

## Where Have All The Prophets Gone?

by Marvin A. McMickle\*

One of the essential needs in every congregation of believers is an occasional sermon rooted in the words and witness of the Old Testament prophets. Preachers need to play a role within the life of their congregation and their community similar to the role that such people as Amos, Jeremiah and Micah played within the life of the nations of Israel and Judah. James Ward and Christine Ward begin their important book on this subject of prophetic preaching by writing:

*The natural inclination of the Christian community, like all religious communities, is to adapt its witness of faith to its most immediate human needs. In doing this the community always runs the risk of obscuring the wider dimensions of the gospel, particularly the wider implications of God's demand for righteousness and justice. What is needed, therefore, is preaching that recovers these wider dimensions and illuminates the ways in which the community obscures them.<sup>1</sup>*

Those who preach must appreciate the need to let their sermons play this role in the life of their church, their surrounding community and the wider society of which the preacher is a member.

There is a tendency within congregational for the preacher to become preoccupied with such pressing matters as new members' or confirmation classes, the maintenance or renovation of the church building, whether or not the annual budget will be met and how to maintain a feeling of intimacy in the face of a rapidly growing or shifting membership. What may be lost in the rush to respond to these issues is that congregation's responsibility to respond to an escalating problem of homelessness in the community, or overcrowding in the jails, or the abuse of drugs and alcohol by youngsters in the local school district. It is the preacher's job to remain watchful, to use the image of Ezekiel 3 and 33, and to sound the alarm about the injuries that are being inflicted upon people as well as about the injustices that are taking place.

Prophetic preaching shifts the focus of a congregation from what is happening to them as a local church to what is happening to us as a society. Prophetic preaching then asks the question, "What is the role or the appropriate response of our congregation, our association and our denomination to the events that are occurring within our society and throughout the world?" Prophetic preaching points out those false gods of comfort and of a lack of

---

\* Marvin McMickle (Ph.D., Case Western Reserve University) is Professor of Homiletics at ATS. This paper was originally presented before the Narrative and Imagination Group of the Academy of Homiletics in Memphis, TN at their 2004 Annual Meeting.

concern and acquiescence in the face of evil that can so easily replace the true God of scripture who calls true believers to the active pursuit of justice and righteousness for every member of the society. Prophetic preaching also never allows the community of faith to believe that participation in the rituals of religious life can ever be an adequate substitute for that form of ministry that is designed to uplift the “least of these” in our world.

The words of the eighth century B.C. prophets Amos and Micah come immediately to mind. Both of them condemned Israel because that nation seemed more interested in the acts of animal sacrifice and the observance of religious feast days than they were in the poverty and economic exploitation that impacted the lives of so many people in their society. The voices of the biblical prophets echoed from the top of Mt. Carmel where Elijah confronted Ahab and Jezebel and the priests of Baal to the streets of Jerusalem where John the Baptist challenged Herod Antipas.

The prophets preached truth to power, attacking the monarchs and the ruling elite for putting more confidence in armies and alliances than they did in the God who had brought them into that land. The prophets challenged the people of Israel who believed that God would never abandon them no matter how far the nation strayed from the covenant it had established with God back at Sinai. With an urgency that could not be contained and a fervor that could not be controlled, the prophets declared their “Thus says the Lord” despite the ridicule, rebuke and outright rejection that most of them experienced throughout their lives. It is impossible to imagine the biblical narrative being told without the pronouncements of the prophets.

As preaching schedules are being planned and as biblical texts and topics are being considered, it is easy to see the need for prophetic preaching in our churches and throughout our society. Many Christians worship inside of immaculately maintained churches that are situated in neighborhoods that look like bombed out war zones. Many Christians drive from the suburbs to churches located within a community that has been ravaged by poverty, drug trafficking, the loss of industry through outsourcing and factory closings, and under-funded and overwhelmed public school systems. Of course, many Christians never have to see these sights or confront the people and problems in these inner city communities, because they have moved out of the city to pristine outer ring suburbs and have brought their churches out to those upscale areas with them.

For those who continue to travel into the crumbling and decaying cities of our nation, it is crucial that they hear a prophetic word about the problems that surround their church, the social policies that are the root cause of those problems and what they can do as an expression of their biblical faith to bring about change. For those who live and worship in exurbia and who never get close enough to the grimy side of America for anything to rub off on them, prophetic preaching becomes even more urgent. It is crucial that people with wealth, power and influence be challenged by a prophetic word that calls upon

them to direct their resources not simply for tax advantages for themselves, but for a fairer and more just society for their fellow citizens.

