

The Twelve “Minor” Prophets **(Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Michah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah,** **Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)**

We will look at them in the order of the DATE they preached instead of the order they appear in the Bible.

1. Obadiah – (848 B.C. – 841 B.C.) Obadiah was not sent to Israel (Northern Kingdom) or Judah (Southern Kingdom), he was sent to EDOM. Edom was the nation from ESAU, Jacob’s brother. Since Jacob’s name was later changed to Israel, we know that the Israelites and the Edomites were cousins! It is true that God’s CHOSEN people were the descendants of Jacob (Israel), but he cared for all of Abraham’s offspring. He told the Edomites that Israel would dominate them.

2. Joel – (830 B.C. ? - Some scholars believe that Joel wrote later, around 760 B.C. putting him with Amos and Hosea.) Joel preached to Judah (Southern Kingdom). He urged them to return to the Lord. Joel is noted for his prophecy of the “*great and the terrible day of the Lord*” (2:31). Peter quoted this reference when he preached the first Gospel sermon on the Day of Pentecost.

3. Jonah - (780 B.C. ?) Jonah was not sent to Israel (Northern Kingdom) or Judah (Southern Kingdom), he was sent to NINEVAH, the CAPITAL of Assyria! Assyria was the ENEMY of the Israelites. In 722 B.C. (just a few years after Jonah’s mission to them) they took Israel (Northern Kingdom) into captivity! God was concerned about them as well as he prepared them to do His will on planet earth! Jonah resented them and tried to run from this mission, yet God dealt with him. When Jonah did preach to Nineveh, they repented!

4. Amos - (760 B.C.) Amos preached at the same time as Hosea (and possibly Joel). Both Amos and Hosea were sent to Israel (Northern Kingdom). Amos was not recognized as a prophet, he was “*a herdman, and a gatherer of sycamore fruit*” (7:14), yet God used him to warn Israel of their sins and the pending destruction they would see at the hands of the Syrians (Assyrians).

5. Hosea – (755 B.C. – 725 B.C.) Hosea preached at the same time as Amos. They may have even traveled together. He was sent to Israel (Northern Kingdom) also. God told Hosea to marry an unfaithful wife. He would then know how God felt toward Israel who had been unfaithful to Him! Israel was also referred to as “Ephraim” because Ephraim was the largest tribe that had settled Israel. Through Hosea, God warned Israel to repent. Unfortunately, they did not. Just three years after Hosea preached, the Assyrians carried Israel into captivity.

6. Micah – (736 B.C. – 710 B.C.) Micah preached at the same time as Isaiah. He specifically noted that “the word of the Lord” came to him during the reigns of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah (1:1), all kings of Judah. Ahaz was a very bad king while Jotham and Hezekiah were relatively good kings. Micah was primarily warning the people of coming judgment, but he gave people hope ... especially when he prophesied that there would be a “ruler” born in Bethlehem (5:2).

7. Nahum — (725 B.C. ?) Nahum was sent to tell Nineveh, the Capital of Assyria, that He would judge them! Jonah had preached there about 60 years before and they had repented. They had fallen back into their sinful ways. God used them to punish Israel in 722 B.C. yet even then God knew that He would judge the Assyrians as well. God did destroy Nineveh in 612 B.C.

8. Zephaniah — (627 B.C.) Zephaniah tells us that “the word of the Lord” came unto him during the “days of Josiah” (1:1), king of Judah. Josiah was a good king. However, God told Zephaniah to warn of the coming judgment that Judah would experience. He also told of the restoration they would have.

9. Habakkuk — (606 B.C. ?) Though we are not sure exactly when Habakkuk wrote, it is possible that it was just prior to the Babylonian invasion in 606 B.C. where Daniel and others were taken into captivity. Habakkuk warned the people that the Chaldeans (Babylonians) were coming soon!

10. Haggai — (520 B.C.) Haggai preached to the people after they returned from Babylonian captivity during the days of the Medo-Persian Empire. Ezra had been sent back to Jerusalem to restore the spiritual foundation of the people. Zerubbabel was the leader. Haggai encouraged the people to rebuild the temple.

11. Zechariah — (520 B.C. – 480 B.C.) Zechariah continued Haggai’s work. Much of his writing contains similar language as The Revelation of the New Testament. Zechariah’s main objective was to encourage the people to rebuild the temple and worship God. He promised that Jerusalem would be restored.

12. Malachi — (430 B.C.) Nehemiah had been sent back to Jerusalem to rebuild the wall of Jerusalem in 444 B.C. He returned to Artaxerxes whom he had served as cup bearer, but he was sent a second time to help with Jerusalem’s rebuilding. Malachi preached during this same time, encouraging the people to give up their sins and serve God. He prophesied that God “*will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me:*”(3:1) and He “*will send Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord:*” (4:5). Jesus told us that this was John the Baptist (Matthew 11:7-15).