

Prophetic Insight  
May 19, 2017

The Seemingly *Disconnected* Ways  
Demons Used **Habitual Mental Deceits**  
To Infuse Themselves Into Christianity  
(part 2)

**Introduction**

The rise of self-made prophets fanned into action the *habitual mental deceits* we discussed in Prophetic Insight 48. The 1980s and 90s saw a return of prophetic activity in certain sectors of Christendom. But recognizing a window of opportunity, Satan sent his demonic workers out to recruit lively and entertaining **false prophets** to deceive eager and unsuspecting audiences. Many of these “prophets” used the platforms of TV, conferences, and books to pronounce “divine insight” into the future.

But unlike biblical prophets whose messages from God brought the disobedient to repentance, this group introduced a form of **witchcraft** into Christianity — divination to tickle the ears of the rebellious and discontented. Divorced women and wives with independent spirits were especially attracted to any so-called prophetic conjecture concerning the future.

In this Prophetic Insight we’ll review the prophetic, focusing especially on how false prophets fed on habitual mental deceit.

**1. Habitual Mental Deceit**  
*Self-Promoting Clergy Made It Possible*  
*For False Prophets To Arise*

In the 1980s and 90s new “prophetic teachers” used TV as a convenient vehicle to reach into people’s homes. Each touted their own special revelations into the future, and the ways and times in which God was going to fulfill Bible prophecies.

But whatever their intent, the covert deceit which enticed many within Christendom was **witchcraft**.

At its core, witchcraft *seeks control* over something or someone that’s outside God’s will. That means you’re *trying to control an outcome* by exercising self-will rather than abiding by God’s will. In His sight that’s rebellion, which He likens to the *sin of witchcraft*—the path Saul took even while rationalizing his disobedience to Samuel and blaming others for his sinful choices! (Read the tragic account in 1Samuel chapter 15.)

Many of the false prophets in the past few decades spoke with such confidence about future events that listeners were convinced these individuals actually had influence or control over what would take place! More and more of their following, addicted to wanting to know future happenings, eagerly sought “knowledge” from these prophets—and were more than willing to pay to hear.

The books of Daniel and Revelation became special fodder for self-proclaimed prophets to use in their televised predictions. Yet Jesus had made very clear to His followers that details about the End Times were a fruitless pursuit: “*No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father*” (Mark 13:32). The prophetic teachers who claimed to know future events and timing were seducing many into witchcraft even as they were passionately pleading for sums to finance their captivating operations.

**“Both prophet and priest are godless; even in My temple I find their wickedness,” declares the LORD”** (Jeremiah 23:11).

And why shouldn’t many throughout Christendom be seduced by the lies of false prophets? The organized religious system of Nicolaitan clergy has long been

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used by the enemy of God to foist lies upon placid, compliant pewsitters. And since none of their teaching is ever questioned nor is the methodology of silence during “sermon indoctrination” sessions regarded as unscriptural, whatever is spoken is swallowed whole as truth.

*Please consider this seriously.* Any other teaching/learning environment, including parenting, relies on role modeling, discussion, and asking questions in order to prepare children or, in Jesus's case disciples, for a God-honoring way of life. Today's clergy, however, have been trained to use the Hellenist lecture method to instruct a silent audience. What does this method look like?

- There's no opportunity to stop the sermon so questions of clarification can be asked.
- No one is allowed to voice disagreement with any of the points the clergy person makes, even if they are blatantly contrary to Scripture.
- And, as a key demonic strategy, no time is allowed during the gathering for people to look into God's Word themselves and verify not only the scriptural basis for what is lectured but equally important, to bring up other verses that may support or disagree with the teaching point.

This lecture format is the same one used by false prophets, whether teaching on TV or speaking at large conferences. The listeners are not given either the opportunity or the time to question or verify anything the prophet is forecasting.

*“Every matter must be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses”*  
(2Corinthians 13:1).