The benefit of a regular use of materials taken from prophetic texts is that the preacher is forced to consider people, issues, and socio-political conditions that stretch over a period of one thousand years; issues that the preacher might otherwise have overlooked. There is no other genre of biblical literature that approaches the prophetic corpus in terms of the breadth of history and the depth of human experiences that are included among its pages. Sometimes Israel is at the height of its power and influence, and the message of the prophets is that God is about to bring that mighty nation to its knees because of its arrogance and pride. Other times the prophets issue a sweet call to Israel to return to the God whose love for them will not allow God to completely give up on them. The God who sent Hosea out to marry a prostitute named Gomer is the God whose love for us is stronger than our disregard for God.

The prophets remind Israel, just as we need to be reminded through regular doses of prophetic preaching, that God is the sovereign creator and sustainer of the whole creation. The God who sent Jonah to preach salvation in Nineveh is the same God who used first Babylon and the Persia as the instruments of God's will. The God who formed Israel into a great nation when they were brought out of the brick pits of Egypt is the same God who can send Israel back into captivity and cause them to hang their harps upon the willows and weep as they sit along the banks of the River Chebar and remember the life they once lived back in Zion. God's concern is for the whole of creation and for all the people that dwell therein. When the people of God lose sight of the fact and begin acting as if only they and their nation really matter, it is time for a prophet to declare, "Thus says the Lord!"

In a nation whose religious life seemed overly focused on the Temple of Solomon, the levitical priesthood, the careful observance of a legalistic lifestyle, and the proper practices of "holy living", prophetic preaching focused the people's attention on the issues that were broader than how to worship or where to pray or what it is lawful to eat. The Mosaic covenant included a series of clear commandments to care for the widows, the orphans, and the stranger who was among them. When the people of Israel lost sight of that commandment, the prophets were there to remind them.

Now as then, there is a need to lift up the conditions of widows, orphans and strangers. Today they take the form of single women, many of them living in great poverty, who have been abandoned by husbands and boyfriends and are raising children by themselves. The world is literally awash with children who have been left orphaned by the unrelenting ravages of HIV/AIDS, as well as by tribal warfare in Africa, ethnic cleansing in the Balkans, and wars in Iraq and Afghanistan that use the methods of terror (shock and awe) to combat acts of terrorism around the world.

The stranger is also among us today, though here too the forms have shifted. Now they are the migrant workers who pick our food, the illegal

immigrants who clean our homes and hotels, and the prisoners at Guantanamo Bay and inside of Abu Ghraib prison who are under U.S. control but not afforded the protections of the U.S. Constitution, the Geneva Convention, or the common decency that any U.S. citizen would expect and/or demand for themselves. The stranger is also that person with an "Arab sounding name" or that Sikh from India who, because his religion requires him to wear a turban or some other kind of head wrap, are being caught up in the post-9/11 frenzy created and sustained by a government which is always on the lookout for a "person of interest."

In the face of all that is currently happening in our world, it is shocking to note that the voice of the prophet is rarely if ever heard. True enough, biblical texts taken from the prophetic corpus are often employed in weekly sermons, but the power and the pathos are not heard or felt. Isaiah and Micah are used primarily to demonstrate that the birth of Jesus was foretold 700-years earlier. Malachi is seldom heard from except in an occasional sermon on tithing and the promise (3:10) that God will open the windows of heaven. We may hear from Zechariah (9:9) around Palm Sunday when the story is told of Jesus riding triumphantly into Jerusalem on a colt amid shouts of hosanna. However, the fiery words of the prophets go unspoken in most pulpits across America. There is very little likelihood that the vast majority of those who hear sermons today will come out of their churches saying to one another "the land cannot bear his words" (Amos 7: 10).

In our Post-modern society with its widespread biblical illiteracy, most people do not know and will likely never hear about Jeremiah's trip to the potter's house, his confinement in a cistern or the yoke of oxen he wore around his neck to symbolize the bondage that was awaiting Judah if Jehoiakim and Zedekiah did not change their ways and the ways of the nation they ruled. They will probably not hear about the encounter between Nathan and David when the prophet told the king "You are the man." They may never hear a sermon based upon Isaiah's condemnation of false gods and idolatry, or Ezekiel's warning from God that God's people were rebellious and impudent.

