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The Ministry
of A



PROPHET

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Chapter I

The Prophet's Call

While conducting a meeting in El Paso, Texas, in 1959, I slipped and fell, hurting my arm rather severely. At first I thought it was broken, so we went to the hospital to have a doctor look at it and set the broken bones, if necessary. When we were riding along in the car about a block from the hospital, the Lord spoke to me and told me the arm was not broken—that I just had a slight fracture. I had knocked small chips off the bone, but no bones were actually broken. My elbow was just knocked out of place. The Lord told me this was the devil's work but that it would result in God's glory. I'm glad that God can take what the devil does and make it work together for our good.

At the hospital the doctor x-rayed me and confirmed what I already knew—that I had knocked my elbow out of place and had knocked a few chips off the bone. This, he explained, was really worse than a broken arm, for muscles and ligaments hold the elbow in place, and I had knocked those muscles and ligaments out of place. He would have to put them back in place while I was under an anesthetic, and then I would have to remain in the hospital for a couple of days. After that, he told me, I would have to carry my arm in a cast for four weeks and then wear a sling for awhile after that.

On my second day in the hospital the Lord came to me in a vision and told me that this accident had happened because I had gotten out of His perfect will and was just walking in His permissive will. Romans 12:2 says,

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Another translation of this verse reads, **"... that ye may prove what is that good and permissive, and perfect, will of God."** The word "permissive" is used in place of "acceptable."

The Lord explained to me that He permits people to do many things that aren't expressly His will. An example was Israel's desire for a king in order to be like the other nations. Although this was not God's perfect will, He permitted them to have a king.

It is also God's desire that His children walk in health and not be sick. He made provision for this for Israel by telling them, **"... I am the Lord that healeth thee"** (Exod. 15:26).

"... I will take sickness away from the midst of thee ... the number of thy days I will fulfill" (Exod. 23:25-26). And if this was the case under the Old Covenant, how much more this would be true under the New Covenant, which is a better covenant established upon better promises.

The Lord reminded me that I had enjoyed divine health for 25 years. He had kept me from sickness and accidents for all that time. But, the Lord said, I had been out of His perfect will for two years and had been walking in His permissive will only. The Lord showed me that while I had been anointed with the ministry of a prophet and a teacher, I had put my teaching ministry first and my prophesying ministry second. I had done this because I like to teach; this was my natural preference. Too, I had seen the great need for teaching. Also, pastors encouraged my ministry of teaching. But I was going to have to reverse the order and put the ministry of the prophet first.

The prophet's ministry isn't altogether understood or appreciated. One runs into such persecution that it's very easy to draw back from it.

I knew that my accident wasn't caused by the Lord. He merely permitted it to happen. The Bible says, "**The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy; I am come that they might have life and that they might have it more abundantly**" (John 10:10). That which steals, kills, and destroys is of the enemy. The Lord doesn't commission it, but He may permit it. For instance, God didn't cause Job's children to be killed or his flocks stolen. God didn't cause the thieves to rob him. God didn't cause the fire to burn his crops. God didn't smite his body with boils. The devil did it. But the Lord gave Satan permission to do it.

To get my attention and bring about complete submission and obedience to His perfect will, God had to let this calamity come into my life. "This is the third time I have had to talk to you about this very thing," the Lord said to me. "For that reason I am going to let you wear your arm in a cast and a sling for a little while. I will speed up the healing process, however, so you won't have to be disabled as long as the doctor has told you would be necessary."

God's perfect will is that men and women enjoy divine healing and divine health. But many are like I was, living only in the realm of God's permissive will. For that reason difficulties have been permitted to come their way. Others are weak in faith; their faith is not strong enough to appropriate what belongs to them. Some don't even know what belongs to them.

Thirteen days later I went back to the doctor to have my cast changed. After the cast was removed, the doctor looked at my arm in amazement. He told me that he had never seen an arm heal this fast. Normally it would take at least 28 days.

He had told my wife that I probably never would be able to touch my shoulder. However, I can. In fact, the Lord told me that He was going to restore 99 percent of the use of that arm. He was going to leave that one percent disability as a reminder to me, similar to the incident where the angel touched Jacob's thigh, putting his hip out of joint for the rest of his life. I can be sailing along sometimes, completely forgetting about my injured arm. But if I get in a place where I'm not using my prophet's ministry as I should, God reminds me. When my arm starts hurting me, I start yielding more completely to God.

In Ephesians 4:8-12 we read,

Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men ... And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.

These are the five ministry gifts which Paul noted God gave to men, "**for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.**"

Notice that the Word mentions apostles first. There are some who say there were only the twelve original apostles. However, there are 24 individuals in the New Testament who are called apostles. The Greek word for "apostle" means "a sent one." Even Paul was not an apostle, "a sent one," in the sense that the original twelve were, for he was not with them from the beginning of Jesus' ministry. He didn't see Him and hear His teaching as He went about among them.

