

THROUGH THE BIBLE IN A YEAR

12/10 – Hos 5-8, Rev 1
12/11 – Hos 9-11, Rev 2
12/12 – Hos 12-14, Rev 3
12/13 – Joel 1-3, Rev 4

12/14 – Amos 1-3, Rev 5
12/15 – Amos 4-6, Rev 6
12/16 – Amos 7-9, Rev 7
12/17 – Obad 1, Rev 8

** Summaries/outlines from The Holy Bible, Contemporary English Version, ©1995 by the American Bible Society.

HOSEA

Hosea was a prophet in the northern kingdom during its final years as a nation. In the first three chapters of this book, Hosea's family life became a living picture of the message he preached to his country. The Lord told Hosea to marry a prostitute, as a way of showing how unfaithful Israel had been. Then the Lord told Hosea what to name his children, and these names were reminders that Israel was going to be punished. But Hosea was told to love his unfaithful wife, and his love was to be a picture of the Lord's continuing love for unfaithful Israel.

The rest of the book emphasizes the agreement that the Lord had made with Israel. This agreement demanded that Israel and the Lord be loyal and faithful to each other. The Lord had always lived up to the agreement, but the people had broken it time after time. They had trusted their own military strength and the power of foreign countries, rather than depending on the Lord to protect their nation. And the people had worshiped other gods and trusted them to provide good crops and large herds of livestock.

In this book the Lord put Israel and Judah on trial and charged them with breaking their agreement with him. They were guilty and would be punished.

But the Lord still loved his people in spite of everything they had done. And so he promised to forgive them and bless them again after they learned to be faithful to him.

OUTLINE

- I. Hosea's Family is a Picture of the Lord's Unfaithful People (1:1-3:5)
- II. The Lord Accuses Israel, Judah, and Their Leaders (4:1-5:15)
- III. The People Pretend to Turn to the Lord (6:1-7:10)
- IV. Israel Refused to Trust the Lord (7:11-8:14)
- V. Israel Will Get the Punishment it Deserves (9:1-16)
- VI. Warnings for Israel (10:1-15)
- VII. God's Love for His People (11:1-11)
- VIII. Israel and Judah are Doomed (11:12-13:16)
- IX. Future Forgiveness and Blessings (14:1-9)

BIBLE BLURB (from @biblesummary)

Hos5: "Hear this, O priests, O king! Israel shall stumble in his guilt. Ephraim is crushed in judgement. I will leave until they seek me."

Hos6: Come, let us return to the LORD. On the third day he will raise us up. "I desire steadfast love, not offerings. Israel is defiled."

Hos7: "The sins of Ephraim are revealed. They are like a heated oven. They call to Egypt, go to Assyria. Woe to them for they have strayed!"

Hos8: "A vulture is over Israel. The calf of Samaria shall be broken. The LORD will punish their sins. For Israel has forgotten his Maker."

Hos9: Rejoice not, O Israel! The days of punishment have come. "I will bereave them. I will drive them from my house." God will reject them.

Hos10: Israel is a rich vine. The LORD will break down their altars. "Nations shall be gathered against them." It is time to seek the LORD.

Hos11: "When Israel was a child, I loved him. But the sword shall devour them. How can I give you up, O Ephraim? I will bring them home."

Hos12: "Jacob fought with God. Ephraim has said, 'I am rich.' But I am the LORD. I spoke through the prophets." The LORD will repay Ephraim.

Hos13: "They make idols of silver. But I am the LORD. I will tear them open. Ephraim's sin is stored up. Shall I redeem them from death?"

Hos14: O Israel, return to the LORD. "I will heal their apostasy. They shall blossom like the vine. Whoever is wise, let him understand."

JOEL

Joel was a prophet who had watched swarm after swarm of locusts cover the land of Israel and wipe out the crops. He described these locusts as though they were an enemy army destroying everything in sight, and he said that the Lord had sent the locusts as punishment for the sins of Israel. Joel also used the locusts as a way of talking about a real army that was going to attack Israel. But the Lord promised that if the people would turn back to him, he would forgive them and bless them once again.

The locusts caused horrible destruction, but it was only a small taste of what will happen on the judgment day of the Lord. At that time the Lord will put all nations on trial for what they have done to his people and those who are guilty will be punished.