It's important to recognize that prophetic revelation isn't God's confirmation. The Bible directs us to *test each prophecy* in order to confirm if it is from God and is therefore true:

*“Do not put out the Spirit's fire; do not treat prophecies with contempt. **Test everything. Hold on to the good**”* (1Thessalonians 5:19-21).

*“Two or three prophets should speak, and the others **should weigh carefully** what is said”* (1Corinthians 14:29).

It's readily apparent that people who prophesy on TV provide no way for their listeners to verify or question their assertions. And, with the advent of prophetic stage performers who aim supposed prophetic words to individuals in the audience, there's no way to test these messages either. We've met individuals who impulsively took action on false prophetic words spoken to them without testing the prophecy or finding confirmation from two or three witnesses. Sadly, when their decisions ended in disappointment, a number of these folks found themselves *distrusting God*.

## **2. Habitual Mental Deceit** *Perverting The Prophetic*

We've grieved as for over four decades we've observed the seduction of prophetic gifting away from what's authentic and into *self-gratifying* distortions which satisfy the flesh. It's become evident that the demonic principality of Jezebel now rules this nation and is the primary force behind the perversion of the prophetic. Relying on deceit and enticement to gain control over many who do have the spiritual gift of prophecy, this demonic entity is able to distort the truth and reduce people's confidence in genuine prophecy.

The demonic spirit of Jezebel is most threatened by the prophetically gifted who are true to our Lord Jesus: *“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”* (Revelation 19:10). Authentic prophetic

words about our unseen enemy expose its sinister goal to dominate souls. In the past 40 years one of Satan's greatest triumphs through the Jezebel demon has been to destroy marriages and families. By deceiving so many women throughout Christendom into ruling their homes as did Queen Jezebel of old, they thereby undermine the leadership and loving authority of their husbands.

Like Jezebel's weak husband Ahab, so many men have responded ineptly with either frustrated anger or emotional detachment. They failed to understand that their *spiritual passivity* and *outsourcing of their families* for spiritual development allowed the divisive Jezebel spirit to gain control over their wives. The tragic fruit has been the wholesale number of women who are divorcing their husbands.

During this same time frame, in many congregations throughout this nation those who were gifted prophetically by the Spirit and who stood up against the ploys of Jezebel were driven out along with anyone else whose spiritual gifting would expose the Jezebel spirit and its iniquitous strategies.

**The false prophets embraced Jezebelic lies which allowed them to distort God's Word and alter it to please their hearers, whether expounded from pulpits or at conferences. The outcome was the same: no one was convicted of sin or brought to repentance and restored to fellowship with God (see 1John 1:6,10).**

The Older Testament offers a vivid example of a lying spirit and its effect on King Ahab's false prophets:

[The word of the Lord from Micaiah, an authentic prophet]: *"Finally, a spirit came forward, stood before the LORD and said, 'I will entice him.' " "By what means?" the LORD asked. 'I will go and be a lying spirit in the mouths of all his prophets,' he said. ¶*

*"'You will succeed in enticing him,' said the LORD. 'Go and do it.' " "So now **the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouths of these prophets of yours. The LORD has decreed disaster for you"** (2Chronicles 18:21,22).*

### **3. Habitual Mental Deceit Hellenism — The Fertile Soil For The Health And Wealth Gospel**

Derived from the pagan worldview of the ancient Greeks, Hellenism and today's offspring Humanism put human beings at the center of their world. Because there is no deity nor sin nor afterlife, humanity exists to pursue *self*-fulfillment and personal achievement. Hence the appeal of the *self*-centered, *self*-focused "Health and Wealth" counterfeit gospel.

Slinking into Christendom in the 1970s, Health and Wealth theology grew rapidly in popularity. Soon dubbed the **"name it and claim it"** gospel, it portrayed God as a divine vending machine obligated to pay off His believing petitioners when they tossed a prayer up to Him. A good number of their leaders claimed to be prophets, using their position to proclaim that God has promised Christians happiness and material blessings. People who suffered sickness, poverty, or trials were told they lacked faith.

