

The Minor Prophets What is Prophecy?

1. **Deuteronomy 18** – Israelites prepare to enter land
 - a. Deuteronomy 18:9–22
 - b. The origin of prophetic institution in 2nd giving of the Covenant
 - c. Covenant preserves God’s people from idolatrous and wicked practices of Canaan
 - d. Structure of Deuteronomy as a Covenant
 - i. Introduction of Great King (I am the Lord...)
 - ii. History of the Relationship (...who brought you out of Egypt with a mighty hand...)
 - iii. Stipulations (...You shall have no Gods before me...)
 - iv. Sanctions (...Blessed shall you be in the city...)
 1. Mounts Gerizim and Ebal - Deut 27:11-13 - ¹¹ That day Moses charged the people, saying, ¹² “When you have crossed over the Jordan, these shall stand on Mount Gerizim to bless the people: Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Joseph, and Benjamin. ¹³ And these shall stand on Mount Ebal for the curse: Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali.
 2. Deut 28:24 – turn your rain into powder and dust (Elijah in 1 Ki 17:1)
 - v. Covenant Renewal (Deut 29)
 1. God invites the people to make the Covenant their own reminding them that He was with their fathers.
 2. *Our* father is Abraham.
 - e. Role of the Prophets is rooted in the Covenant itself
2. **Natural Religion** (Deut 18:9-14)
 - a. Warning against idolatry
 - b. Fallen Human nature is prone to commit idolatry
 - c. Nine practices that the Lord calls an abomination (Making children pass through fire, Witchcraft, Soothsayers, Interpreters of Omens, Sorcery, Conjurers of Spells, Mediums, Spiritists, Those who call up the dead)
 - d. Natural religion does not worship God but the result. It is an attempt to control.
3. **Revealed Religion** (Deut 18:15-22) - Establishment of Prophetic Office
 - a. God is a speaker
 - i. We are created in the image of God (theomorphic)
 - ii. Move in revelation is toward clarity and not mystery or simply power for its own sake.
4. **What is a Prophet?**
 - a. Exodus 6:28–7:1 (ESV) - ²⁸ On the day when the LORD spoke to Moses in the land of Egypt, ²⁹ the LORD said to Moses, “I am the LORD; tell Pharaoh king of Egypt all that I say to you.” ³⁰ But Moses said to the LORD, “Behold, I am of uncircumcised lips. How will Pharaoh listen to me?” ¹ And the LORD said to Moses, “See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet.
 - b. Prophet is to speak on another’s behalf
 - c. Prophet represents God to the people

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- i. Exodus 4:15–16 (ESV) - ¹⁵ You shall speak to him and put the words in his mouth, and I will be with your mouth and with his mouth and will teach you both what to do. ¹⁶ He shall speak for you to the people, and he shall be your mouth, and you shall be as God to him.
 - d. Signs of the True Prophet
 - i. Must be an Israelite
 - ii. Must speak in the name of the Lord
 - iii. Must speak the Words of the Lord
 - iv. What he says will come to pass or he has spoken presumptuously
 - e. Objective revelation – God places His Word in the mouth of His prophets
 - i. Prophet is communicating what God spoke
 - ii. The Word is propositional revelation
 - iii. Prophecy is an outworking of the Revelation in the Covenant in the Law
5. **The value of written Revelation** (Numbers 12)
 - a. Miriam and Aaron complain about Moses (Aren't we prophets too? Numbers 12:6–8 : ⁶ And he said, "Hear my words: If there is a prophet among you, I the LORD make myself known to him in a vision; I speak with him in a dream. ⁷ Not so with my servant Moses. He is faithful in all my house. ⁸ With him I speak mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles, and he beholds the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid to speak against my servant Moses?"
 - b. Words are superior Revelation - 2 Peter 1:16–21 (ESV) - ¹⁶ For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. ¹⁷ For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased," ¹⁸ we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain. ¹⁹ And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, ²⁰ knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.
6. **False Prophets**
 - a. Jer 23 – False prophets steal the Word of God
 - b. True prophets call for repentance and faith
 - c. False prophets preach peace when there is no peace
 - d. 2 Peter 2 (ESV) ¹ **But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you**, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing upon themselves swift destruction. ² And many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of truth will be blasphemed. ³ **And in their greed they will exploit you with false words.** Their condemnation from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. ⁴ For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to chains of gloomy

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darkness to be kept until the judgment; ⁵ if he did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood upon the world of the ungodly; ⁶ if by turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes he condemned them to extinction, making them an example of what is going to happen to the ungodly; ⁷ and if he rescued righteous Lot, greatly distressed by the sensual conduct of the wicked ⁸ (for as that righteous man lived among them day after day, he was tormenting his righteous soul over their lawless deeds that he saw and heard); ⁹ then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment until the day of judgment, ¹⁰ and especially those who indulge in the lust of defiling passion and despise authority. Bold and willful, they do not tremble as they blaspheme the glorious ones, ¹¹ whereas angels, though greater in might and power, do not pronounce a blasphemous judgment against them before the Lord. ¹² But these, like irrational animals, creatures of instinct, born to be caught and destroyed, blaspheming about matters of which they are ignorant, will also be destroyed in their destruction, ¹³ suffering wrong as the wage for their wrongdoing. They count it pleasure to revel in the daytime. They are blots and blemishes, reveling in their deceptions, while they feast with you. ¹⁴ They have eyes full of adultery, insatiable for sin. They entice unsteady souls. They have hearts trained in greed. Accursed children! ¹⁵ Forsaking the right way, they have gone astray. They have followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved gain from wrongdoing, ¹⁶ but was rebuked for his own transgression; a speechless donkey spoke with human voice and restrained the prophet's madness. ¹⁷ These are waterless springs and mists driven by a storm. For them the gloom of utter darkness has been reserved. ¹⁸ For, speaking loud boasts of folly, they entice by sensual passions of the flesh those who are barely escaping from those who live in error. ¹⁹ They promise them freedom, but they themselves are slaves of corruption. For whatever overcomes a person, to that he is enslaved. ²⁰ For if, after they have escaped the defilements of the world through the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, the last state has become worse for them than the first. ²¹ For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it to turn back from the holy commandment delivered to them. ²² What the true proverb says has happened to them: "The dog returns to its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, returns to wallow in the mire."

7. Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecy

- a. Hebrews 1:1–2 (ESV) - Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, ² but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world.
- b. John 14:10 (ESV) - ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.
- c. Revelation 19:10 (ESV) - ¹⁰ Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to

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the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

- d. John 12:48–49 (ESV) - ⁴⁸ The one who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day. ⁴⁹ For I have not spoken on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak.
- e. John 5:45–47 (ESV) (Compare to Deut 18:19) - ⁴⁵ Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father. There is one who accuses you: Moses, on whom you have set your hope. ⁴⁶ For if you believed Moses, you would believe me; for he wrote of me. ⁴⁷ But if you do not believe his writings, how will you believe my words?”
- f. Matthew 17:5 (ESV) - ⁵ He was still speaking when, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice from the cloud said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to him.”
- g. Acts 3:18–23 (ESV) -¹⁸ But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. ¹⁹ Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, ²⁰ that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. ²² Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. ²³ And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.’

Issues for Consideration:

1. Do you believe you have a surer testimony than those who witnessed Christ’s mighty works?
2. How is the Word living and active today?
3. What is the role of the Holy Spirit with respect to the Word?
4. How does the Law help us to understand the rest of the Old Testament and prepare us for Christ?
5. Is there prophecy today?