NAME TERMS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHET OF GOD

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INTRODUCTION

In any serious study of the nature and purpose of Old Testament prophetism, it is mandatory that the terms used to describe the person and office of the prophets be thoroughly understood. This is all the more important in the light of current critical hypotheses which would make of the Old Testament Hebrew prophetic phenomenon nothing more than an ethicized and refined version of that known to exist commonly throughout the ancient Near East. The theory as generally proposed contends that the "pre-literary" prophets (those before ca. 750 B.C.) were akin to the soothsaying dervish-type ecstatics who made up such a large part of the Canaanite and other Near Eastern cults, particularly in the Amarna Age and later.[1] These diviners were gradually supplanted by the "true" prophets such as Amos and Hosea, who brought to the Theocracy concepts which were more morally and religiously oriented and which lifted Israel to a higher spiritual plane than that known to her contemporaries. These religious geniuses, according to the critical understanding, looked with disdain upon their prophetic predecessors, castigated and tried to reform the remnants of the primitive priesthood and liturgy, and were in constant conflict with the monarchy *ipso facto*. Their most important contribution, obviously, lay in their success in elevating Yahweh from His position as a mere tribal deity to that of the universal, ethically monotheistic God of all the world. Begun by Amos, this task was finally consummated by Deutero-Isaiah following the Exile. For an early treatment of the prophet as the creator of ethical montheism, see William Bade, *The Old Testament in the Light of Today* (1915). For an opposing but equally erroneous interpretation —that of presuming that the prophets were cultic officials who usurped priestly functions—see Alfred Haldar, *Associations of Cult Prophets Among the Ancient Semites* (1945), and Aubrey Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel* (1944).

As interesting as prophetic phenomena might be in the context of

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1. See, e.g., N. W. Porteous, "Prophecy," *Record and Revelation*, ed. H. Wheeler Robinson. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press), 1938, pp. 231-232.

the ancient Near East,[2] particularly outside Israel and the covenant, understanding of such can have but minimal value in understanding the divinely originated and revealed concept of prophetism as contained in the Old Testament. Because the Theocracy itself was unique, explicable only in reference to itself as a divine institution, Hebrew prophetism is likewise unique and can be understood only in the framework of Biblical terminology and usage. Hence, the purpose of this study is to determine the nature of the prophetic institution by coming to grips with the name terms expressive of its personnel—the Hebrew prophets of God. This will be done by a consideration of (1) the terms and their occurrence frequency; (2) the etymologies of the terms; and (3) their meaning as decided syntactically and contextually.

I. TERMS EMPLOYED TO DESCRIBE THE PROPHET OF GOD

The following are the most common terms used in the Old Testament to describe the prophet of God: *nabhi* (prophet)—306 times; *roeh* (seer)—12 times; *chozeh* (seer)—17 times; *ish (h)elohim* (man of God) —many times; *ish haruach* (man of the Spirit)—a few times; *ebedh Yahweh* (servant of Yahweh)—a few times; *malakh Yahweh* (messenger of Yahweh)—a few times; *malitz* (interpretor)—once or twice; *tsafah* (sentinel)—a few times; and *shamar* (watchman)—a few times. The most important of these are the first three, the first being by far the most common designation.

II. ETYMOLOGIES OF NABHI, ROEH AND CHOZEH

A. Nabhi

This term, though by far the most common of the three, has occasioned more etymological difficulty than any other because of the problems which attend its derivation. The verbal root of the noun has disappeared in antiquity, and it is by conjecture only that a verbal antecedent can be postulated. Basically, there are two views concerning the verbal significance underlying *nabhi*.[3] The first, and long the more popular of the two, suggests that the original root was passive in form, and therefore, *nabhi* itself is to be considered passive in its import. The prophet according to this position is a passive vehicle of revelation, personally unresponsible for his message. More recently, the view has come to the fore which advocates the active of *nabhi* and its long-forgotten

2. For Phoenician prophetism of ca. 1100 B.C. see "The Journey of Wen-Amon to Phoenicia," in *Ancient Near Eastern Texts Relating to the Old Testament,* ed. James B. Pritchard. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1955), pp. 25-29. For that of Mari, ca. 1800 B.C., see H. B. Huffmon, "Prophecy in the Mari Letters," *Biblical Archaeologist* 31 (Dec., 1968): 101-124; W. L. Moran, "New Evidence from Mari on the History of Prophecy," *Biblica* 50, No. 1 (1969): 15-56.
3. A good discussion of the various views concerning the derivation of *nabhi* is to be found in H. H. Rowley, *The Servant of the Lord.* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1952), pp. 98 ff.

