

Prophetic Vision: A Financial Release for God's Faithful

During **worship** at a conference where I recently spoke, I was suddenly impressed by a mental image of two parallel chains set vertically over a golden coin. Rarely am I given **revelation** by means of vision or mental picture, so I paid attention and began to seek the meaning of what I saw.

Clearly, this image represents financial wealth and abundance that have been held back. Along with the rest of the world, we believers have suffered financially in recent years. As a nation we have been under the Lord's judgment and the church has not been exempt.

It has not been God's judgment, however, in the form of punishment or wrath. It has rather been judgment as *krisis* (Greek New Testament word for "judgment," meaning "to cut or separate") which is sent by God and even welcomed by His people as that which separates the precious from the vile, what is holy from what is unholy and what is godly from what is ungodly. While promised financial abundance and release have been held back, it has been a time of refining and purifying for those who have been able to receive it as such.

When *krisis* fails to produce the fruit for which it was sent, wrath must follow. But for the world around us, although times have been hard, real devastation has yet to come. For many believers these recent years of trial have been a purifying fire in which we have been forced to adjust and establish our priorities and commitments as faithfulness has been put to the test.

In 2006 I prophesied this recession to the people of my church and told them we would be tested and that we would soon

discover where our real faith rested—in material well-being or in the Lord, our true provider. I told them that we as a congregation would be preserved through the difficult times to come. God has kept His word to us.

Unlike many other churches, we did not have to cut back on programs or lay off staff. In fact, we expanded our outreaches to the poor, to Native American reservations and to missions in Eastern Europe. Households have been stressed but preserved. We, and many others in other parts of the body of Christ, have stood our ground and embraced the refining fire of judgment in a way that has purified our devotion to God and confirmed our obedience to Him.

Now I believe that release of the gold coin from the restraining chains is imminent. The time has come for the Lord's justice to be realized, for the breaking of those chains and the release of provision that has been held back. The key to that release is and always has been the heart of sacrificial and faithful giving. Speaking of the righteous in Psalm 112:3, Scripture says, "Wealth and riches are in his house, And his righteousness endures forever." Verse 5 reads, "It is well with the man who is gracious and lends; He will maintain his cause in judgment" (NASB).

Many of us have been painfully faithful in giving and sharing, both as individuals and as local churches, even in the face of economic difficulty. Justice is due. "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne; lovingkindness and truth go before You" (Ps. 89:14). If God does not visit the righteous with justice, then the very foundation of His sovereignty crumbles. His justice demands that the chains holding back the release of the golden coin be broken. I believe that the faithful, both individuals and ministries, will be miraculously blessed in days to come with financial provision even as the world around us suffers.

In this period of time, generosity is key to the release of God's provision and wealth. Jesus promised that if we sow, then we must reap (see Luke 6:38). He who sows little reaps little and he who fails to sow anything at all reaps nothing at all. This is not magic or self-centered manipulation of God's principles, but is rather a function of the **kingdom of God** in line with the idea that love begets more love and grace begets greater grace. We give not in order to get, but because it is right to give and because giving is an expression of love, whether or not we expect to reap a benefit.

It is also true that sacrifice releases power. Witness the power that fell on Solomon's temple when the priests offered up thousands of animals in sacrifice. The glory cloud filled the temple and the priests couldn't stand up to minister. Witness the power released upon all of us when Jesus became our sacrifice for sin offered once for all. I know, therefore, that in these days to come, we must not measure our giving to fit our fear of not having enough for ourselves, but rather we must give in a way that constitutes sacrifice. If we wait until we feel that we can, we not only will never get there, but even if we gave when we felt we had enough to give, it would no longer be a sacrifice. Sacrifice costs something. It involves risk.

What I'm really saying is that we must not walk in fear in the days to come, adjusting our generosity to fit our fears. To do would be to see the release of blessing continued to be chained up. We must be generous as the heart of God is generous. The people of the church in Acts 2 had little materially but they sold their property and possessions sacrificially to meet the needs of others and then reaped the glory in signs, wonders, amazing love and thousands of salvations.

The world may descend into economic chaos, but I believe we who stand for truth are being offered a release of blessing

spiritually, relationally and, yes, economically, that we might have the resources available to minister richly to a dying world.

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