Judas was one of the twelve original apostles. But after he betrayed Christ and went out and hanged himself, he was replaced by Matthias. This made Matthias the thirteenth apostle.

Acts 14:14 says, **"...when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of ..."** Barnabas was just as much an apostle as Paul was, according to this text. Thus, Paul and Barnabas were the fourteenth and fifteenth apostles.

Galatians 1:17-19 says,

Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went to Arabia, and again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.

Paul calls James the Lord's brother, an apostle although he was not one of the original twelve apostles. Because James was sent to be head of the church at Jerusalem, Paul calls him an apostle, for he was a sent one.

Then in Romans 16:7 Paul wrote,

Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles who also were in Christ before me.

Paul began his epistle to the Thessalonians: **"Paul and Silvanus, and Timotheus, unto the church of the Thessalonians ..."** Then writing in the second chapter he refers to the three of them as "apostles of Christ."

In II Corinthians 8:23 two unnamed brethren are called apostles. Then in Philippians 2:25 Paul says,

Yet I supposed it was necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants.

The Greek word for "messenger" is the same word that is translated "apostle" elsewhere.

A person can be a sent one or a messenger of the church and rightly be called an apostle of the church. Smith Wigglesworth was called an apostle of faith. But when Christ calls them and sends them, they are apostles of Christ.

Among the ministry gifts of Christ, there is no mention of missionaries. In fact, the word "missionary" isn't found in the New Testament. The ministry of a missionary is involved in the calling of an apostle. It is a ministry, but not necessarily an office. A person doesn't have the office of an apostle, he has the ministry of one. For instance, if you were called by the Holy Ghost to be a missionary to Africa, the Missionary Committee might send you out, but if you were really sent out by the Holy Ghost, then you would be an apostle to those folk.

Neither Paul nor Barnabas were apostles to begin with. Paul was a prophet and a teacher; Barnabas was a teacher. Later they became apostles.

In dealing with me about the prophet's ministry coming first, the Lord pointed out that the prophet's ministry is listed above the teaching ministry in the scriptures. Paul listed them in the order of their importance.

Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

I Cor. 12:27-30

Here again Paul is talking about ministries not spiritual gifts. Notice, too, that the prophet's ministry is again listed above the teaching ministry.

Paul does not list the evangelist's or pastor's ministry, but they are involved. The New Testament evangelist is equipped with working of miracles and/or gifts of healings. If he does not have these supernatural manifestations in his ministry, he is not a New Testament evangelist. This would belong in the category of exhortative ministry.

Oral Roberts is a type of New Testament evangelist, for gifts of healing operate in his ministry. William Branham was a prophet, not an evangelist. T. L. Osborn is a combination evangelist and apostle. He is a "sent one." Those who go from church to church playing music, singing songs and preaching a so-called evangelistic sermon are not evangelists at all. They are exhorters.

The pastor is involved in governments and helps. The pastor is head of the church. Christ is the Good Shepherd, the head of the body, the head of the whole church. (Pastor and shepherd mean the same thing.) The pastor of the local church and the local sheep is the undershepherd.

Just as government of your whole body emanates from your head, so the government of the local church heads up in the pastoral office. The government of the local church is not in the deacon. That's the reason many Full Gospel churches are in trouble. They are losing their power and their anointing because, following other denominations, they allow men without the anointing and the call of God in their life run the church. And they are not equipped to do it. Deacons are placed in the church to serve and to help when they are called upon, not to provide spiritual leadership. This is the job of the pastor.

After that miracles, then gifts of healing, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

This passage refers to a ministry of tongues, not to lay members' giving messages in tongues. Of course, the Word of God says that lay members may speak but it is limited to three. This scripture however, is a list of ministry gifts for men who are set in the church by God. Laymen are not set in the church; they are placed in the church when they are born again.

This is the ministry gift using diversities of tongues to minister. It is seldom seen in Full Gospel churches today, and therefore very precious ministries have been pushed aside and neglected.

I've known only one such ministry—a couple who minister quite a bit with tongues and interpretation. In a group of 25 people they might minister to each one in tongues and interpretation. This is certainly scriptural. A pastor, evangelist, apostle, prophet might have this gift. It goes along with his ministry. I've seen this couple tell people, through tongues and interpretation, exactly what their needs were, what they've thought and said before they came to church, and the answer to their problem. I have purposely had folk whom I knew and whose problems I knew to come to their church. I knew this couple had never seen these folks before. I would ask them to minister to them. The wife would lay hands on them and speak in tongues. Then the husband would interpret. He told them their spiritual needs and problems better than I could, and I knew them. He told it by the Spirit. These are diversities of tongues.

This is scriptural, but it isn't intended for laymen. The laymen's tongues are to be used primarily in their prayer life, to edify them and to help them to worship God.

In Acts 13:1 we read,

Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain prophets and teachers; as Barnabas, and Simeon ... and Lucius ... and Manaen ... and Saul.

