



# THE MINOR PROPHETS INTRODUCTION

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# *A. Function of Old Testament Prophets*

## 1. TERMS EMPLOYED.

A) *PROPHET* ( נָבִי' / NĀBĪ' )

- EXODUS 7:1–2 SO THE LORD SAID TO MOSES: “SEE, I HAVE MADE YOU AS GOD TO PHARAOH, AND AARON YOUR BROTHER SHALL BE **YOUR PROPHET**.<sup>2</sup> YOU SHALL SPEAK ALL THAT I COMMAND YOU. AND AARON YOUR BROTHER **SHALL TELL** PHARAOH TO SEND THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL OUT OF HIS LAND.



# *A. Function of Old Testament Prophets*

## 1. TERMS EMPLOYED.

B) SEER ( רֹאֵה; רוֹזֵחַ/ RŌ'EH ; ḤŌZEH)

- 1 CHRONICLES 29:29 NOW THE ACTS OF KING DAVID, FIRST AND LAST, INDEED THEY ARE WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF SAMUEL THE SEER, IN THE BOOK OF NATHAN THE PROPHET, AND IN THE BOOK OF GAD THE SEER.

# ***A. Function of Old Testament Prophets***

## **1. TERMS EMPLOYED.**

C) MAN OF GOD ( אִישׁ אֱלֹהִים / 'ÎŠ 'ĔLŌHÎM)

- 1 SAMUEL 9:10 THEN SAUL SAID TO HIS SERVANT, "WELL SAID; COME, LET US GO." SO THEY WENT TO THE CITY **WHERE THE MAN OF GOD WAS.**



# *A. Function of Old Testament Prophets*

## 1. TERMS EMPLOYED.

D) SERVANT OF THE LORD (עֶבֶד יְהוָה / 'ÉBED YHWH)

- 2 KINGS 9:7 YOU SHALL STRIKE DOWN THE HOUSE OF AHAB YOUR MASTER, THAT I MAY AVENGE THE BLOOD OF MY SERVANTS THE PROPHETS, AND THE BLOOD OF **ALL THE SERVANTS OF THE LORD**, AT THE HAND OF JEZEBEL.

# ***A. Function of Old Testament Prophets***

## **1. TERMS EMPLOYED.**

E) MESSENGER (מַלְאָךְ / MAL'ĀK)

- HAGGAI 1:13 THEN HAGGAI, **THE LORD'S MESSENGER**, SPOKE THE LORD'S MESSAGE TO THE PEOPLE, SAYING, "I AM WITH YOU, SAYS THE LORD.



# ***A. Function of Old Testament Prophets***

## ***2. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE PROPHET.***

- A) REVEALERS OF THE MIND AND WILL OF GOD
- B) MORAL AND ETHICAL TEACHERS-PREACHERS OF TRUE RELIGION
- C) ROYAL ADVISORS
- D) PREDICTORS OF FUTURE EVENTS
- E) COVENANT WATCHMEN

## ***3. THE RELATIONSHIP TO THE PRIESTS.***

# B. Prophetic Consciousness

## 1. DIVINE CALL.

- AMOS 3:7–8 SURELY THE LORD GOD DOES NOTHING, UNLESS HE REVEALS HIS SECRET TO HIS SERVANTS THE PROPHETS.<sup>8</sup> A LION HAS ROARED! WHO WILL NOT FEAR? THE LORD GOD HAS SPOKEN! WHO CAN BUT PROPHECY?



## B. Prophetic Consciousness

**2. PROPHETIC STATE. OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS SPOKE AND WROTE AS THEY WERE EMPOWERED AND CONTROLLED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD.**

- DEUTERONOMY 18:18 I WILL RAISE UP FOR THEM A **PROPHET LIKE YOU** FROM AMONG THEIR BRETHREN, AND WILL PUT **My words in His mouth**, AND **He shall speak** TO THEM ALL THAT I COMMAND HIM.

