



Power of the Prophets: from Moses to Jesus

Week 7

Jesus and the Resurrection of Israel



Simplified Old Testament Timeline

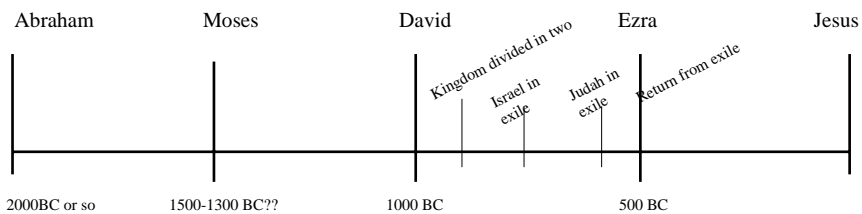
Birth

Life . . . Life . . . Life

Death

Life
after
death

Resurrection!



This is a simplified timeline – all the dates are approximate!



The Maccabees

- ❖ The desecrations by Antiochus Epiphanies prompted a successful Jewish revolt led by a family called the Maccabees, “the hammerer” (their proper name was Hasmonean). Their story is recorded in the historical books of the apocrypha. This family ruled Judea for about 100 years, until the arrival of Rome.
- ❖ The successful revolt (the Temple was restored in 164BC and Hanukkah celebrates it) brought a sense of vindication to the Jews, but they soon came to question whether this was really the keeping of the covenant.
 - Though Jewish, the Maccabeans were not of the house of David and combined the offices of high priest and king.
 - They also embraced the Hellenistic influences, threatening the distinctiveness of the Jews.

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Herod the Great

- ❖ His family had risen to power under the Maccabees and had aligned themselves with the Romans. With Mark Antony (yes, Cleopatra’s Antony!), he defeated the last of the Hasmonean rulers and took Jerusalem in 37BC.
- ❖ Herod became “king” under the Romans, but never achieved the devotion or respect of the Jewish people, despite his efforts.
 - Married into the Hasmonean family
 - Rebuilt the temple into a huge, grand building
- ❖ Herod the Great ruled from 37BC to 4BC.
- ❖ His son, Herod Antipas, got control of Galilee after Dad’s death and is the most-mentioned Herod in the Bible.

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The “prophets of old” – what did they do?

Miracles

Moses
dividing the
Red Sea

These are
manifestations
of divine power
that carry
salvation or
judgment

Symbols

Jeremiah smashing
the jug or “naked
Isaiah” (ch. 20)

‘prophetic dramas’
These are dramatic
presentations of the truth,
‘how things really are’
Manifestations of the
divine will

Signs

Moses’ staff
turns into a
snake

These are
proofs that
validate that the
identity of the
prophet



Jesus – the prophet

- ❖ First => calling Jesus a prophet is true but inadequate!
- ❖ People saw Jesus as a prophet – but they weren’t sure what kind!
 - There was a widespread belief that though there might be prophets in Judea, they weren’t like the ‘prophets of old’
 - So . . . was Jesus a ‘prophet of old’ returned? Elijah?
 - Was he a *new* prophet – could he have the stature of the ‘prophets of old’? In Acts, both Peter and Stephen applied Deut 18:18 to Jesus.



Jesus' miracles

- ❖ Nearly all of Jesus' miracles are seen as manifestations of divine power.
 - He heals and he exorcises demons. All this is a demonstration that God's saving power is bursting in on the world.
 - Jesus calms the waters and demonstrates God's power of the natural world.
- ❖ In the synoptic Gospels (Matthew, Mark, and Luke), Jesus refuses to perform 'signs,' but his disciples see Jesus' miracles as evidence that God is at work through Jesus.
 - In John's Gospel, Jesus' miracles are signs to his divine identity.
- ❖ But . . . Jesus' miracles are also 'prophetic dramas'
 - When he casts out demons, he enacts the truth that God's kingdom has come and Satan's kingdom is crumbling.



Jesus' "prophetic dramas"

- ❖ These are not visual aids that assist Jesus' teachings. They do not cause something to happen.
- ❖ They are the *embodiment* and the *enactment* of God's purposes. Jesus himself was the embodiment of YHWH, Israel's God. His actions are more than symbols.
- ❖ Choosing the twelve
 - Jesus doesn't choose twelve disciples simply because there were twelve tribes. Jesus is creating a new Israel. His disciples will sit on twelve thrones! (see Matt 19:28)
- ❖ Eating with tax collectors and assorted sinners (Matt 9:10-13; Luke 15:1-24)
 - This is the *enactment* of God's kingdom and the messianic banquet to which all would be invited! This is the *embodiment* of the parables Jesus told about banquets and weddings.



More dramas

- ❖ Jesus journeys to Jerusalem and enters the city – on a donkey (*Matt 21:1-11*)
 - See *1 Kings 1:32-40* & *Zechariah 9:9*
 - What is going on with Jesus' entry? This is a messianic claim.
 - Could Jesus entire journey to Jerusalem embody YHWH's return to Zion? *Isaiah 40:9-11*
- ❖ Jesus goes to the temple
 - *Isaiah 56:6-8* to *Jeremiah 7:1-15* to *Mark 11:15-19*
 - Jesus is enacting the coming destruction of the temple, to be carried out by Rome. But he is also protesting what has been done to the temple. He echoes *Amos 5:21-24*. Remember that Amos was the first of the 'writing prophets.' Jesus is calling God's people back to the love of God and of neighbor (see *Mark 12:28-34*).



More than a prophet? Why was Jesus worshipped?

- ❖ Jesus saw himself as a prophet announcing the coming of God's kingdom. He believed himself to be the Messiah and that through his suffering and death, the kingdom would arrive. . . . YHWH was returning to Zion. YHWH was becoming king. "Babylon" was being defeated and the exile was truly ending.
 - ❖ Jesus is the shepherd – who is the shepherd in Psalm 23?
 - ❖ Jesus calls the twelve – who called the twelve tribes?
 - ❖ Jesus forgives sins – who could do that?
 - ❖ Jesus brings new instructions to Israel on his own authority!
- YHWH's return to Zion was to happen in and through Jesus. He had the right and authority to reconstitute Israel around himself.
- This would be Israel's resurrection as the forgiven return-from-exile people of God and Jesus would be its first-fruits.**
- He believed himself called to do and be what only YHWH could do and be!