

# Hosea: The Prophet of the Broken Marriage

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## Background

Hosea ministered for forty years in the Northern Kingdom of Israel (Ephraim) at about 760 B.C. He began his ministry during a time of prosperity and peace but ended it during a time of great upheaval and famine. During his lifetime, Israel was ravaged with Baal worship and distrust for God. Hosea often mentions the political debate within his nation of whether to cling to Assyria or to Egypt for protection.

## The Story 1-3

1:2 Hosea told to marry a harlot

**Jezreel** (1:4) Naboth's vineyard, 1Kings 21  
Jehu's accession, 2 Kings 9-10

**Lo-Ruhamah** (1:6) There is no mercy/pity

**Lo-Ammi** (1:9) You are not mine/covenant

His continued love and pleading, 1:10-11

2:1-5 The divorce

God's Judgment, 2:6-14

God's Mercy 2:14-23

3:1-5 Hosea buys his wife back (15 shekels & barley)

## The Prophecy 4-14 (notice the word lack)

No knowledge of God, 4:1-5:15 (4:6)

No loyalty or love for God, 6:1-11:11 (7:11)

No faithfulness to God, 11:12-13:16 (13:6)

Chapter 14 The joy of returning to God

## Relationship to New Testament

### Hosea and 1 Peter

Hosea 1:6 No mercy                      1 Peter 2:10 we have mercy

Hosea 1:9-10 Not my people        1 Peter 2:10 people of God

### Key Verses of Hosea

1:10 The privilege of being God's people

2:15 The value of purity and discipline among people of God

3:4 The absolute folly of turning our backs on God

4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge

5:11 The destruction of following man made religion

6:10 Horrible attitudes and actions lead to destruction

7:8 Hypocrisy of the half-baked cakes

8:7 Sow wind, reap whirlwind

9:7-9 The folly of corrupt religious leaders

10:12 It is time to seek the Lord

11:8 How shall I give you up Ephraim? God's love

12:13, 13:11 God's Spokesman are God's servants

# Joel: The Day of the Lord

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## Background

Most believe Joel is dated around 830 BC early in the reign of Josiah of the Southern Kingdom of Judah. In the midst of the calamities of a locust plague, drought, fires and possibly foreign invasion, Joel reminds the people that salvation is found only in the Lord. The Day of the Lord is one of destruction to those who are enemies of God but deliverance to those who trust in Him.

## The Story

### **The Harbinger of the Day of Jehovah, 1:1-2:17**

Devastation of Judah by locusts, drought and fire, 1:2-1:20

The scourge of locusts, 1:2-4

Drunkards are without luxuries, 1:5-7

The whole nation has no sustenance, 1:8-12

The awful calamity and need for prayer, 1:15-20

Summons to repent and pray (physical trouble is the forerunner of spiritual calamity), 2:1-17

The trumpet of warning, 2:1-3

A vivid description of the calamity, 2:4-11

They must repent, 2:12-17

### **The Day of Jehovah: Blessing to God's People and Terror to His Enemies, 2:18-3:21**

Blessings promised to Israel, 2:18-32

With repentance, The Lord will relent, 2:18

He will feed you, 2:19

Deliver you, 2:20

And restore you, 2:25

Outpouring of the Spirit and blessings promised, 2:28-32

### **Judgment of the Nations, 3:1-21**

All wrongs against God's people will be avenged, 3:1-3

They had sold Jews into slavery, 3:3, 6-8

They robbed the Israel's treasury, 3:4-5

God's enemies shall suffer, 3:4-8

God's people will be armed, 3:9-11 (compare to Micah 4:10)

The nations will be lured into battle, 3:12-13

They shall be destroyed, 3:14-16

Israel's peace contrasted with her enemies' desolation, 3:16-21

### Key Verses of Joel

2:11 Who can endure the Lord's Judgment?

