

## Jesus the Prophet – Acts 3:17-26

“And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. <sup>18</sup> But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled. <sup>19</sup> Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, <sup>20</sup> that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, <sup>21</sup> whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. <sup>22</sup> Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. <sup>23</sup> And it shall be that every soul who does not listen to that prophet shall be destroyed from the people.’ <sup>24</sup> And all the prophets who have spoken, from Samuel and those who came after him, also proclaimed these days. <sup>25</sup> You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.’ <sup>26</sup> God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.”

1. How did God use the Old Testament prophets:
  - A. To remedy His people’s ignorance?
  - B. To return them from error?
  - C. To bless them?

*Yet the Lord warned Israel and Judah through all His prophets and every seer, saying, “Turn from your evil ways and keep My commandments, My statutes according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you through My servants the prophets.” -2 Kings 17:13*

2. In what ways did Jesus perfectly fulfil these same roles for New Testament believers and for us?

*Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power. After making purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high -Hebrews 1:1-3*

3. How does the sending of prophets demonstrate the love and mercy of God toward us?
4. In your life, how has God lovingly...perhaps painfully or uncomfortably...brought necessary warnings and corrections to bear on your heart when you have been going the wrong way?
5. The Old Testament prophets were messengers of the revelation of God and spoke with authority directly from God. How did Jesus bring the *complete* revelation and authority of God?

*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. -John 1:14*

*The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. -Colossians 1:15*

*For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form -Colossians 2:9*

6. Why do you think the prophets were often ignored or despised? Why was Jesus despised and rejected?
7. What happened when the messages of the Old Testament prophets were rejected?

8. How does the message of the prophets, culminating in the life and ministry of Jesus, show that we all must choose to receive or reject God – to turn to him in faith and obedience or harden our heart in unbelief and rebellion?

*Then the word of the LORD came to Jonah a second time: "Go to the great city of Nineveh and proclaim to it the message I give you." ... Jonah began by going a day's journey into the city, proclaiming, "Forty more days and Nineveh will be overthrown." The Ninevites believed God. A fast was proclaimed, and all of them, from the greatest to the least, put on sackcloth. When Jonah's warning reached the king of Nineveh, he rose from his throne, took off his royal robes, covered himself with sackcloth and sat down in the dust. This is the proclamation he issued in Nineveh: ...let people and animals be covered with sackcloth. Let everyone call urgently on God. Let them give up their evil ways and their violence. Who knows? God may yet relent and with compassion turn from his fierce anger so that we will not perish." When God saw what they did and how they turned from their evil ways, he relented and did not bring on them the destruction he had threatened. -Jonah 3:1-2, 4-7, 8-10*

*From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." -Matthew 4:17*

9. Practically, what does it mean to receive Jesus the prophet – not only His free gift of grace, but His Lordship over our lives in loving obedience?
10. In what area(s) of your life and how is the Spirit convicting you of your need to heed the prophetic instruction of Jesus?

*"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.' -Matthew 7:21-23*

Because of His great love for us, God does not leave us where we are. He does not leave us helpless in our fallen and broken state, wallowing alone in our destructive decisions and behaviours. He calls out to us, like He called out to His people Israel in the Old Testament through the prophets, to turn around and come to Him for salvation, forgiveness, freedom, and restoration through the finished work of Jesus the Perfect Prophet. He works powerfully through people and circumstances to get our attention, to wake us up- and through the testimony of His word in the scriptures, through the power of His Holy Spirit- He calls us to repent of our sin that is leading us to death, and follow Him in the way that leads to life. If you have not taken that step but you know that something is not right in your heart, if you're carrying the heavy burden of conviction for the way you've been living, if God has been moving in your heart and life, perhaps He is calling you to heed His voice and receive Him in faith. If you have been walking in a way that you know is not honouring to God and something is heavy on your heart, has been brought to your attention- perhaps God is calling you to repentance today. Don't put off the gracious and urgent call from the Lord. Respond now in prayer! Praise God that He is living and active, that He knows us and loves us enough to speak and remedy our ignorance, return us from error, and bless us with forgiveness, freedom, and life in Him. Glory to God!