



BIBLICAL PROPHETS AND PROPHECY: A PROPHETIC RESET

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This work is dedicated to a new generation of leaders and believers raised up and anointed by God to fulfill the book of Acts in the power of the Holy Spirit and to the spiritual fathers and mothers called by God to nurture and equip them for multiplying the harvest through strategic prayer, power evangelism, Spirit filled discipleship and house church planting aligned with God's word.

All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the New King James Version (NKJV) of the Bible.

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INTRODUCTION

The value of prophecy in every generation is firmly established in the Scriptures and by the Lord Himself. However, not every generation is skilled in understanding the role of prophecy or the biblical tools for evaluating prophecies. The purpose of this manual is to equip a new generation in the things pertaining to prophecy and its operation strictly from a biblical perspective. Why is this necessary? It is necessary because the new generation remnant church needs to move forward in the power and direction of the Holy Spirit. And they cannot move forward without a prophetic reset in a time of growing global unrest.

The persecution and censorship of Christians will only increase with marked acceleration in the coming days. This should not surprise any of us because the Bible speaks clearly of this. Many prophets and prophetic ministries are speaking in the name of the Lord through dreams and visions on many things. Weighing prophecies and asking relevant questions is not a sign of unbelief or skepticism. Instead, the Scriptures encourage it. There have been alarming degrees of manipulation in the area of personal prophecy in the past. More recently there have been obvious prophetic inaccuracies and declarations surrounding political elections by a large number of present-day prophets and ministries. The purpose of this study is not to judge these prophets or ministries, but to learn from the errors and allow the Holy Spirit to lead this generation to a prophetic reset. Therefore, this equipping manual is designed to be foundationally constructive in helping young leaders and believers to skillfully apply the biblical tools for assessing prophecy and moving forward under the direction and supervision of the Holy Spirit.

There is a question that must be asked today. Is this generation able to carry forth the Word of the Lord in the last days? When the Lord began to speak to Hosea He said, *“the land has committed great harlotry by departing from the Lord”* (Hos. 1:2), but God also said, *“but I will have mercy on the house of Judah, will save them by the Lord their God”* (Hos. 1:7). The Lord is saying the same thing to the new generation church today. It will require a prophetic reset consistent with the prophecy of Scripture and the testimony of Jesus.

Brother Michael

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: UNDERSTANDING THE PROPHETIC	4
Prophetic Roots	4
Prophetic Characteristics	8
Prophetic Expansion	12
Who Can Prophecy	14
CHAPTER 2: Prophetic Visions and Dreams	17
Introduction to Prophetic Visions and Dreams	17
Prophetic and Non-Prophetic Visions and Dreams	18
Understanding Prophetic Visions and Dreams	21
Prophetic Visions and Dreams to Renounce	26
The Fulfillment of Prophetic Visions and Dreams	28
CHAPTER 3: PROPHETIC MESSAGING	33
Prophetic Warnings	33
Prophetic Acts	40
Prophetic Hope	45
Prophetic Schools	50
CHAPTER 4: PROPHETIC CONFLICT	53
Conflict with Leaders: Religious and Governmental	53
Conflict with False Prophets	60
Conflict with other Prophets	67
Persecution of Prophets	71
CHAPTER 5: PROPHETIC OPERATION	74
Biblical Ways of Receiving Prophecy	74
Biblical Ways of Testing Prophecy	82
Abuses of Prophecy Today	94
The Apostolic and Prophetic Team	98
Conclusion: <i>For the Time Will Come</i>	100
APPENDIXES	101
Appendix 1: The Prophetic Books of the Bible	101
Appendix 2: A Vision of the Courtroom of Heaven	102
Appendix 3: 21 Contrasts Between Prophetic Edification and Manipulation	107

CHAPTER 1: UNDERSTANDING THE PROPHETIC

Prophetic Roots

The first reference to a prophet in the Bible is found in Genesis. It occurs after the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah and the beginning of the Moabites through the descendants of Lot by his own daughters. On the other hand, Abraham and Sarah travel South where he presents her to King Abimelech as his sister. Therefore, Abimelech sent and took her. This is what happened next. Pay careful attention to the last verse.

- Gen. 20:3-7 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, “Indeed you *are* a dead man because of the woman whom you have taken, for she *is* a man’s wife.”⁴ But Abimelech had not come near her; and he said, “Lord, will You slay a righteous nation also?”⁵ Did he not say to me, “She *is* my sister”? And she, even she herself said, ‘He *is* my brother.’ In the integrity of my heart and innocence of my hands I have done this.”⁶ And God said to him in a dream, “Yes, I know that you did this in the integrity of your heart. For I also withheld you from sinning against Me; therefore I did not let you touch her.”⁷ Now therefore, restore the man’s wife; for he is a prophet, and he will pray for you and you shall live. But if you do not restore *her*, know that you shall surely die, you and all who are yours.”

Did you realize Abraham is identified in Scripture as a prophet? This is clearly what the Bible says, and it is God Himself who says *he is a prophet*. This means prophets are the creation of God and not man. They originate with God, not man. The importance God reveals to Abimelech about Abraham, the prophet, is also very revealing. He prays, you live! You restore what belongs to him and all that belongs to you will remain and not die. The prophet Abraham prays, and God confirms His word.

- Gen. 20:17-18 So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servants. Then they bore *children*; ¹⁸ for the LORD had closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech because of Sarah, Abraham’s wife.

A second reference to a prophet in the Bible is found in Exodus and follows much the same pattern.

- Ex. 7:1-6 So the LORD said to Moses: “See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet.² You shall speak all that I command you. And Aaron your brother shall tell Pharaoh to send the children of Israel out of his land.³ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply My signs and My wonders in the land of Egypt.⁴ But Pharaoh will not heed you, so that I may lay My hand on Egypt and bring My armies *and* My people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.⁵ And the Egyptians shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I stretch out My hand on Egypt and bring out the children of Israel from among them.”⁶ Then Moses and Aaron did so; just as the LORD commanded them, so they did.⁷ And Moses was eighty years old and Aaron eighty-three years old when they spoke to Pharaoh.

Who established Aaron as a prophet? Again, it was God. God revealed to Moses and Aaron exactly what He was going to do with Pharaoh and Israel. Note how God’s purpose is not only to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage but that the Egyptians would know that He is LORD! You can be certain Abimelech also knew He is LORD. Although Abraham and Aaron are called prophets by God, they were not the first who prophesied. Scripture reveals that Enoch walked with God and prophesied:

- Gen. 5:22-24 After he begot Methuselah, Enoch walked with God three hundred years, and had sons and daughters. ²³ So all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. ²⁴ And Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him.
- Jude 14-15 Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, “Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵ to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him.”

Of course, we would not have known this except for the New Testament record; however, this revelation about Enoch, *the seventh from Adam*, again demonstrates that prophets and prophecy are God’s plan from the beginning. Prophets and prophecy are a God thing, not a man thing. One could say that God was the first to prophesy. Who can forget the prophetic words of the Lord before and after the fall of man?

- Gen. 2:15-17 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”
- Gen. 3:14-19 So the LORD God said to the serpent: “Because you have done this, You are cursed more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly you shall go, And you shall eat dust All the days of your life. ¹⁵ And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel.” ¹⁶ To the woman He said: “I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; In pain you shall bring forth children; Your desire *shall be* for your husband, And he shall rule over you.” ¹⁷ Then to Adam He said, “Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, “You shall not eat of it’: ‘Cursed *is* the ground for your sake; In toil you shall eat of it All the days of your life.¹⁸ Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, And you shall eat the herb of the field. ¹⁹ In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.”

The Apostle Paul draws attention to the above heavenly prophecies to proclaim that the *Seed* is speaking of God’s promise and covenant being confirmed and fulfilled in Christ alone.

- Gal. 3:15-16 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though *it is* only a man’s covenant, yet *if it is* confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. ¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, “And to seeds,” as of many, but as of one, “*And to your Seed,*” who is Christ.

These are astounding revelations in the Scriptures that must shape the prophetic understanding of every generation. There is a satanic attack against prophets and prophecy today. But it began at the beginning where *the serpent* challenged Eve over what God had spoken. Satan worked deceitfully to counter what God had prophetically spoken. Therefore, Satan successfully brought doubt and confusion into their lives.

- “*Has God indeed said, ‘You shall not eat of every tree of the garden’*” (Gen. 3:1).
- “*You will not surely die.*” (Gen. 3:4).
- “*For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.*” (Gen. 3:5).

Satan cunningly brought into question the prophetic words spoken by God . And this very thing is taking place today. This generation needs a prophetic reset that respects God and is aligned with His word.

The early biblical accounts we have briefly looked at thus far show us that the concept of prophets and prophecy has its roots in heaven. This may appear too simple and basic to some, but without this basic understanding, the focus shifts from God to man. This is why a prophetic reset is needed today. Young leaders need to keep their focus upon God, especially when it comes to the area of prophecy. The new generation church must first understand that prophets and prophecy have been established by God. They do not originate with man nor are they the concept of man. Prophets and prophecy are an integral part of God's operation in heaven and on earth. They operate under heavenly command. Young leaders must have this understanding before attempting to teach others about the prophetic or operate in the prophetic themselves.

The importance of prophets is also seen in the fact that the word *prophet* occurs 316 times in the Old Testament and about 125 times in the New Testament. Who or what does it refer to? The primary Hebrew word used in the Old Testament for prophet is *nabi* (naw-bee'). The verb forms of *nabi* appear 115 times in the Hebrew Bible. The root meanings point to the calling or command from God to speak and the inspiration by the Holy Spirit to do so. The noun for *prophet* refers to one who is called to be a spokesman or speaker of a message from God. The emphasis here is in the calling whereas the action of prophesying is on the inspiration with its root meaning *to utter, bubble up, pour forth*. This points to the action involving a *flow of words under the excitement of inspiration*. Both the prophet and the prophesying are under the authority and control of God. Therefore, God calls the prophet, gives him or her¹ a message, and the Holy Spirit comes upon them and inspires them to speak or prophecy what God has given and commanded. This development of prophets and prophecy is also confirmed by other general descriptions of prophets like *man of God, the Lord's Messenger, My Servants, and even Watchman*.

Hebrew words that are less used in the Bible provide more details and understanding into prophets and prophecy. For example, one of the oldest understandings of prophets was that of a *ro'eh* or *seer*. We see this reference first relating to the prophet, Samuel in the context of Saul looking for his father's lost donkeys and God responding to Israel's demand for a king like other nations.

- 1Sam. 9:6-19 And he said to him, "Look now, there is in this city a man of God, and he is an honorable man; all that he says surely comes to pass. So let us go there; perhaps he can show us the way that we should go."⁷ Then Saul said to his servant, "But look, *if we go*, what shall we bring the man? For the bread in our vessels is all gone, and *there is* no present to bring to the man of God. What do we have?"⁸ And the servant answered Saul again and said, "Look, I have here at hand one-fourth of a shekel of silver. I will give *that* to the man of God, to tell us our way."⁹ (Formerly in Israel, when a man went to inquire of God, he spoke thus: "Come, let us go to the seer"; for *he who is now called a prophet* was formerly called a seer.)¹⁰ Then Saul said to his servant, "Well said; come, let us go." So they went to the city where the man of God was.¹¹ As they went up the hill to the city, they met some young women going out to draw water, and said to them, "Is the seer here?"¹² And they answered them and said, "Yes, there he is, just ahead of you. Hurry now; for today he came to this city, because there is a sacrifice of the people today on the high place.¹³ As soon as you come into the city, you will surely find him before he goes up to the high place to eat. For the

¹ The feminine form *nabiah* (prophetess) of the noun for prophet occurs six times in the Bible. Five times in reference to women whom God also called to the same task of prophecy (Exod. 15:20; Judg. 4:4; 2Kings 22:14; 2Chron. 34:22; Luke 2:36) and once referring to a false prophetess Rev. 2:20).

people will not eat until he comes, because he must bless the sacrifice; afterward those who are invited will eat. Now therefore, go up, for about this time you will find him.”¹⁴ So they went up to the city. As they were coming into the city, there was Samuel, coming out toward them on his way up to the high place.¹⁵ Now the LORD had told Samuel in his ear the day before Saul came, saying,¹⁶ “Tomorrow about this time I will send you a man from the land of Benjamin, and you shall anoint him commander over My people Israel, that he may save My people from the hand of the Philistines; for I have looked upon My people, because their cry has come to Me.”¹⁷ So when Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said to him, “There he is, the man of whom I spoke to you. This one shall reign over My people.”¹⁸ Then Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, “Please tell me, where is the seer’s house?”¹⁹ Samuel answered Saul and said, “I am the seer. Go up before me to the high place, for you shall eat with me today; and tomorrow I will let you go and will tell you all that is in your heart.

The above description of a prophet as a *seer* is especially important to our prophetic understanding. It provides basic, valuable insight into prophetic activity that originates with God, is aligned with His word, and fulfills His purpose. The unity of understanding is also worth noting. The city inhabitants, Saul and his companions, and Samuel himself all viewed a prophet as a *man of God* and a *seer*. What is involved in being a *seer*? Here are some helpful meanings:

- “A visionary, a seer, one who sees visions, a prophet. *Ro’eh* comes from the verb *ra’ah*, which means “to see,” but also has a wide range of meanings related to seeing (such as, “perceive,” “appear,” “discern,” “look,” “stare,” and many other nuances). It was only natural for Hebrew speakers to describe a prophet as a “seer,” since prophets frequently received messages from God through visions. However, the word *nabi* (spokesman) is the preferred Hebrew word for prophet.”²
- “This Hebrew noun that is translated “seer” means one who has a special ability to see in the spiritual realm and foresee future events. This title suggests that the prophet saw beyond how conditions appeared to be and saw how they actually were from God’s perspective. Another word for seer, *hozeh*, suggests that the prophet received dreams, visions and revelations from God that enabled him or her to communicate spiritual realities and truths.”³

We are introduced to another Hebrew word related to prophets. *Hozeh* means to “*to have or see a vision*.” It can also be translated as *seer* or *visionary*. Therefore, it appears to be associated with prophetic activity involving visions and dreams. We will be looking at visions and dreams later in our study. There is one place in the Bible where these three main Hebrew terms we have been discussing, *nabi*, *ro’eh*, and *hozeh*, appear together.

- 1Chr. 29:29-30 Now the acts of King David, first and last, indeed they *are* written in the book of Samuel the seer (*ro’eh*), in the book of Nathan the prophet (*nabi*), and in the book of Gad the seer (*hozeh*),³⁰ with all his reign and his might, and the events that happened to him, to Israel, and to all the kingdoms of the lands.

It is amazing to find these words uniquely applied to three prophets, Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, in a single verse of Scripture. The following explanation brings to light the distinctive aspects of each word:

² *Spirit Filled Life Bible*, 3rd Edition (2018), Thomas Nelson, Nashville. Word Wealth 9:9 p. 377.

³ *Fire Bible: Global Study Edition* (2009), Life Publishers international, Springfield, MO. *The Prophet in the Old Testament* p. 1161.

A *ro'eh*, then, was one who was given divine insight into the past, present, and future so that he could see everything from lost items to the great events of the last days. A *nabi* was one who was called of God to announce the divine message, while a *hozeh* was given messages mainly in visions.⁴

Although there are examples where these words are sometimes used interchangeably with the prophets, recognizing their particular focus benefits our understanding of prophets, how they receive messages from God and deliver them by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Even though God uses these servants of the Lord, the prophetic is not the creation of human hands or human minds. A genuine prophetic understanding begins and ends with God's perspective.

Prophetic Characteristics

Prophets announce the word of the Lord. They do so by heavenly call and command. The Holy Spirit comes upon them to prophesy. This is what we see in the true prophets of God in the Bible. In addition, there are some common characteristics. Here are just a few:

1. A unique and close relationship with God. It is a relationship where God would show Himself and reveal His heart to them. Prophets are called into special service. They are given the secret counsel of heaven and are like God's secret agents.

Num. 12:6-8 Then He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, *I*, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. ⁷ Not so with My servant Moses; He *is* faithful in all My house. ⁸ I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?"

Isaiah 6:1 In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lifted up, and the train of His robe filled the temple.

Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

2. A clear understanding of God's purpose, plans, and desires. Prophets understand better than others what God desires and plans to do. They hear His voice and receive His word, but also experience God's emotions and responses. Simply stated, they feel God's heart.

Jer. 6:11 Therefore I am full of the fury of the LORD. I am weary of holding *it* in. "I will pour it out on the children outside, And on the assembly of young men together; For even the husband shall be taken with the wife, The aged with *him who is* full of days.

Jer. 15:16-17 Your words were found, and I ate them, And Your word was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart; For I am called by Your name, O LORD God of hosts. ¹⁷ I did not sit in the assembly of the mockers, Nor did I rejoice; I sat alone because of Your hand, For You have filled me with indignation.

Jer. 20:9 Then I said, "I will not make mention of Him, Nor speak anymore in His name." But *His word* was in my heart like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; I was weary of holding *it* back, And I could not.

3. A deep love for God's people. Prophets feel great pain when the people forsake God. They want what God wants for them. For this reason, they deliver messages from God to warn and correct and also to bring hope, comfort, and encouragement.

⁴ Bible Study Tools. *Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (1997) Walter C. Kaiser, Jr. *Prophet, Prophetess, Prophecy*. <https://www.biblestudytools.com/dictionaries/bakers-evangelical-dictionary/prophet-prophetess-prophecy.html>.

Lam. 1:6 “For these *things* I weep; My eye, my eye overflows with water; Because the comforter, who should restore my life, is far from me. My children are desolate Because the enemy prevailed.”

Ezek. 18:23 Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die?” says the Lord GOD, “*and* not that he should turn from his ways and live?”

4. A complete trust in and loyalty to God. Prophets have no agenda but God’s agenda. Therefore, they constantly warn the people not to depend upon human wisdom, wealth, power, and false gods, but to live according to God’s covenant standards.

Jer. 8:9-10 The wise men are ashamed, They are dismayed and taken. Behold, they have rejected the word of the LORD; So what wisdom do they have? ¹⁰ Therefore I will give their wives to others, *And* their fields to those who will inherit *them*; Because from the least even to the greatest Everyone is given to covetousness; From the prophet even to the priest Everyone deals falsely.

Hos. 10:13-14 You have plowed wickedness; You have reaped iniquity. You have eaten the fruit of lies, Because you trusted in your own way, In the multitude of your mighty men.¹⁴ Therefore tumult shall arise among your people, And all your fortresses shall be plundered As Shalman plundered Beth Arbel in the day of battle—A mother dashed in pieces upon *her* children.

Amos 6:8 The Lord GOD has sworn by Himself, The LORD God of hosts says: “I abhor the pride of Jacob, And hate his palaces; Therefore I will deliver up *the* city And all that is in it.”

5. Extreme sensitivity to sin and evil. Prophets are intolerant and impatient when it comes to even the slightest deviation from God’s standards of righteousness, morality, and justice. They make no compromises with complacency, hypocrisy, or excuses for not following God.

Jer. 2:12-13, 19 Be astonished, O heavens, at this, And be horribly afraid; Be very desolate,” says the LORD. ¹³ “For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, *And* hewn themselves cisterns—broken cisterns that can hold no water... ¹⁹ Your own wickedness will correct you, And your backslidings will rebuke you. Know therefore and see that *it is* an evil and bitter *thing* That you have forsaken the LORD your God, And the fear of Me *is* not in you,” Says the Lord GOD of hosts.

Jer. 25:3-7 “From the thirteenth year of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, even to this day, this *is* the twenty-third year in which the word of the LORD has come to me; and I have spoken to you, rising early and speaking, but you have not listened. ⁴ And the LORD has sent to you all His servants the prophets, rising early and sending *them*, but you have not listened nor inclined your ear to hear. ⁵ They said, “Repent now everyone of his evil way and his evil doings, and dwell in the land that the LORD has given to you and your fathers forever and ever. ⁶ Do not go after other gods to serve them and worship them, and do not provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands; and I will not harm you.’ ⁷ Yet you have not listened to Me,” says the LORD, “that you might provoke Me to anger with the works of your hands to your own hurt.

Amos 8:4-7 Hear this, you who swallow up the needy, And make the poor of the land fail, ⁵ Saying: “When will the New Moon be past, That we may sell grain? And the Sabbath, That we may trade wheat? Making the ephah small and the shekel large, Falsifying the scales by deceit, ⁶ That we may buy the poor for silver, And the needy for a pair of sandals—Even sell the bad wheat?” ⁷ The LORD has sworn by the pride of Jacob: “Surely I will never forget any of their works.

Micah 3: 8 But truly I am full of power by the Spirit of the LORD, And of justice and might, To declare to Jacob his transgression And to Israel his sin.

Isa. 32:11 Tremble, you *women* who are at ease; Be troubled, you complacent ones; Strip yourselves, make yourselves bare, And gird *sackcloth* on *your* waists.

Jer. 7:8-15 “Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. ⁹ Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, ¹⁰ and *then* come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, “We are delivered to do all these abominations’? ¹¹ Has this house, which is called by My name, become a den of thieves in your eyes? Behold, I, even I, have seen *it*,” says the LORD. ¹² “But go now to My place which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it because of the wickedness of My people Israel. ¹³ And now, because you have done all these works,” says the LORD, “and I spoke to you, rising up early and speaking, but you did not hear, and I called you, but you did not answer, ¹⁴ therefore I will do to the house which is called by My name, in which you trust, and to this place which I gave to you and your fathers, as I have done to Shiloh. ¹⁵ And I will cast you out of My sight, as I have cast out all your brethren—the whole posterity of Ephraim.

Amos 4:1 Hear this word, you cows of Bashan, who *are* on the mountain of Samaria, Who oppress the poor, Who crush the needy, Who say to your husbands, “Bring *wine*, let us drink!”

Amos 6:1 Woe to you *who are* at ease in Zion, And trust in Mount Samaria, Notable persons in the chief nation, To whom the house of Israel comes!

6. Constantly challenge God’s people. Prophets confront the people of God with their lack of spiritual commitment and maturity. They demand full dedication and faithfulness to God. No half-hearted commitments allowed with true prophets.

1Kings 18:21 And Elijah came to all the people, and said, “How long will you falter between two opinions? If the LORD *is* God, follow Him; but if Baal, follow him.” But the people answered him not a word.

Jer. 3:12-14 Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say: “Return, backsliding Israel,’ says the LORD; “I will not cause My anger to fall on you. For I *am* merciful,’ says the LORD; ‘I will not remain angry forever. ¹³ Only acknowledge your iniquity, That you have transgressed against the LORD your God, And have scattered your charms To alien deities under every green tree, And you have not obeyed My voice,’ says the LORD. ¹⁴ “Return, O backsliding children,” says the LORD; “for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.

Jer. 7:23 But this is what I commanded them, saying, “Obey My voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be My people. And walk in all the ways that I have commanded you, that it may be well with you.’

Ezek. 16:1-2 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, cause Jerusalem to know her abominations...

7. Possess a vision for the future. God gives messages to prophets with predictions of coming destruction and also those with a vision of hope and restoration. The messianic prophecies stand out in a most dynamic way in this regard.

Ezek. 14:12-21 The word of the LORD came again to me, saying: ¹³ “Son of man, when a land sins against Me by persistent unfaithfulness, I will stretch out My hand against it; I will cut off its supply of bread, send famine on it, and cut off man and beast from it. ¹⁴ Even *if* these three men, Noah, Daniel, and Job, were in it, they would deliver *only* themselves by their righteousness,” says the Lord GOD. ¹⁵ “If I cause wild beasts to pass through the land, and they empty it, and make it so desolate that no man may pass through because of the beasts, ¹⁶ *even though* these three men *were* in it, as I live,” says the Lord GOD, “they would deliver neither sons nor daughters; only they would be delivered, and the land would be desolate. ¹⁷ “Or *if* I bring a sword on that land, and say, ‘Sword, go through the land,’ and I cut off man and beast from it, ¹⁸ *even though* these three men *were* in it, as I live,” says the Lord GOD, “they would deliver neither sons nor

daughters, but only they themselves would be delivered. ¹⁹ “Or if I send a pestilence into that land and pour out My fury on it in blood, and cut off from it man and beast, ²⁰ even *though* Noah, Daniel, and Job were in it, as I live,” says the Lord GOD, “they would deliver neither son nor daughter; they would deliver *only* themselves by their righteousness.” ²¹ For thus says the Lord GOD: “How much more it shall be when I send My four severe judgments on Jerusalem—the sword and famine and wild beasts and pestilence—to cut off man and beast from it?”

Amos 5:16-20 Therefore the LORD God of hosts, the Lord, says this: “*There shall be* wailing in all streets, And they shall say in all the highways, ‘Alas! Alas!’ They shall call the farmer to mourning, And skillful lamenters to wailing. ¹⁷ In all vineyards *there shall be* wailing, For I will pass through you,” Says the LORD. ¹⁸ Woe to you who desire the day of the LORD! For what good *is* the day of the LORD to you? It *will be* darkness, and not light. ¹⁹ It *will be* as though a man fled from a lion, And a bear met him! Or as *though* he went into the house, Leaned his hand on the wall, And a serpent bit him! ²⁰ *Is not* the day of the LORD darkness, and not light? *Is it not* very dark, with no brightness in it?”

Isa. 65:17-19 “For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind. ¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy. ¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.

8. Often persecuted. Prophets experience rejection and persecution from ungodly leaders and false prophets. This appears to be a common pattern.

Jer. 15:15 O LORD, You know; Remember me and visit me, And take vengeance for me on my persecutors. In Your enduring patience, do not take me away. Know that for Your sake I have suffered rebuke.

Amos 5:10 They hate the one who rebukes in the gate, And they abhor the one who speaks uprightly.

Matt. 5:12 Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matt. 23:29-36 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous, ³⁰ and say, “If we had lived in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets.’ ³¹ “Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers’ *guilt*. ³³ Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? ³⁴ Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, ³⁵ that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶ Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.

Acts 7:51-53 “*You* stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers *did*, so *do* you. ⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, ⁵³ who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept *it*.”

The above characteristics of prophets serve to give this generation some basic insight into what prophets and prophecy is all about from God’s perspective. This also helps us to see its foundational development by the hand of God while exposing some of the issues facing the operation of prophets and prophecy today. Although we will get into those things later, it is important to lay this foundation first because the New Testament overwhelmingly confirms all that the prophets have spoken.

Prophetic Expansion

The previous sections of our study have provided us with a framework to understand the heavenly origin and shared characteristics of prophets. One of the most profound aspects in the development and operation of prophets and prophecy in the Bible is the way God expanded prophesying to all believers. This development was not an afterthought but part of God's intentional plan. The Old Testament predicts and anticipates this prophetic expansion in Christ and lays the foundation for it. Moses was a great prophet. The Bible says there was none like him:

- Deut. 34:10-12 But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, ¹¹ in all the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants, and in all his land, ¹² and by all that mighty power and all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.

Moses, however, pointed Israel to One who would be even greater. This was so important that Moses repeats the prophecy of the New Prophet who was to come.

- Deut. 18:15 “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your midst, from your brethren. Him you shall hear.
- Deut. 18:18 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.

Who was this New Prophet? The Early Church clearly saw Jesus Christ as the One spoken of by Moses.

- Acts 3:22 For Moses truly said to the fathers, “The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you. ²³ And it shall be that every soul who will not hear that Prophet shall be utterly destroyed from among the people.’
- Acts 7:37 “This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, ‘The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear.’ (See Deut. 18:15, 18)

Jesus is not only both Lord and Christ, and the High Priest of the new priesthood, He is the New Prophet spoken of by Moses. This means Jesus is the source for the prophetic expansion under the New Covenant.

Moses was overburdened on a number of occasions, but one in particular applies to this new prophetic expansion. It's when the people of God despised the manna, complained and cried out for meat, and “*yielded to intense craving*” (Num. 11:1-10). Moses is in despair even of his life, “*I am not able to bear all these people alone, because the burden is too heavy for me. If you treat me like this, please kill me here and now!*” (Num. 11:11-15). This is how the Lord handled the problem.

- God instructs Moses to gather 70 elders and bring them before Him (11:16).
- God promises to place the same Spirit upon them to bear the burden of the people with him (11:17).
- God instructs Moses to consecrate the people and that He will feed them meat tomorrow (11:18-20).
- Moses questions how this will happen among so many people and the Lord responds, “*Has the Lord's arm been shortened?*” (11:21-23).
- Moses obeys the Lord's instructions and God places the same Spirit upon the 70 elders, “*and it happened, when the Spirit rested upon them, that they prophesied, although they never did again.*” (11:24-25).

- The Spirit also comes upon Eldad and Medad, two elders who remained in the camp, and they also prophesy. (11:26).
- A young man reports this to Moses. Joshua requests Moses to forbid them. (11:27-28).
- Moses responds, **“Are you zealous for my sake? Oh, that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!”** (11:29).

The above summary reveals that God never intended those He calls to work alone. However, this account also serves as a forerunner to what God would do regarding the expansion of prophetic ministry in the New Covenant and the Early Church. Moses reflected the will of God in his response to Joshua’s passionate request to forbid them. What is the church’s response today to the same request?

How can I know for certain that this prophetic expansion was intended by God all along? You can be certain because of what God revealed to Peter and the Early Church on the Day of Pentecost. How did they explain what happened on that Day?

- **Acts 2:16-18** But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ¹⁷ “And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. ¹⁸ And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.
- **Joel 2:28-29** “And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. ²⁹ And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

Note the expanded application of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the effect upon believers. Matthew Henry explains this all-inclusive application in his famous commentary:

“The extent of this blessing, in respect of the persons on whom it shall be bestowed. The Spirit shall be *poured out upon all flesh*, not as hitherto upon Jews only, but upon Gentiles also; for in Christ there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, Rom. x. 11, 12. Hitherto divine revelation was confined to the seed of Abraham, none but those of the land of Israel had the Spirit of prophecy; but, in the last days, *all flesh shall see the glory of God* (Isa. xl. 5) and shall come to *worship before him*, Isa. lxvi. 23. The Jews understand it of all flesh in the land of Israel, and Peter himself did not fully understand it as speaking of the Gentiles till he saw it accomplished in the descent of the Holy Ghost upon Cornelius and his friends, who were Gentiles (Acts x. 44, 45), which was but a continuation of the same gift which was bestowed on the day of Pentecost. The Spirit shall be poured out *upon all flesh*, that is, upon all those whose hearts are made hearts of flesh, soft and tender, and so prepared to receive the impressions and influences of the Holy Ghost. *Upon all flesh*, that is, upon some of all sorts of men; the gifts of the Spirit shall not be so sparing, or so much confined, as they have been, but shall be more general and diffusive of themselves. (1.) The Spirit shall be poured out upon some of each sex. Not *your sons* only, but *your daughters*, shall prophesy; we read of four sisters in one family that were prophetesses, Acts xxi. 9. Not the parents only, but the children, shall be filled with the Spirit, which intimates the continuance of this gift for some ages successively in the church. (2.) Upon some of each age: “*Your old men*, who are past their vigour and whose spirits begin to decay, *your young men*, who have yet but little acquaintance with and experience of divine things, shall yet *dream dreams* and *see visions*;” God will reveal himself by dreams and visions both to the young and old. (3.) Upon those of the meanest rank and condition, even *upon the servants and the handmaids*. The Jewish doctors say, *Prophecy does not reside on any* but such as are *wise, valiant, and rich*, not upon the soul of a *poor man*, or a man *in sorrow*. But in Christ Jesus there is *neither bond nor free*, Gal. iii. 28. There were many that *were called being servants* (1 Cor. vii. 21), but that was no obstruction to their receiving the Holy Ghost. (4.) The effect of this blessing: *They shall prophesy*; they shall receive new discoveries of divine things, and that not for their own use only, but for the benefit of the church. They shall interpret scripture, and speak of things secret, distant, and future, which by the utmost sagacities of reason, and their natural powers, they could not have any insight into nor foresight of. By these extraordinary gifts the Christian church was first founded and set up, and the scriptures were written,

and the ministry settled, by which, with the ordinary operations and influences of the Spirit, it was to be afterwards maintained and kept up.”⁵

One of the most notable things about the outpouring of the Spirit upon all flesh and its expanded prophetic effect is its continuation for each new generation.

- **Isaiah 44:3-4** For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring; They will spring up among the grass Like willows by the watercourses.’

Just how thirsty are the leaders and believers of this generation and those that follow? The expanded prophetic ministry and the display of the gifts of the Spirit in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit will require a much higher level of understanding in the new generation church. It remains to be seen how young leaders today will respond to Moses’ declaration: **“Oh, that all the LORD’s people were prophets and that the LORD would put His Spirit upon them!”** (Num. 11:29).

Who Can Prophecy?

The prophetic expansion established by God and generated by the Holy Spirit encompasses all believers in Christ. And yet, this generation continues to have issues with who can prophesy. For example, many pastors have restricted prophesying by requiring preapproval of the prophecy before it is released in the church. This is like putting a sign on the door saying, *“Prophecy by prior approval only.”* The unintended result is a prophetic cessation all together. Some churches forbid women to prophesy. Others accept all prophesying under the banner of freedom in the Spirit without any weighing of prophecy at all. All these approaches to prophecy originate from one primary issue: *Who can Prophecy?* So, what does the Bible say about this?

The connection of prophecy with the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is firmly established in the Bible and the Early Church. Therefore, let us examine what took place and was displayed after believers experienced the Holy Spirit in this way. It has to do with the Holy Spirit being poured out upon all flesh and the *new tongues* that followed. Remember, Jesus prophesied this in the signs that would follow those who believe saying, **“In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues”** (Mark 16:17). You may find it surprising to see what they displayed and what others heard in the context of these *new tongues*.

