



# Together for the 757

Impact Group Study: Minor Prophets

# Together for the 757

We are part of a culture that celebrates the individual. And while it is true that God has wonderfully made and uniquely gifted each of us, He designed us for each other. He adopted us into a family and told us that we should be known by our love for one another. The church **together** is the strongest witness to our community.

So, this year we are diving headfirst into what this means. Our theme is ***Together for the 757***. Together we will study the 12 Minor Prophets. They are called Minor not because they are of lesser importance, but because their messages are shorter. While their messages may be brief, they pack a punch.

These sermons are delivered not to individuals but to nations. God's heart has always been to create a people for Himself, not merely people for Himself. These often neglected books will come alive as we see themes of justice, love, forgiveness, hope, goodness, respect, and more, all to be experienced together.

That's why I'm so glad that you are a part of an Impact Group. You are living what the prophets were trying to stir the nations up to do, and that is to come together to worship God as He desires. God created Israel to be a light to the nations. She never fulfilled God's intent for her. Now, God birthed His church to be light to the world. Jesus prayed that our unity would manifest itself in love, which would cause the world to believe in the one true God. We get to be the answer to Jesus' prayer as we come together, worship together, serve together ... ***Together for the 757***.

# Week 1: Series Introduction

## *Together With Goodness and Hope*

1. Share your name and what you hope to get out of this Impact Group.
2. On a scale of 1-10, how familiar are you with the Minor Prophets? Have you ever studied these books before?
3. How are you feeling about studying these books?
4. What stood out to you from this week's message about the history of Israel?
5. What makes reading the Old Testament and especially the Minor Prophets worthy of our time and effort?
6. What do you think we might learn about God from the Minor Prophets as we read about His interactions with Israel and other nations?
7. This study is sure to be challenging. What are the benefits of going through this material together?
8. The Minor Prophets are full of God using people to have hard conversations with others. Have you ever had to have a hard conversation with someone? What was that like?
9. When there is a hard conversation to be had, how do you respond? Do you avoid it? Are you direct? Do you hold a grudge afterwards? (etc.) What do you believe is the Biblical instruction concerning having those conversations?
10. Would you like this to be an Impact Group where we are willing to have the hard conversation and in love challenge each other to apply what we learn each week? Are we willing to hold each other accountable?

## Week 2:

# Obadiah

### *Introduction*

Obadiah's name means "servant of the Lord." Beyond that, we don't know much about him. His prophecy is the shortest book in the Old Testament. The primary concern of the book is judgment against Edom and the restoration of Israel.

### *Date*

This is an extremely difficult book to date. Arguments can be made for both a pre-exilic and post-exilic date. The dating of this prophecy was not a concern for Obadiah, which means that we should give our attention to what was important to this prophet.

### **Purpose of the Prophecy**

This book was written to the Edomites, who were the descendants of Esau. There was a long, strained relationship between the descendants of Jacob (Israel) and the descendants of Esau (Edom). Due to Edom's unjust treatment toward Israel, Obadiah writes to warn Edom of her coming destruction and at the same time to tell of Israel's restoration.

### **Primary Application for Today**

Edom sought to capitalize on Israel's struggles. It is clear from this prophecy that God does not think much of that attitude. Rather, when we see people who are struggling, we should come to their aid and be willing to help. There is a goodness that should characterize the way we treat others.

# Week 2:

# Obadiah

*Together With Goodness and Hope*

## **Review:**

1. What has been a popular conversation in your life this past week?
2. Last week, we said that the minor prophets are a collection of hard conversations that needed to happen. Did anyone have any hard, needed conversations this week? What was that like?

## **Begin:**

1. Have you ever experienced a rivalry with someone? What was good about that rivalry and what was challenging?
2. Watch this link: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/obadiah/>

## **Explore:**

1. What is the backstory between Israel and Edom?
2. In verses 2 and 10 Obadiah provides the 2 primary reasons for the coming judgment against Edom. What are those two reasons?
3. In verses 3-9, what examples of pride do you notice?
4. What causes the prophet to shift his focus from Edom to all nations in verse 15?
5. What stands out about the way this prophecy ends?
6. How would you summarize the message of Obadiah?

