

# Who Were the PROPHETS?

Lesson 1 • September 4  
Men Who Spoke From God

The Old Testament of our Bibles has 17 books described as the work of the “prophets.”

- \* Major prophets: 5 books
- \* Minor prophets: 12 books

These aren’t the only prophets we read about in our Bibles (Elijah and Elisha, for example), but these *are* ones who have books of the Bible attached to their names. From approximately 800 B.C. to 400 B.C., these men were used by God to deliver messages to people.

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.

(2 Pet 1:21)

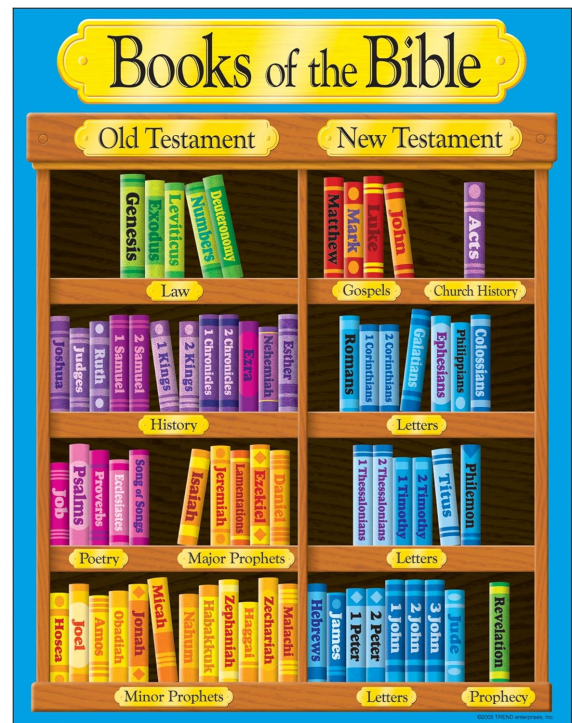
What they had to say was of major importance because of the Source of their message (Isa 6:8; Jer 1:1-2; Ezek 1:3; Dan 2:45; Hos 1:1; Joel 1:1; Amos 7:14-16; Oba 1:1; Jon 1:1; Mic 3:8; Nah 1:12; Hab 1:1; Zeph 1:1; Hag 1:1; Zech 1:1; Mal 1:1).

There were things that the children of Israel (and the nations around them) needed to hear, and God used the prophets as his messengers. Sometimes, that was to foretell—to reveal something that was going to happen in the future. For example...

But you, O Bethlehem Ephrathah,  
who are too little to be among the clans of Judah,  
from you shall come forth for me  
one who is to be ruler in Israel,  
whose coming forth is from of old,  
from ancient days. (Mic 5:2)

Micah lived 700 years before Jesus was born in Bethlehem! But 700 years after the Holy Spirit “carried” Micah “along” to deliver a message from God about something important that was going to happen, people could know “where the Christ was to be born.” When Herod the king wanted to know, the chief priests and scribes of the people could tell him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for so it is written by the prophet” (Matt 2:1-6).

God used prophets to foretell things that were going to happen in the future. Let’s explore together...

