

TIMELINE AND SYNOPSIS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS



Jonah (770 B.C.). The book of Jonah; written by Prophet Jonah who is among the minor prophets of the bible. It was probably written between 793 and 758 B.C. The major themes taught in the book of Jonah are disobedience and revival. The prophet had his own experience while in the whale's belly where he came into a lesson of why its vitally important for people to obey God. He had previously opted to disobey God by choosing to do that which was against His command, but the experience inside the whale's stomach made him come into repentance. The initial disobedience does not only lead to his revival but also for the people of Nineveh. Jonah had chosen to go to the opposite direction from that directed by God but along the way some raging storms affects the sea and the crew were able to determine that it's due to Jonah's disobedience and so he was thrown in the sea where he was swallowed by a whale and taken to Nineveh. A clear lesson to be learnt from the prophet Jonah experience is that God's love is able to manifest itself even in those areas we may deem inaccessible, regardless of our races, reputation, or nationality. The overall lesson to be learnt is that God is very compassion and would like sinners to come into repentance.

Amos (760 B.C), Prophet Amos is a shepherd as well as a fruit picker from a village known as Tekoa in Judea. God choose to use him even though he didn't have the education or even the priestly upbringing. His mission was to be directed to their neighbors in the north who were the Israelites. His messages were that the nation was to face an impending doom and captivity due to their sins. His messages were nevertheless unheeded as Israel had not experienced any good tidings after the reign of Solomon. Amos gave an emphatic wake up call to the people for them to shun their evil ways and come back to God for His hour of judgment was near. A lesson to be learnt is that God can use anybody



irrespective of their occupation and so it's not encouraging when people under-estimate what God work through them.

Hosea (760-730B.C), Prophet Hosea was the author of the book and he was a son of Beeri. The major message that Hosea brought to the people of Israel and to us is that, we have a loving God who is faithful to remain loyal to the covenant between Him and His people. The message was even made much clearer in that God wanted the people to know that, He is a long suffering and His love is steadfast. This was best portrayed to the continued longsuffering of a husband to an unfaithful wife. This was made more open by the marriage of Hosea to Gomer who was a prostitute. The love of God to the ever becoming idolatrous nation, Israel, is displayed by the great metaphor depicted in the lessons of sin, of judgment and of the forgiving love.

Isaiah (740-700B.C) Prophet Isaiah was majorly called to give a prophecy to the Judean kingdom which was going through times of rebellion as well as revival. Judah was facing a perilous times where they stood prone to the destruction by the Egyptians and the Assyrians. The book of Isaiah tells of the God's judgment and salvation. Nevertheless, it remains clear that God is a holy one who can't tolerate sin to go unpunished. During that period, Isaiah understood that God is a God of grace, mercy and of compassion. The book of Isaiah is of different view with regard to the salvation which was to come through the Messiah. Through the reign of the Messiah, there would be a rule in justice and righteousness. The Messiah's kingdom on earth is on the major goal through which it focuses on. The Messiah is depicted to become a suffering one who would become a source of healing to those suffering. In the first advent of Jesus, He would be a suffering king but in His second advent, he would become a conquering and a ruling king. The book presents the savior in undeniable detail and He becomes the only way to heaven and the only sure way of obtain grace.



Micah (737-690B.C), the book of Micah was authored by prophet Micah with the messages of mixtures of judgment as well as hope. His prophecies were against social evils, poor leadership and idol worshiping. There was supposed to have judgment which would be culminated by the destruction of Samaria and Jerusalem. On the other side of the prophecy, he announces the restoration of the nations. This doesn't need to mean lie there is some kind of contradiction as there can't be any restoration if no judgment has taken place. The book closes in some prophetic elements that show that Israel has confessed her sins and is assured of deliverance by the means provided by the Messiah.

Habakkuk (630B.C), From Habakkuk 1:1, it's clear that the book was an oracle given by the prophet Habakkuk. In his book, the prophet was wondering why god was allowing the chosen people to go on suffering under the persecuting arms of their enemies. God later answers his prayer and his faith is restored once again. The practical application of the teachings of this book is that it's allowed to question whatever God is doing in our lives although it should be done with respect and a lot of reverence. This books affirms that God remain sovereign and has all things are under His control.

