

Prophets And You The Unseen Real, The Prophets, And Believers

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Review

- In the Old Testament scriptures we see a continuing theme show up that hints at and then at times, fully reveals the existence of another dimension of reality
- A reality that includes malevolent as well as faithful divine beings
- A reality that hints at an ongoing conflict, one that is very old involving an enemy that desires to destroy us.
- As we have followed YAHWEH and His revelation to us in the Old Testament, we have picked up on some rather world view changing stuff.
- There was not one rebellion in Genesis, but rather three
- Genesis 3
- Genesis 6
- Genesis 11
- YAHWEH created divine beings, we usually refer to them by one of their job titles – angels; but they have many more names
- These divine beings were created with free will
- YAHWEH also created man, Adam and Eve
- They also had free will
- Both groups rebelled, all of man rebelled but not all of the divine beings, and not all at one time.

- YAHWEH has a Council, currently with non-rebellious divine being members
- As per Revelation 4 and 1 Corinthians 6:3, those members will be replaced at a future date with believers – the church after we are glorified
- Some of the divine beings who were placed in charge of the nations in Genesis 11 and Deuteronomy 32 became corrupted and rebelled demanding worship in place of YAHWEH (Matthew 4:9)
- YAHWEH has not changed His plans, He is still intent on establishing His dwelling with His creation.
- He is intent on bringing about Eden again here on earth; but His way, not man's way (Genesis 11) or any fallen divine being's way (Genesis 6.)

We see Him in the person of Jesus Christ totally egging on these malevolent beings into enticing them to have men kill Him. But it was only then they learned they had sealed their own doom because Jesus supplied the ultimate payment on the cross reversing what was started in Genesis 3 and then sealing the deal with His resurrection from the dead.

We learned from Jeremiah 32 that property deeds, which is one of the items obtained in Jesus' triumph on the cross, were typically sealed externally and we see in Revelation that the Lamb who was slain is the only one able to take the title deed to the earth and open the seals.

Today's Reality

- The spiritual warfare we have looked at so far in the scriptures is not solely a past event. It continues on today.
- This is not something that ended back in the day, it is a real reality for today.
- In the Old Testament, there are those who were specifically chosen by YAHWEH and uniquely enabled by Him to be His spokesman or woman
- We call them prophets
- We will also see this calling continues today to a group you will be familiar with

What is a prophet?

The prophet is a 'spokesman,' one who represents another, and Exodus, 7:1 is the best definition or description of what a prophet is, whether in the Old Testament or the New Testament. (Griffith Thomas n.d., 3)

Exodus 7:1–2

"Then the LORD said to Moses, "See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron shall be your prophet. As for you, you shall speak all that I command you, and your brother Aaron shall speak to Pharaoh that he let the sons of Israel go out of his land." (NASB 2020)

Note I also related that not all prophets were male, a unique thing to remember in a patriarchal society.

Seven prophetesses Who are they? Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, Huldah, and Esther. (Neusner 2011, 69)

He said to him, "You have no tribe in Israel from which prophets did not go forth. The tribe of Judah and Benjamin produced kings on the instructions of prophets." (Neusner, The Babylonian Talmud: A Translation and Commentary 2011, 106)

So, we see seven prophetesses, prophets came from every tribe of Israel.

...only those prophets who had prophecies containing a lesson for future generations were recorded. Rabbinical tradition states that there were forty-eight Hebrew prophets, seven Gentile prophets, and seven prophetesses. (Warren 2003, 7)

...a general definition of prophet or prophetess is a person who acts as a mouthpiece for God, receiving a message from him and proclaiming it in accordance with his commands. However, this term could also be used of one who pretended or actually believed that he or she was a mouthpiece of God. This definition would also point out the fact that prophecy was not exclusively predictive. A prophet was both an intermediary and an intercessor. (Warren 2003, 7)

Forecasting future events was only a small part of what prophetic figures did and what they were about. Prophets were simply people who spoke for God—men and women who, at God's direction, looked their fellow Israelites in the eye and told them they were being disloyal to the God to whom they owed their existence and who had chosen a relationship with them over everyone else on earth. Prophets told people the unvarnished truth and often paid dearly for it. (Heiser 2015, 232)

Were there false prophets too? Yes, many.

