

PROPHETS, SEERS AND RULERS

Previous Articles

All scripture is NKJV except where noted)

There is currently a lot of interest in the prophetic gift of the seer, but not an equal amount of understanding. I believe that the Lord is beginning to raise the level of understanding concerning this gift to the Body in order to take us to another level of maturity. The scripture is our best source for understanding what the Spirit is accomplishing. It can be misleading to people when terms are used hap-hazardly, and even interchangeably, for different manifestations of God's spirit through the prophetic. Word of knowledge, (1 Cor 12:8) , is the ability to receive information through the Spirit which could not be known or ascertained by the senses. There are even those who operate at a level of ministry of word of knowledge. There is likewise the manifestation of a word of wisdom, also in 1 Cor 12:8. This is the supernatural ability to receive information of what action may or may not be taken about a particular situation which is known by the Spirit, and not by the senses. Likewise there are those who walk at a ministry level in word of wisdom. Perhaps this empowerment is more needed in the Church today than ever before. It is often associated with those who rule well, as it is most needed in order to govern and guide.

While both of these manifestations may be functioning fluently in the prophetic ministry, they are not to be confused as one and the same. While a ministry of word of knowledge and the ministry of a prophet may overlap, one may have a ministry of word of knowledge and not of a prophet, and vice versa. Also we may receive words of knowledge, or prophecy for that matter, and not have a ministry in either area. The Spirit of Christ makes this available in the New Testament administration. Biblically there are different categories of prophets, and even different categories of the seer ministry. There is one type of seer who is fluent in visions and discernment, which is word of wisdom. If I may suggest it as such, I believe this is an apostolic level of seer, very much needed in the Church today if we are to approach the level of perfection that the Lord wants to require of us. Is 29:10 For the LORD hath poured out upon you the spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your eyes: the prophets and your rulers, the seers hath he covered. (KJV)

The word translated ruler here, and head in other translations, literally means to "shake one's head", as in yes, or no. It is always used in light of those in leadership authority. When the apostle Paul said in 1 Cor 3:10 that he was a wise master builder he was referring to this anointing. The word translated as master builder in this verse is *architekton* from the Greek words *arche* and *tecton*. We get our English word architect from this Greek word. The architect being the one builder who must have a vision of the completed building even before its foundation is laid. He or she must have the ability and wisdom to see the project through from beginning to end and even assign work to those who are specialized in a particular field. An architect must have the ability to see the vision of the completed project even before the first shovel is placed in the ground. The Greek word *arche* is recognizable as the word translated chief, ruler, and principality. Paul was pointing out that the apostolic ministry in God's Kingdom parallels what

principalities are in the devil's Kingdom. Hence the importance of seeing the seers being raised up, so that those called to apostolic authority will pull down principalities and powers and replace them with God's authority on the earth. Please do not misunderstand me as saying that every seer has an apostolic anointing, or vice versa. But I am trying to communicate that there is a level of seer with word of wisdom that is being released into the apostolic these days, as well as other seers who walk in word of knowledge. Both are needed, and both are being raised up today, but we must understand the differences in order that we may mature according to the will of the Lord.

I am one who feels it is counter productive to redefine Biblical terms with non Biblical descriptions or definitions. Biblically a seer simply is a prophet who "sees". Early on all prophets were called seers, but due to the false prophets misusing the term, the people of God used the word prophet, and seer was a specific term for those prophets who saw visions. 1 Sam 9:9b "for he who is now called a prophet was formerly called a seer." 2 Chron 9:29 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, first and last, are they not written in the book of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite, and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam the son of Nebat? Iddo was called a seer simply because he had visions, in opposition to Nathan who also was a prophet, but not a seer. Seers have visions and when God spoke to Jeremiah, who was a seer, He asked him, "Jeremiah, what do you see?" And I said, "I see a branch of an almond tree." (Jer 1:11) He did not ask Jeremiah "what do you feel", or "what do you think". What do you see is a question for a seer. Jesus also was a seer. "Nathanael said to Him, "How do You know me?" Jesus answered and said to him, "Before Philip called you, when you were under the fig tree, I saw you." (John 1:48), "And He said to them, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." (Luke 10:18) Some understand a gift where you sense through touch as a "seeing" gift, but others see the seeing gift more accurately described Biblically as one who "sees" things. Despite current ideas, the Bible should be our source for describing the prophetic. Biblically there are three Hebrew words that are translated as a prophet, two of which are translated as a seer. There is raah which is translated seer, meaning someone who sees open visions. That same word is used for someone who sees with natural eyes. Then there is chozeh. This word emphasizes spiritual apprehension, of internal visions. And lastly nabi which is the most common biblical word in terms of the prophetic. It means someone who has the Spirit working within them. It is a word for inspiration. Every prophet receives this type of inspiration. Every prophet will be the nabi kind, but not every prophet will be the raah or chozeh kind. I'll have more to say on this shortly.