It was one of the "prophetic" teachers from the Health and Wealth false gospel who made clear to Mike how easily lying spirits can influence a large portion of Christendom. (This individual still has a large following on TV today.) "In 1977 while serving in the Navy, I was standing bridge watch one evening while the rest of the ship's brothers listened to a cassette tape from this false prophet.

"Sad to say, they skipped what had been our guiding practice—to stop and have each person search God's Word for himself to con-

firm the message. We respected Paul's compliment to the Bereans because "*they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true*" (Acts 17:11).

"The next morning the brothers all came to me raving about the teaching on the tape. Through just one exposure they'd all swallowed the "name it and claim it" gospel. I took the tape and that evening went through it, stopping to verify each biblical reference the teacher used. By the time I finished the tape my emotions were deeply saddened, even raw.

"The prophetic teacher used what is called "**proof texting,**" a technique in which the speaker already has a conclusion he wants people to accept. (In this case, he was trying to convince listeners that God wants everyone to be healthy and blessed with material wealth.) So he took particular verses out of context or even just parts of verses to support his preconceived conclusion.

"The next night I gathered all the brothers together, about 20 or 30 of us. We played the tape again, stopping so they could look into their Bibles and verify each verse for themselves. We didn't have to get through the entire tape before tears began to flow — as did repentance! And the cassette ended up somewhere on the bottom of the Pacific."

Proof texting has become the norm among so many media-famous "prophets" and "teachers". Riding on the *self*-absorbed influence of Hellenism, their messages are never discomfiting or convicting. Rather they rely on people's natural inclination to be gratified and well and materially comfortable. Falsely promising blessings and a happier life, the "Health and Wealth Jesus" is Someone Whose main purpose is to improve your life here on earth so you can look forward to even more for eternity.

***"The visions of your prophets were false and worthless; they did not expose your sin to ward off your captivity.***

***The oracles they gave you were false and misleading"***

(Lamentations 2:14).

A true prophet, one who isn't looking to be famous or accepted by the standards of this world, is our Lord's message bearer to His followers. An authentic prophet is really nothing more than an earthen vessel through whom the Spirit can speak.

Our Lord's loving purpose for prophecy is to be His proactive means to maintain fellowship with His followers. He accomplishes this by providing *divine guidance and warning* when His people are tempted to stray from His ways. A true prophet is concerned with both the personal and communal righteousness of our Father's children. In other words, a prophetic person may bring forth messages from Father to individuals and to collective members of Christ's body as well. Our Lord's intent is that through these prophetic words individuals and faith communities might be restored to the path of righteousness in their lives.

Mike: During my years of counseling religious leaders, that's how the Lord used me. He'd send me to address religious leaders and/or their faith communities in which sin had clogged their relationship with Jesus. In fact He used me so often this way that I was given the nickname, "the enema." It clarified the prophetic role our Lord gave me: to unclog whatever sin(s) were hindering fellowship with the Father and our Lord Jesus. Paul's assignment from Jesus could also be applied to a prophetic function:

***"To open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive for-***

*givenness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in Me” (Acts 26:18).*

#### **4. Habitual Mental Deceit Conjuring A Mood As The Medium For Worship**

*“This only have I found: God made mankind upright, but men have gone in search of many schemes” (Ecclesiastes 7:29).*

Flesh-pleasing demonic inroads into Christianity that began in the 80s and consolidated in the 90s came via other schemes to gain a stronger foothold. I became aware of one of these tactics in 1983 shortly after our arrival at the retreat center in Connecticut. The staff of the largest congregation in New England conducted a day retreat at our center. Since they held their discussion in a large lounge just outside our office I overheard quite a bit.

Toward the end of the day I had a chance to speak with the senior pastor. When I asked why he was putting so many thousands of dollars into his worship team he replied, “That’s why we’re so large. **Entertaining worship attracts people.**”

In the months to follow we read of seminars being conducted around the country to train worship leaders how to have lively, entertaining worship. I asked Sue and another staff member to attend one of these seminars put on by a “mover and shaker” of the lively worship camp whose techniques were being used to attract many into church buildings.

