

The Prophets of the Old Testament

Part 6 – Amos and Hosea

THE WRITTEN PROPHETS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER

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|-------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| 1. Jonah? | 2. Obadiah? | 3. Joel? | 4. Amos |
| 5. Hosea | 6. Isaiah | 7. Micah | 8. Nahum |
| 9. Jeremiah | 10. Zephaniah | 11. Habakkuk | 12. Ezekiel |
| 13. Daniel | 14. Haggai | 15. Zechariah | 16. Malachi |

THE PROPHETS WE’VE STUDIED SO FAR

The goal of this study is to review the prophets placing them historically within the narrative of the Old Testament, and our primary goal is to understand what they say about the Messiah, His Kingdom, or the events that lead up to His arrival.

Beginning with Samuel, we have seen how many of the prophets have communicated something about the Messiah. Elijah, Elisha, and Jonah do not speak directly about the Messiah, but they are a visual picture of the Messiah. Obadiah and Joel speak of the day of the Lord and the impending judgment upon Israel, Judah, Edom, and all the nations that are at enmity with YHWH.

AMOS

Amos is a prophet in the same vein as Obadiah and Joel in that the primary word of the Lord is about His justice coming upon those who are wicked and following after false gods.

Even though he is from Judah, it appears that Amos’ primary ministry was to Israel. The book was written about 762 BC, during the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah (790–739 BC), and Jeroboam II, king of Israel (793–753 BC), and two years before a memorable earthquake (Zechariah. 14:5, about 760 BC).

He was from Tekoa. In 2 Chronicles 11:5-10, we see that it was founded as a fortified city by Rehoboam after the death of Solomon in the early years of the Divided Kingdom. (Map) Tekoa was a city about 10 miles south of Jerusalem (4 miles south of Bethlehem).

Read Amos 1:1, 7:14

Amos tells his occupation; he is not supported by the national provisions given to prophets and the family of the prophets. In Israel and Judah (Divided Kingdom), there seem to be institutions where recognized prophets were provided for by the state and they would be summoned occasionally to inquire of the Lord (1 Kings 18:1-4).

Amos was a shepherd and agriculturist. His primary occupation was to breed and care for sheep, but he is called away to prophesy against Israel.

Amos pronounces judgment upon Syria, Philistia, Phoenicia, Edom, Ammon, and Moab in Chapter 1:3-2:3. This is both poetic and beautiful, but also dreadful.

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In Chapter 2:4-5, God turns His attention toward Judah's reforms, and His patience was extinguished under King Uzziah (Azariah). The succession of kings in Judah is as follows: Jehoshaphat, Joram, Ahaziah, Athaliah, Joash, Amaziah, and Azariah (Uzziah).

Joram, Ahaziah, and Athaliah were all evil kings who followed in the way of Ahab. Joash made some reforms and did right in the sight of the Lord but did not remove the high places of false worship. His son, Amaziah, also did likewise, and Azariah also did right but did not remove the high places of false worship. It was during the time of Uzziah that Lord shook the earth as a judgment against Judah (Zech 14:1-5).

In Chapter 2:6-6:14, Israel is spoken against very harshly. Israel's successes early in its history led them to be haughty, ignore the needy, sell the poor into slavery, deny justice for the people (2:6-8), and cause those called to be holy to sin (2:11-12).

Israel is particular in God's judgment, unlike the foreign nations, because they had every advantage and misused their position with the Lord, using blessing for evil and oppression (3:1-2). What follows is a series of prophetic judgments in the form of poetry. God hates their false worship, and there is a continued call for righteousness and justice. But in Chapter 5:1-7, the hope of return and the Lord's relenting is available, but Israel will not comply.

Judgment will come against Israel (Amos 6:8-14) (Northern Kingdom). 40 years after this prophecy, Israel will be taken captive and nearly wiped out.

In Chapter 7:1-8:14, Amos is given a vision and defends himself. This goes back in time before the book was written. He is answering Amaziah, the father of Uzziah (read 7:7-17), and the prophecy of Israel's destruction is restated.

Chapter 9 begins with the absolute nature of God's judgment, but the Messianic promises come through in verses 11-15.

Messianic Observations

1. Messiah will be raised up
2. Israel will possess Edom
3. Harvest will be so great that the reaper will not be able to keep up.
4. Crops and wine will be in abundance
5. Israel will be restored
6. They will regain the land never to be moved again.

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HOSEA

Hosea had a lengthy period of ministry, prophesying ca. 755–710 B.C., during the reigns of Uzziah (790–739), Jotham (750–731), Ahaz (735–715), and Hezekiah (715–686) in Judah, and Jeroboam II (793–753) in Israel (1:1). His long career spanned the last 6 kings of Israel from Zechariah (753–752) to Hoshea (732–722). The overthrow of Zechariah (the last of the dynasty of Jehu) in 722 is depicted as yet future (1:4).

Hosea echoes Amos' preaching in the North (about 20 years later) and was a contemporary of Isaiah and Micah as well.

Hosea is one of the more difficult books to read because of its content.

Read 1:1-9. But in the midst of harsh speak, there is hope (1:10-11).

Israel's idolatry and false god worship are perpetually related to harlotry, and God, the faithful husband, will show retribution through fierce judgment (2:12-13). But, like a faithful husband, He will not leave Israel in destruction but will restore the nation (2:14-16).

Hosea is used as an object lesson, demonstrating Israel's unfaithfulness through marriage to an unfaithful wife (Read chapter 3:1-5). Hosea is to reclaim Gomer, pay off her debts, and restore her as his wife.

Hosea uses poetry as a prophetic utterance, and the effect of sin is a lack of knowledge of the Lord. They begin to rely upon national alliances rather than the Lord. Hosea relates to Israel and teaches Israel to pray (6:1-3) so that they would avoid judgment, but they would not have it (7:1). The final straw of Israel's treachery is their alliance with foreign nations, and Israel will be punished with captivity by Assyria (9:1-3).

Israel is perpetually pronounced as a judged people in chapters 7-10 with little hope to survive.

In Chapter 11, God is torn between justice and mercy (11:1-12).

In Chapters 12-13, Hosea gives Israel a history lesson on how obstinate they have been, beginning with Jacob, the rebellion at Kadesh-Barnea, and how they choose Saul.

In Chapter 14, promises are given, and we see some Messianic promises (14:1-7).

Messianic Observations

1. Israel will call out to the Lord in the end, forsaking their allegiances made with foreign kings.
2. God will heal them and love them freely.
3. The population of Israel will be restored.