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C0742 – November 14, 2007 – The Book Of The Twelve –
Introduction

What we want to do tonight is get a handle on the organization of the Old Testament in general and the Minor Prophets in particular. We have a real weakness when it comes to the OT but if you really want to know where we're weak just look at the Minor Prophets. These are a real enigma. Just ask any Christian what Habakkuk is about. Now, I want to suggest three reasons for this. First, some Christians don't find them important because they are not written to us but the nation of Israel. This is the Christian who wants to focus on the NT. I've seen this even in seminary students. A lack of concern really for the OT, "Just give me the NT." But this errs in two ways. For one the NT authors presuppose familiarity with the OT. In other words, the NT is built on the OT and lays the foundation for understanding the NT. You might have heard the name Arnold Fruchtenbaum. Arnold is a Messianic Jew, he earned a Th. M. from Dallas Theological Seminary, a Ph.D from New York University and studied at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Arnold was born in Siberia, Russia, in a Jewish family. During WWII his family escaped from Poland and eventually immigrated to the United States. Arnold's father was a rabbi and the rabbi's memorized the OT, much like the followers of Islam today memorize the Koran. Arnold tells how his father could take a spike and drive it into the Hebrew Bible and wherever that spike stopped, whatever page, whatever word he would have to start quoting by memory from there. So, you can imagine, under that tutelage, Arnold came to know the OT pretty well. Later Arnold became a believer in the Messiahship of Jesus and he tells the story of sitting down and reading the entire NT in one night. What is significant about that is the fact that he could do that only because he had a great understanding of the OT. But if you don't you'll be confused. My father in law tells me of a guy he works out with who said "Jesus is not a Jew" and the guy claims to have read the NT. And I'm

thinking, if you read Matt 1 you'd know Jesus was a Jew, there's His OT chronology. Who do you think those guys are? That Jesus was a Jew is on page 1 of the NT. But I still hear Christians today complain, "Why does my pastor teach from the OT?" Well, frankly we need a lot more pastors doing that because that's where we're weak. And I suggest it's why we're weak in the NT too. That's one reason we're doing the Biblical Framework class, you're going to get the whole counsel of God in that class over the next few years. So, we don't apologize on this point, the NT did not come in a vacuum, Jesus didn't just drop out of heaven. He came as the logical conclusion to the OT. And some people jump right into the NT and get completely lost because the NT authors presuppose you already know the OT. Second reason Christians don't think the Minor Prophets are important. They fail to realize that all Scripture is not written to us but it is all for us. Turn over to 2 Tim 3:14-17. Here's Paul writing to Timothy and telling him, "If you live a godly Christian life you are going to be persecuted. It's inevitable because men are only getting worse." And that's what we're facing today isn't it; people who hate Christianity. This is why, I was listening to a debate between D'Souza and Hitchens over Christianity, and this was like watching two bulls lock horns and Hitchens says "I'm not an atheist, I'm an anti-theist,". In other words he doesn't just not believe in a god he's against God, and this just exposes the fact that he's not neutral. And this is what Paul's telling Timothy, just be ready, people hate God and Christ and Christians but you continue in the faith. Verse 14, "You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*, ¹⁵and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." Now, what were the sacred writings that Timothy had known from childhood? The OT, there wasn't a NT yet. He's talking about the sacred writings of the Hebrew people and then he says this in verse 16, "All Scripture" and strictly speaking he's talking about the OT but of course, now the principle extends to include the NT, but the OT he's saying, "is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;" This is what I want you to see. The OT is *theopneustos*, God-breathed, it's His exhalation. Yes, to the nation of Israel but note that it is profitable for "for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness". So, the Minor Prophets are profitable for us. They may not be written *to us* but they are *for us*. All Scripture is *for us*. As verse 17 says, we need them to be adequately equipped for every good work. So, we reject the

