Minor Prophets

Small in Size, Mighty in Message
A 12-Week Journey Through the Minor Prophets

Introduction

Small in Size, Mighty in Message is a 12-week Bible study journey through the twelve Minor Prophets—Hosea through Malachi. Although these prophetic books are called “minor” because of their shorter length, their messages are anything but minor. Together, they reveal God's holiness, justice, mercy, faithfulness, and unwavering desire to restore His people.

Throughout the series, participants will explore the historical setting and central message of each prophet while discovering how these ancient words continue to speak powerfully to believers today. The study will examine recurring themes such as spiritual unfaithfulness, idolatry, injustice, pride, repentance, judgment, restoration, faithful living, and hope.

Each week will introduce the prophet, explain the historical context, examine key passages and major themes, identify connections to Christ and the New Testament, and provide practical applications for Christian living. Participants will also see how the twelve books fit within the larger biblical story—from Israel's divided kingdom and the Assyrian and Babylonian invasions, through exile and restoration, to Malachi's anticipation of the coming Messiah.

The books may be minor in length, but their message about God and His

Syllabus

- Week 1 (9/9): Hosea — wedding ring or broken/restored heart
- Week 2 (9/16): Joel — locusts
- Week 3 (9/23): Amos — scales of justice
- Week 4 (9/30): Obadiah — mountain/cliff representing Edom and pride
- Week 5 (10/7): Jonah — sea/great fish
- Week 6 (10/14): Micah — scales/justice
- 10/21: **KAHOOT TIME! What did you remember?**
- Week 7 (10/28): Nahum — Nineveh/ancient city
- Week 8 (11/4): Habakkuk — watchtower
- Week 9 (11/11): Zephaniah — trumpet or approaching day
- Week 10 (11/18): Haggai — rebuilding the Temple
- Week 11(11/25): Zechariah — lampstand/visions
- Week 12(12/2): Malachi — messenger or sunrise
- 12/9: **KAHOOT TIME! What did you remember?**

Book Resources

1. The Holy Bible
2. Mark J. Boda — The Message of the Twelve: Hearing the Voice of the Minor Prophets
3. T. Desmond Alexander & David W. Baker, eds. — Dictionary of the Old Testament: Prophets
4. Gordon D. Fee & Douglas Stuart — How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth
5. Andrew E. Hill & John H. Walton — A Survey of the Old Testament
6. Tremper Longman III — Old Testament Commentary Survey

Why Were They called Minor Prophets?

They are called the Minor Prophets because their books are shorter, not because the prophets themselves—or their messages—were less important.

The Old Testament prophetic books are traditionally grouped into two categories:

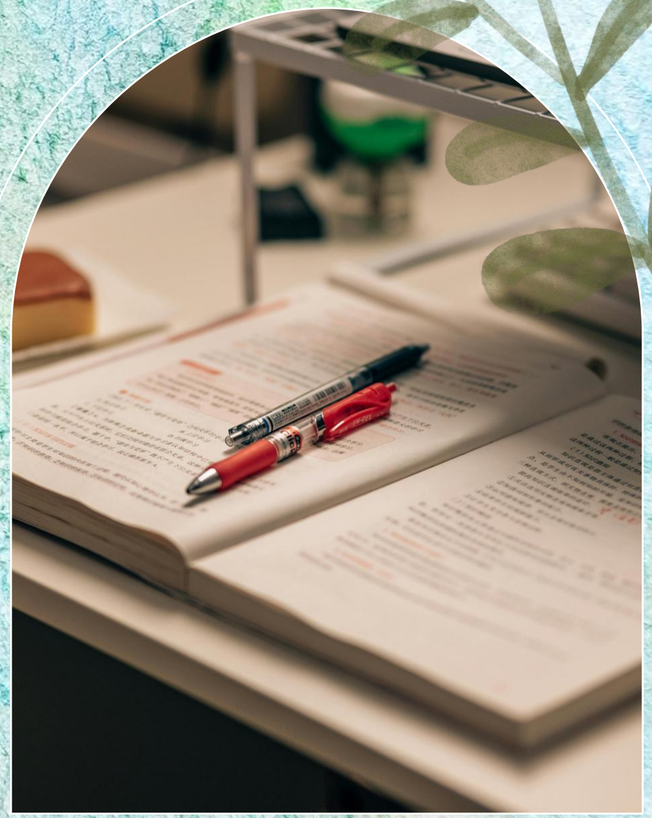
- Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. These books are generally much longer.
- Minor Prophets: Hosea through Malachi—the final 12 books of the Old Testament. These writings are considerably shorter.

