

SHOWNOTES

Podcast Episode: 5th of 8 in Mini-Series 8

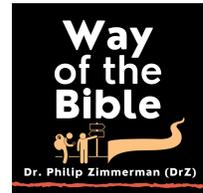
Episode #061

Minor Prophets Part 1 | Hosea to Micah

Mini-Series 8

Major and Minor Prophets

Isaiah to Malachi



Welcome to Episode #061 of Way of the Bible podcast. This is our fifth of eight episodes in our mini-series entitled, Major and Minor Prophets | Isaiah to Malachi. On this episode we're going to look at the first six books of the minor prophets, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, and Micah. These prophets prophesied to the Northern Kingdom of Israel, the Southern Kingdom of Judah, and several of the surrounding nations in the times of the Assyrian invasion of the north and the Babylonian conquest to the south.

The Assyrian invasion was one of destruction to the uttermost of the northern kingdom with remnant survivors dispersed throughout the Assyrian empire. The Babylonians invaded and conquered Judah in stages, taking captive into exile remnant survivors of each stage back to Babylon. Israel's vassal kings kept breaking their agreements with the Babylonians eventually forcing a massive offensive that sacked Jerusalem and leveled the temple.

The minor prophets all address coming judgment of God because of wickedness, idolatry, and apostasy. Some of the minor prophets also speak of a coming day of the LORD's vengeance against the whole world such as never has been seen or will again be seen in the future. While some of these prophecies may reflect the Assyrian or Babylonian invasions to a point, these prophecies also indicate there is a judgment yet to come on a global scale.

What we learned in Daniel was the promised land was to be ruled over by gentile nations until the fulness of wickedness of the gentile nations had been reached. At this time God would return with a final global judgment and reestablish Israel in their promised land.

Given we're covering six individual books on one episode, we'll not going to linger long in any one book. This overview is to give you a taste of what these books contain, and to perhaps encourage you to read these books for yourself. **Psalms 34:8** – *Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!*

When you read these books you will see Western culture has reached the same pinnacle of worldliness, idolatry, and apostasy as the northern and southern kingdoms of Israel. Excess wealth of some with no end in sight, 21st century military might, and loss of even obligatory Christian religious practices. While we see the world enclosing around us with its sex, drugs, and rock and roll 24/7 and opiates for the masses, we also see a shift toward totalitarian control on a global scale.

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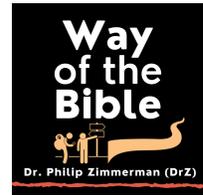
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Are we now in a slide toward a similar judgment by God which he rendered on the apostate and idolatrous Israelites? Let's get started and see

Hosea was a prophet in the northern kingdom of Israel during the reign of the last six king's of Israel from Zechariah to Hosea coinciding with the time of the Assyrian invasion. Little is known of Hosea outside of the text. He was the son of Beerī, the husband of Gomer, and fathered three children (two sons and a daughter). Hosea's message is predominately aimed at the sins of the northern kingdom of Israel, but their idolatry and apostasy that has flowed into and infected Judah is also addressed.

Hosea 1:2-3 – *When the LORD first spoke through Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea, “Go, take to yourself a wife of whoredom and have children of whoredom, for the land commits great whoredom by forsaking the LORD.”* 3 *So he went and took Gomer, the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. After which she conceived of him a son and another daughter. With each child, God had Hosea assign their respective names: Jezreel (God was going to put an end of the kingdom for the sins of Jezreel); No Mercy (God would have no mercy on Israel and would not forgive them, but he would have mercy on Judah and save them); Not My People (you are not my people, and I am not your God).*

Immediately following that, God has a promise. **Hosea 1:10-11** – *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, “You are not my people,” it shall be said to them, “Children^[fn] of the living God.”* 11 *And the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint for themselves one head. And they shall go up from the land, for great shall be the day of Jezreel.*