- **Acts 2:11** ...we hear them speaking in our own tongues the wonderful works of God.
- **Acts 10:46** For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God.
- **Acts 19:6** And when Paul had laid hands upon them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

The Holy Spirit at Pentecost had believers declaring and reciting the greatness of God and His mighty deeds in languages they had never learned. These were 120 men and women. The prophetic surrounds the entire experience. The household of Cornelius is another fascinating example. We learn that many had come together to hear the Word. These were Gentiles so the Holy Spirit broke through the cultural barrier between Jew and Gentile. How did this take place? Both Peter and Cornelius experienced visions with divine instructions that

⁵ Accordance Bible Software (2019) Oaktree Software, INC: *Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Matthew Henry, Joel 2:28-32 paragraph 26742.

were prophetic. We will dive into visions and dreams in the next chapter, however, the important thing here is to understand that what was about to occur had already been spoken of by the prophets and Jesus Himself. Now Gentiles are experiencing Pentecost with new tongues that declare and show how great God is. Believers in Ephesus also experienced Pentecost in much the same way. The Bible says *they spoke in tongues and prophesied*. In other words, these believers began speaking for God under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. This in itself is prophetic and a fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel where the Holy Spirit would be poured out upon all flesh. This means ordinary believers, even new converts, can and do prophesy according to the Bible when the Spirit comes upon them. Spiritual maturity is important, but it is not a requirement to prophesy in the manner we see connected with the baptism of the Holy Spirit. On the Day of Pentecost 120 men and women prophetically declared and recited the awesome works of God. At the residence of Cornelius where many were gathered, the Gentiles prophetically extolled the greatness of God. At Ephesus, 12 disciples prophetically spoke about God and future events. This was all the Holy Spirit's doing. The prophetic has been extended by the Holy Spirit to all believers. All believers can exercise the prophetic under His inspiration, but many do not have the prophetic understanding of the Bible. Again, this is why a prophetic reset aligned with Scripture is needed today.

The issue surrounding who can prophesy has also caused conflict in the area of women in ministry. But what does the Bible say? There are a number of direct references to women who were prophets.

- Ex. 15:20 Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances.
- Judg. 4:4 Now Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, was judging Israel at that time.
- 2Kings 22:14 So Hilkiah the priest, Ahikam, Achbor, Shaphan, and Asaiah went to Huldah the prophetess, the wife of Shallum the son of Tikvah, the son of Harhas, keeper of the wardrobe. (She dwelt in Jerusalem in the Second Quarter.) And they spoke with her. (Also, 2Chr. 34:22).
- Is. 8:3 Then I went to the prophetess, and she conceived and bore a son. Then the LORD said to me, "Call his name Maher-Shalal-Hash-Baz;
- Luke 2:36 Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;

There are also two references to women who are false prophets in the Bible. One was Noadiah who was hired with other prophets to minister fear to Nehemiah. Of course, the other is the notorious Jezebel.

- Neh. 6:14 My God, remember Tobiah and Sanballat, according to these their works, and the prophetess Noadiah and the rest of the prophets who would have made me afraid.
- Rev. 2:20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

In addition, we learn about Paul and his companions coming to Caesarea on his way to Jerusalem. The Bible says they stayed many days in the home of Philip, the Evangelist.

- Acts 21:8-11 On the next *day* we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was *one* of the seven, and stayed with him. ⁹ Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. ¹⁰ And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came

down from Judea. ¹¹ When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his *own* hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.' "

Of course, we are all familiar with the prophet Agabus and his significant role in the Early Church. But the Holy Spirit also determined it necessary to make special mention of Philip's four daughters within the same prophetic context. Why does God want us to know that they prophesied? Could it be He was addressing in His omniscient all-knowing nature the very issue we are discussing? God's Word is consistent. It is all inclusive when it comes to prophesying. Women, men, sons, daughters, young, and old are included. The Bible says, *they shall prophesy* (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:16-21).

CHAPTER 2: PROPHETIC VISIONS AND DREAMS

Introduction to Prophetic Visions and Dreams

Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost. As a result, he boldly stood up with the eleven and lifted up his voice in the power of the Holy Spirit addressing thousands of astonished people from many nations.

- Acts 2:14-18 (Joel 2:28-29) But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, “Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words. For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams. And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.’”

All of this took place at 9:00 AM in the morning. God gets an early start! It is a clear sign that God means business. He’s not messing around! The Bible declares we are currently living in the last days. In fact, it is the last hour according to God’s word (1 John 2:18). Indeed, God is pouring out His Spirit upon all flesh in these last days. He began on the day of Pentecost with the 120 and has not stopped since. This indicates an obvious increase in visions and dreams from God.

Visions and dreams are a common means of divine communication.⁶ Typically, we think exclusively of the Old Testament prophets regarding this topic, but the outpouring of the Holy Spirit reveals a multiplication of this important means of divine communication and revelation in the last days. Visions and dreams are an already established means of God-ordained communication.

- Hosea 12:10 I have also spoken by the prophets, And have multiplied visions; I have given symbols through the witness of the prophets.
- Num. 12:6 Then He said, “Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the Lord, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream.

Two words of caution are necessary before exploring this topic any further. The first is that God speaks to us through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

- Heb. 1:1-4 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

This is nonnegotiable. You must be exclusive on this point. No vision and no dream that is from God will ever even slightly diminish the Sonship and Lordship of Jesus Christ or the role

⁶ Note: The English word *vision* or *visions* occurs 86 times in the Old Testament (KJV) and 17 times in the New Testament. The word *dream* or *dreams* occurs 87 times in the Old Testament and 8 times in the New. The books of Daniel (32 times) and Ezekiel (18 times) have the most occurrences.

of the Holy Spirit in prophecy. I knew an elderly widow who was a strong and mature intercessor. She once told me she saw a vision of angels descending in bright apparel, but when she challenged them with the blood of Jesus Christ, these same angels suddenly turned ugly and swiftly departed (2 Cor. 11:14-15). She concluded that the vision she saw was not from God. You must be “sold out” to Jesus Christ to challenge visions and dreams. Everything goes through Jesus and His word. Don’t ever forget this! The Son speaks the Word, and the Son is the Word. And the Holy Spirit does the same. This is why everything must be filtered through the Word of God and the Spirit of God. It is the Word and the Spirit! The Word and the Spirit! The Word and the Spirit!

The second word of caution is to avoid getting prideful over receiving visions and dreams from God. Do not boast in your visions and dreams and do not use them to draw attention to yourself. The Apostle Paul required unexpected assistance in this matter.

- 2Cor. 12:1-7 It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord: I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago—whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven. And I know such a man—whether in the body or out of the body I do not know, God knows—how he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such a one I will boast; yet of myself I will not boast, except in my infirmities. For though I might desire to boast, I will not be a fool; for I will speak the truth. But I refrain, lest anyone should think of me above what he sees me to be or hears from me. And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure.

Remember, pride is the primary root of all strife in the church.

- Prov. 28:25 He who is of a proud heart stirs up strife, But he who trusts in the LORD will be prospered.

Believers must continually battle against their own pride. An abundance of dreams and visions should not be used to prop a leader up in the eyes of the people. Do not ignore this word of caution! Why is it so important to keep all this in mind?

- Prov. 29:18 Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.

This generation needs the direction of God when it comes to visions and dreams. Therefore, we must consult God’s word in all things.

Prophetic and Non-Prophetic Visions and Dreams

The Old and New Testaments are filled with accounts of God speaking through visions and dreams. Almost all of these accounts are in the category of *prophetic visions and dreams*. A prophetic vision is a vision of divine revelation by which divine messages are communicated to fulfill His purposes. God’s people perish without such prophetic visions and dreams that release spiritual revelation and heavenly counsel. For the sake of this study, we will classify those visions and dreams that are ordinary in nature, those claimed by false prophets and teachers, and those ungodly ones of a sensual nature as *non-prophetic visions and dreams*. With this in mind, we are now ready to examine the meaning of visions and dreams in the Bible.

1. **Visions in the OT** - *chazon* (2377) This is the primary Hebrew word for vision in the Old Testament. It is found mostly in the prophetic books. Almost always it refers to a divine

message or revelation, particularly that which comes through sight or what is sometimes referred to as an *open vision*.⁷

Name	Nature of Vision	Reference
Abraham	Promise & Blessing	Genesis 15:1-6
Jacob	Direction	Genesis 46:1-7
Balaam	Blessing of Israel	Numbers 24:1-25
Samuel	Future Judgment	1 Samuel 3:1-21
Nathan	Future Kingdom	2 Samuel 7:1-17
Isaiah	Entire written message is called a vision	Isaiah 1:1
Ezekiel	Entire written message is called a vision	Ezekiel 1:1
Obadiah	Entire written message is called a vision	Obadiah 1:1
Nahum	Entire written message is called a vision	Nahum 1:1
Zechariah	8 visions of hope & restoration dated Feb. 15, 519 BC	Zechariah 1:14-17; 1:21; 2:3-5; 3:8-9; 4:6; 5:3; 5:8-9; 6:5-7
Daniel	Interpretation	Daniel 2:14-23
Daniel	Future events	Daniel 7:1-28
Daniel	End Times	Daniel 8:1-7
Daniel	End Times	Daniel 9:20-27
Daniel	End Times	Daniel 10:1-21

2. **Visions in the NT** - Three Greek words characterize visions in the New Testament. *Horama* (3705) refers to that which is seen or is visible. *Horasis* (3706) refers to the act of seeing a vision. *Optasis* (3701) means a coming into view. All point beyond ordinary physical sight to the capacity to see with supernatural sight what God reveals.

Name	Nature of Vision	Reference
Peter, James, & John	The Manifest Glory of God	Matthew 17:1-13
Women	Angels	Luke 24:22-24
Young Men	Future blessing of the Holy Spirit	Acts 2:17

⁷ Note: Some distinguish between a closed or open vision. In a closed vision, God shows the vision to the person in their "mind's eye." The person may be dreaming or have their eyes closed. In an open vision, God shows the vision to the person as if it were happening right in front of the person. The person is conscious and has their eyes opened.

Ananias & Saul	Future Plans	Acts 9:10-19
Cornelius	Direction, Plan & Purpose of God	Acts 10:1-8
Peter	Direction, Plan & Purpose of God	Acts 10:9-48
Paul	Direction for Ministry	Acts 16:6-10
Paul	Confidence	Acts 18:9-10
Paul	Calling & Purpose of Ministry	Acts 26:12-19
John	End Times	Revelation 9:17

3. **Dreams in the OT** - *Chalom* (2472) and *chalam* (2492) are the Hebrew words used primarily in the context of prophetic dreams. The dream, therefore, is a means of revelation.

Name	Nature of Vision	Reference
Abimelech	Warning	Genesis 20:1-7
Jacob	Promise	Genesis 28:10-22
Jacob	Justice & Direction	Genesis 31:1-20
Laban	Warning	Genesis 31:24
Joseph	Future Plans	Genesis 37:1-11
Pharaoh's Butler & Baker	Restoration & Judgment	Genesis 40:1-23
Pharaoh	Future Warning	Genesis 41:1-36
Gideon	Confidence & Strength	Judges 7:9-18
Solomon	Wisdom & Prosperity	1 Kings 3:4-15
Nebuchadnezzar	Warning	Daniel 2:1-45
Daniel	Future	Daniel 7:1-28

4. **Dreams in the NT** - The Greek word *onar* (3677) defines a dream as a vision in sleep in distinction from a waking vision. *Enupnion* (1798) literally means what appears in sleep (en = in, *hupnos* = sleep).

Name	Nature of Vision	Reference
Joseph	Direction	Matthew 1:18-25
Three Wisemen	Warning	Matthew 2:1-12
Joseph	Warning	Matthew 2:13-15

Joseph	Direction	Matthew 2:19-23
Pilate's Wife	Warning	Matthew 27:19
Old Men	Promise of seeing visions	Acts 2:17

Understanding Prophetic Visions and Dreams

The understanding of visions and dreams rests with God and God alone. This was true for both Joseph and Daniel. It serves as the pattern for everyone. The baker and the butler were both sad because there was seemingly no one to interpret their dreams. Look at what Joseph says to them.

- Gen 40:8 And they said to him, “We each have had a dream, and there is no interpreter of it.” So Joseph said to them, “Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell them to me, please.”

We could pose the same rhetorical question to young leaders today. *Do not interpretations belong to God?* Notice how Joseph makes known that the understanding and interpretation of visions and dreams is with God before even asking these fellow prisoners to tell him their dreams. Joseph reinforces this fundamental truth two years later with Pharaoh’s dream. He said when called upon to bring understanding that *it is not in me; God will give Pharaoh an answer* (Gen. 41:16). The importance of understanding and interpreting visions and dreams is revealed as Joseph interprets.

- Gen. 41:25 Then Joseph said to Pharaoh, “The dreams of Pharaoh *are* one; God has shown Pharaoh what He *is* about to do:
- Gen. 41:28 This *is* the thing which I have spoken to Pharaoh. God has shown Pharaoh what He *is* about to do.
- Gen. 41:32 And the dream was repeated to Pharaoh twice because the thing *is* established by God, and God will shortly bring it to pass.

The repetitive nature of the above statements in the context of the interpretation of Pharaoh’s dream places God and what He is about to do at the center. Pharaoh was not merely impressed with Joseph’s wisdom and ability to interpret his dream. Remember, he had first called for all the wise men and magicians of Egypt. What was it about Joseph? It was his relationship with God because Pharaoh exclaimed to all *can we find such a one as this, a man in whom is the Spirit of God?* (Gen. 41:38). How do unbelievers respond to prophetic visions and dreams? I do not hear any response like that of Pharaoh’s today.

The Bible also singles out Daniel, one of the four Hebrew teenagers taken into Babylonian captivity, in the area of understanding visions and dreams.

- Daniel 1:17 As for these four young men, God gave them knowledge and skill in all literature and wisdom; and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams.

Daniel and his companions determined to hold fast to their faith in Christ. They vowed not to defile themselves or compromise their faith in the midst of the occult world of Babylon. God honored their commitment, and they were found ten times better in wisdom and understanding than all the magicians and astrologers of Babylon (Dan. 1:20). You could say that the occult forces were no match for the Spirit of God upon these young men. Although, these same occult forces are at work today, they remain no match for the Spirit of God. There

came a time when King Nebuchadnezzar had dreams that greatly troubled him. In fact, the Bible says he could not sleep (Dan. 2:1). Like we saw with Joseph and Pharaoh, the king calls for the magicians, astrologers, sorcerers, and Chaldeans to understand and interpret the dreams. However, in this case the king requires them to tell the dream in addition to its interpretation under the penalty of death to them and their homes (Dan. 2:5,12-13). Even these occult warriors recognized such a request was dependent upon an outside source. It was not going to come from man.

- Dan. 2:11 It is a difficult thing that the king requests, and there is no other who can tell it to the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh.

But what did Daniel do upon hearing about the king's urgent decree. He asked King Nebuchadnezzar for time in order to seek God with his companions.

- Dan. 2:16-19 So Daniel went in and asked the king to give him time, that he might tell the king the interpretation. ¹⁷ Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸ that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹⁹ Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

The mystery of the dreams was given to Daniel in a vision during the night. The occult agents surrounding the king sought *the gods* (plural) but Daniel and his companions sought *the God* (singular). Daniel's blessing (praise & adoration) was reserved only for *the God of heaven*.

- Dan. 2:20-23 Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. ²¹ And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. ²² He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what *is* in the darkness, And light dwells with Him. ²³ "I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we asked of You, For You have made known to us the king's demand."

God is firmly established as the central figure in the prophetic vision. Daniel praised the Lord and blessed His name (Dan. 2:20-23). The understanding came from the Lord. Even when Daniel was in the presence of Nebuchadnezzar, he gave all glory to God. Daniel took no credit for himself in the matter of interpretation and understanding of visions and dreams. This is confirmed by Daniel in the presence of King Nebuchadnezzar.

- Dan. 2:27-30 Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king has demanded, the wise *men*, the astrologers, the magicians, and the soothsayers cannot declare to the king. ²⁸ But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these: ²⁹ As for you, O king, thoughts came to your *mind while* on your bed, *about* what would come to pass after this; and He who reveals secrets has made known to you what will be. ³⁰ But as for me, this secret has not been revealed to me because I have more wisdom than anyone living, but for *our* sakes who make known the interpretation to the king, and that you may know the thoughts of your heart.

Take special notice how Daniel deflects his receiving and understanding of the mystery away from himself to God. Some young leaders today struggle to do this. But Daniel declares to the king the existence of one God who alone reveals such mysteries to man. He makes it known that the occult agents cannot declare the secret God has downloaded into the heart of the king. Of course, Daniel tells the king his dreams and delivers their interpretations concluding that *the dream is certain, and its interpretation is sure* (Dan. 2:45). Although Nebuchadnezzar is not converted, he recognizes that Daniel's God is *the God of gods, the Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets* (Dan. 2:47). Daniel is called upon by the king to interpret yet another

dream. In addition, the king's successor, Belshazzar, sends for Daniel to interpret a writing that suddenly appears on the wall during their drinking party (Dan. 5). In each of these situations, there is the absolute recognition that Daniel is able to interpret and understand visions and dreams because *the Spirit of the Holy God is in you* (Daniel 4:18, 5:11, 14). This is a fundamental point in understanding visions and dreams. The Spirit of God must be operating in you.

Seeking God for interpretation and understanding of visions and dreams cannot be overemphasized. For example, the Bible says Daniel earnestly sought God over the visions and dreams he had received.

1. Vision of the Four Beasts and The Ancient of Days. The Aramaic *behaw* (beh-aw') for asking literally means the desire to seek God for the understanding swelled up and gushed over from the inside of Daniel.

Dan. 7:15-16 "I, Daniel, was grieved in my spirit within *my* body, and the visions of my head troubled me. ¹⁶ I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things:

2. Vision of a Ram and a Goat

Dan. 8:15 Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man.

In both the above visions there is strong and intense seeking of God for understanding. At first Daniel had seen Gabriel by vision, however, it appears that Gabriel literally comes to bring understanding to one of the most tremendous prophetic visions of all time, the seventy weeks prophecy.

- Dan. 9:20-27 Now while I was speaking, praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the LORD my God for the holy mountain of my God, ²¹ yes, while I was speaking in prayer, the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, reached me about the time of the evening offering. ²² And he informed *me*, and talked with me, and said, "O Daniel, I have now come forth to give you skill to understand. ²³ At the beginning of your supplications the command went out, and I have come to tell *you*, for you *are* greatly beloved; therefore consider the matter, and understand the vision: ²⁴ "Seventy weeks are determined For your people and for your holy city, To finish the transgression, To make an end of sins, To make reconciliation for iniquity, To bring in everlasting righteousness, To seal up vision and prophecy, And to anoint the Most Holy. ²⁵ "Know therefore and understand, *That* from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, *There shall be* seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. ²⁶ "And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it *shall be* with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations are determined. ²⁷ Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate."

The Bible indicates that Daniel understood the visions he had been given. However, the understanding came through extremely intense prayer and supplication before God.

- Dan. 10:1-3 In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a message was revealed to Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar. The message was true, but the appointed time was long; and he understood the message, and had understanding of the vision. ² In those days I, Daniel, was mourning three full weeks. ³ I ate no pleasant food, no meat or wine came into my mouth, nor did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.

- Dan. 10:12-14 Then he said to me, “Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. ¹³ But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I have come to make you understand what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision *refers to many days yet to come.*”

Understanding visions and dreams is just as important today as during the times of the prophets of the Bible. You never have to force an understanding from your own heart or mind. If God sent Gabriel to make Daniel understand the visions of the end times (Dan. 9:20- 23), then this generation of leaders and believers can be certain He can make them understand too. Here are seven tips for receiving, understanding, and obeying visions and dreams that are from God.

1. Stand your watch: Understanding visions and dreams requires a firm stance in prayer and the Word. Young leaders need to present themselves before the Lord to receive understanding from Him and when necessary, to be corrected. Those who do so place themselves in the strong tower or fortress of God against magicians, astrologers, soothsayers, and occult warriors who seek to distort and misdirect. Standing your watch is a position of leaning forward to hear what God is saying in the vision or dream.

Hab. 2:1 I will stand my watch And set myself on the rampart, And watch to see what He will say to me, And what I will answer when I am corrected.

2. Purpose not to defile yourself with the world: This is a commitment many believers fall short of today, but it is necessary when seeking understanding from God. Those who are polluted by the world must first have the stain removed before seeing and hearing from God in visions and dreams.

Dan. 1:8 But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself.

2Tim. 2:19 Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: “The Lord knows those who are His,” and, “Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.”

3. Write the vision: Plainly writing the vision and dream was a common practice among the prophets. It keeps the vision and dream in its original state and helps others to capture its divine purpose.

Dan. 7:1 In the first year of Belshazzar king of Babylon, Daniel had a dream and visions of his head *while* on his bed. Then he wrote down the dream, telling the main facts.

Hab. 2:2 Then the LORD answered me and said: “Write the vision And make *it* plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it.

Jer. 36:1-4 Now it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, *that* this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying: ² “Take a scroll of a book and write on it all the words that I have spoken to you against Israel, against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spoke to you, from the days of Josiah even to this day. ³ It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the adversities which I purpose to bring upon them, that everyone may turn from his evil way, that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin.” ⁴ Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah; and Baruch wrote on a scroll of a book, at the instruction of Jeremiah, all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him.

4. Seek God for interpretation and understanding: This involves an intensity and urgency before God. Many visions and dreams are being circulated today without an adequate seeking of God.

Dan. 2:17-19 Then Daniel went to his house, and made the decision known to Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, his companions, ¹⁸ that they might seek mercies from the God of heaven concerning this secret, so that Daniel and his companions might not perish with the rest of the wise *men* of Babylon. ¹⁹ Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Dan 7:16 I came near to one of those who stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me and made known to me the interpretation of these things:

Dan. 8:15 Then it happened, when I, Daniel, had seen the vision and was seeking the meaning, that suddenly there stood before me one having the appearance of a man.

5. Praise and thank the Lord for the interpretation and understanding: Visions and dreams from God have been given to warn, direct, and call God's people to positive action. We need to bless and praise God for them and the ability He gives to interpret and understand them.

Dan. 2:19-20 Then the secret was revealed to Daniel in a night vision. So Daniel blessed the God of heaven. ²⁰ Daniel answered and said: "Blessed be the name of God forever and ever, For wisdom and might are His. ²¹ And He changes the times and the seasons; He removes kings and raises up kings; He gives wisdom to the wise And knowledge to those who have understanding. ²² He reveals deep and secret things; He knows what *is* in the darkness, And light dwells with Him. ²³ "I thank You and praise You, O God of my fathers; You have given me wisdom and might, And have now made known to me what we asked of You, For You have made known to us the king's demand."

6. Run with the vision at the appointed time: A vision or dream from God is not something to be taken lightly or played around with. Seek God before you run. Wait for His timing before you run. Its fulfillment will not be delayed when the timing is revealed by God. That is the time to obey and run like a foot soldier with the vision.

Hab. 2:2-3 Then the LORD answered me and said: "Write the vision And make *it* plain on tablets, That he may run who reads it. ³ For the vision *is* yet for an appointed time; But at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; Because it will surely come, It will not tarry.

Acts 26:19-20 "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ²⁰ but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and *then* to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.

7. Give all the glory to God: This is a fundamental principle that applies not only to prophets but everyone. It is also true when it comes to understanding visions and dreams. Always give God the glory and take nothing for yourself.

Dan. 2:28 But there is a God in heaven who reveals secrets, and He has made known to King Nebuchadnezzar what will be in the latter days. Your dream, and the visions of your head upon your bed, were these:

The church today desperately needs more wisdom and understanding when it comes to prophetic visions and dreams. The current exhaustive bombardment and wide distribution of visions and dreams on a daily basis has created a prophetic environment where different streams of intercession strive to identify and engage. This is one of the reasons the church today needs a prophetic reset. We need God to bring understanding to these visions and dreams. For this purpose, we echo Daniel's prophecy that the wise shall understand.

- Dan. 12:10 Many shall be purified, made white, and refined, but the wicked shall do wickedly; and none of the wicked shall understand, but the wise shall understand.

Prophetic Visions and Dreams to Renounce

Not all visions and dreams are from God. If they do not stand the litmus test of God's word, no matter how slight, then they are to be rejected. Do not attach yourself and do not hang on to visions and dreams that are not from God! Do not further them simply because they originate from a veteran prophet or prophetic ministry. In addition, there are those who claim visions from God and that they themselves have been called outside the church to be prophets. These insubordinate men and women are led by their vision into grave error because the Scripture declares God sets every member in the body of Christ.

- 1Cor. 12:18 But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased...Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.
- 1Cor. 12:27-28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

Although prophets can be sent forth by the church, they have been set and appointed in the church. Clearly God sets them in the church for the church. Do not be fooled by those with visions and dreams who isolate themselves from the body of Christ. Stop following those who claim such visions and dreams. They are not from God! For example, a woman who attended a church service shared a vision she had seen during the week. She said she saw a bright light and a chariot from her kitchen window. Jesus was in it in bright white clothing and a two-edged sword coming from His mouth. She wanted to know what I thought. I told her I did not believe the vision was from God because the description did not match the word of God. Jesus comes on a white horse and not on a chariot (Rev. 19:11). I counseled her to make sure details line up with God's word. I could sense she was not comfortable and not receiving what I told her. The reason was obvious when she told me her mother recognized she had "psychic powers" since she was a young child. I advised her to repent and renounce all dealings with "psychic power." She left and I never saw her again. Another example involved a young emerging British American evangelist. At the time, we were members of the same ministry association and I had worked with him before. On this occasion we were ministering at a prophetic conference in Kiev, Ukraine attended by around 900 pastors and believers. The young evangelist presented a message on the Bride and the Bridegroom from John 3:29: ***He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.*** All was going well until he shared a dream he believed God had given him. He prefaced it by telling the audience it may sound a bit strange. He said in the dream Jesus met him on the beach and they walked together like friends. Then he said they were smoking a cigar together as they walked along the beach. You could feel the Holy Spirit depart the conference hall. There was a dead silence. Immediately after the teaching session, our entire team had to question him on this. It was on everyone's mind until I addressed all the questions sharing that the vision was not from God and that no one on the team smoked tobacco or believed Jesus smoked tobacco. The bottom line is that the vision was not from God and should not have been shared to promote a relationship with Jesus. Details matter.

A growing number who are claiming to see Jesus in visions and dreams are in reality ensnared by the devil. Small details matter and everything must line up with God's word. The word of God either confirms it or it does not! The following list reveals visions and dreams that are to be renounced according to the Bible:

1. Those that diminish your love for God:

Deut. 13:1-5 “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.

2. Those whose word does not come to pass:

Deut. 18:20-22 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.

3. False visions that extend the comfort zone:

Jer. 14:11-18 Then the LORD said to me, “Do not pray for this people, for *their* good.¹² When they fast, I will not hear their cry; and when they offer burnt offering and grain offering, I will not accept them. But I will consume them by the sword, by the famine, and by the pestilence.”¹³ Then I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, the prophets say to them, ‘You shall not see the sword, nor shall you have famine, but I will give you assured peace in this place.’ ”¹⁴ And the LORD said to me, “The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart.¹⁵ Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name, whom I did not send, and who say, “Sword and famine shall not be in this land’—‘By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed!¹⁶ And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; they will have no one to bury them—them nor their wives, their sons nor their daughters—for I will pour their wickedness on them.’¹⁷ “Therefore you shall say this word to them: ‘Let my eyes flow with tears night and day, And let them not cease; For the virgin daughter of my people Has been broken with a mighty stroke, with a very severe blow.¹⁸ If I go out to the field, Then behold, those slain with the sword! And if I enter the city, Then behold, those sick from famine! Yes, both prophet and priest go about in a land they do not know.’ ”

4. False dreams of comfort for the wicked:

Jer. 23:16-40 Thus says the LORD of hosts: “Do not listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you. They make you worthless; They speak a vision of their own heart, Not from the mouth of the LORD.¹⁷ They continually say to those who despise Me, “The LORD has said, ‘You shall have peace’ ”; And to everyone who walks according to the dictates of his own heart, they say, “No evil shall come upon you.’ ”¹⁸ For who has stood in the counsel of the LORD, And has perceived and heard His word? Who has marked His word and heard *it*?¹⁹ Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD has gone forth in fury—A violent whirlwind! It will fall violently on the head of the wicked.²⁰ The anger of the LORD will not turn back Until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly.²¹ “I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied.²² But if they had stood in My counsel, And had caused My people to hear My words, Then they would have turned them from their evil way And from the evil of their doings.²³ “Am I a God near at hand,” says the LORD, “And not a God afar off?²⁴ Can anyone hide himself in secret places, So I shall not see him?” says the LORD; “Do I not fill heaven and earth?” says the LORD.²⁵ “I have heard what the prophets have said who prophesy lies in My name, saying, ‘I have dreamed, I have dreamed!’²⁶ How long will *this* be in the heart of the prophets who prophesy lies? Indeed *they are* prophets of the deceit of their own heart,²⁷ who try to make My people

forget My name by their dreams which everyone tells his neighbor, as their fathers forgot My name for Baal. ²⁸ “The prophet who has a dream, let him tell a dream; And he who has My word, let him speak My word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat?” says the LORD. ²⁹ “Is not My word like a fire?” says the LORD, “And like a hammer *that* breaks the rock in pieces?” ³⁰ “Therefore behold, I *am* against the prophets,” says the LORD, “who steal My words every one from his neighbor. ³¹ Behold, I *am* against the prophets,” says the LORD, “who use their tongues and say, ‘He says.’” ³² Behold, I *am* against those who prophesy false dreams,” says the LORD, “and tell them, and cause My people to err by their lies and by their recklessness. Yet I did not send them or command them; therefore they shall not profit this people at all,” says the LORD. ³³ “So when these people or the prophet or the priest ask you, saying, ‘What is the oracle of the LORD?’ you shall then say to them, ‘What oracle?’ I will even forsake you,” says the LORD. ³⁴ “And as for the prophet and the priest and the people who say, ‘The oracle of the LORD!’ I will even punish that man and his house. ³⁵ Thus every one of you shall say to his neighbor, and every one to his brother, ‘What has the LORD answered?’ and, ‘What has the LORD spoken?’” ³⁶ And the oracle of the LORD you shall mention no more. For every man’s word will be his oracle, for you have perverted the words of the living God, the LORD of hosts, our God. ³⁷ Thus you shall say to the prophet, ‘What has the LORD answered you?’ and, ‘What has the LORD spoken?’” ³⁸ But since you say, “The oracle of the LORD!” therefore thus says the LORD: “Because you say this word, ‘The oracle of the LORD!’” and I have sent to you, saying, “Do not say, ‘The oracle of the LORD!’” ³⁹ therefore behold, I, even I, will utterly forget you and forsake you, and the city that I gave you and your fathers, and *will cast you out of My presence.* ⁴⁰ And I will bring an everlasting reproach upon you, and a perpetual shame, which shall not be forgotten.’”

5. Deceptive visions that are soft on sin:

Lam. 2:14 Your prophets have seen for you False and deceptive visions; They have not uncovered your iniquity, To bring back your captives, But have envisioned for you false prophecies and delusions.

6. Dreams that scare and bring horror:

Job 7:14 Then You scare me with dreams And terrify me with visions.

7. Ordinary dreams:

Job 4:12-15 “Now a word was secretly brought to me, And my ear received a whisper of it. ¹³ In disquieting thoughts from the visions of the night, When deep sleep falls on men, ¹⁴ Fear came upon me, and trembling, Which made all my bones shake. ¹⁵ Then a spirit passed before my face; The hair on my body stood up.

8. Vain visions of pride and flattery:

Ezek. 12:23-25 But say to them, “The days are at hand, and the fulfillment of every vision. ²⁴ For no more shall there be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. ²⁵ For I *am* the LORD. I speak, and the word which I speak will come to pass; it will no more be postponed; for in your days, O rebellious house, I will say the word and perform it,” says the Lord GOD.’”

9. Sensual dreams of ungodly lust:

Jude 8 Likewise also these dreamers defile the flesh, reject authority, and speak evil of dignitaries.

The Fulfillment of Prophetic Visions and Dreams

God is ready to fulfill visions and dreams that He has truly given. Their purpose is to communicate revelation into His plans and purposes, as well as to warn and guide us. The day and hour in which we live is not only a day of visitation, but a day of fulfillment. Delays and postponements are too common in the church. Some of these delays are nothing more than excuses for laziness and disobedience. These words from the Prophet Ezekiel clearly address the issue of God’s timing:

- Ezek. 12:21-28 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, “Son of man, what is this proverb that you people have about the land of Israel, which says, ‘The days are prolonged, and every vision fails’? Tell them therefore, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “I will lay this proverb to rest, and they shall no more use it as a proverb in Israel.” But say to them, “The days are at hand, and the fulfillment of every vision. For no more shall there be any false vision or flattering divination within the house of Israel. For I am the LORD. I speak, and the word which I speak will come to pass; it will no more be postponed; for in your days, O rebellious house, I will say the word and perform it,” says the Lord GOD.’” Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, “Son of man, look, the house of Israel is saying, ‘The vision that he sees is for many days from now, and he prophesies of times far off.’ Therefore say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD: “None of My words will be postponed any more, but the word which I speak will be done,” says the Lord GOD.’”

Many say they are concerned about getting ahead of the Spirit, but I believe it is often the church that is lagging behind. It is time for the new generation church to learn how to wait when the Spirit says to wait and how to run when the Spirit says run. God reveals and speaks the word to fulfill it; not prolong it. This is not advocating impatience or presumption, but obedience to the timing of God’s word and Spirit. There is simply too much delay in the church. We shall run with the vision (Hab. 2:4). No longer shall God’s words be prolonged. There is a massive dissemination of prophetic visions and dreams today. Unfortunately, there is more dissemination than obedience and fulfillment. Visions and dreams seem to be more of a fad today. They come and go in such abundance that it is difficult to keep up. I urge the new generation church to take visions and dreams more seriously because God has something to say and something to fulfill. In conclusion, visions and dreams serve a variety of purposes. They can reveal prophetically what will happen in the future. They can teach spiritual truth. They can strengthen believers in times of trial. They can also reveal specific events that would otherwise be unknown or simply reveal God’s majesty in living color. In addition, visions and dreams can confirm punishment for sin, instruct someone to obey and do God’s will, or even provide encouragement and hope. Lastly, they can confirm a blessing or promise or reveal God’s plan for His people. For example, Peter and Cornelius were given visions that revealed God’s purpose to bring salvation in Christ to all people. Remember, Cornelius was a Roman Centurion and a Gentile.

- Acts 10:1-8 There was a certain man in Caesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of what was called the Italian Regiment, ² a devout *man* and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always. ³ About the ninth hour of the day he saw clearly in a vision an angel of God coming in and saying to him, “Cornelius!” ⁴ And when he observed him, he was afraid, and said, “What is it, lord?” So he said to him, “Your prayers and your alms have come up for a memorial before God. ⁵ Now send men to Joppa, and send for Simon whose surname is Peter. ⁶ He is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the sea. He will tell you what you must do.” ⁷ And when the angel who spoke to him had departed, Cornelius called two of his household servants and a devout soldier from among those who waited on him continually. ⁸ So when he had explained all *these* things to them, he sent them to Joppa.

