

HEARING GOD'S VOICE

The gift of prophecy is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to His people through a divinely anointed utterance. (The Third Wave of the Holy Spirit - C. Peter Wagner) Prophecies are spoken to strengthen, encourage, and comfort the Body of Christ (I Cor. 14:3). The central purpose of prophecy is edification (I Cor. 14:4).

To speak prophetically is to speak by divine inspiration. It is the presentation of God's message for an individual, group, nation, or generation. It may bring direction, correction, warning, encouragement, or instruction, but one thing is for certain: it will always direct the recipients to the heart and ways of God. ¹

It is interesting to note "no one would ever find their way to Jesus without direct, supernatural revelation."² At the time of the first coming many were told that Jesus would come even though there had been scriptural revelation given in the Old Testament.

The first mention of prophet in Scripture is in Genesis 20:7. The Hebrew word is *nabi*, and appears more than 300 times in the Old Testament. The second reference is in Exodus 7:1. Based on these two passages, a prophet is one who speaks for another, or one who lends his voice to another. See also Deut. 18:18, John 12:49, Hebrews 1:1-2, I Peter 4:11. The concept of a prophet as only a foreteller of the future is erroneous.

Old Testament Prophets

Prophets are messengers of God.

Haggai 1:13: Then Haggai, the Lord's messenger, gave this message of the Lord to the people: "I am with you," declares the Lord.

Jer. 28:9: But the prophet who prophesies peace will be recognized as one truly sent by the Lord only if his prediction comes true.

True prophets are those sent by God. A messenger does not carry his own authority. He speaks with the authority of the one who sent him.

The Prophets words are words of God.

Ex. 4:12: Now go; I will help you speak and will teach you what to say.

Deut. 18:18: I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers; I will put my words in his mouth, and he will tell them everything I command him.

Jer 1:9: Then the Lord reached out his hand and touched my mouth and said to me, 'Now, I have put my words in your mouth.'

¹ Thus Saith the Lord

² Deere, Jack. Surprised by the Voice of God.

Num. 22:38: 'Well, I have come to you now,' Balaam replied. 'But can I say just anything? I must speak only what God puts in my mouth.'

Ezek. 2:7: You must speak my words to them, whether they listen or fail to listen, for they are rebellious.

There is absolute divine authority of prophetic words. To disbelieve or disobey a prophet's words is to disbelieve or disobey God.

Deut 18:19: If anyone does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name, I myself will call him to account.

I Sam 8:7: And the Lord told him: "Listen to all that the people are saying to you; it is not you they have rejected, but they have rejected me as their king..."

The words of a true prophet are beyond challenge or question.

I Sam 3:19: The Lord was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground.

I Sam 9:6: But the servant replied, "Look, in this town there is a man of God; he is highly respected, and everything he says comes true. Let's go there now. Perhaps he will tell us what way to take."

In contrast, "if what a prophet proclaims in the name of the Lord does not take place or come true, which is a message the Lord has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously". (Deut 18:22).

New Testament Apostles

New Testament apostles: Speaking God's Very Words. There is little if any evidence for a group of prophets in the New Testament churches who could speak with God's very word, i.e. with divine authority. However, the apostles do speak with absolute divine authority.

The apostles are messengers of Christ. They were commissioned by Christ, sent by him on a specific apostolic mission, just as the Old Testament prophets were sent by God as His messengers.

The apostles' words are words of God. (Gal 1:11-12, 2 Peter 3:2, I Cor. 2:13, 2 Cor 13:2, 3, I Thess 2:13, I Thess 4:8, I Thess 4:15) Therefore to disobey the apostle is to disobey God 2 Thess 3:14. I Cor. 14:37-38: "If any one thinks that he is a prophet, or spiritual, he should acknowledge that what I am writing to you is a command of the Lord. If anyone does not recognize this, he is not recognized." Thomas Edwards writes: "He that refuses to hear Christ's apostles refuses to hear Christ himself and incurs His displeasure." The apostles have authority to write words which are God's own words, equal in truth status and authority to the words of the Old Testament.

Why the name “apostle” instead of the name prophet?

Joel 2:28-29 stated that God’s spirit will be poured out on many people who will become prophets. Therefore, the term of prophet would be too broad of term to apply to a limited number.

In secular Greek (at the time of the apostles) the everyday term prophet meant “one who has supernatural knowledge” or “one who predicts the future, or just spokesman.” The word carries with it no suggestion that this person would speak for God.

