November, December, January
Holy Spirit Study
"Prophecy"

My main ambition in life is to be on the devil's most wanted list.
Leonard Ravenhill

LESSON TWENTY-NINE
PROPHECY
PART ONE

The finally Gift of Inspiration (Talk Like God) is prophecy. It has been said on many occasions by many prophetic people from far and wide that First Love is a prophetic house. I have received direction and encouragement so many times in my own life through the prophetic word that prophetic people have given me. At times these words have been almost life changing as I have waited for their fulfillment and seen them come to pass. I believe there is a great need in the Body of Christ today for prophetic words, especially from *nameless, faceless prophets,* who have no agenda except to bring glory to the Lord or to warn His people of things to come. Many, many scriptures, as well as Church history, make it very clear that prophecy did not end with the death of the last original apostle or with the canonization of scripture. Furthermore, we know that one of the signs of the last days is the prophetic word coming as a result of *the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on all flesh* (Joel 2:28-32). We will be discussing

the scriptural evidence and need for last days' prophetic ministry in later handouts.

Before we get too far into prophecy, I want to explain the difference between the 5-fold ministry prophet and the gift of prophecy. Many have the gift of prophecy but are not prophets. To be a prophet is to operate in the 5-fold ministry office spoken of in Ephesians 4:11: *"And He gave some prophets…"* This is also mentioned in 1st Corinthians 12:28: *"And God hath set some in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers…"* Then Paul asks the rhetorical question: *"…Are all prophets?"*…(1st Corinthians 12:29). Of course, the answer is no! Nevertheless, all, who have been baptized in the Holy Spirit, may have at times, genuine prophet words and operate in the gift of prophecy, and still not be prophets.

Not every believer is called to be a prophet. It is a full time calling, and it is always confirmed by seasoned prophets and apostles. It is placed on a person's life at birth and given by Christ. Sometimes the manifestation might not come until years later, but the gift is given at birth. The job of the prophet, in the 5-fold ministry office, is, as all the offices working together are, *for the equipping or maturing of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up or edifying the Body of Christ.* The prophet consistently walks in the gift. The prophet's messages, however, since the Church Age began at Pentecost, do not hold the same weight as the Bible or of the Old Testament prophets, and no word of prophecy should ever violate scripture. Present day prophets are used to give judgments, promises, blessings, etc. They sometimes warn of wars and prophesy peacetimes.

Prophets are always in control of their gift. 1st Corinthians 14:32 tells us that the spirit of prophecy is subject to the prophet. In other words, the prophet has control over when and if he gives the prophecy. Thus, disruption of a church service is not necessary, and I believe that those who interrupt an anointed teaching of the Word to prophesy are wrong and immature and being led by the wrong spirit.

While the 5-fold ministry office (of the prophet) is given to the Church by Christ, the gift of prophecy is given by the Holy Spirit to any believer who covets this gift. Generally, the emphasis of one with the gift of prophecy is on individuals in the Body and not on the corporate Body. The one with the gift of prophecy uses the gift to encourage, edify and comfort members of the Body. The gift can be activated in anyone who has been baptized in the Holy Spirit. People who minister in the gift of prophecy do so at any time the Holy Spirit chooses, but again this prophetic word is subject to the one prophesying and should be done decently and in order and at an appropriate time.

Prophecy, whether given by a prophet or one with the gift of prophecy, is for believers. The Word tells us in 1st Corinthians 14:22: *"Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.*

When you receive a personal prophecy or even hear a prophetic word for the Body, you should always test the prophecy by the Word of God. Additional safeguards are these*: Does the prophecy witness to the Spirit in you? Do your spiritual authorities confirm the prophecy? Are other spiritual counselors convinced that this prophecy is accurate?* Sometimes it is wise

to “put the prophecy on the shelf” and just wait and let the Holy Spirit bring it about at the proper time, without you trying to help the Spirit. Trying to force the hand of God and make a prophecy come to pass by natural means (Remember Sarah, Abraham’s wife) often results in disaster. The Holy Spirit does not need our help, only our obedience.

I think that we could safely conclude that prophecy is the most important of the gifts of utterance and really one of the most important gifts of all, at least in Paul’s mind. In Paul’s letter to the Corinthians, chapters 11,12,13, and 14, prophecy is mentioned more than any of the other gifts (22 times). Paul also tells us in 1st Corinthians 14:39-“*Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues.*”

Harold Horton relates what the words we render as *prophecy* literally mean: *“To ‘flow forth’ is the lovely meaning of the commonest Hebrew word, Naba. To ‘bubble forth, like a fountain’ says one. As the heart of the Psalmist when it was bubbling up or boiling over….To flow forth-tumble forth-spring forth! You that prophesy!-do not these Hebrew words exactly describe your precious fountain? Who would not covet thus to prophesy?”*

Horton is dealing with the Hebrew. The Greek word translated *prophesy* means to “speak for another,” to let your mouth be used for His message. Prophecy is never something that the human mind thinks up to say. True prophecy is from the Holy Spirit who uses your lips to speak in known languages the message He has for the Body or individual at that precise time.

