

He Gave Us Prophets

Lesson Guide

LESSON
FIVE

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF PROPHECY



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HOW TO USE THIS LESSON GUIDE

This lesson guide is designed for use in conjunction with the associated video. If you do not have access to the video, the lesson guide will also work with the audio and/or text versions of the lesson. Additionally, the video and lesson guide are intended to be used in a learning community, but they also can be used for individual study if necessary.

- **Before you watch the lesson**
 - **Prepare** — Complete any recommended readings.
 - **Schedule viewing** — The Notes section of the lesson guide has been divided into segments that correspond to the video. Using the time codes found in parentheses beside each major division, determine where to begin and end your viewing session. IIM lessons are densely packed with information, so you may also want to schedule breaks. Breaks should be scheduled at major divisions.
- **While you are watching the lesson**
 - **Take notes** — The Notes section of the lesson guide contains a basic outline of the lesson, including the time codes for the beginning of each segment and key notes to guide you through the information. Many of the main ideas are already summarized, but make sure to supplement these with your own notes. You should also add supporting details that will help you to remember, describe, and defend the main ideas.
 - **Record comments and questions** — As you watch the video, you may have comments and/or questions on what you are learning. Use the margins to record your comments and questions so that you can share these with the group following the viewing session.
 - **Pause/replay portions of the lesson** — You may find it helpful to pause or replay the video at certain points in order to write additional notes, review difficult concepts, or discuss points of interest.
- **After you watch the lesson**
 - **Complete Review Questions** — Review Questions are based on the basic content of the lesson. You should answer Review Questions in the space provided. These questions should be completed individually rather than in a group.
 - **Answer/discuss Application Questions** — Application Questions are questions relating the content of the lesson to Christian living, theology, and ministry. Application questions are appropriate for written assignments or as topics for group discussions. For written assignments, it is recommended that answers not exceed one page in length.

Notes

I. Introduction (0:24)

II. Early Monarchy (1:41)

Prophecy rose to prominence in Israel when kingship rose to prominence.

David's kingdom:

- Established around 1000 B.C.
- Remained intact for several generations

A. Major Events (2:27)

1. United Kingdom (2:32)

David's work:

- United all the tribes
- Established relatively secure borders
- Brought the ark of God to Jerusalem
- Prepared for his son to build a temple for God

2. **Divided Kingdom (3:18)**

Solomon and his son Rehoboam did not treat the northern tribes with the respect they deserved.

The tribes of the north broke away and formed their own nation around 930 B.C.

B. **Prophetic Ministries (4:33)**

There are 16 different prophets whose ministries are summarized in the major and minor prophetic books of the Old Testament.

- None of these books come from the early monarchy.
- The early monarchy provided a background to the writing prophets.

1. **Covenant Ideals (5:13)**

Later writing prophets looked back to the days of the united monarchy as establishing important royal covenant ideals.

2. Divided Kingdom (5:48)

The writing prophets served Yahweh in two different nations:

- The northern kingdom of Israel (capital: Samaria)
- The southern kingdom of Judah (capital: Jerusalem)

III. Assyrian Judgment (6:42)

The first time God sent major war against his people. Defeat through the Assyrians came between 734 and 701 B.C.

A. Major Events (7:54)

1. Syrian-Israelite Coalition (8:15)

Involved conflict among three small nations under Assyrian control:

- Syria
- Israel
- Judah

Around 734 B.C.:

- Syria and Israel grew tired of paying tribute to the Assyrian empire.
- They decided to build a coalition to resist the Assyrians.
- The Assyrians were experiencing trouble in other parts of their empire.

Both the north (Israel) and south (Judah) were on a path of conflict with Assyria.

Judah aligned with Assyria.

2. Fall of Samaria (9:35)

Samaria (capital of Israel) became the object of Assyrian vengeance because of the Syrian-Israelite coalition.

3. Sennacherib Invasion (10:18)

Judah rebelled against Assyria, leading to several attacks from the Assyrians. The worst, the Sennacherib invasion, came around 701 B.C.

Hezekiah the king of Judah turned to Yahweh for help and was miraculously delivered.

B. Prophetic Ministries (11:35)

1. Jonah (12:12)

Time: reign of Jeroboam II, king in northern Israel around 793-753 B.C.

