

Prophecy: Introduction

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Sunset Avenue Church of God

DISCUSSION QUESTION: Do you desire to prophesy? If not why not? If yes, what do you want to speak and who do you want to speak into?

1 Thessalonians 5:20-22 *"do not despise prophetic utterances. 21 But examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil."* [NASU]

Prophecy is a valued gift that God grants to us. Prophecy is a significant part of the Bible. Some say that up to 1/3 of the scriptures are devoted to prophecy. Paul reminds us in Ephesians 2:20 that we stand on the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets.

God wants HIS people to operate in the Gifts that HE gives and the prophetic is one of those. But it comes with accountability.

Jesus warned us that in the end of the age we would hear a lot of false prophecy.

Matt 24:3-14 "Later as he was sitting on Mount Olives, his disciples approached and asked him, 'Tell us, when are these things going to happen? What will be the sign of your coming, that the time's up?' 4 Jesus said, 'Watch out for doomsday deceivers. 5 Many leaders are going to show up with forged identities, claiming, 'I am Christ, the Messiah.' They will deceive a lot of people. 6 When reports come in of wars and rumored wars, keep your head and don't panic. This is routine history; this is no sign of the end. 7 Nation will fight nation and ruler fight ruler, over and over. Famines and earthquakes will occur in various places. 8 This is nothing compared to what is coming. 9 "They are going to throw you to the wolves and kill you, everyone hating you because you carry my name. 10 And then, going from bad to worse, it will be dog-eat-dog, everyone at each other's throat, everyone hating each other. 11 "In the confusion, lying preachers will come forward and deceive a lot of people. 12 For many others, the overwhelming spread of evil will do them in — nothing left of their love but a mound of ashes. 13 "Staying with it — that's what God requires. Stay with it to the end. You won't be sorry, and you'll be saved. 14 All during this time, the good news — the Message of the kingdom — will be preached all over the world, a witness staked out in every country. And then the end will come." [The Message]

We went through the blood moon phenomenon ... These lunar eclipses are set. They interest many because they happen at times on cycles that correspond with Jewish Feast Days. But the Jewish calendar it is based on a lunar cycle whereas we use a solar cycle to get our year. So naturally great Feast Days will happen when events with the moon occur.

But when you look at scripture, especially in Joel where it speaks of the moon turning to blood the events that transpire are unpredictable and sudden. It is the great and terrible day of the Lord and not lunar cycles that God has established for times and seasons. It is true that men have looked back at Feast Days and lunar eclipse and found historic events that coincided. That is not predictive.

In the last election cycle, we heard words that turned out to be false. Sadly, some still cling to the words that were spoken. Others have tried to change the intent of their words. Doubling down on being wrong

We need to be a people that endure the endless false statements because we are tuned into the truth and not the fanatical! So, I begin a series on prophecy so we will be a people that endure!

a. Prophecy Defined

- Prophecy has two aspects to it.
- First there is the foretelling.
 - o That is speaking something from God that is predictive in nature.
 - o This is real and it is possible but these people desire accountability.
 - o If someone gives you outcomes, times and dates but then puts the condition on it, "I'm not saying but" discount that it is coming from God.
 - o If they put a disclaimer on their prophecies so they can say that they were right either way it happens, ignore them!
- Second aspect of prophecy is "forth-telling"
 - o That is speaking the things of God but not predictive in nature.
 - o This is found in 1 Corinthians 14:3 *"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort."* [KJV]
 - o All believers can prophesy this way (1 Corinthians 14:29 – 31) but not everyone is called to the office of a prophet.
 - o It is possible and it does happen that some will prophesy in a predictive manner (prophet) but all can speak by the word of the Lord to edify, exhort and comfort.

b. Prophecy Does not come by Will of Man

2 Peter 1:20-21a *"knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. 21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man..."* [ESV]

Prophecy does not come by man's searching, man's guesswork or by his own idea. This is what we are seeing in our day, and we have been warned! People want to see something so bad that they produce their own prophecy and attribute it to God. They want someone to get a job, get married, own a home, get healed so badly that they prophecy by their own will.

You may say pastor you are scaring us and making us fearful to prophesy. It is a fearful thing to speak in the name of the Lord and say that you heard HIM say!

Deut. 18:21 – 22 *"But you may wonder, 'How will we know whether or not a prophecy is from the Lord?' 22 If the prophet speaks in the Lord's name but his prediction does not happen or come true, you will know that the Lord did not give that message. That prophet has spoken without my authority and need not be feared."* [NLT]

c. Prophecy Declares Will & Counsel of God

2 Peter 1:21b *"...but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."*

They were moved along, influenced" by the Holy Ghost to share what God said. The idea is, that in what they spake they were "carried along" by an influence from above. They moved in the case only as they were moved; they spake only as the influence of the Holy Ghost was upon them.