



# An Introduction to the Minor Prophets

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Friday, May 18, 2007

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# Time Line for the Prophets

1. Amos: 760 B. C. E.
2. Jonah: Jonah son of Amittai lived in this time period (during the reign of Jereboam II, see 2 Kings 14:25).
3. Hosea: 750-725 B. C. E.
4. **Isaiah**: 742-701 B. C. E. (or possibly down to about 689 B. C. E.).
5. Micah: 701 B. C. E.
6. Zephaniah: sometime between 640 and 622 B. C. E.
7. Nahum: around 663 - 612 B. C. E.
8. Habakkuk: around 610-600 B. C. E.
9. **Jeremiah**: 627-after 587 B. C. E.
10. **Daniel** (597 B.C.E. and following)
11. **Ezekiel**: around 592-571 B. C. E.
12. Obadiah: most likely sometime between 587 and 539 B. C. E.
13. Haggai: 520 B. C. E.
14. Zechariah: 520-518 B. C.. E.
15. Joel: unknown, but most scholars place Joel around 400 B. C. E.
16. Malachi: around 400 B. C. E.

# HOSEA

- **Author**

As declared in verse 1, the author is Hosea, the son of Beerī and the husband of Gomer (1:3), who was apparently a citizen of northern Israel since his concern was for the Northern Kingdom of Israel and called the king of Samaria “our king” (7:5).

- **Date (750 – 725 B.C.)**

According to 1:1, Hosea ministered during the days of Uzziah (767-739), Jotham (739-731), Ahaz (731-715), and Hezekiah (715-686), kings of Judah and during the days of Jeroboam II (782-752), king of Israel.

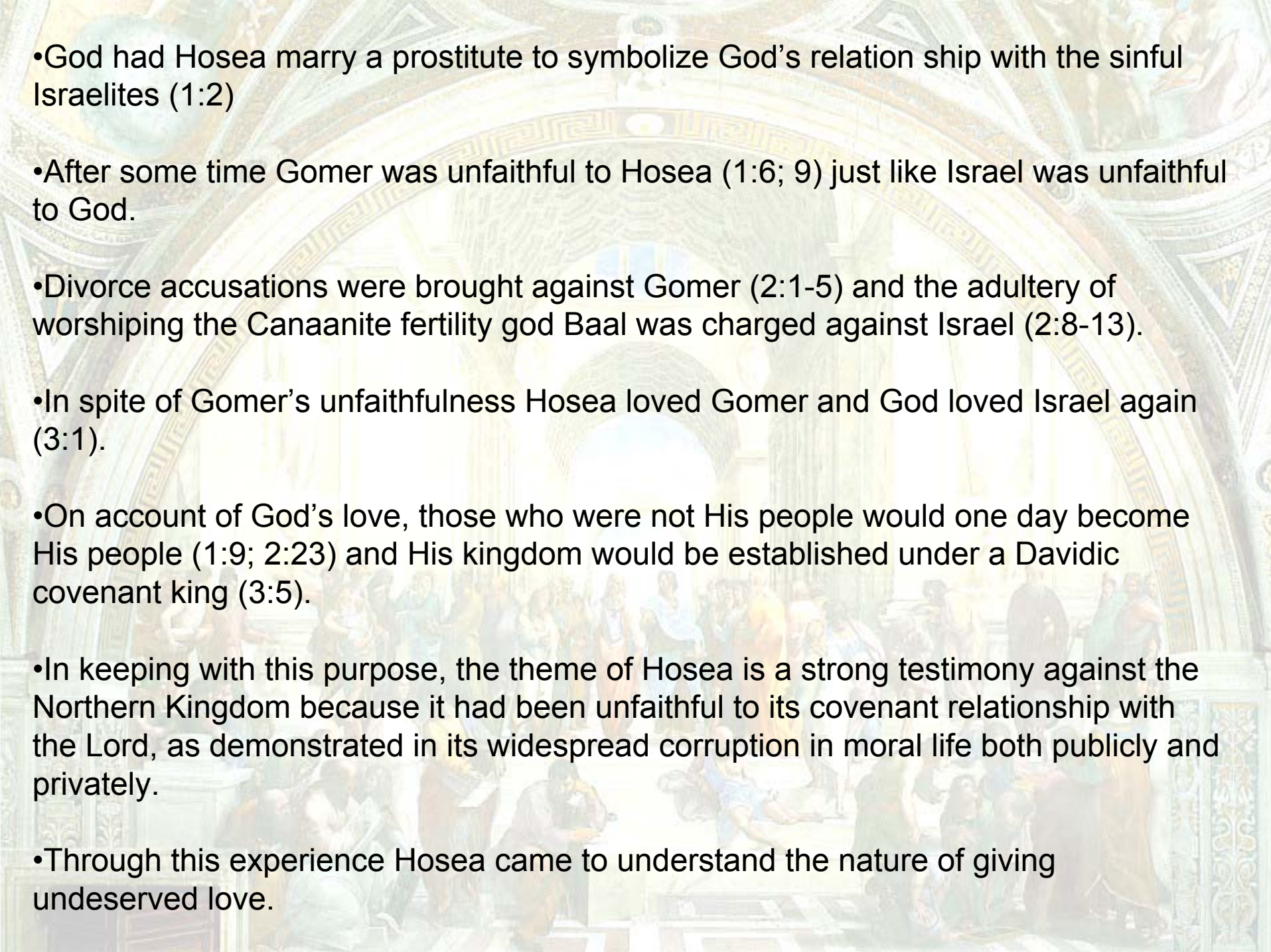
- **Where was it written?**

Northern Kingdom of Israel

- **Theme and Purpose:**

Hosea was written to demonstrate the steadfast or unflinching love of God for Israel in spite of her continued unfaithfulness.

Through Hosea’s marital experience, the book shows us the heart of a loving and compassionate God who longs to bless His people with the knowledge of Himself and all that knowing God intimately can mean to man.

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- God had Hosea marry a prostitute to symbolize God's relationship with the sinful Israelites (1:2)
  - After some time Gomer was unfaithful to Hosea (1:6; 9) just like Israel was unfaithful to God.
  - Divorce accusations were brought against Gomer (2:1-5) and the adultery of worshiping the Canaanite fertility god Baal was charged against Israel (2:8-13).
  - In spite of Gomer's unfaithfulness Hosea loved Gomer and God loved Israel again (3:1).
  - On account of God's love, those who were not His people would one day become His people (1:9; 2:23) and His kingdom would be established under a Davidic covenant king (3:5).
  - In keeping with this purpose, the theme of Hosea is a strong testimony against the Northern Kingdom because it had been unfaithful to its covenant relationship with the Lord, as demonstrated in its widespread corruption in moral life both publicly and privately.
  - Through this experience Hosea came to understand the nature of giving undeserved love.

## •Key Word

In view of the analogy of Israel as the wife of *Jehovah* and the command given to Hosea to take a wife of harlotry which would illustrates Israel's behavior, the words "harlot" (10 times) and "harlotry" (9 times) are key words. In addition, *God's loyal love for Israel* in spite of Israel's unfaithfulness is a key concept of the book.

## •Key Verses

**3:1.** Then the LORD said to me, "Go again, love a woman who is loved by her husband, yet an adulteress, even as the LORD loves the sons of Israel, though they turn to other gods and love raisin cakes."

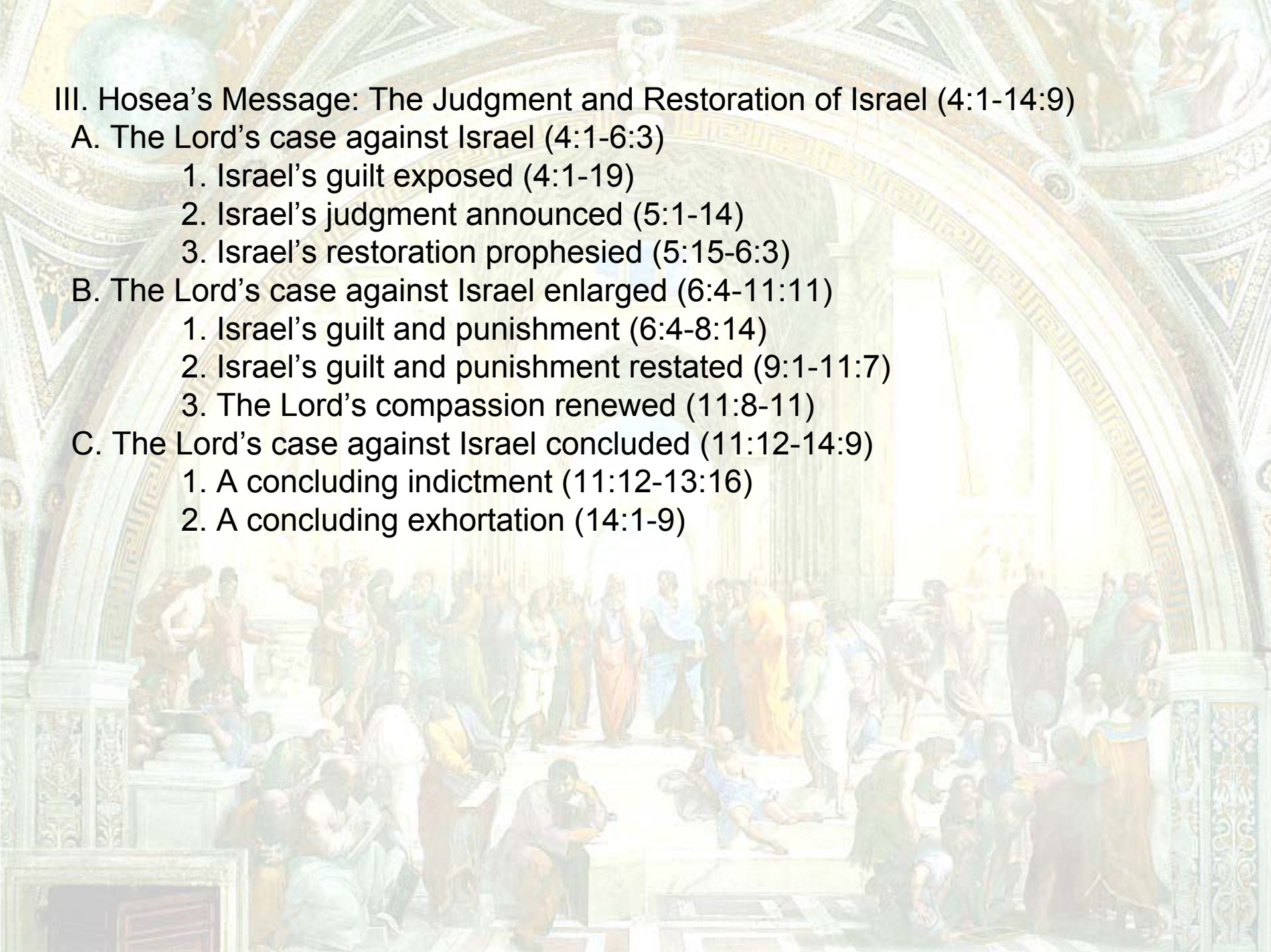
**4:1.** Listen to the word of the LORD, O sons of Israel, For the LORD has a case against the inhabitants of the land, Because there is no faithfulness or kindness Or knowledge of God in the land.