There is no evidence that Cornelius knew Simon Peter. It is remarkable that he receives in the vision such precise information and instructions. Timely obedience to the instructions he received resulted in the promise and blessing of God. Cornelius and those he sent to get Peter understood they had been *divinely instructed* to do so (Acts 10:22). Let us now look at Peter’s vision that occurred on the next day. The following chart presents a good summary of the vision and its meaning and purpose. The plan and purpose of God is remarkably clear with miraculous results.

Peter's Vision	Vision Meaning	Vision Results
<p>Acts 10:9-16 The next day, as they went on their journey and drew near the city, Peter went up on the housetop to pray, about the sixth hour. ¹⁰ Then he became very hungry and wanted to eat; but while they made ready, he fell into a trance ¹¹ and saw heaven opened and an object like a great sheet bound at the four corners, descending to him and let down to the earth. ¹² In it were all kinds of four-footed animals of the earth, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. ¹³ And a voice came to him, "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." ¹⁴ But Peter said, "Not so, Lord! For I have never eaten anything common or unclean." ¹⁵ And a voice <i>spoke</i> to him again the second time, "What God has cleansed you must not call common." ¹⁶ This was done three times. And the object was taken up into heaven again.</p>	<p>Acts 10:34-43 Then Peter opened <i>his</i> mouth and said: "In truth I perceive that God shows no partiality. ³⁵ But in every nation whoever fears Him and works righteousness is accepted by Him. ³⁶ The word which <i>God</i> sent to the children of Israel, preaching peace through Jesus Christ—He is Lord of all— ³⁷ that word you know, which was proclaimed throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee after the baptism which John preached: ³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him. ³⁹ And we are witnesses of all things which He did both in the land of the Jews and in Jerusalem, whom they killed by hanging on a tree. ⁴⁰ Him God raised up on the third day, and showed Him openly, ⁴¹ not to all the people, but to witnesses chosen before by God, <i>even</i> to us who ate and drank with Him after He arose from the dead. ⁴² And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God <i>to be</i> Judge of the living and the dead. ⁴³ To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."</p>	<p>Acts 10:44-48 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. ⁴⁵ And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, ⁴⁷ "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we <i>have</i>?" ⁴⁸ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.</p> <p>Acts 11:15-18 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning. ¹⁶ Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, "John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit." ¹⁷ If therefore God gave them the same gift as <i>He gave</i> us when we believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could withstand God?" ¹⁸ When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, "Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life."</p>

God chose to do all the above through prophetic visions. It is also revealing to note that *Peter wondered within himself what this vision which he had seen meant* (Acts 10:17). This means he was somewhat perplexed and a little doubtful about the vision. Nevertheless, he was seeking what the vision meant. It is a good practice to let a dream or vision settle inside like Peter did until its meaning becomes clearer. This is exactly what happened to Peter. The Holy Spirit gave clear direction to him as he continued to thoughtfully consider the vision.

- **Acts 10:19-20** While Peter thought about the vision, the Spirit said to him, "Behold, three men are seeking you. ²⁰ Arise therefore, go down and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them."

The fact that the prophetic visions of Peter and Cornelius occupy two chapters in the book of Acts indicates the importance of seeking what God is saying in dreams and visions while paying careful attention to details and the timing of God.

I am not a prophet nor the son of a prophet. I seldom awaken at night with a vision from heaven. I have had dreams that I had to rebuke like some of those we discussed in the last section. However, there was a particular experience I had in which the Lord showed me that He still operates today in visions and dreams. A highly regarded prophet with a respected prophetic ministry prophesied on June 24, 1997, in Cleveland, Ohio that I would receive not one, but three visions from the Lord. I would not receive these visions all at once but in succession. There would be a word from each vision and the three visions would reveal three stages. I expectantly returned to my home and carefully placed a writing pad and pen on the

lampstand beside my bed. Some days passed and then one night it happened. Here are the three visions and supportive Scriptures:

Vision One: *I saw a solid wood stand or base of very precious wood. It stood about knee high. There were no marks for it was perfectly structured. It was like it was ancient and new at the same time. As I gazed at it, there was an explosion of light and glory at the top, but the stand or base was not consumed. Suddenly there were small pieces, perfect in size and fan-shaped in formation spreading and spiraling outward and upward in the midst of the light and glory and yet the stand or base was not consumed. These individual pieces were like the stand or base in beauty, but small almost appearing in size like pegs. They were complete and perfect in symmetry. The light and glory propelled them forward at a rapid speed. The stand or base remained strong and solid.* This was the vision I saw and immediately knew God was speaking about His church and His people being built on His solid foundation.

- **Matt. 16:18** And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.
- **Eph. 2:18-22** For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Vision Two: *Suddenly there was in the Spirit the face of a man. His face was round, and he had a mustache. His skin was darker like someone from Pakistan, India, South America or Asia. He did not speak, but the Spirit made me to understand he was an “international man” and God was confirming an “international call” on me and the local church. The vision ended with me wondering whether I would meet the actual man in 1998. The roundness of his face was so distinct and unique that he appeared to represent the nations of the world.* This was the second vision I saw and the Spirit was saying God has raised up the church for global vision. There will be many Macedonian calls for help!

- **Matt. 28:18-20** And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.
- **Acts 1:8** But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”
- **Acts 16:9-10** And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A man of Macedonia stood and pleaded with him, saying, “Come over to Macedonia and help us.” ¹⁰ Now after he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go to Macedonia, concluding that the Lord had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Vision Three: *I saw a face of stone looking directly at me. The face was expressionless, but stern with a stoic determination to prevail. He wore a helmet like that of a Roman centurion or an Egyptian Pharaoh. At first, I could not tell whether his determination was for good or evil. Then like a camera zooming out for a wider angle, I saw a walled fortress of stone solid and strong. The face of stone turned slowly from me to the fortress. As it did, I noticed it wanted to war and prevail over the fortress for evil. I looked and saw the face of stone begin to crack and crumble as it sternly stared at the wall of the fortress. Then I saw three towers above the wall of the fortress, also being part of the wall. The face of stone crumbled into the dust, but the fortified wall with its towers stood as if unmovable and unconquerable from the outside.*

This was the third vision I saw, and the Spirit was encouraging and directing me to continue to lead the church in prayer and spiritual warfare (Matt. 11:12; Eph. 3:10-11).

- **Matt. 11:12 And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.**
- **Eph. 3:10-11 ...to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*, ¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

I prayed over these three visions seeking the Lord for what they meant. He revealed to me the three stages. They were simple and forthright. There is the foundational stage. This is where Jesus builds His church. The second is the “*going*” and “*sending*” stage to the nations in fulfillment of the Great Commission. The third is the warfare stage where the army of God advances His kingdom against all odds. There is much more to what the Spirit is saying to the church in these three visions, but this will serve well as an introduction to the glorious purpose of God for His church in every generation. It is quite amazing today to see just how the Lord is fulfilling what He revealed to me decades ago in these three visions.

CHAPTER 3: PROPHETIC MESSAGING

Prophetic Warnings

Social media and the entire field of media appears to be a dominant and insurmountable force thus far in the 21st Century. Although there are no signs of its controlling influence diminishing at this point, it is important not to lose sight of the important nature and content of the messages God gives to the prophets. No matter what is taking place in the world at any particular time, our God reigns. He has things to say so He gives divine messages through the prophets. This prophetic messaging contains warnings, actions, and hope. In this section we will pay close attention to the warnings that often accompany prophetic messages.

God gives warnings. We see His warnings from Genesis to Revelation. Pay careful attention who is speaking in the following verses. He is the LORD GOD *with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning* (James 1:17) for He says, *I am the LORD, I do not change* (Mal. 3:6)! The God who is warning mankind at creation is the same LORD warning us at the end.

- Gen. 2:15-17 Then the LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to tend and keep it. ¹⁶ And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; ¹⁷ but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."
- Rev. 22:18-19 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and *from* the things which are written in this book.

God always warns His people. Christians and people in general seem to have forgotten this truth today. There is no evidence in the Bible that God destroys without first warning His people. A review of the following verses further confirms this absolute truth about God.

- 2Chr. 36:15 And the LORD God of their fathers sent *warnings* to them by His messengers, rising up early and sending *them*, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place.
- Isa. 58:1 Cry aloud, spare not; Lift up your voice like a trumpet; Tell My people their transgression, And the house of Jacob their sins.
- Ezek. 3:16-21 Now it came to pass at the end of seven days that the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ¹⁷ "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: ¹⁸ When I say to the wicked, 'You shall surely die,' and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. ¹⁹ Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. ²⁰ "Again, when a righteous *man* turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. ²¹ Nevertheless if you warn the righteous *man* that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul."
- Ezek. 33:1-7 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ² "Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them: 'When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their watchman, ³ when he sees the sword coming upon the land, if he blows

the trumpet and warns the people, ⁴ then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his *own* head. ⁵ He heard the sound of the trumpet, but did not take warning; his blood shall be upon himself. But he who takes warning will save his life. ⁶ But if the watchman sees the sword coming and does not blow the trumpet, and the people are not warned, and the sword comes and takes *any* person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at the watchman's hand.⁷ ⁷ "So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me.

- Amos 3:1-7 Hear this word that the LORD has spoken against you, O children of Israel, against the whole family which I brought up from the land of Egypt, saying: ² "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities."³ Can two walk together, unless they are agreed? ⁴ Will a lion roar in the forest, when he has no prey? Will a young lion cry out of his den, if he has caught nothing? ⁵ Will a bird fall into a snare on the earth, where there is no trap for it? Will a snare spring up from the earth, if it has caught nothing at all? ⁶ If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done *it*? ⁷ Surely the Lord GOD does nothing, Unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.
- Acts 20:31 Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears.
- 1Cor. 4:14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn *you*.
- 1Th. 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.
- Col.1:28 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.
- Jer. 6:10 To whom shall I speak and give warning, That they may hear? Indeed their ear *is* uncircumcised, And they cannot give heed. Behold, the word of the LORD is a reproach to them; They have no delight in it.
- Heb. 11:7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

The Bible record is extremely consistent. God provides warnings in the Old Testament and in the New. Did you notice that God not only warns the righteous, but uses His messengers to warn the wicked as well? For example, God sent Jonah to the people of Nineveh. Ezekiel received the divine assignment of a watchman of Israel. Interestingly, the Hebrew *zahar* (zaw-har') has the root meaning *to enlighten by caution, admonish, shine, teach in order to give warning*. The Greek *noutheteo* (noo-thet-eh'-o) means *to put in mind or call attention to in order to caution or reprove, admonish, and warn*. It is clear from God's word that the message of prophets is intended to enlighten both believers and unbelievers. The strategic importance of prophetic warnings must be restored in this generation.

Prophetic Minister, Helen Calder of Enliven Ministries, presents five purposes of prophetic warnings.⁸ It will be good to review these in our attempt to reverse the trending negative reaction to such warnings.

1. *The prophetic warning may be a means of protection to warn of danger and prevent harm (Matt 2:13)*
2. *God may send a prophetic warning to direct or redirect our actions in accordance with His will (Matt 2:12)*

⁸ Helen Calder (2020) [5 Insights About Prophetic Warnings, or "Dark" Prophecies \(enlivenpublishing.com\)](https://enlivenpublishing.com).

3. It may be given to help us prepare for an incident before it happens (Acts 11:27-30)
One stand-out purpose of prophetic warnings to God's people in the New Testament, was so they could protect and prepare.
4. A prophetic warning may be given in order to call us to partner with Him in prayer or spiritual warfare (Acts 20:23, 2 Cor 1:10-11)
5. The purpose of a prophetic warning may be to lead people repentance, and to reconcile them to God (Rev 3:20).
God's passion is always to restore and reconcile!

Do you notice that all the above references are from the New Testament? This is important because many have been misled today that such warnings are limited to the Old Testament. You will see during our study that this is untrue. Sister Calder concludes by saying, *"If a prophetic warning is genuinely from God, there will be a clear, bright spot in the warning! We will be able to see our Father's intention. And the prophetic word will not cause us to shake with fear—rather, it will help us to have a faith that is unshakeable."*⁹ Therefore, prophetic warnings from God often appear negative on the surface. However, a closer examination reveals a good and positive purpose of direction, hope, and restoration. We will examine this in more detail later, but for now let's look at the nature of some of the prophetic warnings in the Bible. What is God warning against?

Warnings in Scripture are very consistent when it comes to what God is warning against. The following chart represents only a partial listing of 15 categories of warnings but display a unified and consistent pattern throughout the Bible.

Warning Category	Old Testament	New Testament
Forsaking God	Jer. 15:6 You have forsaken Me," says the LORD, "You have gone backward. Therefore I will stretch out My hand against you and destroy you; I am weary of relenting!	2Pet. 2:15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; (2Pet. 2:15)
Laziness	Prov. 6:6-11 Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, ⁷ Which, having no captain, Overseer or ruler, ⁸ Provides her supplies in the summer, <i>And</i> gathers her food in the harvest. ⁹ How long will you slumber, O sluggard? When will you rise from your sleep? ¹⁰ A little sleep, a little slumber, A little folding of the hands to sleep— ¹¹ So shall your poverty come on you like a prowler, And your need like an armed man.	Heb. 6:9-12 But, beloved, we are confident of better things concerning you, yes, things that accompany salvation, though we speak in this manner. ¹⁰ For God <i>is</i> not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, <i>in that</i> you have ministered to the saints, and do minister. ¹¹ And we desire that each one of you show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope until the end, ¹² that you do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises.
Sexual Sins: Lust, Adultery, Fornication, Homosexuality...	Lev. 18:22-25 You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It <i>is</i> an abomination. ²³ Nor shall you mate with any animal, to defile yourself with it. Nor shall any woman stand before an animal to mate with it. It <i>is</i> perversion. ²⁴ "Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, which I am casting out before you. ²⁵ For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the	1Cor. 6:9-10 Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

⁹ Helen Calder (2020)

	<p>punishment of its iniquity upon it, and the land vomits out its inhabitants.</p> <p>Prov. 6:32-33 Whoever commits adultery with a woman lacks understanding; He <i>who</i> does so destroys his own soul. ³³ Wounds and dishonor he will get, And his reproach will not be wiped away.</p>	<p>Heb. 13:4 Marriage <i>is</i> honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.</p>
<p>Backsliding, Falling or Drifting Away from God</p>	<p>Isa. 57:17 For the iniquity of his covetousness I was angry and struck him; I hid and was angry, And he went on backsliding in the way of his heart.</p> <p>Jer. 5:6 Therefore a lion from the forest shall slay them, A wolf of the deserts shall destroy them; A leopard will watch over their cities. Everyone who goes out from there shall be torn in pieces, Because their transgressions are many; Their backslidings have increased.</p>	<p>2Th. 2:3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for <i>that Day will not come</i> unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition...</p> <p>Heb. 6:4-6 For <i>it is</i> impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, ⁵ and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, ⁶ if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put <i>Him</i> to an open shame.</p>
<p>Pride & Stubbornness</p>	<p>Isa. 2:12 For the day of the LORD of hosts <i>Shall come</i> upon everything proud and lofty, Upon everything lifted up—And it shall be brought low—</p> <p>Isa. 13:11 “I will punish the world for <i>its</i> evil, And the wicked for their iniquity; I will halt the arrogance of the proud, And will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible.</p> <p>Hos. 7:10 And the pride of Israel testifies to his face, But they do not return to the LORD their God, Nor seek Him for all this.</p>	<p>Acts 7:51-53 “<i>You</i> stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears! You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers <i>did</i>, so <i>do</i> you. ⁵² Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, ⁵³ who have received the law by the direction of angels and have not kept <i>it</i>.”</p> <p>Rom. 2:5 But in accordance with your hardness and your impenitent heart you are treasuring up for yourself wrath in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God</p>
<p>Warnings to Repent</p>	<p>Is. 30:15 For thus says the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel: “In returning and rest you shall be saved; In quietness and confidence shall be your strength.” But you would not.</p> <p>Ezek. 18:30 “Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways,” says the Lord GOD. “Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin.</p>	<p>Luke 13:3 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.</p> <p>Rev. 2:5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. Mark 1:15</p>
<p>Warnings to Watch & Be Ready</p>	<p>Gen. 19:14 So Lot went out and spoke to his sons-in-law, who had married his daughters, and said, “Get up, get out of this place; for the LORD will destroy this city!” But to his sons-in-law he seemed to be joking.</p> <p>Ezek. 33:1-4 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, speak to the children of your people, and say to them: ‘When I bring the sword upon a land, and the people of the land take a man from their territory and make him their watchman, ³ when he sees the sword coming upon</p>	<p>Matt. 24:38-39 For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, ³⁹ and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.</p> <p>Matt. 24:42-44 Watch therefore, for you do not know what hour your Lord is coming. ⁴³ But know this, that if the master of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched and not allowed his house to be broken</p>

	<p>the land, if he blows the trumpet and warns the people, ⁴ then whoever hears the sound of the trumpet and does not take warning, if the sword comes and takes him away, his blood shall be on his <i>own</i> head.</p>	<p>into. ⁴⁴ Therefore you also be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.</p>
Profane & Lying Words	<p>Jer. 7:4 Do not trust in these lying words, saying, “The temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD, the temple of the LORD <i>are</i> these.”</p> <p>Hos. 4:1-3 Hear the word of the LORD, You children of Israel, For the LORD <i>brings</i> a charge against the inhabitants of the land: “There is no truth or mercy Or knowledge of God in the land. ² <i>By</i> swearing and lying, Killing and stealing and committing adultery, They break all restraint, With bloodshed upon bloodshed. ³ Therefore the land will mourn; And everyone who dwells there will waste away With the beasts of the field And the birds of the air; Even the fish of the sea will be taken away.</p>	<p>James 3:5-6 Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! ⁶ And the tongue <i>is</i> a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue is so set among our members that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire by hell.</p> <p>Rev. 22:14-15 Blessed <i>are</i> those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. ¹⁵ But outside <i>are</i> dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.</p>
Ungodliness & Unholiness	<p>Isa. 32:6 For the foolish person will speak foolishness, And his heart will work iniquity: To practice ungodliness, To utter error against the LORD, To keep the hungry unsatisfied, And he will cause the drink of the thirsty to fail.</p> <p>Is. 35:8 A highway shall be there, and a road, And it shall be called the Highway of Holiness. The unclean shall not pass over it, But it <i>shall be</i> for others. Whoever walks the road, although a fool, Shall not go astray.</p>	<p>Rom. 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness..</p> <p>Heb. 12:14 Pursue peace with all <i>people</i>, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:</p>
Stealing	<p>Jer. 7:8-10 “Behold, you trust in lying words that cannot profit. ⁹ Will you steal, murder, commit adultery, swear falsely, burn incense to Baal, and walk after other gods whom you do not know, ¹⁰ and <i>then</i> come and stand before Me in this house which is called by My name, and say, “We are delivered to do all these abominations’?”</p> <p>Jer. 23:30 “Therefore behold, I <i>am</i> against the prophets,” says the LORD, “who steal My words every one from his neighbor.</p>	<p>Luke 18:20 You know the commandments: “<i>Do not commit adultery,</i>” “<i>Do not murder,</i>” “<i>Do not steal,</i>” “<i>Do not bear false witness,</i>” “<i>Honor your father and your mother.</i>””</p> <p>Rom. 2:21 You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself? You who preach that a man should not steal, do you steal?</p> <p>Eph. 4:28 Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with <i>his</i> hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.</p>
Devil & the Occult	<p>Deut. 18:9-11 “When you come into the land which the LORD your God is giving you, you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations. ¹⁰ There shall not be found among you <i>anyone</i> who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, <i>or one</i> who practices witchcraft, <i>or a</i> soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, ¹¹ or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead. ¹² For all who do these things <i>are</i> an abomination to the LORD, and because of these abominations</p>	<p>Gal. 5:20-21 ...idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told <i>you</i> in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.</p> <p>Rev. 9:20-21 But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor</p>

the LORD your God drives them out from before you.

Isa. 8:19-20 And when they say to you, “Seek those who are mediums and wizards, who whisper and mutter,” should not a people seek their God? *Should they seek the dead on behalf of the living?* ²⁰ To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, *it is because there is no light in them.*

Mal. 3:5 And I will come near you for judgment; I will be a swift witness Against sorcerers, Against adulterers, Against perjurers, Against those who exploit wage earners and widows and orphans, And against those who turn away an alien— Because they do not fear Me,” Says the LORD of hosts.

walk. ²¹ And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts.

False Christs, Prophets & Teachers

Jer. 14:14-16 And the LORD said to me, “The prophets prophesy lies in My name. I have not sent them, commanded them, nor spoken to them; they prophesy to you a false vision, divination, a worthless thing, and the deceit of their heart. ¹⁵ Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the prophets who prophesy in My name, whom I did not send, and who say, “Sword and famine shall not be in this land”—‘By sword and famine those prophets shall be consumed! ¹⁶ And the people to whom they prophesy shall be cast out in the streets of Jerusalem because of the famine and the sword; they will have no one to bury them—they nor their wives, their sons nor their daughters—for I will pour their wickedness on them.’

Matt. 24:4-5 And Jesus answered and said to them: “Take heed that no one deceives you. ⁵ For many will come in My name, saying, “I am the Christ,’ and will deceive many.

2Pet. 2:1 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction.

1John 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Drunkenness

Isa. 28:7 But they also have erred through wine, And through intoxicating drink are out of the way; The priest and the prophet have erred through intoxicating drink, They are swallowed up by wine, They are out of the way through intoxicating drink; They err in vision, they stumble *in* judgment.

Micah 2:11 If a man should walk in a false spirit And speak a lie, *saying*, “I will prophesy to you of wine and drink,’ Even he would be the prattler of this people.

Hab. 2:15 “Woe to him who gives drink to his neighbor, Pressing *him* to your bottle, Even to make *him* drunk, That you may look on his nakedness! ¹⁶ You are filled with shame instead of glory. You also—drink! And be exposed as uncircumcised! The cup of the LORD’S right hand *will be* turned against you, And utter shame will be on your glory.

Luke 12:45-46 But if that servant says in his heart, “My master is delaying his coming,’ and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, ⁴⁶ the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for *him*, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint *him* his portion with the unbelievers.

Gal. 5:19-21 Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, ²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, ²¹ envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told *you* in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Hypocrisy

Isa. 29:13-15 Therefore the Lord said: “Inasmuch as these people draw near with their mouths And honor Me with their lips, But have removed their hearts far from Me, And their fear toward Me is taught by the commandment of men, ¹⁴ Therefore,

Matt. 23:27-28 “Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which indeed appear beautiful outwardly, but inside are full of dead *men’s* bones and all uncleanness. ²⁸ Even so you

	<p>behold, I will again do a marvelous work Among this people, A marvelous work and a wonder; For the wisdom of their wise <i>men</i> shall perish, And the understanding of their prudent <i>men</i> shall be hidden.”¹⁵ Woe to those who seek deep to hide their counsel far from the LORD, And their works are in the dark; They say, “Who sees us?” and, “Who knows us?”</p>	<p>also outwardly appear righteous to men, but inside you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.</p>
Abortion	<p>Deut. 27:25 “Cursed <i>is</i> the one who takes a bribe to slay an innocent person.’ “And all the people shall say, ‘Amen!’</p> <p>Ezek. 16:20-21 “Moreover you took your sons and your daughters, whom you bore to Me, and these you sacrificed to them to be devoured. <i>Were</i> your acts of harlotry a small matter, ²¹ that you have slain My children and offered them up to them by causing them to pass through <i>the fire</i>?</p>	<p>John 8:44 You are of <i>your</i> father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own <i>resources</i>, for he is a liar and the father of it.</p> <p>Acts 7:19 This man dealt treacherously with our people, and oppressed our forefathers, making them expose their babies, so that they might not live.</p>

Of course, the above listing reveals that the most common and consistent prophetic warnings in the Bible are the warnings against sin. Remember, the prophets were given messages in their time that few people wanted to hear. This generation must pay close attention because not much has changed in receiving messages today exposing and warning against sin. Responses like *we all sin* and *who are you to tell me about sin* prove there remains a strong resistance to messages about sin in the 21st century. It is interesting to see how the book of Isaiah begins. It represents the typical prophetic pattern.

- **Is. 1:1-2** The vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. ² Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth! For the LORD has spoken: “I have nourished and brought up children, And they have rebelled against Me;

Isaiah, the most quoted Old Testament prophet in the New Testament, begins his comprehensive message with speaking against the sin of God’s people, Judah, Jerusalem, and the nation.

- **Is. 1:4** Alas, sinful nation, A people laden with iniquity, A brood of evildoers, Children who are corrupters! They have forsaken the LORD, They have provoked to anger The Holy One of Israel, They have turned away backward.

God warns that sin has reached the critical level of Sodom and Gomorrah and destruction is everywhere (Isa. 1:9-10). But then He deals with their assemblies, their worship services saying, ***“I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting.”***

- **Is. 1:13-15** Bring no more futile sacrifices; Incense is an abomination to Me. The New Moons, the Sabbaths, and the calling of assemblies—I cannot endure iniquity and the sacred meeting. ¹⁴ Your New Moons and your appointed feasts My soul hates; They are a trouble to Me, I am weary of bearing *them*. ¹⁵ When you spread out your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; Even though you make many prayers, I will not hear. Your hands are full of blood.

Note how the prophetic warning includes the consequence of not having their prayers heard. Another prophet, Jeremiah, was told by God at one point ***“Do not pray for this people, for their***

good. (Jer. 14:11). I wonder how many prayers are not being heard today because of the rising level of sin in the church, in cities, and in the nations. The warning also includes God's judgment of taking away prosperity from Judah and Jerusalem. This is a very applicable warning for prosperous nations like the United States of America.

- Is. 3:1-9 For behold, the Lord, the LORD of hosts, Takes away from Jerusalem and from Judah The stock and the store, The whole supply of bread and the whole supply of water; ² The mighty man and the man of war, The judge and the prophet, And the diviner and the elder; ³ The captain of fifty and the honorable man, The counselor and the skillful artisan, And the expert enchanter. ⁴ "I will give children to be their princes, And babes shall rule over them. ⁵ The people will be oppressed, Every one by another and every one by his neighbor; The child will be insolent toward the elder, And the base toward the honorable." ⁶ When a man takes hold of his brother In the house of his father, saying, "You have clothing; You be our ruler, And let these ruins be under your power," ⁷ In that day he will protest, saying, "I cannot cure your ills, For in my house is neither food nor clothing; Do not make me a ruler of the people." ⁸ For Jerusalem stumbled, And Judah is fallen, Because their tongue and their doings Are against the LORD, To provoke the eyes of His glory. ⁹ The look on their countenance witnesses against them, And they declare their sin as Sodom; They do not hide it. Woe to their soul! For they have brought evil upon themselves.

You will find similar warnings against sin in all the prophets.¹⁰ The question that lies before us today is this: Why are these warnings so absent from prophetic messages today? And why do we rarely hear calls for repentance from sin? This is why we need a prophetic reset aligned with the word of God.

Prophetic Acts

Prophets sometimes engage in prophetic acts. These symbolic actions are directed by God and serve to illuminate the prophetic messaging. They are like visual aids. We know today that visual aids significantly increase the retention of students. Some of the actions appear strange to us today like Isaiah walking barely clothed for three years and Hosea marrying a harlot, however, the message is quite clear in each symbolic act.

- Is. 20:2-4 at the same time the LORD spoke by Isaiah the son of Amoz, saying, "Go, and remove the sackcloth from your body, and take your sandals off your feet." And he did so, walking naked and barefoot. ³ Then the LORD said, "Just as My servant Isaiah has walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and a wonder against Egypt and Ethiopia, ⁴ so shall the king of Assyria lead away the Egyptians as prisoners and the Ethiopians as captives, young and old, naked and barefoot, with their buttocks uncovered, to the shame of Egypt.
- Hos. 1:2-5 When the LORD began to speak by Hosea, the LORD said to Hosea: "Go, take yourself a wife of harlotry And children of harlotry, For the land has committed great harlotry By departing from the LORD." ³ So he went and took Gomer the daughter of Diblaim, and she conceived and bore him a son. ⁴ Then the LORD said to him: "Call his name Jezreel, For in a little while I will avenge the bloodshed of Jezreel on the house of Jehu, And bring an end to the kingdom of the house of Israel. ⁵ It shall come to pass in that day That I will break the bow of Israel in the Valley of Jezreel."

No matter how strange some of these acts appear, you can see each action is followed by a clear and irrefutable interpretation. Therefore, there is an inseparable connection between the natural act and the prophetic message. I can also see a shift through the action from the natural to the spiritual realm where one can readily see and receive what God is saying

¹⁰ Note: See [10 Warnings in the Bible We Don't Take Seriously Enough \(ibelieve.com\)](#). Also, [7 Cautionary Warnings From the Bible | God's Warning Signs - Beliefnet](#).

through the prophet. A prophetic act does not always accompany prophetic messages, but we should not be surprised when it does. For example, God directed Jeremiah and Ezekiel in a number of prophetic acts. Each of the prophetic acts are followed with an interpretation of what God was saying and going to do.

Prophetic Act	Interpretation
<p>The Linen Sash</p> <p>Jer. 13:1-7 Thus the LORD said to me: “Go and get yourself a linen sash, and put it around your waist, but do not put it in water.”² So I got a sash according to the word of the LORD, and put <i>it</i> around my waist.³ And the word of the LORD came to me the second time, saying,⁴ “Take the sash that you acquired, which <i>is</i> around your waist, and arise, go to the Euphrates, and hide it there in a hole in the rock.”⁵ So I went and hid it by the Euphrates, as the LORD commanded me.⁶ Now it came to pass after many days that the LORD said to me, “Arise, go to the Euphrates, and take from there the sash which I commanded you to hide there.”⁷ Then I went to the Euphrates and dug, and I took the sash from the place where I had hidden it; and there was the sash, ruined. It was profitable for nothing.</p>	<p>Jer. 13:8-11 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying,⁹ “Thus says the LORD: ‘In this manner I will ruin the pride of Judah and the great pride of Jerusalem.¹⁰ This evil people, who refuse to hear My words, who follow the dictates of their hearts, and walk after other gods to serve them and worship them, shall be just like this sash which is profitable for nothing.¹¹ For as the sash clings to the waist of a man, so I have caused the whole house of Israel and the whole house of Judah to cling to Me,’ says the LORD, “that they may become My people, for renown, for praise, and for glory; but they would not hear.’</p>
<p>The Potter & The Clay</p> <p>Jer. 18:1-4 The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying:² “Arise and go down to the potter’s house, and there I will cause you to hear My words.”³ Then I went down to the potter’s house, and there he was, making something at the wheel.⁴ And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter; so he made it again into another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make.</p>	<p>Jer. 18:5-11 Then the word of the LORD came to me, saying:⁶ “O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?” says the LORD. “Look, as the clay <i>is</i> in the potter’s hand, so <i>are</i> you in My hand, O house of Israel!⁷ The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy <i>it</i>,⁸ if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will relent of the disaster that I thought to bring upon it.⁹ And the instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant <i>it</i>,¹⁰ if it does evil in My sight so that it does not obey My voice, then I will relent concerning the good with which I said I would benefit it.¹¹ “Now therefore, speak to the men of Judah and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, saying, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I am fashioning a disaster and devising a plan against you. Return now every one from his evil way, and make your ways and your doings good.’ ”</p>
<p>The Broken Flask</p> <p>Jer. 19:1-3, 10 Thus says the LORD: “Go and get a potter’s earthen flask, and <i>take</i> some of the elders of the people and some of the elders of the priests.² And go out to the Valley of the Son of Hinnom, which <i>is</i> by the entry of the Potsherd Gate; and proclaim there the words that I will tell you,³ and say, “Hear the word of the LORD, O kings of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Behold, I will bring such a catastrophe on this place, that whoever hears of it, his ears will tingle...¹⁰ “Then you shall break the flask in the sight of the men who go with you, and say...</p>	<p>Jer. 19:11-13 and say to them, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Even so I will break this people and this city, as <i>one</i> breaks a potter’s vessel, which cannot be made whole again; and they shall bury <i>them</i> in Tophet till <i>there is</i> no place to bury.¹² Thus I will do to this place,” says the LORD, “and to its inhabitants, and make this city like Tophet.¹³ And the houses of Jerusalem and the houses of the kings of Judah shall be defiled like the place of Tophet, because of all the houses on whose roofs they have burned incense to all the host of heaven, and poured out drink offerings to other gods.” ’ ”</p>
<p>The Two Baskets of Figs</p> <p>Jer. 24:1-3 The LORD showed me, and there were two baskets of figs set before the temple of the LORD, after Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon had carried away captive Jeconiah the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah, and the princes</p>	<p>Jer. 24:4-10 Again the word of the LORD came to me, saying,⁵ “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: ‘Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge those who are carried away captive from Judah, whom I have sent out of this place for <i>their own</i> good, into the land of the Chaldeans.⁶ For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not pull <i>them</i></p>

of Judah with the craftsmen and smiths, from Jerusalem, and had brought them to Babylon. ² One basket *had* very good figs, like the figs *that are* first ripe; and the other basket *had* very bad figs which could not be eaten, they were so bad. ³ Then the LORD said to me, “What do you see, Jeremiah?” And I said, “Figs, the good figs, very good; and the bad, very bad, which cannot be eaten, they are so bad.”

down, and I will plant them and not pluck *them* up. ⁷ Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I *am* the LORD; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart. ⁷ “And as the bad figs which cannot be eaten, they are so bad”—surely thus says the LORD—“so will I give up Zedekiah the king of Judah, his princes, the residue of Jerusalem who remain in this land, and those who dwell in the land of Egypt. ⁹ I will deliver them to trouble into all the kingdoms of the earth, for *their* harm, *to be* a reproach and a byword, a taunt and a curse, in all places where I shall drive them. ¹⁰ And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence among them, till they are consumed from the land that I gave to them and their fathers.’ ”

The Bonds & Yokes

Jer. 27:1-4 In the beginning of the reign of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, this word came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, ² “Thus says the LORD to me: ‘Make for yourselves bonds and yokes, and put them on your neck, ³ and send them to the king of Edom, the king of Moab, the king of the Ammonites, the king of Tyre, and the king of Sidon, by the hand of the messengers who come to Jerusalem to Zedekiah king of Judah. ⁴ And command them to say to their masters, “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel—thus you shall say to your masters:

Jer. 27:5-12 “I have made the earth, the man and the beast that *are* on the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and have given it to whom it seemed proper to Me. ⁶ And now I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, My servant; and the beasts of the field I have also given him to serve him. ⁷ So all nations shall serve him and his son and his son’s son, until the time of his land comes; and then many nations and great kings shall make him serve them. ⁸ And it shall be, *that* the nation and kingdom which will not serve Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, and which will not put its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation I will punish,’ says the LORD, “with the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, until I have consumed them by his hand. ⁹ Therefore do not listen to your prophets, your diviners, your dreamers, your soothsayers, or your sorcerers, who speak to you, saying, “You shall not serve the king of Babylon.” ¹⁰ For they prophesy a lie to you, to remove you far from your land; and I will drive you out, and you will perish. ¹¹ But the nations that bring their necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon and serve him, I will let them remain in their own land,’ says the LORD, “and they shall till it and dwell in it.’ ” ” ¹² I also spoke to Zedekiah king of Judah according to all these words, saying, “Bring your necks under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him and his people, and live!

