

4. And, finally, one must remember the truths of the New Testament Scriptures cited on page 3...these who gave the word of God were not dependent on themselves but on the Spirit of God...and they often spoke "beyond" themselves with the understanding that God would make His revelation fully known in the appropriate time.

B. Prophecy...a written record of truth...Discussion

1. Prophets, true and false...This is a very important part of the total picture of prophecy. Since anyone could claim to be a spokesperson for another it was essential that some test be given for recognizing a prophet of truth and distinguishing that person from a prophet of error. The basic biblical texts are

Deuteronomy 13:1-5 and Deuteronomy 18:15-22

The basic tests:

--What the prophet says must come to pass (18:22)

I will elaborate on this a bit for, in many cases, the words of the prophet may be for a distant future. In such cases a more immediate prophecy is given so that the truthfulness of the prophet may be seen immediately and he can be credited with integrity for the future. In the case of directive advice (forthtelling), it should "work", that is must be the word which is established as truth because it accomplishes the needed purpose.

--The prophet must not use his predictive capacity to lead the people away from God (13:2-3) (18:20)

This is obvious in the texts and the concept is that the prophet has spoken in his own power or in the power of another authority than God. In all cases the devotion of the people is to the Lord, not to the spokesperson!

--The prophetic word must accord with what God has given (13:4)

God does not lie, He is not going to be self-contradictory. Prophets speaking for Him are not going to be at cross-purposes.

Note then that a person who spoke for God was to be obeyed as the mouth of God...one who was contrary was not to be listened to, not to be tolerated in the camp of God. The objective tests were to overrule any emotional subjectivism. Nothing was to be feared in denying a hearing to a false prophet but "everything" was in danger in listening to such a one.

Some demonstration Scriptures

Jeremiah 28

cts 21:10 ff (cf. 11:27 ff)

And a word of application, exhortation, or whatever you might choose to call it: