

## CHAPTER 4: THE PROPHETIC EXPERIENCE □ PARAGRAPH 6

*by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman*

But don't ever imagine that prophets were simply inscrutable mystics who set themselves apart from society and only communed with the Divine their whole lives long. For despite the subtle, quiet, and cosmic nature of their preparations the prophets were indeed very much of this world and could in fact be said to have been the portals through which heaven and earth met. (Though that's not to deny the decidedly mystical and enlightening nature of the prophetic *experience* per se.)

In any event, prophets were oftentimes sent by G-d to fulfill certain missions which demanded that they interact with society. But not only were the more experienced prophets required to do that; novice prophets were, too. And they sometimes erred.

For as we all know, different things happen to people (inside and out) when they address others -- even prophets. And things can go wrong.

So indeed, novice prophets' messages were sometimes "colored" one way or another in the course of their encounters, and they consequently didn't manage to carry out their mission accurately in those instances, which was a fatal flaw on their part.

Prophets clearly had to be careful about what they perceived and expressed, and about what was affecting their encounters with both the Divine (from whom they received their inspiration) and with their audiences.

*This series is dedicated to the memory of Yitzchak Hehrsh ben Daniel, and Sarah Rivka bas Yaakov Dovid.*

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