

DEFINING PROPHECY  
AN ANALYSIS OF THE DEFINITION OF A PROPHET

Darryl Burling  
April 15, 2014

## Introduction

A well-known preacher and teacher was once told by a woman that she had “a very hard prophecy” for him: that his pregnant wife would die in childbirth and that she would give birth to a daughter. The effect on him was profound, he went home and wept. This was not what he wanted to hear. He rejoiced a few months later when his wife gave birth to a boy and lived through the birth.<sup>1</sup>

Imagine if this happened to a family member or a friend. Would they have the maturity to trust God in the face of something like this? Could such advice be considered biblically helpful?

There is a movement in the evangelical church that believes the role of a prophet continues and that the prophet can get it wrong and still be a prophet of the Lord. How is this possible? Defenders of fallible “prophecy” explain it like this: “If the revelation is from God, then it must be true because God cannot lie (see Heb. 6: 18). However, we can have a true revelation and give it a wrong interpretation. Furthermore, we can have a true revelation, a correct interpretation and a wrong application. We have to be right at all three stages if the message from the Lord is going to benefit someone.”<sup>2</sup>

But does this makes sense? If God is speaking to His people today, is He not able to ensure the message gets through reliably? Does God allow the faulty messenger to corrupt His words of love, comfort or admonition to His people?

Wayne Grudem has articulated the most compelling argument for fallible prophecy, and

---

<sup>1</sup> John Piper, “What is the Gift of Prophecy in the New Covenant?” online video; recorded December 2012, by David Mathis, “Piper on Prophecy and Tongues,” *Desiring God* (blog), January 17, 2013, <http://www.desiringgod.org/blog/posts/piper-on-prophecy-and-tongues>.

<sup>2</sup> Jack Deere, *The Beginner’s Guide to the Gift of Prophecy*, Revised Ed., (Ventura, CA: Gospel Light, 2008), 81, Kindle.

while many have adopted his position, few have altered it significantly.<sup>3</sup> This paper will focus primarily on his definition of a prophet. Based on his definition of a prophet, he posits the apostles as successors to the prophets and reuses the term “prophet” for a different spiritual gift that continues through the church age.

Space restraints require that this paper omit many important elements of Grudem’s thesis, including whether Agabus is an example of a fallible prophet,<sup>4</sup> his treatment of Ephesians 2:20 (with regards to the Granville Sharp rule),<sup>5</sup> and other worthy aspects of this conversation.

### Old Testament Prophecy

We must start our examination with a core understanding of how prophecy seems to have worked in the Word of God. Our starting point is the Old Testament prophet, because any definition of the term prophet or prophecy in the New Testament must have some relationship to this group. It is unreasonable to call a gift prophecy if in fact it has no relationship at all to what is generally regarded as prophecy.

Moses was the supreme prophet of the Old Testament becoming the model for other prophets to follow. Deuteronomy 18:15–22 provides details about those who would follow Moses as prophets. This passage speaks about a class of prophets in a collective sense,<sup>6</sup> (though it later became the basis of the expectation of an eschatological prophet).

---

<sup>3</sup> While not a significant modification, perhaps the most important is that of D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12–14*, (Grand Rapids, Backer, 1987), 91–100. However while Carson indicates concern over Grudem’s thesis, he fundamentally agrees with him, expanding on Grudem only by blurring the role of Old Testament prophets, which we will examine briefly.

<sup>4</sup> For a careful treatment of Grudem’s position on Agabus, refer to Michael John Beasley, *The Fallible Prophets of New Calvinism: An Analysis, Critique, and Exhortation Concerning the Contemporary Doctrine of “Fallible prophecy”*, (Pfafftown, NC: The Armoury Ministries, 2013), Chapter 3, Kindle.

<sup>5</sup> See David Farnell, “Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?” in *Bibliotheca Sacra* vol 150 no. 1 (Jan 1993), 74–80.

<sup>6</sup> Grisanti, Michael A. “Deuteronomy.” In *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: Numbers–Ruth*, Rev ed. ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, vol. 2, (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012), 654.

