

Quarterly Ministerial Council Online Forum

Under the auspices of the
Ministerial Council Board of the General Council of the Churches of God (Seventh Day) Inc., Meridian Idaho, USA.

Prophets & Prophecies:



Speakers

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Moderator

Bro. Terry Siddens

➤ Join us on Zoom on Sunday May 17th, 2026 @ 9:00am MDT

Prophets & Prophecies:



“Characteristics of a True Prophet”

Presentation Outline

- ❖ Key Texts
- ❖ Definitions
- ❖ Key Aspects of Prophets and Prophecy
- ❖ Characteristic of true prophets
- ❖ Purpose of Prophecies:
- ❖ A bit about false prophets
- ❖ Conclusion

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□ Key Texts

- **2 Peter 1: 16-21**
- **Amos 3: 7-8**
- **Deuteronomy 18:18-19**
- **Exodus 4:10-16 and 7:1**
- **Numbers 12:6**
- **Matthew 24; Mark 13:5**

☐ Definitions:

Prophets

According to Webster's Dictionary, **a prophet is one who speaks for another.** (*Aaron was a prophet for Moses ([Exodus 4:10-16](#)), and God used various men to speak for Him in revealing His secrets*). Prophets were also **teachers, explaining God's purpose to men.** The Apostle Peter said that they were "*holy men of God*" ([2 Peter 1:21](#)). Only holy men can properly speak for God.

... individuals chosen by God to be a mouthpiece or messenger for communicating divine will, revelations, or messages to people.

(The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia) "*According to the uniform teaching of the Bible the prophet is a speaker of or for God. His words are not the production of his own spirit, but come from a higher source.*

☐ Definitions:

Prophecy:

A prophecy is a **forecast/proclamation of something that will happen in the future; a human report of a divine revelation**. It is not merely guessing or predicting, but a message directly from God. (God is the Author of prophecy in the Bible).

Prophecy is the message itself—a divinely inspired revelation or proclamation—often offering guidance, warnings, or insights, rather than just predicting the future.

The prophet Isaiah explained that, “I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure’” ([Isaiah 46:9-10](#)).

□ Definitions:

- **Prophet** (Noun): The person who delivers or proclaims the message or the channel through which the message/proclamation is shared
- **Prophecy** (Noun): The message itself or what is to be spoken of.
- **Prophecy** (Verb): The act of speaking or proclaiming the prophecy

In the Bible, the word **prophet** comes from the Hebrew word **nabi**, meaning spokesperson. Another Hebrew word, **ro'eh**, literally means one who sees—a seer. In Greek, the word is **profetes**, meaning one who “speaks forth” (*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of the Old and New Testament Words*, 1985).

See also **Strongs 5030 occurs 316x - Prophet, Hb. , נָבִיא Htr. nābî’ from the root word nābā. Which means "prophecy", or "to speak under inspiration", in prediction or simple discourse.**

❑ Characteristic of True Prophets

The message of true prophets does not come from their own ideas and imaginations. Peter explained, “No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation [or origin], for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (**2 Peter 1:20-21**).

Being prophetic involves activating spiritual insight through **being called by God**, by **Prayer and supplication**, **Meekness and Humility**, and **Studying Scripture** to understand God’s voice and timing.

Another vital steps include inviting the **Holy Spirit to guide us** in biblical knowledge, cultivating a **humble heart**, waiting for **God's timing**, and **true discernment**.

☐ **Characteristic of True Prophets**

- ✓ **...prophecy via the Holy Spirit (1 Samuel 10:6; 2 Chronicles 24:20; Ezekiel 11:5; Acts 1:16; 1 Peter 1:20-21)**
- ✓ **...prophecy as a result of dreams, visions and God's Calling (Numbers 12:6; Acts 2:17)**
- ✓ **...prophecy by faith (Romans 12:6 ; 2 Kings 4:12-17)**
- ✓ **...do not change, modify nor alter message or words (Psalms 12:6; Psalms 89:34)**
- ✓ **...confront sin and pronounce judgment (Isaiah 58:1; Ezekiel 22:2; Micah 3:8)**
- ✓ **...call sinners to repentance (Jeremiah 25:4-5, 35:15; Ezekiel 14:6; Matthew 3:1-2)**
- ✓ **...promise forgiveness and reconciliation after repentance (2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 38:5; Jeremiah 32:42;)**
- ✓ **...warn people of future events (Amos 3:7; Acts 11:28, 21:10; Isaiah 13:19-22)**
- ✓ **...speak the truth (Psalms 119:151,119:160; John 16:13)**
- ✓ **...do not seek fame, power nor riches (Jeremiah 45:5; Timothy 6:9-10; 2 Corinthians 2:17; Luke 6:26; Zechariah 4:6)**

☐ Purpose of Prophecies:

One of the missions God gives His children includes sharing His message. As in the Old Testament He often inspired prophets to proclaim His words and in the New Testament, He commissioned His Church to preach the gospel—His message—to this world.

