

Assignment 14: Recalling a Destiny (the prophets)

1. What happened during the time of the Monarchy?

Hosea 4:1-13a

- 4** Hear the word of the LORD, O people of Israel;
 for the LORD has an indictment against the inhabitants of the land.
 There is no faithfulness or loyalty,
 and no knowledge of God in the land.
- 2** Swearing, lying, and murder,
 and stealing and adultery break out;
 bloodshed follows bloodshed.
- 3** Therefore the land mourns,
 and all who live in it languish;
 together with the wild animals
 and the birds of the air,
 even the fish of the sea are perishing.
- 4** Yet let no one contend,
 and let none accuse,
 for with you is my contention, O priest.^[a]
- 5** You shall stumble by day;
 the prophet also shall stumble with you by night,
 and I will destroy your mother.
- 6** My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge;
 because you have rejected knowledge,
 I reject you from being a priest to me.
 And since you have forgotten the law of your God,
 I also will forget your children.
- 7** The more they increased,
 the more they sinned against me;
 they changed^[b] their glory into shame.
- 8** They feed on the sin of my people;
 they are greedy for their iniquity.
- 9** And it shall be like people, like priest;
 I will punish them for their ways,
 and repay them for their deeds.
- 10** They shall eat, but not be satisfied;
 they shall play the whore, but not multiply;

because they have forsaken the LORD
to devote themselves to ¹¹ whoredom.

The Idolatry of Israel

Wine and new wine

take away the understanding.

¹² My people consult a piece of wood,
and their divining rod gives them oracles.

For a spirit of whoredom has led them astray,
and they have played the whore, forsaking their God.

¹³ They sacrifice on the tops of the mountains,
and make offerings upon the hills,
under oak, poplar, and terebinth,
because their shade is good.

Amos 7:10-17 Amaziah Complains to the King

¹⁰ Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to King Jeroboam of Israel, saying, "Amos has conspired against you in the very center of the house of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his words. ¹¹ For thus Amos has said,

'Jeroboam shall die by the sword,
and Israel must go into exile
away from his land.'"

¹² And Amaziah said to Amos, "O seer, go, flee away to the land of Judah, earn your bread there, and prophesy there; ¹³ but never again prophesy at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary, and it is a temple of the kingdom."

¹⁴ Then Amos answered Amaziah, "I am^[a] no prophet, nor a prophet's son; but I am^[a] a herdsman, and a dresser of sycamore trees, ¹⁵ and the LORD took me from following the flock, and the LORD said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.'

¹⁶ "Now therefore hear the word of the LORD.

You say, 'Do not prophesy against Israel,
and do not preach against the house of Isaac.'

¹⁷ Therefore thus says the LORD:

'Your wife shall become a prostitute in the city,
and your sons and your daughters shall fall by the sword,
and your land shall be parceled out by line;
you yourself shall die in an unclean land,
and Israel shall surely go into exile away from its land.'"

2. How had Israel distorted its call to be a blessing?

Hosea 8:1-7a Israel's Apostasy

8 Set the trumpet to your lips!

One like a vulture^[a] is over the house of the LORD,
because they have broken my covenant,
and transgressed my law.

² Israel cries to me,

“My God, we—Israel—know you!”

³ Israel has spurned the good;

the enemy shall pursue him.

⁴ They made kings, but not through me;

they set up princes, but without my knowledge.

With their silver and gold they made idols

for their own destruction.

⁵ Your calf is rejected, O Samaria.

My anger burns against them.

How long will they be incapable of innocence?

⁶ For it is from Israel,

an artisan made it;

it is not God.

The calf of Samaria

shall be broken to pieces.^[b]

⁷ For they sow the wind,

and they shall reap the whirlwind.

The standing grain has no heads,

it shall yield no meal;

if it were to yield,

foreigners would devour it.

Amos 6:1-7 Complacent Self-Indulgence Will Be Punished

6 Alas for those who are at ease in Zion,

and for those who feel secure on Mount Samaria,

the notables of the first of the nations,

to whom the house of Israel resorts!

² Cross over to Calneh, and see;

from there go to Hamath the great;

then go down to Gath of the Philistines.

Are you better^[a] than these kingdoms?

Or is your^[b] territory greater than their^[c] territory,

- ³ O you that put far away the evil day,
and bring near a reign of violence?
- ⁴ Alas for those who lie on beds of ivory,
and lounge on their couches,
and eat lambs from the flock,
and calves from the stall;
- ⁵ who sing idle songs to the sound of the harp,
and like David improvise on instruments of music;
- ⁶ who drink wine from bowls,
and anoint themselves with the finest oils,
but are not grieved over the ruin of Joseph!
- ⁷ Therefore they shall now be the first to go into exile,
and the revelry of the loungers shall pass away.