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

**11:7-9.** So My people are bent on turning from Me. Though they call them to the One on high, None at all exalts Him. How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I surrender you, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboiim? My heart is turned over within Me, All My compassions are kindled. I will not execute My fierce anger; I will not destroy Ephraim again. For I am God and not man, the Holy One in your midst, And I will not come in wrath.

## **Outline**

- I. Superscription (1:1)
- II. Hosea's Marriage: A Portrait of God's Dealings with Israel (1:2-3:5)
  - A. The prophetic nature of Hosea's family (1:2-2:1)
    1. Hosea's marriage: Israel's unfaithfulness (1:2-3a)
    2. Hosea's children: Israel's judgment (1:3b-9)
    3. Israel's future: restoration (1:10-2:1)
  - B. Restoration through punishment (2:2-23)
    1. The Lord's punishment of Israel (2:2-13)
    2. The Lord's restoration of Israel (2:14-23)
  - C. Restoration of Hosea's marriage (3:1-5)
    1. The divine command (3:1)
    2. Hosea's obedient response (3:2-3)
    3. The illustration explained (3:4-5)



### III. Hosea's Message: The Judgment and Restoration of Israel (4:1-14:9)

#### A. The Lord's case against Israel (4:1-6:3)

1. Israel's guilt exposed (4:1-19)
2. Israel's judgment announced (5:1-14)
3. Israel's restoration prophesied (5:15-6:3)

#### B. The Lord's case against Israel enlarged (6:4-11:11)

1. Israel's guilt and punishment (6:4-8:14)
2. Israel's guilt and punishment restated (9:1-11:7)
3. The Lord's compassion renewed (11:8-11)

#### C. The Lord's case against Israel concluded (11:12-14:9)

1. A concluding indictment (11:12-13:16)
2. A concluding exhortation (14:1-9)

# JOEL

## Author

As indicated by 1:1, the author is “Joel,” which means “*Jehovah is God.*”

## Historical Background

Joel Prophesied shortly before the fall of Jerusalem in 587/586 B.C.

The people from Judah had been taken into captivity in Babylon in 605 and 507 B.C. (3:1-3) but the temple in Jerusalem had not yet been destroyed ( 2:16-17).

Around 590 B.C. Joel taught that the severe grasshopper plague was a warning from God that the day of the Lord, the final day of Judah, was very near.

## Date

Scholars debate the date of Joel with three main schools:

835-796BC During the time when Joash was too young to govern and Jehoiada did so in his place (2 Kings 11; 2 Chron. 23-24).

About 775-725BC Roughly contemporary with [Hosea](#) and [Amos](#).

About 500BC Roughly contemporary with [Zechariah](#).

## **Title of the Book**

The Hebrew for Joel is Yoáel, which, as stated above, means *Jehovah is God*. This name is extremely appropriate in view of the message of Joel, which lays stress on God as the Sovereign One who has all creation and the nations under His power and control as the God of History.

## **Theme and Purpose**

Joel uses a recent drought and locust plague that strikes Judah without warning as an object lesson to warn of a future invasion of Israel in the Day of *Jehovah*.

The grasshoppers were everywhere and eating everything in sight. In a matter of minutes there was no grapes for wine, no figs, no grain for offerings at the temple, no harvest for the farmers and no fruit on the trees (1:4-12).

Joel encouraged the priests to call the people together at the temple, start a fast in sackcloth, and cry out to God for help (1:13,14)

If the nation will repent and return to the Lord, God will restore His relationship with her and bless her (2:14-17)

## **Key Word**

The key word or words, in keeping with the warnings of the book, is the **Day of Jehovah**.

## Key Verses

**2:11.** And the LORD utters His voice before His army; Surely His camp is very great, For strong is he who carries out His word. The day of the LORD is indeed great and very awesome, And who can endure it?

**2:28-32.** “And it will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. “And even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. “And I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire, and columns of smoke. “The sun will be turned into darkness, And the moon into blood, Before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. “And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD Will be delivered; For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem There will be those who escape, As the LORD has said, Even among the survivors whom the LORD calls.

## Key Chapters

**Chapter 2** is the key chapter in that it promises that God will relent of the judgment to be poured out on Israel if she will only return to the Lord (vss. 13-14). This is then followed by the promise of the future deliverance of the nation through the outpouring of the Spirit of God, the display of wonders in the sky and on the earth, the coming of the day of the Lord, and the calling on the name of the Lord (vss. 28-32).

# Theological Significance of Joel

- The only way to escape the judgment of God is to repent with all your heart and trust in God's mercy
- On the final day of the Lord, God will judge the wicked and bless the righteous with His presence
- Peter taught that Joel's prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit on all flesh (Acts 2:17-21; Joel 2:28-32) began to be fulfilled at Pentecost.

Act 2:17 "And it shall be in the last days, says God, I will pour out of My Spirit upon all flesh. And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.

Act 2:18 And in those days I will pour out My Spirit upon My slaves and My slave women, and they shall prophesy.

Act 2:19 And I will give wonders in the heaven above, and miracles on the earth below, blood and fire and vapor of smoke.

- Paul taught that it was necessary to call on the name of the Lord to be saved (Romans 10:13; Joel 2:32)

- Is it appropriate for believers to question the justice of God?

- How can we overcome doubt in difficult time?

## **Outline**

### **I. The Historic Day of the Lord (1:1-20)**

#### **A. The Historic Occurrence of Locust (1:1-12)**

#### **B. The Historic Occurrence of Drought (1:13-20)**

### **II. The Prophetic Day of the Lord (2:1-3:21)**

#### **A. The coming the Day of the Lord (2:1-27)**

##### **1. The Prophecy of an Invasion of Judah (2:1-11)**

##### **2. The Condition Needed for the Salvation of Judah (2:12-27)**

#### **B. The Ultimate Day of the Lord (2:28-3:21)**

##### **1. The Final Events Before the Day of the Lord (2:28-32)**

##### **2. The Events of the Day of the Lord (3:1-21)**

#### **A. Judgment on the Gentiles (3:1-16)**

#### **B. Judgment on Judah (3:17-21)**

# AMOS

## Author

Amos, a herdsman and a tender of sycamore fruit (1:1; 7:14). He was from Tekoa, which was located near Bethlehem about ten miles south of Jerusalem.

That Amos is the author is supported not only from the claim of the book (1:1; 7:14), but from the pastoral language (7:10f), and the contents which demonstrated his knowledge of an out-of-doors way of life (see 3:4-5, 12; 5:8, 9; 9:9). Though he was a farmer and rancher he was very familiar with the Word of God.

## Date

About 760 B.C.

According to verse 1, Amos tells us that he was a contemporary of Uzziah and Jeroboam II and prophesied “in the days of Uzziah, King of Judah (790-739 b.c), and in the days of Jeroboam the son of Joash, King of Israel (793-753 b.c), two years before the earthquake” (1:1).

Amos probably prophesied in the period from 767-753. We are also told that he prophesied “two years before the earthquake,” but the precise date of this event is not known.

## Theme and Purpose

The divine message given to Amos was primarily one of judgment, though it ends with words of hope. Amos warned that the Lord God, the sovereign Ruler of the universe, would come as a Warrior to judge the nations that had rebelled against His authority.

Israel in particular would be punished for her violations against God's covenant. Amos sought to bring the prosperous and materialistic northern tribes under Jeroboam to repentance as the only escape from imminent judgment. In the process, the book demonstrates God's hatred of evil because of His holiness and that His justice must act against Israel's sin for He cannot allow it to go unpunished.

However, even though the nation would be destroyed, God would still preserve a repentant remnant and one day this remnant would be restored to their covenant blessing and political prominence when the Lord would then also draw all nations to His Himself.

## Key Words

The words "transgress" and "transgression" occur 12 times. This highlights one of the key elements of the book, *the judgment of God on Israel* for her sinful ways. A key phrase of the book is "I will not revoke its punishment because . . ." (see 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 13; 2:1, 4, 6).

