

The Prophet's Blessing

Jesus told His disciples that when He returned to the Father, they would experience persecution, betrayals, imprisonment and even death because of their faith in Him. But He assured them they had nothing to fear from the world because He had overcome it.

“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world” (John 16:33, KJV).

Despite threats and persecution, the apostles boldly preached the good news of the gospel, and miracles, signs and wonders confirmed their message. Consider an account in Acts 3 and 4. After the lame man was healed at the gate called Beautiful, the priests, temple leader and Sadducees took Peter and John into custody and interrogated them because they healed on the Sabbath and preached that Christ had been raised from the dead.

When the religious leaders asked Peter and John by what power they healed the lame man, Peter, full of the Holy Ghost, boldly said: “Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: If we today are being examined concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, how this man has been healed, be it known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands before you whole” (Acts 4:8b-10, MEV).

Acts 4 goes on to say that “when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus. And beholding the man which was healed standing with them, they could say nothing against it” (vv. 13-14, KJV).

Realizing they couldn't deny that a miracle had taken place since the healed man was standing before them and all the people knew what happened to him, the religious leaders threatened Peter and John, commanding them not to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. "But Peter and John answered them, 'Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. For we cannot help but declare what we have seen and heard'" (Acts 4:19-20, MEV).

Peter and John were released, and when they returned to the company of believers, they shared everything that happened.

"When they heard this, they lifted their voices in unity to God and prayed, "Lord, You are God, who has made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them. ... Now, Lord, look on their threats and grant that Your servants may speak Your word with great boldness, by stretching out Your hand to heal and that signs and wonders may be performed in the name of Your holy Son Jesus" (Acts 4:24, 29-30).

How Prophets Bless Others Through Prayer

Notice that when Peter and John returned to their company, they prayed fervently. Prayer was the key to their power and their boldness.

"And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness" (Acts 4:31, KJV).

They prayed and exalted the Lord until the place was shaken by the power of the Holy Ghost as He filled them again with His power and boldness.

Prayer always precedes the power. Prayer and the infilling of the Spirit are the keys to boldness. That company of believers prayed until the power of the Holy Ghost fell and filled them again. And with the infilling of the Holy Spirit came the

anointing and boldness to keep spreading the good news of the kingdom of God and not shrink back.

After the stoning of Stephen, a great persecution arose in Jerusalem against the church (Acts 8). King Herod even stretched his hand against the believers, killing James the brother of John with the sword. When he realized James' death pleased the religious community, Herod imprisoned Peter with the intent to do the same to him.

But the saints prayed.

"Peter was kept in prison, but fervent prayer for him was persistently made to God by the church (assembly)" (Acts 12:5, AMPC).

The believers prayed fervently until the unseen became seen and the impossible was accomplished. An angel awakened Peter, removed his chains, unlocked locked doors and escorted him safely out of the prison. Peter went to his praying company—and they were still praying when he arrived!

Prophets and intercessors, be faithful and persistent in prayer. That is how you will remain sensitive to the Spirit of God and receive the boldness to speak and pray with the kind of power that removes burdens, destroys yokes and sets captives free!

Blessing the Prophet to Bless Yourself

God releases divine blessing upon those who honor His representatives. Those who are hospitable to prophets get God's attention.

The treatment of prophets is a sign of a person's heart toward God. Favor, blessing, promotion and financial breakthrough are some of the blessings that come into your life when you receive a prophet of God. Even if you are called to prophetic ministry, honoring God's prophets brings rewards.

The widow of Zarephath received Elijah as a prophet because he was a prophet. She extended to him the hospitality he requested of her (1 Kings 17:9-16). She acted on his words in faith, giving her all to God by making his servant a meal with her only food. Then, in obedience to Elijah's instructions, she used her flour and oil to make the prophet food, with the expectation that God would keep them filled so she could provide for herself, her son, and Elijah. As a result, God rewarded her faith. "The bin of flour was not used up, nor did the jar of oil run dry, according to the word of the Lord which He spoke by Elijah" (1 Kings 17:16, NKJV). Later on, after what seemed to be a fatal tragedy—her son's sudden death—she was rewarded for her faithfulness to Elijah when her son was restored to life (1 Kings 17:17-24).

Something similar happened to the Shunammite woman who received Elijah's successor, Elisha, into her home. The woman said to her husband, "Look now, I know that this is a holy man of God, who passes by us regularly. Please, let us make a small upper room on the wall; and let us put a bed for him there, and a table and a chair and a lampstand; so it will be, whenever he comes to us, he can turn in there" (2 Kings 4:8-10).

She not only acknowledged Elisha's call and the anointing; she also exercised her faith to make provision for that call and anointing to operate in her life. God rewarded her faith by fulfilling the word given to her through the prophet that her barrenness would be removed and she would have a son. And when that son got sick and died, God used the prophet Elisha to raise him back to life (2 Kings 4:16-17, 34-37).

