

Dr. Marv Wilson, Prophets, Session 2, Introduction (continued) Resources from NotebookLM

1) Abstract, 2) Audio podcast, 3) Briefing Document, 4) Study Guide, and 5) FAQs

1. Abstract of Wilson, Prophets, Session 2, Introduction (continued), Biblicalearning.org, BeL

Dr. Marv Wilson's lecture focuses on distinguishing true prophets from false ones. He suggests that discerning genuine prophets isn't about a single test, but a combination of indicators. **Key identifiers of a true prophet include a clear call from God and a consciousness that their words are inspired by the Holy Spirit.** Wilson emphasizes that true prophets didn't rely on pagan divination or seek material compensation. **He contrasts this with false prophets motivated by payment and driven by their own minds rather than divine inspiration.** The lecture explores the role of the Holy Spirit and offers ways to test a genuine prophetic ministry, which emphasizes living out the message of the prophets by caring for the poor and speaking out against injustice.

**2. 20 - minute Audio Podcast Created on the basis of
Dr. Wilson, Prophets, Session 2 – Double click icon to play in
Windows media player or go to the Biblicalearning.org [BeL]
Site and click the audio podcast link there (Old Testament →
Major Prophets → Prophetic Literature).**



**Wilson_Prophets_S
ession02.mp3**

3. Briefing Document: Wilson, Prophets, Session 2, Introduction (continued)

Okay, here is a detailed briefing document summarizing the key themes and ideas from the provided source, "Wilson_Prophets_EN_Session03.pdf":

Briefing Document: True and False Prophets

Overview: This session focuses on differentiating true prophets from false prophets, emphasizing that there isn't a single, simple test but rather a cumulative set of indicators. Dr. Wilson explores the nature of a prophet's call, the source of their message, and their motivations, contrasting true biblical prophecy with other forms of spiritual expression. The lecture is grounded in the Old Testament but also touches upon implications for Christian life and ministry today.

Key Themes and Ideas:

1. The Divine Call (Not a Vocational Choice):

- **Core Concept:** True prophets are not self-appointed; they are called by God. This call is not a result of vocational choice, aptitude, or personal desire, but rather a divine initiative. It is not a career path.
- **Evidence:** "Being a prophet was not a matter of saying, gee, I guess I'd like to do this when I grow up."
- "And a prophet then was thrust into this by a power outside of himself."
- Examples include Moses' burning bush experience, Amos being called from his work as a herdsman, and Samuel confusing God's voice with Eli's.
- **Modern Relevance:** While all Christians are called to serve God, the specific, unique calling of a biblical prophet is distinct and was "sui generis" (a type to itself).
- **Caution:** Dr. Wilson cautions against expecting God to call people into a prophetic role in exactly the same way today as in biblical times.

1. Inspiration by the Holy Spirit (Not Natural Talent):

- **Core Concept:** True prophets are conscious that their words are inspired by the Holy Spirit, making them an extension of God's personality. This is distinct from a natural human gift or talent.

- **Evidence:** Emphasis on prophetic formulas like “For the mouth of the Lord has spoken it,” “thus says the Lord,” “the word of the Lord came to me,” and “I have put my words in your mouth.”
- Examples of God speaking through prophets using first-person verbs, such as in Hosea: “I will heal their backsliding.”
- Jeremiah’s experience: “His word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones.”
- **Contrast:** Dr. Wilson notes that some theological circles see prophets as human geniuses with natural piety or spiritual gifts and intuitive gifts. He argues the Bible doesn't present it that way; rather, they are empowered beyond human capacity by God.
- **Biblical Support:** 2 Peter 1:21 states that “no prophecy ever came by human impulse, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit,” reinforcing that the prophet is not the originator of the message but is “carried along” by the Holy Spirit.

1. **Rejection of Pagan Divination (Seeking Truth from God Only):**

- **Core Concept:** True prophets do not seek truth through pagan practices like divination, sorcery, interpreting omens, or necromancy (consulting the dead). They rely solely on divine revelation from God.
- **Evidence:** Deuteronomy 18:9-14 condemns various pagan practices.
- Jeremiah 14:14 and 23:16 highlight how false prophets use “false visions, divinations, idolatries, and the delusions of their own mind.”
- **Key Distinction:** This separates Israel’s religion from pagan practices. God's revelation is direct, not through occult means or demonic sources.
- **Caution:** Dr. Wilson warns that occult practices are still prevalent today and can mislead people.

1. Shunning Professionalism (Serving God, Not for Payment):

- **Core Concept:** True prophets did not seek payment for their services; their motivation was a genuine call from God and a desire to serve Him, not material gain.
- **Distinction:** Dr. Wilson distinguishes being "professional," which is a good thing, with "professionalism," which focuses on paid services and compensation.
- **Evidence:** False prophets were often paid servants of kings, prone to giving the message the king wanted to hear.
- The Balaam narrative (Numbers 22) serves as an example of a false prophet motivated by the "fee for divination."
- Amos' statement that he was not a professional prophet but was called by God.
- Personal anecdote about a wedding soloist who prioritized payment over service, highlighting the danger of a monetary motive overshadowing the love of the game.
- **Application:** Those in ministry today should be motivated by a love for God and for people, understanding that "God will meet your needs".

