

I. Prophecy As Understood From Scripture

Prophecy describes various forms of inspired utterance, facilitated through God revealing something to a believer, and that believer giving the human communication of what God is revealing. Prophecy includes but is not limited to preaching or the written words of recognized Old Testament prophets. Old Testament prophecy was mainly predictive in nature. New Testament prophecy is mainly for edification of believers. At its core, all prophecy consists of God communicating specific messages through human instruments.

II. A Distinction Between the Office of Prophet & Those Who Simply Exercised the Ability To Prophecy

A. The OT writing prophets - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel, etc.

God individually commissioned these men to speak on His behalf and only to speak what He communicated. He then inspired these men to write their prophecies and God preserved their words as Scripture.

B. The NT office of prophets:

- Acts 13:1 - "Now there were in the church at Antioch prophets and teachers, Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen a member of the court of Herod the tetrarch, and Saul."
- Ephesians 4:11 - 12 - "And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."
- Named prophets: John the Baptizer, Agabus (acts 11 & 21), Judas & Silas (Acts 15:32)

C. The NT gift of prophecy: 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14; Romans 12:6

- There were some who prophesied but were not officially titled prophets: Philip's 4 daughters (Acts 21:9); unnamed men & women at Corinth (1 Cor. 11:4-5); unnamed Christians in Rome (Romans 12:5); unnamed men at Ephesus (Acts 19:5-6)

III. There Are Varying Degrees of Authority In Prophecies:

A. Scriptural prophecy is infallible, supreme and always binding

"19 And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, 20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." - 2 Peter 1:19-21

B. Non-inscripturated OT prophecies: Medad, Eldad (numbers 11:25-29); King Saul (1 Sam. 10:10); scores of unnamed prophets (Books of Samuel, Kings & Chronicles).

C. NT prophecy - has to be evaluated to be validated.