The teachings from Don Van Hoozier, former pastor of High Point Church in Macon, Georgia, and now with Jesus, tell us what prophecy is not:

1. *"It is not preaching as some of the modern translations translate the word. Actually, there are a number of Greek words which are translated 'preach' in the King James Version. These words, however, mean to make an authoritative declaration, to herald, to proclaim, to set forth, etc. The thought is that of giving out the Scriptures clearly and with authority.* [This is obviously not *prophesying* but *preaching*.]
2. *The gift of prophecy is open to all believers and we are told to covet to prophesy (1st Corinthians 14:39). BUT the gift of prophecy does not set one in the apostolic office as a prophet (Ephesians 4:1,11).*
3. *It is not used to condemn the "life style" (modes of dress, wearing of the hair, etc.) of those present. A prophet may conceivably sound forth a warning about such things and a pastor or teacher may set forth the Scriptures having to do with such, but the whole purpose of the gift of prophecy is edification, exhortation, and comfort.*
4. *It is not to be taken lightly but judged.*
5. *It never takes the place of the written Word for prophecy will cease (1st Corinthians 13:8), but GOD'S WORD ABIDETH FOREVER (1ST Peter 1:25). It is inconceivable that the Holy Spirit through the gift of prophecy will contradict the Word of the Living God. Whole movements have ship-wrecked because they have taken prophecy above the Word of God.*

6. *Often in the Old Testament the Word of Wisdom worked with prophecy in foretelling the future, but 'neither prescience nor prediction is implied by the term in the Hebrew, Greek or English languages.' (William Smith in his Bible Dictionary). So prophecy is NOT to be used to get guidance, for marriage, business ventures, missionary ventures, etc. This is not saying God may not use the Word of Wisdom to direct us at times, but the only safe procedure to follow is to ask the Lord to always confirm by His Spirit major moves by several witnesses to us."*

THE PURPOSE OF PROPHECY (also from High Point teachings)

1. *"To edify the believers, that is to build them up (a far cry from tearing down and discouraging them) (1st Corinthians 14:4). It will be like a fresh breath from the risen Christ blowing new life into our tired spirits.*
2. *To exhort, meaning 'a calling near.' We will sense a new awareness of His unseen presence with us. (1st Corinthians 14:3)*
3. *To comfort, console, and give solace to the sobbing spirit until it sobs its last heaving sigh and rests as a child on the breast of its understanding parent. (1st Corinthians 14:3, 31)*
4. *To convict the unbeliever and make manifest the secrets of his heart. (1st Corinthians 14:24,25)*
5. *That believers may learn in the mysterious realm of the spiritual what they cannot grasp with the natural mind. (1st Corinthians 14:24, 25)*

Before we get deeper in prophecy, I want to give some of my own practical suggestions for those learning to prophesy or learning to walk in the office of a prophet. These come from my own observations during over 50 years in ministry:

1. Just because you think it, does not mean it is a word from the Lord. You must run every word of prophecy by the Holy Spirit, asking Him to confirm it, and you must pray and ask the Lord if this really is a prophetic word from the Lord. As I have already stated, it also must NEVER contradict the Word of God, and, again as I have already stated, but it is worth repeating, an additional safeguard to walking in prophetic accuracy is being under spiritual authority, which so few in the American church are today.
2. Never prophesy who is going to marry whom. I believe this is a misuse of the gift, and I have seen this cause major problems and most often is not accurate anyway.
3. Never prophesy that a person should quit taking medicines.
4. Don't piggyback on someone else's prophetic word. In other words, don't dishonestly plagiarise what another prophet has said and try to present it as your own word from the Lord when you are really just repeating what you heard from a man, not what the Holy Spirit revealed to you. This is a *big* problem today among American prophets.
5. Don't get into political prophecies. They seldom are accurate, and they alienate people.
6. Don't try to prophesy what you already know in the natural, presenting it as a prophetic word to an individual or group. For example, if you know someone is planning a trip somewhere, and they don't know you know, don't

dishonestly say something like “The Lord says you are going to so and so place, as if it is a prophetic revelation to you from the Lord.”

7. Finally, it is generally wise to say, “I believe the Lord is trying to say this to you. Pray about it and see if it witnesses to your spirit,” instead of saying, “Thus saith the Lord.” It is so easy for any of us to prophesy out of our flesh, and prophesying out of the flesh is NOT a word from the living God!

Constant kindness can accomplish much. As the sun makes ice melt, kindness causes misunderstanding, mistrust, and hostility to evaporate.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer

LESSON THIRTY

A CLOSER LOOK AT PROPHECY

WHY NOT STONE FALSE PROPHETS TODAY?

The Old and New Testament Israelites practiced stoning as a means of executing criminals. Stoning was the punishment inflicted for sacrificing children (Leviticus 20:2 & 5), divination (Leviticus 20:27), blasphemy (Leviticus 24:15-23), Sabbath breaking (Numbers 15:32-36), apostasy (Deuteronomy 13:1-10), idolatry (Deuteronomy 17:2-7), juvenile rebellion (Deuteronomy 21:18-21), and adultery (Deuteronomy 22:22). Examples of those stoned were Achan (Joshua 7:20-26); Adoram (1st Kings 12:18); Naboth (1st Kings 21:13); Zechariah (2nd Chronicles 24:20-21); Stephen (Acts 14:19); and unnamed prophets of the Hall of Fame of Faith (Hebrews 11:37). The tragedy in this list is that many apparently were stoned who were not false prophets at all nor had violated any of the other categories that allowed for stoning.

Surprisingly the Bible does not say that Old Testament false prophets were to be stoned, but *put to death* without specifying

the type of capital punishment: *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 same prophet shall die* (Deuteronomy 18:20).

