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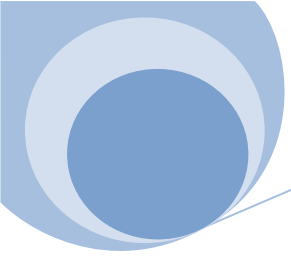
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THE MINISTRY OF PROPHETS

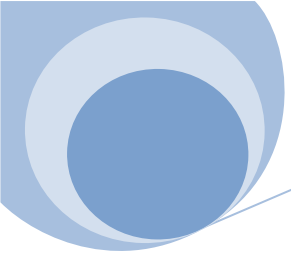
INTRODUCTION

I have always been fascinated by the prophetic ministry, having prophesied on receiving the baptism of the Holy Spirit at age thirteen and having been used by the Lord to function in the prophetic ministry over the years. I have witnessed first - hand the ministry of the prophets and am always amazed at the way God reveals himself through this gift. Many people believe that the prophet functions only to foretell the future, but an examination of the activities and lives of the Biblical prophets will reveal otherwise. A prophet in the midst of a people is a wonderful resource to have, particularly when the life of that individual brings forth good fruit.

The Ministry of Prophets explores events and characteristics in the lives and ministries of selected Bible prophets with the intention of helping the reader to understand the roles of the modern day prophet in the church and in the nations. God endows His prophets with a multiplicity of gifts for the edification of His body and the blessing of individuals and the nations in which they live so that men would worship Him. The book therefore explores the wide variety and scope in the ministry of the prophet in an attempt to help the seeker and indeed those who prophesy, to fully understand all that God has imparted in this gift so that full use and proof could be made of the ministry.

This book is dedicated to my mother, Mrs. Laurie Moss and three prophet musicians with whom I learnt much about the role of music in worship and warfare – Lyndon Moss, André Boyde and Simeon Baker. I hope these writings will bless you as much as it has blessed me and serve as an encouragement to trust God more fully with His plan for your life.

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THE MINISTRY OF PROPHETS

CHAPTER 1 - SPECIAL BIBLE PROPHETS

SAMUEL

The Greek and Hebrew words indicate that a prophet is an inspired person or speaker, a poet and foreteller. This is borne out in 2nd Peter 1:21 which says that “prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit”. The prophet therefore represents the voice, works and character of God on earth. True prophets therefore reveal God and Christ as His Son encourage others to worship Him (Rev 19: 10):

“and I fell at his feet to worship him, but he said unto me, “do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! ... the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”.

The ministry of the prophet is exemplified in the lives of bible prophets. Samuel is one of them. His name means “asked of God”. He was given to the Lord by a vow from his mother Hannah after a life of barrenness (1 Sam 1:1). She took him to the temple when he was about age two (1 Sam 2: 18; 3:1) and it was here that he grew in the presence of the Lord (1 Sam 2:21; 26). His was an interesting upbringing because he was brought up by the priest Eli whose sons committed wicked acts of adultery and desecrated the sacrifices in the temple (1 Sam 1:22). He had divine covering because he was protected from the evil influences around him. This indicates that God will divinely protect the one He calls.



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The climate in which Samuel lived was also one in which the word of the Lord was rare. There was no widespread revelation in the land. In other words, the presence of the Lord was not present in the land. Proverbs 29:18 says the people will perish without a vision or revelation. Samuel first encountered the Lord when He heard His audible voice calling his name (1 Sam 3:2 – 21). He did not yet know how to recognize the voice of the Lord nor was the word or revelation of the Lord given to him. God had raised him up right in the middle of the order, forms and rituals of temple life, signifying to us that He always desires fellowship and relationship with his sons and daughters. Samuel's experience reveals to us that the prophet is called by God and that he or she must respond to the call of God on his or her life, just like Samuel did.

Samuel's first revelation was about God's displeasure with Eli and his sons and their eventual outcome. He became established as a prophet in Israel because God did not let any of his words "fall to the ground" (1st Samuel 3:19). Obviously, he would hear from God and tell the people who proved the accuracy of all that he said. The presence of the Lord became more apparent in Shiloh where He had first revealed himself to Samuel. For the first in a long time, Israel experienced the presence of the Lord. The presence of a prophet will therefore invoke the presence of the Lord and His angels as He fellowships with His servant. Some of the key events in Samuel's life point to elements of the role of God's prophets in nations and include the following:

- ✓ He was the spiritual leader of Israel and was responsible for causing the nation to turn away from serving idols and back to the worship of the true and living God (1 Sam 7:3).
- ✓ *He interceded for Israel when they sinned against God (1 Sam 7: 5, 17).*
- ✓ *He was instrumental in national deliverance in a time of warfare, his ministry being accompanied by signs and wonders in the elements (1 Sam 7:10).*



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- ✓ *He held political office as a judge/ruler (1Sam 7:6, 15 -16). This was important because He represented God's presence in the daily affairs of His people. When Israel rejected Samuel as judge and asked for a king, God explained to him that they had, in essence, rejected the Lord as their ruler (1 Sam 8: 7). There was no dichotomy between Samuel's role as judge and spiritual head since the city in which he lived was the place from which he ruled and led the people in worship (1 Sam 7: 17). This truth points critically to the fact that God can use His servants the prophets in any arena that He chooses since He wants them to impact national life.*
- ✓ *Samuel anointed both Saul and David for leadership. However, David was a man whose heart was pleasing to God, this being the reason that the Spirit of God came upon him from the time that Samuel poured the oil upon him (1 Sam 16: 11 – 13). Prophets can therefore identify individuals whom God has chosen for leadership assignments both in the nation and in the church. This is borne out in Acts 13: 1 and 2 and has also been my own personal experience.*
- ✓ *Prophets are also responsible for the rebuke of individuals. Samuel was sent to rebuke Saul when he failed to kill all the Amalekites as the Lord had commanded him (1 Sam 15). Rebuke gives the one who has erred the opportunity to acknowledge and confess their sin, thus averting the wrath of God and further backsliding (Eze 33). The prophet Nathan also had this task to carry out after David had killed Uriah.*



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ELIJAH

Elijah's name means God is Jehovah, the self-existent, eternal God. His name is a reminder of the great and mighty power of the eternal God and this was evident in the miracles that marked his ministry. He is first introduced in 1 Kings 17 as he declares that there would be drought in Israel. He was then told by the Lord to hide by a brook called Cherith and was fed there by ravens. One of the highlights of Elijah's ministry was a power play between himself and the false prophets of Baal. He repaired the altar of the Lord and caused the people to worship the Lord through the demonstration of the power of God which caused fire to burn up a trench flooded with water (1 Kings 18). He was very passionate for the name of the Lord His God, mocking the prophets of Baal and demonstrating the awesomeness of God in a spectacular display of power.

Through his actions, Elijah demonstrated that the power of God is greater than any other and that He was the only God to be worshipped. He prepared the way for the miraculous by repairing the altar of God that had been broken down; symbolizing a return to God (1 Kings 18: 30) and building an altar in the name of the Lord to indicate the need for continued fellowship with Him (1st Kings 18: 32). This is the role of a true prophet.

Ahab the unbelieving king described Elijah as a "troubler of Israel" (1 Kings 18: 17). Prophets are usually hated for the name of the God they serve and are often seen as provoking people only because the word of the Lord may be unpopular to the powers that be. Of course, if Ahab had been a God-fearing king he would have realized the power in Elijah that he could have harnessed for his personal and national blessing.

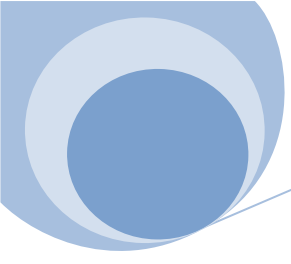


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Several other miracles were apparent in Elijah's ministry. These included the multiplication of food to the widow of Zarephat (1 Kings 17), the resurrection of her son from the dead (1st Kings 17: 17 – 23) and the return of rain after a three-year drought (1st Kings 18: 41 – 46). He also demonstrated an example of prevailing prayer as he interceded for the return of rain to Israel after the drought that he had initiated at God's command. This showed his authority over the elements. He was a forerunner of Christ the Messiah in whose ministry the two former miracles were evident, thus signifying that prophets possess great power through obedience to the word of the Lord.

DANIEL

Daniel was used by God to activate God's plans and purpose for the nation of Israel and their release from Babylon after seventy years of captivity. He was from the tribe of Judah, meaning "Praise" and was taken to Babylon as a captive in his youth. From his life we learn about the kind of character that a prophet of God should possess. He was a man of resolve who sought to please the Lord rather than man. As a result, he refused to eat the king's food which had been offered to idols and instead went on a partial fast. God honored his faith by rewarding him with favor, academic prowess, wisdom and the ability to understand visions and dreams (Dan 1). It was his life of integrity and his spiritual gifts that caused him to give counsel to four kings of diverse backgrounds (Babylonians, Medes and Persians) and caused his ministry to have longevity. Through his ministry these ungodly kings learnt about the nature, the power, might and knowledge of His God.



