

Prophets North and South

Commentary for August 1, 2018 — Did Some Prophets Know Each Other?

It is important that you read the "[August 2018 Newsletter](#)" before you read this month's article "Israel and Judah: 31. Prophets, Writings, and Kings." The Newsletter will give you context about the article.

Most of you familiar with the Bible understand that Elijah and Elisha certainly were contemporaries. Elijah literally passed his "mantle" over to Elisha so he could continue the prophetic ministry to the northern kingdom of Israel (2 Kings chapter 2). Elijah retired to sunny southern Judah. He later wrote King Jehoram of Judah a letter (2 Chronicles 21:12).

Other Prophets Knew Each Other

Isaiah and Micah definitely were contemporaries.

"The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah."

• *Isaiah 1:1*

Isaiah received and taught exclusively to Judah and Jerusalem.

"The word of YHWH that came to Micah the Morasthite in the days of Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah, which he saw concerning Samaria and Jerusalem."

• *Micah 1:1*

Micah's prophetic ministry taught the prophecies to both Judah and "Samaria" meaning the northern kingdom of Israel. Furthermore, Isaiah and Micah quote the same thoughts from God in nearly identical Hebrew:

Isaiah 2:2–4	Micah 4:1–3
<p>And it will come to pass in the latter days, The Mount of the House of Yahweh shall be established on the summit of the mountains, And it shall be lifted up above the hills, And all the nations will stream unto it.</p> <p>Many peoples will come and say: Come, and let us ascend to the Mount of Yahweh, To the House of the Elohim of Jacob; And He shall direct us out of His ways, So that we may indeed walk in His paths. For from Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem.</p> <p>He will judge between the nations, And</p>	<p>And it will come to pass in the latter days, The Mount of the House of Yahweh shall be established on the summit of the mountains, And it shall be lifted up above the hills. And all the peoples will stream unto it.</p> <p>Many <i>nations</i> will come and say: Come, and let us ascend to the Mount of Yahweh, And to the House of the Elohim of Jacob, And He shall direct us out of His ways, So that we may indeed walk in His paths. For from Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem.</p> <p>He will judge between many <i>peoples</i>, And</p>

<p>arbitrate for the many peoples. They will pound their swords into mattocks [plowshares], And their spears into pruners; Nation shall not lift sword against nation, Nor shall they learn war any more.</p>	<p>arbitrate for <i>staunch nations afar off</i>. They will pound their swords into mattocks [plowshares], And their spears into pruners; Nation shall not lift the sword against nation, Nor shall they learn war any more.</p>
---	--

Note the differences, but more importantly note the similarities: two passages from two prophets who ministered to their audiences during the reigns of three of the same kings in Judah. Judah was not so large a kingdom that these two men would not have heard about each other. Do you think they probably met? I do. If so, what did they talk about?

Amos and Hosea

As you will read in this month's article, the prophets Amos and Hosea both taught in the northern kingdom of Israel, and like Isaiah and Micah, they served the people during the reigns of some of the same kings. In the case of Amos and Hosea, both served the people in the kingdom of Israel during the contemporaneous reigns of Uzziah of Judah and Jeroboam II of Israel (Hosea 1:1 and Amos 1:1).

What about Prophets Whose Writings Are Scripture?

Several of the prophets of God whose writings are in our Bibles today were contemporaneous, yet they rarely mention each other, if at all. Jeremiah began his prophetic ministry in the 13th year of the reign of Josiah. Zephaniah also prophesied during Josiah's reign, but the year is not given (Zephaniah 1:1).

Daniel knew about the writings of the prophet Jeremiah (Daniel 9:2). Ezekiel mentions Daniel and his wisdom (Ezekiel 14:14, 20, 28:3).¹ We do not know if Daniel or Ezekiel ever met. Daniel never mentions Ezekiel so we cannot be sure.

Jeremiah was a younger contemporary of Ezekiel, who was taken to Babylon. Jeremiah stayed in Judea for a number of years. Both refer to events during the life of Jehoiachin, King of Israel. Ezekiel had a vision in the 5th year of Jehoiachin's captivity (Ezekiel 1:1–3) and Jeremiah reports on the 37th year of Jehoiachin's captivity (Jeremiah 52:31–34), even stating the exact month and day when Jehoiachin was released from prison.

Inquiring Minds Want to Know

Scholars have known everything I presented here since the prophecies were spoken. For me, repeatedly we are tantalized with these hints there is more to the accounts than we are told. However, what we are given in Scripture is presented to us on a "need to know" basis. The Word of God gives us everything we need to serve God's will and purpose.

David Sielaff
david@askelm.com

¹ Some scholars think this was a different Daniel. Jesus refers to "**Daniel the prophet**" in Matthew 24:15 and Mark 13:14. Remember the Book of Daniel was not catalogued with the Prophets section in the Jewish Canon, but in the Writings section. See "[Diagram: the Symmetry of the Bible.](#)"