God's message is a message of warning, a call for repentance and a message of love, hope and good news.

Prophecies sometimes serve to encourage, instruct, warn, or provide consolation to people, rather than solely focusing on foretelling future events.

To note that while prophecy is generally associated with Judaism and Christianity, it is a widespread concept in various other religions and cultures, involving figures like seers and, occasionally, women with similar roles.

□ Purpose of Prophecies:

It should be appreciated that many of the prophecies recorded in the Bible have already come to pass; and many more remain to be fulfilled at the end of this present age, before Christ's return to earth and after. However, we should bear in mind that:

- **Faithful prophets of the Bible proclaimed the messages as they were inspired to do so by God.** That is, no prophecy in the Bible came from any individual personal ideas, wishes or desires but rather by God's direct inspiration.
- **Prophecies that have been fulfilled gives us confidence and hope that God is real and that He will fulfill what He has said about the future.** Since prophecies of world-ruling empires and even the name of a specific ruler long before his birth have all come to pass, we know the rest of the Bible's prophecies will likewise come to pass.
- **Prophecy encourages us to have a better fear of God, which includes faith in God and obedience to His laws.** Since so many judgments are coming upon peoples and nations because of disobedience to God's law, we realize that commandment-keeping is an important part of our relationship with our Creator ([Matthew 19:17](#); [Revelation 22:14](#)).

□ A bit about false prophets

Take heed that no man deceives you."(Matthew 24:4; Mark 13:5),

So why are **false prophets/prophecies** so common today? ...because prophecy is one of the spiritual gifts that is easy for people to fake/imitate. Anybody can stand up and say, "Thus says the LORD" followed by what they think God might say at that time, and claim to be a **true prophet**. They may not deceive everybody, but it seems that they nearly always deceive a good many. They make this claim because of several reasons: some may do it because they wish to gain people's respect and admiration and they get this when people believe that God speaks through them.

In the **Old Testament false prophets** used to get a seat at the queen's table (1 Kings 18:19), which was a very high place, and some were promised very high positions (Numbers 22:17). Some may do it because it becomes financially prosperous (Micah 3:11). Balaam was an example of this (Numbers 22:7), and other prophets were offered great rewards, although **true prophets** refused them (Genesis 14:23; 1 Kings 13:7; 2 Kings 5:15; Daniel 2:6). Some may do it because they are **genuinely deceived** and think that God is speaking through them, but whatever the reason, **false prophecy is a sin** which causes great harm to those who believe it.

□ A bit about false prophets

Why are there false prophets?

The Adversary, the devil, is the father of lies and has deceived the whole world ([John 8:44](#); [Revelation 12:9](#)). His goal has been to twist and falsify the truth of God and to discourage humanity from following the path to true happiness and eternal life. To assist him in this effort, he influences people to become counterfeit prophets.

Another reason is that some people speak from their own imagination. God says, “Woe to the foolish prophets, who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing!” ([Ezekiel 13:3-4](#)).

God exposed prophets who spoke lies as “an astonishing and horrible thing” and noted that “the prophets prophesy falsely . . . and My people love to have it so” ([Jeremiah 5:30-31](#)). So why would people listen to them? Before the apostle Paul’s death, he predicted that some brethren would be easily led astray by false teachers. “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables” ([2 Timothy 4:3-4](#))

☐ A bit about false prophets

Characteristics of false prophets as provided in the Bible:

So, in addition to being contrary to the characteristics of true prophets as indicated before, we can ask the following question as a test for false prophets:

1. Does the conduct of the prophet reflect godly character?

Jesus and the apostles warned many times about deceptive prophets. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits” ([Matthew 7:15-17](#)). These prophets can be identified by their “fruits”—a term used metaphorically by Jesus to describe one’s actions and character. The law of God is the only standard we have to determine whether someone’s fruits are good or bad. True prophets will live in accordance with God’s law.

☐ A bit about false prophets

2. Do the predictions of the prophet come true?

Moses instructed ancient Israel: “When a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him” ([Deuteronomy 18:22](#)).

3. Are the words of the prophet consistent with Scripture?

God explained to those who foolishly seek knowledge from mediums and wizards, “To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” ([Isaiah 8:19-20](#); [2 Peter 1:16, 19](#))

☐ A bit about false prophets

4. Do the people benefit spiritually or Physically* from the prophet's ministry?

God's desire was that ancient Israel would serve as a model nation and represent Him to the nations around them. Israel would be blessed as it fulfilled God's expectation.

With this background, God warned His people, “Behold, I am against those who prophesy false dreams,’ says the LORD, ‘and tell them, and cause My people to err by their lies and by their recklessness. Yet I did not send them or command them; therefore, they shall not profit this people at all,’ says the LORD” ([Jeremiah 23:32](#); also read [verses 13-14](#)).

