

Understanding Prophecy

Two terms to understand

Judging prophecy is the act of discerning if a prophecy was given by the Spirit of God.

Interpreting prophecy is the act of coming to an understanding of what a prophecy means.

Keys for hearing from the Lord

- Earnest desire: Psalm 119:2; Jeremiah 29:13
- Also remember: concentrate, have an open heart, carefully word your questions

Interpreting prophecy

- The gifts of wisdom, understanding, and discernment: Daniel 8:15
- Prayerful counsel with faithful and wise fellow believers: 1 Corinthians 14:29; Proverbs 11:14; 15:22; 19:20–21; 27:9
- Be guided by the Word: Psalm 119:105
- Be open to the Lord.
- Prophecy cannot be interpreted by using carnal reasoning: Proverbs 3:5–6; 2 Peter 1:20
- When you do not understand: Isaiah 55:9
- Even Bible prophets did not always understand: Daniel 12:8a; Ezekiel 3:14–15
- What if a prophecy does not seem to come true? 1 Corinthians 13:8–9

Warnings about false prophecy

- A false prophet leads you away from God: Deuteronomy 13:1–3
- A false prophet will not lift up Jesus as the only begotten Son of God: 1 John 4:1–2
- False prophets claim greatness for themselves: Matthew 24:4–5,11
- A false prophet may perform “great signs,” but not by the Lord’s power: Matthew 24:23–24

For Your Quiet Times: “Hear My Words!”

Messages from Jesus

Fear not to hear and to give My Words in prophecy, for they are a lamp unto your feet and a light unto your path. You have learned to follow in many ways, but this gift I would refine—this special gift, this closeness, this close following, hand in hand, heart to heart, mind with mind. I would have you follow closer than ever before. So neglect not the gift that is within you. Neither neglect My other gifts. But this is the time I have chosen to refine this gift, to polish it, and make it a jewel of great price to all My children—not only to a few prophets, but to many prophets.

A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid, and I would have all My children as shining lights—lights that shine in the darkness the world over! For the day is coming and even now is, when darkness shall cover the earth. You have need of this close, personal communication and hearing from Me, so that I may lead and guide you to the end.

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For My Words are powerful! They are life, they are truth, they are energy! They will give you the strength and the grace to carry on. They will give you the answers and the solutions to every situa-

tion. They will supply your every need. They will provide direction and guidance and counsel. They will support you when you feel weary or weak, and they will sustain you when you feel faint. They will provide peace when you feel confused and tired. They will provide energy and grace when you feel you cannot go on.

Draw on My Words! Draw on My voice! Be desperate! Just lie back in My arms and pray desperately, and I will come to you. I will answer your call. I will come quickly to you and fulfill your need.

Mountain Streams: Faith!

By David Berg

It's easy to hear from the Lord. You just have to have faith. When you ask the Lord for an answer to a question or problem, *expect* an answer and take the first thing that comes. If you want the Lord to answer and really believe He can and will, you won't be disappointed. What you see or hear with the eyes or ears of your spirit, that's the Lord answering. It will be such a comfort to you. Expect God to answer. Just open up your heart and let it in.

Hearing from the Lord is your spiritual nourishment: You've got to be able to hear from Him in order to grow spiritually. A baby is a good illustration of this principle: When you're asking the Lord to speak, you're like a baby crying for food—in this case, the spiritual food you need to live on.

When a baby is crying for his mother, she wouldn't think of refusing him. That little baby has more faith than a lot of adults do when they pray, because the baby *expects* someone to hear him when he cries. He knows—God put it in him to know—that if he calls, his mother will answer. He expects an answer, and he gets it. If he asks for milk, his mother is certainly not going to deny him or give him something else (Luke 11:11–13). She's going to give him what he needs. Just so, when you ask God to speak to you, you must believe that the next thing that comes into your mind or heart is from the Lord.

