

2015-12-19

### **Spirit of prophecy #1 (Spiritual types)**

Hi all,

One day when my parents were out for the evening and the babysitter was doing her homework, my brothers and I decided we would build a huge castle in the living room using sheets and blankets and furniture. I'm the oldest of 4 kids - I must have been around 8, then 6, then 4, and our little sister, 2 years old.

My brothers and I excitedly talked through the basic design of this fabulous castle-to-be, and each had input into what we could use; The living room sofa would form the main part of it because we could easily tuck sheets between the wall and the back of the sofa stretching across to chairs. We quickly added up the number of chairs we could use, end tables, sheets and blankets from our beds, and got to work.

In our minds the castle would cover the whole room and reach nearly to the ceiling if we stacked the chairs upside down on one another and then set our sister on the top as the damsel in distress. Because she was only 2 years old we considered her to be more like a pet and with her toddling around she seemed to be made of rubber, so she wouldn't mind being lofted to such great heights - we were sure of it.

Well, it didn't turn out quite as big and majestic as we had imagined. Oh, we had stacked the chairs high enough on what was our corner turret, and our sister trusted us enough to be placed high atop 4 chairs resting upon one another precariously, but at the last second I thought we might end up breaking our sister, so intervened on her behalf.

But assigning her to the 'dungeon' in the far corner of the blanket and sheet strewn living room didn't have the same level of fun and danger. Just as quickly a knot slipped on a sheet, someone pulled the flap that was our draw bridge too far, and the whole thing collapsed in a heap of blankets and sheets and fallen chairs.

But we had succeeded in making a castle. It wasn't what we thought it would be, but it was in the spirit of it, a core representation of something far greater, and we were satisfied with the night's adventure.

### **Moses and the tabernacle in the wilderness**

In Hebrews 8:5 we are told that when Moses was up on the Mount with the Lord he was given instructions on building the tabernacle - that portable tent structure that housed the Ark of the Covenant. It says he was told, "See that you make it according to the pattern (Greek: pattern, copy, example) shown to you on the Mount."

Can you imagine the job Moses had before him? He was before the Father in glory seeing the perfect heavenly, and he had the unenviable task of translating heavenly perfection into an earthly representation while living in a wilderness with only wood, metals, tapestries and animal skins for materials!

**The best he could do in his situation was make a tent while holding in his heart what he had seen in the Spirit.**

When we receive a word from the Lord about our lives He shows us the heavenly, the mature, the completed version, like Moses saw in heaven, or what we children held in our mind when building a castle of blankets. But very often we look for that exact thing in our lives to come to pass, and are disappointed or wonder what we did wrong when the fullness doesn't happen as we've seen.

Though our tent castle and Moses' tabernacle were only rough representations of the core truth of what was seen, both were faithful to what was held in the heart and mind's eye. Often when we hear a word from the Lord for our nation, our region, our family or ourselves and we see in the Spirit the finished vision, but reality may be (only) the core truth and picture of the heavenly.

### **Some real life examples**

A lady in our church urged me to visit her dying mother so I could pray with her. This lady was very upset because the Lord had told her years earlier that her mom would be saved and make it to heaven. But all that time she interpreted the Word to mean her mom would leave her church and start going to a strong

Bible believing church, and they could be true 'sisters in the Lord' as her mom grew deep in the Word and Spirit. But now mom was on her death bed and clearly that word as she envisioned it happening would not happen.

She didn't understand how she had heard so wrong (she thought), but in fact the core truth of that Word did come to pass. Her mother did pray with us as the presence of the Lord filled the room, and after 5 days she died having spent much of that time talking with her daughter about the Lord. And the Lord was gracious, allowing the daughter to teach her mom about righteousness and the new birth - she was even baptized with the Holy Spirit shortly before she died. The core truth of the prophecy was fulfilled, but not the image the daughter had held in her heart of her mom believing exactly like she did.

### **Homeless man**

A man wanted to talk to me and he was angry at God. He loved telling people about Jesus and wanted to do that full time, and told me that the Lord had told him years earlier he was called as an evangelist. As a result of that Word he quit a good paying job, tried to arrange churches to speak at but failed, his wife left him when he refused to get a job, and now he was living at a downtown ministry for the homeless.

When he heard the Word about being an evangelist he attached his definition of what that meant and vision of his heart - full time ministry, speaking to large crowds and on TV, and all that goes with that. But when I asked him about him winning people to the Lord he told me story after story of people saved, healed, lives changed, and that was what fulfilled him. He was fulfilling the function to what he was called, the core truth, but it was only a shadow of what he thought he would be. After our visit he was fortunately able to understand this and rebuild his life.

