

The Prophetic

What's It All About

By Ruth Johnson

Lighthouse of Hope Ministries
Mill Creek, WA U.S.A.

Message From The Author

I am deeply thankful to a loving Father who always wants to help us find His wisdom that sets us free, including by Him showing us how to use the gift to prophesy in the way that He longs for us to do.

These are His words that reassure us how earnestly this is His heart toward us as our Abba Father:

“I hold you by your right hand and I say to you,
‘Don’t be afraid. I am here to help you.’”

Isaiah 41:13 NLT

“There is no one like the God of Israel. I ride across the heavens
to help you, across the skies in majestic splendor.”

Deuteronomy 33:26 NLT Personalized

Responses To “The Prophetic”

George E. Markakis, Greek Apostle, European Apostolic Leader, Pastor of Shalom Center, Athens, Greece: “The intro is spectacular! It certainly captivated my attention! Captivating and positively ‘emotional’ at times. It is a very good article. Very well written. Well done dear Ruth. Glad you decided to share these thoughts on the prophetic. May the Lord use your message to encourage many and bring healing to many more.”

Dr. John Roddam, Apostle and Prophet, formerly the Pastor of St. Luke’s Episcopal Church, Ballard, WA: “I have known Barry and Ruth Johnson for over a decade. They are loving and gracious equippers in the Body of Christ who for years have trained believers to operate in the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Truly it is easy to endorse what Ruth has written. She is a friend who walks with grace and who teaches from a strong Biblical and experiential grid. I love the way Ruth sees how the prophetic, and the other gifts, need to be expressed in a safe and loving way. There is also a good balance of testimony and the Word in this teaching and it is written in a style that is understandable by young and old alike. It is excellent!”

Caleb Howard, International Evangelist, formerly the Pastor of Dry Oak Assembly of God, Belton, SC: “I was tremendously blessed and encouraged from this writing on prophecy. I even gained some wisdom and revelation concerning this subject that I had not received before. Barry and Ruth are a hidden treasure in God’s Kingdom that I believe will be brought to the forefront for such a time as this.”

Michael Liu, Businessman with a Marketplace Ministry in China: “I’ve been giving thanks as I have been translating ‘The Prophetic’ into Chinese and thinking to myself what a blessing for those who can read this message. It is not doctrine full of instructions, but a poetry of heart illuminating truth poured out in love. This word has the power of healing! I see the urgency of the Gospel, the goodness of God, and the living example of apostle wisdom in it. All this needs to be shared. I will be giving it to people in China.”

Doug Martin, Gifted Teacher, Associate Pastor with the Father’s Kind Heart at our Home Church, Sunrise Christian Center, Everett, WA: “The scripture says that Jesus came full of Grace and Truth and as I read this I could see those qualities. You have been truthful about what the prophetic really is and areas which need correction. At the same time you have been very understanding and graceful to everyone, as none of us are perfect at this and we are all learning. Thanks so much for taking the time and effort to shine a light on a subject which is not always well understood, but can be so valuable when used the way God intended it to be used.”

Terry Dunnings, Senior Pastor, The Vision Center, Elm City, NC: “This prophetic teaching is truly awesome and inspired by God. So much wisdom and revelation. Wow! I enjoyed the truth of God that resonates from your writing, Ruth. The scripture references, the examples, the stories, they are all so riveting and powerful!”

Russ and Kim Babcock, Missions Pastors, Pursuit NW Church, Snohomish, WA: “We love your heart towards health in the Body of Christ and your desire for the Bride to walk in true freedom. We are also thankful for this honest and sometimes difficult conversation of instruction and correction where prophecy is concerned. Yet with it comes the beauty of what this gift was created for. You have once again communicated very well and with love and grace and truth, always pointing to the Word of God. We love that and we are excited to have you put this in print and allow others to read it so that it can bring clarity to an area that at times is one of learned confusion.”

Hughes Protzman, Associate Pastor, Mukilteo Foursquare Church, Mukilteo, WA: “Your teaching is always powerful because it comes from your love of people. Now you have shown us why prophecy has been effective in your life because it was always ministered within a context of love, mercy and grace. Seeing this brings me to repentance because I haven't always done that. Thank you for once again showing us how to think and function with the mind of Christ and the heart of Father God.”

Dan and Cindy Duff, Pastors of Calvary Family Church, Collinsville, IL: “We love the Word and balanced approach you have taken, Ruth, in this teaching on ‘The Prophetic.’ We both can really feel your love for the church and all of God’s people. This is a very good and clear writing on the prophetic. I believe we need the prophetic and prophets in our churches today, as much as we ever have. But as pastors we also have experienced wrong, and even false prophecy from those in the Body of Christ who allow their perspective or their flesh to get involved. We know this can be very damaging and dangerous. As a result, prophecy concerns, and even scares a lot of people in the church. We strongly believe that the church needs to return to the Word because God is not the God of fear or confusion. Again, this is a great, balanced writing. Keep blessing the body of Christ!”

