

A THIRTEEN-WEEK STUDY

THE MINOR PROPHETS

Twelve Voices, One Story

THE COMPLETE QUARTER

Thirteen lessons · Hosea through Malachi

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

A THIRTEEN-WEEK STUDY

THE MINOR PROPHETS

Twelve Voices, One Story

WEEK 1 • INTRODUCTION

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students should understand:



Why God sent prophets



The historical setting of the Minor Prophets



How the books fit together



How the New Testament interprets them



Why Christians should study them today

ASK THE CLASS

*“If all twelve books disappeared tomorrow,
what doctrines of Christianity would we lose?”*

Most Christians would struggle to answer.

One Story, Told Three Ways

Themes the Minor Prophets weave through all of Scripture



The Messiah's Story

- The Messiah
- Bethlehem
- Palm Sunday
- Judas' betrayal
- The crucifixion
- John the Baptist



The Church's Story

- Pentecost
- Justification by faith
- Inclusion of the Gentiles
- Christ as Bridegroom
- The church
- The remnant



The End's Story

- The Day of the Lord
- The New Covenant
- The coming Kingdom
- Final judgment

Why "Minor"?

Not because they are less important — only because they are shorter.



Major Prophets

Longer in length

- Isaiah
- Jeremiah
- Ezekiel
- Daniel



Minor Prophets

Shorter in length

- 12 shorter books
- Hosea through Malachi

The Historical Story

Tell the story — don't just show the dates

- Abraham — the story begins
- A nation is formed
- United Kingdom — Saul, David, Solomon
- **Kingdom divides (c. 931 BC)**
- 722 BC — Northern Kingdom destroyed by Assyria; Judah survives
- 586 BC — Babylon conquers Jerusalem
- Exile in Babylon
- Return — Temple and walls rebuilt

Where Each Prophet Fits

Grouped by era, not memorized by date

Before Assyria Destroys Israel

Obadiah

Joel

Jonah

Amos

Hosea

Micah

Before Babylon Destroys Judah

Nahum

Zephaniah

Habakkuk

After the Exile

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

The Four Great Themes

The roadmap for the entire course

1

God is Holy

Sin matters. Judgment is real.

2

God Keeps Covenant

He judges. He forgives.

3

A Messiah is Coming

King · Priest · Shepherd · Servant ·
Bridegroom

4

God's Kingdom Includes All Nations

Acts · Romans · Ephesians · Revelation

How the New Testament Reads the Prophets

The apostles saw these prophets fulfilled in Christ and the church

PROPHET	NEW TESTAMENT
Joel	Acts 2
Amos	Acts 15
Micah	Matthew 2
Habakkuk	Romans 1
Hosea	Romans 9, 1 Peter 2
Jonah	Matthew 12
Zechariah	The Passion narratives
Malachi	John the Baptist

The apostles did not merely quote isolated verses — they saw these books fulfilled in Christ, the church, and God's unfolding plan.

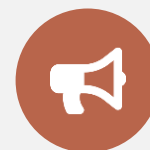
How We'll Study Each Prophet

The same six-part framework, every week for the next twelve weeks



1 Historical Setting

Who? When? To whom? Why now?



2 Major Message

What problem was God addressing?



3 God's Character

What do we learn about God?



4 Messianic Hope

How does this point toward Christ?



5 New Testament Fulfillment

Where do the apostles apply this?



6 Modern Application

What should Christians learn today?

NEXT WEEK

Week 2 — Hosea

God's Faithful Love for an Unfaithful People

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 2 OF THIRTEEN

HOSEA

God's Faithful Love for an Unfaithful People

WEEK 2 • HOSEA

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



1 Historical Setting

DATE

Approximately 750–725 BC

AUDIENCE

The Northern Kingdom, Israel (Ephraim),
with references to Judah

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A time of prosperity accompanied by deep
moral and religious decline

KEY IDEA

Prosperity had masked spiritual adultery



2 Major Message

Israel has broken covenant with God through spiritual adultery.

Hosea's marriage to Gomer becomes a living illustration of God's covenant love for an unfaithful people.

1

Israel's Sin



2

God's Judgment



3

God's Redeeming Love

WEEK 2 • HOSEA



3 God's Character

Hosea reveals:

- God's holiness
- God's grief over sin
- God's covenant faithfulness
- God's willingness to forgive the repentant

Gomer's unfaithfulness magnifies Hosea's love — a living picture of God's love toward sinners.

WEEK 2 • HOSEA



4 Messianic Hope

Key prophetic texts

Hosea 1:10

Hosea 2:23

Hosea 6:1–3

Hosea 11:1

Hosea 13:14

Hosea 14

These passages point beyond Israel's immediate restoration toward God's larger redemptive purposes.



5 New Testament Fulfillment

HOSEA	NEW TESTAMENT
Hosea 11:1	Matthew 2:15
Hosea 1:10	Romans 9:25–26
Hosea 2:23	1 Peter 2:10
Hosea 13:14	1 Corinthians 15:54–55

DISCUSSION QUESTION

Why do the New Testament writers apply Hosea's language to Christ and to God's redeemed people, rather than limiting it to national Israel?



6 Modern Application



Prosperity can conceal spiritual decline



External religion cannot substitute for covenant loyalty



God's discipline is restorative, not merely punitive



God's grace is greater than human unfaithfulness



The church, as Christ's bride, should respond to His redeeming love with covenant faithfulness

NEXT WEEK

Week 3 — Joel

The Day of the Lord

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 3 OF THIRTEEN

JOEL

*The Day of the Lord: Judgment, Repentance,
and the Beginning of the Messianic Age*

WEEK 3 · JOEL

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WHY JOEL MATTERS

*Joel is one of the shortest Minor Prophets,
yet one of the most influential.*

*His prophecy of the outpouring of the Spirit becomes Peter's explanation of Pentecost in Acts 2 — marking the
inauguration of the Messianic Kingdom.*



1 Historical Setting

DATE

Probably around 830 BC

AUDIENCE

The Southern Kingdom of Judah

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

A devastating locust plague has stripped the land bare, bringing economic ruin and national despair

KEY IDEA

God uses present judgments to call His people to repentance before a greater Day of Judgment



2 Major Message

The Day of the Lord calls God's people to genuine repentance and promises ultimate restoration.

The Call to Repentance

Joel 1:1 – 2:17



Restoration & Future Blessing

Joel 2:18 – 3:21

THREE THEMES

- Judgment is God's warning, not merely His punishment
- Repentance must come from the heart
- God's promised restoration ultimately extends beyond Israel into the Messianic age

WEEK 3 • JOEL



3 God's Character

Joel reveals God as:

- Sovereign over nature and history
- Holy in His judgment
- Gracious and merciful toward the repentant
- Faithful to restore those who truly return to Him

No one can successfully resist God's judgment — but His purpose is to bring people back to Himself. Mercy is meant to lead to repentance, not complacency.