Shutting your eyes helps you to see in the spirit and to become less conscious of the things and people around you. It helps you get your mind on the Lord and in a relaxed position where nothing distracts you. When you ask the Lord to speak to you, believe that whatever you hear or see is a message or vision from Him. When you are asking Him to speak, you are like a baby crying for food—in this case, the spiritual food you need to live on.

When a mother picks up her child to nurse him, what does she do? She reveals herself to him. If he's a tiny baby, she also has to bring the nourishment to him. She has to show him where it is; she has to place her nipple in his mouth. As he gets older, he automatically knows where to find the milk and he can reach out for it himself. It's the same with hearing from God. The longer you practice receiving nourishment from the Lord, the better you know where to find it. You just open your spiritual eyes and see it and reach for it.

Faith is the hand of the spirit, which reaches out and receives. It is the part that you do, your spiritual effort. After the nipple is in the baby's mouth, he automatically starts nursing. When you ask God for spiritual nourishment, He puts it there for you, but if you don't start sucking, you'll never get it. You have to have the faith to begin to receive. You literally have to draw God's nourishment. If you don't suck, you won't get anything. The child sucks because God has put that automatic reaction in him to do it. A lot of times he has to suck for a while before he gets anything, but if he doesn't give up, eventually he will.

Faith is a type of drawing power. It is you drawing power from God. What is it that brings the mother's milk out of her breast? How is this explained in scientific terms? When the baby sucks, he creates a vacuum inside his mouth, which pulls the milk out. Similarly, you have to create a vacuum in your spirit: "Lord, here is an empty space. Please fill it!"

When you reduce the pressure in one area, what fills that vacuum? In the case of the nursing child, it's his mother's milk. All the child does is create the vacuum. He reduces the pressure inside his mouth, which then becomes lower than the pressure inside his mother's breast, so the milk flows out into his mouth. That sucking on the part of the baby is his effort; the mother does all the rest.

In prayer, you create a vacuum and the Lord's pressure fills it. Every time you open up your spirit, every time you create a low-pressure area, His Spirit will flow in, in all His power!

What if the baby took one big suck and got discouraged? "Well, I didn't get anything, so I'll just quit!" Sooner or later he would get so hungry that he would start sucking again and not give up. When you start sucking for dear life and really desire that spiritual nourishment with all your heart, you'll get it.

You have to believe that when you create that vacuum in your spirit, the first thing that comes into your mind is from the Lord, and you must go straight on from there. If the baby didn't swallow the first mouthful, he couldn't get any more! His mouth can only hold so much at once. He gets a mouthful and swallows it, and then he gets another mouthful. He's got to swallow each mouthful as it comes, or he won't get more—and it's the same with receiving messages from the Lord.

He gives you a little to start with, but then you've got to expect and make room for more. In this case you empty your mouth, you "swallow," by believing the first words or Scriptures that He gives you, and repeating them out loud or writing them down—and you've got to keep swallowing. The Lord's not going to squirt milk out into the thin air where it will be lost, or into some baby who won't swallow it. You only get one mouthful at a time, and if you don't swallow that mouthful, you won't get another!

Likewise, when you ask the Lord for a vision and you begin to see something, you need to start describing it. Describe what you see, and then the Lord will give you more. What do you do when you watch a movie? You have to keep drinking it in, scene by scene. You couldn't possibly get it all in one picture. You have to keep "swallowing."

Unlike the mother, God has unlimited capacity to give. What you get is only limited by your capacity to receive. When receiving messages from the Lord, pretty soon you get so full that you can hardly stand it. The Lord will keep on feeding you until your vacuum has been filled, your "stomach" is satisfied, and your spirit is content.

The Lord is always there, ready, willing, and able to speak to you if you're willing to listen, but He won't force you. The mother can place her breast in the baby's mouth, but if the baby takes one gulp and doesn't like it and quits swallowing, he's not going to get any more. You have to be willing to *receive* what God gives!

Faith in Action

The Clock That Struck Thirteen

(This true story is about hearkening to the Lord's quiet voice.)