Dr. Patricia Duke, His Heart Ministries International, a powerful Speaking, Teaching, Prophetic and Apostolic Ministry, Tampa, FL: “As I read, ‘The Prophetic What It’s All About,’ I sensed a genuine gentleness of heart and the love of Jesus throughout. The message is an encouragement. It is also a caution for those who move in the prophetic, as well as for those who are receiving a prophetic word. It is an excellent teaching for those who want to know more about the prophetic. I am both humbled and honored to be among the ones you chose to share this with.”

Margie Fry, a highly respected Prophetic Voice in Lighthouse of Hope Ministries, Silverdale, WA: “As I finished the last sentence, I found that I didn’t want this powerful teaching to end. It is full of love and great clarity about the Word of God. It also brings forth the richness of His truth for our daily living and it is explained in such a way that it will help people to move into freedom in the prophetic, and in a safe, encouraging, loving way.”

The Prophetic

What's It All About

By Ruth Johnson

A liberating message for anyone who is searching for understanding about what healthy, Scripture-based prophesying looks like and for those who want to be set free from what is holding them back from the Father using them in this profoundly important way.

The insights come from what I have learned from my decades in ministry and from equipping others to understand how to walk in the fullness of God's purpose for them. I am passionate about sharing them because of how vital it is for God's children to walk in freedom in their prophetic gifting.

I also feel strongly about this message because I've seen so much confusion in people about what that "going free" looks like, and because far too many Christians have been hurt by those who have prophesied to them in an unsafe, not Word-based way. As a result, they are "scared" of someone ministering to them prophetically. Often they become "shut down" in giving themselves a chance to be used in this way, even if they have a strong anointing in prophecy. My earnest hope and prayer is that this writing will significantly help all those who are longing to learn how to fully "rise up on wings as an eagle" in God using them to speak His words of life to others.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

Revelation 19:10 YLT

Paul did everything he could to help the early believers grasp how to be that witness of Jesus. First, he strongly encouraged them to have a longing to both pursue love and to prophesy:

"Let love be your highest goal! But you should also desire the special abilities the Spirit gives—especially the ability to prophesy." 1 Corinthians 14:1 NLT

At the same time, he made it clear that this gift was all about helping others experience how much they are loved by the Father, which is what means the most to His Son, Jesus:

"Those who prophesy are speaking to people to give them strength, encouragement, and comfort." 1 Corinthians 14:3 NCV

In the light of these two verses, Paul was telling the early Christians:

“Want earnestly to speak words to others that will give them encouragement, strength, and comfort.”

Even the prophets during the birth of the church lived this way of love:

“Paul encouraged the believers in all the towns he passed through.” Acts 20:2 NLT

“Judas and Silas, both being prophets, spoke extensively to the Christians, encouraging and strengthening their faith.” Acts 15:32 NLT

The genuine love of Jesus that exploded in the Book of Acts was also at the foundation of the 1906 Azusa Street Revival. This is a quote by an eyewitness historian of that move of God:

“The message was the love of God. It was as if the first love of the early Church had returned. We knew the moment we had grieved the Spirit by an unkind thought or word. The presence of the Lord was so real.” Frank Bartleman

I find it remarkable that we never outgrow the need to receive prophetic encouragement. We never become so “mature” or so spiritually “strong” that we can fully live for Jesus without words of the Father’s love being spoken to us. That’s why it is not spiritual weakness to want encouragement. It is not a lack of dependence on God or a failure to trust Him. Rather the Father created us this way. Consequently, the more we give our lives to serving Him, the greater our need to experience His encouragement. For example, we see in the prophet Isaiah the intense discouragement that can affect any man or woman of God when being encouraged is not happening:

The Lord told him: “You are my servant and you will bring Me glory.” Isaiah replied: “But my work all seems so useless. I have spent my strength for nothing and to no purpose. Yet, I leave it all in the Lord’s hand. I will trust God for my reward.” Isaiah 49:3-4 NLT

Then this is how David wrote about his longing for someone to encourage him:

“You see all that my enemies are doing. Their insults have broken my heart, and I am in despair. If only one person would show some pity; if only one would turn and comfort me.” Psalm 69:19-20 NLT

Even Jesus didn't want to be cared about only by His Father. As a man, He also needed to be emotionally supported by those He was in close friendship relationship with during His years on earth. This is an illuminating account in which He is very honest about feeling this way:

