



**Week 20: The Northern Kingdom, Israel, Falls
(2 Kings 15 – 17; Joel; Isaiah; Micah)**

Israel’s first king, Jeroboam, quickly established a pattern of idolatry and syncretism (mixing elements of true and false worship) from which the northern kingdom of Israel (also called Samaria) would never depart. God sent many prophets to warn the Israelite kings of the destruction that would come their way if they didn’t return to Him.

The first of these prophets was Ahijah, who gave this warning to Jeroboam’s wife: “*For the LORD will uproot Israel from this good land which He gave to their fathers, and will scatter them beyond the River*” (1 Ki. 14:15). This was a clear pronouncement of the northern kingdom’s fate if they would not repent—they would be taken captive “beyond the River” (Euphrates) at the hands of the coming Assyrians.

Many other prophets followed, repeating God’s warnings to the Israelites and their kings, pleading with them to repent of the oppression of the poor, greedy self-centered lifestyles, and abuse of others in the name of the Lord. If they remained hardened in their disobedience they would suffer the awful fate of captivity. Among those who gave such warnings were the prophets Amos, Hosea, Isaiah and Micah. But after the death of Jeroboam II, prosperity came to an end and Israel faced a period of continuous disaster. No prophetic figure was able to arrest the steady internal decay.

From 756–722BCE, there were six kings, the last being Hoshea, a conspirator who had assassinated the previous king. Finally, Samaria fell to the Assyrians after a 20-year siege begun under Shalmaneser and then carried out by his successor, Sargon II. The leading citizens of Samaria were deported to Assyria and colonists from other lands were imported to fill their places. (2 Kings 17-18)

Indeed, the Israelites were taken away into captivity—“beyond the River” as God had warned their first king two centuries earlier. It has been estimated that over 40,000 Israelites were deported out of Israel by the Assyrians, while thousands of others were killed or fled for their lives. Many of the remaining Israelites who survived and stayed in Samaria eventually intermarried with the Assyrian people who took control of the land. It is these intermarrying, “impure” folks who would later become the “Samaritans” who were looked down upon in Jesus’ day.

Week Twenty Reading Plan

Joel 1:1-8; 2:12-32	Repentance and Hope
2 Chronicles 26:1-23	King Uzziah’s Downfall
Isaiah 6:1-13	God Calls Isaiah to Prophecy
Isaiah 1:1-26	Sin Needs to Cease
2 Kings 15:27-16:20	Assyria Begins Taking Captives
Micah 7:14-20	Prayer and Praise
2 Kings 17:1-23	The Fall of Israel

The southern kingdom called Judah lasted almost 135 years longer. This seems to be largely because it was not nearly as unstable or corrupted by idolatry. But the prophets’ cry continued for Judah as it does for today—return to the Lord and walk in His loving ways!

Judah’s Kings	Year	Israel’s Kings
	853	Ahaziah
	852	Joram
Jehoram	848	
Ahaziah	841	Jehu
Athaliah	841	
Joash	835	
	814	Jehoahaz
	798	Jehoash
Amaziah	796	
	793	Jeroboam II
Uzziah	792	
	753	Zechariah
	752	Shallum
	752	Menaham
	742	Pekahiah
	740	Pekah
Jotham	740	
Ahaz	735	
	732	Hoshea
	722	Fall of Israel
Hezekiah	716	
Manasseh	687	
Amon	642	
Josiah	640	
Jehoahaz	609	
Jehoiakim	609	
Jehoiachin	598	
Zedekiah	597	
Fall of Judah	586	

See Week 18 for the first 90 years of the two kingdoms

THE PROPHETS to the KINGS

OBADIAH – *Servant of the LORD* (840's BC)

Prophet to Edom
1:1-16 Edom's doom
1:17-21 Israel's Restoration
Pride goes before a fall!

