

What Saith the Scripture?

<http://www.WhatSaithTheScripture.com/>

How to Identify a False Prophet Or, A Guide to Keep You From Opposing a True Prophet

"When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him"
(Deuteronomy 18:22).

by Tom Stewart
1-26-99

Preface

The Saints of God are unique in that they have been given the Holy Spirit to teach them the very Scripture of Truth (Daniel 10:21) that is a "Light unto [our] path" (Psalm 119:105) to guide us away from the snares of false prophets. "But the Anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same Anointing teacheth you of all things, and is Truth, and is no lie, and even as It hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him" (1John 2:27).

The inability to discern a false prophet from a true prophet, will open the way for the deception of **the False Prophet**-- the beast "out of the Earth" (Revelation 13:11)-- who is the End Time co-worker of the Antichrist. All the marks of a false prophet should be understood by the Body of Believers and applied to our daily discernment of who ought to be believed and who ought to be rejected. "13 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the Word of Righteousness: for he is a babe. 14 But Strong Meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who **by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil**" (Hebrews 5:13-14).

Our LORD did not excuse the hypocrites for their lack of discerning the "signs of the times" (Matthew 16:3). Nor will He excuse the world for allowing the False Prophet to deceive them into worshipping the Antichrist. "And he [the False Prophet] exerciseth all the power of the first beast [the Antichrist] before him, and causeth the Earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed" (Revelation 13:12). Then, why should the LORD allow those of us that name the "Name of Christ" (2Timothy 2:19) to be ignorant of the false prophets, who are currently deceiving the "Flock of God" (1Peter 5:2)?

Disobedience and a False Prophet: He Hath Spoken to Turn You Away From the LORD (Deuteronomy 13:1-5)

- "If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder," (Deuteronomy 13:1).

A "prophet, or a dreamer of dreams", who gives a "sign or wonder" (13:1) recalls the signs the LORD

gave to Moses to convince the Children of Israel that Moses was truly sent from God-- turning Moses' rod into a serpent and back again (Exodus 4:2-4), and turning Moses' hand leprous and back again (4:6-8).

- "1 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they [the Children of Israel] will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee... 9 And it shall come to pass, if they will not believe also these two signs [the rod into a serpent, and the leprous hand], neither hearken unto thy voice, that thou shalt take of the water of the river, and pour it upon the dry land: and the water which thou takest out of the river shall become blood upon the dry land" (Exodus 4:1,9).
- "And **the sign or the wonder come to pass**, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them;" (Deuteronomy 13:2).

We are to not think it strange that even a false prophet can make the "sign or the wonder come to pass" (13:2)-- by the supernatural power of Satan.

- "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24).

Of course, the Almighty must first give permission to Satan before Satan has the slightest ability to accomplish anything. Or, as the LORD Jesus plainly explained to Pontius Pilate concerning the limit of Pilate's control over Himself: "Thou couldest have no power at all against Me, except it were given thee from Above" (John 19:11).

Pivotal to the concept of identifying false prophets, is that **a false prophet seeks to turn people away from the LORD Jesus Christ**, i.e., "Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them" (Deuteronomy 13:2). If we understand that our loving obedience to the Word of God is the basis for our certainty that we belong to Him, then we also know that **anyone who is clearly in disobedience to the commands of our LORD Jesus Christ, is a liar**.

- "3 And hereby we do know that we know Him, **if we keep His Commandments**. 4 He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the Truth is not in Him" (1John 2:3-4).
- "Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul" (Deuteronomy 13:3).

Just as we are to "prove all things; [and] hold fast that which is good" (1Thessalonians 5:21), the LORD desires to prove us "to know whether [we] love the LORD [our] God with all [our] heart and with all [our] soul" (Deuteronomy 13:3). Not only does our proving "all things" (1Thessalonians 5:21) keep us away from evil, but it confirms to us what is good.

- "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8).
- "Ye shall walk after the LORD your God, and fear Him, and keep His Commandments, and obey His Voice, and ye shall serve Him, and cleave unto Him" (Deuteronomy 13:4).