Many people have been confused when they have seen a genuine vision in the Spirit of what the Lord had for them or a personal prophecy, but then life happened. He shows us the completed, mature thing as it looks in the Spirit, and our job is not to attach our cultural or religious ideas of how that translates into modern life.

**Moses saw the perfect, but could only build a rough copy, yet it was exactly what the Lord wanted for the time and place. It was the best Moses could do in his situation.**

### **Elijah?**

In Matthew 11:14 Jesus said of John the Baptist: "If you will receive it, this was Elijah who was to come (before the Lord)." John wasn't the person of Elijah, but his ministry had the main elements of Elijah's ministry in that he called people to repentance to prepare their hearts for the Lord. Elijah was the true, John was a rougher representative but had all the elements of Elijah's ministry.

Jesus said, "If you will receive it", indicating accepting a rough representation of the True requires a perceptive heart, a discerning person to look past appearances to the heart and core of the truth.

### **What to look for**

Call to remembrance something the Lord told you about you or loved ones. Look at the core truth, and then strip away anything you have added to that truth, anything you have imagined how that would come to pass. Look at what HAS happened, what HAS come to pass, that is the core truth. Like Moses, perhaps you or they have seen the heavenly and hold it in the heart, but you've been through the wilderness and you've done the best you can in your situation. And like Moses, the Lord knows and accepts that.

When Israel believed Elijah would come before the Lord they had one picture in their mind what that meant, and John the Baptist did not fit that image. Some adjusted what they had believed according to the Lord's statement that he was Elijah who was to come. They perceived the key common elements of calling people to repentance and how he decreased as Christ increased.

Whatever the Lord has told you, look for the core truth that has come to pass. Maybe you have a life that looks more like the tent-castle of my childhood, but hold in your heart the image of the true, for you are like Moses who did the best he could with what he had, and it was accepted. Hope that makes sense...more next week, blessings,

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2015-12-26

## **Spirit of prophecy #2, (girl, Word/Word)**

Hi all,

Yesterday Chris and I were talking with a store clerk who was at least in her 50's, but as we paid and Chris rolled (wheelchair) through the line he said to her, "Okay girl, we have to go now, thank you, see you later girl." She chuckled and said good bye, and we headed back to the car and home. There is a pasture just before you get to our house, and as we rounded the corner there were a bunch of cows in the pasture, and upon seeing them Chris said "Hello girls, watcha doing, eating some grass? Yep."

He used the same word 'girl' for both a 50 something year old woman at a store and for a herd of cows in the pasture, though the proper use of 'girl' is to describe a human female child. But it was close enough to be applied to that situation, at least in his mind.

Similarly there is an understanding about scripture and prophecy called 'the law of double reference'. It means a prophecy or verse means something to the original hearers or readers, and that same word can later be used by the Lord to someone else at another time for something completely different - Yet when He speaks a verse to us it does not negate the first use, but rather agrees with and builds upon it.

### **Paul and Barnabus, and Jesus**

In Acts 13:44-48 we are told nearly the whole city of Antioch gathered to hear Paul tell people of salvation through Christ, and the Jews were moved to envy. After they stirred up the crowd Paul observed that since they judged themselves unworthy of eternal life, they would now turn to the Gentiles:

"For so has the Lord commanded us, saying 'I have set you to be a light of the Gentiles, that you should be for salvation to the ends of the earth'". And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad..."

The scripture the Lord said was meant for Paul, was in fact a direct quote of Isaiah 49:6 in a prophecy about Jesus. It was also stated over the baby Jesus in Luke 2:32, in both cases referring to the Lord, not Paul. Yet the Lord took that verse about Himself and said it was for Paul & Barnabus.

Notice that Paul & Barnabus didn't choose that verse to apply to themselves, the Lord did.

### **"Turn to John 14:27"**

When I was a teenager struggling with feelings of insecurity, inferiority, and no self-worth, I didn't believe my offer to serve the Lord was going to be accepted by Him - I didn't believe He would want me. Then in the middle of worship, the first time I heard the voice of the Lord Jesus Himself, He said:

"I love you John." I was so startled I stuttered in response: "I, I, love you too Lord." To which He said, "Turn to John 14:27." "Now Lord?" "Yes, now." So I did: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

With that I knew He had accepted my life on the altar of service to Him. But notice that verse was something Jesus originally spoke to the disciples to give them peace. Then about 1,944 years later He picked it out and said it also applied to me. I didn't pick it. He did.

