

Lesson 1 Essential Hermeneutical Perspectives

[*hermeneutical*: relating to the study or science of the principles/methods of interpretation]

I. Our Confusion

A. Sources of Confusion

1. Difficulty of Prophetic Books
2. Disharmony in the Church

B. Results of Confusion

1. Victimization
2. Apathy

II. Nature of a Prophet's Experience

A. Misconceptions Regarding the Prophet's Experience

1. Mental State
 - a. out of minds
 - b. overwhelmed
 - c. lost senses
 - d. delirious
2. Mechanical Inspiration
3. Lack of Comprehension

B. Prophet's True Experience

1. Mentally Aware
2. Organically Inspired
3. Comprehended Much

III. Original Meaning

- A. Popular Exegesis [*exegesis*: the process of interpreting or explaining a text]
 - 1. Atomistic
 - 2. Ahistorical
- B. Proper Exegesis: Grammatico-Historical [*grammatico-historical*: relating to grammar and history]
 - 1. Literary Context
 - 2. Historical Context

IV. New Testament Perspectives

- A. Authority
 - 1. Prophetic Scriptures
 - 2. Prophetic Intentions
- B. Application
 - 1. Expectations
 - 2. Fulfillments
 - a. inauguration of the kingdom
 - b. continuation of the kingdom
 - c. consummation of the kingdom

Lesson 1 Teacher's Guide

Lesson Objective: The purpose of this lesson is to establish the importance of carefully studying Old Testament prophecy by focusing attention on the essential elements required for proper understanding of this part of Scripture.

Main Ideas:

This lesson has four main ideas:

1. Widespread confusion about prophecy has led to blindly following so-called experts and to apathy.
2. To develop an ability to handle prophecy well, we must understand that prophets were organically inspired by the Holy Spirit.
3. To explore prophecy more responsibly, we must search for the original meaning established by the prophets' intentions as they spoke and wrote.
4. To apply prophecy correctly to our day, we must understand the New Testament's approach to prophecy.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of the lesson.
2. Play the video tape of lesson 1 as participants take notes on outlines.
3. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Have you ever seen well meaning Christians place too much hope in a particular view of prophecy that turned out to be disappointing?
2. Give an example of how we normally approach the meaning of Paul's epistles by looking for the original meaning first and then applying it to our lives. What is the danger of not doing this with Paul's writings? What is the danger of not doing this with the prophets?
3. Read several parables of Jesus on the Kingdom of God (e.g. Matt. 13). How do these parables reveal that the final age of fulfillment in Christ appears in the pattern of "inauguration, continuation and consummation"?
4. Take the themes of victory and peace through the Messiah as found in Isaiah 9:6-7. How does Christ fulfill this prophetic hope in the three stages of the inauguration (the

defeat of Satan at Christ's death [Heb. 2:14-15]), continuation (the victory of spiritual war now [Eph. 6:10]), and consummation (final victory over evil [Rev. 19:11-16]) of Christ's Kingdom?

5. Look up all the uses of the word "peace" in the New Testament. Which passages speak of peace at the inauguration, continuation and consummation of Christ's Kingdom?

Lesson 2: A Prophet's Job

I. Job Titles

A. Primary Term

1. Greek: *prophetes* [one who predicts or proclaims]
2. Hebrew: *nabi* [a called person]

B. Secondary Terms (Hebrew)

1. *ebed* [servant, official/officer]
2. *roeh* [seer], *hozeh* [seer, observer]
3. *shomer* [watchman, guard]
4. *malak* [messenger]
5. *ish elohim* [man of/from God]

II. Job Transitions

A. Premonarchy (before 1,000 B.C.)

1. few prophets
2. variety of services
3. variety of people

B. Monarchy (1,000 to 586 B.C.)

1. many prophets
2. formal royal service
3. danger of corrupt kings

C. Exile (586 to 538 B.C.)

1. kingdom

- a. fall of Samaria (723/2 B.C.)
- b. fall of Jerusalem (587/6 B.C.)

