

Learn to Pray With Authority

When we pray with godly authority, we can issue prophetic proclamations that shift heaven and earth.

Almost 10 years ago, prophetic evangelist Chuck Pierce and I traveled to all 50 U.S. states. Our goal was to meet and pray with intercessors and other church leaders in each state to make a difference throughout the nation on a spiritual level.

We set out to accomplish five purposes: (1) to gather God's people for agreement in prayer; (2) to discern Satan's strongholds over a given region and what caused them; (3) to discern the Lord's strategies for breaking those strongholds, and also His strategy for moving the church forward toward revival; (4) to release priestly intercession through corporate repentance and prayer; and (5) to release kingly, governmental intercession through prophetic decrees.

I quickly learned that ministering with Chuck was a lesson in flexibility. In San Antonio, he ran to the platform, interrupted my message, took the microphone and began to prophesy.

At first his behavior took me off-guard. But throughout the tour we operated this way often. Our purpose was not to teach but to discern what God was saying, pray it and decree it. Therefore, Chuck's prophesying was never truly an interruption, but a welcome accomplishment of our mission. Sometimes I would continue my message after he finished; other times we moved into prayers and declarations based on what he prophesied.

The night we were in San Antonio, Chuck prophesied that if we prayed, Saddam Hussein would be captured within seven days. Then he turned around and handed me the mike with an "I can't believe I just said that, you'd better do something" expression.

My first thought was, Why are you handing me the mike? You got us into this situation; you get us out. But it was too late—I had the mike and everyone was looking at me. I did the only thing I knew to do—pray.

As I prayed, I began to move from priestly to kingly intercession. I discerned that the Holy Spirit was leading me to command and decree that the demonic activity keeping Hussein hidden be broken. Other leaders came to the platform and offered similar prayers and decrees.

Hussein was captured three days later!

Kingly intercession is released through decrees. With them we “legislate” God’s will on earth, in much the same way an earthly king would dictate his.

In *Releasing the Prophetic Destiny of a Nation*, Chuck writes the following about prophetic revelation and decrees: “God has chosen us as the necessary link to bring His will from heaven to earth. He wants us to commune with Him, listen carefully to His voice, gain prophetic revelation, and decree that revelation into the earth. This will unlock miracles and release His blessings.

“Once we hear God, we can intercede, but we can also prophesy. Prophesying is declaring His mind and His heart. As we speak, He forms His will in the earth. “We should always be willing to say ‘yes and amen’ to His promises. When we receive prophetic revelation, we need to decree the prophetic revelation. This was the pattern that we operated in, once we gathered together in our meetings from state to state.”

There are two types of prophetic activity, and here Chuck alludes to both. Prophesying is more than foretelling—predicting the future.

It is also forthtelling—speaking forth the plans and will of God for the present and the future. This is still classified

biblically as prophetic because of the discernment required for us to know His plans and will.

John the Baptist was called a prophet, yet as far as we know he did no foretelling or predicting of future events. He did, however, discern the times and speak forth what God was saying about the present. Accordingly, this forthtelling aspect of the prophetic is also referred to as “prophetic intercession.”

While on our tour, we never released the same prophetic words, decrees or strategies for any two states. In the Texas gathering where we decreed Hussein’s capture, God had given me a word about the state’s prophetic calling and destiny. When I spoke it, saying God’s purposes for America would sometimes be declared, launched or pictured from there, Chuck began to receive a prophetic download.

He heard the Spirit say, “Go to the platform and prophesy what I give you—and don’t think about it.” He knew later that he probably wouldn’t have given the prophecy about Hussein if he had thought about it first.

What prophetic dynamics occurred in the meeting that night? First, there was prophetic discernment of one of God’s overall purposes for a state. This prepared the way for a prophetic word concerning His specific desire at that moment. Then the word prompted me to seek prophetic instructions, and those led us to release prophetic decrees—a type of governmental intercession or legislating from the heavens.

All this worked together to become kingly intercession made by the ekklesia, the legislative body of Christ, ruling for Him on earth. It was kingdom authority releasing kingdom power, just as Jesus instructed us to do: “Your kingdom come, Your will be done!” We and an army of intercessors moved in every state in this prophetic, kingly intercession.

You can and should release this type of intercession, not only for the world at large but also for your private and immediate

world. Do it for individuals, your family, your business, your church and your city. Sit on the devil's chest!

The Power of Words

What are decrees, declarations and proclamations? Chuck writes, again in *Releasing the Prophetic Destiny of a Nation*: "A decree is an official order, edict, or decision. A decree is something that seems to be foreordained. This is what makes a decree prophetic.

"Decree can also mean to order, decide, or officially appoint a group or person to accomplish something. A decree is linked with setting apart or ordaining something or someone.

"A declaration is an announcement, a formal statement. ... This statement is what a plaintiff sometimes releases in his complaint, which results in a court action.

"A proclamation actually brings something into a more official realm. A proclamation can ban, outlaw, or restrict. This is linked with the process of binding and loosing."

The power of words is amazing. Job alluded to this power when he said, "How forceful are right words!" (Job 6:25, NKJV).

The word translated "forceful" actually means "to press" in Hebrew. One of its biblical uses describes a king pressing his seal of authority onto a decree or legal document with his signet ring, making it legally binding (the law of the land). Words seal deals and decree laws. They are powerful, even influencing life and death (see Prov. 18:20-21). The New Testament says we are justified or condemned by them (see Matt. 12:37).

Words may be the most powerful conduit of authority and power in the world. God's, "Let there be ...," created the world and everything in it.

Ecclesiastes 12:11 says, "The words of the wise are as goads,

and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies" (KJV). Nails help us build, construct, assemble and hold things together. So do words.