argument that the Minor Prophets are unimportant because they're not written *to us*. *Second* reason these are an enigma for most people is that they are rarely taught? We simply don't get exposed to them. While we all give lip service to the idea that "all Scripture is God breathed", I find it funny that we operate like there's a hierarchy within the canon, that some books are more important than others. This is not unheard of in Church History. Martin Luther did this. His table of contents in his 1522 German NT suggests two levels of canonicity in the NT. He set the first 23 books off from the last four. And this has continued in Lutheran circles. Even today they have an "inner canon" within the wider canon. The inner canon is a Pauline canon. I've also seen this in the modern teachings of Miles Stanford, a Classical Pauline Dispensationalist who so emphasizes the Pauline letters that the others become subservient to Paul. The Pauline's become the interpretive center from which every other NT book is measured and interpreted. And so, historically, and I think in us too, we tend to think of some parts of Scripture as more important to the canon than others. But that's tantamount to saying what? That when God has something to say we're supposed to say, "Well, on a canonicity scale of 1-5, 1 being extremely important, I assign James a 4". Are we really prepared to defend that? What I keep finding is that every thing God says is connected with every thing else God says. Every passage penetrates every other passage. God's word is a rationale system of thought. He's a coherent thinker and as such the Scriptures are a coherent speech. Now, we may not see the coherence. We may be shortsighted, but we can't relegate one part to a lesser canonical status. And true, God may emphasize one portion more than another but that doesn't mean there are portions of Scripture that are less important. But don't we do that with the Minor Prophets. What happens in your mind when you call them Minor? See, it's just axiomatic to the language. Before you know it subconsciously we have assigned different levels of canonicity or different levels of importance and that's not true. So they get taught last, put off till later, kind of a tack on to the OT. *Third* reason these books are an enigma is because they are relatively small, often just a chapter or two and that means there's not a lot of internal information to help us get a handle on what they are about. We don't know much about the human authors. And that lack of information makes them difficult to understand. But, we want to try overcome these difficulties and misunderstandings and familiarize ourselves with these books. They are God's word just as much as Romans. Personally, I decided to do this because I've always been fascinated by them, they just sit there at the

end of the OT and nobody touches them so I wanted to go into them and figure out what's going on. So, let's start with the Hebrew canon as a whole and then their place within the corpus of literature. Then we want to look at the history of Israel and see where they fit.

THE HEBREW CANON

When we talk about the Hebrew canon of Scripture we mean something very simple. It is the list of books contained in the Hebrew Bible and recognized by the Hebrew people as divinely inspired. If you open your Bible to the table of contents you will find a list of Old and New Testament books. In your OT you have 39 books listed. What we're interested in doing is look at the list(s) the Jews put together and their sequence. It's not the same as our sequence. Someone came along, divided the books up differently and ordered them differently. And what's amazing is that if you go back and get the original list, in other words, Jesus' Bible. "What did Jesus' Bible look like?" "What would His table of contents have looked like?" He didn't have one but there was a designated sequence. If you get that and then read the NT, you will find that there are places where that original sequence helps make sense of the passage. Then people come along after Jesus, change the sequence and it foils it and you have to spend all this time in research to uncover these things.

Now, in studying the lists that make up the Hebrew canon we actually find a number of different lists. We want to know why and in what ways they differ? Such lists have differed in two ways. *First*, they have differed in sequence because the books were written in scrolls and not books. Since the scrolls were loose documents and not bound in books the ancient writers list them in different sequences. *Second*, they have differed in number and this is due to two reasons. *First*, because all the Hebrew books were not written at the same time. The books were written over a period of ~1,500 years so that the Hebrew Bible was growing over time. This is called progressive revelation, the idea that God revealed His word progressively over time and not all at one time. So that at the time of Noah, for example, we speak of the Noahic Bible, Gen 1-9, or the time of Moses, we speak of the Mosaic Bible, Gen 1-Deut 33. So, it grew over time and that means the number of books changed until the Hebrew canon was completed. *Second*, even after the Hebrew canon was complete the number differs and this has merely to do with combining

the scrolls differently. For example, adding Ruth to Judges or Nehemiah to Ezra. So, for example, the traditional Hebrew Bible has 24 scrollsⁱ but Josephus listed only 22.ⁱⁱ