Firstly, the phrase “YHWH your God will raise” (v 15), and then, “I will raise” (v 18), comes from a *hiphil* verb, which indicates causation by the one in view, here YHWH. This indicates that a prophet does not raise himself, therefore passage doesn’t say “a prophet will arise” but deliberately indicates that God will raise the prophet. The prophet is called by God.

Secondly, the words he received came from God “I will put my words in His mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him” (v 18). God Himself put (lit. gave) words into the mouth of the prophet. The words of God are in the *mouth* of the prophet. This is a helpful distinction as it demonstrates that God is in control of the words the prophet speaks, not just what appears in his mind. The prophet will *speak* God’s message, not merely think it. For this reason, the prophet’s message is not subject to his own interpretation (2 Peter 1:20). It is only on the basis of his speech that a prophet can say, “thus says the LORD.”<sup>7</sup>

Thirdly, the prophet speaks “in the name of the LORD” (v 19, 20). This means that he speaks carrying the authority of YHWH, representing the character of YHWH. This is evident from verse 22, as representation of the name of YHWH is what guarantees the fulfillment of his words. As the one who sent the messenger is reliable, so also will the message itself be reliable. The prophet’s words are authoritative, because they are God’s own words. To reject the prophet’s words is to reject God’s words, and God Himself “will require it of him” (v 19).

Consistent with this, prophets frequently used the formulaic phrase “Thus says YHWH” in order to inform the listener (or reader) that what follows are the words of God Himself. Isaiah was told the words he was to speak to Israel (Isaiah 6:9), and confidently used the phrase “Thus says YHWH...” 28 times. Jeremiah used the same formulaic phrase 150 times. This phrase occurs over 400 times in the Old Testament.

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 653.

We see these three principles in many Old Testament prophets indicating that it applies as a general rule to all prophets. For example Samuel was confirmed as a prophet (1 Samuel 3:20), meaning Samuel was “proved to be reliable,”<sup>8</sup> this is further explained by the previous verse, which says “YHWH... did not let any of his words fall to the ground.” The Hebrew syntax<sup>9</sup> indicates that God prevented Samuel’s words from failing, making him reliable. Therefore, because God stood behind the Old Testament prophets and upheld them, their words were reliable.

The testimony of the Old Testament is that prophets were messengers of God, speaking God’s precise words, and carrying the authority of God. Grudem agrees with this principle in the Old Testament.<sup>10</sup>

### **Carson’s View of Old Testament Prophets**

Carson, in critiquing Grudem’s writing, makes distinctions among Old Testament prophets. His key distinction is suggest that there are two classes of prophecy in the Old Testament, one class (Mosaic) is reliable and the other class (charismatic and enigmatic)<sup>11</sup> receives only something approximate in conformity to Grudem’s fallible definition.<sup>12</sup>

Carson focuses on the “schools of the prophets” in which there were many who did not seem to enjoy “the status of Amos or Isaiah.”<sup>13</sup> He continues, saying “there is no single

---

<sup>8</sup> Ludwig Koehler, Walter Baumgartner, M. E. J. Richardson, and Johann Jakob Stamm. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. (Leiden; New York: Brill, 1999), 63–64.

<sup>9</sup> The causative *hiphil* verb could literally be translated “He [YHWH] *did not cause to fall* any of his words to the ground.”

<sup>10</sup> Wayne Grudem. *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today*, Rev Ed. (Wheaton, IL: Crossway), 245–246, Kindle.

<sup>11</sup> D. A. Carson, *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12–14*, (Grand Rapids, Backer, 1987), 98.

<sup>12</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament*, 1279.

<sup>13</sup> Carson, *Showing the Spirit*, 98.

stereotypical Old Testament prophecy...[and] that Numbers 12:6–8 and 11:29 give evidence within the Old Testament of two kinds of prophecy - one ‘charismatic and enigmatic’ and the other ‘Mosaic.’” To support this he cites Peter Jones and Joseph Brosch who makes a distinction between the major Old Testament prophets and the Old Testament schools of the prophets.<sup>14</sup>

However, Carson’s (and likely that of Jones and Brosch) analysis of Numbers 12 is inconsistent with a simple reading of the context. In Numbers 12 Miriam and Aaron begin to grumble about Moses and challenge his leadership. To resolve this dispute YHWH Himself addresses Miriam and Aaron with the words of verses 6–8. Carson is right to read this as making a distinction between Moses and other prophets, but this distinction is the favor Moses has with God, which is reflected in the medium by which Moses receives revelation. God speaks to Moses “mouth to mouth” or “face to face” (Deuteronomy 34:10), while to other prophets God might speak in visions and dreams, a less direct form of revelation.

