

The Day of Reckoning for the Prophetic Movement Has Come

Note: This is part one of a two-part series.

As a preface to this article, I want to go on record to say that I adhere to the continualist movement of believers who belong to the Pentecostal, charismatic and third wave tradition. As a continualist, I function in the gifts of the Spirit, including the gift of personal prophecy (1 Cor. 12:5-8).

However, over the last several years, I have become increasingly alarmed due to the prophecies and practices of those associated with the prophetic movement. Furthermore, since the beginning of 2020, many public national prophecies have not come to pass, which has added to my growing concern.

Two significant erroneous prophecies are the prediction that COVID would quickly dissipate right after the Passover and Donald Trump's reelection.

(I was part of a prophetic panel in early April in which approximately 80% of the prophetic voices predicted COVID would lift quickly and that Trump would be reelected. I was one of the few dissenting voices who discerned that COVID would be here for a long time. I did not give a word about a Trump reelection. However, if it were not for COVID wrecking the economy and Trump's excessive off-color tweets, I think he would have, without controversy, won reelection in a landslide.)

What has made it worse regarding these prophecies is that even after former President Trump's controversial loss on election day, several high-level prophetic voices have continued to contend that he will remain in office. While some prophetic voices have already made public apologies for missing it,

others have not.

I have been very burdened about the state of the prophetic for several years. I wrote several articles about why it has gone awry, with my recent article published after election day, "8 Reasons Why Some Prophetic Voices Do Not Have 2020 Vision." One particular concern is that too many contemporary prophetic voices were going to God merely to "release a word" to their online audience instead of plumbing the depths of God to know and communicate His ways.

(See my article entitled "Are You Pursuing God or the Prophet?")

Consequently, it is now a week after the inauguration of Joe Biden as America's new president. This means that the day of reckoning has come for many in the prophetic movement. Judgment begins first in the house of God (1 Pet. 4:17). While many conservative Christians were focusing only on Donald Trump's reelection, God has been uncovering the sick, shallow underbelly of the contemporary prophetic movement. What good is the reelection of a conservative president if a large portion of the conservative evangelical church is biblically unbalanced? Many are easily sucked into conspiracy theories (such as Q Anon) and shallow, politically-driven prophetic words that are not grounded in Scripture's fundamental principles. This has resulted in the public humiliation of the prophetic. It's as bad as any I can remember since the numerous apocalyptic warnings given in the late 1970s that wrongly predicted the looming bodily return of Jesus within a generation of Israel's birth as a nation in 1948. (See books like *The Late Great Planet Earth* by Hal Lindsey.)

Indeed, there is a crisis in the charismatic world.

What is needed in the charismatic/prophetic church are introspection and repentance.

Repentance is needed for the reasons below:

– **Prophecy out of a subconscious mind instead of through the sovereign spirit of God.** These prophets obviously cannot discern the difference between their human soul/spirit and the Spirit of God (Jer. 23:16).

– **Prophecy out of their political bias and the lens of so-called “Christian nationalism.”** The Bible teaches us that we know in part and prophecy in part. Hence we all prophecy out of the lens of our own experience, knowledge and worldview (1 Cor. 13:9). I believe that many of the pro-Trump prophetic voices were motivated by their impulse towards various forms of “Christian nationalism.” By “Christian nationalism,” I am referring to the belief that God made a covenant with America similar to the covenant He made with Israel: to represent Him and bless the world. Although I believe God had a particular plan to use America to spread the gospel and bless the world, it was never entirely a Christian nation. This is obvious from our blighted history, starting with legalized slavery.

Furthermore, God has a plan for Jesus to inherit all nations, not just the United States (Ps. 2:8-9). Only individuals can be Christians (John 3:3-8). However, as the salt of the earth, it is proper for all believers to influence a nation’s laws so that a Christian ethos can be reflected in its policies. This results in a country having a culture favorable to Christian values.

– **Going to God to get a word rather than prioritizing time with God to discern His ways.** The Old Testament prophets and New Testament apostles focused on knowing God’s ways. This is evident in Psalm 25:4, Jeremiah 9:23-24, Hosea 6:3, John 17:3, Philippians 3:8-12 and 2 Peter 3:18. Knowing God’s ways is much more important than merely going to God for a prophetic word. When we go to God for a word, we are merely using God to advance our ministries. God desires that we seek Him for His sake because we delight in Him. This is the only way to mature as a Christ-follower. (See Ps. 37:4, Ps. 42, Ps. 63, Ps. 103:8.)

– **Repenting from equating their prophecies with the canon of Scripture.** Only the Scriptures are purely God-breathed (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Thus, no other words or experiences are equal to the more sure word of prophecy, which is the compilation of sacred writings we now call the Bible (2 Pet. 1:19-21). Contrary to these teachings, many of these prophets demand people believe their word as if it was the word of God Himself. This is erroneously encouraged, even though we are clearly instructed in the New Testament to judge prophetic words and test the spirits (1 Cor. 14:29, 1 Thess. 5:19-21, 1 John 4:1-3). The greatest prophets merely prophesy in part and know in part (1 Cor. 13:9).

– **Repenting from over-reliance upon visions and dreams.** In the Old Testament, God primarily spoke to the prophets through visions and dreams (Num. 12:1-8, Ezek. 1). However, in the New Testament, dreams were usually used for guidance before the Spirit was poured out upon the church (such as when God led Joseph in dreams, as shown in Matt. 1-2). We see only two significant instances related to guidance by a vision and dream in the post ascension. The first is when the apostle Peter was in a semi-conscious trance-like (liminal) state. Here, the Spirit instructed him through a vision to not call Gentiles unclean. The second is when the apostle Paul was led to Macedonia through a vision or a dream (Acts 10, Acts 16:9). That being said, most of the time, the leading of the Lord took place by the Holy Spirit collectively speaking to the church or through the individual's spirit (Acts 13:2, Acts 15:28, Acts 16:7-8, 1 Cor. 2:10-14, Rom. 8:14-16). {eo}

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