

## **Dr. Gary Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 2, Ministry and Message of the Prophets, Part 2 Resources from NotebookLM**

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

### **1. Abstract of Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 2, Ministry and Message of the Prophets, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org, BeL**

**Dr. Gary Yates' lecture focuses on understanding the messages of the Old Testament prophets, particularly those in the Book of the Twelve.** He emphasizes their role as covenant messengers, warning of judgment and promising restoration based on God's covenants with Israel. **Yates addresses common misconceptions about the prophets,** arguing they were not merely hysterical babblers or angry ranting messengers, but logical and clear communicators. **The lecture highlights the importance of understanding the historical context of the prophets' messages** rather than solely focusing on predicting the future. **He encourages pastors and teachers not to shy away from teaching these books,** emphasizing their powerful, relevant, and practical message of God's judgment and salvation, and ultimately to see the extremes of God's love.

**2. 12 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of Dr. Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 2 – Double click icon to play in Windows media player or go to the Biblicalelearning.org [BeL] Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament → Major Prophets → Book of the Twelve [Minor Prophets]).**



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### 3. Briefing Document: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 2, Ministry and Message of the Prophets, Part 2

Okay, here's a briefing document summarizing the main themes and ideas from Dr. Gary Yates's lecture on the Ministry and Message of the Prophets, Part 2, focusing on the Book of the Twelve (Minor Prophets).

#### Briefing Document: Dr. Gary Yates on the Ministry and Message of the Prophets, Part 2

##### Main Themes:

- **Covenantal Message of the Prophets:** The prophets are messengers of God's covenants (Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, New). Their messages are based on these arrangements and follow a pattern: Sin/Covenant Breach, Repentance, Judgment (Exile), and Restoration.
- "The prophets' messages as messengers of God's covenant are based on those specific arrangements that God has made with different individuals."
- "The message of the prophets, the four parts of that from grasping God's word, you have sinned and you have broken the covenant. You need to repent... If there is no repentance, the prophets warn there is going to be a judgment...there will be a restoration."
- **Prophets as Watchmen:** The prophets serve as watchmen, warning the people of impending judgment (Assyrian, Babylonian crises) due to their covenantal disobedience. They are responsible for delivering God's message, and if they fail to do so, they will be held accountable.
- "One of the roles that the prophets are given and one of the ways that they describe their ministry is that they will refer to themselves as the watchmen of God."
- "The prophets had an obligation to warn the people of the judgment that was coming. If they fulfilled that obligation and the people chose not to listen, the responsibility for the judgment and the bloodshed that would come upon them would be on the people for rejecting the message...then ultimately the prophet himself would also be held responsible for the judgment that came upon the people."

- **Covenant Curses and Judgment:** The judgments announced by the prophets are directly linked to the covenant curses outlined in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 (curses in nature, military defeat, exile). Amos chapter 4 is used as a key example demonstrating these specific curses.
- "...the judgments that are going to be announced by the prophets are specifically, in many ways, the judgments and the curses that are announced in the covenant curses that Moses laid out in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28."
- Amos 4 examples: "I gave you cleanness of teeth in all of your cities and a lack of bread...I also withheld the rain from you...I struck you with blight and mildew..."
- **Urgency and Severity of the Prophetic Message:** The prophets use extreme language ("whitewater of God's wrath") to convey the urgency of repentance and the severity of the coming judgment. They are not simply angry, but driven by a desire to avert further disaster.
- "They are speaking an urgent message...The prophets are going to explain and they're going to warn of God's judgment using the most severe terms possible because they want the people to understand how serious this is."
- "Brent Sandy, when he talks about the prophets in his book Plowshares and Pruning Hooks, talks about the prophet's message being like white water when we're rafting. It is an exaggerated message in the worst, most extreme terms possible."
- **God's Love and Restoration:** Despite the warnings of judgment, the prophets also emphasize God's enduring love and commitment to his people, promising restoration after judgment. This is often overlooked, but it is a critical component of the prophetic message.
- "But the prophets are going to come back constantly to the idea that the Lord will never abandon his people. And so, after this judgment, there is always going to be a restoration."
- Examples of God's love: Isaiah 40 (shepherd carrying lambs), Isaiah 49 (God not forgetting Zion), Jeremiah (plans for hope and a future), Hosea 11 (God's compassion for unfaithful Israel).