The Jews during the time of the apostles saw a prophet not as one who spoke for God, but sometimes as a person who simply has knowledge of things beyond his perception. According to Rabbi Hanna B. Isaac, “If one rises early and a Scripture verse comes to his mind, this is a small prophecy.” Again, in this context, there is no sense of absolute divine authority. The women at the well told Jesus she perceived he was a prophet, yet all He did was reveal that he had information that came from no ordinary source.

The word Apostle is a suitable substitute for the idea of the Old Testament prophet. An Old Testament prophet was sent by God. The word Apostle means “sent one” or “messenger”.

Since *apostolos* was a new term it could be used of a limited group of men without seeming to conflict with any Old Testament or rabbinic expectations of a wide distribution of prophetic abilities. The word apostle was a rather uncommon word before the time of the New Testament.

In Ephesians 2:20 and 3:5 the phrase “apostles and prophets” is used. There is considerable support the idea that there is a common foundation of prophets (Old Testament) and apostles (New Testament). ³

The Promise of Latter-Day Prophets

“Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse” (Malachi 4:5-6).

1. Elijah comes from two Hebrew words *el*, meaning strength (also a name of God), and *Yah*, the sacred name of God. Yahweh is Elohim
2. This was first fulfilled with John the Baptist – Luke 1:16-17
3. The message of John the Baptist was repentance – Matt 3:2
4. There is also a future Elijah – Matthew 17:11-13
5. Other prophets also had a message of repentance: Deuteronomy 30:2, I Samuel 7:3, Isaiah 44:22, Jeremiah 4:1, Lamentations 3:40, Ezekiel 14:6, Hosea 6:1, Joel 2:12, Hosea 6:1, Amos 5:4, Zechariah 1:3, Malachi 3:7, 2 Kings 17:13

³ See Grudem, pages 45-62.

6. The major thrust of these servants was to declare God's heart to His people, pricking their hearts that they might return to His ways.

Divine Pattern for Ministry: Hearing in Order to Serve

Jesus did only what he saw the Father doing – John 5:19
(John 5:30; John 7:16; John 8:28, 12:49-50; 14:10, 24; 14:31)

With the exception of Chapter 17, every chapter in the book of Acts contains an example of, or a reference to, supernatural revelatory communication from God to his servants (Acts 1:3-9, Acts 5: 19-20, Acts 8:26, etc.).

There Can Be False Prophets

Jeremiah 23:11

“For both prophet and priest are profane; yes in My house I have found their wickedness: says the Lord.”

Ezekiel 13

New Testament Prophets - Corinth

Prophecy is a great gift! (I Cor. 12:28, 31, 14:4, I Thess. 4:20) The greatness of this gift is because it is the most useful in building up the church.

Prophecies need to be sifted (I Cor. 14:29). Each member of the congregation needs to listen carefully, evaluating the prophecy in light of Scripture and the authoritative teaching, which he or she knows to be true. Therefore, no member of the congregation needs to feel useless for all are to evaluate. Each prophecy might have both true and false elements in it, and those need to be sifted and evaluated.

In I Cor. 14:30, there were to be prophecies which were to be intentionally neglected. While one prophet is speaking, another suddenly has something revealed to him or her. This second prophet signals in some way, perhaps by standing, that he has something to say. Then the first prophet does not finish his prophecy but immediately sits down and is silent, allowing the second one to speak. Note there is no indication that the first prophecy is then given. It appears this prophecy is lost. “Now if the NT prophets had been thought to speak with absolute divine authority this verse would be hard to understand. How could Paul direct that God's words be lost?”

Does revelation mean divine authority? I Cor. 14:30. Revelation (*apokalyopto*) is a special activity of the Holy Spirit. There is no indication that this revelation had divine authority. Phil 3:15: Can we believe that the one reporting this to his neighbor see this information as having divine authority? Eph 1:17-Would a believer say that every time he received a new insight that these were God's words? I Cor 14:36-37 indicates that no words of a prophet could compete with the absolute words that Paul had as an apostle.

New Testament Prophets-Rest of New Testament

Acts 21:4 – Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem. Paul disobeys the prophecy. Would Paul have disobeyed these words if they were the words of God?

