



THE STORY Sermon Study Guide

Week 6: The Prophets - Longing for God's Restoration in a Broken World

Darrell Jackson

7 September 2025

Visit the [NewHope Teaching](#) page to find this week's sermon

When we think about the Old Testament prophets, it can be tempting to imagine strange and distant figures with lofty, important callings far removed from our world today. But in reality, they were normal people living in the thick of daily life and speaking God's truth into difficult times. Like a doctor's diagnosis, their messages were sometimes painful, sometimes hopeful, but always pointing people back to God as their source.

We, too, live in times of uncertainty, injustice and fear. And we, too, are invited to be people who look to God, listen for His voice, and trust in His promises. This week we have the privilege of hearing from guest speaker Rev Associate Professor Darrell Jackson, Principal of Whitley College, as together we explore the voices of three prophets—Isaiah, Micah and Jeremiah.

Read Isaiah 6:1-8

Isaiah's story begins with a vision of God in the temple. He sees the Lord high and exalted, the train of His robe filling the temple, with angels declaring His holiness. Isaiah is undone. He cries, *"Woe to me, I am ruined!"* He sees his own sin and the brokenness of his people.

But God doesn't leave him there. A seraph touches his lips with a live coal, cleansing him. Then comes the question: *"Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?"* Isaiah responds, *"Here am I. Send me!"*

Isaiah's encounter reminds us that before we can represent God or speak on His behalf, we must first be undone by His holiness. The invitation is to **look**—to see and



know the living God in a way that strips away our self-sufficiency and exposes our need for grace. Only then can we truly respond as Isaiah does, “Here am I, send me.”

1. When was the last time you allowed yourself to be undone in God’s presence? What would it look like to set aside your self-sufficiency and simply ask God to show you His holiness today?
2. Darrell noted that Isaiah wasn’t called or commissioned—he volunteered when God asked “Who will go for us?” What does this teach us about responding to God’s invitation in our lives?
3. In what ways might God be inviting you, like Isaiah, to step forward and say, “Here I am, send me”?

Read Micah 6:6-8

Micah saw injustice up close: leaders exploiting the poor, worship disconnected from real life, and people going through religious motions without living faithfully. Today, as in Micah’s day, it can be easy to substitute activity—church attendance, volunteering, even prayer—for the harder work of loving those on the margins and seeking justice for the vulnerable. Yet, God isn’t looking for empty rituals, He requires lives that reflect His heart.

Micah calls the people to ***listen*** and return to what matters, “*To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.*” This is not a checklist, but an invitation to a transformed way of being that responds with our lives, not just our lips.

1. Why do you think God values justice, mercy and humility more than religious performance?
2. What would it look like to “walk humbly with God” in your daily routines?
3. Who in your life or community is vulnerable or overlooked? What is one concrete way you can act with justice or mercy toward them today?

Read Jeremiah 31:31-34

God’s promise through Jeremiah is not a new set of instructions carved on tablets of stone, but a new kind of relationship where God’s law is written on our very hearts. This new covenant represents a move from external rules to internal transformation—a life so shaped by God’s presence that obedience becomes a natural response, not a burdensome duty.



God's love is not something to be earned, but received. This is the gift of the gospel. When we trust that God's Spirit is at work within us, we find ourselves wanting to follow Him, not out of fear or obligation, but out of joy.

The prophets invite us to **trust** in this promise, ultimately fulfilled in Christ our Saviour.

1. Darrell compared having God's law written on our hearts to instinctively knowing your way home without the need for GPS directions. Have you experienced God's Spirit leading you in this way as you walk in close relationship with Him?
2. In what area of your life do you find yourself following God out of obligation rather than love? How might you invite God to write His desires on your heart today?
3. How does experiencing God's grace as a gift rather than something to earn affect how you relate to God and others?

Optional Activity

The prophets show us that God is always speaking—sometimes with comfort, sometimes with challenge, but always with faithfulness. Our calling as disciples is to respond: to **look** for God's presence in both beauty and brokenness, to **listen** for His voice in Scripture and in the cries of the vulnerable, and to **trust** His promises even when circumstances seem hopeless. This is how we become signs pointing others to the truth of God's love and faithfulness in a world that desperately needs it.

Which of these three—look, listen, or trust—do you sense God emphasising for you right now?

Invite group members to write down one area where they feel God is calling them to **look**, **listen**, or **trust** this week. Place the papers in the middle of the circle (or keep them personal if preferred). Spend time praying over these commitments together.

For Further Study

Want to dive deeper into the prophets? Why not try:

- Reading the full context of each passage this week.
- Reading through one of the shorter prophetic books (like Micah or Malachi).
- Reflecting on how Jesus fulfils the prophetic promises. Here are a few places to start:



- Read through Isaiah 53 and compare it with the Gospel accounts of Jesus' crucifixion
- Explore how Hebrews 8-10 explains Jesus as the fulfilment of Jeremiah's new covenant
- Study the Gospels and look for times when Jesus quotes or references the prophets.

Suggested Closing Prayer

Loving Lord God, thank you for speaking to us through the prophets' messages. We are grateful for Isaiah's vision that calls us to truly see you; for Micah's reminder to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with you; and for Jeremiah's promise of a new covenant written on our hearts in close relationship with you.

Help us to be people who look, listen and trust. Give us prophetic imagination and holy courage for the challenges of our time.

Thank you that these ancient voices still point us faithfully to Jesus, our Saviour and our King, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Bible Reading Plan & Resources

As we engage in this sermon series and reflect on 'The Story' of God's redemptive pursuit of humanity, we invite you to practise the discipline of regular Bible reading. You may like to use the [NewHope Bible Reading Plan](#) which has been developed to accompany each sermon over the next 12-weeks. Get a physical copy at church, download a digital copy from our website or follow NewHope in the Bible App for daily updates.

There are also many other wonderful ways to engage with Scripture and you can find a collection of resources, such as books, apps, courses, and more at newhope.net.au/the-story.