TRADITIONAL HEBREW CANON (70-200AD)		
24 SCROLLS		
<u>Law</u>	<u>Prophets</u>	<u>Writings</u>
Genesis	Joshua	Psalms
Exodus	Judges	Proverbs
Leviticus	Samuel	Job
Numbers	Kings	Song of Songs
Deuteronomy	Isaiah	Ruth
	Jeremiah	Lamentations
	Ezekiel	Ecclesiastes
	Twelve Prophets	Esther
		Daniel
		Ezra-Nehemiah
		Chronicles

JOSEPHUS' HEBREW CANON (90AD)		
22 SCROLLS		
<u>Law</u>	<u>Prophets</u>	<u>Writings</u>
Genesis	Joshua	Psalms
Exodus	Judges-Ruth	Proverbs
Leviticus	Samuel	Song of Songs
Numbers	Kings	Ecclesiastes
Deuteronomy	Isaiah	
	Jeremiah-Lamentations	
	Ezekiel	
	Twelve Prophets	
	Job	
	Esther	
	Daniel	
	Ezra-Nehemiah	
	Chronicles	

These are probably just different combinations. So that Josephus combined Ruth with Judges and Lamentations with Jeremiah. This would reduce the number to 22, which may have been deliberately done to make them correspond with the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. There have been other suggestions for Josephus' difference.ⁱⁱⁱ But traditionally there have been 24 books. The most important thing is that they were identical in content. There was no disagreement among the Jews as to what content was included in the canon. And our English Bibles have 39 OT books but these are identical in content to the 24. Now, we've talked about the number of books and their content.

THREE-FOLD DIVISION OF THE HEBREW CANON

Let's discuss now the divisions of the Hebrew canon and the sequence. You can see from the diagram above their canon did not end with Malachi like in the English Bible, but with Chronicles. Now, to be clear, the last book written for the Hebrew canon was Malachi, in fact, Malachi was known among the Jews as "the seal of the prophets". It was written in 420BC. But they put Chronicles last even though it was written much earlier and this helps us interpret some NT sayings of Jesus. There are also several lines of evidence that prove that the Jews split their canon into three divisions and that Jesus' Bible shared these divisions. These are Law, Prophets, and Writings. The first division is the Law composed of the five books of Moses. The second division is the Prophets composed of eight books. The third division is the Writings and is composed of eleven books. We're mainly just concerned with the Traditional list.

Evidence of the three-fold division goes back to 132BC when Jeshua Ben Sira translated his grandfather's book *Sirach Prolog* which says,

"For the same things uttered in Hebrew, and translated into another tongue, have not the same force in them: and not only these things, but the law itself, and the prophets, and the rest of the books, have no small difference, when they are spoken in their own language."^{iv}

The "law" and "prophets" clearly refer to their respective sections and "the rest of the books" were certainly written in Hebrew, therefore probably referring to the "writings". The New Testament also makes this three-fold division. Turn over to Luke 24:44. Here Jesus said,

These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled. (Luke 24:44)

See, this is a verse that shows if you just jump in the NT you won't understand what is going on. You'll keep having to go back to the OT Law, Prophets and Psalms to figure it out. So, you might as well start there to begin with. But note the three-fold division; The "Law of Moses" and the "Prophets" and the "Psalms" which was the first and largest single scroll in the "Writings".^v So, Jesus recognized these three divisions

However, we have some other designations of the entire OT listed in the NT. By the 1st century, when Jesus lived, the three-fold division could be abbreviated three different ways in everyday speech. *First*, turn over to Matt 5:17. This is the famous Sermon on the Mount. This is the first major discourse in Matthew. Matthew is known for Jesus' discourses. And here's