I read with alarm the seminar leader’s workbook on worship which Sue was given. Not one place in the whole book did he cite a biblical basis for the methods he was espousing! Instead he only emphasized the importance of people encountering a satisfying, pleasurable

experience in their so-called “worship”. The worship leader needed to use the music as an avenue to conjure a **“soul-ish mood”**, a feel-good sense of being in God’s presence no matter what their spiritual condition. Sadly, this mood-conjuring methodology has pervaded a number of congregations over the years, mainly because no one bothers to check for scriptural validity.

Whether a person is clean before the Father and not hiding unconfessed sins didn’t matter in this new form of worship. But have you considered the unchanging truth of God’s Word, that He refuses to hear the prayers of the wicked (1Peter 3:12)? So why would He accept their worship?

Picture yourself being a clergy person or worship leader in a congregation that needs to attract people to pay the bills. Are you going to stress *repentance*? Much to the sorrow of godly leaders such as David Wilkerson, who was given prophetic discernment by the Spirit, repentance stood out *by its absence* from the sermons of many clergy he spoke with.

**“Mood conjuring”** worship which entertains is far less threatening to people who want to cling to “pet sins” than biblical conviction is. And “user-friendly” worship that allows the unrighteous to feel good about themselves swept the nation by storm. You’d be hard-pressed to distinguish the melodies and rhythms of “worship” music from the secular music used by the rock industry. And the same “soul-ish response” came from both!

What is your reaction to realize that many of the techniques and music styles which “worship leaders” draw on mirror those used in rock concerts to attract and satisfy audiences? Is that the kind of worship intended for Father’s ears — or for your own gratification?

For years we visited many “lively” churches only to have the Holy Spirit speak to me while the “worship leader” was beginning his or her thing: *“The Father will not be conjured up like the priests of Baal tried to conjure up their god!”*

**Dear ones, Sue and I love to worship! But I have a prophetic gift, and like so many of you with similar gifting, I get spiritually nauseous from the odor of unrepentance around me. As with many of you, I’d rather worship privately or with those who intentionally stand clean in Christ by His grace and please our Father than stand in an assembly that’s reveling in a soulish high.**

### **5. Habitual Mental Deceit** *The Proliferation of “Church” Mortgages* *And The Demise of Repentance*

You may wonder how all these deceptions could be so widely accepted by church leaders throughout much of Christianity in this nation. But were you aware that until the mid-1950s few congregations were *incorporated* in the United States? And hardly any had mortgages to be repaid on their buildings. But then a litigious scheme rose up to plant doubt and fear in professional clergy, using worrisome concerns like this: **“What if someone you counsel goes and commits suicide?”**

Lawyers bent on undermining Christianity’s long-held moral and benevolent influence on society traveled throughout the country convincing clergy that they were *legally liable* if this happened. But if their congregations incorporated, the *corporation* was now liable. As a result there’s hardly a congregation today that isn’t incorporated.

Once congregations became corporations, banks were willing to lend them

money. Thus arose the *“church mortgage”*. In the decades to follow, mortgages became the devil’s yoke around the neck of clergy. Rather than forthrightly and boldly serving the interests of the King, many were forced to serve the next mortgage payment. And to do this they needed *people in pews* to fund it.

Because so many congregations were saddled with substantial mortgages, many clergy felt compelled to do anything possible to attract and retain people to pay the bills. That’s when “nickels and noses” became the rallying cry of clergy success rather than Kingdom-hearted followers of Jesus abiding in communal righteousness for His glory. And that too is why soul-conjuring, entertaining worship has replaced the call to “Repent!!”

The heavy burden to pay mortgages was the fertile soil to spawn the man-centered **“Church Growth Movement”** which began blossoming in the late 1950s. “Church Growth” is a wing within evangelical Christianity which aims to develop methods to grow congregations based on business marketing strategies. Lots of successful plans of action founded on marketing have been promoted over the years.