More than likely our people will hear sermons about the values of patriotism, the paths to peace and prosperity, the appropriate methods for baptism and communion, why God does not approve of women in ministry and why a woman's right to control her reproductive choices is the single greatest evil in the world today. Many of those who will preach such sermons are our former students in homiletics classes in seminaries and schools of religion within the Association of Theological Schools. Many of them will preach with no particular urgency or attention paid to the prophets because no such urgency was laid upon them when they sat in our classes in Bible, theology, ethics or even homiletics!

A folk song of the 1960s raised this question in the context of the anti-war movement; where have all the flowers gone?<sup>2</sup> There is a homiletical equivalent to that question which says:

Where have all the prophets gone?  
Gone in search of mega-churches, every one.  
Where have all the prophets gone?  
Gone in search of faith-based funding every one.  
Where have all the prophets gone?  
Gone in search of personal comfort every one.  
Where have all the prophets gone?  
Gone in search of political correctness every one.  
Where have all the prophets gone?  
Gone into a ministry that places praise over speaking truth to power every one.  
When will they ever learn? When will they ever learn?

In his book, *Interpreting God's Word in Black Preaching*, Warren Stewart reflects on two hermeneutic principles fashioned by James A. Sanders the Old Testament scholar who taught Warren and me when we were students together at Union Theological seminary in New York City in the 1970s. Sanders wrote about the "constitutive" and the "prophetic" readings of scripture. Stewart says:

In biblical times the constitutive reading of the Torah story, which was based on a supportive interpretation of the Word, gave Israel an identity and a purpose. As the moral as well as the historical context of Israel changed, Israel became in need of a challenging message that would call it back to its original purpose as God's elect. Israel, in such a state, was not in need of a supportive reading of the tradition. The establishment context of Israel called for a prophetic interpretation of the Torah story.<sup>3</sup>

The message of the prophets calls us back to our original purpose as the people of God. It reminds us of how we should have been living all along. It points out to us what we have become as a people. Then it challenges us to return to the ways of the Lord our God; the way in which we had long ago promised we would walk.

In his *Letter From a Birmingham Jail* written in 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. embodies for us what it looks like to preach from the prophetic texts and to be a prophet in our midst. He wondered how white Christians could build churches that were so beautiful to behold, and then practice something as ugly as racial segregation within those same structures?<sup>4</sup> No doubt, the church spires he noticed as he traveled throughout the American south in the 1950 and 1960s were well staffed and well-funded. They had a solid constitutive foundation. However, those churches were not focused on what was the central social issue

of that generation. In fact, the people in those churches were the primary reason why racism, segregation and the rule of law known as Jim Crow could last as long as it did in America. What those church people needed to hear was a prophetic word.

As was stated earlier and cannot be reinforced too strongly, prophetic preaching does not demand or even require the use of a text taken from one of the prophetic books of the Old Testament. Nor does it require any reference to one of the prophets of the classical period that stretched from the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 5<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C. Many sermons have been preached from a text taken from a prophetic book that were more “pathetic” than “prophetic.” That is usually the result of a preacher who did not have his/her focus on that which constantly occupied the biblical prophets, namely the fact that God’s people were living in disobedience to the covenant that had been established between God and the people.

Prophetic preaching occurs when the preacher seeks to bring the will of God to the attention of the people of God, and then, as Elizabeth Achtemeier observes, challenge them “to trust their Lord in all circumstances and to obey him with willing and grateful hearts.”<sup>5</sup> Prophetic preaching happens when the preacher has the courage to speak truth to power not only inside of the church building but also in the streets and board rooms and jail cells of the secular order. We must be willing to do this if we are to be faithful to and worthy of following in the footsteps of Samuel who confronted Saul, Nathan who confronted David, Amos who condemned Jeroboam, Jeremiah who challenged both Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, and John the Baptist who did not grow mute or meek in the presence of Herod Antipas.

