

Prophet's Responsibility

Isaiah 1:1; II Kings 17:13

I. GENERAL

1. Prophets WERE men whom God raised up during the dark days of Israel's history.
2. They were evangelists of the day (II Kings 17:13).
3. The period of the prophets covered five hundred years, from the ninth to the fourth century B.C.
4. The voices of the prophets were silenced until John the Baptist came on the scene.
5. The office of the prophet was instituted in Samuel's time. When the kingdom was divided and Judah and Israel were established as separate monarchies, the great prophets appeared.
6. There were 4 Major and 12 Minor Prophets.
7. There are 17 prophetic books in the Old Testament.
8. They are subdivided into major and minor, determined by the amount of material written.

II. PROPHETS ACCORDING TO TIME

1. 6 prophets lived in the time of Israel's destruction by Assyria – Joel, Jonah, Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah.
2. 7 lived in the time of Judah's destruction by Babylon – Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Obadiah, Nahum, Habakkuk and Zephaniah.
3. 3 lived in the time of the restoration to their own land – Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

III. PROPHETS ACCORDING TO SPECIAL MESSAGES

1. 3 to Israel – Amos, Hosea and Ezekiel
2. 2 to Nineveh – Johan and Nahum
3. 1 to Babylon – Daniel
4. 1 to Edom – Obadiah
5. 9 to Judah – Joel, Isaiah, Micah, Jeremiah, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

Prophet's Responsibility (Continued)

IV. PROPHET'S MESSAGE

1. His chief duty was to deal with the moral and religious life of his own people during his time.
2. The prophet was never sent while the nation was walking in obedience to God.
3. Their writings are rebukes, because of the bad conditions that existed.
4. There was nothing general about the prophet's denunciations.
5. The prophet was always a Hebrew.
6. He not only spoke of judgment that would come to pass to the people because of their sin but he was also a foreteller of future events primarily related to the nation of Israel.
7. Other people (other than Jews) were mentioned only as they came in contact with Israel.

V. PROPHECIES RELATED TO THE FUTURE

1. The dispersion and captivity of God's chosen people is emphasized.
2. Everywhere, the prophet told that the Jew was to be scattered among the nations of the world.
3. They foretold the restoration of the chosen people to their own land under the coming Messiah, David's greater Son.
4. The Jew is still looking for his Messiah.
5. Every Jew has a longing in his heart to be a part of a great nation.

VI. THE PROPHETS CHARACTER

1. The prophets were fearless men.
2. They denounced the sins of their day.
3. They called people away from idols, and back to God.
4. The prophets were concerned about the political corruption and moral decay, but their greatest concern was the wrong attitude toward God, and involvement in idolatry.
5. The prophets exposed the cold formalism of their religion.
6. They constantly reminded the people that Jehovah was the only true God.
7. They were not only "*forth-tellers*" but "*fore-tellers.*"
8. So important is the prophecy in the Bible, it occupies about one third of the whole Bible.