

May 1

THE EARLY PROPHETS OF ISRAEL



FIFTH COURSE:

**OLD TESTAMENT
STUDIES** by WELDON
VIERTEL

CARIB BAPTIST PUBLICATIONS



STUDY GUIDES

BIBLICAL BACKGROUNDS

- No. 72201 *The Bible and Its Interpretation* - Viertel - 150 pgs.
No. 72219 *Old Testament World* - Viertel -
No. 72259 *New Testament Background* - Viertel - 150 pgs.

OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

- No. 72221 *Studies in The Pentateuch* - Viertel - 144 pgs.
No. 72240 *Early Prophets of Israel* - Viertel -

NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

- No. 72263 *The Life and Ministry of Christ* - Viertel - 123 pgs.
No. 72265 *The Gospel and Epistles of John* - Viertel - 189 pgs.
No. 72266 *Early Church Growth: Acts* - Viertel -
No. 72271 *Living by Faith: Romans and Gal.* - Viertel - 200 pgs.
No. 72279 *The Testing of Faith: Heb.— 2 Peter, Jude* - Viertel - 223 pgs.

CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

- No. 72310 *The Christian Doctrine of God* - Viertel - 209 pgs.
No. 72340 *The Doctrines of Man and Salvation* - Viertel - 209 pgs.
No. 72360 *The Kingdom and Eschatology* - Viertel - 191 pgs.

HOMILETICS

- No. 72511 *Sermon Building* - Gericke - 135 pgs.
No. 72513 *The Pastor's Pulpit Ministry* - Viertel - 208 pgs.

PASTORAL MINISTRY

- No. 72532 *Pastor's Personal Life and Duties* - Viertel - 120 pgs.
No. 72540 *Pastoral Leadership* - Viertel -

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

- No. 72610 *Biblical Ethics and Contemporary Issues* - Giles -
No. 72618 *Christian Family Life* - Viertel -

MISSIONS

- No. 72660 *Missions Today: Biblical Basis and Strategy* - Scanlon

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- No. 72681 *The Church Teaching and Training* - Graves - 152 pgs.

CHURCH HISTORY

- No. 72701 *Early and Medieval Christianity* - Viertel-Womack - 221 pgs.

EVANGELISM

- No. 72695 *Personal Involvement in Evangelism* - Viertel

THE EARLY PROPHETS OF ISRAEL

FIFTH COURSE:

OLD TESTAMENT STUDIES

by

WELDON VIERTEL

CARIB BAPTIST PUBLICATIONS

© Copyright 1977 by Carib Baptist Publications. All rights reserved.

Box 4255, El Paso, Texas 79914

Printed by the Baptist Spanish Publishing House

El Paso, Texas

B S P H Art. No. 72240

CONTENTS

SUGGESTED TEXTBOOKS	4
PREFACE	5
MINISTERIAL TRAINING BY GUIDED STUDY	7
INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE STUDY GUIDE	8
LESSON 1 The Nature of Prophecy	11
LESSON 2 Eighth Century Prophets in Israel	24
LESSON 3 Eighth Century Prophets in Judah	39
LESSON 4 Judgement Against Judah (Isaiah 1:1–5:30)	54
LESSON 5 Political Crises and Messianic Hope (Isaiah 6:1–12:6)	63
LESSON 6 Oracles Against Foreign Nations (Isaiah 13:1–23:18)	76
LESSON 7 Judgement of the World and Warnings to Judah (Isaiah 24:1–33:29)	90
LESSON 8 Eschatological Discourses and Hezekiah's Crises (Isaiah 34:1–39:8)	106
LESSON 9 Part I: Introduction to Second Isaiah	118
Part II: The Greatness of Israel's God (Isaiah 40:1–45:13)	121
LESSON 10 Yahweh as Saviour and Judge (Isaiah 45:14–52:12)	135
LESSON 11 The Suffering Servant and Israel's Restoration (Isaiah 52:13–58:14)	150
LESSON 12 The New Age (Isaiah 59:1–66:24)	164
BIBLIOGRAPHY	181

SUGGESTED TEXTBOOKS

All Levels:

The New English Bible or the New American Standard Bible

Levels 2 and 3:

Wright, G. Ernest. The Book of Isaiah in The Layman's Bible Commentary. Vol. 11. Edited by Balmer H. Kelly. London: SCM Press Ltd., 1964.