Having the ability to prophesy or to receive a word of knowledge for that matter does not make one a prophet in light of the ministry of a prophet. To confuse these things, confuses comprehension and may lower the Biblical standard, as well as the understanding of the true ministry of a prophet and seer. There does seem to be a lot of interest in the prophetic, and in the calling of a seer. But inaccurate information, no matter how well intended will only confuse the issue and cause the equipping of men and women to become that much more difficult.

There are different stages of revelation. Any prophecy or prophetic word has three parts to it. The first part is the revelation, dream, or vision itself. The second is the interpretation, answering the question "what does the revelation mean?" The interpretation can come in increments, over a period of time. And the third part is the application. It can be immediate or it can be long term. In regards to dreams or visions, God might use dark sayings or He may show us plainly face to face. In Numbers 12:6 God said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, make Myself known to him in a vision; I speak to him in a dream. (7) Not so with My servant Moses; He is faithful in all My house. (8) I speak with him face to face, Even plainly, and not in dark sayings; And he sees the form of the LORD. Why then were you not afraid To speak against My servant Moses?" There are a diversity of ways that God speaks. He spoke to Moses face to face. Although we 'see through a glass darkly', if we will submit ourselves to those dreams and visions and dark sayings, if we will pursue God, He will reveal their meaning to us. He wants us to come to Him for the interpretation. He wants us to come to Him for the information. He wants us to come to Him for the application. He wants us to be dependent upon Him. A word of knowledge or a prophecy can change a life. None of us will ever prophesy all things or have all knowledge. It will not happen. We know in part and we prophecy in part. (1 Cor 13:9) We are a body. He will give one of us a part, and then He will give a part to another one. He wants us depending upon Him. As we train ourselves to come back to Him, we will begin to see God more and more face to face.

How does He communicate with you? Different than how He speaks to me because you are you. He speaks to you in a language that you understand. One that touches your heart. In Isaiah 30:21 it says, "Your ears shall hear a word behind you, saying, 'This is the way, walk in it, whenever you turn to the right hand or whenever you turn to the left'". Mostly He directs us by His peaceful voice that says, "This is the way." In Jeremiah 32:6 Jeremiah said, "The word of the LORD came to me, saying", (it told him what to do and he carried it out). Then in verse 8 it says, "and then I knew that this was the Word of the Lord". Jeremiah received the word and was obedient to carry it out and believe it, but only after he obeyed did he know it was the Lord. If Jeremiah sometimes was not clear until after he had obeyed, what about us?

God spoke to Moses and said for him to go down to Egypt and tell Pharaoh to let My people go, and that he would do many miracles. Moses asked for a sign to know if these things were true. God said after you go down there and all these miracles happen, Pharaoh will resist you but he will eventually let the people go and you are going to bring them back here and you are going to worship Me on this mountain. Then you will know it was Me. (Ex 3:12) That was his sign. Go do it. When you come back that will be the sign. This is not the kind of sign we like, is it? However, this is often God's way. He expects us to walk in faith, and rewards us for doing His will. Confirmation is according to His will, and if we always require confirmation before obeying, we will one day find our selves missing God. The Lord once spoke to me "you do not need to understand in order to obey. If you wait until you understand before obeying, you will remain behind while others go forward." God will always confirm His word, often by the fruit it produces after it is carried out and not before.