Then Jesus went with His followers to a place called Gethsemane. He said to them, "Sit here while I go over there and pray." He took Peter and the two sons of Zebedee with Him, and He began to be very sad and troubled. He said to them, "My heart is full of sorrow, to the point of death. Stay here and watch with Me." After walking a little farther away from them, Jesus fell to the ground and prayed, "My Father, if it is possible, do not give Me this cup of suffering. But do what You want, not what I want." When Jesus went back to His followers and found them asleep, He said to Peter, "You men could not stay awake with Me for one hour?" Matthew 26:36-40 NCV

Paul was also vulnerably honest about having this same fundamental need:

"God, who encourages those who are discouraged, encouraged us by the arrival of Titus." 2 Corinthians 7:6 NLT

"I'm eager to encourage you in your faith, but I also want to be encouraged by yours. In this way, each of us will be a blessing to the other." Romans 1:12 NLT

What's sad is that multitudes of sincere, good-hearted believers are stuck in the same Valley of Dry Bones that Ezekiel wrote about because they have no one encouraging them. A tragic loss of hope is crushing them. When their discouragement deepens, a terrible, dark despair overtakes them. The longer they live with this heartache, the more heartbreakingly painful their loneliness and emptiness become. Yet when people encounter sincere, healthy, Word-based words that comfort them with the Father's kind love, those who are grappling with darkness can be renewed in their courage to not give up. This can make it possible for them to find their way back to "fighting the good fight," rather than being "shipwrecked in their faith." 1 Timothy 1:18-19 NASB To help people find their way to this revival of hope is why the Spirit of the Lord came upon Ezekiel to declare to all generations:

"O my people, I will open your graves of exile and cause you to rise again. Then I will bring you back to the land of Israel. When this happens, you will know that I am the LORD. I will put my Spirit in you, and you will live again. Then you will know that I, the LORD, have spoken, and I have done what I said." Ezekiel 37:12-14 NLT

Countless times my husband, Barry, and I have witnessed the amazing impact when someone experiences prophetic words of encouragement. We saw this take place recently in China. One night we met with a missionary in Shanghai. The moment that kind words from the Father began to be prophesied to him, his countenance completely changed and he began to weep.

"Never in my life have I been encouraged this much," he told us.

"I am so grateful. I will always hold close to my heart what God used you to say to me this night."

I often marvel how even a few simple, humble, even childlike sounding words that the Father prompts us to tell someone can, in a heartbeat, become a “lamp shining in a dark place” for them. They can make it possible for a “new day and the hope of the Morning Star to arise once again in their heart.” 2 Peter 1:19-22 NASB

No wonder the Word tells us:

“Gentle words can bring life and health. A person’s words can be life-giving water, as refreshing as a bubbling brook.” Proverbs 15:4, 18:4 NLT

However, to be quite practical, I have observed and experienced that when the Father uses us in this way, it’s by us speaking natural sounding words, rather than ones that are super-spiritual, grand, fancy, or in a voice or volume that is not how we ordinarily talk. Often it’s also just a few words He wants us to say. Consequently, as we grow and mature in our gifting, we are less apt to go “on and on” because we’ve gone past the point when God is still nudging us to speak.

Since the core purpose of the prophetic is to help others to experience the love of the Father, it is deeply troubling when the words of some who have this gift are harsh.

This absence of love is a betrayal of these truths that Jesus came and died to teach us:

“By **this** all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.” John 13:35 NASB

“I command you to love each other in the **same** way that I have loved you.” John 15:12 NASB

Jesus was asked: “What is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?” Jesus replied: “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind. This is the first and the greatest commandment. A second is **equally** important. Love your neighbor as yourself. (NLT) On these, the two commands, all the law and the prophets do hang (YLT).” Matthew 22:36-40

Then Paul bluntly, boldly explained how strongly God feels about unkind, unloving prophesying:

“If I could speak in any language in heaven or on earth but didn’t love others, I would only be making meaningless noise like a loud gong or a clanging cymbal. If I had the gift of prophecy and if I knew all the mysteries of the future and knew everything about everything, but didn’t love others, **what good would it be?** If I had the gift of faith so that I could speak to a mountain and make it move, without love I would be no good to anybody. If I gave everything I have to the poor and even sacrificed my body, I could boast about it. But if I didn’t love others, I would be of no value whatsoever.” 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 NLT

This is how the Father describes what this love looks like that He is emphatically telling us needs to closely guide all that we say or do prophetically:

“Love is kind.”