# B. Prophetic Consciousness

**2. PROPHETIC STATE. OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS SPOKE AND WROTE AS THEY WERE EMPOWERED AND CONTROLLED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD.**

- 2 PETER 1:19–21 AND SO WE HAVE THE PROPHETIC WORD CONFIRMED, WHICH YOU DO WELL TO HEED AS A LIGHT THAT SHINES IN A DARK PLACE, UNTIL THE DAY DAWNS AND THE MORNING STAR RISES IN YOUR HEARTS; <sup>20</sup> KNOWING THIS FIRST, THAT NO PROPHECY OF SCRIPTURE IS OF ANY PRIVATE INTERPRETATION, <sup>21</sup> FOR **PROPHECY NEVER CAME BY THE WILL OF MAN, BUT HOLY MEN OF GOD SPOKE AS THEY WERE MOVED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT.**



# B. Prophetic Consciousness

**2. PROPHETIC STATE. OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS SPOKE AND WROTE AS THEY WERE EMPOWERED AND CONTROLLED BY THE SPIRIT OF GOD.**

- HEBREWS 1:1 **GOD**, WHO AT VARIOUS TIMES AND **IN VARIOUS WAYS SPOKE** IN TIME PAST TO THE FATHERS **BY THE PROPHETS.**

# C. Tests for Old Testament Prophets

## 1. THE PROPHET MUST BE CONSCIOUS OF A DIVINE CALL.

- AMOS 7:14–15 THEN AMOS ANSWERED, AND SAID TO AMAZIAH: “I WAS NO PROPHET, NOR WAS I A SON OF A PROPHET, BUT I WAS A SHEEPBREEDER AND A TENDER OF SYCAMORE FRUIT. <sup>15</sup> THEN **THE LORD TOOK ME** AS I FOLLOWED THE FLOCK, AND THE LORD SAID TO ME, ‘**GO, PROPHECY TO MY PEOPLE ISRAEL.**”



# C. Tests for Old Testament Prophets

## 2. THE PROPHET MUST SPEAK ONLY IN THE NAME OF THE TRUE GOD.

- DEUTERONOMY 18:20–22 BUT THE PROPHET WHO PRESUMES TO SPEAK A WORD IN MY NAME, WHICH I HAVE NOT COMMANDED HIM TO SPEAK, OR WHO SPEAKS IN THE NAME OF OTHER GODS, **THAT PROPHET SHALL DIE.**<sup>21</sup> AND IF YOU SAY IN YOUR HEART, ‘HOW SHALL WE KNOW THE WORD WHICH THE LORD HAS NOT SPOKEN?’—<sup>22</sup> WHEN **A PROPHET SPEAKS IN THE NAME OF THE LORD**, IF THE THING DOES NOT HAPPEN OR COME TO PASS, **THAT IS THE THING WHICH THE LORD HAS NOT SPOKEN**; THE PROPHET HAS SPOKEN IT PRESUMPTUOUSLY; YOU SHALL NOT BE AFRAID OF HIM.

# C. Tests for Old Testament Prophets

## 3. THE PROPHET MUST SPEAK ONLY BY SPECIAL REVELATION.

- DEUTERONOMY 18:18–19 I WILL RAISE UP FOR THEM A PROPHET LIKE YOU FROM AMONG THEIR BRETHREN, AND WILL PUT **MY WORDS IN HIS MOUTH, AND HE SHALL SPEAK** TO THEM ALL THAT I COMMAND HIM.  
<sup>19</sup> AND IT SHALL BE *THAT* WHOEVER WILL NOT HEAR MY WORDS, WHICH **HE SPEAKS IN MY NAME**, I WILL REQUIRE *IT* OF HIM.



# C. Tests for Old Testament Prophets

## 4. THE PROPHET'S LIFE (WHEN FUNCTIONING AS A PROPHET) MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH THE MESSAGE HE PROCLAIMS.

- JEREMIAH 23:14–15 ALSO I HAVE SEEN **A HORRIBLE THING** IN THE PROPHETS OF JERUSALEM: THEY COMMIT ADULTERY AND WALK IN LIES; THEY ALSO STRENGTHEN THE HANDS OF EVILDOERS, SO THAT NO ONE TURNS BACK FROM HIS WICKEDNESS. **ALL OF THEM ARE LIKE SODOM TO ME**, AND HER INHABITANTS LIKE GOMORRAH. <sup>15</sup> “THEREFORE THUS SAYS THE LORD OF HOSTS CONCERNING THE PROPHETS: ‘BEHOLD, I WILL FEED THEM WITH WORMWOOD, AND MAKE THEM DRINK THE WATER OF GALL; FOR FROM THE PROPHETS OF JERUSALEM PROFANENESS HAS GONE OUT INTO ALL THE LAND.

