

Hello. We will begin our 19<sup>th</sup> lecture on “An Introduction to the Old Testament.” /Today we will be studying the Old Testament Prophetic Books. /The Prophetic Books are made up of the 4 Major Prophets and the 12 Minor Prophets.

/The four books of the Major Prophets are Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. /The twelve books of the Minor Prophets include Hosea and other books. /The Major Prophets and Minor Prophets are called these names because of the length. The Major Prophets are longer books, while the Minor Prophets are relatively shorter in length.

/There is something we need to understand about the Major and Minor Prophets. It is important that we understand the prophecies of the prophets. /Prophets are people who speak the word of God. A prophecy is a prediction of what is to happen in the future.

/However, these prophecies about what is to happen in the future are not the focus of the Prophetic Books. /The prophecies of the prophets are declarations of what is to happen in the near future to Israel, Judah, and the surrounding nations.

/They are prophecies that are mainly about the fall of Israel and Judah in the near future. /The prophecies are also about God restoring them after they perish.

/The prophecies also predict what is to happen in the far future, that is the coming of Jesus the Messiah. They also prophesy about the new covenant times. /The prophecies of the prophets in the Prophetic Books are about things that are to happen in the future. They range from events in the near future to apocalyptic events, which is the coming of Jesus.

/However, prophecies in their dictionary meaning do not take up a large portion of the Major Prophets and Minor Prophets. They only account for about 7%. /Therefore the Prophetic Books include prophecies, but prophecies aren't the distinctive feature of the Prophetic Books.

/The prophets do predict events of the future, but they play a large role in delivering the word of God to those who live in the same time period. /Thus God spoke to the people living in the age of the prophets through the prophets. The prophets are people who represent the word of God.

/Jeremiah 27 says, “Thus says the LORD” and “Declares the LORD” to show us that Jeremiah speaks the word of God. /We will see what these prophets who spoke for the word of God represented.

/The prophets spoke for the covenant between God and the Israelites. /With the covenant relationship between God and the Israelites as the foundation, the prophets spoke the word of God.

/Let me explain it in detail. Rather than blessing the individual, God declares his blessing on the people as a nation, people who obey God's covenant. He also curses them for their

disobedience. The role of the prophets was to remind the people that God does these things.

/We can see these details in Amos 9 and Hosea 8. /The prophets speak for and act as mediator for carrying out God's covenant. Leviticus 26, Deuteronomy 28 and 32 are about this prophecy.

/We need to remember this. The main idea of the Prophetic Books is about the covenant between God and the Israelites. /The prophetic words of the prophets do not follow a chronological order nor do they suggest a historical background. Oftentimes, they are simply about the covenant.

/Furthermore, the prophets' prophecies are in poetic prose or in poetic form. /We are observing the characteristics of the Prophetic Books. Rather than being a foretelling of the future, the prophecies, which are about the covenant relationship with God, speak for the word of God.

/In the Prophetic Books, we find numerous individual prophecies of God. We need to know how to distinguish these prophecies, and we need to know how the prophecies are connected with each other.

/When we look at the form of these prophecies, we see three type. The first is in the form of a lawsuit. /We can call this a prophecy in lawsuit form. The next kind is a prophecy of woe.

/Finally, there are prophecies in the form of promises. /When we say lawsuit, we are talking about the prophets who think about the covenant when they speak their prophecies to the people. /With the covenant in mind, God is suing the Israelites, who are the defendant. In this form, God sues the Israelites through the prophets.

/The prophecies told through the prophets take place in the form of a summoning, an accusation, a display of evidence, and a ruling. This takes place as a completely perfect lawsuit. /As an example, we will look at Isaiah 3.

/Let us read Isaiah 3:13,14. / "The LORD has taken his place to contend; he stands to judge peoples. The LORD will enter into judgment with the elders and princes of his people: "It is you who have devoured the vineyard, the spoil of the poor is in your houses."

/When it says in verse 13 that "the LORD has taken his place to contend," it means God is taking legal action. /God judges the Israelites. The elders and princes of Israel devoured the vineyard and took the spoil of the poor. God is taking action against them for these crimes.

/Verses 15-16. Let us read. / "What do you mean by crushing my people, by grinding the face of the poor?" declares the Lord GOD of hosts. The LORD said: Because the daughters

of Zion are haughty and walk with outstretched necks, glancing wantonly with their eyes, mincing along as they go, tinkling with their feet,”

/Through the prophets, God is filing a complaint. /The verse mentions the wickedness of the people, people who crush God’s people and grind the face of the poor. It also shows us the people of Jerusalem committing adultery.

/If we take a look at the part from verse 17 to verse 26, based on this evidence, Israel’s sin is declared and the judgment is reached. God’s judgment is that the people have broken the covenant with God.