1 Corinthians 13:4

Likewise, the presence of God can only be upon us if whatever we say or do is expressed with this kindness that is essential to His love. It is also what can help someone to “feel” safe to receive from us prophetically. Not always though. But, at least we are expressing the heart of God when the kindness of His love guides us and that is what matters the most to Him.

What’s troubling is that even Christians who are sincerely trying to be encouraging by prophesying can damage this love, and cause what they say to feel unsafe to people, if they don’t understand this area of foundational, Word-based wisdom:

Paul *never* told the early Christians that the purpose of prophecy was correction and rebuke. For example, he never urged all Christians to “desire earnestly” to be able to tell people:

How they need to change

How they need to grow

What they are doing wrong

What they need to do to “fix” their problems

What decisions to make

How they should handle situations in their personal life

Yet the Word does tell us: “Do not ignore it when the Lord disciplines you and don’t be discouraged when He corrects you. For the Lord corrects those He loves, just as a father corrects a child in whom he delights.” Proverbs 3:11-12 NLT

Often this happens when the Holy Spirit sovereignly works in our heart to show us what we are doing wrong and what the Father wants us to do differently.

Then, the people who have the authority to speak into our life in personally invasive, correcting ways are those in spiritual leadership in the Body of Christ whose authority we have placed ourselves under, and those we ask to share their honesty with us. The other exception is: “As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.” Proverbs 27:17 NLT

This verse is talking about a personal relationship with someone, such as a spouse or close friend, whom we have decided to trust and whose honesty we want and welcome.

It's just as vital to remember that even if someone has a strong anointing on his Gift of Prophecy, or even if they are a powerful Prophet, it does not mean that they have learned to use their gift with maturity, wisdom, or with the love of Jesus. The Corinthian church was heavily into prophesying. Yet Paul wrote to them:

“When I was with you I couldn't talk to you as I would to mature Christians. I had to talk as though you belonged to this world or as though you were infants in the Christian life. You are acting like people who don't belong to the Lord. And it sounds as if more harm than good is done when you meet together. Do you want me to praise you? Well, I certainly do not!” 1 Corinthians 3:1, 11:17, 22 NLT

For example, the Holy Spirit would not prompt His children, including the Prophets, to force on anyone a prophetic message, if they are not comfortable. To do this is **not** being led by the Lord. It is **not** love. Rather, it is unkind. It is pushy. It is putting pressure on someone that causes most people to “shut down” on receiving from that person. Likewise, those who are harsh, or who publicly embarrass or scold someone and are calling it prophecy or Word of Knowledge can do terrible harm. This is actually why many in the Body of Christ don't feel safe with someone ministering to them prophetically, especially corporately. They are uneasy about taking the risk of being publicly told how they need to change or grow or what they are doing wrong, all in the name of prophecy, and not by someone who has the authority to correct them when it is necessary, such as the leadership over a church, group or ministry.

Then there are the “lone ranger” prophets who do much harm. They are not accountable to other leaders in the Body of Christ. Yet, “The spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets.” 1 Corinthians 14:32 KJV

Often they are self-appointed “prophets.” Yet those in spiritual leadership in the Body of Christ need to bear witness to someone having the Office of an Apostle, Prophet, Pastor, Evangelist, Teacher. None of these are a “title” or office a person gives to himself. In fact, a humble respect and honoring toward those in authority over us is the character of someone who is being led by the Holy Spirit in his gifting and calling.

What can greatly help us to be discerning about all this is realizing that there are these sources for what anyone may do or say prophetically:

THE HOLY SPIRIT: When what someone is “seeing” is truly from God, their words will always produce the fruit of peace, joy, a comforting awareness of His presence, an increase in realizing His love and caring for them, and an increase in drawing closer to Him.

AN EVIL SPIRIT: There are rare situations when someone is clairvoyant. They do “see” things and they can be accurate. However, what they are perceiving is not coming from the Holy Spirit. It is coming from the demonic realm.

THEMSELVES: This happens when someone thinks that God is showing him to speak into someone's life. But what he wants to say is coming from his own thoughts, feelings, judgments, experiences, or imagination. Yet the Word tells us: "No prophecy in the Scriptures ever comes from the prophet's own interpretation. No prophecy ever came from what a person wanted to say, but people led by the Holy Spirit spoke words from God." 2 Peter 1:20 NCV

What anyone wants to prophesy or speak as a Word of Knowledge can also be coming from their pride. As a result, they will do or say things corporately out of their need to look "really prophetic" or "very anointed and powerful" in their gifting. Those with this pride issue are often ambitious to be perceived as important. They are motivated by their own pursuit of personal glory and gain. This is an incredibly unsafe person to allow to speak into our life. If it ever begins to happen to us, we need to be secure in knowing that the Father wants us to be wise and discerning about the words we allow to influence our life or spirit because "life or death are in the power of the tongue." Proverbs 18:21 NASB

But, whenever we exercise this caution, we are **not judging** that person's heart or motives. This being cautious is never about being unloving by becoming critical of people or fault-finding.