All five of these men were prophets and teachers or else were either a prophet or teacher. We read in the next chapter that Barnabas and Paul were apostles. They were sent ones. They were sent to minister to the Gentiles. Every time they are mentioned, the order is prophet *and* teacher.

When the Lord dealt with me, He said, "You left my perfect will and made it teacher and then prophet. Finally, you left off the prophet's ministry altogether. Reverse the order and put your prophet's ministry first and your teacher's ministry second."

A prophet is one who has visions and revelations. Paul said that he was taught the gospel by revelation of Jesus Christ. In the Old Testament a prophet was called a seer because he could see and know things supernaturally.

"Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge. If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace" (I Cor. 14:29-30). A prophet is one who sees and knows things supernaturally because he has revelation gifts plus prophecy operating in his life and ministry.

To constitute the office of a prophet, a man is first of all a minister. He has the calling of God upon his life. Second, he has to have at least two of the revelation gifts plus prophecy operating in his ministry. He has the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and/or discerning of spirits.

After I received the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the word of knowledge began to operate immediately, and all through these years it has been manifested. Since that time, when I am in the Spirit, the gift of discerning of spirits is also in operation. Therefore, I have the word of knowledge and discerning of spirits plus prophecy operating, which constitutes the office of a prophet.

Any layman might receive a word of knowledge occasionally. Something might be revealed to him as he needs it. But he is not called a minister. He may get the word of knowledge to help himself or someone else, but that doesn't make him a prophet or a minister. That manifestation just comes at the moment to fulfill a certain need. A layman may need a word of wisdom occasionally, so this gift might be manifested. But to constitute the prophet's office, there has to be a continued manifestation of these gifts.

In the Old Testament all the gifts were in operation except tongues with interpretation. Tongues are exclusive with this dispensation. Old Testament prophets knew things supernaturally. For instance, when Naaman was healed of his leprosy, he offered Elisha silver and gold (II Kings 5). Elisha refused his gift because he realized that Naaman was trying to pay for his healing. It can't be purchased, however, as it is a gift from God.

Gehazi, Elisha's servant, ran after Naaman with the story that the two young prophets needed changes of raiment and silver and gold, and that Elisha had said it would be acceptable if Naaman gave this gift for them. Gehazi was lying, of course, and took Naaman's gifts and hid them for his own use.

When Gehazi went into the presence of the prophet and Elisha asked him where he had been, Gehazi lied and said, "Nowhere."

Elisha said, **"Went not mine heart with thee, when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? ..."**

That had to be a supernatural revelation. It was the operation of the word of knowledge in the office of the prophet.

Many people think that if you have this ministry you can tell everything about everybody. But it is only as the Lord wills. Gehazi evidently knew this as he was with the prophet all the time. He knew that Elisha didn't know everything all the time, and he probably thought he could get away with his deceit.

People often write to me wanting me to tell them what's wrong with them. However, people have to be before me, in the service when the gift is operating. I can't just push a button and start operating like a tape recorder. It is as the Spirit

wills and as the anointing comes on me. That's the reason I preach about it, for then the faith of the congregation rises, and the anointing comes upon me to begin ministering.

If I could minister that way every night, I would do it. At times God has had me prophesy to every single person in the crowd, giving me a message for everyone. Where the Spirit is in manifestation, anything can happen. But I can't make it happen just because I want it to happen.

Once while preaching in Kansas, a minister's wife asked me to pray for her as she had a special request and wanted help. As she spoke, the revelation started coming to me and I told her to wait a minute. If a person tells you his need and then you tell him what the Lord has shown you, he doesn't know but what you spoke from your own knowledge. But when God supernaturally tells that person's need and gives instructions on how to solve the problem, then the person knows that it is supernatural.

The Word of the Lord came unto me saying that a little while after this woman was saved, she had sinned. Ever since then a deceiving devil had troubled her and had told her repeatedly that she had committed an unpardonable sin. The Lord showed me that at times she would become very depressed and discouraged. As I told her this she was amazed and said that I must be a mind reader, for this was precisely the case.

She told me that two years after she was saved she had told a lie, and the devil had tormented her ever since. I then took authority over the deceiving spirit and commanded him to leave her at that moment. I have seen her since and learned that she has not been troubled since I prayed for her.

In another city I prayed for a young man who was having epileptic seizures. He was old enough to serve in the army, but he had been rejected because of epilepsy. When he came in the healing line for healing, I knew by revelation of the Holy Ghost that I had to deal with the spirit. I cast out that spirit in Jesus' name.

Twelve months later I was again in that church for a service. As I sat down on the platform before I was to preach, my eyes fell on this young man. The word of the Lord came unto me saying, "Last year when you were here you cast that evil spirit out of his body. For twelve months he has not had an epileptic seizure. However, in the last two weeks he has had three seizures in the nighttime while he was asleep and was awakened by them. Before that he had never had them in the night. The reason for these seizures is that he went to bed fearful." The Lord then told me that before I preached, I should call this boy up to the platform, tell him what the Lord had just shown me, cast that devil out again, and teach the boy how to resist fear and maintain what he has.

