

serve him. I have given him control over all the wild animals. Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, Listen Hananiah, the Lord has not sent you yet you have persuaded this nation to trust in lies. Therefore, this is what the Lord says, I am about to remove you from the face of the earth. This very year you are going to die, because you have preached rebellion against the Lord.

So if we have two men declaring they know what the Lord's message is and they disagree, someone will say from this passage, All we have to do is wait and see which of them dies the next year, then we'll know what the other one says was the truth. I think that makes clear the difficulty there is in _____ in God giving His word to individuals definitely who pass it on. How are you to know who is the man who is speaking from the Lord?

Isaiah says one thing; Jeremiah says the opposite thing in substantially the same situation a century later. Hananiah says substantially what Isaiah says. Jeremiah says that Hananiah is giving as God's word what is not God's Word and they should listen to Jeremiah rather than to Hananiah.

How are you to know which one is giving the Lord's message and which one is not? We find throughout the OT many cases where the Lord gave definite revelation of truth to individuals and there were many books written by these men in which they gave the message as God had given it to them, and I have no doubt there were other books written by other men who said what they said the Lord had given to them which have disappeared completely.

We do not know whether Hananiah was a liar or whether he was self-deceived and thought that God was speaking to him. Or perhaps Satan led him. Satan is very adept at putting thoughts into our minds and in misleading and giving to us false ideas. But in OT times God very definitely gave his message to individuals, and these individuals passed it on in accordance to his will to His people.

When we get into the NT, Jesus Christ who was God-incarnate, gave us God's message and gave us a great many facts and matters of supreme importance for our lives, though I fear the disciples really didn't comprehend the most important of them. We know that when he was crucified the disciples simply couldn't understand what had happened. They did not expect Him to be raised from the dead though he'd told them clearly that this was going to happen.

Then in the Book of Acts we find that the Holy Spirit speaks to individuals and tells them what God wants them to do and He leads them into understanding of truth they did not have before. So we have in the Bible many illustrations of how the Holy Spirit revealed truth but we do not find it easy to apply these to our own day. We have great difficulty in doing so. We have difficulty for two reasons: One reason was this: What was God's purpose in creation? Did God want to create some robots, or machines so that he'd press a button and then'd go this way, or he'd press a button and they'd go that way? Did he want to create instruments that would simply do whatever he directed and that was all there was to it? Certainly he could have done that very easily.