This points to the First and Great Commandment (Matthew 22:38), which is, "Thou shalt love the LORD

thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind" (22:37). As can be seen, it is morally impossible to love God and serve worldly treasure at the same time. "Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). If we "cleave unto Him" (Deuteronomy 13:4), Who is "[our] Life" (30:20), then we will not sin against our God. "Whosoever abideth in Him sinneth not" (1John 3:6). In fact, at that moment, we cannot sin because we will not sin-- as we are kept by His Spirit.

- "Whosoever is born of God doth **not** commit sin; for His seed remaineth in him: and he **cannot** sin, because he is born of God" (3:9). [See our article, "[He Will Subdue Our Iniquities](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/He.Will.Subdue.Our.Iniquities.html)" -- http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Fellowship/He.Will.Subdue.Our.Iniquities.html -- , for help with abiding in Christ.]
- "And that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams, shall be put to death; because he hath spoken to turn you away from the LORD your God, which brought you out of the land of Egypt, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, to thrust thee out of the way which the LORD thy God commanded thee to walk in. So shalt thou put the evil away from the midst of thee" (Deuteronomy 13:5).

Though the New Testament Church has not been given Old Testament Israel's commission to slay the false prophets, we are to **mark and avoid** those who give offence to the Body of Christ.

- "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17).

Devotion and gratitude to the LORD that "bought [us] with a price" (1Corinthians 7:23), will keep us from faltering from the LORD.

- "And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is Love; and he that dwelleth in Love dwelleth in God, and God in him" (1John 4:16).

When assailed with doubts-- "without were fightings, within were fears" (2Corinthians 7:5)-- if we would cling in loving obedience to the LORD Jesus, He will deliver us from our fears.

- "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1John 4:18). [See our article, "[A Prophet Hath Been Among Them](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophets/A.Prophet.Among.Them.html)" -- http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophets/A.Prophet.Among.Them.html -- , for more discussion of this topic.]

Lack of Fulfillment and a False Prophet: If the Thing Follow Not (Deuteronomy 18:20-22)

- "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in My Name, which I have **not** commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die" (Deuteronomy 18:20).

The so-called prophets of the LORD lied to Ahab about his upcoming success against the Syrians.

- "10 And the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah sat each on his throne, having put on their robes, in a void place in the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. 11 And

Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah made him horns of iron: and he said, Thus saith the LORD, With these shalt thou push the Syrians, until thou have consumed them. 12 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, Go up to Ramothgilead, and prosper: for the LORD shall deliver it into the king's hand" (1Kings 22:10-12).

The prophet Jeremiah did prophetic battle with Hananiah the prophet (Jeremiah 28). Jeremiah contended that the LORD would punish Judah 70 years in servitude to the king of Babylon. "And this whole land shall be a desolation, and an astonishment; and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years" (25:11). Only after those 70 years would Judah be allowed to return into the land. "For thus saith the LORD, That after seventy years be accomplished at Babylon I will visit you, and perform My Good Word toward you, in causing you to return to this place" (29:10). Hananiah objected to Jeremiah, and declared "in the presence of all the people" that the LORD said, "Even so will I break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon from the neck of all nations within the space of two full years" (28:11). To this Jeremiah responded, "15 Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath not sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie. 16 Therefore thus saith the LORD; Behold, I will cast thee from off the face of the Earth: this year thou shalt die, because thou hast taught rebellion against the LORD" (28:15-16). And, the result was predictable to the Righteous. "So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month" (28:17).

Again, Israel was to kill the false prophets from among them.

- o "And Elijah said unto them, Take the prophets of Baal; let not one of them escape. And they took them: and Elijah brought them down to the brook Kishon, and slew them there" (1Kings 18:40).

Also, Jehu magnificently executed the will of God in cleansing the prophets of Baal from the land.

- o "And it came to pass, as soon as he had made an end of offering the burnt offering, that Jehu said to the guard and to the captains, Go in, and slay them; let none come forth. And they smote them with the edge of the sword; and the guard and the captains cast them out, and went to the city of the house of Baal" (2Kings 10:25).
- "And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken?" (Deuteronomy 18:21).

Always compare everything to the Word of God. "Thy Word is Truth" (John 17:17) was the LORD Jesus' certainty about the trustworthiness of God's Word.

