

# Westside Christian Academy

## Upper School Summer Reading 2020 (Rising Seventh Grade)

STUDENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Reading:** For the Bible Portion of your Summer Reading, read the brief introduction provided before you read the book, and then each book listed below:

- Hosea
- Amos
- Micah
- Jonah
- Obadiah

Summarize each of the books in one (1) paragraph (please do all of your work in the space provided below).

**Assigned Reading and Page Requirement** *The Scandal of Father Brown* [Complete the worksheet included as part of this packet]

- Read *The Scandal of Father Brown* by G.K. Chesterton <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks02/0201031h.html#story1> and complete the attached worksheet. **(Please note that this is just one short story from a longer collection. You need read only the one story)**
- Grade 7-Additional 300 pages of any parent-approved reading

**To be submitted on the first day of school:**

1. This entire packet, completed. Your packet should be stapled and the student's name should be on the first page. **YOU MUST DO YOUR WORK IN THIS PACKET to receive credit.**

## Summer Reading Log (Seventh Grade) 2020

**Bible Reading with assignments:**

- Hosea
- Amos
- Micah
- Jonah
- Obadiah

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Assigned Book**

- The Scandal of Father Brown* by G.K. Chesterton(Grades 7-9): This is just one short story. It can be accessed here: <http://gutenberg.net.au/ebooks02/0201031h.html#story1>

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**300 Pages Additional Reading:**

Title	Pages
<b>Total Pages</b>	

Parent Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Bible Summer Reading: Minor Prophets

*Book Introductions: Read each introduction before reading the book assigned, and then complete the summary/homiletics assigned per grade level on a separate sheet of paper. Don't be concerned if you do not completely understand the introductions below, gain what you can from it and move on to reading the Bible books. You are welcome to type your assignment if you choose, but it must be printed and stapled to this packet, ready to submit at the first day of school. The following excerpts have been edited for our use from the "Dictionary for Theological Interpretation of the Bible".*

### **The Book of Hosea:**

Hosea speaks directly into the situation of Israel within the eighth century BC and it is not really possible to understand what was going on in Hosea with some awareness of that situation. On the one hand, Israel as a whole was economically prosperous and stable during and after Jeroboam's long reign. They were at peace, with the southern kingdom of Judah equally flourishing under their longtime king Uzziah. They benefited economically from their situation on the major trade route between Assyria and Egypt. Assyria had removed surrounding threats but as yet had not really troubled Israel itself. But the prosperity of the nation was not shared by all. Many of the previous generations of small farmers had lost their land after repeated Syrian incursions and several years of drought. A huge, almost unbridgeable gap had developed between rich and poor, with justice almost inevitably the prerogative of the rich.

Religiously speaking, things were going well. Worship of Yahweh was popular; all the required sacrifices and feasts were kept with rigorous attention to detail, great ceremony, and no regard for expense. However, alongside this religiosity, idolatry was rampant, respect for the law [of Moses] was nonexistent, and the people were in effect treating Yahweh as an idol or a baal who could be pacified by presents and bribed into acting on Israel's behalf.

Within this context Hosea takes the imagery used by surrounding nature cults, with a strong emphasis on fertility, and completely transforms it. Chapters 1 and 3 speak of his own fairly disastrous family life. Sandwiched between is a poetic description of the unfaithfulness and adultery of God's people Israel, dramatically pictured here as God's wife, and of the consequences of that unfaithfulness, which puts their identity as the people of God at severe risk. Chapters 4-13 present a series of sermons or oracles using a whole range of methods, pictures, images, and metaphors to set out the reality of Israel's attitudes and actions, the reaction of God to these, and the consequences that had been set in train. Interspersed within this are insights into the nature of God, his deep love, the hurt he feels at Israel's behavior, his desire for them to return to be his people in reality, but also God's justice and the inevitability of their punishment and destruction if there is no repentance.

Hosea's main aim seems to have been to show Israel that their religious confidence was spurious, their behavior was unacceptable, their understanding of God was quite deficient, and their future was at risk. Hosea 1:1 makes it clear that the book was completed after Hosea's ministry was ended, and 14:9 indicates awareness of future readers. However, in between, certain editorial comments have been incorporated within the messages that Hosea delivered to his contemporaries. The whole is clearly seen as having ongoing relevance, reflecting Hosea's own conviction that history repeats itself. Those from different generations and different situations can certainly be challenged by Hosea's message.

### **The Book of Amos:**

The book of Amos is widely regarded as the earliest legacy of the "writing prophets" and as a paradigm of the prophetic genre. Amos's main theological contributions are the uncompromising censure of the social injustice prevalent in Israelite society in the eight century BC, together with the concomitant threat of a severe divine punishment.

We should also recognize that the book is addressed to subsequent Judean readers, who would have seen Amos's struggle -- and ultimate failure -- to convince his Israelite audience of the imminent punishment in the light of the catastrophic events of 722BC. Read from this "past-fulfillment perspective," the book thus becomes a powerful warning, admonishing its readers not to repeat the stubborn attitude of their northern brothers and sisters, lest they too face divine judgement.

### **The Book of Micah:**

The book of Micah is evidence that the size of a book does not determine its significance to scholars, the quantity of studies focused on its interpretation, or its place in theological discourse. The message of the book demands that Israel go beyond the external forms of worship and penitence to implement justice, but it does not promise to avert punishment. Rather, it promises to restore Jerusalem after the judgment. To further accentuate the severity of the sins, the priests' abuse of their role resulted in compromises in teaching the Torah.