Rather when we are being led by the Holy Spirit to be discerning, we are simply deciding if someone's words, or what he is doing, praying, teaching, or where his leadership is taking a meeting, are from God for us. This helps us know whether or not the Father wants us to spiritually receive from this person.

However, even prophets and prophetic people who do have the blessing of leadership over them can still hurt people if they speak into anyone's life without the love that Paul said this mantle and gift are all about. Those who are the most vulnerable to being damaged are the ones who don't have the confidence to stop someone when they don't have peace about what is being said to them. Consequently, they can easily be overwhelmed and overpowered by a person prophesying or giving them a Word of Knowledge, but what is being said is harsh, unkind and not from the Father for them. Paul cared so much about this not happening to people that he cautioned:

"When you talk, do not say harmful things, but say what people need, words that will help others become stronger. Then what you say will do good to those who listen to you." Ephesians 4:29 NCV

Those "harmful" things can be said by anyone. But the greater the authority someone walks in, the more potential there is for them to occur whenever there is a lack of love, any lack of Word-based wisdom, or if humble maturity is missing.

All this is why, down through the ages, the humble and teachable were the ones that God raised up to be used in the fullness of His purpose for their gifting.

"The prophetic mantle is the mantle of humility."

Stanley M. Hammond

The Lord even warns us:

“There will be no pride allowed on My Holy Mountain.” Zephaniah 3:11 NLT

“The proud will not be allowed to stand in Your presence.” Psalm 5:5 NLT

This is how an eyewitness of the Azusa Street Revival describes the profound importance of a humble heart:

“Only those who were really humble could God release to do His work. Because He who prepares His work through the ages accomplishes it by using the most humble, broken instruments so that the work may be seen to be of God, and not of man. For a great work of God is never accomplished by the natural strength of man. It is from among the dry bones, the darkness, and the dust of death that God is pleased to select the instruments by means of which He designs to scatter over the earth His light and His glory. Therefore, those He chooses must be strong in character. But, we must keep humble and little in our own eyes. If we get built up by a sense of our own importance, we are gone. History repeats itself in this connection. God has always sought a humble people. He can use no other. The fact is, when a person gets to the place where he really loves obscurity, where he does not care to preach, and where he would rather sit in the back seat than on the platform, then God can lift him up and use him. And, not very much before. This is why there is much need of heart preparation before God can come, much need for consecration and humility.” Frank Bartleman

What can help a prophetic person to walk in this humbleness is never forgetting this sobering truth:

“We all know in part. We all prophesy in part.”

1 Corinthians 13:9 NIV

What this means is that we **all** can easily “miss it,” no matter how anointed we are or how long we’ve been a Christian or in ministry. Therefore, if there are words we want to speak to someone that we feel are from God, it does not mean we are always going to be “right on.”

Sometimes what limits a prophetic person from being led by the Holy Spirit is this mindset:

“Saying or doing this worked the last time I tried it.
So it just might work this time.”

But, if we go that direction in our thinking, we are at much higher risk of being “off” when we prophesy. For the Lord guides and leads us in new and fresh ways any time He wants to use us to be His voice, depending on what He knows as a loving Father is needed at the time. So our staying open to Him showing us, **in the moment**, how He wants us to encourage someone does greatly protect us from “missing it.” We also need to understand that to have the Gift of Prophecy only means that someone is **more highly skilled** to speak words of “encouragement, strength, and comfort.” It does not give someone the authority of a prophet.

Prophetically gifted people are also naturally drawn to what is visual. What follows is wisdom about how to keep this interest in visual experiences solidly Word-based.

PICTURES

The Prophet Ezekiel and the Apostle John in the Book of Revelation wrote vivid, even gripping descriptions of pictures. Paul and David also gave us these beautiful images:

“We who have fled to Him for refuge can take new courage for we can hold on to His promise with confidence. This confidence is like a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls. It leads us through the curtain of heaven into God’s inner sanctuary.” Hebrews 6:18-19 NLT

“He calms the storm to a whisper and stills the waves. What a blessing is that stillness as He brings us safely into harbor.” Psalm 107:29, 30 NLT

So pictures being described are definitely in the Word.