This approach to prophetic preaching is consistent with what Walter Brueggemann calls “prophetic consciousness” in his book *The Prophetic Imagination*.<sup>6</sup> He writes that the work of the prophet is to be able to project before the people “an alternative future to the one the king wants to project as the only thinkable one.”<sup>7</sup> For Brueggemann the Old Testament prophets had to contend with something he calls “royal consciousness” that represents “the deeply entrenched forces – political, economic, social or religious – of Israel.”<sup>8</sup> They are the status quo, and they only offer to people a vision of the future that allows them to remain in power, and requires that the masses of people remain marginalized in society. The work of the prophet is to combat that single vision, and show that God can and will bring about a future different from that envisioned by the ruling elite.

In drawing the tension between “prophetic consciousness” and “royal consciousness”, Brueggemann is reminding us that in the 8<sup>th</sup> century BC world occupied by prophets like Amos and in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC world occupied by prophets like Jeremiah, not all of the preachers were prophets. Indeed, we are also reminded that not all people who call themselves or who are referred to as prophets are standing in the tradition of those preachers who spoke an unrelenting message of justice and righteousness.

The presence of Amaziah who is an ally and defender of King Jeroboam and the presence of Hananiah who serves a similar role with and for Zedekiah serve as the clearest indicators that the great Old Testament prophets whose words and work are so instructive to us today did not have the preaching platform to themselves. There were others voices being heard at that same time, other voices that were also cloaked in the title of being prophetic. However, there was a difference between Amos and Amaziah and between Jeremiah and Hananiah.

Amaziah stood against Amos and told him to return to Tekoa and to never again preach in Bethel because “this is the king’s chapel and the king’s court.” (Amos 7: 13). To add insult to injury, in the preceding verse (7:12) Amaziah told Amos to go back and “earn his bread” by preaching in Judah; a clear reference to the fact that Amaziah assumed that all of the so-called prophets were on someone’s payroll, as he was very likely on the payroll of his monarch. This comment led Amos to declare “I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet’s son....The Lord said unto me Go, prophesy unto my people Israel” (Amos 7: 14-15).

Prophesy the word of the Lord is precisely what Amos did. He decried the abuse of the poor in an economic system that favored and rewarded those who were already rich. He condemned a class of people, referred to as cows of Bashan, whose personal comforts prevented them from feeling or caring about the poverty and misery being experienced by many of their own people. Amos also made it clear that the comfort class was in large measure responsible for that inequity in society.

Hananiah sought to persuade both the king and the country of Judah that the words of judgment spoken by Jeremiah were not true. Hananiah saw it as his mission to reassure both king and country that God was not displeased, that the enemy at the gate (the army of Nebuchadnezzar) would not triumph over Judah, and that the future of Judah and its royal line was secure. Hananiah was the son of a prophet and he, too, spoke with the opening phrase “thus says the Lord.” He seemed to have at least as much credibility and authority as Jeremiah, and yet they preach two widely different messages; one was constitutive and the other one was prophetic. One was based upon the preservation of the status quo that is the essence of royal consciousness and the other was fueled by the alternative vision of the future that is the heart and soul of prophetic consciousness.

It cannot be doubted that many pulpits across America are filled by preachers who operate out of a royal consciousness. I once heard a televised sermon by a popular Presbyterian preacher from Fort Lauderdale, Florida who ended his pastoral prayer with the words “God Bless America.” In the sermon that followed I heard no reference from that preacher about the 2000 presidential election and the voting fraud that occurred in Florida that resulted in the first ever “selection” of a President of the United States. While this paper is being prepared, armed members of the Florida State Patrol are going to the homes of

## Where Have All The Prophets Gone?

elderly African Americans who had been actively involved in Get-Out-The-Vote efforts for the 2004 election. This is an obvious attempt to intimidate black voter registration and to suppress black voter turnout in that swing state.

This particular preacher consistently operates within a constitutive and royal consciousness hermeneutic. He and so many of his colleagues who crowd the airwaves of Cable TV religious broadcasting are reaching an enormous audience with the message that all is well in America. They have hijacked the title of being evangelical. No longer does that word suggest a deep commitment to the authority of scripture, a burning passion for spiritual transformation in the lives of those who hear the Gospel and a solid separation of church and state. Now, as a result of the National Association of Evangelicals and preachers like the ones that are seen on TV 24-hours a day, an evangelical is someone who holds a specific position on such issues as prayer in schools, abortion, school vouchers, capital punishment, affirmative action and increased military spending even if it is done at the expense of social programs. "God Bless America."