- o "19 And when they shall say unto you, Seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto wizards that peep, and that mutter: should not a people seek unto their God? for the living to the dead? 20 To the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no Light in them" (Isaiah 8:19-20).
- "When a prophet speaketh in the Name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it **presumptuously**: thou shalt not be afraid of him" (Deuteronomy 18:22).

Remember that even false prophets are known to have **successful** fulfillment of their prophecies.

- o "1 If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, 2 And the sign or the wonder **come to pass**, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, **Let us go after other gods**, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them" (Deuteronomy 13:1-2).

So, fulfillment-- or lack of fulfillment-- must be viewed in light of the false prophets' call to **obvious disobedience** of the LORD, i.e.,

- "Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath **not** sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie" (Jeremiah 28:15).

Notice the phrase, the "prophet hath spoken it presumptuously" (Deuteronomy 18:22). This indicates the spirit of the passage, i.e., the **character** of the prophet is arrogant, proud, and rebellious. The very fact that the prophesied event does **not** come to pass is proof that the prophet was either,

- (1) not from God (i.e., "hath spoken it **presumptuously**"), or,
- (2) that a situation developed which changed God's mind (i.e., "that I may repent Me" [Jeremiah 26:3]).

But, before a prophet is labelled a false prophet because of the lack of fulfillment of his prophecy, we would do well to carefully study Jeremiah 26.

- "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath" (James 1:19).

Misunderstood True Prophets: Jeremiah and Micah (Jeremiah 26:1-19)

- "1 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah came this Word from the LORD, saying, 2 Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD'S house, all the Words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a Word:" (Jeremiah 26:1-2).

The prophet Jeremiah was commissioned to speak "in the court of the LORD's house, all the Words that [the LORD] command[ed him] to speak unto them; [and to] diminish not a Word" (26:2). God's prophets have been called upon to correct defects in the worship of God in both Israel and now the Church.

- "Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew My people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins" (Isaiah 58:1).

The Apostle Paul succinctly told the Ephesian elders, "I have not shunned to declare unto you **all** the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Even so, Jeremiah was faithful in delivering his commission.

- "If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, **that I may repent Me** of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings" (Jeremiah 26:3).

The Holy Jehovah declares to Jeremiah some of His purposes and counsels.

- "Thy counsels of old are Faithfulness and Truth" (Isaiah 25:1).

"If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way" (Jeremiah 26:3), demonstrates that

"God is a merciful God" (Deuteronomy 4:31). Though it is completely just for the Almighty to reward the "wages of sin" with death (Romans 6:23), it is "according to His mercy He saved us" (Titus 3:5).

- "4 And thou shalt say unto them, Thus saith the LORD; **If ye will not** hearken to Me, to walk in My Law, which I have set before you, 5 To hearken to the Words of My servants the prophets, whom I sent unto you, both rising up early, and sending them, but ye have not hearkened; 6 **Then will I** make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the Earth" (Jeremiah 26:4-6).

God deals with His moral subjects as those who should use their "image of God" (Genesis 1:27), i.e., their moral agency, to freely choose right from wrong. "4 If ye will not hearken to Me... 6 Then will I make this house like Shiloh" (Jeremiah 26:4,6). Their disobedience is threatened with the abandonment of His Temple in Jerusalem-- **in the same way** as He did to the Ark of the congregation at Shiloh--

- "The whole congregation of the children of Israel assembled together at Shiloh, and set up the tabernacle of the congregation there" (Joshua 18:1). In the days of Eli, the "Ark was taken" (1Samuel 4:11) by the Philistines, because Eli, his sons, and Israel were wayward. The LORD remonstrated with Eli, "Wherefore kick ye at My sacrifice and at Mine offering, which I have commanded in My habitation; and honourest thy sons above Me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel My people?" (2:29). Tragically, the result was that Israel lost the Ark of the congregation for 7 months to the Philistines (1Samuel 6:1). "He forsook the tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among men" (Psalms 78:60).
- "7 So the priests and the prophets and all the people heard Jeremiah speaking these words in the house of the LORD. 8 Now it came to pass, when Jeremiah had made an end of speaking **all that the LORD had commanded him to speak** unto all the people, that the priests and the prophets and all the people took him, saying, Thou shalt surely die. 9 Why hast thou prophesied in the Name of the LORD, saying, This house shall be like Shiloh, and this city shall be desolate without an inhabitant? And all the people were gathered against Jeremiah in the house of the LORD. 10 When the princes of Judah heard these things, then they came up from the king's house unto the house of the LORD, and sat down in the entry of the new gate of the LORD'S house. 11 Then spake the priests and the prophets unto the princes and to all the people, saying, This man is worthy to die; for he hath prophesied against this city, as ye have heard with your ears" (Jeremiah 26:7-11).

