

# Old Testament Survey

Hosea, Joel, and Amos

# Introduction – Minor Prophets

- Background
  - Called “Minor” to denote the texts are ‘short’
  - Hosea is the beginning of the 12 minor prophet texts or sometimes referred to as “The Book of the Twelve”
  - The main themes are generally sin, judgment, mercy, and hope
  - The books of prophecy are God’s commentary on the narrative story

# Hosea - Overview

- Introduction
  - Preaches during the time of King Uzziah to King Hezekiah
  - Hosea's prophecy is for the Northern Kingdom
  - King Jeroboam, son of Jehoash, was king of Israel
  - Would have been a contemporary of Isaiah, who ministered to the Southern Kingdom
  - It is a time of great prosperity, but a time when the people worshipped foreign gods

# Hosea - Overview

- Theme

- *To instill a sense of shame in God's covenant people when they deliberately ignore God's rules for living and are unfaithful to him, and to encourage them to love and obey God in response for His love for them.*

# Hosea - Overview

- Outline
  - Chapter 1 – Hosea's Marriage to Gomer
  - Chapter 2 – God's charges against Israel
  - Chapter 3 – Hosea reclaims Gomer
  - Chapter 4 – 7 – An Oracle of Judgement
  - Chapters 8-10 – God's intent to punish Israel's Faithlessness

# Hosea - Overview

- Outline
  - Chapter 11:1-11 – God's Love and Judgment
  - Chapter 11:12-13:16 – God's Judgment on Evil Societies
  - Chapter 14 – God's Future Restoration

# Hosea - Summary

- Context
  - The first three chapters are an extended parable based on the life of Hosea and his marriage to an unfaithful wife
  - Hosea is asked to marry Gomer, daughter of Diblaim
  - This is an object lesson for Israel
    - To illustrate Israel's unfaithfulness to God in their covenant relationship

# Hosea - Summary

- Context
  - This provides a framework for the entire Book of Twelve
    - Israel has abandoned her covenant with the Lord
    - Like a faithful husband, God will pursue his true people and restore them
  - We see a basic threefold cycle in the book
    - Accusation
    - Judgment
    - Mercy



# Hosea - Themes

- Love's Strange Story (Chapter 1-3)
  - Hosea's marriage to an unfaithful woman named Gomer
  - Hosea draws the parallel of Israel's covenant relationship with Yahweh with marriage
  - This covenant relationship has been abandoned by Israel and have committed adultery
  - The adultery is portrayed in the image of prostitution

# Hosea - Themes

- Love's Strange Story (Chapter 1-3)
  - Hosea 'restores' Gomer by taking her back after she commits adultery
  - This is to symbolize Israel's role as a harlot by worshipping other gods and how God is always the faithful and forgiving husband
  - However, these does not preclude the punish that is to come

# Hosea - Themes

- Love's Strange Story (Chapter 1-3)
  - However, within the punishment, there is mercy
  - Who will receive this mercy?
    - Hosea 3:5 “Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the LORD their God, and David their king, and they shall come in fear to the LORD and to his goodness in the latter days.”
  - This is a story about a faithful God who calls his people back to him in spite of their unfaithfulness

# Hosea - Themes

- Love's Challenge: Sin
  - Why was there evil in people's hearts?
    - False worship – idolatry
- Love's Recovery: Repentance
  - The way back to God is through repentance
    - Hosea 6:1-2 “Come, let us return to the LORD; for he has torn us, that he may heal us; he has struck us down, and he will bind us up. <sup>2</sup> After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, that we may live before him.”

# Hosea - Themes

- Love's Recovery: Repentance
  - We should always be seeking to expose our sin through:
    - Prayer
    - Confession
    - Meditating on God's word
    - Hosea 14:1-2

# Hosea - Themes

- Love's Hope: Restoration
  - The hope of those who are loved by God becomes restoration of perfect fellowship with God
  - Though he judges Israel for their sin, he would purchase life for his true people and bring them into his presence
  - Hosea 13:14, 1 Corinthians 15:55

# Hosea - Themes

- Love's Hope: Restoration
  - God banishes Israel from the land, but through Hosea, God proclaims hope for all who would listen
    - Hosea 11:8-11
  - Hosea's role is to announce both judgment and to proclaim hope
  - Christ is the one who secures the restoration

# Hosea - Themes

- Concluding thoughts
  - God's covenant with Israel is like the covenant of marriage
  - Israel, though, challenges God's love with their sin
  - How would Israel be restored?
  - Through Christ, by his death and resurrection, we are reconciled to God



# Joel - Overview

- Introduction
  - There is no historical context given in Joel
  - The audience was the people of Judah, the Southern Kingdom
  - Joel looks at what the end of history will look like, “The Day of the Lord”