The word “minor” refers to length, not significance.

For example, Obadiah has only 21 verses, while Isaiah has 66 chapters. Yet Obadiah's message concerning pride, judgment, justice, and God's sovereignty is still significant.
Why are the 12 grouped together?

In the Hebrew tradition, these twelve prophetic books were collected together as a single collection often called “The Twelve.” Because the individual books were short, placing them together on one scroll also helped preserve them as a collection.

Each prophet may have given us a relatively short book, but each carries a powerful message from God concerning sin, justice, repentance, judgment, mercy, restoration, hope, and the coming Messiah.



Where in History do the Minor Prophets Fit?

Prophet	Approx. Date	Biblical-History Setting	Primary Audience	Main Historical Connection
Hosea	755–715 BC	Divided Kingdom; shortly before Israel falls	Northern Kingdom — Israel	Israel's spiritual unfaithfulness; Assyria rising
Joel	Date debated	Setting uncertain; often placed either before exile or after exile	Judah	Locust devastation; repentance; Day of the LORD
Amos	760–750 BC	Divided Kingdom; prosperous period before Israel's fall	Northern Kingdom — Israel	Jeroboam II; prosperity, injustice and spiritual complacency
Obadiah	Likely c. 586 BC*	Jerusalem destroyed; Babylonian crisis	Edom	Edom's response to Jerusalem's destruction
Jonah	c. 785–760 BC	Divided Kingdom; Assyria growing in power	Nineveh/Assyria	God sends an Israelite prophet to Israel's enemy
Micah	740–700 BC	Assyrian crisis; Israel falls in 722 BC	Judah & Israel	Samaria's fall; Jerusalem threatened
Nahum	c. 650–630 BC	Assyria still powerful but approaching judgment	Nineveh/Assyria	Predicts Nineveh's fall, which occurs in 612 BC
Habakkuk	c. 609–597 BC	Babylon rising; Judah approaching destruction	Judah	Babylon will be God's instrument of judgment
Zephaniah	c. 640–609 BC	Reign of King Josiah; before Jerusalem's fall	Judah	Coming Day of the LORD; call to repentance
Haggai	520 BC	After Babylonian exile; Jews returned to Jerusalem	Returned exiles	Rebuilding the Temple
Zechariah	520–518 BC+	After exile; restoration period	Returned exiles	Encourages Temple rebuilding and future hope
Malachi	c. 450–430 BC	Post-exilic Jerusalem; Temple restored	Judah	Spiritual complacency after the return from exile

Where in History do the Minor Prophets Fit?

Understanding when the prophets spoke helps us understand why they spoke.

1. Before the Exile — Warning is coming
Jonah • Amos • Hosea • Micah • Nahum • Zephaniah • Habakkuk
(Joel may belong here depending upon dating.)

2. Around Jerusalem's Fall — Judgment has arrived
Obadiah — connected by many interpreters with Jerusalem's destruction around 586 BC.

3. After the Exile — God is restoring His people
Haggai • Zechariah • Malachi
(Joel is placed here by many scholars who favor a post-exilic date.)

Jonah / Amos / Hosea → Micah → Nahum / Zephaniah → Habakkuk → OBADIAH → Haggai / Zechariah → Malachi

Divided Kingdom → Assyrian Crisis → Israel Falls (722 BC) → Babylon Rises → Jerusalem Falls (586 BC) → Babylonian Exile → Return (538 BC) → Temple Rebuilt (516 BC) → Post-Exilic Community

Bottom takeaway:
The prophets didn't speak in a vacuum. God sent His messengers into real historical circumstances with a specific word for His people.

Week 4: Obadiah

Pride, Judgment & Restoration

Big Idea: God sees pride, injustice, and how we treat others—especially when they are vulnerable.

Key Scripture: Obadiah 15

"For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen: as thou hast done, i
shall be done unto thee..." —



God is concerned not only with how we worship Him, but with how we live after worship.

Week 4: Obadiah

Who was Obadiah?

His name means **“servant/worshiper of the LORD.”**
Very little is known about the prophet personally.

Obadiah is the **shortest book in the Old Testament—only 21 verses.**

His prophecy is directed primarily against **Edom**.

Although short, Obadiah addresses enormous themes: **pride, betrayal, justice, judgment, and restoration.**

Teaching Point:
The length of a message does not determine the power of the message. God can say a great deal in only 21 verses.



Week 4: Obadiah

Before Obadiah: Jacob & Esau

To understand **Israel and Edom**, we must go back to **Jacob and Esau**.

