

Who was Gad the seer?

Gad the seer (or prophet) is first mentioned in 1 Samuel 22:5. Before the Holy Spirit was poured out on believers at Pentecost (Acts 2), God communicated to His people primarily through His chosen prophets. In the Old Testament, those prophets are sometimes called seers (1 Samuel 9:9). Seers were sought by kings and others in authority when they needed direction from the Lord (2 Kings 17:13; 1 Chronicles 25:5).

Gad appears suddenly in the book of 1 Samuel as a consultant to David while he was on the run from Saul. At that time, Gad counsels David to leave Moab and return to Judah (1 Samuel 22:5). Gad is not mentioned again until David took the throne as the king of Israel and Gad is named as his seer (2 Samuel 24:11). At that time, kings had specific prophets whose counsel they sought, much as an American President has an advisory council. The difference is that these seers were to represent the Lord's counsel and not merely present good advice. However, seers were not always trustworthy, and the Lord brought judgment on those who spoke from their own authority (Jeremiah 14:14-15).

Gad, it appears, was an honorable man and faithfully spoke the Lord's words to David. After David had sinned by numbering the troops, the Lord sent Gad to rebuke him and give three options of punishment (2 Samuel 24:11-14). Gad later went back to David to give him the Lord's command about making his sin right through offering a sacrifice (2 Samuel 24:18). Gad remained loyal to David throughout his reign and is later listed as a compiler of the king's chronicles (1 Chronicles 29:29). Gad must have been a young man when he first joined David's band, since he outlived David and wrote a history of his life.

Though rarely mentioned by name, Gad the seer may have played a crucial role in David's

success as king. His initial advice while David was on the run from Saul not only kept David safe, but it allowed David to build a reputation as a mighty warrior, making him popular with the people (1 Chronicles 12:1-22). From that, we learn that leaders need to surround themselves with wise people who understand God's Word and can communicate God's message accurately (see Isaiah 6:8-9; 1 Corinthians 14:1-4). For every great leader, there are nameless supporters who advise, rebuke, encourage, and warn, using their gifts for the betterment of another. Though his name is rarely mentioned, Gad's influence is seen throughout the incredible life and successes of King David. Where David excelled, Gad's counsel was right behind him. When David failed, Gad's rebukes and advice quickly followed. Gad worked in harmony with God's other influential prophet, Nathan, to keep David's heart and life pleasing to God and worthy of the throne (2 Chronicles 29:29; 2 Samuel 12:1). Because Gad was faithful to his calling, David had the godly insights he needed to fulfill the role God called him to play.