

“Especially Prophecy”

Part 1: Let's Report What God is Saying

(preached 1/24/21)

Please turn to *Amos 3*.

GIFTS MODERN. Gateway Fellowship believes in the modern day operation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit a Paul lays them out in *1 Corinthians 12:4-11*: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, tongues, and interpretation of tongues.

WILL NOT ADDRESS. Before I continue, let me say what this series will NOT address:

- **It won't attempt to prove that prophecy or the other gifts are still active today.** I know many good brothers and sisters and Christ who take a cessationist position—meaning they believe the gifts are no longer active—and I'm not here to defend our position.
- **I understand some of you have come here from other churches who may believe differently than Gateway.** I'm not asking that you change your beliefs, only that you understand and accept our position.
- **It won't address why the gifts don't seem to happen as much now as they did in the first century.**

GREEK word for prophecy translates: “to make a prediction [about the future], Scriptural or otherwise” and the Hebrew word is essentially the same.

IT'S A GIFT. As stated in *1 Corinthians 12*, Godly prophecy is a gift which means:

- We only have it when it's given to us by the Holy Spirit.
- We only operate in it according to our level of faith (*Romans 12:6*).
- We must ask for it out of a desire to prophesy (*1 Corinthians 14:1*).

STEP UP. What's motivating this series is something the Lord said to me recently, telling me He wanted me to “step up” in prophesying...act in a higher level of faith in this gift.

MSM. I've been vocal about my frustration with the MSM. The original idea behind papers and TV news (along with the editors, reporters, and journalists they hire) was to report the news: good, bad, or ugly.

FACTORY BURNS. Example: suppose a local factory catches on fire and burns to the ground, but *The Steuben County Times* (a fictitious org I just made up) is able to get there before it's completely gone. The camera man tapes the fire and perhaps even streams it live, while the reporter gives the verbal facts, then goes on to interview the people present. She asks the fire chief what he saw and did when he arrived, she asks a factory worker for his experiences and escape from the factory, and then inquires after the owner as to what his next step will be.

ALT SCENARIO. Let's take an alternate scenario: TSCT doesn't like the factory owner for reasons of their own, and they go on to publish unproven rumors of negligence in safety standards from "anonymous" sources. They show up at the owner's home with a camera and mic, following him when he comes out and making unfounded accusations on live TV.

TSCT is no longer reporting facts and evidence, but are filtering their coverage through their dislike of the factory owner.

SOMETIMES PROPHETIC PEOPLE & MINISTRIES DO THE SAME AND I BELIEVE ITS BEEN HAPPENING RECENTLY.

MAJOR PROPHETIC VOICES. There are major prophetic voices here in the US and around the world, men and women who've built major ministries and are followed by hundreds of thousands of people. They've written books, appear on TV, attend conferences with thousands of people, and have lots of followers on social media.

- I do not believe these prophetic voices or their ministries have an evil intent
- Nor do I think that they are false prophets as Jesus defines them: wolves in sheep's clothing.

What I do believe is that instead of merely reporting what God is saying or showing them, they're filtering things through their own desires and biases.

PREDICT COVID-19. As I said to you before, I didn't hear anyone within the prophetic ministry predict Covid 19 or any of the things that would happen as a result of it. Whether it was manufactured in a lab and purposefully released or came from a wet raw animal market, God should have revealed something on this worldwide scale to at least 2 or 3 witnesses who flow in prophecy. I believe God did exactly that because He speaks all the time and there are beautiful verses of Scripture like *Amos 3:7*

Amos 3:7-8 (ESV)

⁷ "For the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing his secret to his servants the prophets.

⁸ The lion has roared; who will not fear? The Lord GOD has spoken; who can but prophesy?"

ANYONE CALLED TO PROPHECY ON A NATIONWIDE SCALE, THE PROPHETIC MINISTRY IS SUPPOSED TO BE GOD'S MEDIA.

PERSONAL PROPHECY IS A DIFFERENT STORY, A DIFFERENT LEVEL OF FAITH, AND WE'LL GET TO THAT ANOTHER TIME...

AMOS BACKGROUND. Amos is an interesting book because the Lord prophesies not just to Israel and Judah, but several surrounding nations including Damascus Syrai, Gaza, Tyre (Lebanon), Edom, Ammon & Moab...then He gets to Judah and Israel. Consider the following:

- Not all these tribes are “God’s people,” only Judah and Israel.
- God prophesies about and to ALL of them.
- In this case, the prophecies are mostly “judgment is about to rain down on you” types.
- The pagan nations are judged because they sinned against Israel and Judah.
- God’s people are judged for sinning against Him.

