

Biblical Books and Prophets

1. Name the pre-exilic prophets studied in Units 1-2.

*Amos      Hosea      First Isaiah  
Micah      Zephaniah      Nahum      Jeremiah*

2. Name the exilic prophets studied in Units 1-2.

*Second Isaiah      Ezekiel      Obadiah*

3. Name the post-exilic prophet(s) studied in Units 1-2.

*Third Isaiah      Haggai      Zechariah*

4. Name the biblical books studied in Unit 2 that were *unequivocally* written after the Edict of Cyrus (538 BC).

*Haggai      Zechariah      Isaiah 56-66      Ezra      Nehemiah*

5. Name the biblical books studied in Unit 2 that were *unequivocally* written before the Edict of Cyrus (538 BC).

*Lamentations      Obadiah      Ezekiel*

6. Name the biblical books studied in Unit 2 that express interest in the Jerusalem Temple.

*Ezekiel      Haggai      Zechariah      (Third Isaiah – arguably)  
Ezra      Nehemiah (e.g., Neh 13:4-14)*

7. Name three prominent images of God that appear in *Lamentations*.

*God the Enemy (e.g., Lam 2:1-8)  
God the Just Judge (e.g., Lam 1:5)  
God the Redeemer (e.g., Lam 3:55-66)*

True or False

1. Third Isaiah prophesied that a return from exile was about to happen. *F* – 2 *Isaiah*

2. Lamentations consists of four acrostic poems and a fifth that is semi-acrostic. *T*

3. An acrostic poem is a poem structured by the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. *T*

4. Second Isaiah was anointed by the spirit of the LORD. *F* – 3 *Isaiah*

5. The exile took place *after* King Josiah's Reform. *T*

6. Nehemiah was governor of the Persian province of Judah in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. *T*

7. Edom assisted the Babylonians in the destruction of Jerusalem. *T* (see *Obadiah*)

8. Nehemiah presided over a covenant renewal ceremony in which marriages to foreigners were dissolved. *F* – *Ezra* presided

9. Ezra was a scribe and a priest. *T*
10. The returned exiles especially valued partnering with the peoples of the land in Judah and Samaria. *F – Peoples of the land are those who did not go into exile, including those who descended from northern tribes mingled with Assyrian forced immigrants.*
11. The people living in Samaria in the fifth century BC are among those described as “the people of the land” in the Book of Ezra. *T*
12. The prophet Haggai was *most* interested in reforming social abuses. *F – Haggai was most interested in rebuilding the Jerusalem Temple.*
13. The Edict of Cyrus paved the way for exiled Judahites to return to Jerusalem.
14. Nehemiah was *not* interested in reform of social abuses. *F (e.g., Nehemiah 5:1-19)*
15. Obadiah mocks idols as impotent nothings. *F – Second Isaiah*
16. All the events described in the Book of Ezra take place *after* the Temple is rebuilt. *F – Ezra 1-6 describe events that take place between 539 and 520.*
17. The Book of Nehemiah insists on Sabbath reform. *T*
18. Ezekiel contains allegories and parables to describe the religious and political situation of his time. *T (e.g., Ezek 17)*
19. The servant of the LORD in Second Isaiah can be interpreted as an individual and/or as a group of faithful people. *T*
20. The Jordan River flows south from the Sea of Galilee into the Dead Sea along the Aqaba rift. *T*

#### One-word Answers

1. Name the biblical book studied in Unit 2 that can be rightly called a book of consolation. (Hint: It begins with the word, “Comfort.”) (*Second Isaiah*)
2. Name the biblical book studied in Unit 2 that holds the religious viewpoint most similar to that of Haggai. (*First Zechariah*)
3. Name the biblical book studied in Unit 2 that includes the teachings most similar to that of Nehemiah. (*Ezra*)
4. Name three biblical books studied in *Unit 2* that are set or partially written at the time of the Fall of Jerusalem. (*Lamentations, Obadiah or Ezekiel*)
5. Name the biblical book studied in Unit 2 that describes a covenant renewal ceremony similar to the one found in Joshua 24. (*Nehemiah*)
6. Name the biblical book studied in Unit 2 that refers to Cyrus as “God’s anointed.” (*Second Isaiah*)
7. Name the biblical book studied in Unit 2 that is an extended oracle against Edom. (*Obadiah*)

