

The Minor Prophets

I. Introduction

A. The Name "Minor Prophets"

1. What is a Prophet?

Deut 18:9-22: in place of divination, in place of direct appearance of God, prophets were to be sent to give Israel revelation of God's will; to be obeyed; false prophets to be put to death; false detected by error in prediction

Isa 44:24-28: God's control of history guarantees that His prophets' predictions will come true, while there will be errors among predictions of other "prophets"

2. What do we mean here by "minor"?

a. Not minor re/ importance as a group:

e.g., in UBS Gk NT, columns of NT citations

Isa Jer Ezk Dan M.P. (Zch)

10 3 3.5 3.5 6 1.5 = 71x

b. Minor re/ size of book:

(1) pp in ABS KJV:

Isa Jer Ezk Dan M.P. (Hos) (Zch)

46 52 47 14 40 7 8

(2) chapters in each

Isa Jer Ezk Dan M.P. (Hos) (Zch)

66 52 48 12 67 14 14

c. Not the Hebrew name anyway:

called "the Twelve"

individual names "same" as in English

B. The Order of the Minor Prophets

1. Same in English as in printed Hebrew Bibles

2. Not ordered by length, since longest books are first and next-to-last

3. Not in alphabetical order, either Hebrew or English

4. Probably an attempt at later time (when collected into single scroll) to give a chronological order; thus Hos, Amos, Jon early; Hag, Zch late; Mal prob last

II. Hosea

A. Author and Date

1. Son of Beeri; not otherwise mentioned in OT; name is common, often spelled "Hoshea," e.g., Dt 32:44
2. Superscription indicates time-period (Hos 1:1)

Kings of Judah:

Uzziah 792-739

Jotham 750-731

Ahaz 735-715

Hezekiah 715-686

Kings of Israel:

Jeroboam II 793-753

B. Historical Background

1. Religious situation

Baal worship

Worship of Jehovah w/ false elements & attitudes

Great decline in public & private morality (more on this in Amos)

2. Political situation

Jeroboam II raised Israel to greatest heights politically;

upper classes very prosperous;

no particular signs of danger from outside

Within 25 years of Jer II's death, Samaria was

destroyed and Israel captive in Mesopotamia

B. Acrostic Outline: letter and phrase for each chapter (from Barry Huddleston, *The Acrostic Bible*)

Gomer's marriage and children

Offenses of Gomer condemned

Message of second marriage

Error of Israel's ways

Rebuke of Israel's leaders

Testimony of God's love
Hopelessness of Israel's desertion
Exile unavoidable for Israel

Harlotry will be punished
Assyria will enslave Israel
Rebellion against God's love
Legal case against Israel
Overthrow of Ephraim certain
Transformation if Israel repents

C. Key Verses 3:4-5:

The sons of Israel will remain for many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, and without ephod or household idols. Afterward the sons of Israel will return and seek the LORD their God and David their king, and they will come trembling to the LORD and His goodness in the last days.

D. The Prophecy of Hosea

1. Hosea's Marriage a Picture of God & Israel (chs 1-3)

a. The problem of Hos 1:2: Real marriage or symbolic? Did Hosea know in advance?

b. Gomer and the Children

- (1) Jezreel: town in V of Jezreel
Joram & Jezebel killed there
Naboth's vineyard located there
valley is famous "Armageddon" valley
- (2) Lo-Ruhamah
explained as "not pitied"
- (3) Lo-Ammi
explained as "not my people"
- (4) Gomer
eventually deserts Hosea altogether

c. Hosea's reaction

- (1) Buys (hires?) her back (3:2)
- (2) Isolates her (3:3)
- (3) Later restores her as full wife

d. Significance for Israel (3:4-5)

2. God's Case against Israel (chs 4-10)

a. Religious disobedience (ch 4, 9:10-17)

b. Political disobedience (chs 5, 7, 8)

c. Personal disobedience (ch 6)

d. The punishment to come

(1) Invasion (ch 8)

(2) Destruction (10:1-15)

(3) Exile (9:1-9)

3. The Lord's Faithful Love (chs 11-14)

a. God's love as a father to them (11:1-11)

b. Israel's punishment for unfaithfulness (11:12-13:16)

c. Israel will repent and be restored (ch 14)

E. Lessons from Hosea

1. God's relation to His people (both OT and NT) is like that of a husband to his wife (collectively) and of a father to his children (individually).