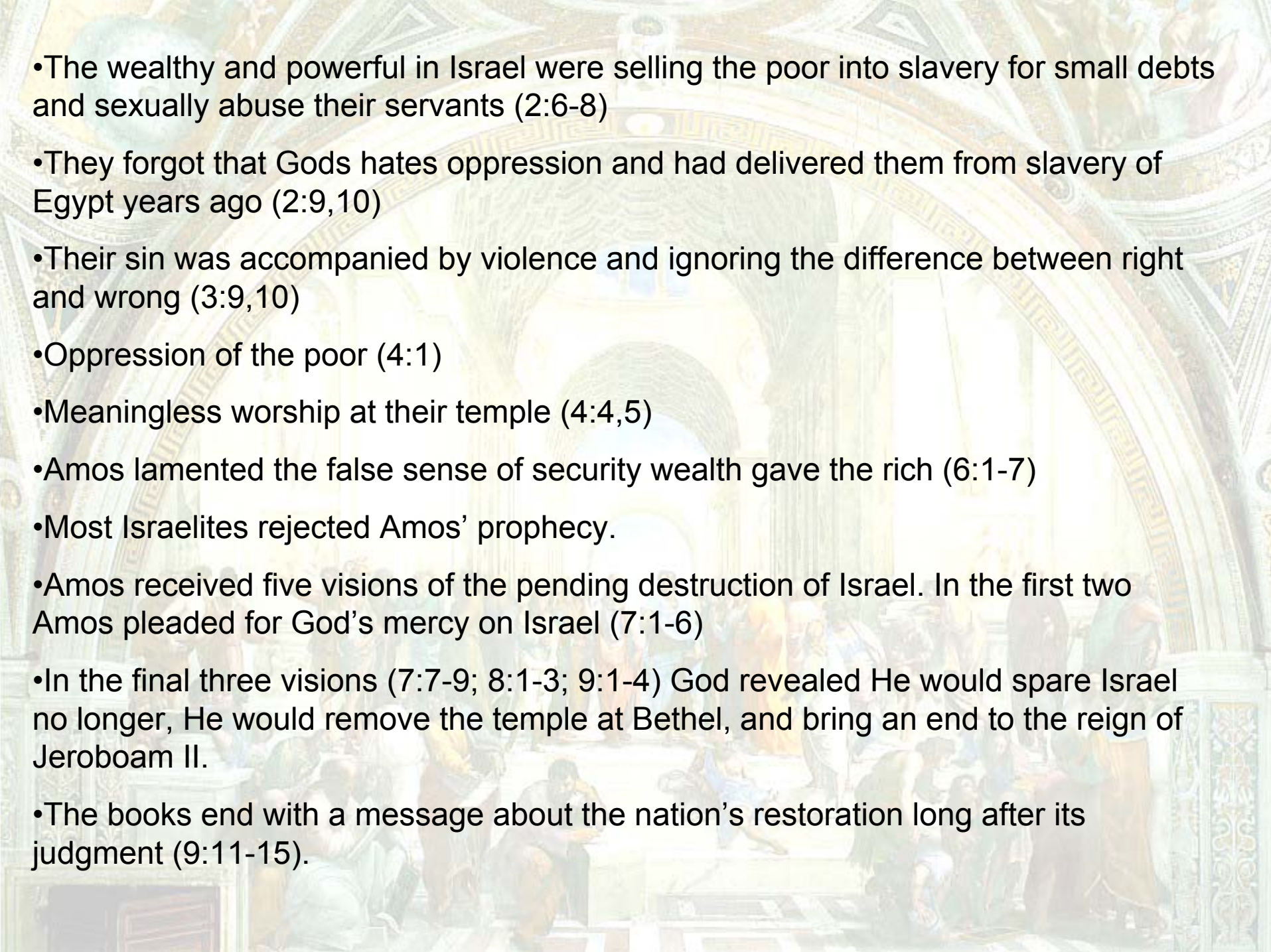
## Key Verses

**3:1-2.** Hear this word which the LORD has spoken against you, sons of Israel, against the entire family which He brought up from the land of Egypt, “You only have I chosen among all the families of the earth; Therefore, I will punish you for all your iniquities.”

**8:11-12.** 11 “Behold, days are coming,” declares the Lord GOD, “When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine for bread or a thirst for water, But rather for hearing the words of the LORD. “And people will stagger from sea to sea, And from the north even to the east; They will go to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, But they will not find it.

## Key Chapter

**Chapter 9** is a key chapter because of its focus on the restoration of Israel. Set in the midst of the harsh judgments of Amos are some of the greatest prophecies of restoration of Israel anywhere in Scripture.

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- The wealthy and powerful in Israel were selling the poor into slavery for small debts and sexually abuse their servants (2:6-8)
  - They forgot that Gods hates oppression and had delivered them from slavery of Egypt years ago (2:9,10)
  - Their sin was accompanied by violence and ignoring the difference between right and wrong (3:9,10)
  - Oppression of the poor (4:1)
  - Meaningless worship at their temple (4:4,5)
  - Amos lamented the false sense of security wealth gave the rich (6:1-7)
  - Most Israelites rejected Amos' prophecy.
  - Amos received five visions of the pending destruction of Israel. In the first two Amos pleaded for God's mercy on Israel (7:1-6)
  - In the final three visions (7:7-9; 8:1-3; 9:1-4) God revealed He would spare Israel no longer, He would remove the temple at Bethel, and bring an end to the reign of Jeroboam II.
  - The books end with a message about the nation's restoration long after its judgment (9:11-15).

## Outline

I. The Introduction: the Author and Theme (1:1-2)

II. The Eight Judgments of Amos (1:3-2:16)

A. Concerning Damascus (1:3-5)

B. Concerning Philistia (1:6-8)

C. Concerning Tyre (1:9-10)

D. Concerning Edom (1:11-12)

E. Concerning Ammon (1:13-15)

F. Concerning Moab (2:1-3)

G. Concerning Judah (2:4-5)

H. Concerning Israel (2:6-16)

III. The Sermons of Amos (3:1-6:14)

A. The Doom of Israel (3:1-15)

B. The Depravity of Israel (4:1-13 )

C. A Dirge over Israel (5:1-6:14)

D. The ruin of Israel in coming judgment (5:1-17)

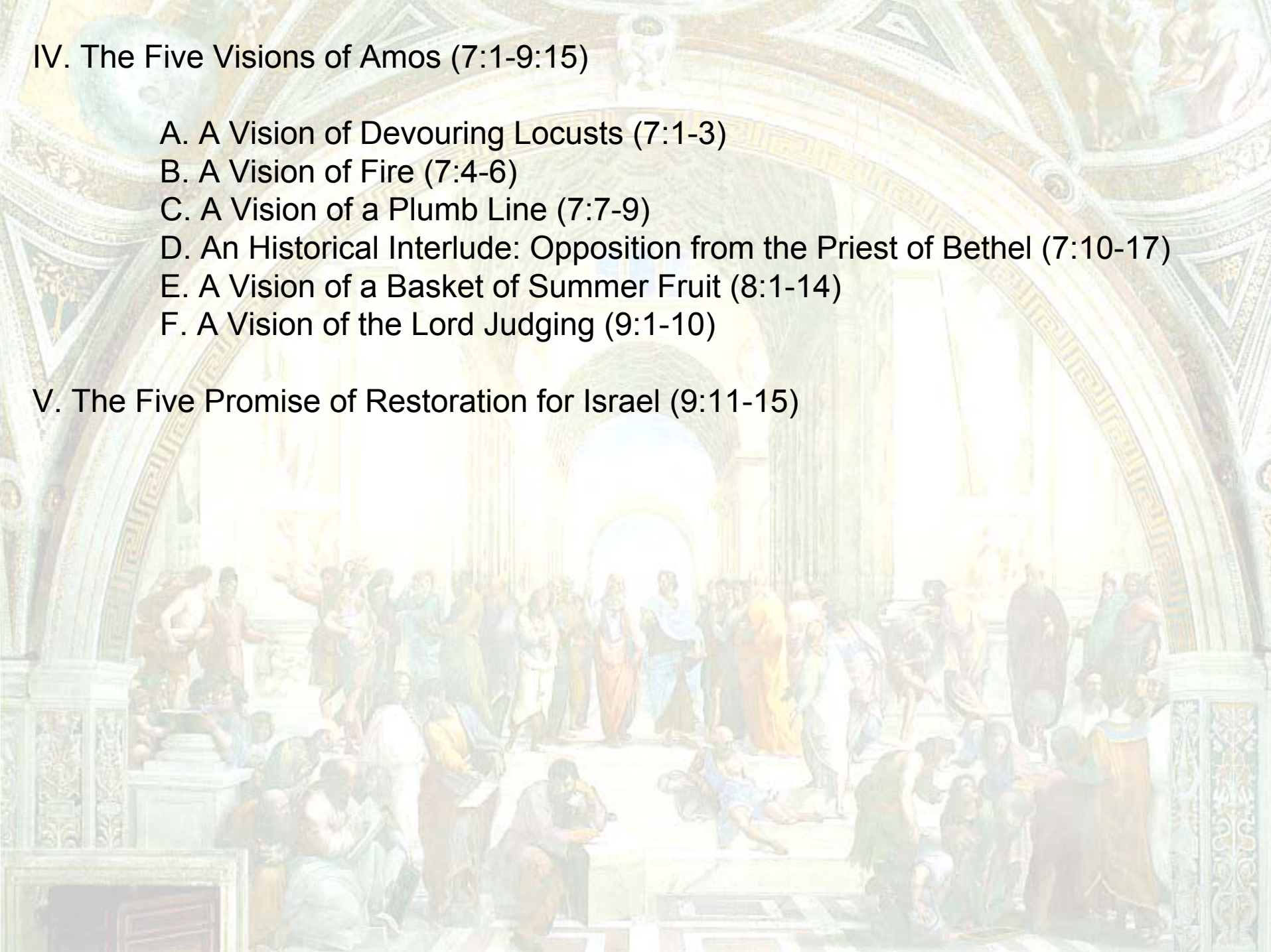
E. The rebuke of religious people (5:18-27)

F. The reprimand of the entire nation (6:1-14)

#### IV. The Five Visions of Amos (7:1-9:15)

- A. A Vision of Devouring Locusts (7:1-3)
- B. A Vision of Fire (7:4-6)
- C. A Vision of a Plumb Line (7:7-9)
- D. An Historical Interlude: Opposition from the Priest of Bethel (7:10-17)
- E. A Vision of a Basket of Summer Fruit (8:1-14)
- F. A Vision of the Lord Judging (9:1-10)

#### V. The Five Promise of Restoration for Israel (9:11-15)



# OBADIAH

## Author

The author is an unknown prophet of Judah by the name of Obadiah (1:1). A number of Old Testament men were named Obadiah. These include an officer in David's army (1 Chron. 12:9), Ahab's servant who hid God's prophets (1 Kings 18:3), a Levite in the days of Josiah (2 Chron. 34:12), and a leader who returned from the Exile with Ezra (Ezra 8:9).

