

They Knew Not

The Voice Of The Prophets

These meditations proceed from a fresh sense of the working of God's Spirit in the midst of God's people. We have been experiencing the turning of His face towards us in a new way and we don't want to miss what He has for us at this turning point. My appeal to each one who reads this message is to approach this word with much brokenness of the inner man. Let us be thankful to God and be available to His Spirit. Let none of us approach this study of His word with a desire other than to know, perceive and be conformed to God's mind and His revealed will. Let us not be satisfied with receiving some kind of mental and religious understanding of His word, but earnestly crave to hear the voice of God and experience the working of His Spirit in our inner man. All of us need to be exposed to a further working of His Spirit in our lives—to be saturated with something that is initiated in heaven. My prayer is that the Breath of Heaven would touch our lives in a fresh way through these meditations.



TOPICS IN THIS ISSUE

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Beloved, God is concerned about His people for there is so much that is breaking down in the spiritual realm. His testimony in the earth lies in ruins and God's people are in a state of spiritual captivity—they are outside what God has destined for them. The majority of His people have become an earthly order rather than representing His heavenly order. But God has not given up—nothing surprises the Lord—He longs to restore His people. If we desire to move on with Him, He will extend His good right arm towards us. Even though God knows the end of some people yet He will bless them and help them. That is our God. But let us be quick and eager to hear the voice of the prophets.

THE VOICE OF THE PROPHETS

Act 13:27. For they that dwell at Jerusalem, and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor yet the voices of the prophets which are read every sabbath day, they have fulfilled them in condemning him.

Act 13:27 (Amplified Bible). For those who dwell in Jerusalem and their rulers, because they did not know or recognize Him or understand the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, have actually fulfilled these very predictions by condemning and sentencing [Him].

The writer of the Book of Acts, i.e. the Holy Spirit, says that they knew not the voice of the prophets. They knew Him not because they did not hear or understand the voice of the prophets. They failed to know God and recognize the prophets because they did not understand the utterances of the prophets.

Heb 1:1 God who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners

Our object in these meditations is to have a look at the diverse

voices and manners of God speaking to us in our times and in our lives. The Bible says that in these last days God has spoken to us by His Son. So our meditations will focus on this one object—to see what this means to us in these days. This is not a full scale study of the prophets but just some salient points that the Spirit is providing for our instruction. However, the Lord spoke in the prophets or by the prophets in ways.

There are specific things that the Lord wants to speak to His remnant in these critical times. They are for our instruction, our comfort, our guidance and our warning and our maturing in these end times. It is necessary to be open to God so that the Spirit can change our lives. As we read in God's word, the old things have passed away (2 Cor 5:17). That is the sign of a man and woman progressing in God—that the things of the past have left and new things in Christ come in and begin to develop and rise up. We must have a heart of the kind that let goes of things in our attitudes, desires, or ambitions. We ought to be in a place where we accept and cling to things which are new in Christ.

The apostle Paul said that it was necessary to leave behind those things which are behind and hold on to those things which are before. "Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before," (Phil 3:13). That is the attitude, mentality and posture which we need to maintain in these days. Forgetting is an important ingredient of our lives: let us not forget this! There are things which we need to leave behind and press on. Let there be a heart in God's people—a broken heart, a contrite spirit—that alone will help us to move on in His purpose in these days.

Acts 13:27 tells us that for hundreds of years on every Sabbath day the words of the prophets were read in the midst of God's people. The statement made therein is a very astonishing and arresting one and in itself becomes a message and a warning from

the prophets. It says in very precise terms that the ‘prophets’ were read in the temple at Jerusalem; they were read in various synagogues; and they were read far and wide for the hearing of God’s people. And all the while, the Scriptures were heard through the mouths of priests and synagogue leaders! The Scriptures were read out with one intention—that through the mouths of those who read out the Scriptures, the people would in fact hear what the prophets spoke. But what happened was that **the rulers and the people missed the voice of the prophets through what was being read. The words, the Scriptures, and the sounds, were heard, times without number, whenever the people assembled together, but the voices of the prophets went unheard, un-discerned and undetected. What a tragedy!** The Lord spoke to His people in diverse manners through the prophets but their voices were ignored. The vital message of the prophets went unheard and was of no avail. The mind and the will of the Lord which was revealed through the prophets was neither detected nor discerned. The one purpose and object of God to reveal Himself through the prophets went unrecognized. The whole purpose of their coming together, to detect and discern His voice through the prophets was nullified. **The people came together but they missed the inner meaning of the words that were read out and they missed the vital, life-giving message. They missed that one inclusive object and the message went unrecognized!**