Moses enjoyed a special revelatory relationship with YHWH that no other prophet had. In the context, this provides a source of incredulity that his authority would be challenged. After explaining the special nature of Moses’ relationship, YHWH said to Miriam and Aaron, “Why then were you not afraid to speak against My servant, against Moses?” The last four words use apposition for emphasis - they didn’t just speak against Moses, but against YHWH’s servant, a category only shared at this point with Abraham (Genesis 26:24). This does not suggest two kinds of Old Testament prophecy, but that Moses was a special prophet unlike any other (Deuteronomy 34:10).

Secondly Carson believes that Old Testament prophets were no more self-aware that they

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. Note that these works cited are written in French and German respectively, making them inaccessible to this writer.

spoke the words of God than a New Testament prophet, meaning they did not always believe they were presenting verbatim quotes. He suggests that “it is not obvious that when, for instance, Paul was explaining his itinerary to the Corinthians in his second canonical letter to them he was *psychologically* aware of a revelatory process operating that extended to the words he was dictating.”<sup>15</sup> If true, this would provide Old Testament support for Grudem’s concept of prophecy as something the Lord might subjectively “bring to mind.”<sup>16</sup>

However, the phrase, “Thus says YHWH” indicates that the prophet who uses the term is confident that the words which follow are the very words of YHWH. This is supported by the overwhelming reliability of the Old Testament prophets who used this phrase. Given the over 400 occurrences in the Old Testament of this phrase by both canonical and non-canonical prophets, Carson must do much more to prove that this phrase does not suggest psychological awareness.

Grudem maintains his position with regard to Old Testament prophecy. He states clearly that “it can certainly be shown that Scripture claims for all of the Old Testament this same kind of authority: the authority of the very words of God.”<sup>17</sup> Grudem, unlike Carson, recognizes that it is God who prevents the words of the prophet from failing<sup>18</sup> and that therefore an Old Testament true prophet will always be reliable.

---

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 99. Emphasis in original.

<sup>16</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, 1190.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 325. Note that Grudem’s *The Gift of Prophecy* was updated and the edition cited here cites Carson’s *Showing the Spirit* at many points for support. However, Grudem does not embrace Carson’s view of Old Testament reliability. Note that here, Grudem is specifically referring to OT Scripture, but he never challenges any OT prophecy.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 291.

## Prophets and Apostles

Grudem's New Testament definition of the meaning of the word prophet relies exclusively on secular meaning. After a summary of his findings he concludes "The word 'prophet' would not automatically suggest 'one who speaks with absolute divine authority' or 'one who speaks the very words of God.'" Therefore he surmises that "if Jesus and the New Testament authors had wanted a word which... would mean 'one who speaks the very words of God,' the Greek word 'prophet' was not well suited to the task."<sup>19</sup> What Grudem fails to take into account, however, is that Jesus and the New Testament authors were Jewish, and had been raised in a Jewish culture reading Jewish writings (primarily the Hebrew Scriptures). Therefore the relevant section Grudem should draw on for his definition of Prophet is the 80 pages of the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament that deals with the Old Testament use of the word.<sup>20</sup> Alternatively he could draw from Jesus' own appeals to the prophets of the Old Testament as authoritative<sup>21</sup> (e.g. Matthew 5:17, 7:12, 22:40, Mark 11:17, Luke 16:16, etc.), not to mention that of his opponents (Luke 7:39). These considered as described above, prophets as messengers of God, speaking God's precise words, and carrying the authority of God.

Grudem goes on to suggest that the word "apostle" is a better fit for the purpose of writing the New Testament Scriptures.<sup>22</sup> Edgar suggests the word "apostle" had a broader

---

<sup>19</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, 479–483.

