

Remnant Life Church  
01.15.23  
**The True and False of Prophecy**  
Ex 7:8-13

Prophecy is a word that invokes many different meanings and images

- For the Christian it often brings to mind the prophets of the OT
  - There are nearly 90 prophets mentioned in the Bible by name who spoke for God with approximately two thirds of them found in the OT
  - Among them...
    - Elijah, Elisha, Jonah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Saul, David, Peter and Anna – and certainly Jesus
    - Of the 39 books of the OT the final 17 are written exclusively by prophets
- But say the words prophet or prophetic to someone outside of the church and the response is very different
  - You then begin to hear words like séance, horoscope, readings, and fortune-teller
- And so many might ask - Is there a difference between the prophecy of the Bible and the reading of cards to tell one's future?

What is of the utmost importance and the highest truth is that all things came from God first

- By that I mean all things, created by God and God alone, are good
  - He said so Himself at the time of creation
- But satan's desire is to twist and pervert everything of God to steal, rob, and confuse the individual
- Let me give you an example of what that means...
  - We read in the second chapter of Genesis that God created marriage to be between a man and woman – this, of course, has been twisted to include marriage to anyone and now – strangely enough - to anything
    - In 2015 a Florida woman married a Ferris wheel – prior to that she had also dated a train and an airplane so at least she had looked around a little before settling down
    - In 2012 a Seattle woman married a warehouse – she also said it was a gay marriage because, apparently the warehouse was a female – sort of brings a whole new meaning to 'she-shed'
    - In 2013 a woman in southern France married a bridge that was built in the 1300's – there was some concern about their differences in age
  - We laugh at these things because they are absurdly humorous
  - But this is just one example of God's creation being turned into something that it is not, and called normal, loving, inclusive, and tolerant

Well, this also applies to biblical prophecy

- If you were to ask the person on the street what prophecy is you would get a host of answers few of which would be even close to the truth of God's original design
  - But unlike the bizarre behavior of marrying a Barbie doll (something a man did in China in 1999) the perversion of God's creation of the prophetic there does lie the presence of a genuine supernatural power

- It is not the power of God, however, it is the power of satan
  - satan does have a measure supernatural ability at this time that will likely even increase in the future as we draw closer to the time of Jesus' return
  - But he can do nothing that God does not permit or allow him to do!
- And so, I will ask the question again, is there any difference between biblical prophecy and the fortune-tellers or mediums who are making a great deal of money stemming from people's ignorance and fear?

The origination of biblical prophecy comes from the foundation of inspiration

- You often hear preachers say that the Bible is the inspired, written word of God
  - That means that the authors were directed by the guidance of the Holy Spirit in what they wrote
  - The prophets of the OT received and shared their writings and prophetic visions or knowledge through the direction of God
  - We can see an example of this during one of the encounters between Moses and Pharaoh

### **READ – Exodus 7:8-13**

We read here that what God told Aaron to do – throw down his staff and it would become a snake – the magicians of Egypt were able to do as well

- **Ex 7:11** identifies three specific types of advisors that Pharaoh had in his court
  - Wise men, sorcerers, and magicians
    - The term for wise men used here is similar by definition to what we read in **Matthew 2:1** of the visit of the Magi, or wise men, to see the infant Jesus in Bethlehem
      - The definition of Magi is admittedly broad but I think it impossible that God would allow a sorcerer to be one of the first to see His Son
      - The Magi were, in every likelihood, astronomers who studied the heavens and had come to investigate the star they had discovered over this small hamlet northeast of Nazareth and what it meant
      - The wise men of Pharaoh's court, and even the courts of Israel's kings, were men of experience, common sense, and general wisdom who could council the leader on a wide variety of topics
      - But the other two identified in Exodus were very different
    - A sorcerer or magician was a person of much darker abilities and strength
      - These directly involved the use of witchcraft
      - Do not be fooled into thinking that this is nothing more than Harry Potter content
        - Make no mistake, Harry Potter movies have done great harm to the young people of this country by making spells and witchcraft attractive and cute and fun
        - Witchcraft is also not just something made up to scare people into turning to the church