This entire passages from Deuteronomy 18:15-22 in the New King James reads as follows: **15**. *The LORD your God will raise up for you a Prophet like me* [Moses] *from your midst, from your brethren* [in other words, He will be Hebrew or Jewish]. *Him you shall hear* [Acts 3:22], **16***. according to all you desired of the LORD, your God in Horeb in the day of the assembly, saying, "Let me not hear again the voice of the LORD my God, nor let me see this great fire anymore, lest I die."* (Exodus 20:18-19) **17.** *And the LORD said to me, "What they have spoken is good.* (Deuteronomy 5:28) **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.* (John 4:25) **19.** *And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him* [there will be consequences]. (Acts 3:23) **20.** *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.* (Jeremiah 14:14-15, 2:8). **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* [In others words, don't worry about him or forget about him]. (Jeremiah 28:9, Deuteronomy 13:2 & 18:20).

From this passage of scripture, Jack Deere, an excellent Bible teacher, takes the controversial position that even Old Testament prophets missed it, and they were not put to death. Why? Because, to Deere, this passage is speaking about a special type of prophet, i.e. one like Moses who actually stood face-to-face with the Lord. The implication is that no other prophet ever reached this status but one, the Lord Jesus Christ, who was Prophet, Priest and King, as well as God the Son. That is why the Amplified and the New King James translators capitalized the word *Prophet,* in the above passage of scripture, i.e. it is referring to Jesus.

As I say, this is a very controversial position, but seemingly supported by Rick Joyner, Bob Jones (who says he gets his prophecies right about 75% of the time); Mike Bickle; and many other modern-day prophets. We have seen that most of the modern prophets have greatly missed the Lord at time, and we should be very cautious with their prophecies. Most of them, however, have brought some good teachings to the Body of Christ and should not be written off.

Others believe that this passage in Deuteronomy, especially in verses 20-22 of chapter 18, applies to all Old Testament prophets who missed it, and that they should have been stoned. They excuse the New Testament (and beyond) prophets because, after Pentecost, they prophesied before a Church people who had the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Each spirit-baptized believer, therefore, could discern with the gift of discernment whether these prophecies were true or false when they were given. Thus false prophecies would not deceive and mislead the whole church because the Church could discern whether the prophecy was

from the flesh, the devil, or the Lord. In fact, 1st Corinthians 14:29 (*Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge),* seems to indicate that the prophet's words could be challenged and that the prophet could at times be wrong, and yet he was not apparently branded a false prophet, even if he missed it. Furthermore, these New Testament prophets were not speaking on the same divine authority that the Old Testament Prophets spoke or even on the authority of the New Testament Apostle Paul: *If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command* (1st Corinthians 14:37).

Outstanding teacher John S. Torell says that there is definitely a difference between the prophets of the Old Testament times and prophets in the New Testament times. *The prophets prior to the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem were used by God to exhort, teach, rebuke and foretell the future and what they spoke was written down and was counted for Scripture. Prophets after the day of Pentecost will exhort, teach, rebuke, and foretell the future, but it is not considered Scripture. After the Book of Revelation was given to the Apostle John, there were no more revelations or prophecies from God that He wants added to the Bible (2nd Peter 1:14:21; 2nd Timothy 3:14-17; and Revelation 22:18-19).* Torell points out that a New Covenant prophet *can be a man or woman* (Acts 21:8-9); *can convey a message from God* (Acts 9:10-19); *can foretell the future* (Acts 21:10-11); *will expose sin* (Acts 5:1-11); and *will be used to set apart Christian workers* (Acts 13:1-4). *Any believer in Christ can be used to prophesy when there is a need* (Acts 27:18-26).

In summary, I turn to 1st John 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.*" Like John Torell, I do not believe that modern day prophets hold the same spiritual authority or standard of truth that Old Testament prophets held. One of the primary reasons, I believe, is that the Lord does not want us following men and has given us the Holy Spirit to be our guide, rather than Prophet Reid or Prophet Joyner, etc. We must be very careful not to follow prophets, although this does not negate the tremendous good they do. The translators of the New King James warn us in a footnnote: *Do not be gullible. Test the moral and spiritual implications of any new ideas. Does it agree with Scripture? Will it make me more like Christ? By this you know: Sometimes one can recognize the work of Satan at a glance. Any idea is false if it denies the deity, humanity, or saving work of Jesus Christ. Anything less than full acceptance of, and obedience to, the divine-human Christ is following the Antichrist.*

A second reason is that the Old Testament prophets, but no modern-day prophets, would be speaking words that would become canonized scripture written by these prophets as the Holy Spirit gave utterance. The Lord insisted that His Word be inerrant and infallible so that we could have a guide for righteous living, a guide that would be relevant and necessary all the way up until He comes again.

PROPHETIC PITFALLS
(from Kingdom Watch)

God is more concerned about the purity of his Prophets, than the accuracy of their prophecies. He values the men and women themselves and their motives as much as their message and ministry.

Dr. Bill Hamon in *Prophets, Pitfalls and Principles*

1. **A Critical and Harsh Spirit:** Prophets have high standards. They see things in black and white. This can sometimes result in the prophet being critical, which makes their words seem harsh, even if they are true. If we enjoy giving hard words, we may have a critical spirit.
2. **Frustration and Bitterness:** All prophets experience rejection, if their words are not always accepted and obeyed. If this happens frequently, the prophet can become frustrated, and frustration can lead to bitterness. Words spoken out of frustration and bitterness will be contaminated by these things and will not come out pure. This is one of the most serious problems faced by prophets. They must learn to deal with rejection without going into frustration and bitterness. **Stephen L. Mansfield**: *Given the path that most prophets have had to walk, both as Christans and before, there is usually an exceptional need for attending to issues of wounding and bitterness. If these aren't addressed, the prophet will likely gravitate to an isolated, critical, and hardened condition of heart that can quench the prophetic fire. If these issues are addressed successfully, however, there can be a greater love and wholeness and thus a clearer prophetic flow*

than ever. **Janet Chambers** in *Cave Dweller or Tower Dweller: A cave seems to be a safe place, but it is not a dwelling place. The Body of Christ is full of wounded prophets who went into a cave and dwelt there.*

