

# BGM BIBLE COLLEGE

## LECTURE NO 18

### The Prophets of the Old Testament

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### The Office of the Prophet

In the days of Holy Scripture, the Prophets of God stood as His representatives before men, even as the priests stood as men's representatives before God. The Prophets received revelation and inspiration from the Most High, and they spake not of themselves but as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

They bare the message of God both unto their own generation and unto the generations to come. Through divine revelation they also declared things that were yet to be; thus, their words spake both to the present and to the future.

Whether the Prophet were a royal officer as Isaiah and Daniel, or a humble shepherd as Amos, each was called of God to fulfil a holy commission.

In relation to the history of Israel and the unfolding of Scripture, the Prophets ministered from three distinct perspectives:

**1. Before the Captivity:**

The Prophets ministered even before the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities. In those days, though the kingdoms of Israel (the north) and Judah (the south) appeared outwardly prosperous, inwardly they were corrupt and declining.

**2. During the Captivity:**

Even in Babylon, the Prophets continued to speak, calling the people to repentance. Ezekiel and, in large measure, Jeremiah ministered during this time of judgment.

**3. After the Captivity:**

When the remnant of Israel returned from exile, Prophets such as Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi ministered to stir the people unto repentance and restoration.

### Prophecy in Israel

بنی اسرائیل میں نبوت

#### (a) Pre-Classical Prophecy

From the very beginning of Israel's history, the Prophet was a divinely appointed guide. Moses' greatness as a leader lay also in his prophetic office. During the time of the Judges, Deborah likewise exercised prophetic leadership.

Samuel, who lived between the time of the Judges and the rise of the monarchy, stands as a great example of a Prophet in Israel. This early form of prophecy is known as **Pre-Classical Prophecy**, wherein the Prophet often served as counsellor and adviser to the king.

When Samuel anointed Saul to be king, the Prophet's office assumed a new role — as that of the royal counsellor. This pattern was common in the Ancient Near East, yet in Israel it possessed a unique divine authority, for the Prophet Spoke not in his own name, but in the name of the LORD.

Though we have no distinct book devoted to the Pre-Classical Prophets, their ministries are recorded throughout the historical books — as Samuel to Saul, Nathan to David, Elijah to Ahab, and Elisha to Jehoram. Their messages often addressed the sins, policies, and moral state of the monarchy, serving as both warning and encouragement.

### (b) Classical Prophecy

#### کلاسیکل نبوت

The **Classical Period of Prophecy** marks the most recognized age in Israel's prophetic history. The sixty-six prophetic books of Holy Scripture embody the words of these Classical Prophets.

This era began in the eighth century B.C., during the reign of Jeroboam II in the northern kingdom of Israel. Amos and Hosea prophesied in the north, while Micah and Isaiah were sent unto Judah in the south.

Though many of the Prophets addressed kings, their primary audience was the people of the land. Their authority was divine, and their cry was ever, *"Thus saith the LORD."*

This period of prophecy was unlike any in the ancient world, for the message was not ritualistic or ceremonial, but moral, spiritual, and eschatological — dealing with judgment, repentance, and the hope of redemption.

### Types of Prophetic Oracles

#### نبوتی پیغام کی اقسام

| Category           | Description                                             |
|--------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Indictment</b>  | The statement of the offense and sin of the people.     |
| <b>Judgment</b>    | The declaration of the punishment to be carried out.    |
| <b>Instruction</b> | The call to repentance and the expected response.       |
| <b>Aftermath</b>   | The affirmation of hope and deliverance after judgment. |

### Pre-Exilic Emphasis

- Focused on idolatry, empty ritual, and social injustice.
- Prophecies often related to near-future political events.
- The call was to forsake wickedness and return unto God.

- Hope was promised after a season of chastisement.

### Post-Exilic Emphasis

- Focused upon honouring the LORD rightly.
- Interpreted current suffering as divine correction.
- Spoke of restoration with more specific promises.
- Viewed fulfilment as unfolding over an extended time — religiously immediate, socially developing, politically eventual.

### Division of the Prophetic Books

نبوتی کتب کی تقسیم

#### (a) The Major Prophets

The Books of **Isaiah**, **Jeremiah**, **Lamentations**, **Ezekiel**, and **Daniel**.

#### (b) The Minor Prophets

The Twelve Books — **Hosea** through **Malachi** — though called “minor,” bear messages of equal divine weight and authority.