ABBREVIATIONS

AV or KJV	Authorized or King James Version*
LNT	Living New Testament
NASB	New American Standard Bible
NEB	New English Bible
RSV	Revised Standard Version

* Scripture quotations are from the Authorized Version except when otherwise indicated.

PREFACE

The purpose of this study guide is to give an introduction to the prophetic institution of Israel. The function of the prophets differed greatly from that of the priests in Israel's religious practices. The priests represented sinful people before God. The people sought God's acceptance through the offering of animal sacrifices. The prophets received revelation from God and proclaimed the Word of the Lord.

In a sense, prophetism started with Moses and continued to play a major role in Israel's religious life in Old and New Testament times. John the Baptist was the last prophet of the Old Covenant. According to Acts 2, every Christian is qualified by the Holy Spirit to speak forth God's Word (prophesy). The word from the Lord in the New Testament is the gospel.

The major part of this study guide deals with Isaiah. Most scholars agree that the first thirty-nine chapters of Isaiah may be dated in the mid-eighth century B.C. and the latter part of the book two centuries later. Technically, Isaiah 40-66 does not fit under the title "The Early Prophets," but a study of these chapters is included in order to give continuity to the study of this greatest book of the prophets. The terms First Isaiah (chs. 1-39) and Second Isaiah (chs. 40-66) will be used to distinguish between the writings of the eighth century prophet and those of the exilic prophet. Some scholars credit the latter part of Second Isaiah (chs. 56-66) to a third author. Since the purpose of this study guide is to examine the theological teachings of Isaiah rather than to solve the critical problems of authorship, little attention will be given to proving or disproving authorship of the various chapters.

The student will observe similarities between Micah and parts of Isaiah. The messages of Amos and Hosea also resemble; however, their basic emphases are different.

This study guide is intended to be only an introduction to the history and theology of the early prophets. Numerous commentaries are available for the student who desires a more extensive study.

El Paso, Texas
July, 1977

WELDON E. VIERTEL

MINISTERIAL TRAINING BY GUIDED STUDY

Ministerial Training by Guided Study is designed to introduce students on various levels of academic preparation to the Bible and related areas. This is not a correspondence course, nor the traditional lecture system, but a new approach in education. The goal of the programme is to make quality theological training available to all students. Family and church responsibilities and lack of academic prerequisites and finances prevent many men and women who have been called of God from improving their ministry through training. These obstacles can be overcome by an approach which emphasizes self-study and weekly small group discussions. The study guides are designed for students on three levels of preparations:

1. Students with some primary education
2. Students with some secondary education
3. Students with university qualifications

Although this course is designed primarily for pastors and ministerial candidates with no seminary training, laymen and lay preachers can also benefit from some of the courses. Pastors with divinity degrees might use some of the study guides as refresher courses while serving as leaders of study groups and conveners of the weekly seminars.

Study guides are used to direct private and group activities in the mastery of the content of a subject. They contain the basic content for each subject and recommend supplementary sources for a more advanced study. Questions are included to direct the attention of the student to the important facts in the lessons and to provide an immediate response to the material read. Weekly seminars of approximately an hour for each subject provide opportunities for the discussion of issues related to the subjects and their practical application in contemporary life. A teacher or tutor guides the seminar discussions, but the students from all three levels present and discuss their ideas. When students come to the seminar with a basic understanding of the lesson, the seminar can be dedicated to enrichment of the subject and to discussion of the practical use of the material in the life of the Church.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR USING THE STUDY GUIDE

Text and learning activities

The study guide is designed primarily for home study. When the guide is opened, the text appears on the left side of the page, and questions requiring an immediate response to the material read are on the right. The student should read a paragraph before reading and answering the question or questions for that paragraph. If there are no questions for a paragraph, he may wish to make a few notes on that paragraph and move on to the next. The questions and answers should be covered with a strip of paper (see following insert) until the paragraph has been read and the student is ready to answer each question. Then the cover sheet should be moved down the page far enough to enable the reading of the question and the writing of the answer. The answer according to the text appears immediately under the question. After the student has written his own answer, he may then compare it with the given answer. If the two are not the same, the paragraph in the text should be read again.