God's prophets already understand that their lives may be forfeit for their faithful reproduction of the LORD's message to His "stiffnecked people" (Exodus 32:9).

- "37 They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38 (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the Earth" (Hebrews 11:37-38).

And, the LORD Jesus warned us that "whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service" (John 16:2).

- "Then spake Jeremiah unto all the princes and to all the people, saying, The LORD sent me to prophesy against this house and against this city all the Words that ye have heard" (Jeremiah 26:12).

The prophet Jeremiah fearlessly proclaimed his credentials in the hearing of all the people, i.e., the "LORD sent me" (26:12). Ezekiel also knew the same type of audience that Jeremiah addressed.

- "And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them" (Ezekiel 2:5).

Jeremiah's message was uncomfoting to the hearers because it spoke of God's judgment for their sin.

- "12 Go and proclaim these Words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the LORD; and I will not cause **Mine anger** to fall upon you: for I am merciful, saith the LORD, and I will not keep anger for ever. 13 Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed My Voice, saith the LORD" (Jeremiah 3:12-13).
- "Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the Voice of the LORD your God; and **the LORD will repent Him of the evil** that He hath pronounced against you" (Jeremiah 26:13).

The familiar Words of God's Prophet, the LORD Jesus Christ, rings out, "Repent: for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). Likewise, Jeremiah clearly and faithfully delivered the LORD's message to sinful Israel.

- "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7).

Jeremiah was giving away God's merciful favor, but at the cost of the sinners' repentance.

- "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isaiah 55:1).
- "14 As for me, behold, I am in your hand: do with me as seemeth good and meet unto you. 15 But know ye for certain, that if ye put me to death, ye shall surely bring innocent blood upon yourselves, and upon this city, and upon the inhabitants thereof: for of a truth the LORD hath sent me unto you to speak all these Words in your ears" (Jeremiah 26:14-15).

But, back to the physical reality of Jeremiah's situation, i.e., "I am in your hand" (26:14).

- "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace" (Daniel 3:23).
- "They brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions" (6:16).
- "Thou art my King, O God: command deliverances for Jacob" (Psalm 44:4).

Further, Jeremiah warned them that ill would happen to them if they killed him.

- "Touch not Mine anointed, and do My prophets no harm" (Psalm 105:15).
- "Then said the princes and all the people unto the priests and to the prophets; This man is not worthy to die: for he hath spoken to us in the Name of the LORD our God" (Jeremiah 26:16).

Thank God for His opportune intervention!

- "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him" (Proverbs 16:7).
- "17 Then rose up certain of the elders of the land, and spake to all the assembly of the people, saying, 18 Micah the Morasthite prophesied in the days of Hezekiah king of Judah, and spake to all the people of Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD of Hosts; Zion shall be plowed like a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of a forest. 19 Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and besought the LORD, **and the LORD repented Him of the evil which He had pronounced against them?** Thus might we procure **great evil** against our souls" (Jeremiah 26:17-19).

The prophet Micah's foretelling of Zion's judgment is here remembered by certain princes and elders of the land. Micah was a contemporary of Isaiah during the reign of Hezekiah.

- "Therefore shall Zion for your sake be plowed as a field, and Jerusalem shall become heaps, and the mountain of the house as the high places of the forest" (Micah 3:12).

King Hezekiah humbled himself before the LORD God of Israel.

- "6 For our fathers have trespassed, and done that which was evil in the eyes of the LORD our God, and have forsaken Him, and have turned away their faces from the habitation of the LORD, and turned their backs... 10 Now it is in mine heart to make a covenant with the LORD God of Israel, that His fierce wrath may turn away from us" (2Chronicles 29:6,10).

