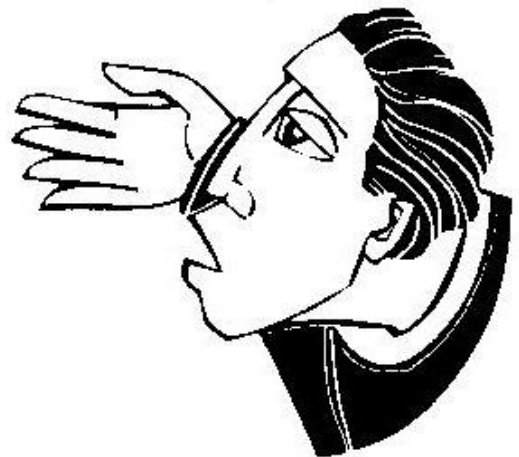


- I. What is a prophet? What does it biblically and contextually mean to call someone a prophet?
 - A. Layers of prophetic definition
 1. Prophets in scripture respond to individual circumstance, social struggle and apocalyptic announcement
 2. Prophets are “seers”
 - a. Personal “seers”
 - b. Social and political “seers”
 - c. Future-oriented apocalyptic “seers”
 - B. The prophetic ministry of the people of God in Israel, the divided kingdom of Israel/Judah, and Israel in exile, is always about the Word of the Lord
 1. In the current circumstance of the twenty-first century, the prophets are either used as personal predictors, “justice-tellers,” or announcers of the end of the world
 2. In truth, the prophets receiving the “Word of the Lord,” speak into current reality from the “Word of the Lord,” simultaneously causing hope and consternation
 3. The prophets are more in accordance with what is happening—ever mindful of the Word of the Lord spoken into a prevailing circumstance



- II. From what criteria are the prophets speaking?
- A. Prophets are always more than “fortune tellers” or “magical anticipators”
 - B. The prophetic criteria are fundamentally three-fold
 1. Worship
 2. Righteousness
 3. Compassion
 - C. Prophecy without reference to the context of worship and righteousness and compassion is unheard of in the Older Testament narrative
 - D. Prophets declare the Word of the Lord from the personal, later to the socio-political, and, finally, to God’s reign, as it will be introduced in the apocalyptic versions of *Ezekiel* and *Isaiah 50–66*
- III. The beginnings of prophetic ministry are always linked to the beginnings of kingship
- A. Samuel, the last judge and first prophet/priest, who received the “Word of the Lord” to become a “seer”—*1 Samuel 3:1-21*
Now the Lord came and stood there, calling as before, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”—1 Samuel 3:10
 - B. Samuel’s ministry is linked to the people’s desire for a king, following the era of the judges
 1. Samuel predicts/prophesies the way of kings—*1 Samuel 8:4-19*, especially *8:11-18*
 2. Yahweh, through the prophet’s voice, indicates his displeasure with the people’s choice—*1 Samuel 8:4-9*
 3. The prophet emerges as the king emerges, recognizing the competing gods of kingship and power
 - C. God relents, and Samuel relents, to the wishes of the people—*1 Samuel 8:22*
 1. Samuel chooses Saul to be king over Israel as appointed by God—*1 Samuel 9–10*
 2. Samuel anoints Saul—*1 Samuel 10:1*
 - D. Saul’s overreaching as king, followed by Samuel’s denunciation—*1 Samuel 13:8-14*

And so it goes...