

6 Prophetic Mandates From the Book of Jeremiah

First off I want to say that I have never considered myself a prophet, nor do I label myself as one. However, I do know from the Word of God that there is a great imbalance in the body of Christ today regarding the office of the prophet and their operation. For example, most prophets today are a polar opposite of what is given as an example in the Bible. Let me explain a little more in detail. In the book of Jeremiah, the Word of God tells us some very important things we need to know about prophets.

Prophets Are Called of God, Not appointed by Man

Jeremiah 1:5 says, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; and before you were born I sanctified you, and I ordained you a prophet to the nations.” As we see from this passage, Jeremiah was chosen of God to be a prophet before he was ever conceived in the womb. Today we have an entire slew of “self-appointed” prophets who have given themselves this title or been put in that position by their local church or a small group of their followers. A real prophet of God will *never* seek the approval or affirmation of people but will receive their call and instructions from God. If someone is given a word in the church that they are called to be a prophet, it must *always* be confirmation of what has already been revealed to them in their private devotional walk with God. Notice God revealed Himself and Jeremiah’s destiny in private, not in public.

Prophets Are Not Qualified by Age

The next thing I want to point out is that immediately after Jeremiah received his calling and assignment from the Lord, Jeremiah responded by telling the Lord he was “too young” to

accomplish what the Lord had told him to do. Here is the conversation in Jeremiah 1:6-8: "Then said I: 'Ah, Lord God! Truly, I cannot speak, for I am a youth.' But the Lord said to me: 'Do not say, "I am a youth." For you shall go everywhere that I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces. For I am with you to deliver you,' says the Lord."

The Lord reveals to us here that He is not intimidated by how young or old you are. He knows who you are, where you are and what you are capable of. After all, He created you. This same God used a young Daniel in the lion's den, three Hebrew boys to face Nebuchadnezzar, Moses in Egypt, and a crazy man in the eyes of the world to build a floating zoo to save the world. He specializes in calling the despised and the foolish to confound the wise and the mighty. Religion will try to categorize and institutionalize, but God will specialize!

Prophets Do More Than Encourage and Exhort

One of the things that really gets under my skin is that nearly all alleged prophets today seem to *never* give a word of warning or rebuke to the church or anyone in the body of Christ. This is extremely dangerous and not biblical. In fact, when we look at this next passage in the book of Jeremiah we see six mandates of a prophet. Jeremiah 1:9-10 says, "Then the Lord put forth His hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, 'Now, I have this day put My words in your mouth. See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out and to pull down, to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant.'"

1. To Root Out: This phrase in Hebrew means to expel, to pluck up, to pull up. Thus, a real prophet of the Lord will not tolerate sin in the church, city or nation. He will come in the authority of the Lord and begin to open his mouth to release an authoritative correction or rebuke regarding the things that are required to be rooted out, plucked up or

expelled! Regardless of the popularity of the message, a prophet will be obedient to the Lord and not compromise to the opinions of the people.

2. To Pull Down: This next phrase is very similar to the last one; however here I believe we are dealing with more of the level of a principality, power or stronghold over a church, city, region or nation. The true prophet of God will hear from God and know the stronghold or strongholds that these areas are contending with and through the weapons of prayer, fasting and intercession there will be breakthroughs! "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ, and being ready to punish all disobedience when your obedience is complete" (2 Cor. 10:3-6).

3. To Destroy and Throw Down: Now this one is very interesting, and will separate the men from the boys. Real prophets of the Lord will call the people to do radical things to bring deliverance, healing and breakthroughs to an individual, a church, a city or a nation. For example, Hezekiah instructed the people of God to destroy something they had turned into an idol. "He removed the high places, broke down the sacred pillars, cut down the Asherah poles, and crushed the bronze serpent that Moses had made, for until those days the children of Israel had made offerings to it. They called it Nehushtan" (2 Kings 18:4). In 2 Kings 5:14, we see the prophet Elisha instruct the commander of Syria to dip in a dirty river seven times to receive healing from leprosy: "So he went down and dipped himself in the Jordan seven times, according to the word of the man of God, and his flesh returned like the flesh of a little boy, and he was clean." I could give more examples, but the point here is that true prophets of God will make others very uncomfortable and not

complacent. They will challenge us to do radical things and even destroy what is sacred and cherished in our lives to draw us close to God and not them.

4. To Build Up and Plant: Finally, prophets will be sent to regions and nations to bring a refreshing word that will build up or exhort the people. They will release words that plant seeds of hope and refreshing to the people. In times of darkness, they will sow seeds of light. They see beyond the storms. They see beyond the current drought and famine. They see the light at the end of the tunnel. I've personally been to many churches and preached messages only to find out that years prior a prophet of the Lord had released a word that planted a seed in the heart of the people to believe for what would later come to fruition. Nehemiah came along in the midst of Israel's darkest hour and released a word to the people to "rise and build" again!

In conclusion, many times we can't build on a foundation that is corrupt, unstable or decayed; the old foundation has to be removed and replanted in order to have a sure foundation to build on. If we are expecting the next Great Awakening to come to America—or any other nation—we must first allow the true prophets of God to root out, pull down, destroy, throw down, plant and build again what the Lord originally intended. It's high time to rid ourselves of the "profits" and give ear to the *real* prophets.