assyrian and before Babylonian captivities	After Captivity
Directed to the North Kingdom	Directed to the South Kingdom	
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

JONAH LOCATION MAP

Search Maps

Show search options

FRANCE

ITALY

SPAIN

TURKEY

ASSYRIA

BABYLONIA

ISRAEL

JUDAH

EGYPT

Mediterranean Sea

Tarshish?

Nineveh

Joppa

Gath-hepher

Jerusalem

THE FLIGHT

THE MISSION

Tarshish ☆
An unknown port city in the Western region of the Mediterranean (1:3), i.e. in the opposite direction to Nineveh.
Directions Search nearby Save to... move▼

Nineveh ☆
"That great city" (1:2), namely the capital of Assyria and home to 120,000 of Israel's enemies (as well as many cattle). Also, the mission destination of Jonah.
Directions Search nearby Save to... move▼

Joppa ☆
A port city in Judah (1:3), where Jonah disobediently boarded a ship for Tarshish.
Directions Search nearby Save to... move▼

The Assyrian king (3:6)

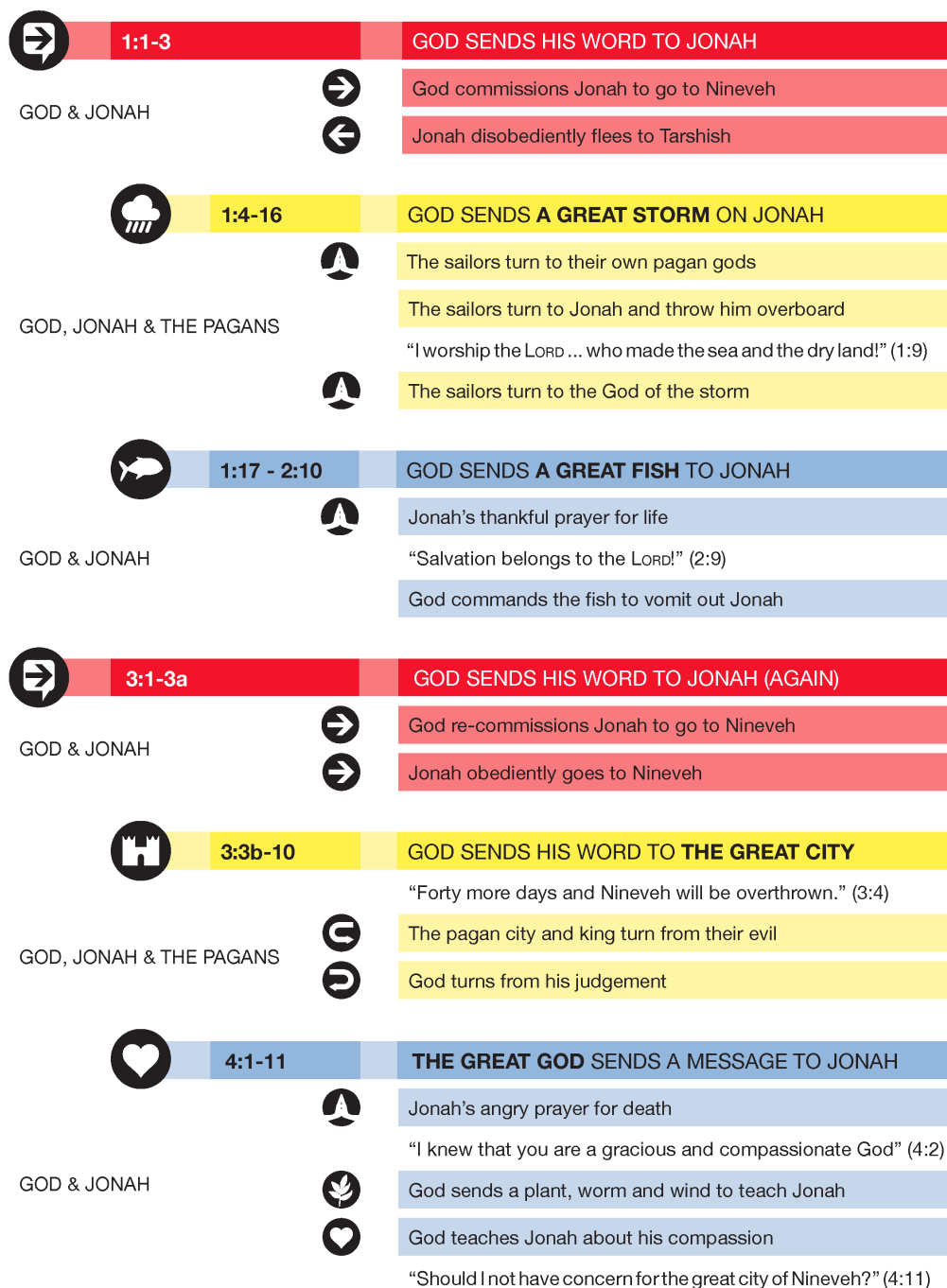
The great fish (1:17)

The Temple (2:4,7)

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JONAH STRUCTURE

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Comments:

Theme of Jonah: The Lord's mercy and forgiveness

Messianic Prophecy: Jonah is a type of Jesus Christ (He came out alive after three days and the Ninevites were saved. Our Lord rose on the third day and delivered His people)

- Jonah is a book that shows God's greatest love and forgiveness.

