

# Prophecies Of The Old Testament Prophets:

Lesson 12

# Major/Minor Prophets

- The Major Prophets are described as “major” because their books are longer and the content has broad, even global implications.
- The Minor Prophets are described as “minor” because their books are shorter (although Hosea and Zechariah are almost as long as Daniel) and the content is more narrowly focused.
- That does not mean the Minor Prophets are any less inspired than the Major Prophets.
  - It is simply a matter of God choosing to reveal more to the Major Prophets than He did to the Minor Prophets.

# Major Prophets

- The Major Prophet books are
  - **Isaiah,**
  - **Jeremiah,**
  - **Lamentations,**
  - **Ezekiel, and**
  - **Daniel.**
- The Major prophets are so called, not because the Minor prophets are unimportant, but because the books of the Major Prophets are lengthier and cast a correspondingly longer shadow on Old Testament history and theology.

# Themes Of The Major Prophets

- **Isaiah**
  - Of the Major Prophets, **Isaiah** has arguably had the greatest influence on Jewish and Christian theology. Like many of the prophets, Isaiah delivered a message that few people wanted to hear: God's people had allowed their hearts to grow corrupt, centered around empty religious practice. Isaiah called God's people to return to true worship or face judgment. While calls for repentance and warnings of punishment characterize the first half of Isaiah, the second half emphasizes a messages of hope and forgiveness.
- **Jeremiah**
  - **Jeremiah** is nearly as famous as Isaiah, although for a different reason. We use the word "jeremiad" to describe gloomy, doom-saying texts because Jeremiah was the archetypal "doom and gloom" prophet. Jeremiah relentlessly confronted Judah about its moral failures and predicted dire consequences if the people did not repent—consequences that unfortunately came true. Jeremiah was not only ignored, but actively persecuted for delivering his unpopular message. He lived to see God's judgment fall on Jerusalem—a vindication that filled him with sorrow, not joy.
- **Lamentations**
  - The book of **Lamentations** is Jeremiah's song of mourning over Jerusalem's destruction. But to this sorrow is added a ray of hope. While Judah's plight seems overwhelming, Lamentations closes with the hope that God remains sovereign and may restore his people:
- **Ezekiel**
  - Like Jeremiah, **Ezekiel** predicted Jerusalem's destruction as a consequence of her sin, but Ezekiel's message was delivered in a very different context than that of his counterpart in Judah. Ezekiel preached in Babylon, the ancient superpower that had conquered much of the ancient Near East. Ezekiel's audience was the band of exiled Israelites who had already been captured and relocated to Babylon. Ezekiel spoke much of God's transcendent holiness. He condemned Israel for turning away from their holy God—but like Isaiah, he had harsh words for some of Israel's pagan neighbors as well. Although God was using Israel's pagan enemies as an instrument of divine judgment, God was not blind to those nations' moral outrages and would visit judgment on them in turn. Judgment and punishment are not the most memorable themes in Ezekiel. Israel had failed, but God had not forgotten them and would one day restore and redeem them. This hope in an eventual restoration is vividly portrayed in the famous story of the "valley of dry bones."
- **Daniel**
  - **Daniel** is a Sunday school favorite due to some of his incredible experiences, notably being cast into a fiery furnace and thrown into a den of lions. He interpreted the writing on the wall (the origin of the phrase we use today) and interpreted a king's dreams. Like Ezekiel, he was a captive in Babylon, although God rewarded his faithfulness by elevating him to a position of respect and authority, first with the Babylonian king Nebuchadnezzar and then with his conqueror Darius. Although Daniel is best known for the adventures described in the first half of the book, the second half relates a series of visions that emphasize God's sovereignty and faithfulness.

# Israel's Restoration Is Unique In All Of Human History

- There are ancient people who have:
  - Always occupied their lands as the Egyptians.
  - No ancient people have ever left their ancient boundaries only to return.
- Israel is the only nation that has ever ...
  - Been deported from her homeland,
  - Remained a distinct people while outside the land,
  - Returned to her original country.

# Most Extreme Picture of Hopelessness

- Ezekiel describes a pile of bones...
  - Bones are from a defeated army that was slaughtered
  - Bodies were left to decomposed into a sun-bleached pile of bones
  - Presents a most extreme picture of hopelessness imaginable V.11 says “these bones are the whole house of Israel
  - In these passages refers to himself as the “Sovereign Lord” and addresses the leader of the hordes that will mount a futile attack against Israel in future years.

