

He Gave Us Prophets

Journal Questions

LESSON
ONE

ESSENTIAL
HERMENEUTICAL
PERSPECTIVES



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Journal Questions

1. Describe the problems that might be created in a church that experienced the types of confusion mentioned in the lesson.
2. What are some improper responses to this confusion? What is the proper way to respond to this confusion?
3. Using an Old Testament prophecy as an example, explain how popular exegesis of that prophecy can lead to misunderstanding and problems, and how proper exegesis can lead to understanding and useful application.
4. In light of the importance of original meaning, what process should we follow in order to apply Old Testament prophecy to events in our day?
5. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

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LESSON
TWO

A PROPHET'S JOB



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1. By studying the titles of prophets, how has your understanding of a prophet's job broadened?
2. If we assume that Old Testament prophets were like mediums of other cultures, what kinds of mistakes might we make in interpreting their prophecies?
3. How do ancient Near-Eastern treaties help us understand God's relationship with Israel?
4. How does Isaiah 6 illustrate the covenant role of a prophet?
5. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

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LESSON
THREE

THE PEOPLE OF THE
COVENANT



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1. The prophets spoke of the theme of redemption and knew God always intended to redeem a people from every nation. How does this teaching affect your understanding of missions?
2. How should the covenant with Moses affect believers today?
3. How were the promises that were given to God's people in the Old Testament realized in the new covenant? How should this understanding affect your view of Scripture as a whole?
4. How do the three distinctions of salvation in relation to covenant enhance your understanding of the church today?
5. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

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LESSON
FOUR

DYNAMICS OF THE
COVENANT



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1. How are the covenant motifs of blessing and cursing applied to people today?
2. Why and how does God test people with regards to covenant fidelity and responsibility?
3. According to Deuteronomy 29:25-28, God's people can provoke his anger. What are some ways that modern Christians might be angering God?
4. What emotional, intellectual and behavioral responses should Christians have to God's patience toward their sin?
5. Faithful Israelites knew that God's blessings depended on his mercy and forgiveness, not on human merit. In what ways do modern Christians seek to merit God's blessings? How might this affect their relationship with God? What practical steps can they take to begin to rely on God's mercy and forgiveness?
6. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

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LESSON
FIVE

HISTORICAL ANALYSIS OF PROPHECY



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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?

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LESSON
SIX

LITERARY ANALYSIS OF THE PROPHETS



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1. Why is it important to pay attention to historical narratives in prophetic books? When we read prophetic writings, what relationship should there be between our understanding of things written in historical narratives and the other things we are reading?
2. What do standard prophetic forms imply about the way we should read prophecy?
3. When was the last time you spent time lamenting to God? Why type of lament did you offer? How often do you interpret suffering in your life as a result of divine judgment? Are there other reasons that Christians suffer? What can we learn from the ways the prophets lamented that might incline God to respond to us positively?
4. The theme of praise for judgment appears many places in the prophetic writings. Is it appropriate for Christians to praise God his judgments? Why or why not?
5. Why did the prophets speak so frequently about both the blessings and the curses of God? Should modern churches do the same thing? Why or why not?
6. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

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LESSON
SEVEN

THE PURPOSE OF PREDICTIONS



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1. How can your understanding of God's immutability sustain you during difficult times?
2. How does it make you feel that your choices and reactions to God affect the direction of history?
3. Knowing that prayer can affect the way prophecy is fulfilled, what new kinds of prayers might Christians be motivated to pray?
4. How might a "who knows?" attitude affect your prayer life?
5. This study has shown that the prophets wanted to activate their listeners to form the future. How should this affect the way Christians use Old Testament prophetic books?
6. How does the idea that prophecy is fundamentally conditional make you feel? Does it reassure you? Does it frighten you?
7. Does the conditionality of prophecy challenge anything else you believe?
8. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?

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LESSON
EIGHT

UNFOLDING
ESCHATOLOGY



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1. How do covenant blessings and curses apply to believers today?
2. How might the behavior of the modern church affect the way the kingdom comes in the future?
3. What might have happened if God's people in the Old Testament had been more faithful in the days before the exile? In the days of the exile? In the restoration after the exile?
4. Explain why John the Baptist's expectation for the kingdom of God was common in his day.
5. How do you feel knowing that Jesus will completely fulfill all the restoration promises from the Old Testament?
6. How should the understanding that we are living during the continuation of the kingdom of God affect the way modern Christians read Scripture and apply it to their lives?
7. If we embrace the picture of biblical eschatology taught in this lesson, how might our views of God, ourselves, unbelievers, and the creation itself be changed?
8. What is the most significant insight you have learned from this study? Why?