

Overview of the Old Testament the Time of the Prophets

Books of the Major Prophets: A prophet was someone who spoke the words of God. Though they did predict future events, their main role was to call God's people back to Him.

- Isaiah:** (Hope through repentance/suffering). Isaiah looked at the failures of all the nations around him and pointed to a future Messiah (Jesus) who would bring peace for the people of Israel.
- Jeremiah:** (Faithful prophet points to new covenant). Jeremiah had many bad things happen to him, yet he held to his stern message that the people needed to turn back to God. He spoke to Judah in the last decades before Babylon destroyed the nation.
- Lamentations:** All Jeremiah's warning about Jerusalem came true, and Lamentations records five poems of sorrow for the fallen city.
- Ezekiel:** Ezekiel spoke to the Jews who were captive in Babylon. He often used dramatic stories and sometimes acted out illustrations to make his point.
- Daniel:** Although he was a captive in Babylon, Daniel became prime minister in the government there. Daniel lived a life of obedience, even when he was faced with pressure from others.

Books of Minor Prophets: Considered only minor in book length only.

- Hosea:** (God's unquenchable love) By marrying a woman who was unfaithful to him, Hosea lived out his message: Israel had been spiritually unfaithful to God.
- Joel:** (Call to repent and prediction of God's Holy Spirit) Beginning with a recent plague of locusts in Judah, Joel foretold God's judgment on Judah.
- Amos:** (God's call for justice and righteousness) Amos preached to Israel during a time of prosperity. He told the people that God would judge them for not helping the poor.
- Obadiah:** Obadiah preached warnings to Edom, a nation bordering Judah.
- Jonah:** (God's universal concern) Jonah reluctantly went to Nineveh and found Israel's enemies responsive to God's message.
- Micah:** (Call for humble mercy and justice) Micah exposed corruption in every level of society. But he ended his book with a promise of forgiveness and restoration for God's people.
- Nahum:** (God's jealousy protects His people) Long after Jonah had preached in Nineveh and the people had turned to God, Nahum foretold the mighty city's total destruction.
- Habakkuk:** (God calls for faithfulness) Habakkuk addressed his book to God, not people. He discussed problems of suffering and justice.
- Zephaniah:** (Hope for the humble and righteous) Zephaniah focused on the coming "day of the Lord," which would destroy Judah. But God would bring restoration.
- Haggai:** (The priority of God's house) After returning from Babylonian captivity, the Jews began rebuilding the temple of God. But soon, they set aside that task to work on their own homes. Haggai reminded them to put God first.
- Zechariah:** Zechariah also urged the Jews to work on rebuilding the temple and how the temple would point to the coming Messiah (Jesus).
- Malachi:** (Honor God and wait for His righteousness) The last Old Testament prophet spoke to a nation indifferent to God. He sought to turn the people back to God.