2. prophet's job

- a. fewer prophets
- b. demise of kingship
- c. diverse and informal service

D. Post-Exile (after 538 B.C.)

- 1. few prophets
- 2. more formal service
- 3. potential for kingship

III. Job Expectations

A. Popular Models

- 1. medium/shaman
- 2. fortuneteller

B. Covenant Model

- 1. past understandings
 - a. little historical context
 - b. own ideas read into Bible

2. contemporary understandings
 - a. archaeological discoveries
 - b. ancient political treaties
 - i. parity treaties [between equals]
 - ii. suzerain-vassal treaties [between suzerain (greater king) and servant (lesser king)]

Lesson 2 Teacher's Guide

Lesson Objective: This lesson is designed to introduce the ministries of prophets by providing an awareness of their many titles and by focusing on their main role as representatives of God's covenants.

Main Ideas:

This lesson has three main ideas:

1. When we think of prophets primarily as "predictors of the future," we risk overlooking the many other roles which their various titles convey.
2. The roles of prophets varied from informal to formal at different times in the history of Israel.
3. Although prophets provided many services, it is best to think of them primarily as emissaries of God's covenants.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of the lesson.
2. Play the video tape of lesson 2 as participants take notes on outlines.
3. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Look up the term "prophet" in Genesis 20:7 and Exodus 7:1. How do these verses show that the term "prophet" {nabi - "a called one"} is broader than someone who makes predictions? How does this help us understand that prophets' ministries concentrated on prayer, rebuking current sins, etc., rather than always predicting the future?
2. Make a list of the different titles given to prophets which are mentioned in this lesson. Make sure that the class understands the variety they represent by having them look up some of the passages mentioned in the lesson for each title.
3. Make a chart of the approximate dates of the premonarchical, monarchical, exilic, and post-exilic periods. Be sure that the participants know the dates and major historical events which took place during each of these periods.

4. Explain what a suzerain-vassal treaty was in the ancient Near East. Explain how emperors used emissaries as diplomats of their treaties. Review how this ancient political arrangement paralleled the ministry of prophets.
5. Read the reign of Asa as found in 2 Chronicles 14-15. How do prophets appear in this reign and how do they illustrate the close association of king and prophet during the monarchical period? How do they illustrate the service of a prophet as a covenant emissary?

Lesson 3: People of the Covenant

I. Humanity in Covenant (Universal Covenants: Adamic and Noahic)

A. Central Concerns of the Universal Covenants

1. Adamic Covenant/Arrangement
 - a. human responsibility
 - b. human corruption
 - c. human redemption
2. Noahic Covenant: natural stability
 - a. divine patience
 - b. human destiny

B. Prophets' Dependence upon Universal Covenants

1. Sins of the nations
2. Redemption for the nations

II. Israel in Covenant

A. Abrahamic Covenant

1. Central concerns: special nation
 - a. descendants
 - b. land of Canaan
 - c. Genesis 15 & 17
2. Prophets' dependence
 - a. promise of land
 - b. promise of descendants

B. Mosaic Covenant

1. Central concerns: Law of God

2. Prophets' dependence
 - a. Law = standards by which they critiqued Israel
 - b. blessings and curses depended upon obedience/disobedience to the Law.
- C. Davidic Covenant
 1. Central concerns: enormous empire
 2. Prophets' dependence: worldwide kingdom of David
- D. New Covenant: fulfillment of all other covenant blessings and promises
 1. Central concerns
 - a. inherit earth
 - b. God's law written in the heart
 - c. David's son on the throne
 2. Prophets' dependence: hoped for and foretold/offered fulfillment

III. Salvation in Covenant: 3 Kinds of People

- A. People Outside the Visible Covenant Community
 1. Old Testament Gentiles (excluding those who joined Israel: Rahab, etc.)
 2. New Testament people who are not part of the visible church
- B. Visible Covenant Community: church, kingdom, house of God, people of God, etc.
 1. Old Testament nation of Israel
 2. New Testament visible church
- C. Invisible Covenant Community (Old and New Testament)
 1. True believers only
 2. Secure destinies
 3. faithful remnant

Lesson 3A Teacher's Guide

(Please note that this lesson contains a number of perspectives which are often unfamiliar. We suggest that this video be used over two consecutive weeks.)

Lesson Objective:

This lesson introduces the idea of biblical covenants as a background for understanding the prophets.