It was midnight in the town of Plymouth, England, many years ago. Two men stood by the town's great clock. As it finished striking the hour, both men, strangers, remarked that it had struck thirteen times instead of twelve. One of these men was a gentleman by the name of Captain Jarvis.

It was not long after this that Captain Jarvis awoke early one morning, got up, dressed, and went down to the front door of his home. As he opened it, he saw, to his surprise, that his groom was standing there, with his horse saddled and bridled, ready for him to mount.

The groom explained, "I had a feeling that you would be wanting your horse, sir." He said the feeling had been so strong that he couldn't stay in bed, but had to get up and get the horse ready.

This was strange. It had never happened before. But since the horse was ready, he mounted and rode off. Not having to go anywhere in particular, he let the horse choose where he would take him. Soon they were down by the river, close to the spot where a ferry took passengers across.

Imagine his surprise, at this early hour, to see the ferryman there with his boat, waiting to take him across. What was going on?

"How are you here so early, my man?" he inquired.

"I couldn't rest in my bed, sir, for I had a feeling I was wanted to ferry someone across."

The captain and the horse got on the boat, and soon they were on the other side. Now what? Again he let the horse direct the course he would take. After some time they came to a large country town. And seeing a passerby, the captain inquired if anything of interest was going on in the town.

“No, sir. Nothing but the trial of a man for murder.”

So, with no other destination in mind for this strange trip, he thought he would see what was going on. He rode to the place of the trial, dismounted, and entered the building.

As he walked in, he heard the judge saying to the prisoner, “Have you anything to say for yourself—anything at all?”

And the prisoner said, “I have nothing to say, sir, except that I am an innocent man. There is only one man in all the world who could prove my innocence, but I do not know his name or where he lives. Some weeks ago we stood together in the town of Plymouth when it was midnight. We both heard the great town clock strike thirteen instead of twelve, and we remarked about it to each other—how strange it was that the clock should strike thirteen at the midnight hour.”

“I am here! I am here!” the captain shouted from the rear of the room. “I was the man who stood at midnight beside the great Plymouth clock and heard it strike thirteen instead of twelve. What the prisoner says is absolutely true. I identify him as the man. On the night of the murder, at the very time it was committed, that man was with me at Plymouth, and we remarked to each other how strange it was that the clock should strike thirteen at the midnight hour!”

The condemned man, proved innocent by the captain’s testimony, was immediately set free!

Think of it! Only one man in the world could prove that prisoner’s innocence. And divine guidance, by awakening a groom and a ferryman and impressing upon them with an urgency they could not understand—and by leading the horse—had brought that one man into the courtroom at the precise moment he was needed!

Miraculous Leading

By Sandy Seltzer

Dustin, my California-bred guide dog, was having trouble outside our Long Island apartment. This was his first snowstorm and he was confused. I’m blind, and I wasn’t doing so well either. No one was out, so there were no sounds to steer me. Contrary to what people think, guide dogs do not find the way for a blind person. The blind person directs the dog.

After a harrowing 45 minutes, Dustin and I finally made it back. But guide dogs must be walked regularly. “Next time why don’t you ask God to go with you?” a friend suggested. And so I did. “Lord, go with Dustin and me. The wind is so fierce it’s hard to concentrate on our direction. Lead us.”

Snow stung our faces and it was difficult to make a path. Dustin whined a little. “Okay, boy,” I said to him, “the Lord is with us.” And then I gave him a command that a blind person gives only when another person is leading the way. “Dustin, follow!”

Dustin perked up and to my astonishment took off as though he knew exactly where to go. We made it to the street, then headed back to our building—no problem.

A young woman trudged up and offered to walk us to our door. “We’ll just follow your footprints back,” she said. “Yours and the dog’s, and that other person’s.”

“What other person?” I asked.

“There’s a dog’s prints. And your prints. And a larger person’s prints. Wasn’t someone with you?”

I paused for a moment and then I answered, “Oh, yes, there was Someone with us.” There always is.