Zephaniah (627B.C) The book of Zephaniah was authored by prophet Zephaniah whose name mean one defended by God. The purpose of writing the book was to ensure that the message of judgment and encouragement has three main aspect of God remains sovereign in all nations, those who are wicked will be punished while those who are righteous will be vindicated during judgment time while God blesses those who repent and trust Him. The prophet announces judgment to the whole earth, on Judea, Jerusalem and all other nations. There also follows the proclamation of the blessings of God to the nations especially to the remnant of the people of Judah.

Jeremiah (627-580B.C) The book of Jeremiah has the record of the final prophecies of Judah which was warning of the oncoming destruction if it

happened that the nation didn't repent. Jeremiah calls on the nation to turn back and get back to God. Coincidentally, he recognizes of the inevitable destruction of Judah due to its unrepentant ways. After the reign of the last righteous king of Judah, the nation fell to the worship of idols and so abandoned God and His commandments. Jeremiah at one point compared Judah to a prostitute and he explains of the destruction that will befall it. Nevertheless, God still promises the restoration of Judah back to Him.

Daniel (605-530B.C) Daniel being the author of the book is living in the reign of king Nebuchadnezzar who is the king of Babylon who conquered Judah and as a result took many inhabitants of Judah as captives, Daniel is among them. The book records the visions and the prophecies shown of him. There is the story of the fiery furnace and that of the lion's den which both cases victory depicts of the salvation which Christ would be bringing to the world. In Daniels' vision of the end times, he is shown how kingdoms and rulers would reign one after the other till God would do away all those kingdoms and finally establish an everlasting kingdom. The lesson to be learnt from Shadrach, Meshack and Abednego clearly shows how those who choose to stand firm for what is right will always emerge victorious.

Ezekiel (593-570B.C), Prophet Ezekiel writes this book during the Babylonian captivity of the Jews. He ministered to the generation of his time who were exceedingly sinful and were living in hopelessness. Through his prophetic ministry, he works forward into encouraging immediate repentance. In Babylon God put His word in Ezekiel for His people. His message taught that, God works through human messengers, though people may go through defeat and despair, they still need to affirm God's sovereignty. God's word also never fails and He expects people to worship Him everywhere. Finally, God's kingdom will soon come.

Nahum (593- 570B.C) The author of the book is Nahum whose name means a

consoler in Hebrew language. God had already commanded Jonah to preach of repentance 150 years back. Nahum's mission was to tell the people of Judah to never despair as God had already pronounced judgment on the Assyrians on the things they had done brutally.

Haggai (520B.C), Prophet Haggai sought to put a challenge on the people of God with regard to their priorities. He asked the people back to reverencing and glorifying God by the way of building the temple though working against local and official oppositions. The book of Haggai acts as a reminder of the people of the problems faced and how they trusted in God and the way they were provided with their needs.

Zechariah (520-518B.C), Prophet Zechariah is emphasizing that God is using the prophets in order to teach, give warning and as well give correction. Unfortunately they refused to take heed and listen to the warning. As a result, God brought punishment upon them. The book also gives evidence of the fact that, some prophecy would also be corrupted. It was during his time that prophecy is falling under a lot of disfavor among the Jews. The book closes with the clear message about the coming Messiah who would come and dwell in the midst of the people.

Joel (500B.C). Prophet Joel is the author of the book which is in a time when Judah is inhabited by locusts which destroys everything. The prophet symbolically describes those locusts as the vast army of human marching through the land. This is to mean that, there was a judgment coming upon people due to their sins.

Obadiah (500B.C). This is the shortest book of the old testament which has only 21 verses and written by prophet Obadiah. This prophet uses his opportunity in order to condemn Edom for the sins against both Israel and God. The division of the Edomites to forbid the Israel during the exodus has lead to

the quarrel between brothers for over 1000 years.

Malachi (433B.C): Prophet Malachi wrote this last book of the Old Testament which was an oracle. It is a warning to the people to shun their evil ways and get back to God. As the testament closes, God pronounces of His justice and the promises of the final restoration through the coming Messiah.