Hosea then goes on to describe Israel's unfaithfulness to God and their coming judgment. Once the judgment is rendered, God will extend mercy to Israel. **Hosea 2:16-23** – *“And in that day, declares the LORD, you will call me ‘My Husband,’ and no longer will you call me ‘My Baal.’* 17 *For I will remove the names of the Baals from her mouth, and they shall be remembered by name no more. 18 And I will make for them a covenant on that day with the beasts of the field, the birds of the heavens, and the creeping things of the ground. And I will abolish^[fn] the bow, the sword, and war from the land, and I will make you lie down in safety. 19 And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. 20 I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the LORD. 21 “And in that day I will answer, declares the LORD, I will answer the heavens, and they shall answer the earth, 22 and the earth shall*

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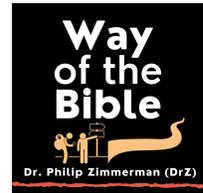
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answer the grain, the wine, and the oil, and they shall answer Jezreel, 23 and I will sow her for myself in the land. And I will have mercy on No Mercy, and I will say to Not My People, 'You are my people'; and he shall say, 'You are my God.'"

God then has Hosea buy back his adulterous wife and tells her she has to dwell with him away from her adulteries. In the same way, Israel will dwell away from her relationship with God for a long season. **Hosea 3:5** – *Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.*

In Hosea Chapter 4 is a passage that indicates judgement always starts with the shepherds of the sheep. **Hosea 4:1-6** – *Hear the word of the LORD, O children of Israel, for the LORD has a controversy with the inhabitants of the land. There is no faithfulness or steadfast love, and no knowledge of God in the land; 2 there is swearing, lying, murder, stealing, and committing adultery; they break all bounds, and bloodshed follows bloodshed. 3 Therefore the land mourns, and all who dwell in it languish, and also the beasts of the field and the birds of the heavens, and even the fish of the sea are taken away. 4 Yet let no one contend, and let none accuse, for with you is my contention, O priest. 5 You shall stumble by day; the prophet also shall stumble with you by night; and I will destroy your mother. 6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.*

Hosea 6:5-7 – *What shall I do with you, O Ephraim? What shall I do with you, O Judah? Your love is like a morning cloud, like the dew that goes early away. 5 Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets; I have slain them by the words of my mouth, and my judgment goes forth as the light. 6 For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice, the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings. 7 But like Adam they transgressed the covenant; there they dealt faithlessly with me.*

The words of judgment spoken by the prophets of God would be fulfilled as spoken. And as light reveals what's in the dark, so God's judgment shall destroy the works of darkness.

Hosea 8:7 – *For they sow the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind.*

Hosea 10:11-15 *Ephraim was a trained calf that loved to thresh, and I spared her fair neck; but I will put Ephraim to the yoke; Judah must plow; Jacob must harrow for himself. 12 Sow for yourselves righteousness; reap steadfast love; break up your fallow ground, for*

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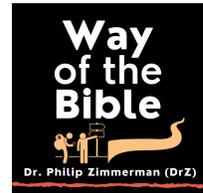
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it is the time to seek the LORD, that he may come and rain righteousness upon you. 13 You have plowed iniquity; you have reaped injustice; you have eaten the fruit of lies. Because you have trusted in your own way and in the multitude of your warriors, 14 therefore the tumult of war shall arise among your people, and all your fortresses shall be destroyed, as Shalman destroyed Beth-arbel on the day of battle; mothers were dashed in pieces with their children. 15 Thus it shall be done to you, O Bethel, because of your great evil. At dawn the king of Israel shall be utterly cut off.

Hosea 11:8-12 - *How can I give you up, O Ephraim? How can I hand you over, O Israel? How can I make you like Admah? How can I treat you like Zeboïim? My heart recoils within me; my compassion grows warm and tender. 9 I will not execute my burning anger; I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not a man, the Holy One in your midst, and I will not come in wrath. 10 They shall go after the LORD; he will roar like a lion; when he roars, his children shall come trembling from the west; 11 they shall come trembling like birds from Egypt, and like doves from the land of Assyria, and I will return them to their homes, declares the LORD. 12 Ephraim has surrounded me with lies, and the house of Israel with deceit, but Judah still walks with God and is faithful to the Holy One.*