2. While we understand (from elsewhere in Scripture) that those who are really saved will never fall away, God may indeed disown some individuals who profess to be His and divorce those groups which fall away from Him.

3. Yet God will never be unfaithful to His promises. He will one day restore a remnant of His OT people to Himself.

III. Joel

A. Author and Date

1. Author not known, other than his name and father
"Joel" (the LORD is God) is a very common OT name

2. Date is very much in doubt
 - even among conservatives range from 800-400 BC
 - no direct/indirect connection with named kings
 - refs to Philistines (3:4) suggest early date
 - refs to Greeks (3:6) suggest late
 - but neither required by context
 - position in 12 near beginning may indicate early date & there is reason to suppose locust plague mentioned would be long remembered

B. Locusts

1. What are they?
 - English popular use includes cicadas, but rather different
 - In middle east, includes several kinds of insects which look like flying grasshoppers
2. Peculiarities of locusts
 - Differ from many insects (incl cicadas) in having no "caterpillar" stage; instead all look like grasshoppers; sheds skins several times, finally developing wings
 - Have both a hermit phase and mob phase, the latter produced by crowding
3. Locust plagues
 - In mob phase, swarms may number in millions or billions (about 1/2 billion eggs cases destroyed on Cyprus in 1881), covering up to 2000 sq mi (sq 45 mi on side), flying as far as 1000 mi, sometimes thick enough to blot out sun, making a deafening racket
 - These swarms app use up food supply and begin to march to find more, sometimes completely devastating vegetation in bands many miles wide

C. The Locust Plague in Joel

1. Described in 1:2-13; 2:2-10
2. Evidence for literal locusts
 - rather than military invasion, etc.
 - emphasis on destruction of vegetation
 - no reference to killing people, sieges, captivity, etc., as accompany regular warfare
 - after "military" passages of ch 2 comes 2:25

Joel 2:25 (NIV) 'I will repay you for the years the locusts have eaten--

*the great locust and the young locust,
the other locusts and the locust swarm--
my great army that I sent among you.*

notice how 2:20 would fit this

*Joel 2:20 (NIV) `I will drive the northern army far from you,
pushing it into a parched and barren land,
with its front columns going into the eastern sea
and those in the rear into the western sea.
And its stench will go up;
its smell will rise.`
Surely he has done great things.*

3. Time of the plague

had it already come when Joel prophesied?

easy to be misled by English verb-tenses, but Hebrew tenses don't give
this information

note 1:14, day of LORD at hand; suggests that event was near but future
when Joel began to prophesy

4. Purpose of the plague

a. A day of the LORD (1:15; 2:1-2, 11)

not always eschatological, but refers to judgment on sinners

b. A call to repentance (1:13-14, 19; 2:12-19)

c. Evidence of God's activity (1:11; 2:26-27)

D. Long-Range Prophecy in Joel

1. Starts in 2:28, runs to end of book

2. A human invasion pictured, involving all surrounding nations: Tyre, Sidon,
Egypt and Edom singled out

3. Suggest locust plague with God's deliverance foreshadows this human invasion

E. Acrostic Outline

Cry to avoid judgment

Return to God's blessing

Yield to God's sovereignty

F. Key Verses 2:31-32:

The sun will be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the LORD will be delivered.

