

Introducing the Biblical Prophets

A. What is a Prophet?

1. General impression –
2. Another false view –
3. “God speaks to his prophets, not in magical processes or through the visions of poor phrenetics, but by a clear intelligible word addressed to the intellect and the heart. The characteristic of the true prophet is that he retains his consciousness and self-control under revelation” (in LaSor, 223; W. Robertson Smith).
4. Key Passage – Deut 18:18, “I will raise up for them a prophet like you [Moses] from among their own people; I will put my words in the mouth of the prophet, who shall speak to them everything that I command.”
5. What did they do?
 - a. Hebrew – 4 key words (largely interchangeable)
 - 1) *Nabi* (1 Kings 16:7, 12, Jehu; Isa 29:10; 1 Sam 1:9 [codified]; 1st time with Abimelech’s recognition of Abraham in Gen 20:7) –
 - 2) *Ish Elohim*
 - 3) *Roeh* (1 Chron 29:29, Samuel; Isa 30:10)
 - 4) *Chozeh* (2 Chron 19:2, Jehu)
 - b. Greek – *prophetes* (“one who speaks for God and interprets his will to man” [LaSor, 221]).
6. How live?
7. Qualifications?

B. Why Did God “Need” Prophets?

C. How did the Prophets . . .

1. Hear God? . . . Speak for God? . . . Earn a living? . . . Address the nations?
 - a. Variety of professions –
 - b. Qualifications –
 - c. False prophets in other nations –
 - d. Content of prophecies –
 - e. Literary types –
 - f. Their message?

D. What If the Prophet were Wrong? (Deut 13:1-5; 1 Cor 14:32)

E. Who were the Prophets?

1. The first to the last (recorded in the OT)
2. The Major & Minor
3. The Former (Joshua – 2 Kings) & the Latter (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, & the Twelve). Daniel --
 - g. The Former Prophets said a lot about individual men – but rarely recorded messages from God to people.
 - h. The Latter Prophets said little about the individual men – but recorded many messages from God to people.
4. Chronologically (See list)

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Prior to Samuel

Enoch (Jude 14)
“Holy prophets from the beginning” (Luke 1:70; Acts 3:21; Heb. 1:1)
Abraham (Gen. 20:7; cf. Ps. 105:14f.)
Moses (Num. 12:1-8; Deut. 34:10; Hos. 12:13)
Miriam (prophetess; Exod. 15:20)
Eldad, Medad, and the Seventy (Num. 11:24-29)
Deborah (prophetess; Judg. 4:4)
“Man of God” (13:6ff.)
Prophetic vision rare in the days of Eli (1 Sam. 3:1)

Monarchy

Samuel (1 Sam. 3:1) [time of Saul and David]
Gad (2 Sam. 22:5) [Saul and David]
Nathan (12:1) [David]
Ahijah (1 Kgs. 12:22) [Rehoboam and Jeroboam I]
Saul, David, Solomon; experiences with prophetic characteristics
Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun (Ethan) (1 Chr. 25:1)
Iddo (seer; 2 Chr. 9:29) [Solomon, Rehoboam, and Ahijah]

From division of the Monarchy to the Assyrian period [931- ca. 800]

Shemaiah (1 Kgs. 12:22) [Rehoboam]
Ahijah, Ido (see above)
Hanani (seer; 2 Chr. 16:7) [Asa]
Jehu son of Hanani (1 Kgs. 16:1) [Asa and Jehoshaphat]
Elijah (17:1) [Ahab and Ahaziah of Israel]
Elisha (19:16) [Ahab-Jehoash of Israel (860-ca. 795)]
Micaiah ben Imlah (22.4) [Ahab]
Jehaziel and Eliezer (2 Chr. 20:14, 37) [Jehoshaphat of Judah]
Zechariah (24:19) [Joash]
Unnamed prophet (1 Kgs. 20:13) [Ahab]

Unnamed prophet (2 Kgs. 9:4) who anointed Jehu
“Sons of the prophets” (1 Kgs. 19:10)
“False” prophets (ch. 13; etc.)

Eighth-century [ca. 800- ca. 675]

Jonah son of Amittai [Jeroboam II; 2 Kgs. 14:25]
Amos [Uzziah of Judah and Jeroboam II]
Hosea [before fall of Jehu’s dynasty]
Micah [Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah]
Isaiah [Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah]
Oded (2 Chr. 28:9)

Seventh-century [ca 675-597]

Zephaniah [Josiah]
Nahum [between 663 and 612]
Huldah [prophetess in Josiah’s day; 2 Kgs. 22:14-20]
Habakkuk [perhaps shortly after 605]
Jeremiah [626-586]

Sixth-century [ca. 597-538]

Obadiah
Ezekiel [592-572 (or 570)]
(Daniel [605-538, or considerably later])
Isaiah 40-66 [ca. 550-538 (possibly later)]

Postexilic (ca. 538-ca. 450)

Haggai [520]
Zechariah 1-8 [520 and 518]
Joel
Malachi [between ca. 486 and 450]
Zechariah 9-14
Jonah