

IMMERSE: PROPHETS

Week 1 – WHY And to WHOM Did God Call Prophets?

June 4, 2023

Major Prophets (entitled as such due to their length): Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations (postscript to Jeremiah), Ezekiel, Daniel

Minor Prophets (entitled as such due to their...not so much length...their shortness): Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

What's the context for all the Prophets? The entire Bible! _____

The structure of the OT - 5 12 5 5 12

5 books in the Torah (Genesis through Deuteronomy); 12 books in Israel's History (Joshua through Esther); 5 books in Poetry (Job-Psalms-Proverbs-Eccl.-Song of Solomon); 5 books in the Major Prophets; 12 books in the Minor Prophets.

To better understand the chronology, envision wrapping your arms around the 5 Poetry books and the 17 Prophets and dropping them into Israel's History books. WHY? The Prophets spoke out against what was occurring in Israel's history. And, the authors of the poetry books are both crying out to God and praising Him for His intervening in their lives and in the life of Israel as a nation.

In this class we will look at the Prophets as part of the BIG PICTURE of Scripture for the purpose of knowing God and His plan and how it unfolds and how the one narrative/one story fits together.

Helping us to understand the BIG PICTURE are the 4 words that summarize the plot of the Bible noted in Genesis through Revelation:

CREATION FALL REDEMPTION RESTORATION

- God created the heavens and the earth.
- God created man and gave man dominion and gave man the responsibility to nurture and serve the earth, God's creation. God gave man the right to rule as HIS representative on earth (Gen. 1:26, 28).
- Man succumbed to Satan's schemes and sin entered the world. Man does not now have the right to rule the earth as God's representative.
 - Jn. 12:31 – Satan is the ruler of this world/world system (Eph. 2:2)

- Immediately God promised a Redeemer Who will redeem – He will pay the price to buy man out of bondage to sin (Gen. 3:15 – the Seed of the woman). And that price – the shedding of blood (Gen. 3:21).
- God’s will is NEVER thwarted. God’s plan is always Plan A. God will RESTORE His creation to His original plan! Man will be given dominion over the earth – Dan. 7:13-14, 27!! See Millennial conditions in creation noted in Isaiah 11.

Results from the fall:

Gen. 6:5-24 - ...*the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.* ⁶ *And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart.* Thus, the global

2

flood under which all the high hills under the whole heaven were covered. Because Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord, he and his family members in the ark, all of 8, remained alive.

Gen. 8:21 – After the flood we read ...*the imagination (intent/thought) of man’s heart is evil from his youth....*

Gen. 9:25-27 – *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Shem...and may God dwell in the tents of Shem.* **SO?** Who’s Shem? One of Noah’s sons.

Gen. 10 – 70 nations descended from Noah’s sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. God had told them to be fruitful and multiply!

Gen. 10:1, 2, 5 - *Now this is the genealogy of the sons of Noah: Shem, Ham, and Japheth. And sons were born to them after the flood...⁵From these the coastland peoples of the Gentiles (the nations; goyim) were separated into their lands, everyone according to his language, according to their families, into their nations.*

God loves the nations! And, so we immediately read of God’s plan to reach out to the nations.

Gen. 11:10-32 – The genealogy of Shem including Terah who begot Abram, Nahor, and Haran (v. 27). Are these names familiar?

Gen. 12 – God called Abram. Acts 7:2-3 – *The God of glory appeared to our father Abraham when he was in Mesopotamia before he delt in Haran and said to him, Get out of your country and from your relatives, and come to a land that I will show you.*

Gen. 12:1-3 - *Now the LORD had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. ²I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. ³I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you **all** the families of the earth shall be blessed.’*

Gen. 18:16-18 - *Then the men (the two angels who appeared with the LORD at Abraham's tent) rose from there and looked toward Sodom, and Abraham.... God announced, ¹⁸ since Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?' God created the nation of Israel to bless all the other nations (70) in the world (Isa. 43:1; Jer. 33:26; II Sam. 7:23)*

Deut. 7:6-8 - *For you are a holy (set apart for its intended purpose) people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for Himself, a special treasure above all the peoples on the face of the earth. ⁷ The LORD did not set His love on you nor choose you because you were more in number than any other people, for you were the least of all peoples; ⁸ but because the LORD loves you, and because He would keep the oath which He swore to your fathers, the LORD has brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you from the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.*

God chose Israel to accomplish His purposes:

To receive His law (which restores the soul [Psa. 19:7]; which speaks to God's holiness and man's sinfulness).

To be witnesses of the one true God to the world (Isa. 43:10).

To be the channel through whom the Messiah would come for the world (Micah 5:2; Isa. 9:6; John 4:22; Rom. 11:15....)