OUTLINE

- I. Locusts and an Enemy Army (1:1-2:17)
- II. The Lord Will Bless His People (2:18-32)
- III. The Lord Will Punish the Nations (3:1-21)

BIBLE BLURB (from @biblesummary)

Joel1: What the locust swarm has left other locusts have eaten. The fields are destroyed. Lament, O priests! The day of the LORD is near.

Joel2: A great army is on the mountains. Return to the LORD for he is merciful. "Fear not, I will restore you. I will pour out my Spirit."

Joel3: "I will gather all the nations for judgement. For the day of the LORD is near. Jerusalem will be inhabited for all generations."

AMOS

Amos wasn't a professional prophet and had never been trained to be a prophet. But when the Lord gave him messages for the people in the northern kingdom, Amos left his hometown of Tekoa in Judah and went to preach in the town of Bethel in Israel, probably at the famous place of worship.

In this book, Amos first condemns many of the nearby nations, and then he condemns the people of Israel, especially the rich who lived in luxury. They had great power and used it to rob the poor and to make slaves of them. And even though most of the people were worshipping other gods besides the Lord, they still expected the Lord to protect them. But Amos warned the people that they would be punished.

OUTLINE

- I. Crimes of the Nations Will be Punished (1:1-3:2)
- II. Israel and Samaria Will be Destroyed (3:3-6:14)
- III. Five Visions of Israel's Punishment (7:1-9:10)
- IV. Israel's Bright Future (9:11-15)

BIBLE BLURB (from @biblesummary)

Amos1: The LORD says: "I will punish Damascus. The remnant of the Philistines shall perish. I will send fire upon Tyre, Edom and Ammon."

Amos2: "I will send fire upon Moab and Judah. I will punish Israel. They sell the poor for a pair of sandals. The mighty shall flee naked."

Amos3: Does a lion roar when it has no prey? The LORD reveals his plans to the prophets. "On the day I punish Israel, I will punish Bethel."

Amos4: "You cows of Bashan will be led away with hooks. I withheld the rain. I overthrew some of you. Prepare to meet your God, O Israel!"

Amos5: "Fallen is virgin Israel. Seek me and live. You shall not dwell in your houses. I despise your feasts. Let justice roll like waters."

Amos6: Woe to those who are at ease in Zion, who are not grieved over Joseph. The LORD declares: "I will raise up a nation against you."

Amos7: The LORD showed me locusts, fire and a plumb line. Amaziah told Amos, "Flee to Judah." Amos said, "You shall die in an unclean land."

Amos8: The LORD said: "The end has come upon Israel. I will not forget your deeds. I will send a famine of hearing the words of the LORD."

Amos9: The LORD said: "Strike the pillars until the earth shakes. I will sieve the house of Israel. In that day I will restore my people."

OBADIAH

Obadiah was a prophet, but nothing else is known about him. His name, meaning "worshiper of the Lord," was fairly common in ancient Israel.

Obadiah wrote about the nation of Edom, which was south of the Dead Sea. The Edomites had been cruel to the Lord's people Israel, and so the Lord was going to punish them and give their land to Israel.

OUTLINE

- I. Edom's Pride and Punishment (1-9)
- II. Edom's Cruelty (10-14)
- III. Victory for Israel (15-21)

BIBLE BLURB (from @biblesummary)

Ob1: The LORD says of Edom: "What disaster awaits you! You stood aloof when strangers entered Jerusalem. Saviours shall rule Mount Esau."

REVELATION

This book tells what John had seen in a vision about God's message and about what Jesus Christ had said and done. The message has three main parts: (1) There are evil forces at work in the world, and Christians may have to suffer and die; (2) Jesus is Lord, and he will conquer all people and powers who oppose God; and (3) God has wonderful rewards in store for his faithful people, who remain faithful to him, especially for those who lose their lives in his service.

This was a powerful message of hope for those early Christians who had to suffer or die for their faith. In this book they learned that, in spite of the cruel power of the Roman empire, the Lamb of God would win the final victory. And this gave them the courage to be faithful.

Because this book is so full of visions that use ideas and word pictures from the Old Testament, it was like a book with secret messages for the early Christians. The book could be passed around and be understood by Christians, but an official of the Roman empire would not be able to understand it. For example, when the fall of Babylon is described, the early Christians knew that this pointed to the fall of the Roman empire. This knowledge gave them hope.