4 Messianic Hope

While the immediate context speaks of Judah's restoration, Joel's vision reaches far beyond his own generation to the coming Messianic age.

Joel 2:12-13

“Return to Me with all your heart.”

Joel 2:28-32

God will pour out His Spirit upon all flesh.

Joel 3

The nations gathered for judgment and the ultimate triumph of God's Kingdom.



5 New Testament Fulfillment

JOEL	NEW TESTAMENT
Joel 2:28–32	Acts 2:16–21 (Pentecost)
Joel 2:13	James 4:8–10 — echoes Joel's call to heartfelt repentance
Joel 3	Revelation 14, 19–20 — final judgment imagery

“This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel.” — Peter, Acts 2

Peter identifies the outpouring of the Spirit as the beginning of Joel's promised Messianic age — not a still-future event.

The inauguration of the church

The beginning of the “last days”

The universal offer of salvation
through Christ



6 Modern Application



God often uses adversity to awaken spiritual complacency



Genuine repentance is a matter of the heart, not merely outward actions — “rend your heart, and not your garments”



God's warnings are expressions of His mercy, giving opportunity to return before judgment falls



Christians now live in the Messianic age inaugurated at Pentecost, enjoying the blessings Joel anticipated



Every believer lives with both urgency and hope — Christ has inaugurated God's Kingdom, and He will one day return to consummate it

NEXT WEEK

Week 4 — Amos

Justice, Empty Worship, and the Rebuilt House of David

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 4 OF THIRTEEN

AMOS

*Justice, Empty Worship,
and the Rebuilt House of David*

WEEK 4 · AMOS

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WHY AMOS MATTERS

*God is not impressed by religious performance
when the life contradicts the worship.*

Wealth can breed moral decay
and indifference to the weak

God judges nations by
righteousness, not religious
heritage

Amos ends not in condemnation,
but in Messianic hope

Acts 15 uses Amos 9 to explain Gentile inclusion in the restored people of God.



1 Historical Setting

DATE

Probably around 755 BC

MESSENGER

Amos of Tekoa in Judah — a herdsman and dresser of sycamore trees, sent north to preach at Bethel

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Jeroboam II's reign brought prosperity and national confidence, alongside religious and moral decadence

KEY IDEA

The greater the blessing, the greater the responsibility — and the greater the judgment for failure



2 Major Message

God will judge His covenant people because their prosperity, worship, and national privilege are corrupted by injustice and idolatry.

The Nations

*Damascus, Gaza, Tyre, Edom,
Ammon, Moab*



Judah

The southern kingdom



Israel

The sermon turns on the hearers

ISRAEL'S CRIMES

- Oppression of the poor
- Dishonest gain
- Empty worship
- Complacent luxury
- Refusal to hear God's word

THE FIVE VISIONS

- Locusts
- Fire
- **The plumb line**
- Summer fruit
- The smitten sanctuary



3 God's Character

Amos reveals God as:

- Morally serious — not bribed by worship while the worshiper practices injustice
- Impartial in judgment — He judges Gentile nations, Judah, and Israel alike
- Covenantally faithful — because Israel belonged to Him, He would not ignore her sins
- Sovereign over history — the coming exile is not merely politics, but divine judgment
- Gracious even in warning — the repeated call is “seek the Lord and live”

AMOS 5:24

“Let justice run down like water, and righteousness like a mighty stream.”



False Worship & the Day of the Lord

Amos did not find a lack of religion in Israel — he found unacceptable religion.

What They Had

- Assemblies
- Songs
- Offerings
- Shrines and religious enthusiasm

What God Said

- “I hate, I despise your feast days.”
- Worship cannot substitute for obedience.
- A solemn rite cannot take the place of a sincere right.

THE GREAT REVERSAL

What Israel Expected

Light for us, darkness for our enemies

What Amos Announced

That day will be darkness for you

An hour of worship cannot take the place of a week of righteous living.



4 Messianic Hope

Amos is mostly judgment — but it does not end in hopelessness.

Amos 9:11–15

God will raise up the fallen booth, or tabernacle, of David.



Judgment

Israel's failure exposed



Davidic Restoration

The royal promise renewed



The Nations

*Restored rule reaches beyond
Israel*

Do not let students leave Amos thinking only of condemnation. After judgment and collapse, God restores the royal promise — and the book's final hope becomes a key text in Acts 15.



5 New Testament Fulfillment

AMOS	NEW TESTAMENT
Amos 9:11–12	Acts 15:13–18 — the Jerusalem council on Gentile inclusion
Amos 5:25–27	Acts 7:42–43 — Stephen on Israel's compromised worship
Amos 5 (theme)	James 1:26–27; Colossians 2:23 — religion that produces righteousness

THE KEY TEXT — ACTS 15

James cites Amos 9 to show that the rebuilding of David's fallen tent includes the Gentiles who seek the Lord. The church is not a detour around prophecy — it is the restored people of God under the reign of the risen Son of David.

Amos is not merely “social justice in the Old Testament” — it is kingdom prophecy fulfilled in the church under Christ.

Judgment on Israel

David's house rebuilt

The nations gathered in Christ



6 Modern Application



Religious activity is not the same thing as faithfulness to God



Prosperity can make judgment feel impossible, even as spiritual danger increases



God measures His people by His plumb line — not by self-image, tradition, or institutional strength



Worship must be joined to righteousness, or the forms of worship become offensive to God



Treatment of the poor and vulnerable is not a political add-on to Amos; it is central to covenant faithfulness



The Day of the Lord is good news only for those who seek the Lord

CLOSING CLASS QUESTION

“Could God look at a people with full buildings, active worship, financial strength, and doctrinal claims, and still say, ‘I hate, I despise your feasts’?”

NEXT WEEK

Week 5 — Obadiah

Pride, Brotherly Hatred, and the Sin of Standing on the Other Side

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 5 OF THIRTEEN

OBADIAH

*Pride, Brotherly Hatred, and the Sin
of Standing on the Other Side*

WEEK 5 · OBADIAH

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



1 Historical Setting

NAME

Obadiah — “servant of Jehovah”

DATE

Most likely around 845 BC

AUDIENCE & TARGET

Edom, the nation descended from Esau

KEY IDEA

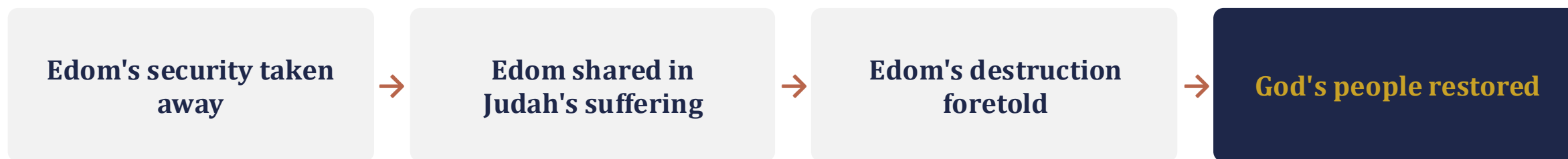
Edom's pride made her feel untouchable — but God says, “from there I will bring you down”

The Edomites lived in mountain strongholds southeast of the Dead Sea — Sela, later Petra — and that security bred contempt.



2 Major Message

God will bring down proud Edom because she stood against her brother in the day of distress.



THE SINS EXPOSED



Edom was not merely passive. When she stood aloof, Scripture says she was “as one of them.” Indifference in the face of evil can become moral participation in evil.

“As you have done, it shall be done to you.” — the central judgment principle



3 God's Character

Obadiah reveals God as:

- Judge over all nations, not merely Israel and Judah
- Watchful over how nations treat the vulnerable in a day of calamity
- Opposed to pride, because pride produces cruelty, false security, and contempt
- Morally serious about brotherly obligation — Edom's sin was aggravated because Judah was her brother
- Fitting and proportional in justice — “as you have done” becomes the pattern of judgment
- Faithful to His promises — Edom falls, but Mount Zion has deliverance

This reinforces the course theme: God keeps covenant, and He judges those who arrogantly oppose His people.



The Sin of Standing on the Other Side

The practical heart of the lesson.



False Neutrality

Edom did not initiate every act of violence — but her neutrality was not innocent.



Delighting in Another's Hurt

Obadiah condemns looking, rejoicing, and boasting over Judah's calamity.



Pride in Self-Preservation

Edom thought her mountain security made her superior and safe.



Taking Advantage of Weakness

Edom moved from watching, to participating, to exploiting.

This is not a call to become busybodies. It is a warning that neutrality is not righteous when truth, mercy, and brotherly duty are clear.



4 Messianic and Kingdom Hope

Obadiah is mostly judgment — but it ends with kingdom hope.

Obadiah 17

Mount Zion will have deliverance, and God's people will possess what God promised.

Obadiah 21

"The kingdom shall be the LORD's."



The Pride of Nations Falls

Edom is brought down



God's People Vindicated

Zion has deliverance



The Lord's Reign Stands

*"the kingdom shall be the
LORD's"*

The Minor Prophets repeatedly move from judgment to kingdom — Obadiah is no exception.



5 New Testament Fulfillment and Application

INTERPRETIVE CAUTION

The New Testament does not use Obadiah the way it uses Joel in Acts 2 or Amos in Acts 15. Do not overstate the case by claiming a direct apostolic quotation as the central fulfillment.

OBADIAH	NEW TESTAMENT
Obadiah 15	Galatians 6:7; Matthew 7:2 — what a man sows he reaps; the measure you use is measured to you
Obadiah 11	Luke 10:31–32; James 4:17 — passing by on the other side; knowing good and not doing it
Obadiah 21	Revelation 11:15 — the kingdom of the world becomes the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ

SUMMARY POINT

Obadiah has fewer direct citations than Joel, Amos, or Jonah — but its message is deeply consistent with New Testament ethics and eschatology. The proud are brought low, hatred is condemned, false neutrality is exposed, and the kingdom belongs to the Lord.



6 Modern Application



Pride deceives people into thinking they are safe from God's judgment



Family and church conflicts can outlive the original offense if bitterness is not repented of



It is possible to sin by watching, rejoicing, boasting, or benefiting while another suffers



Neutrality is not righteous when God has made right and wrong clear



Brotherly obligation matters — Edom's guilt was aggravated because Judah was her brother



God's people should reject gossip, resentment, and satisfaction in another's downfall

CLOSING CLASS QUESTION

“Are there places where we are ‘standing on the other side’ while calling it wisdom, neutrality, or self-protection?”

NEXT WEEK

Week 6 — Jonah and Nahum

Nineveh: God's Mercy and God's Judgment

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 6 OF THIRTEEN

JONAH & NAHUM

Nineveh: God's Mercy and God's Judgment

WEEK 6 · JONAH & NAHUM

Two prophets · one city · both sides of the character of God

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



1 Historical Setting

Two prophets, the same city, about 150 years apart.



Jonah

the name means “dove”

- Dated around 780 BC
- Sent to Nineveh, the Assyrian capital
- God cared for all nations and was willing to save even Assyria if they would repent



Nahum

the name means “consolation”

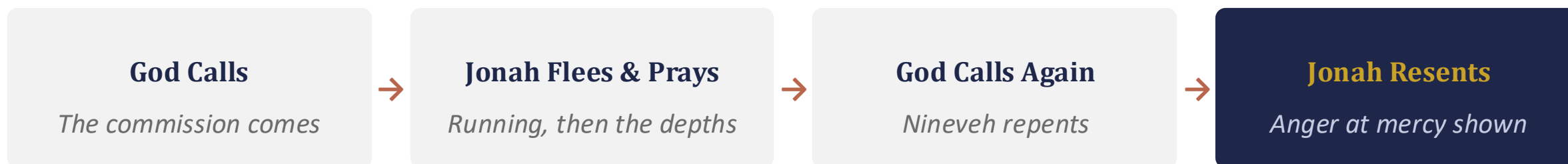
- Dated roughly 630–612 BC
- Concerns the same city, about 150 years later
- Announces the impending destruction of Nineveh and God's vindication against that wicked place

Nineveh's repentance in Jonah was real — but later generations forgot repentance. Mercy rejected eventually gives way to judgment.



2 Jonah's Major Message

God's mercy is wider than Jonah wanted it to be.



- Jonah is not only about a great fish; it is about a narrow-hearted prophet and a merciful God
- Genuine repentance allows no hesitation to obey — Jonah 3:3 reverses Jonah 1:3
- Nineveh's repentance is a plea for grace; they cannot demand mercy, but they can turn and hope
- Jonah's anger reveals the scandal of grace: glad for his own deliverance, resentful over Nineveh's

"Are we ever more interested in seeing enemies punished than seeing sinners saved?"



2 Nahum's Major Message

God's patience must not be mistaken for moral indifference.

God's Majesty

In mercy and in judgment



The Siege

Nineveh's destruction



The Reasons

Why Nineveh is doomed

JONAH ASKS

"Can God forgive Nineveh?"