What was the point of the recounting of Micah's prophecy? Just as Jeremiah threatened God's judgment upon Jerusalem, i.e., "4 If ye will not hearken to Me, to walk in My Law, which I have set before you... 6 Then will I make this house like Shiloh, and will make this city a curse to all the nations of the Earth" (Jeremiah 26:4,6), Micah had previously pronounced the certainty that "Jerusalem shall become heaps" (26:18) to Hezekiah-- who believed him and caused reformation in the land.

The point was that Micah had pronounced the certainty of judgment against the land during Hezekiah's reign in Jerusalem. Micah prophesied that the "LORD cometh [present tense, is coming] forth out of His place, and will come down, and tread upon the high places of the Earth" (Micah 1:3). The result will be that "Jerusalem shall become heaps" (3:12). **Hezekiah led Judah in repentance before the prophecy could be fulfilled.** "Notwithstanding Hezekiah humbled himself for the pride of his heart, both he and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, **so that the wrath of the LORD came not upon them** in the days of Hezekiah" (2Chronicles 32:26). But, who was complaining about the lack of fulfillment of Jerusalem's destruction, since "**the LORD repented Him of the evil which He had pronounced against them**" (Jeremiah 26:19)? A situation had developed which changed God's mind.

The Sovereignty of God in the Fulfillment of Prophecy

The key to understanding how God could instruct His prophets to prophesy the certainty of an event

that does not take place is seen in Jeremiah 26:3, "If so be they will hearken, and turn every man from his evil way, that I may repent Me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings." In other words, the LORD is instructing His prophets to give us prophecies that cause the hearers to act in a desired manner, i.e., repentance (Hezekiah), testing at the hands of a false prophet (Hananiah). As the LORD of All the Earth (Joshua 3:13) is sovereign in His judgments, **He is completely justified in holding back the fulfillment of a prophecy**-- that He promised by the mouth of His prophets. "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He had said that He would do unto them; and **He did it not**" (Jonah 3:10). God can rightly and sovereignly change His mind about the fulfillment of something He said He would do. "And the LORD **repented** of the evil which He thought to do unto His people" (Exodus 32:14).

But, lest we think that God acts arbitrarily, i.e., rewarding evil and punishing good, the Unchanging God (Malachi 3:6) always acts consistently with Himself, for "He cannot deny Himself" (2Timothy 2:13).

- o "7 At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; 8 If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, **I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.** 9 And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; 10 If it do evil in My sight, that it obey not My voice, then **I will repent of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them**" (Jeremiah 18:7-10).

In particular, for those who have felt compelled by modern prophecy to expect the fulfillment of an End Time event, such as the Rapture of the Church or the judgment of America, the Sovereign God has chosen **not** to bring these events to pass-- **yet**-- to accomplish His purposes in us and in the world.

- o "1 The Word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2 Arise, and go down to the potter's house, and there I will cause thee to hear My Words. 3 Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. 4 And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. 5 Then the Word of the LORD came to me, saying, 6 O house of Israel, **cannot I do with you as this potter?** saith the LORD. Behold, **as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand,** O house of Israel" (Jeremiah 18:1-6).

We are aware of some of Jehovah Jesus' purposes in sovereignly choosing not to have **yet** brought to pass the fulfillment of some End Time events (that we expected already to be fulfilled):

- (1) testing and refinement of the Saints in the delay of the Rapture, i.e., "When He hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold" (Job 23:10),
- (2) greater opportunity for repentance of the ungodly in the delay of the judgment of America, i.e., "The LORD is not slack concerning His Promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2Peter 3:9), and
- (3) filling of the cup of iniquity of those who will be ultimately damned and destroyed, i.e., as the LORD Jesus said to the hypocrites, "Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers" (Matthew 23:32), and as the Almighty told Abram, "the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet full" (Genesis 15:16).

Summary

The inability to discern a false prophet from a true prophet, will open the way for the deception of **the False Prophet**. "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie" (2 Thessalonians 2:11). Since the LORD Jesus will not excuse the world for allowing The False Prophet to deceive them into worshipping the Antichrist, why then would He allow His people to be ignorant of the false prophets of today, who are trying to deceive His sheep? Even the four-legged sheep-- beasts that they are-- recognize and follow their own shepherd.