Seeing them is also a direction that prophetically gifted people naturally tend to go because they are so strongly visual. However, their pictures can easily come from an over-active imagination, rather than from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. I have also found that those who often think a great deal in pictures are the most vulnerable to their own mind and thoughts being the source of what they are seeing. Likewise, a prophetic person needs to realize that if they are primarily seeing pictures as their way to connect with the spiritual realm, then they can easily focus more on these images, than on the Word. Yet it is the Word that gives us a solid foundation in our thinking and keeps us “right on” in the operation of our gifting because:

“All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It straightens us out and teaches us to do what is right. It is God’s way of preparing us in every way, to be fully equipped for every good thing God wants us to do.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17 NLT

The Father also has so much more He can draw from when He wants us to speak His words of comfort, encouragement and hope to people when **this** is our heart and our passion:

“I rejoice in Your word like one who finds a treasure.”

Psalm 119:162 NLT

This is another area of wisdom that protects a child of God from going a direction that grieves Him:

The Father does not want us using our prophetic gifting on a regular basis to “see” or describe to others graphic images of what the demonic realm is doing.

No good will come from this.

It stirs up fear. It increases someone’s awareness of evil, rather than increasing their awareness of the presence of God. It causes them to drift further and further away from closeness with the Father. Instead, they become more and more “gifted” in seeing what is happening in the evil realm. We certainly don’t see the prophets in the Bible being keenly, frequently aware of the demonic realm. Nor is there an emphasis on them describing graphic evil in their writings and ministry. For example, Moses was surrounded by intense, relentless, and even at times overwhelming evil. But when he spent personal time with God, it was intimacy with Him that happened, not an encounter with pictures or images of what evil was doing. As a result:

“Inside the Tent of Meeting the Lord would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.” Exodus 33:11 NLT

Then there is the Apostle Stephen. While he was surrounded by an angry, vicious mob that was going to kill him, the evil that was vilely determined to destroy him is not what he focused on. That’s why as he was being falsely accused this is what he looked like:

“Everyone in the council stared at Stephen because his face became as bright as an angel’s.” Acts 6:15 NLT

The supernatural peace upon his countenance was possible because when his life was about to end, rather than focusing on all that horrific evil, this is what he did:

“Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed steadily upward into heaven and saw the glory of God. And he told them, “Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing in the place of honor at God’s right hand.” Acts 7:54-56 NLT

This same intimacy with the Father, which we see in His relationship with Moses and Stephen is what He yearns to have with all His children, no matter what evil we are up against, and regardless of what we are prophetically aware of. He wants us intimately aware of **His** presence and seeking **His** face, and not the presence and face of evil.

PROPHETIC ACTS

There are compelling prophetic acts that God instructed His prophets to do, primarily in the Old Testament, such as telling the Israelites to march around the walls of Jericho seven times and when the trumpets sounded, the army shouted and the walls collapsed (Hebrews 11:30, Joshua 6:20).

Although God still does inspire people, at times, to use prophetic acts, they are always for this same purpose as in the Bible: To help His people see more clearly what He is doing among them. However, if these “acts” are pursued or used often, there is the risk of taking something valid in the Word and it becoming man orchestrating it. We can tell if this is what is occurring because God’s presence and His anointing that can touch lives in miraculous, supernatural ways will be missing from the impact of what takes place.

MANIFESTATIONS

Jesus said: “Signs will accompany those who have believed.” He also told us that He “confirms the Word by signs that follow.” Mark 16:17, 20 NASB

However, if someone who is gifted prophetically goes the direction of wanting, seeking, or pursuing visible manifestations, it grieves the Father because always what He longs for is that we want most of all to “pursue” personal closeness with Him. Yet people who go to meetings to have these manifestation experiences are robbed of that closeness because of their fascination with the supernatural that they want to see taking place. We also need to be aware of the fact that just because there definitely is something “miraculous” that’s physically happening, it does not mean that it’s always from the Lord. These manifestations can, at times, be counterfeit. Both Jesus and Paul told us about this area of potential demonic deception (Matthew 24:24, 2 Corinthians 11:14-15 NASB).

Yet, there **are** times when God does display the power and magnitude of His presence. He even told us:

“The time will come when all the earth will be filled, as the waters fill the sea, with an awareness of the glory of the Lord.”

Habakkuk 2:14 NLT

One of the ways this awareness spreads is when the Lord causes His glory to be revealed to His people. But any time these miraculous demonstrations of His power happened in the Bible, and whenever they occur now, they never draw people away from intimacy with God. They only cause Him to become more compellingly real to those witnessing them. For example, these are a few of the unforgettable manifestations of the Glory of the Lord that my husband, Barry, and I have experienced. But notice that in **none** of these situations did we seek or ask for them. They just happened and totally unexpectedly.