IV. Amos

A. Author and Date

1. Amos a herdsman from Tekoa (about 10 mi S of Jerusalem) (1:1); a worker with sycomore fruit (a type of fig which must be pierced to ripen properly) (7:14), but Amos prophesied in Northern Kingdom
2. Date of activity is about same as Hosea, in reigns of Uzziah (792-739), Jeroboam II (793-753); dated two years before the earthquake (date not now known, but event remembered over 200 yr later, Zech 14:5)

B. Historical Background

(recall Hosea)

C. Acrostic Outline

Judgement on Israel's neighbors
Ungodliness of Israel explained
Destruction of Israel coming
Gods' reproofs went unnoticed
Making plea for repentance
Elimination of unrighteous wealthy
Nature of God's judgments
Time ripe for judgment
Scattering and Israel's restoration

D. Key verses 5:18-20:

Alas, you who are longing for the day of the LORD, for what purpose will the day of the LORD be to you? It will be darkness and not light; as when a man flees from a lion and a bear meets him; or goes home, leans his hand against the wall, and a snake bites him. Will not the day of the LORD be darkness instead of light, even gloom with no brightness in it?

E. Prophecy against Other Nations (1:2-2:5)

1. Damascus (1:3-5) - actually Syrians
2. Gaza (1:6-8) - actually Philistines
3. Tyre (1:9-10)
4. Edom (1:11-12)
5. Ammon (1:13-15)
6. Moab (2:1-3)
7. Judah (2:4-5)

Cites certain sins of each, usually violence, treachery (but notice judgment against Judah); pictures punishment, usually fire, captivity (notice Philistines to perish)

F. Prophecy against Israel (Northern Kingdom) (2:6-6:14)

1. Starts like previous sections (2:6), but much longer (to end chap 2)
 - a. Charges against Israel (vv 6-8)
 - b. Examples of God's judgment on Amorites (9)
 - c. God's goodness rejected (9-13)
 - d. The coming judgment (14-16)
2. 2nd warning to Israel (chap 3)
 - a. God's goodness implies responsibility (1-2)
 - b. Necessary connection of cause & effect (3-6)
 - c. God will reveal judgment, then bring it (7-8)
 - d. Charges against Israel (9-10)
 - e. Resultant punishment (11-15)
3. 3rd warning (chap 4)
 - a. To wealthy Israelite women (1-3)
 - b. To outwardly religious (4-5)
 - c. Partial judgments ignored (6-11)
 - d. Total judgment now coming (12-13)
the earthquake?
4. 4th warning: call to repentance (chap 5)
 - a. Desolation of Israel pictured (1-3)
 - b. Seek God (4-17)
 - c. The day of the LORD (18-27)
5. 5th warning: contrasting futures (chap 6)
 - a. Israel's present luxury (1-6)
but compare other cities destroyed

b. Israel's coming captivity (7-14)

G. Amos' Visions (chaps 7-8)

1. Locusts (7:1-3)
2. Fire (7:4-6)
3. Plumbline (7:7-9)
4. Amaziah's objections (7:10-17)
5. Summer fruit (8:1-14)

H. Conclusion (chap 9)

1. Complete destruction of the sinful (1-10)
note verse 9, sieve picture
2. Restoration of the redeemed (11-15)

V. Obadiah

A. Authorship and Date

1. Author

about a dozen OT people named Obadiah (means "servant of of LORD")
none seems to be indentifiable with the prophet

2. Date

wide variety of opinion, from about 850 to 585 BC or later
most arguments center around finding a place in history for verse 11

B. The Land of Edom

S and mostly E of Dead Sea, extending to Arabian Desert on E; also called "Mt. Seir" because this range dominates the land
also includes Wadi el'Arabah and highlands W of Arabah and S of Judah
whole area now very desolate, but N end of Mr. Seir once wooded and relatively well-watered
King's Highway E of Dead Sea once a major trade route

