

4 Characteristics of the Gift of Prophet

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Prophet - Greek Definition: "Forth telling of the truth": Prophets are like the watchmen in the Old Testament. They help the body to see what is coming in the Spirit. They greatly affect the spiritual climate of the church. God uses them to see spiritual destiny in people and raising up leaders to fulfill their destiny. They are used greatly by Jesus to reveal His presence and majesty.

1. Vision

Rev. 4:1 (NIV) After this I looked, and there before me was a door standing open in heaven. And the voice I had first heard speaking to me like a trumpet said, "Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this."

Higher sight – Vision - is the main gift of the Prophet. There is a principle in scripture, if you can see it, you can have it. If you never see it, you will never be able to inherit it. That is the importance of vision. One of the major pieces of vision being given now is to see the new perspective that the Body of Christ as a whole will walk in one day.

2 Cor. 4:18 (NIV) So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

The vision imparts Direction and Fear of the Lord. It makes know the Standard, the Plumbline. The vision is always moving the people towards maturity.

Vision Requires Time Alone With God

The Prophet must spend time in the 'throne room' with God to get a new perspective. As a result, this gift requires more alone time with God than any of the other offices to operate effectively. It is seen less by the people than the other offices. This requires a 'dying' to being seen. Elisha died to personal status and reputation when he poured water over the hands of Elijah, the task of a servant girl, to follow him and inherit his mantle.

Elisha had to walk closely – even serve – someone with a greater gift – Elijah - to get his new perspective. This is the Prophet's reward.

Vision Requires Death

When you spend time in the throne room it gives vision and it gives death. Death to the old way of seeing and doing.

Rev. 1:17-19 (NIV) ¹⁷When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. ¹⁸I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive forever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades. ¹⁹"Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later.

But death brings new perspective which frees us. But new Perspective Costs – the cost of giving up the old perspective. We all want new perspective, but the sight of God produces personal death. The higher the death – The higher the vision.

When Elisha was called by Elijah to follow him, he didn't even take time to put away his plow, take care of his oxen, or kiss his Father. He immediately forsook his lively hood. Yet He willingly did it. He sacrificed his own ability to produce. He died to familiar cultural norms. He allowed God's Kingdom to replace his own view of life.

The Prophet continually asks God for His vision. The prophet is to be a conduit between 2 realms – earth and heaven. They need to ask to see things as they truly are not how we think they may be : correct perspective, correct purpose.

Prophet's challenge is to share only that revealed by God not what the people or their own desires wants.

Prophet's Reward

Matt. 10:41a (NIV) Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet's reward...

What is the Prophet's reward? This is an important understanding. If we believe in Prophets, welcome Prophets, walk with Prophets, what will happen? We who walk with them will get what Prophets have to give – Vision -- a higher perspective from one that we get from being on our own.

2. Voice

Giving voice means to speak God's thoughts that you have gotten from the throne room. It is the voice that cuts through all of the competing voices.

Matt. 3:3 (NIV) This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.' "

Once you see it you can voice it when God gives permission. When you voice it is important. It must be done at the right time, in the right group, and in the right place. It must be voiced to the group who is to inherit the vision and help work to see the vision fulfilled.

When you give voice it breaks the illusion of what people think they see. It changes their reality of what can happen to what God has for them. Prophets have a grace to release and establish the Voice of God for Direction.

Main enemy of the voice of the Prophet is the voice of Jezebel manifesting in the church.

Fighting Discouragement

The devil will try to discourage you by bringing people who do not believe the vision.

Isaiah 30:8-11 (NIV) ⁸Go now, write it on a tablet for them, inscribe it on a scroll, that for the days to come it may be an everlasting witness. ⁹These are rebellious people, deceitful children, children unwilling to listen to the LORD's instruction. ¹⁰They say to the seers, "See no more visions!" and to the prophets, "Give us no more visions of what is right! Tell us pleasant things, prophesy illusions. ¹¹Leave this way, get off this path, and stop confronting us with the Holy One of Israel!"

2 Peter 3:1-4 (NIV) ¹Dear friends, this is now my second letter to you. I have written both of them as reminders to stimulate you to wholesome thinking. ²I want you to recall the words spoken in the past by the holy prophets and the command given by our Lord and Savior through your apostles. ³First of all, you must understand that in the last days scoffers will come, scoffing and following their own evil desires. ⁴They will say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised? Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation."

When Prophets speak it breaks the status quo, complacency, and current way of thinking. This is not always received at first.

3. Righteous Life Style

To continue receiving vision requires righteous living. It requires living a life pleasing to the Lord.

Isaiah 33:15-17 (NIV) ¹⁵He who walks righteously and speaks what is right, who rejects gain from extortion and keeps his hand from accepting bribes, who stops his ears against plots of murder and shuts his eyes against contemplating evil-- ¹⁶this is the man who will dwell on the heights, whose refuge will be the mountain fortress. His bread will be supplied, and water will not fail him. ¹⁷Your eyes will see the king in his beauty and view a land that stretches afar.

4. Alignment with Others

Prophets that walk alone with usually end up in deception and/or picked off by the enemy – the same as all the other offices. This is often hard for the Prophet because they spend so much time alone with God that it is often hard to come out of that ‘prayer closet’ and walk with others.

Because the Prophet gets revelation from God they often think they are immune to deception or a falling away. This is not true. This dynamic can cause Prophets to go into deception because of the entry of pride and not understanding that God has not given any office or person the full picture.

Most of the Old Testament Prophet model is not the pattern for the New Testament Prophet. The Old Testament Prophet was the highest spiritual office. This is no longer true. Jesus set up a whole new order when He set up the institution of the church. In the Old Testament, you had priests and prophets governing the spiritual realm. In the New Testament, you have Apostles, Prophets, Pastors, Evangelists, Teachers, Elders, Deacons, and priests – 6 *new* positions with the positions of priests and prophets being greatly redefined.

Prophets are now a part of a team of people to accomplish the things of God. They must be properly aligned with a corporate community that has Apostolic input. The Prophet especially needs the Apostle’s gift. This can be hard and humbling for a prophet because they often see in the spirit first. But it must be realized that while seeing in the spirit first is required, that does not mean the job is finished. What is seen in the Spirit must be built in the earth. Seeing and declaring is the first step, but it is only the first step of many. Apostles are the first to build in the physical. Prophets must align themselves with Apostles to see what they have seen finished.

1 Cor. 12:28 (NIV) And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

Isolation is very dangerous to any of the offices, especially a Prophet. A Prophet in isolation assumes they can do more than they can. An Apostle in isolation assumes they can build accurately by themselves.