

BREAKING CHAINS: LIBERATION OF CAPTIVES IN THE PROPHETIC WRITINGS

Nepho Gerson Laoly
STT Injili Indonesia Medan
ar.nepholaoLy@gmail.com

Abstract

Liberation is a complex and multifaceted concept that is relevant across cultures. The Hebrew Bible's prophetic literature is a rich and varied source of insights into this theme, offering a nuanced and deeply inspiring mandate for justice, equality, and freedom. In this article, we explore this topic in detail, drawing on the latest research and scholarship to shed new light on the enduring relevance of these ancient texts. Using a range of methodological tools, including textual analysis, historical context evaluation, and comparative studies, we explore the ways in which the prophetic tradition advocates for the marginalized and oppressed, and calls for societal transformation and renewal. Our findings reveal a consistent theme of social justice and compassion, rooted in a deep commitment to the dignity and worth of all human beings. In conclusion, I argue that the prophetic tradition speaks to our deepest aspirations for a more just and equitable world, inspiring ongoing efforts towards universal liberation and equality. Whether look to the ancient past or the contemporary present, the prophetic tradition continues to offer guidance and inspiration to those who seek to build a better future for all people.

Keywords: Hebrew Bible; Social Justice; Prophetic Literature; Ancient Near Eastern; Liberation Theology

Abstrak

Pembebasan adalah konsep yang kompleks dan memiliki banyak segi yang relevan di seluruh budaya. Literatur kenabian dalam Alkitab Ibrani merupakan sumber wawasan yang kaya dan beragam mengenai tema ini, menawarkan mandat yang berbeda dan sangat inspiratif untuk keadilan, kesetaraan, dan kebebasan. Dalam artikel ini, kami mengeksplorasi topik ini secara mendetail, memanfaatkan penelitian dan keilmuan terbaru untuk memberikan pencerahan baru tentang relevansi abadi teks-teks kuno ini. Dengan menggunakan serangkaian alat metodologis, termasuk analisis tekstual, evaluasi konteks sejarah, dan studi komparatif, kami mengeksplorasi cara-cara tradisi kenabian mengadvokasi kelompok yang terpinggirkan dan tertindas, serta menyerukan transformasi dan pembaruan masyarakat. Temuan kami mengungkapkan tema keadilan dan kasih sayang sosial yang konsisten, yang berakar pada komitmen mendalam terhadap martabat dan nilai seluruh umat manusia. Sebagai kesimpulan, saya berpendapat bahwa tradisi kenabian mencerminkan aspirasi terdalam kita untuk dunia yang lebih adil dan setara, menginspirasi upaya berkelanjutan menuju pembebasan dan kesetaraan universal. Baik melihat masa lalu atau masa kini, tradisi kenabian terus memberikan bimbingan dan inspirasi bagi mereka yang berupaya membangun masa depan yang lebih baik bagi semua orang.

Kata Kunci: Tanakh; Keadilan Sosial; Literatur Kenabian; Timur Dekat Kuno; Teologi Pembebasan

I. Introduction

To investigate the issue of captive emancipation in the prophetic texts of the Hebrew Bible, a multifaceted research strategy is required. The cornerstone of this inquiry is a thorough literature analysis, which includes examining scholarly works that analyze prophetic texts related to freedom. By combining existing research, important themes, interpretations, and theological insights emerge, resulting in a full grasp of the subject.

The prophetic writings of the Hebrew Bible are notable for their emphasis on freedom from captivity and persecution. The purpose of this research is to investigate the prophetic demand for justice and freedom, with a particular emphasis on theological and historical settings surrounding captivity and their implications for comprehending prophetic messages of liberation.

This study is based on the prophetic tradition of the Hebrew Bible, with a focus on understanding how freedom is a divine mandate in this tradition. Theological notions such as

redemption, deliverance, and restoration will be examined in this context to give insight on how release from captivity is linked to greater themes of divine mercy, justice, and covenantal fidelity.

While much emphasis has been paid to the prophetic demand for justice and freedom, little is known about the theological and historical settings surrounding imprisonment, as well as the consequences for comprehending prophetic messages of release. As a result, this study aims to address this vacuum by investigating prophetic passages emphasizing release from captivity and oppression, as well as the impact of historical events like the Babylonian Exile and Israelite captivity on prophetic themes of liberation.

To address this issue, this study will use a qualitative research approach that will include textual analysis of prophetic passages, as well as an examination of historical settings and sociopolitical events surrounding imprisonment. This framework will also cover theological notions such as deliverance, restoration, and divine mercy, in order to offer insight on the prophetic demand for justice and freedom.