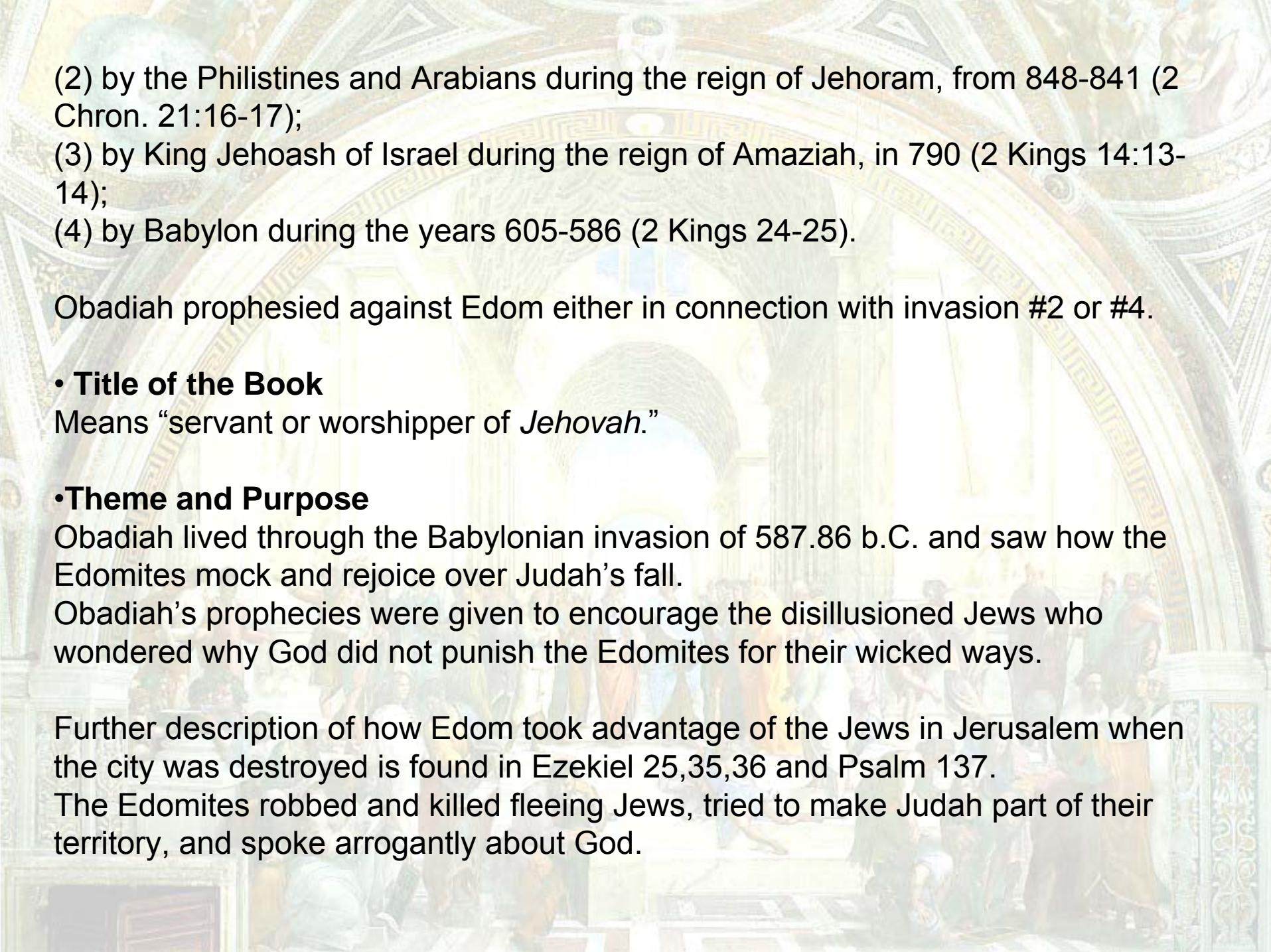
Nothing is known of Obadiah's home town or family. The fact that his father is not named suggests that he was not out of a kingly or priestly line.

## Date

The shortest book of the Bible, containing only 21 verses, bears the distinction of being the most difficult of the minor prophets to date. Regarding the date Ryrie writes:

The question of date relates to which battle against Jerusalem the Edomites were associated with (vv. 11-14).

There were four significant invasions of Jerusalem in Old Testament times: (1) by Shishak, king of Egypt, during Rehoboam's reign, in 926 B.C. (1 Kings 14:25-26);

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- (2) by the Philistines and Arabians during the reign of Jehoram, from 848-841 (2 Chron. 21:16-17);
  - (3) by King Jehoash of Israel during the reign of Amaziah, in 790 (2 Kings 14:13-14);
  - (4) by Babylon during the years 605-586 (2 Kings 24-25).

Obadiah prophesied against Edom either in connection with invasion #2 or #4.

- **Title of the Book**

Means “servant or worshipper of *Jehovah*.”

- **Theme and Purpose**

Obadiah lived through the Babylonian invasion of 587.86 b.C. and saw how the Edomites mock and rejoice over Judah’s fall.

Obadiah’s prophecies were given to encourage the disillusioned Jews who wondered why God did not punish the Edomites for their wicked ways.

Further description of how Edom took advantage of the Jews in Jerusalem when the city was destroyed is found in Ezekiel 25,35,36 and Psalm 137.

The Edomites robbed and killed fleeing Jews, tried to make Judah part of their territory, and spoke arrogantly about God.

## Key Verses

**1:10.** “Because of violence to your brother Jacob, You will be covered with shame,  
And you will be cut off forever.

**1:15.** “For the day of the LORD draws near on all the nations. As you have done, it  
will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head.

**1:21.** The deliverers will ascend Mount Zion To judge the mountain of Esau, And  
the kingdom will be the LORD’S.

### •Theological Significance of Obadiah

Pride goes before destruction. The Edomites had a false sense of security based upon the easiness to defend their city (located in the mountains).

The also relied on their wealth. A major trade route went through their nation. Thus, they became very wealthy (1:5). In addition they had many allies to defend them (1:7).



## Outline

### I. The Prophecies of Judgment on Edom (1-9)

A. The Certainty of Judgment (1-4)

B. The Completeness of the Judgment (5-9)

### II. The Basis for the Judgment on Edom (10-14)

A. For an Absence of Brotherly Love (vs. 10)

B. For Aloofness (11-12)

C. For Aggressiveness (13-14)

### III. The Time of the Judgment (vs. 15)

### IV. The Results of the Judgment (16-18)

### V. The Deliverance of Israel (19-21)

# JONAH

## Author

The author of the book is Jonah, the son of Amittai, a prophet from Galilee in the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

This is evidenced by the book itself (1:1), the historical character of the book which names real places and persons, and by corroboration from other sources (2 Kings 14:25) including the testimony of Jesus in the New Testament (Matt. 12:40).



## Date

In 2 Kings 14:27 Jonah is connected with the reign of Jeroboam II of Israel (793-753). Jonah ministered after the time of Elisha and just before the time of Amos and Hosea.

While no Assyrian inscription mentions a religious awakening such as that described in Jonah, during the reign of Ashurdan III there was a swing toward monotheism which could have been related to the preaching of Jonah. The repentance of Nineveh probably occurred in the reign of Ashurdan III (773-755). Two plagues (765 and 759) and a solar eclipse (763) may have prepared the people for Jonah's message.[78](#)

## Theme and Purpose

The sovereignty of God is predominant in this book. His purposes can not be stopped by man. Jonah refuse to deliver a message to the terrible nation of Niniveh. Instead he choose to escape from God. Through a series of events God force Jonah into capitulation and the terrible Assyrians repented after they heard Jonah. This book reveals God's love for the human race.

## Key Word

“*prepared*” (מנה mānâh) God prepared a great fish (1:17), the plant (4:6), a worm (4:7)

Jon 1:4 *But Jehovah hurled a great wind into the sea, and there was a great storm in the sea, so that the ship was thought to be broken.*

## Key Verses

**3:10.** When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented concerning the calamity which He had declared He would bring upon them. And He did not do it.

**4:2.** And he prayed to the LORD and said, “Please LORD, was not this what I said while I was still in my own country? Therefore, in order to forestall this I fled to Tarshish, for I knew that Thou art a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness, and one who relents concerning calamity.

## **Theological Significance**

Jesus taught from this book in Matthew 12:38-41. He compared the three days that Jonah spent in the fish to the three days He would spend in the earth after his death.

He also said that the repentant people of Niniveh would condemn the Pharisees who rejected Jesus' message, a message greater than Jonah's.

## **Outline**

- I. The Fleeing of Jonah (1:1-17)
  - A. The Reason for His Flight (1:1-2)
  - B. The Route of His Flight (1:3)
  - C. The Results of His Flight (1:4-17)
- II. The Praying of Jonah (2:1-10)
  - A. The Characteristics of His Prayer (2:1-9)
  - B. The Answer to His Prayer (2:10)
- III. The Preaching of Jonah (3:1-10)
  - A. God's Command to Preach (3:1-3)
  - B. The Content of Jonah's Preaching (3:4)
  - C. The Consequences of Jonah's Preaching (3:5-10)
- IV. The Learning of Jonah (4:1-11)
  - A. Jonah's Complaint to God (4:1-3)
  - B. God's Curriculum for Jonah (4:4-11)

# MICAH

## Author

Little is known about the author of this book other than what can be learned from the book itself and from Jeremiah 26:18.

Micah was from Moresheth (Micah 1:1; cf. 1:14), a town in Judea about 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem near the Philistine city of Gath. Moresheth was located in Judah's fertile foothills near Lachish, an international trading town.

## Date

Micah tells us he prophesied during the days of Jotham (750-732), Ahaz (736-716) and Hezekiah (716-687) (1:1). Micah speaks primarily to Judah, but since he also speaks to the Northern Kingdom of Israel and predicts the fall of Samaria (1:6), a good part of his ministry occurred before the Assyrian captivity in 722 B.C., probably around **700 B.C.**

## Theme and Purpose

The theme of judgment is prominent in each of Micah's three messages. The Judgment on Samaria, God would destroy the idols, false temples, and the city itself. He also lamented the coming destruction of Judah (1:8-16)

Why the pending judgments?

- Because the powerful landlords in Judah covet and steal property from the poor (2:1-4,9)
- Because the people abused God's mercy and thought they will never get punished (2:6-7)
- Because the nation followed false prophets (2:11)
- In spite of the severe judgment, God will not reject the righteous remnant of Judah (2:12,13)

In the last days new leadership will come to Jerusalem and God Himself will reign as King over Zion (4:1,7). At that time the poor and the weak, as well as foreigners from all the nations will come to Jerusalem to be instructed by God (4:3-5)

Although the nation would go first through the exile in Babylon (4:9-11) a new powerful ruler (The Messiah) will be born in Bethlehem (5:2).

He will bring peace to all the world, restore the remnant of Judah and remove all armies, false prophets & false gods (5:4-15)

## **Key Verse**

**1:5-9.** All this is for the rebellion of Jacob And for the sins of the house of Israel. What is the rebellion of Jacob? Is it not Samaria? What is the high place of Judah? Is it not Jerusalem? For I will make Samaria a heap of ruins in the open country, Planting places for a vineyard. I will pour her stones down into the valley, And will lay bare her foundations. All of her idols will be smashed, All of her earnings will be burned with fire, And all of her images I will make desolate, For she collected them from a harlot's earnings, And to the earnings of a harlot they will return. Because of this I must lament and wail, I must go barefoot and naked; I must make a lament like the jackals And a mourning like the ostriches. For her wound is incurable, For it has come to Judah; It has reached the gate of my people, Even to Jerusalem.