# Israel Today & Tomorrow

- This restoration ([37:5-6](#)) is exactly what we have seen take place as the modern state of Israel has been re-gathered and constituted as a nation again.
- Israel is currently without breath ([37:6,8](#)) which refers to the spiritual regeneration of many within the nation (V. [37:9-10](#))
  - Israel is not spiritually 'alive' to the Lord.
  - This will occur during the tribulation and will reach its climax by the time of Christ's second coming.
  - Israel will then enter the Millennial Kingdom as a regenerate nation (V [37:10](#))

# Israel Today & Tomorrow (2)

- Not only will Israel be revived, but the future renewal will reunite Israel & Judah
  - Split in 931 BC ([1 Kings 11:26-40](#))
  - This prophecy is not being fulfilled today, but will be fulfilled in conjunction with the national regeneration ([V 37:20-28](#))
  - This prophecy will be fulfilled when national Israel recognizes that Jesus was and is her promised Messiah
  - In the Millennial Kingdom, the Lord will rule over the entire globe, and David will be the vice-regent over Israel ([V 37:24-28](#)) ([2 Samuel 7:16](#))
  - God will implement an everlasting covenant of peace with Israel
    - The covenant of peace will be commemorated by the Lord's placement of His sanctuary "in their (Israel's) midst forever.
    - The sanctuary will be a testimony to all the nations that the Lord has sanctified the nation and now dwells in their midst ([V37:27-28](#))

# Invasion of Gog & Magog

- [Ezekiel 38- 39](#)
- Most scholars believes this war takes place *before* the Tribulation
- Details in Ezekiel re-enforce that this battle is not the battle of Armageddon.
  - **Ezekiel**: There are definite allies mention and they are limited in number while other nations stand in opposition. **Armageddon**: All nations are against Israel without exception
  - **Ezekiel**: Invasion comes from the North. **Armageddon**: Invasion comes from the whole world.
  - **Ezekiel**: Purpose of the war is for Russia to take spoils. **Armageddon**: Purpose is to destroy Israel and all Jews.
  - **Ezekiel**: Nations protest against war. **Armageddon**: No protest.
  - **Ezekiel**: Invasion is terminated through convulsion of nature. **Armageddon**: Invasion is terminated through return of Jesus Christ
  - **Ezekiel**: Invasion is terminated in the Mountains of Israel. **Armageddon**: Invasion is terminated in the area between Petra and Jerusalem
  - **Ezekiel**: Invasion takes place while Israel lives peacefully in the land. **Armageddon**: Invasion takes place while Israel is in flight and hiding.
  - It takes seven months to bury the dead from the Ezekiel invasion and seven months to burn the weapons. This makes the Armageddon battle the wrong focus of Ezekiel 38-39.

# Timing of Gog-Magog Invasion

- In attempting to determine the timing, consider
  - It takes seven months to bury the dead (therefore this cannot happen after the Abomination that causes desolation as Israel will be running and hiding and not able to bury the dead.).
  - It takes seven years to burn all the weapons.
- The most common view from scholars is that the timing of the battle is before the Tribulation
  - The Tribulation begins at the signing of a seven year covenant between Israel and the Anti-Christ. ([Dan 9:27](#))

# Participants of Gog-Magog Invasion

- This is achieved by tracing the migration of those ancient peoples to their modern-day descendants: Appears to relate to lands occupied by the descendants of Japheth, a son of Noah.
- Ezekiel says this battle will occur “in the later years.” ([38:8](#)) and “in the last days” ([38:16](#))
- The invasion involves a coalition headed by “Gog of the land of Magog”. These allies are pretty well known.
  - Magog: Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, (Probably descendants of Japheth)
  - Gog: Persia (Iran) (Probably descendants of Shem)
  - Ethiopia (Probably descendants of Ham)
  - Cush: Sudan (Probably descendants of Ham)
  - Put: Libya (Probably descendants of Ham)
  - Gomer & Beth-togarmah: Turkey
  - Sheba & Dedan: Saudi Arabia
- They are all muslim nations
  - Interestingly enough, they are already aligned today
- The fact that all three sons of Noah are represented in this battle, may indicate it is global in scope.