/Verses 17-18. Let us read. / “therefore the Lord will strike with a scab the heads of the daughters of Zion, and the LORD will lay bare their secret parts. In that day the Lord will take away the finery of the anklets, the headbands, and the crescents;”

/Verse 26. Let us read. / “And her gates shall lament and mourn; empty, she shall sit on the ground.”

/God says he will put the people to shame and make bare their land. /With the covenant relationship with the Israelites as the premise, God through the prophets is pressing charges against them. God declares that he will judge them appropriately.

/We need to be able to differentiate the prophecies told by the prophets. /In some cases, God brings a lawsuit with the covenant as proof. In other cases, the prophecies predict woe.

/A prophecy of woe declares, “This is disaster.” People usually say these things during funerals, when they are sad. /The people of Israel broke their covenant with God and abandoned God. This shows that God’s impending judgment will be upon them. That is why God says the word “woe” through the prophets.

/God visually describes the prophecies of woe. He tells them the cause of disaster, and he foretells destruction. /We see an example of this in Habakkuk 2:6-8.

/Habakkuk 2:6-8. Let us read. / “Shall not all these take up their taunt against him, with scoffing and riddles for him, and say, “Woe to him who heaps up what is not his own—for how long?— and loads himself with pledges!” Will not your debtors suddenly arise, and those awake who will make you tremble? Then you will be spoil for them. Because you have plundered many nations, all the remnant of the peoples shall plunder you, for the blood of man and violence to the earth, to cities and all who dwell in them.”

/God through Habakkuk the prophet declares woe on people who take from others what is not theirs. /He says Israel will face the disaster of being destroyed by another nation.

/Speaking of such woe, God announces that great disaster and death will be upon them. /Jesus also declared this disaster on the Pharisees and scribes who were hypocrites.

/We will look at the last form of prophecy. This is a prophecy of promise. It is a prophecy that tells of a sudden change in the future, one that also mentions blessing. /The book of Amos gives us an example.

/Amos 9:11-15.

/9:11-15. Let us read. / “In that day I will raise up the booth of David that is fallen and repair its breaches, and raise up its ruins and rebuild it as in the days of old, that they may possess the remnant of Edom and all the nations who are called by my name,” declares the LORD who does this. “Behold, the days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when the plowman shall overtake the reaper and the treader of grapes him who sows the seed; the mountains shall drip sweet wine, and all the hills shall flow with it. I will restore the fortunes of my people Israel, and they shall rebuild the ruined cities and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and drink their wine, and they shall make gardens and eat their fruit. I will plant them on their land, and they shall never again be uprooted out of the land that I have given them,” says the LORD your God.”

/This prophecy of promise foretells a sudden change happening in the future, and it speaks of blessing. Amos 9:11-15 shows us these factors. /Verse 11 points to a day in the future by saying “In that day.”

/Sudden changes, such as the restoration of the booth of David, are mentioned in verse 11. It also says that Israel will defeat Edom and rejoice. /Additionally, verses 14 and 15 speak of the blessing of the Israelites returning from exile.

/In verse 13, blessing is depicted as the abundance of crops. /Prophecy in this form is a prophecy of promise. /We need to study the Prophetic Books by making a distinction among lawsuit prophecies, prophecies of woe, and prophecies of promise.

/Important details of the Prophetic Books are in prose, but they also are written in poetic prose. /The text is in poetic prose.

/Poetic prose is a unique blend of poetry and prose. It is a very unique style. A unique literary style. /Poetic prose follows a regular, fixed form. This makes it easy for us to remember and memorize.

/Following a regular, fixed form is a poetic characteristic. /The prophecies are written in prose, but they contain poetic aspects. That is why we say it is poetic prose.

/In this poetry is an important characteristic called parallelism. /In this parallelism are three types of parallels. /First, there is synonymous parallelism.

/In synonymous parallelism, the second line of the sentence repeats or supports the meaning of the first line. /We see synonymous parallelism in Isaiah 44:22.

/Verse 22 says, “I have blotted out your transgressions like a cloud and your sins like mist.” /These two lines make up a parallelism. It says God will blot out their transgressions like a cloud and their sins like mist.

/These two phrases carry the same meaning. /However, the second line repeats the first line, giving it more emphasis. /We call this synonymous parallelism.

/When two lines are in contrast with each other, we call it antithetical parallelism. /With antithetical parallelism, we see parallels that are in contrast with each other.

/We see an example of antithetical parallelism in Hosea 7:14.

/7:14. Let us read. / “They do not cry to me from the heart, but they wail upon their beds; for grain and wine they gash themselves; they rebel against me.”

/We observe a contrast here when it says “They do not cry to me from the heart” and “They wail upon their beds.” /The Israelites should go forward to God in prayer with all their heart, but they only pretend to cry out to him when they sleep. In this way, the two lines are in contrast.

/Up until now, we have studied prophecies in poetic prose, which are synonymous or antithetical. Lastly, there is a form called synthetic parallelism that combines all of these things.