C. History of the Edomites

Earliest known inhabitants of Mt. Seir were Horites (to about 1900 BC)
Esau, Jacob's older twin brother, married a Horite (Gen 36:20); his descendants

eventually conquered them and became known as the Edomites
Job may have been an Edomite (lived in Uz, a land which Lam 4:21 connects with Edom); his friend Eliphaz from Teman, one of Edom's three chief cities (with Selah [Petra?] and Bozrah)
When Israel wanted to use King's Hwy thru Edom on way to promised land, Edomites refused (Num 20:17-21)
Israelites not allowed to despise Edomites (Dt 23:7-8)
Saul fought Edomites (1 Sam 14:47)
David and Joab conquered Edomites (2 Sam 8:13; 1 Kings 11:15)
Although nearly all Edomite men killed by David, one member of royal house escaped to Egypt (1 Kings 11:14, 15ff, 25), later made trouble for Solomon
Edom revolted under Jehoram son of Jehoshaphat (c 845 BC; 2 Chron 21:8-10, 16-17). possibly aiding Philistines and Arabs in sacking Jerusalem (Obad 11?)
Edom later became part of Assyrian, then Babylonian empire; poss Obad 11 refers to Nebuchadnezzar's taking Jerusalem 587 BC
About 500 BC, Nabatean Arabs drove out Edomites, who fled into S Judah (came to be called Idumea)
After time of Maccabees, John Hyrcanus (135-105 BC) conquered Idumeans, forced them to become Jews
Later (after 40 BC) the Idumean Herods became rulers over Judea, etc.
Idumeans try to help in defense of Jerusalem about 68 AD, but refused
Disappear from history after 70 AD

D. Acrostic Outline (with only one chapter, this is subdivided for acrostic)

Edom's doom is prophesied (1-9)
Sins of the Edomites (10-14)
Accountability of all nations (15-16)
Ultimate restoration of Israel (17-21)

E. Key Verse 10:

Because of your violence to your brother Jacob, you will be covered with shame, and you will be cut off forever.

F. Obadiah's Prophecy against Edom

1. Coming Destruction of Edom (1-9)
 downfall of Selah (?) (1-4)
 city to be plundered, devastated, forsaken (5-9)
2. Charges against Edom (10-14)

3. Coming Day of the LORD (15-21)
 - judgment soon on Edom and other Gentiles (15-16)
 - deliverance of Israel (17-21a)
 - the final kingdom (21b)

G. Lessons from Obadiah

1. God judges all people, not just "His own."
2. Rejoicing at another's calamity is sin.
3. No nation on earth is invulnerable.
4. God will yet cause His people to triumph.

VI. Jonah

A. The Prophet

1. Son of Amittai (1:1; see 2 Kings 14:25)
2. From Gath-hepher (2 Kings 14:25)
 - in N Kingdom, about ½ way from Mt. Carmel to Sea of Galilee
3. Lived before fall of Nineveh (in 612 BC), during reign of Jeroboam II (793-753 BC; 2 K 14:25)

B. The City of Nineveh

1. Capital of the Assyrian empire, actually reached its greatest heights in century after Jonah
2. Reference to size of city in 3:3-4 seems to be to "Greater Nineveh," stretching 26 mi from Khorsabad to Nimrud (about 60 mi around, pop of several hundred thousand)
3. Now merely ruins, with a small village on top of one of the heaps

C. The Assyrian Empire

1. An independent kingdom by about 1700 BC, with capital at Ashur, began to conquer neighboring countries, reaching Mediterranean coast about 1100 BC.
2. Real organization of empire for conquest about 875 under Ashur-nasir-pal II

(883-859)

3. His son, Shalmaneser III (858-824) put N Kingdom under heavy tribute in 841 BC.

D. Acrostic Outline

Flight from God's presence
Intercession from within fish
Sackcloth worn in Nineveh
Human failure of Jonah

E. Key Verse 4:11:

Should I not have compassion on Nineveh, the great city, in which are more than 120,000 persons who do not know the difference between their right and left hand, as well as many animals?