## **Theological Significance**

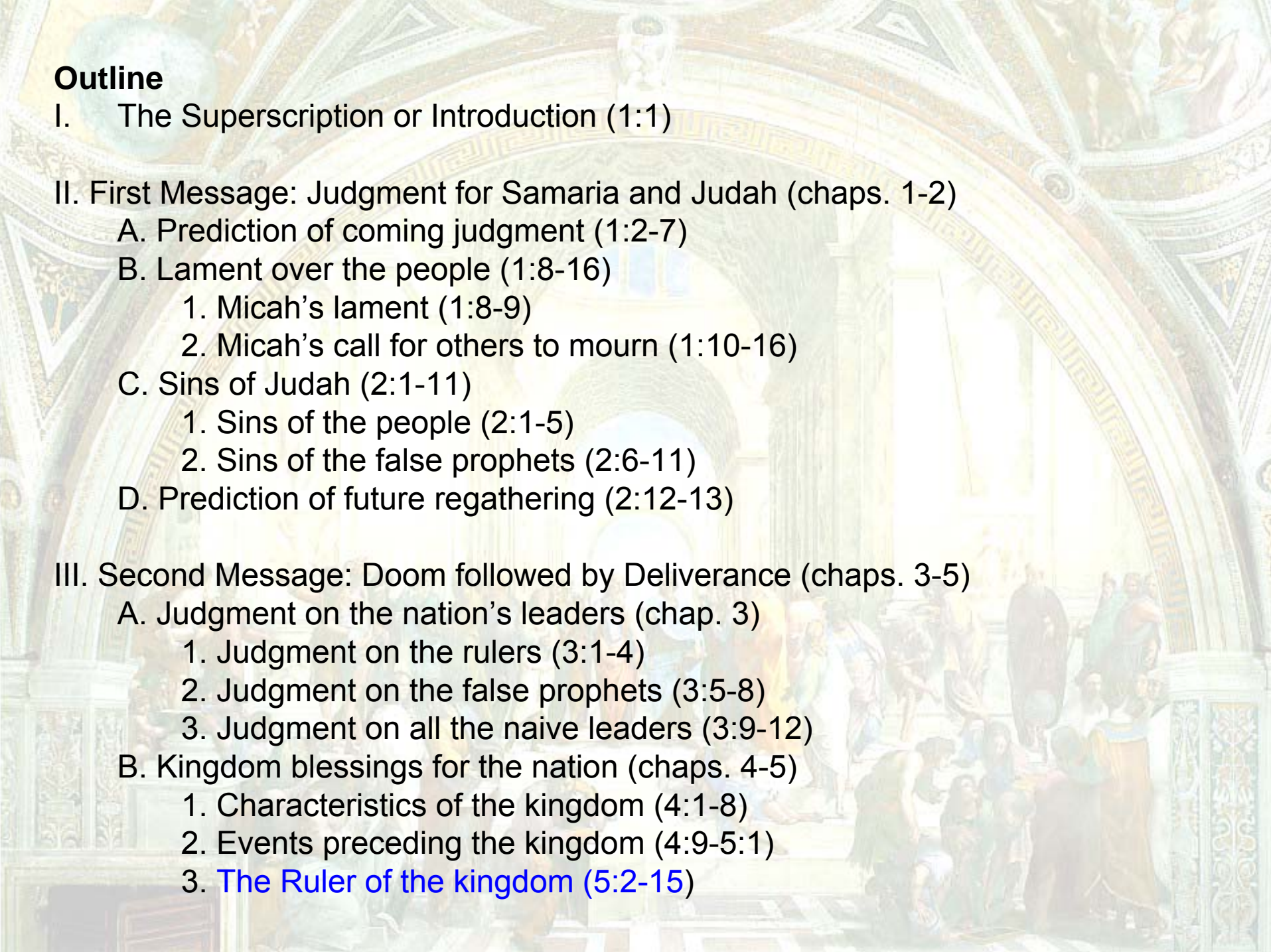
God will bring judgment on those who do not rule with justice

It's possible to have hope in the midst of oppression and violence if trust is put in God and His promises

The Messiah was born in Bethlehem as Micah said (Matthew 2:3-6) and one day He will reign as King over all the earth.

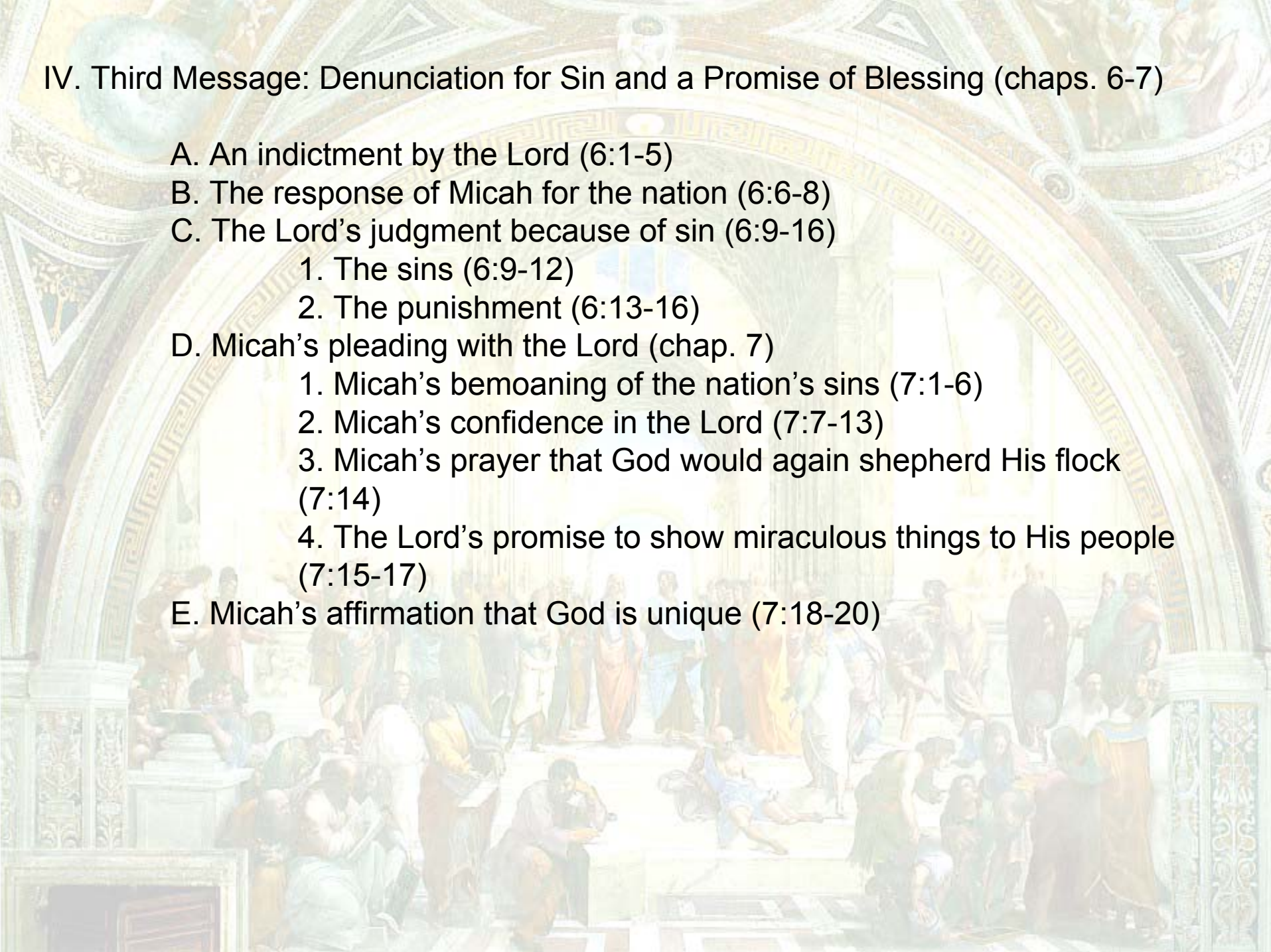
All war will conclude and people from all nations will worship Him.

## Outline

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- I. The Superscription or Introduction (1:1)
  - II. First Message: Judgment for Samaria and Judah (chaps. 1-2)
    - A. Prediction of coming judgment (1:2-7)
    - B. Lament over the people (1:8-16)
      1. Micah's lament (1:8-9)
      2. Micah's call for others to mourn (1:10-16)
    - C. Sins of Judah (2:1-11)
      1. Sins of the people (2:1-5)
      2. Sins of the false prophets (2:6-11)
    - D. Prediction of future regathering (2:12-13)
  - III. Second Message: Doom followed by Deliverance (chaps. 3-5)
    - A. Judgment on the nation's leaders (chap. 3)
      1. Judgment on the rulers (3:1-4)
      2. Judgment on the false prophets (3:5-8)
      3. Judgment on all the naive leaders (3:9-12)
    - B. Kingdom blessings for the nation (chaps. 4-5)
      1. Characteristics of the kingdom (4:1-8)
      2. Events preceding the kingdom (4:9-5:1)
      3. **The Ruler of the kingdom (5:2-15)**

#### IV. Third Message: Denunciation for Sin and a Promise of Blessing (chaps. 6-7)

- A. An indictment by the Lord (6:1-5)
- B. The response of Micah for the nation (6:6-8)
- C. The Lord's judgment because of sin (6:9-16)
  - 1. The sins (6:9-12)
  - 2. The punishment (6:13-16)
- D. Micah's pleading with the Lord (chap. 7)
  - 1. Micah's bemoaning of the nation's sins (7:1-6)
  - 2. Micah's confidence in the Lord (7:7-13)
  - 3. Micah's prayer that God would again shepherd His flock (7:14)
  - 4. The Lord's promise to show miraculous things to His people (7:15-17)
- E. Micah's affirmation that God is unique (7:18-20)



# NAHUM

## **Author**

Other than what Nahum tells us in 1:1, that the book is of the vision of Nahum, the Elkoshite and that it is an oracle about Nineveh, we know nothing about this prophet. Nahum means “consolation”

