

Prophecy: Beware of the Deception of Hananiahs in the Church

This morning I woke up with the words, “the year that Hananiah died” violently ringing in my heart, almost as if the Lord had burned these words upon my spirit. I could not escape this theme and felt that I needed to share this important message to all that will have ears to hear.

I know that this message will not be popular with many, but I also know that it is important, especially as storm clouds continue to gather in America and around the world with great tornadic implications in the spirit and natural realm.

I immediately began to pray this morning and ask the Lord why He was speaking this to me. It was then that I began to reflect upon the story of the false prophet Hananiah in the book of Jeremiah.

Instantly, the Lord began to download a vivid picture of this man and how much of what we categorize as “prophetic ministry,” or even ministry at all, for that matter, falls under the same description of this false prophet who was clothed with a spirit of deception.

I firmly believe that God showed me these things due to the seriousness of the hour that we currently live in and how that the level of sobriety and even dread in America and around the world compare to Jeremiah’s day. We are in very serious times that the church cannot ignore or stay asleep in any longer!

The prophetic ministry of Hananiah in Jeremiah 28 is reflective of a spirit of stupor, self-promotion, deception and compromise that encompasses a host of prophets and leaders in much of the church in the current hour.

This group of professional actors with Jesus as their mascot are completely enveloped in their own sphere of popularity, and they continue to expand their influence, even at the expense of deceiving many within the body of Christ.

They thrive on the emotional high that they get when those that they minister to and even prophecy to are in awe of their ability to thrill their emotions and make them feel spiritually impacted. This experience is repeated over and over again as these Hananiah-type characters expand their mailing lists and increase their book sales.

Let me state clearly here that I definitely believe in prophetic ministry, and I have witnessed its authenticity and have even operated in it myself on multiple occasions over the past 34 years as the Holy Spirit has graced me to do so. Therefore, please do not think I have any desire to hinder the gifts of the Spirit within the church.

However, my concern is that a good portion of the church has been duped by these modern-day false messengers who up-end biblical prophetic patterns that have stood the test of time and revealed the authentic glory of God throughout history, and especially in seasons of grave challenge.

As with Hananiah, these ticklers of the ears become bold and brash in their demonstrative displays, as Hananiah was when he took the wooden yolk from Jeremiah's neck (which, by the way, represented the state of spiritual bondage that Judah was in due to her being ruled by King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon as a result of her past disobedience to God) and broke it in two (see Jer. 28:10-11).

This outward display is clearly bold on one level, but at the same time it is gut-wrenching to see the brashness of this false prophet in the face of Jeremiah (God's true messenger and ambassador). This act reveals a complete lack of and or loss of the fear of God, which unfortunately is part and

parcel for many that serve in ministry positions in this season of church history.

To set the scene of Hananiah's false prophecy it's important to know that Zedekiah was the king of Judah during this time, but he was really only a puppet of King Nebuchadnezzar. During the time of Hananiah's false prophecy, Nebuchadnezzar was preoccupied, and as a result seemed weakened in his rule over Judah and surrounding kingdoms. Because of this, we see in Jeremiah 27 that a gathering is held with leaders from multiple kingdoms as a strategy is needed to escape the clutches of Nebuchadnezzar.

In Chapter 28, despite Jeremiah's warning regarding false prophecy relating to escaping the dominance of Nebuchadnezzar, Hananiah shows up in full prophetic fashion. He boldly proclaims that freedom and even the return of the vessels taken from the temple would be returned within two years, along with King Jeconiah and the captives that were forced to flee Judah and go to Babylon. He speaks in the name of the Lord by declaring this in Jeremiah 28:2, "Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: I have broken the yoke of the king of Babylon."

It is clear that Hananiah is no fan of Jeremiah's message of gloom that he speaks to the gathered kings in Jeremiah 27:1-11. It is in this setting where we see Jeremiah actually wearing a yoke that animals used in order to clearly display to them that they would stay subjected to Nebuchadnezzar, even though they had high hopes of a successful revolt fueled by the false prophecies of Hananiah.

There is much more to this story, but I believe you can get a sense of the setting where we behold two prophetic voices (Jeremiah and Hananiah) standoff with the glory of the God of Israel at stake. It is here that we see the display of falseness in such an egregious manner. It is also here that we are exposed to the upcoming death of Hananiah through the word

of the Lord spoken by Jeremiah.

This death is what the Lord branded upon my heart in such an overwhelming way early this morning as He showed me clear distinctions in Hananiah that are present in many today, and they must be exposed and dealt with through deep repentance.

1. Hananiah was very bold about his false prophecies. This is a picture of the pride and arrogance that so many operate in as they proclaim, "Thus says the Lord," while completely rejecting the fear of the Lord.
2. Hananiah had no humility or repentance in his life. We see this same pattern today as false leaders desecrate the ministry by way of perverse ministry passions, as well as ungodly lifestyles void of character.
3. Hananiah commanded a crowd when he prophesied and was able to sway people to him by his flattering words that rang a chord as his audience heard what tickled their ears and in turn instilled a false sense of security and peace in their hearts.
4. Hananiah had a boldness that was so audacious that he literally called Jeremiah out as a false prophet in front of others. This brashness was radical, to say the least, and it reflects the condition of the hearts of some leaders today that have allowed themselves to be overtaken by sin and deception while rejecting a true word from the Lord.

The final chapter for Hananiah was his death that Jeremiah prophesied to him in Jeremiah 28:15-17. Hear his sobering words: "Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, 'Listen now, Hananiah. The Lord has not sent you, and you make this people trust in a lie. 'Therefore thus says the Lord: I am about to cast you from off the face of the earth. This year you shall die, because you have taught rebellion against the Lord.' So Hananiah the prophet died the same year

in the seventh month.”

Then the prophet Jeremiah said to Hananiah the prophet, “Hear now, Hananiah, the LORD has not sent you, but you make this people trust in a lie. Therefore, thus says the LORD: ‘Behold, I will cast you from the face of the earth. This year you shall die, because you have taught rebellion against the LORD.’” So Hananiah the prophet died the same year in the seventh month.”

This message to Hananiah from God was strong, to say the least. God said Hananiah would die within the span of a year, and that he did. He actually died two short months after Jeremiah prophesied to him. God in His mercy gave Hananiah a span of two months to repent and prepare to meet His ultimate judge.

It is in the final scene of Hananiah’s life that we behold what the Lord showed me this morning. The true prophetic ministry in this hour will be gloriously demonstrated while at the same time, the false prophetic ministry will be exposed and experience a sure death. This death to Hananiah demonstrated the authenticity of God to His own nature and character. He will have a pure ministry and church that will know His love and mercy while embracing the wisdom that comes from the fear of God in this hour.

Let me close by offering a plea to those that traffic in false ministry displays in order to build your own kingdoms while using the Lord as validation for your actions. This is an hour where we need ministers who are broken over the condition of a dying world and backslidden church. We need leaders who know the Lord in an intimate way and can reveal His Word in this challenging time of history. We need those that can weep with the hurting and can stand in authority over the forces of darkness. We need ministers full of holy fire and deep passion for a greater place in prayer and intercession. This is who we need!

The ministries of Hananiah are being exposed, and the death nail is being driven in deep. Please, find a place of repentance before it is too late! Our God is loving, kind and merciful. However, He will not be mocked, and the time at hand demands a host of leaders/prophets who know their God and can make His purposes known to this generation. {eoa}

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