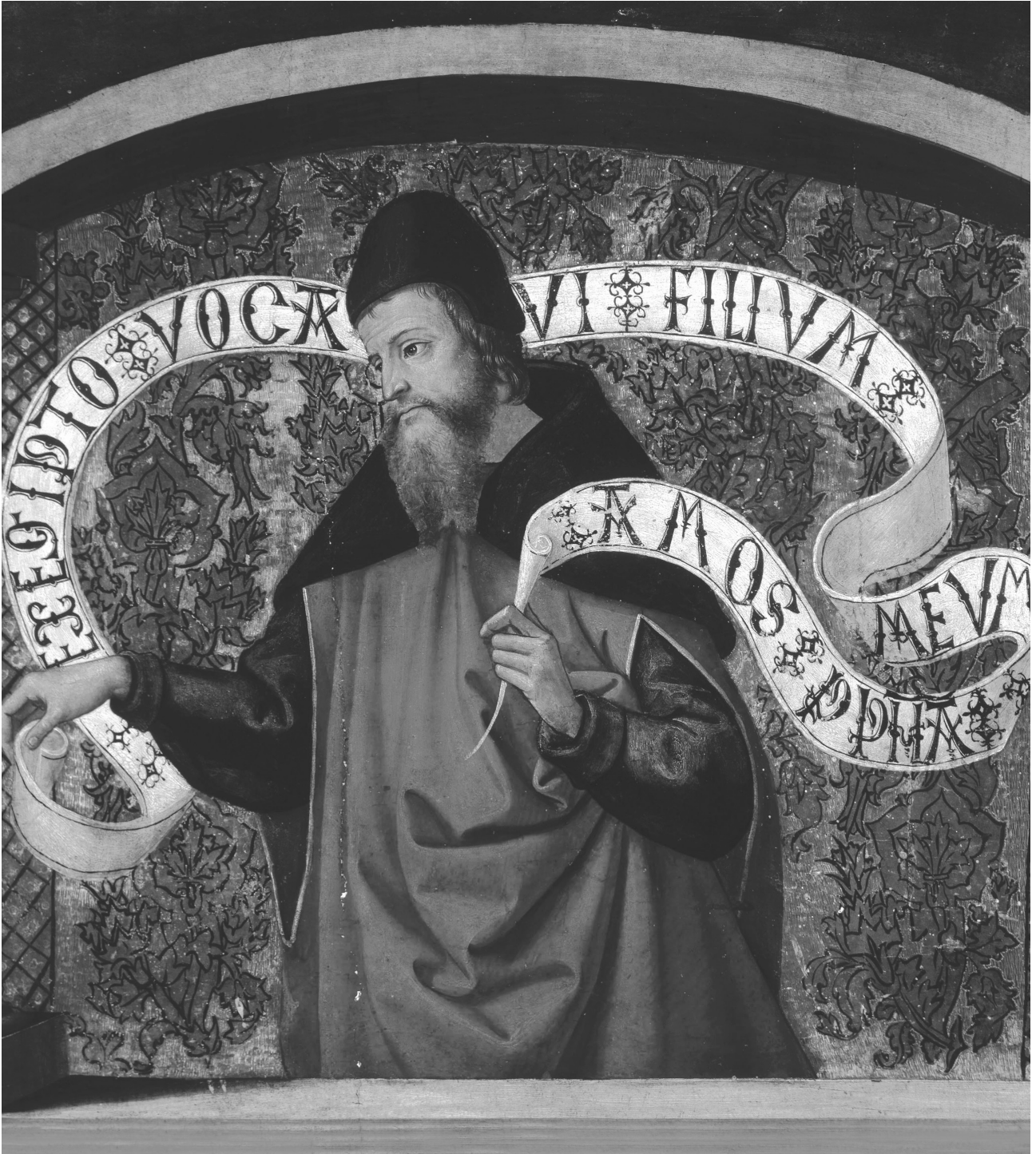


Study Guide





LifeLight

LifeLight Expands

Available NOW!

