



Beit Din Judgment

Question: How is a False Prophet and Teacher identified? How should such be handles according to Torah? Are those wilfully and blatantly opposing Torah seen as False Prophets and Teachers?

Ruling of the Beit Din

To answer these questions correctly we must ask what constitutes a prophet and teacher according to the Bible. I would hope that we would all agree that both a prophet and teacher are to speak and teach the Word of HaShem. Those who hold these offices are to be faithful to the instructions of the Holy One of Israel. One of the best descriptions of what constitutes a prophet comes from Jer 1:9-10.

"Then HaShem extended His hand and touched my mouth, and HaShem said to me, "Behold! I have placed My words in your mouth. See I have appointed you this day over the nations and over the kingdoms, to uproot and to smash, and to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant." [Stone edition Tanach]

Let us pay close attention to the order of the above text. Firstly we have the statement that it is HaShem's words that are placed in the mouth of the prophet, not the prophets own words or thoughts. This is vital because it is only HaShem who knows His own plans and the unfolding of those plans intimately. The role of the prophet is to turn people away from their sin and back into covenant relationship with HaShem. Hence we have the instruction given to the prophet to uproot, smash, destroy and overthrow the sinful behaviour of the people. In other words the prophet is to expose the false religions and beliefs that His people become involved with. He must expose the lies of man and often destroy through the word of Torah much if not all that man holds sacred. The prophet must be willing to be unpopular, to challenge the status quo of man and his false traditions. The prophet usually gives a word attached to judgement from HaShem, before he gives a word of restoration and hope.

A false prophet and teacher will be one who brings words that are not the instructions of HaShem. These are those who bring messages and teachings that are pleasing to the ears of men.



For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.” [2Tim 4:3-4 NKJV]

Sadly the people are much more inclined to turn their ears to false prophets and teachers. Hashem tells us not to listen to false prophets and teachers.

“Thus said HaShem Master of Legions: Pay no heed to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you; they are deluding you. They speak the vision of their own heart, not of the mouth of HaShem.” [Jer 23:16 Stone edition Tanach]

Again we are reminded that the prophet must speak the words of HaShem, the very words HaShem puts in their mouths. All other words are false and to be discarded. Notice the words following the above.

“They [false prophets] always tell those who anger Me, ‘HaShem has spoken: There will be peace for you; and to all who follow the vision of his heart they say, ‘No evil shall befall you.’ [Jer 23:17 Stone edition Tanach]

HaShem Himself confirms that false prophets and teachers bring messages that oppose the word of HaShem giving false hope and result in further rebellion instead of repentance and restoration. False prophets have no boundaries, and no shame.

“I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran, I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied”. [Jer 23:21 NKJV]

“I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in My name, saying, ‘I have dreamed, I have dreamed!’. [Jer 23:25 NKJV]

“who try to make My people forget My name by their dreams which everyone tells his neighbour as their fathers forgot My name for Baal.” [Jer 23:27 NKJV]

False prophets and teachers have no trouble putting words in HaShem’s mouth, but refuse to allow HaShem to put His words in their mouths, instead they allow their own deceitful visions and dreams to control their mouths and words. They are the messages of evil, and have no place in the assemblies of HaShem.



The Torah gives clear instructions on how to identify and deal with false prophets.

13 "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, 'Let us go after other gods'—which you have not known—'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst. [Deut 13:1-5NKJV]

It is very clear from these passages that the claims of a false prophet [and this carries over to false teachers] are closely associated with dreams; dreams that come from a dreamer whose focus and dreams are far from HaShem. Dreams that are best from their imagination, but are often influenced by satan. Unfortunately these dreams that false prophets have, do at times come true, yet that is not to be the deciding factor regarding who or who isn't a false prophet or teacher. The deciding factor is if such a prophet or teacher takes the people away from the Word of HaShem, leading the people to not only acknowledge other gods but to follow them. It would be remiss of me not to point out the fact HaShem Himself uses such false prophets and teachers to test His people, as explained in verse 3. We the people of Israel are to love the Holy One of Israel with all our heart and all our soul. Yeshua Himself spoke these words to one who professed to be an expert in the Torah.

"And He said to Him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind'" [Matt 22:37 NASB]

How does one show their love for the God of Israel? I suggest an excellent place to start is what our Messiah outlined in:

"If you love Me, you will keep My commandments" [John 14:15]



It is very simple, we demonstrate our love for HaShem, and our Moshiach Yeshua, by KEEPING the Torah of Moshe. Not complicated, very clear and straight forward. Let us view another portion of Scripture relating to false prophets.

18 I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him. 19 And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. 20 But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' 21 And if you say in your heart, 'How shall we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?'— 22 when a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. [Deut 18:18-22 NKJV]

These passages speak about the Moshiach of Israel, whom we believe to be Yeshua. I suggest if it good enough for the Messiah Himself to speak only the Words that the Father puts in His mouth, it should be good enough for the prophets and teachers of Biblical Israel. It is without doubt if a prophet speaks of a matter in the name of the Holy One of Israel, and this matter does not come true, then that one can and should be labelled a false prophet and we should pay that one no attention.

It is clear that false prophets and false teachers are identified via their words. If their words and teachings differ from HaShem's biblical patterns and from the Torah, such as claiming Sunday as the new Sabbath, encouraging people to engage in pagan festivals, changing the Moedim [meeting times] of HaShem, neglecting to call people to BIBLICAL repentance, followed by a call of hope, then these same ones are false prophets and teachers and should be escorted from the camp, until they repent and return to embracing a Torah lead lifestyle.

We must acknowledge that we are talking about those who claim to be prophets and teachers of HaShem, not those who are trying to find their way on the journey of redemption and reconciliation with HaShem. We must all remember where we have come from and may I say "there but for the grace of God go I."

On behalf of the Beit Din
Rabbi Philip Hammond.