F. The Prophecy of Jonah

1. Chapter One: From God

Joppa - a Mediterranean port, about 25 mi NW of Jerusalem, app a Phoenician colony
Tarshish - name is thought to be related to mining, prob ref to a city in Sardinia or Spain
Why did Jonah run? see his remark in 4:2; app didn't want God to show mercy to this cruel empire
Note examples of God's control: storm, lot, calming storm, great fish
"fish" may or may not have been a whale

2. Chapter Two: To God

Jonah's prayer: did he die?
God's answer

3. Chapter Three: With God

Only one verse giving the prophet's message
Reaction of people
note esp 3:9: who knows?

4. Chapter Four: Ahead of God

Jonah's anger (1-5)
God's answer (6-11)

G. Lessons from Jonah

1. It is a dangerous thing to stubbornly refuse God's will for your life.
2. God will use even our disobedience for His glory (but we will lose the joy and reward of it).
3. God may bring even the most unpromising to repentance.
4. God will receive even the most sinful and vicious when they repent.
5. God may postpone judgment (even when most deserved) to those who repent.
6. God is more concerned about the lost than we are.

VII. Micah

A. The Prophet

1. Name "Micah" is very common, a shortened form of Michaiah or Micayahu, meaning "Who is like God?"
2. Our prophet from Moresheth-Gath (1:1, 14), a village about 25 mi SW of Jerusalem
3. From same period as Isaiah and Hosea, but with different background
4. His prophecy was well-known over 100 years later (see Jer 26:18, citing Mic 3:12)

B. Background to His Prophecy

1. Given (1:1) in days of Jotham (739-35), Ahaz (735-15) and Hezekiah (715-687), so earlier prophecies came before fall of Samaria and Northern Kingdom (c722 BC), but after Hosea, Amos and Jonah; compare Isa 1:1
2. Now Israel (Northern Kingdom) about gone, Judah about to be reduced to one main city by Assyrians.
3. Diplomatic, political features more emphasized in Isaiah; personal, internal problems more in Micah

C. Acrostic Outline

Messages against Samaria, Jerusalem
Evils of Israel's people
Sins of Israel's leaders
Sovereign king in Zion
Introduction of Bethlehem's Messiah
Actions of injustice rebuked
Hope in God's future

D. Key Verses 5:2-5a:

But you, Bethlehem Ephratah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose campaigns are from of old, from ancient times. Therefore Israel will be abandoned until the time when she who is in labor gives birth and the rest of his brothers return to join the Israelites. He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the LORD, in the majesty of the name of the LORD his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. And he will be their peace.

E. The Prophecy of Micah

1. Chapter 1: Judgment for Sins of Israel and Judah
 - appearance of Lord (3-4)
 - sins of His people (5)
 - the judgment (6-7)
 - Micah's reaction (8-16)
2. Chaps 2 & 3: Doom for Oppressors & False Prophets
 - land grabbers (2:1-5)
 - false prophets (2:6-13)
 - leaders (3:1-7)
 - judgment on Jerusalem (3:8-12)
3. Chaps 4 & 5: Prophecies of Blessing
 - the coming kingdom (4:1-5)
 - regathering of Israel (4:6-8)
 - first, the Babylonian captivity (4:9-10)
 - Israel & her enemies (4:11-13)
 - the King (5:1-3)
 - the Kingdom (5:4-15)
4. Chaps 6 & 7: God's Lawsuit

God's 1st charge: unfaithfulness (6:1-5)
Israel's 1st reply: how please God? (5:6-7)
God's requirement (6:8)
God's 2nd charge: deceit, violence (6:9-16)
Israel's 2nd reply: confession (7:1-10)
God's blessing & charge (7:11-17)
Micah's praise (7:18-20)

G. Lessons from Micah

1. Righteousness, not religiosity, is what God requires (6:6-8).
2. In the last analysis, only God can be safely trusted (7:2-7).
3. God will pardon sin; He will keep His promises (7:18-20).
4. One is to come from Bethlehem, who will be their (and our) peace (5:2-6).

