

"IN THE PAST GOD SPOKE TO OUR FOREFATHERS THROUGH THE PROPHETS AT MANY TIMES AND IN VARIOUS WAYS..."

HEBREWS 1:1

A PERSPECTIVE ON THE PROPHETS

1. THE PROPHETIC ROLE:
 - A. A CALL FROM GOD
 - B. A SPOKESMAN FOR GOD
 - C. AN OUTSIDER TO THE COMMUNITY
2. THE PROPHETIC MESSAGE: (PALESTINIAN COVENANT: LEVITICUS 26, DEUTERONOMY 30-32)
 - A. OBEDIENCE BRINGS BLESSING!
 - B. DISOBEDIENCE BRINGS DISCIPLINE!
 - C. REPENTANCE BRINGS RESTORATION!
3. THE PROPHETIC TASK
 - A. CRITIQUING THE CULTURE – LEADING TO GRIEF
 - B. ENERGIZING THE PEOPLE – LEADING TO HOPE
 - C. CALLING FORTH ALTERNATIVE LIVING – LEADING TO FAITH



PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING THE PROPHETS

1. THE PROPHETS ARE ANCHORED TO THE COVENANT PROMISES OF GOD.
 - A. MOSAIC COVENANT: ENFORCERS OF THE LAW
 - B. PALESTINIAN COVENANT: REFORMATION PREACHERS
 - C. NEW COVENANT: HOPE FOR THE FUTURE
2. THE PROPHETS ARE MORE LIKE PREACHERS THAN PREDICTORS.
3. THE PROPHETS FOCUS ON FORTH-TELLING MORE THAN FORETELLING.
4. THE PROPHETS ARE VERY PASSIONATE AND CREATIVE SO EXPECT IMAGINATIVE LANGUAGE.
5. THE PROPHETS ARE CALLING FOR REPENTANCE ABOUT RITUALISM, IDOLATRY, AND FORSAKING THE POOR.

AN APPROACH TO MAKE THE PROPHETS RELEVANT

1. DON'T FOCUS ON THE FUTURE TOO FAST.
2. KEEP THE PALESTINIAN COVENANT IN MIND ALWAYS.
3. HIGHLIGHT THE CALL FOR REPENTANCE AND ITS CONSEQUENCES.
4. UNDERSTAND THE FOCUS ON THE FUTURE AS A MOTIVATION FOR REVIVAL.

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TESTING THE PROPHETS

1. TEST # 1 - CONSISTENCY WITH TORAH (DEUTERONOMY 13)
 - EVEN IF THEY PERFORM MIRACLES.
2. TEST # 2 - PROPHECIES COME TRUE (DEUTERONOMY 18)
 - NEAR FULFILLMENTS VERIFIES FUTURE FULFILLMENT.
 - JESUS PREDICTED HIS RESURRECTION TO REDEEM.
 - WE CAN TRUST HIS RETURN TO JUDGE AND RULE.

PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING PROPHECY

1. PROPHECY IS “REVELATION” OF TRUTH FROM GOD.
2. PROPHETS ARE “SEERS” BECAUSE THEY SEE IT.
3. IMAGES MUST BE UNDERSTOOD FROM THE ORIGINAL CULTURE.
4. THE FUTURE IS PLACED IN PRESENT OR PAST TENSE EVEN THOUGH FUTURE.
5. THE CERTAINTY OF THEIR VISION IS ASSURED.
6. PAST PROPHECIES HAVE BEEN LITERALLY FULFILLED.
7. FUTURE PROPHECIES WILL BE LITERALLY FULFILLED.
8. NEAR AND FAR FULFILLMENTS ARE OFTEN NOT DISTINGUISHED.
9. SEQUENCE AND TIMING IS NOT CRITICAL.
10. PROPHECY STILL REQUIRES FAITH.



THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE NONWRITING PROPHETS

PREMONARCHIAL PROPHETS (4000 BCE - 1000 BCE)

ENOCH
(GENESIS 5:22; JUDE 14)

ABRAHAM
(GENESIS 15:1; 20:7)

MOSES
(DEUT. 34:10; HOS. 12:13)

MIRIAM
(EXODUS 15:20)

SEVENTY ELDERS
(NUMBERS 11:24-25)

ELDAD AND MEDAD
(NUMBERS 11:26-30)

MOSES IS THE PROTOTYPE PROPHET
(DEUT. 18:14-22; 34:10-12)

AARON IS AN EXAMPLE OF A PROPHET
(EXODUS 7:1)

MONARCHIAL PROPHETS (1000 BCE - 750 BCE)

SAMUEL
(1 SAMUEL 3:1)

GAD
(1 SAMUEL 22:5)

NATHAN
(2 SAMUEL 7:2)

AHIJAH
(1 KINGS 11:29)

ASAPH AND SONS
(1 CHRONICLES 25:1)

IDDO
(2 CHRONICLES 9:29)

SHEMAIAH
(1 KINGS 12:22)

HANANAI AND JEHU
(2 CHR. 16:7, 1 KINGS 16:1)

ELIJAH
(1 KINGS 17-2 KINGS 2)

ELISHA
(1 KINGS 19-2 KINGS 13)

MICAH
(1 KINGS 22:8)

JEHAZIEL AND ELIEZER
(2 CHRONICLES 20:14,37)

OBED
(2 CHRONICLES 28:9)

HULDAH
(2 KINGS 22:14)

SAMUEL IS THE LAST JUDGE AND FIRST PROPHET
(1 SAMUEL 3:1)

ELIJAH IS THE MODEL OF A PROPHET
(LUKE 1:17)

MOSES AND ELIJAH ARE PRESENT AT THE TRANSFIGURATION OF CHRIST
WITNESSES TO CHRIST BEING THE FULFILLMENT OF THE ENTIRE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETIC MINISTRY
(MATTHEW 17:3; MARK 9:4; LUKE 9:30)

THE CHRONOLOGY OF THE WRITING PROPHETS

PRE-EXILIC

TO ISRAEL:

OBADIAH
(840)

AMOS
(760)

JONAH
(760)

HOSEA
(755)

NAHUM
(660)

THREE PROPHETS
SPEAK TO ISRAEL/JUDAH
ABOUT OTHER COUNTRIES.

OBADIAH
(EDOM)
JONAH
(NINEVEH/ASSYRIA)
NAHUM
(NINEVEH/ASSYRIA)

TO JUDAH:

JOEL
(835)

ISAIAH
(740)

MICAH
(735)

ZEPHANIAH
(630)

JEREMIAH
(627)

HABAKKUK
(607)

LAMENTATIONS
(586)

EXILIC

EZEKIEL
(593-571)

DANIEL
(605-537)

POSTEXILIC

HAGGAI
(520)

ZECHARIAH
(520-514)

MALACHI
(520)



THE WRITING PROPHETS IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT

ASSYRIAN DOMINANCE (745-612 BC)



KING JEHU OF ISRAEL BOWING TO SHALMANESER OF ASSYRIA
CIRCA 825 BC - BLACK OBELISK OF SHALMANESER

OBADIAH
(848-841?)

AMOS
(760)

JOEL
(835?)

JONAH
(760)

HOSEA
(755)

ISAIAH
(740)

MICAH
(735)

NAHUM
660

ZEPHANIAH
(630)

JEREMIAH
(627)

LAMENTATIONS
(586?)

OBADIAH
(586?)

BABYLONIAN DOMINANCE (612-539 BC)



THE LION OF BABYLON
CIRCA 575 BC - ISHTAR GATE BUILT BY NEBUCHADNEZZAR II

HABAKKUK
(607)

EZEKIEL
(593-567)

DANIEL 1-6
(605-537)

JOEL
(?)

PERSIAN DOMINANCE (539-336 BC)



CYLINDER SEAL OF CYRUS THE GREAT
CIRCA 539-530 BC - CYRUS CYLINDER BRITISH MUSEUM

DANIEL 7-12
(605-537)

HAGGAI
(520)

ZECHARIAH
(520-514)

MALACHI
(520)



EGYPT REMAINED A COMPETING WORLD POWER DURING THIS TIME