But that was not all; **the tragic result of all they heard resulted in a violent and grievous contradiction. This is what is so sad! When they read the Scriptures, not only did the voice of the prophets go undetected, but the tragic result was that the people became violent and rose-up in grievous contradiction to the very word they heard!** They began act in contrary ways, to do deeds that were differing and in contradiction to the will and pleasure of God. Sabbath after Sabbath, they did what was opposite to all that they heard. What a calamity! They gave themselves to doing things that were contrary to and violently against what the prophets were speaking. Instead of improving their lives and profiting from

the things that the prophet told them, they not only paid no heed to their counsel, but they spoke and acted against them. The Scriptures say that they stood on a ground of condemnation because they condemned the prophets by their actions. These thoughts bring a greater challenge to us who are living in the end times. The same things are happening in the midst of God's people today and greater dimensions than those days.

Thus at the very outset we are challenged as to the result of all that we hear spiritually and the value of all that has come to us. **Saints, what will the verdict be when the 'voices' are no longer to be heard?** It is, however, very important to be aware of the issue upon which the final judgments and verdict will rest. God has spoken in times past, in diverse manners (Heb 1:1); He has revealed His will in many different ways and places through the words that have been spoken by the prophets. All that God has spoken is centered in the Son. The prophets-of-old spoke of the Lord. But the people did not detect the voice of the prophets and as a result they knew Him not. They missed Him and could not recognize Him. Had they detected and discerned the prophets, they would have also recognized Christ when He stood before them. But, they turned violent and went against Him; they did things that were contrary to all they had heard. Will history repeat itself in these end times?

THE PROPHETS SPOKE OF CHRIST

Figuratively speaking, we have been hearing the 'Scriptures' on every Sabbath (gathering of the saints) for several years. Yet the question that needs to be answered is have we heard the voice of the prophets! I am sure that many of God's people are guilty of not hearing the voice of the Lord though they had heard a message or a teaching. Beloved, it is not a matter of our intelligence; for our spiritual life does not depend on our intellectual ability. Our intellect can not save us, nor can it help us to further our spiritual lives. It is not a matter of our education, our intelligence or our mental capacities.

Spiritual life is one of conception. You are a Christian, a child of God by conception and not by education or by instruction. Your spiritual life has been initiated by God; we are born from above as



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children of God; **it is a work of the Spirit and not of the intellect or of the ability of man.** “*But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: 13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*”

(John 1:12-13) Therefore, our growth and progression must also come through His Spirit and His Word. None of us can ever educate someone to become a Christian!

Our birthing, our growth and subsequent progression is a work of the Spirit and the Word. The Holy Spirit

uses the Word to produce this life in us initially and subsequently as well. It is a matter of being available to the Spirit of God and the Word of God.

Men missed the vital message that God had for His people in the past. The messages that God sent His people through the prophets were disregarded and went unnoticed. God had sent His word through the prophets for one purpose only—that the people would give His Son the right place and measure. **This has been the consummate issue through the ages.** That is what we read in Acts 13: 27. The consummate issue before every generation and every dispensation is the measure given to Jesus Christ the Son of God. God is concerned with the recognition of His Son; He is concerned with the degree of knowledge we have pertaining to the Son. The Scriptures say that the people knew Him not. The Amplified Bible says that they did not recognize or understand the utterances of the prophets. Jesus said that all the prophets spoke of Him. He told the Pharisees, “*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me*” (John 5:39). This is

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the consummate issue of the Scriptures—that we may know Him, that we may recognize Him. Jesus said in His day, “The prophets have spoken about me.” The prophets had much to speak of the eternal Son of God.”

