

MODERN PROPHETS - ARE THEY FROM GOD

Jesus warned His followers to be on guard against false prophets. Matthew 24:11, 24. If there were to be no prophets at all He would have simply said "beware of prophets."

There are three common misconceptions concerning the gift of prophecy.

1. To be a prophet one had to write a book of the Bible. Such a fallacy is easily refuted by such well known prophets as Elijah, John the Baptist, and dozens of others who did not write any of the Bible.
2. The gift of prophecy ended with the death of the last of the apostles and the close of the New Testament.

The gift of prophecy was to be found in the church, as needed, until the second coming of Jesus. Ephesians 4:11-13.

It is included among all of the lists of the gifts of the Spirit. Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-10, 28; Ephesians 4:11-13.

It is one of the identifying marks of God's true last-day church. Revelation 12:17; 19:10.

Any church that claims to be the true church and refuses to keep all of God's commandments, or does not have the prophetic gift, cannot be that church.

3. The prophetic gift was given to men only.

There are many cases in Scripture where women had the prophetic gift.

A few examples of this would be Miriam (Exodus 15:20), Deborah (Judges 4:4), Hulda (2 Chronicles 4:22), and Philip's four daughters (Acts 21:9).

Shortly after the signs in Matthew 24:29 and 30, and Revelation 6:13 and 14, this gift was to be manifested among God's people. Joel 2:28-32.

The last of these signs was fulfilled on November 13, 1833 and the gift of prophecy was given in 1844 with the rise of the remnant church.

How can one tell the true prophetic gift from the false? The Bible gives several tests by which one can tell a true prophet from a false one.

1. One way Jesus says we can tell the true from the false is "by their fruits". Matthew 7:15, 16. If one who claims to be a prophet does not live a life in harmony with the principles of God's Word you may know that they are a false prophet.
2. What they say comes to pass. Jeremiah 28:9; Deuteronomy 18:22. They are always accurate in their predictions.
3. They do not place their own interpretation on Scripture. 2 Peter 1:20. A true prophet will not claim to be the only one who can correctly interpret the Scriptures.
4. They will deliver what ever messages God sends. Jeremiah 1:6, 7. Whether favorable or not a true prophet does not hesitate to deliver a message from God.
5. All that they teach and say must be in harmony with the Bible. Isaiah 8:20. One prophet will not contradict what a previous prophet has said, but will live and teach in harmony with what the previous prophets have said.
6. The purpose of the gift of prophecy is to edify, exhort, and comfort the church. 1 Corinthians 14:3, 4. The prophets concern is not with his or her own standing or well being, but that of the church.
7. Part of a prophet's function is to warn of judgment. Isaiah 24:20.

This gift was to be given to the remnant church in 1844 with the beginning of the investigative judgment.

The Lord says if He sends a prophet and we reject that prophet we will receive a terrible retribution. Deuteronomy 18:18, 19.

Our only safety lies in making sure that anyone claiming to have the prophetic gift meets all of the Bible specifications. If they do not we are to reject them, if they do we should receive their message.

To reject one who meets all of the Bible criteria is to reject God who sent that prophet.

God's counsel is: "Quench not the Spirit. Despise not prophesying. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21.

To despise, reject, or mock the true gift of prophecy is to despise, reject, and mock the Spirit of God and will cause one to lose eternal life. Matthew 12:31, 32.

Therefore, "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe His prophets, so shall ye prosper." 2 Chronicles 20:20.

Study Helps

Revelation 12:17 ----- What two things identify the remnant church?

Revelation 19:10 ----- What is the testimony of Jesus?

Amos 3:7 ----- What is the purpose of a prophet?

NOTE: Three common misconceptions are: 1. To be a prophet one had to write a book of the Bible. Such a fallacy as this is easily refuted by such well known prophets as Elijah, John the Baptist, and dozens of others who did not write any of the Bible. 2. That the gift of prophecy ended with the death of the last of the apostles and the close of the New Testament. 3. That the prophetic gift was given to men only.

Ephesians 4:11-13 ----- How long is this gift to be in the church?

Was this gift bestowed upon men only?

Exodus 15:20 ----- Miriam.

Judges 4:4 ----- Deborah.

2 Chronicles 34:22 ----- Hulda.

Acts 21:9 ----- Philip's four daughters.

Joel 2:28-31 ----- Will this still happen in the last days?

How can one tell the true from the false?

Matthew 7:15-20 ----- By their fruits.

Jeremiah 28:9 ----- What they say comes to pass.

2 Peter 1:20 ----- Do not place their own interpretation on Scripture.

Isaiah 8:20 ----- All they say and do will be in harmony with the Bible.

Isaiah 58:1 ----- They will point out sin.

1 Corinthians 14:3, 4 ----- They will edify and counsel.

Isaiah 24:20 ----- They will warn of judgment.

Deuteronomy 18:18-22 ----- What if we reject a true prophet?

2 Chronicles 20:20 ----- What is God's assurance to us?

1 Thessalonians 5:19-21 ----- What are we counseled to do?