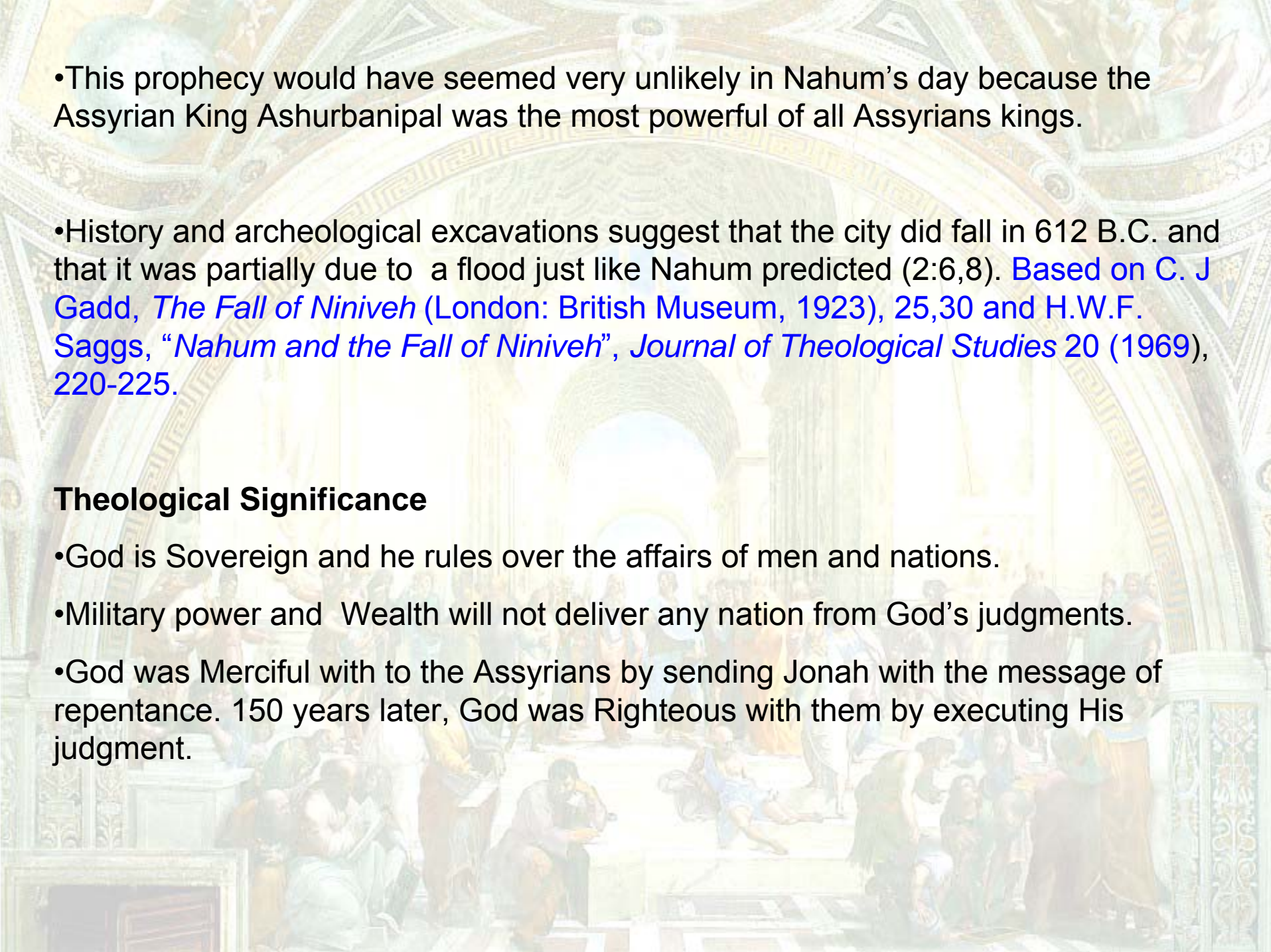
## **Date**

Nahum speaks of the fall of Thebes as already past in 3:8-10 and Thebes fell in 663 B.C.. Further, in all three chapters Nahum predicted Nineveh’s fall and this occurred in 612.

Nahum therefore gave his oracle somewhere between 663 and 612, probably close to the end of this time because he represents the fall of Nineveh as imminent (2:1; 3:14, 19). This would place his ministry sometime during the reign of Josiah and makes him a contemporary of Zephaniah and Jeremiah.

## Theme and Purpose

- Although God was gracious to the Assyrians after they responded positively to the preaching of Jonah over 150 years earlier, before long they went back to their wicked ways.
- Sargon II of Assyria destroyed Samaria and took the Northern Kingdom of Israel into captivity, scattering the ten tribes in 722.
- Later, Sennacherib of the Assyrians almost captured Jerusalem during the reign of Hezekiah in 701 B.C. But regardless of its power and prominence, Nineveh is clearly judged as doomed by a Holy God through the prophet Nahum.
- Assyria's cruelty, power, and pride would come to an end by the power of God. Though the book focuses on Assyria's fall and judgment, it is written to bring comfort to Josiah not to submit to the Assyrians and continue with his political and religious reforms.
- The siege and capture of Niniveh is described in detail by Nahum. Speeding chariots, clashing swords, terrified red dressed soldiers, tumbling walls near the river, looting of the palace riches, fleeing troops, and weeping women (2:1-6)



- This prophecy would have seemed very unlikely in Nahum's day because the Assyrian King Ashurbanipal was the most powerful of all Assyrians kings.

- History and archeological excavations suggest that the city did fall in 612 B.C. and that it was partially due to a flood just like Nahum predicted (2:6,8). [Based on C. J Gadd, \*The Fall of Niniveh\* \(London: British Museum, 1923\), 25,30 and H.W.F. Saggs, "Nahum and the Fall of Niniveh", \*Journal of Theological Studies\* 20 \(1969\), 220-225.](#)

## **Theological Significance**

- God is Sovereign and he rules over the affairs of men and nations.
- Military power and Wealth will not deliver any nation from God's judgments.
- God was Merciful with to the Assyrians by sending Jonah with the message of repentance. 150 years later, God was Righteous with them by executing His judgment.

## Key Verses

**1:7-8.** The LORD is good, A stronghold in the day of trouble, And He knows those who take refuge in Him. But with an overflowing flood He will make a complete end of its site, And will pursue His enemies into darkness.

**Nah 2:1** The scattering one is coming up against your face. Guard the rampart. Watch the way, make your loins strong, firm up *your* power mightily.

**Nah 2:2** For Jehovah has turned away the glory of Jacob, as the glory of Israel. For the plunderers have plundered them, and have destroyed their vine branches.

**Nah 2:3** The shield of his mighty ones has become red; the mighty men *are* in scarlet; the chariots flame like iron torches in the day of his preparation. And the cypresses are made to quiver.

**Nah 2:4** The chariots race madly in the streets; they shall run to and fro in the open squares. Their appearance *is* like torches; they dart about like lightnings.

**Nah 2:5** He shall remember his nobles; they shall stumble in their walking; they shall make haste to its wall, and the covering shall be prepared.

**Nah 2:6** The gates of the rivers shall be opened, and the palace shall be melted.

**3:5-7.** “Behold, I am against you,” declares the LORD of hosts; “And I will lift up your skirts over your face, And show to the nations your nakedness And to the kingdoms your disgrace. “I will throw filth on you And make you vile, And set you up as a spectacle. “And it will come about that all who see you Will shrink from you and say, ‘Nineveh is devastated! Who will grieve for her?’ Where will I seek comforters for you?”



## Outline:

- I. The Introduction (1:1)
- II. The Prophecy and Certainty of God's Judgment on Nineveh (1:2-15)
  - A. God's Holy Wrath Against Nineveh (1:2-8)
  - B. Nineveh's Scheming Against *Yahweh* Will Come to an End (1:9-11)
  - C. Judah's Affliction Will End Because of Nineveh's Judgment (1:12-15)
- III. The Description of God's Judgment on Nineveh (chap. 2)
  - A. The Assault Described (2:1-6)
  - B. The Defeat Declared (2:7-13)
- IV. The Cause for God's Judgment on Nineveh (chap. 3)
  - A. Because of Her Violence and Deceit that Leads to Shame (3:1-7)
  - B. Her Treatment of Thebes (No-amon) Results in Her Own Defeat (3:8-11)
  - C. Her Defenses to be Useless (3:12-19)

# HABAKKUK

## Author

The author is identified as Habakkuk in 1:1 and 3:1.

## Date

Because the book anticipates the coming Babylonian invasion and shows an awareness of the fame of the Babylonians, Habakkuk probably ministered during the reign of Jehoiakim of Judah. It appears that Babylon had not invaded Judah, though it was imminent (see 1:6 and 2:1), which suggests Habakkuk prophesied shortly before Babylon's invasion in 605 B.C. around **606**.

## Historical Background

The early years of Jehoiakim's reign were full of violence, strife, wickedness, injustice, and the oppression of the righteous (1:1-4)

After the fall of Niniveh (612 b.C.), the Jews embraced a false sense of security and indulged themselves into sin. Idol worship was rampant, some parents sacrificed their children to idols. The King ignore the prophecies and them burned their writings and so on. This period of time is described in 2 Kings 23:31- 24:7; 2 Chronicles 36:1-8.

In his prayer Habakkuk questions God's justice. Why would a righteous God allow so much evil and injustice?

## Theme and Purpose

The Prophets were God's messengers to man. But Habakkuk was a messenger to God. At least he attempted that role. His prayers seemed to update God of all the details. Later on it was revealed to him that God is in control.

How could the Holy everlasting God who promised to protect Israel (1:12) allowed the terrible Babylonians to destroy God's people (1:13)?

Habakkuk waited for the answer:

**Hab 2:1** I will stand on my watch and set myself on the tower, and will watch to see what He will say to me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved.

- And the answer come from heaven with a different perspective:

**Hab 2:4** Behold, the soul of him is lifted up, *and* is not upright; but the just shall live by his faith.

- Because the **soul** of the king of Babylon was lifted up with pride, he would die, but the godly remnant of Israel would **live by faith**.
- *But the Just shall Live by faith* is quoted three times in the NT.  
Rom. 1:17 emphasizes "the just";  
Gal. 3:11 emphasizes "faith";  
Heb. 10:38 emphasizes "shall live."

•The Just will always live by Faith, no matter what the circumstances dictates. This was the secret that set free the Protestant revolution in 1517, when Martin Luther penned his 95 thesis declaring that salvation comes by faith alone.

