



 **LifeGroups**
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Four Offices: Prophet

Prophets are God's Messengers

- Prophets are God's messengers to His people
- Numbers 12:6–8; Deuteronomy 13:1–5 and 18:22; 1 Samuel 3:1–21 and 9:9
- In the theocracy, Moses was the prophet and judge, along with the elders he appointed; Aaron was the priest, and God was the king.
- During the time of the judges, most leaders were only judges, not prophets.
- But Samuel (Israel's final judge prior to the monarchy) served as judge, prophet, and priest, and God was Israel's king.

Prophets are God's Messengers

- We see three main prophets to the king of Israel – Samuel, Nathan and Gad, who did not serve sequentially; their ministries overlapped.
- There were also groups of other prophets, and even Saul prophesied when the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him, but only temporarily (1 Samuel 10:10–12).
- Later, when David first fled from Saul to Samuel at Ramah, Saul sent messengers to bring David back, but the Spirit overcame them, and they prophesied with Samuel and the prophets with him instead.

Prophets are God's Messengers

- In 1 Samuel 9:9, a parenthetical statement tells us that in earlier times in Israel, the people called a prophet a “seer,” a Hebrew word that means “vision.”
- The use of “seer” is confusing because it is used in the Old Testament only in this instance. A word related to “seer” is only used after this – in Samuel, Kings, Chronicles and a few of the prophets (Isaiah, Amos, Micah).
- But the word “prophet” (spokesperson) is used in all the books leading up to Samuel (except Joshua), about Abraham, Miriam, Moses and Deborah (Genesis 20:7; Exodus 15:20; Deuteronomy 18:15; Judges 4:4).

Prophets are God's Messengers

- God said a prophet typically heard from the Lord in visions or dreams (which explains “seer”), but with Moses, God spoke “mouth to mouth, clearly, and not in riddles” (Numbers 12:6–8).
- God’s law describes “prophets” as hearing from the Lord in dreams or visions (Deuteronomy 13:1–5). Samuel described his calling as a “vision,” though using a different word (1 Samuel 3:15).
- Also, the story opens with “the word of the Lord was rare in those days; there was no frequent vision,” implying that dreams and visions were how prophets typically heard from the Lord (1 Samuel 3:1).

Prophets are God's Messengers

- The prophet's role was to hear God's Word and communicate it to His people.
- The book of 1 Samuel opens by telling us that the Word of the Lord was rare in the days before He called Samuel. After more than 400 years of the downward spiral of idolatry and disobedience in Judges, God hadn't spoken to His people for a while.
- But a "man of God" came to the high priest Eli and pronounced judgment on his house, which God repeated to Samuel when He called him as a prophet (1 Samuel 2:27–36; 3:10-14)

Prophets are God's Messengers

- In the modern world, we often think of a prophet as someone who predicts the future, but in the Old Testament, they were often more like preachers, proclaiming God's word to the people.
- Some scholars also call them “covenant enforcement mediators” because their messages typically told the people how they were breaking the covenant and called them to repent and turn back to God.
- Prophets didn't make up new laws or doctrines. They reminded the people of what God had already said in His law.

Prophets are God's Messengers

- In the ancient world, all kings employed professional “prophets” to seek a word or vision for them from their gods.
- In Israel, sometimes the professional prophets were sent by God and did hear His voice, like Samuel, Nathan and Gad.
- Other times, the professional “prophets” just told the king what he wanted to hear to stay in his good graces.
- Kings had lots of advisors, but a godly prophet didn't give the king his own advice or say what the king wanted to hear.

Prophets are God's Messengers

- He spoke only what the Lord gave him to say (Numbers 24:12–13).
- Even when it was hard, as Samuel's relaying God's judgment to Eli or Nathan confronting David about his sin.
- True messengers of God will not be swayed by fear or bribes or power.
- They will not add to the message or take away from it but will only speak what God says (2 Chronicles 18:13).

Prophets are God's Messengers

- Godly prophets preach God's Word, no matter the personal cost
- 2 Samuel 12:7–15; Matthew 5:10–12; and 2 Timothy 4:1–5
- Throughout the monarchy, God continued to raise up prophets who would speak His word to Israel's kings and the people of God.
- They usually told them things they really didn't want to hear.
- Very rarely would the kings repent and turn back to the Lord because of what the prophets preached, the way David did when Nathan confronted him (2 Kings 22:11; 2 Samuel 12).