The prophet's reward is the fulfillment of the prophet's word. It is received by giving honor to the prophet and taking action in faith that shows you believe the prophetic word will surely come to pass. It is also received by faith in the prophet's blessing or decree.

“For whosoever shall give you a cup of water to drink in my name, because ye belong to Christ, verily I say unto you, he shall not lose his reward” (Mark 9:41, KJV).

Receiving a Prophet's Reward

You can receive a prophet's reward in many ways: divine intervention, impartations, confirmation of direction, blessings and the breaking of curses. Other ways in which you can receive a prophet's reward include the following:

Encouragement. This is one of the assignments of prophets. They will encourage people others have forgotten. If you need encouragement, get around prophets. In Acts 4:36, Barnabas is called the “son of prophecy” or the “son of encouragement.”

“Judas and Silas, being prophets themselves, exhorted the brothers with many words and strengthened them” (Acts 15:32, MEV).

“The Lord God has given me the tongue of the learned, that I may know how to sustain him who is weary with a word; He awakens me morning by morning; He awakens my ear to listen as the learned” (Isa. 50:4).

Conviction. Without conviction, there is no change. Conviction is the grace of the prophet. Their words pierce the heart to bring understanding, insight and the fear of the Lord to produce lasting change.

“When they heard this, they were stung in the heart and said to Peter and to the rest of the apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’” (Acts 2:37).

Hope. Prophets can step into hopeless situations and prophesy a miraculous turnaround. Prophets can see beyond discouragement and despair. They can see restoration, change and hope (Ezek. 37:11-12).

Miracles. If you want to see miracles, step out in faith on

the words of a prophet. Peter obeyed the word of the Lord and caught a great number of fish (Luke 5:5-6).

Warning of and exposing the enemy's plans. Elisha warned the king of Israel concerning the plans of the enemy because the Lord opened his ears to hear the plotting of the enemy (2 Kings 6:10-12).

Revealing root issues. It is a true blessing when a prophet gets to the root of a problem to address what is hidden beneath the surface. Roots are the source of what is growing. Is the root rebellion, pride, rejection, bitterness or unforgiveness? Prophets will reveal and deal with the root issue so you can reap the reward of freedom.

“Even now the axe is put to the tree roots. Therefore, every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire” (Matt. 3:10).

Sensitivity to the Spirit of God. Prophets know and can bring correction when the Holy Spirit is grieved or vexed, and also when the glory has departed (Ichabod). It is amazing that some people can carry on when God's glory leaves, but the prophet cannot act as if the glory is still there when it has lifted. Prophets are grieved when the Holy Spirit is grieved or vexed.

“Don't grieve God. Don't break his heart. His Holy Spirit, moving and breathing in you, is the most intimate part of your life, making you fit for himself. Don't take such a gift for granted” (Eph. 4:30, MSG).

Prosperity. Prophets hurt when they see the people of God struggle because of disobedience. (Consider, for instance, the Lamentations of Jeremiah.) Listening to God's voice and responding with obedience is a key to prosperity.

“I alone know the plans I have for you, plans to bring you prosperity and not disaster, plans to bring the future you hope for” (Jer. 29:11, GNT).

Times of refreshing. Churches and believers need seasons of refreshing. A prophetic atmosphere refreshes and provides rest and water in the dry places. Refresh means “to revive or reinvigorate, as with rest, food, or drink; to renew by stimulation.” We are refreshed in the presence of the Lord.

“So repent (change your mind and purpose); turn around and return [to God] that your sins may be erased (blotted out, wiped clean), that times of refreshing (of recovering from the effects of heat, of reviving with fresh air) may come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19, AMPC).

Other rewards. Prophets also help us go through God’s chastening and correction the right way (Heb. 12:11-13; Rev. 3:19). They challenge our comfort zones (Amos 6:1, 4) and call us to rise out of sin and rebellion. Their foresight as well as their discernment of the times and seasons help us to stay poised, purified and prepared for the future.

“We are intimately linked in this harvest work. Anyone who accepts what you do, accepts me, the One who sent you. Anyone who accepts what I do accepts my Father, who sent me. Accepting a messenger of God is as good as being God’s messenger” (Matt. 10:41, MSG).

Apostle John Eckhardt is overseer of Crusaders Ministries, located in Chicago. Gifted with a strong apostolic anointing, he has ministered throughout the United States and overseas in over 80 nations. He is a sought-after international conference speaker and has authored over 40 books, including *Prayers That Rout Demons and Deliverance* and *Spiritual Warfare Manual*. Eckhardt resides in the Chicago area with his wife, Wanda.