1. The Nature of Prophetic Ministry Today

- **Core Concept:** A prophetic ministry today involves living and teaching the messages found in the biblical prophets, which includes concern for the poor, speaking against injustice, and reflecting the values of the biblical prophets in daily life.
- **Distinction:** While Christians can have a prophetic *ministry*, it's important to distinguish this from the unique *office* of the biblical prophet.
- **Modern Application:** This means focusing on reflection of God's word rather than presuming to speak the very Word of God.

Concluding Remarks Dr. Wilson concludes by saying that prophets were called by God, and He put the words in their mouth, which is the genuine motive. He plans to elaborate on this in the following session. The core takeaway is that discerning true prophets requires a holistic view of these indicators.

Quotes

- “How do we determine the phony from the real?”
- “When it came to the world of the prophets, there was no simple formula that people had to follow to guarantee the person they were listening to was truly a man of God...”
- “A prophet is somebody who is aware of a clear call by God. You have to go back and stand on that.”
- "The divine call made the prophet conscious of being in the presence of God."
- “No prophecy came by human impulse... but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”
- “The prophet did not seek truth by pagan divination.”
- "True prophets, at the end of the day, really shunned professionalism."
- "A prophetic ministry means to be live and teachers of the materials found in the prophets."
- “They spoke visions from their own minds. So, notice the careful distinction here in terms of not speaking God's Word but speaking out of your own mind.”

This briefing doc encapsulates the essence of Dr. Wilson's lecture on true and false prophets, offering a comprehensive guide to understanding the key differentiators within a biblical context.

4. Study Guide: Wilson, Prophets, Session 2, Introduction (continued)

Prophets: True and False - A Study Guide

Quiz

Instructions: Answer the following questions in 2-3 sentences each.

1. What is the main theme of Dr. Wilson's lecture?
2. According to Dr. Wilson, what is the first indicator that someone is a true prophet?
3. How was the calling of a prophet different from the priesthood?
4. What role did the Holy Spirit play in the life and ministry of a true prophet?
5. How does the Bible differ in its portrayal of prophets compared to liberal theological circles?
6. What is the significance of 2 Peter 1:21 in understanding prophecy?
7. What is hepatoscopy, and why is it relevant to this discussion?
8. What is the difference between being "professional" and "professionalism" as used by Dr. Wilson?
9. What was Balaam hired to do, and what was his ultimate action?
10. What does a prophetic ministry look like today, according to Dr. Wilson?

Answer Key

1. The main theme is distinguishing between true and false prophets. Dr. Wilson discusses how to discern whether someone claiming to be a prophet is genuinely from God, as there are many who appear genuine but are not.
2. The first indicator of a true prophet is a clear awareness of being called by God. It was not a matter of personal choice or vocational training but being compelled by a power outside of themselves.
3. The priesthood was hereditary, passed down through families, while the calling of a prophet was a direct and unique call from God. It was not a matter of training or familial ties, but a divine appointment.

4. The Holy Spirit inspired the prophets, enabling them to see things hidden to the natural eye and mind. The Holy Spirit enabled prophets to speak God's words with boldness and divine compulsion, making them extensions of God's personality.
5. The Bible emphasizes that prophets were not merely human geniuses with natural talents, as liberal theology suggests. Instead, the Bible asserts that prophets spoke because of the onrushing power of the Holy Spirit and divine anointing.
6. 2 Peter 1:21 states that prophecy does not originate from human impulse but is the result of being moved by the Holy Spirit. This emphasizes that the prophet is acted upon by God and does not generate the prophetic message on their own.
7. Hepatoscopy was the practice of examining animal livers to discern omens in ancient Mesopotamia. It is relevant because it is an example of the pagan practices that true prophets of Israel would not engage in, instead relying on divine revelation.
8. Being "professional" is about skill and competency in one's work, while "professionalism" focuses on financial compensation, a motivation the prophets were to avoid. The prophets acted out of divine calling, not for financial gain.
9. Balaam was hired to curse the Israelites, but he was unable to do so and instead blessed them. He was an example of a false prophet who served a king for payment and was expected to provide what the king wished to hear.
10. A prophetic ministry today means living and teaching the materials found in the prophets. This includes showing concern for the poor, speaking against injustice, and reflecting the concerns of the biblical prophets in daily life.

Essay Questions

Instructions: Answer the following essay questions, using the source material as a basis for your arguments.

1. Discuss the various ways in which true prophets demonstrated their calling from God, using specific examples from the lecture and the biblical text.
2. Compare and contrast the biblical view of prophets with the view found in liberal theological circles, paying close attention to the role of the Holy Spirit in each understanding.
3. Analyze the distinction between being professional and professionalism as it relates to the prophets of Israel, using Dr. Wilson's arguments and examples to support your claims.
4. Evaluate the significance of the "call" in the life of a prophet, and how that differentiates them from other religious leaders or speakers.
5. How does the text distinguish between the nature of prophetic speech in the Old Testament and prophetic gifts in the modern church, and what are the implications of this distinction?