•The Lord revealed His plan to Habakkuk:

•Hab 2:8 **Because you have stripped many nations, all the rest of the people shall strip you; because of men's blood, and the violence of the land, of the city, and of all who dwell in it.**

•The Babylonians were the instrument of God to execute His justice to its own people. But Babylon would not go unpunished!

•In 586 b.C Babylon destroyed Jerusalem but 50 years later, in 539 b.C. the Persians destroyed the Babylonian empire!. Thus fulfilling the prophecies of 1:6 and 2:8.

•So the questioner goes from Misery to complete Surrender:

**3:17-19.** **Though the fig tree should not blossom, And there be no fruit on the vines, Though the yield of the olive should fail, And the fields produce no food, Though the flock should be cut off from the fold, And there be no cattle in the stalls, Yet I will exult in the LORD, I will rejoice in the God of my salvation. *The Lord GOD is my strength, And He has made my feet like hinds' feet, And makes me walk on my high places.*** For the choir director, on my stringed instruments.



## Outline:

- I. The Perplexities of Habakkuk: faith is tested and taught (1:1-2:20)
  - A. The First Problem: Why Does God Allow Wicked Practices to Continue in Judah? (1:2-4)
  - B. God's First Answer (1:5-11)
  - C. The Second Problem: Why Will God Use Wicked People to Punish Judah? (1:12-2:1)
  - D. God's Second Answer (2:2-20)
  
- II. The Praise of Habakkuk: faith is triumphant (3:1-19)
  - A. Praise for God's Person (3:1-3)
  - B. Praise for God's Power (3:4-7)
  - C. Praise for God's Purpose (3:8-16)
  - D. Praise for Faith in God (3:17-19)

# ZEPHANIAH

## Author

As seen in 1:1, the book was written by Zephaniah, the son of Cushi.

## Date

640-609 B.C.

According to the introduction (1:10), Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of Josiah (640-609 B.C.). His prophecy preceded the fall of Nineveh in 612 and the reforms of Josiah in 622-621.

## Historical Background

In spite of King Josiah's reforms, corruption and idolatry become permanent in Judah. After the death of Josiah and Zephaniah, Babylon conquered Judah and destroyed the temple. Many were taken captive to Babylon.

## Purpose of the Book

Zephaniah's purpose was to warn the people of an eminent judgment against Judah

**Zep 1:1** The Word of Jehovah which came to Zephaniah the son of Cushi, the son of Gedaliah, the son of Amariah, the son of Hizkiah, in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah.....**Zep 1:4** I will also stretch out My hand on Judah and on all the people of Jerusalem. And I will cut off the remnant of Baal from this place, the name of the idol-worshippers, with the priests.

## The Day of the Lord

Zephaniah warned that God would come and devastate the earth, removing man, beasts, birds, and fish.

This judgment was particularly aimed at Judah because of the worship to the canaanite god "Baal", and the bowing down to the Ammonite god "Molech", and praying to the Assyrian astral deities (1:45; Jer. 8:2; 19:13).

To show how serious the danger was, Zephaniah reminded his audience of the terrible and horrible of the day of the Lord (1:14-18).

Zep 1:14 ***The great day of Jehovah is near, it is near and rushing greatly, the voice of the day of Jehovah. The mighty man shall cry bitterly there.***

Zep 1:15 ***That day is a day of wrath, a day of trouble and distress, a day of waste and ruin, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and thick darkness,***

Zep 1:16 ***a day of the ram's horn and alarm against the fortified cities, and against the high towers.***

Zep 1:17 ***And I will bring distress on men, so that they shall walk with the blind, because they have sinned against Jehovah. And their blood shall be poured out as dust, and their flesh as dung.***

Zep 1:18 ***Their silver nor their gold will not be able to deliver them in the day of Jehovah's wrath; but the whole land shall be devoured by the fire of His jealousy. For He shall make even a full, yea, a speedy end of all the dwellers in the land.***

## **Repentance before the day of the Lord**

The good news is that it is possible for Judah to avoid the judgment side of the day of the Lord.

Zephaniah exhorted the people to gather at the temple and repent before the anger of the Lord falls on them (2:13).

But the political & religious leaders did not trust God because they profane the temple and preached that God would never judge them (3:1-5)

## **Restoration and Joy on the day of the Lord**

If the people will repent they will be part of the righteous remnant from all over the world that has purified lips, forgiven sins, humble attitudes, and holy lives (3:9-13).

These people will rejoice because God their king will dwell in their midst (3:14,15)

## **Theological Significance**

The Day of the Lord signifies God's execution of His Justice over all sinners in every generation. Ultimately, this long day will find its climax during the tribulation.

## Outline:

### I. Introduction (1:1)

### II. The Judgment of the Day of *Yahweh* (1:2-3:8)

#### A. Judgment on the whole earth (1:2-3)

#### B. Judgment on Judah (1:4-2:3)

##### 1. The causes of judgment (1:4-13)

##### 2. The description of judgment (1:14-18)

##### 3. A summons to the nation: Repent and Seek God (2:1-3)

#### C. Judgment on the surrounding nations (2:4-15)

##### 1. On Philistia (2:4-7)

##### 2. On Moab and Ammon (2:8-11)

##### 3. On Ethiopia (2:12)

##### 4. On Assyria (2:13-15)

#### D. Judgment on Jerusalem (3:1-7)

##### 1. The prophet's indictment (3:1-5)

##### 2. The Lord's judgment (3:6-7)

#### E. Judgment on all the earth (3:8)

### III. The Restoration of the Day of *Yahweh's* (3:9-20)

#### A. The restoration of the nations (3:9-10)

#### B. The restoration of Israel (3:11-20)

# HAGGAI

With Haggai, we come to the only three post-exilic prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, all of whom spoke to the returned remnant.

Their objective was to encourage their spiritual and moral life of this remnant, now back in their home land, as they sought to rebuild the temple and the nation. Haggai and Zechariah dealt mostly with the spiritual needs as they related to the rebuilding of the temple and Malachi dealt primarily with the moral and social needs involved with the reconstruction of the nation itself.

## **Author:**

Haggai's name means "festal" or "festive, suggesting to some that he was born on one of the major feast days, though there is nothing in the text to support this. Haggai is known only from this book (mentioned 9 times) and the mention of him in Ezra 5:1-2 and 6:14.

Little is known about him. He refers to himself as "the prophet Haggai" (1:1), but nothing is known about his parents or genealogy. He was a contemporary of Zechariah the prophet and Zerubbabel the governor. His authorship is uncontested.

## **Date**

520 B.C.

Under the policies of Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, almost 50,000 Jews were allowed to return to Jerusalem. Among these were Zerubbabel (Ezra 1:2-4; cf. Isa. 44:28), Joshua the high priest and the Prophets Haggai and Zechariah. The decree allowing the Jews to return to their land and rebuild their temple occurred in 538 B.C.

Levitical sacrifices were soon reinstated on a rebuilt altar for burnt offerings (Ezra 3:1-6), and in the second year of the return the foundation of the temple was laid (Ezra 3:8-13; 5:16). However, Samaritan harassment and eventual Persian pressure brought a halt to the rebuilding of the temple. Then spiritual apathy set in; and for about 16 more years—until the rule of the Persian king, Darius Hystaspes (521-486 b.c.)—the construction of the temple was discontinued. In the second year of Darius (520 b.c.) God raised up Haggai the prophet to encourage the Jews in the rebuilding of the temple (Ezra 5:1-2; Hag. 1:1).

As stated by Haggai in 1:1, his first message was given on the first day of Elul (Aug.-Sept.) in the second year of Darius. This was in 520 B.C.

## The Temple

After years of frustration over not being able to rebuild the temple, The drought on the land limited their resources and many people gave up on the idea (1:6,9-11).

Haggai challenged the circumstances and reset the priorities: First is God's glory, and this required a temple (1:8).

The people revered God, obeyed and began to work on the temple (1:12-15)

## The Problem of comparing

The new temple was much smaller than Salomon's temple, without gold on the walls, floor, and furniture (2:3; 1 Kings 6:14-36)

God's glory does not abide in monuments nor in institutions...But in a person  
Hag 2:7 *And I will shake all the nations; and the **desire of all nations shall come;** and I will fill this house with glory, says Jehovah of Hosts.*

Hag 2:9 *The glory of this latter house shall be greater than that of the former, says Jehovah of Hosts. And in this place I will give peace, says Jehovah of Hosts.*

### •Third Message (2:10-19)

After three months God sent another message to answers questions to his servant:

*Hag 2:17 I struck you with blight and with mildew, and with hail, in all the labors of your hands; yet you did not turn to Me, says Jehovah.*

•¿Why such a harsh response. After all, they did obeyed Haggai and continued with the rebuilding of the temple.

•The returning Jews from Babylon were questioning God's faithfulness. They did not understand how can God did not bless them for rebuilding the temple?

•But God called them to repent

*Hag 2:19 Is the seed still in the barn? Yea, as yet the vine, and the fig tree, and the pomegranate, and the olive tree, have not brought forth. From this day I will bless you.*

### The Fourth Message (2:20-23)

That same day God send a message to Judah's Governor Zerubbabel that God would be with him, would control all the surrounding nations that threatened him, and choose him (a Davidic descendant who would wear the king's ring) to be a sign of God's continuing work to bring about His Kingdom on earth (2:20-23)



Hag 2:20 And a second time the Word of Jehovah came to Haggai in the twenty-fourth of the month, saying,

Hag 2:21 **Speak to Zerubbabel**, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth.

Hag 2:22 And I will overthrow the throne of the kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the nations. And I will overthrow the chariots and their riders. And the horses and their riders shall come down, each one by the sword of his brother.

Hag 2:23 In that day, says Jehovah of Hosts, I will take you, O Zerubbabel, My servant, the son of Shealtiel, says Jehovah, and will make you like a signet; for I have chosen you, says Jehovah of Hosts.

### **Theological Significance**

- In spite of opposition the believer must always give priority to what pleases and glorifies God
- God is less concerned about external ritual than He is about internal holiness.