God, the master craftsman, used them to build the earth and its seas and mountains, and all the other amazing elements and dimensions of creation. Hebrews 1:3 tells us He holds it all together by the power of His words and decrees!

Luke's Gospel says that even the incarnation—God's becoming human—was caused by a combination of God's words and His Spirit. When Mary asked how she, a virgin, could have a child, the angel informed her that the power of the Holy Spirit would overshadow her and impregnate her with Jesus (1:35). Then he said, "Nothing will be impossible with God" (1:37, NASB).

This translation doesn't do justice to the strength of what the angel actually said. The most literal and accurate rendering is: "No word spoken by God is without power."

What a claim this is, and what ramifications it carries for us! Our all-powerful God infuses transcendent power into His words. They become the carriers of His awesome strength.

In the Scriptures, God issues a myriad of decrees or declarations. When God issues a command or decree, it is earth's law. To violate His command is rebellion against His authority and invites certain judgment.

God also calls His Word a sword with which He rules and judges. His declarations not only create and build but also judge and destroy. They are both constructive and destructive.

Consider the following verses: "Out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength" (Rev. 1:16, NKJV); "'Repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war . . . with the sword of My mouth" (2:16; see also 19:15,21).

Some of God's decrees are to create or perform something in the present; others are declarations about the future. In Isaiah 46:9-10, God says of Himself: "'I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure'"'"' (emphasis added).

What an amazing God! He stands outside time, looks ahead and declares the future, and eventually time catches up to His decree.

You Will Decree

In *The Worship Warrior*, Chuck shares the following story that illustrates God's ability to declare the future:

"When my son Daniel was seven years old he came to his mother and me with a question: 'What is anthrax?' We both were astonished that a seven-year-old boy would ask such a question. My stepfather (Daniel's grandfather) had cows and land, so I assumed that he had mentioned the issue of anthrax occurring in a natural context.

"However, when my wife and I questioned Daniel over where he had heard the word 'anthrax,' he said, 'The Lord spoke it to me and said it is coming to America.' I explained to him what anthrax was.

"We have always been honest with our kids, so I just laid it all out on the line. [My explanation] caused Daniel to fear that it might come upon him. When he would touch something, he would immediately wash his hands. This threw us into a crisis as a family.

"In my quiet time one morning I began to seek the Lord, asking Him how He would pull us out of this awkward situation and bring freedom and confidence to Daniel. The Spirit of God said: 'This will not be an issue in Daniel's life until he is

20 years old.'

"At breakfast that morning when he began to obsessively discuss anthrax with us, I told him what the Lord had said. ... Nothing really changed, except that I had heard God.

"When I do not know what to do, I either worship or ask God what I can give. I find that I can ... hear Him when I begin to worship, and He will always tell me where to give. Then I can hear Him on the issues that burden my heart.

"That night when I put Daniel to bed, I said to him, 'Let's worship.' We listened to an audiocassette and sang along. At the end of the music, I said to Daniel, 'You know how much Mom and I love you. We have tried every way we know to help you get through the fear of what God has shown you.

'Perfect love casts out all fear. God does not give you the spirit of fear. Therefore, ask the Lord to show you how much He loves you. Since we've worshiped, is there anything you want to ask the Lord?'

"Daniel replied, 'I've been trying to catch a butterfly all week, and I've not been able to.'

"I wanted to go out and find every butterfly I could and put them all in his room so that when he awakened, they would be surrounding him. However, I knew I could not do that. I had to trust the Lord.

"The next morning ... an interesting thing happened. A butterfly flew into our yard and landed on Daniel's shirt.

He cupped his hands around the butterfly and looked up at the Lord and said, 'Because You have shown me how much You love me, I'm just going to set this butterfly free.' This was quite a moment.

"On Daniel's 20th birthday, the headlines in the newspapers in America read 'Anthrax Strikes America.' I was traveling and

called him on his birthday. Remembering God's word about anthrax, I asked Daniel how he was doing.

"He said, 'Dad, since we worshiped that night and God revealed His love to me the next day, I have never questioned His love protecting me in the midst of this particular crisis.' He had received faith that would last him the next 13 years of his life and extend into the future."

Thirteen years before the anthrax attacks happened, God had declared that they would occur. When time catches up to the decree God makes concerning the future, He involves us in its fulfillment. We become the voice of God in the earth, decreeing His decrees for Him!

Job 22:28 says, "You will also decree a thing, and it will be established for you; and light will shine on your ways" (NASB). The first part could be more literally rendered "You will decree a decree." We discern God's will and decree—what He has determined about a given situation—and then decree His decree.

The verse then says that when we decree the decree, it will be "established." This is the Hebrew word *quwm*, which means "to rise."

God's Word is called a seed (see 1 Pet. 1:23), and when we sow it into a situation, we are sprinkling the seeds through which He causes His will to spring up.

According to the Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, *quwm* also describes a variety of other activities, including God's "creative, saving and judging action" rising up. Our decreeing the Lord's Word releases His creativity, His salvation, and yes, His judgments!

The power of God's inspired words is extraordinary. He rules through words—and so must we.

In fact, you will never truly rule your world until you learn the force of words. Thank God for leaders and intercessors who understand this spiritual authority and know how to pray!

You too are a part of God's government on the earth, and He desires to decree His will and purposes through you. You are a member of His church—the ekklesia—and as such have authority to insist on His will and stop the plans of hell.

Dutch Sheets is the pastor of Springs Harvest Fellowship in Colorado Springs, Colorado. He is the author of several books, including the best-selling *Intercessory Prayer* and, with Chuck Pierce, *Releasing the Prophetic Destiny of a Nation*. He travels extensively as a conference speaker and Bible college teacher.