Deuteronomy 18:20–22

“But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in My name, a word which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.’ And if you say in your heart, ‘How will we recognize the word which the LORD has not spoken?’ When the prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, and the thing does not happen or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you are not to be afraid of him.” (NASB 2020)

Were they only in Israel during the time of the monarchy? No. There were prophets prior to the flood, and also prior to the nation being formed.

Who was the first prophet?
We get a hint in Job

Job 15:7–8

“Are you the first man who was born? Or were you brought forth before the hills? Have you listened in the council of God? And do you limit wisdom to yourself?” (ESV)

Yes, these are rhetorical questions being asked of Job by one of his friends, Eliphaz. Who was the first man, well Adam, of course. Remember what we said about Adam and Eden. What did we discover about where YAHWEH was?

Where YAHWEH is, His Divine Council is also. Adam was part of the family and prior to the fall, he was also privy to conversations taking place in the Divine Council.

In the Tabernacle and the Temple, where YAHWEH was, His Council was. They too were on the other side of the curtain.

Remember, this is what God has for us as we see in Revelation.

The pattern we see in scripture includes the Divine Council.

Remember from Genesis 3 that after the fall, God was walking in the garden.

Genesis 3:8

“And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden.” (ESV)

This is not just God out for a stroll, but it is also used of God's active presence, by the way, who was strolling in the Garden and who is it that appeared to Adam after his sin? Adam and Eve know it was God, they had met with Him before in this manner.

Once they had children, they became mediators between God and their children. Then they filled the prophetic role.

Back to the walking.

Leviticus 26:12

"I will walk among you and be your God, and you shall be My people." (NKJV)

Deuteronomy 23:14

"For the LORD your God walks in the midst of your camp, to deliver you and give your enemies over to you; therefore your camp shall be holy, that He may see no unclean thing among you, and turn away from you." (NKJV)

We also refer to our walk with God when we talk about our relationship. There is another antediluvian prophet who walked with God

Genesis 5:21–24

"When Enoch had lived 65 years, he became the father of Methuselah. After he became the father of Methuselah, Enoch walked with God for 300 years, and he had other sons and daughters. The entire lifetime of Enoch was 365 years. Enoch walked with God, and then he disappeared because God took him away." (NET)

Enoch was also a prophet of God recognized as such in Jude.

Jude 14–15

"It was also about these people that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord has come with many thousands of His holy ones, to execute judgment upon all, and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." (NASB 2020)

His specific calling is in 1 Enoch.

Enoch 14:18 – 15:1

"I looked, and I saw a high throne, and its appearance was like crystal, a wheel like the sun shining brightly and a mountain of cherubs. And below the throne, burning rivers of fire were going out, and I was not able to see. And the great glory was seated upon it, its covering like the appearance of the sun, brighter and whiter than all snow. And all the angels were not able to go into this house and see his face because of the honored and esteemed one. And all flesh was not able to see him. The fire was burning in a circle, and the great fire stood beside it. No one comes near to him in the circle; numberless ten thousands stood before him, and all of his reason is a work. The holy ones of the angels who come near to him do not withdraw with the night, neither do they leave him. Until then I was cast upon my face and trembling. And the Lord called me with his mouth and said to me, "Come here, Enoch, and hear my word." And one of the holy ones came to me and woke me, and stood me up, and brought me to the door; I bowed my face down. And answering, he said to me, "The true human, a human of the truth, the scribe." Then I heard his voice say, "Don't be afraid, Enoch, a true human and scribe of the truth. Come here and hear my voice." (Lexham Press 2020, Enoch 14:18 - 15:1)

The Jews considered Enoch to be a prophet because he was God's mouthpiece to the fallen watchers delivering YAHWEH's words of doom to them. We also again see in Jude, that Enoch saw and spoke about the future as well.

Noah also spoke for God and prophesied of the coming judgement, which everyone pretty much ignored.

Genesis 6:8–13

“But Noah found favor in the sight of the LORD. These are the descendants of Noah. Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God. And Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth. Now the earth was corrupt in God’s sight, and the earth was filled with violence. And God saw that the earth was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted its ways upon the earth. And God said to Noah, “I have determined to make an end of all flesh, for the earth is filled with violence because of them; now I am going to destroy them along with the earth.” (NRSV)

2 Peter 2:5

“and if he did not spare the ancient world, even though he saved Noah, a herald of righteousness, with seven others, when he brought a flood on a world of the ungodly;” (NRSV)

We see the same pattern of personal appearance and calling to each of the patriarchs as well. Abraham, Isaac, Jacob – they all multiple meetings with and conversations with God.