- Many people pinpoint Jonah's arrogance and his escape from God, but we shall meditate on his strong faith and repentance.
- At his time, prophets like Hosea, Joel, and Amos strongly urged the people to repent before the Assyrian captivity came as a punishment.
- Ninevah was the capital of Assyria. Jonah hesitated to go because he knew the Assyrians were coming to destroy his people and take them captive.
- For Jonah, it did not make sense to preach about this 'extremely bad nation' who is coming to rule over his nation.
- God knew their hearts and knew they would repent.
- This generation that Jonah evangelized to repent. But the following generation was bad and they started to head towards Israel to take them to exile.
- We will see later that Nahum prophesied against Ninevah (The Assyrians) as they exiled God's people. He prophesied the Assyria would be punished by Babylon.
- In summary:
 - Hosea, Joel, and Amos: told the people to repent lest the Assyrians come to destroy the North Kingdom (Israel)
 - **Minor prophets and the Assyrian captivity:**
 - (Before) Jonah: Went to evangelize to the Assyrians
 - (During) Micah: Prophesied to the South Kingdom (Judah). His message to them was to repent or the Babylonians will punish Judah
 - (After) Nahum: Prophesied against the Assyrians. Babylon will punish Assyria
- In the Jewish Tradition, Jonah is thought to be the son of the widow whom Elijah arose from the dead (1 Kings 17)
- Some people doubt Jonah is a symbolic story and not real. However, our Lord pointed out this story in Matthew 12 and Luke 11.
- Jonah is also mentioned in 2 Kings 14
- Jonah 1
 - Everything and everyone obeyed, except Jonah (Sea, ship, wind, mariners, fish)
 - The mariners:
 - They knew from experience what happened in the sea was abnormal. Most likely due to someone's sin/fault
 - They prayed to their gods before doing any actions (throwing cargo)
 - They made sure everyone prays (life of fellowship)
 - They did not agree initially to throw Jonah into the sea as they cared about him
 - They rebuked Jonah for not obeying his God
 - They prayed to Jonah's God and feared Him
 - They offered sacrifices and took vows to Jonah's God
- Jonah 2
 - Jonah is God's man
 - The first thing he did was pray and praise in the middle of his hardships
 - His deep faith is highlighted in Jonah 2:4
 - "*I will look again toward Your holy temple*" - He was in the belly of the fish when he said that!
 - Jonah 2:7 - "And my prayer went *up* to You" He is sure God is listening to him
 - God didn't prevent Jonah from service. He accepted Jonah and returned him to his service. Similar to St. Peter after the Cross at the Sea of Tiberias (Jonah 21)

- Jonah 3
 - The people didn't question Jonah but believed right away
 - They instantly offered true repentance
 - This chapter shows that repentance does not need a long period of time, but a true repentant heart
 - Jonah didn't tell them what to do. He only said they would be destroyed.
 - The people's faith led them to understand that repentance will allow God to not relent (3:9)
- Jonah 4
 - Jonah was not happy they repented and God accepted them
 - He was like the older son who didn't like the return of his younger brother
 - The plan is like the Jews who grew but went astray from God and the Ninevites are the Gentiles whom God cared for their repentance.

Review/recap questions:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. Why did Jonah run from God?
2. What effect did God stirring and stilling the storm have on the sailors?
3. How do you see Jonah's prayer: a cry for help, for forgiveness or for thanksgiving?
4. Give verses showing Jonah's assurance of the deliverance of God.
5. What was the Ninevites' reaction to Jonah's message?
6. Mention four commands in the decree given by the king.
7. Show Jonah's selfishness through this Holy Book.
8. After reading the Book of Jonah, prove that salvation comes from the Lord to everyone who believes.

Homework:

***Servant may add more questions*

1. The Lord asked Jonah to go to:
 - a) Tarshish b) Nineveh c) Joppa
 2. What was Jonah doing when the storm started?
 - a) praying b) eating c) sleeping
 3. Jonah was in the belly of the fish for:
 - a) forty days b) one week c) three days and three nights
 4. While in the belly of the fish Jonah was:
 - a) praying b) singing c) crying d) all of these
 5. How many days did the Ninevites have before the city was overthrown?
 - a) three b) ten c) forty
 6. When the Ninevites heard Jonah's message they:
 - a) proclaimed a fast b) believed God c) put on sackcloth d) all of these
 7. The plant was damaged by:
 - a) fire b) a worm c) wind d) rain
 8. How many people lived in Nineveh?
 - a) 20,000 b) 200 c) 120,000
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Revision #8

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