Main Ideas:

This lesson has two main ideas:

1. As emissaries of divine covenants (see Lesson 2), the prophets relied on the covenants God made in Adam and Noah with all of humanity.
2. As emissaries of divine covenants (see Lesson 2), the prophets relied especially on the covenants God made with Israel.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

4. Review previous lessons.
5. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of the lesson.
6. Play the video tape of lesson 3 *up to the third signpost (Salvation in Covenant)* as participants take notes on outlines.
7. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Write the names of each covenant mentioned in this lesson in front of the class. List the principal verses in Scripture which describe these covenants.
2. Make sure that the participants know the basic contribution of each covenant to the theology of Scripture. What themes are emphasized in each covenant? Why are these themes important to the Christian Faith?
3. Review at least one prophetic passage mentioned in the video that demonstrates how the prophets relied on each biblical covenant.

Lesson 3B Teacher's Guide

(Please note that this lesson focuses on the third part of the video lesson 3.)

Objective: This portion of video lesson 3 explains how the prophets viewed the difference between being in covenant with God and being saved to eternal life.

Main Ideas:

This portion of video lesson 3 has main ideas:

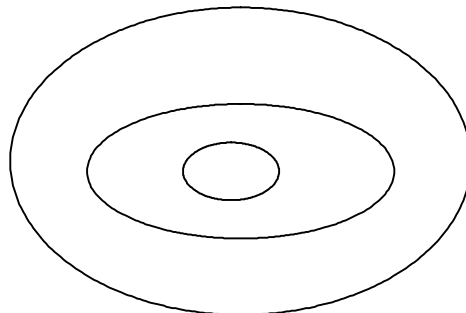
1. The prophets believed that with rare exception Gentiles were outside the covenants with Israel.
2. The prophets taught that all Israelites were in covenant with God.
3. The prophets knew that only some within the nation of Israel were redeemed from their sins.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Review Previous lessons.
2. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of the lesson.
3. Play the third portion (*Salvation in Covenant*) as participants take notes on outlines.
4. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Using concentric circles on the board, illustrate the three kinds of people mentioned in this portion of the lesson: outside of covenant, in covenant, redeemed. Review these basic concepts.



2. Read Ephesians 2:11-12. How does this passage explain the typical relationship of Gentiles to God's covenants with Israel during the Old Testament days? What are some exceptions to this rule in the Old Testament?
3. Make copies of the chapter of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* mentioned in this lesson. Looking up the Scripture references, make sure that the participants understand the differences between the visible and invisible church.
4. Read the visions of Amos 7:1-9. There Amos protested against God destroying all the people of Israel, but he did not object to the use of a plumb line which distinguished the righteous from the unrighteous in Israel. How do these visions illustrate the prophet's understanding of the visible covenant people and the invisible covenant people?
5. Read Ezekiel 33:12-20. There Ezekiel declared how repentant Israelites would be redeemed from the judgment of God. How do his words illustrate the prophet's understanding of the visible covenant people and the invisible covenant people?
6. What practical difference does it make for us as we read the prophetic word with these distinctions in mind?

Lesson 4: Dynamics of the Covenants

I. Covenant Ideals

A. Covenant Structures

1. Suzerain-Vassal Treaties [*suzerain*: emperor; *vassal*: servant]
 - a. Emperor: imperial benevolence
 - b. Vassals: human responsibility
2. Biblical Covenants
 - a. Adam
 - i. divine benevolence: Garden of Eden, etc.
 - ii. human responsibility: forbidden fruit
 - b. Noah
 - i. divine benevolence: rescued Noah and family from flood
 - ii. human responsibility: “be fruitful and multiply”
 - c. Abraham
 - i. divine benevolence: promise of blessing
 - ii. human responsibility: “walk before me [God] and be blameless”
 - d. Moses
 - i. divine benevolence: rescued Israel from Egypt
 - ii. human responsibility: full obedience
 - e. David
 - i. divine benevolence: made David king
 - ii. human responsibility: remain loyal, keep law/commands
 - f. New
 - i. divine benevolence: saved by grace
 - ii. human responsibility: good works

B. Prophetic Ministry

1. Emphasized Divine Benevolence
2. Emphasized Human Responsibility: test of faith for visible covenant community
 - a. proved the true faith of believers
 - b. disproved the false faith of unbelievers

II. Covenant Judgment

A. Types of Judgment: Dependence on Moses (Deut. 4:25-28; 28:15-68; 29:16-29; 32:15-43; Lev. 26:14-39)

1. Judgment in Nature: drought, pestilence, famine, disease, wild animals, population loss
2. Judgment in War: defeat sieges, occupation, death, destruction, exile