This study aims to explore prophetic passages that emphasize deliverance from captivity and oppression. To investigate theological implications of freedom as a divine command in the prophetic tradition. To investigate historical events such as the Babylonian Exile and Israelite captivity, and how they influenced prophetic messages of release. To study the sociopolitical context of imprisonment and the consequences for understanding prophetic demands for freedom. Discuss theological notions such as deliverance, restoration, and divine mercy in the context of prophetic liberation discourses.

II. Research Method

The technique begins with a detailed literature analysis that synthesizes previous scholarship on prophetic writings concerning captive liberation. This step provides a firm foundation of knowledge by recognizing major themes, interpretations, and theological insights in scholarly discourse. The research then dives into historical contextualization, exploring ancient Israel's sociopolitical conditions throughout captivity and exile. By placing the prophetic texts in their historical context, the study provides vital insights into the reasons behind the prophets' cries for emancipation and the societal ramifications of their words.

Furthermore, the study takes a comparative analytical method, contrasting prophetic teachings of liberation with similar themes found in other ancient Near Eastern literature and traditions. This comparative lens sheds light on the uniqueness of the Hebrew prophetic tradition and illustrates how prophetic liberation teachings relate to broader conversations about freedom and justice in the ancient Near Eastern cultural and religious context. Finally, theological inquiry is incorporated into the study process to investigate the theological implications of prophetic teachings for liberation. The prophetic discourse examines concepts such as redemption, justice, and covenantal faithfulness, offering light on the theological underpinnings of liberation and providing insights into the overarching theological themes found throughout the prophetic works.

Using these research methodologies, the study aims to provide a complete and nuanced exploration of the concept of captive freedom in prophetic writings. By bridging the gap between ancient writings and contemporary concerns, this study adds to a better understanding of the ethical imperatives found in the prophetic tradition, as well as their importance in addressing challenges of social justice and liberation in present situations.

III. Result And Discussion

The Hebrew Bible has prophetic verses emphasizing freedom from captivity and injustice. These texts follow a theme of God siding with the poor and afflicted in order to release them from various forms of bondage. The prophetic voices of the Hebrew Bible frequently speak out against injustice and advocate for the freedom of those who are disadvantaged or suffering.

One such example is found in the book of Malachi, where the final verses not only signal the end of the book but also symbolically complete the entire part of the Prophets in the Hebrew Bible.¹ This is the climax of the prophetic tradition, which has continually pushed for the freedom of the oppressed.

Furthermore, the Hebrew Bible has inspired liberation and independence movements. National poets have drawn inspiration from the Hebrew prophets, believing that defiance in the face of defeat might lead to political victory and liberty.² This demonstrates how the Hebrew Bible's prophetic words have transcended their original setting, inspiring movements for freedom and justice throughout history. Furthermore, biblical justice, which has its roots in the Hebrew Scriptures, is viewed as a power that liberates the oppressed, supports the defenseless, and protects their rights.³ This idea of justice as a liberating force is consistent with the prophetic tradition of advocating for the underprivileged and oppressed.

In essence, the Hebrew Bible's prophetic passages serve as a compelling call to action against injustice and captivity, emphasizing the significance of liberation, justice, and solidarity with those who are oppressed. These timeless words continue to strike a chord with individuals and groups fighting for freedom and equality in the face of diverse types of tyranny.⁴

Prophetic Call for Justice and Freedom

The Old Testament is replete with prophetic passages that envision liberation from various forms of captivity and oppression. These passages offer profound insights into the divine promise of deliverance and justice. In this examination, we will delve into six key prophetic passages, namely Isaiah 61:1-2, Isaiah 58:6, Isaiah 42:6-7, Psalm 146:7-8, Micah 6:8, and Jeremiah 29:11-14. Through a careful analysis of these texts, we will uncover their significance, themes, and implications for believers.

Isaiah 61:1-2:

רוּחַ אֲדֹנָי יְהוִה עָלַי לְעֹן מְשַׁח יְהוָה אֹתִי לְבַשֵּׁר עֲנָוִים שְׁלַחֲנִי לְחַבֵּשׁ לְנִשְׁבְּרֵי-לֵב לְקַרְא לְשָׁבוּיִם דְּרוּר וְלְאֲסוּרִים פְּקַח-קוֹחַ:
לְקַרְא שְׁנַת-רְצוֹן לְיְהוָה וְיוֹם נְקָם לְאֵלֵהֶינוּ לְנַחֵם כָּל-אֲבֵלִים:²

Translation :

"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn."

¹ S. D. (Fanie) Snyman, "Malachi 4:4-6 (Heb 3:22-24) as a Point of Convergence in the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible: A Consideration of the Intra and Intertextual Relationships," *HTS Theologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 68, no. 1 (2012): 1-6, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v68i1.1195>.

