

The Prophetic Tradition

Who?	When? (all BC)	To whom?	What?
Samuel (nonwriting)	1040–1020	The tribes of Israel	Anoints Israel’s first two kings, Saul and David, but warns the people of the dangers of having a king.
Nathan (nonwriting)	1000	David	Tells David that he and his family will suffer because of David’s sins of adultery and murder.
Elijah (nonwriting)	875–850	Israel	Challenges belief in the god Baal.
Elisha (nonwriting)	850–820	Israel	Performs miracles and cures.
Amos	750	Israel	Condemns empty ritualism and the oppression of poor people.
Hosea	750	Israel	Compares Israel’s betrayal of God to his own wife’s infidelity.
Micah	725	Israel and Judah	Looks ahead to a time of justice and peace.
First Isaiah	742–700	Judah	Prophecies about Immanuel.
Zephaniah	630	Judah	Tells of a time of judgment for unfaithful Judah; preaches the idea of a humble remnant.
Jeremiah	626–570	Judah	Condemns idolatry, injustice, and foolish defiance of Babylon; offers hope of a new Covenant, which will be “written on the hearts of the people.”
Nahum	612	Judah	Rejoices over the coming destruction of Assyria.
Habakkuk	609–598	Judah	Asks why God does not stop human evil by punishing Judah.
Ezekiel	600–570	Judah and the Babylonian exiles	Performs pantomimes of Jerusalem’s coming destruction; later offers the exiles hope of restoration and a new Covenant.
Obadiah	after 587	The Babylonian exiles	Condemns Edom for “fratricide” in helping Judah’s enemies.
Second Isaiah	550	The Babylonian exiles	Consoles the exiles with the joyous expectation of returning home; tells of a suffering servant who will save the people.
Third Isaiah	540–510	The postexilic community	Calls for true fasting—that is, works of justice and mercy; proclaims God as the God of all the nations.
Haggai	520–515	The postexilic community	Spurs the people into rebuilding the Temple.
Zechariah	520	The postexilic community	Describes the messianic age; portrays the messiah as a king of peace.
Malachi	500	The postexilic community	Condemns sacrilegious offerings and materialism.
Joel	400	The postexilic community	Calls for fasting and prayer after a plague of locusts.