NAHUM ANSWERS

"Will God judge Nineveh?"

Both answers are yes. God's mercy is real, but so is His justice.

THIS PAIRING GUARDS AGAINST TWO ERRORS

Thinking God is too harsh to forgive

Thinking God is too kind to judge



3 God's Character

Two books, one God — mercy and judgment are not competing attributes.



Jonah Reveals

compassion for the nations

- God cares about Gentiles, enemies, and great cities
- God cares about morally confused people who do not know their right hand from their left
- God is patient with the prophet's heart as well as with Nineveh



Nahum Reveals

justice against cruelty

- God acts against cruelty and oppression
- God is slow to anger, but He will not acquit the wicked
- No empire's violence escapes His reckoning

The God who relents when Nineveh repents is the same God who judges when Nineveh returns to wickedness.



4 Messianic Hope

Jonah 1-2

Jonah's three days point forward typologically to Christ's death and resurrection.

Jonah 3

Preaching to Gentiles anticipates the gospel's movement to all nations.

Nahum 1:15

Good news of peace announced after the oppressor's fall.

Together the two books point to a Savior whose resurrection is the ultimate sign, and a kingdom in which evil will not have the last word.

Note: the New Testament does not use Nahum as directly as it uses Jonah.



5 New Testament Fulfillment: Jonah

JONAH	NEW TESTAMENT
Jonah 1–2	Matthew 12:39–41; Luke 11:29–32 — the sign of Jonah: three days in the heart of the earth
Jonah 3	Matthew 12:41 — the men of Nineveh will rise in judgment against an unbelieving generation
Jonah's mission	Luke 24:47; Acts — repentance and forgiveness preached to all nations

THE KEY TEXT — MATTHEW 12

Jesus treats Jonah as real history and also as typology. The point is not merely that Jonah survived — it is that Jesus is greater than Jonah. Jonah's deliverance gave power to his preaching; Christ's resurrection gives ultimate authority to His gospel.

If Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah, that generation was more accountable for rejecting One greater than Jonah.

Death and resurrection

Outsiders who repent

Mission to the nations



5 New Testament Fulfillment: Nahum

INTERPRETIVE CAUTION

Nahum does not have Jonah's direct citation pattern. The connection is thematic and theological — not every connection is the same kind of fulfillment.

NAHUM	NEW TESTAMENT
Nahum 1:3	Romans 2:4–5 — despising God's patience stores up wrath; delayed judgment is not denied judgment
Nahum 1:15	Romans 10:15 (with Isaiah 52:7) — beautiful feet bringing good news of peace
Nineveh's fall	Revelation — Babylon as the symbol; violent, oppressive power falls before God

No empire is too strong, too wealthy, or too terrifying for God to judge. In the gospel, peace comes not merely through the fall of Assyria, but through the reign of Christ.

Christians should not confuse worldly power with permanence.



6 Modern Application



From Jonah

- Do not run from hard duty because the audience seems difficult or undeserving
- Preach God's message, not a softened version that avoids repentance
- Good people need repentance too — Jonah needed it as surely as Nineveh did
- There should be rejoicing when sinners repent, not resentment that grace has been shown



From Nahum

- God's patience should never be used as an excuse to continue in sin
- Violent and arrogant powers may seem secure, but God's judgment is certain

TOGETHER

God's people must proclaim mercy sincerely and trust God's justice completely.

NEXT WEEK

Week 7 — Micah

Judgment, True Religion, and Messianic Hope

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 7 OF THIRTEEN

MICAH

*The Coming Shepherd-King
and the Religion God Requires*

WEEK 7 • MICAH

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



1 Historical Setting

NAME

Micah — “Who is like the Lord?”

DATE

Approximately 740–700 BC

AUDIENCE

Both Israel/Samaria and Judah/Jerusalem

KEY IDEA

Religious privilege and national identity will not protect a people whose lives contradict God's righteousness

Micah was from Moresheth-gath, a village some 25 miles southwest of Jerusalem — he speaks as a countryman who sees the damage corrupt rulers do.



2 Major Message

God will judge the sins of Israel and Judah, but He will preserve a remnant and raise up the true Shepherd-King.

Micah 1-3

Judgment upon Israel and Judah — with a remnant to be saved

Micah 4-5

The coming of Christ and His kingdom hope

Micah 6:1-7:6

Condemnation for sins and corrupt religion

Micah 7:7-20

Ultimate blessing and God's pardoning mercy

The book moves from judgment to hope and back again. Micah's repeated burden is that God is not impressed by religious forms when justice, mercy, humility, and covenant loyalty are absent.



3 God's Character

Micah reveals God as:

- Holy and morally serious about idolatry and injustice
- Watchful over leaders, rulers, priests, prophets, merchants, and common people alike
- Not manipulated by sacrifice, ceremony, or religious performance
- Requiring justice, mercy, and humble walking with Him
- Judging His people without abandoning His promises
- Preserving a remnant and promising a ruler who will shepherd them

MICAH 7:18

“Who is a God like You, pardoning iniquity?”



True Religion: Micah 6:6–8

The practical center of the lesson — Micah 6 pictures a courtroom scene: God has a controversy with His people.

WHAT THE PEOPLE IMAGINE

Burnt offerings

Thousands of rams

Rivers of oil

Even the firstborn

WHAT GOD HAS ALREADY SHOWN

Do Justly

Practice righteousness toward others

Love Mercy

Not perform mercy reluctantly, but delight in loyal kindness

Walk Humbly

Covenant life ordered under God, not occasional ritual

Micah is not rejecting God-authorized worship. He is rejecting worship used as a substitute for obedience.



4 Messianic and Kingdom Hope

Micah's contrast is powerful: corrupt rulers exploit the people, but the coming ruler shepherds them.

Micah 4

The exaltation of the Lord's house, the gathering of peoples, and the word of the Lord going forth.

Micah 5:2

Bethlehem Ephrathah — the place from which the ruler in Israel will come.

Micah 5:4

He will stand and shepherd His flock in the strength of the LORD.

CORRUPT RULERS

Exploit and devour the people

THE COMING RULER

Stands and shepherds the flock



5 New Testament Fulfillment

MICAH	NEW TESTAMENT
Micah 5:2	Matthew 2:5–6 — the chief priests answer Herod from Micah; Bethlehem is the Messiah's birthplace
Micah 5:4	John 10 — Jesus as the Good Shepherd; Matthew 2:6 carries the shepherd language
Micah 7:6	Matthew 10:35–36; Luke 12:53 — allegiance to Christ divides even close families
Micah 4	Thematic — peoples gathered, the word going forth, the reign of God established

THE KEY TEXT — MATTHEW 2

Micah's prophecy was recognized as Messianic even by the Jewish leaders in Matthew's account. Jesus is not an accidental teacher from Galilee — His birth fits the prophetic geography of the promised King.

