

Encountering the Old Testament

Session #7.

Encountering the Prophetic Books (Part 1)

Covering the books of
Isaiah, Jeremiah & Lamentations.

The Canon – a reminder

- **The Torah** (5 books of the Law)

- ***The Prophets***

Former: Joshua, Judges, Samuel & Kings

Latter: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel & The Twelve

- **The Writings**

Major: Job, Psalms, Proverbs

The Five Scrolls: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations,
Ecclesiastes, Esther

The role of the prophets

- Pentateuch: Origin & establishment of the covenant (for the people of God)
...Law, Sacrifice & Worship
- Historical books: *Living out the covenant:*
...Examples of Obedience & Disobedience
- Wisdom books: *Living out the covenant:*
Way of the wise/ Way of the fool
Fear of the Lord
- Prophetic books: *Living out the covenant:*
Reminder of the covenant/
Calling people back to obedience

Key to understanding OT history

● The Covenant

“Deuteronomy 28 may be seen as the ‘Bible’ for the OT historical books...& Deuteronomy 32 is a ‘Bible’ for the OT prophetic books.” (Arnold & Beyer)

The OT is not just history, it is **history** as seen through the eyes of **theology** (who God is & what he is doing). It is salvation-history! Therefore the key to understanding history is to learn to ask the question, “What is God doing” or even, “What does God think or say about what is happening”?

Deuteronomy (“The Covenant”)



Remember
the lessons
of history



Listen to
the message
of the prophets

Deut. 32:44-47 “Take these words to heart...they are your life”

Living in the land

Two goals:

Establishing the worship
of the one, true God

- A place for his name
- A pattern of worship
- A holy lifestyle

Removing the worship (and
practices) of the false gods

- ...Idols & idolatry
- ...Sin & immorality
- ...Warfare!

Two recurring biblical themes

● SALVATION

● “God is love”

➤ Covenant relationship

❖ Security

❖ Blessing

❖ Life

● JUDGEMENT

● “God is holy”

➤ Outside covenant relationship...or broken covenant relationship

❖ Insecurity

❖ Curse

❖ Death

The three leadership roles in the OT

- **King** – lead from his throne
(one who would shepherd the people for God)
- **Priest** – serve from his altar
(one who would represent the people to God)
- **Prophet** - proclaim from his shrine
(one who would represent God to the people)

Or...to look at in another way

KING

(Faithful to the Covenant – Deut. 17:18)



PROPHET

(proclamation & guidance)



PRIEST

(intercession & sacrifice)

The Prophet (Deut. 18:14-22)

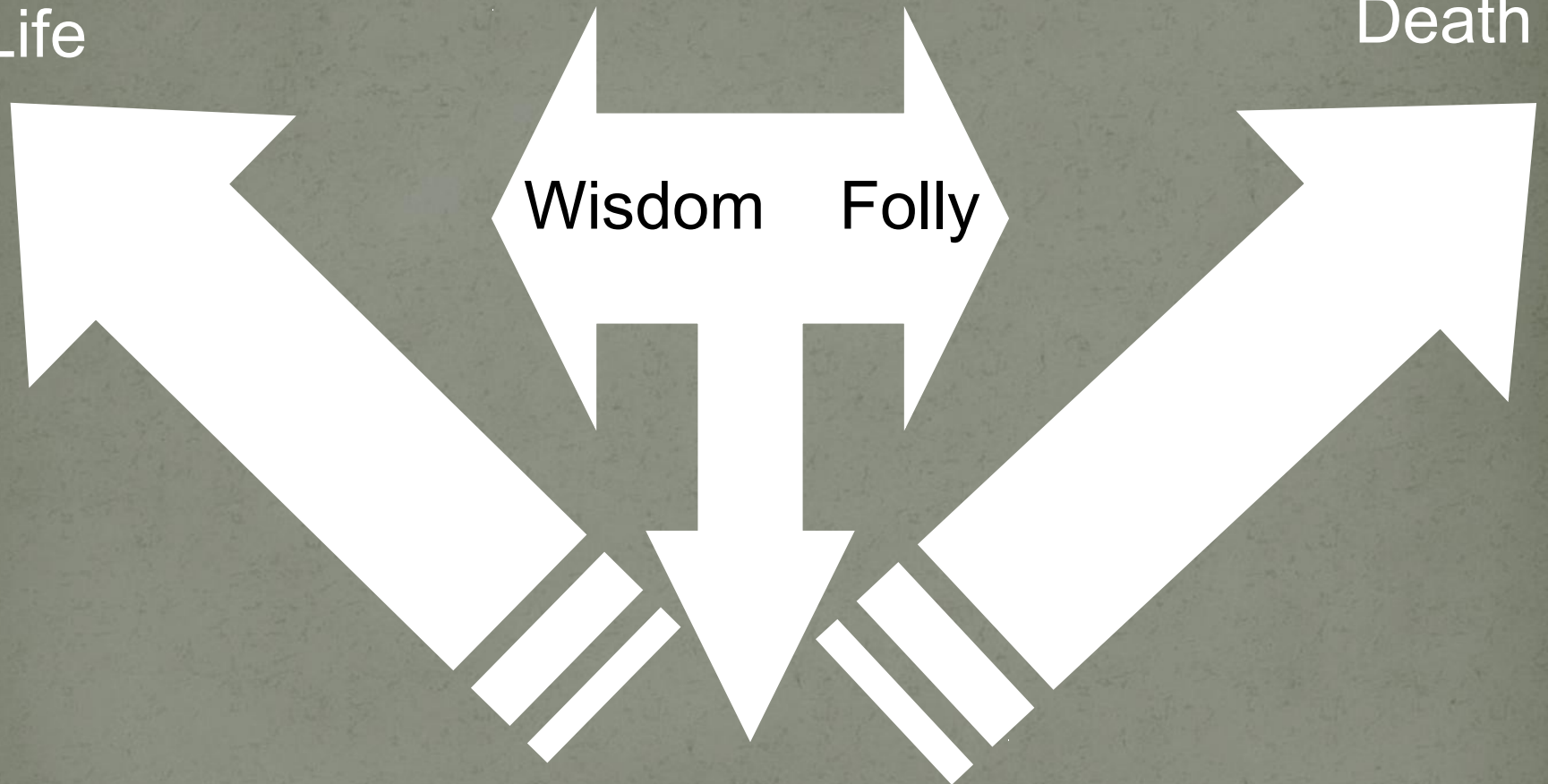
- Chosen by God
- ...From among the people
- ...With responsibility to declare the word/ will of God
- Given the words of God
- Called to discern & accept the words of God
- Proclaim the words of God