INTERCEPTED BY AMAZIAH. Amos went to Israel to deliver this written prophecy, but High Priest Amaziah intercepted him, tried to censor, then banned him altogether. Amos was a simple shepherd, yet on the day the Lord spoke to him and then showed him visions, He was called to be a mailman and deliver the message to the highest authority in the land. He and several other prophets who lived during that time were God’s media.

WARNING! BURDEN. Prophecy can be a heavy burden and here’s why: they must report whatever God says.

- Perhaps the Lord predicts blessing, favor, and freedom or maybe He prophesies judgment and hard times.
- Maybe he gives factual words of knowledge about what’s going on, or offers divine wisdom that gets someone out of a pickle.
- Perhaps He praises someone’s faithfulness or rebukes sinfulness.

REPORT, DECIDE. We get frustrated with MSM because things went from “we report, you decide” to “we decide, then report.”

Are people in the prophetic ministry doing the same thing?

Is that why they missed predicting Covid-19 and/or consequences of the same?

WELL KNOW PROPHET. A very well-known and reputable prophetic voice prophesied the following back in February 2020:

“The Lord showed me The end of the Coronavirus...the tide is turning now! He is answering the prayers and cries of the nations and is putting an end in sight. The exaggerated fear based tactics of both the enemy and several media outlets for political reasons is coming to an end. The enemy has been trying to distract and steal from several equally important purposes and issues by dominating airwaves with conspiracy and fear. Even now several vaccines are coming out as well as a natural dying out of the virus itself. The Lord is saying “I am removing the threat of this.” Within a short amount of time the extreme threat will feel like it is in the way past.

Psalm 56:9

*The very moment I call to you for a father's help
the tide of battle turns and my enemies flee.
This one thing I know: God is on my side"*

“TWO WEEKS - TWO MONTHS.” He went on to say—in Feb 2020—that it would be over within two weeks – two months. Other prophetic voices jumped on this bandwagon and said the Lord showed them it being over by Passover 2020, which took place in April of the same year. None of these things happened. Also, God hasn’t put an end to the twisted reporting of the MSM surrounding Covid...it continues stronger than ever.

“NATURAL” PROPHESYING. Look at the wording of the social media post itself: it’s mixed with “natural” occurrences. In other words: the timing of his prophetic word coincides with 1) reports of a vaccine in the words, which was common at that time and 2) reports that with summer/warmer temps the virus would die (which it didn’t).

NOT TRYING TO DISCREDIT. Please don’t misunderstand me: I’m not trying to discredit this man nor am I raking him over the proverbial coals. I don’t think he’s a wolf in sheep’s clothing, and I do believe he’s not only Saved but given the gift of prophecy by the Spirit.

HE MISSED BIGLY. My point is that he missed this one—big time—because **instead of just reporting what the Lord was saying, he allowed his biases to interfere.**

Too many modern day prophetic voices only want to prophesy good things, whether for personal or nationwide prophecy.

I both understand and sympathize! More on that in a moment. They take one verse of the Bible and create an entire doctrine around it, and here is that verse:

1 Corinthians 14:3 (ESV)

³ On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation.

NOT THIS WEEK. I don’t have time this week to dig into the context of this, that will be a future sermon in this series.

JESUS PROPHESED ONLY WHAT FATHER SAID. Yet I proved to you in weeks previous that Jesus and the Apostles—in the New Testament Scriptures—gave both personal and nationwide prophecies that weren’t all positive. (Note: verse 3 doesn’t mean all positive either.)

JESUS PROPHESED....

- That the Pharisees and the disciples they made were going to Hell.
- The cities/citizens of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum—who all rejected Him—would burn in the fires of Hell at Judgment Day! He even told Capernaum that Sodom would have it better on JD.
- When speaking about the whole world, He spoke the famous Matthew 24: wars, natural disasters, great deception, false prophets, great hatred, horrible persecution to death, the Antichrist and his evil actions, and that the Jewish people will need to flee.
- In Matthew 25 He says not everyone makes it into the Kingdom: Parable of the 10 Virgins, the judgment of the “goat” nations who are cast into outer darkness.
- When He was carrying His cross He uttered a horrible prophecy in Luke’s Gospel about the siege of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD; that starvation within the city would be so severe, people would find themselves doing...really really really bad things that I won’t mention here.

JESUS & APOSTLES VIOLATED DOCTRINE. If, as some modern day prophets claim, prophecy is only meant to contain messages of blessing and good things to come, then both Jesus and the Apostles are in error.

NC PROPHECY. The New Covenant allows every Saved Christian to ask for this gift (one is called and anointed to the office of Prophet) because the One Who dispenses said gifts lives inside of us. That was not the case under the OC...the Holy Spirit had not yet come.