2:13 Rend your heart and not your garments

2:23 Recognize God's Great blessings (the former and latter rains)

2:25 I will restore to you the years the locusts have eaten

2:27 My people will never be put to shame

3:14 Multitudes, multitude in the valley of decision.

## Relationship to the New Testament:

*Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:16-21*

# Amos: The Country Prophet

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## Background

Amos was written (750 BC) during a period of prosperity immediately before Assyria would destroy the country. The prophet was from Tekoa (five miles southeast of Bethlehem) and worked as a herdsman and cultivator of sycamore figs. Though he was not educated in the school of prophets, he went to the royal court of affluent Samaria to speak God's Word.

## The Story

### Amos 1-2 The Covenant of Brotherhood (1:9)

Damascus mistreated Gilgal, 1:3-5

Gaza and Tyre sold slaves, 1:6-10

Edom attacked its neighbors, 1:11-12

Ammon abused pregnant women, 1:13-15

Moab desecrated the dead, 2:1-3

Judah had broken the covenant, 2:1-3

Israel had oppressed the poor, 2:6-8

All this happened in spite of God's warnings, 2:9-12

Therefore punishment is coming, 2:13-16

### Amos 3-6 Injustices in Israel (3:10)

The Lord roars as a lion, 3:1-10

Only a small remnant shall remain, 3:11-15

Samaria's Women      Are cows compared to the poor, 4:1  
Will be carried away with fishhooks, 4:2-3  
Refuse to heed God's warnings, 4:6-13

Samaria's Men      Visit the pagan temples, 5:7-10  
Trample the poor and take bribes, 5:10-13  
Are rich and complacent, 6:1  
Bring God to wrath, 6:8-14

### Amos 7-9 The Coming Destruction (5 visions)

(1) The locust plague 7:1-2 (God's relents)

(2) The raging fire, 7:3-6 (God relents)

(3) The Plumbline, 7:7-9

Amos Confronted, 7:10-16

(4) Basket of Ripe Fruit, 8:1-3

(5) The Temple Shaken 8:4-9:10

Israel has hope in its future though, 9:11-15

### Key Verses of Amos

1:2 The Lord Roars From  
Zion

2:7 The depths of  
covetousness

2:12 Do not prophesy!

3:3 Can two walk together  
unless they be agreed?

4:12 Prepare to meet your  
God

5:15 Hate evil, love what is  
good

5:18 Woe to you who desire  
the Day of the Lord

5:23-24 Futility of worship  
with an empty heart

6:1 Woe to those who are at  
ease in Zion

7:7-8 The Plumbline

7:15 Go and tell God's Word

9:2-3 How will you escape  
God?

# Obadiah: The High Price of Soup

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## Background

This powerful and short Old Testament prophet chronicles the end of a relationship of the people born of two brothers: Esau and Jacob

Jacob and Esau, Genesis 25:23, 25:29-34, 27:1-30, 41

Edom refused Moses and Israel passage through their land, Numbers 20:14-20

They enjoyed Jerusalem's destruction, Ezekiel 35:1-5, Psalm 137:7

The Lord punished them, Lamentations 4:21-22, Malachi 1:1-4, Isaiah 34:4-9

Even without a homeland, they hated Israel:

note the Idumeans and Anticus Ephiphanes and the Herods

## The Story

### The Coming Judgment of Edom, Obadiah 1:1-9

Edom was very prideful, 1:2-3a

They were ferocious warriors, 1:3b-4

Famous for their stone fortresses

But God would not be merciful, 1:5-6

They be left without friends or resources, 1:7-9

### Edom Mistreated his Brother, Obadiah 1:10-16

They had joined in Jerusalem's destruction, 1:10-11

They continually stared at Israel's shame, 1:12-13

Parallel here to Parable of Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37)