Since repentance was no longer being trumpeted from pulpits, *“Greasy Grace”* became the cotton candy of many faith communities. Obeying God’s laws out of loving appreciation through His life-transforming Spirit’s presence became branded as *legalism*, the robber of grace, rather than an outflow of His life at work in Christ’s own. That’s the “greasy” part — maligning what’s righteous and good in God’s sight and labeling it as detrimental to your spiritual life! Followers of Jesus who gratefully walked in God’s ways and kept His commands according

to His work in them (Philippians 2:12, 13) were called “judgmental” by those who balanced their “spiritual” life with yielding to the world’s values and goals.

Greasy grace then gave rise to the *“seeker-sensitive”* approach of increasing turnout. Not wanting to alienate the unrepentant with discomfort over their sinful state before God, anything pointing out their need to turn from sin and turn toward the Lordship of Jesus was studiously avoided. In place of the cross of Christ being preached as the only means to reconcile your sinful self with a Holy God and find forgiveness, Jesus was presented as a *life-improver* who can make you happy in this world and in the next.

Over the decades ever slicker schemes to attract people to congregations were copied from the world system. Since the media industry was so successful, entertainment replaced confronting sin. The “penitent pew” which once occupied the front was replaced by a dynamic “worship leader” and a lively team of performers.

## 6. Habitual Mental Deceit

### *Doubting the Existence of Demons And Disbelieving That God Uses Demons To Test and Try His Followers*

Studies reveal that the majority of “Christians” in the US don’t believe that demons even exist, no matter what the Bible says. Still others who accept the reality of this unseen enemy realm are convinced that demons can’t influence Christians. These popular deceptions have given Satan and his hordes freedom to disrupt and ultimately destroy this nation by undermining the biblical moral fiber on which it was founded. Within the US now reside multiple millions of families that have been shattered by the unrelenting and unopposed work of our adversary through divorce.

We’ve observed from our years of experience a phenomenon which is validated by God’s Word: that demons are not only real but that they are subservient to God’s will and are even sent to achieve specific sovereign purposes:

- to drive followers of Jesus into closer dependence on Him;
- or, to alter unChrist-like character deficiencies or sin that isn’t being exposed any other way;
- or, to validate the genuineness of His follower’s trust in Him;
- or, to delude those who want to believe lies and unbiblical falsehoods.

For example, God told Satan to test the faith of Job (Job 1:7-12; 2:2-7). It’s pretty startling when you overhear the conversation between our holy God and the nefarious enemy of our souls: “*Then the LORD said to Satan, “Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil? ...And the LORD said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.” So Satan went out from the presence of the LORD”* (Job 1:8,12). And Job didn’t question God’s motive in allowing whatever tragedies came his way: “*In all this, Job did not sin by charging God with wrongdoing”* (Job 1:22).

In the Newer Testament, Jesus warned Peter before his particular test happened, “*Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat”* (Luke 22:31). Notice that the Lord didn’t offer to protect Peter from sifting. He just told him what to do after the testing was over: “*But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers”* (Luke 22:32).

In another instance God kept Paul’s

pride in check in his Spirit-empowered experiences by allowing the apostle to suffer at the devil's hand: *"To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me"* (2Corinthians 12:7). Like you or we would, Paul prayed for relief, but the Lord didn't alter his situation: *"Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me"* (2Corinthians 12:8,9).

In more recent times David Wilkerson's wife, daughters, and even some of his grandchildren have over the course of several years suffered various forms of cancer. Even though David knew these attacks were coming upon his family because he was speaking out against the evil that was becoming so widespread in this nation, he refused to quit. His prophetic warnings, many of which he cited decades in advance, have come about as he had prophesied.

