

“PROPHECY”

The word prophecy in Hebrew is NABA, which means, “to flow, boil up or over; bubble or pour forth words, to gush.”

Exodus 7:1-2

So the Lord said to Moses:” See, I have made you as God to Pharaoh, and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet. “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.”

Proverbs 15:28

The heart of the righteous studies how to answer, (but the mouth of the wicked pours forth evil)

In the New Testament the words prophecy, prophesy, prophesied, and prophets are used approximately 186 times and mean, “to speak, say; declare or make known.” Thus the subject is given an important place in the New Testament for the church.

When men would prophesy, whether in old or new testament, the spirit of god would inspire their speech and cause his own words to bubble forth. The same is true in the church today. Men and women can utter words from the lord as he inspires them to speak, for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of the entire body.

The four realms of prophecy

1. Prophecy of scripture

All biblical revelation prophesied through the old and new testament prophets is the prophecy of scripture.

2Peter1: 20-21

Knowing this first that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

The prophecy of scripture speaks of the declatory and revelatory elements of the word of god as the highest revelation of God to man.

All prophetic utterance must be judged by the prophecy of scripture. It contains no errors, mistakes, or imperfection. The written words which were recorded by the prophets and the apostles were supernaturally given by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. websters dictionary defines inspiration as “the supernatural influence of the spirit of god on the human mind, by which the apostles and prophets and sacred writers were qualified to set forth divine truth without any mixture of error.”

2. Spirit of prophecy

The second realm of prophecy in scripture is the spirit of prophecy.

Revelation 19:10

The spirit of prophecy is the anointing of Holy Spirit that enables men or woman who do not have the gifts of prophecy or the office of prophet to speak forth under the inspiration of God. Such unction sometimes releases such a powerful presence of God in church services that almost anyone could pick up on the mind of the lord for that occasion and declare it plainly. Yet just because a person speaks forth under the inspiration of the spirit when a spirit of prophecy is present in a meeting does not mean that the person has the gift of prophecy or the mantle of a prophet.

3. Gift of prophecy

Third realm of prophecy found in scripture is the gift of prophecy.

1Cor.12: 4

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit

1Cor12: 10

“.. To another the workings of miracles, to another prophesy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues

The gift of prophecy is given to certain believers to bring the word of the Lord to the congregation. The revelation of the Lord is brought by the Holy Spirit to teach, encourage, and comfort the body, or to exalt and crown the worship of Christ.

4. Office of the prophet

The prophetic realm of foretelling and confirmation of ministries in the presbytery with the laying on of hands should only be done by those who have the mantle of the office of the prophet, the fourth realm of prophecy.

Eph2: 19-20

Now therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone.

Eph4: 11

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

Prophets are vessels whom Christ chooses to function constantly and accurately in the realm of the word of knowledge, word of wisdom, discernment of spirits, confirmation, revelation, illumination, prophetic utterance, prediction, visions, correction, and ministry confirmation.

5. Developing the ministry of prophecy

1Cor 12:31

But earnestly desire the best gifts

1Cor13: 9

For we know in part and we prophesy in part

1Cor14: 3

But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men

1Cor14: 4

He who speaks in tongues edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

There are some basic guidelines, which can be followed to prepare for and to develop the prophetic gift.

1. Realize that prophecy was a vital part of the early church ministry

Joel 2:28-29

Luke 2:36

Acts 2:16-19

Acts 19:6

Acts 21:9

1Cor.11: 5

1Thes 5:20

Prophecy comes from the Spirit, where as preaching comes from the intellect.

2. Release the faith to prophesy

Faith is important for prophecy because one can only speak forth in this way according to the proportion of his faith. (Romans 12:6-8)

2. Learn to operate and flow in the anointing of the Holy Spirit

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is the all-important condition to bring forth the words of the Lord. The spiritual gift is given forth in the Spirit's anointing. The unction of the Holy Spirit cannot be seen in human terms of ability. It is God's enabling power operating through a humble vessel.

3. Learn how to receive a word from the Lord

A word of prophecy comes as a word of joy and burning to a person's heart before he gives it. A word of prophecy is not just a passing good thought or idea. It is a quickened, Spirit anointed burden and word from the Lord that gives the recipient a definite feeling of the need for its expression. (Psalm 119:11,16,25,50,148)

3. Move out at the right time in the meeting Prophesying at "any old time" in a church meeting is not appropriate. One must interject his prophecy at a time that would be most edifying for all involved. The Holy Spirit expresses different moods in different meetings, and the one who feels he has a word for the church must ask him, "What is the mood of the Spirit in this meeting." It is possible that the word the person has received from the Lord is only for himself or for a later time.