As I obeyed the Lord and called this young man to the front, telling him all that the Lord had shown me, the boy was amazed and verified what I said. I told him I was going to cast that spirit out of him, but when he was alone he would be on his own. He would have to resist that spirit. The Bible says to resist the devil and he will flee from you. I taught him to resist the devil.

Many years have passed since that time and as far as I know he has never had another epileptic seizure. Manifested in this boy's case was a combination of the gifts of the word of knowledge, discerning of spirits, plus prophecy and the teaching ministry that taught him how to resist the devil and maintain what he had.

Chapter II

The Prophet's Function

But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men ... And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

Eph. 4:7-13

When Christ ascended on high, He gave gifts unto men. He gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers. The reason He gave them was for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ. Therefore, they are called the ministry gifts. There are five of them: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers.

We need to find our place and know what God has called us to do, for He will equip us by His Spirit to stand in the office to which He has called us. We can use the ministry gift that He has given us to minister according to His will, purpose, and plan.

I began my ministry as a Baptist minister, was filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke with other tongues. From the very moment I was filled with the Holy Ghost, I not only spoke in tongues, but immediately the word of knowledge began to be manifested in my life.

The word of knowledge is supernatural revelation, just as all gifts of the spirit are supernatural. If one of them is supernatural, they are all supernatural. If the word of knowledge is not a supernatural revelation, then the gifts of healing are not supernatural.

Notice that it isn't the "gift of knowledge." It's the "word of knowledge." This spiritual gift of the word of knowledge is a supernatural revelation by the Holy Ghost concerning people, places, or things in the present or in the past. The word of wisdom concerns knowledge of the future. The word of wisdom is a supernatural revelation concerning the plan and purpose of God.

When the word of knowledge began to operate in my life after I was filled with the Holy Ghost, I would know supernaturally about people, places, and things. Sometimes I would know through a vision. Sometimes while preaching the cloud would appear and my eyes would be open. I would see in vision form someone who was sitting in the congregation, when they were off in another town. I would see the sin they had committed. I would later tell them about it, although never publicly because only hypocrites should be rebuked publicly. Usually, even though people have sinned they are not hypocrites and they want to do right. They want to serve God. He shows these things many times to help them and show them how to overcome temptation.

During a meeting I was conducting in Alabama in which several churches were cooperating, one of the pastors, who was also the sectional presbyter, was somewhat skeptical of this type of ministry, never having seen such a gift in operation before.

One night a woman came for prayer that she might receive the Holy Ghost.

This woman was the only one whom I have ever rebuked publicly. I told her that she wasn't going to get the Holy Ghost because her heart wasn't right with God. I told her that she talked and gossiped so much that she had used the Lord's name in vain and hadn't repented of it. When she denied this, I pointed my finger at her and commanded her, in the name of Jesus, to be quiet, for she had a lying spirit.

Actually, I had a vision as she stood there. I saw her standing about a block away from the parsonage of the church which she attended. (Didn't know at the time that it was the presbyter's church.) In this vision I saw her arguing with another woman. Then because this other woman refused to agree with her, she slapped her and knocked her down. She then went to the parsonage and when the pastor wouldn't agree with her, she cursed him. I told her publicly that she needed to repent and to apologize to this pastor. The pastor, the skeptical presbyter, then verified that what I had just said was true. (It also made a believer out of him.)

Sometimes the word of knowledge comes to me in vision form; sometimes it comes by an inward revelation. Sometimes it comes like the interpretation of a tongue or a prophecy. Sometimes I give it out by tongues and interpretation. Sometimes I speak it out by prophecy.

Although one might have the word of knowledge, that wouldn't necessarily make him a prophet. The word of wisdom, the word of knowledge and the discerning of spirits will operate in connection with prophecy many times. It is not called the gift of prophecy because the simple gift of prophecy has no revelation with it. While it is true that any layman may have a word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, or discerning of spirits given to him occasionally, that would not make him a prophet.

The Word says, **"But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort"**

(I Cor. 14:3). The simple gift of prophecy, therefore, is not given for revelation. Very often in the prophet's ministry, the utterance he gives will have revelation in it because he has the other gifts operating also. He has to have the other gifts to stand in this office. The fact that one prophesies does not make him a prophet. He must have the revelation gifts as well as prophecy to be in this office.

Paul told those at Corinth to covet earnestly that they might prophesy. The simple gift of prophecy can be used in prayer and worship to God as well as in addressing a congregation or an individual. In the book of Psalms we have a number of psalms, songs and prayers that were given in prophecy by the Holy Ghost. They were spoken out by inspiration of the Holy Ghost.

