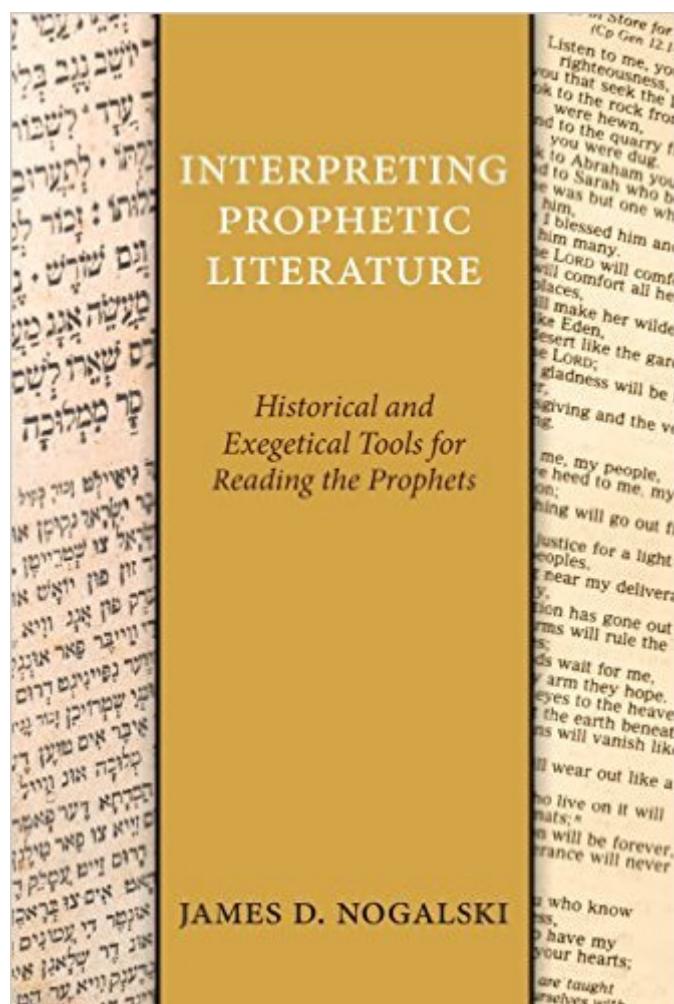


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# Interpreting Prophetic Literature: Historical And Exegetical Tools For Reading The Prophets



## **Synopsis**

Exegeting a text burrowing deep into its history, language, and literary structure is an indispensable skill for any serious student of the Bible. Given their theological richness and poetic power, the prophetic texts of the Hebrew Bible would seem to be prime candidates for exegetical examination, but they often pose difficulty. In this book, James Nogalski offers solid, practical guidance on how to read and exegete a prophetic text in its literary, historical, and conceptual contexts. Assuming no prior knowledge of Hebrew, Nogalski devises an exegetical method that focuses on the distinctive elements of prophetic literature, rather than on the narrative material one finds in practically all introductions to exegesis. He provides clear examples for understanding poetic texts, prophetic genres, changing voices, and other important aspects of these texts. This book offers essential tools to help readers navigate the particular challenges and opportunities of interpreting the prophets.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

"Jim Nogalski has produced a tremendously useful exegetical primer for the prophetic books of the Bible (rather than yet another summary of their contents). There is nothing else like it currently in print. Concisely and judiciously, he treats prophetic speech formulas, parallelism, key terms, symbolic acts, literary forms, syntactical connectors, catchwords and major themes. He pays particular attention to the basic challenge of identifying speaker, addressee and context, especially in translation, and provides well-chosen examples. I recommend his book for any introductory course on the Prophets." --Stephen B. Chapman, Duke University "Seminary students, professors,

and interested lay persons will thank Nogalski profusely for this clear and concise demystification of the terms, tools, and techniques utilized by biblical scholars. He provides more than a mere glossary of terms, demonstrating instead the use and usefulness of virtually the complete arsenal available to a student of Israel's prophetic literature. Most importantly, he makes this demonstration with a view toward the ultimate objective of a theological reading of the prophets, namely, the final step of hearing them in the context of a contemporary life of faith within a community of faith." --Mark E. Biddle, Russell T. Cherry Professor of Old Testament, Baptist Theological Seminary at Richmond "Nogalski's book is the product of years of practical teaching experience, as well as scholarly reflection upon these ancient texts. Students coming to the exegesis of prophetic literature for the first time will find here a wealth of useful and immediately applicable information concerning how prophetic literature works, from its characteristic compositional elements to its historical settings, collection, and editing." --Steven Tuell, James A. Kelso Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary

James D. Nogalski is Professor and Chair of Graduate Studies in the Department of Religion at Baylor University. He has published numerous articles and books on the Old Testament prophets.

The prophetic books in the Hebrew Bible (Tanach, First or Old Testament) are difficult to read and interpret to many theology and Bible school students. Whether or not you end up as a paid professional serving local Christian congregations or have the chance to lead a small group or preach every now and then, you need tools for reading the prophets. In the primer *Interpreting Prophetic Literature: Historical and Exegetical Tools for Reading the Prophets*, James Nogalski, offers an impressive kit to help you out. Rather than being an introduction to each and every prophetic book or containing verse-by-verse commentaries, it shows structures, parallels and linguistic concepts which are hidden when you only superficially read these books. As a tool for exegesis (what's written here), and only introduce possible approaches to hermeneutics (how to apply the message), the book shows genres, protagonists, historical context and likely genesis of the scrolls. Much attention is given to the Latter Prophets (Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the Twelve minor prophets), composite collections containing speeches, commentary, narratives, and various poetic forms. The transmission, shaping, and updating of these materials into their final forms. A deep understanding of Hebrew is not required for this book. Nogalski challenges his audience to read the prophets for themselves, watch for patterns, and decide what could be a good or better translation for a specific piece of text. It may surprise you how effective certain linguistic structures

are, how little of the prophetic literature actually points (in)directly to Jesus Christ, and actually how relevant these ancient books are for contemporary congregations of believers.

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