The Bible: An Overview
 Genesis, Pt. 1
 Genesis, Pt. 2
 Exodus, Pt. 1
 Exodus, Pt. 2
 Wilderness Wanderings
 Joshua
 Judges
 Ruth/Esther
 1 & 2 Samuel
 Life of David
 1 & 2 Kings

Ezra/Nehemiah
 Job
 Selected Psalms
 Proverbs
 Ecclesiastes/
 Song of Solomon
 Isaiah, Pt. 1
 Isaiah, Pt. 2
 Daniel
 Hosea/Joel/Amos
 Minor Prophets
 Nahum/Habakkuk/
 Zephaniah

Haggai/Zechariah/
 Malachi
 Matthew, Pt. 1
 Matthew, Pt. 2
 Mark
 Luke, Pt. 1
 Luke, Pt. 2
 John, Pt. 1
 John, Pt. 2
 Acts, Pt. 1
 Acts, Pt. 2
 Romans, Pt. 1

Romans, Pt. 2
 1 Corinthians
 2 Corinthians
 Galatians/Philippians/
 Colossians
 Ephesians/
 1 & 2 Thessalonians
 Timothy/Titus/Philemon
 Hebrews
 James/Jude
 1 & 2 Peter
 1, 2, 3 John
 Revelation

LifeLight Foundations

Baptism
 Bible Feasts
 Creation, New Creation
 The Christian's Mission

Heaven & Hell
 Law & Gospel
 Ministry

Miracles
 Parables
 Prayer

Prophecy
 Triune God
 Worship

LifeLight Release Schedule

2014 RELEASES

LifeLight Foundations—End Times July
 LifeLight—1 & 2 Chronicles October

2015 RELEASES

LifeLight—Jeremiah/Lamentations January
 LifeLight—Ezekiel April
 LifeLight—Obadiah/Jonah/Micah July

Getting into the Book of the Twelve

A Survey of the Minor Prophets

Distribute before session 1 for use in session 1.
Use enrichment magazine pp. 2–4.

all the pages through Malachi—how many pages are there?

Resources for Worship

Use these resources for your daily study at home and at the week’s assembly.

Hymn

God of the prophets, bless the prophets’ sons;
Elijah’s mantle o’er Elisha cast.
Each age its solemn task may claim but once;
Make each one nobler, stronger than the last.

Anoint them prophets, men who are intent
To be Your witnesses in word and deed,
Their hearts aflame, their lips made eloquent,
Their eyes awake to ev’ry human need.

Make them apostles, heralds of Your cross;
Forth let them go to tell the world of grace.
Inspired by You, may they count all but loss
And stand at last with joy before Your face.
(LSB 682:1–2, 5)

b. As you compare the pages needed for these twelve books with those for the bigger prophetic books, what do the figures suggest?

Prayer

O God of the prophets, as You spoke to Your people of old by the mouths of the prophets, speak again through their books and open our ears to hear. May the messages of the twelve Minor Prophets revive, for they comforted the people of Jacob and delivered them with confident hope. Give to us such a hope in Your Son, Jesus, who is the fulfillment of their words and the substance of which they preached. In the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

- 2. a. Read Hosea 2:16–23. Is “that day” good or bad?
- b. What does our Lord promise to do in “that day”?

Digging Deep

My Personal Study for Week 1

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Day 1 • Read Hosea 2:16–23; Amos 5:18–27; Malachi 4

This study will serve as an introduction not only to Hosea, Joel, and Amos but also to the Book of the Twelve Minor Prophets.

1. a. Open your Bible to Isaiah and calculate the number of pages it holds in the Bible. Do the same for Jeremiah and Ezekiel—calculate how many pages in each. Now, beginning with Hosea and including

- 3. a. Read Amos 5:18–27. Is this “day” good or bad?
- b. What does our Lord promise to do in that “day”?

4. Compare these two messages from Hosea and Amos. How might reading the messages of both prophets influence your understanding of this Day of the Lord?

7. a. What do all these “day of the LORD” references point toward?

b. When is this day?

8. a. Read Joel 1:15. Consider yourself among the original hearers of Joel’s prophecy. Are you afraid of these words?

b. Why or why not?

5. Novels are typically broken down into various subdivisions—sometimes chapters, sometimes parts. Plays are the same way, with acts and scenes. Sometimes, chapters or parts don’t seem to transition to one another all that well. But writers often intentionally present their message through conflict before bringing everything together nicely in the end.

Read Malachi 4. If Malachi’s message concludes the Book of the Twelve, what major theme(s) might we expect to find throughout the twelve books?

9. Think for a moment over all the Scriptures—from Genesis to Revelation. If you were to highlight the most significant day, which would it be?

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**Day 2 • Read Zephaniah 1:14–16;
 Joel 1:15; John 19:31–37;
 Zechariah 12:10–13:1**

6. As we continue our first week of this study, we will consider how the remaining prophetic books in the Book of the Twelve shed light on how we should understand the first three books of that collection: Hosea, Joel, and Amos. Read Zephaniah 1:14–16. What sort of response does Zephaniah intend from his readers and hearers?