Bethlehem links the Messiah to David, and God brings great deliverance through humble beginnings.

The true ruler

The true shepherd

True religion



6 Modern Application



Religious people can become corrupt while still speaking religious language



God is not impressed by worship that is disconnected from righteousness



The Lord requires justice, mercy, and humble walking with Him



Leadership matters — corrupt rulers wound people, but Christ shepherds them



Small places and humble beginnings do not limit God's redemptive work; Bethlehem proves that



The church should be a kingdom people shaped by the word of the Lord, not by the power values of the world

CLOSING QUESTION

“Who is a God like You?” — the answer is seen fully in Christ, who both judges sin and provides pardon.

NEXT WEEK

Week 8 — Habakkuk

The Just Shall Live by Faith When God Does Not Make Sense

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 8 OF THIRTEEN

HABAKKUK

*The Just Shall Live by Faith
When God Does Not Make Sense*

WEEK 8 • HABAKKUK

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



1 Historical Setting

NAME

Habakkuk — “embrace”

DATE

Likely between 612 and 606 BC

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Assyria has fallen, Babylon is rising, and Judah faces the threat of Chaldean invasion

UNUSUAL FEATURE

He does not primarily address the people — he addresses God, as a representative of the troubled faithful

The first captives were taken in 605 BC — so Habakkuk is writing while waiting for an invasion he knows is coming.



2 Major Message

The righteous must live by faith while waiting for God's justice.

1:2-4 **PROPHET** Laments violence, injustice, and unanswered cries

1:5-11 **GOD** Answers that He is raising up the Chaldeans

1:12-17 **PROPHET** Struggles with God using the wicked to punish the less wicked

2:1-20 **GOD** The proud will fall — but the just shall live by faith

3:1-19 **PROPHET** Ends in worship and trust, before circumstances change

THE MOVEMENT OF THE BOOK

Perplexity

Waiting

Faith

Worship



3 God's Character

Habakkuk reveals God as:

- Holy — He does not ignore evil in Judah
- Sovereign — He can use even nations that do not acknowledge Him
- Just — Babylon too will be judged for its violence and arrogance
- Patient with honest lament — Habakkuk brings hard questions, and God answers
- Unhurried by human anxiety — the vision waits for the appointed time
- Trustworthy in character when His providence is not yet clear

The book does not answer every philosophical question. What it gives is the posture of the faithful: watch, wait, trust, and worship.



The Just Shall Live by Faith

The central text of the book, and one of the most important bridges to the New Testament.

THE PROUD PERSON

- Swollen and self-reliant
- Trusts in visible power
- Unstable — will not endure

THE RIGHTEOUS PERSON

- Lives by faith and faithfulness
- Trusts God and remains loyal
- Waits for God's justice

IN HABAKKUK'S SETTING

Faith means trusting God during national crisis and apparent delay.

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

This principle becomes central to justification and persevering discipleship.

Paul and Hebrews do not rip Habakkuk from context — they carry forward the same contrast between proud self-reliance and life grounded in faith.



4 Messianic and Gospel Hope

Habakkuk contains no Bethlehem-style prediction. Its Messianic significance is theological — it supplies the faith principle by which the gospel is later explained.

Habakkuk 2:14

The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

Habakkuk 2:20

The LORD is in His holy temple — let all the earth keep silence before Him.

Habakkuk 3

Joy in God even when every visible blessing disappears.

The gospel brings Habakkuk's faith principle to its fullest expression: sinners are justified by faith, and saints endure by faith.



5 New Testament Fulfillment

HABAKKUK	NEW TESTAMENT
Habakkuk 2:4	Romans 1:17 — the gospel reveals God's righteousness; the just shall live by faith
Habakkuk 2:4	Galatians 3:11 — no one is justified before God by the law
Habakkuk 2:3–4	Hebrews 10:37–38 — the coming one will not delay; the righteous do not draw back
Habakkuk 1:5	Acts 13:40–41 — a warning not to reject God's surprising work

ONE VERSE, FOUR ARGUMENTS

Romans uses Habakkuk for righteousness by faith. Galatians uses it against justification by law. Hebrews uses it for endurance under pressure. Acts uses it as a warning not to reject God's surprising work.

The same prophetic message runs through all of them: the proud fall, but the righteous live by faith.

Justified by faith

Not by law

Enduring by faith



6 Modern Application



Faithful people may have honest questions for God



God's answers may not remove all tension immediately



The righteous must learn to wait for the appointed time



Pride trusts in visible power, but faith trusts in God's character



The gospel does not eliminate the need for endurance; it gives the ground for endurance



Habakkuk teaches us to rejoice in God even when the fig tree does not blossom

Habakkuk's faith is not optimism. It is worshipful trust in the God of salvation.

NEXT WEEK

Week 9 — Zephaniah

The Day of the Lord and the Humble Remnant

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 9 OF THIRTEEN

ZEPHANIAH

*The Day of the Lord and the Hope
of a Humble Remnant*

WEEK 9 • ZEPHANIAH

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



1 Historical Setting

NAME

Zephaniah — “Jehovah hides”

DATE

Probably around 625 BC

AUDIENCE

Judah and Jerusalem, during the reign of Josiah

KEY IDEA

Reform movements cannot substitute for real repentance before the Day of the Lord

Zephaniah is presented as the great-grandson of Hezekiah — royal lineage — writing after Amon and Manasseh had brought Judah's religion and morality to a severe low point.



2 Major Message

The Day of the Lord will bring judgment on idolatry, violence, fraud, and complacent indifference — but a remnant will be saved.

THE SINS EXPOSED

Idolatry

Violence

Fraud

Idle indifference

THE SCOPE OF JUDGMENT

The Nations

Philistia · Moab · Ammon

Ethiopia/Cush · Assyria

Jerusalem Herself

Judah is not protected merely
because Jerusalem is the covenant city

The hope of the book is not national pride but humble seeking of the Lord. The movement is from universal judgment to purified remnant restoration.



3 God's Character

Zephaniah reveals God as:

- Holy — He judges idolatry and moral corruption
- Never indifferent to religious compromise, violence, dishonesty, or complacency
- Universal King — He judges Judah and the nations alike
- Near in judgment — the Day of the Lord is not abstract theology
- Merciful to the humble — He preserves and gathers a remnant
- Rejoicing over His restored people, turning judgment into songs of deliverance

This balance matters: Zephaniah is severe, but not hopeless.