Acts 21:10-11- After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'" There are two mistakes in this prophecy. First, Paul was bound by the Romans and not the Jews. Second, he was not given over to the Gentiles but rescued by them (the Jews were trying to kill him). "It is not that Agabus has spoken in a totally false or misleading way; it is just that he has the details wrong. But this kind of minor inaccuracy is exactly compatible with the type of prophecy we found earlier in I Corinthians in which the prophet receives some kind of revelation and then reports it in his own words. He would have the general idea correct (Paul would be imprisoned at Jerusalem), but the details somewhat wrong. Agabus had a vision of Paul as a prisoner of the Romans in Jerusalem, surrounded by an angry mob of Jews. His own interpretation of such a vision or intuitive insight (from the Holy Spirit) would be that the Jews had bound Paul and handed him over to the Romans, and that is what he would erroneously prophesy." (Grudem-p. 99)

I Thessalonians 5:19-21: Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. Test everything. Hold on to the good. Prophecies must be sifted.

I Peter 4:11: If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. Peter is not saying whoever speaks (teaching, prophecy, preaching) is speaking the very words of God but rather people should speak as carefully as they would if they were uttering the very oracles of God.

Characteristic of the Prophetic

The Source of Prophecies

- Prophecy must be based on a revelation from God. I Cor 14:30.
- The revelation comes spontaneously.
- The revelation comes to an individual.
- The revelation is from God. Paul uses *apokupto* and is used 44 times in the NT and never refers to human activity or communications.
- The revelation gives insight from God's perspective. This is not some type of magic or fortune telling (Pagan fortune telling or soothsaying obtains special knowledge or hidden facts that are used for personal benefit or in the service of false religion. Prophecy is for the building up of the church.

How much does a prophet know? (I Cor 13:8-13) The prophecy is imperfect because it gives only a glimpse of the subjects it treats (in parts v. 9), because the prophet himself only receives some kind of indirect revelation, and a limited one at that (we see in a mirror, v. 12), and because what the prophet does receive is often difficult for him to understand or interpret (dimly-v. 12). Therefore a prophet may not always understand with complete clarity just what has been revealed to him, and at times may not even be sure that he has received a revelation.

Is prophecy ecstatic? Ecstatic is defined as a state of being beyond reason and self-control. There are four questions that relate to an ecstatic experience. (1) Was the prophet forced to speak against his will? (2) Did the prophet lose his self-control and begin to rave violently or in a disorderly, disruptive way? (3) Did the prophet speak things which made no sense to him? (4) Was the prophet for a time unaware of his surroundings?

Christian prophecy is different from pagan prophecy. I Cor 12:1-3.

Christian prophecy is characterized by reasonable orderly conduct.

I Cor. 14:30b That the prophet was not forced to speak against his will is shown by the fact that he could stop his prophecy to allow another to speak. That the prophet did not lose his self control or begin to rave violently is made clear by Paul's statement in I Cor. 14:33 when he says that the result of the Spirit's working in a prophet is not disorder (frenzied disturbance-Greek *akatastasia*) but peace (v.33). Although there is no explicit statement that a prophet understood what he was saying, it is clear that the hearers understood, for they were to evaluate what was said (I Cor. 14:29). Since the first prophet was able to recognize from some clear signal that someone else had received a revelation and was ready to prophesy (I Cor. 14:30), it is clear that Paul assumed him to be well aware of his surroundings, not out of touch with reality at all.

Is Prophecy miraculous? The fact that prophecy originates with the Holy Spirit only puts it on a par with other spiritual gifts.

How God Speaks

➤ Word of God

➤ **Audible Voice** - the clearer the revelation, the harder the task. When God speaks in an audible voice, you can be sure the powers of hell will rise up to challenge that voice. When God speaks to you most clearly, it usually means you are going to go through such a difficult experience that you will need to be absolutely certain that God had spoken to you. In fact, the clarity of the voice may be the main thing that gives you the power to endure the subsequent testing.⁴ First, It appears that God speaks regularly in the audible voice to people he was rising to a prominent place of leadership (Ex. 19:9). Second, the audible voice comes at

⁴ The Voice of God
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a turning point in the lives of the saints and in the history of the church, i.e., the beginning of Jesus ministry, just before he died on the cross, at the conversion of the apostle of the Gentiles, at the conversion of the first Gentile, and at the revelation of the last days. Third, the voice comes when the divine ministry about to be performed is extraordinarily difficult to accept or believe, or when the task about to be undertaken is so hard that it will require the clarity and assurance of an audible voice in order to endure and complete the task.

➤ **Voice Audible to You Alone** – I Samuel 3: the Lord calls Samuel

➤ **Internal Audible Voice** – Ezekiel 14:2-4: (v. 2) As he spoke, the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet, and I heard him speaking to me.