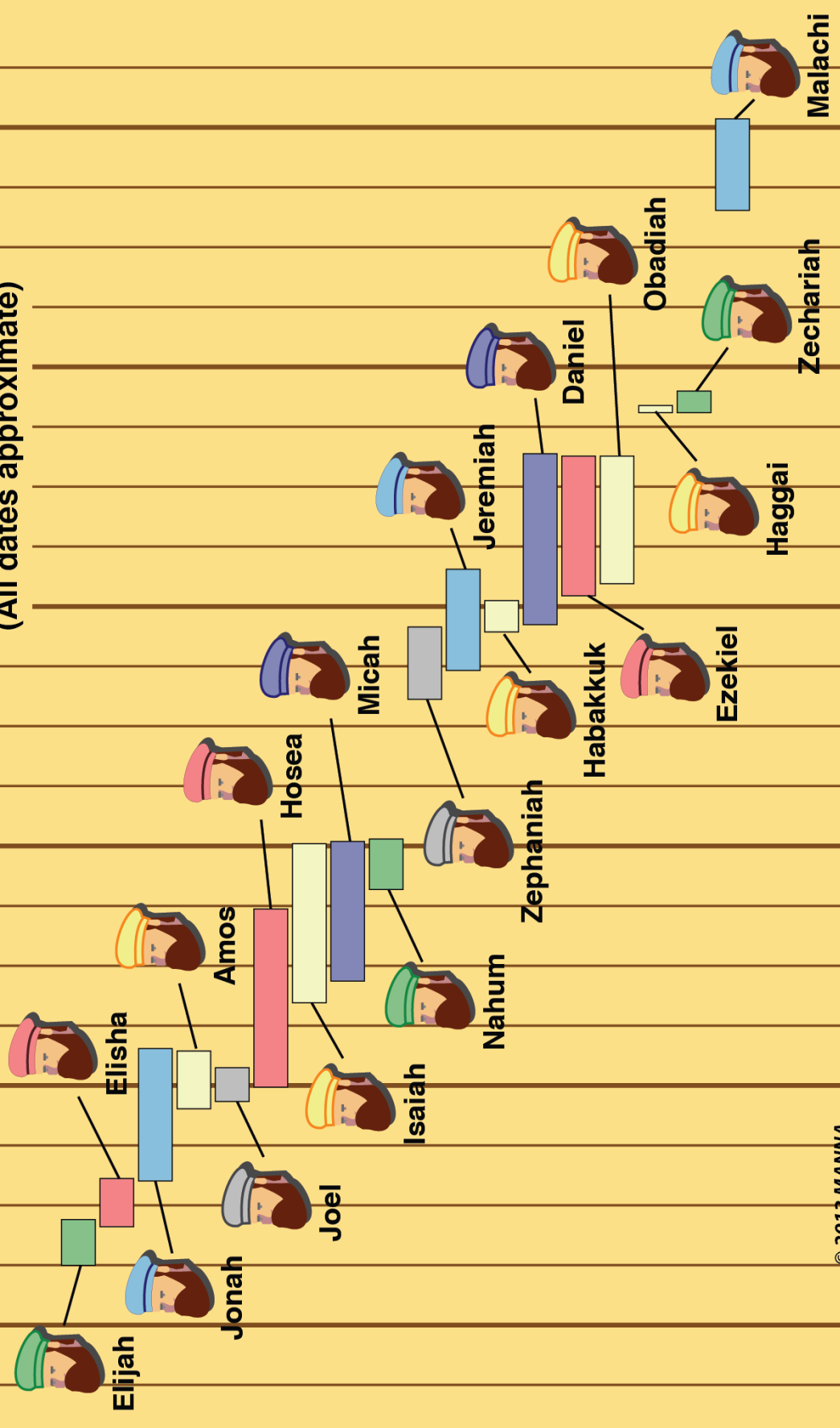


## For Class & Family Discussion:

- Let's list the five books of the "Major Prophets"...
- Let's list the twelve books of the "Minor Prophets"...
- **2 Peter 1:21** helps us understand what was going on in the lives of these men. How would you summarize that verse in your own words? Notice also the next verse of **2 Peter**. What's the difference between the two groups?
- **Romans 1:1-2** is also helpful as we think about the important work of the prophets. What is the apostle Paul helping us understand in those verses?
- According to **Ephesians 2:19-22**, how does the work of the prophets impact our lives today?
- God used prophets to foretell things that were going to happen in the future. **Micah 5:2** was one example given in our video. Let's look at another example together in **Joel 2:28-32**. Joel "uttered" these words approximately 800 years before Peter and the rest of the apostles used them to explain what was happening in **Acts 2:14-21**. How was that 800-year-old prophecy very valuable on the Day of Pentecost in **Acts 2**?
- There are many, many other examples from the Old Testament prophets of God foretelling something that was going to happen in the future. Let's brainstorm a few of them together...
- In your own words, why is it valuable for us to understand who the prophets were?

# Chronology of Prophets

(All dates approximate)



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