<sup>20</sup> Michael John Beasley, *The Fallible Prophets of New Calvinism: An Analysis, Critique, and Exhortation Concerning the Contemporary Doctrine of "Fallible prophecy"*, (Pfafftown, NC: The Armoury Ministries, 2013), 796, Kindle.

<sup>21</sup> A fact not lost on Gerhard Friedrich who authored the bulk of the New Testament article in TDNT on prophet. Gerhard Friedrich, "Prophets and Prophecies in the New Testament" in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Eds. Kittel, Gerhard, Geoffrey W. Bromiley, and Gerhard Friedrich, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 6:834.

<sup>22</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, 579.

connotation in the pagan culture than the word “prophet.”<sup>23</sup> This undermines the reason for changing the name of Old Testament prophets to apostles - why change the name to something more ambiguous to avoid ambiguity? According to Grudem’s logic, Christ called the successors to the prophets “the apostles,” a title that is less defined than “prophet,” and then retains the title “prophet” for something significantly less than an Old Testament prophet in the context of a people primarily familiar with the Old Testament prophet.

There are two distinctions made between prophets in the New Testament writings. The first is to point out false prophets - who are distinguished specifically as “false” (Acts 13:6, 2 Peter 2:1, 1 John 4:1), the second is a distinction sometimes made by referring to the Old Testament prophets as “Holy Prophets” (Luke 1:70, Acts 3:21, 2 Pet 3:2). The term “holy prophet” may reflect a reference to specific texts,<sup>24</sup> or attempt to separate the prophets as “set-apart instruments of God,”<sup>25</sup> or merely describe them and their character.<sup>26</sup> There are no other adjectives or distinctions used of prophets in the New Testament. If Grudem is correct, it is astonishing that the New Testament nowhere makes his distinction explicit, but instead continues using the word “prophet” to refer to both Old Testament (Acts 2:16, 30, 3:24, 8:28, 13:20, Romans 1:2) and New Testament prophets (Acts 11:27, 13:1, 15:32, 21:10, 1 Corinthians 12:28–29, 14:29, 32, 37) indiscriminately.

Instead, it seems apparent that Grudem’s rationale for his definition is based on a

---

<sup>23</sup> Thomas R. Edgar, *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit: Affirming the fullness of God’s Provision for Spiritual Living*, (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996), 75.

<sup>24</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Acts*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007), 177–178.

<sup>25</sup> Darrell L. Bock, *Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament: Luke 1:1–9:50*, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994), 181.

<sup>26</sup> Martin, M. Culy, and Mikeal C. Parsons. *Acts: A Handbook on the Greek Text. Baylor Handbook on the Greek New Testament*, (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003), 60.

selection of criteria that suit his theological purposes. Beasley points out that, while Grudem exclusively cites secular sources for his definition of prophet, he chides the reader for using the *Didache* for a definition of *prophetes* later in the book.<sup>27</sup>

In contrast to Grudem's complicated parallels between Old Testament and New Testament offices, Jesus and others referred to the Old Testament as "Moses and the Prophets" (Luke 16:29, 31, 24:44, cf. John 1:45, Acts 26:22, 28:23), which likely suggests a parallel between Moses and the Apostles and between Old Testament Prophets and New Testament Prophets.<sup>28</sup> The Apostolic representation of Christ is similar to Moses, in that God spoke to Moses face to face (Numbers 12:6–8, Deuteronomy 34:10), and one of the requirements for apostolic office was to have been in the presence of the risen Christ (Acts 1:21–22; 1 Corinthians 9:1, 15:8). Further, the phrase "Apostles and Prophets" occurs throughout the New Testament (Luke 11:49, 1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 2:20, 3:5, 4:11, Revelation 18:20) even in a foundational sense (Ephesians 2:20, 3:5) similar to the foundation of the law of Moses for the rest of the Old Testament (Joshua 1:7–8, Psalm 1:2<sup>29</sup>). This provides a clearer and more consistent continuity of offices between the Old and New Covenant periods than that of Grudem.

