

“The Gift (3): Of Maniacs and Fools and Other Such Gifts”

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Seven Stages in the Life Cycle of a Prophet

- **Stage #1—God calls a _____ to deliver a divine message to His people.**
 - Jeremiah 1:4, 5
 - Don't forget:
 - _____ (Exodus 15:20);
 - _____ (Judges 4:4);
 - _____ (II Chronicles 34:22);
 - _____ (Luke 2:36);
 - _____ (Acts 21:9).
 - Gerhard von Rad: “The picture we see is of a man appointed to hear the word of God. As the result of this divine call he surrenders much of his _____—occasionally he is completely overwhelmed by an external compulsion: but paradoxically, just because he has received this call he is able to enjoy an entirely new kind of freedom. Drawn into ever more and more close converse with God, he is privy to the divine purposes and is thereby given the authority to enter into a unique kind of converse with men.” (*Old Testament Theology* 2:76)
- **Stage #2—It was usually a message of _____.**
 - Jeremiah 1:14-16
 - The divine messages were generally delivered by _____, by _____ or by _____.
(Numbers 12:6-8)
 - Jeremiah 36:1, 2, 4-6, 23, 27-28, 32
 - Divine revelation inspired a prophet's _____, which he then shaped into _____ that either he or an assistant then transcribed into the written Word of God.
 - The Bible prophets who wrote were not God's _____; they were rather God's _____.
 - Thus it is not the _____ of the Bible that are inspired, but rather the _____ of the Bible.
 - II Peter 1:21 NIV—“Men spoke from God as they were _____ by the Holy Spirit.”
 - Just because it didn't get written down in the canon of Holy Scripture doesn't negate the divine _____ and source of the prophet's message.
- **Stage #3—The prophet responds by either _____ or acquiescing.**
 - Jeremiah 1:6
- **Stage #4—The prophet _____ the divine message, and attempts to persuade the listeners of its divine _____.**
 - Jeremiah 9:1, 2; 10:19
- **Stage #5—The popular response generally is one of _____.**
 - Matthew 23:31, 41, 37
- **Stage #6—The prophet _____ with his mission and message.**
 - John Goldingay: “Who is this man who proclaims that God is judge, *and* that God commits violence and outrage; who declares God's praise, *and* curses the day he was born; who is as hard as a rock outside, but torn apart inside? The most extraordinary thing is that the chapter ends on that note of despair. . . . But even more remarkable is the fact that Jeremiah's agonizing finds a place in God's book. God, in other words, accepted Jeremiah's complaints and protests and prayers for vengeance on his enemies. God let Jeremiah batter him on the chest, and implicitly encourages us to follow Jeremiah's example.” (*God's Prophet, God's Servant* 30, 31)
- **Stage #7—The prophet's mission and message are eventually divinely _____, though by then the prophet is either martyred or has disappeared into obscurity.**
 - Von Rad: “It is still Jeremiah's secret how, in the face of growing skepticism about his own office, he was yet able to give an almost superhuman obedience to God, and, bearing the immense strains of his calling, was yet able to follow a road which ultimately led to abandonment. Never for a moment did it occur to him that this mediatorial suffering might have meaning in the sight of God. Again, if God brought the life of the most faithful of his ambassadors into so terrible and utterly uncomprehended a night and there to all appearances allowed him to come to utter grief, this remains God's secret.” (2:206)

*“Believe His prophets,
and so shall you prosper”*

II Chronicles 20:20

man/woman, Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, Anna, Daughters of Philip, freedom, urgency, visions, dreams, divine voice, thoughts, words, pen, penmen, words, writers, carried along, authority, protesting, delivers, reliability, rejection, struggles, vindicated