The pattern we see emerging is a simple one that in some cases is focused on in the prophets as a means to reflect that the calling is genuine, and they are truly prophets of God. There is a pattern a Jew would look for.

The pattern that emerges from the patriarchal sagas is that when God chooses someone to represent him, that person must first meet with God. By necessity, that meeting is with the visible Yahweh, who can be discerned by human senses. In many cases, the divine job interview occurs in a place that is described as God’s home or headquarters, the place where the divine council meets. (Heiser 2015, 236)

Exodus 3:1–6

“Now Moses was keeping the flock of his father-in-law, Jethro, the priest of Midian, and he led his flock to the west side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, “I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned.” When the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Then he said, “Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground.” And he said, “I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God.” (ESV)

Exodus 33:7–11

“Now Moses used to take the tent and pitch it outside the camp, far off from the camp, and he called it the tent of meeting. And everyone who sought the LORD would go out to the tent of meeting, which was outside the camp. Whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people would rise up, and each would stand at his tent door, and watch Moses until he had gone into the tent. When Moses entered the tent, the pillar of cloud would descend and stand at the entrance of the tent, and the LORD would speak with Moses. And when all the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance of the tent, all the people would rise up and worship, each at his tent door. Thus the LORD used to speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend. When Moses turned again into the camp, his assistant Joshua the son of Nun, a young man, would not depart from the tent.” (ESV)

Moses, specifically called of YAHWEH and met with both YAHWEH and the angel of YAHWEH, Jesus. It is the divine encounter that convinced the people that Moses was called of God.

Deuteronomy 34:10

“No prophet ever again arose in Israel like Moses, who knew the LORD face to face.” (NET)

Moses also prophesied about another prophet who would be coming. We also get the standard required to be a prophet.

Deuteronomy 18:18–22

“I will raise up a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites. I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell the people everything I command him. I will personally deal with anyone who will not listen to the messages the prophet proclaims on my behalf. But any prophet who falsely claims to speak in my name or who speaks in the name of another god must die.’ “But you may wonder, ‘How will we know whether or not a prophecy is from the LORD?’ If the prophet speaks in the LORD’s name but his prediction does not happen or come true, you will know that the LORD did not give that message. That prophet has spoken without my authority and need not be feared.” (NLT)

Who was with Moses each step of the way? That also uniquely qualified him to be a prophet as well.

Deuteronomy 31:14

“Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, the time for you to die is near; call Joshua and present yourselves at the tent of meeting, and I will commission him.” So Moses and Joshua went and presented themselves at the tent of meeting.” (NASB 2020)

1 Samuel 3:2–10

“At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his own place. The lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. Then the LORD called Samuel, and he said, “Here I am!” and ran to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call; lie down again.” So he went and lay down. And the LORD called again, “Samuel!” and Samuel arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” But he said, “I did not call, my son; lie down again.” Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. And the LORD called Samuel again the third time. And he arose and went to Eli and said, “Here I am, for you called me.” Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, “Go, lie down, and if he calls you, you shall say, ‘Speak, LORD, for your servant hears.’ ” So Samuel went and lay down in his place. And the LORD came and stood, calling as at other times, “Samuel! Samuel!” And Samuel said, “Speak, for your servant hears.”” (ESV)

Coming out from behind the curtain.



(Bolen 2012, Used with Permission)



(Bolen, Tabernacle Holy of Holies behind the veil 2012, Used with Permission)

So as we see, the expectation was that a prophet or prophetess had been called of God. They had been interviewed and been involved with the Divine Council.

In Isaiah we see the classic calling.

Isaiah 6:1–2

“In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew.” (ESV)

Note the presence of the throne of God as well as throne guardians, seraphim. Why has Isaiah been summoned to the throne room?

Isaiah 6:8

And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?” Then I said, “Here I am! Send me.” (ESV)

YAHWEH, in His throne room, where the Divine Council is gathered, asks a question of those there, and note, Isaiah has been summoned to be there as well. Sounds like God, who does not need any assistance at all to rule the universe, is asking for participants to take part in the work with Him? Yes, He is.

