

3 Prophetic Cautions Before You Rise Against Belshazzar

I wonder if we realize not only the urgent need, but also the opportunity God is providing for true prophetic messengers to rise up and bring order and life to the world.

Many who read this will admit they have been tapped by God to reveal life-altering mysteries and to deliver powerful truths to a confused and deceived culture. I believe God is preparing his messengers to interpret the handwriting on the wall today, a word from God that will shake up kingdoms and bring cleansing, reformation and revival. We must use caution, however, as there will be temptations and stumbling blocks that can fully wipe out not only the message but the messenger. We must be a humble people, fashioned after God's very heart.

Handwriting on the Wall

"Belshazzar the king made a great feast for a thousand of his lords and drank wine before the thousand" (Dan. 5:1).

The self-indulgent spirit that drove King Belshazzar and the culture under his reign was obnoxious, much like we see today. There's a spirit of excess and drunkenness in the land, and nothing short of a move of God will bring it to an end. There is a remnant of people who are yearning for the kingdom of God to come down and for righteousness to dominate the nation, and God will use that hunger to his advantage.

These zealots are about to be called on to release the word of the Lord and renounce the overwhelming wickedness we see today. These messengers will operate in the spirit of Daniel, people who are only interested in being called on as God's vessels.

Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem. And the king and his officials, his wives and his concubines drank from them. They drank wine and praised the gods of gold and of silver, of bronze, of iron, of wood, and of stone (Dan. 5:3-4).

This passage reveals the defilement that had overtaken the people. I suggest it may be worse today—much worse. God's house has been desecrated. What was meant as offerings has been stolen and used as worship to other gods, gods of gold and silver. The worship of money has become a stench in our world, and many in the church have been seduced by the very same spirit. An overturning of the tables is coming.

“Immediately fingers of a man's hand appeared and wrote opposite the lampstand on the plaster of the wall of the king's palace. And the king saw the back of the hand that wrote” (Dan. 5:5).

This verse is causing a tremble in my spirit. So many are crying out for a move of God in our nation, yet might it come in the form of a terrifying message? The moment King Belshazzar saw this otherworldly invasion into his palace, he was desperately looking for resolution. A move of God must result in the people today becoming so desperate that they forget the party, surrender their selfish pursuits and focus on resolution. Many spiritual people will willingly offer their services to help interpret what is going down, but only true godly, prophetic people who have lived in the secret place of prayer will have the interpretation. It's the only interpretation anybody should trust.

Bring on the Enchanters

Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees struck against one another.

The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever shall read this writing and show me its interpretation shall be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom" (Dan. 5:6-7).

The supernatural message written by the finger of God caused the king to drop to his knees. We must pray for our leaders to hit their face, for their own strength to fail them and for them to cry out! The king, clearly not a man after God's own heart, sought after help from the enchanters and astrologers. He knew he was up against something spiritual, something that originated in another realm, and his immediate thought was to call on his supposed experts on the supernatural. They offered no help.

Caution No. 1

The first caution for God's messengers comes in right here.

The king cried aloud to bring in the astrologers, the Chaldeans, and the soothsayers. And the king spoke and said to the wise men of Babylon, "Whoever shall read this writing and show me its interpretation shall be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about his neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom."

Then all the king's wise men came in, but they could not read the writing, nor make known to the king its interpretation. Then King Belshazzar was greatly troubled, and his countenance was changed in him, and his nobles were astonished (Dan. 5:7-9).

In today's prophetic culture, it can be tempting to deliver a prophetic word when the pressure is great. It's not uncommon for ministers today to invent prophetic words or to deliver

one that is general, safe from scrutiny.

And when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he did not go as other times to seek for enchantments, but he set his face toward the wilderness (Num. 24:1).

It's entirely possible to be called of God and to have His words put into our mouths, while utilizing sorcery to deliver a tainted message. This is a serious, sobering reality, and we cannot dismiss the ramifications.

Jude highlights Balaam to warn against his prophetic greed:

"Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain, have run greedily after the error of Balaam for a reward, and perished in the rebellion of Korah" (Jude 11).

Balaam was a prophet of God who sold out to God's enemies—and it cost him dearly. "The children of Israel killed Balaam son of Beor, who practiced divination, with the sword along with the rest of the slain" (Josh. 13:22).

Often when I travel, I will minister prophetically. There is commonly an expectation that I will release prophetic words for the church, the city and also for individuals in the meetings. There can be pressure to perform, to give them what they want. It's not uncommon for me to avoid giving prophetic words at all on some trips, even when asked. I wonder if the church may have felt like they were shortchanged, but the fear of the Lord is very real for me. I simply cannot lie in the name of God, taking his name in vain. We should be terrified at such a thought!