- **The "Return After the Return":** The post-exilic prophets (Haggai, Zechariah, Joel, Malachi) address the incomplete nature of the initial restoration and promise a future, ultimate restoration where God's people will fully return to Him and the nations will come to worship.
- "...the prophets who minister during that time are also going to promise that the Lord is going to cause there to be a return after the return where there will finally be a full restoration of the people."
- Zechariah 8:7-8: "Thus says the Lord of hosts, behold, I will save my people from the east country and from the west country, and I will bring them to dwell in the midst of Jerusalem, and they will be my people, and I will be their God in faithfulness and in righteousness."
- **Common Misunderstandings of the Prophets:**
  - **Hysterical Babblers:** The prophets are not simply in a state of ecstasy, but conveying a clear, logical message based on God's revelation.
  - **Angry, Ranting Messengers:** The prophets are not motivated by anger or a desire to destroy, but by a genuine concern for the people and a desire to avert judgment through repentance.
  - **Primarily Predictors of the Future:** Predicting the future is a part of the prophetic ministry, but it's not their primary role. Their main focus is forth-telling, preaching the word of God and reminding the people of their covenant responsibilities.
  - **Too Hard to Understand/Preach:** The message of the prophets can be simplified by focusing on the core themes of judgment and salvation, understanding the historical context, and recognizing the use of figurative language.

#### **Key Ideas/Facts:**

- Four parts of the prophets' message: sin/covenant breach, repentance, judgment, and restoration.
- Prophets are "watchmen" responsible for warning the people, facing accountability if they fail.
- Judgments reflect specific covenant curses from Leviticus and Deuteronomy.
- Urgency of message is paramount; prophets use severe language to highlight consequences.

- God's love and commitment endure, promising ultimate restoration even after judgment.
- Post-exilic prophets point to a "return after the return," a complete restoration.
- Overemphasis on predicting the future is a common misunderstanding.
- Prophetic message centers on idolatry, social injustice, and insincere worship.
- Studying the prophets provides a richer, more varied understanding of God.

**Implications:**

- Pastors and teachers should not be afraid to teach the Minor Prophets.
- The prophetic message is relevant and practical for today's church, addressing issues like idolatry, social injustice, and insincere worship.
- Understanding the prophets' covenantal message can deepen our appreciation of God's love and faithfulness.
- Caution should be exercised when interpreting prophetic passages, avoiding overly literal or speculative interpretations of eschatological details.

## 4. Study Guide: Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 2, Ministry and Message of the Prophets, Part 2

### Understanding the Ministry and Message of the Prophets

#### Study Guide

This study guide is designed to help you review the key concepts presented in Dr. Gary Yates' lecture on "The Ministry and Message of the Prophets, Part 2." It includes a quiz, essay questions, and a glossary of key terms.

#### Quiz: Short Answer Questions

Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each, based on the provided source material.

1. According to Yates, what are the four key components of the prophets' message, derived from "Grasping God's Word?"
2. What role did the prophets fulfill as "watchmen," and what were the consequences if they failed in their duties?
3. What specific sources did the prophets draw upon when announcing judgments, and how did these relate to the covenant?
4. How did Amos use the concept of "cleanness of teeth" in his preaching, and what was its significance?
5. What does Yates mean when he says the prophet's message was an "urgent" message?
6. According to Brent Sandy, what literary device do the prophets use to convey their message? Explain with an example from Jeremiah or Joel.
7. How does God's love manifest in the prophets' message, even amidst warnings of judgment?
8. How do Haggai, Zechariah, Joel, and Malachi reveal the people were still not aligned with God during the post-exilic period?
9. According to the lecture, what proportion of the prophets' preaching was foretelling versus forth-telling?
10. What three major issues did the prophets address in their applications to the people?