### **Prophets in Church History**

How did the early church view prophets? A brief review must suffice. Justin Martyr (110–165) wrote that the prophetic office that once belonged to Israel had been transferred to the

---

<sup>27</sup> Beasley, *Fallible Prophets*, 974.

<sup>28</sup> Beasley, *Fallible Prophets*, 945.

<sup>29</sup> Joshua 1 and Psalm 1 form a seam between the different sections of the Old Testament. Joshua is the first book of the "Prophets" (or *Neviim*) and Psalms is the first book of the "Writings" (or *Ketuvim*). It is significant that in the first chapter of each of these books is a statement that indicates the importance of the Law (or Torah). Other passages also indicate the foundation of the Torah for the Old Testament, such as Deuteronomy 27–28.

church<sup>30</sup> indicting that he regarded New Testament prophets as the continuation of Old Testament prophets and therefore not in any way fallible, but carrying the same authority. Origen also stated that “there were no prophets in the church bearing any resemblance to the ancient prophets” during his time (ca. 254).<sup>31</sup> Chrysostom said that he was ignorant of the operations of tongues and prophecy because they “used to occur but now no longer take place.”<sup>32</sup> These statements attest that the nature of the gift of prophecy was regarded as identical to Old Testament prophets, but that it ceased early in church history.

### **Conclusion**

The definition of an Old Testament prophet is one who spoke the words God gave him, with God’s full authority and being upheld in his words by God Himself. This definition is never explicitly redefined or invalidated. Grudem’s redefinition is from sources incongruous with the New Testament literary and historical context, which invalidates it. This means that using this definition to say that the word prophet is inappropriate for a New Testament messenger of God is also invalid.

His assertion that the word “apostle” is clearer is highly suspect. He then distinguishes New Testament prophecy from Old Testament prophecy in a way that the New Testament does not. It is better to regard the Apostles as succeeding Moses as foundational to the new covenant, and the prophets following them. Ultimately Grudem’s redefinition is not borne out by either the New Testament or church history.

According to Grudem, New Testament prophets do not possess the authority to say “Thus

---

<sup>30</sup> David Farnell, “Is the Gift of Prophecy for Today? Part 1,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (July 1992):292 This article presents a more comprehensive understanding of how the gift of prophecy has been regarded throughout the church age than is able to be developed in this paper.

<sup>31</sup> Edgar, *Satisfied*, 204.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 206-207.

says the Lord...”<sup>33</sup> The content of this study bears this out, not because prophecy is fallible, but because what he calls “prophecy” is simply not prophecy.

---

<sup>33</sup> Grudem, *The Gift of Prophecy*, 2300.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Aland, Kurt, Matthew Black, Carlo M. Martini, Bruce M. Metzger, Maurice. Robinson, and Allen Wikgren. *The Greek New Testament, Fourth Revised Edition (with Morphology)*. Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1993; 2006.
- Arndt, W., Danker, F. W., & Bauer, W. *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.
- Beasley, Michael John, *The Fallible Prophets of New Calvinism: An Analysis, Critique, and Exhortation Concerning the Contemporary Doctrine of "Fallible prophecy"*, Pfafftown, NC: The Armoury Ministries, 2013, Kindle.
- Beecher, Willis Judson. *The Prophets and the Promise*, Reprint. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2002.
- Bock, Darrell L. *Acts*. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.
- . *Luke: 1:1–9:50*. Vol. 1. Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1994.
- Bromiley, G. W. (Ed.). In *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised*. Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1988.
- Brown, C. *New international dictionary of New Testament theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1986.
- Carson, D. A. *Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12–14*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1987.
- Culy, M. M., & Parsons, M. C. *Acts: A Handbook on the Greek Text*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2003.
- Edgar, Thomas R., *Satisfied by the Promise of the Spirit: Affirming the fullness of God's Provision for Spiritual Living*, Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1996.
- Edersheim, A. *Bible History: Old Testament*. Oak Harbor: Logos Bible Software. 1997.
- Farnell, David, "Does the New Testament Teach Two Prophetic Gifts?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 no. 1 (Jan 1993), 62-86.
- . "Is the Gift of Prophecy for Today? Part 1," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (July 1992), 277-303.
- . "Is the Gift of Prophecy for Today? Part 2," *Bibliotheca Sacra* 149 (October 1992), 387-410.
- . "When will the Gift of Prophecy Cease?" *Bibliotheca Sacra* 150 (April 1993), 171-202.