**“You must listen to him...I will put my words
in his mouth!”**

“The way of wisdom”

Life

Death

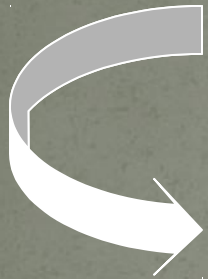


The fear of the LORD

The United Monarchy

Saul *Bad*

(A man with a wayward heart)



David *Good*

(A man after God's heart)



Solomon *Good* *Bad*

(A man with a wise & discerning heart)

The Divided Monarchy

- 1 Rehoboam
- 2 Abijah
- 3 **Asa**
- 4 **Jehoshaphat**
- 5 Jehoram
- 6 Ahaziah
(Queen) Athaliah
- 7 **Joash**
- 8 **Amaziah**
- 9 **Uzziah (Azariah)**
- 10 **Jotham**
- 11 Ahaz
- 12 **Hezekiah**
- 13 Manasseh
- 14 Amon
- 15 **Josiah**
- 16 Jehoahaz
- 17 Jehoiakim (Eliakim)
- 18 Jehoiachin
- 19 Zedekiah (Mattaniah)

722 BC (Assyrian invasion)

586 BC (Babylonian invasion)

- 1 Jeroboam I
- 2 Nadab
- 3 Baasha
- 4 Elah
- 5 Zimri
- 6 Omri
- 7 Ahab
- 8 Ahaziah
- 9 Joram (Jehoram)
- 10 **Jehu**
- 11 Jehoahaz
- 12 Joash (Jehoash)
- 13 Jeroboam II
- 14 Zechariah
- 15 Shallum
- 16 Menahem
- 17 Pekahiah
- 18 Pekah
- 19 Hoshea

Three periods of the prophets

1

ISRAEL

*Fall of Samaria &
Assyrian captivity*
722BC

Jonah?

Amos

Hosea

*Fall of Jerusalem &
Babylonian captivity*
586BC

JUDAH

Joel?

Isaiah

Nahum

Micah

Zephaniah

Habakkuk

Daniel

Obadiah

Jeremiah

2

Ezekiel

3

*Return from
captivity: 538BC*

Temple rebuilt
516 BC

Zechariah
Haggai

Malachi

Before the exile

During exile

After the exile

“My servants – the prophets”

“Surely the Sovereign LORD does nothing without revealing his plan to his servants the prophets.”
(Amos 3:7)

The prototype: **MOSES**

God called him (as a spokesman & a leader – Ex.3)

God gave him the Law (Ex. 19:20-25)

God spoke with him face to face (Deut. 34:10;
Ex. 33:11; Numb. 12:8)

What exactly was a prophet?

- Nabi

“a called one”

To witness about God
to the people.