Many have thought that tongues and interpretation and prophecy are only for public ministry. There is more, however. I use tongues and interpretation all the time in my prayer life. Many times I pray in tongues for an hour or so and then pray the interpretation in English. In this way my mind is edified. If I prayed only in tongues, my spirit would be edified but my mind would be unfruitful. I have prayed as much as six hours a day in tongues and then prayed the interpretation in English. At other times I use prophecy entirely. None of this comes from my own mind, but I pray in English by a supernatural utterance given by the Holy Ghost. It is most blessed to use prophecy in prayer. It lifts one higher than anything because prophecy carries the greatest inspiration.

This is not limited to ministers. All laymen can do it too. They could all pray in tongues and could all pray with interpretation; they could all prophesy. But that in itself wouldn't make them a prophet. They cannot intrude into an office.

When the Lord dealt with me concerning my ministry He showed me that the revelation gifts which operate in my life are the word of knowledge and discerning of spirits, plus prophecy and occasionally a word of wisdom. The Lord then spoke to me concerning the prophet of the Old Testament, who was called a seer, and who would see and know things supernaturally. He reminded me of the time when Saul, as a young boy, was out looking for some of his father's donkeys that had strayed away (1 Sam. 9). When Saul inquired about them, someone suggested that he go and ask the prophet, for he would know where they were. Saul went to Samuel, the prophet, and was told that the donkeys had been found three days before and now folk were out looking for Saul. Samuel knew this supernaturally—that was a word of knowledge. But Samuel also asked Saul to wait because he had a word of wisdom for him concerning God's plan. He was then anointed to be the first king of Israel.

Naturally, Samuel didn't know the whereabouts of every stray donkey in Israel. There could have been many stray donkeys at the time. God had a purpose in revealing this to him at that particular time, for it concerned Israel's future king.

Once I stopped by to see a minister at the site where he was building a new church. After he showed me around, we each got into our car to leave. Just as I did, however, the word of the Lord came unto me saying that I should tell this minister that he wasn't going to live much longer unless he corrected three things: his diet, his money matters, and his lack of love for the brethren.

I stepped out of my car to go and tell him, but someone else walked up to his car about that time and began to talk to him. I sat back down in my car and began to reason with myself. I knew that he probably wouldn't take this advice from me. He didn't walk in love towards his brethren, and he would probably slap my face. As I sat there talking myself out of it, the minister left without my telling him what the Lord had shown me. That was the last time I saw him, for three years later he died.

Several times the Lord told me to warn certain ministers that they were going to die and the reason, but each time I failed to warn them. The Lord showed me that this was the reason I had had the accident and hurt my arm. He said that from then on if I didn't tell someone what He told me to, judgment would come on me. If I told them and they wouldn't accept it, then it was their responsibility—judgment would come on them. Even if I feel sure that folk won't listen to me, I have to tell them whether they listen or not. There is a responsibility that goes along with certain ministries.

Now everywhere I go I read scriptures about the ministry gifts. I read I Corinthians 12:28 where it says that God has set these ministries in the church. I read the fourteenth chapter of I Corinthians concerning the prophets' speaking, and the gifts of tongues and interpretation. I point out the verses,

If any man speak in an unknown tongue, let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course; and let one interpret. But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the church; and let him speak to himself, and to God. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge.

Verses 27-29

Then the 30th verse says, **"If any thing be revealed to another that sitteth by, let the first hold his peace."**

Most Full Gospel churches will permit tongues and interpretation in the services, but many shy away from the prophet's ministry. However, it's all in the same chapter. If one should be omitted, then the other should also.

When the Lord was dealing with me concerning the prophet's ministry, He said that if a church doesn't accept my ministry then I should go my way, shake the dust off my feet against them, so to speak; but He would remove their candlestick. He would take away from them what power they had left. The Lord told me that the time is short and the work that must be done should be done quickly in these last days. He said that judgment must begin in the house of God, and if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the sinner and the ungodly appear. If a church won't accept this ministry, then they wouldn't accept His Word and He can't help them.

If the pastor won't accept this message, then judgment will come on him. If I have a revelation or message for the pastor, I am to deliver it. If I have a message for an individual or a church, then I am to deliver it.

Some do not believe that personal prophecy is scriptural. They do not believe that a prophet may have a message for an individual. However, in Acts 21:8-11 Luke says,

And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist ... And the same man had four daughters, virgins, which did prophesy. And as we tarried there many days, there came down from Judaea a certain prophet, named Agabus. And when he was come unto us, he took Paul's girdle, and bound his own hands and feet, and said, Thus saith the Holy Ghost, So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle, and shall deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.

One phase of the prophet's ministry is that he speaks for the Holy Ghost. In the scripture quoted above, Agabus didn't tell Paul not to go to Jerusalem. He merely told him what would happen there. And it came to pass. Through this gift we have the ability to help people and to prepare them for things that are ahead.

While I was holding a meeting in California, the pastor's sixteen-year-old granddaughter was coming to visit them from Oregon. Her parents phoned to say that they had just put the girl on the bus and told them when to meet her at the bus station. They went to the bus station at the appointed time, but when her bus arrived, she was not among the passengers who got off.