➤ **Voice of Angels** – Heb. 13:2: Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it.

Acts 8:26: Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, Go sought to the road – the desert road – that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.

➤ **Dreams** – consist of images – accompanied by thoughts and emotions – we see while we are asleep. God may use a dream to warn, encourage or guide us. He may visit us or reveal the future to us (Gen. 37:5ff). He may use a dream to command us (Gen. 31:11-13). He may even use dreams to speak to unbelievers (Gen 20:3-7, Gen. 41:1-7, Dan. 2:1ff)). Also read Numbers 12:6, Joel 2:28-29, Job 33:16-18

➤ **Visions** – are pictures we have while we are awake. Numbers 12:6: Listen to my words: “When a prophet of the Lord is among you, I reveal myself to him in visions; I speak to him in dreams.

Joel 2:28-29: And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.

➤ **Night Visions** - Acts 16:9, 18:9-10

➤ **Trances** – are a visionary state that occurs while we are awake. People in trances have a profound loss of consciousness of their surroundings, as well as a loss of bodily functions.

➤ **Sentence Fragments and Single Words**

➤ **Impressions** – The Holy Spirit’s influences our feelings, our physical sense, or our minds. A divine impression comes to us from the Holy Spirit while intuition arises from within our human spirit.

➤ **Discernment** – Hebrews 5:14

➤ **Seeing Words**

➤ **Everyday Objects**

➤ **Numbers**

➤ **Creations**

Nine Purposes of Prophecy⁵

- Restore people's dignity and self-respect
- Edify, encourage and comfort the church
- Bring correction or warning
- Provide direction and enhance vision
- Open up the teaching of the Word and confirm preaching
- Release the church into new doctrine or practices
- Provide insight into counseling situations
- Provide evangelistic breakthroughs
- Provide an agenda for prayer

Make Up of a Prophetic Word⁶

- Word of knowledge (Be careful not to speak the word of knowledge without direction from the Lord). A word of knowledge opens up the issue
- Gift of prophecy and word of wisdom. A prophetic word speaks God's heart into it
- Word of wisdom. The Word of Wisdom tells us how to respond to God

Judging Prophecy

The prophecy is a spiritual message that must conform to biblical truth. Objective: verifiable statements about the past and present must be checked against facts. Predictions for the future are judged by whether they come to pass.

Pitfalls of Prophecy

Pitfall of Self Pity – as in *Elijah* - I Kings 17-19

Pitfall of Persecution – *Jeremiah and Ezekiel* - Ez. 2:6, Jer. 20:2, 37:15, 38:6, 2 Timothy 4:3, James 5:10, I Peter 4:12

⁵ Graham Cook

⁶ Graham Cook

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Pitfall of Pride - *Jonah*. Jonah was more concerned with his reputation than with the people he was to ministered. These prophets want to dictate to God how to fulfill His word through them because they do not trust God to do it.

Pitfall of Position and Power - *James and John* - Mark 10:35-41. The desire for position and power was more important than servanthood and ministry to others. Covetousness can be a problem (covet: a desire or wish for, with eagerness; to desire earnestly – It is the desire for gain. Note that Paul said that the gifts were for the purpose of building up the church – I Cor. 14:12). Note the biblical account in 2 Chronicles 18.

Pitfall of Wrong Motive –*Balaam*. Num 22:1-24:25. Balaam is the only one who portrays the reality that a prophet can give accurate prophecies and yet be judged as a false prophet.

Pitfall of Negativism - *Jacob* - Gen. 47:9. Compare to Joseph's optimism-Gen 45:5-8

Pitfall of Prophesying out of the Flesh and not the Spirit – Jeremiah 23:15-16, Ezekiel 13:6

Pitfall of Receiving into the Heart False Words – When we agree with and receive words that appeal to us but are not from God, we open our lives to deception and ruin. Jer. 23:16, James 3:6.

Pitfall of Wanting a Prophecy that Will Guarantee No Suffering – Acts 14:21-22

Pitfall of Believing Unbiblical Prophecies - *Jezebel* – Revelation 2:20-22, Romans 16:17-18

Pitfall of Claiming to be a Prophet - Jesus is the one who appoints offices - Ephesians 4:11, Hebrews 5:1, Acts 13:2, Jeremiah 23:21, Acts 7:23-25, Acts 20:30. Whenever we assume a position of authority without God's appointment we are exalting ourselves. Numbers 12:1-2. New Testament prophets never use prophetic authority to control someone's life.