I like to describe understanding as the louvers in a blind. From one angle you cannot see out. As you change your position the view becomes unobstructed. From the new angle you can look outside and can see everything clearly. What has changed? Nothing but your position. When we go out in faith we have changed our position. We can receive from the Lord and we can say like Jeremiah did, "Now I know it is the Lord." One of the three Hebrew words that are translated as a prophet in the Bible, raah is one that has the calling of a seer. Someone with this anointing will be someone who sees open visions and is also able to interpret them. That same word is used for someone who sees with natural eyes and understands. This level of prophet sees in the spirit with deeper understanding. There are not that many prophets in the scriptures who see open visions in proportion to the other types listed. The second type is called chozeh. This meaning emphasizes spiritual apprehension, of internal visions. The word chozeh is translated as prophet or seer but appears to be subordinate to the raah type of seer, because of the authority that comes through understanding available at to the raah seer. I believe that this view is contained in the verse Is 29:10 For the LORD has poured out on you The spirit of deep sleep, And has closed your eyes, namely, the prophets (chozeh); And He has covered your heads, namely, the seers (raah). Those considered seers in the higher sense, raah, are usually given a preeminence over the other types of prophets. Samuel a raah type of seer was regarded above other prophets and seers of his day. He was not only a prophet sent with a message, but often had a deeper understanding and insight to go along with the vision he carried. Daniel was esteemed above all the other prophets and wise men of his time because of the understanding which accompanied his prophetic gifts. Dan 1:17 As for these four children, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom: and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams. Seers have visions.

Lastly there is the Hebrew word nabi which is the most common biblical word in terms of the prophetic. It means someone who has the Spirit working within them. It is a word for inspiration. Every prophet receives this type of inspiration and in the New Testament all believers can and should operate at this level at least in its elementary levels. Every prophet will be the nabi kind, but not every prophet will be the raah kind. 1 Chron. 29:29 contains all three of these Hebrew words: "Now the acts of King David, first and last, indeed they are written in the book of Samuel the seer (raah), in the book of Nathan the prophet (nabi), and in the book of Gad the seer (chozeh)".

Any given prophet will have different long suits in regard to these three types of inspiration. Some will see open visions, some will have angelic visitations, some dreams, visions and trances, and some or all will have inspirations and leadings of the inner witness. Those who walk with authority in the empowerment of words of knowledge, usually fall into the category of a chozeh prophet or seer. Those that walk powerfully in words of wisdom generally fall into the category of the raah prophet or seer. Also many times operating as a prophet to prophets, because of the wisdom and understanding which is manifested through this type of ministry. All who walk in the prophetic must learn nabi inspiration. This is generally the first that we should become proficient with. I like to call this category of the prophetic, the still small voice.

TWELVE EXPRESSIONS OF INSPIRATION:

1. Impressions. An impression is like a feeling or intuition. Often I get the sense that the Spirit pressing upon me in a certain way. This is a form of discernment. The still small voice really is under this category. In Numbers 11:29 Moses said to Joshua, "Are you zealous (or envious or upset for me?) for my sake? Oh, that all the Lord's people were prophets and that the Lord would put His Spirit upon them!" *Nabiy* is the Hebrew word used here. Everyone who is born again is in this category now. Paul said we all may prophesy. This is exactly what he meant. We are all in that category as far as we can receive through inspiration and we can receive through the voice of God and then speak it.

2. A knowing or witness. Romans 9:1 says, "I tell the truth in Christ, I am not lying, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Spirit". We all have an inner witness. It is called Christ in you. It is the mind of Christ that tells us what we ought to do or ought not to do. 1 John 5:10 says, "He who believes in the Son of God has a witness in himself". All believers have this. If we have confessed Jesus as Lord, we have an inner witness that is ours that will lead us in the way that we should go. The Spirit may witness with our spirit information about another individual or situation which we have no way of knowing in our senses. Take action, in love, upon these witnesses of the Spirit. This is often how we enter the realm of word of knowledge, word of wisdom, and discerning of spirits.

3. We can feel things. We can receive things in the emotions of our soul and in our bodies. This is why it is so important to sanctify ourselves. 1 Peter 3:15, "But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts and always be ready to give a defense of everyone who asks you the reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear". The word does not come through your flesh, but the word can effect the flesh. Often I have had the sense that the Spirit is touching a part of my body in order to communicate a message to me. There may be other times, however, when one might say, "Well, I just felt it was God" and it was not God at all. It was the lusts that are in our flesh and we ascribe it to Him. It is important to allow ourselves room to grow. If we have the attitude that we can not be wrong in our interpretation, or feel the need to always say "God told me", then we will hinder our ability to mature. This is why we need mentoring and to submit ourselves and what we are receiving to other proven people who are committed to assisting us in our growth.