- Grisanti, Michael A. "Deuteronomy." In *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Numbers–Ruth* Rev. Ed., Ed. Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland. Vol. 2. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.
- Grudem, W. Ed. *Are Miraculous Gifts for Today: Four Views*, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011, Kindle.
- . *The Gift of Prophecy*. Rev. Ed. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2000. Kindle.
- . *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine*. Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; Zondervan Pub. House, 2004.
- Hester, H. I. *The Heart of Hebrew History: A Study of the Old Testament* (Rev. ed.). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 1962.
- Keil, C. F., & Delitzsch, F. *Commentary on the Old Testament*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996.
- Kittel, G., Bromiley, G. W., & Friedrich, G. (Eds.). *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964.
- Koehler, L., Baumgartner, W., Richardson, M. E. J., & Stamm, J. J. *The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament*. Leiden; New York: E.J. Brill, 1999.
- Mailander, Scott J., "The Implications of Holding to an Open but Cautious View of the Spiritual Gifts," ThM Thesis, Masters Seminary, 2009.
- Oehler, G. F., & Day, G. E. *Theology of the Old Testament*. New York; London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1883.
- Rowley, H. H., *The Servant of the Lord and Other Essays on the Old Testament*, London: Billing and Sons, 1952.
- Shogren, Gary Steven, "Christian Prophecy and Canon In the Second Century: A response to B. B. Warfield", *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 40 no. 4, (1997)
- Thomas, Robert L., *Understanding Spiritual Gifts: A Verse by Verse Study of 1 Corinthians 12-14*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1999.
- Varner, William, *The Way of the Didache: The First Christian Handbook*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2007.
- Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia: SESB Version*. Electronic ed. Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 2003.
- The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. Wheaton: Standard Bible Society, 2001.
- New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update*. LaHabra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995.

Definition and word study of Prophet. Includes synonyms, related ideas, Greek references, and scripture chain. Definitions: A prophet was a preacher or proclaimer of God's word, however in addition to preaching from the scriptures, was able to speak by direct revelation from God, as moved by the Holy Spirit who imparted the gift of prophecy. Greek References: προφήτης (prophētes) prophet 4396 (Strong), προφητεία (prophēteia) prophecy 4394, προφητεύω (prophēteuo) prophesy 4395, cf 5457 φως, 5316 φαίνω light shining. Scripture: Prophecy principles. Matthew 10:41 "He who receives a prophet in the name of a prophet, shall receive a prophet's reward..." Matthew 13:57 "A prophet is not without honour except in his own country and in his own house." Is there a Biblical definition that matches the actual practices of the prophets? If possible, please support your answers using the 66 books of Scripture that are found in the Protestant Bible. biblical-basis prophecy terminology protestant-bible. The point is simple that a prophet is a messenger of God. If that message says something about the future, then it is because God wishes to give a message about consequences. The main problem with defining "prophecy" is that you must work your way back to the "prophet" and like many words in the Bible, there are various meanings, not just one. For example "fear" in the Bible has so many meanings, sometimes almost contradicting each other, that you need a spreadsheet just to sort them. If a prophet speaks a prophetic utterance, he is PROPHECYING. If he has already uttered the prophetic, it then becomes a PROPHECY. What are YOUR concepts about the prophetic? To sort out the quagmire of beliefs found throughout Christianity, a list of the different ideas below may orient and help determine part or all of what you think prophecy is. These statements below reflect western culture and society, particularly North American Christianity. As you read the concepts listed it becomes evident they are contradictory. Defining a Prophet. Your Free Written Prophecy will Give Direction. Birth Month January February March April May June July August September October November December. Birth Date 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31. The derivation and meaning of the word prophet has been a matter of controversy for several centuries now with no prospect of closure on this debate. Since most of the solutions to this mystery have been based on etymologies or terms in similar languages, it is small wonder that no resolution has been forthcoming. Linguists are especially agreed that the most that etymologies can yield are only various suggestions.

