

THE NEW COVENANT PROPHET NOBODY TALKS ABOUT!

Why New Covenant prophets don't look like Old Testament prophets

Old Testament prophets primarily represented God to the people as covenant prosecutors (ENFORCERS) and authoritative spokesmen. New Testament prophets primarily function within the body of Christ as Spirit-empowered EQUIPPERS who strengthen, encourage, reveal, and help guide believers under the authority of Christ and His apostolic teaching.

The gift remains prophetic, but the covenant context changes dramatically.

OLD TESTAMENT PROPHETS: Their Primary Role

The Old Testament prophet often stood as God's direct representative to a covenant nation.

Key Functions

Covenant Prosecutor

Prophets constantly called Israel back to the Law.

Examples:

- Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Amos

Their message was often:

"You have broken covenant. Repent or judgment is coming."

I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put My words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. And whoever will not listen to My words that he shall speak in My name, I Myself will require it of him. But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name that I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that same prophet shall die.' And if you say in your heart, 'How may we know the word that the Lord has not spoken?'— when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the word does not come to pass or come true, that is a word that the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously. You need not be afraid of him (Deuteronomy 18:18-22).

Then the Lord put out His hand and touched my mouth. And the Lord said to me, "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth. See, I have set you this day over nations and over kingdoms, to pluck up and to break down, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant" (Jeremiah 1:9-10).

Characteristics

- Spoke with divine authority

- Often introduced messages with:
 - "Thus says the Lord" OR "The word of the Lord came to me"
- Frequently addressed nations
- Confronted kings
- Pronounced judgments
- Called for repentance

National Leadership Role

Many prophets shaped the destiny of Israel.

Examples:

- Samuel anointed kings
- Nathan confronted David
- Elijah challenged Ahab
- Isaiah counseled kings

Receivers of Revelation

God often revealed His plans through prophets.

*For the Lord GOD does nothing without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets.
(Amos 3:7)*

NEW TESTAMENT PROPHETS: Their Primary Role

After the Holy Spirit was poured out after Pentecost – everything changed!

Why?

Under the New Covenant:

- Every believer has the Holy Spirit.
- Every believer can know God personally.
- Every believer can hear God's voice.
- Scripture is the final authoritative revelation.

Now – ALL can hear God's voice and prophesy...

(Prophesied from Joel): And in the last days it shall be, God declares, that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams; even on My male servants and female servants in those days I will pour out My Spirit, and they shall prophesy (Acts 2:17-18).

*For you can all prophesy one by one,
so that all may learn and all be encouraged (1 Corinthians 14:31).*

*The one who prophesies speaks to people for their upbuilding and
encouragement and consolation (1 Corinthians 14:3).*

*But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or outsider enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to
account by all, the secrets of his heart are disclosed, and so, falling on his face, he will
worship God and declare that God is really among you (1 Corinthians 14:24-25).*

In the Old Testament: The Spirit came upon selected individuals.

Examples:

- Prophets
- Kings
- Priests

In the New Testament: The Spirit is poured out on all believers.

IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, PROPHETS (AS LEADERS) ARE EQUIPPERS

*And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip
the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the
unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure
of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro
by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in
deceitful schemes. (Ephesians 4:11-15)*

Notice:

The goal is not ruling the church.

The goal is equipping the church.

Old Testament prophets rarely equipped others into prophetic ministry.

New Testament prophets are specifically given to equip saints.

Old Testament prophets were often solitary figures.

New Testament prophets frequently operate within leadership teams.

New Covenant prophets are not known primarily by their prophecies, but their ability to equip
and empower others to hear God's voice and discern rightly by His Spirit.

Agabus as New Covenant prophet:

Now in these days prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch. And one of them named Agabus stood up and foretold by the Spirit that there would be a great famine over all the world (this took place in the days of Claudius). So the disciples determined, every one according to his ability, to send relief to the brothers living in Judea. And they did so, sending it to the elders by the hand of Barnabas and Saul (Acts 11:27-30).

While we were staying for many days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea. And coming to us, he took Paul's belt and bound his own feet and hands and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'This is how the Jews at Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'" When we heard this, we and the people there urged him not to go up to Jerusalem. Then Paul answered, "What are you doing, weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be imprisoned but even to die in Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus." And since he would not be persuaded, we ceased and said, "Let the will of the Lord be done." (Acts 21:10-14)

Notice:

- Agabus revealed what would happen. - He did not command what Paul must do.
- Paul weighed the prophecy and still chose his course.
- That is very different from Old Testament prophetic authority.

The Most Significant Difference: Prophecies Are Weighed

Old Testament

A true prophet's word carried direct divine authority.

To reject God's prophet was to reject God.

Remember Duet 18 – they will die!

New Testament

All prophecy is evaluated and weighed (whether a leader or not)!

Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others weigh what is said (1 Corinthians 14:29).

*Do not despise prophecies, but test everything; hold fast what is good
(1 Thessalonians 5:20-21).*

Notice:

- The prophecy is not automatically treated as infallible.
- It is tested.

- Introduces mutual accountability.
- That instruction never appears regarding Old Testament prophetic declarations.

What Stayed the Same?

The following remained true in both covenants:

- Receive revelation from God
- Speak God's heart
- Call people toward righteousness
- Expose sin
- Reveal future events at times
- Warn of danger
- Encourage obedience
- Strengthen God's people

Examples:

- Agabus predicting famine (Acts 11)
- Judas and Silas strengthening believers

Judas and Silas, who were themselves prophets, encouraged and strengthened the brothers with many words (Acts 15:32).

Old Testament Prophet

Spoke primarily to covenant nation

Covenant prosecutor

Direct representative of God to people

Often stood alone

Words carried governmental authority

Spirit upon selected individuals

Focused on covenant obedience

Frequently addressed kings and nations

"Thus says the Lord" authority

People obeyed prophet's authority

New Testament Prophet

Speaks primarily to church

Equipper of saints

Spirit-filled servant among God's people

Functions in teams

Words are weighed and tested

Spirit available to all believers

Focused on edification, exhortation, comfort, and equipping

Primarily serves the church

Revelatory ministry under apostolic doctrine and Scripture

Believers discern and weigh prophecy

Theological Conclusion

The New Testament prophet is not a lesser prophet than those in the Old Testament. Rather, he or she functions in a different covenant. The greatest shift is that prophets are no longer the exclusive channel through which God's people hear His voice. Under the New Covenant, prophets help the church hear and respond to God, but they do so as fellow members of Christ's body whose revelations are subject to Scripture, discernment, and mutual accountability.

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