## Week 2:

# Obadiah

*Together With Goodness and Hope*

### *Apply:*

1. What are the types of situations and circumstances where pride tends to reveal itself in your life?
2. How can we help someone else who struggles with pride?
3. How sensitive are you to the struggles of others? What is your natural response when you see someone struggling?
4. What is one good thing you can do for someone this week?

# Week 3: Joel

## *Introduction*

The name Joel means “the Lord is God.” Joel is similar to Obadiah in that we don’t know much about him. We know that his father is named Pethuel, but beyond that everything is merely conjecture.

## *Date*

Obadiah and Joel are the two Minor Prophets whose prophecies are extremely difficult to date. Like Obadiah, there is a debate around an early or a late date for this prophecy.

## **Purpose of the Prophecy**

Joel writes to Israel about a swarm of locusts that swept through the land and ravaged the crops, and the prophet’s warning is that, “as bad as that was it will be nothing compared to the day of the Lord.”

While not explicitly stated, the judgment of the Lord is coming due to the people’s rebellion against God by violating the covenant that God had established. However, while this book emphasizes the coming judgment, it switches to a note of hope. The prophet calls the people to repentance, because with repentance comes forgiveness, and with forgiveness comes blessing.

## **Primary Application for Today**

God uses natural occurrences and judgments to draw people closer to Him. Therefore, as we see the world around us, we should be quick to trust that God is at work. This prophecy also reminds us that we have a message of hope and our words should be full of hope.

# Week 3:

# Joel 1:1-2:17

*Together With Goodness and Hope*

## **Review:**

1. What was something good that happened in your life this last week?
2. Last week, we talked about the importance of being good to others. We challenged ourselves to display that goodness to someone this week. How did that go?

## **Begin:**

1. How do you typically react to difficult news?
2. Watch this link: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/joel/>

## **Explore:**

1. According to verses 2 and 3, how significant did Joel understand this message to be?
2. According to verses 4-12, how severe was the locust plague?
3. What response should be taken according to verses 13 and 14? What does that response demonstrate?
4. The format of chapter 2 repeats that of chapter 1 (judgment and a call to repentance), only this time the setting is in the future. What is the significance of the repetition?
5. What can you infer about sin from the prophecy?
6. How would you describe what true repentance looks like, based on the message of Joel?



Week 3:  
**Joel 1:1-2:17**

*Together With Goodness and Hope*

**Apply:**

1. In our culture, how would you describe the general attitude toward sin? How does that attitude affect you?
2. How sensitive to sin are you in your own life?
3. One of the pictures Joel paints is to mourn like a virgin who has lost her fiancé. How does that hit you? Does that cause you to need to shift anything in how you think about or respond to sin?
4. Next week, we'll see this prophecy turn toward a message of hope. But in getting there, Joel calls the people to repent together. How can going through hardships together lead to hope? Where can you share hope this week?

Week 4:  
**Joel 2:18-3:21**  
*Together With Goodness and Hope*

**Review:**

1. Did you do anything enjoyable with someone this past week?
2. Last week, we talked about the value of collective repentance and how going through something hard can lead toward collective hope. Were there any situations where you were able to share hope this week?

**Begin:**

1. Is there anything in life that you are hoping for?
2. Can you summarize the first half of Joel's prophecy that we talked about last week?

**Explore:**

1. Last week, we saw Joel was giving the instruction. Who is giving the instruction in the second half of the book? What strikes you about that?
2. What does God promise to do for His people in verses 19-27, and what attitude should the people have?
3. What would God give that is even better than the physical blessings promised (2:28-32)? Where and how does it have New Testament implications?
4. Following the blessings for His people, how would you describe the warning God gives to those who oppose Him at the beginning of chapter 3?

Week 4:  
**Joel 2:18-3:21**  
*Together With Goodness and Hope*

**Explore:**

5. How would you describe the way this prophecy ends in Joel 3:17-21?
6. Compare and contrast the first half of Joel, which we looked at last week, to this section. How do the two fit together?

