

When Your Prophetic Journey Meets With Spiritual Warfare

Mary knelt in the shadow of the **cross**, weeping in anguish as her first-born Son hung above her, naked and bloody. The ominous roar of thunder was crowded out by His agonizing cry, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"

She looked up through her tears. "Why," she cried out in the deafening silence of her thoughts, "why didn't You defend Yourself? I saw the raw power of God move through You. At Your word, demons fled, blind eyes were opened, lepers were cleansed. Why didn't You command the angels to save You?"

"You were going to be king of the Jews. It was prophesied; I didn't make it up. The angel Gabriel visited me, and everything happened as he said. It wasn't supposed to end like this."

Most of us remember Mary as the 15-year-old girl who rode off on a donkey to facilitate the Christmas story. But her life was so much more. It was a tapestry of mysteries that unraveled gradually across the seasons of her years, bringing her ultimately to this scene at the foot of the cross.

Mary, you see, was on a prophetic journey. And so are you.

On the day of the **crucifixion**, Mary's Son was not all that was dying; so were every belief and **prophetic promise** she'd clung to for 33 years. Perhaps you, too, have had your life turned upside down. You've seen your dreams die. The future looks bleak and empty. You need to understand that your **prophetic walk** with God is a cyclical journey. Like Mary, you will have seasons of prophetic **revelation**; seasons of **spiritual warfare** and wilderness wandering; seasons of ordinary, "ho-hum" life; seasons of effective ministry. All these ultimately lead to the cross and to the death of all things you hold dear.

But the cross is never the end.

Radical Visitation “One night the angel Gabriel came to me. Me—a simple Jewish girl living in poverty in the little town of Nazareth. What did I have to offer anyone, especially almighty God?

“His voice filled the room. ‘Greetings, you who are highly favored among women. The Lord is with you.’ He told me not to fear and that I would give birth to the Messiah. I cried out, ‘Yes, Lord, let it be unto me according to Your word.’”

Mary was a sovereign vessel chosen to be the mother of Jesus. Yet the Bible doesn’t indicate that she moved in miracles. She simply possessed a heart of devotion and childlike faith. She said, “Yes Lord, let it be done unto me,” and it changed her life forever. That’s why we can all be like Mary.

The Holy Spirit overshadowed her, and the new life that was birthed in her womb ushered in the Messianic Age. Do you cry out, “Lord, I want to be like Mary—radically overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, impregnated with your purpose”? Do you want to usher in revival?

Then know that there is a price behind the anointing. There is a stigma. Birthing the things of the Spirit is messy, and revival is controversial. Are you willing to be a humble vessel giving birth to God’s purpose in an untidy stable, or will you say, “There’s no room in the inn”?

Spiritual Warfare “In the middle of the night Joseph shook me violently. He was terrified, crying, ranting about Herod’s wanting Jesus dead. He said we had to leave town—right away. He grabbed Jesus and was out the door before I could understand what was happening. We left everything behind that night, no explanations, no goodbyes. Life as we’d known it was over.”

Satan always goes after a move of God in its infancy, when

it's most vulnerable. King Herod diabolically ordered the slaughter of baby boys. But God gave Joseph and Mary divine strategies to protect their son, telling Joseph in a dream to flee with his family to Egypt.

Are you under attack from the enemy? The greater your call and destiny, the greater the spiritual warfare you will face. The enemy wants to abort your prophetic promises. When the stirrings of revival begin to be birthed in you and around you, challenging the status quo, the demonic realm is aroused. Don't be afraid; God will be faithful to deliver you out of the enemy's hand.

The Wilderness "Why didn't God remove Herod instead of us? It hurt so much to leave everyone behind. I kept thinking, If only my family and friends could see Jesus grow up.

"And why Egypt? Why did God send us to the land that represents bondage for our people? Are we going to die here or in the wilderness, like our forefathers?"

Maybe you've had incredible, dramatic encounters with God. You've had multiple prophetic words recorded on tape and transcribed into notebooks. You're sure that any minute now your prophetic promises will come to pass.

Mary also received prophetic words: Her Son would be king of the Jews. So why were they banished and suffering in an uncomfortable and foreign land? Mary didn't realize that the prophetic timetable for the fulfillment of Jesus' destiny would be a grueling 30 years long. You, too, will spend time in the wilderness; you will experience seasons of barrenness. Are you willing to wait on the Lord's timing?

An Ordinary Life "Finally, after several years in Egypt, God spoke to Joseph again in a dream. Herod was dead. This time it was I who grabbed Jesus and ran out the door with Joseph trailing behind. We couldn't get home fast enough.

