

The Minor Prophets...Who Were They?

The Problem With Prophets...Then And Now:

1 Kings 22:1-36, 2 Timothy 4:3

You can always find a "prophet" to tell you what you want to hear

Keeping It Simple:

Deuteronomy 18:9-22, Exodus 7:1-6

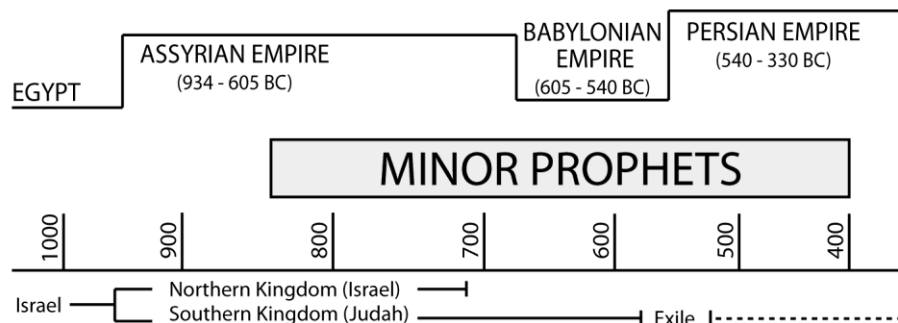
Prophet = One who speaks for someone else

Minor Prophets = Simply shorter books, not less important

Old Testament Prophets were:

- ✓ Preachers who said what God told them to
- ✓ Motivating in the present, more than predicting the future
- ✓ More concerned about revealing God, than future events

The Who What Where & When:



Hosea (part 1):

Hosea 1-4, Exodus 19:1-6, Ephesians 5:25-33

Hosea's bizarre and heartbreaking marriage illustrates:

- ▶ The depth and pain of our sin toward God
- ▶ The depth and commitment of God's love toward us

Growth Group Homework

For the week of February 26, 2012

QUICK REVIEW

Looking back at your notes from “*The Minor Prophets...Who Were They?*,” was there anything that particularly caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

MY STORY

1. What did you think when Chris said that the prophets in the Bible were more involved in forth-telling than fore-telling?

How did his description of Old Testament prophets differ from what you thought about the role of a prophet?

2. Chris said that you can always find a “prophet” voice to tell you what you want to hear. Can you think of a time in your life when you listened to and followed one of those “prophet” voices? What was the impact on your life?

DIGGING DEEPER

1. God’s unconditional love for Israel flowed from the covenant relationship he had established with them. Christ’s death has provided for us a new covenant in which we are also recipients of this same unconditional love. How do the following passages help you gain a greater understanding of what God’s unconditional love involves?

Romans 8:35-39

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? [36] As it is written:

"For your sake we face death all day long;

we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered."

[37] No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. [38] For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, [39] neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. [NIV]

1 John 3:1

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! The reason the world does not know us is that it did not know him. [NIV]

1 John 4:9-11

This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. [10] This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. [11] Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. [NIV]

What difference could it make in someone's life if he/she really understood that God loves them?

2. One of the chief roles of the prophets was to warn the nation of Israel about the consequences of their disobedience. Just like then, there continue to be consequences for our disobedience. Can you think of any consequences you or someone you know has experienced from sin?

What motivations can you find in the following passages to help keep you from sin and its consequences?

Galatians 6:7-8

Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. [8] The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. [NIV]

Hebrews 12:7-11

Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? [8] If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. [9] Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live! [10] Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. [11] No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it. [NIV]

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive what is due him for the things done while in the body, whether good or bad. [NIV]

Psalms 119:1-2

Blessed are they whose ways are blameless,
who walk according to the law of the Lord.
[2] Blessed are they who keep his statutes
and seek him with all their heart. [NIV]

Which of these do you find most motivating to you? Which is least motivating?

3. In the Book of James, the author uses language reminiscent of the message of Hosea's marriage to warn his readers about how they're living. After reading James 4:4, read the following passages and note how they help further explain James' warning.

James 4:4

You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. [NIV]

Mark 8:35-37

For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it. [36] What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? [37] Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? [NIV]

John 15:18-19

"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated me first. [19] If you belonged to the world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world, but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you. [NIV]

1 John 2:15-16

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. [16] For everything in the world--the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does--comes not from the Father but from the world. [NIV]

How can we balance not being friends with the world and our responsibility to be friendly toward the world and make a positive impact on those around us.

TAKING IT HOME

1. Do you wish you had a better understanding of God's love for you? If so, can you think of something you could do to help you better grasp it?

2. How are you doing at not being friends with the world? Is there anything in your life influencing your friendship with the world that needs to change?

Prayer Requests:

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