3. **Anger:** Prophet people often get angry with those who do not receive their words, when the real problem is that the message was not spoken clearly. The prophetic person may have been given a truth to share, but if the trumpet does not sound a clear call, no one will respond. The hard truth for prophetic people to swallow is that an unclear word is a dead word. Praise from friends and people who have already received the word does not mean much. We are all receptive to words that confirm our own views. The real test of a word is whether it is clear to those challenged by it. Taking rejection as a sign that a word was true is dangerous, because this is not always the case. Rejection often occurs because the word was not clear, and sometimes because it was not true. Prophets must be constantly looking at the way they presented their message. They should hone their words, so they can present a clearer warning.
4. **Pride:** Prophets usually lead lives that are extremely righteous. They can easily take on the spirit of the Pharisees, who felt good, because they could see the sins of other people. Pride is very destructive of prophetic ministry. **Jack Deere** in *Surprised by the Voice of God* (p. 207): *Another trap into which I commonly see prophetic people fall is the desire to be awesome in ministry, to be "a prophet to the nations." This is the*

exact opposite of the true Spirit of prophecy (Revelation 19:10). Prophecy is meant to testify to the awesomeness of Jesus, not to the prophetic ministry. Cindy Jacobs in *The Voice of God* (p. 59): *Why does God have to deal so strongly with those who are prophetic? For one thing, they are so stubborn! For another, they are more prone to pride.*

5. **Prophetic Pushiness:** Prophets must avoid the trap of pushing their name forward. This pushiness often comes from frequent rejection, but must be rejected. Prophets must be servants of God's word. Their only concern should be that God's word is heard. If the word is heard, it does not matter if the prophet is forgotten. Prophets are human, so this is easier to say than to live.
6. **Rebellion:** Pride often leads to rebellion. Rebellion is terribly crippling for a prophet. It is the moral equivalent of witchcraft (1st Samuel 15:23). **Andrew Strom**: *I believe that many prophetic people (like myself) do have problems with "rebellion." They seem to rub leaders the wrong way almost by design sometimes. And then they develop a "persecution complex" or slink off wallowing in self-pity. I have done all of this and more. In times past I have found myself sitting in the "gate" like rebellious Absalom, subtly speaking words against the leadership and growing my own reputation thereby. Rebellion is the most insidious sin, and when you begin to see how much it dominates our world, and how ingrained it is in us, it is a real eye-opener. I have found that it is only when you have dealt with Rebellion that*

you can trust yourself to speak only God's word to a leader. Rebellion can greatly affect the words we bring to leaders, and yet many prophets seem to hardly know they have a problem in this area. I can look back now and I wince at the influence of Rebellion over my words and actions in the past. But God does cleanse and heal. Often now I see the Pastor's point of view-that of a leader and responsible shepherd, when unwise prophets arrive looking for something or someone to 'target.' So-called "prophets" like this are a curse, not a blessing. God is dealing with Rebellion now. If you can't sit under authority today, you will be a pain in the neck to tomorrow's leaders too. Deal with your rebellion now or miss out. It's that simple. I believe a lot of problems could be caused by roaming "lone ranger prophets" in the coming move of God-even worse than today. Tell me friend, do you have the makings of being just such a "lone ranger"??

7. **Control and Manipulation:** The Jezebel spirit uses manipulation and control to achieve results. It is the opposite and the enemy of the prophetic ministry. Prophets must avoid all temptation to "help" the fulfillment of their words by manipulating people. **African prophecy**: *Steer clear of the "Three C's"- Condemnation, Control, and Criticism. These have to stay out of our prophecy. We need to root out the three C's ruthlessly in our words, in our thought life, in our actions. Don't give them place. Don't pray them, don't think them, and don't speak them. Then they won't get*

into the prophecy. John Paul Jackson: *Every church that embraces a prophetic ministry will have to contend with the Jezebel spirit because it mimics the prophetic gifts and callings of God. This spirit comes to destroy the prophetic gift. Consequently, since it works covertly, its activities are extremely treacherous.*

8. **Misuse of Power:** God's gifts are irrevocable (Romans 11:29). This means that prophets can misuse their gift. Elisha and the rude children is an example. The scriptures do not say that Elisha's behavior was correct. They just record the incident. Elisha was not perfect. He just did his best with the knowledge that he had. With knowledge of Jesus and his teaching, it is clear that Elisha misused his gifting. The boys who mocked him were irrelevant. He should have just turned the other cheek and ignored them. James and John acted in the same way when they wanted to call down fire from heaven on those who opposed them. Jesus warned that they were acting in the wrong spirit. I think he would have said the same to Elisha. Prophets must not use their gifting to protect their role or their reputation.
9. **Jealousy:** Prophets can often become jealous of other ministries that seem to receive much more honor and acceptance. Jealousy can prevent us from hearing clearly. **Elijah List (12-02-01):** *Men who have not mastered glory get easily offended at others. We get "this stinging bitterness" inside of us when we have not died to glory. We will only have menial success in life and ministry with this hindering spirit still raging on the*

inside. It will cause a jealousy to build on the inside of you. It will make you feel good when others' "ministry does not work." It will make you feel that "I am the one who can do this." "I am the one!" "I am the one!" Dying to glory is the hardest death to die.

