

THE BIG PICTURE OF SCRIPTURE THROUGH THE MAJOR AND MINOR PROPHETS

Week 8 – Amos; Micah; Hosea

March 12, 2024

In reading this handout, and understanding these three prophetic books, please write down your observations, the themes you are observing, note repetitious words/phrases, and write down your questions. Additionally, write down why these messages from God were given to Israel (both Kingdoms). Write down God's perspective! Our desire is to understand God's heart!

As we read the prophetic books in the Hebrew Scriptures, we need to remember our lessons from the outset of this class concerning God's promises to Israel.

Gen. 12/Gen. 15/Gen. 17 – God's promises to Abram within the Abrahamic Covenant; the cutting of the Covenant; the sign of the Covenant.

The Abrahamic Covenant continues to be in effect and all of what God has promised Abraham and his descendants has yet to be completely fulfilled. Because the Abrahamic Covenant is a unilateral (one-sided)/unconditional covenant, God has obligated Himself to deliver on His promises (Heb. 6:13). The deliverance of the promises is NOT dependent on the obedience of Abraham and his physical descendants – NOT dependent upon Israel's obedience – dependent upon GOD!

God will deliver His promises to Abram and his physical descendants, Israel, the Jewish people: physical land, multiple seed/The Seed (the Messiah reigning from His throne in Jerusalem at a time in the future), and blessings (salvation – Gal. 3:14; material blessings – Lev. 26; Deut. 28).

Without understanding the Abrahamic Covenant, the prophetic books would make no sense! We are reading of God's judgment on the nations and on Israel while reading of God's promise of hope, restoration, and a glorious future for Israel! We can only understand through comprehending God's plan for His chosen people, Israel. As a result of the restoration of Israel, the nations, those who are redeemed, will also be included in the earthly Kingdom of God (Psa. 2:8; Isa. 2:2; Isa. 19:18-25; Isa. 60; Isa. 62:7...). We are reading of God's mercy and grace!

God has a plan for Israel. God has a plan for the Church. God has a plan for the nations!

AMOS

His name means "burden" or "burden bearer" – one who carries a load! God called the Prophets to bring a heavy message to His people! The book of Amos was thought to be written between 760 and 753 BC before the Assyrian attack in 722 when the Kingdom of Israel was carried away into exile.

Amos was a shepherd and a fruit picker living in the Kingdom of Judah. Amos lived during a time of prosperity. While the people living in the northern Kingdom of Israel believed that God was with them (5:14, 18-20; 6:1-3; 9:10) and that they were immune to disasters, the people

worshiped other gods and offered corrupted sacrifices (4:4-5; 5:21-23)!!! Spiritually it was a time of corruption and moral decay (4:1; 5:10-13; II Kings 4:24).

God's message through Amos to the Kingdom of Israel: chastening would come upon them due to the neglect of God's Word, idolatry, pagan worship, greed, corrupted leadership, and oppression of the poor. God promised divine judgment.

Regarding God's judgment on the nations and on Judah and Israel, we read a repeated phrase from Amos 1:3 through Amos 2:6: *For three transgressions of... and for four, I will not turn*

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away its punishment.... WHY is God not turning away from punishing? The height of transgression, the completeness of sins had been reached. For each nation only the final and culminating sin was named which had gone beyond.... God is longsuffering. BUT GOD, because He is holy and just, MUST deal with sin! NOTE: for Israel, the complete list of seven sins was recorded (Amos 2:6-8, 12). WHY?

Re: Israel, with greater light comes greater accountability! Israel had spurned God's grace countless times: destroying the Canaanites; delivering the children of Israel from Egypt; raising up spiritual leaders (Num. 6:1-21). This is My grace which I have poured out upon you...and you rebelled against Me.

Amos viewed the sins of Judah (Amos 2:4-5) and Israel (Amos 2:6-16; 3:14; 4:4; 5:12) as violations of the Mosaic Covenant. Amos viewed the sins of the Gentile nations as rebellion against God's universal covenant with humanity made at the time of Noah (Gen. 9:6-7).