WEEK 9 • ZEPHANIAH



The Day of the Lord

Zephaniah 1 presents the Day of the Lord as near, sweeping, and terrifying.

IN JOEL — WEEK 3

The Day of the Lord called Judah to heartfelt repentance

IN ZEPHANIAH — WEEK 9

The same theme confronts complacency and corruption

THIS PREVENTS TWO ERRORS

Thinking judgment is only for outsiders

Thinking covenant privilege protects the impenitent

The Day of the Lord is God entering history to judge evil and vindicate His rule. That prepares students to see why the New Testament also speaks of watchfulness and the coming day.



4 Messianic and Remnant Hope

No Bethlehem-style prediction here. The hope centers on a purified people, restored worship, gathered nations, and the Lord dwelling with them.

Zephaniah 2:3

Let the meek seek the LORD, seek righteousness, and seek humility.

Zephaniah 3:9–20

Purified speech, united service, a humble people, shame removed, and divine rejoicing.



Judgment

Complacency confronted



A Purified Remnant

The humble preserved



Gathered in Christ

The people of God restored

Judgment does not destroy God's promise — it purifies and preserves a people.



5 New Testament Fulfillment

INTERPRETIVE CAUTION

Zephaniah is not quoted the way Joel is quoted in Acts 2. Its use is less about a single proof-text and more about a prophetic framework the New Testament assumes.

ZEPHANIAH	NEW TESTAMENT
Day of the Lord	1 Thessalonians 5; 2 Peter 3 — vigilance, holiness, and readiness for the coming day
Remnant hope	Titus 2:14; Ephesians 2 — a holy people zealous for good works, Jew and Gentile made one
Zephaniah 3:14–17	God in the midst of His people, rejoicing over them — fulfilled in Christ and finally in God dwelling with His people

SUMMARY POINT

The framework is judgment, repentance, remnant, restoration, and the coming day. That framework is essential for understanding the New Testament's calls to watchfulness, holiness, and hope.



6 Modern Application



Complacency is spiritually dangerous — Zephaniah rebukes those who sit in idle indifference



Religious reform around us is not the same as repentance within us



God judges idolatry, violence, fraud, and practical unbelief



The Day of the Lord should produce sober self-examination, not speculation



The only safe place is humble seeking of the Lord



God's final purpose is not merely to punish but to purify and rejoice over a restored people

CLOSING QUESTION

“Are we among the complacent, or among those who seek the Lord in humility?”

NEXT WEEK

Week 10 — Haggai

Rebuild the Temple: Priorities, Presence, and Greater Glory

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 10 OF THIRTEEN

HAGGAI

*Rebuild the Temple: Priorities,
Presence, and Greater Glory*

WEEK 10 • HAGGAI

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



1 Historical Setting

NAME

Haggai — “festive” or “festival”

DATE

Precisely dated to 520 BC, in the reign of Darius

AUDIENCE

The returned exiles in Jerusalem, under Zerubbabel

KEY IDEA

Deliverance from captivity must lead to renewed obedience, not spiritual complacency

THE TIMELINE

536 BC

≈50,000 return · altar built
· foundation laid

—

Work stops: opposition
and indifference

520 BC

Haggai calls the people to
build · work resumes

516 BC

The temple is completed



2 Major Message

God's people must put His house and His purposes ahead of their own comfort.

1

The Excuse

“The time has not come to build the Lord's house.”

2

The Rebuke

“Consider your ways.” Economic frustration is read as chastening from God.

3

The Response

The people obey, and the work resumes.

4

The Encouragement

God promises His presence and a greater glory to come.

The book also looks forward to future glory and God's blessing through Zerubbabel.



3 God's Character

Haggai reveals God as:

- Jealous for proper priorities among His people
- Not indifferent when His work is neglected for personal comfort
- Disciplining through frustration and lack — to awaken, not to destroy
- Encouraging obedient workers with His presence: “I am with you”
- Valuing faithful obedience even when the work looks small
- Sovereign over the future glory of His house and His kingdom purposes

God can take a discouraged remnant and make them part of a much larger redemptive plan.



The Temple Theme

The temple is not merely architecture — it represents God's presence among His covenant people.

Solomon's Temple
Destroyed

Zerubbabel's Temple
Dedicated 515 BC • looked poor by comparison

Herod's Expansion
The complex expanded

Haggai 2:3–9

Speaks directly to the discouragement of those who remembered the former house.

God's people must not despise small beginnings when God is present. The “greater glory” promise opens the door for fulfillment beyond the physical building.

Transition: the New Testament will relocate temple fulfillment around Christ and His people.



4 Messianic and Kingdom Hope

Not as explicit as Zechariah — but real: temple glory, kingdom shaking, and Davidic promise are all forward-looking.

Haggai 2:6–9

God will shake the nations and fill His house with glory.

Haggai 2:9

The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former.

Haggai 2:20–23

Zerubbabel as God's signet — Davidic hope restored after exile.

Haggai points from a rebuilt temple to a greater glory. Zechariah will open that window wider.



5 New Testament Fulfillment

HAGGAI	NEW TESTAMENT
Haggai 2:6	Hebrews 12:26–29 — God removes what is temporary and leaves the unshakable kingdom
Temple hope	John 2 — the temple of His body; 1 Corinthians 3, Ephesians 2 — God's people as His dwelling
Haggai 2:23	Matthew 1; Luke 3 — Zerubbabel in the genealogy leading toward Christ

THE KEY TEXT — HEBREWS 12

Haggai encouraged a discouraged remnant by promising that God would shake the nations and bring greater glory. Hebrews carries that promise forward to the final superiority of the kingdom Christians receive in Christ.

God's promises often continue quietly through small, discouraged, rebuilding moments.

Temple

Kingdom

Davidic hope



6 Modern Application



Delayed obedience often hides behind reasonable-sounding excuses



God's people can become more concerned with personal comfort than God's house and mission



Economic frustration may sometimes expose misplaced priorities



God's presence is the great encouragement for hard obedience



Small work in God's kingdom should not be despised



Christians belong to an unshakable kingdom and should serve with reverence

“Consider your ways.” — Haggai's repeated command

NEXT WEEK

Week 11 — Zechariah, Part 1

Visions of Restoration and the Coming Branch

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 11 OF THIRTEEN

ZECHARIAH

*Part 1 — Visions of Restoration:
The Branch, the Priest, and the Temple People*

WEEK 11 • ZECHARIAH

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



1 Historical Setting

NAME

Zechariah — “whom Jehovah remembers”

DATE

Begins two months after Haggai, around 520–518 BC

THE PROPHET

From the priestly tribe; returned to Jerusalem in the migration led by Zerubbabel

KEY IDEA

God remembers His covenant, and He is building more than a physical structure

Haggai pressed the people to build. Zechariah lifts their eyes to what the rebuilding means in God's redemptive plan.