It was the year of 2002 in Africa.

Early one morning I sensed an alarming evil coming against us. I immediately alerted Barry and we began to worship. We knew we were safe in the presence of God and that all evil would be crushed that wanted to bring harm to us, because the Father had reminded us so many times of this:

**“As wax melts in the fire and smoke is blown by the wind,
the wicked perish at the presence of God.”**

Psalm 68:2 NIV/YLT

After a short time, Barry left the room. He returned moments later with a stunned look on his face.

“Ruth,” he said, “there was a strong earthquake while we were worshipping. I felt the earth moving under me and the bed shaking and I just thought maybe the bed was unstable. But when I left you, I found out that the whole building was moving so violently that the family on the top floor decided to come downstairs to make sure they were safe. They told me that the instant you began to play the harp, the entire building began to shake and as soon as you stopped, then the earthquake also stopped.”

We were overwhelmingly comforted by such a bold manifestation of God’s miraculous visitation. We also found out that this was the only place where there was an earthquake. Years later, when we unexpectedly encountered this family, the mother told us:

“We still vividly remember the day of the earthquake as Ruth played the harp.”

Then in 2005 in Africa, several pastors who were living on our compound for a week of Leadership Training told us: “At night we can see tongues of fire on the top of the fence that surrounds your compound.” It filled us with a holy awe to know that God was revealing Himself in such a supernatural way. This is what it reminded me of:

**“To the eyes of the sons of Israel the appearance of the glory of the
Lord was like a consuming fire on the mountain top.”**

Exodus 24:17 NASB

A year later there was a supernatural manifestation of heaven touching earth that took place shortly after we arrived in an upper room in Kampala, Uganda. The moment our voices rose in “new song” worship with the harp we became like a heavenly choir. It seemed like the walls trembled with the sound of our voices as a revival move of God exploded in the room. People fell to their knees. Men unashamedly wept with repentance. Soon a hush fell upon us. All were overcome with awe by the visitation of God. The Lord of Hosts had miraculously come among us. Later Barry and our African team told me this incredible account: “While we were worshipping, all the cars and people were silent as far as we could see on Kampala Road. No one moved. People were looking up at the room where we were gathered. Many were pointing to the window and asking, ‘What is this? What is happening in that place?’ Then the moment the worship ended, everything went back to the way it always is on Kampala Road.”

Finally, this is another area of crucial wisdom. Something *is imparted* whenever anyone is prophetically speaking into our life or they pray a prophetic sounding prayer over us. That's why the Word tells us:

“Do not lay hands on anyone too hastily.”

1 Timothy 5:22 NASB

This also means that we should not allow others to hastily lay hands on us. Rather, the Lord soberly instructs us:

“Do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God.”

1 John 4:1 NASB

“Test everything that is said and hold on to what is good.”

1 Thessalonians 5:21 NLT

In other words, if we are not certain that someone is a safe person for us to receive from spiritually, we should not allow it. Furthermore, as soon as we realize that we feel uneasy or troubled, it is *not* rude to stop anyone in a loving, kind, but firm way. It is only honoring of this solid wisdom from a caring Father who cautions us to observe the fruit from someone's life, ministry or gifting before we let them have an impact on us:

**“You will know them by their fruits.
A good tree cannot produce bad fruit, nor
can a bad tree produce good fruit.”**

Matthew 7:16, 19 NASB

In practical terms, this is how to discern fruit:

If the result of what is being said, done, prophesied, taught, or is manifesting in a meeting is the peace of God, and if it draws people into closer intimacy with the Father and His Presence, then it most likely is coming from the Holy Spirit.

But if what is happening causes fear, confusion, uneasiness, a troubled spirit, a lack of peace, a distraction away from an increase in closeness to the Lord and away from seeking His face, then the Word of God is alerting us that it needs to be viewed with serious caution.

In all honesty, any of us can find ourselves, at different times in our life, in a place where we don't feel spiritually safe and it isn't healthy or wise for us. We may have even made poor choices and mistakes that have caused us to end up there. This can happen because we all "blow it" and we can all "miss it," no matter how hard we try to stay on the path God wants for us.

Those are difficult moments for anyone.

Yet the Father is always going to be there for us, to help us and lovingly guide us back to a place of His safety, whenever we need His help, His wisdom, His peace, just like is described in this story:

A young girl traveling on a train for the first time heard that it would have to cross several rivers. She was troubled and fearful as she thought of the water. But each time the train came to a river, a bridge was there to provide a way across. After passing safely over several rivers and streams, the girl settled back in her seat with a sigh of relief. "I'm not worried anymore," she told her mother. "Somebody has put bridges for us all of the way."

