

Week 9: Overview of the Major Prophets

Course : Survey of the Bible – Prophetic Books

Audience: Theology beginners and foundational Bible students

Theme : Major Prophets – Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel

1. Overview of the Prophetic Books

- 1) The Prophetic Books of the Old Testament contain messages from God delivered by prophets, addressing judgment, repentance, hope, and restoration for Israel and the nations.
 - 2) The terms Major and Minor Prophets are based on the length of the books, not their importance.
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2. Isaiah

- 1) Author: Isaiah
 - 2) Period: 8th century BC, Kingdom of Judah
 - 3) Main Themes: Judgment and restoration, the coming of the Messiah
 - 4) Key Features:
 - (1) Known as the "Little Bible" with 66 chapters reflecting the structure of the Bible
 - (2) Messianic prophecies (e.g., Isaiah 7:14, 53), New Heavens and Earth (Isaiah 65:17)
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3. Jeremiah

- 1) Author: Jeremiah
 - 2) Period: End of Judah, just before Babylonian exile
 - 3) Main Themes: Judgment due to sin, call to repentance, the New Covenant
 - 4) Key Features:
 - (1) Known as the "Weeping Prophet"
 - (2) Proclamation of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31–34)
 - (3) Rebukes to kings, priests, and false prophets
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4. Lamentations

- 1) Author: Jeremiah
- 2) Content: Lament over the destruction of Jerusalem
- 3) Form: Poetic structure (5 chapters)
- 4) Key Message: God's justice and faithfulness in sorrow (Lam. 3:22–23)

5. Ezekiel

- 1) Author: Ezekiel (a prophet during the exile)
- 2) Period: Babylonian exile
- 3) Main Themes: God's presence, judgment, restoration, vision of the new temple
- 4) Key Features:
 - (1) Symbolic acts and visions(e.g., the valley of dry bones –Ezek. 37)
 - (2) God's glory and restoration of Israel

6. Daniel

- 1) Author: Daniel (a nobleman taken into exile)
- 2) Period: Babylonian and Persian empires
- 3) Structure: Historical narratives (Chs.1–6), apocalyptic visions(Chs.7–12)
- 4) Main Themes: God's sovereignty, prophetic visions of the end times
- 5) Key Features:
 - (1) Stories of the fiery furnace, the lions' den
 - (2) Vision of four empires and "one like a Son of Man" (Ch. 7)

7. Application and Reflection Points

- 1) God's justice requires judgment on sin, but He offers mercy and restoration to those who repent
 - 2) All prophetic messages ultimately point to the coming of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God
 - 3) We are called to live with a prophetic awareness of God's will in our present age
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