“Things eventually settled down, but mothering Jesus was always a challenge. Once, when He was 12 years old, and we were returning in a large group from the festival in Jerusalem, I realized He wasn’t with the other children. We frantically returned to the city to look for Him. Finally, we found Him in the temple. You know what He said? He said I should have known He was there! Oy vey! I wanted to ground Him until He was 21!”

Do you feel as if you’re on a shelf, living an ordinary life? Are you changing diapers, cooking dinner and dealing with the neighbors while crying out in your heart: Lord, have you forgotten me? Why don’t people recognize my gifting? Don’t they realize I had a radical visitation back in 1990?

Mary had 30 years of obscurity to develop a hidden testimony—a secret history with God. You, too, have an appointed time to build family, community and greater intimacy with Jesus. In the midst of that time you may feel like crying out, What’s taking so long? By the time my destiny comes, I’ll be pursuing it in a wheel chair! But seasons of preparation are important. These are the times when God works patience, radical passion and deep devotion into your life.

Finally, Ministry Begins “When I was 45 years old, life changed dramatically for Jesus and me. He started bringing home a ragtag bunch of fishermen to dinner. Then, at a wedding, He changed water into wine. From then on He moved in amazing signs and wonders, and a huge crowd followed Him everywhere. The excitement grew daily as Jesus walked among the people, bringing revival. But I still don’t understand what He meant when He said, ‘Who is my mother?’”

Mary had to relinquish control of her life and Jesus’ life in the midst of an outpouring of the Spirit. In your life and ministry, you also have to let go—of your plans, your expectations, your ways. Just as Jesus had to leave His home and follow the Father, you also have to relinquish control of

your life and follow the Father, even if it takes you to the cross.

And it will.

The Dark Night “Why God, why? Why have You forsaken Him? Why have You forsaken me? He was supposed to deliver us. He was our salvation, and now He’s gone. If you really love us, why have You allowed this to happen?”

Jesus was in the prime of His life. The countryside was in the midst of a tremendous revival. But now He was dying on the cross—and so was Mary. Overcome by feelings of abandonment and betrayal, she was in the middle of a crisis of faith.

When Jesus chose to go to the cross, Mary was compelled to go there, too. The truth is, the cross is always being worked in our lives—sometimes through the choices of others. Your daughter has an abortion; your son abuses drugs; your husband files for divorce. You never intended to go to that cross, but there you are.

You want to believe the Lord will rescue you at the last moment, but often His plan is to crucify you. Everything dies at the cross: relationships, ministries, agendas, reputations, finances. It’s painful, but it’s necessary. If you cry out to be part of the bride of Christ, then you must be—you will be—identified with the sufferings of the Bridegroom.

Resurrection “He’s alive! I thought I’d cried all my tears on Golgotha, but when our eyes met, it was like a flood. As I ran into His open arms, He scooped me up and spun me around in joyous laughter.

“The times we shared after the resurrection were the most precious of my life. They made it easier to release Him—again. As I watched Him ascend, I prayed again, ‘Lord, let it be unto me according to Your word, for the rest of my life.’”

Out of great death comes great life. Mary's prophetic promises had been limited by her worldview. In her mind's eye she had seen Jesus as king over the little nation of Israel for the span of His lifetime. In reality, He was King of kings and Lord of lords for all people and all time.

At the cross, God crucifies our limited view concerning the fulfillment of our prophetic destiny and resurrects it to His eternal view. The Lord revives our broken dreams—when they come to pass, they rarely look as we thought they would.

Carriers of Glory “Explosions of glory! Now it was not just I who was overshadowed, but all 120 of us. Tongues as of fire fell, and we were gloriously baptized in the Holy Spirit. We couldn't keep the news to ourselves. We ran, pushing each other out the door and down the narrow staircase to tell everyone.

“We gave ourselves to prayer night and day, sharing all we had, and loving one another. We grew from 120 to 3,000 to 5,000. Signs, wonders and miracles followed as we told everyone about Jesus!”

Mary and the other disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit, and the church was set ablaze—just as the Lord wants your life to be ignited now. When the Holy Spirit moves through you, it's not just for your benefit; it's to bring conviction, salvation, healing and deliverance to suffering humanity.

By the end of her prophetic journey, Mary had seen every prophecy she'd ever been given come to pass. Now she was a carrier of the glory of God. How about you? Are you willing to be a carrier—to bring the glory of God to your family, your neighborhood, your workplace?

Are you willing to embark on your own prophetic journey and birth revival?

*The late **Jill Austin** was the founder and president of Master Potter Ministries based in Kansas City, Mo. She ministered at conferences and churches around the world.*