Micah 3:1-11

Wicked Rulers and Prophets

- 3** And I said:
Listen, you heads of Jacob
and rulers of the house of Israel!
Should you not know justice?—
- ² you who hate the good and love the evil,
who tear the skin off my people,^[a]
and the flesh off their bones;
- ³ who eat the flesh of my people,
flay their skin off them,
break their bones in pieces,
and chop them up like meat^[b] in a kettle,
like flesh in a caldron.
- ⁴ Then they will cry to the LORD,
but he will not answer them;
he will hide his face from them at that time,
because they have acted wickedly.
- ⁵ Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets
who lead my people astray,
who cry "Peace"
when they have something to eat,
but declare war against those

who put nothing into their mouths.

⁶ Therefore it shall be night to you, without vision,
and darkness to you, without revelation.

The sun shall go down upon the prophets,
and the day shall be black over them;

⁷ the seers shall be disgraced,
and the diviners put to shame;

they shall all cover their lips,
for there is no answer from God.

⁸ But as for me, I am filled with power,
with the spirit of the LORD,
and with justice and might,
to declare to Jacob his transgression
and to Israel his sin.

⁹ Hear this, you rulers of the house of Jacob
and chiefs of the house of Israel,

who abhor justice
and pervert all equity,

¹⁰ who build Zion with blood
and Jerusalem with wrong!

¹¹ Its rulers give judgment for a bribe,
its priests teach for a price,
its prophets give oracles for money;

yet they lean upon the LORD and say,
"Surely the LORD is with us!

No harm shall come upon us."

3. How had Israel distorted Gods original purpose for the temple?

Jeremiah 7:1-10 Jeremiah Proclaims God's Judgment on the Nation

⁷ The word that came to Jeremiah from the LORD: ² Stand in the gate of the LORD's house, and proclaim there this word, and say, Hear the word of the LORD, all you people of Judah, you that enter these gates to worship the LORD. ³ Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: Amend your ways and your doings, and let me dwell with youⁱⁿ in this place. ⁴ Do not trust in these deceptive words: "This isⁱⁿ the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD."

⁵ For if you truly amend your ways and your doings, if you truly act justly one with another, ⁶ if you do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place, and if you do not go after other gods to your own hurt, ⁷ then I will

dwell with you in this place, in the land that I gave of old to your ancestors forever and ever.

⁸ Here you are, trusting in deceptive words to no avail. ⁹ Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, make offerings to Baal, and go after other gods that you have not known, ¹⁰ and then come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, "We are safe!"—only to go on doing all these abominations?

4. How had Israel distorted God's original purpose for the law?

Amos 5:7 Ah, you that turn justice to wormwood,
and bring righteousness to the ground!

5. How had Israel distorted God's original purpose for separation?

Jonah 3:10-4:3

¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it.

Jonah's Anger

4 But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the LORD and said, "O LORD! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³ And now, O LORD, please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live."

6. How had Israel distorted God's original purpose for circumcision?

Jeremiah 4:4 Circumcise yourselves to the LORD,
remove the foreskin of your hearts,
O people of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem,
or else my wrath will go forth like fire,
and burn with no one to quench it,
because of the evil of your doings.

Jeremiah 9:25-26 ²⁵ The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will attend to all those who are circumcised only in the foreskin: ²⁶ Egypt, Judah, Edom, the

Ammonites, Moab, and all those with shaven temples who live in the desert. For all these nations are uncircumcised, and all the house of Israel is uncircumcised in heart.

7. How had Israel distorted God's original purpose for the land?

Jeremiah 2:7 I brought you into a plentiful land
to eat its fruits and its good things.
But when you entered you defiled my land,
and made my heritage an abomination.

8. What did God want from Israel?

Jeremiah 4:1-2

4 If you return, O Israel, says the LORD,
if you return to me,
if you remove your abominations from my presence,
and do not waver,
² and if you swear, "As the LORD lives!"
in truth, in justice, and in uprightness,
then nations shall be blessed^[a] by him,
and by him they shall boast.

Amos 5:21-24

I hate, I despise your festivals,
and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies.
²² Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings,
I will not accept them;
and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals
I will not look upon.
²³ Take away from me the noise of your songs;
I will not listen to the melody of your harps.
²⁴ But let justice roll down like waters,
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Micah 6:6-8

What God Requires

⁶ "With what shall I come before the LORD,
and bow myself before God on high?
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings,
with calves a year old?

⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams,
with ten thousands of rivers of oil?
Shall I give my firstborn for my transgression,
the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?"

⁸ He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice, and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

Hosea 6:4-6

Impenitence of Israel and Judah

⁴ What shall I do with you, O Ephraim?
What shall I do with you, O Judah?

Your love is like a morning cloud,
like the dew that goes away early.

⁵ Therefore I have hewn them by the prophets,
I have killed them by the words of my mouth,
and my^[a] judgment goes forth as the light.

⁶ For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice,
the knowledge of God rather than burnt offerings.