B. Process of Judgment (Lev. 26:14-39)

1. Divine Patience
2. Increasing Severity
3. Particular Climax: exile

III. Covenant Blessings

A. Types of Blessings: (Deut. 4; 28; 30; Lev. 26): seek to be faithful (not perfect); not rebelling

1. Natural Blessings
 - a. agricultural plenty
 - b. livestock fertility
 - c. health
 - d. population increase
2. Blessings in Warfare
 - a. defeat of Enemies
 - b. end to warfare
 - c. relief from destruction
 - d. return of captives

B. Process of Blessings

1. On the Basis of Grace
2. Varying Degrees of Blessing
3. Climax: Remnant Survival, and Greater, Permanent Blessing (Lev. 26; Deut. 4; 30)

Lesson 4 Teacher's Guide

Objective: This lesson describes the dynamics of blessings and cursing which governed the ministries of the prophets.

Main Ideas:

This lesson contains three main ideas:

1. Every covenant in the Bible was saturated with God's grace, but each covenant also required human beings to be faithful to the Lord in order to avoid judgment and to receive the blessings of the covenant.
2. The judgments of the covenants followed certain patterns which consistently appeared in the prophets' words.
3. The blessings of the covenants followed certain patterns which consistently appeared in the prophets' words.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Review previous lessons.
2. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of the lesson.
3. Play the video tape of lesson 4 as participants take notes on outlines.
4. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. How is it possible to speak of divine grace and human responsibility as co-existing in biblical covenants? What is the biblical support for this view? How do we avoid a doctrine of salvation by works if we allow for human responsibility?
2. Summarize the types of judgment and the process of judgment described in this lesson.
3. Read Isaiah 1:21-31. Explain in detail how this passage illustrates the types and processes of judgment described in this lesson. Do the same with Hosea 2:9-13.
4. Summarize the types and processes of blessings described in this lesson.
5. Read Isaiah 2:1-4. Explain in detail how this passage illustrates the types and processes of blessing described in this lesson. Do the same with Hosea 2:21-23.

Lesson 5 Historical Analysis of Prophecy

I. Early Monarchy

A. Major Events

1. United kingdom (1,000–930 B.C.)
2. Divided kingdom (930 B.C. and later)

B. Prophetic Ministries

1. No writing prophets
2. Later writing prophets looked to:
 - a. united kingdom for covenant ideals
 - b. divided kingdom for reality of two kingdoms in the people of God

II. Assyrian Judgment (734–701 B.C.)

A. Major Events

1. Syrian-Israelite Coalition (734 B.C.; Isa. 7)
2. Fall of Samaria and exile (722 B.C.; 2 Kgs. 17)
3. Sennacherib Invasion of Judah (701 B.C.; 2 Kgs. 18-19)

B. Prophetic Ministries

1. Jonah
 - a. when: 793–753 B.C. (2K 14:25)
 - b. where: Nineveh (capital of Assyria)
 - c. what: destruction of Nineveh
2. Hosea
 - a. when: 750–722 B.C. (Hos. 1:1)
 - b. where: northern Israel
 - c. what: Assyria will destroy Israel and Samaria, exile is coming, hope for restoration

3. Amos

- a. when: 760–750 (Amos 1:1)
- b. where: northern Israel
- c. what: Assyria will destroy Israel and Samaria, exile is coming, hope for restoration

4. Micah

- a. when: 735–701 B.C. (Mic. 1:1)
- b. where: Judah
- c. what: Assyria will destroy Israel and Judah, hope for restoration

5. Nahum

- a. when: 663–612 B.C. (Nah. 3:7,8)
- b. where: Judah
- c. what: destruction of Assyria and Nineveh

6. Isaiah

- a. when: 740–701 B.C. (Isa. 1:1)
- b. where: Judah
- c. what: trust against Assyria, exile of Judah, hope for restoration

III. Babylonian Judgment (605–539 B.C.)

A. Major Events

1. 1st Babylonian Incursion and Deportation of Judah (605 B.C.)
2. 2nd Babylonian Incursion and Deportation of Judah (597 B.C.)
3. 3rd Babylonian Incursion and Deportation of Judah (586 B.C.)