- "3 The sheep hear his [the shepherd's] voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out... 4 he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5 And a stranger will they **not follow**, but will flee from him: for **they know not the voice of strangers**" (John 10:3-5).

Can there be any excuse for us, who are made in the "image of God" (Genesis 1:27), and led by a totally selfless and Divine Caretaker, to **not** know Him?

- "14 I am the Good Shepherd, and know My sheep, and **am known of Mine**. 15 As the Father knoweth Me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down My life for the sheep... 27 My sheep hear My Voice, and I know them, and **they follow Me**" (John 10:14-15,27).

"Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Luke 16:13). It is morally impossible!

The fundamental concept in identifying false prophets, is that **a false prophet seeks to turn people away from the LORD Jesus Christ**, i.e., "Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them" (Deuteronomy 13:2). It is not enough that "**the sign or the wonder come to pass**". The success of the prophecy, its fulfillment and timing, does **not** define the character of the prophet. The fulfillment-- or lack of fulfillment-- must be viewed in light of the false prophets' call to **obvious disobedience** of the LORD, i.e., "Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them".

Therefore, in evaluating a modern prophet, your defining question should be, "Does this prophet **provoke me to disobedience** of the sure Word of God?"

- "Thy Word is Truth" (John 17:17).

If "yes", then **mark and avoid** them.

- "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them" (Romans 16:17). "To the Law and to the Testimony: if they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is **no Light** in them" (Isaiah 8:19-20).

If the prophet **does not provoke me to disobey** God, but rather, he does "provoke unto love and to good works" (Hebrews 10:24), then you have your answer.

- "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; **teaching and admonishing one another** in psalms and hymns and Spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts **to the LORD**" (Colossians 3:16). "That they **do**

good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate" (1Timothy 6:18). "Let every one of us please his neighbour **for his good to edification**" (Romans 15:2).

The defining question should **not** be, "Did this prophet's words **come to pass**?" Because, if the answer is "yes", we are to not think it strange that even a false prophet can make the "sign or the wonder **come to pass**" (13:2)-- by the supernatural power of Satan.

- "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, **and shall shew great signs and wonders**; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Matthew 24:24).

And if the answer is "No, this prophet's words **did not come to pass**." Then the prophet was either,

(1) not from God, i.e., "hath spoken it **presumptuously**" (Deuteronomy 18:22), or,

(2) that a situation developed which **changed God's mind**, i.e., "that I may repent Me" (Jeremiah 26:3).

God is completely justified in holding back the fulfillment of a prophecy-- that He promised by the mouth of His prophets.

- "And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil, that He had said that He would do unto them; and **He did it not**" (Jonah 3:10).

So, fulfillment-- or lack of fulfillment-- must be viewed in light of the prophets' character and call to **obvious disobedience** of the LORD, i.e.,

- "Then said the prophet Jeremiah unto Hananiah the prophet, Hear now, Hananiah; The LORD hath **not** sent thee; but thou makest this people to trust in a lie" (Jeremiah 28:15).

Remember, before a prophet is labelled a false prophet because of the lack of fulfillment of his prophecy, we would do well to carefully study Jeremiah 26.

Related Topics:

1. [Does GOD Test People Like That?](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Does.God.Test.People.html)

-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/Does.God.Test.People.html> --
Biblical Examples of Failed Prophecy, Testing, and Refinement

2. [For the Elect's Sake](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/For.the.Elects.Sake.html)

-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Timeline/For.the.Elects.Sake.html> --
That a Merciful God Will Shorten the Tribulation Week

3. [Rapture And Judgment Are At Hand](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/Rapture.Judgment.At.Hand.html)

-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophecy/Rapture.Judgment.At.Hand.html> --

The LORD's Response is to Silence the Scoffers

4. [A Prophet Hath Been Among Them](http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophets/A.Prophet.Among.Them.html)

-- <http://Whatsaiththescripture.com/Prophets/A.Prophet.Among.Them.html> --

How to Discern a True Prophet From a False Prophet