Hosea 14:4-9 – *I will heal their apostasy; I will love them freely, for my anger has turned from them. 5 I will be like the dew to Israel; he shall blossom like the lily; he shall take root like the trees of Lebanon; 6 his shoots shall spread out; his beauty shall be like the olive, and his fragrance like Lebanon. 7 They shall return and dwell beneath my shadow; they shall flourish like the grain; they shall blossom like the vine; their fame shall be like the wine of Lebanon. 8 O Ephraim, what have I to do with idols? It is I who answer and look after you. I am like an evergreen cypress; from me comes your fruit. 9 Whoever is wise, let him understand these things; whoever is discerning, let him know them; for the ways of the LORD are right, and the upright walk in them, but transgressors stumble in them.*

Next we'll look at the three chapter book of Joel who was a prophet to the southern kingdom of Judea. Joel prophesied around the time of the first exiles being taken into captivity to Babylon to the fall of Jerusalem. He has a lot to say about the day of the Lord and the judgment of the nations where we'll have most of our focus today. Both of which have not yet come.

Joel 1:15 - *Alas for the day! For the day of the LORD is near, and as destruction from the Almighty it comes.*

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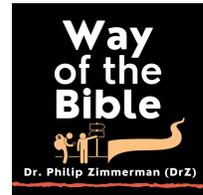
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Joel 2:1-11 - Blow a trumpet in Zion; sound an alarm on my holy mountain! Let all the inhabitants of the land tremble, for the day of the LORD is coming; it is near, 2 a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness! Like blackness there is spread upon the mountains a great and powerful people; their like has never been before, nor will be again after them through the years of all generations. 3 Fire devours before them, and behind them a flame burns. The land is like the garden of Eden before them, but behind them a desolate wilderness, and nothing escapes them. 4 Their appearance is like the appearance of horses, and like war horses they run. 5 As with the rumbling of chariots, they leap on the tops of the mountains, like the crackling of a flame of fire devouring the stubble, like a powerful army drawn up for battle. 6 Before them peoples are in anguish; all faces grow pale. 7 Like warriors they charge; like soldiers they scale the wall. They march each on his way; they do not swerve from their paths. 8 They do not jostle one another; each marches in his path; they burst through the weapons and are not halted. 9 They leap upon the city, they run upon the walls, they climb up into the houses, they enter through the windows like a thief. 10 The earth quakes before them; the heavens tremble. The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. 11 The LORD utters his voice before his army, for his camp is exceedingly great; he who executes his word is powerful. For the day of the LORD is great and very awesome; who can endure it?

There are many who have studied this text with other texts we'll look at in another mini-series who believe this invasion on the day of the LORD is associated with the great tribulation. The creatures/soldiers that Joel describes fit the descriptions of demonic spiritual creatures in other texts concerning the great tribulation. Joel encourages the people to repent and return to the Lord as he will have pity and restore them.

Joel 2:25-27 – I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent among you. 26 “You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the LORD your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. 27 You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I am the LORD your God and there is none else. And my people shall never again be put to shame.

Joel 2:28-32 – And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions. 29 Even on the male and female servants in those days I will pour out my Spirit. 30 “And I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and columns of smoke. 31 The sun shall be turned to darkness, and the moon to

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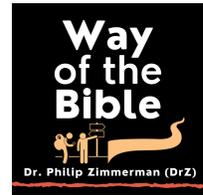
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blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. 32 And it shall come to pass that everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be those who escape, as the LORD has said, and among the survivors shall be those whom the LORD calls.

Peter quotes this passage in the book of Acts to explain the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost. It will pour out once again upon the all people of Israel just before the return of Jesus.

