

The Bible: The Book of the Prophets

Last week I wrote about the Book of Wisdom. The next set of books in the Bible is the Book of the Prophets. The word prophet means “one who speaks for another.” Prophets have two main messages throughout the books: If the people are sinning, the prophets call them to repentance and warn of inevitable suffering. And if the people are suffering, the prophets call them to repentance and encourage them to remain hopeful for God never abandons His people. Many of the prophets predicted the coming of the Messiah. *“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (Isaiah 9:6)* Isaiah has some of the clearest prophecies of the coming of the Messiah. *“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; the young woman, pregnant and about to bear a son, shall name him Emmanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14)* There are three Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah and Ezekiel. These books are called major because of their length. The prophets from Hosea to Malachi are traditionally known as the Minor Prophets. They are called minor because their books are shorter. Some of the Minor Prophets are ones that we are familiar with. Jonah tells a story about a very reluctant prophet who tries to run away from God’s request to go to Nineveh. Micah foretells that a savior will come to rule Israel and that he will come from Bethlehem. Daniel displays the courage it takes to remain faithful to God in the midst of unspeakable punishment and persecution. Through such stories as Daniel in the lion’s den and Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in the fiery furnace, this book teaches moral lessons. Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament, which comprises of some very important messages: Marriage is supposed to be an unbreakable covenant; be faithful to the law of Moses; the importance of tithing and it also links to the Messiah of the New Testament. Next week we will begin to look at the New Testament. *–Sherrie Clutts DRE*