



The Book of the Twelve

*A Journey Through the
Minor Prophets*

Overview and Outline

- Module 1: The Prophets: Theology, Literature and History
- Module 2: Introduction to the Twelve
- Module 3: Hosea
- Module 4: Joel
- Excursus 1: How Do NT Authors Use OT Texts?
- Module 5: Amos
- Module 6: Obadiah
- Module 7: Jonah
- Module 8: Micah
- Module 9: Nahum
- Module 10: Habakkuk
- Module 11: Zephaniah
- Excursus 2: Survey of Biblical-Theological Frameworks
- Module 12: Haggai
- Module 13: Zechariah
- Module 14: Malachi

The Prophets as Biblical Books

- Former Prophets vs. Latter Prophets
 - Latter Prophets | Major vs Minor
 - Together, the former and latter prophets comprise one of three major structural units of the *Tanakh*, an acronym for the Hebrew Bible.
 - Torah (Law)
 - Nebi'im (Prophets)
 - Ketubim (Writings)

The Prophets as Divine Mouthpieces

- Most fundamentally, prophets are those who speak the words of God.
 - Ex. 7:1-2; Deut. 18:15-22
 - It could be (fruitlessly) argued who was technically the first prophet amongst the people of God, with Aaron, Moses and Samuel as the top candidates, but Enoch is the first recorded character in Scripture to *prophecy*.
 - Jude 14-15

The Prophets as Divine Mouthpieces Cont.

- The designations “prophet,” “seer” and “man of God” are nearly synonymous terms, with “seer” likely being an older term (1 Sam. 9:9) and “man of God” used nowhere in the major or minor prophets.
 - 1 Sam. 9:8-10
 - All three designations used interchangeably
 - Amos 7:12-14
 - “prophet” and “seer” equated
 - 2 Chron. 11:2; 12:5
 - Shemaiah is referred to as both a “prophet” and a “man of God”
 - 1 Kgs. 17:18; 2 Chron 21:12
 - Elijah is referred to as both a “prophet” and “man of God”
 - 2 Sam 24:11
 - “prophet” and “seer” seem to be interchangeable designations for Gad

The Prophets as Historical Instruments

- Writing vs. Non-writing
 - E.g., Elijah, Elisha vs. Isaiah and Hosea
 - Different characterizations of ministry
- Pre-Exilic vs. Post-Exilic
 - Historically speaking, all of the writing prophets besides Ezekiel prophesy either prior to fall of the Northern kingdom to Assyria (721/722 BC), prior to the fall of the Southern kingdom to Babylon (586/587 BC) or *after* the decree of Cyrus in 538 BC.
 - The first group (Isaiah-Zephaniah, minus Ezekiel) is referred to as the pre-exilic prophets while the latter group (Zechariah-Malachi) are referred to as post-exilic prophets.

The Prophets as Covenant Prosecutors

- Standard vs Non-Standard
 - Most of the writing prophets prophesied to God's people prior to (or during) the Babylonian exile. Only Nahum and Obadiah, who prophesy to foreign nations and Haggai-Malachi, who are post-exilic, do not fit this mold.
- The Prophetic Message | The importance of Deuteronomy
 - A tri-partite shape
 - **You've sinned against God and broken the covenant—you must repent.**
 - Israel's covenant violations tend to fall *roughly* into three categories: idolatry, social injustice and religious ritualism
 - **If you don't repent, judgment is coming for you as it will for the nations.**
 - Fascinatingly, the prophets weave the global story of Gen. 1-11—both judgement and redemption promised—together with the story of Israel beginning in Gen. 12.
 - **Yet, there is hope beyond judgement for glorious restoration, both for Israel/Judah and for the nations.**
 - Both Israel/Judah and the nations will experience both judgement and restoration, though they way they relate to one another in each will be different.

The Prophets as Covenant Prosecutors Cont.

- Foretelling vs. Forthtelling
 - Although prophecy is often considered to be primarily futuristic, less than two percent is Messianic, less than five percent describes the new covenant age and less than one percent describes events yet to come from our perspective in the 21st century.
 - Foretelling: *primarily* describing or predicting future events
 - Forthtelling: *primarily* addressing current realities
 - The vast majority of the writing prophets' message was not oriented exclusively in the distant future, but in the present.