Pitfall of Not Waiting to See the Fruit of a Prophet: Result Deception – Matt 7:15-16; 2 Tim. 3:1, 13; Matt. 24:14

10 M's for Maturing and Maintaining Ministry and Discerning True and False Ministries

1. **Manhood or Womanhood** - Gen 1:26, 27; Rom 8:29; I Tim 2:5 - Our highest goal is not to be the greatest, but rather to be Christ's type of man or woman that God wants us to be both now and forever. Christ-likeness needs to be our goal. Question to ask: Is this the kind of person I would want for my best friend, neighbor, or co-laborer in God's kingdom throughout eternity?
2. **Ministry**- Deut 18:22, Mt. 7:15-21, 2 Cor 6:3
3. **Message of love** - Eph 4:15, I Tim 4:2,
4. **Maturity** - I Cor 13, Gal 5:22, James 3:17 - God is loving towards one's faithfulness, theological maturity, and one who lives Jesus.
5. **Marriage** - Eph 5:22-23, I Tim 3:2, 5, 1 Peter 3:1, 7 - Our spouse should be our best friend. Our children must be well disciplined and well cared for. Ministry must not compete with the family. Rules without relationship lead to rebellion.
6. **Methods** - Rom 1:18, Rom 3:7, 8, Tit 1:16, -There needs to be honesty in finances. We must walk in absolute integrity. We must treat our staff with basic kindness.
7. **Manners** - Eph 4:29; 5:4, Tit 1:7; 3:1-2 - We must slander no one. There must be no coarse language.
8. **Money** - I Tim 6:5-17 - The Christian can have money but money must not have the Christian. Trust the Lord to provide.
9. **Morality** - Mt 5:28, I Cor 6:9-18; Eph 5:3;
10. **Motive** - Pr 16:2, Mt 6:1, I Cor 16:15, I Cor 13:1-3 - Do we minister to be seen. Are we motivated by a desire to fulfill God's will, or by some personal drive, such as lust for power, fame, pleasure, or wealth? Do we minister out of a heart full of God's love?

The Timing of Prophecy⁷

- "Suddenly or immediately." On the surface, it may seem that a sudden event has happened spontaneously, but if we look below the surface we find that a long time of preparation has led up to the sudden manifestation. "Suddenly" on the day of Pentecost they all began to speak with other tongues...But this came

⁷ Bill Hamon. Prophets and Personal Prophecy

about according to God's timetable, and man's preparation and placement. The word "Immediately" was used by Jesus in a similar way. When the grain is fully ripe, then "immediately" the farmer comes and harvests it. What is called "sudden" and "immediate," is actually based on progressive growth and preparation.

- "Now." When we hear the word "Now" we usually think immediately, or within 24 hours...In the first two years of King Saul's reign, he received a personal prophecy from the prophet Samuel who had prophesied judgment to Saul by telling him that "now" his kingdom would not continue. The "now" was thirty-eight years later.
- "Immediately" can mean from one day to three years.
- "Very soon" means one to ten years.
- "Now" or "This day" means one to forty years.
- "I will" without a time designation means God will act sometime in their life if he is obedient.
- "Soon" was the term Jesus used to describe the time of His soon return almost two thousand years ago. "Behold, I come quickly."

Practical Applications

- Do not overvalue prophecy and make them the very words of God.
- Avoid the words "Thus says the Lord," "the Lord said" or "the Lord told me." It is better to say "I think the Lord is suggesting something like...," "I think the Lord is indicating that...," "It seems that the Lord is putting on my heart a concern that..."
- During worship, time would be allowed for listening for God or waiting on Him.
- Prophecy must never compete with Scripture in the authority or importance we attach to the prophetic words.
- Prophecy must never be allowed to function without continued evaluation by the church, especially those in leadership.
- All must recognize that the revelation is partial, and may not be clear to the person prophesying, and may contain elements of mistaken understanding or interpretation on the part of the person prophesying.
- Prophetic words are not to be limited to only those who appear to hold the office of prophets (I Cor 14:24-25).
- Only three are to give prophetic words at a time so the congregation can have opportunity to judge the prophecies (I Cor. 14:27).