When I first read this story, the Father said this to me and it is what He is saying to all His children whenever they are having a really hard time:

**"I will always be for you that bridge over troubled waters so that you can find your way to the other side. Every time you end up in a place where you need that miracle to get to a place of safety, I will be there. I will do the same for you, as I did for that young child on the train."
Abba Father**

Acknowledgments

Michael Liu in Shanghai, China

Michael has translated this teaching about “The Prophetic” into Mandarin. That makes it available to China, and to anyone who speaks the Chinese language in other countries. I am profoundly thankful to this dear man of God for such an invaluable contribution to this message having a broader, international impact. My husband, Barry, and I treasure Michael as our family, our friend, and our passionate co-laborer in reaching China for the Gospel.

Pastor George E. Markakis in Athens, Greece

I am deeply grateful to Pastor Markakis for his honest and extensive input that helped this message on prophecy to go to a whole new level of clarity. Through the process of receiving his invaluable insights, this very caring Father in the Faith became a beloved brother to my husband, Barry, and I.

Kerin Elias

Kerin’s superb editing greatly helped “The Prophetic” to become far more excellent in the details that I so easily miss as a writer. I tremendously appreciate this dear sister in the Lord for all the generous time and effort she invested to help me.

Sources

Quotations by Stanley M. Hammond are taken from an edited transcript of a series of lectures given at Elim Tabernacle in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada by Stanley M. Hammond. First Edition September 1997 No copyright information is available.

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Barry and Ruth Johnson

We would love to hear from you in response to this writing.

We can send it to you by email attachment, if you would like to use it for teaching purposes or to share it more easily with others.

Ruth can be contacted by “friending” her on Facebook and sending her a “message.” She can also be reached by using this email:

ruth@lighthouse-of-hope.org

We are excited about sharing with you the other teachings and messages on our web site.

www.lighthouse-of-hope.org

Lighthouse of Hope Ministries
PMB# 365
914 164th street SE #B-12
Mill Creek, WA 98012

(425) 775-3904

About The Author

From the moment Ruth and her husband, Barry, were married in 1991, the favorite part of their life has been that they are each other's best friend.

Barry's love for Ruth shines through all that he says and does. His clearly evident support for all she is meant to be is an inspiration to all who know them.

Ruth's greatest joy is serving the Father with Barry, and going wherever He sends them to make a difference in the lives of others.

Our Message

Revival igniting and spreading as a Holy Fire across generations, denominations and nations.

Restoration of the love and unity that exploded in the Book of Acts Revival and changed the world.

Helping a fatherless generation know God as a loving Dad.

Ruth's Psalmist Ministry on the harp that powerfully brings people into the presence of God.

Intimate, from the heart, Tabernacle of David worship in the Holy of Holies.

Prophetic Ministry that inspires young and old to enter into God's destiny for them.

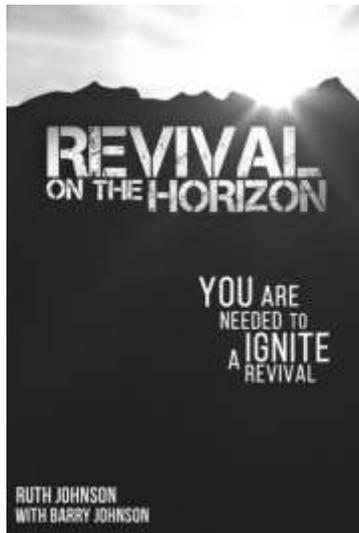
Miraculous transformations that set people free.

RUTH HAS TWO BOOKS THAT ARE AVAILABLE ON AMAZON



God is calling His people from across the nations to a Radical Revival. But those stuck in the hurts of their past can't be fully a part of this Great Awakening. That's why the urgent cry of the Father's heart is to set His children free so that they can clearly understand how to "forget what lies behind them and be liberated to reach forward to what lies ahead of them in the High Calling of His Son Jesus!" This book captures how Ruth learned from the Word of God to enter into this transformation and walk through the door to freedom after 45 years of horrific abuse.

She writes about how this happened with such a vulnerable honesty that since it was first published in 1998, this book has helped countless people from across the nations to find their own path to freedom.



This book is filled with hope for the generations about Revival not only being possible, but what it's going to take for it to continue when it does ignite.

Its passionate message grips the heart.
It moves to tears.
It pierces the soul with the fire of God.

It equips believers in extraordinarily practical, simple ways how they can be part of the unprecedented move of God that the Father is going to pour out across the nations. All of this is why "Revival on the Horizon" is a powerful, seriously needed book with a timely message for this hour in the history of Christianity.