

# Scriptural Guidelines in Determining Prophetic Words

July 26, 2015

## I. There are four degrees or levels of prophecy:

1. The prophecy of Scripture (Infallible).  
"Law and the Prophets," is used 27 times in the Bible

The next three are fallible and must be judged by the infallible written word of God.

2. Office of the ministry of a prophet (1 Cor 12:28; Eph 4:11).
3. The gift of prophecy (1 Cor 14:31).
4. The spirit of prophecy (Rev 19:10).

## II. Personal attitudes towards prophecy

A perfectly good word from the Lord can be canceled, misunderstood or misinterpreted if the hearts and minds of the people are not in a positive, receptive mindset.

Seven scriptural guidelines, to assess our attitude and receptivity towards receiving prophetic words:

### 1. Desire to hear and understand.

1 Cor 14:1 Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.

We can be dull of hearing or have no ears to hear

Heb 5:11 Concerning him we have much to say, and it is hard to explain, since you have become dull of hearing . (Isa 6:9-10; Jer 6:10; Ezk 12:2; Mt 13:9-17)

### 2. Don't be skeptical.

1Thes 5:19 Do not quench the Spirit;  
Quench (Gk.) = To put out fire or things on fire.

To stifle or suppress what the Holy Spirit is saying (from King James study Bible)

Fire may be put out by pouring on water; or by covering it with any incombustible substance; or by neglecting to supply fuel. If it is to be made to burn, it must be nourished with proper care and attention. (from Barnes' Notes)

### 3. Don't despise prophecy

1Thes 5:20 do not despise prophetic utterances.  
Despise (Gk.) = To make of no account; to regard as nothing.

### 4. Examine everything carefully

1Thes 5:21 But examine everything carefully;

1 Jn 4:1 Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.

Don't despise prophecy nor swallow it without "proving" it; Pay attention; Listen with a willing heart; Be ready to respond to God's direction.

Zec 7:11-14 "But they refused to pay attention and turned a stubborn shoulder and stopped their ears from hearing. 12 "They made their hearts like flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the LORD of hosts. 13 "And just as He called and they would not listen, so they called and I would not listen," says the LORD of hosts; 14 "but I scattered them with a storm wind among all the nations whom they have not known. Thus the land is desolated behind them so that no one went back and forth, for they made the pleasant land desolate."

#### **5. Hold fast to that which is good;**

Carelessness or lack of interest can cancel God's best for you.

Heb 2:1-3 For this reason we must pay much closer attention to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away from it. 2 For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty, 3 how will we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?

#### **6. Hear in faith.** Do not let opportunity be lost by an attitude of unbelief (Heb 4:1-3).

Mk 9:23 And Jesus said to him, " 'If You can?' All things are possible to him who believes."

Heb 4:1-2 Therefore, let us fear if, while a promise remains of entering His rest, any one of you may seem to have come short of it. 2 For indeed we have had good news preached to us, just as they also; but the word they heard did not profit them, because it was not united by faith in those who heard.

#### **7. Seek further confirmation.** Even when you believe the word is from the Lord, wait on Him for further confirmation.

2Cor 13:1 This is the third time I am coming to you. EVERY FACT IS TO BE CONFIRMED BY THE TESTIMONY OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES. (Nu 25:30; Dt 17:6; 19:15; Heb 10:28-29).

### **III. How to judge prophecy—Seven Tests:**

#### **A. Prophetic words needs to be judged.**

1 Cor 14:29 Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment.

#### **B. Teaching also needs to be judged.**

##### **The gospel is about grace of Christ; all contrary messages are a different, distorted gospel!**

Gal 1:6-9 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

##### **Examining teaching makes you a noble minded person.**

Acts 17:10-11 The brethren immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived, they went into the synagogue of the Jews. 11 Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.

##### **Not having a love for the truth makes a person vulnerable for deception.**

2 Th 2:8-12 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 9 that is, the one whose

coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders, 10 and with all the deception of wickedness for those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth so as to be saved. 11 For this reason God will send upon them a deluding influence so that they will believe what is false, 12 in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

**The Thessalonians accepted the gospel as the word of God, and were changed by it.**

1 Th 2:13 For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.

**C. Seven questions to ask yourself when discerning prophecy:**

**1. Does it edify, admonishing or exhort?**

1Cor 14:3 one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.

**2. What are the fruits? Five test questions:**

a. Does the prophet have control?

1Cor 14:32 and the spirits of prophets are subject to prophets;

b. Does the word bring confusion?

1Cor 14:33 for God is not a God of confusion ...

c. Does the word bring peace to you?

1Cor 14:33 ... but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

d. Does the word bring freedom or fear?

Rom 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again,...  
(2Tim 1:7; Heb 2:15; 1Jn 4:18)

e. Does the word bring life or minister death?

2Cor 3:6 who also made us adequate as servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life. (2Tim 1:10; Heb 2:9; 5:7)

**3. Does the word glorify Christ?**

John 15:26 When the Helper comes, ... He will testify about Me,

John 16:14 He will glorify Me, ...

Rev 19:10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

**4. Does the word agree with the Scriptures?**

Gal 1:6-9 I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed! (2 Ti 3:16-17)

### **5. Are the predictive prophecies fulfilled?**

Dt 18:20-22 But the prophet who speaks a word presumptuously in My name which I have not commanded him to speak, or which he speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.' 21 "You may say in your heart, 'How will we know the word which the LORD has not spoken?' 22 " When a prophet speaks in the name of the LORD, if the thing does not come about or come true, that is the thing which the LORD has not spoken. The prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him.

### **6. Does the fulfilled word draw you away from Jesus?**

Dt 13:1-5 If a prophet or a dreamer of dreams arises among you and gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes true, concerning which he spoke to you, saying, ' Let us go after other gods (whom you have not known) and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams; for the LORD your God is testing you to find out if you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 " You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him, and cling to Him.

### **7. Does the word bear witness with your spirit?**

1 Jn 2:27 As for you, the anointing which you received from Him abides in you, and you have no need for anyone to teach you; but as His anointing teaches you about all things, and is true and is not a lie, and just as it has taught you, you abide in Him. (1Jn 2:20)