



LOGOS



HOSEA

Session 5: Hosea

13 June 2023

Book of the Twelve

Photo by [Mick Haupt](#) on [Unsplash](#)





The Book of the Twelve

8th Century BCE – Isaiah

Amos

Hosea

Micah

7th Century BCE – Jeremiah

Nahum

Zephaniah

Habakkuk

6th Century BCE – Ezekiel

Haggai

Zechariah

Malachi

The outliers- likely postexilic

Jonah

Obadiah

Joel



The Book of the Twelve

8th Century BCE – Isaiah

Amos (3)

Hosea (1)

Micah (6)

7th Century BCE – Jeremiah

Nahum (7)

Zephaniah (9)

Habakkuk(8)

6th Century BCE – Ezekiel

Haggai (10)

Zechariah (11)

Malachi (12)

The outliers- likely postexilic

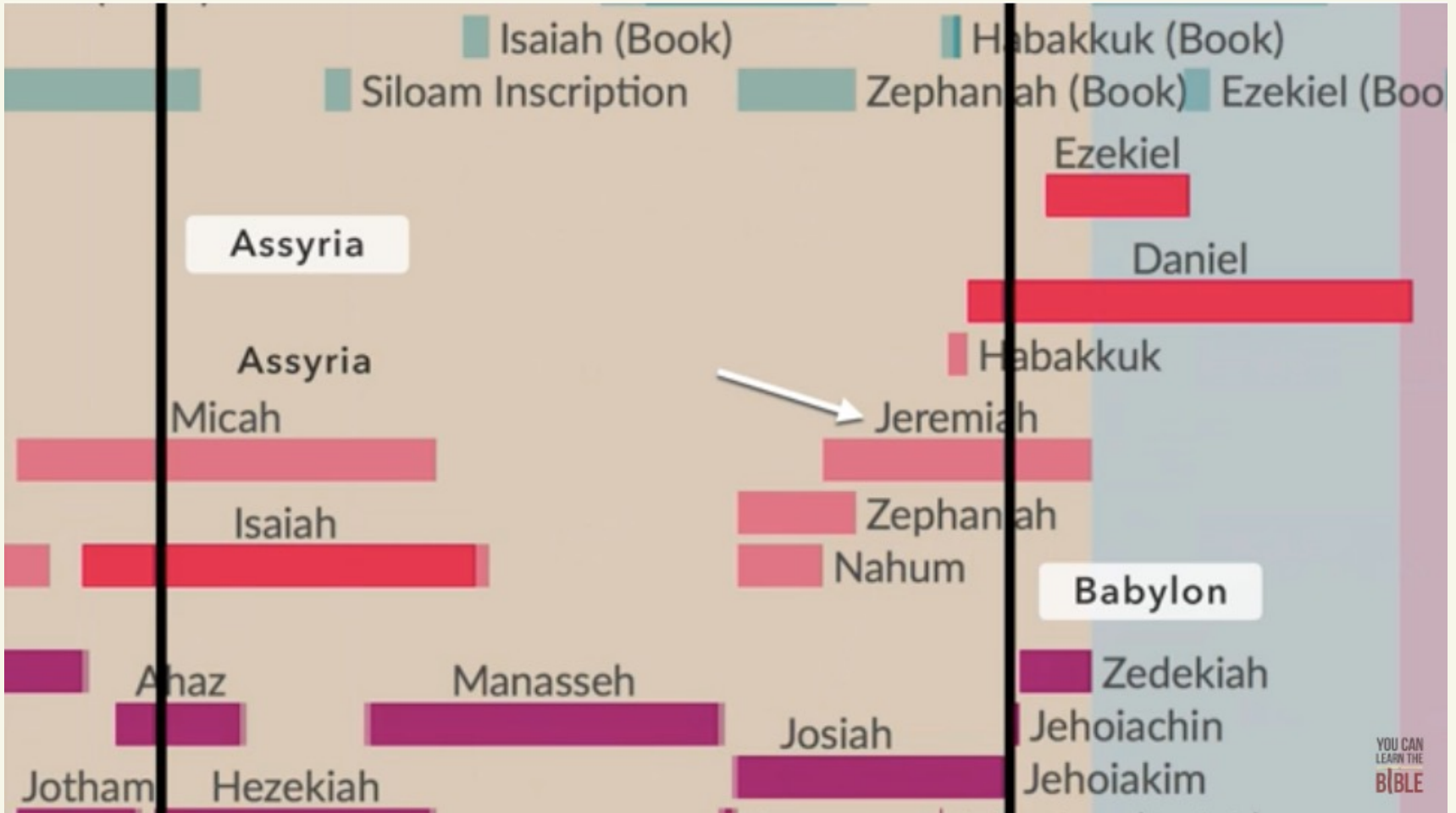
Jonah (5)

