

Prophets 9.

prophets are not very difficult as a rule to detect if they are prophets who are in connection with a definitely false god but in Israel we have also false prophets. We have those who claim to represent God and yet are clearly false prophets. An outstanding instance of this is I Kings 22, vv. 5-28 where we have the story of Micaiah. I believe everyone here would be familiar with the event of that story, the events there in which these men told the king what he wanted to hear instead of what the Lord actually wanted them to hear. They gave him their message and pretended to be speaking from God. Jeremiah 23, vv. 16-32, shows Jeremiah opposed to men in his day who claimed that they were prophets of God. Well, we perhaps should then take up the heading b, small b. **Types of False Prophets.** because it is always a good thing to classify when you get a general subject, divide it into sections and see what you can gather in order to understand it better, and so the false prophets we would divide into three heads and between the first and second it is very easy to separate; between the second and third it often is difficult if not impossible. The first would be heathen prophets who spoke in the name of an idol. The heathen prophet who spoke in the name of an idol is an institution which developed in imitation of the true prophet of God. We do not find it in lands which are remote from the influence of the Bible, but in the Bible we find evidence of the possibility of one claiming to be a prophet and speaking not for God but for Baal or some other idol. We find this suggested in Deuteronomy 18:20, at which we have already looked, Deuteronomy 18:20, I Kings 18:19 and Jeremiah 2:8 and Jeremiah 23:13 where they speak of the prophets who prophesied by Baal, who prophesied speaking as representatives of a false god instead of the true God. They, of course, are not prophets, because there is no such god to speak to them, but in the eyes of people seeing them they may seem to have the same relation to this false god that the true prophets of Israel have to the true god, and so we have these heathen prophets speaking in the name of an idol and then the second class of false prophets would be imposters, that is, people who claim to speak in the name of God and really are pretending. We have definite evidences in the Scripture that there were such men. There were imposters, but also we have No. 3, Deluded. We have men who thought they spoke for God when they didn't. And there are many instances in which it would be pretty hard to say whether you are dealing with an imposter or with a deluded man. In fact, sometimes I think the line passes over from one to the other. The man who begins as an imposter may actually become deluded, or it may work