6. Learn to discern one's own thought and feelings from those of the Holy Spirit

It is very important that a person does not project his preconceived thoughts and ideas into the prophetic stream. However, this caution is not to put new ministries into such bondage of fear that they do not have the liberty to function. A person learns to prophesy as a child learns to walk.

If a person is going through some specific problem or emotional anxiety, he may have a tendency to prophesy these things. For example, if a person were being moved upon the Holy Spirit to forgive someone and the person had not yet done this, he might project what the spirit was saying to him upon the congregation with the words: "thus says the Lord to his people; thou shall learn better to forgive one another. For, surely, the Lord is calling you to a greater level of forgiveness." In doing this, the person may be putting his own thoughts, dealings, needs, problems, and questions onto the congregation.

This is unannointed, unedifying, and unfortunate for the people because they can be sidetracked from what the spirit wanted to say to them. The Old Testament refers to men that do this as false prophets who prophesy out of their own heart and visions

7. Stir up your gift

In the Greek the word "stir" means to "rekindle"; to stir the coals that are almost out. Because spiritual gifts can be quenched through sin, neglect, and laziness, many times they must not only be rekindled, but rekindled by the spirit. The bible speaks very clearly of the necessity of spiritual stirring.

Exodus 35:21

Job 17:8

Psalm 35:23

8. Cultivate a hunger for spiritual gifts

Many Christians and many local churches do not function freely in spiritual gifts because they do not have a Godly desire to see them operate. Without an earnest thirst for the Spirit to operate the gifts in the church, she will not see the manifestation of the power of God. It is as Jesus said, "Be it unto you according to your faith."

9. Speak forth the word of God for the purposes of God

God intended His Word to accomplish many spiritual ends. In His descriptions of His Word are set forth His very purposes:

1. The Word is as fire, which purifies from dross (Jer.23: 29)
2. The Word as a hammer, which breaks bondages (Jer.23: 29)
3. The Word as a lamp, which gives direction (Psa.119: 105)
4. The Word as a mirror, which causes a person to see (Jam.1: 21-25)
5. The Word as milk, which gives nourishment (1Pet.1: 23)
6. The Word as a rod, which measures the Church (Rev.11: 1-2)
7. The Word as a seed (1Pet.1: 23)
8. The Word as a sword, which defends (Heb 4:12)
9. The Word as water, which cleanses (Eph.5: 26)
10. The Word as honey, which tastes good (Psa. 19:7-10)
11. The Word as bread, which feeds the soul (Matt. 4:4)
12. The Word as an ox goad which prods a person (Ecc.12: 11)

Further more, the prophetic word from the Lord is to be the word of:

13. Healing (Ps.107: 20)

14. Hope (Ps. 119:114,147; 130:5)
15. Strength (Psa. 119:116)
16. Rejoicing (Ps.119: 162)
17. Deliverance (Psa. 119:170)
18. Proper timing (Pro. 15:23)
19. Fruition (Isa.55: 8-11)
20. Life (Phil.2: 16, 1John 1:1)
21. Christ (col. 3:16)
22. Exhortation (Heb.13: 22)

10. Receive the quickening of the Holy Spirit

The word translated “quicken” is used twelve times in the New Testament and means “to make alive” and “to give life”. This word is translated in different ways. In 1Cor.3: 6 it is “giveth life” and in Gal. 3:21 it is giving life. A person who prophesies must learn how to be quickened in his own spirit by the Holy Spirit. A person who prophesies should prophesy only when he senses the inner prompting and quickening of the Spirit upon him.

11. Be sensitive to the lifting of the prophetic spirit

Before a person begins to prophesy he usually sense, to some degree, the anointing of God upon him. As he responds to this anointing and steps out in faith with a prophetic utterance, the Holy Spirit will increase His prophetic anointing. However, as soon as the Holy Spirit’s message has been adequately communicated, the person prophesying will sense a lifting of the anointing. One must start and stop according to the flow of the anointing.

12. Learn how to begin speaking in the prophetic flow

Getting started in a prophetic flow is possibly the most difficult part of moving in prophecy. Yet the more you do it the easier it becomes. One’s first step must be taken in boldness and faith. God desires His people to be bold in Him.

13. Cultivate self-control and temperance in the operation of the prophetic gift

Many times younger Christians will become so excited at a sensing of the anointing of God’s Spirit on them that they will tend to lose self control and may even become fanatical in their expression of the prophetic flow. When a person prophesies he must realize he is in control of his expressions or emotions. God anoints, but He does not overpower. 1Cor. 14:32 and the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. When there is self-control and temperance in the ministry of the prophetic gifts, each local church is edified.