

## ISAIAH---JEREMIAH---DANIEL

In order to understand the Old Testament story one needs to be aware of how the books are arranged, especially the books of prophecy. They are not arranged to fit into the historical narrative of the times in which they lived and worked. Rather they are grouped together at the end of the other scriptures.

The terms “Major Prophets” and “Minor Prophets” have been used to indicate the length of the books which they wrote, and not necessarily their relative significance.

It is not the intent of this series of lessons to explore the specific messages of each prophet, but rather to show how each fits into the over-all picture, with a brief notice of their general messages.

It is somewhat amazing to note the extent to which so many prophets were bunched into one time period---the Divided Kingdom. Having just studied the conditions of this period---the extreme wickedness which so often prevailed---one can see why God sent so many messengers to warn the people.

As one studies these prophets he notes three general themes prevalent in their messages: a call to return to God, warnings about impending punishment, and messianic prophecies---clues as to what God will do in the future involving a coming messiah and kingdom.

Following is a list of prophets who lived and preached during this Divided Kingdom Period: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah.

The next period in this series will be the Captivity Period, the time when the people were in Babylonian Captivity (70 years). Two prophets, Ezekiel and Daniel, were taken to Babylon and spoke there.

The last period in the series of lessons is the Return (or Restoration) which occurred after 70 years of Babylonian captivity when many of the people were allowed to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the city. The last 3 prophets, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi, wrote during this period.

As will be pointed out later, the last 2 books in the Old Testament chronology are Ezra and Nehemiah. (Hopefully, by the end of these studies those who have done each lesson will be able to think through the Old Testament thinking the following: “After Adam’s time men became very wicked, leading to Noah. After Noah evil again prevailed, leading to God’s call of Abraham. Then there was Isaac, Jacob, Joseph. Then came Moses, Wilderness, Conquest, Judges, United Kingdom, Divided Kingdom, Captivity, and Return.” That is the O.T. story!)