

# The Antichrist Prophet

by Stella Paterson

The feverish search by many to learn the identity of "the Antichrist" has produced a plethora of ideas--all spoken with an air of authority. In this time of financial turbulence and political mayhem there have emerged "prophets" to give their spin on what is about to occur. Of course, they all attempt to prognosticate using Bible passages to validate their words. We hear them on television, read them in magazines, on the Internet and on mailing lists sent to subscribers, many of whom have itching ears.

People today have a lust for "prophetic words" to tell them what is coming. With ears wide open, they are ready to receive anything that is spoken as a "thus saith the Lord" *prophetic* word. There seems to be little discernment as to whether the *prophecy* is inspired by the Spirit of God, or simply the words of a popular "prophet."

Who are the true prophets and who are the false? Who is the "antichrist prophet?" What does the Bible say?

## **Prophets, prophets everywhere!**

In the Bible we learn that prophets were God's mouthpiece. He has always had those who conveyed His message to the people. God's prophets almost always called the hearers to repentance, using impassioned pleas for them to turn from destructive paths and actions for the sake of their eternal souls. We also find numerous accounts of false prophets who misled and deceived God's people. And to this day we have both true and false prophets.

In the New Testament, there is reference to God's prophets. The Apostle Paul spoke of the various functions--gifts provided by our Lord for His body. "*And He gave some as apostles, and some as **prophets**, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints for the work of ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ...*" (Eph 4:11-12 EMTV)

May I add here that there is no such thing as an "office" of any of the above functions. As we covered in the word study on "minister" we found the misused word "office," courtesy of the King James translators.

Both the Hebrew (O.T.) and Greek (N.T.) words for *prophet* have the same definition: "a *prophet* or (generally) *inspired* man" [Hebrew]. "...a *foreteller* ("prophet"); by analogy an *inspired speaker*" [Greek].

The question would be, "where does the *inspiration* come from?"

If God is the Source, His Spirit gives the inspiration and the prophet is true--his words will come to pass. If the source is the evil, fleshly store of "self"--rooted in the knowledge of good and evil--the prophet is false and his words will not come to pass. He is an "antichrist" prophet, opposing Messiah who came to free us from sinful "self." Those may seem like strong words, but we are accountable to God for everything we do in the name of Holy Spirit "inspiration."

It is very common these days to find those who call themselves "prophets," or are seen by others as "prophets." There is a difference between one who is given a word of prophecy to utter in a group setting, or on a personal level, and one who is a prophet. Merely giving a prophetic word does not make one a prophet. What we are focusing on in this article is the "prophet"--both true and false.

False prophets have been around for millennia. In the first five verses of Deuteronomy 13, we learn how a false prophet "arises from among the people" and causes them to turn away from the Lord. The prophet's signs and wonders served only to turn people to other gods.

Do we have "false prophets" today who cause God's people to begin following them, rather than point the hearers to Jesus? How many are there who publicly proclaim they are prophets and "wear" the title as though it were a "badge of authority?" Do they not know the life and calling of a true prophet? Have they ever been alone with God in the secret place, agonizing over the souls of men and women before going out and speaking the words God has given them? The calling of God to be a true prophet is not a thing to be trifled with.

Unlike the prophets who "arise up from among the people," there is Another who was prophesied in Deuteronomy 18:18-19. *"I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and I will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that **whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him.**"* There is no need for further emphasis--the bold text says it all.

Why is it that man prefers to follow after "prophets" rather than hear the words spoken by the greatest Prophet of all? Jesus did not mince words. He addressed the Pharisees of His day with great vehemence over their legalistic deeds, while they neglected love, mercy and obedience to the words He spoke. His words would be no less true for the "Pharisees" of today.

### **Where are the prophets?**

God still has His true prophets. The only thing is, where are they? and why are they not recognized and received by those who profess to be part of the "body of Christ?"

The Bible gives us many examples of true prophets. Jeremiah, for one, was told this: "*Before I formed you in the belly I knew you; and before you came forth out of the womb I sanctified you, and I ordained you a prophet unto the nations.*" (Jeremiah 1:5) This young prophet was concerned about the call on his life and this is the response he heard from the Lord: "*See, I have this day set you over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.*" (Jeremiah 1:10) Read Jeremiah and learn of the strong words the Lord God had him speak to the nations.