the first one, he's talking to Jewish people, people who are familiar with the Hebrew Bible and he says, "Do not think that I came to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill" (Matt 5:17). So, the "Law and the Prophets" was a shortened way of referring to the whole OT because there are Messianic prophecies in the Writings, the Psalms, Daniel, etc...Also, the designation "Moses and the Prophets" as in Acts 28:23 where Paul tried "to persuade them concerning Jesus, from both the Law of Moses and from the Prophets." Finally, turn over to John 10:34. Here Jesus quotes from the Psalms, a part of the Writings, but He refers to it as "the Law". The point is that it was common to refer to the whole Hebrew Bible as "the Law". Paul does the same thing in 1 Cor 14:21. Turn there. This is a quote from Isa 28:11. Isaiah is a part of the Prophets but Paul says it is "in the Law". This is an important passage for another reason too. This is where Paul is talking about the gifts of the Spirit and one of the gifts was being abused, the gift of tongues or languages. And you'll see that in verse 21 he quotes from Isaiah to give the purpose of tongues. What was the purpose of tongues? And you see very clearly it had to do with unbelieving Jews. "In the Law it is written, "BY MEN OF STRANGE TONGUES AND BY THE LIPS OF STRANGERS I WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE," who's "this people" in Isa 28:11? Israel. "AND EVEN SO THEY WILL NOT LISTEN TO ME," says the Lord. ²²So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers;" so that's where we pick up they were for unbelieving Jews. What did Paul already tell us, earlier in this book that Jews ask for? A sign. And tongues are for a sign he says. The Greeks didn't search for a sign, they searched for wisdom (1 Cor 1:22). So, this is showing that the tongues were a sign to unbelieving Jews. I wanted to point that out but look in verse 21 how he starts, "In the Law it is written" and then he quotes Isa. But Isaiah is in the "Prophets". Nevertheless, what this shows is that the whole OT could be referred to simply as "the Law".

So, this shows that when the Hebrew canon was completed with Malachi, about 420BC, these books were divided into three parts, Law, Prophets and Writings, so that this reflects the Bible Jesus was familiar with and they had all these shortened ways of referring to the OT such as the "Law and Prophets" or simply "the Law".

Lastly, before we move to the Minor Prophets we want to look briefly at the traditional Hebrew sequence.

JOSEPHUS' HEBREW CANON (90AD)

22 SCROLLS

<u>Law</u>	<u>Prophets</u>	<u>Writings</u>
Genesis	Joshua	Psalms
Exodus	Judges-Ruth	Proverbs
Leviticus	Samuel	Song of Songs
Numbers	Kings	Ecclesiastes
Deuteronomy	Isaiah	
	Jeremiah-Lamentations	
	Ezekiel	
	Twelve Prophets	
	Job	
	Esther	
	Daniel	
	Ezra-Nehemiah	
	Chronicles	

You'll notice that Chronicles follows Ezra-Nehemiah but we know that the events of Chronicles happened before Ezra-Nehemiah. So why is Chronicles last? We don't know for sure. It may have been because they recognized Ezra-Nehemiah as canonical before Chronicles. But what is very interesting is that Jesus Christ recognized the traditional Hebrew Bible as ending with Chronicles. In other words, we know Jesus studied the OT, in His humanity He had to learn the Scriptures, in Isa 50:4 it says He got up every morning and He studied the Hebrew Scriptures so that, do you remember a little story of Mary and Joseph going up to Jerusalem for Passover and after the feast they left town and they thought Jesus was with them, "Oh, he's somewhere in the caravan" and this is like leaving your kid in an out of town department store and so they go back and search for him for three days. Just think of the human drama. "Mary, we lost the Son of God! God gave us His son and we've lost Him" And so they go back, search for him three days and where do they find Him? In the Temple. What was He doing? Sitting in the midst of the teachers, the Harvard Law Professors of the day, listening and asking questions and it says they were amazed at His understanding and His answers. Twelve years old and Jesus was more fully conversant with the Hebrew Scriptures than anyone; because he spent time in the word of God, conversing with God every day for hours and hours. He did His chores too but He knew this was the most important thing. So, turn over to Matthew 23:34-35. Here's where we can tell Jesus did His homework, He was a student of the Scriptures and He followed the traditional Hebrew sequence. We've looked at this text recently to show that Jesus believed in a literal Genesis and if we claim to be followers of Jesus shouldn't we follow His interpretation of Genesis? But notice this time an observation about the Hebrew canon. Here Christ is pronouncing judgment on that generation of Israel for