B. Prophetic Ministries

1. Jeremiah

- a. where: Judah
- b. when: 626–586 B.C. (Jer. 1:1-3)
- c. what: true repentance, destruction of Jerusalem, hope for restoration

2. Zephaniah

- a. when: 640–609 B.C. (Zeph. 1:1; 2:13)
- b. where: Judah
- c. what: Babylon will destroy Assyria, hope for restoration

3. Joel

- a. when: 597–586 B.C.
- b. where: Judah
- c. what: destruction of Jerusalem, hope for restoration

4. Obadiah

- a. when: uncertain (during Babylonian Judgment)
- b. where: Judah
- c. what: destruction of Edom

5. Habakkuk

- a. when: around 605 B.C.
- b. where: Judah
- c. what: lamented evil of Judah and oppression of Babylon, encouraged trust in God

6. Ezekiel

- a. where: Babylon (Ezek. 1:1)
- b. when: 597–586 B.C. (Ezek. 29:17)
- c. what: destruction of Jerusalem and temple, directions for rebuilding temple

7. Daniel

- a. where: Babylon
- b. when: 605–539 B.C.
- c. what: exile to be extended, encouraged repentance

IV. Restoration Period

A. Major Events

1. Cyrus Edict: Israelites begin to return to land (539–538 B.C.)
2. Neglect rebuilding temple (520–515 B.C.)
3. Widespread apostasy (450–400 B.C.)

B. Prophetic Ministries

1. Haggai

- a. where: Jerusalem
- b. when: 520 B.C. (Hag. 1:1)
- c. what: blessings upon rebuilding, repentance

2. Zechariah

- a. where: Jerusalem
- b. when: 520 (Zech. 1:1)
- c. what: rebuild the temple, future divine intervention necessary for full restoration

3. Malachi

- a. where: Jerusalem
- b. when: 450-400 B.C.
- c. what: coming great judgment, final restoration of righteous

Lesson 5A Teacher's Guide

(Note that this lesson is relatively heavy in content. We suggest that it be divided over three classes to maximize learning. This portion of the lesson includes the second part of the video: Assyrian Judgment.)

Objective: This portion of the lesson focuses on the historical contexts of prophets ministering during the Monarchical Period and the period of Assyrian Judgment.

Main Ideas:

This portion of the lesson includes two main ideas:

1. The monarchical period established an essential background for the writing prophets of the Bible. The ideal of the United Monarchy and the reality of the Divided Monarchy deeply influenced the prophetic word.
2. The period of Assyrian judgment brought about the first wave of writing prophets. Their ministries focused primarily on the threat of the Assyrians as God's instrument of judgment and the hope of restoration of God's people after the Assyrian judgment.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Review previous lessons.
2. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of all of Lesson 5.
3. Play the first two parts of the video of Lesson 5 as participants take notes on outlines.
4. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Make a chart displaying the four periods of prophetic ministry mentioned in this lesson (Early Monarchy, Assyrian Judgment, Babylonian Judgment, Restoration Period). Make certain that everyone knows the dates and basic events that characterize each period.
2. Focus primarily on the Assyrian Judgment by making sure everyone knows the main events listed in the video. What was the Syrian-Israelite coalition? What is the Sennacherib invasion? What is the fall of Samaria? Why were these events so important?
3. Give an overview of each prophet identified with the Assyrian judgment. With a visual aid, lead the class in understanding the time, place, and message of each prophet and how they related to the events of the Assyrian judgment. Choose one negative section warning of judgment and one positive section encouraging hope for restoration after

Assyrian dominance which are mentioned in the video. Relate these oracles as much as possible to the three main events of the Assyrian Judgment.

Lesson 5B Teacher's Guide

(Note that this video lesson is relatively heavy in content. We suggest that it be divided over three classes to maximize learning. This portion of the lesson includes the third part of the video: Babylonian Judgment.)

Objective: This lesson gives an overview of the main events and the prophets of the Babylonian Judgment.

Main Ideas:

1. Following the Assyrian Judgment which primarily effected the northern kingdom of Israel, God sent the Babylonians to judge the southern kingdom of Judah.
2. A number of prophets ministered during the Babylonian Judgment. They brought warnings of the upcoming troubles from Babylon, but they also gave hope that God will one day restore his people from exile.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Review previous lessons.
2. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of all of Lesson 5.
3. Play the third part of the video of Lesson 5 as participants take notes on outlines.
4. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Make a chart displaying the four periods of prophetic ministry mentioned in this lesson (Early Monarchy, Assyrian Judgment, Babylonian Judgment, Restoration Period). Make certain that everyone knows the dates and basic events that characterize each period.
2. Focus primarily on the Babylonian Judgment by making sure everyone knows the main events listed in the video. One way to do this is to focus on whom the Babylonians took in each deportation: Daniel, Ezekiel, the remaining Judahites. It often helps to remind participants of the events in the lives of those men.
3. Give an overview of each prophet identified with the Babylonian judgment. With a visual aid, lead the class in understanding the time, place, and message of each prophet and how they related to the events of the Babylonian judgment. Choose one negative section warning of judgment and one positive section encouraging hope for restoration after Assyrian dominance which are mentioned in the video.