Joel 3:1-21 - *For behold, in those days and at that time, when I restore the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem, 2 I will gather all the nations and bring them down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat. And I will enter into judgment with them there, on behalf of my people and my heritage Israel, because they have scattered them among the nations and have divided up my land, 3 and have cast lots for my people, and have traded a boy for a prostitute, and have sold a girl for wine and have drunk it. 4 "What are you to me, O Tyre and Sidon, and all the regions of Philistia? Are you paying me back for something? If you are paying me back, I will return your payment on your own head swiftly and speedily. 5 For you have taken my silver and my gold, and have carried my rich treasures into your temples. 6 You have sold the people of Judah and Jerusalem to the Greeks in order to remove them far from their own border. 7 Behold, I will stir them up from the place to which you have sold them, and I will return your payment on your own head. 8 I will sell your sons and your daughters into the hand of the people of Judah, and they will sell them to the Sabeans, to a nation far away, for the LORD has spoken." 9 Proclaim this among the nations: Consecrate for war; stir up the mighty men. Let all the men of war draw near; let them come up. 10 Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruning hooks into spears; let the weak say, "I am a warrior." 11 Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, and gather yourselves there. Bring down your warriors, O LORD. 12 Let the nations stir themselves up and come up to the Valley of Jehoshaphat; for there I will sit to judge all the surrounding nations. 13 Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Go in, tread, for the winepress is full. The vats overflow, for their evil is great. 14 Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. 15 The sun and the moon are darkened, and the stars withdraw their shining. 16 The LORD roars from Zion, and utters his voice from Jerusalem, and the heavens and the earth quake. But the LORD is a refuge to his people, a stronghold to the people of Israel.*

17 "So you shall know that I am the LORD your God, who dwells in Zion, my holy mountain. And Jerusalem shall be holy, and strangers shall never again pass through it. 18 "And in that day the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the

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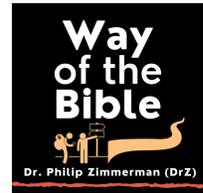
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streambeds of Judah shall flow with water; and a fountain shall come forth from the house of the LORD and water the Valley of Shittim. 19 "Egypt shall become a desolation and Edom a desolate wilderness, for the violence done to the people of Judah, because they have shed innocent blood in their land. 20 But Judah shall be inhabited forever, and Jerusalem to all generations. 21 I will avenge their blood, blood I have not avenged, for the LORD dwells in Zion."

We'll revisit this entire section on another mini-series. It has a lot of details of the coming global battle led by the anti-Christ to destroy Israel in their land. Jesus comes to their rescue after which he established his kingdom on earth.

Next we'll look at the book of Amos. Amos was from Judah and prophesied during the reign of King Uzziah of Judah. He was a contemporary with Joel and Jonah and just before Hosea, Micah, and Isaiah. He prophesied in the northern kingdom of Israel regarding God's coming judgments on the surrounding nations and in the northern kingdom itself. Economic riches, military might, and exuberant pride of the northern and southern kingdoms were near their pinnacle as well as idolatry, materialism, immorality, and injustice. Performing obligatory religious practices God required to check the boxes while pursuing full stride a seemingly endless euphoria found in sex, drugs, and rock and roll 24/7.

Amos 2:4-16 – *Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Judah, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they have rejected the law of the LORD, and have not kept his statutes, but their lies have led them astray, those after which their fathers walked. 5 So I will send a fire upon Judah, and it shall devour the strongholds of Jerusalem." 6 Thus says the LORD: "For three transgressions of Israel, and for four, I will not revoke the punishment, because they sell the righteous for silver, and the needy for a pair of sandals—7 those who trample the head of the poor into the dust of the earth and turn aside the way of the afflicted; a man and his father go in to the same girl, so that my holy name is profaned; 8 they lay themselves down beside every altar on garments taken in pledge, and in the house of their God they drink the wine of those who have been fined. 9 "Yet it was I who destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars and who was as strong as the oaks; I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath. 10 Also it was I who brought you up out of the land of Egypt and led you forty years in the wilderness, to possess the land of the Amorite. 11 And I raised up some of your sons for prophets, and some of your young men for Nazirites. Is it not indeed so, O people of Israel?" declares the LORD. 12 "But you made the Nazirites drink wine, and commanded the prophets, saying, 'You shall not prophesy.' 13 "Behold, I will press you*

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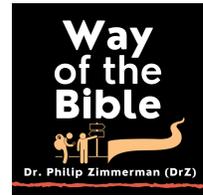
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down in your place, as a cart full of sheaves presses down. 14 Flight shall perish from the swift, and the strong shall not retain his strength, nor shall the mighty save his life; 15 he who handles the bow shall not stand, and he who is swift of foot shall not save himself, nor shall he who rides the horse save his life; 16 and he who is stout of heart among the mighty shall flee away naked in that day," declares the LORD.