rejecting His Messiahship and He's prophesying that in the future He's going to send them more revelation through prophets and yet they are going to murder them and then He gives the judicial sentence, "Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, ³⁵so that upon you may fall *the guilt of* all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah." Once they commit the murders of verse 34 then what guilt is going to fall on them? The guilt of ALL the righteous blood shed on earth. Starting when? With Abel. Ending when? With Zechariah. "All the blood" he's saying, "from Abel...to Zechariah". What book of the Bible was Abel murdered in? The Book of Genesis, first book in the Hebrew canon. What book of the Bible was Zechariah murdered in? The Book of Chronicles, last book in the Hebrew canon. It's interesting because Zechariah was not the last martyr of the Old Testament *chronologically*. He was murdered about 800BC. But he was the last martyr of the Old Testament *canon*. So, Jesus was simply saying that once they carried out their murders they would be guilty of all the righteous blood shed in the OT canon. But then people come along, think they have a better way to organize the books so they do and then you miss little things like this. But, we can see from this that Jesus knew the OT cold, he was very in touch with the traditional order and that He considered the Old Testament canon to be closed.

In summary, the OT has 24 scrolls that begin with Genesis and end with Chronicles. These scrolls were divided into three parts; the Law, the Prophets and the Writings. Jesus knew this, we should know this, now we want to look at the organization and placement of the Minor Prophets in the Hebrew canon.

THE MINOR PROPHETS

The designation Minor Prophets was first made by Latin Christians at least as early as Augustine because they were much shorter than Prophets like Isaiah or Jeremiah though some have noted the designation "a literary blunder" since it implies inferiority, lesser canonical status. But the Jews did not consider them The Minor Prophets but "The Book of the Twelve".

The Talmud says “The Book of the Twelve” came about because each was so small that their individual scrolls were hard to keep up with so they were written on a single scroll. Probably this was done by Ezra and a group of famous scribes called the Great Synagogue shortly after Malachi was written, about 420BC. This group of scribes lasted into the 3rd century BC and it is possible that their scrolls, including “The Book of the Twelve” became a part of the Qumran library, portions of which have been discovered beginning as early as 1935-36, and which we know as the Dead Sea Scrolls.^{vi} When the canon was complete after Malachi they were catalogued with the “Prophets”. There were eight books in the Prophets and the Jews divided them into two categories, “The Former Prophets”—Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings and “The Latter Prophets”—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and the Twelve.

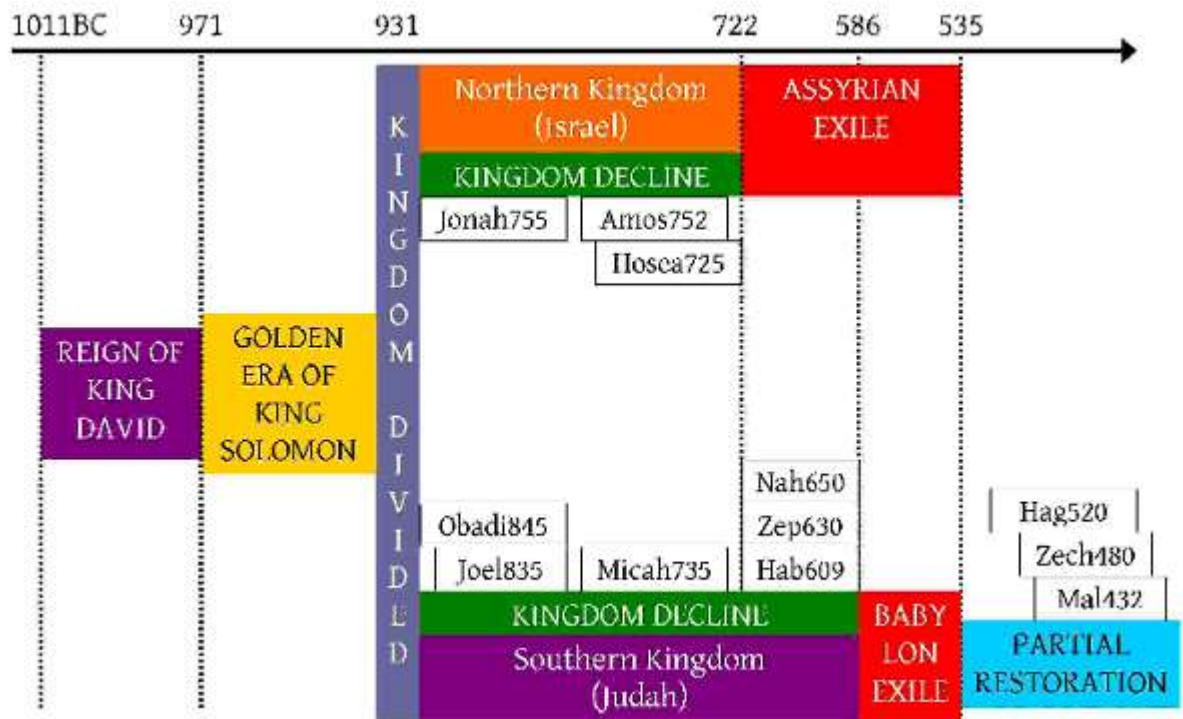
Now, when we look at the Twelve books separately, they are very small. But if we put them all together they contain 67 chapters, 1,050 verses or 30,305 words, making it 18% smaller than Isaiah (37,044), which gives you a sense of the amount of information in them.

