

Major and Minor Prophets

THE 611

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Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel

Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

Major Prophets: Date and Authorship

Isaiah: A man of the city of Jerusalem. Believed to come from a noble family, he was born about 765 B.C. and began to prophesy around 740 B.C. with his last prophesy around 701 B.C.

Jeremiah: Born around 645 B.C. his years of prophecy started in 627 B.C. He prophesied on and off until the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C. Jeremiah lived in a time of war and social turmoil. He lived to see the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem and the Babylonian captivity.

Ezekiel: Active between the years 593-571 B.C. The book is believed to have its final form a few years after this time of prophecy.

Daniel: The book is written as taking place during the time of the exile in Babylon, sometime between 587 -537 B.C., but this book details the reign of Antiochus IV (173-164) suggesting that it was written sometime after the exile.

Minor Prophets: Date and Authorship

Hosea: A contemporary of Amos, lived in the N. Kingdom under the rule of Jeroboam II (786-746 B.C.). He began to prophesy in the last years of Jeroboam II, about 745 and prophesied until roughly 730 B.C.

Joel: Very little is known about this book aside of the fact that it is written after the time of Ezra and Nehemiah and before the Greeks in the fourth Century B.C. A rough dating of the text would be 400 B.C.

Amos: A shepherd boy who was a contemporary of Hosea, his prophecies were delivered at Bethel in the N. Kingdom. The date of the book is roughly 755 B.C.

Obadiah: Nothing is known about the authorship outside of its rough date of 450 B.C. and that it was composed in opposition to Edom.

Jonah: The exact date of composition is unknown, but Tobit refers to Jonah so the book must have existed before the fourth century B.C. The Hebrew is like that of Ezra and Nehemiah.

Micah: A contemporary of Isaiah, he prophesied between the years 740-701 B.C. Some of his oracles precede the destruction in Samaria in 721 B.C. and some come after that. Like Amos, he lived in the country and rebuked the corrupt ways of city dwellers in Samaria and Jerusalem.

Nahum: Nothing is known of Nahum. Just the assessment of the time of authorship given the context of the composition, which dates around 612 B.C shortly after the siege of Nineveh.

Habakkuk: Due to the sharp attack on the hated Babylonians before their attack on Jerusalem in 587 B.C., it is very likely the composition is dated between 605-597 B.C. Nothing is known of the person outside of his association with the Temple in Jerusalem.

Zephaniah: Prophesied under King Josiah before his religious reform between 635 B.C. A native of Jerusalem with connections to the royal court. The first significant prophet to emerge from Judah, 50 years after the death of Isaiah.

Haggai: The date was written in 520 B.C., the second year of the reign of Darius I of Persia. Nothing is known about the life and person of Haggai. This book is an exhortation to the leaders of Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple.

Zechariah: A contemporary of Haggai who prophesied in the years 520 B.C.-518 B.C. He was a priest so there too was an emphasis of the Temple in Jerusalem.

Malachi: The subject matter point to the dating of this book after the founding of the restored Temple in 515 B.C. and before the arrival of Ezra in 445 B.C. Otherwise, there is very little know of this prophet who is known as “the messenger.”

*** Primary work Cited: Kenneth Baker's *Inside the Bible*