verbal source. This, of course, makes the prophet an active participant in his work of reception and communication of divine revelation. The theological implications arising from this divergence in viewpoint are obvious. Whether the prophet was a mere channel through which God spoke or a man who maintained all of his native faculties in receiving and expressing God's dicta to men is dependent upon a right interpretation of the facts pertaining to his name *nabhi*.

Early scholars who contended for an interpretation which rendered the prophetic term passive (e.g., Gesenius and Kuenen) did so on the basis of the verb form *naba*, which, they said, means "to bubble or boil up." It must be remembered, however, that the verb in question is a denominative; hence, its meaning must be based on that of the noun itself. Without question, such a verb is no help in establishing the meaning of the noun from which it springs. This leads to an attempt to identify the nominal root, rather than the denominative, and again several theories have been advanced. The following are the most serious attempts to establish the original verbal idea of *nabhi*: (1) it was based on the Hebrew *nabh'a*, which is analogous in sound to *nabha*, to which it has been softened;[4] (2) it was derived from the Arabic cognate *nabhu'a* which is synonymous with *nabha*;[5] (3) it was connected with the Accadian *nabu*.[6] The first view would produce the meaning for *nabha* of "to gush forth" or "to bubble up," for that is the meaning of *nabh'a*. The second conjecture translates *nabha* as "announce," and, in its passive sense, "one who is called by God." Similarly, view number three renders the Hebrew verb "call, announce" in line with the meaning of the Accadian word.

In evaluation of the viewpoints just presented above, the following considerations are posited. First, there is little evidence that the Hebrew verb *nabha* would adopt the meaning of *nabh'a* simply on the basis of analogy of pronunciation. It is still more unlikely that this is the etymology of *nabhi*, for "bubbling up" or "gushing forth" fails to represent the prophetic utterance despite what proponents of the position have to say. In describing the message of the *nabhi*, the word *nataph* is used in the Old Testament in several instances (Amos 7:16; Micah 2:6, etc.). Meaning "dropping," the word surely indicates that the utterances of the prophet, at least in these cases, were anything but "gushings forth" or "bubblings up." Whereas the latter meanings suggest uninhibited displays of vocality, the former denotes a controlled expression of purposeful communication.

The second proposition, i.e. that the noun has its source in the Arabic cogate, is little more likely. It does, however, suggest that the

4. W. Gesenius, cited in Rowley, *ibid.*, p. 98.
5. Francis Brown, S. R. Driver, C. A. Briggs, *Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament*. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1962), p. 611.
6. W. F. Albright, *From the Stone Age to Christianity*. (Garden City: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1957), p. 303.

prophet's ministry is one of an "announcer." In keeping with this, the third suggested source of *nabhi* is also plausible. In Akkadian the root signifies "to speak, proclaim, designate," and probably from it is derived the name of Nebo or Nabu, mentioned in Isaiah 46:1, the Mesopotamian god of intelligence and wise speech, whom the Greeks and Romans identified with their Hermes and Mercury. This word appears in such personal names as Nebu-chadnezzar and Nebu-zaradan. As the god of matters pertaining to speech, Nebo parallels clearly the concept of the Old Testament *nabhi*. Space does not permit discussion of Haldar's thesis that the Babylonian *mahhu* prophets corresponded with the Hebrew *n'bhiim*, but suffice to say that there is no historical or Biblical authority for such a conclusion. All of these preceding explanations, furthermore, fail to orient the uniqueness of the Hebrew prophetic institution within the framework of Old Testament revelation. Such an important means of divine communication surely has its roots in a divine origin, not only so far as the phenomenon itself is concerned, but also in the very terminologies associated with it. It seems apparent that little can be gained through an etymological study of the word *nabhi*. The obscurity of its verbal root renders any attempt to define the word positively a scholarly conjecture at best. It is for this reason that assistance must be obtained elsewhere, and, fortunately, such help is available from an examination of the word in its various relationships and usages throughout the Old Testament.