THE MINOR PROPHETS BY SIZE^{vii}			
BOOKS	CHAPTERS	VERSES	WORDS
1. Zechariah	14	211	6,444
2. Hosea	14	197	5,175
3. Amos	9	146	4,217
4. Micah	7	105	3,153
5. Joel	3	73	2,034
6. Malachi	4	55	1,782
7. Zephaniah	3	53	1,617
8. Habakkuk	3	56	1,476
9. Jonah	4	48	1,321
10. Nahum	3	47	1,285
11. Haggai	2	38	1,131
12. Obadiah	1	21	670
	67	1,050	30,305

As per order they are not in chronological order in any Bible; Hebrew, Greek or English.

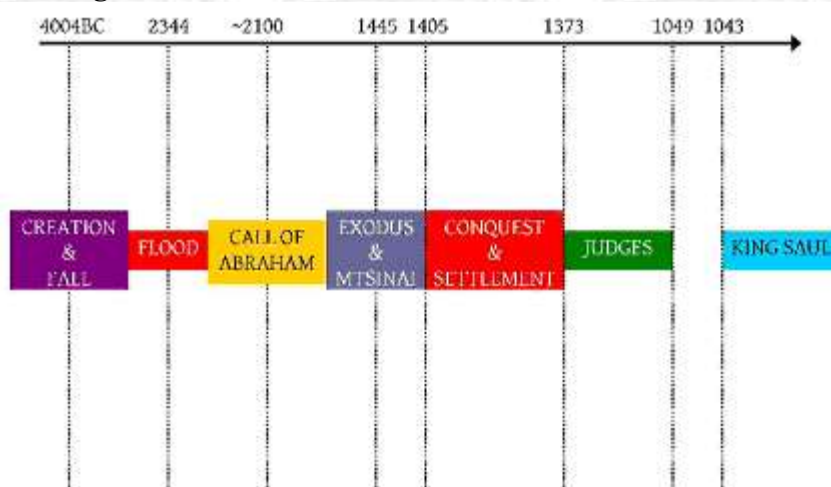
ALTERNATIVE ARRANGEMENTS OF THE MINOR PROPHETS^{viii}		
HEBREW ARRANGEMENT	GREEK ARRANGEMENT	CHRONOLOGICAL ARRANGEMENT
1. Hosea	1. Hosea	1. Obadiah
2. Joel	2. Amos	2. Joel
3. Amos	3. Micah	3. Jonah
4. Obadiah	4. Joel	4. Amos
5. Jonah	5. Obadiah	5. Hosea
6. Micah	6. Jonah	6. Micah
7. Nahum	7. Nahum	7. Nahum
8. Habakkuk	8. Habakkuk	8. Zephaniah
9. Zephaniah	9. Zephaniah	9. Habakkuk
10. Haggai	10. Haggai	10. Haggai
11. Zechariah	11. Zechariah	11. Zechariah
12. Malachi	12. Malachi	12. Malachi

