

- **Prophet:** A human being who speaks for God, usually as a result of a divine call and sometimes (not always) exhibiting extravagant behavior (Isaiah 20:1-6) or abnormal psychological states (ecstasy)
- How to know a message is from God? How to recognize the genuine Prophet?
 1. Deut. 18: 21-22 If the prophecy does not happen, the prophet is false...
 2. Deut. 13: 1-4 If the prophecy does not conform to the Bible's message, the prophet is false, even if the things prophesied do happen.
- **Prophet:**
 1. has an immediate experience of God
 2. has had the holiness and will of God revealed to him or her
 3. contemplates the present and the future through the eyes of God
 4. sent (by God) to remind men of their duty to God and to bring them back to obedience and love
 - => a providential instrument of God for guidance of His people
 - => Moses, the Father of Prophets; spoke to God face-to-face and delivered the Law (Deut 34:10-12)
 5. Prophets intervene in times of crisis preceding or accompanying major turning points of the nation's history—message not for the king but for the people and since the message is of general interest, it was written down and disseminated; it survives.
- Major messages of Prophets:
 1. **Monotheism** => Besides Jehovah, Lord of the Universe, there is no room for other Gods
 - => God is transcendent...Holy...wrapped in mystery...and yet near
 2. **Morality** => God is pure holiness; human beings are unclean
 - => Sin is what divides humanity from God
 - => As sin is national and collective, so too must be punishment
 - => One who is to escape punishment for sins must seek God, which means observing God's Law, pursuing what is right, practicing humility...religion must be of the heart
 3. **Future Salvation** => punishment is not the end
 - => in the future, God's people (the remnant) will enjoy happiness unlike any they have ever known
 - => the future will be characterized by the kingship of God—virtue & holiness; new mode of life & forgiveness; true knowledge of God; peace & joy

- Watch for connection between Jeremiah and Josiah, king of Judah

Lamentations • 3:22-24 “When you come to the place that He’s all you have, you’ll find that He’s all you need”

Ezekiel • Set during the Exile; Ezekiel was a priest ministering to the exiles in Babylon; focus on **God’s Glory**

- Visions: 1-3 chariots and scrolls
8-11: sin & punishment (God’s Glory departs from the Temple)
37 dry bones (can they live again?)
40-48 Temple & Temple worship (God’s Glory returns)
- Watchmen: 3:16-21 / 33:1-9
- The wonderful plan: 36:22-27 **That they may know that I am God**

Daniel • **Faithfulness in the face of oppression and threats of death**

- Major events / visions:

=> Boys’ faithfulness in a strange land	chap 1
=> Faithfulness in the shadow of the fiery furnace	chap 3
=> Faithfulness through the lions’ den	chap 6
=> Faithfulness rewarded—Daniel sees the future	chap 9; Prediction of Messiah; 70 weeks

Hosea • Hosea is a young preacher (prophet)
=> his bride, whom he loves, deserts him and becomes a prostitute (maybe a temple prostitute)
=> his love for her remains
=> he will punish her—but with the purpose to win her back to the joy of their first love

- In his grief, the young preacher sees something he had never seen before—his love for his wife and his grief over her unfaithfulness is a metaphor for God’s love for His people and His grief over their unfaithfulness
- Sin is breaking God’s Law, yes, but much more, sin means breaking God’s heart
- Two major metaphors:
 1. Our relationship to God is like that of wife to husband, and sin is to our relationship to God what adultery/unfaithfulness is to a marriage relationship (introduced in chap 1)
 2. Our relationship to God is like that of child to parent, and sin is to our relationship to God what disobedience/rebellion is to a family relationship (introduced in chap 11)

Joel • A plague of locusts occurs and in it the Prophet sees a metaphor of the Day of the Lord, a day of vengeance and judgment (1:15-16; 2:1-6)

- but he also sees a call to repentance and recommitment (2:11b-13)
- but above all, he sees a new day of salvation for those who love the Lord, especially 3:1-5, quoted in Acts 2:17-21; Pentecost fulfilled this.

Amos • Prophet to Israel (northern kingdom) in its golden age—but Amos saw what God saw:
=> social injustice; corruption; empty religion
and he came with two messages: => seek God or perish; seek good or perish

- Introduction—condemnation of nations---closing in on Israel (chap 1-2)
Book of Words—three sermons: chap 3; chap 4; chaps 5-6
Book of Visions: chaps 7ff

• Theme: **God is the Lord of History**

Obadiah • Abraham---Isaac---Esau & Jacob: Esau is Edom

- Condemnation of Edom for taking advantage of Jerusalem/Judah in her time of woe

Jonah • The Reluctant Prophet

- God cares for all people 4:10-11
- Ninevah (Assyria) is judged, but they repent and God relents

Micah • God's standard: Micah 6:6-8

- see also: 1 Sam 15:22 Amos 5:21-24 Deut. 10-12-13, 16-17
Hosea 6:6 Psalm 40:6-11 James 4:5-10 => Isaiah 57:15
Isaiah 1:11-18 Isaiah 30:15 => Jer. 17:5-8 => Psalm 1
Psalm 51:1-4, 10-13, 16-17

and: Isaiah 58 => Worship pleasing to God (58:6-8):

1. Worship must give a unifying center to our life => harmony between life at work & life at worship; not independent, not in conflict
2. Worship must be accompanied by a consistent life style => informed by God and God's priorities
3. Worship must make us sensitive to and aware of human need and then result in acts of compassion responding to that need.

and with this kind of worship (58:8), we will become effective in our influence, testimony, sense of direction, confidence, and prayer life

Nahum • Witness to fall of Israel (northern kingdom) to Assyria and of God's delivery of Judah

- Companion book to Jonah; destruction of Ninevah
- God's character has two sides: Father and Judge. Choose Father or face Judge

- Habakkuk**
- Prophet sees coming destruction of Judah by Babylon, and is outraged:
How can bad people be punished by worse people?
 - Watch & See (chap 1); Stand & See (chap 2); Kneel & See (chap 3)

What does he see?—God’s principle for human beings: **The Just shall live by Faith** (2:4)

- Zephaniah**
- Theme: **The Day of the Lord is Coming**
 - The Day of the Lord is terrible for all....except for those who seek him

1:2-18	2:1-3
2:4-3:11	3:12-20
 - Seek the Lord and perhaps you will escape: 2:1-3, especially 2:3

see also:	Isaiah 55:6-7	2 Chr 15:2	Isaiah 57:15
	Amos 5:4,14	Matt 6:23	Deut 30:1-3, 6
	Jer 29:13-14	Deut 4:29	Matt 7:7-8

- Haggai & Zechariah**
- Focus on **Rebuilding the Temple**
 - Haggai => making your priorities right; holiness is not contagious, but uncleanness is—you cannot save someone else (only God can do that), but you can corrupt someone else.
 - Zechariah=> visions of the future, and especially of God’s Messiah, our Redeemer

- Malachi**
- series of units: God speaks, the people reply (often flippantly), and through the Prophet, God teaches a lesson.
 - Lessons:
 - God’s love for Israel (1:2-5);
 - How to honor God (1:6-2:12);
 - Respecting marriage (2:13-16);
 - Being excited about what God is doing (2:17-3:5);
 - Investing in what God is doing (3:5-12);
 - God remembers faithful people (3:13-21)