

# PROPHECY

## 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting

### 1. What is Prophecy?

Prophecy is an inspired (God-breathed) word given by the Holy Spirit.

Foretelling - revealing something true about the Future

Forthtelling - revealing something true about the Present

### 2. Prophecy in the Old Testament

- True prophecy - God-given, infallible speech spoken by people such as Moses, Samuel, Nathan, Elijah, Elisha, and even Jesus in the New Testament.
- False prophecy - when someone speaks presumptuously on behalf of God and they are subject to condemnation. Deuteronomy 18:20 says they could be executed, but at the very least permanently ignored.

### 3. Prophecy in the New Testament

- Spontaneous, personal revelation from the Holy Spirit
- Message is subject to regulation and endorsement from the Church. Spiritual gifts are given to believers, but believers belong to the Church according to the New Testament (1 Corinthians 12 & 14)
- Purpose of Prophecy in New Testament
  - Edification
  - Encouragement
  - Consolation
  - Conviction
  - Guidance

- Important to see that prophecy is not infallible but regulated in the New Testament
- In the Old Testament - Holy Spirit/Prophecy was given to:
  - Specific People
  - Specific Times
  - Specific Reasons
- In the New Testament - Holy Spirit is given to all of us and Spiritual Gifts are given to each of us.
- The office of Prophet still exists in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11) but it describes one on whom the gift of prophecy rests but does not mean that they are infallible and never make mistakes.
- This is why Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 14:29 that we should test and weigh everything that is said in a prophecy.
- Spiritual gifts of a Message in Tongues with an Interpretation are the equivalent of Prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:5)

#### 4. How should Prophecy be used in the Church today?

- New Testament does not speak of prophecy outside of a church setting.
  - Agabus
    - Acts 11:28 - Agabus came to Antioch from Jerusalem with a group of prophets sent by the Church and under their authority and he prophesied a famine "would spread over the entire Roman world." The famine happened under the Roman Emperor Claudius.
    - Acts 21:10-12 - Agabus takes Paul's belt and ties his own hands and says, ""The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'"

- There were no national prophetic ministries without oversight from Church authority. (This does not mean a ministry board made up of family members)
- There was no such thing as unaccountable leaders.
- Evaluate every Prophecy
  - Must be Submitted to the Word of God (Bible)
  - Must be submitted to Church Leadership (Humility)
  - Go back and see if previous prophecies have come to pass. (Accuracy)
- Prophecy has a Redemptive Purpose
  - Prophecy is not just predicting the future—that’s what psychics try to do
  - Agabus was given the prophecy of the famine so they could collect offerings that the Church could give to help people during the disaster.
  - Prophecy has a purpose - “edify the church...for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort.” (1 Corinthians 14:3-4)

## 5. Who’s at fault if a Prophecy doesn’t happen?

- **God is never at fault** if a prophecy fails

God does condition some prophecies that are tied to repentance

<sup>7</sup> If at any time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be uprooted, torn down and destroyed, <sup>8</sup> and if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned. <sup>9</sup> And if at another time I announce that a nation or kingdom is to be built up and planted, <sup>10</sup> and if it does evil in my sight and does not obey me, then I will reconsider the good I had intended to do for it. - Jeremiah 18:7-10

- It might be the One who Prophesies
  - Could be a False Prophet - one who intentionally is trying to mislead God's people.
  - Speaking the Prophecy from the desires of **their** heart
- It might be the one who **Hears the Prophecy** - interpreting the prophecy the way they desire.

## 6. What should we do about prophets who got it wrong?

- Be aware of how they respond
  - Some are Repentant - allow them grace to seek God's face and submit to accountability.
  - Some are Blaming Others for their lack of faith. (This is not how prophecy works)
  - Some are Reinterpreting their Prophecies. (Treat them with extreme caution)

## 7. What is the Biblical way to treat prophecy?

- Acknowledge that the Bible says it is a real, active gift of the Holy Spirit operating in the Church today.
- Weigh every prophecy
  - God's Word
  - Mature Believers
  - Church Authority
- Be aware of your own heart's desires as you interpret prophecy.
- Realize the comfort and peace that come from true prophecy.
- Remember that our Hope is rooted in Prophecy

"Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God<sup>[a]</sup>; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup>My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup>And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and

take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. – John  
14:1-3

For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.<sup>17</sup> After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. <sup>18</sup>Therefore encourage one another with these words.  
– 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18