

Points of interest: Hosea, Joel, Amos  
17 Sep 2001

**Hosea** begins with the famous story of Hosea and Gomer, the unfaithful wife who is a symbol of Israel. Hosea's reconciliation with his wife is interpreted by the New Testament as a symbol of the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's people (1 Pet 2.10, Rom 9.25–26).

**1.4** Here we see a charge of a specific offense, which is recorded in 2 Kgs 9–10. Was Jehu right or wrong? Perhaps he did the right thing (purging paganism) for the wrong reason (political gain).

**6.1–3** are the words of a popular praise song. However, in context it is an insincere song of repentance (v. 4). Whether this makes the words inappropriate for *us* is not clear.

**6.6** is quoted by Jesus (Mt 9.13, 12.7) against the Pharisees who obsessed about the ceremonial law at the expense of the more important matters of the Law (cf. Mt 23.23).

**6.7** 'Adam' can either be interpreted as a place-name (Josh 3.16) or the first man (Gen 2–3). The context suggests the former, but we don't know what sin was committed in that place.

**10.8** is an image that gets reused in Luke 23.30 and Rev 6.16.

**11.1**: This prophecy was fulfilled by Jesus when his parents brought him back from Egypt (Mt 2.15).

**13.14** is quoted by Paul (1 Cor 15.55) in connection with the resurrection of the dead.

**Joel** is a difficult book to date. It is possible that it was written in the same period as Hosea and Amos, although most scholars would place it later, it seems. There are similarities between Joel and Amos (compare Joel 3.16 and Amos 1.2, for example). Whether they are similar because they are next to each other in the Bible or vice versa is not clear.

**1.15** "The day of the Lord" gets mentioned several times in this book, and in other books as well (Amos 5.18, for example). This phrase is used to describe both the day of judgment by God and the day of salvation by God.

**2.28–32** is surely the best-known text in Joel. It is cited by Peter in Acts 2.17–21 as a prophecy of Pentecost, and also by Paul in Rom 10.13. Also notable is 2.23, which is used by some charismatics to explain why charismatic gifts only appeared in the early church ("the early rain") and the modern church ("the later rain").

**Amos** prophesied, like Hosea, to eighth-century Israel. The book begins by bringing charges against neighboring nations, and then Judah, and finally the harshest condemnation for Israel.

**7.9** Jeroboam: not the son of Nebat, but the later Jeroboam of 2 Kgs 14.23–29.

**9.11** is cited by James (the Just) in Acts 15.16–17 as describing the inclusion of the Gentiles in God's people.

Points of interest: Obadiah, Jonah, Micah  
29 Sep 2001

**Obadiah** prophesied against Edom for their assistance to the enemy in an attack on Jerusalem. Which attack that was is not totally clear. Two of the best options are during the reign of Jehoram (2 Chr 21.8–20), during which Edom rebelled against Judah, or at the fall of Jerusalem, which Edom approved of (Ps 137.7).

Edom is also called Esau because Esau, Jacob's brother, was also called Edom (Gen 25.30), and the Edomites were descended from Esau. Obadiah calls Edom "Jacob's brother" (10).

**Jonah** is mentioned in 2 Kgs 14.25 as prophesying about Israel, but in the book of Jonah he prophesies to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. This book is unusual in that it is a story rather than a prophecy.

Jesus explicitly interprets this book as a type (that is, a foreshadowing) of himself and his listeners (Mt 12.39–41, 16.4, Lk 11.29–32).

**4.2** seems to be a quotation from Joel 2.13; the first part goes back to Ex 34.6 and is repeated several times elsewhere (Num 14.18, Neh 9.17, Ps 103.8, Ps 145.8).

**Micah** prophesied against Judah at the same time as Isaiah. Don't confuse him with Micaiah (1 Kgs 22.8, 14–28).

**3.12** is, interestingly, quoted in Jer 26.17–19 with an explanation.

**5.2** is quoted in Mt 2.6 as a prophecy of the birth of Christ in Bethlehem.

**6.5** These events are described in Num 22–25 and Josh 3–4.

**6.8** (KJV) is the text of a praise song. Between the archaic language and the way it is versified, it is very hard to understand. Hopefully it will make more sense for you here, in modern English and in context.

**6.16** Omri and Ahab: two of the worst kings of Israel (1 Kgs 16.21–34).

**7.6** is quoted by Jesus (Mt 10.35–36, Lk 12.53) as a pointer to the division that will come about because of him.