We want to strongly emphasize that Satan *never* operates outside our Father's domain and sovereign authority. From the Garden of Eden where he was allowed to deceive Eve to the explicit pages of Revelation where we're told that evil forces have been given *"power to make war against the saints and to conquer them"* (13:7), the devil always fits into our Lord's divine purposes. At times our Lord's purposes are *painful* even though they're for our own good — and He is under no obligation to explain Himself. And sometimes we who follow Him do have doubt about His justice or question His love for us or His abiding presence.

***"We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ"*** (1John 1:3).

Mike: Before each seminar we conducted in various congregations around the country, I'd enter the sanctuary and ask the Holy Spirit to tell me what demonic forces Sue and I would be up against. In one congregation it was "pride", in another "fear and insecurity", in yet another, bitterness.

But one congregation stands out the most. The Spirit told me we were going to be confronting a "spirit of murder." No one had been killed there. Rather, it was what the cowardly elders of the congregation had *failed to do* by allowing the character of their prior pastor to be assassinated by their denomination and the local press. The elders knew he was innocent of a false charge, but not one stood up for him. Leaving in disgrace, the man was plagued by bitterness years afterward.

So we ask you, "Have you ever asked the Holy Spirit to point out which demonic spirit dominates or influences your faith community as a whole?"

### **Anecdotes From Our Years Of Ministry: God Allows Demons to Work HIS Purposes**

#### **• Validating the genuineness of His follower's trust in Him:**

Just before the Lord was about to use us for a specific ministry purpose, on a number of occasions He would let Satan test us first. These trials would show up as unusual illnesses or frustrating unexpected events that tested the depth of our patience and resolve. And each time, the test ended when our Lord ascertained that our trust in Him was genuine.

Here's another example. While we were teaching at the retreat center a

group was due to arrive from Salem, Massachusetts. Mike was working near the parking lot when the group arrived. Knowing they were a Charismatic faith community, he wasn't initially surprised when he saw them getting out their vehicle and jumping up and down with their hands in the air praising our Lord. When he got closer they shared how sick everyone had become while waiting to leave Salem. A few even canceled and went home. But those who did make the trip realized that *the sickness left every one of them* the moment they turned onto the retreat center road.

• **Alter unChrist-like character deficiencies or sin that isn't being exposed any other way:**

A few years ago Mike ended up on the terminal ward of the University of Colorado Medical Center with a potentially life-threatening infection. He'd been going through several years of various physical attacks and then finding himself grumbling about them during and afterward. This time while bedded down in the hospital our Lord confronted him about his grumbling. Breaking into tears of repentance, he was ashamed that he hadn't accepted these trials as loving and corrective character developers from Father's hands. (And he was released from the hospital that very day, healed of his infection!)

• **Drive His followers into closer dependence on Him:**

During our time at the retreat center Mike's mom, a staunch Roman Catholic, had often prayed the rosary for us, unintentionally releasing demonic attacks against us by praying to entities other than our God. In the midst of some of the worst attacks, Mike suffered awfully and asked our Lord why this was happening in case we'd opened the door for

rebuke or chastening or whatever.

The Spirit, however, told him that these particular attacks would go on as long as Mom prayed the rosary "on Mike's behalf"— and He didn't intend to stop her. Mike's classroom was to learn to love his mom regardless of what he suffered (and thankfully, several years later she did put her whole trust in Jesus and stopped the rosary prayers).

• **Delude those who want to believe lies and unbiblical falsehoods:**

In the 1980s the "**Shepherding Movement**" shredded the spiritual confidence of many. Self-proclaimed "shepherds," often using lying prophecies, placed themselves in unquestioned authority to dominate the lives of people in their care. One night the Spirit awakened Mike to write a letter to a particular very popular clergyman in Connecticut. (Mike didn't realize this man was deep into the shepherding movement.) His letter addressed no specific sin but warned him by the Spirit's own words that he would die of cancer if he didn't repent.