This is probably one of the reasons people get so confused when they try to read them. It's like you took a time machine into the past and got dropped off, but who knows where? So, it's very helpful to organize them chronologically and group them. So, to do that let's take a look at world history. It's amazing how rarely people look at this. Yet it's plainly fundamental. Where am I? Most people don't have a clue when they live. We can locate ourselves, somewhat geographically. I'm on earth on the North American continent, in the United States of America, in the state of Texas, in Gillespie county and so on but if you ask someone where they are in time you can forget it and it's really sad. So, let's just take a brief journey. I like to look at history in terms of the big historical events. And we stress these are historical. What I mean is if you had a video camera and you were there you could have recorded them. That's what I mean by historical. If you're listening on CD or MP3 or on the internet, if you'll download the notes all these charts are on there so you can follow along.



Creation is the defining event and the universe, contrary to modern scientific claims, is not 13.7 billions of years old, it's about 6,000 years old, we will deal with radiocarbon dating, starlight and all the rest of it in our Sunday class on A Biblical Framework. Incidentally, however, I've already given you the key in that class when I showed you the chart on the limitations of man's knowledge in both the areas of human reason and experience and how that places a limitation on how we construct a universal history. So, creation is fundamental. About 1,656 years later you have the Noahic Flood and just a few hundred years after that the Call of Abraham, when Abraham lived in a pagan culture in a city called Ur of the Chaldees and God called him out to form a counter-culture. So, up until Abraham God was dealing with the cosmos and all humanity in general but with the Call of Abraham we begin looking with the history of Israel and we're not going to trace all the pagan cultures outside of Israel. So, with the Call of Abraham something happens that defines the rest of world history. Anyone know what it was? It's the driving force of world history. The Abrahamic Covenant. God entered into a covenant, or contract with Abraham. This is going to be very important for understanding The Book of the Twelve. At the conclusion of most of those books there's a promise of restoration of the Jewish people to their land. So, we'll be looking at the Abrahamic Covenant in more detail next week. Then, in 1445, after the Egyptian bondage we have another significant event, the Exodus and in the same year or so Mt Sinai where we have the second big

thing involved in Israel's history that will help us with The Book of the Twelve and that's the Mosaic Covenant. This is really big for understanding the rest of the OT and so, we'll have to spend significant amounts of time here. So, these are your two keys to The Book of the Twelve, the Abrahamic Covenant and the Mosaic Covenant. The Abrahamic established Israel's position as the eternal people of God and explains why at the close of many of those little books there's a promise of restoration but leading up to that in most of the books there's all this cursing on the nation which ultimately results in their exile and this is explained by the Mosaic Covenant. So, the Abrahamic and Mosaic Covenants are the key to The Book of the Twelve. Now, after the Exodus and Mt Sinai we have the Conquest and Settlement of the land under Joshua. Then the long period of the judges and finally the people want a king and there's a small break there and then King Saul.



Then we come to the next slide where we see King David in 1011, the kingdom is solidified and expands under King David. Israel is dominating world history under David. He rules for 40 years till 971 BC where his son by Bathsheeba, Solomon becomes King. We call it the Golden Era of King Solomon because it is the fruits of David's reign, the development of the world's greatest economy, greatest culture and greatest wisdom. It lasted 40 years till 931. But it's during this era that the nation, lead by the Solomon begins to go into idolatry and when Solomon is gone the Kingdom is divided into northern and southern kingdoms. At this time the name Israel, which was used of the entire kingdom is now used exclusively of the northern kingdom and the southern kingdom is called Judah because it's largest tribe was Judah. But, both kingdoms as you can see go into decline. We call that Kingdom Decline but the northern kingdom declines more quickly and she goes into Exile to Assyria in 722. You can see that three prophets from the