Prophets are God's Messengers

- They usually rejected the prophets, persecuted them, or even killed them (Nehemiah 9:26; Matthew 5:12; 23:37).
- The life of a prophet was hard. In the days of David, they were treated well because David wanted to hear from the Lord, even if it was to be held accountable for his sin. But later prophets, such as Elijah and Jeremiah, found themselves on the run for their lives, beaten, or thrown into a pit to die.
- Some of the prophets were even given difficult assignments from God as part of their message – Hosea had to marry an adulteress; Jeremiah had to wear a yoke on his neck; Isaiah had to walk naked and barefoot for three years.

Prophets are God's Messengers

- The call to become a prophet wasn't a call to an easy, comfortable life.
- It was usually a call to persecution and rejection and could be scary to receive.
- Even Samuel, who was treated well as a prophet, was afraid at first to tell Eli the message God had for him because it wasn't good.
- We may not think about it when we read the story of Nathan's confronting David, because David responded well and repented, but Nathan took a huge risk in confronting the king like that.

Prophets are God's Messengers

- David had just had Uriah killed to cover up his sin.
- He could have had Nathan killed, too. But he didn't.
- He listened to the hard truth preached to him and repented.
- This is what made him different from most other kings, a man after God's own heart.

Prophets are God's Messengers

- God did not promise His prophets a comfortable or even a safe life, but He did promise to be with them (Jeremiah 1:7–8).
- Things might get really scary, but godly prophets fear God rather than people and choose to deliver His message even if it means they may be killed for it (Matthew 10:28).
- Godly prophets preach God's Word, no matter the cost to themselves.

Prophets are God's Messengers

- The New Testament says that disciples of Jesus can expect persecution like the prophets experienced from those who don't want to hear the hard truths (Matthew 5:10-12; John 15:18-27).
- But Scripture tells us that rebuke and correction from God's Word is how we grow (2 Timothy 3:16).
- We are to preach the hard truths of God's Word no matter what people want to hear (2 Timothy 4:1–5).
- This is the calling of “prophets.”

Prophets are God's Messengers

- The role of the prophets points us ahead to Christ
- Deuteronomy 18:15–22; John 7:37–44; 12:49–50; and Hebrews 1:1–4
- Moses promised that the Lord would raise up a prophet like himself who would speak all that God commanded him (Deuteronomy 18:15–18).
- Jesus told His disciples that, like a true prophet, He didn't speak His own words but only what the Father told Him to say (John 12:49–50).

Prophets are God's Messengers

- God told Moses that this prophet to come was the one to whom we should listen, and when John baptized Jesus, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased. Listen to him!” (Matthew 17:5).
- Like the prophets of the Old Testament, Jesus was persecuted, rejected, and even killed for His message.
- The powers that be didn't want to hear what He had to say, so they conspired to kill him (John 11:47–53).

Prophets are God's Messengers

- Jesus told His disciples that the world hated him because He was not of this world, and the people of the world loved the darkness rather than the light (John 3:16–21; 15:18–27).
- Yet, Jesus continued to preach God's message, no matter the cost to Himself (Luke 22:42).
- Jesus' teaching was different from any prophet who came before Him.
- People were amazed at His teaching, not only because of what He taught but also the authority with which He taught (Matthew 7:28–29).

Prophets are God's Messengers

- Miraculous signs accompanied His teaching so that people would know He was from God (Acts 2:22).
- Most people who met Jesus figured He must be a prophet (John 4:19).
- Many asked if He were the prophet whom Moses had promised (John 7:40).
- A prophet “like Moses” would be one to whom God spoke directly – mouth to mouth, not through dreams, visions or riddles (Numbers 12:6–8).