### **The flow**

We have all had a verse 'jump out' at us when we have been reading the Bible. Or we've had a personal prophecy delivered by someone. Or the Lord quickened, revealed, or impressed upon us a certain verse was for us and our situation. Sometimes it isn't something chapter and verse, but a direct promise to us by revelation or directly like "Your mom will be 'born again' before she dies." Sometimes He can even quicken something said to us by someone who wasn't even aware God was using them, but we know a certain portion of what they said was from Him to us.

We can also be like Timothy who was told in I Timothy 1:18 to live "...according to the prophecies that went before on you." We don't know if those prophecies for young Timothy included chapter and verse, but they were acknowledged as genuine and accurate by Paul, with instructions to remember and live by them. Notice Timothy didn't create the prophecy; someone had a 'word' for him.

### **Standing on the Word**

Look at the pattern in the Bible: The Lord picks out a verse for someone and says 'this is for you'. They didn't pick it out, He did.

However, the common practice today goes like this: We are faced with a crisis so we go to a Bible or a list of reference verses. We flip through the pages or look up our 'promise list', find a verse, pray it out to God announcing this is what we are standing on.

But that practice isn't in the Bible. Then when we are disappointed we wonder why. We did all the right things, didn't we? We found a verse to stand on, we confessed it, prayed it, waited...check, check, check. What went wrong? Or if we got the answer we think it was the written Word and what we did to stand, when in fact we can't add an inch or centimeter to our height - God does many things just by mercy and grace and we mistakenly think our formula worked.

You see, we are to get together with Him and let Him give us a Word, then we stand. Christianity is about knowing Him, not formulas, rituals, and 'models' doing x thing to get y result. We are to know and walk with God.

Too many in our generation know the written Word but don't know the True Word (Leaving them with empty and often carnal 'Christian' lives) We cannot 'stand' on the written Word unless we first have that verse given to us by the True Word. We have to know Him. Not just believe in Him. Not just pray to Him. Not just sing songs about Him. But we have to know the Living Word, from which the written Word proceeds.

#### **Hebrews 4:12-13 - the Word and the Word**

The Word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing in two the soul and spirit, the joints and marrow, and judging the very thoughts and intentions of the heart. And not a creature exists that is concealed from His sight, but all things are open and exposed, and revealed to the eyes of Him with whom we have to give account."

When this is taught most preachers use just verse 12 to tell the congregation they need to 'get into the Word every day'. They rarely read v13 which reveals he is talking about the Person of the Word, the Lord Jesus, and it is He who divides between soul and spirit and judges the thoughts and intents of our hearts.

#### **Think of it this way**

Jesus is the Word, and the written Word has flowed from Him to the printed page, therefore He can pick up a verse and apply it to whomever He deems fit to receive it. But if we pick and choose a verse from the printed Word without it having first come from the Living Word to us for that situation, we risk not getting what the Lord has for us because we are in the flesh.

The good news is that when the author says the Living Word divides between soul and spirit and judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart, and that all things are open and naked before Him with whom we have to do - he goes on to say: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest who has passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God...let us come boldly to the throne of grace to receive mercy and help in a time of need."

He says the Lord Jesus knows and judges our thoughts and intentions, and then invites us to come for mercy and grace to help - wow, what love! What ease in His presence, for He knows all our heart yet loves and yes, even likes us.

Just remember, let Him pick out the verse for you and your situation or you may be like Chris applying the same word to 2 situations with neither of those being the correct use of that word. More next week,  
Blessings,

John Fenn

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2016-01-02

#### **Spirit of prophecy #3, (using common sense)**

Hi all,

When I go to a store I usually have a list, and once inside the store I go to item 1, then to item 2, then to item 3, and can be in and out within a few minutes. Barb also has a list, but for some reason her list leads her on a path resembling what a drunken sailor might walk when he leaves a bar at 2am and tries to remember where he parked that aircraft carrier.

Neither is the right or wrong way to go shopping, and we each end up with what we went for, but...I better stop before I get into trouble and just make my point.

When the Lord gives us a promise it will happen, but how we are emotionally between the promise and the time of the answer is either focused and steadfast, or we wander all over our emotions and thoughts putting ourselves through misery until the Father manifests the answer.

Today is about how to stand on the Word for a promise and remain steadfast.

### **How much faith do you have in what God told you?**

Have you ever wondered how Peter could be so sound asleep in jail\* just hours before his scheduled execution that the angel had to literally strike him on the side to awaken him?

