

God's Word In Depth

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God said, "Daughters Will Prophesy"

The LORD God said in Joel 2:28-32, *"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And everyone who calls upon the name of the LORD will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the LORD has said, among the survivors whom the LORD calls."*

The outpouring of God's Spirit upon all people (mentioned in Joel 2:28-32) is accomplished by God Himself during a specific time period which is marked by certain characteristics. Among the characteristic marking the "days" of God's Spirit outpouring are: 1) the sun turning to darkness; and, 2) the moon turning to blood. Since neither of these have happened, we are still in "those days" in which God's Spirit is being poured out upon men and women in order for them to prophesy. According to Joel, a third characteristic marking "those days" is *"everyone who calls upon the name of the LORD will be saved!"* This is the reason God wants both men and women to prophesy. He wants men and women to give His Word to all those who are seeking salvation. Obviously, since people are still calling upon the Name of the LORD and being saved, we are still in "those days" of God's Spirit outpouring! This is God's plan. He pours His Spirit upon all flesh, both men and women, so that they will preach His Word to unsaved mankind in order that they might know to call upon the Name of the LORD to be saved. Women preaching the Gospel is just as much God's idea as that men should preach the Gospel.

The words translated *"will pour out"* from Joel 2:28 and 29 come from the Hebrew word שָׁפַק (esh-pok). This is from the Hebrew root verb שָׁפַק (sha-phak) which means *"to pour out, bestow in profusion."* (*The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*, p. 735) In the שָׁפַק (esh-pok) form, this word, *Sha-phak*, (poured out) is in the Kal., future tense, first person, singular form. (ibid., p. 52). This means that God, after people begin to turn their hearts to Him, will continually pour out His Spirit upon all flesh until the last person calls upon the Name of the LORD to be saved.

Men and women should prophesy when God's Spirit is poured upon them. However, according to the *Encyclopaedia Judaica Volume 13*, p. 1151, "The word of "YHWH" and not His "Spirit" is the primary source of prophecy. The "Spirit" may prepare the prophet to receive divine revelation, may evoke the revelatory state of mind, but the "Word" is the revelation itself. What makes him a prophet is not the Spirit which envelops or moves him—for this Spirit also motivated elders, judges, Nazirites, and kings—but the Word which he has heard and transmits to others." God wants men and women to deliver His Word to those ready to call upon His Name to receive His salvation. He readies and enables preachers by pouring His Spirit upon them. The Hebrew word לָבַשׁ (la-vash) best describes how this outpouring takes place. *La-vash*, according to the *Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*, page 430, primarily means "TO PUT ON a garment, TO CLOTHE ONESELF with a garment."

The message of all prophets is God's Word. In order for men and women to deliver God's Word with authority, God "clothes" them with His Spirit. A person who has had God pour His Spirit upon them is duly "clothed to represent Him to those people being liberated by His Word. This is exactly to what Jesus was referring in Luke 24:45-49. It says, *"Then he [Jesus] opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures [Torah, Neviem {including Joel 2:28-32}, and, Ketoveem]. He told them, 'This is what is written: The*

*Christ [Messiah] will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and **repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached** in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. I am going to send you what my Father has promised [Holy Spirit]; but stay in the city until you have been **clothed with power from on high**. Jesus further clarified His Father's intent to clothe men and women in His Spirit for prophetic enablement in Acts 1:4-5, 8. He said, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift [Holy Spirit outpouring] my Father promised [John 14:15-21], which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water; but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit. ... But you will receive power [enablement] when the Holy Spirit comes upon [la-vash - clothes] you; and **you will be my witnesses** in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."*

