

Poetry & Prophecy

1 Tool: Summary Sheet

Poetry & Prophecy is a big grouping of several different types of writing. One thing that ties these different types of books together is their use of metaphors. Metaphors help bring the emotion & truth behind a situation to life. Within this group include different types of songs, poems, proverbs and prophecies. Each reveals God’s truth in a different and creative way. These books are often describing metaphorically what’s happened in the History section and pointing forward to what will happen when Jesus comes.

Psalms

The title Psalms comes from the Greek word for songs. This book contains many different types of songs written about God and sung to Him. They give us a peek into the emotions of the authors as they experience life with God. As you are reading, try to identify the different song types including:

- Thanksgiving- songs that give God thanks
- Lament- calling out to God during difficult times
- Praise- Calls for God’s people to praise
- Wisdom- Similar to Proverbs giving general truths of life

Some of the Psalms also look forward to Jesus prophetically, as you are reading look to see how they help us understand who He is.

Prophets

In the History section, we’ve already read about some of God’s prophets like Elijah and Elisha and their role to proclaim God’s will to the people. In this section we will read the writing prophets, those whose prophecies were written out in the last 17 books of the Old Testament. All of these prophets are also declaring God’s truth to the people, emphasizing the need of the northern and southern kingdom of Israel to repent of their sins or face judgment. The prophets are actually writing to different groups at different periods of time. Use the chart below to help you see if the prophet was prophesying to the north or south and when in Israel’s history they were speaking.

Before Israel is conquered	After Israel falls, before Judah exiled	During the exile of Judah	After Judah has returned to the land
Amos Jonah Hosea Isaiah Micah	Jeremiah/ Lamentations Nahum Habakkuk Zephaniah	Ezekiel Daniel Obadiah	Haggai Zechariah Malachi

Prophet to Israel (Northern Kingdom)
Prophet to Judah (Southern Kingdom)

Wisdom

Wisdom books focus on everyday life and show it’s relation to God. Proverbs gives general truth and wisdom, starting with the most important truth “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge”(Prov. 1:7) It is a picture of how the world usually works. Job, in contrast takes us into the experience of life not seeming to work as it should. Through Job’s example we learn more about God’s sovereign plans. Ecclesiastes was written by King Solomon, someone experiencing the best of what this world has to offer, money, power, wisdom, wives & concubines. Through his experience we learn that nothing satisfies. All is meaningless apart from God.

Job

Shows us an example of when life does not seem fair

Proverbs

General truth and wisdom for life; not promises, but explanations of how the world works most of the time

Ecclesiastes

Shows us the truth about life- everything is vanity apart from God

And taking the twelve, he said to them, “See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. For he will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. Luke 18:31-32