

# Week Twenty-Six

Days 176–182



**Divided Kingdom** Narrative: 2 Kings 8–16 | Supplemental: Hosea 8–14; Amos 1–9; Jonah 1–4; Micah 1–4; Psalms 108–110, 122, 124, 138–139

## THE REFRAIN OF THE ANCIENTS IS FOR US



City of Nineveh's fate awaits

We find a balance in this week's readings between the historical narrative given in 2 Kings and the writings of four different prophets. Although Israel had known the activities of prophets like Elijah and Elisha, a new movement of prophets began to both follow God's instructions and write about it. The writing prophets—such as Hosea, Amos, and Isaiah—are an important element in the development of God's interaction with his people. The inspired historical books now can be read in conjunction with the inspired writings of prophets.

- The readings from 2 Kings continue the stories of partial obedience to God from the kings of Judah and significant disobedience from the kings of Israel.
- The repeated theme in Hosea is that God has blessed the people abundantly, yet they offer his treasure to idols.
- Hosea begs the people of Israel to turn from evil. Though God's faithfulness is unending, if people choose something other than the Lord, he will let them go to what they have chosen.
- Judah's transgressions are found in Amos 2. The people reject God and worship falsely. Amos calls them to true worship.
- Amos proclaims that the Lord takes no delight in the people's solemn assemblies because of (1) their failure to care for the poor and (2) their idolatry with Jeroboam's golden calves.
- Today, those who live extravagantly may never witness the poor's needs, thus ignoring them and the injustices they suffer.
- When God calls Jonah to preach repentance to a nation of Israelite enemies, the prophet tries to reject the mission. Yet God shows his love and care for all, Jews and Gentiles alike.
- During Isaiah's time, Micah is also serving God as a prophet. Like the other prophets, he proclaims both judgment and hope—God's judgment if the people remain far from the Lord but hope if they draw near to him.
- The constant refrain of the prophets is: "Return to the Lord before it is too late." Their message remains ours today.