Lesson 5C Teacher's Guide

(Note that this video lesson is relatively heavy in content. We suggest that it be divided over three classes to maximize learning. This portion of the lesson includes the fourth part of the video: Restoration Period.)

Objective: This lesson gives an overview of the main events and the prophets of the Restoration Period.

Main Ideas:

1. After the Babylonian Judgment God brought back a few of his people to the land of Canaan. They began the restoration of the kingdom of Israel.
2. Three main prophets ministered during the days of Israel's restoration: Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Their messages related directed to the circumstances of the restoration period.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Review previous lessons.
2. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of all of Lesson 5.
3. Play the fourth part of the video of Lesson 5 as participants take notes on outlines.
4. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Make a chart displaying the four periods of prophetic ministry mentioned in this lesson (Early Monarchy, Assyrian Judgment, Babylonian Judgment, Restoration Period). Make certain that everyone knows the dates and basic events that characterize each period.
2. Focus primarily on the Restoration Period by making sure everyone knows the main events listed in the video. This portion of Biblical history is usually not well known. So, it is important to sketch the contours of this time carefully. It usually helps to review the roles of Cyrus, Zerubabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah.
3. Give an overview of each prophet identified with the Restoration Period. With a visual aid, lead the class in understanding the time, place, and message of each prophet and how they related to the events of the Restoration Period. Note especially the role of Haggai and Zechariah in relation to Zerubabel. Focus on Malachi as ministering during or after the failures of Nehemiah's reforms.

Lesson 6 Literary Analysis of the Prophets

- I. Historical Narratives
 - A. Types of Narratives
 1. Biography
 2. Autobiography
 - B. Content of Narratives
 1. Prophetic call
 2. Symbolic actions
 3. Vision reports
 4. Historical backgrounds
- II. Communication with God
 - A. Prayers of Lament
 1. Sins of God's people
 2. God's judgment against sin
 - B. Prayers of Praise
 1. Judgment
 2. Blessings
- III. Communication with People
 - A. Speeches of Judgment
 1. Judgment oracles
 - a. accusation
 - b. sentencing

2. Woe oracles

- a. woe
- b. accusation
- c. sentencing

3. Lawsuits (*rib*, pronounced like “reeve”)

- a. summons
- b. witness(es)
- c. God’s kindness
- d. response
- e. accusation
- f. sentencing

B. Speeches of Blessing

1. Judgment on enemies

2. Oracles of blessing

- a. introduction
- b. reason
- c. blessing

C. Mixed Speeches

1. Judgment-salvation

- a. judgment for the wicked
- b. salvation for the righteous

2. Call to repentance

- a. judgment
- b. blessing

3. Call to war

- a. victory
- b. defeat

4. Prophetic disputation

- a. condemn
- b. announce truth
 - i. blessing
 - ii. judgment

5. Parables

- a. blessing
- b. judgment

Lesson 6A Teacher's Guide

(Note that this lesson is relatively heavy in content. We suggest that it be divided over two classes to maximize learning. This portion of the lesson includes the first and second parts of the video: Historical Narratives and Communication with God.)

Objective: This lesson describes the typical kinds of materials which appear in prophetic books, especially historical narratives and communication with God.

Main Ideas:

This lesson contains two main ideas:

1. Many prophetic books contain historical narratives which are biographical and autobiographical. These narratives contribute significantly to the messages of these books.
2. Many prophetic books also contain records of the prophets' communication with God. These communications range from lament to praise and contribute significantly to the messages of these books.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Review previous lessons.
2. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of this entire lesson.
3. Play the first two parts of the video tape of lesson 6 as participants take notes on outlines.
4. Discuss the main ideas of the first two parts of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Why is it important to know the typical forms of literature we find in the prophets? What are all of the typical forms listed in lesson 6? Each participant should be able to identify one passage in the prophets for each type of literature.
2. It often helps to refer to the book of Jonah because it is predominantly narrative. It can be used as an example of a prophetic narrative which had a particular purpose. You can find a useful discussion of the original purpose of the book of Jonah in R. Pratt, *He Gave Us Stories* (Presbyterian and Reformed Pub) 303-304.