## Quiz: Answer Key

1. The four key components of the prophets' message are: (1) You have sinned and broken the covenant. (2) You need to repent. (3) If there is no repentance, there will be judgment (exile). (4) Based on God's covenant promises, there will be restoration.
2. As "watchmen," the prophets warned the people of impending judgments, like an approaching army. If they failed to warn the people when God revealed coming judgment, they would be held responsible for the consequences.
3. The prophets drew upon the covenant curses outlined in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28 when announcing judgments. These curses were specific consequences for disobeying God's covenant.
4. Amos used "cleanness of teeth" to signify a lack of food, indicating that God had cursed their crops. This was a tangible reminder of their covenant failure and a call to repentance.
5. Yates says the prophet's message was an "urgent" message because whether the people lived or died depended on how they listened to it. It was a life-and-death matter with immediate consequences.
6. According to Brent Sandy, the prophets use the literary device of white water rafting, exaggerating their message in the worst, most extreme terms possible. An example is Jeremiah saying, "God's judgment is going to be like death climbing through the window."
7. God's love manifests through the promise of restoration and an abiding commitment to His people despite their disobedience. Even in anger, God's heart grows warm with compassion, showing a reluctance to completely destroy them.
8. Haggai and Zechariah confronted them for failing to rebuild the temple and prioritize God. Joel warned of more judgment if they did not return to God. Malachi highlights the dispute between God and the people due to their lack of genuine repentance.
9. According to the lecture, approximately two-thirds of the prophets' preaching was forth-telling (preaching the Word of God), while only one-third was foretelling (predicting the future).
10. The prophets focused on three major application issues: idolatry, social justice, and insincere/false worship.

## Essay Questions

Consider the following essay questions, drawing upon the lecture's main points and supporting details.

1. Discuss the role of covenant in understanding the message of the Old Testament prophets. How did the covenants shape their warnings, judgments, and promises of restoration?
2. Explore the common misunderstandings of the prophets, as outlined by Yates. How does understanding the covenantal context help to correct these misunderstandings?
3. Analyze the balance between judgment and salvation in the message of the prophets. How do they portray God's wrath and love, and what does this reveal about God's character?
4. Examine the concept of the prophets as "watchmen." What responsibilities did this role entail, and how did it shape their ministry and message?
5. Discuss the relevance of the prophets' message for contemporary Christians and the church. How can we apply their teachings on idolatry, social justice, and worship in our lives and communities today?



## Glossary of Key Terms

- **Covenant:** A binding agreement or relationship between God and humanity, often involving promises, obligations, and consequences.
- **Watchmen:** Messengers of God who warned the people of impending judgments, like an approaching army.
- **Judgment:** Divine punishment or consequence for disobedience to God's covenant.
- **Restoration:** The act of God bringing his people back from exile, both physically and spiritually, renewing his covenant with them.
- **Exile:** The state of being forced to leave one's homeland, often as a result of divine judgment.
- **Hesed:** A Hebrew term referring to God's loyal love, commitment, and faithfulness.
- **Minor Prophets (Book of the Twelve):** A collection of twelve shorter prophetic books in the Old Testament, including Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi.
- **Forth-telling:** The act of preaching the Word of God and applying it to the current situation.
- **Foretelling:** The act of predicting future events.
- **Post-Exilic Prophets:** Prophets who ministered after the Babylonian exile, such as Haggai, Zechariah, Joel, and Malachi.