Genesis 25:21–34

21 And Isaac intreated the LORD for his wife, because she was barren: and the LORD was intreated of
him, and Rebekah his wife conceived.
22 And the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she
went to enquire of the LORD.
23 And the LORD said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be
separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the
elder shall serve the younger.
24 And when her days to be delivered were fulfilled, behold, there were twins in her womb.
25 And the first came out red, all over like an hairy garment; and they called his name Esau.
26 And after that came his brother out, and his hand took hold on Esau's heel; and his name was
called Jacob: and Isaac was threescore years old when she bare them.
27 And the boys grew: and Esau was a cunning hunter, a man of the field; and Jacob was a plain man,
dwelling in tents.
28 And Isaac loved Esau, because he did eat of his venison: but Rebekah loved Jacob.
29 And Jacob sod pottage: and Esau came from the field, and he was faint:
30 And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with that same red pottage; for I am faint: therefore
was his name called Edom.
31 And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.
32 And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birthright do to me?
33 And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto
Jacob.
34 Then Jacob gave Esau bread and pottage of lentiles; and he did eat and drink, and rose up, and
went his way: thus Esau despised his birthright.



Week 4: Obadiah

Before Obadiah: Jacob & Esau
To understand **Israel and Edom**, we must go back to **Jacob and Esau**.

Genesis 25:21–34
Esau → Edom
Jacob → Israel

Jacob and Esau were:

- Twin brothers
- Sons of Isaac and Rebekah
- Grandsons of Abraham
- Struggling with one another even before birth
- Esau eventually settled in the region of **Seir**, and his descendants became the nation of **Edom**.

Genesis 36:1, 8
36 Now these are the generations of Esau, who is Edom.
8 Thus dwelt Esau in mount Seir: Esau is Edom.

Teaching Point:
Obadiah is not describing hostility between two unrelated nations. **Edom and Israel were family.**
That makes Edom's actions even more serious.



Week 4: Obadiah

What Did Edom Do?

Obadiah 10–14

10 “And why? Because of what you did to your brother Israel. Now your sins will be exposed for all to see; ashamed and defenseless, you will be cut off forever.
11 For you deserted Israel in his time of need. You stood aloof, refusing to lift a finger to help him when invaders carried off his wealth and divided Jerusalem among them by lot; you were as one of his enemies.
12 “You should not have done it. You should not have gloated when they took him far away to foreign lands; you should not have rejoiced in the day of his misfortune; you should not have mocked in his time of need. 13 You yourselves went into the land of Israel in the day of his calamity and looted him. You made yourselves rich at his expense. 14 You stood at the crossroads and killed those trying to escape; you captured the survivors and returned them to their enemies in that terrible time of his distress.

When Jerusalem suffered, Edom:

- Stood by and watched
- Rejoiced over Judah's destruction
- Took advantage of Judah's disaster
- Participated in plundering
- Blocked escape routes
- Handed fugitives over to the enemy

Notice God's repeated warning:
“You should not have…”
(vv. 12–14)

Teaching Point:
Edom wasn't judged merely for what it **did**. Edom was also judged for what it **refused to do** when its brother was suffering.

Week 4: Obadiah

The Danger of Pride

Read Obadiah 3–4

3 “You are proud because you live in those high, inaccessible cliffs. ‘Who can ever reach us
way up here!’ you boast. Don’t fool yourselves! 4 Though you soar as high as eagles, and
build your nest among the stars, I will bring you plummeting down,” says the Lord.

Edom lived in mountainous territory and believed its location made it secure.
Their attitude was essentially:
“Who can bring me down?”
But God answered:
“Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle… thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD.” — **Obadiah 4**
Key Truth:
Pride can make us feel secure in something that cannot ultimately save us.
Edom trusted its:

- Location
- Strength
- Wealth
- Alliances
- Wisdom

But none could protect it from God's judgment.



Week 4: Obadiah

“The Pride of Your Heart Has Deceived You”

Focus on **Obadiah 3**.
3 “You are proud because you live in those high, inaccessible cliffs. ‘Who can ever reach us way up here!’ you boast. Don’t fool yourselves!

This is one of the most important statements in the book.

Pride deceives.

Pride doesn't always announce:
“I'm better than everybody.”
Sometimes pride sounds like:

- “I don't need anybody.”
- “I've got this.”
- “That could never happen to me.”
- “I did this myself.”
- “Nobody can tell me anything.”
- “I don't need God's help.”

Teaching Point:
Pride is dangerous because **it can prevent us from recognizing that we are proud.**

Week 4: Obadiah

When Someone Else Falls
Read Obadiah 12
“But thou shouldest not have looked on the day of thy brother…”
Edom didn't simply watch Judah suffer.