3. It is also helpful to review the book of Haggai as it depicts both praise and lament in the prophets. Discuss the value of these laments and praises for the original audience and for us in our communication with God today.

Lesson 6B Teacher's Guide

(Note that this lesson is relatively heavy in content. We suggest that it be divided over two classes to maximize learning. This portion of the lesson includes the third part of the video: Communication with People.)

Objective: This lesson describes the typical kinds of speeches to people which appear in prophetic books.

Main Ideas:

This lesson contains four main ideas:

1. The terrain of prophetic books is dominated by the prophets' speeches directed toward people. It is necessary to understand the typical types of speeches as they range from very negative to very positive.
2. Many prophetic books contain speeches which are negative in that they focus on divine judgment.
3. Many prophetic books contain speeches which are positive in that they focus on divine blessing.
4. Many prophetic books contain speeches which are mixed in that they focus both on judgment and blessing.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Review previous lessons.
2. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of this entire lesson, focusing especially on the types of historical narratives and communication with God.
3. Play the third part of the video tape of lesson 6 as participants take notes on outlines.
4. Discuss the main ideas of the third part of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Discuss the basic scheme outlined in this portion of the video. Explain especially why it is appropriate to speak of a scale of speeches ranging from judgment, to mixed, and to blessing.
2. Choose one example of each type of judgment speech from the video. Read each one and explain the structure of each according to the categories of the video.
3. Choose one example of each type of speech of blessing from the video. Read each one and explain the structure of each according to the categories of the video. (Don't forget to include judgments against Israel's enemies as speeches of blessing.)
4. Choose one example of each type of mixed speeches from the video. Read each one and explain how they are mixed between positive and negative perspectives.

Lesson 7 The Purpose of Predictions

I. Divine Sovereignty

A. God's Immutability

1. Character/attributes
2. Covenant promises
3. Eternal counsel

B. God's providence/involvement in history

1. Necessary events
2. Free events
3. Contingent events

II. Predictions and Contingencies

A. General Patterns of Historical Contingencies (Jer. 18:1-10)

B. Specific Examples of Historical Contingencies

1. Shemaiah (2 Chr. 12)
2. Jonah (Jon. 3)

III. Certainty of Predictions

A. Explicitly Conditional

B. Unqualified

C. Confirmed

1. Signs
2. Words

D. Sworn Predictions

1. When = contingent
2. Who = contingent
3. By what means = contingent
4. To what degree = contingent

IV. Goals of Predictions

A. Popular Perspectives

1. Prognostication
2. Test for a true prophet

B. Correct Perspectives

1. "Who Knows?" reaction
2. Twofold reaction
 - a. rebellion/sin
 - b. repentance

Lesson 7 Teacher's Guide

Objective: This lesson explains how prophetic predictions were primarily designed to motivate Israel to trust and obey the Lord in order to receive his blessings.

Main Ideas:

1. God is absolutely sovereign over all events. Yet, he has ordained human choice as a powerful secondary cause by which he carries out his plan. For this reason, God's plan is perfectly carried out necessarily, freely, and contingently.
2. Prophets predict the future in ways which indicate that God had varying degrees of determination to carry through with a prediction. Human reaction to the prophetic word always had the potential for influencing the way a prediction is carried out.
3. The role of human reactions (intervening historical contingencies) points out that the main purpose behind predictions was not prognostication but activation.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Review previous lessons.
2. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ideas of the lesson.
3. Play the entire video of lesson 7 as participants take notes on outlines.
4. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Discuss how God can be sovereign over all and still have a vital place for human choice in his plan. Both of these biblical truths are essential for a proper understanding of how predictions work in the prophets.
2. Focus much attention on Jeremiah 18. Explain how this passage indicates that God is free to react to human reactions to prophetic predictions.
3. Touch on the example of Jonah. How important was the reaction of Nineveh to the fulfillment of prophecy.
4. Explain the three-dimensional graph of the types of prophetic predictions. Make sure everyone knows one example of each.
5. Explain how the prophets revealed different levels of divine determination to carry through with a prediction. Give an example of each type. In what ways are predictions confirmed by oaths still subject to the influence of human reactions?