Home study exercises

A home study assignment appears at the end of each lesson. The study guide contains the basic content for each lesson, and the questions of the *basic assignment* are to be answered by all three levels. After reading the text and doing the learning activity on each page, the student should be able to answer most of the home study questions without further reference to the text. These questions are self-testing exercises. If a student is unsure of the correct answer, he has not learned adequately the material in that particular section, and he should review until he is sure that he understands the content. Some questions call for more extensive answers and require concentrated effort for mastery. The completed questions serve as a summary of the lesson and should be helpful as a review.

Students on Levels 2 and 3 are required to do *supplementary assignments* in addition to the basic exercises. The supplementary activities include sometimes a reading assignment in another book with questions to be answered.

Level 3 is required to do *advanced assignments* in addition to the basic and supplementary work. This work will vary according to the availability of library resources. Sometimes there will be questions over a parallel reading assignment in a recommended resource book. At other times, the questions will require independent or individual research. Bible dictionaries, encyclopaedias, and books on the subjects of the study guide are sources which should be consulted. A bibliography at the end of the study guide indicates where additional material may be found.

Seminar

It is suggested that the students of all three levels in a geographical area meet for an hour each week with a teacher or tutor to discuss the lesson with reference to—

1. problems encountered in home study in answering questions or in understanding the textual material;
2. the application of the lesson to the practical work of Christian ministry and conduct;
3. the significance of the lesson as a whole and its place in the total programme of ministerial training.

The fragmentary questions of the lesson may sometimes be answered without getting a picture of the lesson as a whole. It is also possible to learn the facts about Christianity without seeing their application in the life of the Church. The student is responsible for getting the detailed information of the lesson in his home study. Understanding the over-all meaning of the lesson and its practical application should be the goal of the seminar.

Some seminar questions have been included with each lesson. Their purposes are—

- to stimulate interest (some are controversial questions which have not been resolved by scholars);
- to guide in the beginning of the seminar discussions;
- to direct attention to problems related to the material studied;
- to require original thinking which will lead to suggestions for the practical application of the material.

Teacher or tutor

The teacher or tutor may offer other seminar questions which are more relevant in a given situation. He should feel free to use any approach he chooses as long as the discussion remains related to the material of the lesson. It is his responsibility to prevent the seminar discussion from departing from relevant issues.

The teacher may find that a brief test at the beginning of the seminar will be helpful. The test will encourage students to prepare more adequately their home study assignments and enable the teacher to evaluate the progress of each student. Two or three questions from the basic studies should be sufficient. Students who are not making satisfactory progress may need personal help and encouragement in preparing their lesson. They should not be overlooked!

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Use this sheet of paper to cover the learning activity on each page.

* * * * *

When you have finished reading each paragraph, slide the sheet down just far enough to expose the learning activity for that paragraph. If there is no activity, continue to the next paragraph.

Write your answers.

Then slide the sheet down farther to expose the suggested answers.

Compare your answers with the suggested ones. If they do not agree, reread the paragraph.

Continue to the next paragraph.

cut

LEARNING ACTIVITY

Use this sheet of paper to cover the learning activity on each page.

* * * * *

When you have finished reading each paragraph, slide the sheet down just far enough to expose the learning activity for that paragraph. If there is no activity, continue to the next paragraph.

Write your answers.

Then slide the sheet down farther to expose the suggested answers.

Compare your answers with the suggested ones. If they do not agree, reread the paragraph.

Continue to the next paragraph.