- There are several types of active witchcraft that have been noted throughout history
  - But one in particular remains that is alive and very much active in our world today
- It is the activity of neopaganism
  - Neo meaning new and paganism from all things that are contrary or against God
  - The writings and development of neopaganism formed the foundation of the wiccan ideals and practices
    - Wicca is a mid-20<sup>th</sup> century pagan religion founded in England
    - It is a practice of beliefs that is and has always been a part of the occult world
- Lest you think these things are all shadowy, cloaked efforts on the part of satan, think again
  - Ouija board games, Tarot cards, fortune-tellers and yes, the entire HP franchise have pushed this to the forefront of acceptability
- Witchcraft, in every form and in every way, is categorically condemned by the Word of God
  - **Duet 18:10** - *Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft*
  - In the prophet Micah's warning to Israel...
    - **Micah 5:11-13** - *I will destroy the cities of your land and tear down all your strongholds. I will destroy your witchcraft and you will no longer cast spells. I will destroy your idols and your sacred stones from among you*
  - **Gal 5:20** - *The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.*
- Now I tell you all of this to say that you must understand the world's interpretation and practice of the prophetic is not the same as God's
  - God gives the prophet words of knowledge and coming of events in order to help guide, warn, and save His people
    - It was and is done in love
    - Because it is still active today
  - The world's twisted version is to control, manipulate, and gain the things of pleasure and wealth
- Biblical prophecy is NOT the same or anything close to these things of the world that receive their power not from God, but from satan

There is also a distinction between prophecy and the prophet

- All prophets prophesy, but not all who prophesy are prophets
- The giving of a prophecy is the action or activity of the spoken word
  - The word “prophecy” is a combination of two Greek words
    - The first “pro” meaning before
    - And the second “phemi” meaning to speak
    - ‘Speaking before’ – in this definition telling of something that has not yet occurred
  - Prophecy is a spiritual gift of grace through which God speaks directly to His people
  - It is called a spiritual gift in **I Cor 12:10** and Paul gives it a place of prominence as we see 2 chapters later
    - **I Cor 14:1** – *Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy*
    - Paul also places prophecy first in his list of spiritual gifts in **Romans 12** again signifying its importance
      - Why is it so important?
      - Paul answers that in **I Cor 14:3** - *...the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort.*
    - This does not mean that prophecy is always used properly or even genuine
      - Too many times you have people saying to others “God told me...” then they go on to say something that may or may not be from God
        - A word of caution – if someone wants to tell you something and it begins with “God told me” be very careful how you respond to what they say next
        - That is not say that God will not speak through someone to tell you something about your life
        - But random thoughts or words of encouragement do not suddenly become prophetic because it is prefaced by “God told me.”
      - God most often spoke through His prophets in the OT to warn the nation of Israel to repent and turn from their sin
        - Their words, given by God, were given to encourage and strengthen
        - It was supernatural in origin and words that were authentic meaning they came true
- We then should ask what is a prophet?
  - This word has been assigned much too easily and freely to people within the church today
  - A prophet is a person who receives directly from God meaning, a prophet is NEVER WRONG!
    - Think about that

- If a person claims to be a prophet of God they are never ever wrong in the words of prophecy they give
  - I believe there are very few prophets operating in the church today
    - The gift of prophecy is the one spiritual gift above all others, that must be daily clothed and bathed in humility
    - But we live in a very prideful society and unfortunately that also extends to the church
      - Men and women who the church calls prophets are most often simply not
      - A person may have the gift of prophecy but that does not mean he or she is a prophet
    - The clearest example I can give you of this was the 2020 presidential election
      - Prior to the election in November of 2020, I watched message after message put out by those who called themselves or were called prophets regarding the outcome of the election
      - Every single one of them said that God told them Donald Trump would be reelected because God yet had things for him to accomplish
        - Whatever you think of the integrity and honesty of the election is irrelevant
        - If God had told them this, it would have happened
        - Because a prophet is never wrong
      - Yet that is not what happened – they were wrong
      - Therefore, by definition they are not prophets
    - I believe that the only people who can truly be prophets are ones who do not seek the office or title
- The only way you can judge whether someone has the gift of prophecy is not by what they tell you or claim, but only by the exercising or evidence of prophesying itself
- In the same way, the only way you can judge that someone is a prophet is by the perfection of their spoken word by its fulfillment every time

I believe it was necessary to begin this series by examining the truth and falsehoods of prophecy and the prophet

- It is a powerful tool of God to use within the body of believers for encouragement, strengthening and comfort.
- But since it can be such a powerful element of the believers walk when given by God, it is also a very dangerous one when twisted and perverted by satan