In 21<sup>st</sup> century America, a person who identifies themselves as an evangelical is most likely to vote Republican, vote against school levies for public school districts, stand opposed to funding the United Nations because that agency encourages birth control in parts of the world where poverty and overpopulation go hand-in-hand. Today's evangelicals want a smaller government here in the United States, but support the overly aggressive Patriot Act that not only enlarges the size and cost of the U.S. government but also greatly threatens civil liberties and privacy.

Evangelicals are likely to have supported the war in Iraq and the fall of Saddam Hussein, even though they also likely know that 20-years earlier we equipped and encouraged that same Saddam Hussein when he was our ally in a war that Iraq was fighting against Iran. The same could be said about modern-day evangelicals who likely supported the war in Afghanistan against the Taliban, Al Qaeda and Osama bin Ladin, despite the fact that we encouraged and equipped them in their war against the Soviet Union during that same point in history. United States foreign policy 20-30 years ago laid the foundation for most of the turmoil in which our nation is engaged today. That being said, the preachers in America, black and white, who have the largest following and the highest name recognition, seem to have nothing to say on matters of justice and righteousness. Where have all the prophets gone?

What is needed in America is an alternative voice that sets forth God's alternative vision for the future. While \$87 billion have been allocated to rebuild Iraq after we needlessly blew the country up with our shock and awe, there are 45 million Americans that have no health insurance. While nearly \$1 billion was spent on the 2004 election by candidates pursuing elective office at the federal level alone, a ban on assault weapons will be lifted without much congressional debate, the minimum wage laws leave many working Americans in the status of being the working poor and newly established overtime laws in the workplace



will allow employers to require overtime from their workers without paying them an overtime wage.

The abuse of the poor by the rich, the neglect of the neediest in our society, and the focus of a religious life that is defined by the proper performance of rituals and not the dogged pursuit of righteousness is where we find ourselves in America in 2004. It was times similar to these that spawned the biblical prophets and that also spawned the prophets who flashed across the stage of history: Sojourner Truth, Martin Luther King, Jr., Desmond Tutu, Oscar Romero, Fannie Lou Hamer, William Sloane Coffin and Philip and Daniel Berrigan. There are a lot of people preaching in this country and throughout the world today, but one feels the need to raise the question, "where have all the prophets gone?"

Lest I be accused of focusing all of my attention outside of the black community, rendering black people more as victims than as perpetrators of the constitutive hermeneutic, let me say a word or two about what is happening in the pulpits of black churches across the country. It can best be described by the phrase, "*All the prophets have turned to praising.*" I recently heard an announcement about a cruise that was being planned to the Caribbean that is to include presentations by many of the biggest names in the black community in the fields of entertainment, business, motivational speaking and sports. The advertisement then said, "***Get your praise on with the biggest names in the black church today.***" They then listed such names as Noel Jones, Creflo Dollar, Eddie Long and others. I am not condemning any of those persons or the ministries in which they are engaged. I am expressing concern that the focus within so many black churches has shifted away from justice and righteousness to "getting your praise on." That is precisely what Amos was condemning when he uttered these words from the Lord:

Take away from me the noise of your songs,  
For I will not hear them,  
But let justice roll down like water,  
And righteousness like a mighty stream (Amos 5: 23-24).

What has happened to the legacy of Vernon Johns, Martin Luther King, Jr., Howard Thurman, Samuel Proctor, Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. and James Lawson? Where are the successors to Richard Allen, Nannie Helen Borroughs, Fannie Lou Hamer and Prathia Hall? Why is it that more black preachers today are interested in helping people "get their praise on" than they are in getting schools improved, or getting the levels of poverty in the community right around their church reduced, or getting the rate of divorce lowered, or getting more and more black men into school and out of prison? One has to labor long and hard these days to hear a prophetic word even from within the African American church; that part of the body of Christ that 40 short years ago had the audacity to see as its mission the goal of "saving the soul of America."

## Where Have All The Prophets Gone?

The black community in America is in what may be its greatest crisis since slavery. That community faces record levels of poverty, drug addiction and alcohol abuse, and a staggering and constantly escalating rate of imprisonment usually for drug related offenses. So many of the finest young men and women in our community make a foolish mistake with regard to the use or possession of the smallest imaginable amounts of illegal substances. They are convicted of felony offense, and even if they receive a shortened sentence or drug abuse counseling in lieu of a prison term, they live the rest of their lives and the bulk of their lives as ex-offenders. That phrase has the power to limit their hopes and dreams, their employment and upward mobility for as long as they live. It faces record levels of unemployment among adults and a staggering rate of teens that are both parents and high school dropouts.