2 Chronicles 18:5–27

“So Ahab called in the prophets, about 400 of them, and asked them, “Should I go and attack Ramoth, or not?” “Attack it,” they answered. “God will give you victory.” But Jehoshaphat asked, “Isn’t there another prophet through whom we can consult the LORD?” Ahab answered, “There is one more, Micaiah son of

Imlah. But I hate him because he never prophesies anything good for me; it's always something bad." "You shouldn't say that!" Jehoshaphat replied. So King Ahab called in a court official and told him to go and fetch Micaiah at once. The two kings, dressed in their royal robes, were sitting on their thrones at the threshing place just outside the gate of Samaria, and all the prophets were prophesying in front of them. One of them, Zedekiah son of Chenaanah, made iron horns and said to Ahab, "This is what the LORD says, 'With these you will fight the Syrians and totally defeat them.'" All the other prophets said the same thing. "March against Ramoth and you will win," they said. "The LORD will give you victory." Meanwhile, the official who had gone to fetch Micaiah said to him, "All the other prophets have prophesied success for the king, and you had better do the same." But Micaiah answered, "By the living LORD, I will say what my God tells me to!" When he appeared before King Ahab, the king asked him, "Micaiah, should King Jehoshaphat and I go and attack Ramoth, or not?" "Attack!" Micaiah answered. "Of course you'll win. The LORD will give you victory." But Ahab replied, "When you speak to me in the name of the LORD, tell the truth! How many times do I have to tell you that?" Micaiah answered, "I can see the army of Israel scattered over the hills like sheep without a shepherd. And the LORD said, 'These men have no leader; let them go home in peace.'" Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "I told you that he never prophesies anything good for me; it's always something bad!" Micaiah went on: "Now listen to what the LORD says! I saw the LORD sitting on his throne in heaven, with all his angels standing beside him. The LORD asked, 'Who will deceive Ahab so that he will go and get killed at Ramoth?' Some of the angels said one thing, and others said something else, until a spirit stepped forward, approached the LORD, and said, 'I will deceive him.' 'How?' the LORD asked. The spirit replied, 'I will go and make all Ahab's prophets tell lies.' The LORD said, 'Go and deceive him. You will succeed.'" And Micaiah concluded: "This is what has happened. The LORD has made these prophets of yours lie to you. But he himself has decreed that you will meet with disaster!" Then the prophet Zedekiah went up to Micaiah, slapped his face, and asked, "Since when did the LORD's spirit leave me and speak to you?" "You will find out when you go into some back room to hide," Micaiah replied. Then King Ahab ordered one of his officers, "Arrest Micaiah and take him to Amon, the governor of the city, and to Prince Joash. Tell them to throw him in prison and to put him on bread and water until I return safely." "If you return safely," Micaiah exclaimed, "then the LORD has not spoken through me!" And he added, "Listen, everyone, to what I have said!" (GNB)

The implications are clear: true prophets have stood and listened in Yahweh's divine council; false prophets have not. (Heiser 2015, 239)

Ezekiel is another who was uniquely called of God with the throne room coming down to him. (Ezekiel 1-3)

Jeremiah is another. (Jeremiah 1)

Then there is Daniel, who is also a prophet. He provides us another picture of the divine throne room and actions there in Daniel 7. His vision involves the last days but for our purposes, lets focus on two specific sections of Daniel 7.

Daniel 7:9–10

"I kept on watching until the Ancient of Days was seated. His clothes were white, like snow, and the hair on his head was like pure wool. His throne burned with flaming fire, and its wheels burned with fire. A river of fire flowed out from before him. Thousands upon thousands were serving him, with millions upon millions waiting before him. The court sat in judgment, and record books were unsealed." (ISV)

This is not a small throne room being seen here. Someone else is provided a view of the same throne room in Revelation 4. As in Revelation 4, there is more action to take place.

Daniel 7:13–14

"I continued to observe the night vision—and look!—someone like the Son of Man was coming, accompanied by heavenly clouds. He approached the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. To him dominion was bestowed, along with glory and a kingdom, so that all peoples, nations, and languages

are to serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion—it will never pass away—and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.” (ISV)

Daniel clearly gives us the view of the throne room and the council which is there and participating with YAHWEH. Daniel also clearly show us that there is a war going on not only on earth, but in the heavenlies.

Indeed, so authentic is the ongoing cosmic spiritual battle that in a few instances Old Testament authors suggest that these forces successfully resisted God’s will in opposing nations or individual persons. For three weeks the “prince of Persia” successfully blocks God’s answer to Daniel’s prayer (Dan 10)... (Boyd 1997, 163)

Jeremiah was very familiar with the throne room and the council. He actually makes reference to it in Jeremiah 23, and carries a message from the Lord who is in discussion. The message also still holds for today, for those who say they carry a message from God, but do not know Him nor have they communed with Him.