Place: Nineveh, in Assyria

Message: Destruction of Nineveh

2. Hosea (13:07)

Time:

- days of Hosiah, Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah
- around 750 B.C. at least until the fall of Samaria in 722 B.C.

Place: Israel (northern kingdom)

Message: Assyrian destruction of Israel

3. Amos (14:35)

Time: when Hosiah was king of Judah and Jeroboam was king of Israel, around 760 to 750 B.C., before the Syrian-Israelite coalition.

Place: Israel (northern kingdom)

Message:

- Assyrian judgment was coming.
- Samaria would fall.
- Exile was going to take place.

4. Micah (15:51)

Time:

- days of Jothan, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, the kings of Judah
- from at least 735 to 701 B.C.

Place: Judah, especially in the vicinity of Jerusalem.

Message:

- Jerusalem would be destroyed if repentance did not take place
- If exile occurred, one day God would:
 - retaliate against Jerusalem's enemies
 - free his people
 - bring a great king to:
 - reunite the people
 - restore their covenant blessings in the land.

5. Nahum (17:10)

Time: between 663 B.C. and 612 B.C.

Place: Judah

Message: Destruction of Nineveh, the Assyrian capital

6. Isaiah (18:50)

Time:

- reigns of Hosiah, Jothan, Ahaz and Hezekiah.
- from 740 B.C. to slightly after 701 B.C. (the Sennacherib invasion)

Place: Judah, especially Jerusalem

Message:

- Judah was to trust Yahweh as she faced Assyrian judgments.
- Exile would come to Judah.
- The restoration of Judah would take place after the exile.

IV. Babylonian Judgment (20:27)

This period of judgment extended from 605 B.C. to 539 B.C. The prophet Isaiah forms a hinge between the period of Assyrian judgment and Babylonian judgment.

A. Major Events (22:05)**1. First Incursion (22:25)**

King Jehoiakim was unfaithful to his Babylonian suzerain Nebuchadnezzar. Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah, and removed many of the leaders in Jerusalem.

2. Second Incursion (22:53)

Nebuchadnezzar responded to continuing rebellion in Judah with a second incursion and deportation.

3. Third Incursion (23:18)

The Babylonians utterly destroyed Jerusalem and its holy temple.

B. Prophetic Ministries (24:00)

Seven prophets served as Yahweh's emissaries at this time.

1. Jeremiah (24:28)

Time:

- throughout the three invasions and deportations
- from around 626 B.C. at least until shortly after 586 B.C.

Place: Judah

Message:

- True repentance might forestall the invasions.
- Jerusalem's doom was certain; repent and prepare for years of hardship.
- Israel would be restored some day in the future.

2. Zephaniah (25:50)

Time: the reign of Josiah, son of Amon, King of Judah

Place: Judah

Message:

- Day of the Lord was coming against Assyria and other nations who had persecuted the people of God.
- Babylonian dominance over the entire region, including Judah.
- Israel and Judah would be restored to greatness.

3. Joel (26:59)

Time:

- while the temple and the priesthood were still in operation
- probably during the deportations of the Judaites to Babylon

Place: Judah

Message:

- The land of Judah was going to be ravished by foreign armies.
- Sincere repentance might forestall or soften the Babylonian destruction.
- Once the exile was over, God would restore his people to a time of unsurpassed covenant blessing.

4. Obadiah (28:17)

Time: probably during the Babylonian invasions and deportations of 597 to 586 B.C.

Place: probably Judah

Message:

- The nation of Edom took advantage of the terrible suffering of the Judaites.
- Yahweh would not overlook the cruelties of the Edomites.

5. Habakkuk (29:14)

Time: sometime near the first Babylonian invasion and deportation in 605 B.C.

Place: Judah

Message:

- Lamented the evil of the Judaites.
- Lamented the oppression of the Babylonians.
- Affirmed trust in Yahweh.

6. Ezekiel (30:30)

Time: from around 597 through the destruction of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.

Place: Babylon

Message:

- The Babylonians were going to destroy Jerusalem and its temple.
- The people will return to the land, and must rebuild the temple when they return.