These are the very real and urgent problems that confront millions of African Americans. There is certainly a need for praise and celebration as one way to cope with the problems that confront our community. The inspiration that come from times of praise and worship can go a long way toward helping people bear up under the weight and burden of these conditions. However we cannot let “getting our praise on” become the sole or central reason for our coming together. We must speak to the issues that are the root causes of the social problems that we face. That is where prophetic preaching comes into play.

J. Deotis Roberts writing in *Roots of a Black Future: Family and Church* notes that the black church has traditionally operated out of two forms of ministry that he calls the priestly and the prophetic.<sup>9</sup> He says, “The priestly ministry of black churches refers to their healing, comforting and succoring work. The prophetic ministry involves its social justice and social transforming aspects.”<sup>10</sup> By being careful to include prophetic preaching in the course of a year’s pulpit work, while continuing to allow people time to “get their praise on” black preachers can be sure that this historic and important balance in the worship and witnessing life of the black church continues into the future.

In speaking to those issues, black preachers must declare “Thus says the Lord” not only with regard to what is being done to black people by white society. We must also say “Thus says the Lord” to our own community and our own congregations about the choices we are making and the values we are adopting that greatly contribute to our present dilemma. It must be remembered that as long as Amos was listing the “for the three transgressions and four” against Moab, Edom, Syria, Gaza and Judah he was on safe ground in Bethel. It was when he turned his attention to the people who were before him at the time that his courage had to increase and his popularity suddenly fell.

It is not possible for a prophetic ministry to be sustained or for prophetic preaching to have authenticity when the words “Thus says the Lord” are directed only toward those outside of your own community who are doing harm to that community. At some point, preachers must direct the prophetic word to those who are members of their own nation, their own community and even their own congregation. Moreover, they must engage in that prophetic

preaching endowed with the “divine pathos”<sup>11</sup> that Abraham Joshua Heschel says was the essence of the messages that God sent to Israel through the biblical prophets. “The prophets communicated God’s anger over the sins of the covenant community. However, “what God intends is not that his anger should be executed, but that it should be annulled by the people’s repentance.”<sup>12</sup> In the last analysis, it is hope and deliverance, not death and destruction that is the ultimate promise of prophetic preaching. As Israel learned in 722 BC and as Judah discovered in 586 BC, death and destruction came not because God willed it, but because the people of God refused to listen to what the prophets were saying.

Finally, prophetic preaching requires something more than righteous indignation over what is happening in society and over what is not happening within the church. Prophetic preaching also requires a large amount of humility and the awareness that the sins we see in the people who hear the sermons are also alive and at work in the people who preach the sermons. Preachers have no right to preach a prophetic word with their fist balled up and their index finger pointed out and away from themselves. We do not have the right to preach to people about **their sins**. The preferred approach is to preach about the sins and shortcomings that grip us all and that pull all of us away from the love and loyalty we should be displaying toward God.

Isaiah speaks for all of us when he says, “Woe is me, for I am a person of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips” (Isaiah 6: 5). My slave ancestors put it equally well when they encouraged every one, preachers included to sing:

It ain't my mother,  
It ain't my father,  
But it's me, O lord,  
Standing in the need of prayer.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> James Ward and Christine Ward, *Preaching From the Prophets*, Nashville: Abingdon, 1995, p. 11.

<sup>2</sup> Lyrics for *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* By Pete Seeger, 1955.

<sup>3</sup> Warren Stewart, *Interpreting God's Word in Black Preaching* (Valley Forge: Judson Press, 1984) 32-33.

<sup>4</sup> Martin Luther King, Jr., *Why We Can't Wait* (New York: Signet Books, 1963) 91.

<sup>5</sup> Elizabeth Achtemeier, *Preaching From the Minor Prophets* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998).

<sup>6</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978).

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid*, 44.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, 30-31.

Where Have All The Prophets Gone?

<sup>9</sup> J. Deotis Roberts, *Roots of a Black Future: Family and Church* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980).

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

<sup>11</sup> Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Prophets* (New York: Harper & Row, 1962) 224.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 224-225.