

WERE THE PROPHETS INNOVATORS OR WERE THEY A CONSERVATIVE FORCE?

Lindblom says that Israel's prophets were not founders of a new religion. The prophets themselves never regarded it as their personal mission to give their people a new religion. They assumed that their words could be immediately understood and accepted; and it seemed to them wholly enigmatic and paradoxical that the people were deaf to their preaching. (Lindblom., p. 313)

The ideas of the prophets concerning God, the election of Israel, the divine revelation, and the moral demands of Yahweh were not new; they were old ideas, but applied by the prophets in a new way. (Lindblom, p. 314)

The revolutionary element in it was their denunciation of their compatriots for having forgotten the God of their fathers, for worshipping Yahweh only in name, and for having trampled His holy demands under foot. (Lindblom, p. 315)

They((i.e. the nebiim)) did not regard themselves as innovators, but as recalling Israel to standards of private and public conduct which went back to the time of the covenant mediated by Moses. Hence, while they were the most trenchant critics of the religious institutions of their time, kings, princes, priests, and prophets, all alike coming under the last of their denunciation, they themselves cannot be omitted from any account of the religious institutions of Israel. (Hooke in Peake's, p. 148)