Unlike the prophets of old, today's "prophets" like to speak comforting, encouraging or ear-tickling words so they can be popular and have a good following. Look at Jeremiah's Spirit-inspired words to such as already existed in his time: "*Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the LORD, that use their tongues, and say, He saith. Behold, I am against them that prophesy false dreams, saith the LORD, and do tell them, and cause my people to err by their lies, and by their lightness; yet I sent them not, nor commanded them: therefore they shall not profit this people at all, saith the LORD.*" (Jeremiah 23:31-32)

When eternal souls are at stake, God's true prophets speak His words--at risk of being shunned and even persecuted. They care nothing for themselves but to heed the call of God Whom they serve in whole-hearted surrender to His will. And for the souls of men, they will be willing to suffer like Jeremiah, as we read about here: "*My lord the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is...*" (Jeremiah 38:9)

### **Picture of a prophet**

I would like to quote here from Leonard Ravenhill's *Picture of a Prophet*.

"The group, challenged by the prophet because they are smug and comfortably insulated from a perishing world in their warm but untested theology, is not likely to vote him "Man of the year" when he refers to them as habituates of the synagogue of Satan!

"The prophet comes to set up that which is upset. His work is to call into line those who are out of line! He is unpopular because he opposes the popular in morality and spirituality. In a day of faceless politicians and voiceless preachers, there is not a more urgent national need than that we cry to God for a prophet! The function of the prophet, as Austin-Sparks once said, "*has almost always been that of recovery.*"

"The prophet is God's detective seeking for a lost treasure. The degree of his effectiveness is determined by his measure of unpopularity. Compromise is not known to him.

He has no price tags.  
He is totally "otherworldly."  
He is unquestionably controversial and unpardonably hostile.  
He marches to another drummer!  
He breathes the rarefied air of inspiration  
He is a "seer" who comes to lead the blind.  
He lives in the heights of God and comes into the valley with a "thus saith the Lord."  
He shares some of the foreknowledge of God and so is aware of impending judgment.  
He lives in "splendid isolation."  
He is forthright and outright, but he claims no birthright.  
His message is "repent, be reconciled to God or else...!"  
His prophecies are parried.  
His truth brings torment, but his voice is never void.  
He is the villain of today and the hero of tomorrow.  
He is excommunicated while alive and exalted when dead!  
He is dishonored with epithets when breathing and honored with epitaphs when dead.  
He is a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, but few "make the grade" in his class.  
He is friendless while living and famous when dead.  
He is against the establishment in ministry; then he is established as a saint by posterity.  
He eats daily the bread of affliction while he ministers, but he feeds the Bread of Life to those who listen.  
He walks before men for days but has walked before God for years.  
He is a scourge to the nation before he is scourged by the nation.  
He announces, pronounces, and denounces!  
He has a heart like a volcano and his words are as fire.  
He talks to men about God.  
He carries the lamp of truth amongst heretics while he is lampooned by men.  
He faces God before he faces men, but he is self-effacing.  
He hides with God in the secret place, but he has nothing to hide in the marketplace.  
He is naturally sensitive but supernaturally spiritual.  
He has passion, purpose and pugnacity.  
He is ordained of God but disdained by men."

How do the "prophets" we now see in abundance compare with such a description?

Shame on us for giving ear to the empty words of "pillow prophets" who fail to call us to repentance! Are we so full of self that we are willing to settle for their promised (false sense of) peace, believing we are "right" with God? Are we that deceived that we may fail to examine our hearts before a Holy God?

## **Spirit of prophecy**

Read this verse from the last book of the Bible: "*And I fell before his feet to worship him. But he said to me, 'See that you do not! I am your fellow servant, and of your brothers who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For **the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.**'*" (Revelation 19:10 EMTV)

The Greek word for *testimony* is defined as "evidence given." This tells us that true prophecy points to Jesus--there is "evidence" that He is in it. Let's rephrase that part of the verse. "The evidence given of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

When it comes down to the last days upon this earth, will we have the "testimony of Jesus?" Or, will we still be looking for the latest from the multitude of "antichrist prophets?"

***He who testifies these things says, "Surely I come quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.*** (Revelation 22:20)