Five messages in chapters 3 through 6 explain the reasons for God's judgment. And, within these messages, God calls Israel to repent – as a nation and as individuals.

The first message – Amos 3:2: God declared that Israel would be punished because of her unique relationship with God (covenant relationship). *You only (exclusively) have I known (have I distinguished) of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.* NOTE: God's plan is RESTORATION!

Amos 3:3-6 – seven rhetorical questions posed. A second event does not happen unless it has been preceded by a necessary first event. Please read Isa. 31:2 and Isa. 47:10-11 in reference to the last question posed. AND, in understanding Who God is we need to realize that nothing occurs outside God's sovereignty.

Amos 3:7 - *Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.* God does nothing regarding the history of Israel without first revealing His plan to His servants - the Prophets. Once His plan is revealed, Israel's plan is accomplished!

The second message - Amos 4:6-13: God's repeated attempts to bring His people back to Him – through famine, drought, withered crops, locusts, overthrew some of their cities (Deut. 29:22-23) ... ***Yet you have not returned to Me.*** With each chastisement, God anticipated repentance. Israel refused. Final judgment was inevitable: *Prepare to meet your God!*

The third message - Amos 5:1-17: the nation would be judged by God but individuals could yet repent and live. Amos 5:14-15 - *Seek good and not evil, that you may live;...¹⁵ Hate evil, love good; establish justice in the gate. It may be that the LORD God of hosts will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.* And, He has been and will continue to be (Rom. 11:5)

The fourth message – Amos 5:18-27: because of Israel’s worshipping other gods, “the day of the LORD” would be a day of exile. Repentant individuals, however, could escape this disaster. However, “Woe” was spoken to those who were eagerly longing for the day of the LORD. Israel’s thinking was that “the day of the LORD” was to be the time of God’s vengeance against her enemies.

The fifth message – Amos 6:1: “Woe” against the complacent in Zion (Jerusalem – capital of the Kingdom of Judah) and those who felt secure on Mount Samaria (capital of the Kingdom of Israel). Both Israel and Judah would be taken into exile.

Amos 7:1-9:10 - Results of Judgment:

We read of 5 visions – what is pictured is God’s total destruction of the land and its people.

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Throughout this section, two phrases stand out – “sovereign LORD” and “My people.” WHY?

Amos 7:1-2 – first vision: Amos saw that a plague of locusts which stripped the land clean. Amos begged the sovereign LORD to forgive the people of their sins though Israel was unrepentant. Amos 7:3 – Moved by sorrow/compassion, God relented. God promised that the swarm of locusts would not happen. The nation was not forgiven; they would go into exile. However, this particular punishment was withdrawn.

Amos 7:4 – second vision: a devouring fire which devoured the land. Amos 7:5-6 - The Prophet again begged God to stop and God, once again, was moved by compassion.

The last three visions announced the inevitability of judgment.

Amos 7:7-9 - The vision of the plumb line – God’s plumb line of righteousness found Israel to be wanting! The nation had been “built”/established “true to plumb,” but now was out of line and needed to be torn down. The religious and political structures would be destroyed: the numerous high places (pagan hilltop shrines) and the larger official sanctuaries of worship in Bethel and Gilgal (3:14; 4:4; 5:5-6; 7:13). And the house of King Jeroboam II would crumble (II Kings 14:29; 15:10).

Amos 8:1-2 - The vision of the summer fruit: the fruit was fully ripened. Israel was ripe for judgment.

Amos 9:1-10 – The vision of the LORD standing by the altar and watching His work of His inescapable judgment. *And will sift the house of Israel among all nations*: God will use Israel’s exile among the nations to *sift* His people – not to destroy them, but to purify them.

Because of His unconditional covenant that God made with Abraham, the Lord would not abandon Israel altogether, but would bring future restoration to the righteous remnant (Amos 9:7-15).

