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Dear Associates and Friends,

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“[Israel and Judah: 31. Prophets, Writings, and Kings](#)” is the title of this month’s article. Beginning in this episode the writings of the Major Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel) and the twelve Minor Prophets of Israel enter the conversation between YHWH and His people in a major way. The prophetic writings begin when the Assyrian Empire enters a period of great ascendancy. They give us God’s commentary on events leading to the end of the kingdom of Israel, and more than a century later, the end of the kingdom of Judah.

The article begins with a lengthy introduction about the role of Prophets whose prophecies are in our Bibles today. In the background of all prophetic writings is God’s covenant with Israel at Mount Sinai:

**“Now therefore, if you will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then you shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine: And you shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which you shall speak unto the children of Israel. ...**

**And all the people answered together, and said, ‘All that YHWH has spoken we will do.’ And Moses returned the words of the people unto YHWH.”**

• *Exodus 19:5–6, 8*

Blessings come with obedience. Punishments come with disobedience according to an increasing scale of offense. These prophetic writings and prophecies of the future add a new dimension and detail to God’s point of view on Israel’s covenant violations and sins against their God over hundreds of years. He tells us about His response of judgment and punishment according to the covenant agreed to with Israel.

### ***Not Your Usual Cast of Characters (In Order of Appearance):***

This episode of “Israel and Judah” has a smaller cast of people, but it also includes topics.

**Ezra the Priest**, reviewed the history of Israel and Judah after the return from exile in Babylon.

**Azariah/Uzziah** (in the background), king of Judah, had a very long and prosperous reign. At first blessed by God, he exceeded his authority in the Temple. God punished him with a skin condition. He had peace with Israel and died a natural death. See “[Israel and Judah: 30. Amaziah & Uzziah](#).”

**Jeroboam II** (in the background), long ruling king of Israel, a time of prosperity and expansion for Israel. He received help from God. Israel had peace with Judah in his lifetime. Also see “[Israel and Judah: 30. Amaziah & Uzziah](#).”

**Prophets of God** (Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos, three of several) are introduced. They left writings beginning in Uzziah’s and Jeroboam II’s contemporary reigns.<sup>1</sup>

**Prophecy**, its problems are discussed with the role of “**the seasons of refreshing**” and “**times of restitution**” in Acts 3:18–21, supported by Daniel on how YHWH opens men’s minds.

<sup>1</sup> “Prophet,” *Fausset's Bible Dictionary*

“There are four groups of the 16 prophets. [1] Of northern Israel, Hosea, Amos, Joel, Jonah; [2] of Judah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Obadiah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah; [3] prophets of the captivity, Ezekiel and Daniel; [4] prophets of the restoration, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.”

**Amaziah**, a pagan prophet, met God’s prophet Amos. God pronounced doom upon him and his family.

**Amos**, a prophet of YHWH presents a vision and pronounces God’s doom on Jereboam and Amaziah.

**The Last Six Kings of Israel**, a synopsis briefly given about their reigns and how they died.

One of the compilers of Second Kings (probably Isaiah) wrote a summary of God’s thoughts about the two kingdoms of northern Israel and southern Judah. God was not pleased:

**“Yahweh testified against Israel and against Judah by means of every prophet and every vision seer, saying,**

**‘Turn back from your evil ways, and keep My instructions and My statutes, according to all the law that I enjoined on your fathers and that I sent to you by means of My servants the prophets.**’

**Yet they did not hearken ...”**

• **2 Kings 17:13–14, Concordant Literal Old Testament**

Those last words are terrible to read. Horrible punishments came upon God’s people after He begged them to repent and do right. They would not listen. God chose Israel to be an historical example, an object lesson for all non-Israelites. After the mass of humanity is physically resurrected (after believers have been given immortality), those who lived both before and after Israel’s covenant with YHWH will learn from Israel’s failures, God’s mercies, and God’s eventual salvation of all humanity including His chosen people Israel.

God is showing that mankind cannot succeed or even exist long without Him. He has allowed mankind to try every possible human condition and every mode of life: before the flood, after the flood, a chosen people, Gentiles, every possible governmental organization, every societal plan, every economic model, every familial arrangement, with resources or without resources, poverty or wealth, feast or famine. By the time Christ returns every possible combination of life will have been tried. All fail without God in control.

All humanity will recognize that God exists and He provided a Savior, Jesus Christ, to save him or her from before the foundation of the world, individually and collectively. Job had an expectation of seeing His redeemer after death. He expected a physical resurrection, to be re-embodied in flesh once again:

**“For I know that my redeemer lives, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins [kidneys] be consumed within me.”**

• **Job 19:25–27**

The apostle Paul clarified God’s role in each of our lives:

**“This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance. For therefore we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. These things command and teach.”**

• **1 Timothy 4:9–11**

## **Thank You**

We believe wholeheartedly in the **“faithful saying”** that Paul gave to us all. We at ASK teach the same. Your generosity helps ASK continue its research to share the Gospel. We continue this task day by day.

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