They even assisted the enemies of Israel, 1:14

### Israel's Final Triumph, Obadiah 1:15-21

What they had done will be returned to them, 1:15-16

Israel will be restored, Edom will be destroyed, 1:17-18

God will restore things once again, 1:19-21

#### Key Verses of Obadiah

1:3 The pride of your heart has deceived you

1:4 You can never get too big for God

1:7 Trust in anything but God is futile

1:12, 15 Do to others as you would have them do to you

1:7 On Mount Zion there shall be deliverance and there shall be holiness

1:21 The Kingdom shall be the Lord's

## The Main Point

*The result of carnal mindedness: from soup to national pride*

# Jonah: The Prophet who Flew the Coop

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## Background

Jonah is a prophet who was a patriot, 2 Kings 14:25. We learn from his life the danger of exceptionalism (in matters of national pride, race and religious history). The lesson he learns is one we need to think about constantly as well.

## The Story

### Running From God, Chap 1

God's Command, v. 2 (Go and cry against Ninevah)

- Jonah went down to Joppa, 3
- Jonah went down into the ship, v. 3, 5
- Jonah went down into the sea, v. 15
- Jonah went down into the fish, v. 17

### Running to God, Chap 2

His prayer

- God hears me, v. 2
- God has punished me, v. 3-6
- I have repented, v. 7
- I will serve the Lord, v. 8-9

### Running With God, Chap 3

Jonah obeys God's command

- Four days, and Ninevah will perish! v. 4
- The people repent, v. 5-9
- God relents, v. 10

### Running Ahead of God, Chap 4

- Jonah complains to God, v. 1-3
- The vine and the worm, v. 4-9
- God's love for his creation, v. 10-11

## Relationship to the New Testament

Matthew 12:40 The sign of the prophet Jonah

Acts 10:15 Jonah is a foreshadowing of the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles

### Key Verses of Jonah

1:3 Jonah paid the fare  
(Romans 6:23)

1:9 "I am a Hebrew and I fear  
the Lord." REALLY!?!?!?!?

2:9 Salvation is of the Lord

3:5 The power of the Word of  
God

4:2 You are a gracious God

4:4 Is it right for you to be  
angry?

4:9 Is it right for you to be  
angry about the plant?

4:11 Should I not pity  
Ninevah?

# Nahum: Sequel to Jonah's Book

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## Background:

Nahum is a sequel to the Book of Jonah. While we know little about the prophet Nahum, it is very impressive to hear the burden he carried (1:1) from the Lord. Ninevah had repented at the preaching of Jonah but had fallen away again a short time later. They had become famous for their mistreatment of the other nations. Historians tell us about how they would stack the corpses of the men of a city as cordwood. They also mention many other atrocities of this nation committed against the other nations. While Assyria may have felt invincible, this prophet reminds the nation that judgment is coming.

## The Story

### Judgment Against Ninevah, Chap One

God's wrath kindled, v. 1-2

God is all powerful, v 3-8

No one wins fighting against God, v. 9-15

### The Fall of Ninevah, Chap Two

The enemies stand guard, v. 1-2

The blood begins to flow, v. 3-10

The Lord taunts his prey, v. 11-13

### The Results of God's Vengeance, Chap Three

Ninevah's actions are given back to them

The charging chariots, v. 1-2

The stacked corpses, v. 3-4

The humiliation, v. 5-7

The helplessness, v. 8-11

The vanity of fighting God

They are ripe for harvest, v 12-13

They cannot prepare for battle, v. 14-17

They are still unprepared, v. 18-19

### Key Verses of Nahum

1:2 Our God is a jealous God

1:3 The Lord is slow to anger...and will not at all acquit the wicked

1:6 Who can endure the fierceness of his anger?

1:7 The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble

1:15 Behold on the mountains the feet of him who brings good tidings, who proclaims peace!