Amos 9:11-15 – The Remnant Will Be Preserved:

After God’s judgments are past, the Lord will move in mercy to refresh and renew Israel.

Amos 9:11 – *On that day (day of renewal) I will raise up the tabernacle of David, which has fallen down, and repair its damages; I will raise up its ruins, and rebuild it as in the days of old*; The tabernacle of David speaks of the future dynasty/kingdom promised by God to King David on earth through the Davidic Covenant (II Sam. 7:12-16). The tabernacle had been broken in

two when the Kingdom had been divided into the Kingdom of Israel and the Kingdom of Judah. God promised to unite the two kingdoms once again under Davidic rule (II Sam. 7:16; Jer. 30:3-10; Eze. 37:15-28; Hosea 3:4-5). God will carry out His promise to David. He will raise up a Descendant after him and establish His rule forever – Jesus (II Sam. 7:11-16, 25-29).

Amos 9:11-12 – speaks of Gentile inclusion in the Kingdom of God on earth. OF COURSE, God had chosen Israel to bless the nations. This will be fulfilled in the Millennial Kingdom.

Dispersed/scattered Israel will be returned to her land to dwell securely and enjoy its goodness. He Who has claimed them as “My people” (7:8, 15; 8:2; 9:10, 14; Hosea 2:23; Zech 8:8, 13:9), will once again take the title “your God.”

MICAH

Micah was called to speak to the Kingdom of Judah. His three messages showed that Judah was just as guilty as Israel. Micah’s ministry fell between 750 and 686 BC.

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First Message: Judgment Will Come – Micah 1-2

Micah 1:2-7 form the backdrop for the rest of the book. Micah spoke of the results of God’s punishment (vv. 3-4), the reason for judgment (v. 5), and the certainty of judgment (vv. 6-7).

Second Message: Blessing Will Follow Judgment – Micah 3-5

Characteristics of the Kingdom of God – Micah 4:1-8

- The Millennial temple will be prominent in the world (4:1a) – being raised above the hills. God’s plan to bless the world through Israel (Gen. 12:3; Gen. 18:18) was not nullified by her sin.
- People of the world will be attracted to Jerusalem (4:1b).
- Jerusalem will be the place of instruction for the entire world (4:2a).
- Revelation will go forth from Jerusalem (4:2b).
- The Lord will be the Judge in Jerusalem (4:3a).
- Peace will be universal (4:3b).
- Israel will dwell in security and peace (4:4).
- Israel will be spiritually sensitive to God (4:5).
- Israel will be regathered (4:6).
- Israel will be made strong (4:7)
- Jerusalem will have dominion restored to her (4:8). Israel will no longer be under the domination of other nations for “the times of the Gentiles” (Luke 21:24) which began in 586 BC and will go through the tribulation (Rev. 11:1-2).

Events **Preceding** the Kingdom of God (Micah 4:9-5:1)

- Israel would be exiled to Babylon (4:9-10a) beginning in 605 BC..
- Israel would be rescued from Babylon (4:10b) beginning in 536 BC.
- Nations will gather against the nation Israel (4:11-13; Zech. 12:3).
- The ruler (*shaw-fot* translated as “judge”) of Israel will be humiliated (**5:1** - *Now gather yourself in troops, O daughter of troops; he has laid siege against us; they will strike the judge of Israel with a rod on the cheek*). This “judge” is not identified. He is thought to be

Judah's King Zedekiah who was captured and tortured when Jerusalem was besieged by Babylon (II Kings 25:1-7).

- This “judge” is NOT Jesus. Jesus was struck on his head (Matt. 27:30) and face (John 19:3) prior to His crucifixion..

- Different word for “Ruler” re: Jesus in Micah 5:2 – *masal* (pron. ma SHALL) – having dominion (Dan. 7:13-14 – READ!)

NOTE: The difference in timeframe between Micah 5:1 and Micah 5:2. Micah 5:1 begins with “Now....” Micah 5:2 refers to the distant future...² *But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of you shall come forth to Me the One to be Ruler in Israel, Whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting* (from eternity past). This is Jesus!.

