

THE PROPHETIC: PROPHETS, MANIFESTATIONS & GIFTS

Part 3 - Gifts: The Functions of Prophecy

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In seeking a full understanding of the prophetic gifts, the most important word to keep in mind is that they fall into two basic categories: the office of prophet ordained by Yah'shua, and the prophetic gift given by Ruakh Ha Qodesh.

The prophetic gift of the Ruakh is eventually given to every Messianic believer who continues on from justification to consecration in Mashiyach. But the prophetic *office* includes the added dimension of oversight as well as organizational responsibilities within the holy nation at large.

And in truly understanding the prophetic, we must not only draw a distinction between the office and the gift; but we must know very simply that the office of prophet is rooted in foretelling, while the gift of prophecy is rooted in "forth-telling."

As we so often teach, a true prophet has a measured ability to see not only into the future, but into the lives and destinies of individuals, as well as whole communities, cities and nations, when they themselves are either unwilling or unable to do so. And contrary to the prevailing winds of doctrine, YAH anoints His prophets even under the renewed Covenant, for this purpose (see Acts 11:27-30).

On the other hand, the prophetic gift to the faithful at large is the spiritual ability to declare the mighty works of YHWH - to glorify and extol His goodness and mercy, and thus inspire, console, and encourage the brethren.

Now let's look a bit further into the two basic gifts of prophecy, to gain a full understanding of each gifting, and its various components.

To begin with, a true prophet of YAH will move in ministry by three basic means:

- Foresight.
- Insight.
- Oversight.

The first of the office gifts is foresight - the most basic and most widely accepted function of the prophetic mantle.

In the earliest days of our fathers, a prophet was called a 'seer', since his sole responsibility was to provide divine vision, and thus guidance to his given family, city, tribe, and in certain instances, the entire Israelite nation. (And in some instances - á la the prophet Yonah/Jonah, and others) - even to other nations whom YAH had taken issue with.) For example, a seer putting his city on notice of an impending famine, or foreign invasion, would obviously be an invaluable and deeply appreciated contribution to the community, to say the least!

First and foremost, a true prophet of YAH was and is, a visionary.

But needless to say, as time in ancient Yisrael progressed, her inevitable backsliding caused the judgment of YAH to be proclaimed. Of course, this became a word from the prophets that, although humbly received by a faithful remnant, earned the wrath of many - often to the point of the prophets very lives hanging in the balance.

The true test of a prophet at this hour, beyond his worship of YAH in Yah'shua, and that, those things which he says do surely come to pass, is a willingness to declare even that which is likely to offend his listeners – and suffer the inevitable tribulation and persecution that rises as a result. Measured by that yardstick, it becomes obvious that there aren't many genuinely anointed prophets of YAH in our midst.

What becomes just as obvious is that we desperately need the ones who are willing, like Yah'shua Himself and all the prophets of Israel, to tell the hard truths in love. And thus...

The second of the basic office gifts is insight.

Again, the divine ability to see into the lives and destinies of individuals, as well as whole families, communities, cities and nations. And like the mighty prophets of old; the will, the courage, and the humility to speak a true word of correction or judgment to the mistaken and the disobedient.

Of course at some point, the ancient prophets of Yisrael, for the most part, were no longer held in high esteem as valued and respected members of the community.

Instead, more often than not, they were viciously maligned, isolated, tortured, and even killed outright, for being "bearers of bad news". But even so, do not err, beloved. Contrary to popular religious opinion, a true prophet's mantle continues to this very hour to include the full range of prophetic expression; including judgment by rebuke, reproof and admonition - until we all come to the unity of the faith.

In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he sets forth the proper manner to fulfill the prophetic needs of the church, instructing, "Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sits by, let the first hold his peace.

For you may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted" (1 Cor. 14:29-31). This order of the prophets is absolutely crucial to our receiving the knowledge and revelation we require to overcome the world.

But also, the prophetic order is needful for the powerful witness and testimony it brings to the weak or unbelievers among us, they they might repent, and find new life in YAH through Yah'shua.

Paul put it this way: "...But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believes not, or one

unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face he will worship YHWH, and report that YHWH is in you of a truth" (1 Cor. 14:24-25). And yet, for the record, our congregations for the most part, have no such practice, and are therefore clearly without the *whole* counsel of YAH.

Therefore, the study of the prophetic is no mere exercise in rote theology - but a practical matter of paramount importance in bringing the remnant of Yisrael in Mashiyach into the very unity of the faith.

The third basic gift of the prophetic office is oversight.

Another key area that has yet to be established among our congregations; and is a *major* cause of our extreme vulnerability to heresy and demonic infiltration.

The office of prophet is first and foremost a governmental position within the local congregation, as well as the holy nation at large. And unlike most local pastors and teachers, an endowment of supernatural spiritual discernment is a part of a prophet's gifting for overseeing the church of Yah'shua - prophetic discernment being a major requirement for ordering the household of faith, and maintaining its operation in peace and true holiness.

As it is written, "Where there is no vision the people perish: but he that keeps the law, happy is he" (Proverbs 29:18). In other words, no prophetic vision, no limit on lawlessness. And the vision that provides real, life sustaining hope is not the vain, materialistic madness being passed off as "anointed prophetic teaching" today; but a vision that simply has yet to be fully realized at this hour.

The true prophets of YAH, like the prophets who were before them, are yet in 'the wilderness', or away from the camp, so to speak. Like the prophets of old, these men are prepared for ministry not by the 'second-hand' revelation of the established order of their day, but by YAH Himself!

