

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

GOD'S PROPHETIC NETWORK

WHAT DO THESE BIBLE CHARACTERS HAVE IN COMMON?

Anna • Amos • Hosea • Agabus • Huldah • John the Baptist • Elisha • Deborah



Answer: All of them were prophets.

WHAT'S A PROPHET?

You might think a prophet is someone who predicts the future. But that's only one part of the job.

A prophet is a spokesperson for God. The prophet receives messages from God and communicates them to people.

COULD WE HAVE PROPHETS TODAY?

Definitely! The prophet Joel predicted that the gift of prophecy would make a big comeback at the end of time (that's now). "I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will have dreams. Your young men will have visions" (Joel 2:28).

The gift of prophecy is so important that it's one of the signs of God's end-time "remnant" people (see FUN-da-Mental #13).

But wait! Jesus also warned that false prophets would fool many people before His second coming (Matthew 24:11). So if someone claims to be a prophet, we should think carefully about what they say and decide if they are a true prophet or not.

"Do not scoff at prophecies, but test everything that is said. Hold on to what is good" (1 Thessalonians 5:20, 21, NLT).

PROPHETS IN THE BIBLE

Dozens of prophets pop up in the Bible story. What did they do all day? Most prophets did at least one of these jobs:

- Governed God's people or gave advice to the leaders.
- Taught people about God and His laws.
- Urged people to turn away from their sins and obey God.
- Warned people about the bad consequences of not following God.
- Revealed what would happen in the future.
- Encouraged God's people by telling them how much He cares for them.
- Wrote the books of the Bible. (Yep, that one's pretty important.)
- Occasionally messed up and beat their donkeys, disobeyed God's instructions. (News flash: Being chosen as a prophet doesn't mean you'll never sin.)



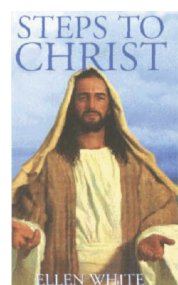
HOW CAN I IDENTIFY A TRUE PROPHET?

- ✓ **1. Does their message agree with the Bible?** "Look to God's instructions and teachings! People who contradict his word are completely in the dark" (Isaiah 8:20, NLT).
- ✓ **2. If the prophet makes a prediction, does it come true?** "If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, that is a message the Lord has not spoken" (Deuteronomy 18:22, NIV).
- ✓ **3. Does the prophet point people to Jesus as the Savior?** A prophet who doesn't believe in Jesus can't be from God (1 Corinthians 12:3; 1 John 4:1-3).
- ✓ **4. Does the prophet live a godly life and help others live for God?** "Watch out for false prophets... You can tell what they really are by what they do" (Matthew 7:15, 16).

HOW DO ELLEN WHITE'S WRITINGS HELP US?

The messages God gave through Ellen White don't replace the Bible. But they are a huge help to Christians today.

- They help us understand the Bible better.
- They help us apply Bible teachings to our lives. For instance, the Bible doesn't say anything about cigarettes, but Ellen White showed how smoking goes against the Bible's principle of using our bodies to honor God.



- They warn us about the ways Satan will try to trick people at the end of time.
- They encourage us to stay close to Jesus and wait eagerly for His return.

Bible texts from NIRV unless noted (NLT, NIV).
Source for number of books/articles (for reference only)
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ELLEN WHITE – A MESSENGER FOR GOD

Ellen White, one of the founders of the Seventh-day Adventist Church, worked as a prophet for 70 years (1844–1915).

Ellen had her first vision when she was **17 years old**.

She experienced more than **2,000 visions** from God.

During her life she wrote more than **40 books** and **5,000 magazine articles**.

God gave her messages to share about all sorts of topics:

- the life of Jesus
- health
- how sin began
- God's love
- clothes
- Jesus' second coming
- what students should learn in school
- how to witness
- guy/girl relationships
- and many more!