The Buying of the Field

Jer. 32:6-14 And Jeremiah said, “The word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁷ “Behold, Hanamel the son of Shallum your uncle will come to you, saying, ‘Buy my field which *is* in Anathoth, for the right of redemption *is* yours to buy *it*.’ ” ⁸ Then Hanamel my uncle’s son came to me in the court of the prison according to the word of the LORD, and said to me, “Please buy my field that *is* in Anathoth, which *is* in the country of Benjamin; for the right of inheritance *is* yours, and the redemption yours; buy *it* for yourself.’ Then I knew that this was the word of the LORD. ⁹ So I bought the field from Hanamel, the son of my uncle who *was* in Anathoth, and weighed *out* to him the money—seventeen shekels of silver. ¹⁰ And I signed the deed and sealed *it*, took witnesses, and weighed the money on the scales. ¹¹ So I took the purchase deed, *both* that which was sealed *according* to the law and custom, and that which was open; ¹² and I gave the purchase deed to Baruch the son of Neriah, son of Mahseiah, in the presence of Hanamel my uncle’s son, and in the presence of the witnesses who signed the purchase deed, before all the Jews who sat in the court of the prison. ¹³ “Then I charged Baruch before them, saying, ¹⁴ “Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: ‘Take these deeds, both this purchase deed

Jer. 32:15-19, 42-44 For thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel: “Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land.” ” ¹⁶ “Now when I had delivered the purchase deed to Baruch the son of Neriah, I prayed to the LORD, saying: ¹⁷ “Ah, Lord GOD! Behold, You have made the heavens and the earth by Your great power and outstretched arm. There is nothing too hard for You. ¹⁸ *You* show lovingkindness to thousands, and repay the iniquity of the fathers into the bosom of their children after them—the Great, the Mighty God, whose name *is* the LORD of hosts. ¹⁹ *You are* great in counsel and mighty in work, for your eyes *are* open to all the ways of the sons of men, to give everyone according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings...⁴² “For thus says the LORD: ‘Just as I have brought all this great calamity on this people, so I will bring on them all the good that I have promised them. ⁴³ And fields will be bought in this land of which you say, “*It is* desolate, without man or beast; it has been given into the hand of the Chaldeans.” ⁴⁴ Men will buy fields for money, sign deeds and seal *them*, and take witnesses, in the land of Benjamin, in the places around Jerusalem, in the cities of Judah, in the cities of the mountains, in the cities of the lowland, and in the cities of the South; for I will cause their captives to return,’ says the LORD.”

which is sealed and this deed which is open, and put them in an earthen vessel, that they may last many days.”

Ezekiel: Portrayal of the Siege of Jerusalem

Ezek. 4:1-12 “You also, son of man, take a clay tablet and lay it before you, and portray on it a city, Jerusalem. ² Lay siege against it, build a siege wall against it, and heap up a mound against it; set camps against it also, and place battering rams against it all around. ³ Moreover take for yourself an iron plate, and set it as an iron wall between you and the city. Set your face against it, and it shall be besieged, and you shall lay siege against it. This *will be* a sign to the house of Israel. ⁴ “Lie also on your left side, and lay the iniquity of the house of Israel upon it. *According* to the number of the days that you lie on it, you shall bear their iniquity. ⁵ For I have laid on you the years of their iniquity, according to the number of the days, three hundred and ninety days; so you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Israel. ⁶ And when you have completed them, lie again on your right side; then you shall bear the iniquity of the house of Judah forty days. I have laid on you a day for each year. ⁷ “Therefore you shall set your face toward the siege of Jerusalem; your arm *shall be* uncovered, and you shall prophesy against it. ⁸ And surely I will restrain you so that you cannot turn from one side to another till you have ended the days of your siege. ⁹ “Also take for yourself wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt; put them into one vessel, and make bread of them for yourself. *During* the number of days that you lie on your side, three hundred and ninety days, you shall eat it. ¹⁰ And your food which you eat *shall be* by weight, twenty shekels a day; from time to time you shall eat it. ¹¹ You shall also drink water by measure, one-sixth of a hin; from time to time you shall drink. ¹² And you shall eat it as barley cakes; and bake it using fuel of human waste in their sight.”

The Sharp Sword used as a Barber’s Razor

Ezek. 5:1-4 “And you, son of man, take a sharp sword, take it as a barber’s razor, and pass *it* over your head and your beard; then take scales to weigh and divide the hair. ² You shall burn with fire one-third in the midst of the city, when the days of the siege are finished; then you shall take one-third and strike around *it* with the sword, and one-third you shall scatter in the wind: I will draw out a sword after them. ³ You shall also take a small number of them and bind them in the edge of your *garment*. ⁴ Then take some of them again and throw them into the midst of the fire, and burn them in the fire. From there a fire will go out into all the house of Israel.

Ezek. 4:13-17 Then the LORD said, “So shall the children of Israel eat their defiled bread among the Gentiles, where I will drive them.” ¹⁴ So I said, “Ah, Lord GOD! Indeed I have never defiled myself from my youth till now; I have never eaten what died of itself or was torn by beasts, nor has abominable flesh ever come into my mouth.” ¹⁵ Then He said to me, “See, I am giving you cow dung instead of human waste, and you shall prepare your bread over it.” ¹⁶ Moreover He said to me, “Son of man, surely I will cut off the supply of bread in Jerusalem; they shall eat bread by weight and with anxiety, and shall drink water by measure and with dread, ¹⁷ that they may lack bread and water, and be dismayed with one another, and waste away because of their iniquity.”

Ezek. 5:5-12 “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘This *is* Jerusalem; I have set her in the midst of the nations and the countries all around her. ⁶ She has rebelled against My judgments by doing wickedness more than the nations, and against My statutes more than the countries that *are* all around her; for they have refused My judgments, and they have not walked in My statutes.’ ⁷ Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: “Because you have multiplied *disobedience* more than the nations that *are* all around you, have not walked in My statutes nor kept My judgments, nor even done according to the judgments of the nations that *are* all around you’— ⁸ therefore thus says the Lord GOD: “Indeed I, even I, *am* against you and will execute judgments in your midst in the sight of the nations. ⁹ And I will do among you what I have never done, and the like of which I will never do again, because of all your abominations. ¹⁰ Therefore fathers shall eat *their* sons in your midst, and sons shall eat their fathers; and I will execute judgments among you, and all of you who remain I will scatter to all the winds. ¹¹ “Therefore, *as I live,*’ says the Lord GOD, ‘surely, because you have defiled My sanctuary with all your detestable things and with all your abominations, therefore I will also diminish *you*; My eye will not spare, nor will I have any pity. ¹² One-third of you shall die of the pestilence, and be consumed with famine in your midst; and one-third shall fall by the sword all around you; and I will scatter another third to all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them.”

Portrayal of Captivity

Ezek. 12:1-7 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying: ² “Son of man, you dwell in the midst of a rebellious house, which has eyes to see but does not see, and ears to hear but does not hear; for they *are* a rebellious house. ³ “Therefore, son of man, prepare your belongings for captivity, and go into captivity by day in their sight. You shall go from your place into captivity to another place in their sight. It may be that they will consider, though they *are* a rebellious house. ⁴ By day you shall bring out your belongings in their sight, as though going into captivity; and at evening you shall go in their sight, like those who go into captivity. ⁵ Dig through the wall in their sight, and carry your belongings out through it. ⁶ In their sight you shall bear *them* on *your* shoulders and carry *them* out at twilight; you shall cover your face, so that you cannot see the ground, for I have made you a sign to the house of Israel.” ⁷ So I did as I was commanded. I brought out my belongings by day, as though going into captivity, and at evening I dug through the wall with my hand. I brought *them* out at twilight, and I bore *them* on *my* shoulder in their sight.

Sighing with bitterness, crying & wailing, striking the thigh & your hands together

Ezek. 21:6-7 Sigh therefore, son of man, with a breaking heart, and sigh with bitterness before their eyes. ⁷ And it shall be when they say to you, “Why are you sighing?” that you shall answer, ‘Because of the news; when it comes, every heart will melt, all hands will be feeble, every spirit will faint, and all knees will be weak as water. Behold, it is coming and shall be brought to pass,’ says the Lord GOD.”

Ezek. 21:12-14 “Cry and wail, son of man; For it will be against My people, Against all the princes of Israel. Terrors including the sword will be against My people; Therefore strike *your* thigh.¹³ “Because *it is* a testing, And what if *the sword* despises even the scepter? *The scepter* shall be no *more*,” says the Lord GOD. ¹⁴ “You therefore, son of man, prophesy, And strike *your* hands together. The third time let the sword do double *damage*. *It is* the sword *that* slays, The sword that slays the great *men*, That enters their private chambers.

The Road Sign of Two Ways

Ezek. 21:18-23 The word of the LORD came to me again, saying: ¹⁹ “And son of man, appoint for yourself two ways for the sword of the king of Babylon to go; both of them shall go from the same land. Make a sign; put *it* at the head of the road to the city. ²⁰ Appoint a road for the sword to go to Rabbah of the Ammonites, and to Judah, into fortified Jerusalem. ²¹ For the king of Babylon stands at the parting of the road, at the fork of the two roads, to use divination: he shakes the arrows, he consults the images, he looks at the liver. ²² In his right hand is the divination for Jerusalem: to set up battering rams, to call for a slaughter, to lift the voice with shouting, to set battering rams against the gates, to heap up a *siege* mound, and to build a wall.

Ezek. 12:8-14 And in the morning the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ⁹ “Son of man, has not the house of Israel, the rebellious house, said to you, ‘What are you doing?’ ¹⁰ Say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘This burden *concerns* the prince in Jerusalem and all the house of Israel who are among them.’” ¹¹ Say, “I *am* a sign to you. As I have done, so shall it be done to them; they shall be carried away into captivity.’ ¹² And the prince who *is* among them shall bear *his belongings* on *his* shoulder at twilight and go out. They shall dig through the wall to carry *them* out through it. He shall cover his face, so that he cannot see the ground with *his* eyes. ¹³ I will also spread My net over him, and he shall be caught in My snare. I will bring him to Babylon, to the land of the Chaldeans; yet he shall not see it, though he shall die there. ¹⁴ I will scatter to every wind all who *are* around him to help him, and all his troops; and I will draw out the sword after them. ¹⁵ “Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD, when I scatter them among the nations and disperse them throughout the countries. ¹⁶ But I will spare a few of their men from the sword, from famine, and from pestilence, that they may declare all their abominations among the Gentiles wherever they go. Then they shall know that I *am* the LORD.”

Ezek. 21:1-5 And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ² “Son of man, set your face toward Jerusalem, preach against the holy places, and prophesy against the land of Israel; ³ and say to the land of Israel, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I *am* against you, and I will draw My sword out of its sheath and cut off both righteous and wicked from you. ⁴ Because I will cut off both righteous and wicked from you, therefore My sword shall go out of its sheath against all flesh from south to north, ⁵ that all flesh may know that I, the LORD, have drawn My sword out of its sheath; it shall not return anymore.’”

Ezek. 21:15-17 I have set the point of the sword against all their gates, That the heart may melt and many may stumble. Ah! *It is* made bright; *It is* grasped for slaughter: ¹⁶ “Swords at the ready! Thrust right! Set your blade! Thrust left—Wherever your edge is ordered! ¹⁷ “I also will beat My fists together, And I will cause My fury to rest; I, the LORD, have spoken.”

Ezek. 21:24 And it will be to them like a false divination in the eyes of those who have sworn oaths with them; but he will bring their iniquity to remembrance, that they may be taken. ²⁴ “Therefore thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Because you have made your iniquity to be remembered, in that your transgressions are uncovered, so that in all your doings your sins appear—because you have come to remembrance, you shall be taken in hand.

The above prophetic acts provided a vivid and sometimes theatrical presentation of the prophet's message from God. Even the false prophets used prophetic actions to sell their messages. For example, Hananiah removed the yoke on Jeremiah's neck and broke it to support his prophetic message that God would break the yoke of Babylon and return the temple vessels in two years. Of course, it did not come to pass, and he met his doom (Jer:28:1-17). Also, Zedekiah, one of 400 prophets, made iron horns to show King Ahab and King Jehoshaphat that they should go up against Syria and that they would be victorious in battle (1Kgs. 22:1-40). We will discuss false prophets in another chapter of our study; however, it is important to understand that the display of a prophetic act can also be used to lend credibility to messages God has not spoken.

Jesus often spoke in parables which were earthly stories that the people could naturally relate to. The parables provided a visual image of the heavenly, spiritual message within the earthly story. Similarly, prophetic acts by prophets highlight God's message. For example, the New Testament prophet, Agabus, was directed by God to use a prophetic act to prepare Paul for what he would be facing in Jerusalem.

- Acts 21:4-14 And finding disciples, we stayed there seven days. They told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem. ⁵ When we had come to the end of those days, we departed and went on our way; and they all accompanied us, with wives and children, till we were out of the city. And we knelt down on the shore and prayed. ⁶ When we had taken our leave of one another, we boarded the ship, and they returned home. And when we had finished *our* voyage from Tyre, we came to Ptolemais, greeted the brethren, and stayed with them one day. ⁸ On the next *day* we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was *one* of the seven, and stayed with him. ⁹ Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied. ¹⁰ And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹ When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his *own* hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.'" ¹² Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³ Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." ¹⁴ So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

Agabus removed Paul's belt and tied up his own hands and feet. The act clearly indicated what was awaiting Paul at Jerusalem. This was nothing new and surely bore witness in Paul's heart because he had shared this before with the Ephesian elders at Miletus:

- Acts 20:22-24 And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, ²³ except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. ²⁴ But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

The Holy Spirit had repeatedly told him in every city exactly what the prophetic act of Agabus demonstrated. This confirms that prophetic acts are purposeful and occur throughout the Bible.

Prophetic Hope

Prophetic Minister Helen Calder made a profound statement quoted earlier in the context of prophetic warnings. It warrants repeating here. *"If a prophetic warning is genuinely from God, there will be a clear, bright spot in the warning! We will be able to see our Father's intention. And the prophetic word will not cause us to shake with fear—rather, it will help us to*

*have a faith that is unshakeable.*¹¹ I call this bright spot in prophetic messages prophetic hope. The insertion of hope in prophetic messages is a well-established pattern. In fact, this is a primary reason we have the Scriptures today.

- Rom. 15:4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.

What is *written before* definitely includes the writing of the prophets. There are 17 completely prophetic books of prophecy in the Bible (See Appendix 1). In addition, prophetic writings occur throughout the Bible. The Bible says the prophetic writings are for our learning. I believe this generation needs to learn from the prophets. The Apostle Peter alludes to this when speaking of the prophets and the living hope we now have in Christ.

- 1Pet. 1:10-15 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you,¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow.¹² To them it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.¹³ Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest *your* hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;¹⁴ as obedient children, not conforming yourselves to the former lusts, as in your ignorance;¹⁵ but as He who called you *is* holy, you also be holy in all *your* conduct,¹⁶ because it is written, “*Be holy, for I am holy.*”

You cannot capture the prophetic hope in prophecy if you do not inquire and carefully search the prophets and what is prophesied. This literally means conducting an active investigation with the utmost earnestness and diligence. When is the last time you have done such an inquiry into the prophets? Many young leaders lack prophetic hope today because they are not paying close attention to the writings of the prophets in the Bible. Those who are ignorant of the prophetic writings must be careful not to conform their behavior and conduct with *the former lusts*. This remains a dangerous situation facing the church and prophetic messaging in the 21st century.

The prophetic writings in the Bible overflow with prophetic hope. It is impossible in the scope of our study to examine every prophetic message, however, we will highlight just a few to firmly establish how the prophets always include the hope that is in the Lord. For example, in the first chapter of Isaiah, the prophet speaks of how the people have forsaken and rebelled against God. Although the prophet says God cannot endure their iniquity, is troubled, and is weary of them, He directs the people to the hope that is in Him.

- Is. 1:16-20 “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; Put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes. Cease to do evil,¹⁷ Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow.¹⁸ “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are like scarlet, They shall be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They shall be as wool.¹⁹ If you are willing and obedient, You shall eat the good of the land;²⁰ But if you refuse and rebel, You shall be devoured by the sword”; For the mouth of the LORD has spoken.

Just these few verses above demonstrate how prophecy today is presenting an incomplete message. The hope is in the repentance and returning in obedience to the Lord. The removal of such admonitions from prophetic messaging, preaching, and altar calls is counterproductive at the least and displays a false hope contrary to God’s word.

¹¹ Calder (2020) [5 Insights About Prophetic Warnings, or "Dark" Prophecies \(enlivenpublishing.com\)](https://enlivenpublishing.com).

The prophet Jeremiah, like Isaiah, presents a message of true hope for the people of God. This prophet strongly deals with the condition of *backsliding*. The prophetic messaging is saturated with this condition; however, there remains the hope that is in the Lord alone.

- Jer. 3:12-19 Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say: “Return, backsliding Israel,’ says the LORD; “I will not cause My anger to fall on you. For I *am* merciful,’ says the LORD; ‘I will not remain angry forever. ¹³ Only acknowledge your iniquity, That you have transgressed against the LORD your God, And have scattered your charms To alien deities under every green tree, And you have not obeyed My voice,’ says the LORD. ¹⁴ “Return, O backsliding children,” says the LORD; “for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion. ¹⁵ And I will give you shepherds according to My heart, who will feed you with knowledge and understanding. ¹⁶ “Then it shall come to pass, when you are multiplied and increased in the land in those days,” says the LORD, “that they will say no more, ‘The ark of the covenant of the LORD.’ It shall not come to mind, nor shall they remember it, nor shall they visit *it*, nor shall it be made anymore. ¹⁷ “At that time Jerusalem shall be called The Throne of the LORD, and all the nations shall be gathered to it, to the name of the LORD, to Jerusalem. No more shall they follow the dictates of their evil hearts. ¹⁸ “In those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given as an inheritance to your fathers. ¹⁹ “But I said: “How can I put you among the children And give you a pleasant land, A beautiful heritage of the hosts of nations?” “And I said: “You shall call Me, ‘My Father,’ And not turn away from Me.’
- Jer. 3:22-25 “Return, you backsliding children, *And* I will heal your backslidings.” “Indeed we do come to You, For You are the LORD our God. ²³ Truly, in vain *is* salvation hoped for from the hills, *And from* the multitude of mountains; Truly, in the LORD our God *is* the salvation of Israel. ²⁴ For shame has devoured The labor of our fathers from our youth—Their flocks and their herds, Their sons and their daughters. ²⁵ We lie down in our shame, And our reproach covers us. For we have sinned against the LORD our God, We and our fathers, From our youth even to this day, And have not obeyed the voice of the LORD our God.”
- Jer. 4:1-4 “If you will return, O Israel,” says the LORD, “Return to Me; And if you will put away your abominations out of My sight, Then you shall not be moved. ² And you shall swear, “The LORD lives,’ In truth, in judgment, and in righteousness; The nations shall bless themselves in Him, And in Him they shall glory.” ³ For thus says the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: “Break up your fallow ground, And do not sow among thorns. ⁴ Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, And take away the foreskins of your hearts, You men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem, Lest My fury come forth like fire, And burn so that no one can quench *it*, Because of the evil of your doings.”

Notice how Jeremiah repeats the call to return to the Lord within the context of the hope. This generation appears to readily embrace the comforting aspects in the hope of salvation but struggles with the call of repentance from sin as the condition for returning to the LORD.

The prophet Ezekiel, like Isaiah and Jeremiah, presents God’s case against the rebellion, idolatry, and evil abominations of His people. However, the prophetic hope remains in God’s covenant.

- Ezek. 14:1-6 Now some of the elders of Israel came to me and sat before me. ² And the word of the LORD came to me, saying, ³ “Son of man, these men have set up their idols in their hearts, and put before them that which causes them to stumble into iniquity. Should I let Myself be inquired of at all by them? ⁴ “Therefore speak to them, and say to them, “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Everyone of the house of Israel who sets up his idols in his heart, and puts before him what causes him to stumble into iniquity, and then comes to the prophet, I the LORD will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, ⁵ that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols.’” ⁶ “Therefore say to the house of Israel, “Thus says the Lord GOD: ‘Repent, turn away from your idols, and turn your faces away from all your abominations.

- Ezek. 18:30 “Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways,” says the Lord GOD. “Repent, and turn from all your transgressions, so that iniquity will not be your ruin.
- Ezek. 16:60-63 “Nevertheless I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you. ⁶¹ Then you will remember your ways and be ashamed, when you receive your older and your younger sisters; for I will give them to you for daughters, but not because of My covenant with you. ⁶² And I will establish My covenant with you. Then you shall know that I *am* the LORD, ⁶³ that you may remember and be ashamed, and never open your mouth anymore because of your shame, when I provide you an atonement for all you have done,” says the Lord GOD.’ ”

It seems in the above verses that the leaders and people have forgotten who God is. Think of that for a moment in the context of the church today. The point is they will know when God provides the *atonement for all you have done*. Nothing has changed in the situation today except the movement from the messianic hope to the messianic fulfillment through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. This is why it is important to connect all prophetic hope with the admonition to repent and turn to the Lord. The following chart furthers this prophetic pattern in both the Old and New Testament.

Prophet/Apostle	Call to Return/Repent
Hosea	Hos. 6:1-3 Come, and let us return to the LORD; For He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. ² After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight. ³ Let us know, Let us pursue the knowledge of the LORD. His going forth is established as the morning; He will come to us like the rain, Like the latter <i>and</i> former rain to the earth.
Joel	Joel 2:12-13 Now, therefore,” says the LORD, “Turn to Me with all your heart, With fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” ¹³ So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, For He <i>is</i> gracious and merciful, Slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm. Jer. 2:25-29 So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you. ²⁶ You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, And praise the name of the LORD your God, Who has dealt wondrously with you; And My people shall never be put to shame. ²⁷ Then you shall know that I <i>am</i> in the midst of Israel: I <i>am</i> the LORD your God And there is no other. My people shall never be put to shame. ²⁸ “And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions. ²⁹ And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.
Amos	Amos 5:4-5, 14-15 For thus says the LORD to the house of Israel: “Seek Me and live; ⁵ But do not seek Bethel, Nor enter Gilgal, Nor pass over to Beersheba; For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity, And Bethel shall come to nothing. ⁶ Seek the LORD and live, Lest He break out like fire <i>in</i> the house of Joseph, And devour <i>it</i> , With no one to quench <i>it</i> in Bethel—... ¹⁴ Seek good and not evil, That you may live; So the LORD God of hosts will be with you, As you have spoken. ¹⁵ Hate evil, love good; Establish justice in the gate. It may be that the LORD God of hosts Will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.
Zephaniah	Zeph. 2:3 Seek the LORD, all you meek of the earth, Who have upheld His justice. Seek righteousness, seek humility. It may be that you will be hidden In the day of the LORD’S anger.
Zechariah	Zech. 1:1-4 In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the LORD came to Zechariah the son of Berechiah, the son of Iddo the prophet, saying, ² “The LORD has been very angry with your fathers. ³ Therefore say to them, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Return to Me,” says the LORD of hosts, “and I will return to you,” says the LORD of hosts. ⁴ “Do not be like your fathers, to whom the former prophets preached, saying, “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘Turn now from your evil ways and your evil deeds.’ ” But they did not hear nor heed Me,” says the LORD.
Malachi	Mal. 3:6-7 “For I <i>am</i> the LORD, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob. ⁷ Yet from the days of your fathers You have gone away from My ordinances And have not kept <i>them</i> . Return to Me, and I will return to you,” Says the LORD of hosts. “But you said, ‘In what way shall we return?’

John the Baptist	Matt. 3:1-6 In those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, ² and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" ³ For this is he who was spoken of by the prophet Isaiah, saying: " <i>The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the LORD; Make His paths straight.'</i> " ⁴ Now John himself was clothed in camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. ⁵ Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him ⁶ and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins.
Jesus	<p>Matt. 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."</p> <p>Luke 13:3-5 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. ⁴ Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all <i>other</i> men who dwelt in Jerusalem? ⁵ I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."</p> <p>Rev. 2:5 Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.</p> <p>Rev. 2:16 Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.</p> <p>Rev. 2:21 And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. ²² Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.</p> <p>Rev. 3:3 Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you.</p> <p>Rev. 3:19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent.</p>
The Apostles	Mark 6:12 So they went out and preached that <i>people</i> should repent. ¹³ And they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many who were sick, and healed <i>them</i> .
Peter	<p>Acts 2:38-39 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call."</p> <p>Acts 3:19-21 Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, ²⁰ and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, ²¹ whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.</p>
Paul	<p>Acts 17:30 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, ³¹ because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead."</p> <p>Acts 26:19-20 "Therefore, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, ²⁰ but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and <i>then</i> to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.</p>

The above sampling of the connection between prophetic hope and the call to repent and return to the Lord flows throughout the prophets and the entire Bible. The new generation church can ill afford to abandon this spiritual and practical connection. Few are calling out sin and because of this they are not calling for people to repent. Instead, they are inviting people to have a relationship with God that lacks any mention of repentance from sin. The biblical evidence is so overwhelming! It is appalling today to see so much prophetic messaging lacking alignment with God's word. This is why a prophetic reset is needed in the church.

Prophetic Schools

The Bible reveals a plurality of prophets. Many view the prophets as loners and isolated from others. However, the existence of prophetic schools or established groups of prophets has a strong biblical foundation that enhances the prophetic messaging. The first mention of a group of prophets is when Samuel anointed and prophesied over Saul (1Sam. 10:1-8). Samuel told Saul, among other things, he would meet a group of prophets and the Spirit of the Lord would come upon him to prophesy with them. And all happened just as was spoken by the prophet Samuel.

- 1Sam. 10:5-6 After that you shall come to the hill of God where the Philistine garrison is. And it will happen, when you have come there to the city, that you will meet a group of prophets coming down from the high place with a stringed instrument, a tambourine, a flute, and a harp before them; and they will be prophesying. ⁶ Then the Spirit of the LORD will come upon you, and you will prophesy with them and be turned into another man.
- 1Sam. 10:9-13 So it was, when he had turned his back to go from Samuel, that God gave him another heart; and all those signs came to pass that day. ¹⁰ When they came there to the hill, there was a group of prophets to meet him; then the Spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. ¹¹ And it happened, when all who knew him formerly saw that he indeed prophesied among the prophets, that the people said to one another, “What is this that has come upon the son of Kish? Is Saul also among the prophets?” ¹² Then a man from there answered and said, “But who is their father?” Therefore it became a proverb: “Is Saul also among the prophets?” ¹³ And when he had finished prophesying, he went to the high place.

We can conclude from the above account that there were groups of prophets who congregated together and engaged in prophesying. Was Samuel previously aware of this group of prophets? Could he have been their leader and teacher? The Bible answers these questions later when David fled King Saul who was controlled by a distressing spirit and sought to kill him (1Sam. 19:9-17). The following verses reveal more details about this group of prophets:

- 1Sam. 19:18-24 So David fled and escaped, and went to Samuel at Ramah, and told him all that Saul had done to him. And he and Samuel went and stayed in Naioth. ¹⁹ Now it was told Saul, saying, “Take note, David is at Naioth in Ramah!” ²⁰ Then Saul sent messengers to take David. And when they saw the group of prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as leader over them, the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul, and they also prophesied. ²¹ And when Saul was told, he sent other messengers, and they prophesied likewise. Then Saul sent messengers again the third time, and they prophesied also. ²² Then he also went to Ramah, and came to the great well that is at Sechu. So he asked, and said, “Where are Samuel and David?” And someone said, “Indeed they are at Naioth in Ramah.” ²³ So he went there to Naioth in Ramah. Then the Spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on and prophesied until he came to Naioth in Ramah. ²⁴ And he also stripped off his clothes and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Therefore they say, “Is Saul also among the prophets?”

This reveals Samuel was firmly established as the leader over this group of prophets. He was very effectively guiding and instructing them in the prophetic ministry. You could say they were a prophetic team.

The prophet Elisha also led a group of prophets. The Scripture regularly calls them the *sons of the prophets*. This terminology shows that a new generation of prophets was being trained for prophetic ministry. There is also a clear indication that Elijah had led this group and Elisha would follow in his footsteps like Moses and Joshua. Review these excerpts and identify some key insights into these prophetic groups.

- **2Kings 2:3** Now the sons of the prophets who *were* at Bethel came out to Elisha, and said to him, “Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?” And he said, “Yes, I know; keep silent!”
- **2Kings 2:5** Now the sons of the prophets who *were* at Jericho came to Elisha and said to him, “Do you know that the LORD will take away your master from over you today?” So he answered, “Yes, I know; keep silent!”
- **2Kings 2:7** And fifty men of the sons of the prophets went and stood facing *them* at a distance, while the two of them stood by the Jordan.
- **2Kings 2:15** Now when the sons of the prophets who *were* from Jericho saw him, they said, “The spirit of Elijah rests on Elisha.” And they came to meet him, and bowed to the ground before him.
- **2Kings 4:1** A certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets cried out to Elisha, saying, “Your servant my husband is dead, and you know that your servant feared the LORD. And the creditor is coming to take my two sons to be his slaves.”
- **2Kings 4:38** And Elisha returned to Gilgal, and *there was* a famine in the land. Now the sons of the prophets *were* sitting before him; and he said to his servant, “Put on the large pot, and boil stew for the sons of the prophets.”
- **2Kings 6:1** And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, “See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us.
- **2Kings 9:1** And Elisha the prophet called one of the sons of the prophets, and said to him, “Get yourself ready, take this flask of oil in your hand, and go to Ramoth Gilead.
- **2Kings 9:4** So the young man, the servant of the prophet, went to Ramoth Gilead.

What did you learn about this group of prophets? Here are just a few things that stand out about prophetic schools or groups of prophets.

1. They have a leader (Elijah and then Elisha).
2. They were being trained in the prophetic ministry (the sons of prophets).
3. They represented a new generation of prophets (the sons of the prophets).
4. They had a prophetic network (Bethel, Jericho...).
5. They had a central dwelling place and shared provision (too small for them).
6. They were married and had families (woman of the wives of the prophets).
7. They were sometimes sent out on assignments (the young man sent to Ramoth Gilead).

Jesus often referred to a plurality of prophets when He used phrases like *all the prophets* (Matt. 11:13; Luke 13:28; 24:25-27). Although He spoke mainly of their collective message being fulfilled in Himself as the coming Messiah, the Early Church carried forth the same prophetic foundation of hope through the prophets.

- **Acts 3:18** But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled.
- **Acts 3:21** whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. ²² For Moses truly said to the fathers, “*The LORD*

your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me from your brethren. Him you shall hear in all things, whatever He says to you.

- Acts 3:24 Yes, and all the prophets, from Samuel and those who follow, as many as have spoken, have also foretold these days. ²⁵ You are sons of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying to Abraham, “*And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*”
- Acts 10:43 To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins.”
- Acts 24:14 But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets.

The references to the prophets in the above verses certainly include the groups of prophets we have looked at. Not only do you see the many references to *all the prophets*, but there is the revelation that believers in Christ are *sons of the prophets*. What a fascinating revelation! This is why I believe this generation needs a prophetic reset and even more than that. They need basic training in the prophets and prophetic ministry. The quality of this training will determine the effectiveness of the prophetic messaging that comes forth. One final point about prophetic schools or groups is that the Early Church recognized the functioning of a plurality of prophets.

- Acts 11:27-30 And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. ²⁹ Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. ³⁰ This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Agabus was one of a group of prophets. Even though he is the one who stood up and delivered the prophetic message, it was other prophets who were present with him in Antioch. There is the mention of more than one prophet together in several other places in the New Testament Church. The Bible mentions certain prophets and teachers (Acts 13:1), of prophets speaking and being subject to other prophets (1Cor. 14:29-32), and a prophetic eldership that laid hands upon young Timothy (1Tim. 4:14-16). And, I also have to mention that the Resurrected Jesus gave some prophets (plural) to the church and continues to do so today.

- Eph. 4:11-16 And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³ till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴ that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, ¹⁵ but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ— ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

CHAPTER 4: PROPHETIC CONFLICTS

Conflict with Leaders: Religious and Government

Conflict is one of the main reasons many church leaders today refuse to facilitate prophets and prophetic ministry. Although the intention is to avoid potential conflicts, this is disobedience and a great error from a biblical perspective. The Early Church sent prophets forth, encouraged prophecy, and instructed the church about the function and operation of prophets and prophecy. So, to disregard the role of prophets and prophecy in the church simply because you are apprehensive about conflict is unwise. This generation must not receive a spirit of fear regarding prophets and prophecy. Instead, we must examine God's word and allow the Holy Spirit to minister a correct understanding. Therefore, in this chapter we will look at some of the conflicts God's prophets experienced in the Bible with religious and governmental leaders, false prophets, other prophets, and the persecution they experienced.

The Bible records many conflicts between prophets and religious and governmental leaders. I will use only a few examples in this section. The greatest example is the conflict Jesus Himself experienced. Religious leaders (chief priests, elders, scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees) constantly confronted Jesus. But why? A closer look at the following verses reveals some of the reasons from their perspective.

- **Matt. 21:23** Now when He came into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people confronted Him as He was teaching, and said, "By what authority are You doing these things? And who gave You this authority?"
- **Matt. 21:45-46** Now when the chief priests and Pharisees heard His parables, they perceived that He was speaking of them. ⁴⁶ But when they sought to lay hands on Him, they feared the multitudes, because they took Him for a prophet.

Note that the multitudes considered Jesus to be a prophet. However, it is evident that the religious leaders did not. Much of this has to do with the nature of prophecy. Typically, confrontation and conviction provoke leaders. It is a serious situation when religious leaders do not receive the prophets God sends.