In fact, there have been times when I did have a prophetic word for the church or the city they were laboring in. I can remember feeling a bit unsettled after delivering the word due to the reaction of the leadership. They became extremely excited about the word, and I could tell they were going to

hang too much of their hope on it. Prophecy was never meant to be the end-all of divine revelation. If a pastor is called to lead his church in a specific direction, prophecy can be encouraging and even directional to a point, but if they are seasoned and mature, they won't become giddy. They will take it in stride, judge it, weigh it and appreciate whatever assistance it offers as they add it to their prophetic history. They simply stay the course and keep moving.

"Then Daniel was brought in before the king" (Dan. 5:13a).

After the enchanters fail, God's people will be summoned. A prophetic people will be called on to bring understanding to the crisis in the land. We must understand the great cost that such an honor demands. A causal connection to God will never suffice. This prophetic company will be those who are firebrands, burning night and day in the place of intercession.

And I have heard of you, that you can give interpretations and solve problems. Now if you can read the writing, and make known to me its interpretation, you shall be clothed with scarlet and have a chain of gold about your neck and shall be the third ruler in the kingdom (Dan. 5:16).

Caution No. 2

Caution No. 2 comes into play here. King Belshazzar was in close with the gods of money, and he was ready to reward Daniel from that domain. Remember, the king was desperate, terrified and was willing to pay greatly for resolution. Too much of today's prophetic culture is wooed and conditioned by the temptation of financial reward. The words of God are too sacred for such a carnal approach to prophecy. Even today, people are not only willing but eager to pay prophets for an encouraging word. The fortunetellers are better off as they are at least prophesying without putting God's name behind the message. I fear many of today's prophetic ministers have

jumped at the chance to prophesy for leaders in exchange for wealth.

What we read next is what we must see emerge in our nation if we have hope of delivering a pure word to a desperate people:

“Then Daniel answered and said before the king, “Let your gifts be for yourself, or give your rewards to another. Yet I will read the writing to the king and make known to him the interpretation” (Dan. 5:17).

Did you pick up on the humility and purity of what Daniel said? It’s enough to take pause and just meditate on that verse! He was in no way motivated by financial gain. His passion was to function in his God-given gift and to be faithful in his opportunity to impact the king and the kingdom.

Daniel goes on to explain how God had so favored the king’s father, Nebuchadnezzar, and went to great lengths to reveal his greatness when the fear of the Lord disappeared. Even though Belshazzar witnessed God’s undeniable activity in his dad’s life and his dealings with him when his heart grew hard, he still turned to the gods of gold.

But have lifted up yourself against the Lord of heaven. And they have brought the vessels of His house before you, and you and your lords, your wives and your concubines, have drunk wine in them. And you have praised the gods of silver and gold, of bronze, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know. And the God in whose hand is your breath, and whose are all your ways, you have not glorified (Dan. 5:23).

Today’s prophetic culture rewards prophets who deliver what the people want to hear, but God is looking for those who, in the spirit of Daniel, will with great love and humility, reveal the hard truths.

What happens next is remarkable. Daniel prophesies the end of Belshazzar's reign, and the very wealth that Daniel refused before delivering the prophecy was given him after he obediently served God's purposes. He was ultimately named as one of three leaders of the new administration. Provision and promotion will follow obedience.

"This is the interpretation of the message:

Mene: God has numbered your kingdom and put an end to it.

Tekel: you have been weighed in the balances and are found wanting.

Peres: your kingdom has been divided and given to the Medes and Persians."

Then Belshazzar gave the command, and they clothed Daniel with scarlet and put a chain of gold about his neck, and made a proclamation concerning him, that he should be the third ruler in the kingdom.

That same night Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans was slain. Then Darius the Mede received the kingdom, being about sixty-two years old.

Caution No. 3

I contend it's only the fear of the Lord that will enable today's end-time messengers to deliver the very hard words to a hard-hearted people. It will be extremely easy to soften the word, to pull back, to hesitate or to be muzzled entirely. Great caution must be considered when dealing with God's weighty, timely prophetic declarations. Daniel refused to shrink back. He wasn't focused on the financial benefits for bringing a word that the king approved of.

Will you be included as part of the end-time remnant that is available to God, who is not seduced by wealth or notoriety

and who lives in the fear of the Lord? Will you with love and humility speak only the words of God even if it comes at a price?

We need people like this who will be ready when called on by the leaders of the world to bring clarity to a move of God they can't understand.

I believe prophecy is going to become more important than it has ever been in history, with the exception of the compilation of God's prophetic messages that resulted in the Bible.

True prophecy that is delivered accurately without modification will result in mind-blowing advance of the kingdom of God. We can see a demonized earthly kingdom fall in a day and the life of God advance in power if we are faithful to reveal the truth. You are invited to be a part of this sober, God-fearing end time company of prophetic messengers.