

## WHERE HAVE THE PROPHETS GONE?

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When we read through the bible, we often find ourselves struck by the great wisdom shown through the many great prophets in the Old Testament. Who could overlook the impact that these prophets had on the people of their time and on the people in ages to follow? We may think names such as Moses who brought hope for a captive Israel; Samuel who anointed and counseled kings; Isaiah who foretold of the impending judgment of the unbelievers and predicted the coming of Messiah; or so many others.

However, as we progress through the bible, we find that the New Testament offers far fewer such accounts of prophets, and that eventually, in our modern day, there seem not to be any true prophets around at all (we still observe quite a few false prophets still). One could argue that John the Baptist was the last prophet around, as the one who prepared the way for Christ.

So the question is: Where have the prophets gone, and why is it that we do not see any great prophet rise up in today's society?

Upon some reflection, I have arrived at some distinct reasons for this, however, before I continue I feel obliged to point out that the following is merely my own personal reflections and not an explanation with strong religious foundations. By no means am I an educated scholar in the Word of our Lord, so my reasons discussed here remain nothing more than personal reflections, which you of course are welcome to disagree with.

My reasoning for why we do not see prophets rise up today, has to do with the differences between Old Testament times and our modern times. Firstly, we need to appreciate that Old Testament times were truly tough and hard times for God's people (just look at the world which the prophets Jeremiah or Ezekiel lived in), and thus the people relied on a strong leadership to lead them in terms of both spiritual matters and day-to-day living (as can be illustrated by Moses and the subsequent judges and kings of Israel). However, when such leadership failed at spiritual levels (as illustrated with King Saul, then later King David), or when the people fell captive under foreign leadership (e.g., Babylonian or Assyrian occupation), God raised up individuals of wisdom as prophets to let the people and their leaders know that they had gone astray (prophets such as Samuel or Elijah), and also to lead and show the way in terms of what needed to change to get back on track in the eyes of God (e.g., Isaiah or Daniel), or simply to restore hope of a better future (e.g., Moses).

Further, in Old Testament times, Faith was not merely a personal choice, but rather the Law. The leaders in Old Testament times dictated the Law and Law was based upon the Faith. Thus, Faith was the Law, and the people followed the

Law given to them by their leaders. In other words, Faith was not a personal lifestyle choice, but more a corporate and societal lifestyle dictated by Law.

Today, however, we don't rely on such strong leadership to the same extent. When God sent His only son, Jesus Christ, to our world, everything changed. With Christ, we were given the Holy Spirit, and Faith became a matter of having a personal relationship with God. Faith thus became a matter of free choice: We are free to choose to accept the Holy Spirit and to believe in our Lord Jesus and whether to follow Him. Christ removed the need for such strong leadership which can be observed in the Old Testament. The only leadership as such we would ever need, is indeed found in Christ and the Holy Spirit. With Christ bringing salvation to us, there is no further need for prophets to rise up and lead us, as we have already been saved.

Further, though we don't rely on strong human leadership to the same extent that is seen in the Old Testament, we still do have some human leadership in which we rely on for guidance and direction, namely our current spiritual leaders: our pastors in the church. And this is how I choose to conclude my reasoning for why we don't see prophets rise up in our modern day: Maybe, just maybe, the reason we don't see prophets rise up today, is simply because our current leadership haven't failed God and lead us astray? Maybe there is no need for prophets to rise up, because we do remain faithful to our God?

Maybe there are no prophets because God's people are finally doing something right? Now, that is a controversial thought.