3:1 The bloody city (our fate reflects our actions)

## Main Point

***No one is too big for God to judge!***

# Micah: The Concerned Prophet

## Background:

Micah, like Amos, was a man of the countryside who had time for thought and clear vision. He had Amos' passion for justice and Hosea's heart of love. He burned with indignation over the rich city dwellers who oppressed the peasants. Much of what we read in Micah is not unique because he repeats the great truths of his predecessors and contemporaries, especially Isaiah. Like them, he faced a people who had a faulty concept of God and the divine requirements of the people.

## Story

### Apostasy, Chapter One

No one can resist God's judgment, 1:1-4  
The sins are idolatry, 1:5, 13  
Israel and Judah shall be shamed, 1:6-16

### A Love For Evil, Chapter Two

They are creative in their evil ways, 2:1-2  
They are oppressive to the poor, 2:3-9  
They desire false teaching but not truth, 2:5-6, 10-11  
They will be corrected by God, 2:12-13

### Perverse Leadership, Chapter Three

The leaders are corrupt, 3:-4  
The prophets are false, 3:5-7  
But God's Word cannot be stopped, 3:8-12

### Blessing, Chapter Four

Prophecy of the Coming Kingdom, 4:1-5  
The Restoration of God's people, 4:6-8  
God's Judgment and Deliverance, 4:9-13

### Restoration, Chapter Five

Assyria was coming to conquer, 5:1-6  
But the ideal King will deliver them, 5:2-4  
The world will be reached with the gospel, 5:7-9  
Extreme purification will result from this, 5:10-15

### God's Faithfulness, Chapter Six

God has always been faithful, 6:1-8  
Yet, God's people are not kind to others, 6:9-12  
Then they will lose what is important to them, 6:13-16

### Hope, Chapter Seven

The Corruption of Society, 7:1-9  
God will restore his people, 7:10-13  
God will perform wonders once again, 7:14-20

## Key Verses of Micah

2:7 Do not my words do good to him who walks uprightly?

3:6 You shall have darkness without vision (400 years of silence)

4:1-2 For out of Zion the law shall come forth, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem

4:3 They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks

5:2 But you, Bethlehem...through you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the one to be ruler in Israel.

5:8 And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles, in the midst of many peoples

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?

7:7 Therefore I will look to the Lord; I will wait for the God of my salvation; my God will hear me.

7:18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over the transgression of the remnant of his heritage?

7:19 You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

# Habakkuk: Does God Have an Answer?

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## Background:

Habakkuk is unique among the prophets because he spoke to God and not to other men in his book. The book is very applicable to us today as we wonder why God allows certain evils in the world and wonder when he will return to judge it.

## Story:

### The Debate:

Question:	Why does God not respond to the wrong and injustice in the land?	1:2-4
Answer:	God is about to respond by using the Chaldeans as a tool of judgment	1:5-11
Question 2:	How can a righteous God use wicked Babylonians to punish a more righteous people?	1:12-13
Answer:	God has chosen this plan of action (2:2-3). The just person will live by his faith in God.	2:4

### Woe to the Unrighteous:

		2:5-20
Woe to the plunderer		2:6-10
Woe to those who think only of personal gain		2:9-11
Woe to the oppressor		2:12-14
Woe to the tyrant		2:15-17
Woe to the idolater		2:18-19
The Lord rules all things,	2:20	

## A Divine Reminder of God's Faithfulness, Chapter Three

An Acrostic (in Hebrew) Poem of God's Faithfulness to His People

- 3:2-4 The Lord's Covenant Given on Sinai
- 3:5-6 The Lord's deliverance of the Land of Canaan to Israel
- 3:7 The Lord's Protection During the Judges Period
- 3:8, 10, 15 The Exodus and Crossing of the Red Sea
- 3:12-14 The Conquest of Canaan

Habakkuk's Profession of Faith, 3:16-19

- He quivers at the strength of God
- He will follow God regardless of life's circumstances, v. 17-18
- God will help him through all of his troubles, v. 19

### Key Verses of Habakkuk

- 1:6 God is even in charge of evil people
- 2:4 The just shall live by his faith
- 2:20 The Lord is in his holy temple. Let all the earth keep silence before him.
- 3:18 ...Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.