2 Major Message

Return to the Lord, rebuild in faith, and look for the coming King-Priest who will bring true cleansing and kingdom peace.

Zech 1:1–6

A call to return to the Lord

Zech 1:7–6:8

The eight visions

Zech 6:9–15

Joshua as a symbolic priest-king figure

Zech 7–8

Fasting transformed into future joy; a call to justice and truth

Temple rebuilding and spiritual restoration are inseparable.



3 God's Character

Zechariah reveals God as:

- The covenant God who remembers His people
- Calling His people to return, not merely to rebuild externally
- Defending His people against their accusers
- Removing iniquity and providing cleansing
- Empowering His work not by might nor power, but by His Spirit
- Turning mourning into joy and fasting into feasting

God's restoration is larger than the remnant can see in the moment.



The Eight Visions

Walk through the visions as encouragements rather than getting lost in every symbol.

1

Man among the myrtle trees

God sees the nations and remembers Jerusalem

3

The measuring line

Jerusalem restored and protected by God's presence

5

Lampstand and olive trees

God's work succeeds by His Spirit

7

Wickedness removed

Impurity is taken away

2

Horns and craftsmen

Hostile powers will be overthrown

4

Joshua the high priest

Accusation answered by divine cleansing

6

The flying scroll

Wickedness is judged

8

The four chariots

God rules over the earth

The visions tell the remnant that God is not absent, weak, or finished with them.



4 The Branch and the Priest-King

The source material lists “the branch of David” as a Messianic allusion in Zechariah 3:8 and 6:12.

Zechariah 3

Joshua the high priest is accused by Satan, but vindicated and cleansed by God.

Zechariah 3:8

A sign of things to come — God will bring forth His servant, the BRANCH.

Zechariah 6:12–13

The Branch will build the temple of the LORD, bear royal honor, and sit and rule.

KING

He will bear royal honor and rule

PRIEST

He provides cleansing and restored access



5 New Testament Fulfillment

ZECHARIAH	NEW TESTAMENT
Zechariah 3	Hebrews — Jesus the superior High Priest who answers accusation and provides real cleansing
Zech 3:8; 6:12	The Branch — Jesus fulfills the hope of the Davidic Messiah and builds the true temple
Zechariah 4:6	The church's mission proceeds by the Spirit's power, not by might nor by human strength
Zech 6:9–15	Jesus unites kingship and priesthood as no ordinary Old Testament figure could

LOOKING AHEAD TO PART 2

Before Zechariah shows the King riding into Jerusalem and the Shepherd being struck, he shows the need for cleansing, Spirit-empowered rebuilding, and the Branch who builds the true temple.

Fulfillment centers on Christ as the priestly King who cleanses His people and builds God's true dwelling.

Cleansing

Spirit-empowered work

The Branch



6 Modern Application



God's people must return to Him, not merely resume religious projects



Discouraged workers need a vision of what God is doing beyond what they can see



Accusation is answered by God's cleansing grace



The Lord's work is accomplished by His Spirit, not merely human power



Small beginnings are not small when God is behind them



Christ is both King and Priest — ruling and cleansing His people

Next week Zechariah moves from visions of restoration to direct Passion and kingdom fulfillment.

NEXT WEEK

Week 12 — Zechariah, Part 2

The Coming King: Humble, Rejected, Pierced, and Victorious

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 12 OF THIRTEEN

ZECHARIAH

*Part 2 — The Coming King: Humble,
Rejected, Pierced, and Victorious*

WEEK 12 · ZECHARIAH

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



2 The Message of Zechariah 9–14

The source outline describes this section as “the shepherd-king” and “deliverance and the Messiah.”

9 *The humble King and universal dominion*

10 *Gathering and strengthening God's people*

11 *Rejected shepherd; thirty pieces of silver*

12 *Looking on the pierced one, and mourning*

13 *Cleansing; the Shepherd struck, the sheep scattered*

14 *Final victory and holiness to the LORD*

This is not simple chronology. It is a prophetic portrait of the King, His rejection, His people, and His victory.



Messianic Allusions in Zechariah

The master list for the New Testament fulfillment discussion, drawn from the source material.

3:8; 6:12

The Branch of David

9:9

The humble King riding on a donkey

6:13; 9:10

His universal dominion

11:12-13

Sold for thirty shekels of silver

12:10

One pierced for His sheep

13:7

The scattering of the sheep

13:9

A remnant to be His

13:1-2

Victory over uncleanness

Keep this list visible as the class works through the fulfillment slides that follow.



5 Fulfillment: The Humble King

ZECHARIAH	NEW TESTAMENT
Zechariah 9:9	Matthew 21:4–5; John 12:14–15 — the triumphal entry interpreted as fulfillment
Zechariah 9:10	Christ's authority extends to all nations; the commission goes to all nations

THE KING ON HIS OWN TERMS

Jesus deliberately enters Jerusalem in the manner of the humble King — righteous, having salvation, and riding on a donkey. He is King, but not the militaristic national deliverer many expected. The King's humility is not weakness; it defines the character of His kingdom.

THE REMNANT

Small, weak, and recently returned from exile

THE KING'S DOMINION

Peace among nations, to the ends of the earth

The church must not shrink the kingdom to one nation, ethnicity, or political expectation.



5 Fulfillment: The Rejected Shepherd

ZECHARIAH	NEW TESTAMENT
Zech 11:12–13	Matthew 27:3–10 — Judas' betrayal money and the potter's field
Zechariah 13:7	Matthew 26:31; Mark 14:27 — “Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered”

A TEACHING NOTE

Matthew names Jeremiah in the citation formula, likely reflecting a prophetic-composite way of citing Scripture. For this class, keep the focus on the Zechariah imagery clearly present in Matthew's account.

THE INSULTING VALUATION

The shepherd is rejected and valued cheaply — thirty pieces of silver

THE SCATTERED FLOCK

Jesus cites Zechariah to explain the disciples' scattering before it happens

Rejection of Christ is not always loud atheism — sometimes it is valuing Him cheaply.



5 Fulfillment: The Pierced One

ZECHARIAH	NEW TESTAMENT
Zechariah 12:10	John 19:37 — “They shall look on Him whom they pierced”
Zechariah 12:10	Revelation 1:7 — the exalted Christ seen by all, including those who pierced Him

AT THE CROSS

The rejected Shepherd-King is literally pierced. John uses Zechariah to show that Jesus' death is not defeat but fulfillment.

AT HIS APPEARING

John carries the pierced-one imagery from the crucifixion forward to the public vindication of Christ.

