



Teaching the Bible Classically

with Dr. Fred Putnam

Lecture 8: Prophecy (I)

Outline:

Introduction

- Canonical prophets have a book named for them.
- Non-canonical prophets do not have a book named for them. They are part of the Bible, but they didn't contribute to the canon as far as we know.
- Major Prophets are the longer books (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel).
- Minor Prophets are the shorter books (Hosea through Haggai).

What is a prophet?

- The first prophet is Abraham. Someone who prays for someone else. Abimelech and his household were prayed for and healed.
- The call of Moses:
 - Exodus chapter 4
 - I will put the words in your mouth and you will put the words in Aaron's mouth.
 - A prophet is someone who speaks for someone else.
- In Acts, the crowd called Paul, Hermes, and Barnabas, they called Zeus. Paul did all the talking. The messenger did all the talking for the king.
- The prophets are speaking for God.
 - In Ezekiel, the Lord said to take the scroll and eat it.
 - God literally puts the words in the mouth of the prophet.
- The prophets are **taught by God** because they have been **called by God**.
 - The prophets were called in different ways.
 - Isaiah has a vision. Ezekiel has a fantastical vision. Jeremiah is spoken to by the Lord. Amos says, "I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet."

Content of Prophetic Books

- Most of the content is preaching.
 - The prophets are coming to the Israelites telling them that they have broken the covenant. They are preaching against covenantal sins, injustice, oppression by the wealthy, abusing power, abusing authority, and for worshipping false gods. Most of the time they are addressing social sins – justice and business/financial sins.



- They also struggle against false prophets (especially Jeremiah and Ezekiel).
- There is also quite a bit of narrative.
 - There are prophetic stories.
 - There are some symbolic acts to give messages to the people.
 - There are visions.
- Most of it is about what is going to happen in the next generation or less.
- Less than 3% of the prophetic books is yet to come in the future.
- The prophets are preaching out of this covenantal background.
 - Heaven and Earth are called as witnesses to the covenant. Isaiah 1 calls Heaven and Earth to witness that Israel has broken the covenant.
 - They are pointing out that breaking the covenant has consequences beyond imagination. If God is full of mercy and compassion and extends his love to thousands of generations to those who love him, then these prophetic calls are not denunciations for smacking Israel. They are calls to Israel for repentance, to turn to the covenant.
- Promise of change:
 - Isaiah 31, Ezekiel 40-48, this new covenant is going to be different. He is going to write the covenant on their heart instead of on stone.
 - There will be a restoration that comes from God himself.
 - Hope is offered.