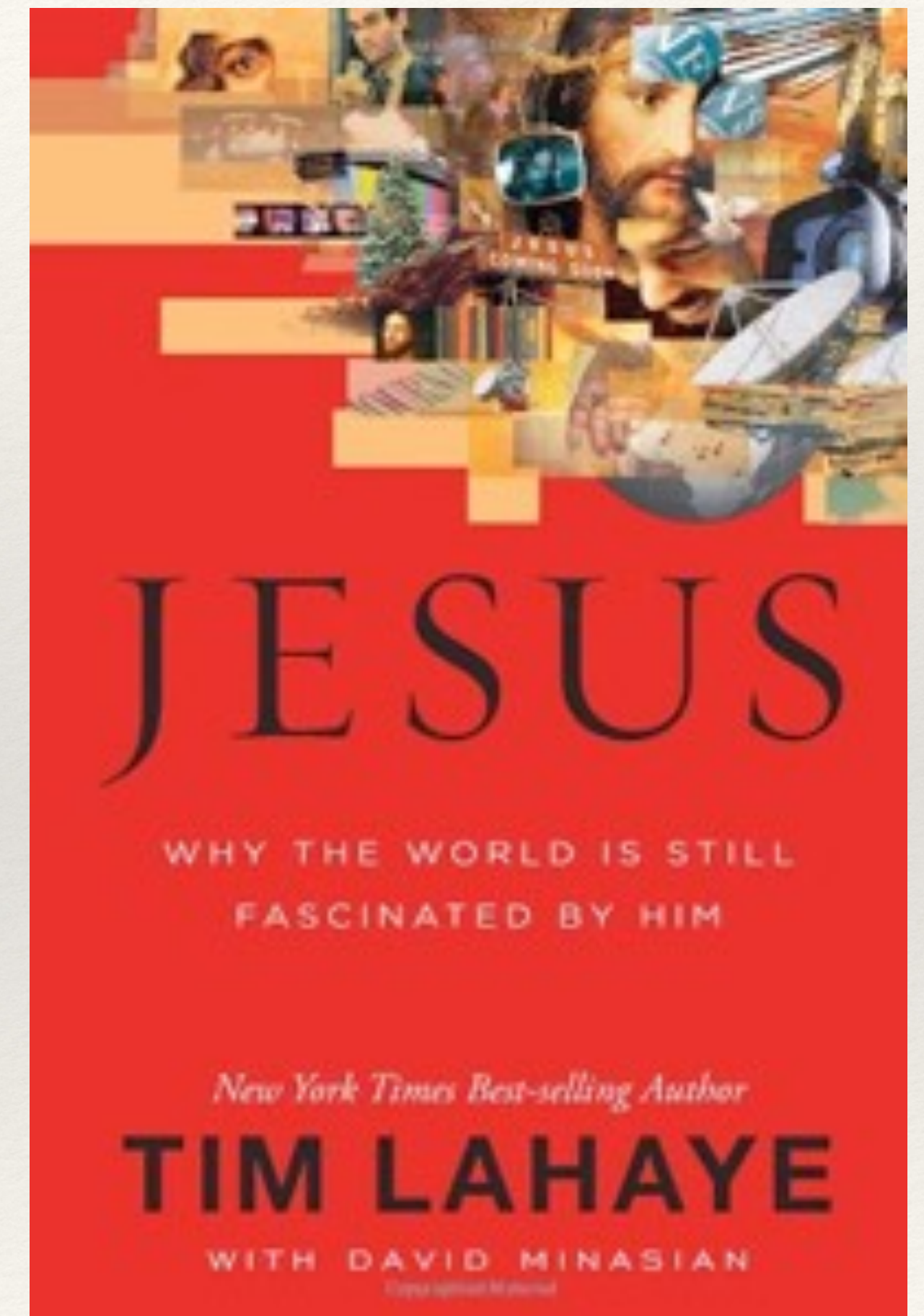
Prophets are God's Messengers

- We know that Jesus spoke directly with God (John 11:42), but even more, Jesus and the Father are one (John 10:30).
- The writer of Hebrews tells us that for centuries, God spoke to His people through prophets, but now He speaks to us through His Son (Hebrews 1:1-4).
- Not only the words of Jesus, but the very person of Jesus. His very person speaks God's word to us. This is why John called Him "The Word" (John 1:1). Jesus was the Word of God made flesh.

Application: Evangelism

Moses and Jesus

- One chapter in this book compares Moses to Jesus. A good witnessing approach to our Jewish friends.
- Moses stands as one of the preeminent heroes of the Judeo-Christian tradition.
- Prophecy in Deuteronomy 18:15-18 indicates that the coming Messiah would be a prophet like Moses.
- Talmud - Messiah will be the greatest of future prophets - spirit like Moses.



Moses and Jesus

- Both men spent their infant years in Egypt.
- Both men grew to become tremendous leaders, teachers, and prophets.
- Both men fasted for 40 days.
- Both men delivered the law from a mountain (Moses - 10 Commandments, Jesus - Sermon on the Mount).
- Both men performed remarkable miracles before eyewitnesses.
- Both men had power over demonic forces.

Moses and Jesus

- Both men has power over bodies of water (Moses - Red Sea, Jesus - Sea of Galilee).
- Both men's faces shone with the glory of heaven (Mt. Sinai, Transfiguration).
- Moses lifted up brazen serpent to heal his people. Jesus was lifted up on the cross to heal believers from sin.
- Seventeenth day of Nisan - Moses and Jesus offered salvation to the people.
- Both men died on hill, but their bodies did not remain in a tomb.

Resource