JONAH – *Dove* (825-782BC)

Tried to take flight from the LORD's call
Prophet of Israel to Assyria
1-2 Repentance of Jonah
3-4 Repentance of a City
God's infinite mercy for all people contrasted with our reluctance to share His mercy
*And Jonah stalked And God is still waiting
To his shaded seat For a host of Jonahs
And waited for God To come around
To come around To His way of loving!
To his way of thinking.*

ISAIAH – *Salvation is of the LORD* (740-700BC)

Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah's reigns)
Prophet to Judah
He appeals to Judah to turn back to God or to be driven from the land. But in the midst of it all, he promises a glorious future! The Messiah will bring salvation.
Isaiah is the Bible in miniature with 66 chapters
Ch. 1 begins with sin and transgression
Chs. 1-39 are filled with judgment upon the sinful people
Ch. 39 ends with punishment and captivity
Ch. 40 begins with comfort
Chs. 40-66 declares a message of hope with a Suffering Sovereign will enact Salvation
Ch. 66 ends with a new heaven and a new earth
Central theme of Section 2 is Isaiah 53 Central theme of the NT is the Cross
Isaiah speaks more of the Messiah than any other prophet.

NAHUM – *Comfort* (640-630BC)

The destruction of their cruel enemy was comfort
Prophet to Assyria
1-3 Judgement of Nineveh, capital city of Assyria
Jonah preached to this city 150 years earlier in which they repented.

JEREMIAH – *Yahweh Throws or Establishes* (627-585BC—last 5 kings)

A single heartbroken prophet with a heartbreaking message whose unpopular message led to his stoning in Egypt
Prophet to Judah
Commissioned at a young age to announce the last appeal of the LORD before destruction, he labored for more than 40 years proclaiming a warning to the stiff-necked people in the time of Josiah to Babylonian captivity.
The sad message caused him great personal grief, he is called the weeping prophet. But...he alone sets the Babylonian captivity at 70 years and tells of the coming new covenant!
Evil=81 times, Sin=53 times, Captive(ity)=51 times

LAMENTATIONS – *a mournful dirge or tears* as cried by Jeremiah (586BC—covers the year Jerusalem was sacked by Babylon)
Describes the funeral of a city. In the midst of this 5-poem dirge Jeremiah triumphantly cries out, "Great is Thy Faithfulness."
This is written acrostically with the 22-letter Hebrew alphabet.

JOEL – *The LORD is God* (837-800BC—Joash's reign)

Message of the OT = *The LORD is God*; Message of the NT = *Jesus is LORD*
Prophet to Judah
1) historically the nation is desolate as all vegetation is devoured
2) prophetically deliverance will be by Messiah in the form of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2)

AMOS – *Burden-bearer* (810-785BC—Jehoahaz to Jeroboam II's reign)

Shepherd-turned-prophet bears up under his burden to declare judgment
Prophet to Israel
He lived in a time of material prosperity and moral decay. Israel needed correction for the sins of social injustices. He gives a message of judgment to come. At that time it was discipline time. But after judgment is blessing.

HOSEA – *Salvation* (785-725BC—Jeroboam II to the fall of Israel) 60 years—fitting

that he who emphasized the longsuffering love of the LORD, should have the longest career of the prophets!

Prophet to Israel
1-3 Biography - Personal: Faithful Hosea/Unfaithful Gomer
4-14 Historical - National: Faithful Yahweh/Unfaithful Israel

His life communicates the heart of God. Judgment is never God's last word!

MICAH – *Who is like the LORD* (740-695BC)

Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah, end of Israel)
The meaning of his name is used in 7:18
Prophet to Judah & Israel
The champion of the poor
1:2 Hear all you (sinful) people
3:1 Hear O (corrupt) leaders of Israel
6:2 Hear O you (hopeful) mountains
Showed the sins of the Israelites, the inevitable judgment they deserved, and the eventual restoration.
Judgment and restoration are interwoven.

ZEPHANIAH – *Yahweh Hides*: The Lord hides His wrath

desiring to rather dance with us. 3:17
640-610BC—Josiah's reign
Prophet to Judah
1 Denounces sin
2 Pronounces and warns of judgment (via Babylon)
3 Announces hope of restoration
Day of the Lord is used 20x

HABAKKUK – *One who embraces or clings* (610-600BC—Jehoiakim)

He chose to cling to God regardless of what happens to his nation
Prophet to Judah & Babylon
1 God and Habakkuk discuss Judah
2 God and Habakkuk discuss Babylon
3 Habakkuk's hope in God's deliverance
How can God be just and use a more wicked nation to judge Judah?
Paul's favorite verse seems to be *The just shall live by faith!* 2:4