10. **Sexual Immorality: John Paul Jackson:** *Any ministry can fall prey to any sin, but prophetic people seem to be especially prone to sexual sin. Perhaps one reason is because of the heightened sensitivity that comes with the prophetic gift. While prophetic individuals can "feel" the movement of the Holy Spirit, but they can also feel the torment of demonic spirits that attack them through others. Sometimes a prophetic person will begin to discern and feel what someone is tormented with. If the prophetic individual is lax in their time spent with the Lord, it will become increasingly difficult to differentiate between their own feelings and those coming from other people. The second reason stems from various roots of rejection. In many cases, prophetic individuals have experienced rejection so often that they harbor deep feelings of insecurity. Subsequently, they also can harbor pride at doing something others may never have had the opportunity to experience. This pride becomes a driving force that opens the door to deception. Furthermore, they are prone to receive the acceptance of others with open arms, without maintaining an attitude of vigilance. Thus, a prophetic person who has not developed the characteristic of restraint becomes "open prey" for demonic torment and attraction.*

11. **Rationalizing Mistakes:** *Some prophets are so worried about their mistakes that they refuse to admit them. No one is right 100 percent of the time.* **Jack Deere:** *Sometimes a prophetic person has a hard time admitting a mistake because he or she things it would ruin their credibility. Usually just the opposite happens. Rationalizing or failing to admit our mistakes is what usually ruins credibility. People trust people who say they were wrong.*
12. **Calling Out Sins Publicly:** Prophets should not publicly accuse individuals of sin. The gospel provides guidelines for dealing with Christians who sin. They should first be spoken to in private. **Matthew 18:15-17:** *If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over. But if he will not listen, take one or two others along, so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, treat him as you would a pagan or a tax collector.*
13. **Money:** Money can be a cause of blindness. Prophets should be careful about giving favorable words to those who provide them with financial support. Generally, it is better if prophets can be financially independent of the church and the community. **Jack Deere** in *Surprised by the Voice of God* p. 209: *Materialism and money have always been a problem in prophetic ministry. Micah complained in his day, "This is what the Lord says: 'As*

for the prophets who lead my people astray, if one feeds them, they proclaim peace; if he does not, they prepare to wage war against him" (Micah 3:5). *When prophets succumb to the temptation to give good prophecies to those who treat them well and bad prophecies to those who don't show them special deference, then the Lord may cease speaking to any of the prophetic people.*

14. **People Pleasing:** People pleasing is a killer for all ministry, and especially prophetic ministry. Prophetic people who tell people what they want to hear will lose touch with God (Galatians 1:10 & Ezekiel 13:2). A true prophet should not expect the praise of men (Luke 6:26). They will seek only the approval of God. **Cindy Jacobs** in the *Voice of God: Human love can taint a word. Sometimes love blinds the prophet causing him or her to give a good prophetic word when the Lord wanted to give a word of correction.* **Ivan Poulter:** *Few self-proclaimed 'prophets' are anything more than teachers. I see too much of the man pleasing spirit everywhere. I have just preached a little on Samuel. Now there was a prophet. Are there any so-called prophets operating in the realm of Samuel? If any, I don't know of them, and have never heard of them. Are there self-proclaimed prophets around the world? They are more abundant than cent pieces, and yet just about every single one of them are more travelling teachers who couldn't prophesy themselves out of a paper bag.* **Rick Joyner** in *The Prophetic Ministry: Regardless of which ministry we are called to, we must not copy or emulate other people,*

but rather the One whose image we are called to bear. Schools for prophets may be helpful, but they will be counterproductive if they just bring forth "parrot," who all prophesy the same things.

15. **Confusing Wisdom and Prophecy:** Most prophetic people have studied the scriptures for most of their lives. They usually have a passion for God's Kingdom and are keen observers of all that is going on in the world. This puts them in a good place to comment on what is happening in current events or to develop sound applications of the scriptures. Their wisdom is often really insightful and worth sharing, but it is not the word of the Lord, so it is misleading to label it prophetic. A prophet must be able to distinguish between what they receive from the Lord and what comes from their own wisdom.
16. **Blindness to Our Culture:** The hardest thing for a prophet is to see the weakness and sins of their own society, culture or denomination. If we are attached to something, we can be blinded by it. A true prophet stands apart from his culture. **Chris Anderson** in *Little Flock-Culture Prophets*: *If we attempt to execute the prophetic burden upon earth's affairs without first losing our love for and identity in our culture, our spiritual gift and office becomes overpowered and subverted by our culture to reaffirm its own ways. The prophetic becomes a mouthpiece for the very powers behind culture which is has been dispensed to challenge and oppose. We become unable to discern between the loves of John 3:16*

and 1st John 2:15, deceived into believing that God's love for men and out love of culture are the same thing—our nations and our denominations, our government policies and our society's passing fancies, our civic customs and our religious holidays-believing we are indeed prophesying the true mind of the Lord and the true love of the Father to the world. We think we are executing God's will to transform the earthly into the image of the heavenly, but are only debasing heaven, lowering God to the image of the earthly.

FUNCTION OF PROPHETS BESIDES GIVING PERSONAL PROPHECY

By Jonas Clark

1. Are forerunners who make a way for "greater things" to come (Matthew 3:3)
2. Deal with spiritual climates (Jeremiah 1:10)
3. Turn people from sin to holiness (Jeremiah 23:21-22)
4. Are front line intercessors (Jeremiah 27:18)
5. Turn the hearts of the fathers and sons (Malachi 4:5-6)
6. Challenge dead traditions of men and dangerous spirits of religion (Matthew 3:9-10)
7. Are stewards of the mysteries of God (Ephesians 3:5)
8. Carry lamentations, mourning and woe (intercession burdens) (Ezekiel 2:10)
9. Are fore-tellers of things to come (Amos 3:7)
10. Contend with false prophets of divination including Jezebel and Baal (1st Kings 18:19)

11. Challenge demonic territorial guards (Acts 13:7)
12. Speak to the nations and kingdoms (Jeremiah 1:5)

Prophetic ministry is a wonderful gift from God. Moses said, "Would God that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them" (Numbers 1:29).