□ Conclusion

Throughout the Bible a number of people are recorded as serving as prophets of God. Beginning with Abraham ([Genesis 20:7](#)), both men and women—called prophetesses ([Exodus 15:20](#); [Judges 4:4](#))—have faithfully served as God’s messengers.

Naturally, not everyone who claims to be a prophet or prophetess is necessarily a true spokesperson for God. The Bible reveals that there have been false prophets in the past and that there will be false prophets in the future. *For example, during the time of Nehemiah, a false prophetess by the name of Noadiah tried to discourage the work God was doing through Nehemiah ([Nehemiah 6:14](#)).*

Additionally, the book of Revelation corrects members of the Church for allowing “that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols” ([Revelation 2:20](#)).

□ Conclusion

In His famous Sermon on the Mount Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves” ([Matthew 7:15](#)). Later, in His Olivet Discourse (Prophecy), He added that “many false prophets will rise up and deceive many” ([Matthew 24:11](#)).

In the book of Revelation, Jesus also speaks of “the false prophet”—a particularly deceptive person who will arise in the end times ([Revelation 16:13; 19:20; 20:10](#)).

True prophets bring the uncompromised WORD of God! The prophet stands for the very God and speaks from God with the authority of God to bring light into a dark situation, in a troubled and final generation...

❑ Conclusion

The prophet's statements are the statements of God's heart to His people... It is the prophet who is alerted by God. The prophet interprets the events and communicates that interpretation to a church that would otherwise have passed it over! A prophet communicates the will of God

We need to remember that the false prophet tries to look and act like a true prophet in order to deceive because people have a stereotyped view of what a prophet should be. ([Matthew 7:15](#) - Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves; [Matthew 24:24](#) - For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect)

□ Conclusion

The true prophet functions to instruct the church on how to identify, recognize, and overcome false doctrine and false prophets as they disguise themselves as angels of light... The prophet is preparing God's people to be able to perceive, to recognize and to give honour to the true Word of God. There is, therefore, a blessing in the receiving of the man who God sends as a prophet.

To note... the difference between the "gift of prophecy" and "a prophet" is extremely important. The Word of God mentioned that God's Spirit will be poured out on all flesh... but not everyone who prophesies is a prophet. The Spirit of God can fall on any Christian and they can prophesy. The church today can and should share the message of God...the Good news of Salvation.

□ Conclusion

Biblical prophecy is a wonderful gift from God. Through fulfilled prophecy, we can have confidence in what the Bible predicts. Through future prophecies, we can know in advance what is going to occur.

True Prophets cannot be individualized personal messages, sayings, or predictions!... The phrase “I claim and decree, I believe, and I feel” are associated with personal attributes and not messages from God.

The prophet is only a channel or a conduit to share and pass on the message from the Most High God. His messages are absolute, and should not be personalise nor adopted to suit or please....it should be broadcast without fear or favour, in spirit and in truth and both in and out of season.

The Word of God tells us, that we shall know the truth:

- *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth”... [2 Timothy 2:15](#):*
- *“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good”... [1 Thessalonians 5:21](#)*
- *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me”... [John 5:39](#)*

□ Conclusion

There are true prophets and there are also false prophets. Jesus and the apostles warned that there would be false prophets throughout the ages who would not be authorized by God to speak to mankind.

Religious deception is prophesied to be especially intense at the end of this age. One test to determine whether someone is a true or false prophet is to carefully examine this person's words compared to the truth of the Bible.

There is only one supreme Authority in the universe who speaks to humankind and whose word is truly reliable. As the author of the book of Hebrews explains, "God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds" ([Hebrews 1:1-2](#)).

A true prophet of God is a person specifically appointed to convey God's messages to nations and individuals.

About Biblical Prophets and Prophecies...

The Bible contains nearly 2000 prophecies, as in predictions about the future, Some 1,300 prophecies in the Old Testament and 600 prophecies in the New Testament, with about 750 separate subjects. To note, some 27% of the Bible is about prophecy.

There are between 300 – 450 prophecies relating to Jesus Christ.

There are an estimated 88 to 92 named prophets in the Bible, roughly 63 in the Old Testament and 25 in the New Testament.

The 4 Major Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel. (Note: Lamentations is also often grouped with Jeremiah).

The 12 Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi

Famous figures: Abraham, Moses, Aaron, Joshua, Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, and Elisha; **Prophetesses:** Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, and Anna. **Pre-Pentecost:** John the Baptist, Zechariah, Simeon, and Anna. **Apostolic era:** Jesus (who is also viewed as the ultimate prophet), Agabus, Judas Barsabbas, and Silas.

Thank you... and God's continued blessing to all!

God is loving, merciful and gracious to reveal to His children the future in advance through His true prophets.

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer...(Psalm 19:14)

QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

Prophets & Prophecies:

