

Hermeneutics – Prophets Hermeneutic

“What drives this entire process is a precise hermeneutical core. Fundamentally, we observed the prophets read the Scriptures meticulously. They knew past texts from their general ideas down to their individual words and everything in between (meaning). They also had an immense awareness of the implications of these passages (significance). They knew ideas had consequences and were aware of particular theological consequences already discussed and defined by previous writers. The depth of their understanding of a text's meaning and significance—their hermeneutic—provides a profound platform for progressive revelation. It provides the rich concepts, implications, and framework from which the prophets continue the work of their predecessors, enhancing the details about a text's implications on theology and redemptive history via new revelation. This sets up for others to build upon their work, which results in chains of Old Testament texts that richly dig into the particular ramifications of a certain passage.”

— Abner Chou, *The Hermeneutics of the Biblical Writers, Learning to Interpret Scripture from the Prophets and Apostles*, (Kregel Publications, a division of Kregel Inc., 2450 Oak Industrial Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505-6020., 2018), 90.

“How does this help us in our quest for authorial logic? In evaluating the New Testaments' use of the Old, having the complete picture of the Old Testament is essential. This chapter has argued the prophets were skillful and thoughtful in handling God's Word. They began to put theological puzzle pieces together which provide a framework for the apostles. When seeing the hermeneutical accuracy and biblical theological complexity of the prophets, the assertions of the apostles may not be as big of a jump as we might have thought. Perhaps some of the confusion over the New Testaments' use of the Old stems from under-reading the Old Testament writers. Succinctly put, this chapter shows that the prophets do have a rationale and it is intertextual, precise, and sophisticated. Along that line, the reality of the prophetic hermeneutic should not only change how we view the prophets but also how we read them. Their exegetical precision reminds us why we take great care with Scripture. They paid attention to authorial intent not only on a general level but down to the very word. This grounds our exegetical method. Our exegetical attention to detail is not over-reading a text but reflects the prophetic hermeneutic, how they believed Scripture communicated. Moreover, the idea that the prophets are theologians elevates how we view their writings. Perhaps our view of the prophets has made us read their works as simplistic. We may see the history of Kings or Chronicles as merely a sort of recounting of events with some moral lesson. We may see poems as merely a sort of encouragement for our souls. These ideas have some merit to them; however, there is so much more occurring in the Old Testament. The prophetic hermeneutic attests every story, poem, and prophecy is an advancement of theology, one that shapes how we understand biblical and systematic theology, one that reflects God's person, promises, and plan; one that in turn shapes our lives. We can and should find theology in the Old Testament. We just need to see how the prophets' writings incorporate past revelation to produce such theological development.”

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