10. **Challenge question.** Read John 19:31–37. John quotes two passages from the Old Testament: Exodus 12:46 and Zechariah 12:10. Read Zechariah 12:10–13:1. How do the events that John records relate to Zechariah’s prophecy of “that day”?

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**Day 3 • Read Haggai 1:1; Obadiah 1;
Hosea 1:1; Amos 1:1; Micah 1:1;
Zechariah 1:1**

11. Just as it is common for students to write their names at the top of their assignments, so also do the prophets typically begin with what is called a “superscription.” Read just the first verse of each of the prophets in the Book of the Twelve.

a. Compare the superscriptions. What patterns do you notice?

b. What sticks out?

12. a. Read Haggai 1:1. Notice the detail Haggai provides in dating this Word of the Lord. Write below how he provides that dateable information.

b. With the help of a Bible dictionary or your Bible’s study notes (if provided), try to determine approximately when Haggai proclaimed this prophecy.

13. **Challenge question.** Now read Obadiah 1. Unlike Haggai’s superscription, Obadiah gives very little information. What elements of this passage can we use to try to date Obadiah’s preaching?

14. a. Read Hosea 1:1; Amos 1:1; and Micah 1:1. Compare the kings mentioned in each and write below which kings appear more than once. What does this say about the prophecies?

b. Now compare Haggai 1:1 and Zechariah 1:1. Approximately how far apart was the preaching of Haggai and Zechariah?

15. The Book of the Twelve spans about three hundred years. So many years and different personalities may make it difficult to think that these twelve should be read as one book. However, there are other books that, though they cover a long period of time and are written by many different authors, nevertheless belong together because of a unity of thought, purpose, and intention. For example, survey the superscriptions and headings for Psalms 73–89. How does “Book Three” of the Psalter illustrate the broader relationship between the books in the Book of the Twelve?

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**Day 4 • Read Luke 24:13–27;
Zechariah 9:9–17; 13:7–9**

16. Read Luke 24:13–27. As Jesus and the Emmaus disciples journey together, it becomes evident that the disciples have missed a major point of Jesus' teaching. Notice especially verses 25–27. What does Jesus expect us to know from the Prophets?

17. The Book of the Twelve is often quoted or alluded to in the New Testament. Read Zechariah 9:9–17. How does Jesus fulfill this prophecy from the Book of the Twelve? (See Matthew 21:1–11, if necessary.)

18. Read Zechariah 13:7–9. How does this passage proclaim Jesus? (See Matthew 26:31, if necessary.)

19. *For personal reflection. Sharing optional.* After seeing just briefly that the proclamation of Jesus Christ is the purpose of the Book of the Twelve, how has your understanding of the Old Testament been challenged or changed?

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**Day 5 • Read Jonah 3:4–10;
Micah 4:6–7; Nahum 3**

The age-old distinction between Law and Gospel provides a helpful means for understanding the messages of the prophets. The *Law* is that Word of God that shows us our sin—accusing us, declaring us guilty, and ultimately putting us to death. The *Gospel* is that Word of God that shows us our Savior—forgiving us, declaring us innocent, and ultimately raising us to new life.

20. Based on the texts you have read today, would you say the Book of the Twelve is mainly Law or Gospel?

21. Contrast Jonah 3:4 with Jonah 3:5–10 and summarize their message(s) below. In each of these two sections, what things does God do or promise to do?

22. When deciding whether to speak Law or Gospel to someone, we should always ask, "What does this person need to hear—Law or Gospel?" The prophets also faced this greatest difficulty.

a. Read Micah 4:6–7. Whom does Micah address?

b. Does Micah present the Day of the Lord as Law or Gospel for his hearers?

23. *For personal reflection. Sharing optional.* A common difficulty we have when reading Scripture is seeing where we fit in. (We're often far better in our heads than we are in reality.) Read Nahum 3:5–7. Where it says "you" and "Nineveh," read your own name. Write below how the prophet's words strike you personally.

A Mysterious Love Story

Hosea 1–3

*Distribute before session 2 for use in session 2.
Use enrichment magazine pp. 5–7.*

Resources for Worship

Use these resources for your daily study at home and at the week's assembly.

Hymn

Within an earthborn form He hides
His all-creating light;
To serve us all He humbly cloaks
The splendor of His might,
The splendor of His might.

He undertakes a great exchange,
Puts on our human frame,
And in return gives us His realm,
His glory, and His name,
His glory, and His name.

He is a servant, I a lord:
How great a mystery!
How strong the tender Christ Child's love!
No truer friend than He,
No truer friend than He.