B. *Roeh*

Another word by which the prophets are sometimes designated is the participial form of *raah*, which is principally employed in relation to Samuel (I Sam. 9:9, 11, 18, 19, etc.). In I Samuel 9, Samuel is discussed by Saul and his servant, who were searching for some strayed asses, and he is described as a man of God whose words would surely come to pass. This testimonial of men who wanted Samuel to do a prophetic service for them in telling them the whereabouts of the lost beasts renders certain the function of the prophet. To Saul, as well as to anyone else of that day, the seer was a forth-teller, whose message, not its medium of reception, was most important. Johnson, as have others, has attempted to prove from I Samuel 9:9 that Samuel changed from a *roeh* to a *nabhi*.[7] The supposition is unfounded, for the terms are used interchangeably in the passage under discussion to mean the same man. Samuel, though known as a *roeh*, performed here the work of a *nabhi*, and was recognized by Saul as such.

Roeh comes from the verb *raah* which means "to see." The *roeh*, then, was "one who sees." The difference between the *roeh* and the *nabhi* seems to be in the emphasis which each word gives to the prophetic mission. The latter stresses the active work of the prophet, and the

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7. Aubrey Johnson, *The Cultic Prophet in Ancient Israel*. (Cardiff: University of Wales, 1944), pp. 11 ff.

former the experience of the prophet in receiving the message. With these qualifications, it is possible to see that a prophet was at once a *roeh* and a *nahbi*.

The verb *raah*, from which this name of the prophet is derived, is the one most commonly used in the Old Testament for physical seeing. In the simple active voice it means to behold something, and thus, when employed with reference to the prophet, signifies receiving a revelation from God (Ezek. 1:1; Zech. 1:18; Jer. 1:13; etc.). As a reflexive it is used of God appearing to men for purposes of revelation (Gen. 12:7; 17:1; 18:1; etc.). In the causative stem it is used of God who causes someone to behold something that constitutes a divine revelation (Amos 7:1, 4, 7; Jer. 24:1, etc.). Its limited use in the Old Testament precludes any attempt to arrive at a certain meaning for *roeh*, except that it assuredly is associated with seeing the divine revelation. In this sense it can be said to illustrate the passive side of the prophet's exercise and his peculiar agency in reception of God's truth as opposed to its proclamation, which is generally seen to be the task of the *nabhi*.

C. Chozeh

The work of the *nabhi* can best be understood when seen in its relationship to the prophetic term *chozeh*. This term, translated also "seer," appears much more frequently than *roeh*, and seems to have a slightly different shade of meaning. *Chozeh* is translated "prophet" only once (Isa. 30:10), but its cognate nouns are rendered "vision" or "appearance" in nearly all places where they are found (I Sam. 3:1; I Chron. 17:15; Isa. 29:7; etc.). As with *nabhi* and *roeh*, there seems to be evidence that the two words for seer, *roeh* and *chozeh*, are virtually synonymous in that they are commonly used to describe the same individual (II Chron. 19:2; cf. II Chron. 16:7). However, some see a striking difference in them. R. Payne Smith maintained that "Samuel is the *Roeh*, the man who can see, whose eyes are open, and who therefore is consulted in all the important circumstances of human life. Gad is *Chozeh*, the gazer; one who sees visions, not the acute intelligent man possessed of insight in matters of worldy business, but the tranced man who gazes with dazed eyes upon the verities of the spiritual world."[8] Perhaps the truth lies closer to the idea that the two designations could and did refer to the same individuals at times, but that there were differences in the aspects of the prophetic ministry to which they referred. Thomas Horne was of the opinion that the *chozeh* possessed the prophetic gift, but not the prophetic office; hence, he concluded, that "the *Nabi* might be styled *Chozeh*, but not conversely."[9] This seems unlikely because of the fact that Gad, who was generally considered to be a *chozeh*, was also

8. R. Payne Smith, *Prophecy a Preparation for Christ.* (New York: Macmillan, 1871), p. 47.
9. Thomas Horne, *A Compendius Introduction to the Study of the Bible.* (New York: Carleton and Porter, n.d.), p. 425.

known as a *nabhi* (II Sam. 24:11). An indication of the different facets of the prophetic gift as represented by the use of *chozeh* and *roeh* might be clearly seen in Psalm 63:3 (MT) where the psalmist expresses his longing to see (*raah*) God's power and glory as he had seen (*chazah*) God in the sanctuary. Girdlestone says that "he wished to see face to face that Being whom now he only saw through a glass darkly."[10] Both verbs, however, later came to be used to express revelation of any kind, not that associated with the eyes only.

