

LITERARY PROPHETS

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There are 16 Literary Prophets, and their activities cover a little over 400 years. From 850 B.C. to 432 B.C. They fall in the Old Testament periods of: The Divided Kingdom, Judah Alone; Captivity; and Restoration.

JOEL

“Jehovah Is God”

DATE: 830 - 825 B.C. A Prophet of Judah and Jerusalem.

BACKGROUND: It is set in Judah and Jerusalem. No kings are mentioned. The book occasioned by an invading locust army.

JONAH

“Dove”

DATE: 780 - 775 B.C. Prophet of Israel.

BACKGROUND: Jonah was from Gath-hepher. He was a prophet in the days of Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:23-25). It is written primarily from the historical point of view....the history of a man, a nation, and God.

AMOS

“Burden-bearer”

DATE: 760 B.C. Prophet of Israel.

BACKGROUND: Amos was from the village of Tekoa, about 6 miles south of Bethlehem. He had been a herdsman and a dresser of sycamore trees. He prophesied in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and of Jeroboam, king of Israel. (II Kings 14,15; II Chron. 24-27). The borders of both Israel and Judah had been spread to their original size. It was a time of Luxury, and Moral, Political and Religious corruption.

HOSEA

“Salvation”

DATE: 750 - 735 B.C. Prophet to the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

BACKGROUND: Nothing is said of his early life or home. His ministry coincided with the reigns of: Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and Jeroboam II of Israel. (II Kings 14-20; II Chron. 24-32). It was an era of peace, plenty, prosperity and luxury. The condition of the people is perhaps summed up in the one word “whoredom.”

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ISAIAH

“Jehovah Is Salvation”

DATE: 740 - 700 B.C. Prophet in Judah and Jerusalem.

BACKGROUND: He was a prophet during the reign of four kings of Judah (Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah) and at the Fall of Israel. There was a rich class and poor class of people and a wide gap between. Corrupt government and Idolatrous religion.

MICAH

“Who Is Like Jehovah”

DATE: 740 - 700 B.C. Prophet in Judah.

BACKGROUND: He was of the village of Moresheth-gath. He was a contemporary of Isaiah, and ministered under the same kings. (II Kings 14-20; II Chron. 24-32). It was a time when the people were under the control of: “false prophets” (2:11) “priests who taught for hire” (3:11). “Rulers in their greed were as cannibals” (3:1-3). And “Judges, judged for a bribe” (7:3).

NAHUM

“Consolation”

DATE: 663 -612 B.C. Prophet of Judah.

BACKGROUND: Nahum the Elkoshite...but where is Elkosh located? Lived during the reign of the kings: Manasseh; Amon and Josiah. The book identifies the fall of No-amon, the Egyptian Thebes (3:8). This was carried out by Ahurbanipal, king of Assyria about the year 663 B.C. And Nineveh was destroyed by Medes and Chaldeans 612 B.C.

HABAKKUK

“Embrace”

DATE: 630 - 620 B.C. Prophet of Judah.

BACKGROUND: Nothing of the early life of the prophet is known. Most of the background is the same as Nahum. Was a contemporary of Jeremiah, Nahum, and Zephaniah.

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ZEPHANIAH

“Jehovah Hides”

DATE: 630 - 620 B.C. Prophet of Judah.

BACKGROUND: See Nahum and Habakkuk, and Jeremiah.

JEREMIAH

DATE: 627 - 561 B.C. Prophet in Judah, then carried to Egypt.

BACKGROUND: He was raised to be a priest, but God called him to be a prophet. He served during the reigns of: Josiah, Jehozhaz, Jehoiakim, Jehoiachin, and Zedekiah. Also when Gedaliah was governor. It is the time just before; during; and after the fall of Jerusalem to Babylon. Included the beginning of the captivity in Babylon.

OBADIAH

“Servant of Jehovah”

DATE: 845 or 587 B.C. Wide difference of opinion concerning the date of book.

BACKGROUND: The prophet refers to an attack on Jerusalem in which the Edomites helped. That can well be narrowed down to two possibilities: the days of Jehoram when the Philistines and Arabians attacked the city, the early date. Or the destruction of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, the late date.

DANIEL

“God Is My Judge”

DATE: 605 - 530 B.C. Prophet in Babylon during the Captivity.

BACKGROUND: Carried to Babylon by Nebuchadrezzar and lived into the reign of Darius king of Persia.

EZEKIEL

“God Strengthens”

DATE: 590 - 560 B.C. Prophet in Babylon during the Captivity.

BACKGROUND: See Daniel and later part of Jeremiah.

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HAGGAI

“Festival”

DATE: 520 B.C. In Jerusalem, Post-Exile prophet during second year of reign of Darius.

BACKGROUND: Judah had returned from Babylon under Zerubbabel in 536 B.C. Now sixteen years later the temple had not been rebuilt. The message is a simple but earnest warning...”**Build The Temple.**”

ZECHARIAH

“Whom Jehovah Remembers”

DATE: 520 B.C. In Jerusalem, Post-Exile prophet, see Haggai.

BACKGROUND: See Haggai. Much confusion about the last 6 chapters. It seems most likely that the final 6 chapters were written by the same author, but a much later date, dealing with different problems.

MALACHI

“My Messenger”

DATE: 445 - 432 B.C. The content of the prophecy fits well into the conditions described by Nehemiah.

BACKGROUND: First exiles had returned during 536 B.C. under Zerubbabel and Joshua the priest. Encouraged by Haggai and Zechariah, the people rebuilt the temple between 520 and 516 B.C. Ezra had returned with a second group of exiles in 458 B.C. Nehemiah returned to Jerusalem to rebuild the walls of the city about 444-443 B.C. The conditions of the people as revealed in Nehemiah and the bold and courageous attack of Malachi against the problems which the latter sets forth in his book point to the contemporary dates of the two.