**Apply:**

1. What do you learn about God from this section?
2. Based on their repentance, God promises future blessing. What does this tell you about repentance?
3. As God uses Joel to offer hope to Israel, we know from the New Testament He now desires to use us to offer hope. How can we offer hope to a chaotic world?
4. Is your life marked by peace, hope, and joy? How do we get to that place?

# Week 5: Hosea

## *Introduction*

The name Hosea means “God is salvation.” The prophets Hosea and Amos are contemporaries who both preached to the Northern Kingdom, Israel. In contrast to Amos, who stressed the righteous judgment of God, Hosea focused on the lovingkindness of God, even though Israel had disappointed God as His spiritual bride.

## *Date*

Hosea 1:1 provides the context for when this prophecy was given. He spoke when Jeroboam II sat upon Israel’s throne and during the leadership of several different kings of Judah. Based on Judah’s kings, Hosea spoke during the latter part of Jeroboam II’s reign and shortly before the Assyrians conquered Israel. Hosea has the distinction of being the last prophet to address Israel.

## **Purpose of the Prophecy**

The main message of Hosea’s prophecy was to emphasize God’s unconditional love for Israel. Everything God had done and would do was driven by His steadfast love for Israel. Through his own broken heart, Hosea would relay the heart of God to the people.

## **Primary Application for Today**

Throughout this prophecy we see that God is in pursuit of people with His faithful love. In seeing God’s heart toward people, we learn how we ought to love people.

Week 5:  
**Hosea 1:1-3:5**  
*Together With Love and Respect*

**Review:**

1. What has been encouraging to you about our time together so far?
2. Last week we discussed having hope in a chaotic world. Were you able to demonstrate hope, joy, and peace this week?

**Begin:**

1. How do you typically respond when someone hurts you deeply?
2. Watch this link: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/hosea/>

**Explore:**

1. Describe the instruction that God gives Hosea in 1:2. How does that strike you?
2. Gomer gives birth to three children. What are their names and what is the significance of each of their names?
3. In Hosea 2:1-8, what are the charges against Israel?
4. What are the consequences as a result of those charges (Hosea 2:9-13)?
5. Describe the hope given in Hosea 2:14-23? What does this say about God?
6. Compare and contrast the relationship between Hosea and Gomer with God and Israel.

Week 5:  
**Hosea 1:1-3:5**  
*Together With Love and Respect*

**Apply:**

1. In what ways are we like Gomer and in what ways are we called to be like Hosea?
2. From the story of Hosea and Gomer we get a picture of the heartbreak of God. What did you learn from this passage about how to deal with a broken heart?
3. From this passage we see stiff consequences and steadfast love. How do those two go Together, and what could be some of the dangers of withholding either one of those?
4. Is there anyone in your life who, because of their choices, is difficult to love? How can you show love to them?

Week 6:  
**Hosea 4:1-14:9**  
*Together With Love and Respect*

**Review:**

1. What was a highlight from your last week?
2. Last week we talked about loving people well. How did you love someone well this last week?

**Begin:**

1. Describe the most committed person you know.
2. Can you summarize the first half of Hosea's prophecy that we talked about last week?

**Explore:**

1. Last week, we saw that the relationship between Hosea and Gomer paralleled the relationship between God and Israel. How does Hosea 4:1 pick up on the marriage imagery, and what are the 2 primary accusations against Israel? How would those violations affect a marriage?
2. What was Ephraim's (Israel's) solution when she realized her condition, and was it successful (Hosea 5:13)? What do you think of that solution? What does God make of this solution (Hosea 7:11)?
3. What tender reminiscing does God do in Hosea 11:1-4? At the same time, what awaits Israel (Hosea 11:5-7)? How would you describe the heart of God toward Israel based on Hosea 11:8-11?

Week 6:  
**Hosea 4:1-14:9**  
*Together With Love and Respect*

**Explore:**

4. Compare and contrast God's faithfulness and man's rebellion from Hosea 11:12-12:14. What examples do you notice?
5. Read Hosea 14. What is God asking Israel to do, and how would God respond to that? How would you describe the ending of Hosea's prophecy?
6. What is the primary message from the book of Hosea?