This was the first time the Spirit had given Mike a message but had not stated a specific sin. Mike held onto the prophecy for several days, praying for further guidance from the Holy Spirit. One morning the Spirit told him to show the prophecy to a pastor who ministered in the same town as the man to whom the prophecy was directed. After reading it the pastor told Mike the Holy Spirit wanted him to sign it too. This signed endorsement was repeated by four other pastors in that town who knew the intended recipient and also knew in their spirit that he needed this prophetic word.

Now comes the interesting part of Father's timing and work. The *day after* the letter was mailed, each of the pastors

who signed the prophetic warning received a visit from men who were currently in their respective congregations but had once been part of the congregation of the pastor to whom the prophecy was mailed. Each of these individuals had been convicted by the Holy Spirit the day before to confess to their current pastors what they knew about their former pastor—sordid accounts of embezzlement, tax fraud, all the way to the pastor taking his three teenage daughters on men’s retreats to have intercourse with the men.

Several days later Mike and the five pastors who signed the letter met with the man. He openly admitted that the accusations against him which each of the pastors had heard from his former members were true. But he added that *his conscience wasn’t convicting him that he’d done anything wrong*. There were consequences for Mike, though, for having been the Spirit’s messenger who exposed this man’s sins to him. Over the next few days the pastor called other clergy throughout the state to defame Mike. (Mike had agreed with the five who signed the prophecy that the nature of this man’s sins could not go beyond their group, so no one else was privy to the prophetic letter.)

A week or two later the pastor demanded an early morning meeting at a restaurant in his town with the five pastors and Mike. The town was about an hour away from the retreat center. Before Mike left, the Holy Spirit woke Sue up to pray for him. An exit or two short of the town, a truck carrying concrete blocks swung onto the highway. An immense block came tumbling off the truck and nicked our car. The trucker drove on, unaware of what had taken place.

Mike pulled off the highway to assess

the damage. An evil intimidating voice growled at him, “If you go through with this meeting, you’ll be dead by sunset.” Mike continued to the restaurant.

This wasn’t the first time the devil warned Mike he’d lose his life if he refused to stop what he was doing. On one occasion he was choked by a demon as he prayed aloud for a young man who’d been heavily into *Dungeons and Dragons*. The demon told him he’d die if he kept praying but Mike gasped, “Then I’ll die *praying!*” The demon then released its chokehold.

At the restaurant the five pastors and Mike found themselves on one side of a long table facing 10 or 12 clergymen the pastor had summoned to the meeting. It was then that we learned they were all part of the Shepherding Movement and had come to discredit us.

Before these clergy had a chance to level their verbal artillery, the Holy Spirit prompted Mike to go down the line and point out to each man the specific sins he was hiding. A good number had been committing adultery with their church secretary or other women in their congregations. When Mike finished addressing the last man they all got up as one and fled the restaurant. Two months later the pastor to whom the prophecy was written died of liver cancer apparently without repenting. (His hospital-bed words to a mutual friend were, “I was quite a rascal, wasn’t I!”)

#### •Validating the genuineness of His follower’s trust in Him:

In the mid-1980s Mike was asked by the pastors in our region to write about prophecy — what is true and what is false since he had often served as a messenger in the Spirit to deliver prophetic words among them. We were in South

Carolina on a week's vacation from the retreat center in Connecticut, and Mike would work on the paper in the early mornings before Sue and our son got up. The day before we were to return home our Lord Jesus spoke to Mike in his spirit (Revelation 19:10): *"I've given you everything you need to know. On the way back home Satan will make an attempt on your life to keep these truths from reaching the church leaders."*

On our way back home, just outside Fayetteville, NC our newly licensed son was driving 65mph on the interstate. He got distracted, lost control and flipped the car. We skidded upright to an abrupt stop after one revolution. Father miraculously kept all the other cars away from our disabled vehicle which was blocking both lanes of traffic. Mike was bleeding profusely from a head wound, but neither Sue nor our son had any injuries. An ambulance took him to the hospital and he was released that afternoon with staples in his skull and a concussion. So, could our Lord have prevented this? Absolutely. But He didn't — and that didn't alter one iota of our trust in His fathomless love and sovereign purposes!