7. Daniel (31:34)

Time: from 605 to 539 B.C.

Place: Babylon

Message:

- The exile of God's people would extend through four kingdoms:
 - Babylonians
 - Medes and Persians
 - Greeks
 - Romans
- Encouraged repentance and faith among the exiles.
- Continuing rebellion would only prolong separation from the land.

V. Restoration Period (33:32)

This restoration period extends from 539 B.C. to around 400 B.C.

A. Major Events (34:16)**1. Israelites return to the Land (34:23)**

The Persian emperor Cyrus:

- conquered the Babylonian empire
- encouraged the Israelites to return to their land and rebuild the temple

Relatively few exiles returned. They were not firmly devoted to doing Yahweh's will.

2. Rebuilding of the Temple (35:06)

The first Israelites who returned neglected rebuilding the temple.

Haggai and Zechariah prophesied in Jerusalem around 520 B.C. They exhorted the people to rebuild the temple.

3. Widespread Apostasy (35:43)

Within one generation after Zerubbabel had rebuilt the temple:

- The people of God began to intermarry with foreign women.
- As a result, the religion of Israel was mixed with the religions of other peoples.
- The restoration period ground to a halt.

B. Prophetic Ministries (36:31)

1. Haggai (36:46)

Time: 520 B.C.

Place: Jerusalem

Message: God would bless the people if the nation would sincerely turn back to the Lord and rebuild the temple.

2. Zechariah (37:57)

Time: 520 B.C.

Place: Jerusalem

Message:

- Great blessings would come if the people will rebuild the temple.
- Full restoration would come only by a catastrophic, future, divine intervention.

3. Malachi (39:17)

Time:

- during or after the time of Nehemiah's reforms
- somewhere between 450 and 400 B.C.

Place: Jerusalem

Message:

- Great judgment was still coming against the people of God.
- The judgment of God would lead to the final restoration for the righteous in Israel.

The Prophets concluded that the great restoration blessings would come only in the distant future. As Christians, we know it was when Jesus came to earth.

VI. Conclusion (40:48)

Review Questions

1. Describe the major events of the early monarchy.

2. What characterized the prophetic ministry during the early monarchy?

3. Describe the major events of the Assyrian judgment.

4. What characterized the prophetic ministry during the Assyrian judgment?

5. Describe the major events of the Babylonian judgment.

6. What characterized the prophetic ministry during the Babylonian judgment?

7. Describe the major events that took place during the restoration period.

8. What characterized the prophetic ministries during the restoration period?

Application Questions

1. Read 2 Kings 18-19. During the Sennacherib invasion, King Hezekiah asked the Lord to deliver him and his people. Why do you think God acted on King Hezekiah's behalf? How might God deliver modern believers who face insurmountable enemies?
2. Jonah's place of ministry was unique among the prophets. He was called to go to Nineveh, the capital of Assyria. To Jonah's dismay, the people repented. What does Jonah's ministry reveal to you about God's fame throughout the nations? What does Jonah's ministry reveal to you about your enemies?
3. The prophet Isaiah called for trust in the Lord even during periods of judgment. How did Isaiah attempt to persuade his audience? What can modern Christians learn from Isaiah's strategy?
4. The prophets during the restoration concluded that ultimate blessings would come only in the distant future. What does this tell us about the role that Christ played? How should this understanding of Christ's role influence the ways we interact with other believers and with the unbelieving world?
5. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

Glossary

Amos – Prophet who ministered from around 760-750 B.C. when Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam was king of Israel

apostasy – Rebellion against God after a profession of faith; total rejection of one's faith, religion or principles

Assyria – Empire located in northern Mesopotamia in the ancient Near East that invaded and conquered the northern kingdom of Israel around 722 B.C.