The prophets spoke to God’s people about several matters such as idolatry in the house of God, idolatry in the life of God’s people, and worship of other gods. They spoke about the moral condition and degradation of God’s people. They talked about their activities that had become formal. They told the people of the external activities that they were holding on to while missing the essence. They exposed the condition of the people’s hearts and laid bare the nature of their religious activities. **The prophets spoke of all these things and yet, the main thing, the focus of their messages was all about Christ, the eternal Son.** We read in the Gospel of *Luke* “*Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken: Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.*” (Luke 24:25-27). This is the reason that Jesus Christ attested, “The prophets have spoken about me.” The prophets saw Him and they wrote about Him. They pointed to Him. Jesus said, “They have written about me” He made a personal reference to them. He said that they spoke all about Him.

Saints, we all need to know that ultimately all the judgments of God will turn on one thing—the Son. God’s judgments will not hinge on our sins, be they a few or many more. His judgments will ultimately turn upon one thing and that is His Son. He will judge all men by one Man, which is Christ, the Son. **Everything hangs upon one thing—the place and measure given to Christ.** That is what is important in the eyes of the Lord. There are many issues before us—problems of various kinds, weaknesses, and infirmities. There are a multitude of things in us which are not in consonance with the perfect will of God and with God’s Word, but the most important issue is the place and the measure that Christ has in our lives. That is the most

important issue in the eyes of the Father. The Eternal God can forgive all sins however bad or terrible they may be. Every sin under the sun can be forgiven by God. **However, there is one sin which the Father can never forgive, and for which there is no provision in God's economy. That is the rejection of the Son.** So, the place and the measure of the Son is what the Father looks for in everything. Everything is going to be judged by this measure. We read in the book of Acts "*Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead*" (Acts 17:31)

God expected the children of Israel to hear the prophets by the reading of the Scriptures through which they would know and recognize His Son. That was the main purpose of sending His word to the people through the prophets. The consummate issue is the same even today as far as God is concerned. All hearing and reading of the Scriptures must culminate in a growing and true knowledge of the Son! Every message must result in knowing Him more. **Even today, God's concern is how much of Christ comes forth in us.** Even today, God is looking for His Son in the midst of His people. The issue today is no different from the issue in the days of the prophets. What is bound up in hearing the Scriptures today is the same as it was in earlier days. When we hear the Scriptures or messages, how much of Christ comes forth in us? What is the result of hearing the Scriptures Sabbath after Sabbath? There are many things that are happening in our lives, but the most important thing is the formation of the place and measure of Christ.

In the Old Testament prophets, the most important issue was the place of Christ in the lives of the people. **But in the New Testament, it is both the place and the measure of Christ that is most important.** The Old Covenant, its sacrifices, its offerings, its priesthood and all that the people did related to their place in Christ. The shadows of the Old Testament pointed to the substance and the reality of Christ. But in the New Testament it is different—

both the place of Christ and the measure of Christ are significant. When we gather together to worship and hear the Lord what matters is not only the place but also the measure of Christ in us. We need to realize this issue at the very outset of our meditations. The real issue in our assembling together is not just the place but also the reality and measure of His life within each one of us

THE PLACE AND MEASURE OF CHRIST

Epistles in the New Testament are primarily concerned with the ‘measure of Christ’ in believers. In every epistle that apostle Paul wrote, the burden of the Spirit was that the measure of Christ may be increased, both individually and corporately (or collectively). That is the burden of the Spirit even today. The final outcome of all the reading and the hearing of the Scriptures must be to bring us to a definite place and a measure of Christ, individually and collectively. In Isaiah we read,

Isa 6:9-10, KJV “ And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed.”

The day that we are not able to hear the voice of the prophets will be a tragic day for sure! The Lord told the prophets-of-old that the more they spoke to the people the more the people would be blinded. What a tragedy! He brought His judgments upon the people because the people refused to hear the prophets. The Lord said to the prophets, “Make their ears heavy and make their eyes blind.” What a ministry! The prophets were sent to open the eyes of the people, but a day came when the Lord asked them to minister in a way that would prevent the people from seeing! This seems to contradict the purpose of God for were not the prophets sent to open their eyes and ears? Yes, but the Lord told Isaiah to make

their ears heavy! Let us, therefore, not miss the true ways of God; let us not bypass God's will in our lives.