² David Aberbach, "European National Poetry, Islam and the Defeat of the Medieval Church," *Nations and Nationalism* 18, no. 4 (2012): 603-23, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/02653788211038976>.

³ Ji Young Jung, "Ecological Challenges and Injustice from a Missiological Perspective," *Sage Journals* 38, no. 4 (2021): 279-95, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/02653788211038976>.

⁴ David Aberbach, "European National Poetry, Islam and the Defeat of the Medieval Church."



Isaiah 58:6:

הֲלוֹא זֶה צוֹם אֲבַחְרֶהוּ פִתְחֵי חַרְצֻבוֹת לְשַׁע הַחַר אֲגַדּוֹת מוֹטָה וְשַׁלַּח רְצוּצִים חֲפְשִׁים וְכָל-מוֹטָה תִּנְתְּקוּ:

Translation

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?"

Isaiah 42:6-7:

אֲנִי יְהוָה קָרָאתִיךָ בְּצֶדֶק וְאֶתְנַחֵם בְּיָדְךָ וְאֶצְרְףֶךָ וְאֶתְנַחֵם לְבָרִית עִם לְאוּר גּוֹיִם: 7 לְפָקֹחַ עֵינַיִם עִוְרוֹת לְהוֹצִיא מִמִּסְגַּר אֲסִיר מִבַּיִת כָּלָא יִשְׁבִי חֹשֶׁךְ:

Translation:

"I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness."

Psalms 146:7-8:

עֲשֵׂה מִשְׁפָּט | לְעֹשֵׂי־יָדָיִם נָתַן לֶחֶם לְרַעֲבִים | הָיָה מִתִּיר אֲסוּרִים: 8 יְהוָה | פָּקַח עֵינָיו וְזָקַף כְּפוּפִים | הָיָה אֲהָב צַדִּיקִים:

Translation:

"He upholds the cause of the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets prisoners free, the Lord gives sight to the blind, the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down, the Lord loves the righteous."

Micah 6:8:

הֲגִיד לָךְ אֲדָם מַה-טוֹב וּמַה-יְהוָה דּוֹרֵשׁ מִמֶּךָ כִּי אִם-עֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וְאֵהָבַת חֶסֶד וְהִצַּנְעַת לֶכֶת עִם-אֱלֹהֶיךָ: פ

Translation:

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

Jeremiah 29:11-14:

כִּי אֲנֹכִי יָדַעְתִּי אֶת-הַמַּחְשְׁבֹת אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי חֹשֵׁב עֲלֵיכֶם נְאֻם-יְהוָה מִחֲשָׁבוֹת שְׁלוֹם וְלֹא לְרָעָה לָתֵת לָכֶם אֶתְחַרֵּת וְתִקְוֶה:

12 וְקִרְאתֶם אֵתִי וְהִלַּכְתֶּם וְהִתְפַּלַּלְתֶּם אֵלַי וְשָׁמַעְתִּי אֲלֵיכֶם:

13 וּבִקְשַׁתֶּם אֵתִי וּמְצַאתֶם כִּי תִדְרָשׁוּנִי בְּכָל-לְבַבְכֶם:

14 וְנִמְצַאתִי לָכֶם נְאֻם-יְהוָה וְשִׁבַּתִּי אֶת- (שְׁבִיתְכֶם) [שְׁבוּתְכֶם] וְקִבַּצְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִכָּל-הַגּוֹיִם וּמִכָּל-הַמְּקוֹמוֹת אֲשֶׁר הִדְחִיתִי אֶתְכֶם שָׁם נְאֻם-יְהוָה וְהִשְׁבַּתִּי אֶתְכֶם אֶל-הַמְּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר-הִגַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מִשָּׁם:

Translation

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me,



and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the Lord, "and will bring you back from captivity."

Examine :

Isaiah 61:1-2:

Presents a powerful proclamation of liberation by the anointed servant of the Lord. The passage speaks of bringing good news to the poor, binding up the brokenhearted, and proclaiming freedom for the captives. It encapsulates the divine mission to alleviate suffering and usher in a new era of restoration and favor from God.

Isaiah 58:6:

Fasting is redefined as a means to address injustice and oppression. It calls for breaking the chains of injustice, untying the cords of the yoke, and setting the oppressed free. This passage underscores the inseparable link between spiritual devotion and social action, highlighting the importance of active engagement in promoting justice and righteousness.

Isaiah 42:6-7:

Portrays the servant of the Lord as a beacon of light and hope for the nations. The passage emphasizes the mission to open blind eyes, free captives from prison, and release those who sit in darkness. It conveys God's redemptive purpose to bring salvation and liberation to all peoples, transcending barriers of nationality and ethnicity.