8. Name the biblical book studied in Unit 2 that includes a prayer of lament which identifies Yahweh as “Father” and “Redeemer.” (*Third Isaiah*)
9. Name the biblical book studied in Unit 2 that contains a paraphrase of the Edict of Cyrus. (*Ezra*)
10. Name the prophet studied in Unit 2 who criticizes the people for building their own houses before the temple is rebuilt. (*Haggai*)
11. Name the biblical book that is comprised of a series of prophetic visions. (*First Zechariah*)
12. Does Nehemiah come *before or after* the beginning of the Persian Empire? (*after*)
13. Does Josiah’s reform come *before or after* the Edict of Cyrus? (*before*)
14. Does the Fall of the Northern Kingdom to Assyria come *before or after* the prophecies of Jeremiah? (*before*)
15. Does Hezekiah build his tunnel *before or after* the Fall of Jerusalem? (*before*)
16. In what two directions would you have to travel to get from Jericho to Jerusalem? (*south and west*)
17. Is the Dead Sea *north or south* of the Sea of Galilee? (*south*)
18. What river connects the Dead Sea with the Sea of Galilee? (*Jordan River*)
19. What tribal group/nation is located south of the Dead Sea (*Edom*)
20. Name one biblical book studied in Unit 2 which includes messianic hopes (*First Zechariah and/or Haggai*)
21. In approximately what year did Second Isaiah prophesy? (*Ca. 540 BC*)
22. Name the prophet known for lamenting his personal anguish as a prophet in service to the word of God. (*Jeremiah*)
23. Name the religious leader who was the first publically to read Torah as part of a Jewish religious service. (*Ezra*)
24. What year was the Book of Lamentations most likely written. (*Accept one of two answers: 587 or 586*)
25. What prophet was known for visions and angelic interpretations? (*First Zechariah*)
26. What prophet advocated for individual responsibility for sins. (*Ezekiel*)
27. What prophet is known for the theology of redemptive suffering (*Second Isaiah*)
28. Name the two biblical books studied in Unit 2 that were most likely written by priests. (*Ezekiel and Ezra*)
29. Name two biblical books studied in Unit 2 which personifies Jerusalem/Zion as a woman. (*Third Isaiah - Is 60 and Lamentations - Lam 1*)

30. Name the prophet studied in Unit 2 who is the first prophet in the Bible to insist without qualification in religious monotheism for Israel. (*Second Isaiah*)

31. Put the following items in historical, chronological order:

- a. Ezekiel, Haggai, Edict of Cyrus (*Ezekiel* → *the Edict of Cyrus* → *Haggai*)
- b. Fall of Jerusalem, Reform of Josiah, First Zechariah (*Reform of Josiah* → *Fall of Jerusalem* → *First Zechariah*)
- c. Assyrian Empire, Persian Empire, Babylonian Empire (*Assyrian Empire* → *Babylonian Empire* → *Persian Empire*)
- d. Obadiah, Fall of Northern Kingdom, Edict of Cyrus (*Fall of the Northern Kingdom* → *Obadiah* → *Edict of Cyrus*)
- e. Nehemiah, Second Isaiah, Fall of Jerusalem (*Fall of Jerusalem* → *Second Isaiah* → *Nehemiah*)
- f. Ezekiel, Ezra, Second Isaiah (*Ezekiel* → *Second Isaiah* → *Ezra*)
- g. Lamentations, Third Isaiah, Edict of Cyrus (*Lamentations* → *Edict of Cyrus* → *Third Isaiah*)