# Joel - Overview

- Main Theme
  - *“To predict terrible woes as acts of God’s judgment, with a view toward leading people to repent and thereby share in the promised blessings.”*

# Joel - Overview

- Outline
  - Joel 1:1-2:17 – The Day of the LORD in Judgment
    - The Call to Lament (1:1-2:11)
    - The Call to Repent (2:12-17)
  - Joel 2:18-3:21 – The Day of the LORD in Grace
    - The Promise of Salvation (2:18-32)
    - The Promise of Justice (3:1-16)
    - The Promise of Restoration (3:17-21)

# Joel - Overview

- The Call to Lament (1:1-2:11)
  - Uses the context of the locust plague to illustrate God's wrath
  - The prophet's concern is that disasters like this will not move the nation to repentance
  - The Day of the Lord will be great, who will be endure it?

# Joel - Overview

- The Call to Repent (2:12-17)
  - The way to escape the impending judgment is repentance, for people to turn back to God
  - God is the one bringing destruction, but is also the hope for their safety
  - Who can endure the Day of the Lord?
  - Only Jesus can

# Joel - Overview

- The Promise of Salvation (2:18-32)
  - We see that those who rebel against God, the Day of the Lord is a time of reckoning and justice
  - For those who repent and gladly submit to Him, it is a day of mercy and joy
  - The Day of the Lord is both 'already' and 'not yet'

# Joel - Overview

- The Promise of Justice and Restoration (ch. 3)
  - God promises to show justice to the nations that had sinfully tormented his people (1,2)
  - The closing verses promise how Judah will be restored in its relationship with God, never again to taste the bitter fruits of sin again

# Joel - Overview

- Concluding thoughts
  - Salvation isn't only described in negative terms (deliverance from God's punishment)
  - It is also described positively as God restoring his people to himself and his own presence
  - Like Hosea, the message is of judgment, repentance, and of promise of restoration



# Amos - Overview

- Introduction

- Is preaching during the reign of Uzziah in Judah and Jeroboam II in Israel
- Time period is 8<sup>th</sup> century B.C., just a few decades before the fall of Israel and before Isaiah
- Like Hosea, his preaching is focused on the Northern Kingdom
- This was time of great prosperity, expansion, and security for both kingdoms

# Amos - Overview

- Central Theme
  - *“To denounce affluent people who oppress the poor of their society, to rebuke the attitudes and lifestyles of people who scorn God’s moral commands, and to offer hope for the marginalized and oppressed”*

# Amos - Overview

- Central Theme
  - God is angry about two things:
    - His own people are acting corruptly, by trying to get rich off the oppression of their own kinsman
    - His own people despise those who are righteous in their midst and despise the word of Yahweh

# Amos - Overview

- Outline
  - Amos 1-2 – Yahweh deals with the nations
  - Amos 3-4 – Yahweh deals specifically with His people
  - Amos 5-6 – The call to repent
  - Amos 7-9 – Five visions

# Amos - Themes

- God Judges the Nations
  - Judges Syria (1:3), Gaza (1:6), Tyre (1:9), Edom (1:11), Ammon (1:13), and Moab (2:1)
  - The crimes they committed were horrific
  - Though they did not receive God's revealed law, the requirements of God's moral law is written in their conscience
  - God's judgment of the gentile nations demonstrates his universal kingship

# Amos - Themes

- God Judges His People
  - The judgment on God's people are more critical as they are in covenant with God
  - Israel is being judged for sins of social and political injustice, along with religious sins, such as idolatry, neglect of God's word, and faithlessness to His covenant
  - Israel was guilty of slavery, corruption, bribery, favouritism towards the rich, and exploitation of the poor

# Amos - Themes

- God Judges His People
  - Remember, God's people were to reflect the character of God
  - We are also reminded that his people will be held accountable for how they act and treat others in this life
  - What is your heart attitude towards money?  
Tithing?

# Amos - Themes

- God Judges His People
  - Israel is also judged for religious sins
    - Israel commanded their prophets not to prophesy
    - Israel belittled God and people's vows
  - God's election heightens one's responsibility to live upright before the LORD
  - This is also repeated in the New Testament through Paul and Peter



# Amos - Themes

- God Judges With Justice and With Certainty
  - Because God's standard is perfection, God justly finds us wanting and judges us accordingly
- God Judges With Mercy
  - Remember that the prophets always ended their prophecy with grace and mercy
  - Escaping judgement through repentance

# Amos - Themes

- God Judges With Mercy
  - Yahweh will remember His promises of old
  - Israel will taste Yahweh's covenant love

# Amos - Themes

- Concluding Thoughts
  - Those who desire to be rich should seek justice, do righteousness, and put their hopes in Christ for the reward to be had in the coming world, not this one
  - God's mercy is extended to all of God's people, including gentiles (ch. 9:12)

# Next class

- Obadiah, Jonah, Micah

# References

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