## **Outline**

### **I. The First Message: A Call to Rebuild the Temple (1:1-15)**

- A. The Introduction (1:1)
- B. The First Rebuke (1:2-6)
- C. The Remedy (1:7-8)
- D. The Second Rebuke (1:9-11)
- E. The Response to the Prophet's Message (1:12-15)

### **II. The Second Message: A Call to Find Courage in God's Promises (2:1-9)**

- A. The Introduction (2:1-2)
- B. The Promises of Enablement and Future Glory (2:3-9)

### **III. The Third Message: A Call to Cleanness of Life (2:10-19)**

- A. The Introduction (2:10)
- B. The Problem: The Disobedience of the Remnant (2:11-14)
- C. The Solution: The Obedience of the Remnant (2:15-19)

### **IV. The Fourth Message: A Call to Confidence in the Future (2:20-23)**

- A. The Introduction (2:20-21a)
- B. A Promise of the Future Defeat of the Gentile Kingdoms (2:21b-22)
- C. A Promise of the Restoration of the Davidic Kingdom (2:23)

# ZECHARIAH

## **Author**

Zechariah the prophet was the son of Berechiah (1:1), the son of Iddo, the priest who led the Levites (Neh. 12:4), and a contemporary of the previous prophet (Ezra 6:14). His name (Zekarya,h) means “*Jehovah* remembers”. In the Greek and Latin version Zechariah is *Zacharias*.

## **Purpose**

Zechariah provided messages of hope for the leaders and a community of believers who were powerless because of their own sinfulness. They were discouraged because it seemed that God was not restoring their nation.

## **Date**

Although the first eight chapters which encourage the building of the temple are dated around 520-518 B.C., chapters 9 – 14 have no dates and are more concerned with the time when God will establish His Messianic Kingdom.

Because of these differences it is possible that God gave these rather apocalyptic messages in 9-14 a god number of years after the temple was rebuilt.

## **Eight Visions**

Apparently all the material from 1:7- 6:15 was proclaimed the same day:

- a. *His angels on horses* (1:10-11), which symbolizes God's presence of Jerusalem
- b. *Visions of the horns* (1:18-21), symbolizing the destruction of God's enemies
- c. *The man with the measuring line* (Chapter 2), symbolizes the expansion of Jerusalem in the future, well beyond the present walls. Filled with joy, God's presence and people from many nations.
- d. *Joshua and Satan* (chapter 3), symbolizes that purity precedes blessings.
- e. *The Vision of the Golden Lamp stand* (4:1-14)
- f. *The Vision of the Flying Scroll* (5:1-4)
- g. *The Vision of the Woman in the Ephah* (5:5-11)
- h. *The Vision of the Four Chariots* (6:1-8)

## The Issue of Fasting

Zec 7:4 And came the Word of Jehovah of Hosts to me, saying,

Zec 7:5 Speak to all the people of the land, and to the priests, saying, When you fasted and mourned in the fifth and seventh months, even those seventy years, ***did you truly fast to Me, even to Me?***

The Believer's Bible Commentary says the following:

In the first, God reminds them that the fast **in both the fifth and seventh months had been instituted by themselves, not by Him**. Both their fasting and their feasting were for themselves, not for God. Before the destruction of **Jerusalem**, **the former prophets** had warned the people that God wants righteousness and reality rather than ritual.

Zec 7:8 And the Word of Jehovah came to Zechariah, saying,

Zec 7:9 So speaks Jehovah of Hosts, saying, Judge true judgment, and practice kindness and pity, *each* man to his brother.

Zec 7:10 And do not crush the widow or the orphan, the alien or the poor. And do not devise evil in your heart, of a man *against* his brother.

## The Rejection of Messiah (9:1-11:17) & the Future of Israel (12-14)

God's judgment of Tyre and Philistia (9:1-7)

Restoration of His people (9:8-11-13),

- this includes the coming of Israel's Messiah on a donkey (Matthew 21:5)
- the rejection by the people who sold him for 30 pieces of silver (11:4-17 fulfillment in Matthew 26:15)

• Chapters 12 to 14 describes the God's deliverance of Judah in a great war with all nations of the earth. It describes a painful period of history for the Nation of Israel. Could be in reference to the Great tribulation.

• Israel will recognize the Messiah, the one they pierced (fulfillment on the cross), mourn their sins and be cleanse ( 12:10-13:6)

• During a final attack on Jerusalem, many will be killed, God Himself will stand on the mount of Olives and rescue His people (13:7-14:5)

• Then He will reign as King over the whole world (14:9-21)



## **Outline:**

I. The Call to repentance (1:1-6)

II. The Eight Visions of Zechariah (1:7-6:8)

A. The Vision of the Horses and Riders (1:7-17)

B. The Vision of the Four Horns and Four Craftsmen (1:18-21)

C. The Vision of the Surveyor (2:1-13)

D. The Vision of the Golden Lamp stand (4:1-14)

E. The Vision of the Flying Scroll (5:1-4)

F. The Vision of the Woman in the Ephah (5:5-11)

G. The Vision of the Four Chariots (6:1-8)

III. The Crowning of Joshua (6:9-15)

IV. The Questions Concerning the Fasts (7:1-8:23)

V. The Oracles Concerning the Future (9:1-14:21)

A. The First Oracle: The Rejection of Messiah (9:1-11:17)

B. The Second Oracle: The Reign of Messiah (12:1-14:21)

# MALACHI

## **Author and Title**

Malachi is only mentioned in Malachi 1:1 as the author of this prophecy. Malachi (Maáa,,chi,) means “My Messenger”.

## **Historical Background**

The Prophet Malachi ministered God’s word about 100 years after Haggai and Zechariah.

The walls of Jerusalem were now up so the city had good security. Since the rebuilding of the temple happened so long ago, many were not very excited about their worship there.

The priests were no longer teaching the people about sacrificial regulations. Many were twisting Ezra’s command to divorce foreign wives into permission to divorce their Hebrew wives.

## **Date:**

450-400 B.C.

## Questioning God's Love (1:1-5)

Some of the Jews in Jerusalem questioned whether God really loved them.

**Mal 1:1** The burden of the Word of Jehovah to Israel by Malachi.

**Mal 1:2** I have loved you, says Jehovah. But you say, In what have You loved us?

*Was not Esau Jacob's brother? says Jehovah; yet I loved Jacob,*

**Mal 1:3** and I hated Esau and made his mountains a desolation, and his inheritance *to be* for the jackals of the wilderness.

Proof of God's love for them was evident in His choice to love Jacob rather than Esau (Gen. 25:25-26)

His recent judgment on the Edomites (descendants from Esau) showed that His plan has not changed.

## Charges about honoring God (1:6-14)

**Mal 1:6** A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I *am* a father, where is My honor? And if I *am* a master, where is My fear? says Jehovah of Hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. And you say, In what way have we despised Your name?

They offering blind and lame sacrifices that even their own governor would not accept.

## **Charges against the Priest (2:1-9)**

Mal 2:7 For the priest's lips should guard knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of Jehovah of Hosts.

Mal 2:8 But you have turned out of the way; you have caused many to stumble at the law. You have corrupted the covenant of Levi, says Jehovah of Hosts.

Mal 2:9 Therefore I have also made you despised and low before all the people, just as you have not kept My ways but *are* lifting up faces in the law.

The moral compass was lost because the priesthood had lost its calling. They forgot to instruct the people in the Lord's way.

## **Charges against Marriage with foreigners & Divorce (2:10-16)**

Mal 2:11 Judah has dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem. For Judah has profaned the holy *place* of Jehovah, which He loves, and **has married the daughter of a foreign god.**

**Mal 2:12** Jehovah will cut off from the tents of Jacob the man who does it; stirring and answering; or offering a food offering to Jehovah of Hosts.

Mal 2:13 And this *is* a ***second thing you have done***, covering the altar of Jehovah *with* tears, weeping, and groaning, yet not facing toward the food offering, and taking it *with* delight from your hand.

Mal 2:14 Yet you say, Why? ***Because Jehovah has been witness between you and the wife of your youth, against whom you have dealt treacherously; yet she is your companion and your covenant wife.***

- Many Hebrews were marrying foreign women that worshipped other Gods. Thus violating God's commands.
- Ezra's command to divorce them was being abused by many who used this opportunity to divorce their Hebrew wives.

**Charges against God's Justice (2:17-3:6)** Some suggested that God delighted in those who did evil

Mal 2:17 You have wearied Jehovah with your words. Yet you say, In what have we wearied Him? When you say, Every evildoer *is* good in the eyes of Jehovah, and He delights in them; or, Where *is* the God of justice? .

But God replies with the mention of the coming of John the Baptist:

**Mal 3:1** Behold, I will send My messenger, and He will clear the way before Me. And Jehovah, whom you seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Angel of the Covenant, in whom you delight. Behold, He comes, says Jehovah of Hosts.

It was Jesus himself that identified the messenger in Mal. 3:1 and Elijah in Mal. 4:5 as John the Baptist in Matthew 11:9,19,14

## Charges against lack of Tithing (3:7-12)

Mal 3:8 **Will a man rob God? Yet you have robbed Me. But you say, In what have we robbed You? In the tithe and the offering! .**

The crops were suffering because of a plague sent by God. The people did not connect the dots between the plague & the lack of tithing.

During the time of Ezra the government took care of the temple expenses (Ezra 7:15-24), But in Nehemiah's time (Neh. 10:32), the people provided for the temple expenses in the form of tithing.

Historically Abraham offered a tenth of his spoils in Genesis 14:1-24. The tithing was included in the mosaic law (Lev. 27:30-33 y Deut. 14:22) as an act of gratitude

The New Testament does not mention tithing. Yet in 2 Cor. 9:8-11 God establishes a principle of giving and receiving.

God can not be manipulated. If we offer with finance in mind expecting a percentage returns, soon we'll realize that God's equation operates on higher principles.



## **Outline:**

### **I. The Privilege Place of Israel (1:1-5)**

- A. God's Love Declared (1:1-2a)**
- B. God's Love Doubted (1:2b)**
- C. God's Love Demonstrated (1:3-5)**

### **II. The Pollution of Israel (1:6-3:15)**

- A. Cheating (1:6-14)**
- B. Unfaithfulness (2:1-9)**
- C. Spiritually Mixed Marriages (2:10-12)**
- D. Divorce (2:13-16)**
- E. Impiety and Impertinence (2:17)**
- F. Parenthesis: The Coming of John the Baptist (3:1-6)**
- G. Robbery (3:7-12)**
- H. Arrogance (3:13-15)**

### **III. The Promises to the People (3:16-4:6)**

- A. The Promise of the Book of Remembrance (3:16-18)**
- B. The Promise of the Coming Christ (4:1-3)**
- C. The Promise of the Coming of Elijah (4:4-6)**