32. Name two biblical characters studied in Unit 2 that are given messianic importance in the restoration community. (*Joshua the High Priest and Zerubbabel* – see *Zech 3:8* and *Haggai 2:3-9*)

33. Name two groups of people who were excluded from the Jerusalem temple, which Third Isaiah invites into the Second Temple and into God's salvation. (*Foreigners and eunuchs* – *Isaiah 56:1-8*)

### Short Answer Questions

1. Name three important messages given by Second Isaiah to the exilic community. Choose one and explain why it might be important today.
2. Name two significant themes that are explored in Third Isaiah. Cite at least one biblical reference for each theme.
3. Describe the significance of Ezra the Priest in forming post-exilic Judaism.
4. How is prayer used in the Book of Nehemiah to demonstrate the theology and restoration program favored by Nehemiah?

### Overview of Biblical Books Studied in Unit Two

#### **Lamentations**

Date: ca. 587-86 BCE Setting: Jerusalem, after the destruction by Babylon

Structure: 5 Laments written as an acrostic

Themes:

- Suffering
- Call to admission of sin and conversion
- Hope in the midst of pain

#### **Obadiah**

Date: after 587-86 BCE

Situation: Edom assisted Babylon in destroying Jerusalem

Theme: Oracle against Edom

#### **Ezekiel**

Date: ca. 593-573 BCE

Setting: Babylon—the priest Ezekiel prophesied to the exiles during the early years of the Exile

Call: Ezekiel experiences the glory of God in a chariot vision; he heats the scroll of lamentation

Themes:

- The glory and holiness of God
- Images of hope and restoration
- God present in the Exile
- Individual responsibility for one's sins
- Symbolic prophetic actions
- Temple as an image of judgment and restoration

#### **Second Isaiah**

Date: ca. 540 BCE

Setting: Babylon—shortly before Cyrus conquered Babylon

Themes:

- Consolation and comfort signaling the end of the Exile
- Cyrus of Persia as God's "anointed one"
- Restoration and return: the suffering of Jerusalem at an end
- Importance of monotheism
- Servant Songs: Israel the servant of the Lord

#### **Haggai**

Date: ca. 520 BCE

Setting: Jerusalem, after the Exile. Haggai urges the people to rebuild the Temple

Theme:

- Importance of rebuilding the Temple

**Zechariah**

Dates: ca. 520-518 BC

Setting: Zechariah receives a series of 8 visions addressing the post-exilic population

Themes:

- Call to conversion from sin
- Importance of Jerusalem and the Temple
- Satan, the accuser and member of God's council
- Social justice

**Third Isaiah**

Dates: early post-exilic period

Setting: Problems and hopes of a post-exilic community in Jerusalem

Call: The prophet anointed by the spirit of the Lord (Isa 61)

Themes:

- Zion and Jerusalem as a mother
- God as warrior and redeemer
- The inclusion of all people and nations into the community
- Community divisions that cause conflict
- Social justice tied to religious observance

**Ezra**

Dates: final editing: late 5<sup>th</sup>-early 4<sup>th</sup> century

Ezra's Mission: ca. 458 or 398 BCE

Situation: Two periods: 1) return of the exiles, conflicts with locals, rebuilding of the Temple; 2) religious reforms of Ezra, priest and scribe

Themes:

- Continuity with the past regarding worship
- Exclusivity
- Torah observance
- Temple and cult restored
- "People of the land" as negative

**Nehemiah**

Dates: final editing: late 5<sup>th</sup>-early 4<sup>th</sup> century

Nehemiah's Mission: last half of the 5<sup>th</sup> century

Situation: 1) Nehemiah as governor of Judah from 445-433; returned to Persia and then back to Judah; 2) Rebuilt the wall of Jerusalem; dealt with social and religious abuses in the post-exilic community

Themes:

- Exclusivity
- Rebuilding Jerusalem's walls
- Reforms: Sabbath observance; social justice issues; temple abuse
- Centrality of prayer
- Covenant renewal by Ezra the priest