

# Old Testament Survey

## Introduction to the Prophets

### ***The Nature of Hebrew Prophecy***

1. Two broad categories:
  - a. Specific predictions regarding future events.
  - b. Discourses or messages of anointed men.
2. Two groups:
  - a. Writing prophets - include those prophets for whom we have written prophecies.
  - b. Oral prophets - those prophets we know of but who have not written any of their prophecies down for later generations although their prophecies may be alluded to in the Bible.

### ***The Nature of the Prophetic Office***

1. The major task of the prophet was not to predict the future but be a spokesman for God to the generation to which he belonged. In other words, the Old Testament prophet was more of a preacher regarding current events than a predictor of future events.
2. A prophet's ultimate accountability was to God. One false prophecy by him branded him as a false prophet and deserving of death.
3. In Israel's early history, the prophetic function was performed by the Levitical priests. As time went on and the priesthood became more professionalized, there arose the office of the prophet.

### ***The Function of Hebrew Prophecy***

1. The prophet encouraged the people to trust in God and not in their own power and strength.
2. The prophet was responsible to remind Israel that God's blessing to them was conditioned upon their obedience to the Covenant.
3. The prophet encouraged Israel regarding the future, that in spite of the current circumstances or situation, God would ultimately make things right.
4. Hebrew prophecy was validated by fulfilled prophecies in the near term. These near-term fulfillments would prove the validity and authenticity of long-term prophecies.