- **Matt. 23:29** "Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! Because you build the tombs of the prophets and adorn the monuments of the righteous..."
- **Matt. 23:31-37** "Therefore you are witnesses against yourselves that you are sons of those who murdered the prophets. ³² Fill up, then, the measure of your fathers' *guilt*. ³³ Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell? ³⁴ Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, and scribes: *some* of them you will kill and crucify, and *some* of them you will scourge in your synagogues and persecute from city to city, ³⁵ that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar. ³⁶ Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation. ³⁷ "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! ³⁸ See! Your house is left to you desolate; ³⁹ for I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say, "*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!*" "

The above references represent the response of Jesus to those in positions of leadership who fail to receive and even persecute and kill prophets sent by God. Just think of it! Religious and

governmental leaders who do not receive a prophet are held accountable for *all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah*, who was a prophet of God during the reign of Joash in Judah under the supervision of Jehoiada, a righteous priest. The following account is what Jesus was referring to:

- 2Chr. 24:17-22 Now after the death of Jehoiada the leaders of Judah came and bowed down to the king. And the king listened to them. ¹⁸ Therefore they left the house of the LORD God of their fathers, and served wooden images and idols; and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem because of their trespass. ¹⁹ Yet He sent prophets to them, to bring them back to the LORD; and they testified against them, but they would not listen. ²⁰ Then the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest, who stood above the people, and said to them, “Thus says God: ‘Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, He also has forsaken you.’” ²¹ So they conspired against him, and at the command of the king they stoned him with stones in the court of the house of the LORD. ²² Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which Jehoiada his father had done to him, but killed his son; and as he died, he said, “The LORD look on it, and repay!”

How does the Lord repay this evil deed against God’s prophet? He places it upon generations who do not receive His prophets. Jesus says *all these things will come upon this generation*. What generation is Jesus talking about? He is referring to any generation that rejects His prophets. The present generation needs to seriously consider the consequences of the way they relate to prophets and prophecy today. This is why I am strongly advocating for a prophetic reset in the church. Did you notice how Jesus bursts into intercession at the end of His “woes” in Matthew 23. This is just like Jesus. He warns of what will happen when leaders reject God’s prophets and then intercedes for the city with *O Jerusalem, Jerusalem* indicating He would have gathered them all to Himself if they were only willing. The same is true today.

The prophetic nature of Jesus led multitudes to acknowledge that He was indeed the Christ. This was the case with the Samaritan woman, however Jesus had to overcome an imposed religious barrier between Jews and Samaritans in addition to the religious doctrine about the proper place of worship.

John 4:5-42 So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. ⁶ Now Jacob’s well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour. ⁷ A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, “Give Me a drink.” ⁸ For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. ⁹ Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, “How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?” For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. ¹⁰ Jesus answered and said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.” ¹¹ The woman said to Him, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water?” ¹² Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?” ¹³ Jesus answered and said to her, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.” ¹⁵ The woman said to Him, “Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw.” ¹⁶ Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.” ¹⁷ The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have well said, ‘I have no husband.’ ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly.” ¹⁹ The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, and you Jews say that in Jerusalem is the place where one ought to worship.” ²¹ Jesus said to her, “Woman, believe Me, the hour is coming when you will neither on this mountain, nor in Jerusalem, worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we know what we worship, for salvation is of the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him. ²⁴ God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.” ²⁵ The woman said to Him, “I know

that Messiah is coming" (who is called Christ). "When He comes, He will tell us all things." ²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am *He*." ²⁷ And at this *point* His disciples came, and they marveled that He talked with a woman; yet no one said, "What do You seek?" or, "Why are You talking with her?" ²⁸ The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men. ²⁹ "Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" ³⁰ Then they went out of the city and came to Him. ³¹ In the meantime His disciples urged Him, saying, "Rabbi, eat." ³² But He said to them, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." ³³ Therefore the disciples said to one another, "Has anyone brought Him *anything* to eat?" ³⁴ Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. ³⁵ Do you not say, 'There are still four months and *then* comes the harvest'? Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes and look at the fields, for they are already white for harvest! ³⁶ And he who reaps receives wages, and gathers fruit for eternal life, that both he who sows and he who reaps may rejoice together. ³⁷ For in this the saying is true: "One sows and another reaps." ³⁸ I sent you to reap that for which you have not labored; others have labored, and you have entered into their labors." ³⁹ And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified. "He told me all that I ever did." ⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days. ⁴¹ And many more believed because of His own word. ⁴² Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

Conflicts over religious tradition and doctrine continue to divide the people of God today. It creates many barriers but in the situation of the Samaritan woman and the city of Samaria itself, the prophetic nature of Jesus overcame the barriers, and many ended up believing He was *the Christ, the Savior of the world*. Why was this the case when in other situations there was such strong conflict with religious and governmental leaders even violent at times? I noticed one thing in the account of the Samaritan woman that can be easily overlooked. There is no mention of religious leaders being present. Not one Pharisee, Scribe, Sadducee, Herodian, High Priest, or Elder is present or mentioned. However, this was not the case in the city of Nazareth or with a blind man in Jerusalem. Examine these two accounts and take note of how the prophetic spurred a conflict with religious leaders.

1. The Blind Man in Jerusalem

John 9:1-41 Now as *Jesus* passed by, He saw a man who was blind from birth. ² And His disciples asked Him, saying, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" ³ Jesus answered, "Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. ⁴ I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day: the night is coming when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." ⁶ When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay. ⁷ And He said to him, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam" (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing. ⁸ Therefore the neighbors and those who previously had seen that he was blind said, "Is not this he who sat and begged?" ⁹ Some said, "This is he." Others said, "He is like him." He said, "I am *he*." ¹⁰ Therefore they said to him, "How were your eyes opened?" ¹¹ He answered and said, "A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, 'Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.' So I went and washed, and I received sight." ¹² Then they said to him, "Where is He?" He said, "I do not know." ¹³ They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees. ¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes. ¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see." ¹⁶ Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them. ¹⁷ They said to the blind man again, "What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?" He said, "He is a prophet." ¹⁸ But the Jews did not believe concerning him, that he had been blind and received his sight, until they called the parents of him who had received his sight. ¹⁹ And they asked them, saying, "Is this your son, who you say was born blind? How then does he now see?" ²⁰ His parents answered them and said, "We know that this is our son, and that he was born blind; ²¹ but by what means he now sees we do not know, or who opened his eyes we do not know. He is of age; ask him. He will speak for himself." ²² His parents said these *things* because they

feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed *that* He was Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue. ²³ Therefore his parents said, "He is of age; ask him." ²⁴ So they again called the man who was blind, and said to him, "Give God the glory! We know that this Man is a sinner." ²⁵ He answered and said, "Whether He is a sinner or *not* I do not know. One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see." ²⁶ Then they said to him again, "What did He do to you? How did He open your eyes?" ²⁷ He answered them, "I told you already, and you did not listen. Why do you want to hear *it* again? Do you also want to become His disciples?" ²⁸ Then they reviled him and said, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples. ²⁹ We know that God spoke to Moses; *as for this fellow*, we do not know where He is from." ³⁰ The man answered and said to them, "Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He is from; yet He has opened my eyes! ³¹ Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him. ³² Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind. ³³ If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing." ³⁴ They answered and said to him, "You were completely born in sins, and are you teaching us?" And they cast him out. ³⁵ Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?" ³⁶ He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?" ³⁷ And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you." ³⁸ Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him. ³⁹ And Jesus said, "For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind." ⁴⁰ Then *some* of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?" ⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.

2. Jesus at the City of Nazareth

Luke 4:16-30 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. ¹⁷ And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: ¹⁸ *"The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; ¹⁹ To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."* ²⁰ Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. ²¹ And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing." ²² So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, "Is this not Joseph's son?" ²³ He said to them, "You will surely say this proverb to Me, 'Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.' " ²⁴ Then He said, "Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country. ²⁵ But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; ²⁶ but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, *in the region* of Sidon, to a woman *who* was a widow. ²⁷ And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian." ²⁸ So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, ²⁹ and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff. ³⁰ Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.

There is severe conflict in these two accounts. However, a closer examination of all three accounts reveals several key elements in what I call a "*prophetic progression*". The following chart will help you put this in perspective.

Prophetic Element	The Samaritans	The Blind Man	Jesus in Nazareth
Prophetic Word, Declaration, or Act	John 4:13-14 "Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a	John 9:4 I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; <i>the night is coming</i> when no one can work. ⁵ As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world."	Luke 4:18-19 " <i>The Spirit of the LORD is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to the captives And recovery of sight</i>

fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.”

John 4: 16-18 Jesus said to her, “Go, call your husband, and come here.”¹⁷ The woman answered and said, “I have no husband.” Jesus said to her, “You have well said, ‘I have no husband,’¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one whom you now have is not your husband; in that you spoke truly.”

John 4:23-24 But the hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for the Father is seeking such to worship Him.²⁴ God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth.”

John 4:26 Jesus said to her, “I who speak to you am *He*.”

Prophetic Engagement:

John 4:19 The woman said to Him, “Sir, I perceive that You are a prophet.

John 4:28 The woman then left her waterpot, went her way into the city, and said to the men,²⁹ “Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”

John 9:6-7 When He had said these things, He spat on the ground and made clay with the saliva; and He anointed the eyes of the blind man with the clay.⁷ And He said to him, “Go, wash in the pool of Siloam” (which is translated, Sent). So he went and washed, and came back seeing.

John 9:37 And Jesus said to him, “You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you.”

John 9:39 And Jesus said, “For judgment I have come into this world, that those who do not see may see, and that those who see may be made blind.”

John 9:11 He answered and said, “A Man called Jesus made clay and anointed my eyes and said to me, ‘Go to the pool of Siloam and wash.’ So I went and washed, and I received sight.”

John 9:17 They said to the blind man again, “What do you say about Him because He opened your eyes?” He said, “He is a prophet.”

John 9:22-23 His parents said these *things* because they feared the Jews, for the Jews had agreed already that if anyone confessed *that He was Christ*, he would be put out of the synagogue.²³ Therefore his parents said, “He is of age; ask him.”

John 9:30-33 The man answered and said to them, “Why, this is a marvelous thing, that you do not know where He

*to the blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed;*¹⁹ *To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.*”

Luke 4:21 And He began to say to them, “Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.

Luke 4:23-27 He said to them, “You will surely say this proverb to Me, ‘Physician, heal yourself! Whatever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in Your country.’” Then He said, “Assuredly, I say to you, no prophet is accepted in his own country.²⁵ But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land;²⁶ but to none of them was Elijah sent except to Zarephath, *in the region of Sidon*, to a woman *who was a widow*.²⁷ And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.”

Luke 4:20 Then He closed the book, and gave *it* back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him.

Luke 4:22 So all bore witness to Him, and marveled at the gracious words which proceeded out of His mouth. And they said, “Is this not Joseph’s son?”

Prophetic Reception or Conflict

John 4:39-42 And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, "He told me all that I ever did."⁴⁰ So when the Samaritans had come to Him, they urged Him to stay with them; and He stayed there two days.⁴¹ And many more believed because of His own word.⁴² Then they said to the woman, "Now we believe, not because of what you said, for we ourselves have heard *Him* and we know that this is indeed the Christ, the Savior of the world."

is from; yet He has opened my eyes!³¹ Now we know that God does not hear sinners; but if anyone is a worshiper of God and does His will, He hears him.³² Since the world began it has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind.³³ If this Man were not from God, He could do nothing."

John 9:13-16 They brought him who formerly was blind to the Pharisees.¹⁴ Now it was a Sabbath when Jesus made the clay and opened his eyes.¹⁵ Then the Pharisees also asked him again how he had received his sight. He said to them, "He put clay on my eyes, and I washed, and I see."¹⁶ Therefore some of the Pharisees said, "This Man is not from God, because He does not keep the Sabbath." Others said, "How can a man who is a sinner do such signs?" And there was a division among them.

John 9:35-38 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"³⁶ He answered and said, "Who is He, Lord, that I may believe in Him?"³⁷ And Jesus said to him, "You have both seen Him and it is He who is talking with you."³⁸ Then he said, "Lord, I believe!" And he worshiped Him.

John 9:40-41 Then *some* of the Pharisees who were with Him heard these words, and said to Him, "Are we blind also?"⁴¹ Jesus said to them, "If you were blind, you would have no sin; but now you say, 'We see.' Therefore your sin remains.

Luke 4:28-30 So all those in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath,²⁹ and rose up and thrust Him out of the city; and they led Him to the brow of the hill on which their city was built, that they might throw Him down over the cliff.³⁰ Then passing through the midst of them, He went His way.

Conflict in most cases is with those in positions of leadership. John the Baptist is another New Testament example of a typical prophetic pattern of conflict with both religious and governmental leadership. Factor in that John the Baptist was a very popular prophet with the people. His coming was announced beforehand, and he arrived through a miraculous birth. Multitudes came to hear and be baptized by him, including Jesus Himself. But this was not the case with most leaders. The following Scriptures display the nature of the ongoing conflict of John the Baptist with religious and governmental leaders.

- **Matt. 3:7-12** But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? ⁸ Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, ⁹ and do not think to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as *our* father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. ¹⁰ And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ¹¹ I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹² His winnowing fan *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” (See also Luke 3:1-22)
- **John 1:19-26** Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, “Who are you?” ²⁰ He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, “I am not the Christ.” ²¹ And they asked him, “What then? Are you Elijah?” He said, “I am not.” “Are you the Prophet?” And he answered, “No.” ²² Then they said to him, “Who are you, that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?” ²³ He said: “I *am* ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness: “Make straight the way of the LORD,”’ as the prophet Isaiah said.” ²⁴ Now those who were sent were from the Pharisees. ²⁵ And they asked him, saying, “Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” ²⁶ John answered them, saying, “I baptize with water, but there stands One among you whom you do not know. ²⁷ It is He who, coming after me, is preferred before me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose.” ²⁸ These things were done in Bethabara beyond the Jordan, where John was baptizing. ²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is He of whom I said, “After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.’” ³¹ I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water.” ³² And John bore witness, saying, “I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. ³³ I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, “Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.’” ³⁴ And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God.”
- **Matt. 14:1-5** At that time Herod the tetrarch heard the report about Jesus ² and said to his servants, “This is John the Baptist; he is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him.” ³ For Herod had laid hold of John and bound him, and put *him* in prison for the sake of Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife. ⁴ Because John had said to him, “It is not lawful for you to have her.” ⁵ And although he wanted to put him to death, he feared the multitude, because they counted him as a prophet.

What was it about the prophetic ministry of John the Baptist that set the Pharisees, Sadducees, Priests, Levites, and even Herod the tetrarch on edge? Take a moment to glean some of the aspects of his prophetic pattern.

1. He called these leaders out with clear prophetic warnings of God’s judgment and bold exhortations to repent and ***bear fruits worthy of repentance***. These leaders did not like being prophetically challenged with such frankness, candor, and boldness. He called them a ***brood of vipers!*** John also repeatedly addressed Herod that it was wrong for him to have his brother’s wife. This conflict led to his imprisonment and execution.
2. He prophetically pointed the leaders to the coming Christ, the One who would save and baptize them ***with the Holy Spirit and fire***. He revealed and confirmed by the Holy Spirit to them and the multitudes that Jesus is ***the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*** and ***that this is the Son of God***.

The above prophetic pattern is common among all the prophets of God. God's prophets call out and expose sin, warn of judgment, exhort to repentance, and urge people and nations to return to the LORD. This prophetic pattern is one that often leads to conflict with religious and governmental leaders. I believe it is a prophetic pattern that is missing in the church today. In fact, this generation seems to prefer a soft, feel-good message rather than a message of truth, confrontation, and conviction that leads to repentance. Jesus confirmed this when he spoke to the people about John the Baptist.

- **Luke 7:24-35** When the messengers of John had departed, He began to speak to the multitudes concerning John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ²⁵ But what did you go out to see? A man clothed in soft garments? Indeed those who are gorgeously appareled and live in luxury are in kings' courts. ²⁶ But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I say to you, and more than a prophet. ²⁷ This is *he* of whom it is written: "*Behold, I send My messenger before Your face, Who will prepare Your way before You.*" ²⁸ For I say to you, among those born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; but he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he." ²⁹ And when all the people heard *Him*, even the tax collectors justified God, having been baptized with the baptism of John. ³⁰ But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the will of God for themselves, not having been baptized by him. ³⁰ And the Lord said, "To what then shall I liken the men of this generation, and what are they like? ³² They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling to one another, saying: "We played the flute for you, And you did not dance; We mourned to you, And you did not weep." ³³ For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, "He has a demon." ³⁴ The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and you say, "Look, a glutton and a winebibber, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!" ³⁵ But wisdom is justified by all her children."
- **Matt. 17:11-13** Jesus answered and said to them, "Indeed, Elijah is coming first and will restore all things. ¹² But I say to you that Elijah has come already, and they did not know him but did to him whatever they wished. Likewise the Son of Man is also about to suffer at their hands." ¹³ Then the disciples understood that He spoke to them of John the Baptist.

Note that the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the prophetic message and the baptism of repentance. New generation leaders today need a prophetic reset to recover and declare the prophetic pattern revealed in the prophets. Although conflict with religious and governmental leaders will continue, Jesus likens this generation to children playing musical games with one another in order to illustrate a fickle and conflicting response to the ministry of John the Baptist and His own ministry (Luke 7:32).

Conflict with False Prophets

The Bible contains repeated warnings about false prophets. Jesus said there would be many false prophets in the end times.

- **Matt. 7:15-16** "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles?"
- **Matt. 24:11** Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many.
- **Matt. 24:23-25** "Then if anyone says to you, "Look, here *is* the Christ!" or "There!" do not believe *it*. ²⁴ For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect. ²⁵ See, I have told you beforehand.

The above verses indicate that the church of every generation will have to face false prophets. Young leaders of the new generation church must help the people of God to be alert to false prophets and their deceptive practices. They will be unable to do this if they are not alert themselves. I see very little alertness or even awareness of false prophets in the

church today especially when it deals with wolves in sheep's clothing (Matt. 7:15). Note Jesus warned us that there would be many in the last days. The Apostle John also warned of many false prophets in the last days saying *many false prophets have gone out into the world* and that *many antichrists have come by which we know that it is the last hour* (1John 2:18; 4:1). Here is a list of some of the false prophets in the Bible.

Name(s)	Bible References
Ahab & Zedekiah, the son of Maaseiah	Jer. 29:21-23 Thus says the LORD of hosts, the God of Israel, concerning Ahab the son of Kolaiah, and Zedekiah the son of Maaseiah, who prophesy a lie to you in My name: Behold, I will deliver them into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon, and he shall slay them before your eyes. ²² And because of them a curse shall be taken up by all the captivity of Judah who are in Babylon, saying, "The LORD make you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom the king of Babylon roasted in the fire"; ²³ because they have done disgraceful things in Israel, have committed adultery with their neighbors' wives, and have spoken lying words in My name, which I have not commanded them. Indeed I know, and am a witness, says the LORD.
Ahab & Jezebel	1Kings 21:25 But there was no one like Ahab who sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the LORD, because Jezebel his wife stirred him up. Rev. 2:20 Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.
450 False Prophets of Baal & 400 False Prophets of Asherah	1Kings 18:19-20 Now therefore, send and gather all Israel to me on Mount Carmel, the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of Asherah, who eat at Jezebel's table." ²⁰ So Ahab sent for all the children of Israel, and gathered the prophets together on Mount Carmel.
Ahab's False Prophets	1Kings 22:10 The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, having put on <i>their</i> robes, sat each on his throne, at a threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them. ¹¹ Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made horns of iron for himself; and he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'With these you shall gore the Syrians until they are destroyed.'" ¹² And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, "Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver <i>it</i> into the king's hand."
Zedekiah, the Son of Chenaanah	1Kings 22:11-12 Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made horns of iron for himself; and he said, "Thus says the LORD: 'With these you shall gore the Syrians until they are destroyed.'" ¹² And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, "Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver <i>it</i> into the king's hand."
False Prophets of Samaria	Jer. 2:8 The priests did not say, "Where is the LORD?" And those who handle the law did not know Me; The rulers also transgressed against Me; The prophets prophesied by Baal, And walked after <i>things that do not profit</i> . Jer. 23:13 "And I have seen folly in the prophets of Samaria: They prophesied by Baal And caused My people Israel to err.
Pashur	Jer. 20:6 And you, Pashur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. You shall go to Babylon, and there you shall die, and be buried there, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied lies.' "
Hananiah	Jer. 28:15 Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, "Hear now, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, but you make this people trust in a lie.
Shemaiah	Jer. 28:31-32 Send to all those in captivity, saying, Thus says the LORD concerning Shemaiah the Nehelamite: Because Shemaiah has prophesied to you, and I have not sent him, and he has caused you to trust in a lie— ³² therefore thus says the LORD: Behold, I will punish Shemaiah the Nehelamite and his family: he shall not have anyone to dwell among this people, nor shall he see the good that I will do for My people, says the LORD, because he has taught rebellion against the LORD.
Balaam	Num. 22:5-6 Then he sent messengers to Balaam the son of Beor at Pethor, which is near the River in the land of the sons of his people, to call him, saying: "Look, a people has come from Egypt. See, they cover the face of the earth, and are settling next to me! ⁶ Therefore please come at once, curse this people for me, for they are too mighty for me.

Perhaps I shall be able to defeat them and drive them out of the land, for I know that he whom you bless is blessed, and he whom you curse is cursed.”

2Pet. 2:15 They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;

Jude 11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

Rev. 2:14 But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

Elymas

Acts 13:6-8 Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus, ⁷ who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. ⁸ But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.

The False Prophet of Revelation

Rev. 16:13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

Rev. 19:20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Rev. 20:10 The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

What makes them false prophets? I believe it is important to answer this question first because it provides the reasons for the conflicts God’s prophets encountered with false prophets and their prophecies.

1. If what they prophesy is not right 100% of the time.

Deut.18:21-22 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.

2. If they lie and do not speak the truth.

Jer. 20:6 And you, Pashhur, and all who dwell in your house, shall go into captivity. You shall go to Babylon, and there you shall die, and be buried there, you and all your friends, to whom you have prophesied lies.’ ”

Jer. 28:15 Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, “Hear now, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, but you make this people trust in a lie.

3. If they deal falsely and are greedy.

Jer. 6:13 “Because from the least of them even to the greatest of them, Everyone is given to covetousness; And from the prophet even to the priest, Everyone deals falsely.

4. If they teach you to follow after other gods.

Deut. 13:1-3 “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.

5. If they prophesy for money.

Micah 3:11 Her heads judge for a bribe, Her priests teach for pay, And her prophets divine for money. Yet they lean on the LORD, and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No harm can come upon us."

6. If they prophesy peace in opposition to God.

Jer. 6:14 They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, "Peace, peace!" When *there is no peace*.

Jer. 23:17 They continually say to those who despise Me, "The LORD has said, 'You shall have peace' "; And to everyone who walks according to the dictates of his own heart, they say, "No evil shall come upon you.' "

7. If all men speak well of them.

Luke 6:26 Woe to you when all men speak well of you, For so did their fathers to the false prophets.

8. If they use sorcery or any form of divination.

Num. 24:1 Now when Balaam saw that it pleased the LORD to bless Israel, he did not go as at other times, to seek to use sorcery, but he set his face toward the wilderness.

Josh. 13:22 The children of Israel also killed with the sword Balaam the son of Beor, the soothsayer, among those who were killed by them.

Acts 8:9-11 But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great,¹⁰ to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God."¹¹ And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time.

Acts 13:6 Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus.

The above list applies to the active operation of false prophets in every generation. You may be familiar with some of the false prophets listed while others may be relatively unknown to you. However, the list contains those the Bible specifically mentions as false prophets. We can learn much from the confrontations God's prophets had with these false prophets and their practices.

The confrontation of the prophet Elijah with the false prophets of Ahab and Jezebel is a classic study of prophetic conflict. However, a part of this battle that is overlooked by Elijah's Mount Carmel victory over 450 false prophets (1Kings 18:20-40) is the confrontation of the prophet Micaiah with King Ahab and 400 false prophets (1Kings 22:1-37). The context of that conflict is when Jehoshaphat visited Ahab who asked him if he would join him *to fight at Ramoth Gilead* (1Kings 22:2-4). Jehoshaphat had only one request of Ahab: *Please inquire for the word of the LORD today* (1Kings 22:5). The exchange between the two kings is interesting.

- 1Kings 22:6-10 Then the king of Israel gathered the prophets together, about four hundred men, and said to them, "Shall I go against Ramoth Gilead to fight, or shall I refrain?" So they said, "Go up, for the Lord will deliver *it* into the hand of the king."⁷ And Jehoshaphat said, "*Is there not still a prophet of the LORD here, that we may inquire of Him?*"⁸ So the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, "*There is still one man, Micaiah*

the son of Imlah, by whom we may inquire of the LORD; but I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil.” And Jehoshaphat said, “Let not the king say such things!”⁹ Then the king of Israel called an officer and said, “Bring Micaiah the son of Imlah quickly!”¹⁰ The king of Israel and Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, having put on *their* robes, sat each on his throne, at a threshing floor at the entrance of the gate of Samaria; and all the prophets prophesied before them.

It appears that the kings are looking for a prophet or prophets who support what they want to hear. I believe this is going on in the church today regarding prophetic ministry. This sets up a classic prophetic conflict with false prophets by one named, Micaiah. Interestingly, here and in the parallel account in Second Chronicles 18-19:3 is the only mention of this prophet in the Bible. Let’s look more closely at this prophetic conflict and what each side prophesied.

400 Prophets & Zedekiah	Micaiah
1Kings 22:6 So they said, “Go up, for the Lord will deliver <i>it</i> into the hand of the king.”	1Kings 22:17 Then he said, “I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd.
1Kings 22:10 ...and all the prophets prophesied before them. And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, “Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver <i>it</i> into the king’s hand.”	1Kings 22:17 And the LORD said, ‘These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.’ ”
1Kings 22:11 Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah had made horns of iron for himself; and he said, “Thus says the LORD: ‘With these you shall gore the Syrians until they are destroyed.’ ”	1Kings 22:19-21 Then <i>Micaiah</i> said, “Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on His throne, and all the host of heaven standing by, on His right hand and on His left. ²⁰ And the LORD said, “Who will persuade Ahab to go up, that he may fall at Ramoth Gilead?” So one spoke in this manner, and another spoke in that manner. ²¹ Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, and said, “I will persuade him.’
1Kings 22:12 And all the prophets prophesied so, saying, “Go up to Ramoth Gilead and prosper, for the LORD will deliver <i>it</i> into the king’s hand.”	1Kings 22-23 The LORD said to him, “In what way?’ So he said, “I will go out and be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And the LORD said, ‘You shall persuade <i>him</i> , and also prevail. Go out and do so.’ ²³ Therefore look! The LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these prophets of yours, and the LORD has declared disaster against you.”
1Kings 22:13 Then the messenger who had gone to call Micaiah spoke to him, saying, “Now listen, the words of the prophets with one accord encourage the king. Please, let your word be like the word of one of them, and speak encouragement.”	1Kings 22:14 And Micaiah said, “As the LORD lives, whatever the LORD says to me, that I will speak.”
1Kings 22:15 Then he came to the king; and the king said to him, “Micaiah, shall we go to war against Ramoth Gilead, or shall we refrain?”	1Kings 22:15 ... And he answered him, “Go and prosper, for the LORD will deliver <i>it</i> into the hand of the king!”
1Kings 22:16 So the king said to him, “How many times shall I make you swear that you tell me nothing but the truth in the name of the LORD?”	1Kings 22:17 Then he said, “I saw all Israel scattered on the mountains, as sheep that have no shepherd. And the LORD said, ‘These have no master. Let each return to his house in peace.’ ”
1Kings 22:18 And the king of Israel said to Jehoshaphat, “Did I not tell you he would not prophesy good concerning me, but evil?”	1Kings 22:25 And Micaiah said, “Indeed, you shall see on that day when you go into an inner chamber to hide!”
1Kings 22:24 Now Zedekiah the son of Chenaanah went near and struck Micaiah on the cheek, and said, “Which way did the spirit from the LORD go from me to speak to you?”	

1Kings 22:26-27 So the king of Israel said, "Take Micaiah, and return him to Amon the governor of the city and to Joash the king's son; ²⁷ and say, "Thus says the king: 'Put this *fellow* in prison, and feed him with bread of affliction and water of affliction, until I come in peace.' " "

1Kings 22:28 But Micaiah said, "If you ever return in peace, the LORD has not spoken by me." And he said, "Take heed, all you people!"

I believe we can learn much from epic prophetic conflicts like the one above. The prophet Micaiah was outnumbered 400 to 1. The kings of Israel and Judah both went with the 400 but it was only one prophet who prophesied the truth and will of God. And what he prophesied is what came to pass. King Jehoshaphat of Judah acted foolishly by going into the battle with Ahab. The only connection he had with Ahab was by marriage of his son, Jehoram, to Ahab's daughter, Athaliah (2Chr. 18:1; 2Kings 8:16-19). Although God delivered him, a son of a prophet spoke a word of correction to him upon his return.

- **2Chr. 19:1-3** Then Jehoshaphat the king of Judah returned safely to his house in Jerusalem. ² And Jehu the son of Hanani the seer went out to meet him, and said to King Jehoshaphat, "Should you help the wicked and love those who hate the LORD? Therefore the wrath of the LORD *is* upon you. ³ Nevertheless good things are found in you, in that you have removed the wooden images from the land, and have prepared your heart to seek God."

This confirms the instructional value inherent in prophetic conflicts with false prophets. So, what do we learn from Micaiah's experience with the false prophets? Here are just a few lessons to glean from this conflict.

1. Prophets and leaders that gather together to seek the word of the Lord on a matter is a good thing in principle.
2. Prophets that always speak what is pleasing to leaders cause those leaders to err.
3. Prophets that speak only prosperity and what is considered good are not always reflecting the will of God.
4. Prophets and leaders that reject and fail to take heed to what one prophet speaks because it goes against the grain of the many, can easily miss what God is speaking.
5. Prophets and leaders strike out against those who speak words of warning, judgment, and repentance do so at their own peril.

Ahab, Jezebel, and Balaam are well known false prophets to those who read their Bibles. Ahab and Jezebel's conflict with Elijah is a classic study in itself. However, Jezebel and Balaam have serious connections in the New Testament Church with warnings from Jesus to repent of the doctrine of Balaam and to rid the church of the influence and operation of the false prophetess, Jezebel.

- **2Pet. 2:15-16** They have forsaken the right way and gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness; ¹⁶ but he was rebuked for his iniquity: a dumb donkey speaking with a man's voice restrained the madness of the prophet.
- **Jude 11** Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.
- **Rev. 2:14** But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.

- **Rev. 2:20-23** Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. ²¹ And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. ²² Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. ²³ I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.

The backgrounds of these false prophets are known by many, but the above Scriptures bear witness to a confrontation with them that continues in this generation and beyond. And, the Bible says, it's in the church! It is in the church now! You do not have to have a degree in theology to see what is being talked about regarding the way of Balaam and Jezebel. Keep in mind this contrast: The prophets God sends speak and teach the right way while false prophets speak and teach the wrong way. What does the doctrine of Balaam teach? Two things stand out. One is the seeking of personal gain at the expense of God's people. The second is an ungodly teaching that leads people into sexual impurity and compromise with the world. This goes along with Balaam's selling his services for a *diviner's fee* (Num. 22:7) to an ungodly king. In addition, he advised the Midianite women to tempt God's people to compromise their faith with idolatrous and immoral behavior (Num. 25:1-3; 31:16). How is this applicable to the modern generation? One of my study bibles says this about the doctrine of Balaam in the church.

"Balaam represents corrupt and deceptive teachers or preachers – or any believers – who lead or influence God's people to compromise with worldly beliefs and behaviors, all for the sake of selfish interests or personal advancement. The church at Pergamum evidently had teachers who taught that spiritually saving faith and an immoral lifestyle were compatible."¹²

I believe there is more compromise and corruption in the church today than what many would like to acknowledge. I base this on what the risen Jesus spoke prophetically to the churches regarding these two false prophets and what they stand for. For example, the mention of Jezebel in the church warns against the growing toleration of leaders and God's people for unbiblical teaching and immoral lifestyles. Jesus confronts the church of Thyatira saying, *I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, to teach and to seduce My servants* (Rev. 2:20). This means the leaders and believers were just letting her alone and letting her operate in the church. Why such toleration when the prophets God sends boldly confront sin and warn of severe judgment? The following Bible study notes provide some reasons:

"We must reject all spokespersons who put their own words above Biblical revelation and standards, and who claim that God accepts immoral behavior and lifestyles among professing Christians. Some in the church show an openness to tolerate such beliefs and teaching because it excuses their own questionable behavior and compromise with the world's evil pleasures. Others will overlook this type of sin because of spiritual apathy, personal friendships, or fear of confrontation. Still others have completely selfish reasons for this unacceptable practice: self-promotion and material gain. God says he will judge such leaders and punish all who sin in these ways and do not turn back to God for forgiveness and change their ways."¹³

¹² Fire Bible, Global Study Edition (2009). Study notes Rev. 2:14 p. 2519-2520.

¹³ Fire Bible, Global Study Edition. Study notes Rev. 2:20 p. 2520-2521.

These are all applicable reasons why there is so much toleration and compromise with the world today. It begs the question of just how much deception and seduction is currently going on in churches?¹⁴ Many believers are being deceptively influenced by false prophets and teachers to adapt to the world's cultural standards rather than what the word of God says. The seduction is very strong, and it is in the church. Few prophets and prophetic ministries appear to be boldly confronting this accelerated trend of sin-toleration in the church. Note how Jesus spoke of Jezebel's children (Rev. 2:23). Who are the children of Jezebel in the church? Are they not those who believe they have the freedom in Christ to engage in and tolerate immoral behaviors and things that are abominations to God without fear of punishment or judgment from God? If this is who they are then the false prophetess, Jezebel, must be strongly confronted and opposed by the prophets of God. Does such confrontation represent the truth and grace of God? The Bible answers this question for us with strong words of warning and impending judgment by the prophets. You may ask where's the grace of God? Jesus said, *I gave her time to repent...and she did not repent* (Rev. 2:21). And, He says those who follow her teaching will go through *great tribulation* but adds *unless they repent of their deeds* (Rev. 2:23). In addition, Jesus gives a prophetic admonition and declaration to the church and those that overcome these false prophets and false doctrines:

- Rev. 2:24-29 “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.²⁵ But hold fast what you have till I come.²⁶ And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—²⁷ “He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels”—as I also have received from My Father;²⁸ and I will give him the morning star.²⁹ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” ’

The prophets of this generation need to break their silence and hesitancy to take on false prophets and teachers. They are in the church today and will be increasing even more so according to God's word. This generation must confront them rather than ignore them. But they must confront them God's way. It is time for a prophetic reset to realign with God's word when it comes to the conflict and confrontations with false prophets.

