

**Prophecy Study Guide for Initiates and Members
of
Circulos Tenebris Matrem Arcanas
Circle of the Dark and Mysterious Mother**



Prophecy

Prophecy is one of the most misunderstood spiritual gifts and practices. Most people think of fortune telling or predicting the future when they think of prophecy. A prophecy certainly can be both of these but isn't necessarily about the future at all. Prophecy is actually about messages being given to a practitioner from a spiritual force (such as a deity). These messages can be about the future, they can be teachings, or they can be messages that are much more personal.

Many Christians feel that the time of prophecy is over with the closing of the Biblical cannon. Basically, the idea is that with the Christian Bible being constructed there are no more messages given that are not coming through Biblical study. At CTMA we disagree with that idea. It's fine if an individual wishes to believe that for themselves, but we believe that prophecy is something that happens every day. Every moment that we are alive is a prophetic moment. Any gnostic, shamanistic, experiential Tradition believes that prophecy occurs for the individual even when they are not aware of it.

Prophecy and prophets (someone who receives prophecy) have existed in many cultures and throughout the ages. At one time a prophet was consulted before kings, queens, and nations made any decisions. It was taken that seriously.

One of the most famous prophets was the Oracle at Delphi. The Pythia was the name of the high priestess of the Temple of Apollo at Delphi who also served as the oracle, commonly known as the Oracle of Delphi.

The name Pythia is derived from Pytho, which in myth was the original name of Delphi. In etymology, the Greeks derived this place name from the verb, "to rot", which refers to the sickly-sweet smell of the decomposition of the body of the monstrous Python after she was slain by Apollo.

The Pythia was established at the latest in the 8th century BC and was widely credited for her prophecies inspired by being filled by the spirit of the god, in this case Apollo. The Pythian priestess emerged pre-eminent by the end of 7th century BC and would continue to be consulted until the 4th century AD. During this period the Delphic Oracle was the most prestigious and authoritative oracle among the Greeks, and she was without doubt the most powerful woman of the classical world. The oracle is one of the best-documented religious institutions of the classical Greeks.

In CTMA we continue the tradition of prophecy and believe that every practitioner is a prophet as they receive their own messages from their deities and other spiritual forces. Every writing, every insight is prophecy and we proudly carry this forward.

Vehicles for Prophecy

There are many practices that can help invoke prophecy. What is important to understand here is that prophetic moments happen without practices, but the conditions can be made right for prophecy to occur and help the flow of information as well as understanding of what has been given.

Study

In our Scholarship study guide we explore ways of studying and how to work with source works (foundation materials for a given Tradition). Studying is a great way to receive prophetic messages. By reading texts and contemplating their meanings, many messages can be received – not just the content of the reading, but the various other ideas that crop up naturally from the exploration. I find source works the most advantageous for prophecy, but it can come from any reading (including works of fiction).

Meditation

Meditation is an important practice to invoke prophecy. It is very true that most of our brains are so active that we never stop to listen. It takes listening to be able to hear the messages that are being given to us. Many times, by learning meditative practices (see our study guide on Meditation) we can learn to still the mind and open up reception. During meditation we may receive prophecy or the stillness that we gain from meditative techniques may give us the ability to get messages at other times because we are more open to listen.

Ritual

Ritual (see the Ritual study guide and related materials) can be an affective way to receive spiritual messages. Ritual is all about setting intent, acting out movement and vocalizations to build energy, and

focusing our will. During a ritual I will usually set aside a time to just listen and contemplate. The ritual often involves invoking deity, angels, and other spiritual forces. It is a great time to take a moment and listen to what they have to say.

Dreams

Our dreams are an interesting combination of unconscious thoughts and spiritual messages. I believe that dreams are a mixture of both. When dreaming we have to remember that we are seeing, hearing, and experiencing in symbol. There are many books on dream symbology on the market, but I tend to go with my gut feeling of what my symbols mean. After all, they are my symbols, not someone else's. I believe we dream in symbol because energy from within or without comes to us and our brain has to make sense of it. That "sense" comes in the form of symbols.

To effectively use your dreams as an agent for prophecy, I suggest a couple of things. First, before you go to bed invoke a deity that you are especially drawn to and ask for messages in your sleep. Sometimes it is helpful to put something next to your bed that reminds you of that deity, such as jewelry or a statue. Keep a journal and writing implement next to your bed as well, so that if you wake up with images, you can write them down before they slip away.

If I have a dream that seems prophetic, I will meditate on it, asking for wisdom and insight. Often I will start to see the message that is trying to be conveyed and I can then use the symbology to come to conclusions about what is learned from the experience.

Scrying

Scrying is a process of using a tool to aid in the process of prophecy. For this one can gaze into a crystal ball, a black mirror (reflective, but not to the point of just looking at your image), a bowl of water, a flame, or any other tool that gives you something to gaze into. Scrying is a form of meditation, but specifically with a tool to help with prophecy. I would keep a journal and writing implement next to you so after your scrying, you can take notes.

Pendulum

A pendulum is a weighted chord. There are very beautiful pendulums that have been created with crystals and are a form of artwork on the very own. To use the pendulum, you can hold it in one hand with the weight facing downward. You can either just agree that one direction is yes and another no, you can write these on a piece of paper, or you can purchase a board for work with a pendulum. After prayer, meditation, or opening a ritual, the process is to ask simple yes or no questions and let the pendulum swing to give an answer. Many will say that the pendulum swings based on micro movements of the hand to create the answer we believe is correct. That may be true, but prophecy comes from within and not from without. The message comes to our subconscious and then in one way or another, we receive an answer.

Tarot and Other Cards

The use of Tarot and other card decks can be very helpful for prophecy. This uses symbology from the cards to give us answers in a more structured way than any of the previous techniques. This method takes more practice than many of the others because you have to learn how to use the cards and the more you "feel" the symbology, the more accurate they will be. You can reference our study guide on Tarot, The Paths of the Tree of Life, and the Netivah for more information.

Runes

Runes are another method of receiving messages. Runes are small stones, pieces of wood, or other material that have a symbol on them. One of the most common are Norse Runes that have Nordic symbols on them. These runes are shaken and then thrown down or a given number can be selected from them all. This will then give messages based on what symbols show up. This is a very disciplined practice that I would recommend studying up on before practicing.

Astrology

Looking at the placement of stars and planets in the heavens for a given period of time has been a form of prophecy since the beginning of mankind. We see many temples and structures from the ancient world used to watch the skies (for example: Stonehenge, the Mayan temples, and the pyramids of Egypt).

Astrology requires a great deal of knowledge about the meaning of constellations and heavenly bodies. It also requires charts or software to track the movement of the heavenly bodies through time. There are many books on the subject and practitioners that can help with an astrologic chart.

Other Methods

The methods listed above are only a few of the methods to do prophecy. There are many, many other ways used by various cultures. If you follow a particular deity or Tradition, looking into their methods may be helpful. In any case, remember that prophecy is not just about telling the future, but about receiving messages from spiritual sources.