On the other hand, if the differences between the acts of seeing on the part of the *roeh* and the *chozeh* are unduly emphasized, it is difficult to explain the gradual diminishing of the former and emergence of the latter in frequency of use in the Old Testament. In general, *roeh* is used from ca. 1100-700 B.C. and *chozeh* from 800 to the close of the canon. Of course, *nabhi* is used throughout the whole period of revelation. This, in effect, equates all three names of the prophet, because if *roeh* equals *nabhi*, and *chozeh* for all practical purposes is equivalent to *roeh*, then *chozeh* must in a very real sense be the same as *nabhi*. The distinctions drawn are seen to be of a very superficial nature, and generally have to do with phases of the prophet's ministry rather than a different ministry altogether.

In conclusion, the prophetic institution remained the same in essence or principle from its inception, though the designations assigned it varied from age to age. Beginning with the word *nabhi*, the name gradually became associated with *roeh* and then *chozeh*. Though *roeh* nearly disappeared from use, *chozeh* maintained its use, even increasing in frequency toward the close of the canon. The reasons for the name changes are to be sought in the relationship of the prophet to the progressively developing theocratic program of God. While God was King *de facto*, the priestly office and the Law were vehicles of revelation; thus, the less profound insights of the *roeh* sufficed. At the disruption of the kingdom and its subsequent division, the prophet as *nabhi* entered more prominently into public life and, by virtue of his public utterances for God, became known as a spokesman rather than a seer. As time pased, and the people defected more and more from the revelation they had been given in earlier ages, the *chozeh*, with his gifts of deeper spiritual insight, became prominent. In all ages, though, the prophet of God exercised all of these ministries and his office remained essentially the same. The meanings of the principel names for the prophets, both from an etymological and usage standpoint, present them as "mouthpieces" for God who, in exercise of their supernatural gifts, became recipients of divine revelation and proclaimers of the same. They stood as mediators between God and man, forth-telling and fore-telling God's theocratic program of redemption.

10. Robert Girdlestone, *Synonyms of the Old Testament*. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1948), pp. 240-241.

III. CONTEXTUAL MEANINGS OF THE TERMS

A. *Use of nabhi in Exodus* 7:1

As was pointed out above, there is vast disagreement over the meaning of *nabhi* on the basis of etymological considerations. In fact, the etymology of the word affords practically no aid in determining the true significance of the prophet and his office. This is particularly true in regard to the reception and utterance of the divine message. As a result, the prophet has often been branded as an abandoned ecstatic who expressed himself in a frenzied, uncontrollable fashion, the only philological warrant for the accusation being the unfounded allegation that the verb *nabha* means "to bubble over" or "to gush forth."

The classic passage which makes most lucid the Biblical concept of the prophet is that in Exodus 7:1, the importance of which deems extensive commentary necessary. A proper understanding of this and allied passages will rescue the prophet from the extreme hypotheses adduced against him and his work and will also provide an irrefutable standard by which to evaluate the character of true prophetism. After God had appeared to Moses in Horeb and had commissioned him to return to Pharaoh as the representative of Yahweh, and to effect the exodus of the people of God from Egypt, Moses protested on the grounds that he was of "uncircumcised lips" and was unable to procure from Pharaoh the requisite respect to impress him to release the Israelites that they might worship God in the wilderness. Yahweh then bolstered the spirit of Moses by reaffirming His promise to be with him, and by making the declaration that Moses would be as a god to Pharoah. He followed this declaration with the remarkable statement that "Aaron thy brother shall be thy *nabhi*." The import is that Moses would occupy such a relationship to Pharaoh that Pharaoh would be compelled to hearken to Moses in his demands. In this position of "god," Moses would have his own brother Aaron speak for him to Pharaoh. By virtue of this mediatorial ministry, Aaron was to be known as a *nabhi*. The meaning of this term is more clearly defined by an understanding of responsibilities which were to attend Aaron's peculiar calling. These are found in Exodus 4:15ff where Yahweh says: "And thou shalt speak unto him [Aaron], and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God" (AV). Here, then, is a wonderful picture of the prophetic responsibility and relationship. The *nabhi*, standing between two parties, is to be the one who speaks for the one to the other. There is no hint of any other duty but that of spokesman. Neither is there any connotation of "ecstasy" or any other passivity which was to render the prophet incapable of self-control or consciousness. An incidental proof of the antiquity of the word *nabhi* is here presented, because the Mosaic authorship (which cannot be successfully discredited) of the passage demands an earlier date for the word than the evolutionary