Conflict with Other Prophets

Prophets of God sometimes have conflict with one another. There is an interesting prophetic situation during the reign of King Jeroboam of Israel. Jeroboam had somehow reasoned in his own thinking that the people would return their loyalty back to Rehoboam, king of Judah. Therefore, he sought advice and *made two calves of gold* (1Kings 12:28) and spoke this to the people of Israel:

- 1Kings 12:28-30 It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, which brought you up from the land of Egypt!”²⁹ And he set up one in Bethel, and the other he put in Dan.³⁰ Now this thing became a sin, for the people went to *worship* before the one as far as Dan.

¹⁴ Vincent's Word Studies of the New Testament. To teach and to seduce (διδάσκειν καὶ πλανᾶσθαι). The word πλανᾶν *to seduce* is found oftener in Revelation than elsewhere in the New Testament. It never means mere error as such, but *fundamental departure from the truth*.

Jeroboam created a substitute religious system in the northern kingdom. God is not going to allow this to stand without a clear and direct prophetic confrontation. Therefore, *a man of God went from Judah to Bethel by the word of the LORD and Jeroboam stood by the altar to burn incense* (1Kings 13:1). The man of God is later referred to as a prophet (1Kings 13:18a). This is confirmed by the fact that he is sent forth and speaks prophetically by the word of the LORD. Look carefully at the prophetic word that was spoken:

- **1Kings 13:2-3** Then he cried out against the altar by the word of the LORD, and said, “O altar, altar! Thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, a child, Josiah by name, shall be born to the house of David; and on you he shall sacrifice the priests of the high places who burn incense on you, and men’s bones shall be burned on you.’ ” ³ And he gave a sign the same day, saying, “This *is* the sign which the LORD has spoken: Surely the altar shall split apart, and the ashes on it shall be poured out.”

Note this unnamed prophet is crying out *against the altar by the word of the LORD*. This is a very strategic prophetic assignment. God is displeased and enraged by what is taking place at the altar. He will not allow this religious system of man to stand. This generation also needs to be mindful of what is taking place at church altars. It is no place for the display of self-interests, self-attention, or sensuality. Such things at the altar represent strange incense just as much as the two calves of gold. How many church altars are ready to split today? I believe God is going to begin shaking some altars in this generation! The prophet also speaks of a future child named Josiah and his actions. Did you know this was almost 300 years before this king would come on the scene? How remarkable is this! King Josiah of Judah was used by God to bring one of the greatest revivals in the history of God’s people. Nevertheless, God immediately dealt with what was happening at the altar in Bethel.

- **1Kings 13:4-6** So it came to pass when King Jeroboam heard the saying of the man of God, who cried out against the altar in Bethel, that he stretched out his hand from the altar, saying, “Arrest him!” Then his hand, which he stretched out toward him, withered, so that he could not pull it back to himself. ⁵ The altar also was split apart, and the ashes poured out from the altar, according to the sign which the man of God had given by the word of the LORD. ⁶ Then the king answered and said to the man of God, “Please entreat the favor of the LORD your God, and pray for me, that my hand may be restored to me.” So the man of God entreated the LORD, and the king’s hand was restored to him, and became as before.

Prophets who confront leaders are often viewed as uncaring and unloving. However, the above account shows the opposite is true. The man of God prays without any hesitation for a leader who had just issued a command to arrest him. King Jeroboam’s hand is fully healed and restored to its normal condition. This certainly cancelled the arrest order. Instead, the king wants to reward the prophet and dine with him.

- **1Kings 13:7-10** Then the king said to the man of God, “Come home with me and refresh yourself, and I will give you a reward.” ⁸ But the man of God said to the king, “If you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you; nor would I eat bread nor drink water in this place. ⁹ For so it was commanded me by the word of the LORD, saying, “You shall not eat bread, nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came.” ¹⁰ So he went another way and did not return by the way he came to Bethel.

Up to this point the man of God has been faithful to his prophetic assignment. There is no evidence of any deviation from what God had commanded him to say and do. But then we are introduced to an old prophet in Bethel who hears of what the younger one has said and done.

- **1Kings 13:11** Now an old prophet dwelt in Bethel, and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel; they also told their father the words which he had spoken to the king.

The introduction of the old prophet and his interaction with the younger prophet is somewhat confusing. However, it does illuminate a prophetic conflict between prophets. Perhaps, the conflict has to do with the fact that the old prophet was aligned with Bethel and the younger was from Judah. I have observed conflicts among believers who align with different prophets and prophetic ministries. They are quick to point out every prophetic word coming forth from their favorite prophetic ministry without any detailed examination. So, we cannot ignore the possibility of such a conflict between these two prophets. The old prophet was emphatic about this prophet and intent on pursuing him.

- 1Kings 13:12-17 And their father said to them, “Which way did he go?” For his sons had seen which way the man of God went who came from Judah. ¹³ Then he said to his sons, “Saddle the donkey for me.” So they saddled the donkey for him; and he rode on it, ¹⁴ and went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak. Then he said to him, “Are you the man of God who came from Judah?” And he said, “I am.” ¹⁵ Then he said to him, “Come home with me and eat bread.” ¹⁶ And he said, “I cannot return with you nor go in with you; neither can I eat bread nor drink water with you in this place. ¹⁷ For I have been told by the word of the LORD, “You shall not eat bread nor drink water there, nor return by going the way you came.’ ”

The old prophet *went after the man of God*. This is a telling statement in itself. Some prophets and prophetic ministries come into conflict and go after one another. And this leads to wrongdoing on both sides. Although the prophet from Judah clearly reiterates his commitment to obedience to his divine assignment, he succumbs to the appeal of the prophet from Bethel. The rest of the account has much to say about this.

1Kings 13:18-32 He said to him, “I too *am* a prophet as you *are*, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the LORD, saying, ‘Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water.’ ” (He was lying to him.) ¹⁹ So he went back with him, and ate bread in his house, and drank water. ²⁰ Now it happened, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came to the prophet who had brought him back; ²¹ and he cried out to the man of God who came from Judah, saying, “Thus says the LORD: ‘Because you have disobeyed the word of the LORD, and have not kept the commandment which the LORD your God commanded you, ²² but you came back, ate bread, and drank water in the place of which *the LORD* said to you, “Eat no bread and drink no water,” your corpse shall not come to the tomb of your fathers.’ ” ²³ So it was, after he had eaten bread and after he had drunk, that he saddled the donkey for him, the prophet whom he had brought back. ²⁴ When he was gone, a lion met him on the road and killed him. And his corpse was thrown on the road, and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse. ²⁵ And there, men passed by and saw the corpse thrown on the road, and the lion standing by the corpse. Then they went and told *it* in the city where the old prophet dwelt. ²⁶ Now when the prophet who had brought him back from the way heard *it*, he said, “It is the man of God who was disobedient to the word of the LORD. Therefore the LORD has delivered him to the lion, which has torn him and killed him, according to the word of the LORD which He spoke to him.” ²⁷ And he spoke to his sons, saying, “Saddle the donkey for me.” So they saddled *it*. ²⁸ Then he went and found his corpse thrown on the road, and the donkey and the lion standing by the corpse. The lion had not eaten the corpse nor torn the donkey. ²⁹ And the prophet took up the corpse of the man of God, laid it on the donkey, and brought it back. So the old prophet came to the city to mourn, and to bury him. ³⁰ Then he laid the corpse in his own tomb; and they mourned over him, *saying*, “Alas, my brother!” ³¹ So it was, after he had buried him, that he spoke to his sons, saying, “When I am dead, then bury me in the tomb where the man of God *is* buried; lay my bones beside his bones. ³² For the saying which he cried out by the word of the LORD against the altar in Bethel, and against all the shrines on the high places which *are* in the cities of Samaria, will surely come to pass.”

This interchange between the two prophets reveals several things. The fact that the younger prophet obeyed the word of the older indicates he considered him to be a fellow prophet of God. In addition, the older prophet takes great care to bury his younger counterpart and refers to him as *my brother* while mourning over his death. He also desired to be buried beside his younger counterpart. Therefore, it is clear that they considered each other to be prophets of God. There is also evidence of a degree of mutual respect between them. This partially explains why the prophet of Judah went back to eat and fellowship with the prophet of Bethel.

He appears to be unaware of his impending peril and the serious nature of this unhealthy alliance.

Two issues stand out in the conflict and interchange between the two prophets of God. One is the disobedience of the prophet of Judah. Prophetic messages in the Bible are often accompanied by instructions to do something, stop doing something, or not to do something. I am taken back at how little obedience exists in response to similar prophetic messages today in churches that allow the operation of prophets and prophetic ministry. I have heard prophetic messages come forth in church services that expose things displeasing to God with clear instructions to repent and the pastor just continues with the planned service. I have also been present when a prophetic message is delivered saying God is ready to heal the sick and the leadership fails to immediately pray for the sick. Instead, they just go on with the planned service. In fairness, I have also been present when leaders have obeyed prophetic instructions without hesitating and there is a notable move of God. Obedience to prophetic messages needs very serious attention in the church today. The second issue that is apparent in the case of these two prophets is the character of the old prophet. Matthew Henry rightly distinguished between a bonafide false prophet and a prophet of God who has been called and trained but has character issues.

“The old prophet’s wickedness. I cannot but call him a false prophet and a bad man, it being much easier to believe that from one of such a bad character should be extorted a confirmation of what the man of God said (as we find, v. 32) than that a true prophet, and a good man, should tell such a deliberate lie as he did, and father it upon God. *A good tree could never bring forth such corrupt fruit.* Perhaps he was trained up among the sons of the prophets, in one of Samuel’s colleges not far off, whence he retained the name of a prophet, but, growing worldly and profane, the spirit of prophecy had departed from him. If he had been a good prophet he would have reproved Jeroboam’s idolatry, and not have suffered his sons to attend his altars, as, it should seem, they did.”¹⁵

The Bible makes it clear that *he was lying to him* when he said *an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord to bring him back to his house that he may eat bread and drink water.* This reveals obvious character issues with the old prophet of Bethel. Many biblical scholars deal with the disobedience of the prophet from Judah but ignore the character flaws and wrongdoing of the old prophet of Bethel. The old prophet was a bad prophet. Not only did the old prophet lie to the prophet from Judah but he also provided his own donkey for him to ride home on. Although the prophet from Judah should have discerned these things and obeyed the specific instructions of God, the old prophet did him no service. Matthew Henry does a good job of balancing the issues of these two prophets.

“The old prophet that had deluded him, as if he would make him some amends for the wrong he had done him or help to prevent the mischief threatened him, furnished him with an ass to ride home on; but by the way a lion set upon him, and killed him, v. 23, 24. He did but return back to refresh himself when he was hungry, and behold he must die for it; see 1 Sam. xiv. 43. But we must consider, 1. That his offence was great, and it would by no means justify him that he was drawn into it by a lie; he could not be so certain of the countermand sent by another as he was of the command given to himself, nor had he any ground to think that the command would be recalled, when the reason of it remained in force, which was that he might testify his detestation of the wickedness of that place. He had great reason to suspect the honesty of this old prophet, who did not himself bear his testimony, nor did God think fit to make use of him as a witness against the idolatry of the city he lived in. However, he should have taken time to beg direction from God, and not have complied so soon.”¹⁶

Although the account of these two prophets provides a clear warning from God concerning disobedience to His direct commands and instructions, there is no indication that the prophet

¹⁵ Accordance Bible Software (2019) Oaktree Software, INC: *Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Matthew Henry, 1Kings13:11-22, paragraph I

¹⁶ Ibid. 1Kings 13:23-34, paragraph I.

from Judah received eternal punishment after he died. The disobedience, though serious, may have been similar to that of Moses at the waters of Meribah (Num. 20:2-13). Review these Bible study notes to see the similarity:

“Moses was forbidden to lead God’s people into Canaan because he had not carefully followed the Lord’s command (compare v. 8 with v. 11. Moses was a spiritual leader of God’s people, the one through whom God gave the law. His responsibility to obey the Lord’s word was greater because of his greater position and influence (Jas. 3:1). (1) Moses’ sin was twofold: First, he spoke rashly as if God’s glory and power had their source in himself and Aaron (v. 10; Ps 106:33). Second, he then acted rashly by angrily striking the rock twice rather than speaking to it as God had instructed (v.11).”¹⁷

Of course, Moses’ disobedience did not result in eternal punishment because he appears in glory with Elijah at the transfiguration of Jesus (Luke 9:30-31). I believe a similar case could be made for the prophet of Judah. Although the lion killed him, the Bible says, *his corpse was thrown on the road, and the donkey stood by it. The lion also stood by the corpse* (1Kings 13:24). People who passed by saw and reported the scene. The old prophet himself went and saw *the lion had not eaten the corpse nor torn the donkey* (1Kings 13:28). The old prophet must have seen something in this highly unusual scene because he is able to retrieve the body, mourn over the prophet, bury him, and give instructions for his own burial with the prophet of Judah. How could the old prophet be at peace knowing what he had done to cause the death of a good prophet of God? Was he attempting to make amends for his behavior after the death of the man of God? Or did he suddenly realize that God was sending him a warning of his own pending judgment by miraculously protecting the corpse of His prophet from Judah? All of these things could be possible with the old prophet. I believe the conflict places him in some trouble with God.

The conflict between the two prophets we have been discussing in this section has serious implications for prophets and prophetic ministries in this generation. There are too many bad habits that have crept into believers today as a result of an unwillingness of prophets to confront sin and call for repentance. There are good and well-trained prophets and veteran prophetic ministries that are not fully obeying God in this regard. A careless attitude toward God’s word that leads to an acceptance of things that contradict instructions and standards revealed in God’s written word makes this prophetic conflict applicable today. A prophetic climate that fails to reveal the consequences of disobedience to God’s direct commands is one of the reasons for the current moral and spiritual failure in this generation. This is why I believe God desires a prophetic reset that realigns with His word.

Persecution of Prophets

The persecution of prophets is nothing new. It began from the beginning with the blood of Abel, according to Jesus. Let’s take a closer look again at these words of Jesus addressing the persecution of prophets:

- Luke 11:49-51 Therefore the wisdom of God also said, “I will send them prophets and apostles, and *some of them they will kill and persecute,*”⁵⁰ that the blood of all the prophets which was shed from the foundation of the world may be required of this generation,⁵¹ from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation. (See also Matt. 23:34-36)

It is easy to overlook that Jesus listed Abel among *all the prophets*. I did not see this at first myself, but then realized it was necessary to adhere to what Jesus said. I also noticed that Jesus included apostles in his prophetic message that *some of them they will kill and*

¹⁷ Fire Bible Global Study Edition. Study note Num. 20:12, p. 280.

persecute. Furthermore, it is *the wisdom of God* that is speaking. Therefore, it is conclusive that Jesus considered Abel to be a prophet. What makes Abel a prophet? This is not an easy question to answer since there is no prophetic message attributed to Abel in the Bible. Let's take a look at what the Bible does say about Abel. Keep in mind that Jesus said he was a prophet and that he is the first prophet to be persecuted and killed.

- Gen. 4:1-8 Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, "I have acquired a man from the LORD."² Then she bore again, this time his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, but Cain was a tiller of the ground.³ And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.⁴ Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering,⁵ but He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.⁶ So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?⁷ If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire *is* for you, but you should rule over it."⁸ Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.
- Gen. 4:25-26 And Adam knew his wife again, and she bore a son and named him Seth, "For God has appointed another seed for me instead of Abel, whom Cain killed."²⁶ And as for Seth, to him also a son was born; and he named him Enosh. Then *men* began to call on the name of the LORD.
- Heb. 11:4 By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, through which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts; and through it he being dead still speaks.
- Heb. 12:22-24 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels,²³ to the general assembly and church of the firstborn *who are* registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect,²⁴ to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than *that of* Abel.

Note in the beginning Cain talked with Abel but there is no mention of Abel responding or talking with him. Instead, it was God who did the talking with Cain and it revolved around doing what is pleasing to God. It is obvious that Cain had lost the battle of resisting sin because he had become *very angry* and it was all over his face before God talked with him. This was not just a little anger, but an intensive anger that was a raging fire. Therefore, Abel was declared righteous and Cain was not. Even Jude talks about the way of Cain as an evil path in relation to false teachers.

- Jude 11 Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit, and perished in the rebellion of Korah.

On the other hand, Abel is called righteous by what he did; not what he said. This means Abel was a prophet by his actions and not his words. The references in Hebrews indicate his action of bringing a blood sacrifice as an offering to God pointed prophetically to Jesus. And this prophetic action *still speaks*. The following excerpt from an article entitled, *Abel, the Silent Prophet* reveals how this one prophetic act speaks to us today.

"Abel was a prophet by his actions, not by his words. Abel prophesied by offering a sacrifice that pleased God. Abel's sacrifice was prophetic in two ways. First it showed that without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins and second, it pointed to the atoning blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God. Cain's sacrifice did neither. Cain tried to bring the work of his own hands to God as a sacrifice. God rejected Cain's offering of his own labor, but accepted Abel's offering of another living being. Cain killed Abel over this issue. Just like Cain, it is those who trust in their own righteousness that persecute those who instead put their trust in a merciful God and the blood sacrifice that He requires."¹⁸

¹⁸ Mark S. Haughwout. Back to the Bible: *Abel, the Silent Prophet*. February 19, 2014. [Abel, The Silent Prophet \(markhaughwout.com\)](http://markhaughwout.com).

The above understanding becomes even clearer when you compare the way of Cain with the way of Abel, and with Jesus.

The Way of Cain	The Way of Abel	Jesus
Offered vegetables	Offered an animal	Offered himself
No blood shed	Blood was shed	Blood was shed
No forgiveness of sin	Forgiveness of sin	Forgiveness of sin
Trusted his own ideas	Abel trusted God	We must trust God
God rejected Cain; his offering confused the illustration	God accepted Abel; his offering illustrated what Jesus would do on the cross	God will accept us; the death of Jesus completes the prophetic picture

Abel may have acted like other prophets urging his family and especially his brother to repent of their sins, but there is no direct evidence in the Bible of anything he said. The prophetic picture, however, is clear. Abel and Jesus were both persecuted and killed.¹⁹ Those who by faith prophetically point people to Jesus will be hated, persecuted, and some will be killed. This is especially true of those who in word and/or deed align their prophetic ministry with the biblical understanding of prophets. Abel was the first martyr according to Jesus and the Early Church. Sadly, he was not, nor will he be the last. Prophets and prophecies are a vital part of God's plan for the church. Jesus confirms that their persecution began with Abel and continues today. Prophets of God are endangered and will be persecuted in every generation.

¹⁹ Interestingly, neither Abel nor Jesus had children regardless of what some false teachers or movies want to say today. Cain's offspring of seven generations all perished in the flood.

CHAPTER 5: PROPHETIC OPERATION

Biblical Ways of Receiving Prophecy

Most churches acknowledge the fact that prophets and prophetic ministry is in the Bible. They may even provide some teaching about prophets. However, when it comes to prophetic operation it is another story. In this final chapter I want to present practical biblical ways prophets and prophetic ministry operate in the church. The Bible presents three fields of prophetic operation for the New Testament Church and five ways of receiving prophetic ministry.

Three Fields of Operation	Five Ways of Receiving
1. Office of Prophet	1. Prophetic Office (Eph. 4:11; Heb. 1:1)
2. Manifestation Gift of Prophecy	2. Gift of Prophecy (1Cor. 12:10)
3. Motivational Gift of Prophecy	3. Spirit of Prophecy (Rev. 19:10)
	4. Prophecy of Scripture (2Pet. 1:19-21)
	5. Prophetic Presbytery (1Tim. 4:14; Heb. 1:1-2; Acts 13:1-3)

The church needs prophetic ministry like never before. Therefore, it is important that you give strict adherence to God's word and overcome any denominational teachings that diminish the operation of prophecy in the church today. The Early Church had a burning desire for the operation of prophecy. What did Paul mean when he urged believers in Corinth to *desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy* and to *desire earnestly to prophesy* (1Cor. 14:1, 39)? The Greek *zealo* (zealous) means to *be zealous for, to burn with desire, to pursue ardently, to desire eagerly or intensely*. This is not the spiritual environment in most churches today. I believe this can change, but it will take a prophetic reset to do so.

The three fields of prophetic operation are clearly revealed in the Scriptures. Look at the following verses and see if you can confirm the identify of each.

- Eph. 4:11-12 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...
- Rom. 12:4-8 For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, *let us use it in our ministering*; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
- 1Cor. 12:4-11 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶ And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another

prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

The value of the operation of prophesy in the church is seen in each of the above fields of operation. You can easily identify the three.

1. Ascension Gift of Prophet (Eph. 4:11). Called Ascension gift because the gift of prophets was given to the church after Jesus ascended. Also, referred to as leadership or ministry gift, 5-Fold gift, Eph. 4:11 gift of prophet or the ministry office of prophet.
2. Motivational Gift of Prophecy (Rom. 12:6). Called motivational gift because it operates *in proportion to our faith*.
3. Manifestation Gift of Prophecy (1Cor. 12:10). Called manifestation gift because it is given by *the manifestation of the Spirit* (1Cor. 12:7).

The Bible presents each of the above in the context of gifts.²⁰ The Spirit Filled Life Bible presents an excellent summary of these three categories of gifts beginning with the Ephesians 4:11 leadership gifts or offices of ministry. This helps us see how the prophetic fits into the overall function of gifts in God's operational plan for the church.

"The five ministry offices listed here are gifts that Christ gave for the nurture and equipping of His church, not for hierarchical control or ecclesiastical competition. Beyond the distinct role filled by the original founding apostles (Eph. 2:20), the NT mentions enough additional apostles to indicate that his office, with that of prophets, is as continuing a ministry in the church as the more commonly acknowledged offices of evangelists, pastors, and teachers...Uniqueness is manifested in individuals according to the varied gifts God the Father has given them (Rom. 12:3-8) and joined with whatever gifts the Holy Spirit distributes to or through them (1Cor. 12:4-11). The distinct gifts of the Father (Rom. 12), the Son (Eph. 4), and the Spirit (1Cor. 12) ought not to be confused, nor should any of the five ministry offices in this text be limited to the operation of any particular gift."²¹

It is alarming to note how differently churches view prophetic operation today in light of the gifts the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit have given. Jesus would not have given prophets and prophetic ministry to the church without expecting its full operation. It is uncertain if the new generation church fully understands this. Did you also notice that the operation of prophets and prophecy is the only ministry that appears in each of the three primary lists of gifts? I believe this speaks of the unquestionable value God assigns to the operation of the prophetic in the church. Church leaders and believers must understand this. If they don't, few will mature beyond nominal levels of spiritual growth. Prophets and prophetic ministry are a vital and indispensable part of God's plan for the church. The lack of maturity and unity of faith seen in the church today is directly related to a general devaluing of prophetic operation. This is why I keep expressing the need for a prophetic reset to realign new generation leaders and believers to God's word. A prophetic reset will lead to a willingness again to receive prophecy and to operate in the prophetic according to God's order and design. We can now turn to the biblical ways of receiving prophecy.

Five ways are revealed in the Bible for receiving prophecy. I identified them earlier for you. Let us take them one by one. The first is the prophetic office. For some, the term office may mean a position of someone higher than others. This is not the case with the office of prophet. Like the other Ephesians 4:11 ministry gifts, the emphasis is upon function and operation in ministry as a servant leader. It is not a hierarchical leadership structure. We have

²⁰ The plural *Charismata* or *Charismaton* (gifts of grace and spiritual endowment) is used in Rom. 12:6 and 1Cor. 12:4 whereas *domata* or *didomi* (gifts freely given as presents) appear in Eph. 4:8, 11.

²¹ New Spirit Filled Bible (2018). Study notes p. 1716.

already established in our study of prophets and prophetic ministry, that Jesus is God's supreme revelation to the world. God used prophets to reveal Him to the world.

- Heb. 1:1-4 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, ² has in these last days spoken to us by *His Son*, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; ³ who being the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ⁴ having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

This same Jesus, God's son, gave prophets to the church from His place of majesty *by the word of His power*. Therefore, it is His purpose that we receive through them. How do we receive through the prophetic office? The Bible says prophets along with apostles are foundation builders in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

- Eph. 2:19-22 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, ²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

It is clear from the above reference alone that the operation of the prophetic office is absolutely essential to God's plan for His church. I will go into more detail on this later in the chapter, but it is important here to understand that the ministry office of prophet is a primary means of receiving prophecy and also prophetic training to equip the saints for the work of ministry (Eph. 4:12). The Greek *propheteuo* literally means *to say or speak forth, to foretell events, speak under inspiration, exercise the prophetic office; to proclaim a Divine revelation; to break forth under sudden impulse in lofty discourse or in praise of Divine counsels.*²² There appears to be two aspects of this prophetic function of prophets:

1. **Forth telling** – speaking forth a message from God.
2. **Foretelling** – declaring something that will take place in the future.

These are significant features often displayed by prophets. It is important to understand that all may prophesy but not all are prophets. For example, the prophet Agabus foretold about a severe famine that would come upon Judea and the world.

- Acts 11:27-30 And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. ²⁹ Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. ³⁰ This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

This reveals that the role and operation of prophets was recognized in the Early Church. They were following the team leadership structure and operational instructions of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church. Therefore, the new generation church needs to do the same. The predictive nature of the prophetic operation of Agabus was *by the Spirit* which confirms such foretelling is established within the prophetic office. The following explanation is helpful.

²² Kevin Conner. p. 154.

“Apparently, predictive prophecy about specific future events was the exclusive ministry of “the prophet,” while in 1Cor. 14:1 Paul encouraged everyone to prophesy for the general edification or encouragement of the church (1Cor. 14:3). The Scriptures, then, seem to distinguish between the gift of prophecy and the office of the prophet.”²³

It is important to point out that this prophecy from Agabus propelled the church into action. Almost all the principles and guidelines in the New Testament regarding giving and receiving originate from this one prophecy. Can you find anything like it today even among those who recognize the ministry office of prophet? Like Agabus, prophets are front-runners. Their ministry helps the church to get ahead of things that are coming. They are also exhorters. This is what Paul and Silas exhorted the Philippian jailer to do when he asked, ***Sirs, what must I do to be saved?***

- **Acts 16:31-34** So they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household.”³² Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed *their* stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.³⁴ Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household.

Remember, the Bible says Silas was a prophet (Acts 15:32). Therefore, he is exhorting along with Paul. This also reveals that prophets are focused on global evangelism in partnership with the other fivefold ministries. The fact they are based and sent forth by the church again speaks volumes about just how much the church needs their ministry in every generation.

- **Acts 11:27** And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch.
- **Acts 13:1-3** Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul.² As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.”³ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.

Note how this involved a plurality of prophets in the church. Dr. Bill Hamon, a highly respected Bible teacher on apostolic and prophetic operation in the church provides an accurate and mature understanding of the prophetic office. It is a gift extension of Christ Himself!

“But the office of prophet is authorized and anointed to flow in the areas of guidance, instruction, rebuke, judgment, and revelation-whatever Christ chooses to speak for the purifying and perfecting of His Church. The prophets are especially anointed to perceive what is next on God’s agenda for restoration. Then they lift their voices like trumpets to alert, enlighten, and charge the Church to conquer that part of the truth to be restored at that time. The prophets are thus the eyes of the Body of Christ, the trumpeters in the army of the Lord to give a clear sound revealing the desires of the Commander-in-Chief.”²⁴

It is Christ’s desire to prepare His bride, the church. The church cannot be purified or perfected without the operation of the office of the prophet. One other aspect revealed in the operation of the prophetic office is what has become known as personal prophecy. We see Jesus Himself displaying this prophetic function with the Samaritan woman (John 4:16:18). He also demonstrated personal prophecy in sending Ananias to Saul after his conversion. A comparison with the personal prophecies given later to Paul by Agabus reveals something very important.

²³ Spirit Filled Life Bible. Study note 11:28, p. 1576.

²⁴ Bill Hamon. *Prophets, Pitfalls, and Principles*, p. 107-108.

Jesus to Ananias

Acts 9:15-16 But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. ¹⁶ For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.”

Agabus to Paul

Acts 21:10-11 And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. ¹¹ When he had come to us, he took Paul’s belt, bound his *own* hands and feet, and said, “Thus says the Holy Spirit, ‘So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.’ ”

Paul was keenly aware of the above prophecies regarding him. He had declared to the Ephesian elders he was *bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.* (Acts 20:22-23). Disciples in Tyre also *told Paul through the Spirit not to go up to Jerusalem* (Acts 21:4). Once Paul arrived in Caesarea and stayed many days in the home of Philip the evangelist²⁵ where Agabus arrived and prophesied, he could not be persuaded to cancel his journey to Jerusalem.

- Acts 21:12-14 Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem. ¹³ Then Paul answered, “What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.” ¹⁴ So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, “The will of the Lord be done.”

Many believers today would be troubled if they experienced what appears to be conflicting messages in these biblical examples through personal prophecy. However, the prophecies served to prepare Paul for what was coming and to strengthen his resolve even if it involved imprisonment and death. He said he was ready to be bound and to die for the name of the Lord Jesus. How many of us can say that today? The personal prophecies Paul received were consistent and he knew the will of God on the matter. The important thing to understand here is that personal prophecy typically bears witness and confirms things the Lord has already laid upon the heart of the one receiving. The operation of personal prophecy has been widespread among modern day prophets, prophetic ministries, and believers in general. Some exclusively operate in personal prophecy. At one time, it appeared almost everyone was seeking to receive a personal prophecy. There were some excesses and abuses. However, I believe this has leveled off somewhat and the operation of personal prophecy has come into a healthier balance.

The spiritual gift of prophecy is another means of receiving prophecy according to the word of God. We see the operation of this gift as part of nine manifestation gifts of the Holy Spirit.

- 1Cor. 12:7-11 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

Note that I have underlined three of the nine gifts listed above. This is because they all represent what is commonly referred to as *the vocal gifts* of the Spirit or those which speak or

²⁵ Note: Specific mention of Philip’s four daughters who prophesied confirms again the prominent operation of prophecy among believers from house to house.

say something. Paul connects these three gifts with the operation of prophecy in the Corinthian church:

- 1Cor. 14:3-6 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. ⁴ He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. ⁵ I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies *is* greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification. ⁶ But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?

Note how prophecy comes forth and is received through both the gift of prophecy and tongues with interpretation.²⁶ Paul goes to great lengths to urge believers who *speak in a tongue pray that he may interpret* (1Cor. 14:13). Hamon concludes that *the gift of prophecy operates within the saints or a minister for the general upbuilding, encouraging, and comforting of the Church.*²⁷ Consider this working definition for the gift of prophecy: *A spiritual message or revelation directly from God that is spoken under the prompting of the Holy Spirit to encourage, exhort and comfort others.* What does this mean?

- ***oikodome*** - (edify) speaks to the advancement of the spiritual house/structure. Builds up/edifies the corporate body of Christ; the spiritual family.
- ***paraklesis*** - (exhort) calling for something with earnestness to persuade, exhort, and instruct, and incite to action what the Spirit is calling for. (A cheerful and supportive influence upon the body of Christ).
- ***paramuthia*** - (comfort) summon for assistance to comfort by dispelling grief and discouragement by an impartation for divine strength. (This person is used as a positive force to cheer the body of Christ on) Isaiah 40:1 Comfort My people!

The church forfeits the above benefits when it limits the prophetic operation of the gift of prophecy in the church. The overall emphasis is clearly on *the edification of the church* (1Cor. 14:12). In addition, many believers today appear unaware of the operational instructions involving the vocal gifts of prophecy, tongues, and interpretation. This is particularly the case when prophecy comes through tongues and interpretation. In fact, Paul gives the Corinthian Church both general and detailed instructions when it comes to the operation of tongues and prophecy.

Operational Instructions (1Cor. 14)

- 14:13 – Pray to interpret
- 14:3-19 – Combination of tongues and interpretation edifies the church
- 14:20-22 – A sign to unbelievers
- 14:26-28 – Spiritual discernment is necessary
- 14:27, 40 – Limit to 2-3 believers in orderly manner
- 14:32-33 – Prophets evaluate
- 14:39 – Don't forbid tongues in the church

The above instructions represent God's prophetic and operational order in the church. Seldom are these instructions understood or followed today. I believe this is one reason there

²⁶ Interpretation is not a word for word translation, but a clear understanding or meaning of what the Spirit is speaking to the church for edification.

²⁷ Hamon. p. 107.

is confusion about prophetic operation in the church. Paul concludes with a very interesting point that must be taken seriously by the church of this generation.

- **1Cor. 14:37** If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord. ³⁸ But if anyone is ignorant, let him be ignorant. ³⁹ Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. ⁴⁰ Let all things be done decently and in order.

Does the church really understand that these instructions regarding prophets and prophecy *are the commandments of the Lord*? Ignorance is no excuse. This key verse analysis of verses 39 and 40 gives us a deeper and richer picture of what Paul is communicating to the church.

1. **Brothers** (Greek *adelphoi*) masculine plural, but Paul typically uses this word in connection to any fellow believer with the adjoining “my” (*moi*) following, meaning my brothers and sisters.
2. **Desire earnestly** (Greek *zeloo*) means to burn with zeal and it’s a present active imperative verb. (Note: the fulfillment of Joel’s prophecy assigns this gift to all generations (See Acts 2:17-21)
3. **Prophecy** (Greek *propheteuo*) speak forth by divine inspiration
4. **Do not forbid** (*me koluo*) to hinder, prevent, forbid; to withhold a thing from anyone; to deny or refuse one something.
5. **Speak with tongues** (*laleo...glossa*) to utter a voice or emit a sound; to speak (Note: This is clearly out loud)
6. **Decently and in order** (Greek *euschemonos...taxis*) becomingly, properly, decently...an arranging, an order (Note: Talking about God’s order of things as indicated in the guidelines provided in Scripture)

The spirit of prophecy is another way we receive prophecy. This is a very important and overlooked aspect of prophetic operation in the church. We are introduced to the spirit of prophecy in the book of Revelation.