# Zephaniah: God Will Judge

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## Background

Zephaniah, great grandson to Hezekiah, prophesied during Josiah's reign about 630 B.C. Manassah and Amon, the former kings, had brought great evil to Judah but, perhaps in part to Zephaniah's work, Josiah's reign brought about some much needed reform.

## Story

### The Day of the Lord, 1:1-18

God's Complete Judgment, 1:1-3

Against Judah's Idolatry, 1:4-9

Wailing in Jerusalem, 1:10-13

The Day of the Lord, 1:14-18

### Rebuke of the Heathen, 2:1-3:8

A Call to Repentance, 2:1-3

Judgment to Philistia, 2:4-7

Judgment to Moab and Ammon, 2:8-11

Judgment to Ethiopia (Cush), 2:12

Judgment to Assyria, 2:13-15

Judgment to Jerusalem, 3:1-5

Yet Jerusalem Refuses to Repent, 3:6-8

### Restoration and Blessing, 3:8-20

The Nations Purified, The Remnant  
Restored and Jerusalem Purged, 3:9-13

Great Rejoicing in the City, 3:14-17

The Nation Restored, 3:18-20

## Key Verses of Zephaniah

The Danger of Syncretism, 1:4-9

1:18 Neither their silver nor their gold shall be able to deliver them in the day of the LORD's wrath.

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

Their Major Mistakes (Chap 3)

1. The Obeyed Not
2. They did not receive correction
3. They did not trust the Lord
4. They did not draw near to God.

3:4 They do violence to the Law

3:5 The LORD is righteous in her midst, He will do no unrighteousness. Every morning He brings His justice to light; He never fails, but the unjust knows no shame

3:9 For then I will restore to the peoples a pure language, that they all may call on the name of the Lord, to serve Him with one accord

3:17 The LORD your God in your midst, the Mighty One, will save; He will rejoice over you with gladness, He will quiet you with His love, He will rejoice over you with singing.

# Haggai: Organizing Priorities

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## Background

In the second shortest book of the Old Testament, next to Obadiah, we see the consequences of disobedience (1:6, 11, 2:16-17) and obedience (2:7-9, 19). While God had delivered Judah from Babylon, Persians and the Samaritans, the Judeans now had to overcome their own lethargy.

## Timeline:

Babylon Overthrows Judah 586 BC  
Cyrus Overthrows Babylon 539 BC  
Cyrus' Decree Allowing Exiles to Return 538 BC  
Temple Construction Begins, 536 BC (Ezra 3:8-10)  
Temple Work Halted, 530 BC (Ezra 4:4-5)  
Haggai & Zecharia Begin Ministry/Temple Work Restarted, 520 BC  
Temple Completed 516 BC

## Story

### First Message: The Call to Rebuild the Temple, 1:1-11

The People's Lame Excuse, 1:1-4  
The Poverty of the People, 1:5-6  
The Reason God Has Cursed Them, 1:7-11

### The Response of Zerubbabel and the People, 1:12-15

The Leaders and Remnant Obey, 1:12  
The Lord Strengthens the Workers, 1:13-15

### Second Message: The Temple to Be Filled With Glory, 2:1-9

The People Encouraged, 2:1-5  
The Promise of Glory and Peace, 2:6-9

### Third Message: A Defiled People Purified & Blessed, 2:10-19

The Rapid Spread of Sin, 2:10-14  
Poor Harvests Because of Disobedience, 2:15-17  
Blessing to Come When Temple is Rebuilt, 2:18-19

### Fourth Message: The Promise to Zerubbabel, 2:20-23

The Judgment of the Nations, 2:20-22  
The Significance of Zerubbabel, 2:23

## Key Verses of Haggai

1:4 *Is it time for you yourselves to dwell in your paneled houses, and this temple to lie in ruins?"*

1:7 Thus says the LORD of hosts: "Consider your ways!