Unfolding Eschatology

[*eschatology* = the study of last things/end times]

I. Mosaic Eschatology

A. Covenant Cycles

1. Judgment

- a. war
- b. nature

2. Blessing

- a. war
- b. nature

B. Covenant Culmination

1. Judgment: exile

2. Response: repentance and forgiveness

3. Blessing: restoration in the latter days

- a. latter days in the OT: Is. 2:2; Mi. 4:1; Ho. 3:5
- b. latter days in the NT: Ac. 2:17; Hb. 1:2; Ja. 5:3

II. Early Prophetic Eschatology

A. Similarities to Moses

1. Judgment: exile

2. Response: repentance and forgiveness

3. Blessing: restoration in the latter days

B. Additions to Moses

1. Kingship

- a. judgment: throne deserted
- b. blessing: glorious throne

2. Temple
 - a. judgment: temple destroyed
 - b. blessing: glorious temple
3. Gentiles
 - a. day of the Lord
 - b. defeat of God's enemies
 - c. blessing of Israel
 - d. ingrafting into Israel

III. Later Prophetic Eschatology

A. Jeremiah's Expectation

1. Agreed with Moses and early prophets
2. Exile will be 70 years

B. Daniel's Insight

1. Little repentance after exile of 70 years
2. Exile extended to 490 years

C. Final Outlooks

1. Initial hopes
 - a. 539-515 B.C.
 - b. groups of returnees
 - c. hopes
 - i. throne restored
 - ii. victory in war
 - iii. temple restored
 - iv. nature renewed
2. Final hopes
 - a. 450 B.C.
 - b. intermarriage
 - c. widespread apostasy
 - d. hope of future blessing

IV. New Testament Eschatology

A. Terminology

1. Gospel
2. Kingdom
3. Latter days

B. Structure

1. John the Baptist
 - a. immediate blessings
 - b. immediate judgment
2. Jesus
 - a. inauguration
 - b. continuation
 - c. consummation

C. Themes

1. Exile
 - a. inauguration: warns against turning from Messiah
 - b. continuation: church discipline
 - c. consummation: God's wrath against apostasy
2. Restoration
 - a. inauguration: Jesus is king, Jesus is temple, Jesus began victory, Jesus sent Holy Spirit as downpayment of inheritance, Jesus performed miracles as restoration of nature
 - b. continuation: inaugurated blessings continue
 - c. consummation: inaugurated/continued blessings ultimately fulfilled

Lesson 8 Teacher's Guide

Objective: This lesson gives an overview of the ways in which eschatology developed in the Old Testament and into the New Testament.

Main Ideas:

1. The eschatology of the Bible (it's view of history as culminating in Christ's second coming) developed from Moses' basic covenant pattern of exile and return from exile.
2. Moses' basic covenant pattern (exile and restoration) was endorsed by the early prophets. The later prophets, however, elaborated on this pattern in that they saw a delay of the latter days until an extended exile was complete for some 490 years.
3. The New Testament affirmed that Jesus was the fulfillment of the latter days hope of restoration and salvation for God's people. Yet, the New Testament also teaches that Christ fulfills these hopes in three stages: the inauguration, continuation, and consummation of the kingdom.

Suggested Lesson Plan:

1. Review previous lessons.
2. Display (on a board or overhead) and explain the main ways in which eschatology developed from Moses, to early prophets, to later prophets, to the New Testament.
3. Play video of Lesson 8 as participants take notes on outlines.
4. Discuss the main ideas of the video.

Discussion Items:

1. Make a chart explaining how Moses, early prophets, later prophets and New Testament writers all believed that the world would come to the latter (final) days, but that their concept of this developed as God's people reacted to the prophetic word.
2. Focus especially on the way Daniel 9 explained the fulfillment of Jeremiah's 70 years of exile.
3. Explain how the New Testament says that Christ's kingdom (the latter days) comes in three stages of inauguration, continuation, and consummation.
4. Choose four themes which appear in the Old Testament vision of the latter days (e.g. war, prosperity, peace, etc.) and show how the New Testament applies these themes to the inauguration, continuation, and consummation of the kingdom of Christ. Explain how this helps us understand how to use the prophets today during the continuation of the kingdom.