

## Prophets

The word "prophets" describes a person who serves the body of believers by mostly giving encouraging messages from God. In contrast, apostles (messengers) are sent by God for a purpose; for example, the emissary Shaul (Paul) was sent to give the Gentiles the messianic message (gospel). Prophets may give warnings or information about the future. Ephesians 4:11 lists prophets as a common service to the believers. Some people are given prophetic words liberally while others may only give prophetic words occasionally. We call them words because the Bible says these messages may come by a "word of knowledge" or "word of wisdom."

There were prophets in both the Old and New Testament portions of the Bible. There were notable prophets that predicted future events, prophets who encouraged, and prophets who warned the people to do what is right. Ordinary people also gave prophetic words. Miryam (Mary) and Elizabeth prophesied Simeon and Anna prophesied when they met Miryam (Mary) at the Temple during the time of Yeshua's (Jesus') birth.

The ability to prophesy is something that accompanies the giving of the Holy Spirit. "But you will receive power when the Ruach HaKodesh" (Holy Spirit) "comes upon you;" Acts 1:8 CJB. Speaking about the Holy Spirit Kefa (Peter) says, " I will pour out from my Spirit upon everyone. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams.;" Acts 2:17 CJB.

1 Corinthians 14:1 says that we should desire to give words of prophecy. In verse 3 it says, "But someone prophesying is speaking to people, edifying, encouraging and comforting them." It is evident that the primary purpose of prophecy is to encourage believers. Prophets are important Ephesians 2:20 says. When believers came together, Shaul (Paul) says that is one of the things they were to do (see 1 Corinthians 14:26, 29, 31) and whatever they did should be encouraging.

Shaul recommends limiting the number of people giving messages from God to a few people. These are not personal thoughts and ideas, but messages from God. It is wrong to say we are giving a word from God when it is merely something that we've been thinking about or made up. We find both women and men giving prophetic words in the Bible.