

PROPHETS AND PROPHECY, VISIONS AND DREAMS

INTRODUCTION: Before the entrance of sin into the world, God spoke directly to Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:8). God demonstrated His love through Divine communication to man as a part of His great plan of salvation.

Matthew 24:24 Jesus warned against false prophets in the last days.

Matthew 7:21 False prophets can still use Jesus' name and perform "miraculous" works.

WHEN WOULD THE GIFT OF PROPHECY END?

Ephesians 4:8 God placed all the gifts in the church with the intention that they would remain there down through time.

1 Corinthians 1:6,7 The church which is waiting for Jesus to come would lack in no gift.

Revelation 12:17 Identifies God's true church as having the "testimony of Jesus."

Revelation 19:10 Identifies the "testimony of Jesus" as "the spirit of prophecy."

Revelation 22:9 The "brethren" of John who had the "testimony of Jesus" were the "prophets," therefore the remnant church would have the "testimony of Jesus," which is the "spirit of prophecy," which is manifested through an earthly prophet.

WHY DID THE GIFT OF PROPHECY DISAPPEAR OUT OF THE CHURCH?

Jeremiah 26:4-6 God had two requirements—keep the law and obey the prophets.

Lamentations 2:9 When the law was no more, God removed the prophets.

Ezekiel 7:26 The same is true again—no law, no prophet.

Ezekiel 20:3 Why would God not be inquired of? Verse 11-13, they were breaking God's law.

The gift of prophecy left the church when men neglected the law and began to follow the traditions of men and pagan worship.

GOD'S SPECIAL COMMUNICATION SINCE THE FALL

- A. Communications sent at different times, in various manners (Heb. 1:1, 2).
- B. God spoke through visions and dreams (Hos. 12:10; Num. 12:6).
- C. Under direct influence of the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Sam. 23:2).
- D. Line of communication (Rev. 1:1). Special angel, Gabriel (Lk. 1:19; Dan. 9:21, 22); Urim and Thummim (1 Sam. 28:6; Ex. 28:30).

PROPHET—GOD'S DIVINE MESSENGER

Is selected by God (Amos 7:14, 15). A prophet foretells, predicts (Deut. 18:21; Jer. 28:9). A prophet foretells as God's mouthpiece (Isa. 56:1). A prophet foretells and is God's spokesman (1 Kings 17:1-4).

PURPOSE OF PROPHECY

- A. Preservation and prosperity of God's people (Hos. 12:13; Prov 29:18;1).
- B. To guide (1 Sam. 9:6, 19, 20; Acts 13:1-4). To reprove sin and wrong-doing (1 Sam. 24:11-15; Matt. 14:1-10). To instruct in things of God (2 Kings 22:3-17). To give warning (Jer. 26:1-15; Acts 21:10-14; 2 Kings 6:1-17). Reveal God's secret purposes (Amos 3:7).

WORK OF A TRUE PROPHET

- Prediction must come to pass (Jer. 28:9; Deut. 18:22).
- Will teach obedience to the truth of God (Deut. 13:1-4).
- Their teachings will produce good spiritual fruit (Matt. 7:15, 20).
- Will speak according to the law and testimony (Isa. 8:20).
- Will call for a return to commandment-keeping (2 Kings 17:13).
- Will believe in the incarnation, life and ministry of Jesus Christ (1 Jn. 4:1-3).

TWELVE TESTS OF A TRUE PROPHET:

1. A true prophet does not lie. His or her non-conditional predictions will always be 100 percent right and accurate (Deut. 18:21, 22; Jer. 28:9).
2. The true gift of prophecy leads people back in harmony with Scripture (Deut. 13:1-3).
3. A true prophet recognizes the incarnation and divinity of Jesus Christ (1 Jn. 4:1-3).
4. A true prophet acts and speaks in accordance with the will and approval of God as expressed in the Bible, and the Ten Commandments in particular—including the fourth commandment (Deut. 18:18, 19; Isa. 8:20; 2 Kings 17:13).
5. A true prophet should have a Godly influence on the Church as well as live a righteous life (Matt. 7:15-20).
6. A true prophet does not prophesy for fees or payments (2 Kings 5:15, 16; Dan. 5:17).
7. A true prophet does not give even his own private interpretation of his or of another true prophet's prophecy; it is always the Lord's exegesis and interpretation, based on what He has revealed (2 Pet. 1:20).
8. A true prophet, with all other things equal, does not prophesy in his own name; it is always in the name of the Lord (2 Pet. 1:21).
9. A true prophet points out the sins, transgressions, and iniquities of the people against God as well as warn the people of God's coming judgments (Isa. 58:1; Isa. 24:19-21).
10. A true prophet edifies the church with counsel and advice in religious matters (1 Cor. 12:28; 1 Cor. 14:3, 4).
11. A true prophet will be in absolute harmony with the words of preceding Bible prophets (1 Cor. 14:32; Isa. 8:20).
12. A true prophet, when in vision, will not breath (Dan. 10:15, 17).

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