**Apply:**

1. What do you learn about humanity and God from this section?
2. Have you ever looked for a solution to a problem in the wrong place? What causes humanity to run toward people and things that cannot help us and actually make things worse?
3. In this passage we saw God reminisce about what He had been through with Israel. How can thinking about the good times help when times are difficult?
4. This prophecy ends imploring Israel to turn back to God and how God will forgive them. Is there any area in your life where you know God wants you to make an adjustment?



# Week 7:

# Amos

## *Introduction*

Amos's name means "burden bearer." He was a humble farmer in the southern kingdom of Judah who was called to preach to the rich people of the northern kingdom of Israel. He was a contemporary of Hosea, and while Hosea was preaching primarily about God's steadfast love, Amos proclaimed God's righteous judgment.

## *Date*

Amos delivered his message during the reign of Jeroboam II in Israel and while Uzziah sat on the throne of Judah. So, as he was concluding his message, Hosea was just beginning. Although the fall of Israel was right around the corner, this was a time when Israel's borders were expanding and her wealth was increasing. However, spiritually Israel was bankrupt and this is what the prophet addresses.

## **Purpose of the Prophecy**

Amos's message could be summed up in Amos 4:12, "Prepare to meet your God, O Israel." God sent Amos to make Israel understand that God could not be flattered by religious ceremonies, but only by repentance and devotion to His will. Though his message is primarily one of God's righteous judgment that was coming against Israel, it did end on a note of hope concerning Israel's future.

## **Primary Application for Today**

The three primary issues Amos exposes concern materialism, injustice, and immorality. We see these same issues in our culture today and this book is a great reminder that life is defined by the richness of one's relationship with God, not anything else. From that relationship God can use anyone, regardless of one's lot in life.

Week 7:  
**Amos 1:1-6:14**  
*Together With Love and Respect*

**Review:**

1. Looking back, what has stood out to you from the prophets Obadiah, Joel, and Hosea?
2. Last week we talked about any adjustments we need to make personally. How are those adjustments being worked out in your life?

**Begin:**

1. What are some of the distractions in life that can pull you away from your relationship with God?
2. Watch this link: <https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/amos/>

**Explore:**

1. Amos 1:1 tells us that Amos was a shepherd in Judah who was called to preach primarily to the people in Israel. What does that tell you about God?
2. From Amos 1:3 through Amos 2:5, what nations does Amos warn of God's punishment? What are some of the sins that are being committed?
3. From Amos 2:6 through the rest of the book the warnings are all to Israel. What does that tell you?
4. According to Amos 2:6-8 what are the primary sins for which Israel will be punished? What does this tell you about the state of the nation?

Week 7:  
**Amos 1:1-6:14**  
*Together With Love and Respect*

**Explore:**

5. According to Amos 4:6-13, what are the coming punishments to Israel? What was God wanting to accomplish as a result of these punishments?
6. Describe the lamentation offered by Amos in Amos 5:1-13. He calls Israel a virgin in verse 2; this obviously is not in reference to her purity. So, what does he mean by using that term?

**Apply:**

1. If God can use a humble shepherd in Judah to preach to the wealthy people of Israel, what does that tell you about who he could use you to reach? What are the primary qualifications used by God?
2. Amos spoke messages concerning a lot of nations, but he primarily focused on Israel. Is there a primary person or group whom you are impacting, and is there a secondary group you are influencing?
3. Israel seemed blissfully unaware of her offenses against God. What does that tell you about humanity and what needs we all have?
4. Several times in chapter 5 the exhortation is given to seek the Lord and live. Amos then explains how that attitude affects the way we treat others. What does it mean to seek the Lord and live? What aspects of life are impacted when that is your mindset?

Week 8:  
**Amos 7:1-9:15**  
*Together With Love and Respect*

**Review:**

1. Who has made the biggest impact in your life?
2. Last week we talked about the instruction Amos gave to seek the Lord and live. Was that your focus this last week, and what fruit did you experience as a result, or what took your focus away from that?

**Begin:**

1. Have you ever warned someone about something bad that could happen? How did you feel as you were giving that warning?
2. Can you summarize the first half of Amos's prophecy that we talked about last week?

**Explore:**

1. In Amos 7:1-9:6 he is given 5 visions. What are those 5 visions?
2. After the third vision, in Amos 7:10-17, Amos is falsely accused by a priest. How does he respond to those false accusations? What would cause a priest to lie about Amos?
3. In Amos 8:9-10, when talking about his 4th vision, he discusses what Israel's current situation is like versus what will come. What do these contrasting pictures tell you about sin?

Week 8:  
**Amos 7:1-9:15**  
*Together With Love and Respect*

**Explore:**

4. In Amos 9:2-4, Amos concludes his fifth vision by talking about the certainty of the punishments. Describe the language used in this section. What caused the punishments to be so certain and so severe?
5. According to Amos 9:7-10, in what ways are God's dealings with Israel similar to the other Nations, and in what ways are they different? What would cause His dealings to be different, and how does that square with His nature?
6. Read Amos 9:11-15. Describe the ending of Amos's message.

**Apply:**

1. Have you ever been falsely accused? Based on Amos's response, what is the right response when we are lied about?
2. Sin deceives us into living life seeking short-sighted satisfaction. How can you be a good friend to someone who is living life that way?
3. What similarities do you see in our culture compared with the culture of Israel? How can we be the light in the darkness?
4. Hosea and Amos each spoke to the people of Israel. While they both spoke hard truths to the people, Hosea emphasized God's steadfast love while Amos emphasized God's righteous judgment, but both ended on a note of hope. Are you able to speak the hard truths to people with gentleness and respect? Do you have the wisdom to know which to emphasize, and are you able to end on a note of hope?

Week 9:  
**John 17:20-26**  
*Together: The Prayer of Jesus*

**Review:**

1. Of the Minor Prophets we've discussed so far, whose message has impacted you the most?
2. Do you have any examples of how you were able to be a light to our culture this past week?

**Explore:**

1. We shifted gears this week to look at what Jesus prays for us (His church). What is similar about what God wanted for Israel in the Old Testament and what Jesus prayed for the church here?
2. Have you ever thought about the fact that when Jesus was on Earth He prayed for us today? How does that impact you? What does that say about Him?
3. The primary request of Jesus is for the unity of the church. What causes Jesus to see this as so vital?
4. What is the glory that the Father has given Jesus and that Jesus has given to us?
5. Describe the parallels between Jesus' relationship with the Father and His relationship with us.
6. Jesus asks that we would love the way the Father loved Him. Describe the love of God the Father toward God the Son.

Week 9:  
**John 17:20-26**  
*Together: The Prayer of Jesus*

*Apply:*

1. What are the consequences of disunity in the church? What are the benefits of unity?
2. How has your unity with other believers impacted the world to believe in the triune God? Do you make every effort to protect the unity of the church, or do you give audience to complaining?
3. How are we able to love others the way God loved us?
4. Are you living the life Jesus prayed that you would live? How can we grow to live that great reality?

Week 10:

# Deuteronomy 6:1-9

*Together as a Family*

**Review:**

1. How has being a part of this group affected your life over the last 10 weeks?
2. How did you do last week at being the answer to Jesus' prayer?

**Explore:**

1. According to Deuteronomy 6:1-3, what are the conditions for blessing? Are obedience and blessing tied together today as well?
2. What does it mean to fear God?
3. How does fearing God in verse 2 lead to loving God in verse 5?
4. Based on this passage, how important to God are His commands? Either directly or implicitly, what are we to do with God's commands?
5. What does it tell you about humanity when you see the intensity and frequency we are to speak about God's commands?
6. How were God's commands to be experienced together?



Week 10:  
**Deuteronomy 6:1-9**  
*Together as a Family*

*Apply:*

1. How well do you know the law of Christ and His commands for us today?
2. How does your intensity and passion for God's desires line up with what He expected then?
3. There was and is the expectation that we will be teaching God's truth to others. Who are you teaching? If no one, what help would you need to begin impacting people?
4. How can you share what you have learned with someone else?



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