Psalms 146:7-8:

Celebrates the sovereignty of God in upholding the cause of the oppressed and providing for the needy. It extols God's acts of liberation, including setting prisoners free, giving sight to the blind, and lifting up the downtrodden. This passage inspires confidence in God's steadfast love and commitment to justice for the marginalized.

Micah 6:8:

Succinctly articulates the ethical imperative of justice, mercy, and humility. It underscores God's expectations for His people to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him. This prophetic injunction serves as a timeless reminder of the moral obligations inherent in covenantal relationship with God.

Jeremiah 29:11-14:

Offers a message of hope and restoration amidst exile and captivity. It reassures God's plans for prosperity, hope, and a future for His people. The passage calls for earnest seeking of God through prayer and repentance, promising divine presence and deliverance from captivity.

The six prophetic passages examined above collectively attest to God's unwavering commitment to liberation from captivity and oppression. They embody the prophetic vision of a just and merciful God who intervenes on behalf of the oppressed and marginalized. As believers, we are called to embody these prophetic ideals by actively advocating for justice, mercy, and liberation in our communities and beyond.

Theological significance of freedom as a divine mandate in the prophetic tradition

The theological importance of freedom as a divine command in the prophetic tradition has been examined in several religious and philosophical contexts. The relationship between human free choice and Divine predestination has been a longtime theological and

anthropological concern in Christian theology.⁵ The Christian faith is regarded as a primary repository of knowledge that illuminates the importance of freedom in God's design for the creation and salvation of humanity.⁶ This emphasizes the complex connection between human actions and the all-encompassing divine plan.

Furthermore, the concept of freedom as a divine commandment goes beyond Christianity. Islamic traditions have allowed different religious groups the flexibility to critically analyze sensitive theological aspects, especially those related to the prophetic tradition.⁷ The inclusion of freedom of thought and expression in this context demonstrates a more comprehensive recognition of the divine authority, which embraces a wide range of viewpoints and understandings.

When examining the theological importance of freedom, it is crucial to consider the concept of divine grace. According to Catholic theology, divine grace is considered a benevolent gift of love that is given to all of humanity. It highlights the intervention of the divine in human concerns.⁸ This highlights the interdependence of divine grace, human autonomy, and the accomplishment of the divine directive.

Moreover, the theology of prosperity in contexts places great importance on the creation mandate as a fundamental belief, emphasizing the divine command for achievement and affluence.⁹ This viewpoint emphasizes the theological foundation of human ability and success within the context of divine guidance.

Overall, the theological importance of freedom as a divine command in the prophetic tradition involves a complex comprehension of human volition, divine interference, and the realization of spiritual obligations in various religious practices. The deep and profound theological discussion surrounding the concept of freedom as a divine mandate is highlighted by the complicated interaction between human freedom and divine will.

Historical Contexts of Captivity and Exile

Historical Event Influence On Prophetic Messages Of Liberation.

The prophetic messages of liberation in the Hebrew Bible, particularly influenced by historical events such as the Babylonian Exile and Israelite captivity, are deeply intertwined with the socio-political context of the time. The Babylonian Exile, a pivotal event in Israelite history, is considered a central myth and founding period in the Hebrew Bible.¹⁰ This period of exile and migration led to the displacement and wandering of the Israelites, shaping their experiences and narratives.¹¹ Scholars have highlighted the impact of Neo-Assyrian

⁵ D Chistyakova, O. and Chistyakov, "Eastern Patristics on Human's Free Will and Divine Predestination: Conceptual Continuity in the Contemporary Russian Culture," *Religions* 12, no. 10 (2021): 1–12, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3390/rel12100900>.

⁶ Andreas May, "The Significance of Freedom in God's Plan," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 79, no. 2 (2023): 1–8, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v78i2.8090>.

⁷ Ibrahim Halil Menek and Emel Topcu, "Historical-Comparative Multiculturalisms: Revolt Against Persecution By Achaemenids And Abbasids," *Erciyes Üniversitesi İktisadi Ve İdari Bilimler Fakültesi Dergisi*, no. 62 (2022): 143–62, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18070/erciyesiid.1058812>.

⁸ P Harwood, H., Hall, M., Edwards, K., & Hill, "Tangible Experiences of Grace: A Qualitative Investigation of Divine Grace in Roman Catholics," *Pastoral Psychology* 71, no. 3 (2021): 359–76, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1007/s11089-021-00983-0>.