Amos 5:1-17 – Hear this word that I take up over you in lamentation, O house of Israel: 2 "Fallen, no more to rise, is the virgin Israel; forsaken on her land, with none to raise her up." 3 For thus says the Lord GOD: "The city that went out a thousand shall have a hundred left, and that which went out a hundred shall have ten left to the house of Israel." 4 For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel: "Seek me and live; 5 but do not seek Bethel, and do not enter into Gilgal or cross over to Beersheba; for Gilgal shall surely go into exile, and Bethel shall come to nothing." 6 Seek the LORD and live, lest he break out like fire in the house of Joseph, and it devour, with none to quench it for Bethel, 7 O you who turn justice to wormwood and cast down righteousness to the earth! 8 He who made the Pleiades and Orion, and turns deep darkness into the morning and darkens the day into night, who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out on the surface of the earth, the LORD is his name; 9 who makes destruction flash forth against the strong, so that destruction comes upon the fortress. 10 They hate him who reproves in the gate, and they abhor him who speaks the truth. 11 Therefore because you trample on the poor and you exact taxes of grain from him, you have built houses of hewn stone, but you shall not dwell in them; you have planted pleasant vineyards, but you shall not drink their wine. 12 For I know how many are your transgressions and how great are your sins—you who afflict the righteous, who take a bribe, and turn aside the needy in the gate. 13 Therefore he who is prudent will keep silent in such a time, for it is an evil time. 14 Seek good, and not evil, that you may live; and so the LORD, the God of hosts, will be with you, as you have said. 15 Hate evil, and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the LORD, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph. 16 Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of hosts, the Lord: "In all the squares there shall be wailing, and in all the streets they shall say, 'Alas! Alas!' They shall call the farmers to mourning and to wailing those who are skilled in lamentation, 17 and in all vineyards there shall be wailing, for I will pass through your midst," says the LORD. Let Justice Roll Down 18 Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! Why would you have the day of the LORD? It is darkness, and not light, 19 as if a man fled from a lion, and a bear met him, or went into the house and leaned his hand against the wall, and a serpent bit him. 20 Is not the day of the LORD darkness, and not light, and gloom with no brightness in it? 21 "I hate, I despise your feasts, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. 22 Even though you offer me your burnt

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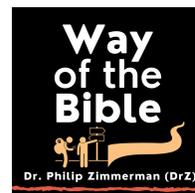
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offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the peace offerings of your fattened animals, I will not look upon them. 23 Take away from me the noise of your songs; to the melody of your harps I will not listen. 24 But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. 25 "Did you bring to me sacrifices and offerings during the forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel? 26 You shall take up Sikkuth your king, and Kiyyun your star-god—your images that you made for yourselves, 27 and I will send you into exile beyond Damascus," says the LORD, whose name is the God of hosts.

Amos 7:8-9 – *"Behold, I am setting a plumb line in the midst of my people Israel; I will never again pass by them; 9 the high places of Isaac shall be made desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword."*

Amos 9:1-15 – *I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said: "Strike the capitals until the thresholds shake, and shatter them on the heads of all the people; and those who are left of them I will kill with the sword; not one of them shall flee away; not one of them shall escape. 2 "If they dig into Sheol, from there shall my hand take them; if they climb up to heaven, from there I will bring them down. 3 If they hide themselves on the top of Carmel, from there I will search them out and take them; and if they hide from my sight at the bottom of the sea, there I will command the serpent, and it shall bite them. 4 And if they go into captivity before their enemies, there I will command the sword, and it shall kill them; and I will fix my eyes upon them for evil and not for good." 5 The Lord GOD of hosts, he who touches the earth and it melts, and all who dwell in it mourn, and all of it rises like the Nile, and sinks again, like the Nile of Egypt; 6 who builds his upper chambers in the heavens and founds his vault upon the earth; who calls for the waters of the sea and pours them out upon the surface of the earth—the LORD is his name. 7 "Are you not like the Cushites to me, O people of Israel?" declares the LORD. "Did I not bring up Israel from the land of Egypt, and the Philistines from Caphtor and the Syrians from Kir? 8 Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from the surface of the ground, except that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob," declares the LORD. 9 "For behold, I will command, and shake the house of Israel among all the nations as one shakes with a sieve, but no pebble shall fall to the earth. 10 All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, who say, 'Disaster shall not overtake or meet us.' 11 "In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, 12 that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name," declares the LORD who does this. 13 "Behold, the days are coming," declares the LORD, "when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed;*