- **Rev. 19:10** And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “*See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*”

This simply means *Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*. True prophecy is its testimony or witness to the Lord Jesus Christ. John appears tempted to worship the angel. Perhaps there is a warning here that idolatry would arise in the church, but there is a much greater truth here in regard to worship and prophecy. The spirit of prophecy is not a gift or office of ministry. It is a special anointing from Christ Himself for a specific time. You may be surprised that the spirit of prophecy can come forth in prophetic song and prophetic instrumentation.

- **Eph. 5:17-21** Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹ submitting to one another in the fear of God.
- **Col. 3:16-17** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. ¹⁷ And *whatever* you do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.
- **Isa. 30:32** And *in* every place where the staff of punishment passes, Which the LORD lays on him, *It* will be with tambourines and harps; And in battles of brandishing He will fight with it.

The above verses reveal that believers prophetically speak, teach, and admonish each other in singing *psalms and hymns and spiritual songs* worshiping Jesus. Have you ever understood church worship services in this way? In addition, the musical instruments are being used by God to cause the devil to tremble according to the prophet Isaiah. All of this takes place when everything overwhelmingly bears witness to Jesus. Look at this excellent summary of the spirit of prophecy:

“True prophecy is using one’s voice or communication to deliver a message from God – something that honors him and often reveals something of his plans and purposes. Prophecy can inform, challenge, predict, warn or encourage people regarding those purposes. Ultimately, all true, godly prophecy is related to Jesus and his work of restoring people to a personal and eternal relationship with God. As such, all true prophecy honors Christ and calls us to be in right relationship with him.”²⁸

The ministry office of prophet, the gift of prophecy, and the spirit of prophecy are important prophetic operations by which we receive prophecy. There are two more ways of receiving prophecy that are equally important. One is what the Bible refers to as the prophecy of Scripture.

- **2Pet. 1:19-21** And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; ²⁰ knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, ²¹ for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as *they were moved by the Holy Spirit*.

The prophecy of Scripture is so important that it is something God wants you to know first. What does He want you to know? He wants you to see and understand that *no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation*. This is saying that one’s own interpretation of a prophecy cannot be used as a substitute for the written word of God. It is because the Bible is authoritative and God-breathed. Jesus said *the Scripture cannot be broken* (John 10:35) and He challenged religious leaders with *Have you not even read this Scripture?* (Mark 12:10). Paul also concluded while chained in the midst of severe persecution saying, *but the word of God is not chained* (2Tim. 2:9). We have seen in this study that prophets and prophetic ministry flows from Genesis to Revelation. The prophecy of Scripture cannot be replaced with human explanations and applications that reflect the will and desire of man. The prophetic word confirms Scripture and Scripture confirms the prophetic word. Prophetic utterances only have value when confirmed by Scripture. All of this is securely connected with the moving of the Holy Spirit. The prophecy of Scripture also involves prophetic preaching. I have said many times that this generation has a rather casual approach to the Scriptures. The preaching seems weak and lacks anointing of the Holy Spirit. Believers are not hearing from church pulpits what is needed. Preaching that reflects a biblical understanding and operation of the prophetic will take the church to a new and transformative place where the moving of the Holy Spirit will be evident to all.

One final way of receiving prophecy is through the prophetic presbytery or eldership. We see this prophetic operation in several places in the Early Church. The following are two such situations:

- **1Tim. 4:14** Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.
- **Acts 13:1-3** Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch,

²⁸ Fire Bible, Global Study Edition. Study note 19:10, p. 2558.

and Saul. ² As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, “Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” ³ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.

The above verses indicate that a prophetic presbytery involves the laying on of hands with prophecy by men and women who meet the qualifications of a presbyter, elder, or overseer. This is clearly a biblical practice of the New Testament Church that is also being continued by a number of churches today. Note also that it is a team operation of great prophetic significance to both the leaders involved and most importantly the Holy Spirit. The leadership team in each situation ministers prophetic revelation to those called to leadership ministry in the church or being sent forth by the Holy Spirit on strategic mission operations. I believe there is a cry in the hearts of young leaders today for a team of 5-Fold leaders to lay hands and prophesy over them. The Holy Spirit is saying now is the time for this prophetic operation to confirm and activate by the Spirit the gift and plan of God upon young emerging leaders.

The operation of prophets and prophetic ministry in the ways we have presented in this chapter comes with some biblical rules and instructions. First, let’s take a look at five rules related to prophesying that the Apostle Paul presents.

Prophetic Rule	Biblical References
Desire to prophesy	1Cor. 14:1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual <i>gifts</i> , but especially that you may prophesy.
Desire to edify the church	1Cor. 14:3-5 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. ⁴ He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. ⁵ I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies <i>is</i> greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification. 1Cor. 14:12 Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual <i>gifts</i> , <i>let it be</i> for the edification of the church <i>that</i> you seek to excel.
Prophecy according to or in proportion to your faith	Rom. 12:6-8 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, <i>let us use them</i> : if prophecy, <i>let us prophesy</i> in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, <i>let us use it</i> in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.
Be subject to other prophets	1Cor. 14:32-33 And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. ³³ For God is not <i>the author</i> of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

Although the above prophetic rules or guidelines were given in the context of the operation of spiritual gifts and specifically to the operation of the vocal gifts of the Spirit, they apply to the overall function of prophets and prophecy. Spiritual leaders of this generation have the responsibility in Christ to teach and activate the prophetic in the church.

Biblical Ways of Testing Prophecy

The Bible provides us not only with ways of receiving prophecy but also ways of testing prophecy. There seems to be little testing of prophecy today. It appears like many accept prophetic messages more on the grounds of who or what favorite prophetic ministry has published them rather than their content. The Bible indicates that all things must be tested.

- 1Th. 5:19-22 Do not quench the Spirit. ²⁰ Do not despise prophecies. ²¹ Test all things; hold fast what is good. ²² Abstain from every form of evil.

I see a very relevant connection between the above imperative admonitions. First, the Holy Spirit's operation is presented by the image of fire. ***Do not quench***, therefore, refers to putting out or reducing the flames of a burning fire. In this case, it is talking about the flames of the Holy Spirit. It is significant that this first admonition is immediately followed by the second regarding prophecy. ***Do not despise prophecies*** means making something utterly nothing or the least esteemed among other things. Immediately, there is the charge to test everything, seize and retain the good, and to keep yourself from all appearances of evil. ***Test all things***, which includes prophecies, refers to an examination of a given prophecy with spiritual discernment that will prove whether the given prophecy is acceptable or not. What was the Thessalonian Church guilty of that led the Holy Spirit to speak through the Apostle Paul such strong admonitions? Here is a helpful explanation:

"The commands Do not quench the Spirit and Do not despise prophecies, imply, by their form in Greek, that the Thessalonians were guilty of both. Paul counters these attitudes by endorsing rested, proven, and validated charismatic activities – anticipating the counsels of 1 Cor. 12-14, which later he was to write back to Corinth, where he was when he wrote these words. To quench carries the idea of dampening the flame of Holy Spirit fire, which is poured out to purify, enlighten, warm, melt and consume. Quenching may be either by an inadequate, chilled response or an exaggerated disruptive response."²⁹

I believe both of the above responses are active in churches today. Many pray for revival only to devalue the very things that the Bible says are consistent with the operation of the Holy Spirit. Others pray for revival and open the gates to the operation of the Spirit only to ignore specific biblical rules and guidelines. All is allowed in that environment, and everything is attributed to the operation of Holy Spirit. Nothing is out of bounds. However, the Psalmist prays, ***Revive me according to Your word*** (Psa. 119:25b) and ***Revive me in Your way*** (v. 37b), and ***Establish Your word to Your servant*** (v. 38). Therefore, know that all things, including revival and prophetic operation, have to be within the boundaries of God's word! And nowhere is the operation of prophecy eliminated in the Bible! Instead, there is the admonition to ***test all things***.

How do you test prophecies? Dr. Kevin Conner in his classic work on the New Testament Church presents seven tests that can be applied to prophets and prophecy.³⁰

- **Test of the spirit.** Did the prophetic message display Christ and the Holy Spirit or something sensual, fleshly, or even demonic?

1John 4:1-3 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world. ² By this you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is of God, ³ and every spirit that does not confess that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is not of God. And this is the *spirit* of the Antichrist, which you have heard was coming, and is now already in the world.

- **Test of fulfillment.** Did the prophetic word come to pass?

Deut. 18:22 ... "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.

- **Test of worship.** Did the prophetic word lead one away from the worship of Christ alone or even slightly in a different direction?

²⁹ Spirit Filled Life Bible. Study note 5:19, 20, p. 1756.

³⁰ Kevin Conner. *The Church in the New Testament* (Portland, OR.: City Bible Publishing, 1982), p. 167-168.

Deut. 13:1-5 NIV If a prophet, or one who foretells by dreams, appears among you and announces to you a sign or wonder, ² and if the sign or wonder spoken of takes place, and the prophet says, "Let us follow other gods" (gods you have not known) "and let us worship them," ³ you must not listen to the words of that prophet or dreamer. The LORD your God is testing you to find out whether you love him with all your heart and with all your soul. ⁴ It is the LORD your God you must follow, and him you must revere. Keep his commands and obey him; serve him and hold fast to him. ⁵ That prophet or dreamer must be put to death for inciting rebellion against the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery. That prophet or dreamer tried to turn you from the way the LORD your God commanded you to follow. You must purge the evil from among you.

- Test of doctrine. Is the prophetic word in harmony and alignment with the word of God?

1John 4:4-6 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. ⁵ They are of the world. Therefore they speak as of the world, and the world hears them. ⁶ We are of God. He who knows God hears us; he who is not of God does not hear us. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

- Test of fruit. Does the prophet have godly character and holiness in living?

Matt 7:15-23 "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. ¹⁶ "You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? ¹⁷ "Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. ¹⁸ "A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. ¹⁹ "Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ "Therefore by their fruits you will know them. ²¹ "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² "Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' ²³ "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'

- Test of covetousness. Is there a desire for personal gain or finances displayed by the prophetic messenger?

2Pet 2:1-3 But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, *and* bring on themselves swift destruction. ² And many will follow their destructive ways, because of whom the way of truth will be blasphemed. ³ By covetousness they will exploit you with deceptive words; for a long time their judgment has not been idle, and their destruction does not slumber.

- Test of ministry to the people. Does the prophetic word turn people to the Lord?

Jer. 23:18-23 For who has stood in the counsel of the LORD, And has perceived and heard His word? Who has marked His word and heard *it*? ¹⁹ Behold, a whirlwind of the LORD has gone forth in fury-- A violent whirlwind! It will fall violently on the head of the wicked. ²⁰ The anger of the LORD will not turn back Until He has executed and performed the thoughts of His heart. In the latter days you will understand it perfectly. ²¹ "I have not sent these prophets, yet they ran. I have not spoken to them, yet they prophesied. ²² But if they had stood in My counsel, And had caused My people to hear My words, Then they would have turned them from their evil way And from the evil of their doings. ²³ "Am I a God near at hand," says the LORD, "And not a God afar off?"

The above biblical tests need to be surrounded by much prayer, however, there are times when a prophetic word comes forth that it immediately becomes obvious that something is amiss or that the Spirit is speaking something that must be acted upon without delay. At other times, spiritual leaders need to pray and consult with one another to properly weigh a given prophetic word. Spiritual leaders often find it challenging to test prophecies and publicly announce why a prophetic word is unacceptable. They also find it most uncomfortable to

bring correction to the one who has given an errant message. Therefore, they are tempted to just let it stand unchallenged knowing that most will not remember it after a short period of time. Although I can understand the reluctance to test prophecies and deal with those that fall short of obvious biblical tests, this trend will not produce a healthy environment for prophetic operation in the church. Now let us take a look at some practical examples to help us test prophecies.

I recall a woman named Jessica (not her real name). We were experiencing a strong move of the Spirit in the church and encouraged believers to operate in spiritual gifts including the prophetic gifts. My wife and I had met Jessica and helped her with some clothing needs. She attended church for a period of time and began to operate in the prophetic. However, we began with others to question the spirit behind the prophetic utterances. There was a notable change of voice when she prophesied. It became deep like a male voice. My wife and I first visited her to discuss things and then I followed up with the elders to minister correction. As we attempted to minister to her, she suddenly began to speak in tongues and then interpret. I heard these words from her, "*Ta-Torah!, Ta-Torah!, Ta-Torah!, Preach the Torah!, Preach the Torah!*" Looking straight at me she said, "*The Lord is sending you to Israel. Torah! Torah! Preach the Torah!*". Immediately, I heard the voice of the Holy Spirit speak to my spirit. "*I have not sent you nor will I ever send you to preach the Torah. I've called you to preach the Gospel!*" I stopped her right then and repeated the words of the Holy Spirit. She responded, "*Oh, you know what I meant.*" We called her to repent and that she would be required to have additional prophetic training before she prophesied again in the church. We never saw Jessica again.

What tests of prophecy do you see applied to the above example? Obviously, there is the test of the spirit whether the prophetic operation is representative of the Spirit, the flesh, or Satan. Often when there are some signs of the flesh in a prophetic operation it is a teachable moment, but when you see what was displayed in this example, it is a different and more serious matter. It is common for some fleshly elements to get in the way, but in most cases, this can be overcome with sound biblical training and oversight in the prophetic. I have found that those who refuse such training and oversight end up operating much the same way as in the example. The test of doctrine or Scripture is also evident. The prophetic words Jessica spoke were clearly out of sync with the preaching of the Gospel. Other tests of prophets that warrant our attention in this example are the test of worship and the test of ministry to the people. Believers who came to worship the Lord were exposed to a very weird sounding prophetic utterance. This alone diminished worship of Christ even among the least mature in the body of Christ. And, if that was not enough, anyone who came seeking God would be turned away from their hunger and thirst for the Lord. It is a serious situation when leaders fail to test prophecies in the church. They allow unacceptable prophecies to stand without godly examination. There is the danger that people desiring to prophesy will conclude: *If that is what the operation of the Holy Spirit in prophecy is like, then count me out!*

The testing of prophecy needs to be done with grace accompanied by a thorough knowledge of God's word. Although experience in the prophetic is helpful, it is the Scripture that bears the most weight when testing prophecy. Prophetic examination appears somewhat weak in the church today. This is especially true when it comes to the fulfillment of prophecies. A prime example of this occurred in the 2020 presidential election in America. An overwhelming number of prophets and prophetic ministries foretold of a specific outcome. Dr. Michael Brown, host of the nationally syndicated *Line of Fire* radio program, said this following the election, "*I have not heard of a single respected prophetic leader (meaning, within the charismatic church) who prophesied a Biden victory. Not one. To the contrary,*

*every single one of them prophesied a second term for Trump.*³¹ What does it mean when none of these prophecies were fulfilled? Their prophecies dictated and dominated the prayers of intercessors and most of the nation and world for over two years. The prophets were certain they had heard from God. Nevertheless, the absence of fulfillment presented a prophetic dilemma. Brown rightly viewed the dilemma in this way only six days after the 2020 election:

“On the spiritual side, either a multitude of prophetic voices have been jointly misled, prophesying in total unison that Trump will serve a second term. Or the words of these prophetic voices will prove true, shocking the nation with the reality of God.”³²

The prophetic voices did not prove true. So, what is the church to make of this? Although some of these prophets clearly indicated that the prophecy would come about if the church truly prayed, there was overwhelming evidence that the church indeed was earnestly praying worldwide. It was nothing short of a massive outpouring of prayer. The prophetic dilemma, however, appears to be still with us. It becomes rather complicated when you consider that these prophets and prophetic ministries are highly respected. This makes it especially challenging when testing their prophecies. Brown says, *“They are not corrupt preachers. They are not mercenaries. They are God-fearing, Jesus-centered men and women of God. Some of them have excellent track records spanning many years. And every one of them is convinced God showed them He wants Trump to have another four years”*.³³ Although I agree they are fully devoted to Christ and fully believe they heard from God; I must acknowledge that what they prophesied about the election did not materialize unless they somehow missed God’s timing. I do not believe any of them intentionally misled God’s people, but I saw by the Spirit a politicization of intercession that took the focus of many away from Jesus. This involves the test of ministry to people and the testimony of Jesus as the spirit of prophecy. I have discovered in these situations it is best to humbly bow before the Lord and seek greater understanding about what He is doing. Brown makes mention of a respected pastor who concluded this:

“When I pray, I keep having it impressed on me. I don’t often invoke the prophetic, but I believe I have heard from heaven. Trump is done. After all the court fights, he will no longer be president. God has allowed his removal because of the idolatry of the church. God used Trump for four years, but like Gideon’s ephod, an idol was made of the tool (Judg. 8:2). God will not share His glory, nor the affection of His bride.”³⁴

I believe the above prophetic statement is worthy of prayerful reflection. Sometimes the testing of prophecy concludes with an encouragement just to pray fervently for God’s perfect will to come to pass. Remember, some warned Paul by the Spirit not to go to Jerusalem. What they spoke by the Spirit did not come to pass and they could not persuade Paul. What was their conclusion? The Bible says this about them, ***we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done*** (Acts 21:14).

This next example involves testing a prophetic vision received by a veteran prophet and ministry. This will be a working example for you. I ask you to first read the prophecy in Appendix 2. Here is a preview to give you some background to the vision and prophecy. I

³¹ Michael Brown. Charisma News: *The Presidential Election: Looking at Corruption, Deception, Prophecies*, [The Presidential Election: Looking at Corruption, Deception, Prophecies – Charisma News](#). 11Nov. 2020.

³² Michael Brown.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Ibid.

omit the name of the prophet so you can test the prophecy without prejudice. One Christian radio show featured the prophet and gave this description:

“In December 2018, Prophetic Seer, _____, was summoned into the Courtroom of Heaven to serve as a Recorder. In this show _____ shares how he was caught up for three hours and entered Heaven’s Court, through what he describes as a portal. _____ goes on to describe the courtroom for us in detail and to recount the amazing proceedings he witnessed. This show contains vital information for the Bride of Christ in this midnight hour. Don’t miss this one!”

The prophetic vision was published by the prophet to my knowledge in its entirety on January 16, 2019. I later received a printed copy from a team of mature intercessors. I laid it aside and did not think much about it for some time. The Courts of Heaven with the concept of heavenly portals has been around for some time so perhaps this was a reason no one took time to closely examine the prophecy. But I saw that his prophecy had gone global. The Courts of Heaven is also a movement that has gone global. One ordained prophet and prophetic speaker promotes the Courts of Heaven teaching in this way:

“The Courts of Heaven operate similar to the legal system we see on Earth. Because of all the injustices happening in the world, God is releasing new revelation about gaining justice through the Courts of Heaven. The Cross of Christ is our verdict but there are times we need to enforce this by entering into the justice system of God. We operate in the Courts of Heaven through prayer and an intimate relationship with the Lord. And just like here on Earth, there is more than one type of court in the Courts of Heaven.”³⁵

He goes on to declare that *God is releasing new revelation about gaining justice through the Courts of Heaven* before describing six different types of Courts he sees in the Bible.³⁶ You may have a number of questions regarding the following overview of the Courts of Heaven teaching. I also have questions. However, review this brief overview and take note of the questions that arise.

1. The Court of Mediation (Reconciliation)

“Settling outside of court” in the Court of Mediation should always be our first step in the process of gaining justice. (You can read more about my experience with heavenly mediation)

all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation. 2 Corinthians 5:18 NKJV

2. Court of Petition

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Philippians 4:6 NIV

We already operate in the Courts of Heaven when we bring our prayers and petitions to the Lord. **Notice that Paul says we need to do it with thankfulness and not a spirit of revenge.**

3. The Throne of Grace

Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. Hebrews 4:16 NIV

Our interactions with the Lord in the Courtroom of Heaven are centered around prayer and intimacy. It is important to approach the Lord with grace and mercy toward others and ourselves. We need to know and have God’s heart of love (1 John 4:8).

³⁵ This teaching appeared on March 15, 2015. The prophet’s name is also withheld to avoid prejudice in testing prophecy or this overall prophetic teaching on the Courts of Heaven.

³⁶ Ibid.

4. The Court of Mount Zion

The Throne of Grace and the Court of Petitions are linked to this court system. **Most all your interactions take place here.**

But you have come to Mount Zion, to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the Judge of all, to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. Hebrews 12:22–24 NIV

Throughout the Bible, Mount Zion is a place of God's justice and judgment. **This best describes the Courts of Heaven and how we can approach the Lord.**

5. The Court of the Accuser

There are several verses in the Bible that show Satan accusing people in the Courts. The main one is:

For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. Revelation 12:10 NIV

It is very important for us to not operate in the court of the accuser. It is best to learn to operate in a spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

6. Court of the Ancient of Days (Supreme Court)

The highest court in Heaven is the Ancient of Days court. This is equivalent to the Supreme Court in the U.S.

“As I looked, “thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. ... The court was seated, and the books were opened. Daniel 7:9–10 NIV

This is the highest level court and you cannot go in. You can be taken in through visions and dreams, *but this is not a place to present your case.*

Which court do you go in?

There are other Courts of Heaven that require greater understanding to operate in, but these are the basic ones that are safe to operate in:

- The Court of Petitions
- The Throne of Grace
- The Court of Mount Zion
- The Court of Mediation

Always ask the Lord's permission before operating in the Courts of Heaven.

Remember to mediate your case first and settle outside of the Courts of Heaven whenever possible, so we aren't unnecessarily clogging up the heavenly courtrooms.

For more insight and revelation on the Courts of Heaven—including **how to open a case for yourself or a loved one**—I encourage you to check out my online workshops: *Understanding the Courts of Heaven Parts 1 & 2.*

The above overview of the prophetic teaching on the Courts of Heaven presents a number of theological issues. It is only presented to give you some background on the Courts of Heaven movement. I include it to say that when a prophecy is connected with a popular movement it is helpful to do some basic research into that movement. If there is a mixture of truth and error in a movement, the same may be displayed in the prophecies associated with that movement. Although I find some questionable aspects in the Courts of Heaven teaching that require more serious study, a basic awareness of the main principles of the movement will assist you in

your testing of this prophetic vision of *The Courtroom of Heaven* in Appendix 2. With that in mind, let us now test the prophecy before us.

The prophecy of The Courtroom of Heaven came to the prophet as a vision. Therefore, it needs to be compared with prophetic visions of heaven in the Bible. This comparison is with the understanding that the heavenly visions in the Old and New Testaments possess a remarkable consistency. Therefore, we can limit our comparison with the detailed and descriptive visions of heaven provided in the Book of Revelation. In addition, we will use primarily the prophecy of Scripture to test this prophecy. A review of the following chart will assist our evaluation of the prophecy.

Courts of Heaven Vision

I was surprised how much it looked like our Supreme courtroom in America, except it was much larger. It looked more like a giant arena with thousands of seats ascending up as far as I could see. There were five big leather "lawyer-like" chairs with wings on each side in the front row. They reminded me very much of the kind of chairs my father always sat in behind his desk at his law firm years ago

There were not nine judges, but twelve. God the Father sat in the middle with six of the Supreme Court Judges on both sides of Him. I somehow knew He was the final deciding vote in every decision.

There were gold-embossed cards on them that said, "Recorder" on all five of these chairs. I must have been the first to arrive, and I was ushered into the one closest to the Bench.

The angel said, "You are one of five prophet Recorders that have been summoned from the earth to chronicle and witness this trial soon to begin. Just let the pen flow over the parchment and it will be a witness to the proceedings. Then, you will sign it when it is finished, and it will be added to the Eternal Ledger of Legal Proceedings."

Then there came a time of silence. Nobody moved. the Judges on the bench were studying the scroll. Somehow it had multiplied into 13 scrolls. All of the Judges, (including the Father), read through the scroll. I got to get one glance at the writing. It was written in red! It was written in the blood of Yeshua! I was told that by the chronicling angel that was helping me to write .Amazingly, as I wrote about this, the ink coming out of my pen became blood red as well for the duration of the description of it. Then, it turned back to black ink again.

Everyone finally assembled and a great and beautiful Angel who presided over the courtroom named "Justice" stood up. She seemed to tower over us and was about 20 feet tall! Then angels appeared with long trumpets on either side of the courtroom and

The Book of Revelation

Rev. 4:2-6 Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. ³ And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. ⁴ Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. ⁵ And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. ⁶ Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back.

Rev. 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Rev. 10:8-10 Then the voice which I heard from heaven spoke to me again and said, "Go, take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel who stands on the sea and on the earth." ⁹ So I went to the angel and said to him, "Give me the little book." And he said to me, "Take and eat it; and it will make your stomach bitter, but it will be as sweet as honey in your mouth." ¹⁰ Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. ¹¹ And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

Rev. 21:10 And he said to me, "Do not seal the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand.

Rev. 5:2-3 Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its

sounded a fanfare that ended with a blast. The Angel Justice then shouted with a very loud, but soprano, Voice: "ALL RISE! The Honorable Ancient of Days, The Judge of all Creation, The King of the Ages, The Most High LORD Almighty is Present and PRESIDING!!"

After our praises finished, the Angel Justice, who I now saw was a Lady and not a male Angel, shouted: "Be Seated! The High Court is now in session. She was standing just in front of His Throne. She had a golden gavel and struck a giant crystalline base with it

The only Person I could not see the Face of was the Father, but I could see the Throne He sat upon and the outline of His face. He seemed to be clothed in a white blinding light as well. He had a black robe on but had every color of the rainbow flashing out of it.

The other Judges to the Father's right hand were Enoch, Father Abraham, Moses the Lawgiver, David the King, Elijah the Prophet, and Daniel. On the Father's left hand were John the Baptist, Peter, James, John, Andrew, and Paul the Apostle. I do not know whether these were the permanent Judges of the Supreme Court of Heaven or not, but these were the ones seated for this case. They all were also dressed in these black iridescent judge robes. There were stunning crowns of glory on each of their heads, and they were holding gold scepters in their right hands.

After some deliberation, there was a vote. Every judge voted in favor of the saints to extend another time period of grace. I

seals?"³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.

Rev. 10:1-7 I saw still another mighty angel coming down from heaven, clothed with a cloud. And a rainbow was on his head, his face was like the sun, and his feet like pillars of fire.² He had a little book open in his hand. And he set his right foot on the sea and his left foot on the land,³ and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roars. When he cried out, seven thunders uttered their voices.⁴ Now when the seven thunders uttered their voices, I was about to write; but I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Seal up the things which the seven thunders uttered, and do not write them."⁵ The angel whom I saw standing on the sea and on the land raised up his hand to heaven⁶ and swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things that are in it, the earth and the things that are in it, and the sea and the things that are in it, that there should be delay no longer,⁷ but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished, as He declared to His servants the prophets.

Rev. 4:3 And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

Rev. 5:1-5 And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.² Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?"³ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.⁴ So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.⁵ But one of the elders said to me, "Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals."

Rev. 5:6 And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.

Rev. 7:13-17 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"¹⁴ And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.¹⁵ Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them.¹⁶ They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;¹⁷ for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

Rev. 22:6-9 Then he said to me, "These words are faithful and true." And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel

cannot disclose how long it is at this time.

Finally, the Father, the Great Judge of all the earth, spoke. He said: "On the basis of the evidence presented by the Defense, I decree that the prosecution has failed to bring a closing to the final days of Grace on earth. An extension of time has been granted to the saints of the overcoming Bridal remnant Church.

to show His servants the things which must shortly take place. ⁷ "Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." ⁸ Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these things. ⁹ Then he said to me, "See *that you do not do that*. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

Did you notice in the prophecy how the prophet was surprised how the Supreme Courtroom of heaven *looked like the Supreme courtroom in America*? He continues to describe the courtroom in earthly terms: 5 recorders dressed in black robes; a bailiff (Lady Justice) in a black robe; the Judge in a black robe; not nine, but 12 judges in black robes, 6 on the right and 6 on the left; a prosecutor (Satan); and a defender (Jesus), the only one in a white robe. Recall that one of the core beliefs of the Courts of Heaven movement is that the heavenly courts operate like those on earth. Although one might find a similarity here and there, I have difficulty seeing heaven patterned after earthly courts. For example, everyone in the subject prophetic vision is dressed in black robes except for Jesus.

- Rev. 4:4 Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.
- Rev. 7:9 After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,
- Rev. 7:13 Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"

Note the emphasis on white robes. I am unaware of any angel, saint, elder, judge, or any other being in heaven dressed in black robes. I am alarmed by the way the prophecy presents God the Father in a black robe. How does your spirit react to that display of God? The prophet also deems it important to point out the gender of the *great and beautiful Angel* named *Justice*. Since when does gender identity play a role in heaven? The Bible says in Christ there is *neither male nor female* (Gal. 3:28). Jesus told the Sadducees that those in heaven *neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like the angels in heaven* (Mark 12:25). It is clear that *in Christ distinctions of race, rank, and sex neither hinder fellowship nor grant special privileges*.³⁷ There is no reference to gender in all the mention of angels in the book of Revelation. Another point that needs to be tested is the mention of five prophet Recorders. The prophecy identifies by region each prophet chosen and assigned *to chronicle and witness this trial*. The prophet recognized one of the prophets but adds, *I cannot speak of whom it was at this time*. There is no mention of him being forbidden to reveal the prophet's name so you are left wondering why this is the case since both could bear witness on earth to the prophecy. In addition, these prophet recorders are to sign what has been recorded. The prophecy says *it will be added to the Eternal Ledger of Legal Proceedings*. Is there such a book or parchment in heaven? A brief review of the following Scriptures gives us some reliable information about the books in heaven.

- Psa. 56:8 You number my wanderings; Put my tears into Your bottle; Are they not in Your book?

³⁷ Spirit Filled Life Bible, Study Note 3:28, p. 1700.

- Mal. 3:16-18 Then those who feared the Lord spoke to one another, And the Lord listened and heard them; So a book of remembrance was written before Him For those who fear the Lord And who meditate on His name. “They shall be Mine,” says the Lord of hosts, “On the day that I make them My jewels. And I will spare them As a man spares his own son who serves him.” Then you shall again discern Between the righteous and the wicked, Between one who serves God And one who does not serve Him.
- Rev. 3:5 He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.
- Rev. 22:18-19 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book’.
- Rev. 20:11-15 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

The above references reveal the existence in heaven of a Book of Tears, a Book of Remembrance, the Book of Life, and a Book of Works and Deeds. There is no mention to my knowledge of an *Eternal Ledger of Legal Proceedings*. One of the theological issues with this prophecy involves the test of doctrine. The proceedings in the prophecy are presented in present time whereas the result or verdict was settled over 2000 years ago in Jesus Christ. The only thing remotely similar to the prophetic picture in the Courtroom of Heaven vision is that of the prophet Zechariah.

- Zech. 3:1-10 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. ² And the LORD said to Satan, “The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! *Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?*” ³ Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. ⁴ Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, “Take away the filthy garments from him.” And to him He said, “See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.” ⁵ And I said, “Let them put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the LORD stood by. ⁶ Then the Angel of the LORD admonished Joshua, saying, ⁷ “Thus says the LORD of hosts: ‘If you will walk in My ways, And if you will keep My command, Then you shall also judge My house, And likewise have charge of My courts; I will give you places to walk Among these who stand here. ⁸ “Hear, O Joshua, the high priest, You and your companions who sit before you, For they are a wondrous sign; For behold, I am bringing forth My Servant the BRANCH. ⁹ For behold, the stone That I have laid before Joshua: Upon the stone *are seven eyes*. Behold, I will engrave its inscription,’ Says the LORD of hosts, “And I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day. ¹⁰ In that day,’ says the LORD of hosts, “Everyone will invite his neighbor Under his vine and under his fig tree.’ ”

Although the adversarial scene in the above prophetic vision between Joshua the high priest and Satan the accuser is similar in both visions, the one given to Zechariah prophetically foretold with remarkable accuracy how God would *remove the iniquity of that land in one day*. It points to the cleansing of sin *My servant the BRANCH* would achieve for the world on the cross. This event has already taken place and as the Psalmist says, *Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven* (Psa. 119:89). The Courtroom of Heaven vision appears to present a retrial. Two other points about the Courtroom of Heaven vision is in regard to the judgement and timing of God. We learn from the basic foundational teaching on the doctrine of Christ that God the Father has given the authority for all judgment to Jesus.

- John 5:22-23, 26-27 For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him...For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself, and has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.
- Acts 10:42 And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God to be Judge of the living and the dead.
- 2Tim. 4:8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

This becomes an important point because Jesus is not only Savior and Lord, but also Righteous Judge of the living and the dead. He alone earned this right according to God the Father. Did you notice something in the prophecy about the length of the extended period of grace granted before the wrath of God comes in the great tribulation? The prophet says, *I cannot disclose how long it is at this time*. Does this mean he was given the length of time? If so, why can't he disclose it? At the end of the prophecy, he notes the following:

"I have condensed what was spoken in the trial into this brief summary. I am forbidden to share any more...though much more was spoken. You can (eventually) go to the Library of Legal Proceedings in Heaven to access the entire transcript. Of course, you will probably have to wait for this access to when you arrive there, unless granted by the LORD through revelation by the Holy Spirit. Amen."

Do you believe this prophetic attitude passes the test of fruit? When prophets claim they have been given *much more* but *forbidden to share any more*, it leaves believers questioning their standing before God and ability to hear what the Spirit says to the churches. What is the benefit to the body of Christ to include what sounds like arrogant instructions if you want to know more about the prophecy? Bear with me for a moment. Let me put the prophetic instructions in a more dramatic way: *"Enter the heavenly portal. Go to the Library of Legal Proceedings. Access the whole transcript. Oh, By the way, you most likely will have to wait until you die and leave this world unless you get the special access God granted me including the length of time until the end of the age of grace."* It is likely that the prophecy also falls short when the test of fruit is considered around the questions of what kind of prophetic attitude is displayed and what is the benefit to God's people?

The prophecy of *The Courtroom of Heaven* leaves you with a lot of biblical challenges. We have discussed a number of them. So, what would be your conclusion after this examination or testing? Here is mine. I believe the church must awaken to the reality of the soon return of Jesus Christ. I believe the time is short and the church must be on fire for evangelism to bring in the end time harvest. I believe the church needs to be prophetically reminded of this through the prophets. But using inaccurate descriptions and details of heavenly structures people, and operations is not the way to do it. You do not need someone

to prophesy in such a way. The end does not justify the means. Instead, the message is weakened and confused by such inaccuracies. This generation of spiritual leaders and believers needs to take the testing of prophecies much more seriously. It can be done without skepticism or disparaging modern day prophets or their ministries. But it must be done because God's word says, *Test all things*.