- Ro'eh

“a seer”

To have special insight.
The ability to see things
as they really are - how
they could & should be.

Marks of a prophet (Is. 6)

- **Called** (for an incident or for life – Ezek. 2)
 - **Sanctified** (set apart for a purpose – Jer. 1:5)
 - **Empowered** (filled with the Spirit – Micah 3:8)
 - **Commissioned** (sent on a mission – Is. 6:8)
-
- They must be listened to! (2 Chron. 24:19)
 - Their message must be tested! (Deut. 18:22)
 - They will be persecuted! (Matt. 5:12; 23:35)

“This is what the LORD says”

Forth-telling
(into the **present**)

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graph TD; A[Forth-telling] --> B[Former-telling]; A --> C[Fore-telling];
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Former-telling (what God said in the **past**) Fore-telling (what God will do in the **future**)

Therefore = to speak forth into a situation what God is saying or doing, based on what he has said in the past.

The prophetic message

1. Here's how it really is (if you could see reality)
2. This is what God thinks about it (wrath & mercy)
3. Here's how it is supposed to be (and will be)
4. This is what you need to do, or else...

This is what God is going to do!

5. God – though he will punish - is waiting to save

The two-fold call

- To be faithful to the covenant

Loyalty to Yahweh (the Torah & Worship)

Worship (festivals), obedience (law) & compassion (poor).

Key texts:

Micah 6:8; Amos 5:24

- To repent from sin

Apathy & indifference

Love of money & power

Social injustice

Tear down the high places

Detestable practices

Sexual immorality

Prophetic teaching techniques

- Proclamation (“This is what the Lord says”) x 170
- Visions (Is. 6; Amos 7; Ezek. 37)
- Symbolic actions (Jer. 18-19; Ezek.4-5; Hos.1)
- Miracles (1 Kings 18; 2 Kings 4)
- Parables/ illustrations (Is. 5)
- Laments & songs (Is. 10; Mic. 7)

Non-writing prophets

- Enoch (Gen. 5:21-24; Jude 14-15)
- Nathan (2 Sam. 7, 12)
- Ahijah & Shemaiah (1 Kings 11-13)
- Elijah (1 Kings 17-19, 21; 2 Kings 1-2)
- Micaiah (1 Kings 22)
- Elisha (2 Kings 2-9, 13)
- Huldah (2 Kings 22:14)

Noah

David

Jeroboam

Ahab-Jehu

Ahab

Jehoram-Jehoash

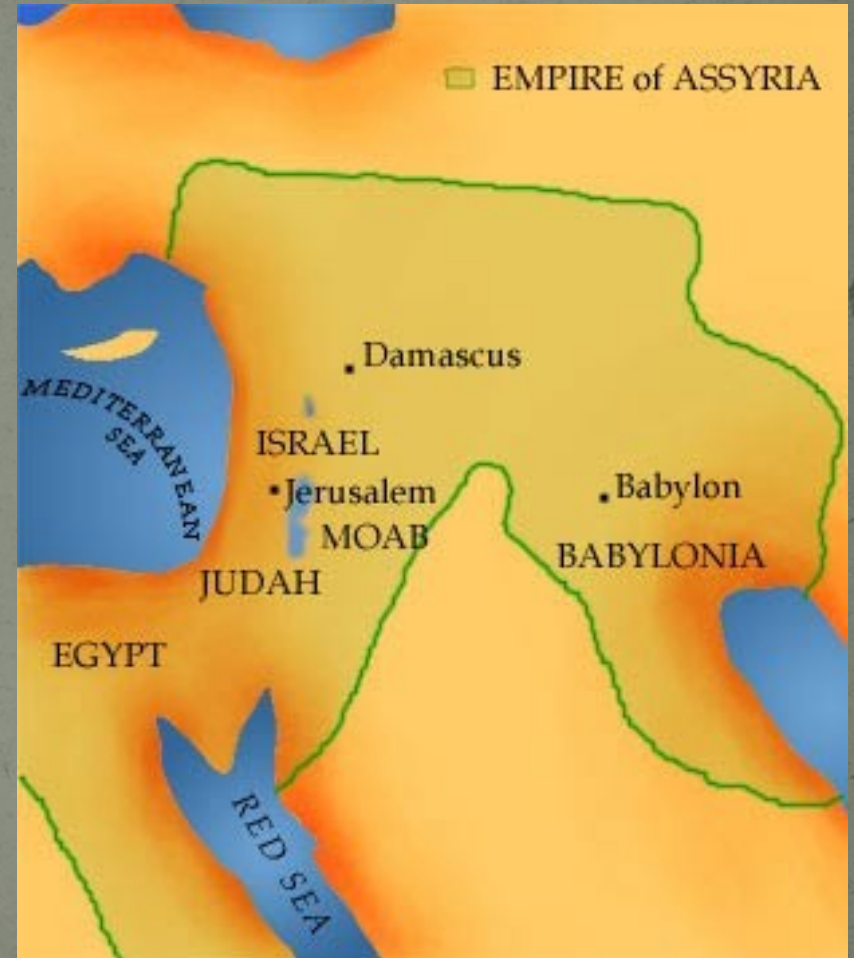
Josiah

– cf. also Miriam (Ex. 15:20) & Deborah (Judges 4:4)