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His life of prayer was consistent and the ministry of intercession became evident in Daniel 9: 3 – 19 and 10: 2 – 3 as he fasted and prayed, repenting for the sins that had caused God to send them into captivity. Daniel illustrates the key intercessory role that prophets must take in watching over the affairs of nations (Ezekiel 33). As a watchman, he/she must be alert to national and international events and pray on the urging or quickening of the Holy Spirit. In the same way that Daniel's intercession and repentance paved the way for national deliverance, so can the prophet deliver nations from social unrest, natural disasters and spiritual onslaught to name a few. In the latter case, sins that are strongholds in nations can be broken down by intercession.

Biblical examples from the life of Israel showed that the nation would come under oppression by their enemies anytime the people served false gods. The outcomes included being taken captives by foreign nations; losing in warfare; rulership by foreign enemies/oppressors; national depression; loss of the fear of God; loss of a sense of justice; sickness and proliferation of depravity. The scriptures are replete with examples. The prophet Samuel gives an excellent example in 1 Samuel 7 in which he led Israel into national deliverance after a period of oppression from their enemies. This was preceded by the exposure of their sin in turning from God, national repentance and a return to the worship of God who responded by subduing the Philistines who ruled them. God therefore wants His servants to subdue everything in the nations that oppose Him so that He could bless the land and accomplish His purposes in the earth.

Daniel's intercession also activated the release of angels to deliver him from death in a lion's den. His intercessions also caused God to send angels and archangel to bring the answers to him since he was a man greatly beloved by God. Through Daniel we learn that there are demonic strongholds over the nations that can impede the prayer of the saints and that prevailing prayer and fasting can break these demonic strongholds. Daniel possessed "an excellent spirit" (Dan 6: 3) and was known as a man of great integrity and administrative ability (Dan 6: 1 – 5).



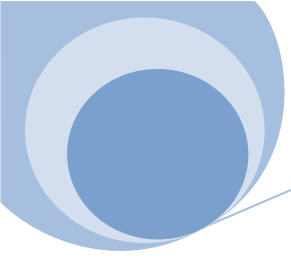
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He was a man par extraordinaire, since he excelled his compatriots and rulers of Babylon in wisdom and understanding even at a young age (Daniel 1:19 – 20). As a result he held key political positions throughout his life and was influential in the formulation of national policies. This is critical, because a heathen king decreed that his subjects should serve only Daniel's God after his miraculous deliverance from the Lion's den (Dan 6). Thus the prophet in leadership position has been given a wonderful ministry of influence, so that the plan of God can be revealed to the nation.

DAVID

David the King of Israel was a prophet (Acts 2: 30). He is first introduced in 1 Samuel 16 when Samuel anointed him as Saul's successor. The nature of the true prophet was evident in the description given to Saul whose servants told their king that David was comely, a skillful musician, a mighty valiant man of war and that the Lord was with him (1 Sam 6: 18). As a prophet, he foretold events about Christ's death (Psalms 22), his glorious exaltation (Psalms 24) and impartation of gifts to the church (Psalms 68: 18).

From David we also learn about the nature of God, ways to worship and praise God and spiritual warfare (Psalms 18). In Psalm 18, for example, the Holy Spirit reveals David's prowess in warfare. He had shed so much of his enemies' blood that the Lord did not permit him to build Him a temple of worship (1 Chron 28: 3). As a warrior, David gained supernatural strength in battle (verse 32) which enabled him to advance against troops, leap over walls (verse 29) and gave him deer's feet so that he could leap upon high places or "stand on the heights" (verse 33). The Lord also taught his hands to war and gave him the ability to bend bows of steel (verse 34). David was an athlete who had the ability to pursue, overtake and totally destroy his enemies, crushing them under his feet. They flee away but he destroys them as they call to the Lord for help (verses 40 –41). Because he was an aggressive warrior, his very voice inspired the respect



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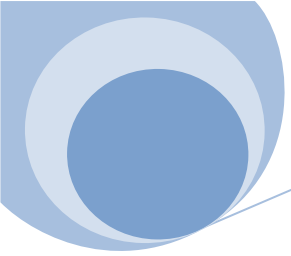
of his enemies, causing them to cower in fear (verses 44 –45). He seems to be entirely heartless when dealing with his enemies.

In the same way that David’s enemies would cower and fear exceedingly when they heard of him, even so the believer who has exercised his or her spiritual authority causes opposing spiritual forces to abate at a command or by his very presence. We are mighty in the spirit realm, aggressive, overtaking and totally annihilating the forces of hell so their weapons cannot prosper. Demons would cry out in the presence of the Lord Jesus, even confessing him as Christ (Mark 5: 6, 7).

