

## Prophecy and Prophets ~ Part 2

In my last post, we began this short mini-series on **Prophecy & Prophets** by looking at some of the named prophets in the **Tanakh** and **Brit Hadashah**. I used the definition of a prophet in the Bible from GotQuestion.org: someone who revealed God's message through writing or speech. The operative phrase here is God's message.

Both the **Tanakh** and **Brit Hadashah** contain many references to false prophets. Their messages are not from God but **HaSatan** himself. We are warned to **test the spirits to see whether they are from God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.** ~ 1 John 4:1 (CJB)

So, what is prophecy; or is it prophesy? Well, prophecy is the noun form and prophesy the verb form. Taking you back to your English instruction, prophecy is the message; prophesy is the instrument of telling the message.

Prophecy can be either telling the future aka *fore-telling* and revealing God's Word for a particular issue aka *forth-telling*.

One of my favorite passages of fore-telling is:

***"He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed. <sup>6</sup> We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all."*** ~ Isaiah 53:5-6 (NIV)

Scripture presents fore-telling as a manifestation of God's power glorifying His Person, exalting His redemptive work in the Messiah, and setting forth the divine character of His revealed Word. We certainly observed God's power when studying the ministries of **Eliyahu** and **Elisha**.

True prophets also have another responsibility to discharge. It was part of their commission to **proclaim** [prophesy] **to my people what rebels they are, to the house of Ya'akov their sins.** ~ Isaiah 58:1 (CJB) (see also Ezekiel 22:2; Ezekiel 43:10; Micah 3:8). They were, therefore, pastors and ministerial monitors of the people of God. It was their duty to admonish and reprove, to denounce prevailing sins, to threaten the people with the terrors of divine judgment, and to call them to repentance. Their function differed from that of the priests, the latter approaching God in behalf of humanity using sacrifices, the former coming to the people as ambassadors from God, beseeching them to turn from their evil ways and live. Gee that sounds an awful lot like our modern-day pastors.

The test of a prophet in the **Tanakh**, whether true or false, was not whether the predictions came true, for even the predictions of false prophets could come true. The test was rather whether the people were led in the ways of God (Deuteronomy 13:1-5; Jeremiah 23:21-22,29-32). Nevertheless, if a prophet made a bold assertion that the prediction would come true and it did not, it was a false prophecy (Deuteronomy 18:22). If prophets were truly God's messengers, their chief concern was not with foretelling events, but with leading people to repentance and obedience (Micah 3:8; 7:18; Zephaniah 2:1-3). Those tests are still true today.

Many of you may have been reading through **The Revelation of Yeshua the Messiah to Yochanan** recently and read in the final chapter His warning: ***"I warn everyone hearing the words of the prophecy in this book that if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues written in this book. <sup>19</sup> And if anyone takes anything away from the words in the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the Tree of Life and the holy city, as described in this book."*** ~ Revelation 22:18-19 (CJB) Like so many passages of Scripture, that can be a tough one to interpret.

In my next post, I want to dig into the **Spiritual Gift of Prophecy and the Office of the Prophet** within the **Kehilah** in our time.