ISAIAH



Isaiah the Prophet (Raphael)



Isaiah's world

Isaiah – the miniature Bible

“Just as Colorado river, 280 miles long, between 4-18 miles wide and over a mile deep, has many gorges, so too the Book of Isaiah is majestic because of the breadth of its teachings, the importance of its message and the sweep of its subject matter...It beckons to the reader to revel in its beauty and plumb its message again and again.” (Ronald Youngblood)

Isaiah the prophet

- Isaiah = “The Lord has saved”
(name is related to Joshua & Jesus)
- Served in Judah’s royal court (spoke to Northern Kingdom)
- Ministered during the reigns Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, Hezekiah & Manasseh (c. 739- late 600’s)
- Commenced ministry c.20 years before the fall of Israel to the Assyrians (722 BC)

Isaiah: the tributes

- “One of greatest theologians of all time”
- “The king of all the prophets”
- “The eagle among the prophets”
- “The evangelist of the Old Covenant”
- “The evangelical prophet”
- “The St. Paul of the OT”

“He knew God intimately, obeyed him faithfully, understood his will clearly & proclaimed it fearlessly.”
(Youngblood)

Isaiah the man

- Born c. 762 BCE
- Father = Amoz (acc. to Jewish tradition, the brother of Amaziah, who was father to Uzziah)
...therefore acc to tradition = cousin to King Uzziah
- Married (wife was a prophetess, 8:3)
- Two children:
 - Shear-Jashub (“a remnant will return”)
 - Maher-shalal-hash-baz (“quick to the plunder,
swift to the spoil”)
- Family’s names = “signs & symbols in Israel from the LORD” (8:18)

The times

“Best of times – worst of times”

Domestic scene:

Moral deterioration of Israel

- Uzziah (Azariah)
- Jotham
- Ahaz
- Hezekiah
- Manasseh

International scene:

Threat of Assyria

- Tiglath-Pileser 111
- Shalmaneser V
- Sargon 11
- Sennacherib
- Esarhaddon

God's judgement on the nations

- Babylon (13-14, 21, 46-47)
- Assyria (14)
- Moab (15-16)
- Damascus (17)
- Cush (Ethiopia 18)
- Egypt (19-20)
- Edom (21)
- Arabia (21)
- Tyre (23)
- The Nations (34)

The key:

Jerusalem (Judah)

Samaria (Israel)

Key themes

Key phrase: “*Holy One of Israel*”

- Used x25 in Isaiah (& only x7 in rest of OT).

x12 in chs. 1-39 (1:4; 5:19, 24; 10:20; 12:6; 17:7; 29:19; 30:11, 12, 15; 31:1; 37:23)

X11 in chs. 40-55 (41:14, 16, 20; 43:3, 14; 45:11; 47:4; 48:17; 49:7 x2; 54:5; 55:5)

X2 in chs. 56-66 (60:9, 14)

Key verse: “Turn to me & be saved, all you ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is no other.” (45:22)

“Isaiah...saw the glory of Jesus and spoke about him”

John 12:41 (ie... Is. 6; 7:14; 9:6; 4 & 11 “The branch”; 42, 49, 50 & 53 “Servant of the Lord”, Is. 61/ Luke 4).

Main sections

1. Chs. 1-39

2. Chs. 40-55

3. Chs. 56-66

■ Deutero-Isaiah?

■ Trito-Isaiah?

■ Isaiah-school?

● Key chapters:

❖ Ch. 5 (Song of the Vineyard)

❖ Ch. 6 (Call & commission)

❖ Chs. 7-12 (“Immanuel”)

❖ Ch. 40 (Vision of God)

❖ Chs. 42-53 (Servant songs)

❖ Ch. 53 (Suffering servant)

❖ Ch. 61 (Year of Lord’s favour)

Servant (songs) of the LORD

“Serve” – to execute the work of God on earth and serve others as his representative.

1. Selection of the servant
42:1-7
2. Obedience of the servant
49:1-7
3. Violence against the servant
50:4-9
4. Suffering servant as redeemer
52:13-53:12

Themes:

- Calling of the servant
- Message of the servant
- Ministry of the servant
- Cost to the servant