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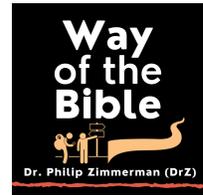
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the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. 14 I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. 15 I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them," says the LORD your God.

Next is the one chapter book of Obadiah who was likely a prophet in Judah who wrote during the time of Jerusalem's destruction by Babylon. The book is written against Edom who the descendants of Esau, Jacob's twin brother. They celebrated the fall of Jerusalem and may have helped the Babylonians do their worst.

Obadiah 15-21 – *For the day of the LORD is near upon all the nations. As you have done, it shall be done to you; your deeds shall return on your own head. 16 For as you have drunk on my holy mountain, so all the nations shall drink continually; they shall drink and swallow, and shall be as though they had never been. 17 But in Mount Zion there shall be those who escape, and it shall be holy, and the house of Jacob shall possess their own possessions. 18 The house of Jacob shall be a fire, and the house of Joseph a flame, and the house of Esau stubble; they shall burn them and consume them, and there shall be no survivor for the house of Esau, for the LORD has spoken. 19 Those of the Negeb shall possess Mount Esau, and those of the Shephelah shall possess the land of the Philistines; they shall possess the land of Ephraim and the land of Samaria, and Benjamin shall possess Gilead. 20 The exiles of this host of the people of Israel shall possess the land of the Canaanites as far as Zarephath, and the exiles of Jerusalem who are in Sepharad shall possess the cities of the Negeb. 21 Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.*

Next is likely the most familiar of the minor prophets, Jonah. Jonah prophesied in the northern kingdom during the time of king Jeroboam II of Israel. He lived just after the time of prophet Elisha and just prior to Amos and Hosea. In this book God demonstrates his mercy to Jonah and to perhaps the wickedest kingdom of its day, Nineveh.

When told to prophesy in Nineveh, Jonah ran in the opposite direction and hoped on a ship to Tarshish. That journey had him suggest being thrown into the sea to stop a raging storm that was about to sink the ship he was on. Immediately upon being thrown into the sea the storm stopped, which had the sailors worshiping God. Jonah on the other hand was swallowed by a large fish.

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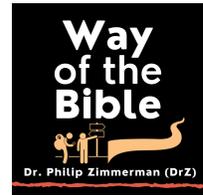
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He was in the belly of the fish for three days and three nights, likely dead, before being spewed out on dry land after praying a prayer. I'll get to the prayer in a moment. The only sign Jesus told the religious elite who accused him of casting out demons by Beelzebub (the devil) that the only sign he'd give them was the sign of Jonah. **Matthew 12:40** - *For just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.* Jesus was dead in the tomb so it can be assumed that Jonah also was dead in the fish.