There is a burden and travail within me to bring this word to the people of God today so that they may not miss whatever the Lord has for them. It is God who initiates everything spiritual; it is God's Spirit that brings forth life. On our part it is all a matter of how one responds to the words, sounds, and scriptures that the Spirit provides. Ask Saul of the Old Testament! The Spirit of the Lord was upon him at one time. He could hear the Lord. But his disobedience cost him much: he lost the ability to hear the Lord. He stopped speaking to the prophet. He could no longer hear God. That was the cause of his utter frustration. Beloved, the voice of God that opens some ears can also make the ears of others heavy. God is not a respecter of persons. The word that comes forth today from the true ministries of God will make some ears hear and some eyes see, but they can also shut the eyes and ears of others so that they will be unable to see or hear His voice. The word that brings life to some people can also bring death to those who refuse to respond to Him. It has to do with the heart. God did not tell the prophets to make the ears and eyes of every unbeliever heavy and blind, but He told them to tell His own people that He would make their ears heavy and eyes blind. Why did God do this? In the book of Revelations, God says to His people, "He that hath an ear let him hear!" These words are repeatedly mentioned in the book of Revelations.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God. (Rev 2:7)

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death. (Rev 2:11)

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden

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manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. (Rev 2:17)

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. (Rev 2:29; 3:6; 3:13; 3:22)

Why does God say to His own people, “*He that hath an ear, let him hear*”? God knows that every eye is not a seeing eye and every ear is not a hearing ear. The issue is our spiritual hearing. We ought to have an ear to hear what the Spirit is saying ‘now’. The Spirit is speaking, but not every ear is given to hearing the voice of the Spirit or the voice of God in the present hour. How true this is today. The issue is just one thing – hearing the voice of the Lord in all that we hear. There is a specific voice and expression which the Spirit brings forth in every gathering of His people. The consummate issue is the place and measure of Christ. **It is not ‘many other things’ which comprise Christianity but the degree of Christ Himself in us!** The people were not able to detect or discern the voice of the prophets in the Old Testament. What about you? In their time, clearly the tragedy happened not because the prophets were unfaithful, but because the people of God who heard the prophets failed to respond to them.. The voices of the prophets and all that came through the mouth of those who read the Scriptures were rendered totally null and void.

Dear saints, God is just as much concerned about His people today as He was then. It is with the object of catching the ‘voice’ of the prophets, to consider them and their message that the Scriptures are read and spoken even today, dearly beloved. We gather together for one purpose—namely to discern and detect the voice of the prophets, so that we in turn may have a greater ‘place’



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for Christ and greater 'measure' of Christ.

Certainly God is merciful and faithful, but He will meet you and me on the same ground that we meet Him. On what ground do you want to meet Him? He will meet you on the same ground. The same voice of God that opens the eyes of men also shuts the eyes of men. The voice that opens the ears of some will also make the ears of others heavy. God is concerned about His remnant people. He wants to do a work in us. He wants us to hear His voice in this crucial hour. Let us approach Him in brokenness so that we may also perceive, discern and detect the voice of prophets. This alone will enable us to come into the true place and measure of Christ. God desires His remnant in this day to reach out for His Son.

Beloved, the place and the measure of His Son is no longer the object of the gathering of God's people today in many places. **It is reduced to this and that and many other things concerning religious Christianity and their ministry. The spiritual life is totally reduced to many things being done unto the Lord.** It is a human agenda every time. It is no longer the place and the measure of His Son. Oh, what a tragedy! **Who will hear this cry of today's prophets! Where are such voices as the voice of the apostle Paul in all the letters in the New Testament? Oh, the burden and the cry of the man of God in his generation is being resounded today in the ears of those who really seek for God's highest in this hour.**

If you are part of God's remnant today, you will hear that burden and cry, dearly beloved. How can you miss that voice, the burden and the travail of the Holy Spirit! **May we not forget the issue upon which the final judgment and verdict will rest**

I would close with a prayer request that this meditation not be treated merely as 'the letter of the word', but be considered as 'the spirit of the word'! Amen!