To be used as the instrument of blessing for the world (Gen. 12:3; Gen. 18:18; Deut. 28; Deut. 32:8-9; Rom. 11:12, 15).

3

God will pick up where He left off with Israel during the tribulation and into the Millennial Kingdom.

Isa. 43:1 - *But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel (the nation): 'Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; you are Mine.*

God created the nation of Israel.

Deut. 32:8-9 - *When the Most High divided their (Israel's) inheritance to the nations, when He separated the sons of Adam, He set the boundaries of the peoples (goyim- the Gentiles) according to the number of the children of Israel. (70 nations [Gen. 10]; 70 children of Israel who went to Egypt [Gen. 46:27]) ⁹ For the LORD's portion is His people; Jacob is the place of His inheritance.*

God ordained a plan where the number of nations (70 according to Gen. 10) corresponded to the number of the children of Israel (70 according to Gen. 46:27)

God has a covenant relationship with Israel! WHY? So "...that the world may know" (I Sam. 17:45-46 – and cross reference to find other verses where we read, "...that the world may know.") God placed the children of Israel amongst the Gentiles. The world surrounding the Israelites took note of God's blessing Israel if they obeyed. And, the Gentile world was well aware of Israel's disobeying God and being disciplined by God. Tough love!

Consider a brief summary leading up to the book of Isaiah...

SUMMARY OF JOSHUA TO II KINGS

- God's plan to establish Israel as a great nation and kingdom of God on earth developed under Joshua as Israel possessed the land of Canaan. (Josh. 23:1-16; Josh. 24).
- Israel's incomplete removal of the Canaanites was viewed as disobedience and later contributed to problems for Israel's kingdom. (Judges 1 & 2; Judges 2:11)
- Israel's insistence to enthrone a king like the rest of the nations was viewed by God as their rejection of Him (I Sam. 8; note esp. v. 7)
- God rejected King Saul and chose David to reign as King over Israel. The Davidic Covenant promised an eternal kingdom from David's line and blessings to both Israel and the nations.
- The kingdom in Israel reached a high point under Solomon who was the last King to rule over a united Israel until Solomon...(I Kings 11:1-8) sowed seeds of destruction which resulted in the nation turning from God.
- The kingdom of Israel became divided between the ten tribes of Israel and the two tribes of Judah.
- Both Israel and Judah were characterized by disobedience and experienced captivity – Israel by Assyria and Judah by Babylon.
- Even in captivity, Israel's restoration is God's plan.
 - *Isa. 14:1-2 - For the LORD will have mercy on Jacob, and will still choose Israel, and settle them in their own land. The strangers will be joined with them, and they will cling to the house of Jacob. ² Then people will take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them for servants and maids in the land of the LORD; they will take them captive whose captives they were, and rule over their oppressors.*

During the period following Solomon, the Prophets became the immediate spokesmen for God conveying the will of God to the kings and people. They explained Israel's failure to obey the Mosaic Covenant and foretold the devastating consequences.

Yet, the Prophets also offered hope. Because of God's covenant faithfulness to Abraham and the patriarchs, darkness and judgment would be followed by light and restoration. The same

nation that fell because of disobedience would rise again because of God's grace and faithfulness.

The dispersion to the nations would not be permanent. With the decline of the Kings, the Prophets became prominent as they preached repentance and a future restoration of Israel.

WHY ISRAEL'S RESTORATION?

The two sentences that address the thrust/the summary statement of the entire Bible:

The Bible lays out God's plan for the nations through the nation of Israel.

And, within God's plan for the world (redeemed and unredeemed) following sin entering the world, we read the unfolding of God's plan of redemption for both Jew and Gentile who place their trust in Jesus. Remember: God announced that He showed His power through Pharaoh who was NOT redeemed (Rom. 9:17).

Bit. WHY? WHY God's plan for the nations through the nation of Israel?

- God's sovereign choice.
- God promised and He is faithful. He will deliver! God obligated Himself to fulfill the promises He made to Israel (Heb. 6:13)
- Following the rapture of the Church, God is going to pick up where He left off with Israel.
- Rom. 11:15 – when Israel as a nation comes to faith in God through Jesus, it will be like life from the dead for the world. God's original plan/His initial plan from creation will be restored!
- Israel's restoration will result in the Millennial Kingdom, more evangelism, and the eternal state (the New Jerusalem) (Isa. 66:22).

Rom. 11:33-36 - Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and His ways past finding out! ³⁴ 'For who has known the mind of the LORD? Or who has become His counselor?' ³⁵ 'Or who has first given to Him and it shall be repaid to him?' ³⁶ For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen.