

# Minor Prophets, Major Message

## INTRODUCTION

The prophets warned the Israelites before exile, strengthened them during exile, and gave them hope after exile. This hope was founded on the fundamental truth that salvation is of the Lord. In this lesson, Dr. Lawson surveys the Minor Prophets by highlighting the doctrines of grace to demonstrate that, though they are called “Minor” Prophets, they have a major message.

## LEARNING GOALS

When you have finished this lesson, you should be able to:

- Grasp the historical context of the Minor Prophets
- Identify passages that teach the doctrines of grace in the Minor Prophets
- Recognize the centrality of the Word of God as an instrumental means of conversion

## KEY IDEAS

- The twelve books known as the Minor Prophets are named as such for their relatively short length and are set within the pre- and postexilic periods of Israel’s history.
- The sovereignty of God extends over secondary means, not only over ultimate ends, such that the effectual call of God accompanies the preaching of the Word of God.

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## REFLECTION & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

### Before the Video

#### *What Do You Think?*

Take a moment to answer the following questions. They will prepare you for the lecture.

- Have you ever read the Minor Prophets? What did you find in them, or what do you expect to find in them, in terms of the doctrines of grace?
- Is it accurate to speak of unbelievers as seeking after God? Why or why not? Before God saved you, were you actively seeking God? How so?

#### *Scripture Reading*

*Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah the second time, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you." So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, three days' journey in breadth. Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them.*

*When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.*

—Jonah 3:1–5, 10

- How does Jonah respond to God's call? How do the Ninevites respond to Jonah's message? How does God respond to the Ninevites' response?

### During the Video

Answer the following questions while you watch the video. They will guide you through the lecture.

#### *The Prophet Hosea*

0:00–10:40

- Why did God tell Hosea to take for himself a wife of harlotry?
- What did God tell Hosea to name his third child from Gomer? What does this name mean? What did it signify?

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- How is it possible for a people who are not God's people to become God's people?
  - How did God respond to the tribe of Ephraim's idolatry? What doctrine does this teach?

*The Prophets Jonah and Malachi*

10:40-26:01

- What was Jonah's response to God's initial call? How was God's sovereignty displayed despite Jonah's response?
- What was God's appointed means for the salvation of the Ninevites?
- Why was God's choice of Jacob over Esau a seemingly unlikely choice?

After the Video

Answer the following questions after you have finished the lecture. They will help you identify and summarize the major points.

- What did Dr. Lawson name as a supreme mark of a Christian in this lecture? What is a result of such a mark in a Christian's life?
- Who is speaking in Zechariah 12:10?
- Now that you have finished studying the doctrines of grace in the Old Testament, what was your favorite Old Testament example that clearly taught one of the doctrines of grace? Why?

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## PRAYER

Commit what you have learned from God's Word in this lesson to prayer.

- Praise God for His steadfast love and grace to you in spite of your sin.
- Confess your reluctance to repent from your sins as quickly as you ought.
- Thank God for giving you the Holy Spirit to help you in the midst temptation.
- Ask God to make you quick to yield to Him in obedience, unlike Jonah.