# C. Tests for Old Testament Prophets

## 4. THE PROPHET'S LIFE (WHEN FUNCTIONING AS A PROPHET) MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH THE MESSAGE HE PROCLAIMS.

- MATTHEW 7:15–20 “BEWARE OF **FALSE PROPHETS**, WHO COME TO YOU IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING, BUT INWARDLY THEY ARE RAVENOUS WOLVES. <sup>16</sup> YOU WILL **KNOW THEM BY THEIR FRUITS**. DO MEN GATHER GRAPES FROM THORNBUSHES OR FIGS FROM THISTLES? <sup>17</sup> EVEN SO, EVERY GOOD TREE BEARS GOOD FRUIT, BUT A BAD TREE BEARS BAD FRUIT. <sup>18</sup> A GOOD TREE CANNOT BEAR BAD FRUIT, NOR CAN A BAD TREE BEAR GOOD FRUIT. <sup>19</sup> EVERY TREE THAT DOES NOT BEAR GOOD FRUIT IS CUT DOWN AND THROWN INTO THE FIRE. <sup>20</sup> THEREFORE BY THEIR FRUITS YOU WILL KNOW THEM.



# C. Tests for Old Testament Prophets

## 5. THE PROPHET'S MESSAGE MUST BE CONSISTENT WITH THE CHARACTER OF GOD.

- EZEKIEL 13:8–10 THEREFORE THUS SAYS THE LORD GOD:  
“BECAUSE YOU HAVE SPOKEN NONSENSE AND ENVISIONED LIES,  
THEREFORE I AM INDEED AGAINST YOU,” SAYS THE LORD GOD.  
9 “MY HAND WILL BE AGAINST THE PROPHETS WHO ENVISION  
FUTILITY AND WHO DIVINE LIES; THEY SHALL NOT BE IN THE  
ASSEMBLY OF MY PEOPLE, NOR BE WRITTEN IN THE RECORD OF  
THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL, NOR SHALL THEY ENTER INTO THE LAND  
OF ISRAEL. THEN YOU SHALL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD GOD.  
10 “BECAUSE, INDEED, BECAUSE **THEY HAVE SEDUCED MY  
PEOPLE, SAYING, ‘PEACE!’ WHEN THERE IS NO PEACE**—AND  
ONE BUILDS A WALL, AND THEY PLASTER IT WITH UNTEMPERED  
MORTAR.

# C. Tests for Old Testament Prophets

## 6. THE PROPHET'S MESSAGE MUST BE IN HARMONY WITH PREVIOUS REVELATION.

- DEUTERONOMY 13:1–3 “IF THERE ARISES AMONG YOU **A PROPHET** OR A DREAMER OF DREAMS, AND HE GIVES YOU A SIGN OR A WONDER, <sup>2</sup> AND THE SIGN OR THE WONDER COMES TO PASS, OF WHICH HE SPOKE TO YOU, **SAYING, ‘LET US GO AFTER OTHER GODS’**—WHICH YOU HAVE NOT KNOWN—‘**AND LET US SERVE THEM,**’ <sup>3</sup> **YOU SHALL NOT LISTEN** TO THE WORDS OF THAT PROPHET OR THAT DREAMER OF DREAMS, **FOR THE LORD YOUR GOD IS TESTING YOU** TO KNOW WHETHER YOU LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL.



# C. Tests for Old Testament Prophets

7. THE PROPHET'S MESSAGE WILL BE CONFIRMED BY THE INTERNAL WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LIFE OF THE REDEEMED.

- JOHN 7:17 IF ANYONE WILLS TO DO HIS WILL, **HE SHALL KNOW CONCERNING THE DOCTRINE**, WHETHER IT IS FROM GOD OR *WHETHER I SPEAK ON MY OWN AUTHORITY*.
- 1 JOHN 4:6 WE ARE OF GOD. **HE WHO KNOWS GOD HEARS US**; HE WHO IS NOT OF GOD DOES NOT HEAR US. **BY THIS WE KNOW THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND THE SPIRIT OF ERROR**

## C. Tests for Old Testament Prophets

**8. THE PROPHET'S MESSAGE WILL BE AUTHENTICATED BY FULFILLMENT AND MAY BE AUTHENTICATED BY MIRACLES.**

- EXODUS 4:21 AND THE LORD SAID TO MOSES, "WHEN YOU GO BACK TO EGYPT, **SEE THAT YOU DO ALL THOSE WONDERS** BEFORE PHARAOH WHICH **I HAVE PUT IN YOUR HAND**. BUT I WILL HARDEN HIS HEART, SO THAT HE WILL NOT LET THE PEOPLE GO.