Jeremiah 23:16–40

“This is what the Lord Almighty says: “Do not listen to the words of the prophets, because they bring visions to nothing by themselves; they speak from their own heart and not from the mouth of the Lord. They say to those who reject the word of the Lord, ‘There will be peace to you,’ and to all who walk by their will, to all who walk by the deception of his heart, they said, ‘Evil will not come upon you.’ Because who has stood in the assembly of the Lord and seen his word? Who has paid attention and listened? Look! An earthquake from the Lord! And wrath goes out like a whirlwind; gathered up, it will come upon the ungodly. And the anger of the Lord will no longer turn back until he has done it, from the undertaking of his heart. At the end of days, they will perceive it. I did not send the prophets, and they kept running. And I did not speak to them, and they kept prophesying. And if they had stood in support of me and heard my words, also my people might have turned themselves back from their evil pursuits. I am a God nearby and not a God far off. If someone is hidden in secret then will I not see him? Do I not fill the sky and the land?” says the Lord. “I have heard the things that the prophets have spoken; they are prophesying lies in my name, saying, ‘I have dreamed a dream!’ How long will there be lies in the heart of the prophets who prophesy, when they prophesy the will of their heart, who plan to forget my law with their dreams that each one recites in detail to his friend, just as their fathers have forgotten my name by the Baal? Let the prophet in whom the dream is recite his dream in detail. And let him to whom my word comes recite my word in truth in detail. What is the chaff to the grain? So are my words,” says the Lord. “Look! Are not my words like fire and like an axe smiting a rock? Because of this, look! I am against the prophets who prophesy false dreams and have not recited them in detail, and led my people astray by their lies and by their leading astray, and I did not send them, and I did not command them, and they will not help this people with help. And if this people or a priest or a prophet would ask you, ‘What is the oracle of the Lord?’ then you shall say to them, ‘“You are the oracle and I will strike you,” says the Lord.’ As for the prophet and the priests and the people who might say, ‘Oracle of the Lord,’ then I will avenge that person and his house. This is what you shall say, each to his friend and each to his brother, ‘What was answered by the Lord?’ and ‘What has the Lord spoken?’ And do not call it ‘Oracle of the Lord’ any longer, because his word to humankind will be the oracle, ‘And why has the Lord our God spoken?’ ” Therefore this is what the Lord our God says: “Because those of you who have said this word, ‘Oracle of the Lord,’ and I sent to you, saying, ‘You shall not say, “Oracle of the Lord.” ’ Therefore look, I myself am taking and striking you and the city that I have given you and your fathers. And I will place an eternal reproach and an eternal dishonor into you that will not be forgotten.’ ”” (Lexham Press 2020, Jer 23:16-40)

Today, the problem continues to be false prophets, false teachers who say they have been commissioned by God, but do not know Him.

2 Peter 2:1

“But false prophets also appeared among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.” (2 Peter 2:1, NASB 2020)

As believers in Jesus Christ, we meet, each one of who knows the Lord, the standard.

Acts 2:1–4

“When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly a noise like a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And tongues that looked like fire appeared to them, distributing themselves, and a tongue rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with different tongues, as the Spirit was giving them the ability to speak out.” (NASB 2020)

The first two points of the description that deserve attention are the “violent rushing wind” and the “divided tongues like fire.” Both are images in the Old Testament associated with God’s presence—the disciples are being commissioned by God in his council like the prophets of old. (Heiser 2015, 297)

As believers in Jesus Christ, what kind of access does Christ provide for us?

Ephesians 2:13–16

“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.” (NKJV)

Mark 15:37–38

“And Jesus cried out with a loud voice, and breathed His last. Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom.” (NKJV)

We have access now, through Christ, directly to the Father, directly to YAHWEH. Where YAHWEH is, there is His Divine Council as well.

Jeremiah 1:4–5

“And the word of the Lord came to him: “I knew you before I formed you in the belly, and I sanctified you before you came out; I established you as a prophet to the nations.”” (Lexham Press 2020, Jer 1:4-5)

Romans 8:29–31

“For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory. What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us?” (NLT)

Mark 16:15

“And He said to them, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.” (NASB 2020)

Next week, we pick up on the unseen realm in the New Testament. We will see how a day in the life of Jesus, was a day of spiritual warfare.

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