PROPER RESPONSE TO PERSONAL PROPHECY

(Reprinted from Life Center Ministries, Atlanta, GA)

1. RECORD (write it out and read every month)-1st Timothy 4:14-15-*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. Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.*
2. WITNESS TO AND THEN WAR A GOOD WARFARE WITH PROPHECY-Romans 8:16-*The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.* 1st Timothy 1:18-*This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare.*
3. DO NOTHING DIFFERENT (unless definitely directed)-1st Samuel 16:13-Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah. (David did nothing except wait for the Lord's timing after he was anointed by Samuel.)

4. REMOVE HINDRANCES of mind set, soul blockage, self-image, price, blame-shifting, self-justification, self-preservation, people pleasing, carnal reasoning, and procrastination. Hebrews 12:1-2-THEREFORE we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
5. WAIT PATIENTLY-Isaiah 40:31-*But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.*
6. MAN MUST BE MADE BEFORE MIGHTY MINISTRY (Jesus spent 30 years in preparation for 3 years of ministry.) – Hebrews 2:9-10-*But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.*
7. RESULTS OF NOT WAITING LONG ENOUGH-*Abraham and Sarah; Ishmael; Saul; etc.*
8. RECEIVE WITH FAITH, HUMILITY, MEEKNESS AND VISION-Hebrews 4:2-*For indeed the gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not*

profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it. (Also, Deuteronomy 29:29; James 1:21; James 3:17; James 4:17; Matthew 21:21; Psalm 34:2)

HAVING AN IDOL IN YOUR HEART

Sometimes when we go to the Lord in prayer or inquire of a prophet for a personal word, we get a wrong answer because we have an idol in our hearts. Ezekiel 14:4-5 addresses this issue: *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 the prophet, I the LORD will answer him who comes, according to the multitude of his idols, that I may seize the house of Israel by their heart, because they are all estranged from Me by their idols.*

First of all, let's look at what an idol is. An idol is anything or anybody that you want or enjoy more than you want the Lord. In the Old Testament we do not find the children of Israel ascending from idol worship to pure worship of God, rather we find believers falling, often at the influence of a religious leader, to idol worship. Those believers who worship idols, whether idols made by hands or idols of the heart, are practicing spiritual adultery. Examples of idols in our day are the human body, money, sports, pleasure, houses, cars, position, power, attention, etc. Idols certainly do not have to be materialistic. They can be dreams and ambitions, goals and plans that do not take in the Lord's will for our lives, and they can possess a demonic presence whether they are materialistic or not.

When we go to the Lord in prayer or to a prophet for a personal word-and in general I don't recommend going to a prophet but letting him come to you-we have to lay down our own wills and be a living sacrifice, trusting Jesus so much that we seek and ask for His will alone for our lives. If you don't have that attitude of self-denial and really seeking His will, you need to pray that God first change your attitude, and when you allow Him to change your heart, then you can go to prayer or be prophesied over. If you, on the other hand, have a definite direction in your mind as to how the Lord should answer this prayer, that becomes an idol of your own will and causes you to think that God is answering the way you want whether He actually is or not. If your will is His alone whatever it is, then the answer from the Lord will be pure revelation, not contaminated by your own desires. A true word from the Lord comes when you are fixing your eyes on Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith (Hebrews 12:2).

Where we often see people seeking prophetic ministry with an idol in their hearts is when people have decided without any witness from the Lord of whom they are going to marry. So often these marriages are not of the Lord. He did not join the two together, and the marriage ends prematurely or lingers on in unhappiness and contention. That is not to say that you should not really want to marry the person whom you are in love with, nor that this is not God's will. But you must be careful to seek His will and not only your own.

The best example, perhaps in scripture is the story of Balaam, the prophet. He was a true prophet. In Numbers 22 Balak wanted Balaam to come to him and curse the enemies of Balak. The only problem was that his enemies were the Israelites, who

were God's chosen people. The Lord specifically told Balaam not to go and not to curse the Israelites. Then Balak sent messengers with the promise from Balak to Balaam of honor, riches, and gold, if Balaam would come and curse the Israelites. Balaam wanted these things more than he wanted God's will. He prayed with an idol in his heart, and so he interpreted the word from the Lord as, "Sure! Go ahead!" God was very angry with Balaam and sent an angel with a sword to block his path. This is when Balaam's donkey spoke and Balaam's eyes were open to the angel of the Lord telling Balaam to go to Balak but to speak only the word the angel of the Lord spoke.

"A Familiar Spirit is an evil or unclean spirit that is familiar with people, places and situations. These spirits often bring about generational patterns and cycles of bondages, addictions, and spiritual difficulties in generations of families."

Perry Stone

LESSON THIRTY-ONE

Prophesying Out of a Familiar Spirit

Then said Saul to his servants, "Seek me a woman that hath a FAMILIAR SPIRIT, that I may go to her and inquire of her." And his servants said to him, "Behold, there is a woman that hath a FAMILIAR SPIRIT at Endor." And Saul disguised himself and put on other raiment, and he went and two men with him, and they came to the woman by night. And he said, "I pray thee, divine unto me by the FAMILIAR SPIRIT and bring me him up, whom I shall name unto thee."