The paper Mike wrote concerning prophecy was tested and tried by the pastors to whom it was given. Every church leader who read it stated that it was biblically sound. We want to cite a few points we recall from that document:

- A person who prophesies about a prophecy in the Bible which has not yet been fulfilled by God is lying. God forbids human conjecture about future events that is made as though coming from Him. There were many of these well-known, deceitful "prophets" at that time who'd prophesy about how as-yet unfulfilled prophecies would come

about. None of their false predictions came true.

- Never trust a prophet who interprets his or her own prophecy. Many who were well-known in Christendom and interpreted their own prophecies wanted to be esteemed for what they spoke. Much like the clergy in the Shepherding Movement, these false prophets also wanted to be in control.

- A well-known group of prophets at that time claimed that God had told them that prophets were to lead the church. Mike prayed about this assertion and publicly denounced them to be lying as they were falsely representing our Father's will for His collective called-out ones. Not long afterward all of these "messengers" experienced a downfall in their ministry.

- Revelation is never confirmation. Prophecy must always be tested by two or three. We've witnessed many damaged and despairing lives because people took action on a supposed prophetic revelation without testing it with others in the faith to confirm its validity.

- Anyone who claims to be a prophet and stands in front of a crowd for pay to prophesy is lying.

For the 40 years our Lord has used Mike to prophesy, the Spirit has always made clear the time, the recipient(s), and the circumstances of delivering the message and what He wanted done in response. The Spirit always made known to him specific sin(s) the message's recipient(s) were hiding. No one ever had to interpret the prophecies that were delivered, only test them to determine that they came from the Spirit.

During this same period, as the Jezebel principality gained control over this nation, we've watched the rise of *"imagery prophecies."* These pictorial

messages are filled with images and impressions which always need to be interpreted as to their meaning. This type of “prophecy” was heavily pushed by two self-identified *schools for prophets* several decades ago. Interestingly, women in particular were attracted to this approach and many began to claim the gift of prophecy because of it.

**“For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”** (Revelation 19:10).

We’d like to close by repeating our ending from Prophetic Insight 48:

*“I tell you the truth, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven. Again, I tell you that **if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven. For where two or three come together in My name, there am I with them**”* (Matthew 18:18-20).

This kind of agreement and confirmation by those who are purposing to enact Father’s will is essential! When it comes to marriage and family, He made a couple a natural twosome to bind and loose how they would live out His commands for their household. He also intended that within the extended spiritual family of a home fellowship at least two or three could agree in asking that Father’s will be done since Jesus would be in their midst. (See also 1John 5:14.)

Think of the wonder of that promise by Jesus to you! If you are earnestly seeking Father’s will on what He permits (your freedoms) and what He forbids (your limits) for your family or for the extended spiritual family of your home fellowship, Jesus pledges to be there with you. **Your confidence in His promise is your first line of defense against being**



**deceived by demons and by any false creeds and religious practices they may try to infuse into your spiritual lives.** And being assured that Jesus is among you enables you to exclude demonic deception in your discussions as well.

With this said, we want to repeat that the Hebraic Restoration is a prophetic movement to restore the spiritual power and relational intimacy which our Lord’s first followers enjoyed. Please pray, asking the Holy Spirit to confirm for you that what we share is from Him. If you don’t do this, you won’t take any *personal responsibility* for the actions and way of life He requires of you as His own.

And finally:

When you’re being attacked by demonic tactics and assaults, it could be good thing for your spiritual growth and character development — *unless* you believe so many lies that you’re being turned over to a spirit of delusion. If you’re undergoing attack for any other reason than the result of delusion, then remember that our loving and sovereign Lord really does have a good plan and purpose for you!

[If you’re interested in some further reading on life in the Spirit and demonic opposition against you, please read Lifebyte 28. Bearing Fruit for the Father: *Life Flows from the SPIRIT* (John 3:8).]