# THE HEBREW OLD TESTAMENT ARRANGEMENT\*

## The Law (Torah)

1. Genesis
2. Exodus
3. Leviticus
4. Numbers
5. Deuteronomy

## The Prophets (Nevi'im)

### A. Former Prophets

1. Joshua
2. Judges
3. Samuel
4. Kings

### B. Latter Prophets

1. Isaiah
2. Jeremiah
3. Ezekiel
4. The Twelve

## The Writings (Kethuvim)

### A. Poetical Books

1. Psalms
2. Job
3. Proverbs

### B. Five Rolls (Megilloth)

1. Ruth
2. Song of Songs
3. Ecclesiastes
4. Lamentations
5. Esther

### C. Historical Books

1. Daniel
2. Ezra-Nehemiah
3. Chronicles

\*This is the arrangement in the New Jewish Version of the Old Testament based on the Masoretic Text (MT). See *TANAKH: A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures According To The Traditional Hebrew Text*; Rudolf Kittel and Paul E. Kahle, eds., *Biblia Hebraica*; and K. Elliger and W. Rudolph, eds., *Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia*. This is not the arrangement as it appears in Alfred Rahlfs, ed., *Septuaginta: Id est Vetus Testamentum graece iuxta LXX interpretes*.

The Law (Pentateuch)—5 books	Poetry—5 books
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Genesis</li> <li>2. Exodus</li> <li>3. Leviticus</li> <li>4. Numbers</li> <li>5. Deuteronomy</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Job</li> <li>2. Psalms</li> <li>3. Proverbs</li> <li>4. Ecclesiastes</li> <li>5. Song of Solomon</li> </ol>

History—12 Books	Prophets—17 Books	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Joshua</li> <li>2. Judges</li> <li>3. Ruth</li> <li>4. 1 Samuel</li> <li>5. 2 Samuel</li> <li>6. 1 Kings</li> <li>7. 2 Kings</li> <li>8. 1 Chronicles</li> <li>9. 2 Chronicles</li> <li>10. Ezra</li> <li>11. Nehemiah</li> <li>12. Esther</li> </ol>	<p>A. Major</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Isaiah</li> <li>2. Jeremiah</li> <li>3. Lamentations</li> <li>4. Ezekiel</li> <li>5. Daniel</li> </ol>	<p>B. Minor</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Hosea</li> <li>2. Joel</li> <li>3. Amos</li> <li>4. Obadiah</li> <li>5. Jonah</li> <li>6. Micah</li> <li>7. Nahum</li> <li>8. Habakkuk</li> <li>9. Zephaniah</li> <li>10. Haggai</li> <li>11. Zechariah</li> <li>12. Malachi</li> </ol>



# F. Various Approaches to Classifying the Prophets

## 1. ACCORDING TO THE CHRONOLOGICAL PERIODS.

*PRE-EXILIC:* OBADIAH, JOEL, JONAH, HOSEA, AMOS,  
ISAIAH, MICAH, NAHUM,  
ZEPHANIAH, JEREMIAH, HABAKKUK

*EXILIC:* DANIEL, EZEKIEL

*POST-EXILIC:* HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI

# F. Various Approaches to Classifying the Prophets

## 2. ACCORDING TO THE PERIODS OF GENTILE KINGDOMS.

*ASSYRIAN PERIOD:* OBADIAH, JOEL, JONAH, HOSEA,  
AMOS, ISAIAH, MICAH, NAHUM

*BABYLONIAN PERIOD:* ZEPHANIAH, JEREMIAH, HABAKKUK,  
DANIEL, EZEKIEL

*PERSIAN PERIOD:* HAGGAI, ZECHARIAH, MALACHI



# F. Various Approaches to Classifying the Prophets

## 3. ACCORDING TO THE DATES OF EACH PROPHET.

OBADIAH 845      JOEL 835      JONAH 780

AMOS 760      HOSEA 760      ISAIAH 740

MICAH 735      NAHUM 650      ZEPHANIAH 640

JEREMIAH 625      HABAKKUK 610      DANIEL 605

EZEKIEL 595      HAGGAI 520      ZECHARIAH 520

MALACHI 435