

Lecture Six: Part One of the Minor Prophets

Amos – a herdsman & fig-dresser from Tekoa in Judah who prophesied in the northern kingdom of Israel during the reign of Jereboam II (783-743); Assyria preoccupied with internal quarrels.

1:1–6:14 – Preaching at Bethel about God’s judgment on the other nations and on Israel itself; call for repentance. Threats of God’s silence if Israel will not respond. “Day of the LORD” (5:14-20): terrifying punishments (locust, drought). Amaziah, the high priest at Bethel, expels Amos from the shrine and accuses him of sedition (5:25-27). Amos: God’s command that he leave Judah and give warning of unexpected doom coming upon Israel [see Acts 7:42-43].

7:1–9:10 – divine visions; Attack (7:10-13) on religious rites at Bethel, Dan, Gilgal, Beersheba – hiding the extortion, cheating, abuse of servants, debt slavery: betrayals of the Covenant (3:1-2).

9:11-15 – the Lord’s promise to restore the house of David [see Acts 15:16-17 for James’s likening of the vision of restoration to decree of the Jerusalem Council in 49 about Jews and Gentiles.]

Hosea – Unstable period after Jereboam II’s death; 5 rulers in 10 years, war between Israel & Judah (735-734); Assyrian invasion of Galilee (732). Marital difficulties as a symbol of Israel’s chaos: God’s love: like a husband for his wife (6:6, 10:12, 12:7) & a father for his children (11:1-4, 1:3-9), despite Israel’s infidelity. God’s covenant loyalty of compassion, to elicit a response in kind.

1:1–3:5 – marriage (2:4-25) to Gomer, who had participated in orgiastic rites (1:2, 3:1-3, 4:13-14).

4:1–14:1 – collection of the prophet’s teachings on the LORD’s judgment against the fertility cults that extol Baal (4:7-14, 10:1-2, 13:1-3) and that make Israel’s liturgy a kind of adultery (2:4-15, 5:5-7, 9:1-5), as well as the intrigue and treachery of the court (7:1-7, 8:4, 10:3-4) and foreign alliances (8:8-10, 10:5-8). The problem: the people want to claim a relation to God but reject His law (4:6, 8: 1, 12): it is not ignorance but wilful rejection; yet God will not give up (11:8-9).

14:2-10 – the LORD’s invitation to repent and be healed: a new Exodus involving destruction of a sinful past (9:11-17, 13:9–14:1) and the renewal of the betrothal (2:16-25) as a new covenant (14:2-9).

NT: Jesus as the bridegroom (Mark 2:19-20, Mt 22:1-14, 25:1-13); immortality as adultery (1 Cor 6:15-20); the espousal of Christ to the Church (Eph 5:21-33): mutual self-giving and self-emptying.

Micah – Contemporary of Isaiah in Judah from the reign of Jotham (740-736) to the time of the Assyrian attack on Jerusalem in 701. His warnings helped to provoke the reforms of Hezekiah.

1:1–2:13 – Judah’s impending punishment for her crimes; a vision of God gathering scattered sheep back into one fold. God’s rejection of injustice toward the poor, e.g., taking the property of the poor in lieu of debt-payments (2:1-5), increase of homelessness, markets in which a farmer cannot get a fair price (2:8-10, 6:10-12), corruption of civil and Temple authorities (2:6-7), breakdown of the family (7:5-6), false prophets speaking soothing words for the corrupt (3:5-7).

3:1–5:14 – corruption of leaders and God’s promise of the restoration of Zion

6:1–7:20 – God’s lawsuit against Israel for breaking the covenant. Micah as the spokesman Judah need to repent and experience God’s healing and deliverance.

Chronology of the prophets

Prophet & Dates	Place	Judah	Israel	Other Nations
Elijah (874-853)	Israel		Jeroboam I (931-910)	Sheshonk I of Egypt invades Judah and Israel (c.925)
		Rehoboam (931-913)	Nadab (910-909)	
		Abijah (913-911)	Baasha (909-886)	
		Asa (911-870)	Elah (886-885)	
		Jehoshaphat (870- 48)	Zimri (885)	Shalmaneser III of Assyria(858-824)
			Omri (885-874)	

			Ahab (874-853) Ahaziah (853-852)	Battle of Kharkah vs. Ahab (853)
Micaiah (850)	Israel	Jehoram (848-841) Ahaziah (841) Athaliah (841-835)	Jehoram (852-841)	
Elisha (853-783)	Israel	Jehoash (835-796) Amaziah (796-781)	Jehu (841-814) Jehoash (798-783)	
Amos (760-740)	Israel	Uzziah (781-740)	Jeroboam II (783-743)	Assyrian turmoil
Hosea (745-736)	Israel	Jotham (740-736) Ahaz (736-716)	Zechariah (743) Shallum (743) Menahem (743-738) Pekahiah (738-737) Pekah (737-732) Hoshea (732-724)	War between Israel and Judah (735-734) Assyria takes Galilee (734) and Damascus (732) Shalmaneser V (726-721)
Isaiah (742-695)	Jerusalem	Hezekiah (716-687)		End of Northern Kingdom and exile (721)
Micah (740-710)	Judah			Assyria siege of Jerusalem (701)
Nahum (663-612)	Jerusalem	Manasseh (687-642) Amon (642-640) Josiah (640-609)		Esharhaddon of Assyria (680-669) Ashurbanipal (669-630)
Zephaniah (635-630)	Judah			Nebupolassar of Babylon (626-605)
Jeremiah (627-580)	Judah	Jehoahaz (609) Jehoiakim (609-598)		Nineveh falls to Babylon (612) Babylon repels Assyria at Haran (609)
Habbakuk (605-600)	Judah	Jehoiachin (598-597) Zedekiah (597-587)		Necho of Egypt controls Judah (609-605) Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (605-562)
Ezekiel (593-571)	Babylon	Gedaliah (587)		Babylon's 1st invasion of Jerusalem (597) Babylon's 2nd invasion of Jerusalem (588-587) Evil-Merodach (562-560) Neriglissar (560-556)
2 Isaiah (540)	Babylon			Nabonidus (556-39) Conquest of Babylon (539) Cyrus II (550-530)
Haggai (520)	Jerusalem	Zerubbabel (520-515)		Cambyeses II (529-522)
Zechariah (520-515)	Jerusalem			Darius I (522-486)
Jonah (500?)	Nineveh			
3 Isaiah (515)	Jerusalem			
Malachi (515-445)	Jerusalem			Xerxes I (485-465)
Joel (400-350)	Jerusalem			Xerxes II (423)
Obadiah (450?)	Jerusalem			Darius II Nothus (423-404)