VIII. Nahum

A. Author

1. Not otherwise known
2. Name means "consolation, comfort"
3. Elkoshite (1:1) probably refers to city or tribal family, but not certainly located; some suggest he is person for whom Capernaum ("city of Nahum") named, which would put him in Galilee; others make him a descendant of Elkosh of tribe of Simeon, which would put him in SW Judah.

B. Background

1. No date given, but he predicts fall of Nineveh, which occurs in 612 BC, and speaks of fall of Thebes (No-Amon) as past (663 BC), so writing in period 663-612, probably closer to latter end (2:1, 3:14, 19).
2. Assyria, largest international empire to this time, has destroyed Northern Kingdom Israel in 722 BC, reduced Judah to a small vassal state, defeated Egypt, and used great cruelty against its opponents.

C. Acrostic Outline

God's character and judgment
Overthrow of Nineveh imminent
Details of Nineveh's judgment

D. Key Verse 3:19:

Nothing can heal your wound, [O Nineveh]; your injury is fatal. Everyone who hears the news about you claps his hands at your fall, for who has not felt your endless cruelty?

E. The Prophecy of Nahum

1. Chapter One: The God of Israel

Burden = prophecy against (1)
God's nature (1-7)
 jealous (2)
 slow to anger (3)
 powerful (3-6)
 good (7)
God's action (8-15)

2. Chapter 2: The Siege and Fall of Nineveh

The Siege (1-6)
 call to defend selves (1)
 what God did to Israel (2)
 the invaders (3)
 the defense (4-5)
 gate opened (6)
The Fall (7-13)
 captivity & plunder (7-9)
 desolation (10-13)

3. Chapter 3: Last Warning

Woe to Nineveh (1-7)
Example of No-Amon (8-10)
Hopelessness of Situation (11-19)

F. Lessons from Nahum

1. God does act in human history to avenge sin, even that of unbelievers.
2. Who can stand before his indignation? (1:6)
3. God hates lying, stealing, adultery, occultism, slavery, selfishness.

IX. Habakkuk

A. Author

1. not otherwise known
2. note the title "prophet," unique among minor prophets
3. meaning of name obscure (embracer?), probably not significant

B. Date

predates Babylonian conquest (605 BC), but probably after 612

C. Acrostic Outline

Why is evil unpunished
Haughty Chaldea will fall
Yielding to God's sovereignty

D. Key Verses 3:17-19:

Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior. The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights.

E. The Prophecy of Habakkuk

1. Habakkuk's First Complaint (1:1-4)
"God, why don't you punish Judah for their disobedience?"
2. God's Answer (1:5-11)
"I am about to do so. I will use the Babylonians to do it."
3. Habakkuk's Second Complaint (1:12-2:1)
"God, how can you use **them**? They are worse than the Jews!"
4. God's Answer (2:2-20)
"I will protect the righteous and punish the sinner."
Five woes against:
 agression (6-8)
 covetousness (9-11)

violence (12-14)
inhumanity (15-17)
idolatry (18-20)

5. Habakkuk's Prayer (chapter 3)
 - For mercy (2)
 - The fearfulness of the LORD (3-15)
 - Habakkuk's resolve (16-19)

F. Lessons from Habakkuk

1. We cannot understand the righteousness of all God's acts in this life; we must trust Him.
2. We should not expect things to go easy with us should God judge our nation; but we should have Job's attitude, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."

X. Zephaniah

A. Author and Date

1. Name occurs twice elsewhere in OT (1 Chr 6:36 and Jer 21:1), but probably neither is our prophet; fourth generation descendant of King Hezekiah
2. Time of prophecy given in 1:1 as reign of Josiah (640-609 BC); lived at time of Jeremiah, Nahum, Habakkuk

B. Historical Background

1. The Last Kings of Judah
 - Hezekiah (715-686)
 - Manasseh (697-642)
 - Amon (642-640)
 - Josiah (640-609)
 - Jehoahaz (609)
 - Jehoiakim (609-598)
 - Jehoiachin (598-597)
 - Zedekiah (597-586)
2. The Reign of Manasseh - great wickedness
 - 2 Kings 21:1-18
 - 2 Chr 33:1-20

3. The Reign of Josiah - great (but shallow?) revival
2 Kings 22-23
2 Chr 34-35

C. Acrostic Outline

Judah's day of wrath
Enemies of Judah punished
Wrath and coming restoration

D. Key Verse 1:12

At that time I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and punish those who are complacent, who are like wine left on its dregs, who think "The LORD will do nothing, either good or bad."