/That is we see a contrasting second line that is a repetition. However, it also better explains the first line. /We see this in Obadiah verse 21.

/Obadiah is made up of one chapter. Let us read verse 21.

/ “Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion to rule Mount Esau, and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.”

/ “Saviors shall go up to Mount Zion” is in contrast to “To rule Mount Esau.” /But it says that the kingdom shall be the LORD's. /The idea of saviors going up Mount Zion contradicts the idea of ruling Mount Esau. In conclusion, the verse says the kingdom belongs to the LORD. This is synthetic parallelism.

/We have looked at the important factors that we need to know when understanding the Prophetic Books. We have studied the different forms of prophecies, and we have studied literary forms as well.

/There is another important point we need to mention, and that is the historical situation of the prophets. /The Prophetic Books are God's words that were written between 760 and 460 BC.

/Amos was recorded first at around 760 BC, and the Malachi was written last at around 460 BC. /The words of the prophets were written between 760 and 460 BC.

/Why was the focus on the words of the prophets for about 300 years? /The first reason for this is Israel and Judah experienced huge changes politically, militarily, economically, and socially.

/For one, North Israel and South Judah meet their downfall. /After the fall, God's people, who went into captivity, return from exile. /Second, during this time, there was serious unbelief, and the people thought lightly of the law.

/Also during this time, there was a growth in population and an expansion of borders. /In such conditions, God actively responded and delivered his will to the people through the prophets.

/In a situation where sudden changes were occurring, God was reminding the people of their relationship with him, the relationship of the covenant. God also spoke for the future generations of Israel.

/As all this was happening, Amos in 760 BC and Hosea in 755 BC announce Israel's fall. /After Israel's fall, Judah fell into severe sin. Also, the Babylonian empire saw a revival. At this time, God speaks through the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, and Zephaniah.

/The prophets Ezekiel, Daniel, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi declare the restoration of God's people and the rebuilding of the nation. /These words of the prophets are connected to the word of Deuteronomy 4:25-31.

/Deuteronomy 4:25-31. Let us read. /"When you father children and children's children, and have grown old in the land, if you act corruptly by making a carved image in the form of anything, and by doing what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, so as to provoke him to anger, I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that you will soon utterly perish from the land that you are going over the Jordan to possess. You will not live long in it, but will be utterly destroyed. And the LORD will scatter you among the peoples, and you will be left few in number among the nations where the LORD will drive you. And there you will serve gods of wood and stone, the work of human hands, that neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell. But from there you will seek the LORD your God and you will find him, if you search after him with all your heart and with all your soul. When you are in tribulation, and all these things come upon you in the latter days, you will return to the LORD your God and obey his voice. For the LORD your God is a merciful God. He will not leave you or destroy you or forget the covenant with your fathers that he swore to them."

/This word stands parallel to the word of Deuteronomy 30:1-10. /If the Israelites sin before God, God will judge them and destroy them. But God keeps his covenant by restoring them.

/The prophets, with the word of the covenant given through Moses as their basis, declare the word of God. /Finally, we will discuss the things we need to be careful about when understanding the Prophetic Books.

/Earlier, I told you that the prophecies of God given through the prophets announced what was to happen in the near future. /For example, in Ezekiel chapters 25 to 39, the prophet Ezekiel prophesies about the judgment and salvation that is to come in the near future.

/But he also prophesies about the apocalyptic things that are to happen in the far off future. We see this in Ezekiel 37:15-28. /The Prophetic Books sometimes tell prophecies that include both the near future and the apocalyptic future.

/We find this in Ezekiel 37:1-14 and Joel 3:1-3. /In the Prophetic Books, God speaks about the near future through the prophets. He also prophesies apocalyptically about Jesus, and this includes the new covenant times that Jesus will bring.

/We need to remember that these Prophetic Books are speaking to believers who believe in Jesus. /God judges and destroys those who do not keep the old covenant. In this way, people of the new covenant times are blessed when they obey, but if they do not obey, they are cursed.

/What do we need to obey in the new covenant times? We need to believe in Jesus, and through Jesus, we will receive the blessing of seeing everything go well. However, the Prophetic Books tell us that if we do not believe in Jesus, we will be cursed.

/The writers of the New Testament Bible connect the Prophetic Books to Jesus. /For example, Hosea 11:1 says, “When Israel was a child, I loved him, and out of Egypt I called my son.”

/God calls the Israelites “his son,” and he talks about the exodus from Egypt. But if we see Matthew 2:15, we see this message being applied to Jesus.

/When Jesus temporarily goes down to Egypt because of Herod, God brings Jesus back to Nazareth. /The writer of Matthew is applying the word of Hosea to Jesus. Therefore we discover Jesus Christ in the Prophetic Books.

/In our next lecture, we will study the Prophetic Books in more detail. /Thank you.