Thus the prayer Jonah prayed was while he was in Sheol after his death. **Jonah 2:1-10** - *Then Jonah prayed to the LORD his God from the belly of the fish, 2 saying, "I called out to the LORD, out of my distress, and he answered me; out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice. 3 For you cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, and the flood surrounded me; all your waves and your billows passed over me. 4 Then I said, 'I am driven away from your sight; yet I shall again look upon your holy temple.' 5 The waters closed in over me to take my life; the deep surrounded me; weeds were wrapped about my head 6 at the roots of the mountains. I went down to the land whose bars closed upon me forever; yet you brought up my life from the pit, O LORD my God. 7 When my life was fainting away, I remembered the LORD, and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple. 8 Those who pay regard to vain idols forsake their hope of steadfast love. 9 But I with the voice of thanksgiving will sacrifice to you; what I have vowed I will pay. Salvation belongs to the LORD!" 10 And the LORD spoke to the fish, and it vomited Jonah out upon the dry land.*

Jonah 3:1-5 - *Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, 2 "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you." 3 So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. 4 Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" 5 And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.*

Immediately when the king of Nineveh heard the proclamation he took off his robe, covered himself in sackcloth and sat in ashes. **Jonah 3:7-10** - *And he issued a proclamation and published through Nineveh, "By the decree of the king and his nobles: Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything. Let them not feed or drink water, 8 but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them call out mightily to God. Let everyone turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who knows? God may turn and relent and turn from his fierce anger, so that we may not*

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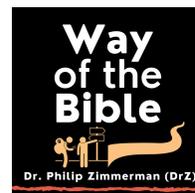
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perish." 10 When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

Jonah was totally dismayed and told God that's why he fled toward Tarshish as he knew God was gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relenting from disaster. Jonah asked that God take his life that day, as it was better to die than live. Jonah had just delivered a message that made the most wicked city of that day to repent meaning they wouldn't be punished for all the atrocities they'd inflicted upon the Israelites in the past. God gave Jonah an example with a plant of shade. After the example God noted that Johan pitied the plant that died which he didn't plant or tend. God responded in Jonah 4:11 – *And should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left, and also much cattle?"*

Interesting sidebar. The city of Nineveh is the capital of the Assyrian empire on the bank of the Tigris river. After several hundred years of conquest and gaining control of vast territories of the region, historical records show that Nineveh stopped its conquest activities for about 40 years. After which it restarted and made their last conquest of Egypt through the land of Israel. Sixty years later they no longer existed as a nation.

And now to our sixth book, Micah. **Micah 1:1** – *The word of the LORD that came to Micah of Moresheth in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem. Micah was a contemporary of Hosea, Amos, Isaiah, and Jonah, and he's mentioned in Jeremiah 26:18. He prophesied predominately regarding the southern kingdom's idolatry and immorality, but also spoke against the wickedness of the northern kingdom as well.*

Micah 3:9-12 – *Hear this, you heads of the house of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who detest justice and make crooked all that is straight, 10 who build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity. 11 Its heads give judgment for a bribe; its priests teach for a price; its prophets practice divination for money; yet they lean on the LORD and say, "Is not the LORD in the midst of us? No disaster shall come upon us." 12 Therefore because of you Zion shall be plowed as a field; Jerusalem shall become a heap of ruins, and the mountain of the house a wooded height.*

You've heard me mention the LORD's new temple is going to be on the highest mountain in the world near Jerusalem. One of the passages for this comes from **Micah 4:1-5** – *It shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be*

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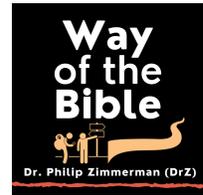
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established as the highest of the mountains, and it shall be lifted up above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it, 2 and many nations shall come, and say: "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may teach us his ways and that we may walk in his paths." for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 3 He shall judge between many peoples, and shall decide disputes for strong nations far away; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore; 4 but they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken. 5 For all the peoples walk each in the name of its god, but we will walk in the name of the LORD our God forever and ever.

You've also heard me mention that Israel will be the chief of all nations. One of the passages for this claim comes from **Micah 4:6-13** – *In that day, declares the LORD, I will assemble the lame and gather those who have been driven away and those whom I have afflicted; 7 and the lame I will make the remnant, and those who were cast off, a strong nation; and the LORD will reign over them in Mount Zion from this time forth and forevermore. 8 And you, O tower of the flock, hill of the daughter of Zion to you shall it come, the former dominion shall come, kingship for the daughter of Jerusalem. 9 Now why do you cry aloud? Is there no king in you? Has your counselor perished, that pain seized you like a woman in labor? 10 Writhe and groan, O daughter of Zion, like a woman in labor, for now you shall go out from the city and dwell in the open country; you shall go to Babylon. There you shall be rescued; there the LORD will redeem you from the hand of your enemies. 11 Now many nations are assembled against you, saying, "Let her be defiled, and let our eyes gaze upon Zion." 12 But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD; they do not understand his plan, that he has gathered them as sheaves to the threshing floor. 13 Arise and thresh, O daughter of Zion, for I will make your horn iron, and I will make your hoofs bronze; you shall beat in pieces many peoples; and shall devote their gain to the LORD, their wealth to the Lord of the whole earth.*