Have you ever wondered why Paul just shook the viper off his hand\* and continued working, with no harm coming to him and no mention of concern on his part? \*Acts 12:7, 28:3-6

### **Faith in the Word and Word**

In John 21:18-19 Jesus indicates to Peter he will die by crucifixion 'when you are old'. When Peter was in jail sound asleep awaiting execution in Acts 12:7 it is no more than 12 years after Jesus told Peter how and when he would die. In Acts 12 he was set to be executed by sword and he wasn't old - so he was able to deeply sleep knowing he would somehow get out of that situation.

In Acts 27:24 while Paul is on board a ship being driven by a long lasting storm, an angel appears to him and says 'Fear not Paul, you must be brought before Caesar.' So when the venomous snake bit Paul right after they were shipwrecked on Malta, he just threw it into the fire and went on working because he knew he would be brought before Caesar.

Instead of Peter questioning why he was in jail about to die when Jesus told him something else, and instead of Paul being in fear because a poisonous snake bit him and he was about to die in contradiction to what the angel said, each man chose to believe what they'd been promised and went on about their lives.

### **They used their brains**

They had direction from the Lord, direct words, and they used their brains to think and reason.

People of faith often lay aside common sense and logic once they receive a prophecy, verse, or other promise they feel is from the Lord, often to their own hurt and even death. They have a word but when things happen contrary to that they run around like Barb's shopping method, only instead of shopping they are in fear wandering here, there, and everywhere looking for assurance God is still in control.

But Peter and Paul were steadfast because they thought the promise through, and disciplined their thoughts and emotions accordingly. They pondered what they'd been told, giving them a quiet internal strength.

There was a man who received a personal prophecy that he would get wealthy in real estate. So without hesitation and without study, and without using any common sense from the brain God gave him, he began buying homes to then rent out. He mismanaged them because he hadn't educated himself about the subject, went bankrupt, his wife left him, and he was homeless for a time - and he blamed it on God who told him he said 'To get into real estate'.

God didn't tell him 'to get into real estate', and the legitimacy of the prophecy is highly questionable because it was a single word not even in the man's heart before that moment, and there were no other confirmations, but using the prophecy he threw common sense out the door, thinking God was his business partner.

He is not. He is God. He isn't a business partner. Christ lives in you and is therefore with you at your job. But they hired you not Him - it is your job, your business, we make our way prosperous, and He will guide us along the way during which we use clear thinking and common sense.

### **Healing**

There was an up and coming evangelist who was diagnosed with cancer. Yet after prayer he said the Lord told him he was healed, or would be healed. He refused all treatment because 'God said'.

Some urged him to get treatment, noting that giving the promise of healing does not exclude doing what we are to do in the natural. But the young evangelist refused medical care, died, and left many confused about why if God said he was healed, he died. He should have sought treatment.

God may reveal to you that you have x job when you see the ad in the paper for it, but you still have to get up and go through the interview process - do what is right in the natural and let it come to pass, don't try to make it come to pass, nor think because God said it means it will magically appear.

### **Led by personal prophecy?**

In I Timothy 1:18-19 Paul tells Timothy "This charge I give you son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on you, that by them you might war a good warfare; Holding faith and a good conscience; which some concerning the faith have made shipwreck..."

Notice Paul's instruction about the handling of prophecy combines the spiritual and 'common sense'. When Paul said to 'war a good warfare' he said to do so while 'holding faith and a good conscience'.

Faith is spiritual, good conscience is natural. God requires both when He gives us a promise. It means doing things right and with honesty so we can maintain a clear conscience. God's personal word to you will never require you to lie, cheat, steal, or to lay aside what is morally right.

II Peter 1:4 says "...through these are given to us exceeding great and precious promises, that by these you might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption of the world that came by evil desires."

We view promises as the point of answered prayer, this verse says God issues promises for the purpose of working in us the divine nature. The quicker you cooperate with Him to grow as a person and in Christ while 'standing' on a promise, the better off you will be emotionally and spiritually. Realize a promise is given for you to grow in Him - character building and fruit of the Spirit growth.

Faith with a clear conscience is the direct route to seeing God's word come to pass. Or a person can be in fear and back away from opportunities for the growth that comes by disciplining thoughts and emotions, and doing the right thing even if it is difficult.

Many back away from difficulty thinking it is the devil or they just don't want to go through it. My experience has been usually the difficult decision and hardest on the flesh, is part of that 'divine nature' He wants us to grow in. When you value growth in Him above all else because in those times is when you get to know Him best, you will be steadfast like Peter and Paul.

Think His promises through, not for the purpose of figuring out how it might happen and then arranging your life to help Him make it happen - but ponder these things in your heart, do what is right, choose growth in the divine nature, and allow Him to work it out.

New subject next week, until then, blessings,  
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