Joel 2:28-32 said that God would pour His Spirit upon men and women. Therefore, in Acts chapter 1, both men and women should be waiting in Jerusalem in obedience to the command of Jesus in Acts 1:4-5, 8. Acts 1:12-14 describes the "waiting" band of 120 believers. Among those present in the upper room were "**women**" and "**Mary the mother** of Jesus." Women were (as they had always been) "clothed" with the Holy Spirit along with the men. A "clothed" man, Peter, preached the salvation sermon recorded in Acts 2 where 3,000 were saved. However, we find women preachers mention in Acts 21:8-10. It says, "*Leaving the next day [from Ptolemais], we [Paul's entourage] reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven [Deacons of Acts 6]. He had four unmarried **daughters who prophesied**. After we had been there a number of days, ...*" Philip was first a deacon of the church at Jerusalem because he was "full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom." He later evangelized in Samaria [Acts 8:4-8] with accompanying miracles and then preached God's Word to the Ethiopian Eunuch in Gaza. He obviously had been an example to his four daughters. They now also prophesied. A unique footnote to Acts 21:8-10 is that the Apostle Paul stayed in their house "a number of days!" Paul records no objection to these four women prophets! Why? Paul knew Joel 2:28-32 as well as Peter, the one who used it in his Pentecost sermon.

Contrary to modern teaching, Paul accepts women prophets. This thought is contrary to the deadly conclusions preached by generations of alleged Greek Bible scholars. It is in opposition to those who have misused I Corinthians 14:34 and I Timothy 2:12 to perpetuate their *Romano-Greco* myths. All should read Paul's definitive teaching on women prophesying. It is found in I Corinthians 11:2-16. Here, Paul teaches men and women propriety in public prayer and prophecy. Paul is addressing a Gentile congregation. In verse 5 Paul says, "**every woman who prays or prophesies ...**" Paul expected women to prophesy! His issue in this context is that they should do so with their heads covered. The covering of a Jewish woman's head shows that she is under her husband's authority. The practice of head covering is Jewish. The issue of I Corinthians 11:2-16 is not over whether or not women should prophesy. Paul expected women to prophesy, even the saved Gentile women from Corinth, Greece! Paul expected women throughout "those days" spoken of by Joel would be "clothed" with God's Spirit in order to prophesy God's Word to those calling upon the Name of the LORD to be saved! He expected the same for men. Until the sun turns dark and the moon turns red, Oh God, pour out your Spirit upon all flesh that they may tell others how to be saved. Oh God, while we are still seeing thousands call upon your Name to be saved, clothe your people with your precious Holy Spirit! Endue us all to reach just one more before they are lost to an eternal hell.

When and where did this notion that women should not prophesy creep in? In my opinion, history supports Lisa Aiken's claim (below) that women began to lose their prophetic status around the time of the building of the Second Temple in Jerusalem. "Issued in 538 B.C.E., after his conquest of Babylon, Cyrus' rescript relates the return exclusively to the reconstruction of the Temple" (*Encyclopaedia Judaica, Volume 15, p. 955*). Following the reconstruction of the Temple in Jerusalem, the Greeks rose to world prominence. "When Judea came under Greek rule, following the campaign of Alexander the Great, there was a closely knit Jewish population centered around the Temple in Jerusalem. ... The Hellenistic kings respected the temple and lavished gifts upon it. ... The attitude of the Seleucid monarchs changed radically in the days of Antiochus IV Epiphanes. On his way back from Egypt in 169 B.C.E., Antiochus broke into the Temple, and carried off its precious

vessels; two years later he erected the “abomination of desolation” on the altar, turning the building into a temple of Zeus (*ibid.*, p. 958). Even though Judah Maccabee cleansed the Temple three years later [Hanukkah], the *Hellenization* of the Jewish Biblical world had begun. Greek philosophy mixed with Biblical truth is a portion of the *Hellenization* process. According to Abraham Joshua Heschel in his book *God in Search of Man*, p. 98, “*Greek philosophy began in a world without God. It could not accept the gods or the example of their conduct. Plato had to break with the gods and ask: What is good? Thus the problem of values was born. And it was the idea of values that took the place of God.*” Once you replace God with human values then what God says or does ceases to exist. Once God’s Word ceases to exist it is a small step to replace it with human wisdom. One must remember, “The major premises of Western philosophy are derived from the Greek way of thinking” (*ibid.*, p. 14). Almost all preachers in the West are schooled in Greek philosophy. Hence, Western preaching (done by men) automatically attaches itself to learned Greek philosophical roots which repudiate women. This has been done all the while God Himself said in His Word, “*And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, ... Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days.*”