I've often wondered the significance of Jesus being born in Bethlehem, apart from just being a geographic location. Then I read **Micah 5:1-5** – *Now muster your troops, O daughter of troops; siege is laid against us; with a rod they strike the judge of Israel on the cheek. 2 But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days. 3 Therefore he shall give them up until the time when she who is in labor has given birth; then the rest of his brothers shall return to the people of Israel. 4 And he shall stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD,*

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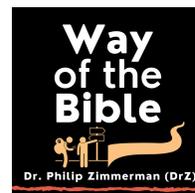
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in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. 5 And he shall be their peace.

The next section of chapter 5, immediately after where we just left off, many scholars believe may be identifying the nationality of the coming world leader. **Micah 5:5-6** – *When the Assyrian comes into our land and treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men; 6 they shall shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod at its entrances; and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian when he comes into our land and treads within our border. and treads in our palaces, then we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men; 6 they shall shepherd the land of Assyria with the sword, and the land of Nimrod at its entrances; and he shall deliver us from the Assyrian when he comes into our land and treads within our border.*

The hope of Israel after the great tribulation will be realized as indicated in **Michah 7:11-20** – *A day for the building of your walls! In that day the boundary shall be far extended. 12 In that day they will come to you, from Assyria and the cities of Egypt, and from Egypt to the River, from sea to sea and from mountain to mountain. 13 But the earth will be desolate because of its inhabitants, for the fruit of their deeds. 14 Shepherd your people with your staff, the flock of your inheritance, who dwell alone in a forest in the midst of a garden land; let them graze in Bashan and Gilead as in the days of old. 15 As in the days when you came out of the land of Egypt, I will show them marvelous things. 16 The nations shall see and be ashamed of all their might; they shall lay their hands on their mouths; their ears shall be deaf; 17 they shall lick the dust like a serpent, like the crawling things of the earth; they shall come trembling out of their strongholds; they shall turn in dread to the LORD our God, and they shall be in fear of you. 18 Who is a God like you, pardoning iniquity and passing over transgression for the remnant of his inheritance? He does not retain his anger forever, because he delights in steadfast love. 19 He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea. 20 You will show faithfulness to Jacob and steadfast love to Abraham, as you have sworn to our fathers from the days of old.*

And with that, we end our review of the first half of books by the minor prophets. When you read these prophets you will see what God saw about the people in both the northern and southern kingdoms. Their pretense of being totally enmeshed in the world and its gods and yet still considering themselves in good religious standing with God for obligatory sacrifices, offerings, and festival celebrations. Micah puts it simply this way, **Micah 6:8** – *He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the LORD require of*

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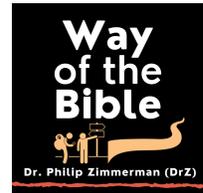
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you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? You will see in all the prophetic texts, this was a foreign thought in all Israel.

A key theme you see running through these minor prophets is the failure of the kings, the priests, and the prophets to shepherd the people in the ways of the LORD. Rather they chased the enrichment of themselves through the selling of their office duties in order to indulge and enjoy the sex, drugs, and rock and roll flowing freely for a price in the temples of the gods of the nations.

And finally, we saw how the idea of the LORD coming back to redeem his people and establish an earthly kingdom is not a one off from some random scripture. It is recorded in almost every prophetic book to make very clear. God is not finished with Israel, and he will deliver on his covenantal promises to them.

Join me on our next episode where we'll be covering the final six books of the minor prophets – Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.

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