The Minor Prophets

**Keys:**
- The Book of The Twelve
- 722 BC
- 650 BC
- 621 BC
- 605 BC
- 612 BC
- 587 BC
- 539 BC
- 538 BC
- Assyria
- Babylon
- Egypt
- Nineveh
- Persia
- Cyrus
- Cyrus Edict
- Exile and return
- Amos 5
- Zephaniah 2
- Haggai 2

**Memory Verse:**
"Away with the noise of your songs! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-falling stream." - Amos 5.23-24

"Gather together, gather together, O shameful nation, before the appointed time arrives and that day sweeps on like chaff, before the fierce anger of the LORD comes upon you, before the day of the LORD's wrath comes upon you." - Zephaniah 2.1-2

"This is what the LORD Almighty says: 'In a little while I will once more shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations will come, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD Almighty." - Haggai 2.6-7

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Lecture Notes:

Why are they "Minor Prophets"?

These books are shorter than Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel

Most are addressed to more narrowly defined audiences. Only Micah addresses (both Israel and) Judah.

Most cover a brief period of time, again Micah is an exception. He was a contemporary of Isaiah.

In the Context of Israel's History
(Memorize)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Prophet</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Background</th>
<th>Audience</th>
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<tr>
<td>Assyria</td>
<td>Amos, Jonah</td>
<td>793-740</td>
<td>2 Kgs 14-15</td>
<td>Israel</td>
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<td>732 BC</td>
<td>Hosea, Micah</td>
<td>786-746?</td>
<td>2 Kgs 14</td>
<td>Assyria/Israel</td>
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<td>Damascus</td>
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<td>753-722</td>
<td>2 Kgs 15-18</td>
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<td>722 BC</td>
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<td>742-686</td>
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<td>586 BC</td>
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<td>Persia</td>
<td>Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel</td>
<td>520, 520, 458-433, post-exilic</td>
<td>Ezra 5-6, Ezra 5-6, Cf. Neh 13</td>
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Assyrian Period: Amos, Jonah, Hosea, Micah
Amos, a southern shepherd warns the North.

1-2 Israel will be judged with nations.

3-6 Her judgment is certain & severe

7-9:10 Visions of Israel’s judgment

9:11-15 Israel will be restored

Jonah resents God’s mercy towards Nineveh.

1-2 Jonah’s disobedience is punished; he repents and is rescued.

3-4 Nineveh repents and is spared; Jonah’s anger provokes ironic lesson.

Hosea’s painful marriage to a prostitute parallels the Lord’s covenant with Israel.

1-3 Hosea’s marriage, divorce and remarriage depicts God’s with Israel.

4-14 Hosea’s case against the priests and people of Israel.

Micah warns Judah with the example of Israel’s sin and punishment.

1-2 Judgment and hope seen in Assyria’s conquest of Israel.

3-5 Judgment awaits Jerusalem’s false leaders, but hope still seen in remnant.

6-7 Judgment and hope illustrates God’s faithfulness to his covenant.

Babylonian Period: Nahum, Zephaniah, Habakkuk, Obadiah

Nahum describes God’s judgment against Nineveh.
1 The Lord praised as a divine warrior

2 Judgment for Nineveh; Restoration for Israel and Judah

3 Doomed Nineveh is mocked

Zephaniah describes the Lord’s judgment against Judah and all Nations.

1 The Day of the LORD will come against Judah and all the nations.

2:1-3 Hope for reprieve is found in humble repentance.

2:4-3:8 Judgment is coming

3:9-20 But, judgment will purify and bring restoration.

Habakkuk questions God’s treatment of rebellious Judah, but reaffirms his trust.

1:1-11 First complaint about Judah.

1:12-2:20 Second complaint about Babylon.

3:1-19 Habakkuk’s psalm of reaffirmation.

Obadiah describes the Lord’s judgment against Edom for her violence against Judah. In one chapter, which centers on vv10-14, the prophet presents Edom’s violence against Judah when Jerusalem fell as evidence the Lord counts against Edom. But, her punishment is also a part of a larger plan for God’s new order.

Persian Period: Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi, Joel

Haggai urges the first returnees to rebuild the Temple.

1 Haggai calls the people to repent.
2:1-9 God promises greater blessings when Temple is rebuilt.

2:10-19 With rebuilding comes purification for a defiled people.

2:20-23 God promises to reestablish David.

Zechariah’s visions and oracles encourage the returnees to reestablish the Temple priesthood and Davidic leadership for future blessings.

1-8 Eight visions relate importance of temple priesthood and Davidic leadership.

9-14 Two groups of oracles relate the more distant future of Jerusalem, once again challenged but secured by God through David’s royal line.

Malachi joins Ezra (and Nehemiah) in calling the priests and people among later returnees to repent because the Messiah is coming!

1-2:16 Priests and people called to repent of offering blemished sacrifices.

2:17-4:6 Judgment and blessing are coming on the LORD’s Day through the messenger of his covenant to establish righteousness.

Joel uses a locust plague to illustrate Jerusalem’s need of repentance in order to escape the day of the LORD.

1-2:17 Locusts and drought foreshadow the coming judgment of the Day of the LORD.

2:18-3:21 Repentance will mean final judgment against God’s enemies and blessings for his people.

Common Themes, Memorable Chapters
God’s Faithfulness, His People’s Unfaithfulness

Hosea 11:1-2 “When Israel was a child, I loved him and out of Egypt I called my son. But the more I called Israel the further they went from me.”

The Hypocrisy of Worship Without Social Justice

Hosea 6:6 “I desire mercy, not sacrifice.”

Micah 6:8 “Act justly, love mercy, walk humbly with your God.”

The Day of the LORD reveals God’s Just Rule Over All the Nations.

Zechariah 14:9 “The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD and his name the only name.”

The Restoration of God’s People

Joel 2:32 “And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance.”

The Grammar of Grace in the Minor Prophets

Questions:
1. Why are these twelve books called "minor prophets"?
2. Memorize the chart above. Identify some of the specific things each prophet focus on along with who was king, in their specific region, at the time of their ministry (e.g. Amos focuses on social injustice.)? Note: you may not be able to do these for each of the minor prophets but try to exhaust the information to have.
3. Which of these periods covers the exile and the return from exile?