

The Prophets

Falls International Baptist Institute

Introduction to Course: Class One

Text: II Peter 1:19-21 *“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”*

Isaiah 8:20 *“To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.”*

Homework for course: Read Isaiah – Malachi. The first question on the final exam will be “Did you read the Prophetic Books?”. That question will count for 10 points on your final exam. Additionally, any text in these class notes that are written in bold print or underlined will probably be on the final exam. Listen carefully to the lessons in class and study thoroughly your class notes.

Introduction and purpose of course: The purpose of this course is to introduce the prophets to the student of the Word. It is our desire that you will have a working knowledge of who the prophets were, what their purpose was, and how they fit into the scriptures. We desire that the student understand each book of prophecy in its:

1. Direct Interpretation
2. Prophetic Implication
3. Practical Application

Review: The first seventeen books, Genesis through Nehemiah, cover the whole history of the Old Testament. The Poetical Books fit somewhere into the history of those seventeen books. The Poetical Books is a small section of the Old Testament consisting of five books—Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon.

While the historical books are “historical”, the Poetical books are “experiential”. The historical books are concerned with a nation: Israel; while the poetical books are concerned with individuals. These five books have to do with the human heart. If the Law (the Pentateuch) dealt with Israel’s moral life, and the historical books dealt with Israel’s national life, then the poetical books deal with Israel’s spiritual life.

The first seventeen books of the Old Testament are historical in nature.

The middle five are experiential in nature.

The last seventeen are prophetic in nature.

Before we study the Prophets, let’s give a one-word review of each book we’ve studied in the Old Testament thus far. (Please memorize this list):

<u>Genesis</u>	---	<u>Beginnings</u>
<u>Exodus</u>	---	<u>Redemption</u>
<u>Leviticus</u>	---	<u>Holiness</u>

<u>Numbers</u>	---	<u>Direction</u>
<u>Deuteronomy</u>	---	<u>Destination</u>
<u>Joshua</u>	---	<u>Conquest</u>
<u>Judges</u>	---	<u>Apostasy</u>
<u>Ruth</u>	---	<u>Kinsman-Redeemer</u>
<u>I Samuel</u>	---	<u>Transition</u> (From theocracy to monarchy)
<u>II Samuel</u>	---	<u>Confirmation</u> (Davidic Throne)
<u>I Kings</u>	---	<u>Division</u> (in the Kingdom)
<u>II Kings</u>	---	<u>Dispersion</u>
<u>I & II Chronicles</u>	---	<u>History</u>
<u>Ezra</u>	---	<u>Restoration</u>
<u>Nehemiah</u>	---	<u>Reconstruction</u>
<u>Esther</u>	---	<u>Providence</u>
<u>Job</u>	---	<u>Suffering</u>
<u>Psalms</u>	---	<u>Praise</u>
<u>Proverbs</u>	---	<u>Wisdom</u>
<u>Ecclesiastes</u>	---	<u>Vanity</u>
<u>Song of Solomon</u>	---	<u>Love</u>

Introduction to this class: *“Twenty-two books now lie behind us. A further seventeen stretch before us, namely, the seventeen books of the Prophets. These we shall find to be an arresting concentration of inspired doctrine and prediction.”* – J. Sidlow Baxter
 The prophetic books also fit into the narrative of the pre-exile, exile, and post-exile history of Israel. The prophetic books in their direct interpretation are a continual call to Israel to repentance. Gentile nations are dealt with only in their relations or interactions with the nation of Israel. In their prophetic implications, the prophets ALWAYS prophesied of Christ.

- **Revelation 19:10b** *“for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”*
- I Peter 1:10-12
- Luke 24:25-27, 44
- John 5:39
- Acts 3:18
- Acts 10:43
- Romans 3:21-22

The prophecies of the prophets *“focused on two future events, the first and second comings of Christ. The prophets themselves probably could not distinguish between these two comings, and, often, too, a message would be given only to be enlarged upon at a later date either by the same prophet or by another.”* – John Phillips

I. FACTS ABOUT THE PROPHETS

- A. They were all normal men who were “holy men of God”.
 1. II Peter 1:21 *“For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.”*

2. James 5:17 *“Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months.”*
- B. They were confident of both their mission and their message.
1. Isaiah 1:1-2 *“The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: **for the LORD hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me.”***
 2. Jeremiah 20:9 *“Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. **But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.”***
- C. They were in possession of their mental and physical faculties.
1. Daniel 10:8-11 *“Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground. And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands. And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.”*
 2. Study how many times the prophets said “the word of the LORD came unto me”. They were cognizant of the fact that God was speaking to them and they did not lose control of their senses or their bodies.
 3. This is important to note because almost every pagan religion or charismatic denomination has as a characteristic their prophets losing control of their own physical, emotional, and mental faculties. This is a notable difference between the prophets of the LORD and false prophets. When God’s Spirit is working, His Power of revelation always works in conjunction with a sound mind.
 4. *“God did not make use of idiots or fools to reveal His will by, but such whose intellects were entire and perfect; and He imprinted such a clear copy of His truth upon them as that it became their own sense, being digested fully by their understandings, so that they were able to deliver and represent it to others as truly as any can paint forth his own thoughts.”* – Smith on Prophecy (Matthew Henry Commentary Preface to Isaiah)
- D. Their messages were consistent: Repent and Return to God.
1. Jeremiah 7:3 *“Thus saith the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, Amend your ways and your doings, and I will cause you to dwell in this place.”*

2. Isaiah 55:7 *“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.”*
 3. The Word of God never contradicts Itself; therefore God’s message through His prophets was consistent, and never contradictory.
- E. They all prophesied of Jesus Christ.
1. Luke 1:68-70 *“Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.”*
 2. I Peter 1:10-11 *“Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.”*
 3. They NEVER testified and prophesied of themselves: it was ALWAYS of Christ!
- F. They were hated by their peers.
1. Acts 7:52 *“Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which shewed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers.”*
 2. Luke 11:47-51 *“Woe unto you! for ye build the sepulchres of the prophets, and your fathers killed them. Truly ye bear witness that ye allow the deeds of your fathers: for they indeed killed them, and ye build their sepulchres. Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute: That the blood of all the prophets, which was shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation; From the blood of Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, which perished between the altar and the temple: verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation.”*
 3. The world loves their own but they hated the prophets of God.
- G. They were honored by God.
1. Isaiah 44:26a *“That confirmeth the word of his servant, and performeth the counsel of his messengers.”* They may have been mocked by the world, but their prophesies came to pass.
 2. I Samuel 2:30b *“for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.”*