critics are willing to follow. If the word were borrowed from the Canaanites or others with whom Israel later came in contact, it is incredible that Moses should use the word here. Furthermore, the ancient meaning of the prophetic concept is also revealed in these passages, for Yahweh does not have to explain to Moses what He means by "prophet."

Another gross misconception concerning the prophetic ministry is that the prophet served only as a predictor of future events. This idea also arose from a false comparison of the prophet of God with the soothsayers and heathen seers of neighboring peoples. The passage under discussion is helpful in dispelling this notion, for there is no intimation that Aaron's ministry with Moses was to entail foretelling as well as forth-telling. In fact, there appears to be no reason for such a thought to be connected with the use of the word *nabhi* here in this passage. Exodus 4:16 states that Aaron was to be a "mouth" to Moses, and 7:1 says that he was to be a *nabhi*. Since the second passage is a repetition of the promise given in the first, there is no alternative but to recognize the fact that *nabhi* and *peh* (mouth) are synonymous in this technical sense. The prophet, in the final analysis, is the "mouth" of the one whom he represents. This connection with the organ of speech is most instructive, for it reveals that the primary task of the prophet is that of "speaker." Again, there is no room here for the necessity of ecstasy or unusual behavior of any sort, for the *nabhi* is represented always in these and other passages as being in control of himself, both in reception and delivery of his message.

A brief discussion of the term "ecstasy" may be helpful at this point. The word does not occur in any of the standard English translations of the Bible, though its Greek source (*ekstasis*) appears twenty-seven times in the Septuagint and is the translation of at least eleven different Hebrew words.[11] H. H. Rowley objects to its use at all, for, as he says, it is founded on Greek psychology rather than on the Old Testament presentation of prophetism.[12] Moreover, Vos suggests that Philo employed the term in reference to the departure of the prophets' *nous* upon the indwelling of the divine Spirit. To Philo, it was inconceivable that man's mind could cohabit the body with the transcedent Spirit of God.[13] This confusion of the Old Testament prophet with the mantic seers of his own day led Philo to an interpretation of the Old Testament phenomena completely contrary to the facts.

Unfortunately, this Greek and Philonic notion was followed by many of the early Fathers as well as by modern critics. Athenagoras felt that God used the prophet as the flute player uses his instrument.[14] Justin

11. Cf. Robert L. Alden, "Ecstasy and the Prophets," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 9, No. 3 (1966), p. 149.
12. Rowley, *op. cit.*, p. 91.
13. Geerhardus Vos, *Biblical Theology*. (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1954), p. 244.
14. *Presbeia* 8.

Martyr believed that men of themselves could not know the great revelations which God initiated, but he erred in believing that the Spirit "as a Divine plectrum, descending from heaven, and using these righteous men like a cither or lute, might reveal to us the knowledge of Divine and heavenly things."[15] It was natural that Montanism, with its concept of immediate inspiration, should adopt the same position as Philo and the Fathers and carry it to the extreme.

The only Old Testament evidence for prophetic ecstasy is in the Hithpa'el form of the verb *nabha*. This stem occurs twenty-nine times[16] and is used to describe true as well as false prophets. It is important to remember that the Hithpa'el is reflexive in meaning and contains the idea of making oneself "that which is predicated by the stem";[17] e.g., to make oneself as a prophet would be the meaning of *hithnabe*. A. B. Davidson points out that the use of the Hithpa'el in the passages cited above cannot prove that the true prophet was "excited" or that he "raved."[18] That imposters did so in some cases while attempting to imitate the prophets of God may only highlight their imposture. Perhaps that explains why the man who feigns to be a prophet is called in one place at least a *meshugga'* ("a fool").[19]

In any event, one looks in vain in the Old Testament to discover the true prophets under the influence of ecstasy as popularly understood.[20] In fact, a dominant hallmark of the true prophet is that he soberly and rationally receives and communicates the Word of God as opposed to the charlatans who, in order to make themselves psychologically receptive to self-induced imaginations and to somehow accredit themselves before the superstitious, dramatized their pseudo-prophetism. They acted like prophets.

B. *Use of nabhi and roeh in I Samuel 9:9*

I Samuel 9:9 states: "Formerly in Israel, thus a man said when he went to consult God: 'Come, that we might go unto the Seer.' For as for the prophet today, he was customarily called in former times the seer." From this text, it is apparent that a significant change had occurred in the designations assigned to the prophet of God. Many scholars hold that this verse is an indication of the change in office which the prophetic

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15. *Cohort. ad Graecos* 8.
16. Num. 11:25, 25, 27; I Sam. 10:5, 6, 10, 13; 18:10; 19:20, 21(2), 23, 24; I Kings 18:29; 22:8, 10, 18; II Chron. 18:7, 9, 17, 18; 20:37; Jer. 14:14; 23:13; 26:20; 29:6, 27; Ezek. 13:17; 37:10.
17. E. Kautzsch and A. E. Cowley (eds.), *Gesenius' Hebrew Grammar*. (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1957), Par. 54d.
18. A. B. Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*. (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1905), pp. 84-85.
19. Jer. 29:26.
20. For the apparently exceptional cases of the Seventy Elders (Num. 11:25-29) and Saul (I Sam. 10:1-13; 19:18-24) see Leon J. Wood, "Ecstasy and Israel's Early Prophets," *Bulletin of the Evangelical Theological Society* 9, No. 3 (1966): 126-134.

institution underwent in the time of Samuel.[21] They feel that the *roeh* had outlived his usefulness and was being displaced by the more cultured and professional *nabhi.* This opinion is untenable, however, for the verse states that only the name of the office, not the office itself, changed. On the other hand, the change of name seemed to be a reflection of popular use only, for the name *roeh* was in use in a technical sense as late as the time of Isaiah (Isa. 30:10). The idea of the obsolescence of the office of the *roeh* and the emergence of that of the *nabhi* is further attacked by Rowley, who urges, "If the seer had ceased to exist as a type, there would have been no need to restyle him a *nabhi* or indeed to call him anything at all."[22] T. H. Robinson and others, contending for a difference between the two kinds of prophets, cite II Kings 17:13.[23] Here Yahweh has reiterated to the Northern Kingdom the fact that He had testified against them "by all his prophets, every seer." That this may be an example of Hebrew apposition and not evidence for two distinct offices may be seen by referring to II Samuel 24:11, where it is stated that "the word of the Lord came unto the prophet Gad, David's seer." Here is one man given the two designations at the same time, disproving the idea that the offices were different. In a still valuable discussion Conrad von Orelli agrees and says that "according to I Samuel 9:9 [*roeh* is the prophet's] earliest popular name. This passage proves that the idea of *roeh* and *nabhi* is substantially identical."[24]

The significance of I Samuel 9:9, then, is that it provides more insight into the meaning of *nabhi* by associating it with *roeh*, a seer. The receptive side of the prophetic ministry is thereby stressed. Moreover, it establishes the progressive nature of the prophetic institution by revealing the development of the office in the minds of the people from one of receptivity primarily to one of public proclamation of God's Word.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study of the names and etymologies of the Old Testament prophet may be summarized in the following observations: (1) Because of both the lack of etymological support and the abundance of support from usage, it is necessary to rely almost entirely upon the latter. The result yields the impression that the prophet was a man who received a message from God and spoke it to men. (2) The dominant characteristics of the prophet and his work are those which depict him as an active instrument in the hands of God, rather than primarily a passive channel of communication whose activity consisted of ecstatic frenzy or predictive soothsaying. He might under rare circumstances enter into experiences and activities which *seem* to be abnormal (e.g., II Kings 3:15, etc.), but these were always subsidiary to his main purpose of speaking for God. (3) The names of the prophet provide clues to the work to which he was called, and a basis for consideration of his role in the theocratic program of God.

21. T. J. Meek, *Hebrew Origins.* (New York: Harper & Row, 1960), p. 157.
22. Rowley, *op. cit.,* p. 101.
23. *Ibid.,* p. 99.
24. Conrad von Orelli, *Old Testament Prophecy.* (Edinburgh: Clark, 1890), p. 5.