At the beginning of this book there are seven letters to seven churches. These letters show what different groups of the Lord's followers will do in times of persecution.

The author uses many powerful images to describe God's power and judgment. The vision of God's throne and of the scroll and the Lamb show that God and Christ are in control of all human and supernatural events. Opening seven seals, blowing the seven trumpets, and emptying the seven bowls are among the visions that show God's fierce judgment on the world.

After the suffering has ended, God's faithful people will receive the greatest blessing of all.

OUTLINE

- I. A Prophecy from John (1:1-8)
- II. A Vision of the Living Lord (1:9-20)
- III. Letters to the Seven Churches (2:1-3:22)
- IV. A Vision of Worship in Heaven (4:1-11)
- V. A Scroll with Seven Seals (5:1-6:17)
- VI. Worship in Front of God's Throne (7:1-17)
- VII. Seven Trumpets (8:1-11:19)
- VIII. A Dragon and Two Beasts (12:1-13:18)
- IX. Visions of God's Judgment and Protection (14:1-15:8)
- X. Seven Bowls of God's Anger (16:1-21)
- XI. God's Enemies are Defeated (17:1-20:10)
- XII. The Final Judgment (20:11-15)
- XIII. A New Heaven and a New Earth (21:1-8)
- XIV. New Jerusalem (21:9-22:5)
- XV. Christ Will Soon Return (22:6-21)

BIBLE BLURB (from @biblesummary)

Rev1: The revelation of Jesus Christ to John. A voice said, "Write to the churches." I saw one like a son of man, his face was like the sun.

Rev2: "Ephesus, renew your first love. Smyrna, be faithful until death. Pergamum, some hold false teaching. Thyatira, you tolerate Jezebel."

Rev3: "Sardis, you are not alive but dead. Philadelphia, you have endured in my word. Laodicea, you are lukewarm so I will spit you out."

Rev4: I saw one seated on the throne in heaven. The four living creatures say, "Holy, holy, holy." The elders say, "You created all things."

Rev5: A Lamb standing as though slain took the scroll with seven seals. The creatures, elders and myriad angels sang, "Worthy is the Lamb!"

Rev6: The Lamb opened four seals and the horsemen went out to destroy. With the fifth seal I saw the martyrs. With the sixth the stars fell.

Rev7: The 144,000 were sealed from the tribes. A multitude cried, "Salvation belongs to our God." An elder said, "God will wipe every tear."

Rev8: With the seventh seal there was silence. I saw seven angels. Four angels blew their trumpets and a third of the earth was destroyed.

Getting to Know God Through His Book - 4 Questions - Ask...

Insight—what does the passage say? Paraphrase the main point(s) and the commands to follow, promises to claim, examples to follow (or avoid), etc.

Question—what don't I understand? Need to know more about? How does this passage make me feel?

Praise—what does this passage teach me about God? Turn what the passage says into praise for the Lord's goodness, power, holiness, wisdom, etc.

Apply—what is God saying to me from this passage? Confess how you have not followed it. Pray, asking God to help you obey. Get quiet and ask God to speak to you.

Journal—write out your prayers, thoughts, responses to God and His Word

HOW TO PRAY

Scripture is God speaking to us. Prayer is us speaking to and listening to God. Jesus gave us the model in the Lord's Prayer (Mt 6). Keep your relationship fresh with the Lord by both reading and praying - two way communication. Remember to look up like Jesus did when He prayed.

1. Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name – focus on God, adore, praise, thank Him – long to see His glory and honor.
2. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done – ask for what you know will please Him, pray back the Scripture – that is His will.
3. Give us this day our daily bread – ask for your needs and others to be met.
4. Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us – ask for forgiveness, from God, and from others you may have hurt. Ask God to help you forgive and restore others too. Ask Him to get rid of bitterness and have love & compassion for those who have hurt you.
5. And lead us not into temptation – ask God to take over your day, protect you and others from evil.
6. For thine is the kingdom, power & glory – end by re-focusing on God, His kingdom, power, and glory!
7. Listen – ask God to speak to you by His Spirit – always test what you hear by His Word.
8. Pray the Blind Bartimaeus Prayer (Mark 10) – Tell God what you feel, what you want, and ask God what you should do to get what you want (if what you want is right).