Hear, O Yisrael, and understand - Mosheh didn't encounter the most High among his brethren, but was prepared for leadership among the Midianites - a different branch of the family of Abraham. David didn't seal the vision of YAH in the court of Shaul; but in part, while sojourning among the Philistines - in enemy territory. EliYahu gained the courage and faith to overthrow Achab's ungodly rule under Jezebel, not in the synagogue, but in the *wilderness*.

Yah'shua Himself was born in Judea, but grew in favor with YAH and man, not among the Yisraelim, but among the Samaritans.

One of the main causes for His rejection was that He was perceived by the priestly order as a foreigner, and therefore not a legitimate Messianic candidate; as in "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?", and "You (Yah'shua) are a Samaritan, and have a devil" And so shall it be in this final hour.

Hearken, O beloved nation - as we move into the season of the restoration of all things spoken in the Ruakh by the prophets, the true prophets of YAH will become increasingly evident, and

increasingly effective in preparing the way for establishing Kingdom order in HaMashiyach.

Behold, the kingdom of heaven is at hand!

And now, let's take a brief look at the gift of prophecy given to every true Messianic believer.

To begin with, the gift of prophecy by Ruakh Ha Qodesh is given to every true disciple of Yah'shua, for three basic purposes:

- Edification.
- Exhortation.
- Consolation.

At the onset of the Church of Mashiyach, His family and disciples, after misunderstanding Him, forsaking Him, and even betraying Him; were finally gathered together in one accord, and were then filled with the Ruakh. They immediately began to prophesy in the languages of the proselytes from the many nations who were gathered at Yerushalayim for Pesach.

Clearly, this gift of prophecy, which was promised to us by Yah'shua Himself, is given to every believer who moves beyond being a distant, fearful follower of Mashiyach, to a true disciple, or *student* of Mashiyach.

Kefa's message to the gathered throngs on that Pesach included this marvelous assurance - "...Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Yah'shua HaMashiyach for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Ruakh Ha Qodesh. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as YHWH our Elohim shall call" (Acts 2: 38-39).

I beseech you, O Yisrael; do not be deceived. The gift of prophecy was not limited to the birthing of the church alone, but for her growth into maturity as well, which includes the faithful remnant of Messianic Yisrael of every generation, including our own.

The first basic prophetic gift is edification, which simply means to build up - and the gift of prophecy properly exercised does exactly that.

This wonderful gift of the Ruakh both strengthens the saints, building up the believer, and brings conviction and repentance to the unlearned and the backslidden, building up the church. As it is written, "How is it then, brethren? when you come together, every one of you has a psalm, has a doctrine, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying" (1 Cor. 14:26). The fact that so many of our meetings have become little more than one-man pontifications is a major reason why the remnant is so divided and confused.

The second of the basic gifts of prophecy is exhortation, which is, according to the dictionary, "To urge by strong, often stirring argument, admonition, advice, or appeal... ."

The gift of Ruakh Ha Qodesh and the utterances He inspires will often serve to greatly encourage

the remnant, and re-energize our spirits for the day-to-day difficulties and challenges that face all of us who seek to live holy and consecrated lives in Mashiyach.

There are those among us who suggest that the "hooping" of 'black' preachers for example, is not ministry at all, but nothing more than a show. And while in many instances this is no doubt the case, we must also know that this rich tradition, which many have misused to gain followers unto themselves, was born as a legitimate gift of the Spirit, only to be co-opted by the wicked, and exploited for personal gain.

And yet, as with all things, we must strike a balance between teaching *and* preaching. To be sure, YHWH by the mouth of the prophet Hoshea /Hosea declared, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge." And not a lack of entertainment, I might also say. But at the same time, the positive spiritual impact of a stirring, heartfelt exhortation in the Spirit is self-evident, and in my judgment, without question. Let there be no doubt - this ability is in great measure what has kept us, O Yisrael, through the long and bitter winter of our captivity.

The third basic gift of prophecy is consolation, which is simply the comforting of one another, again, through the inevitable trials and tribulations we face as disciples of Mashiyach.

A word of consolation, fitly spoken, serves as a kind of spiritual balm for our wounds. And although this beautiful gift seems to be less popular than the more 'high profile' gifts, the binding up of the broken or wounded in spirit is without question a necessary and very real gift of Ruakh Ha Qodesh to the body of Mashiyach. After all, Mashiyach Himself declared according to the prophet YeshaYahu/Isaiah, that YAH "...hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted" (YeshaYahu 61:1). HalleluYAH!

Finally my brethren, it is written, "...believe in YHWH your Elohim, so shall you be established; believe His prophets, so shall you prosper" (2 Chronicles 20:20).

Surely, without the prophets of YHWH, the body of Mashiyach has no eyes - unsightly and disfiguring, not to mention dysfunctional.

And just as importantly, without the inspired utterances of consecrated Spirit-filled believers, the body of Mashiyach has no spark, without which genuine forward spiritual motion as a nation is impossible - foolish and wasteful, not to mention immobilizing.

O nation, greatly beloved, I simply cannot over-emphasize our need to come into a new and renewed understanding of the prophetic!

We must finally submit ourselves to, and endure the rod of correction, and the divine judgment of the prophets; as well as reinstitute the exercise of the prophetic gifts given to us all - that we may become a suitable bride for Mashiyach; crowned with glory, and honor, and praise; and beautifully adorned with divine knowledge, wisdom, and understanding.