E. The Prophecy of Zephaniah

1. Warning of Judgment on Jerusalem (chap 1)
 - destruction universal (2-4a)
 - destruction of false worship (4b-6)
 - Malcham = Molech, god worshiped w/ child sacrifice
 - day of LORD (7-18)
 - punishment on royalty, merchants, complacent
 - day of gloom
2. Call to Repentance (2:1-3)
 - seek LORD that you may be sheltered
3. Judgment on Surrounding Nations (2:4-15)
 - Philistia (4-7)
 - Ammon/Moab (8-11)
 - Ethiopia (12)
 - Assyria (13-15)
4. Jerusalem Present and Future (chap 3)
 - a. Present (1-7)
 - character (1-2)
 - classes (3-4)
 - warnings ignored (5-7)
 - b. Future
 - therefore wait (8)

remnant regathered (9-13)
praise for God's blessing (14-20)

F. Lessons from Zephaniah

1. Again, God intervenes in history to punish both the people of God and the heathen for disobedience.
2. He may protect His people in such times, but He may allow them to suffer with the wicked.
3. In any case, His people need not fear His work is "going down the drain." God will bring victory in His time.
4. Those who trust Him can be comforted even in the worst circumstances by looking beyond.

XI. Haggai

A. Author and Date

1. Haggai mentioned in Ezra 5:1 and 6:14.
2. Several dates given in book itself, all in the 2nd year of the Persian King Darius (I), 520 BC.

B. Background

1. Return from Babylonian captivity 538-536 BC (Ezra 1)
2. Rebuilding altar and laying foundation of temple (Ezra 3:1-6, 8-13).
3. The work on temple stopped by authorities, 536-535 BC (Ezra 4:1-5, 24).
4. The work resumed under Haggai and Zechariah, 520 BC (Ezra 5:1-5, 13-16), completed in 516 BC.

C. Acrostic Outline

God's temple needs rebuilding
Older temple less glorious

D. Key Verse 2:9:

"The glory of this present house will be greater than the glory of the former house," says the LORD Almighty, "And in this place I will grant peace."

E. The Prophecy of Haggai

1. Build the temple! (1:1-11)
 - given 1st day of 6th month, about Sept, 520 BC
 - panelled houses cp with unfinished temple (4)
 - consider your ways! (5-11)
 - God's curse on disobedience

2. I am with you! (1:12-15)
 - given 23 days later
 - Israel's obedience
 - God's promise

3. Don't despise small beginnings! (2:1-9)
 - given about one month still later
 - similar reaction earlier (Ezra 3:12-13)
 - though building little cp with Solomon's,
 - will one day be greater

4. Blessing to begin (2:10-19)
 - given about two months later
 - ritual pollution a parable of Israel's (11-14)
 - contrast former curse w/ coming blessing (15-19)

5. Zerubbabel pictures God's future conqueror (2:20-23)
 - "I will shake" connects w/ 2:6-7
 - Zerubbabel an ancestor of Jesus (Matt 1:12)
 - prophecy like that to 12 sons of Jacob (Gen 49)
 - signet carries authority of owner

F. Lessons from Haggai

1. God often uses bad circumstances to warn us of our disobedience.
2. We should not let circumstances discourage us from doing God's will.
3. God is with us as we obey Him.
4. We cannot judge the full significance of our service, no matter how lowly, in the light of God's total plan.