The Ruler of the Kingdom (Micah 5:2-15)

- The birth of Israel's Ruler (5:2).
- The work of Israel's Ruler (5:3-15). He will reunite and restore the nation (5:3). He will shepherd His flock (5:4). He will destroy Israel's enemies (5:5-9). He will purge Israel's

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reliance on military power (5:10-11). He will destroy false worship from within Israel (5:12-14) and cities in which Israel had built strongholds for protection (5:14). He will judge the nations who oppose Him (5:15).

Third Message: An Indictment of Sin and a Promise of Blessing – Micah 6–7)

- The LORD set forth His case against His people (6:2).
- God reminded His people of some of His mighty deeds on their behalf (6:3-5).
- Micah told Israel what God desired from them. Micah 6:8 - *He has shown you, O man, what is good (tov - be beneficial; be right; be pleasing) And what does the LORD require of you*

But to do justly (to act rightly; to act lawfully; to be fair in their dealing with others), *to love mercy* (kindness, faithfulness; to carry through with their commitments to meet the needs of others) *And to walk* (to fellowship with God) *humbly* (without arrogance; not exalting self) *with your God?*

- Because of Israel's failure to meet God's requirements, He would punish the nation. They were told to “listen” and to “heed the rod” (God's instrument of punishment). They would be taken into captivity (6:13-15).
- Micah bemoaned his position in the midst of a people who were totally godless (7:1-2).
- However, Micah promised that he would continue to watch and wait in hope for the LORD (7:7).
- Micah expressed confidence in the truth that eventually God would reverse Israel's condition and that God would be her light (7:8-10).
- When Israel will be restored to her land in the Millennium, she will rebuild her walls and expand her boundaries (7:11-13),
- God promises to show miraculous things to His people (7:15-17).

- Micah's final words of praise express his great faith in God's eventual out-working of His plan for His covenant people (7:18-20).
- Micah confirmed six actions of God: He pardons sin; He does not remain angry (righteous anger) forever; He shows mercy; He has compassion; God would hurl Israel's sins into the sea; God is true.

Israel's peace and prosperity will be realized with the Messiah-King reigns. Jesus will exercise justice over His enemies and Israel's enemies. He will extend grace to His own. This promise gave Micah confidence in his dark days and is also a source of comfort to believers today.

HOSEA

Hosea's name means "salvation." Hosea lived in the northern Kingdom of Israel, at times called Ephraim. Hosea prophesied from 785 to 725 BC. God's message through Hosea is directed to Israel, the northern kingdom. The theme of Hosea is God's loyal love for His covenant people, Israel, despite their idolatry.

Hosea was instructed by God to marry a certain woman, Gomer, and to commit his love and faithfulness to her and experience with her a domestic life which was a dramatization of the sin and unfaithfulness of Israel. While it has been debated, it seems best to understand Gomer as chaste/pure at the time of marriage to Hosea, only later having become an immoral woman. Hosea's marriage to the adulterous Gomer pictures God's love for Israel despite her spiritual

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adultery. God's steadfast love is portrayed in the long-suffering husband of the unfaithful wife. Throughout Hosea we note the themes of sin, judgment, and forgiving love.

Children born:

Hosea 1:4 – Jezreel means "God will scatter" speaking of future judgment. Hosea 1:5 - *It shall come to pass in that day that I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel...* Assyria took the northern Kingdom of Israel captive in 722 BC from the Valley of Jezreel north.

Hosea 1:6 – Lo-Ruhamah – "not pitied" – God is no longer extending His favor toward Israel.

Hosea 1:8 – Lo-Ammi – "not my people"!

Hosea 1:10-2:1 - The effects of judgment would someday be reversed! The Israelites will again be like the sand on the seashore. In the same place where Israel heard the words *not My people*, they will be called sons of the living God (Hosea 1:10-2:1 – READ)

Restoration of Israel!