Glossary of Key Terms

Akkadian: An ancient Semitic language that was used as a lingua franca (common language) in the ancient Near East, alongside cuneiform script.

Baru Priests: Priests in ancient Mesopotamia who studied omens, often through hepatoscopy, to discern the will of the gods.

Charismata: A Greek word referring to spiritual gifts given by the Holy Spirit to members of the church for the edification of the body of Christ.

Cuneiform: An ancient writing system using wedge-shaped marks, commonly used in Mesopotamia.

Divination: The practice of seeking knowledge of the future or the unknown by supernatural means.

Ecstatic Prophets: Prophets in the ancient Near East who entered a trance-like state to receive and deliver prophetic messages.

Hepatoscopy: The practice of examining animal livers to discern omens or predict the future, a common practice in Mesopotamia.

Lingua Franca: A language used as a means of communication between people who do not share the same first language.

Necromancy: The practice of communicating with the dead, often to seek guidance or knowledge of the future.

Ruach: Hebrew word for "spirit," often associated with wind, breath, energy, and the life-giving force of God.

Sui Generis: A Latin phrase meaning "of its own kind" or "unique." Dr. Wilson uses this to describe the unique calling of the biblical prophet.

Theopneustos: Greek word meaning "God-breathed," used in 2 Timothy 3:16 to describe the nature of Scripture as inspired by God.

5. FAQs on Wilson, Prophets, Session 2, Introduction (continued), Biblicalearning.org (BeL)

Okay, here's an 8-question FAQ based on the provided source, formatted with markdown:

FAQ: True and False Prophets in the Bible

1. How did someone become a prophet in the Hebrew Bible, and was it a career choice?

The prophetic role in the Hebrew Bible was not a career choice but rather a divine calling. Prophets were not chosen based on vocational aptitude, training, or heredity, unlike the priesthood. They were chosen and empowered by God, often dramatically, and sometimes against their own wishes. This call was a distinct experience where the prophet became conscious of standing in God's presence.

2. What were some of the varied backgrounds of biblical prophets, and did they rely solely on their natural talents?

Biblical prophets came from diverse backgrounds and did not rely solely on their natural talents. Moses, for example, had a high-level education, while Amos was a herdsman and fig farmer. The common thread was that their prophetic ability stemmed from God's empowerment through the Holy Spirit, not their individual intellect or skills. The power of the message came from God, not the vessel.

3. How did the prophets of Israel know they were truly speaking God's words, and what role did the Holy Spirit play?

True prophets were conscious that their words were inspired by the Holy Spirit. They used phrases like, "Thus says the Lord," indicating their words were not from themselves. The Holy Spirit enabled them to see hidden truths and gave them the boldness to speak. There was a sense of divine compulsion, like a fire shut up in their bones, that made them unable to stay silent. The Holy Spirit carried them along, and their prophecies were not merely their own thoughts or impulses.

4. In what ways were the prophets' words thought of as unique from other spiritual teachers?

The words of the prophets were understood to be the direct word of God, unlike the reflections and teachings of other spiritual teachers. Biblical prophecy was considered

unique and inscripturated, carrying the weight of divine authority, and God spoke in that unique way in that period. While there may be prophetic gifts in the church today, they are not the same as biblical prophecy which is considered part of the closed canon of Scripture.

5. Why was it crucial for prophets to avoid pagan divination practices like sorcery, necromancy, and interpreting omens?

True prophets were to avoid pagan divination because they believed that God's truth came through direct revelation, not through occult practices. Divination and sorcery were considered detestable to God. True prophets received divine revelation through the Holy Spirit's onrushing power, not through demonic sources or hidden knowledge. Using divination meant a prophet was speaking out of their own mind, not God's, and could therefore be rejected.

6. What were some behaviors of false prophets that would distinguish them from true prophets?

False prophets often sought materialistic compensation for their services and were more interested in pleasing their employers, such as kings, than speaking God's truth. Unlike true prophets, they were often paid for their pronouncements and would thus tell their patrons what they wanted to hear.

7. How does the text differentiate between "being professional" and "professionalism" in the context of prophets?

"Being professional" implies skill and competence in a task, while "professionalism" often focuses on the material aspects of compensation. True prophets focused on their divine calling and serving God rather than financial gain. True prophets were motivated by the desire to serve God and people, rather than by monetary rewards.

8. How can believers today live prophetically, even if they are not biblical prophets?

Although the office of a biblical prophet was unique and closed with the canon of Scripture, Christians can still live prophetically today. This involves living and teaching the messages found in the prophets with a concern for the poor and speaking out against injustice. Living prophetically means allowing one's life to reflect the same concerns for justice and righteousness found in the biblical prophets. This also entails being intentional about one's vocation and listening to the Holy Spirit.