- Judge a prophecy by considering the content of the words spoken to determine whether they are true or false. Judge a prophet as a person by the quality of his or her life.
- Record and meditate on your personal prophecies. Record the prophecy.
- Prove prophecy by biblical principles and the proper criteria for judging prophetic words but witness to prophesy with your spirit. Do not do or believe what you do not bear witness to. If the prophecy is of God it will come to pass.
- Understand that there are hindrances to the fulfillment of personal prophecies: unbelief, pride, impatience, self-deception, negligence, procrastination, slothfulness, false preconceptions about life and ourselves.
- Reserve the term false prophet for one who speaks words with wrong motives and intent. It is better to use the word inaccurate when a particular word does not fit the established facts.
- A prophet should minister with a spirit of humility that invites investigation and correction. There should be accountability with a spiritual leader. All prophecies should be recorded or witness to by a third party.
- Understand that not all the statements made within a single prophetic flow or words will necessarily be fulfilled in the order spoken or with a single time frame (cf Is 61:1ff)
- All words must be given with the approval of those in authority. The approval could be passive in the sense that the word is allowed to be given and allowed to be judged by those present. It is best that if the words are radically corrective or directive, the words should be submitted to the those in authority before speaking them publicly to the congregation.
- It is wise simply to avoid prophesying a particular marriage partner or that one is about to have a child. Of course, there are exceptions!
- It is wise to wait to receive a specific prophetic word for healing for a particular person before prophesying healing for that person.
- No one should speak to a group unless that person has been released by the leadership to do.
- Speak only what the Lord has told you – II Kings 4:27
- Be patient. No one learns a language instantly. Languages are acquired over time through constant use. The same is true of the language of the Holy Spirit.

- Get permission from God to speak.
- Distinguish between revelation, interpretation, and application.
- Give prophetic words with humility.
- Leave the results to God.
- Pray for those to whom you prophesy.
- Give negative messages with tact and gentleness. It is best to give these kinds of words privately. Submitting the words to a leader would help to temper the delivery of that word.
- Never trust a negative impression about someone with whom you are angry or jealous.
- Be cautious about trying to please people.
- Be careful about trying to be awesome – “Prophet to the Nations!”
- When you err, admit it! Do not rationalize mistakes.
- Hold what the Lord tells you in confidence. Do not gossip or slander by revealing to others what the Lord has told you about someone.
- Do not call out sin publicly.

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Prove prophecy by biblical principles and the proper criteria for judging prophetic words but witness to prophesy with your spirit. Do not do what you do not bear witness to. If the prophecy is of God it will come to pass.

Understand that there are hindrances to the fulfillment of personal prophecies: unbelief, pride, impatience, self-deception, negligence, procrastination, slothfulness, false preconceptions about life and ourselves.

Reserve the term false prophet for one who speaks words with wrong motives and intent. It is better to use the word inaccurate when a particular word does not fit the established facts.

A prophet should minister with a spirit of humility that invites investigation and correction. There should be accountability with a spiritual leader. All prophecies should be recorded or witness to by a third party.

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All words must be given under the covering and approval of the local pastors. If the words are radically corrective or directive, the words should be submitted to the pastor before speaking them publicly to the congregation.

IT IS WISE SIMPLY TO AVOID PROPHESYING A PARTICULAR MARRIAGE PARTNER OR CHILDREN TO OTHERS.

Only when we receive a specific prophetic word of healing for a particular person should we prophecy healing for that person.

No one can speak to entire congregation unless that person has been released by the pastor (s) to do.

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Do not call out sin publicly.

Interpreting Dreams

Record your dreams.

Possible symbolism: car-ministry, baby-ministry, water-Holy Spirit, faceless man-Holy Spirit, trains-movements, ships-major movements.

Interpretation of dreams belongs to God.

Dreams may reveal generational issues.

Dreams may have several meanings

Avoid pride in interpretation and sharing of dreams – Joseph

Some Reasons Why God May Not Speak

Pride – I Peter 5:5

A desire to dominate

Blind Hatred

Religious pride – believing you already know what God thinks (Matt. 15:14)

The Kind of People Who Hear God's Voice

Available

Willing to do God's will

Humble

GOD COMES TO US BECAUSE HE WANTS A RELATIONSHIP WITH US.

“MY SHEEP KNOW MY VOICE.”

Resources used:

Bevere, John. Thus Saith the Lord

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Gordon Fee. 1st Epistle to the Corinthians

Grudem, The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today

Hamon, Prophets and Personal Prophecy

Hamon, Prophets and the Prophetic Movement

Hamon, Prophets Pitfalls and Principles.

Cindy Jacobs, The Voice of God