Assyrian judgment – Divine judgment on God's people from 734-701 B.C. when God sent the Assyrians against northern Israel in response to their flagrant violation of his covenant

Babylonia – Empire located in southern Mesopotamia in the ancient Near East that invaded and conquered Judah and destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 586 B.C.; capital city was Babylon

Babylonian judgment – Divine judgment on God's people extending from 605-539 B.C. when the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar invaded Judah and deported the majority of the population

covenant – A binding legal agreement made either between two people or groups of people, or between God and a person or group of people

Cyrus – Persian emperor from 559-530 B.C. who decreed that the Israelites could return to the Promised Land

Daniel – Prophet taken to Babylon as a young man in the first deportation of 605 B.C.; ministered from at least 605-539 B.C.; known for his ability to interpret dreams and for his devotion to God, even when thrown into a lion's den

David – Second Old Testament king of Israel who received the promise that his descendant would sit on the throne and reign forever

divided kingdom – Period beginning around 930 B.C. when the northern tribes of Israel broke away from the southern tribes and formed their own nation

Ezekiel – Old Testament prophet who ministered in Babylon among the exiles from around 597-586 B.C.

Habakkuk – Prophet who most likely ministered sometime around the first Babylonian invasion in 605 B.C.

Haggai – Prophet who returned to Judah after the Babylonian exile and ministered in Jerusalem during a four month period in 520 B.C.

Hezekiah – Son of Ahaz and king of Judah from approximately 716-686 B.C., known for his religious reforms and miraculous deliverance from Assyrian aggression in 701 B.C.

Hosea – Prophet during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, and Jeroboam, king of Israel

Isaiah – Prophet from Judah who ministered from approximately 740-701 B.C. during the reigns of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah

Jeremiah – Old Testament prophet from about 626-586 B.C., also called the "weeping prophet"; prophesied about the future of Judah and of the new covenant to come

Jeroboam I – First king of the northern kingdom after the nation was divided; corrupted the northern tribes of Israel by establishing idol worship in Dan and Bethel

Jerusalem – City where David established his throne and Solomon built the temple during the united monarchy; capital of the southern kingdom of Judah that was destroyed by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.; city where the early church began

Joel – Old Testament prophet who ministered sometime during the deportations to Babylon; offered hope of restoration after the exile; spoke of a future outpouring of the Holy Spirit; quoted by Peter on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2

Jonah – Prophet called to preach during the reign of Jeroboam II from around 793-753 B.C.; sent to warn Nineveh of God's judgment and was swallowed by a large fish when he refused to go

Judah – One of the twelve tribes of Israel; Jacob's fourth son from whose offspring the promised Messiah was to come; name of the southern kingdom after the nation of Israel was divided

Malachi – Old Testament prophet who ministered in Jerusalem sometime around 450-400 B.C.

Micah – Prophet who ministered in Judah from about 735-701 B.C. during the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah

mishpat – Hebrew term (transliteration) for "judgment"; refers to legal deliberations in a court of law

Nahum – Prophet who ministered in Judah sometime between 663-612 B.C.

Nebuchadnezzar – Powerful king of Babylon from approximately 605-562 B.C.; known for destroying Jerusalem and the temple and carrying the Jews into exile during the Babylonian judgment

Nineveh – Capital of Assyria; known for its wickedness; city where God sent the prophet Jonah to issue a warning of judgment

Obadiah – Prophet who most likely ministered from around 597-586 B.C.

Rehoboam – Son of King Solomon who reigned after him and mistreated the northern tribes of Israel, leading to the divided kingdom

Samaria – Capital city of the ten northern tribes of Israel that fell to Assyria in 722 B.C.

Saul – First king anointed by God to rule over the nation of Israel

Sennacherib invasion – An attack on the southern kingdom of Judah by Sennacherib, king of Assyria, around 701 B.C. in response to Judah's rebellion against Assyria; Jerusalem was miraculously spared from this invasion after Hezekiah turned to Yahweh for help

Solomon – Son of King David and third king of Israel who was known for his wisdom and wealth; expanded Israel's borders and built the first temple in Jerusalem

Syrian-Israelite coalition – Partnership formed between Syria and Israel's northern kingdom around 734 B.C. in order to resist Assyria

united kingdom – Period from around 1000 B.C. when David became king of Israel and united Israel's tribes, secured Israel's borders and brought the ark of God to Jerusalem; ended around 930 B.C. when the northern tribes broke away and formed their own nation

Zechariah – Prophet who ministered in Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile; prophesied that great blessings would come if the people would rebuild the temple

Zephaniah – Prophet during the reign of Josiah, king of Judah, from about 640-609 B.C.