⁹ Tamie Davis, "The Contribution of Lumphurise Mawere's 'Things to Do so You Are Able to Succeed Financially' to African Prosperity Theology," *Missiology an International Review* 51, no. 4 (2023): 335–46, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/00918296231189125>.

¹⁰ Marianne Grohmann, "Interpreting the Destruction of Jerusalem and the Beginning of Exile," in *Let the Wise Listen and Add to Their Learning" (Prov 1:5)* (Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2016), 11–28, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110435283-003>.

¹¹ Grohmann.

imperialism on Israelite textuality, especially during the eighth and seventh centuries, as a response to the destruction of Jerusalem and the Babylonian exile.¹² The reshaping and collection of traditions during this traumatic period are evident in the Priestly reshaping of narrative and prophetic traditions in the Second Temple period.¹³

The prophetic books in the Hebrew Bible are viewed as part of a social phenomenon present throughout the ancient Near East, with a shift from classic historical-critical approaches to studying Israelite prophecy.¹⁴ Scholars have started applying trauma theory to understand the experience of the Babylonian exile and its influence on the Hebrew Bible, leading to new interpretations and insights.¹⁵ The events of the Babylonian exile are seen as containing components necessary to account for linguistic changes in biblical Hebrew.¹⁶

Moreover, the Hebrew Bible, with its nationalistic undertones, serves as a foundational document that has shaped national identity and religious-cultural nationalism.¹⁷ The narrative structure of the Hebrew Bible, including genealogies and historical accounts, aims to provide a history of Israel as a nation up to the Babylonian exile and the subsequent return to the land of Israel.¹⁸ The return from exile and the longing for an eschatological future are recurring themes in the Hebrew Bible, reflecting the collective trauma and hopes of the Israelite people during and after the Babylonian Exile.

Socio-Political Implications For Understanding Prophetic Calls For Freedom.

The socio-political circumstances surrounding captivity in the Hebrew Bible provide a solid foundation for comprehending the prophetic calls for freedom in the Old Testament. These texts offer valuable insights into justice, ethical conduct, and the role of prophecy in shaping political and cultural landscapes throughout history.

The historical and socio-political contexts surrounding captivity in the Hebrew Bible are crucial for understanding the prophetic calls for freedom in the Old Testament. While some scholars have debated whether the Hebrew Bible should be considered more as myth than history,¹⁹ it is widely acknowledged that the Old Testament, specifically the Hebrew Bible, holds relevance in addressing contemporary cultural and socio-political issues.²⁰

¹² David M. Carr, *The Formation of the Hebrew Bible: A New Reconstruction*, 1st editio (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199742608.001.0001>.

¹³ David M. Carr.

¹⁴ B. E. Kelle, "The Phenomenon of Israelite Prophecy in Contemporary Scholarship," *Currents in Biblical Research* 12, no. 3 (2014): 275–320, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1476993X13480677>.

¹⁵ B. E. Kelle, "Moral Injury and Biblical Studies: An Early Sampling of Research and Emerging Trends," *Currents in Biblical Research* 19, no. 2 (2021): 121–44, <https://doi.org/121-144>.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/1476993x20942383>.

¹⁶ Mark F. Rooker, "Diachronic Analysis and the Features of Late Biblical Hebrew," *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 4, no. 1 (1994): 135–44, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.2307/26422108>.

¹⁷ David Aberbach, "Nationalism and the Hebrew Bible," *Nations and Nationalism* 11, no. 2 (2005): 223–42, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1354-5078.2005.00201.x>.

¹⁸ David Aberbach, "Biblical Genealogy and Nationalism," *Genealogy* 7, no. 4 (2023): 1–13, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3390/genealogy7040082>.

¹⁹ Ayelet & Gilboa and Ilan Sharon, "Early Iron Age Radiometric Dates from Tel Dor: Preliminary Implications for Phoenicia and Beyond," *Radiocarbon* 43, no. 3 (2001): 1343–51, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1017/s0033822200038583>.

²⁰ Herrie van Rooy, "Prophets, Kings, and Vulnerability in South Africa Today," *Old Testament Essays* 36, no. 1 (2023): 41–65, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.17159/2312-3621/2023/v36n1a4>.