Many young girls disappear out there every year, although this fact is not publicized. And when this beautiful girl did not arrive when she was expected, the grandparents were frantic.

The bus company officials went to work on it immediately and traced her from Portland, Oregon, to Reno Nevada, where it was learned that she didn't get back on the bus after a rest stop. In the meantime, they checked every bus coming into Los Angeles, but she wasn't on any of them.

The girl's parents and grandparents were becoming more fearful as each minute passed. They could just see someone carrying the girl away, and perhaps they would never see her again.

When I walked into the church office before the Sunday night service, I found that dear grandmother crying. I began to look to the Lord. I knew that He knew right where the girl was. The Lord showed me that she got on another bus which was going east, but that she was all right and would not meet any harm. When I told the grandmother what the

Lord had just spoken to my heart, her face lit up and she was so relieved. We then went on in to the service and preached. After the conclusion of the service the phone rang with news that the girl was all right. She had gotten on a bus headed for Salt Lake City. They put her on a bus to Las Vegas and then to San Diego. The next morning the grandparents drove to a small city about 50 miles

from Los Angeles to meet her.

God knew where she was just as much as He knew where Saul's donkeys were a few thousand years ago. He hasn't changed. Many times we suffer through trials that we really don't have to, for if we would just take advantage of the supernatural equipment that is given to the church, we would have supernatural things happening constantly.

In May, 1943, while I was pastoring a small church in north central Texas, I began to teach a Wednesday-night series on the gifts of the Spirit, teaching on the word of knowledge. I told how this gift could be used to locate lost persons. I brought out how Samuel knew where Saul's lost donkeys were. Then when Saul hid when he became king, the Lord showed the prophet where he was.

A couple in the church had a daughter who had disappeared 23 years before. This couple were not saved at the time, and the girl, then sixteen, had been in with a gang. The police felt that the gang had killed her because they were getting ready to make arrests and the gang probably felt that since the girl was so young, she might crack and give away incriminating evidence. It was generally believed that the girl was dead, and they even went so far as to have the city lake dragged for her body. The mother had never been able to accept this in her spirit, however.

She asked me if God could tell them if their daughter was alive or dead. I assured her that He could, and we took the matter before our prayer group which met every Wednesday afternoon in the church. There were just a few ladies in this group, but they knew how to pray. One woman in particular had great power in prayer, and the Lord gave her the interpretation of a message in tongues saying that the daughter was alive, living in a large city in America, but that she had been held a virtual prisoner these many years. The message said that in 30 days the parents would get a letter from her.

When the father went to the post office to pick up his mail 30 days later, he found a letter addressed in a vaguely familiar scrawl. Opening it at home, the parents read, "Dear Mom and Dad, I trust that you are still alive. Twenty-three years have come and gone and I know you're now in your seventies. But if you're still alive and get this, if you write me I'll come home to visit. I will say that I have been captive and have not been able to contact you until now. But I want you to know that I am married and have two children, a boy 17 and a girl 13. We will come to visit you if you are still alive."

The parents hastened to answer the letter. One Sunday morning not long after that they brought to the service their long-lost daughter together with her children. The daughter and her 17-year-old son were gloriously saved in that service.

The church has power that she doesn't use. She is sitting around praying for it when all she has to do is muster up the faith to use that which she has. Then we would see more manifestations of these things.

Some people feel that we do not need a prophet's ministry in the New Testament dispensation since we all have the Holy Ghost. In Old Testament times the laity did not have the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost came upon the priest, the king, and the prophet to anoint them to stand in those offices and minister. Even though the king and priest had the Holy Ghost, they would still go to the prophet for guidance. Though one may have the Holy Ghost, that doesn't mean he has the revelation gifts in operation.

As the Lord continued to deal with me concerning my prophet's ministry, He reminded me that just the day before the accident when I hurt my arm, I had

received a letter from the pastor of a large church inviting me for a meeting. Although I had made no demands of salary to him, he had promised me a rather generous amount of money if I would come to his church. At that particular time, I did need the money. If we are not careful, sometimes we preachers will do things for convenience.

I decided to write and tell him I would come to his church. However, every time I would think about it, I had a dead feeling in my spirit, almost a weight. I realized later that this was the Holy Spirit prompting me not to go. It was a stop sign that He had put there. The Lord didn't want me to go as that pastor would not have accepted my ministry. I would have been wasting my time.

Then the Lord spoke to me about an invitation I had from a small church. The pastor had asked me to come to his church, if the Lord ever led me to, but I had forgotten about it. As I prayed about it, the Lord led me to go, and when I did, we had a meeting! God blessed abundantly and many people received the Holy Ghost. Also, that little old church paid me more money than I've gotten in a long time.

We are not led by the prophet's ministry, we are led by the Lord, generally by an inward witness. But the prophet's ministry is used many times to confirm the leading that we already have. Acts 13:2 says "... **The Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.**" Notice that they were not called to be missionaries or apostles to the Gentiles that day. They already had the calling. It was just confirmed.