# The Invasion

- God will sovereignly cause this invasion ([39:1-2](#))
- Gog's coalition of nations attack Israel, that has recovered from war and whose people, brought from many nations to resettle are living in safety. God's evil scheme will be to attack and plunder the peaceful, unsuspecting people of Israel.
- God will miraculously deliver Israel from the hands of this overwhelming force through ...
  - Using a great earthquake ([28:19-20](#)) God's wrath will be so aroused by the hordes from the far north driving against Israel like a violent storm cloud that he will create an earthquake in Israel so great the whole earth will tremble at his presence.
  - Confusion
  - Infighting among the invaders' troops
  - Disease,
  - Torrential rains
  - Hailstones, fire, and burning sulfur will fall on all the troops
- God directly intervenes so the nations of the world know Him "...I am sanctified through you before their eyes" ([38:16](#)) God will use Gog as his instrument to punish all the nations and make his sovereign power and holiness known to them.
- When God drags out Gog and his hordes against the mountains of Israel, their weapons will drop from their hands. The troops will fall on the mountains and in the open fields, and their flesh will be served to the Carrion birds and wild animals. ([Eze 39:19-20](#), [Rev 19:17-18](#))
- Those dwelling in the towns of Israel will gather up so many discarded weapons that for seven years they will not need other wood for fuel.
- Only God will be able to account for Israel's victory. The nations will understand that though he sent Israel into exile among the nations, he is now bringing them back. Because of their sin, the Lord hid his face from the house of Israel, but now he will pour out his Spirit on them – the same Spirit that fell on the church at Pentecost.
- "My holy name I will make known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let my holy name be profaned anymore. And the nations will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel" ([39:7](#)).
- At the end of Ezekiel 39 we see Israel delivered, restored, and given the calling of being a light to the nations.

# Restoration Stages of Israel In Ezek 37

Stage	Historical Fulfillment
Scattered Bones (V 11)	Israel in dispersion
Sinews connected to Bones	Pre-1948 gathering (over 6,000,000)
Flesh on bone	Israel becomes a nation (Present status)
Skin covers body	Israel during the Tribulation
Breath in body	Israel after national conversion

# Minor Prophets

- There are twelve Minor Prophets, each of whom is given a separate book in the Bible. They include:
  - Hosea,
  - Joel,
  - Amos,
  - Obadiah,
  - Jonah,
  - Micah,
  - Nahum,
  - Habakkuk,
  - Zephaniah,
  - Haggai,
  - Zechariah,
  - Malachi.
- The minor prophets are described as “minor” not because they’re less important than the books of the Major Prophets, but because they’re shorter in length (most of them can easily be read in a single sitting).
- Together, their indictments of Israel’s drift away from God set the stage for the New Covenant that will be ushered in with the person of Jesus Christ.

# Themes Of The Minor Prophets

- **Hosea:**
  - Hosea had the dubious honor of having his life used as a living moral object lesson for Israel—instructed by God to marry an unfaithful wife, he spoke movingly and earnestly about God’s sorrow at Israel’s “adulterous affairs” with false gods and His willingness to forgive.
- **Joel:**
  - Joel’s recorded prophecies are short but direct. He described God’s coming judgment as an “invasion of locusts”—a clear and terrifying image for Iron Age Israelite society. However, Joel is best known for predicting the “pouring out” of the Holy Spirit which would occur hundreds of years later at Pentecost, as described in Acts 2
- **Amos:**
  - Amos was a simple shepherd called to deliver a message nobody wanted to hear: Israel had grown complacent, spiritually lazy, and hypocritical. Injustice, in the form of slavery, greed, and mistreatment of the poor, was commonplace. Amos’ criticisms still strike home two thousand years later.
- **Obadiah**
  - Obadiah consists of just one chapter. Obadiah’s message is quite specific to his time, describing the judgment that awaited the nation of Edom, which had done nothing to help Judah in her hour of need. Edom’s actions would be revisited upon them: their land and wealth would be lost just as Judah’s had been.
- **Jonah**
  - The most famous of the Minor Prophets, Jonah was famously swallowed by a whale while attempting to flee God’s call. Jonah’s prophetic message is directed not at Israel, but at the sin-choked foreign city of Ninevah—a reminder that God’s love and forgiveness was not limited to one nation or ethnic group. God’s endless compassion could reach even the Assyrians, whose cruelty and military power had made them the terror of the ancient world.
- **Micah**
  - Micah’s was a familiar message: Israel and Judah had turned away from God to follow false prophets and hypocritical religion, and disaster was coming if they did not repent. Micah tried to remind his audience that what God truly desired from men and women was not religious ritual, but faithful living. What God wanted wasn’t hard to understand:

# Theme of The Minor Prophets (2)

- **Nahum**
  - One of the more obscure prophets, Nahum foretold the ruin of the mighty Assyrian empire, which had hauled Judah into slavery and exile. His words were a warning that no city or nation was so powerful as to be beyond the reach of God's judgment.
- **Habakkuk**
  - Habakkuk strikes a markedly different tone than many of the other prophets. Instead of preaching judgment, he asked questions—*tough* questions, like “Why does God allow evil to exist?” and “If God is sovereign, why do wicked people prosper?” He brought these questions to God in prayer and found consolation in God's strength and power. Habakkuk shows us that ancient believers wrestled with the same difficult questions about sin, evil, and suffering that Christians ask today.
- **Zephaniah**
  - Prophecy during the reign of king Josiah, Zephaniah warned Judah that if they did not turn away from false religion and pagan practices, God's judgment would fall on them. But God's day of judgment is portrayed not just as a day of suffering, but as a time of rejoicing, when God would return to rescue the oppressed and restore the broken. The wicked had cause to fear judgment, but the faithful could look ahead to it with hope.
- **Haggai**
  - Haggai served as a prophet while a small remnant of Jews, returning from exile, were struggling to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. His message was one of encouragement and hope—God was still with His people, even though they had fallen far from the glorious days of David and Solomon:
- **Zechariah**
  - Zechariah was a post-exile prophet like Haggai, and also directed his message to the surviving remnant returned from exile in Babylon. Zechariah stands out as an Old Testament messenger who spoke clearly about the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ:
- **Malachi**
  - Also preaching to the returned exiles, Malachi offered a less happy message: after all they'd been through, God's people *still* fell into disobedience. Israel's priests and leaders were leading their flock astray, and only a faithful few remained who lived in accordance with God's law. The book of Malachi concludes the Old Testament with a reminder of humanity's need for a Saviour—and a promise that “for you who revere my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its rays.”

# Theme of The Minor Prophets (3)

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# Zechariah On The Day of The Lord

- [Zech 12:1-11](#); [13:1](#)
- Concerning Israel: A great final conflict will take place between Judah/Jerusalem and all the nations of the earth. It is clear in this passage that the Lord is moving against the nations of the earth to protect Judah/Jerusalem
- Jerusalem unharmed. The Lord protects Jerusalem with such force that the world is stunned and the Jews acknowledge that Jerusalem is strong because the Lord Almighty is her God.
- Judah saved, then Jerusalem. All the nations that attack Jerusalem will be destroyed. He will save the dwellings of Judah. Jerusalem will not be harmed and even the feeblest of Jews will be given strength to counter and destroy her enemies.
- Israel will mourn. When the Lord pours out his spirit on Israel, they will mourn for having rejected Jesus, who has not returned to them as their King.

# Jerusalem Harmed

- [Zechariah 14:1-2](#)
- Jerusalem Ravaged (AOD ???)
- The city will be taken
- Half the population sent into exile (slavery)

# That Mighty Awesome Day

- [Zechariah 14:3-17](#)
- The Mount of Olives split into two.
  - When Jesus plants his feet on the Mount of Olives, it split the mountain into an east-west valley.
  - Same spot he surrendered himself up to be crucified.
- The Lord Comes.
  - The Lord comes with all his holy ones with him.
- Day of the Lord.
  - That day will have no light (heavenly bodies are darkened) and no chilly air, but at evening there will be light. From that time on water will stream out of Jerusalem summer and winter, flowing both east and west through the east-west valley.
- Deadly Plague.
  - The Lord will strike the invaders with a plague that causes their eyes, flesh and tongue to rot while they are standing.
  - He will cause the enemy to panic and turn on each other
  - The wealth of the invading nations will be brought to Jerusalem.
- Survivors worship the King.
  - Failure to worship the feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem results in severe consequences