Twelve were prophets to the northern kingdom—Jonah, Amos, and Hosea, all pre-exilic, and in the south, they went into decline too, but a bit slower, they last till 586 and go into Exile to Babylon. You can see they had six of the Twelve prophets—Obadiah, Joel, Micah, Nahum, Zephaniah and Habakkuk, all pre-exilic. Finally, after the Babylonian Exile the southern kingdom has a Partial Restoration beginning in 535 and they have three more prophets from the Twelve—Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, all post-exilic. So, here's the simplest way to organize The Book of the Twelve, you can separate them into Pre-Exilic and Post-Exilic, Before the Exile and After the Exile. The easiest way to remember this is simply to memorize the Post-Exilic Prophets—Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi. After that you have the Intertestamental Period of about 400 years where the Greeks Empire thrives then the Roman Empire when Christ is born, according to Malachi, in Bethlehem. So, that's one way of dividing them, Pre-Exilic and Post-Exilic. Another way is to look at them in four triads. If you notice there are four groups of three and this will help you with the dates of these books as well because they're not in a chronology in your Bible. So, we have in Triad 1: Obadiah, Joel and Jonah. Triad 2: Amos, Micah and Hosea. triad 3: Nahum, Zephaniah and Habakkuk. Now, those first three triads are all Pre-Exilic. Then we have Triad 4: Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi, all Post-Exilic. You'll see all the dates there as well on the chart.

Now, as per doctrines, you can see the historical events here; Kingdom Divided, Kingdom Decline, Exile and Partial Restoration, we'll connect doctrines to each of these and the primary doctrines are Sanctification, Chastening, Prayer and Canonicity. We'll also see the faithfulness of God. He keeps His end of the bargain in the Mosaic Covenant as well as His eternal promises in the Abrahamic Covenant. So, it gets very practical because these truths are vital for the Christians life too. We have sanctification, chastening, prayer and canonicity of the NT. So, this is very helpful for us in these areas. Well, that's a little bit of an introduction to the Hebrew canon and OT history and where The Book of the Twelve fits. Like I say, we're not familiar with a lot of this so if there any questions, now's the time, don't be bashful, we're all learning here. I'm pretty unfamiliar with this section of Scripture and very hesitant to teach it but Pam told me I was ahead of most of you but I can't imagine I'm very far ahead. But I'll try to answer any questions.

¹ The Baba Bathra document written between 70-200AD claims divine inspiration for all twenty-four books and discusses their order. The order of the first five books, the Torah, are fixed because they fit

chronologically and were all written by the same author/compiler, Moses. The order of the Latter Prophets and the Writings was not so fixed. This is simply because many of these books were kept in separate scrolls and not in codices (bound books). The codex did not come into use until the early Christian era. Since the Latter Prophets and Writings were separate scrolls, kept together in one box, it should be no surprise that we find different orders in different lists.

ⁱⁱ Josephus was commissioned by the Roman Empire to write a history of the Jewish people and in his work *Against Apion* 1.8, written around 90AD, he remarks, “For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another [as the Greeks have], but only twenty-two books,^g which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine; (39) and of them five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of three thousand years; (40) but as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life. (41) It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time; (42) and how firmly we have given credit to those books of our own nation, is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add anything to them, to take anything from them, or to make any change in them; but it becomes natural to all Jews, immediately and from their very birth, to esteem those books to contain divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be, willingly to die for them.”ⁱⁱ

ⁱⁱⁱ To explain why Josephus had 22 and not 24 some scholars suspect that the documents Josephus had were taken directly from the Temple before it was destroyed by Titus in AD70 and that list was identical to Nehemiah’s list from the 5th century BC, in which case the last two books Zechariah and Malachi had not been written. Others think that he did not see Song of Solomon or Ezra.

^{iv} Also see Sirach Prolog 1:1 “Whereas many and great things have been delivered unto us by the law and the prophets, and by others that have followed their steps, for the which things Israel ought to be commended for learning and wisdom...”

^v By this time the Hebrews recognized 22 books that had the same content as the 24. Josephus said, “We have but twenty-two [books] containing the history of all time” *Against Apion* 1.8. Apparently the number was reduced from 24 to 22 by combining Ruth with Judges and Lamentations with Jeremiah. The important point is that the content, whether contained in 39, 24, or 22 books is the same.

^{vi} See Randall Price, *Secrets of the Dead Sea Scrolls*.

^{vii} James E. Smith, *The Minor Prophets* (Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1992).

^{viii} James E. Smith, *The Minor Prophets* (Joplin, Mo.: College Press, 1992).

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