

In August of 1858, the first transatlantic telegraph cable was completed—more than 1900 miles of cable, laid on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, stretching from Valentia in Ireland to Trinity Bay in Newfoundland. The first official message was sent by the directors of the telegraph companies to each other: "Europe and America are united by telegraph. Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good will towards men." England's Queen Victoria sent a message to congratulate American President James Buchanan, who responded in kind.

Hysterical celebrations ensued in NYC: guns salutes were sounded, flags were waved, church bells were rung, parades and processions and special church services were held, and fireworks were shot off. The enthusiasm was because *this telegraph cable allowed—for the very first time—people to receive messages from far away, relatively quickly, in the exact words they were sent.*

We have something even better than this. God can send a message—through a prophetic word—which is received by someone, and then passed on to someone else. It is like a divine telegraph system reaching from heaven to earth ... and it is called *prophecy*.

Greetings! I'm Jim Taylor, thanks for joining me & IN Favor Resources in this video series titled **PROPHECY IS FOR YOU! Understanding prophetic words, receiving them** from others, and **giving them** to others

During these videos, we will compare the OT *office* of prophet with the NT *gift* of prophecy, what you should do after *receiving* a word, guidelines on *giving* words to others, and some other stuff—examples and experiences we can learn from.

In the first post: **God speaks to us in many ways: in nature, in Scripture, through circumstances, in godly advice, in miraculous ways, in promptings and through conscience, and through prophetic words. He is not a silent God, he is speaking all the time!**

Today, we'll give an introduction and some background, the big picture of **Prophecy in general**.

### *What is prophecy?*

Our English words *prophet*, *prophetic*, *prophecy*, and *prophecy* all originated from a Greek term that combines a preposition—  $\pi\rho\omicron$  (*pro*), meaning "for, on behalf of, before"— (being *proactive* = acting *before*; if you are *pro-life*, you are *for* it) and a verb—  $\phi\eta\mu\acute{\iota}$  (*phemi*), meaning "to speak."

From its origin, and its usage in the Bible, we understand this root can be used in three overlapping ways...

- It can refer to **someone who speaks *for*, on behalf of, another person**, as an ambassador would speak for the one who sent him. This is perhaps the foundational use of the term, and we see it in passages like *Exodus 7:1*— *Then the LORD said to Moses, "See, I have made you like God to Pharaoh, and your brother Aaron will be your prophet. <sup>2</sup> ... your brother Aaron is to tell Pharaoh to let the Israelites go out of his country.* Notice: Moses was to be "**like God to Pharaoh**"—he was going to call the shots, he was going to tell Pharaoh what Pharaoh was going to do, *or else*. But Aaron was to be "Moses' **prophet**"—when it was time for Pharaoh to hear the news, *Aaron was going to speak Moses' words for him.*

Also seen in *Exodus 4:1*—Moses, *You shall speak to him (Aaron) and put words in his mouth ... <sup>16</sup> He will speak to the people for you, and it will be as if he were your mouth and as if you were God to him.*

Notice, Moses is "**like God**" to Aaron, too; **just because Aaron was doing the talking it didn't mean he was the boss**. He was speaking the words Moses gave to him. Aaron was appointed, in effect, to be Moses' mouthpiece—and God's.

I see something similar to this at funerals: someone in the family wants to share their memories of the deceased, but don't feel they can because of their emotional state. Another person agrees to *speak for them*; it is still their words, spoken by someone else.

Do you see the implications? Prophets don't *speak for* themselves—they *speak for* God. This idea probably occurs in some degree whenever this word appears in Scripture: *God says something to the prophet, the prophet speaks for God to the people.*

- This term can also describe *Someone who speaks forth*, as in *declaring an authoritative message to others*. We call this use *forthtelling*, in contrast with speaking about the future (coming up in the next point). This use is illustrated by all the times the OT prophets relayed *with authority* God's commands and admonitions for obedience and holy living, etc.:

For instance, Isaiah—one of the greatest prophets, thundered against Israel's sinfulness in *Isaiah 31:6 Return, you Israelites, to the One you have so greatly revolted against.* And again in *Isaiah 52:11 Depart, depart, go out from there! Touch no unclean thing! Come out from it and be pure, you who carry the vessels of the LORD.* (That passage was quoted in the NT by the apostle Paul in *2 Corinthians 6:17*)

A policeman is on traffic duty on a busy street; he knows the laws that have been laid down. He sees you beginning to turn the wrong way into a one-way street. He raises his hand, he blows his whistle, he shouts, "No! You must not!" and points you another way. It's not *his* law, but he knows *the* law; you're breaking it, he tells you in no uncertain terms.

In these cases, the emphasis is not so much on the prophet *receiving the words* from God, but on *passing that message on* to others in forthright and *authoritative* way. "Listen, everyone—*this is what the Lord says; Thus saith the Lord!*"

- And the word prophet can also mean *someone who speaks before an event occurs*, and so, *predicting* the outcome *in advance*. We call this use *foretelling* (*this is what most people think of when they hear the word "prophet" or "prophecy"*).

It can be illustrated by all those prophecies about the coming of the Messiah and all the end-time prophecies in the Bible—in fact, 8,352 verses in scripture—that's more than ¼ of the Bible—deals with the future! *This is a big deal to God:* He knows what's coming, and he wants us to know some things about it too!

I love the story C. Peter Wagner tells about his doubts about this whole prophecy thing. Chuck Pierce, widely regarded as someone with the prophetic gift, had said specifically that there would be an earthquake on a given day; he actually named the day. Wagner was an evangelical (like me), and had significant doubts about this. One day he came into his office and noticed that *all his books were on the floor*, fallen from the shelves. He checked the calendar against the prophetic word by Pierce—the *prophesied earthquake had come true.*

Sometimes prophecy is *Foretelling* events *before* they happen.

Now the Hebrew terms used to describe a prophet include: *messenger, man of God, seer, God's servant, watchman, and announcer or spokesman*. They are always associated with speaking, singing, or prophesying the words God put in their mouths. They were messengers who communicated God's words, speaking *for* him, whether by *foretelling* or by *forthtelling*, or sometimes, all of the above.

Having said all that, *What is prophecy?* Here is a simple, workable, understandable definition: *Prophecy is hearing the voice of God and speaking what He says.*

*Hearing* a message from God and passing it on, *speaking* it to others. I believe this is true in all three of the definitions we just covered.

I wanted to begin with these introductory remarks on **prophecy in general**, because we will be exploring situations where *you will be spoken to by a prophet ... or you will be the prophet!*  
*Remember; **PROPHECY IS FOR YOU!** It is for all of us!*

Coming up: How **the prophetic gift in the NT** is different from **the office of the OT prophet**:  
(not the least of which is that *we don't stone you if you get it wrong!*)

I'm so glad and grateful to be working with all of you to bring Indiana into her prophetic destiny!  
You can keep up with us on our website, *infavorresources.com*, our "IN Favor" Facebook page,  
and our IN Favor Resources channel on YouTube.

Thanks for joining me today; signing off until next time, hope to see you then.



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