XII. Zechariah

A. Author and Date

1. A common OT name, but here have father Berechiah and grandfather Iddo; this Z mentioned in Ezra with Haggai
2. 3 dates given in book:
 - 1:1: 2nd year of Darius, 520 BC, overlaps Haggai
 - 1:7: later in same year
 - 7:1: 2 years later, 518 BC

B. Background

see Haggai

C. Acrostic Outline

Meaning of Zechariah's vision
Examination with measuring line
Satan and the Branch
Seven lampstands of gold
Interpreting the flying scroll
Act of crowning Joshua
Hearts become like flint
Security comes to Jerusalem

Return of the Messiah
Ephraim and Judah restored
Teaching about wicked shepherds
Understanding whom they pierced
Refining of God's remnant
New kingdom ushered in

D. Key Verse 9:9:

*Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem!
Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation,
Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.*

E. The Prophecy of Zechariah

1. Introduction (1:1-6)
 - call to repentance based on Israel's history

2. The Eight Visions (1:7-6:8)

- a. Horses and Riders (1:7-17): the earth is at peace, God has returned to build
- b. 4 Horns and 4 Craftsmen (1:18-21): God will deal with those who scattered Israel
- c. Man with Measuring Line (2:1-13): Jerusalem to be inhabited, large, prosperous, protected
- d. Joshua with Filthy Garments (3:1-10): cleansing of high priest
- e. The Golden Candlestick (4:1-14): temple to be completed against all obstacles by the Spirit of God, working through His two witnesses
- f. The Flying Scroll (5:1-4): curse against stealing and false witness in Israel
- g. The Woman and Basket (5:5-11): removal of sin and transgression from Israel (to Babylon)
- h. 4 Chariots (6:1-8): obscure, probably connected with first vision of 4 horsemen

3. The Symbolic Coronation (6:9-15)
of Messiah, who is both king and priest

4. The Question on Fasting (7:1-8:23)
self-imposed fasting no substitute for obedience; promise of blessing on Israel symbolized by converting these fasts to feasts

5. The Restoration of Judah & Destruction of Its Enemies (9:1-10:12)
note coming king in 9:9-12

6. The Rejection of the Shepherd & Its Consequences (11:1-13:9)

- a. Destruction of Jerusalem (11:1-6)
- b. Rejection of Good Shepherd (11:7-14)
- c. The Evil Shepherd (11:15-17)
- d. God's Defense of Jerusalem (12:1-9)
- e. The People's Repentance (12:10-14)
- f. The Cleansed Land (13:1-6)
- g. Israel Purified (13:7-9)

7. The Final Victory of the Shepherd-King (14:1-21)

XIII. Malachi

A. Author and Date

1. Name may be shortened form of Malachiah, "the messenger of Jehovah"; individual not otherwise known
2. Contents of book show problems very much like those late in Nehemiah (Neh 13), so perhaps from same period, 450-425 BC; probably latest book in OT

B. Acrostic Outline

Lord reproves and reminds
Offenses of the priests
Robbing God is cursed
Dawning of new day

C. Key Verses 4:5-6:

Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD. And he will restore the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse.

D. The Prophecy of Malachi

1. God's love for Israel (1:2-5)
2. Israel has despised God (1:6-2:9)
polluted offerings (1:7-9)
shut the temple, let Gentiles worship! (1:10-11)
Israel's contempt for worship (1:12-14)
God will abase the priests (2:1-9)
3. Israel has mistreated others, esp. their wives (2:10-16)
4. Israel has wearied God with unbelief (2:17-3:6)
5. Israel has robbed God (3:7-12)
6. Israel has spoken against God (3:13-4:3)
7. Summary (4:4-6)

Remember the Law (4)
Elijah coming (5-6)

E. Lessons from Malachi

1. God loves us very much (#1, above).
2. We must beware of treating religion as a mere pastime or occupation (##2, 5).
3. We must be faithful to our marriage relationships (#3).
4. We must beware of practical atheism (##4, 6).