(LSB 389:3–5; © 1969 Concordia Publishing House)

Prayer

O blessed Christ, You give what is Yours and take what is ours. You bless us with this happy exchange. As You have united Yourself to us in the wedding feast of Your Sacrament, create within us thankful hearts to recognize that You have given us everything by Your grace alone. For You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, in blessed communion, now and forever. Amen.

Digging Deep

My Personal Study for Week 2

..... Day 1 • Read Hosea 1:1–3

1. As noted in Session 1, Hosea 1:1 sets the preaching and ministry of Hosea within a historical context. As Hosea's preaching addresses primarily the Northern Kingdom of Israel, it is important to note the king at that time, Jeroboam II (2 Kings 14:23–24), who continued in the sins of Jeroboam I (1 Kings 12:25–33).

Based on 1 Kings 12, what great sin is being committed in the Northern Kingdom at the time of Hosea's preaching?

2. Read Hosea 1:2–3.

- a. What does God command Hosea to do?
- b. How does Hosea respond?

3. If Hosea obeys God, how might Hosea's actions reflect on his social reputation?

4. What might people today say about the situation of Hosea and Gomer?

5. *For personal reflection. Sharing optional.* The Word of God to Hosea was not an easy word. Its ramifications would permeate Hosea’s whole life (family, friends, and society). Has God set before you a difficult word, a cross to bear? And did you respond as Hosea did?

8. Read Hosea 1:8–9. Compare the name of Hosea’s third child with the promise made in Leviticus 26:3, 12–13. What does this name say about God and His promises to Israel?

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Day 2 • Read Hosea 1:4–9

6. In the Scriptures, names often signify something prophetic, which is often explained when the name is given (e.g., Matthew 1:21). In Hosea 1:4–5, the prophet’s first child is named Jezreel. Hosea explains the name Jezreel but, for most, the allusion is lost.

Skim through 2 Kings 9–10 for the account of Jehu; read especially 9:21–24. If Jehu rightly banished Baal and all the Baal-following kings and prophets from Israel, then what does Hosea mean by naming his first child *Jezreel*?

9. **Challenge question.** Some interpreters have argued on moral grounds that these opening passages in Hosea must be metaphors and not real events. List below any evidence you see in these verses that would point to the events as

a. historical

b. metaphorical

7. Read Hosea 1:6–7. Compare Hosea’s second child’s name with God’s description of Himself in Exodus 34:6. What does this daughter’s name imply about the relationship between the Lord and the house of Israel?

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Day 3 • Read Hosea 1:10–2:1

10. The first session (Day 5, question 20) described the distinction between Law and Gospel. If the Law shows our sin, and the Gospel shows our Savior, is Hosea 1:1–9 predominantly Law or Gospel? Explain.

11. Read Hosea 1:10–11. What does the change in tone signal about this section’s Law or Gospel content?

12. Notice the phrase “on that day” in Hosea 1:4–5. Compare this with Hosea 1:11, which mentions “the day of Jezreel.”

a. Do these days seem to present the same picture?

b. Are they referring to different days?

13. Hosea 1 sets us up for a great reversal. According to 1 Peter 2:10, how is this great reversal ultimately accomplished for you and your family?

14. In Hosea 2:1 the prophet applies the message of chapter 1. Whom has Hosea been talking about all along?

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Day 4 • Read Hosea 2:2–23

15. Compare Hosea 2:2–5 with Ezekiel 16:3–5, where the prophets describe the same audience. Whom does the mother (Gomer) represent?

16. Read Hosea 2:6–13.

a. What does God say He will do in response to the people’s sinfulness?

b. How does He hope the people will respond?

17. Evaluate God’s use of punishment on Gomer/Israel.

a. Is He justified in punishing them?

b. Why or why not?

18. Just as Hosea turned on a dime and transitioned us from Law to Gospel in chapter 1, he does it again here in chapter 2. Read verses 14–23. What great reversal does God say He will do for Israel here?

19. In Hosea 1:10–2:1 and 2:14–23, we have read about God’s great reversal. How would you describe God and His ways to someone struggling with the devastating effects of sin in his or her life?

22. The prophecy of Hosea anticipates a great mystery in the New Testament. Read Ephesians 5:20–33. Describe below the great mystery.

23. *For personal reflection. Sharing optional.* Gomer stands for you. Hosea stands for Christ. What sorts of emotions, desires, or responses do you experience reflecting on these acts of love described in Hosea’s prophecy?

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Day 5 • Read Hosea 3

20. Gomer ran off and committed adultery somewhere between chapters 1 and 2. Read Hosea 3. What is Hosea commanded to do for Gomer this time?

21. What does Hosea’s marriage and remarriage (buying back and all) tell us about God’s love for His people?