The pervasiveness of sin is presented through the repeated use of the terminology and depiction of "practices". The leader and other accused are characterized as abusing their power and seizing people's lands and possessions, thus reducing them to poverty. The judgment is extended to the whole nation. The Deity forgives all types of sins-- the terminology may reflect the gamut of forgiveness-- taking away iniquity, overlooking transgression, trampling upon iniquity, casting sin into the depth. Even so, forgiveness is particular to the remnant, indicating God's selectivity in whom and when to forgive.

Another one of the challenges encountered by the people is their understanding of God's requirement. First, they assume that God's presence in their midst exempts them from adversity. Second, they believe that God's total requirement is giving sacrifices, and they view this requirement as burdensome. They thus give sacrifices and expect them to be sufficient to appease if not to please God, rather than seeing that God may be wearied by their sins and sacrifices.

Unlike the book of Amos, which held out the possibility of changing God's resolve to bring judgment, in the book of Micah judgment is inevitable. The identity of the remnant is as much a concern as it's relationship to the judgment.

### **The Book of Jonah:**

The book of Jonah is characterized by a highly artistic literary structure. Chapter 1 parallels chapter 3 as each highlights a non-Israelite audience threateningly confronted by Yahweh. In both cases the response is exemplary, contrasting favorably to the prophet's questionable behavior. God is seen as initiator, non-Israelites as responders, and prophet as foil. Both chapters conclude with God's merciful deliverance. Chapters 2 and 4 are likewise parallel as Yahweh interacts in each with his prophet. These chapters conclude recognizing God's character.

The above literary structure highlights many of the major elements that bind the book together. Yet despite parallels, chapter 4 has often been seen as incompatible with the unity of the book. If the persuasiveness of a particular understanding is found in its ability to integrate every aspect into the whole, then the object lesson and the abrupt ending of chapter 4 must be addressed. As the conclusion, it is the key to the book's purpose and message, which in the end is not about Nineveh, Jonah, or Israel, but about God. The object lesson gives the reading the operative equation by which the book operates: Jonah becomes a surrogate Nineveh. The initial indicator of this is signaled by the variations in the divine name. Throughout most of the book, Jonah interacts with Yahweh, while the non-Israelites predictably use the term *'elohim*. Consequently, in 4:6 the sudden use of the compound divine name, Yahweh-Elohim, catches the attention of the reader and signals a temporary and meaningful switch. The object lesson then uses Elohim through its conclusion in 4:9. This suggests that Jonah has been relocated among the non-Israelites in the object lesson.

What does the book teach us? We are not receiving messages of doom from prophets, but the judgment of God still threatens the unrighteous. It is most important for us to use the message of the book to deepen our understanding of God. It is not unusual for people to feel that something they have done has put them beyond the reach of God's mercy, disqualified for his grace or compassion. The book of Jonah has encouraging words to offer: God's compassion is boundless. Should anyone feel that their straying has led no way back to God, the encouragement of the book is that God is inclined to respond to even the smallest steps in the right directions. The jump from prodigal to sainthood need not be made in a single leap. We need only to climb the fence out of the pigsty and take a step toward home. A compassionate God waits with open arms and is ready to meet us on our journey.

## The Book of Obadiah:

The history of Obadiah research mirrors OT studies in miniature. Early Christian interpreters used Edom's fall as a type of the fall of Jerusalem. They also stressed the day of the Lord and final judgement, and treated Mt. Zion and Mt. Edom as types of the church. Late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century scholars tended to discuss the book's authorship and date along lines established in analyses of the Pentateuch. Thus, scholars debated how the book of shaped over time, since they did not think it probable that one writer include threats against Edom and hope for Israel's future in the same book. Most concluded that the book was a prophetic denunciation from shortly after the fall of Jerusalem in 586 BCE, though this opinion was by no means universally accepted.

Even some of the excellent longer studies of Obadiah do not highlight the book's theology. Though understandable, this situation is somewhat regrettable, since a study of the final form of Obadiah provides examples of several of the OT's most significant canonical-theological issues. These include human pride, and hatred of one's neighbor.

Like Isaiah, Obadiah considers pride the root of other sins. The Edomites' pride is based on their status among the nations (v. 1), their seemingly impregnable capital (vv. 3-4), their famous wise men, (v. 8), and their valiant warrior (v. 9). These attainments have let to the self-deception that they are beyond the reach of any higher power (v. 3). Thus, they believe they can act as they wish against Israel (v. 10). In other words, Obadiah depicts Edom in a manner similar to Isaiah's description of Assyria (Is. 10:1-19). If so, it is ironic that small nations have the same delusions of self-sufficient grandeur as larger ones.

Edom's mistreated of Israel is the reason Obadiah gives for their coming judgment. The Edomites have stood by when invaders ransacked Israel and took captives (vv 11-12). Worse yet, they rejoiced in Israel's downfall and cut down those trying to flee (vv. 13-14). They did this despite the fact that they were Israel's "brother" (v. 12), a reference to the fact that Jacob and Esau, the patriarchs of Israel and Edom respectively, were brothers. Amos adds the fact that Edom was famous for slave trade (1:9) and for fierce wrath in battle (1:11-12). They have made money from hating their neighbor, and their status and security make them think they can do so forever.

Ultimately, this brief prophecy should be seen for what it is: a tightly packed, theologically rich essay on Yahweh's sovereignty over Israel and Israel's neighbors. When viewed this way, Obadiah highlights the trans biblical belief that Yahweh deserves and demands exclusive worship and service. There are no other gods, so there is no salvation outside of a relationship with Israel's God, who is the Creator and Judge of everyone. Those who deny this exclusive sovereignty take place themselves in Edom's precarious position.

Hosea Summary:

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Amos Summary:

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Micah Summary:

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Jonah Summary:

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Obadiah Summary:

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*The Scandal of Father Brown* by  
G.K. Chesterton

Why did people think that Father Brown had done something bad?

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What is Chesterton saying about love?

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Who does the girl end up with in the end?

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