There are times when the hosts of hell literally surround the believer like an army. God then gives through David the spiritual revelation for accomplishing the victory. These include clapping, shouting, dance (Psalm 150: 4) and high praises (Psalm 149: 6). High praises are those that attract God’s attention and cause him to come into our very midst to deliver (Psalm 22: 3). High praises are those that Jehoshaphat and Israel offered when they were going to battle against their enemies. As they sang, “praise the Lord, for His mercy endureth forever”, his enemies ambushed each other (2 Chron 20: 20 – 22).

David reveals that high praises and the word of God will bring victory over the heathen for their wicked acts against the children of God and bind the opposing spiritual forces with chains and fetters of iron. When we declare praises and declare the word of God, we bind principalities and powers and bring vengeance upon the works of the enemy, no matter what form the attack takes. The results will then be manifested in the natural realm. Destruction of the forces of hell is an honor that God gives to His children. This warfare can be executed from the headquarters of one’s own bed (Ps 149: 5 – 9). We must launch aggressive attack whenever the enemy attacks in any form, never giving the forces of hell an opportunity to prevail, for the weapons of our warfare are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds (2 Cor 10: 3 – 5).

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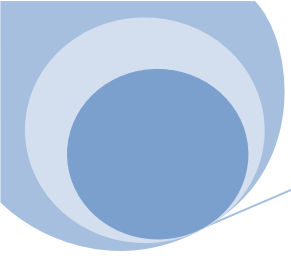
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I believe that the believer needs to become aggressive when undergoing spiritual battles. Our lifestyles should inspire this kind of divine favor in spiritual warfare, just as David's did. According to David, his righteousness, purity, faithfulness and humility had caused God to rescue him from his enemies (Ps 18: 24 – 27). We need to be always dressed in spiritual armor which includes protective gear and offensive weapons. According to Ephesians 6: 10 – 18, this gear includes the helmet of salvation, breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, belt of truth and feet fitted with the gospel of peace (NIV). The sword of the spirit or the word of God and prayer are two critical elements of the armor that are both offensive and defensive in nature.

I had a vision related to Ephesians 6: 10 – 18 sometime between 1990 and 1991 that explained this truth to me. In this vision I saw a black mass hovering over me, which I interpreted in the vision to be a host of demons. As they hovered, I saw small fiery darts of fire coming at me like arrows. I heard a voice say “shield of faith” and a shield appeared in my hand. This attack continued but could not harm me because of the shield. A man suddenly sprang at me, screaming in anger. I recognized him as the devil. Suddenly I heard a voice say “sword of the spirit”. An instrument in the shape of the prongs of a fork appeared in my hands and I started to scrape at the man's face, signifying destruction of the devil with the Word. He began to scream. At that point the vision ended suddenly.

This vision showed me that the hosts of hell could be assigned to attack a particular area of our spiritual weapon. When demons fail in their attack, the devil himself can initiate the attack. He is powerless against the most powerful element of the weapon which is the Word of God. Jesus' ability to wield the Word of God appropriately during his temptation in the wilderness caused him to defeat the plan of the devil to stop his ministry (Luke 4: 1 – 13).

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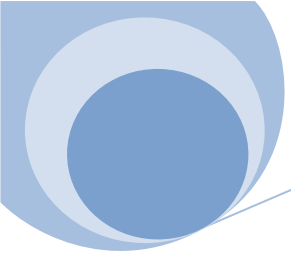


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As the believer faces the hosts of hell and spiritual attack in any arena, the Spirit of God will cause them to flee seven ways (Deut 28: 7). This implies total and complete deliverance from attack. The Holy Spirit will reveal the nature of the warfare that is to be fought in the realm of the spirit. The actions to be taken may appear unconventional in the natural realm, but in the realm of the spirit, demonic hosts are fleeing away in fear. While the foundation of the armor is found in Ephesians 6: 10 – 18 and must be adhered to at all times, God has an unlimited weaponry, tactics and strategies in war which include but are not limited to, running, leaping, bending bows of steel, beating down the enemy (Psalm 18), shouting (Joshua 7), singing and music (1 Chron 20), treading on the enemy (Luke 10: 19), uttering high praises in song, the playing of instruments and dance (Psalm 149).

Psalm 149 is also very telling in the nature of the aggression that the believer possesses in spiritual warfare. The sword is double edged, signifying extreme skill in wielding the word of God. The Word of God and the high praises of God will

*“inflict vengeance on the nations and punishment on the peoples
to o bind their kings with fetters, their nobles with fetters of iron,
to carry out the sentence written against them” (NIV)*



THE MINISTRY OF PROPHETS

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