I held a meeting in a church in Texas some time ago. The pastor was resigning in about a month and the board of the church had asked the local presbyter to consider pastoring their church. He came to the service one night to talk with the board members. When the service was over I called him aside privately and told him that the Word of the Lord had come unto me saying that he should not accept this pastorate. The Lord had something better for him. The presbyter told me that this confirmed what he had already felt in his own spirit. He thanked the board members, but declined their invitation. Within a month a church three times as big as that one called him to pastor. This was God's plan for his ministry.

This presbyter didn't get a leading through me or through the prophet's ministry. What he already knew in his own spirit was merely confirmed, as it was in the 13 th chapter of Acts.

I was praying once with a pastor about a certain decision he needed to make. I didn't know what he wanted prayer for, but I did know that they had bought all the property around them as well as some land in another place. As we were praying together I began to speak a psalm out which was a message to him. It told him what he had been thinking and on what he was waiting. He later told me that I had said, word for word, what he had just told his wife. He had had a witness in his heart, but hadn't known for certain, and this message was just the confirmation needed. It had lifted a great burden from him and he was now sure of his way.

As the Lord dealt with me further concerning the inward witness, He cautioned me to listen to Him, as I always got in trouble when I didn't listen. He promised help in all the affairs of life, including finances and how to invest money. He said that if His children would listen to Him, He would make them wealthy. He isn't opposed to their being rich, only to their being covetous.

The matter of the inward witness does not do away with the need for

supernatural manifestations such as discerning of spirits or the word of knowledge. In ministering to people we need these, especially in the ministry of healing. Many times it is actually a spirit that bothers a person.

In 1949 a man came in the healing line for prayer for stomach trouble. He worked for a local company, but he couldn't go back to work until the doctors released him. He had been off work for several months, and was living on a diet of baby food. As I laid hands on him, the Lord revealed to me that his body was oppressed by an evil spirit. Then in a vision I saw him lying on a screened-in back porch, tossing about on his bed as the Lord dealt with him about paying his tithes. He was not a tithe payer. As I told him what the Lord had just shown me, he was amazed for this was exactly what had happened. Then when I asked him what he was going to do about it, he said he was going to obey God.

I commanded that foul spirit to leave his body in Jesus' name. Then I told him to go home and eat a T-bone steak. He did, and when he went back to the doctor, he x-rayed him and couldn't find any trace of the ulcer. The man went back to work, blessed of God both spiritually and physically, as he was free of stomach trouble and he began to pay his tithes unto the Lord.

Chapter III

The Operation of the Word of Knowledge in the Scriptures

The word of knowledge is a supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of certain facts in the mind of God. God knows everything, but He does not reveal everything He knows. He just gives a person a word of knowledge. A word is a fragmentary part of a sentence. He just gives a man what He wants him to know at the time—a part of the knowledge that He has. Many times this gift is confused with natural knowledge, but it is actually supernatural knowledge. It is something that is revealed or given by the Holy Ghost.

When John was on the Isle of Patmos, he was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, as we read in the book of Revelation. The Lord gave him a word of knowledge about seven different churches. Those churches actually existed. They may have a prophetic application for us, but they were seven literal churches that existed in Asia Minor at that time.

As John was on the Isle of Patmos, it would have been impossible in the natural for him to know the condition of those churches. It was revealed to him by the Spirit. He had knowledge given to him in vision form by the Holy Ghost, of their spiritual condition.

In the ninth chapter of Acts we read of an instance where the gift of the word of knowledge was in operation in the life of a lay member. "There was a certain disciple ..." He was a disciple, or what we would call a layman, a follower of the Lord.

And to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I am here, Lord. And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth.

Even though Ananias wasn't a minister or prophet, he wasn't a pastor or evangelist, a word of knowledge was imparted to him telling him that Saul was praying and where, and that Saul had had a vision himself. **"He hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting his hand on him ..."** That was a manifestation of this spiritual gift of the word of knowledge.

Many times the word of knowledge is confused with the profound knowledge of the Bible. But we gain a deep knowledge of the Bible by studying the Word of God. That is not a gift. If knowledge of the scriptures came through the gift of the word of knowledge, it wouldn't be necessary to study. It would just come to a person. Paul received his revelation by this method, but it is passed on to us through his writings as we study the Word of God. **"The gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."**

Then again, this word of knowledge is associated erroneously with the very real knowledge of God that comes by walking with Him. Just as in the natural we know a person better as we walk with that person and live with him, so by walking with God we learn more about Him. But that kind of knowledge comes through experience. This gift is a supernatural revelation that comes at the moment. Looking to scriptural references, we will see the difference.

When Samuel, as a small boy, was living with Eli and serving in the temple, God spoke to him (1 Sam. 3). But due to his inexperience with spiritual things, he

did not recognize the voice of the Lord. Therefore, the word of knowledge that came unto the young child Samuel could not have been the result of walking closely with God for many years. This was a supernatural manifestation of the Holy Ghost which may come to children as well as to older folks.