1st Samuel 28:7,8

In her excellent book *How to Try a Spirit,* Mary Garrison categorizes all demonic spirits into twelve categories based on what scripture calls demonic spirits. Each of these spirits can manifest in many different ways and are cast out by what they

manifest, such as a Spirit of Heaviness, which might manifest and be cast out as depression, suicide, sadness, grief, etc. Of the twelve spirit categories, the *familiar spirit* is the only one to me that involves wholesale prophecy, although I am sure the lying spirit and maybe others can be somewhat behind false prophecies. These spirits specified in scripture are:

1. **SPIRIT OF BONDAGE-**Romans 8:15
2. **SPIRIT OF FEAR-**2ND Timothy 1:7
3. **DUMB AND DEAF SPIRIT-**Mark 9:25-26
4. **SPIRIT OF HEAVINESS-**Isaiah 61:3
5. **SPIRIT OF INFIRMITY-**Luke 13:11
6. **SPIRIT OF JEALOUSY-**Number 5:14
7. **PERVERSE SPIRIT-**Isaiah 19:14
8. **SPIRIT OF DIVINATION OR FAMILIAR SPIRIT-**1st Samuel 28:7-8
9. **SPIRIT OF WHOREDOMS-**Hosea 4:12
10. **SPIRIT OF HAUGHTINESS-**Proverbs 16:18-19
11. **LYING SPIRIT-**2nd Chronicles 18:22
12. **ANTICHRIST SPIRIT-**1st John 4:3

I have notice through the years that some people who are not living a Christian lifestyle seemed to have a gift in prophesying over people, giving seemingly correct words of knowledge to back up the prophetic word. So many times I feel an uneasiness about these words and have come to realize that some are operating in a familiar spirit, not a true word of knowledge or a true word of prophesy. These spirits are mentioned in the Old Testament in Leviticus 19:31, 20:6, 20:27; Deuteronomy 18:9-14; 1st Samuel 28:7-9; 2nd Kings 21:6, 23:24; 1st Chronicles 10:13-14;

2nd Chronicles 33:6; Isaiah 8:19, 19:3, and 29:4. They are mentioned in the New Testament in ACTS 16:16-18 in addition to other places. Those with familiar spirits are called in scripture diviners, soothsayers, mediums. They are really operating in a form of witchcraft. In more modern translations, the term *familiar spirit* is seldom used, with the translators substituting words such as soothsayer or medium.

Often those operating in a familiar spirit do not know they are and think they are prophesying on behalf of the Kingdom of God. Dr. Jonathan David writes, "These spirits have become accustomed to the lifestyles, moods and behavioral patterns of an individual life making them impossible to detect unless the Holy Spirit is revealing. Those who are controlled by familiar spirits are not able to discern if these patterns are part of their lifestyles or are motivated by these spirits."

We are so hungry for a prophetic word from the Lord that we forget the scriptural warnings. 1st John 4:1 says, "*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.*" 2nd Corinthians 11:13-15 says, *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."* The Scripture also warns us over and over about false prophets and deception in the last days, which my beloved we are in now!

Ida Mae and Frank Hammond, authors of *Pigs in the Parlor,* List the following as a partial list of ways that people can and do acquire familiar spirits:

1. **Divination** (consulting spirit mediums, Haitian voodoo, water witching, Ouija Boards, consulting psychics)
2. **Transcendental Meditation**
3. **Imaginary Playmates**
4. **Visualization**
5. **Drugs**
6. **Rock Music**
7. **Games and toys** (for example, Dungeons and Dragons)
8. **Conversing with Demons during deliverance**
9. **Necromancy** (trying to communicate with spirits of the dead)
10. **Incubus and Succubus**

Ida Mae and Frank Hammond's prayer to be set free from a Familiar Spirit:

Lord Jesus, I belong to You. You have saved me and redeemed me by Your blood. I have need of no spirit other than THE HOLY SPIRIT. Forgive me for having sought from other spirits that which should only come from You. I renounce and separate myself from all familiar spirits, however acquired. I call upon You, Lord, to deliver me from the lies and deceptions of familiar spirits. Teach me Your truth and Your ways. It is my earnest desire to walk in Your will and to glorify Your name. AMEN.

Satan, I renounce you, and I take back all the ground that I ever yielded to you. God is my source of wisdom, knowledge, guidance, and power. You familiar spirit, leave in the name of Jesus.

Dealing with Familiar Spirits

Dr. Jonathan David

1. **FAMILIAR SPIRITS HAVE BECOME FAMILIAR WITH A PERSON'S LIFESTYLE, ITS MOODS AND BEHAVIORAL PATTERNS.** They have learned to work around the person's character. They have become accustomed to his ways and behavioral patterns. They have taken time to study your weaknesses and strengths. They have infiltrated your emotional and thought patterns. They know how you will react or act in various situations. They know your comfort zones as well as explosive zones.
2. **FAMILIAR SPIRITS OPEN DOORS FOR OTHER SPIRITS TO INVADE YOUR LIFE.** They are informers of areas that are open to sin. They know the entrance points of your heart and life. They know your past history and intimidate future advancement. They know how to afflict our weaknesses and keep us sorrowful. They control us by the past weaknesses and failures.
3. **FAMILIAR SPIRITS ARE RESIDENTIAL SPIRITS.** They stay with the individual or family. They sometimes carry forward from past generations. They are permitted by other spirits to move with you to different places or cities. They can choose not to follow you but stay in your home. They can only influence the person they have taken position to reside with. Spirits familiar with you may not be familiar with me.
4. **FAMILIAR SPIRITS REFUSE US TO CHANGE.** They make us resent change and fear of losing our comfort. They depress us with the cost of allowing change until it becomes distasteful in our sight and unwarranted. They cushion our

comfort zones with well-padded thought patterns and humanistic reasoning. They stir our emotions until we are upset with change and we feel change is a nuisance and it is inconvenient.