Obadiah (4)

Joel (2)

LOGOS

The Book of the Twelve



Layered Authorship and Editing

8th Century

Hosea

Collector – fled to Judah, southern kingdom,
during Assyrian assault

7th Century

Josianic redactors – Deuteronomist influence,
shaping law, practice and history

6th Century

Exilic redactors – during exile in Babylon

Structure of the Book

Chp 1-3 Hosea/Gomer, husband/wife: Yahweh/Israel

1. Hosea commanded to marry Gomer,
3 children born and named
2. Parallel to Yahweh/Israel
3. Reconciliation with Gomer parallel to Israel

Chp 4-11 Oracles against Israel

Parent/child: Yahweh/Israel

Chp 12-14 Weaves together parent/child &
husband/wife metaphors

Return, reconciliation, fruitfulness

Context of the Book

Social turmoil: inequality, depleted resources,
threat of invasion and exile.

Cultic turmoil: Hosea condemns religious practices
Emphasis on idolatry, and purity culture?
Is Hosea proposing a return to the old/pure religion?
Is this 'new' theology or later redaction?

Context of the Book

Social turmoil: inequality, depleted resources,
threat of invasion and exile.

Cultic turmoil: Hosea condemns religious practices
Emphasis on idolatry, and purity culture?
Is Hosea proposing a return to the old/pure religion?
Is this 'new' theology or later redaction?

Canaanite Cultic Practice

Ras Shamra Tablets -discovered 50 years ago on the Syrian coast. Gives evidences of Canaanite practices e.g. the fertility cults and festivals.

Storm god Baal was killed by Mot, god of barrenness and death, depicted by the hot months between May and September when no rain fell. Baal's sister-lover, the goddess Anat, came to the rescue slaying Mot and bringing Baal back to life. Their passionate intercourse then initiated the rainy season which begins in October.

Re-enactment of story during festival season.



Metaphor

The better known *vehicle* is used to explore the lesser known *tenor*

Tenor: lesser known

God's covenantal love

Israel's sin of idolatry

God's punishment of Israel

Israel's repentance/return

God's renewal of
covenantal love

Vehicle: better known

a husband's marital love

a wife's sexual infidelity

a husband's beating of wife

a wife's return/repentance

a husband's renewal of
marital love

Marriage

8th century understanding of marriage in Israel

Patrilineal – inheritance and descent thro male line

Patrimonial – power and authority with oldest male

Patrilocal – women would leave their household to enter the husband's father's household, only becoming a full member of this new household once she had born a son.

Women were 'owned' by the male lead of the household.

Women were commodities to bear sons.

Guarding women's purity was crucial.

Adultery a capital offence (technically for both men and women, but practically only for women).

Marriage

Honor/shame value system

Male honor achieved through wealth, courage, aggression, providing for family, and the extent of his children. A man was shamed by a lack of wealth and power.

Female honor was derived from the men they were connected to. Female honor was depicted through weakness, deference, modesty, and sexual purity. A woman was shamed if she was strong willed, independent, assertive, disrespectful of men, and sexually immodest.

Group Discussion

Group 1

Read Hosea chapters 1-3.

Discuss gender roles and why the use of the husband/wife metaphor is theologically problematic.

How might it be problematic for 8th-6th century Israelites?

How might it be problematic today?

Group 2

Read Hosea chapters 6-7.

Discuss the depiction of God's anger, and the call to repentance and purity.

How do Christians understand this type of theology alongside the love of God revealed in Jesus?

Group Discussion

Does Christianity need original sin and the threat of punishment (hell/exile) to convince people of their need for God?

Are there other ways to understand and talk about reconciliation with God?

Do we hold our scriptures as

important?

sacred?

revelatory?

when they contain texts of terror like Hosea.

What do we do with these texts?