

DAILY BIBLE READING PLAN

06-25-2023 // WEEK 25 NOTES

All, this past week, you have continued your journey through the minor prophets. They are called such not because they are minor in message, but simply in length. The major prophets are the longer ones (**Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel**). Let me simply go through each one of these at a very high level (**Amos 1 - Zechariah 7**). Here are a few highlights:

- **Amos:** Prophesied mostly to the **northern kingdom** and all of its apostasy and wickedness. Its theme is the **universal justice of God**. You should read it with a heart toward the poor and the believer's need to have them in our hearts. **Amos 5:24** is the most famous verse in this book: *"Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream."* This is one of Martin Luther King's most famous verses he used in his preaching.
- **Obadiah: Prophesied against Israel's neighbor, Edom.** Edom rejoiced with Israel's demise and judgment under God. God said that this will only cause God's judgment on them. We are never to rejoice when God does judgment, even on our enemies. He is the just judge. We are to bow our heads and thank him that his judgment is not on us.
- **Jonah:** He was a **prophet to Nineveh**, the capital city of Assyria. God calls him to go there and call the Ninevites to repentance. Jonah hates Assyria and runs in the other direction. You know the story. He ends up in the belly of a great fish and is regurgitated on the shores of Israel. He is commanded by God again to go to Nineveh. He does. He preaches. **There is repentance and God's delayed judgment.** Jonah becomes mad at God's mercy. Read **chapter 4** again. And the 4 times the word "appointed" is used in the book. God appoints the great fish, the wind, the plant, and the scorching sun to do as he wills. **We are simply called to be faithful and obey.** And trust him as he controls all.
- **Micah:** He was a prophet to the **southern kingdom**. He reiterated much of what has already been spoken by other prophets. Judgment and restoration promised. The most famous verse is **Micah 6:8**.

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It's a wonderful verse for all of us to ascribe to. It's actually on Coach Dean Smith's tombstone. It's calling all of us to **have mercy, do justice, and walk humbly with our God**. That is the central focus of this prophetic book. Don't miss too the importance of **5:2**, the prophecy that the Messiah will be born in Bethlehem. This prediction is 500 plus years before it actually happened.

- **Nahum:** This short prophetic book is **against Nineveh** and God's judgment against Assyria's capital city. It will happen. The reasons are because of its violence, lying, and greed. It's a very wicked city.
- **Habakkuk:** It's one of my favorite prophetic books. **Habakkuk laments before God why justice is taking so long against the evils of the southern kingdom**. God tells him that if he told him he would never understand. Habakkuk says he will understand. God says that he's **going to use the Babylonians as his instrument against Judah's gross sins**. Habakkuk doesn't understand! But God tells him that this is what he is going to do. Though justice often seems slow, God assures Habakkuk that it will happen (**2:3**). And **2:4** is used by Paul in Romans to show that God's righteous live by faith. It's a key theme in Paul's writings. The other famous verse is **3:19**: *God's strength makes us like the feet of deer. We can go higher and higher in him as we understand his mysterious ways.*
- **Zephaniah:** Another prophet to the **southern kingdom**. His message is all about "the day of the Lord" – both present and in the future. God will judge against Judah and all the nations. **Chapter 3** is significant for **end times** people. It addresses the assurance from God of the conversion one day of all the nations and God's promised restoration. **It's a message of great hope to the people.**
- **Haggai:** This prophet is post-exilic. In other words, **the people have returned from the Babylonian captivity and have set out to rebuild the destroyed Temple**. This begins what is called "The Second Temple Period" (the first one is from Solomon to the Temple's destruction in 586 BC). This book is the call to rebuild the Temple and how sad the people were when they remembered the glory of the first Temple in comparison to this one. It's a book of restoration of the people to the land, as God promised. And please note **2:20-23** and the **promise of Zerubbabel and the signet ring**. A king in David's line will be restored, thus **setting up Jesus's entrance into the world.**

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- **Zechariah Chapters 1 - 7:** Oracles (the word means a burden, something the prophet deeply felt from God that needed to be spoken) and visions, supernatural visions from God to the prophet. These oracles and visions included hidden horsemen, God's avenging angels, how Judah's oppressors would become oppressed by another chosen by God, Jerusalem would become unwalled and vulnerable, the reclothing of Joshua the high priest in clothes of pure righteousness, unstained no longer, olive trees and lampstands – about God's relighting Judah one day, a flying scroll – symbolizing God's Word can never be defeated, the Lord's army on the move (angel armies), and the crowning of Joshua – symbolizing the high priest's reestablishment.

Okay, that's it for this week! I know that this is a lot to absorb. But I hope you can see how the prophets, from Isaiah to Malachi, all had a message to a certain group but it's always the same: warning, desired repentance, if not judgment, and restoration. I do hope that you are enjoying the journey.

David