5. **FAMILIAR SPIRITS THRIVE IN UNREPENTANT LIVES.** They can dominate the Cycle of Continual Defeat. They open doors to religious spirits who often cause us to put more value on rituals, religious ways instead of RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS. They afflict us with the sense of guilt and condemnation by tormenting us with sin-conscious.
6. **FAMILIAR SPIRITS ARE REPONSIBLE TO TRANSFER A PROBLEM, A SICKNESS OR A CURSE FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER.** Spirits do not die and thus they are capable to carry it into many generations. They also work to establish themselves through natural genes of the family lineage. The similarity of personality and character exposes the new generation to the old sins. These spirits attack also on the same areas of temptation on that family.
7. **FAMILIAR SPIRITS CONTROL REGULAR NEGATIVE EMOTIONAL CYCLES.** They control outbursts of anger, depression, swings of moods, bitterness, etc. They engineer circumstances in your life to allow the continual manifestation of these cycles. They control the thought patterns that govern these areas so that we see no reason to change. These areas are seen as weapons we can use for our benefit instead of calling it as sin.

WATCHERS, WATCHMEN, AND SEERS

Some have asked me what is the difference between watchers, watchmen, seers and prophets. Watchers are not humans but angelic messengers who bring messages from heaven to mankind. Daniel 4:13 is an example of this: *I* [Nebuchadnezzar] *saw in the visions of my head while on my bed, and there was a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven.*

I do not consider watchmen and seers always true prophets, although they may have a gift of prophecy, and some five-fold ministry office prophets may operate in these areas. From my experience, I believe that watchmen almost always are true intercessors who give warnings to the Body of Christ and intercede concerning things to come. Dr. Paula Price in *The Prophet's Dictionary*, however, says that watchman *are* prophets whose duty is to guard and patrol (Habakkuk 2:1a-*I will stand my watch and set myself on the rampart and watch to see what He will say to me...*). In the Bible watchmen were responsible for warning towns and military groups when the enemy was coming so that they could be prepared and protected and not surprised by an enemy attack. Ezekiel 33:7 says, *"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."* Spiritually watchmen are called to protect the souls of men and in the New Testament refer to spiritual leaders, as in Hebrews 13:17: *Obey those who rule over you and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.*

A seer is one who receives communication from the Lord mainly through visions. The seer sees in the spirit realm and prophesies what is seen. Samuel was the first judge of Israel and

was called a seer. Other seers were Gad, Iddo, and Asaph. Price says, "Visions, observations or supernatural and futuristic scenes, and various apparitions are examples of Seer manifestations, which always emphasize the visual over the audible." The seer sees pictures, scenes, visions in dreams, in one's mind, or in open eyed, natural eye visions. A good example of a seer is Jeremiah. Note that God does not ask Jeremiah what he "feels" or "thinks," but what he "sees" in Jeremiah 1:11: *Moreover the word of the LORD came to me, saying, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" And I said, "I see a branch of an almond tree."*

STAYING SPIRITUALLY ALERT FOR PROPHETIC VISITATIONS

"...God wants to supernaturally visit His people and give them divine encounters, but these will be events set in motion by His will and not produced by one's own volition. In fact, if you study the entirety of Scripture, one fact will become clear to you by the stories of men and women who experienced divine encounters with God. In all of these experiences, there is one constant factor: In every instance-*without exception*-it was God's initiative to invade that person's world to give him a word, a revelation, or life-transforming experience. There is not a single example anywhere in Scripture in which any believer was encouraged to *forcibly pry his or her way* into another realm by himself.

But as believers live godly lives, keep their hearts open, and listen to the Holy Spirit, it prepares the soil of their spirit for God to supernaturally invade their world when an appropriate moment for it arrives. Our task is to follow Christ, live in obedience to God's Word, pray in the Spirit, and thus enlarge our spiritual capacity to keep our spirit alert and sensitive to spiritual

things. Our part to stay spiritually alert cannot be overestimated. We are to set our heart upon Him, but divine encounters and 'heavenly invasions' are always initiated by God upon the hearts of those who are open to God's movement upon them. "

Rick Renner in *Apostles and Prophets*

Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.

Amos 3:7

SOME OF THE BIBLICAL SCRIPTURES ON PROPHECY

...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. DEUTERONOMY 18:22

...."Do not touch My anointed ones, and do My prophets no harm." PSALM 105:15

Again He said to me, "Prophesy to these bones, and say to them, 'O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD!'" EZEKIEL 37:4

Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets. AMOS 3:7

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. MATTHEW 7:15

Then many false prophets will rise up and deceive many. MATTHEW 24:11

And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. ACTS 19:6

And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that

I could remove mountains, but have not love I am nothing. 1st CORINTHIANS 13:2

Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. 1st CORINTHIANS 13:8-10

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. 1st CORINTHIANS 14:5

And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. 1st CORINTHIANS 14:32

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 Himself being the chief cornerstone. EPHESIANS 2:19-20

Do not despise prophecies. 1st THESSALONIANS 5:20

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: knowing this first, that

no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never comes by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. 2ND PETER 1:19-21

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. 1st JOHN 4:1

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." REVELATION 19:10