

## ***“Prophets and Prophecy”***

May 2012

Hymn            “Today we all are called to be disciples”    VU 507  
Verse 4

May we in service to our God act out the living Word,  
and walk the road the saints have trod till all have seen and heard.  
As stewards of the earth may we give thanks in one accord  
to God who calls us all to be disciples of the Lord.

Scripture        *Ezekiel 1:1-3; 1:28b-2:3a; 3:1-4*    (*King James Version*)

Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month as I was among the captives by the river of Chebar, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God. In the fifth day of the month which was the fifth year of king Jehoiachin’s reign, the word of the Lord came expressly unto Ezekiel, the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans, by the river Chebar; and the hand of the Lord was there upon him.

This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the Lord. And when I saw it I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake. And he said unto me, Son of Man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee. And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me. And he said unto me, Son of Man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation that rebelled against me:

Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll\*, and go speak unto the house of Israel. So I opened my mouth, and he caused me to eat that roll. And he said unto me, Son of man, cause thy belly to eat, and fill thy bowels with this roll that I give thee. Then I did eat it; and it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness. And he said unto me, Son of man, go, get thee unto the house of Israel, and speak with my words unto them.

(roll\* = scroll)

Prayer            Let us pray – O Spirit, above us, beneath us, around us, within us; we seek your prophecy for us today. Whither is our way? Or are we to wither away? Amen.

Lesson            This year is the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the introduction of the King James Version of The Bible. Within the English speaking world the introduction of this version was most important in acquainting the common people with the messages in the Bible. For many years The Book, the KJV, was **The** Word of God. It was an item to be worshipped and remains so for some people today. But, in the 21<sup>st</sup> century the King James English doesn’t flow off the tongue and into the mind in a meaningful way. There are better translations for use now, where the translators have gone back to the original language and written in the English commonly used today.

We see something of the difficulty of the language in the verses chosen from the book of Ezekiel, but for us who grew up with the King James Version it is possible to understand. For younger people it may be more difficult.

The priest, Ezekiel, has a vision where he is called to go to the people of Israel and prophesy using the words that a divine presence has given him. It is important

that the Israelites receive and understand this message. It is important for the future of the people of Israel that they take action when they understand the message.

When Ezekiel saw the vision, there was a big change in his life.

When the Israelites paid attention to Ezekiel's prophecy, a major change in their actions and lives was necessary.

When the Bible was printed in English, in the King James Version, there was a major change in the church and in the lives of many people.

In the Christian church today there are "prophets" who are saying that major changes are necessary and offering suggestions so that the church will carry on.

In AOTS men's clubs there are other "prophets" who are saying we are doomed as an organization unless we do something, or perhaps everything, differently.

Do we have an Ezekiel or an Isaiah, or a Jeremiah in our midst that can cajole, or direct, or steer us in a new direction where we can follow Jesus teachings and example to mentor followers into 21<sup>st</sup> century disciples?

Discussion - How would you be willing to change the structure of your club or of your meetings, or the time and location of your gatherings, or the focus of your group, in order to accommodate the needs of men who are seeking fellowship and wish to nourish their souls and may consider being part of your group?

- How would you know if you are making the right choice of changes?

Prayer Let us pray – O God, we would love to bring more men to know you better. We thank you for all the joy we share within our group whether we are sharing food together, or working to create or repair something, or deep in faith discussions. Make us aware of the prophets who carry your message today and who seek to guide us in the direction you would have us take as we strive to become better servants and true disciples. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

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