They celebrated it.
This raises a heart question:
How do I respond when someone who hurt me experiences trouble?

Do I:
Secretly rejoice?
Say, “They got what they deserved”?
Spread the news?
Stand back and watch?
Or respond with mercy?

Related Scripture:
Proverbs 24:17
“Rejoice not when thine enemy falleth…”

Teaching Point:
God is concerned not only with **what we do**, but with **what another person's downfall reveals about our heart.**

Week 4: Obadiah

“As You Have Done…”
Read Obadiah 15
“As thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee…”

This introduces one of Obadiah's central principles:
God holds nations and people accountable for their actions.

Edom had:
Watched suffering → Judgment would come upon Edom.
Plundered others → Edom would be plundered.
Helped cut off fugitives → Edom itself would face destruction.
This isn't simply “karma.”

Biblically, this is divine justice.
God sees.
God remembers.
God judges rightly.

Related Scripture: Galatians 6:7
“Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”

Week 4: Obadiah

The Day of the LORD
Obadiah 15
“For the day of the LORD is near upon all the heathen…”
The prophecy suddenly becomes larger than Edom.

Obadiah moves from:

Edom's judgment
to
the Day of the LORD.

In the prophets, **the Day of the LORD** describes God's decisive intervention in human affairs—bringing **judgment against evil and vindication/restoration for His people**.

We encountered this theme in **Joel**, and now it appears again in **Obadiah**.

Teaching Connection:
Joel asks us to **return to God** because the Day is coming.
Obadiah reminds us that **God's justice will ultimately prevail** when that Day comes.

Week 4: Obadiah

But There Is Hope

Obadiah doesn't end with destruction.

Read Obadiah 17
“But upon mount Zion shall be deliverance…”

Notice the transition:
Judgment → Deliverance
Defeat → Restoration
Loss → Possession

God promises that His people will not remain defeated forever.

Teaching Point:
God's judgment is not the final word for His people.

Restoration is coming.
This is a recurring message throughout the Minor Prophets:
Sin is serious.
Judgment is real.
But God still offers hope and restoration.



Week 4: Obadiah

The Kingdom Shall Be the LORD's"

Obadiah ends with an extraordinary statement.

Read Obadiah 21

"...and the kingdom shall be the LORD'S."

After everything—

Pride

Conflict

Betrayal

Violence

Judgment

Deliverance

Restoration

—the final word is:

THE KINGDOM BELONGS TO GOD.

- Human kingdoms rise.
- Human kingdoms fall.
- Nations change.
- Leaders change.
- Power shifts.

But **God's sovereign rule remains.**

Teaching Point:

Obadiah begins with a proud nation saying, essentially, **"Who can bring me down?"**

It ends by answering:

God can—because ultimately, the kingdom belongs to Him.

Week 4: Obadiah

What Does Obadiah Teach Us Today?

Five Lessons from Obadiah

Pride can deceive us. — Obadiah 3
God cares how we treat people who are vulnerable. — Obadiah 10–14
Don't celebrate another person's downfall. — Obadiah 12
God holds us accountable for our actions. — Obadiah 15
God has the final word. — Obadiah 21

Personal Reflection
Ask yourself:
Where might pride be hiding in my heart?
How do I respond when someone else is struggling?
Have I ever stood by when I should have stepped in?
Am I trusting my security—or trusting God?

Discussion



Why do you think God took Edom's treatment of Judah so seriously?

Discussion



What does Obadiah 3 mean when it says **“the pride of thine heart hath deceived thee”?**

What's the difference between confidence and pride?



Discussion

Why can it be tempting to rejoice when someone who has hurt us experiences trouble?



Discussion

What does **“as thou hast done, it shall be done unto thee”** teach us about God's justice?



Discussion

How does knowing **“the kingdom shall be the LORD's”** change how Christians view temporary difficulties?



Discussion

What warning from Obadiah speaks most strongly to you personally?

Conclusion

DON'T LET YOUR HIGH PLACE BECOME YOUR HIDING PLACE.
Edom thought its mountains made it untouchable.
But not:

Position
Achievement
Money
Education
Connections
Title
Ministry
or human strength
can replace dependence upon God.

Obadiah reminds us:

Walk humbly.
Show mercy.
Practice justice.
Trust God.

Because ultimately—
“THE KINGDOM SHALL BE THE LORD'S.”
Obadiah 21
Closing Prayer Focus:
“Lord, reveal any pride within us. Give us compassionate hearts toward those who are hurting. Help us walk humbly, act justly, extend mercy, and remember that everything ultimately belongs to You. Amen.”

Thank You

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