The cross reveals both human rejection and God's redemptive purpose. The One once pierced in humiliation will be revealed in glory.

Mourning over the pierced one has both repentance and judgment dimensions.



5 Fulfillment: Cleansing and Remnant

Zechariah 13:1

A fountain is opened for sin and uncleanness — fulfilled through Christ's blood and the forgiveness He provides.

Zechariah 13:9

The remnant is refined and becomes the people who call on the LORD.

SUMMARY POINT

Zechariah's Passion fulfillment is substantial and direct. The Gospels use Zechariah to interpret the triumphal entry, the betrayal, the scattering of the disciples, and the crucifixion. Revelation uses Zechariah to point toward the public vindication of the pierced Christ.

Humble

Rejected

Pierced

Victorious

The pierced Shepherd does not merely expose sin — He provides cleansing from it.



6 Modern Application



We must receive Jesus as the King Scripture actually promised, not the king human expectations invent



The kingdom comes through humility and suffering before visible victory



Christ can be rejected not only by enemies but by people who value Him cheaply



The Shepherd was struck, but He gathers and restores His sheep



The pierced One provides cleansing for sin and uncleanness



The church lives between the King's humble entry and His final public vindication

Zechariah lets us read the Passion narratives with prophetic eyes.

NEXT WEEK

Week 13 — Malachi

Covenant Faithfulness While Waiting for the Lord

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL

WEEK 13 OF THIRTEEN

MALACHI

*Preparing the Way: Covenant Faithfulness
While Waiting for the Lord*

WEEK 13 • MALACHI

THIS QUARTER



HOS



JOEL



AMOS



OBAD



JONAH



MICAH



NAH



HAB



ZEPH



HAG



ZECH



MAL



1 Historical Setting

NAME

Malachi — “My messenger”

DATE

Approximately 445–432 BC

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The Jews had returned to Jerusalem almost 100 years earlier, with zeal and renewed faith — but hardship and famine weakened it

KEY IDEA

Restored location did not automatically produce restored hearts

They began murmuring against God's justice and doubting His faithfulness. Malachi assures them God had not been unfaithful — the problem lay in their own lack of sincerity, devotion, and obedience.



Style and Structure

The source material describes Malachi's style as “didactic-dialectic” — it reads like a courtroom argument or covenant dispute.

1

The Charge

God makes an assertion



2

The Objection

The hearer raises a question



3

The Rebuttal

God answers and amplifies the charge

Students should listen for the repeated pattern: God speaks, the people object, God answers. This is spiritually searching because the people do not see themselves accurately.

Malachi's hearers are not defiant — they are genuinely puzzled that God is displeased. That is what makes the book uncomfortable.



2 Major Message

God rebukes insincere worship and covenant unfaithfulness while promising the coming messenger and the coming Lord.

Malachi 1:1–14

The Jews' disrespect for God

Malachi 2:1–16

The priests and people rebuked

Mal 2:17–3:15

God's requirements

Mal 3:16–4:6

The final lot of the righteous and the wicked

Defective sacrifices • withheld tithes and offerings • moral failure in divorce • ritual without righteousness

The book ends by pointing forward to “Elijah,” who will herald the coming Messiah.



3 God's Character

Malachi reveals God as:

- Covenantally faithful — “I have loved you,” even when the people doubt it
- Worthy of honor, not leftovers
- Rebuking priests who corrupt worship and fail to teach faithfully
- Caring about marriage covenant faithfulness
- Seeing economic selfishness and withholding from Him
- Distinguishing between the righteous and the wicked

God is coming — and His coming will be both purification and judgment.



Corrupt Worship and Covenant Drift

Malachi is especially useful for application because the people are still religious.



Defective Sacrifices

God receives leftovers instead of honor.



Corrupt Priests

Religious leaders can become part of the problem.



Broken Marriages

Covenant failure with people is connected to covenant failure before God.



Withheld Offerings

Selfishness beneath the surface of ritual religion.

They are not abandoning the temple. They are treating God with contempt while maintaining the forms. Formal worship without reverence, obedience, and sincerity becomes offensive to God.



4 Messianic Hope: Messenger and Lord

This is why Malachi is such a fitting bridge to the New Testament.

Malachi 3:1

“My messenger” will prepare the way before the Lord — and the Lord will come to His temple.

Malachi 4:5–6

Elijah will come before the great and dreadful day of the LORD.



The Messenger

Someone prepares the way



The Lord Himself

Coming to His people



The Question

Will they be ready?

The Old Testament closes not with mere moralism, but with expectation.



5 New Testament Fulfillment

MALACHI	NEW TESTAMENT
Malachi 3:1	Mark 1:2; Matthew 11:10; Luke 7:27 — John the Baptist is the messenger who prepares the way
Malachi 4:5–6	Matthew 11:14; 17:10–13; Luke 1:16–17 — John comes in the spirit and power of Elijah
Refiner's fire	Christ purifies a people for Himself and exposes empty religion

SUMMARY POINT

The promised messenger is John the Baptist. The coming Lord is Christ. The final prophetic word before the New Testament is therefore not silence as an end, but silence awaiting fulfillment.

The Old Testament closes with anticipation; the New Testament opens with preparation and arrival.

The messenger comes

The Lord arrives

The people are refined



6 Modern Application



God does not accept leftover worship



Religious service can continue long after reverence has faded



Leaders are accountable for whether they honor God and teach truth



Covenant faithfulness includes marriage, money, worship, and justice



Doubting God's justice often leads to spiritual compromise



Preparation for the Lord means repentance and renewed faithfulness

CLOSING CLASS QUESTION

"If John the Baptist prepared people for Christ's first coming, how should we live as people awaiting His return?"

COURSE CONCLUSION

Twelve Voices, One Story

Hosea	God's covenant love for an unfaithful bride	Habakkuk	The just shall live by faith
Joel	The Day of the Lord and the Pentecost promise	Zephaniah	Judgment on complacency, hope for a humble remnant
Amos	Justice, unacceptable worship, and David's restored house	Haggai	Restored priorities and an unshakable kingdom
Obadiah	Pride, brotherly betrayal, and divine reversal	Zechariah	The Branch, the humble King, the pierced and victorious Messiah
Jonah & Nahum	Mercy to repentant Nineveh; judgment when repentance is forgotten	Malachi	Corrupt worship confronted; the messenger prepares the way
Micah	The Shepherd-King from Bethlehem and the religion God requires		

One unified story: holiness, covenant, judgment, mercy, Messiah, kingdom, remnant, nations, and final hope.

*Read the Minor Prophets not as obscure ancient books, but as inspired witnesses that lead us to Christ
and teach us how to live as His covenant people.*

