

Word of Knowledge – Part 2

We see the use of the expression 'A Word of Knowledge' written by Paul in **1 Corin. 12:8**. '***To another a Word of Knowledge is given through the same Spirit.***' Although the actual expression is not used previously, all of the Gifts, apart from tongues and interpretation, were in operation during Old Testament times. Before Pentecost the Holy Spirit was active for a while in the lives of particular individuals, usually prophets, to fulfil a specific purpose, but, He was not permanently indwelling in their lives. Since Pentecost the Holy Spirit potentially indwells the lives of all Christian believers.

A supernatural Word of Knowledge is always about something that concerns either the past or the present. It is usually given to individuals, but occasionally appears to be given to a group of people. Sometimes it benefits or encourages an individual, sometimes a whole nation. At other times God uses a Word of Knowledge to reprimand an individual by revealing dishonesty or a way of life that is not pleasing to Him.

In **2 Kings 5** we can see how Elisha was given a Word of Knowledge concerning his servant Gehazi. Naaman, who had leprosy, was told that the prophet Elisha could cure him of his leprosy. When Naaman arrived at Elisha's house, Elisha did not go out to meet him but sent a messenger telling him to go and wash in the River Jordan seven times. Naaman was not at all happy about just receiving a messenger instead of Elisha himself going out to him and waving his hand over him to cure him of his leprosy; after all, (not sure) but I think that he must have travelled about eighty miles to see Elisha. He was also annoyed about being told to wash in the muddy Jordan rather than in the two much cleaner rivers of Damascus. He was persuaded by his servants to be obedient to what Elisha had told him to do and he received his healing.

Naaman offered gifts to Elisha, which Elisha refused to accept, knowing that the healing had come from God and not from himself. Naaman acknowledged that it was God who had done such a wonderful thing and vowed to worship the God of Elisha in future instead of idol worship. He asked Elisha for two mule loads of soil to take back with him. At that time it was thought that a God could only be worshipped on the soil of that one nation so Naaman wanted to take some Israelite soil back with him so that he could continue to worship the true God of Elisha.

Gehazi, a servant of Elisha, had heard the conversation between Naaman and Elisha and without telling Elisha, decided to go after Naaman and ask him for the gifts that he had offered. He lied to Naaman and concocted a story about two young men arriving, saying that Elisha had said that it was okay to give them the gifts. Naaman willingly did what was asked and Gehazi took the gifts and hid them in the house. Elisha, remaining in the house, was given a supernatural Word of Knowledge from God showing him exactly what Gehazi had done whilst several miles away. When asked where he had been, Gehazi again lied and said that he had not been anywhere, but of course, God had already revealed the truth to Elisha. As a result of his deceit Gehazi and his descendants became lepers.

Words of Knowledge operated more in the life of Elisha than in anyone else in the Old Testament. Another example of this concerns not just an individual but a whole nation. In **2 Kings 6**, we can read how the Syrian army was coming to fight against the Israelites. Twice Elisha received a Word of Knowledge as to the exact whereabouts of that army and told the King of Israel. The King of Syria thought that there must be a traitor within his own army relaying the information, but his servants assured him that it had been because of the prophet Elisha. Elisha could not possibly have known the plans of the Syrian army but they were revealed to him by God through a supernatural Word of Knowledge.

About a hundred years earlier there came a point when the Israelites no longer wanted God to be their sole ruler, but wanted a king in the same way as other nations had kings. Although Samuel had already previously anointed Saul to be king, he brought all of the tribes together in order to go through the process of officially choosing a king. We can read about this in **1 Samuel 10: 20-24**. Their usual method of making such decisions was by relying on God to show them the right decision by drawing lots. When they did this they chose one of the tribes, then one of the families within that tribe, followed by an individual within that family. In this way it was Saul who was chosen to be king. It is remarkable when you think that it says, ***'Present yourselves before the Lord by your tribes and by your thousands.'*** (v. 19) and yet the system still produced the same person who had already been chosen by God to be king!

Apparently, after Saul had been chosen he was nowhere to be found, so we read in v. 22, ***'When they sought him he could not be found, so they inquired again of the Lord.'*** They were obviously very open to hearing what God would say to them and were expecting an immediate response. He spoke to them by a Word of Knowledge – ***'He has hidden himself among the baggage.'*** Words of knowledge are always very practical and also produce immediate results.

Elijah was very much used by God in a variety of ways, but, he was still a normal human being, such as you and I, who had his ups and downs. Shortly after successfully calling down fire from heaven in confrontation with the Baal worshippers, he was told that Queen Jezebel was after him and was going to kill him. He was so afraid that he quickly went miles away, sat down and asked God to let him die. He felt really sorry for himself because he thought that he was the only one left who was not worshipping Baal. God gave him a Word of Knowledge saying that he was not the only one and that there were also seven thousand others. Elijah could not have known that information and it was given to him supernaturally by God.

God is able to give us Words of Knowledge at just the right time because He knows everything and is able to convey that knowledge to us in what are very tiny fragments of knowledge to Him, but very important bits of information to us at a time when most needed.