While Peter was at Joppa praying on a housetop, the Lord gave him a vision, revealing His plan and purpose for the Gentiles (Acts 10). After the vision had disappeared and Peter was wondering what it all meant, the Lord gave him a word of knowledge. **"Behold, three men seek thee. Arise therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, doubting nothing; for I have sent them"** (Verses 19-20). God knew those men were there to see Peter, and this was revealed to him supernaturally.

In II Kings 6:9-12 we read where the word of knowledge was used to warn a king of the enemy's plan of destruction. Every time the enemy would send his men to ambush the king of Israel, the prophet of God would tell the king where the ambush was, and the king's soldiers ambushed the ambush.

The enemy king reasoned that they must have a traitor among them, someone who was giving away their secrets. But who? Then someone spoke up and said, **"None, my lord, O king; but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speaketh in thy bedchamber."**

On another occasion the word of knowledge was used to enlighten and encourage a discouraged servant of the prophet Elisha (II King 6:17).

When Elijah was dejected to the point that he wanted to die when Queen Jezebel threatened to have his head within 24 hours, the word of knowledge came unto him saying, **"Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him"** (I Kings 19:18). Elijah could not have known this naturally. It was a supernatural revelation. God gave him a word of knowledge that strengthened and encouraged him.

The word of knowledge is also used to expose a hypocrite, as in the case of Elisha's servant, Gehazi, mentioned in the previous chapter.

Another example where the word of knowledge exposed hypocrisy and corruption in the church was the case of Ananias and Sapphira. We read in the fifth chapter of Acts where this couple conspired together to claim that they sold their property for so much and give that money to the church, but held back part of the money for themselves. When Ananias came in and put the money at the apostles' feet, Peter said, **"Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?"** (Verse 3).

The worst thing was not their keeping back part of the money for themselves, but lying about it. Peter said they lied "to the Holy Ghost." If they would have said, "We have decided that we will give 75 percent of the money and keep 25 percent for ourselves," that would have been a different matter. But they lied.

Their conspiracy was revealed to Peter through the word of knowledge. Ananias didn't get by with it, but fell dead immediately, and the young men carried him out to bury him. When Sapphira came in three hours later, unaware of the fate of her husband, she confirmed that the land had been sold for just so much—the amount that she and her husband had agreed they would tell. Then Peter told her that the men who had buried her husband were at the door to carry her out, and she fell dead.

The word of knowledge can mightily aid in effectual prayer either for God's servants in distress or for those in need of spiritual help. Again and again the

Lord has revealed to me people in need. That was a word of knowledge that He gave me about their problems.

Several years ago a minister and his wife took into their home a 17-year-old boy. They had only one child, a daughter, and she was grown and in missionary work. Therefore, they welcomed this boy as their own son.

The boy had been saved under their ministry. He had never had a mother or a real home. This couple had quite a bit of difficulty keeping him going in the right direction, but they took great interest in him and prayed much with him.

One day he went out to look for a job. While he was gone the mother was washing dishes. Suddenly she felt an urge to pray, so she left her dishes and went to prayer. As she was praying, God gave her a word of knowledge. In a vision she saw this young man downtown. Instead of going to look for a job, he stopped by the pool hall. She cried out in prayer, "Dear God, arrest him. Don't let him go back to his old way of life and old habits of sin." In the vision she saw him step about three feet inside the pool hall and stop. Then she saw him straighten up, turn around, and march out. He walked down the street to find a job and he got one.

A little while later he came home and told his mother that he had found a job. Then he said, "You know, I won a real victory today."

She said, "Yes, I know, and I'll tell you what it was. You started to go in a pool hall, stopped just inside the door, straightened up, turned around and left."

"How did you know?" he asked in astonishment.

Then she told him the Lord had impressed her with a burden to pray and then had given her the vision of the boy's struggle.

Fathers and mothers today need this manifestation of the Holy Ghost. God wants to give us supernatural help in raising our children. Many times we needlessly endure problems and trials. We have the Holy Ghost in us all of the time.

Let's stay open to Him so He can manifest Himself to us. By the manifestation of the word of knowledge the church may be purified, the distressed comforted, the saint gladdened, lost property or persons found, the enemy defeated, and the Lord Jesus glorified in all.

About the Author:

***Mark 11:23 and 24* keynote Kenneth Hagin's life and ministry.**



He first believed these startling statements from the lips of Jesus while lying almost totally paralyzed and completely bedfast from a deformed heart and incurable blood diseases. Doctors did not expect him to reach his seventeenth birthday.

But, after sixteen months bedfast, he *believed* that those Scriptures mean what they say—*acted* upon them in simple faith—and rose up healed.

Later the Lord called him to *Go teach my people faith*. The fulfilling of this calling has now spanned more than forty years with emphasis on the integrity of God's Word.