



### Lesson 17 – KINGS: The Role of the Prophets

**Deuteronomy 13:1-5; 1 Kings 22:1-8; 21:17-28; Jonah 3:1-4:4; Amos 5:21-27; Hosea 1:1-10; Hosea 2:4-8; Isaiah 2:1-5; Isaiah 53; Micah 6:6-8; Zephaniah 3:6-20; Nahum 1; Habakkuk 1:1-4; 3:16-19; Joel 2:10-32; Jeremiah 7:1-15; 31:31-34; Obadiah 1:15-17; Romans 9:25-26; 10:9-16; Matthew 5:10-16**

#### The Role of Prophets

##### 1. What is a Prophet?

- Spokesperson for God,
- Preacher, covenant mediator
- Seer, seeing visions/dreams

*Even when things were the darkest, God always gave them a message of \_\_\_\_\_ for the future.*

##### 2. Professional Prophets

Sometimes professional prophets really did hear from God, like Nathan. But often, because they were paid to be in the service of the king, they just told the king whatever he wanted to hear.

##### 3. Spoken Prophets in Kings

All of their messages are either one of two things:

- God telling them whether or not to go into battle, showing us that He is the true king, the one who fights their battles, not the human kings.

- God condemning a king for idolatry and evil and warning them to repent, showing us that the most important quality of a king is worshiping God alone and following His ways because the human king is only a representative of God who is the true king.

This is the purpose of the prophets – to remind the people to follow God and His ways.

#### **4. The Written Prophets**

Because their message was about centered around the event of the Exile, they are categorized either as Pre-Exilic, Exilic, or Post-Exilic Prophets.

#### **5. Discerning False Prophets**

- If what they preach doesn't come true (Deuteronomy 18:19-22)
- If they tell you to worship other gods or not follow God (Deuteronomy 13:1-5)
- Jesus: You will know them by their fruit (Matthew 7:15-20)
- They tell you what you want to hear instead of hard truths (2 Timothy 4:1-5)
- They deny Jesus as the Way to the Father (1 John 2:22)

False prophets may perform signs and wonders to lead people astray. It's not the signs and wonders that matter, it's their message and spiritual fruit (Matthew 24:24; Matthew 7:21-23).

#### **6. Persecution of the Prophets**

*"Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, and you were not willing. Look, your house is left to you desolate." Matthew 23:37-38*

#### **7. David: A Model for How to React to the Prophets**

*"Anyone who loves correction loves knowledge. Anyone who hates correction is stupid."*  
Proverbs 12:1

It is never too late to repent and turn back to God, no matter who you are and what you have done. If you repent, God will listen and respond (2 Chronicles 7:14).

#### **Chronological Order of the Written Prophets:**

1. Pre-exilic prophets (Kings/Chronicles)
  - To Nineveh: Jonah
  - To Israel: Amos, Hosea
  - To Judah: Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, Jeremiah,
  - To Nineveh: Nahum
  - To Judah: Habakkuk, Joel
  - To Edom: Obadiah
2. Exilic prophets (during Exile)

Daniel, Ezekiel

3. Post-exilic prophets (Ezra/Nehemiah)

Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

**A. Pre-Exilic Prophets**

**1. Overall Message**

The pre-exilic Prophets were primarily about warning God's people that if they didn't repent and turn back to God, they would be taken into exile, as He had predicted in Deuteronomy. The purpose was never about punishment, it was always about trying to bring back to the Lord.

**2. Chronological Order**

It is extremely theologically significant that the first written prophet (Jonah) didn't even preach to Israel/Judah, but to their greatest enemies. Israel was to be a light to the nations, even their enemies!

**3. Common Themes**

- There many metaphors used for God: judge, father, king, friend, husband...
- Israel was condemned for breaking the covenant, specifically for 1) idolatry (not loving God) and 2) oppression of the vulnerable (not loving others as yourself)
- Messiah is portrayed as the only answer to the broken covenant (Isaiah 42:1-7; 49:1-7, et. al.)
- Many of the prophets actually lived out symbols and metaphors from their preaching
- The prophets wrote about the Day of the Lord as something to look forward to because although it is a day of judgment for the wicked, it is a day of vindication for the righteous

**B. Summaries of Each Book**

1. Jonah: God's Grace and Compassion on Everyone, Even Israel's Enemies
2. Amos: God Hates Idolatry and Oppression
3. Hosea: God is Faithful, Even When We are Unfaithful
4. Isaiah: Trust and Hope in the Lord and in His Messiah
5. Micah: Do Justice, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly with God
6. Zephaniah: God's Judgment Always Includes a Message of Hope
7. Nahum: God is Sovereign Over All (Nineveh)
8. Habakkuk: Trust in God's Timing and His Plan
9. Joel: God Will Restore His People With His Spirit
10. Jeremiah and Lamentations: God Laments Over Having to Punish His People
11. Obadiah: God humbles His Enemies (Edom)

## **C. The New Covenant**

### **1. The Messianic Promises**

There are over 300 prophecies about the Messiah in the Old Testament.

### **2. The Suffering Servant**

*“Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, by his wounds we are healed... it was God’s will to crush him and cause him to suffer... the Lord makes his life an offering for sin.”* Isaiah 53:4-10/Matthew 27

### **3. God’s Spirit in the New Covenant**

*“I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.... And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* Joel 2:28-32/Acts 2

### **4. The Eternal Kingdom**

*In the last days, the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and peoples will stream to it. Many nations will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.”* Micah 4:1-2 (c.f. Isaiah 2:3; Jeremiah 31:1; Jeremiah 3:17)/Revelation 7:9

### **5. Prophets With a Message**

*“How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news!”* Isaiah 52:7/Romans 10