2:4 Yet now be strong...all you people of the land,' says the LORD, 'and work; for I am with you,' says the LORD of hosts

2:9 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

2:23 In that day,' says the LORD of hosts, 'I will take you, Zerubbabel My servant, the son of Shealtiel 'and will make you like a signet ring; for I have chosen you'

# Zechariah: Israel's Future; Near and Far

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## Background

A contemporary of Haggai, Zechariah spoke of how the people needed to leave behind their self-serving, empty religion for a true, heartfelt obedience to God. While Haggai focused on the paneled houses and physical temple, Zechariah uses apocalyptic styling to point to the coming of the Messiah and the need to get right with God.

## Story:

### Part One: A Series of Eight Visions

1. The man among the myrtle trees, 1:7-17
2. The four horns and the four craftsmen, 1:18-21
3. The man with the measuring line, Chapter 2
4. The cleansing of the High Priest, chapter 3
5. The golden lamp stand and two olive trees, Chapter 4
6. The flying scroll, 5:1-4
7. The woman in the basket, 5:5-11
8. The four chariots and the crowning of the High Priest, 6:10-15

### Part Two: From Fasts to Festivals, Chapters 7-8

1. Some men asked about the fasts of the fifth and seventh months, 7:1-3
2. God told them their fasts meant nothing without a change in heart
3. What He really wanted was for them to do right by their fellow man, 7:9-10, 8:16-17
4. Their fasts would then turn into triumphant feasts, 8:18-23

### Part Three: The Fate of the Jews and the Triumph of God's Kingdom, Chapters 9-14

1. The shepherd and his flock, 9-11
2. The purification of Israel, 12-13
3. The triumph of God, 14

#### Key Verses of Zechariah

2:5 For I, says the Lord, will be a wall of fire all around her, and I will be the glory in her midst.

13:1 In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of the David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.

14:8 In that day it shall be that living waters shall flow from Jerusalem.

#### THE MESSIAH

9:9 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.

12:10 they will look on Me whom they have pierced...

13:7 Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.

# Malachi: God's Exclamation Point to the Old Covenant

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## Background

Our Old Testament closes with the book of Malachi. This prophet, whose name means "my messenger," seems to have been written in the time of Nehemiah (after Haggai and Zechariah). It deals with the problems in Judah following the return from Babylonia.

## Story

### I. The Bad News

The sins of a dishonest, ungrateful people and a corrupt priesthood

#### 1. Robbing God

By failing to respond to divine love, 1:2

By dishonoring God's name, 1:6

By offering blemished sacrifices, 1:7-8, 13-14

The priests are stumbling blocks rather than helpers, 2:1-8

By honoring sinners, 2:17, 3:15

By withholding offerings to God, 3:8

By justifying impiety, 3:14

#### 2. Social sins

Treacherous dealings, 2:10

Intermarriage with unbelievers, 2:11

God hates divorce, 2:14-16

Sorcery, impurity, oppression, 3:5

### II. The Good News

The messenger of the New Covenant is coming, 3:1-4

The out pouring of great blessings, 3:10-12

The saints as God's special treasure, 3:16-18

Of the new day with righteousness' triumph, 4:2-3

Of the coming of a spiritual reformer before the Messiah, 4:5-6

### Key Verses of Malachi

1:6 Where is my honor...where is my reverence?

1:11 From the rising of the sun even to its going down the name of the Lord will be praised

2:7 For the lips of a priest should keep knowledge, and people should seek the law from his mouth.

2:10 Have we not all one Father? Has not God created us? Why do we deal treacherously with one another by profaning the covenant of the fathers?

2:16 For the Lord God of Israel says that he hates divorce.

3:1-4 The purifying messenger of the Covenant

3:10 God will always give us more than we give him

3:17 The faithful are God's jewels

4:5 I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.