Abuses of Prophecy Today

A significant number of pastors have imposed unbiblical restrictions on the operation of prophecy in the church. They do so to curb the adverse effects of faulty prophecies and abuses that they have seen in the operation of prophecy. It would be better for them to properly test prophecy and equip the saints on the healthy operation of prophecy in the church rather than hinder its operation. In this section, we will look at some of the abuses that can and do take place in the operation of prophecy. The following list presents the most common abuses.

- Substitute for Scripture
- Self-projection
- Mixing in our thoughts
- Wrong motivations
- Out of order and/or out of season
- Manipulation

We continue to see the above abuses reoccurring in churches that still encourage prophetic operation. The good news is that they can all work themselves out with proper biblical training and oversight in the prophetic. Therefore, it is important to learn how to recognize these abuses of prophecy and correct them in the church.

The operation of prophecy must never be used as a replacement or substitute for the written word of God. No prophecy given through current prophets, prophetic ministries, or believers operating with the spiritual gift of prophecy is to be given precedence over the Scriptures. This should be a fact acknowledged by every Christian. However, more than we would like to think, are taken in by the latest and newest prophetic revelation. There also seems to be a growing level of competition between prophets and prophetic ministries today. People with *itching ears* (2Tim. 4:3) rally around the latest intriguing prophecy with new revelations. Whole movements are established around these new revelations that more often than not end up mixed with elements of truth and error. Prophecies must be taken seriously but those that go beyond the written Word have little to no benefit for the body of Christ. The Scripture is clear on this.

- Acts 15:15 And with this the words of the prophets agree, just as it is written:
- 1Cor. 4:6 Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively transferred to myself and Apollos for your sakes, that you may learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other.
- Rev. 22:18-19 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; ¹⁹ and if anyone takes away from

the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Prophecies must agree with the written Word. Anything else is a violation of God's word. There are too many violations of God's word today in the operation of prophecy. It is time for young emerging leaders to learn how to operate in the prophetic in a way that is fully aligned with what is written in the Scriptures. This will enable them to gracefully equip the saints and correct any abuse of using prophecy as a substitute for Scripture.

Self-projection and mixing one's own thoughts and ideas are two more abuses in the operation of prophecy. Typically, they go hand in hand. Did you notice that the reason Paul desired believers at Corinth to learn from them *not to think beyond what is written* was in order that none of them *may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other*? It is obvious that this was happening in the Corinthian Church or Paul would not have given this admonition. *To think* means *to exercise the mind, to entertain or have sentiment or opinion on someone or something*. Some prophecies seem to be more of an exercise of the mind than a word from the Lord. *Puffed up* is when someone gets so enamored with their prophesying that they get an extended or heightened notion about themselves. The truth is that some who operate in the prophetic get inflated ideas about themselves. You can see this when they bring forth a prophecy and the focus is more on *look at me* rather than what is spoken. The self is being projected more than the prophecy. Another aspect of self-projection and mixing your own thoughts is when a person transfers their thoughts, feelings, and insecurities when operating in the prophetic. Psychologists define projection as *the process of displacing one's feelings onto a different person*.³⁸ Transference is a real danger when self-projection and mixing of ideas, insecurities, and woundedness are projected upon others in the operation of prophecy. This abuse happens more than is commonly recognized in the arena of personal prophecy. Therefore, believers need to be alert and discerning of transference when being prophesied over by others.

Wrong motivations are very difficult to evaluate in the operation of prophecy. This is mainly due to the fact that only God truly knows the heart of a person. However, Christians do have a God-given responsibility to be fruit inspectors. One example of a wrong motivation is when you observe a person prophesying seeking attention and promotion rather than seeking to excel in the edification of the church.

- 1Cor. 14:6 But now, brethren, if I come to you speaking with tongues, what shall I profit you unless I speak to you either by revelation, by knowledge, by prophesying, or by teaching?
- 1Cor. 14:12 Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.

Profit in the above Scripture means to be useful or beneficial. It includes prophesying. I am taken back by anyone prophesying to gain attention. In addition, I find it alarming that some prophets and prophetic ministries charge money to access their prophecies or to receive a personal prophecy. I question the motivation in such a practice. Therefore, prophesying that is accompanied with a desire for attention or financial gain is harmful. It has no beneficial advantage for the church.

Some prophecies are out of order or out of season. This occurs when a prophecy is out of sync with something the Spirit has clearly spoken beforehand. For example, a prophecy comes forth that calls the church to repentance. It may even chronicle specific things for

³⁸ *Psychology Today*. Projection. [Projection | Psychology Today](#).

repentance. Suddenly, another prophecy comes forth that comforts the church with words of grace, consolation, and a call to give thanks to the Lord who loves and is pleased with them. Can you see the disconnect with what God desired to be done first and foremost? What do you think happens in this example when a prophecy is out of sync with the order, timing, or season of what God desires to do? I have observed what typically happens. The people give thanks to the Lord and the prophecy of repentance is not acted upon. Sadly, it falls to the ground. Another example is when the word of God is being preached and someone begins to operate in the prophetic in the midst of the preaching of the Word. Although we should never rule out the Spirit doing this, it rarely occurs so we must conclude that the preaching of the Word is not to be interrupted. I believe this is because the preaching of the Word is prophetic in and of itself.

Manipulation is a major abuse in the operation of prophecy. Most believers desire the Lord to speak into their lives. We have seen in this study that prophecy is a very important way God speaks to people about their lives and destinies. God has designed the operation of prophecy in our lives to edify us. However, there is nothing edifying about prophetic manipulation. Dr. Joseph Mattera of the Coalition of Apostolic Leaders identifies ten signs of prophetic abuse and/or manipulation. This mature prophetic leader presents a wise and insightful perspective when it comes to the operation of the prophecy in the church.

"I have found the prophetic gift, including inspirational preaching, teaching and prophetic words to be the most edifying of all the gifts as St Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14. However, with every true gift of God comes either a counterfeit and or an abuse. You can say that about all of the cluster gifts mentioned in Ephesians 4:11. The prophetic gift can especially be very dangerous if left un-checked, since people think the words spoken are directly from God and will often obey them without question or the use of discernment. Based on all my years of operating in the prophetic, as well as mentoring, nurturing, overseeing and hosting many prophetic ministers, the following are ten signs of prophetic abuse and manipulation. I write this not to discourage prophetic function, but as a guide to increase the level of discernment and true edification in the body of Christ. All sincere prophetic people should welcome these warning signs. If they are truly endeavoring to serve the Lord, they will welcome correction and or desire more discernment in the Church."³⁹

Do prophetic people actually welcome the mentoring, nurturing, overseeing, and correction needed for the operation of prophecy in church? Review these ten signs of prophetic manipulation and identify any you have observed in the context of prophecy.⁴⁰ I include some excerpts from the teaching, so you know what abuse is being referred to.

1. **Prophecies are intentionally given to people of wealth.** *The motive of this prophetic manipulator is that they want the personal cell phone number of the wealthy person so they can develop a relationship with them outside of the church and perhaps receive personal donations. In my opinion, the motive is wrong, and the prophetic person is using their gift to manipulate unsuspecting potential donors. Not that it is wrong to give wealthy people a word, it is wrong when the hidden agenda is to befriend a potential high-end donor.*
2. **Prophecies commissioning people to high-level leadership.** *What makes this prophetic abuse is the harm it creates in both the individual receiving the word and the local church where they serve. Furthermore, I suspect some prophetic people also commission people into the apostolic or prophetic because it gives them a strong link and even possibly authority over the persons to whom they give the word. By celebrating, affirming and commissioning others as apostles and prophets, many prophetic leaders and their networks have gained them as adherents.*

³⁹ Joseph Mattera. [10 Signs of Prophetic Abuse and/or Manipulation – International Coalition of Apostolic Leaders \(icaleaders.com\)](https://www.icaleaders.com) March 23, 2019.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

3. **Prophecies are based upon on prior knowledge.** *I had a visiting minister come to our local church. Before he ministered, he asked me questions about several of our members. I was shocked when he got up to minister because he started prophesying to every single person I spoke to him about. His prophecies were general exhortations that orbited around the info I provided him prior to the service.*
4. **Prophecies are given for monetary gain.** *Prophets who charge money to give words are guilty of the sin of "Simony" which is when a person uses the gifts of the Holy Spirit for monetary gain. This is something the Apostle Peter strongly corrected (Read Acts 8:20-22). Truly, whenever we think the gifts of God and or godliness is a means for financial gain, we are greatly in error (1 Tim. 6:5; Titus 1:11)!*
5. **Prophecies go beyond the Scriptures to teach doctrine.** *The greatest level of the prophetic will always be the Scriptures, once and for all given to the saints, and any tradition, or prophetic word that claims to be equal to the bible is in great error (Read 2 Peter 1:19-21). Some charismatics are so extreme they put their spiritual experiences above the plain teaching of Scripture and or are led by prophecies when making big decisions, even without a witness in their own spirit and or without checking biblical principles before making said decision.*
6. **Prophecies are used to manipulate relationships.** *Some people will even use prophetic words to try to manipulate people into remaining close to them, serving them, or even remaining their friend. I am not referring to accurate prophetic words given to a friend, employee or church member for their edification or for the sake of the kingdom, but words given for the purpose of emotionally manipulating a person into remaining in some kind of relationship. This is an abuse of the prophetic and very manipulative.*
7. **Prophecies are used to get people to serve the prophet.** *There have been some prophetic leaders who will use the example of Elisha serving Elijah as a way of getting younger leaders to serve them (1 Kings 19). Although there is truth in this principle, it can also be used to manipulate naïve young prophetic people into waiting on older more seasoned prophetic leaders. No matter who gives you a word, it should not be obeyed if it compromises the relationships and commitments you presently have, including to your spouse, family and local church, and if God doesn't clearly confirm it.*
8. **The prophetic leader is not accountable when mistakes are made.** *There have been many prophetic leaders who have declared words involving national catastrophes, events, and even predictions about the last days. After it is clear they were in error, rarely does anyone have the guts to call them out in private or in public. Any prophetic leader that lacks a working, relational, accountability structure in their life, should shut their mouth until they get apostolically aligned for personal oversight.*
9. **Dramatic prophecies are given to build an audience.** *Some leaders feel compelled to give a dramatic word every time they minister or are on T.V. This is because they depend on the dramatic to maintain their audience which also brings in their donations. I am of the opinion, we should never feel pressure to perform or to give a prophetic word unless the Lord is clearly leading us to do so. Case in point; one time, after I finished preaching and prophetically ministering in a church, the pastor announced that I was going to prophesy over every person in the service. I promptly took the microphone and corrected him and told him I was done ministering since I had no more of a leading to continue.*
10. **The prophecies draw attention to the prophet.** *Some prophetic words begin and end with self affirming accolades describing themselves as "the man of God sent to them" or "the prophet sent to them", or even as "the voice of God" that they need to hear. While this may be true in a very limited sense, there is only one completely accurate voice and expression of the Father, Hebrews 1:1,2. I am usually suspicious when a person points to himself or herself when giving a word. A true word both edifies the church and exalts the Lord Jesus Christ, not the speaker (1 Corinthians 12:3; 14:1-4). Whenever any minister or believer points to himself or herself instead of to Jesus, we should be very leery of that person. Paul said*

follow me as I follow Christ (1 Cor. 4:16). Since Jesus was not self-promoting, then his so-called ministers involved in chronic self-elevation are not serving in the pattern of Christ.

The above signs of prophetic abuse and manipulation will help to heighten your discernment when prophecy is operating in the church or wherever God's people are gathered together. Although we have covered most of them earlier in this section and chapter, it is important to also include an outside witness. Many of these abuses go unrecognized or ignored by believers when prophecy is in operation. However, others see them but are hesitant to bring anything to the attention of spiritual leaders. And many spiritual leaders just don't want to deal with prophetic abuses. I want to say again that prophetic abuses do not edify the church. Appendix 3 provides *21 Contrasts Between Prophetic Edification and Manipulation*. Prophetic gifts must be used for edification and not manipulation. Mattera concludes that *all prophetic gifts have to be framed by the intent, the motives and ultimate purpose of the Word of God.*⁴¹ The new generation church needs to rise to the occasion with a prophetic reset that will align a resurging of the operation of prophetic gifts with God's word.

The Apostolic and Prophetic Team

The Bible says the church is built upon *the foundation of apostles and prophets*. Although I have noted this before, it is important to see again the remarkable scope of this dynamic operational truth.

- Eph. 2:19-22 Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Christ's plan to build His church then and now involves the operation of apostles and prophets. I believe the Lord desires to progressively restore the church to the New Testament pattern. I do not find prophets working alone in the New Testament Church. Instead, I see apostles and prophets working together in the Early Church. How do apostles and prophets work together? The late Dr. Peter Wagner pointed out that *prophets can better be what God wants them to be if they agree to become hitched to apostles for the long haul.*⁴² There are several examples of this in the Early Church.

- Paul and Agabus

Acts 21:10-11 And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.¹¹ When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver *him* into the hands of the Gentiles.' "

- Paul and Silas

Acts 15:39-41 And so Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus;⁴⁰ but Paul chose Silas and departed, being commended by the brethren to the grace of God.⁴¹ And he went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. (See Acts 15:32).

⁴¹ Joseph Mattera. *21 Contrasts Between Prophetic Edification and Manipulation* (2019) [Charisma Magazine](#).

⁴² Peter Wagner. *Apostles and Prophets: The Foundation of the Church* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2000), p. 121.

- Paul and a Prophetic Team

Acts 11:25-30 Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to seek Saul. ²⁶ And when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So it was that for a whole year they assembled with the church and taught a great many people. And the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch. ²⁷ And in these days prophets came from Jerusalem to Antioch. ²⁸ Then one of them, named Agabus, stood up and showed by the Spirit that there was going to be a great famine throughout all the world, which also happened in the days of Claudius Caesar. ²⁹ Then the disciples, each according to his ability, determined to send relief to the brethren dwelling in Judea. ³⁰ This they also did, and sent it to the elders by the hands of Barnabas and Saul.

Acts 13:1-3 Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. ² As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." ³ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.

The above team situations indicate that prophets were working with apostles as well as with the entire church. The fact that a team of prophets were sent forth from Jerusalem reveals that the apostles and elders in Jerusalem were also linked with prophets. This operational relationship continued in the church of Antioch. Although Wagner identifies two types of relationships where apostles and prophets are tied together, I discovered a third. In addition, to being linked together for a season or moment like Paul and Agabus or in a lengthy more structured relationship like Paul and Silas, apostles and prophets are part of a growing apostolic team. This is apparent in the church of Jerusalem and Antioch. There are several points to keep in mind regarding the operational relationship between apostles and prophets.

1. Churches are more comfortable with pastors, teachers, and evangelists.
2. Apostles and prophets did not cease to exist at the end of the 1st century.
3. Apostles and prophets that ignore teamwork and networking partnerships with others established by the Holy Spirit are greatly limited.
4. Prophets in the church can lead to great advances and success.
5. All Ephesian 4:11 ascension gifts are important, but only two are specifically designated as the foundation builders of the church.
6. Governmentally, apostles come first and then prophets.
7. Prophetic ministry has biblical order and apostolic structure.
8. Pastors alone can be detrimental to expanding the Kingdom if they exclude apostles and prophets. (Note: there has been much conflict and confusion in churches where pastors attempt to pastor apostles and prophets).
9. Without apostolic leadership in unity with the ministry of prophets, things only go so far and get somewhat out of step with the priorities of the Holy Spirit.
10. The greatest advance for God's kingdom is when apostles and prophets work together.

I have reached the same conclusion as Wagner: *It is only when apostles and prophets are properly harnessed and pulling together that the kingdom of God will advance throughout the world as God desires it to advance in our generation.*⁴³

⁴³ Wagner. *Apostles and Prophets*, p. 140.

The new generation church needs to embrace the operation of apostles and prophets. There remains a tension between conventional churches and those that desire to move forward with the restoration of apostolic and prophetic ministry in the church. Prophets and prophetic ministries tend to be para-church ministries today more than integrated within the church. A new generation of leaders must rise up and boldly challenge existing church structures that exclude the operation of apostles and prophets.

Concluding Remarks: *For the Time Will Come*

The purpose of this training manual on prophets and prophetic ministry is to equip emerging new generation leaders in the things pertaining to prophecy and its operation strictly from a biblical perspective. Young leaders will not be able to equip the saints unless they themselves are equipped in the prophetic. There is a dual responsibility in the body of Christ to grow up in Christ and this includes the operation of prophecy in the church. Young leaders have the responsibility to equip the saints in prophetic ministry and the saints have the responsibility to be in the word of God. Paul's admonition to young Timothy brings this out with remarkable clarity.

- **2Tim. 4:1-5 I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: ² Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. ³ 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; ⁴ and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. ⁵ But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.**

Paul prophetically warns of a time when believers will not endure sound or healthy doctrine. It is obvious that time has come. Many believers fail to go deeper into God's word. And some have little patience in seeking to spiritually understand what the Word is saying to them. Paul says they have *itching ears*. Their ears tickle at any new prophetic revelation. There is no testing or desire to make certain the prophecy from their favorite teacher represents God's word or not. This is a ripe environment for the prophetic abuses and manipulation to flourish and it is taking place today. New generation leaders and believers all need to boldly rise up in the power of the Holy Spirit and *preach the Word, convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching*. The church needs the healthy operation of prophets and prophetic ministry to bring in the end time harvest. Paul's final admonition is a most fitting conclusion: *But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

Appendix 1
The Prophetic Books of the Bible

OT Major Prophetical Books	OT Minor Prophetical Books	NT Prophetical Book
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Isaiah• Jeremiah• Ezekiel• Daniel	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hosea• Joel• Amos• Obadiah• Jonah• Micah• Nahum• Habakkuk• Zephaniah• Haggai• Zechariah• Malachi	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Revelation

Appendix 2

A Vision of the Courtroom of Heaven

(This represents the exact transcript of the prophet)

I had a vision/prophetic experience as I was eating lunch recently. Suddenly a portal opened in the spirit realm and my angel said to me, "You are summoned to come to the Courtroom of Heaven. You are to record the case being tried now, so that God's people will know the lateness of the hour. You must warn them so that the Bride may awaken and take heed! The time is short!"

I was escorted by two angels to a seat on the left side, down front, of the Supreme Courtroom. There were many hundreds of angels and saints already seated before the Bench. I was surprised how much it looked like our Supreme courtroom in America, except it was much larger. It looked more like a giant arena with thousands of seats ascending up as far as I could see. There were five big leather "lawyer-like" chairs with wings on each side in the front row. They reminded me very much of the kind of chairs my father always sat in behind his desk at his law firm years ago. There were gold-embossed cards on them that said, "Recorder" on all five of these chairs. I must have been the first to arrive, and I was ushered into the one closest to the Bench. I sat down and sunk into this really comfortable chair and was handed a pen and a small scroll. I was curious as I looked at it, for it looked really old-fashioned. The pen was a feather quill with an old fashioned nib like a fountain pen at the bottom to write with. The "pad" was a scroll that was made out of parchment. It would open automatically as you wrote upon it when you got to the bottom of the page. It was kind of like an iPad that looked like a small Torah scroll at the same time. The angel showed me how it worked, it was extremely easy to hold and write on. When I would start to write, it would write whatever I thought of in perfect calligraphy script as fast as I thought it! The nib seemed to just fly over the parchment with ease in my hand. It would write whatever the angel put into my mind from what I saw and heard to record, and then would describe perfectly any other information the Holy Spirit deemed important in an instant as it happened. It was the easiest thing I ever written, it seemed to do all the work without my thinking or trying. I think this must be heaven's way of court/legal stenography! Most amazing of all, I was writing in Hebrew, and I hardly know the language at all! But, somehow, I understood and thought in fluent Hebrew during this vision. I cannot offer any explanation for this at all.

The angel said, "You are one of five prophet Recorders that have been summoned from the earth to chronicle and witness this trial soon to begin. Just let the pen flow over the parchment and it will be a witness to the proceedings. Then, you will sign it when it is finished, and it will be added to the Eternal Ledger of Legal Proceedings."

Soon, the other four recorders were seated and shown how to write as I was. I recognized one of them as a current prophet on earth. He was the only other from the Western world. I cannot speak of whom it was at this time and the other three of them were not known to me. We were all different races from different regions of the earth. One was a Chinese woman of great age, who just glowed with the wisdom and love of God. We were dressed in black robes, with red border sashes on the sides and the sleeves. The other prophet/recorder was a lady from Africa who had a headdress that wrapped around her head which flashed rays of light whenever she moved. She spoke and wrote in French, I believe. The fifth was a man from South America. I was given a yarmulka of golden color. It had twelve ruby stones around it. (God called me to wear a yarmulka whenever I minister on earth, so I wasn't surprised that I had one to wear here). When the angel put it on my head I could feel the weight of it like it was made out of actual metal/gold, even though it felt soft to the touch - like silk.

Everyone finally assembled and a great and beautiful Angel who presided over the courtroom named "Justice" stood up. She seemed to tower over us and was about 20 feet tall! Then angels appeared with long trumpets on either side of the courtroom and sounded a fanfare that ended with a blast. The Angel Justice then shouted with a very loud, but soprano, Voice: "ALL RISE! The Honorable Ancient of Days, The Judge of all Creation, The King of the Ages, The Most High LORD Almighty is Present

and PRESIDING!!”

We all stood up exactly at the same time in unison. Then the most awesome sound of praise and worship filled the atmosphere as we all began to praise His Glorious Majesty together. I have never experienced such a sense of awe as the Fear of the LORD filled the Court! It was only then that I could just make out who was seated behind the Holy Bar. There were not nine judges, but twelve. God the Father sat in the middle with six of the Supreme Court Judges on both sides of Him. I somehow knew He was the final deciding vote in every decision. After our praises finished, the Angel Justice, who I now saw was a Lady and not a male Angel, shouted: “Be Seated! The High Court is now in session. She was standing just in front of His Throne. She had a golden gavel and struck a giant crystalline base with it. There was a great thunderclap and lightning flashed out from the gavel base and flew across the room in all directions.

It was only then that I could see the Judges behind the bench. The only Person I could not see the Face of was the Father, but I could see the Throne He sat upon and the outline of His face. He seemed to be clothed in a white blinding light as well. He had a black robe on but had every color of the rainbow flashing out of it. If He moved even slightly, lightning bolts would fly all over the room out of His head, His hands and His feet.

The other Judges to the Father’s right hand were Enoch, Father Abraham, Moses the Lawgiver, David the King, Elijah the Prophet, and Daniel. On the Father’s left hand were John the Baptist, Peter, James, John, Andrew, and Paul the Apostle. I do not know whether these were the permanent Judges of the Supreme Court of Heaven or not, but these were the ones seated for this case. They all were also dressed in these black iridescent judge robes. There were stunning crowns of glory on each of their heads, and they were holding gold scepters in their right hands. The Father in the middle on the Throne of Judgment held the biggest scepter and had many crowns suspended over His head that shot lightnings out of them in every direction. I could not look upon them or His face because it was so bright it was like looking into the noonday sun. I was given one glimpse at Him when He first came into the Courtroom. There was a rainbow that would appear that encircled Him above and below that I saw a few times during this vision. I could not endure looking at Him for more than a split second before I had to avert my eyes for the white blazing brightness was too intense. All the judges behind the Great Bar were emanating great light that was also nearly blinding. That is the closest I can describe them now.

Then the Case was read before all present by Lady Justice the Angel:

She spoke: This is (the summary) of the case brought before the Supreme Court of Heaven today:

“The Timing of the Final Judgments of the Day of the LORD must be decided. The Accuser satan is prosecuting, declaring that the time of Adam’s lease is over and he must be allowed to take ownership of the earth for a time, and times, and a half of time, as it is written in the Holy Scriptures.

“Representing the Holy Defense is the LORD Yeshua, Jesus, the Messiah the Lamb of God.” At this, Yeshua Himself stood up at the Defense table as the Advocate General of the Bride of Messiah on earth. He was representing the Holy Saints of God still alive in their bodies on earth. When He stood up at the left table, everyone bowed and worshiped, except those at the prosecution table to the right. There was a very handsome man who just sat stone-faced with several other princes at the prosecution table. They did not move. the head “man” sneered when they worshiped Yeshua.

“Representing the agenda of the fallen lucifer, now called satan, is himself, the Accuser, liar and deceiver, - Ha satan.” At this, the handsome prince with the evil smirk stood up. No one moved. There was silence in the courtroom for about a minute. Then, Lady Justice spoke again, “You may sit down now.” Finally, he did so, with another sneering grunt. I marveled that he seemed human and actually very attractive to look at, although there was no heavenly light in him or around him.

“The prosecution may proceed,” Lady Justice proclaimed.

At that, this 'man' stood up. He was robed in a black suit that had a long cape of crimson red that followed behind him. He had gold epaulets on his shoulders that were built into his cape. He was very articulate and extremely haughty. I got sick to my stomach, as he spoke. He walked back and forth in front of the court room in long strides with his nose in the air. It reminded me of a painting of what Napoleon looked like, except this 'man' was much taller than Napoleon. He began his long diatribe of accusation against fallen man. He seemed to know the Bible very well. Starting from Adam and Eve, he began accusing God of failing mankind in every generation. He started with the stipulation, "Adam was given exactly 6,000 years to rule the earth. He gave that lease to me and I own it. I have a right to rule over every man, woman, and child who are MINE by Adam's free choice. The time is up. I now demand, to be given to me the government of Mankind through whom you call the Son of Perdition. I call him, My Son of Man. I have the scriptural right to take control of the earth for seven years. GIVE IT TO ME NOW!"

Then he sat down. Again, for about a minute or so, there was complete silence. Lady Justice then spoke again, "the Defense may proceed."

Yeshua then arose from the Defense table. He wore a white robe with blue trim and red sleeves with a bottom border and neck border of red. He wore a small diadem of solid diamonds as a crown. Once again, when he stood up, everyone bowed their heads before Him in worship, except those at the prosecution table.

He said, (in summary) "As the true Son of Man, I have taken the death penalty for every generation of fallen man, including those in this harvest generation. I also stripped satan of his authority over the Church of the Living God. His gates can no longer prevail against her. Through the intercession of My Holy Bride on earth, the overcoming Church of the Living God, there has been granted a pause by this Court to allow for the fullness of the harvest to come in, during the last hearing on this matter in 2015 - three years ago in earth's time. For I spoke on earth, as it is written, 'This Gospel of the Kingdom shall be preached in all the world, and then the end shall come.' I, by the authority of the prayers and intercession of the Bride, documented here in this scroll..." He handed the scroll to the Father, and another copy of it to satan's prosecution table... "I petition the Court for another measure of time for the end time church to finish and fulfill the promise to My people, as it is written, "that NONE should perish, but all, (who are truly Mine) have the opportunity to hear the good news of the Gospel and to be saved from perdition."

As he was speaking, satan - the handsome 'man' lawyer was busy reading the scroll feverishly to see if there truly was enough intercession to stop his immediate seizing of the earth and for the tribulation to begin. He was consulting his other diabolical "lawyers" about it. Foul language was coming out of his mouth along with hissing and, accusing his right hand "man", saying, "You told me that we had destroyed the prayers of the church. The great awakening had been thwarted! !##***!@&*!!"

"Yeshua continued, "As you can see, my faithful Bridal remnant has kept the faith, enduring the evil, and continue to overcome. The blood of the martyrs has proven their faithfulness. Look at China. Look at the Middle East, look at Africa, look at Indonesia, look at South America, look at the islands of the sea, look at My persecuted Bride in all nations. Even America has held, though all of hell has been thrown against her. The facts speak for themselves. I have the authority to request for another extension of time. The Defense petitions the Court for another extension of time in the Grace that I purchased by My blood on the cross. Also, I petition the Court to look into the scrolls of the hidden counsels written before the foundations of the earth regarding the Mysteries of the Harvest of the end of days. These, satan has no knowledge of - as they were never shown to him. It is written there, as well as in the hidden revelation of scripture, that the Tribulation beginning the Kingdom Age must begin only after ALL of My Bride that are ordained to Eternal Life are saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. This information can also be found in the scroll given by My hands to the Court for eternal record. The evidence written in this scroll fully confirms and documents our Holy and Righteous claim." Though millions shall come to me and be saved in the Tribulation to come, My Holy Bride must all be prepared now!

Then there came a time of silence. Nobody moved. the Judges on the bench were studying the scroll. Somehow it had multiplied into 13 scrolls. All of the Judges, (including the Father), read through the scroll. I got to get one glance at the writing. It was written in red! It was written in the blood of Yeshua! I was told that by the chronicling angel that was helping me to write. Amazingly, as I wrote about this, the ink coming out of my pen became blood red as well for the duration of the description of it. Then, it turned back to black ink again.

After some deliberation, there was a vote. Every judge voted in favor of the saints to extend another time period of grace. I cannot disclose how long it is at this time.

Finally, the Father, the Great Judge of all the earth, spoke. He said:

“On the basis of the evidence presented by the Defense, I decree that the prosecution has failed to bring a closing to the final days of Grace on earth. An extension of time has been granted to the saints of the overcoming Bridal remnant Church.

“Nevertheless, the birthing pains and judgments on the earth will not be stopped. Ha-satan has the authority to rule over the tares of the earth-the wicked in darkness, by their willing consent according to the tenets of free will given to Adam’s race at the beginning of creation. Both the tares and the wheat have grown up and are now ready to be harvested. Therefore, the birth pangs of judgment shall increase. Those that will abide with Me in the secret place, I will provide for and protect. Those that do not are in more and more peril with each passing day. Though I have granted this, the final Day of the LORD has indeed come, and the prosecution is correct. The time of Grace upon the earth is nearly over. Warn my children: This is the midnight hour! Watch and Pray that you can stand in the evil day and overcome! I am answering the prayers of My Kingdom coming to earth. It shall come first in the fire of My Holy judgments! But it shall also come in the Great Awakening that I have promised of revival and outpouring. The Time of My Wrath is soon to engulf the earth! But, in it I will remember Mercy. Many millions of souls shall be saved and come to the knowledge of the Truth.”

Then the Angel, Lady Justice, came forward and was blindfolded. She raised a large, old fashioned scale in her hands above her head. Into one of the bowls a presiding angel poured a black sand-like powder from a brass urn. This tipped the scale to all the way at the bottom as far as it could descend. This represented the accumulated sin and rebellion of all of mankind, as well as the failures of the church in this generation. Into the other bowl, a presiding angel dressed in a golden robe poured a white sand-like powder from a porcelain white urn, that represented the prayers and intercession and obedience of the overcoming church in generations past as well as the Bridal company of our generation. (This is what allows for evil to be restrained.) I was really alarmed, because it looked so small at first compared to the amount of black powder in the other bowl. But, the angel kept pouring, and suddenly the Holy justice scale began to balance out. Then it was even. As we all watched, the scale suddenly shifted. The white bowl went down and the black bowl came up! Then there were mighty shouts of Praise and Victory in the Courtroom!

Then, the Father raised His golden scepter in His left hand, and slammed his Gavel down accompanied by thunderclaps and lightning flashing everywhere with bursts of rainbow colors shooting through the courtroom, and said, “The time of Grace shall be extended as petitioned by the Bride of Messiah for a little longer. _____ more (length of time) has been granted to finish the final harvest in the age of Grace.”

(Note: I have condensed what was spoken in the trial into this brief summary. I am forbidden to share any more...though much more was spoken. You can (eventually) go to the Library of Legal Proceedings in Heaven to access the entire transcript. Of course, you will probably have to wait for this access to when you arrive there, unless granted by the LORD through revelation by the Holy Spirit. Amen.)

Then, I was told to sign the recording scroll I had written. (The other four prophet recorders also

signed their scrolls. I noticed that their scrolls were written in different earthly languages. The most visible was in Chinese.)

Then, the vision ended and I immediately went to my computer and typed what I saw and heard.

Dearly Beloved Bride of Messiah, we must labor now while it is light! Soon it will be night, where we cannot labor in the Harvest Fields of the earth any longer.

People get ready! Jesus is coming!!

Appendix 3

21 Contrasts Between Prophetic Edification and Manipulation⁴⁴

1. Prophetic edification benefits the church; manipulation benefits only the prophet (1 Cor. 14:4).
2. Prophetic edification exalts the Lord Jesus; manipulation exalts the one giving the prophetic word (1 Cor. 12:3).
3. Prophetic edification advances God's kingdom; manipulation advances the ministry of the prophet (Matt. 6:33).
4. Prophetic edification advances the vision of the church; manipulation advances the financial provision of the prophet (Num. 22, Rev. 2:14).
5. Prophetic edification points people to the vision of the church; manipulation draws people away from the church and toward the prophet (Acts 20:30).
6. Prophetic edification builds the spirit-man; manipulation entices unresolved issues in the emotions of the hearer (Eph. 5:18-19).
7. Prophetic edification builds discernment; manipulation takes advantage of naivete in the believer (Prov. 1:2-4).
8. Prophetic edification is motivated by God's agenda; manipulation is motivated by the prophet's agenda (1 Kings 22, Jer. 23).
9. Prophetic edification is accountable to spiritual authority; manipulation is accountable to no one (1 Cor. 14:29).
10. Prophetic edification is built upon a correct handling of the Scriptures; manipulation is built upon a distortion of the Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
11. Prophetic edification gives us great faith in God; manipulation gives us great faith in the prophet (John 7:18).
12. Prophetic edification emanates from the counsel of the Lord; manipulation comes from the imagination of the prophet (Jer. 23).
14. Prophetic edification expresses the heart and mind of God; manipulation expresses the desires of the prophet (Jer. 7:24).
15. Prophetic edification speaks the truth in love; manipulation flatters for personal gain (2 Pet. 2:18).
16. Prophetic edification helps mature people in the church; manipulation eventually drives people out of the church (Acts 15:32).
17. Prophetic edification motivates people to seek the Lord; manipulation motivates people to seek the prophet (Isa. 55:6-7).
18. Prophetic edification implores people to confirm the prophetic word; manipulation scares people into being led by their word (2 Cor. 13:1).
19. Prophetic edification encourages humility; manipulation encourages selfish ambition (Isa. 57:15, Phil. 2:1-12).
19. Prophetic edification seeks the honor of God alone; manipulation motivates many to glory in men (John 7:18).
20. Prophetic edification has an eternal effect; manipulation has a temporary effect (1 Pet. 1:25).
21. Prophetic edification builds up the hearer; manipulation takes advantage of the hearer (Eph. 4:2).

⁴⁴ Joseph Mattera. *21 Contrasts Between Prophetic Edification and Manipulation* (2019) [Charisma Magazine](#).