## 5. FAQs on Yates, Book of the Twelve, Session 2, Ministry and Message of the Prophets, Part 2, Biblicalelearning.org (BeL)

Here is an 8-question FAQ based on the provided source:

### FAQ on the Old Testament Prophets and Their Message

- **What is the primary role of the Old Testament prophets, and how should we approach studying their messages?**
- The prophets were messengers of God's covenants, acting as "watchmen" who warned the people of impending judgment due to their covenantal unfaithfulness. However, they also offered hope of repentance, restoration, and salvation based on God's unwavering commitment to His promises. Studying them requires understanding their historical context, covenantal framework, and recognizing the balance between judgment and salvation. We should not be afraid of studying the Minor Prophets. As pastors and teachers, we should not fear teaching these books.
- **What is the covenantal message of the prophets, and how does it relate to the blessings and curses described in the Old Testament?**
- The prophets' message centers on the covenants God made with Israel (Noahic, Abrahamic, Mosaic, Davidic, and New Covenants). It consists of four parts: pointing out sin and covenant violations, calling for repentance, warning of judgment (primarily exile) if there is no repentance, and promising eventual restoration based on God's covenantal faithfulness. The judgments they warn of are directly linked to the covenant curses outlined in Leviticus 26 and Deuteronomy 28, which include curses in nature (blight, famine), military defeat, and ultimately, exile from the land.
- **In what ways did the prophets act as "watchmen," and what responsibilities did they have to the people of Israel?**
- The prophets, as watchmen, were responsible for warning the people of impending dangers, just like watchmen on city walls. They were obligated to deliver God's message of warning, even if it was unpopular. If they failed to warn the people of coming judgment, they would be held accountable for the consequences. Their warnings were often urgent and delivered in severe terms to emphasize the seriousness of the situation.

- **What is the significance of understanding the prophets in light of both God's judgment and God's love?**
- While the prophets often delivered messages of severe judgment for Israel's sins, they also consistently emphasized God's enduring love and commitment to His people. Even amidst warnings of destruction, the prophets proclaimed hope for restoration and salvation. Understanding both aspects provides a more complete picture of God's character, showcasing His holiness and justice alongside His compassion and mercy.
- **What is meant by the phrase "a return after the return" in the context of the post-exilic prophets, and what does it reveal about God's commitment to His people?**
- The phrase "a return after the return" refers to the promises made by post-exilic prophets like Haggai, Zechariah, Joel, and Malachi, after the initial return from Babylonian exile. Although the people had returned to the land, they had not fully turned back to God. These prophets promised a future, complete restoration that would surpass the initial return, emphasizing God's unwavering commitment to fulfilling His covenant promises despite Israel's continued disobedience. This ultimate restoration would include spiritual renewal and the inclusion of all nations in worshiping God.
- **What are some common misunderstandings of the Old Testament prophets, and how can we avoid them?**
- Common misunderstandings include viewing the prophets as hysterical babblers, angry ranting messengers of a vengeful God, or primarily predictors of the distant future. To avoid these, recognize that the prophets delivered clear, logical messages rooted in covenantal responsibilities. They weren't primarily focused on predicting the distant future; their core message was about calling people to repentance and warning about the consequences of covenantal unfaithfulness. Understand that while they convey the holiness of God and hatred of sin, the message of the prophets also offer forgiveness, grace, and restoration.

- **What were the major application issues that the prophets focused on in their messages, and how are they relevant to the church today?**
- The prophets primarily addressed idolatry, social injustice, and insincere worship. These issues remain relevant to the church today, as we must guard against placing other things before God (idolatry), acting unjustly toward others (social injustice), and engaging in religious practices without genuine devotion (insincere worship).
- **Why is it important for pastors and teachers to include the message of the prophets in their spiritual diet that they give to the people and teaching them?**
- Including the prophets is essential for understanding the full spectrum of God's character and His relationship with humanity. By studying them, we see both the severity of God's judgment against sin and the depth of His love and commitment to His people. Neglecting the prophets creates an incomplete and potentially distorted view of God, hindering our ability to appreciate the richness and complexity of His nature. The prophets present a balanced picture of the God that is needed.