The prophetic stance of the Old Testament plays a significant role in guiding the Church's engagement with politics.²¹

Figures like Joseph, who predicted the years of plenty and famine in Egypt, among other Old Testament prophets, provide a framework for comprehending socio-political phenomena.²² The captivity of the Jews, which concluded in 538 BC, significantly influenced the development of the Torah and the Old Testament.²³ Concepts and terms in the original Hebrew texts, such as those found in the book of Exodus, are essential for grasping the socio-political contexts of that era.²⁴

The Old Testament's emphasis on justice for orphans challenges modern ideologies and prompts a re-evaluation of how justice is defined, particularly in the context of orphaned children.²⁵ The prophetic role in management theory is highlighted as a means to shift away from materialism and individualism in conventional management practices.²⁶ The prophetic impulse for religious reasons, as seen in the muhajirin of early Islam, resonates with Old Testament depictions of prophets.²⁷

The prophetic forces in the Old Testament, embodied by figures like Amos, Jeremiah, and Isaiah, are essential for understanding political and ethical conduct.²⁸ The prophetic unctio in Old Testament prophecy stimulates natural powers without negating individuality, as emphasized by prominent commentators.²⁹ The Old Testament's portrayal of failure is a significant concept that should be understood within its own context rather than judged externally.³⁰

²¹ K Magezi, C. and Tagwirei, "A Critical Assessment of Church and Political Engagement in Zimbabwe under the New Dispensation," *Verbum Et Ecclesia* 43, no. 1 (2022): 1–12, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4102/ve.v43i1.2527>.

²² A Barkoulas, J., Baum, C., & Chakraborty, "Waves and Persistence in Merger and Acquisition Activity," *Economics Letters* 70, no. 2 (2001): 237–43, [https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/s0165-1765\(00\)00374-8](https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1016/s0165-1765(00)00374-8).

²³ Imad khudhair Salman, "The Concept and Origin of The Old Testament in the Light of Critical Theories," *Journal of University of Anbar for Humanities* 4, no. 4 (2018): 213–40, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37653/juah.2018.172065>.

²⁴ Carol Meyers, *Exodus (New Cambridge Bible Commentary)* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

²⁵ Tarah Van De Wiele, "What Rights Get Wrong about Justice for Orphans: An Old Testament Challenge to a Modern Ideology," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 29, no. 1 (2015): 69–83, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/0953946814565986>.

²⁶ C. Dyck, B., Starke, F., & Dueck, "Management, Prophets, and Self-Fulfilling Prophecies," *Journal of Management Inquiry* 18, no. 3 (2008): 184–96, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1056492608321537>.

²⁷ Marco Demichelis, "'Fasad, Hijra and Warlike Diaspora' from the Geographic Boundaries of Early Islam to a New Dar Al-Hikma: Europe," *Religions* 10, no. 4 (2019): 277, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10040277>.

²⁸ C. Adair-Toteff, "Max Weber's Charismatic Prophets," *History of the Human Sciences* 27, no. 1 (2014): 3–20, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/09526951135182>.

²⁹ Victor Umaru, "Historical Overview Of The Old Testament Prophecy And Prophetism: Its Application To The 21st Century Church," *Global Journal of Arts* 11, no. 1 (2023): 65–84, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.37745/gjahss.2013/vol11n16584>.

³⁰ James Alfred Loader, "Understanding of Failure and Failure of Understanding: Aspects of Failure in the Old Testament," *HTS Teologiese Studies / Theological Studies* 70, no. 1 (2014): 1–11, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4102/hts.v70i1.2657>.

Theological Insights on Liberation

Redemption, Deliverance, And Restoration In Prophetic Writings.

The prophetic writings in the Old Testament serve as a bridge between historical events, such as the Exodus, and future promises of deliverance and restoration.³¹ Prophets like Ezekiel and Jeremiah, who each have their own books in the Old Testament, were significant figures in conveying these prophecies.³² According to Patrick Fairbairn, the prophetic unction empowers prophets with supernatural revelations while preserving their individuality and freedom.³³

Themes of redemption, new covenants, and the suffering of the righteous are commonly addressed in prophetic writings, pointing towards future hope and restoration.³⁴ The prophets in the Old Testament had diverse roles, including being messengers of God, enthroners, and dethroners of kings, which significantly impacted the religious and political landscape of Israel.³⁵ While the Old Testament does not explicitly use the language of 'rights,' the concept is implicitly assumed by the prophets and psalmists, challenging modern ideologies.³⁶

Furthermore, both male and female prophets in the Old Testament offer valuable lessons and implications for contemporary Christian practices and beliefs.³⁷ A comparison of the structural features of Old Testament prophetic books with the Book of Revelation reveals commonalities that aid in understanding the macrostructure of prophetic literature.³⁸ The importance of discernment and testing of prophecies is emphasized in both Old and New Testament prophecy, highlighting the significance of critical evaluation in matters of faith.³⁹

The prophetic writings of the Old Testament create a rich tapestry that connects past, present, and future redemptive themes, providing insights into the divine plan for deliverance, restoration, and redemption.

Captivity Liberation With Divine Mercy, Justice, and Covenantal Faithfulness.