Hosea 1:10-2:1 – The restoration of Israel and Judah is recorded immediately in Hosea! (Hosea 1:11 – both Israel and Judah are mentioned. Eze. 37:15-27 – United Kingdom is noted!) God preserved a remnant for Himself from both Israel and Judah (Hosea 1:7).

Restoration Through Punishment (Hosea 2:2-23)

Hosea 2:2 – *Bring charges against your mother.* While this language is applicable to Gomer, it depicts a courtroom scene in which the Lord brings charges against the defendant, Israel. Children are commanded to bring charges against their mother, Israel, as a nation.

Hosea 2:5-13 – The Lord’s judgment was designed to effect restoration. Israel was deprived of her lovers (Hosea 2:5-7). Israel was deprived of the Lord’s blessings (2:8-13). Israel’s basic sin and the reason for the coming judgment: she had forgotten the LORD...which was a refusal to acknowledge the Lord’s goodness and authority (8:14; 13:6).

Hosea 2:14 – Renewed love ...*behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness* (where one can only depend on God) *and speak comfort to her* (Eze. 16). God will restore Israel to Himself.

Hosea 2:16 – Renewed marriage – *And it shall be, in that day, says the LORD, that you will call Me, ‘My Husband.’* .

Hosea 2:19-20 – *I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord.* Repeated three times, *I will betroth you* – the term emphasizes the intensity of God’s restoring love for the nation. In that day, Israel will no longer be thought of as an adulterous wife. We note that Israel brings nothing to the marriage. God makes all the promises and provides the dowry. These verses are recited by every Orthodox Jew as he places the phylacteries on his and forehead. Deut. 11:18 – (in a section re: love and obedience being rewarded) *Therefore you shall lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul, and bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.*

The restoration of Hosea’s marriage – (Hosea 3)

Having been previously separated, Hosea was commanded to pursue his estranged wife, Gomer, illustrating God’s unquenchable love for faithless Israel.

Hosea 3:4-5 (READ) – God’s dealings with Israel during the present age. Israel continues to exist without the monarchy, without their Levitical priesthood until... *Afterward* – when Messiah returns at the Second Coming to set up His Kingdom – His Millennial reign (Eze. 40-48).

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God’s Judgment and Restoration of Israel – (Hosea 4-14)

The remainder of Hosea’s prophecy expands the message of the first three chapters. Though emphasis is placed on Israel’s guilt and impending doom, each of the three major sections (4:1-6:3; 6:4-11:11; 11:12-14:9) concludes on a positive note by referring to Israel’s restoration.

Hosea 14:1-9 - *O Israel, return to the LORD your God, for you have stumbled because of your iniquity; ²Take words with you, and return to the LORD. Say to Him, ‘Take away all iniquity; Receive us graciously, for we will offer the sacrifices of our lips. ³Assyria shall not save us, we will not ride on horses, nor will we say anymore to the work of our hands, ‘You are our gods.’ For in You the fatherless finds mercy.’ ‘I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely, for My anger has turned away from him. ⁵I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall grow like the lily, and lengthen his roots like Lebanon. ⁶His branches shall spread; his beauty shall be like an olive tree, and his fragrance like Lebanon. ⁷Those who dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall be revived like grain, and grow like a vine. Their scent shall be like the wine of Lebanon. ⁸‘Ephraim shall say, ‘What have I to do anymore with idols?’ I have heard and observed him. I am like a green cypress tree; your fruit is found in Me.’ ⁹Who is wise?*

Let him understand these things. Who is prudent? Let him know them. For the ways of the LORD are right; the righteous walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.

QUESTIONS:

Observations? Questions?

Who is God?

What is the one theme of Amos, Micah, and Hosea?

Issues?

With what truth are you coming away?

SUGGESTED HOMEWORK:

Reread Week 8 (!!!!!) w/ Bible references (!!!!!).

Continue working on your observations/questions/answers.

With whom will you share this lesson?!!!!!!!

Read Week 9 when you receive it.