4. Visions. The first and most common manifestation of visions are visions of the spirit in the heart. The eyes can be open or closed. Seeing a vision and interpreting what is being seen are not one and the same. The prophet Daniel, one of scriptures greatest seers, often had to seek the Lord for long periods of time to receive the understanding of the vision. Interpretations belong to the Lord, as Joseph stated while still in the Egyptian prison.

5. Supernatural senses. In this level the five senses are amplified in sensitivity and ability. One can experience 'x-ray vision' giving the ability to see through something or a

heightened sense of smell or hearing. A "foul spirit" may be discerned through spiritual smell. One may hear a sound of conversation across a distance which could not be heard with your physical senses. One can have a taste to communicate something spiritual to you. There is a record in the Old Testament where Elisha's prophets in training were making up some porridge and tasted "death in the pot." (2 Kings 4:40) How did they know there was death in the pot? Nobody had died. God communicated supernaturally through their sense of taste.

6. Dreams. The next level is dreams. They are seen all through the Bible. Jacob at Bethel saw the angels go up and down a ladder. Joseph saw the vision or dream of the moon and the stars. He saw the dream of the sheaves bowing down and got himself in big trouble by telling his family about it. Job 33:15 In a dream, in a vision of the night, When deep sleep falls upon men, While slumbering on their beds, 16 Then He opens the ears of men, And seals their instruction. 17 In order to turn man from his deed, And conceal pride from man. God will often use dreams to communicate warnings and other important information to us in order to avoid as much interference from our senses as possible.

7. Open visions. This is where the eyes are open and one sees spiritual things as if they appeared normal to the natural eyes. It is possible for the open vision to be so real to our eyes that it is only later understood that it was an open vision at all. It is likewise possible to actually be involved in the physical sense in a spiritual phenomenon only to realize later that it was not a vision. This happened to Peter in Acts 12:11.

8. Trances. This manifestation is distinct from visions because in a vision one is still aware of ones surroundings. In a trance ones surroundings are blotted out temporarily, unless God wants them to be observed. This also occurred to Peter in Acts 10.

9. Audible voices. Acts 9 is the account of Paul's encounter with the Lord while traveling to Damascus. He was knocked to the ground and a conversation occurred between he and the Lord. In verse 7 it says the other men stood by and heard a voice but they did not see anyone. To Paul it was an audible voice. In my experience, the audible voice of God will always be life changing no matter the length or brevity of the conversation.

10. Visitations from angels. Angels can bring us information. An angel came to Daniel to bring him understanding. Angels came to Abraham because there was something important that needed to happen that he needed to be informed about. Mary spoke with the angel Gabriel, the same archangel who communicated to Daniel. Joseph was ministered by an angel through a dream, as was Jacob.

11. Visitations from the Lord. At times there may be a commissioning that the Lord Jesus Himself will administer. It is often difficult for the person to communicate what happened in human words. It may not be something they want people to know about, especially since many people would not believe it. The Lord may come at other times, and He said that He would manifest Himself to those who love him (Jn 14:21).

12. Translation in place or time. Both Paul and John were caught up into the third heaven. They were used to doing service for the Body of Christ, to bringing the Word of God so that the Body would prosper, so that they could adjust and prepare for the things that are ahead. When we have a servant's heart like that, willing to give our life as living sacrifice, then we will grow up in all things unto Him who is the Head. We will grow up to the place where we can see Him face to face like Moses did and be able to receive that sure word of prophecy which will change lives and change the nations as we give them the prophetic word. Philip was caught away by the spirit and physically translated from the desert of Gaza to Azotus (Acts 8). On the Mount of transfiguration four men, that is Jesus, Peter, James and John all were translated to a future time where they saw the Lord standing with Moses and Elijah, in His glorified and resurrected body. There is no record in scripture of more than one person sharing an internal vision simultaneously with another. I believe that in this case all were translated to a time after Jesus' resurrection as well as that of Moses. Enoch himself, as well as Elijah, were two in scripture who were translated to be with the Lord and are examples of those who were physically translated into the heavenly realm of eternity.

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