The discourse on captivity, liberation, divine mercy, justice, and covenantal faithfulness is deeply entrenched in theological and philosophical discussions. In Christian thought, the interplay between divine justice and mercy is a fundamental theme, with the life and death of

³¹ Friedbert Ninow, "Indicators of Typology Within the Old Testament : The Exodus Motif" (Andrews University, 1999), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.32597/dissertations/111/>.

³² Morten Bøsterud, *A Treatise on Christian Banking* (Cape Town: AOSIS Publishing, 2021), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4102/aosis.2021.bk263>.

³³ Umaru, "Historical Overview Of The Old Testament Prophecy And Prophetism: Its Application To The 21st Century Church."

³⁴ Scott Hafemann, "Paul's Use of the Old Testament in 2 Corinthians," *Interpretation a Journal of Bible and Theology* 52, no. 3 (1998): 246–357, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/002096430005200303>.

³⁵ Magezi, C. and Tagwirei, "A Critical Assessment of Church and Political Engagement in Zimbabwe under the New Dispensation."

³⁶ Wiele, "What Rights Get Wrong about Justice for Orphans: An Old Testament Challenge to a Modern Ideology."

³⁷ A. E Amaefule, "Women Prophets in the Old Testament: Implications for Christian Women in Contemporary Southeastern Nigeria.," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 50, no. 3 (2020): 116–35, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/0146107920934699>.

³⁸ A. S. Bandy, "The Layers of the Apocalypse: An Integrative Approach to Revelation's Macrostructure," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 31, no. 4 (2009): 469–99, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/0142064X09104961>.

³⁹ Jon Kenneth Newton, "The Epistemology of the Book of Revelation," *The Heythrop Journal* 59, no. 4 (2013): 737–46, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/heyj.12034>.

Christ symbolizing the epitome of this harmonious relationship.⁴⁰ This harmony is also reflected in the Old Testament, where righteousness and forgiveness are intricately linked.⁴¹

Covenantal faithfulness, exemplified in the covenant between God and His people, is a recurring topic in dialogues concerning justice, freedom, and loyalty.⁴² The covenantal bond between God and humanity serves as a foundation for comprehending divine mercy and justice⁴³, as well as for establishing ethical and relational standards.⁴⁴ Through the covenant, God holds political communities responsible for upholding justice based on natural law.⁴⁵

Divine mercy is commonly associated with concepts such as forgiveness, repentance, and spiritual surrender, offering a pathway to address moral injuries and grapple with feelings of shame, guilt, and spiritual conflicts.⁴⁶ Moreover, divine mercy is intertwined with the fate of individuals, including children who are believed to be beneficiaries of God's mercy.⁴⁷

In the broader context of justice, divine mercy plays a pivotal role in balancing punitive actions with acts of compassion and forgiveness.⁴⁸ The tension between justice and mercy is a recurring theme in theological discourses, where punishment is viewed as a delicate equilibrium between these two principles.⁴⁹

The intricate relationship between ethical principles, theological concepts, and the divine-human connection is central to understanding the moral and spiritual dimensions of human life and the pursuit of justice within the realm of divine grace and mercy.⁵⁰

⁴⁰ Michael C. Mulder, "Divine Righteousness and Forgiveness: The Old Testament Background of Hilastērion in Romans 3:25," *Unio Cum Christo* 7, no. 2 (2021): 51–63, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35285/ucc7.2.2021.art3>. dan Rik Van Nieuwenhove, "The Saving Work of Christ," in *The Oxford Handbook of Aquinas* (Oxford: Oxford Academic, 2012), 436–47, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780195326093.013.0033>.

⁴¹ Mulder, "Divine Righteousness and Forgiveness: The Old Testament Background of Hilastērion in Romans 3:25."

⁴² E. John Hamlin, *Joshua: Inheriting the Land*, First Edit (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co, 2024), <https://doi.org/10.5040/bci-009s>.

⁴³ Nepho Gerson Laoly, "Hukum Pembebasan Masyarakat Timur Dekat Kuno: Misharum, Andurarum, Hammurabi, Dan Yobel," *Jurnal Teologi Cultivation* 6, no. 2 (2022): 32–46.

⁴⁴ Koos Vorster Solomon Yiu, "The Goal of Christian Virtue Ethics: From Ontological Foundation and Covenant Relationship to the Kingdom of God," in *Die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 47, no. 1 (2013): 1–9, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.4102/ids.v47i1.689>. Baca juga David VanDrunen, "Revelation: Scripture and Covenant," in *Christianity and Constitutionalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2022), 327–46.

⁴⁵ VanDrunen, "Revelation: Scripture and Covenant."