Before the Second Temple, women were accepted as prophets. According to Lisa Aiken on page 216 of her book, *How to be a Jewish Woman*, “*Sarah possessed tremendous divine inspiration [ruach ha-kodesh], even as a child.¹ She later married Abraham, who eventually became a great prophet, yet she surpassed him in her level of prophecy.² She so excelled in this that she was known as the mother of prophecy. ... Both men and women have always had equal opportunities to achieve prophecy, and it was not always limited to a few individuals. For example, the millions of Jews who left Egypt during the Exodus were all granted prophetic visions. There were also many other Jews throughout history who were prophets or who were occasionally granted prophetic visions. **Prophecy by both sexes continued until the time of the Second Temple.**”*

The Hebrew word translated “prophet” in the Bible is נביא (nabi). The feminine form used in the Bible is נביאה (nabi-ah). *Nabi-ah* (prophetess) carries the same meaning of the masculine form. According to page 528 of *Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon*, Gesenius states, “נְבִיאָה ... a prophet, who is actuated by a divine afflatus, or spirit, ... With the idea of a prophet there was necessarily attached, that he spoke not his own words, but those he had divinely received. ... נְבִיאָה f.-(1) a prophetess, ...”.

There are forty-eight men and seven women prophets mentioned in the Old Testament. Three of the women prophets are mentioned in the Old Testament where נְבִיאָה (nabi-ah), *prophetess* is used in the text. They are: **Miriam** - Exodus 15:20; **Deborah** - Judges 4:4; and, **Huldah** - II Kings 22:14. “The rabbis add **Sarah, Hannah, Abigail** and **Esther** (Meg. 14a),” according to page 1176 of the *Encyclopaedia Judaica Volume 13*. This makes seven the number of acknowledged Jewish women prophets. Sarah is accorded this status by Rashi on Genesis 21:12 while others list Proverbs 31:10-31 as her qualifications to be a prophet. Hannah is given prophetic status due to her prophecy recorded in I Samuel 2:1-10. I Samuel 25:24-31 reveals Abigail’s ability to correctly prophesy. Esther is obviously given prophetic status due to her introduction of (and the Israeli perpetual keeping of) the Feast of Purim recorded in Esther chapter 9. We have the prophecies made by these four women which allow them to be called prophets. By contrast, in Acts 21:8-10 there is no record of the prophecies made by Philip’s daughters. They must have, like their father and according to Joel 2, spoken God’s Word to those calling on the Name of the LORD in order to be saved.

Heschel asks, “What do we and the people of the Bible have in common? The anxieties and joys of living; the sense of wonder and the resistance to it; the awareness of the hiding God and moments of longing to find a way to Him.” (*Between God and Man*, p. 242) I agree with Abraham Heschel. Further, I am convinced that nothing has changed since Genesis chapter 3. Man is lost in his own sin and in need of a Savior. Unfortunately, there are no words of salvation from the Greek gods. The Greek gods could care less about the fate of all mankind. They are all capricious. The Greek philosophers were correct in sacking the Greek gods! The only good God in search of lost mankind is the LORD God of the Bible. Only the Bible contains the words which

bring lost men back to life. How shall any of these lost ones hear His Word. It must be preached by those previously saved by its promises. When preached, God's Word will give faith to believe its promises to those who are lost. Since both men and women have been and are now being saved by "hearing" God's Word, it is Biblically correct that both men and women should be "clothed" with God's Spirit and be released to preach the Gospel to all those who will yet call upon the Name of the LORD and be saved. Along with Moses and Joel, before Almighty God, I humbly, dreadfully humbly, welcome all, both men and women, to the prophetic ministry of preaching the Gospel! At the same time, I ask "Why, when so many are headed to hell, would anyone deny another human the opportunity of God's Spirit(ual) outpouring to clothe them to preach the Gospel?"