But the protocol—if you will—hasn’t changed.

We report what God has said—good, bad, or a mixture of both—and the hearer decides what they will do with the message.

LEVEL OF FAITH. Depending on our level of faith and our calling, the hearer could be a fellow brother or sister at church, or a world leader. We don’t decide first what the message should be and then report it people.

Back to Amos. Jereboam’s High Priest Amaziah intercepted Amos & his message before it ever got to the king. What if Amos had followed the modern day doctrine of positive only? He would only have given the first two “chapters” of his book, where the sins of the pagan nations at war with Israel are laid out and God’s promise to bring the hammer down on them. Is it possible that, only reading that part, the High Priest might have said “Amen brother! Good word! I’ll bring this right to the king!!!”

AMOS CHAPTERS. As I said, the first two chapters are against the nations.

- The next two chapters—3-4—lay out the sins of both Israel and Judah and God’s promise to judge them.
- Chapters 5-6 are God sounding a lot like a Father crying out to a wayward son, calling on him to repent and return to Him. He’s pleading with Israel and Judah as a loving Father would do!
- Then Father gives Amos 5 visions of impending judgment and Amos intercedes, pleading for mercy, on behalf of Israel. God actually relents on some of these—based only upon Amos’ pleading!
- He was showing the great love He had for His people and that He would ALSO relent if they repented.

Therefore the king and high priest of Israel needed to hear the whole message.

CHANCE TO REPENT. Then and only then would they—especially the king—have a chance to turn from his wicked ways and lead His nation back to the Lord...to avoid a nationwide judgment. Jereboam doesn’t receive the whole message, though, because High Priest Amaziah reasoned that he would decide first what the king would hear, and report only that. He did report one of God’s warnings directly specifically to the king yes, but immediately followed that up with “he’s conspiring against you!” turning the King’s heart away from hearing the rest of Amos’s message.

AMOS represents a believer who heard from God and reporting everything God said, then allowing the hearers to decide.

AMAZIAH represents a believer who also heard from God (by reading Amos’ written prophecy), then deciding to only report certain parts.

Let’s be like Amos.

SYMPATHY. A few moments ago I promised to follow up on my sympathy toward wanting to only prophesy positive things. There have been times in my life where I’ve received words of knowledge or prophecy about a person that I didn’t want to share, because I was afraid they’d be hurt or offended. My wife has faced this many times in her life. Godly compassion and empathy are a GOOD thing, enabling her and I to deliver the message with gentleness and love. The human versions of those things will change the message and inspire us to indulge in deciding first what part of the message to report, then reporting only that part or saying nothing at all.

OLDER PROPHET CALLS OUT PASTOR. I was watching an older prophet on TV once give a testimony that he was invited to speak and teach at a church and, after he arrived, God gave him a convicting word of knowledge about the pastor! With fear and trembling, he asked the pastor for privacy and revealed the message just as God had given it. This one worked out well: the pastor broke down in tears, confessed his sin, and repented right there on the spot.

APPALLED. Can you imagine? I've been invited to speak elsewhere and would be APPALLED if the Lord gave me a word like this and then told me I needed to deliver it (why else would He give it to me?)!

NOT ADVOCATING DOOM AND GLOOM/ Please don't misunderstand me: I'm not advocating all negative "doom and gloom" prophecies either.

I'm saying that it's time for the church to just report what God is saying regardless of what it is and regardless of the outcome.

VETTING IN FUTURE SERMON. In a future sermon, I will show the proper "vetting" protocol that goes with this to do our best to make sure it's coming from God and not just anywhere, **but for today:**

- God's messages are not limited to blessing only—there are times when He calls out sin and urges repentance whether to a person or an entire nation.
- We must ask the Holy Spirit to help us remove personal biases, desires, and limited perceptions as to how things will or ought to work.
- Let's ask the HP to help us with being afraid to offend and to let His fruits of gentleness and compassion be what transmits any "tough" prophecies He gives.
- Said biases will block us from receiving what God is saying, causing us to be wrong in predictions we make.

As we draw closer to the Second Coming of Jesus, the devil will turn up the heat producing fake news intended to create fear and inspire people to fall in with his agenda.

Therefore the prophetic ministry is as important as ever. People wonder what they can do to fight back against evil, and I believe God is calling the Church to be God's media.

- We all have the Holy Spirit living inside of us and people need to hear what the Lord is saying and planning!
- Only a Christian with the Holy Spirit living inside can receive God's gift of prophecy, to hear what the Lord is saying, and to see what the Lord is doing.