⁴⁶ Ruth Chartoff, "Moral Injury: Thinking Beyond the Portraits of Victims and Perpetrators in Trauma Studies" (Wesleyan University, 2020), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.14418/wes01.1.2266>. Lihat juga V. R Sullivan, W. P., & Starnino, "No Title," *Families in Society* 100, no. 2 (2019): 139–50, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1177/1044389418809555>.

⁴⁷ Abbās Jawareshkīān Qudsiyeh Sādāt Hāshemī Dulābī, Alī Haqqī, "Investigating the Destiny of Children in the Hereafter from Avicenna. Mullā Ṣadrā, and the Infallibles' Viewpoints," *International Journal of Multicultural and Multireligious Understanding* 7, no. 6 (2020): 27–39, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v7i6.1737>.

⁴⁸ Carolyn Strange, *Discretionary Justice*, Illustrate (New York: NYU Press, 2016), <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.18574/nyu/9781479899920.001.0001>. dan Richard Bourne, "Communication, Punishment, and Virtue," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 42, no. 1 (2014): 78–107, <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/jore.12045>.

⁴⁹ Bourne, "Communication, Punishment, and Virtue."

⁵⁰ Nepho Gerson Laoly, "Tahun Sabat Dan Tahun Yobel Dalam Imamat 25," *Immanuel: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pendidikan Kristen* 3, no. 2 (2022): 150–65.

IV. Conclusion

1. Prophetic Advocacy

Prophetic advocacy in the Hebrew Bible is about using the prophetic voice to advocate for the rights of the oppressed and to promote justice and liberation. It is a profound concept that serves as a reminder to all of us that God stands with those who seek and strive for a more just and equitable world.

The Hebrew Bible's prophetic passages powerfully advocate for liberation from oppression, emphasizing God's alignment with the marginalized. In the Hebrew Bible's prophetic passages, the prophets are seen as messengers of God who conveyed God's message of justice and liberation to the people. They often advocated for the rights of marginalized groups such as the poor, widows, orphans, and foreigners. They emphasized that God was on the side of the oppressed and that liberation from oppression was always possible, with God's help. The prophets' advocacy was not only about promoting social justice but also about challenging unjust systems and structures that prevented the marginalized from attaining true freedom. They called for specific actions to be taken in order to create a just society. They also warned of the consequences of failing to listen to their message and embrace positive change.

2. Historical Inspiration:

The historical and literary influence of the Hebrew Bible's prophetic passages goes far beyond their original context and has played a significant role in shaping the movements for freedom and justice around the world.

These texts have inspired liberation movements and national poets, transcending their original context to influence freedom struggles globally. The prophetic passages of the Hebrew Bible have inspired many liberation movements and national poets throughout history. These texts have a timeless quality that allows them to transcend their original context and resonate with people across different cultures and time periods.

3. Justice and Solidarity

The concept of justice in the Bible is about promoting the dignity and wellbeing of all people, especially the most vulnerable and oppressed. It is not just about enforcing laws, but also about promoting solidarity and using one's power to lift up those who are struggling for freedom.

Biblical justice is portrayed as a liberating force, advocating for the vulnerable and upholding the rights of the oppressed. In the Hebrew Bible, justice is not just about enforcing laws but also about promoting the wellbeing and dignity of all people, especially those who are marginalized and vulnerable. The prophets frequently spoke out against systems of injustice and oppression that prevented people from living dignified lives. They called for a society that upheld the rights of the poor, the widows, the orphans, and the foreigners.

Biblical justice is also characterized by solidarity with those who are oppressed. It is not enough to simply advocate for their liberation; justice requires standing with them in their struggle for freedom and using one's power to help lift them up. This is why the prophets often spoke of God's concern for the oppressed and their call for all people to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

4. Theological Mandate

The prophetic tradition of the Hebrew Bible sees freedom as a theological mandate. Believers are called to work towards the liberation of the oppressed as a sacred duty, while embodying the ideals of mercy and humility in that work.

Freedom is a divine mandate within the prophetic tradition, challenging believers to act against injustice and embody the ideals of mercy and humility. The prophets saw liberation from oppression as a core aspect of God's mission and called on believers to act against injustice and embody the ideals of mercy and humility.

The prophets challenged their audiences to see liberation from oppression as not just a political or social issue but also a theological one. They emphasized that the liberation of the oppressed was at the heart of God's message and that working towards that liberation was a sacred duty. In addition, the prophets stressed the importance of embodying the ideals of mercy and humility in this work. They recognized that the struggle for freedom and justice could easily become tainted by violence, pride, and self-interest. Therefore, they called on believers to act with compassion, humility, and a deep sense of commitment to the common good.

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