

The Lodge at Cliffs Edge

April 11, 2024

I've found one thing particularly unsettling and humiliating in my years of ministry. Ministry at its root is following the Lord, and for me, as it should be for any Christian, is of paramount importance. Therefore, when revelation arrives indicating point B, it is far too easy to presume that the course is a straight line, A to B, and that it is time to start the march. In my earlier years, I finally learned I needed to wait for His command to begin marching. The sin of presumption is very real, and I've come to understand that it is entrenched in my heart and foundational to how I was raised. Invariably, even when I attempt to be careful in following, the Lord takes a sharp left or right turn that I never saw coming. The other variant is that orders come down to wait. Many will recognize it as the four-letter word that it is, especially for those that just want to reach their destination. How many times have we found ourselves thinking, "Where is my waiter?" Ironically the morpheme of the term describing the person who has my check is *wait*, which is something we would rather avoid. Wait? Thank you, no. My experience in prophetic ministry is that prophecy can come like waves of the ocean. Other times it will come like an unexpected tsunami. For the sailor on the ocean, the inevitability of no wind is understood, but it is never welcome to one who wants to simply *get there*.

The inevitable came unwanted a few weeks ago that turned out to be a blistering and prolonged prophetic gale of eleven visions over two months. Receiving a prophetic vision is the easy part. The process of recording the vision which normally means writing, processing it within the framework of the Bible, writing an essay/blog post to release the vision, and/or producing a video is something else. During the final weeks as the wind began to die down, I was warned in a dream that indeed Jesus was running, and I had been invited to run with Him. In the dream, we had set out and I was close behind Him, which clearly was a mistake. Some years back I had been warned at least three times that I was to give the Lord room and NOT to follow too closely, which is a safeguard against presumptuous sins. However, in the dream, and in short order He was no longer in front of me, but behind. The humiliation! Somehow, I had run past Him. I was surprised to say the least. Glancing over my shoulder, I saw that He had stopped at a path on the right that I never saw. Relieved, I immediately reversed course, approximately 50 yards and began following Him again. Assumably, the crisis averted.

In short order, following Him closely once again (when will I ever learn), I saw nothing but fog ahead of me. In the dream I continued at full speed without realizing that He had come out of the fog and was waiting at the edge of a cliff. He knew the cliff was there, but I did not. Note to self, *Jesus knows the safe way*. But now, because of the speed I was running, I proceeded over the edge, unable to stop. This is indeed the peril

of following the Lord too closely. Presumption will lead to error and in many cases grave consequences. At the direction of the Holy Spirit, I have studied what the Bible has to say about this prolific sin, written about it, and prophesied His warning – “the sin of presumption will be dangerous if not deadly in the days ahead.” The issue is never far from my mind, yet, here I was in the dream falling, as one inevitably does when one runs full speed over a cliff.

I then saw the Lord reach down to take hold of my ankle and set me back up on the safe side of the edge. I had avoided the consequence that Wile E. Coyote never does. When I awoke, I knew it was a warning, but I found it difficult to believe that I could now, after all the study, the warnings, and the writing make such an error again. I was stunned. The reader will be astounded to find no less than a total of ten teaching videos that I have produced on what the Bible records as some of the greatest disasters experienced by key figures linked to the sin of presumption. When will I ever learn?

It was soon after the warning, the Lord said to me in no uncertain terms to wait. “Wait for what?” one might ask. Earlier He had revealed that my *Jericho* was dead ahead. Undoubtedly, you can already hear my thoughts, “Let’s get on with it! Let’s go!” The frustration was immediate, but I knew that if I pushed through, I would be going over the edge. One can better navigate the surprise of the call to wait, better than dealing with the inevitable consequences of not heeding the warning. Better to wait, than to be sorry – *or dead*. Spiritual fog comes often in our journey with the Lord. When it comes, and it invariably will, one must be willing to wait and be cautious, but it has never been easy. But then, the Cross wasn’t designed to be easy.

After three to four weeks of waiting, without a hint of a cool spiritual breeze, I began to remember Biblical accounts that were slowly being tied together by the Holy Spirit. They culminated in the truth that *surprises*, such as sharp right turns and cliff edges, along the path of following the Lord are inevitable. For those called to lead the Church, waiting is but one surprise the Lord will bring.

Reviewing the Abrahamic covenant, one doesn’t have to look far to see the surprise that Abram experienced in being called by the Lord to leave his land for another he knew nothing about. Abram had never heard the voice of the Lord, let alone been challenged to leave everything he knew. One must conclude that Abram’s stupefaction would be a jolt to anyone. I would submit that the Lord’s covenant-related initiatives can bring a cardinal wonder, coupled together with truth.

However, the calling of Abram was not the timing of the establishment of the Lord’s covenant with him. The precedent of progressive revelation comes into play where the Lord discloses to Abram that, “...for all the land which you see, I will give it to you and to your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth (Gen 13:15-16a),” a few verses later, the Lord repeats His promise in verse 17, “for I will give it to you.” One must note that up to this point, the Lord has promised *He will* give, **not** that it had been given – the transfer was to come later.

Following the Biblical narrative, we arrive at Abram's question in Gen 15:8, "O Lord how may I *know* that I shall possess it?" The word "know" that he uses in Hebrew is *yada*. Essentially what Abram is asking is how would he know at an *experiential and intimate level* (i.e. far superior to cognitive understanding alone) that what the Lord was saying was true? Only an encounter with the Lord, where up to this point Abram was hearing the Lord and accepting what was promised, could make the difference that would bring a deep assurance - *knowing*.

An encounter is much different from hearing the voice of the Lord, as dramatic as that can be. It is where the Lord burns revelation into our hearts that never leaves. Permanently branded in our innermost being, we live with a knowing that transcends the mind, which Paul speaks of in his letter to the Ephesians. The apostle reveals that his prayers are that they would *know* the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge (Eph 3:19). The context of the verse reveals that Paul is speaking of *yada*, for which there is no suitable Greek equivalent.

This is a turning point that causes the Lord to reveal much more than He has up to this point. He commands that Abram bring an offering, where after having done so, a terror and a great darkness fell upon him (Gen 15:12). An encounter can, and most likely will be terrifying, which is replicated numerous times throughout the Bible. These include, but are not limited to the following: 1) the establishment of the Mosaic covenant at Mt. Sinai where thunder and lightning flashes and a thick cloud upon the mountain and a very loud trumpet sound, so that all people who were in the camp trembled (Exodus 19:16); 2) in Isaiah's encounter recorded in chapter 6 where he declared, after seeing the Lord, that he was ruined; 3) the encounter that John the Apostle had with Jesus, where hearing His loud voice like a trumpet (Rev 1:10) and saw Him, the Son of Man (verse 13), ultimately fell at His feet as a dead man (verse 17a). Upon doing so, the first words that Jesus speaks is to not be afraid (verse 17b), confirming the terror of the experience. At the risk of being redundant, the above instances were surprises for the aforementioned figures. In the case of Moses and the Hebrews, they knew when the Lord would show up, but the encounter was in fact a terrifying sharp right turn.

In Genesis 17, we find the climax of the narrative in the establishment of the Abrahamic covenant. In verse 4a, the Lord says, "As for Me, behold my covenant is with you." The progressive revelation takes a sharp turn where the Lord stipulates that Abram's responsibility is that he and every male in his household be circumcised. Ouch! Didn't see that coming! This is linked to the fact that Abram *will now be* called Abraham, Sarai is *now to be called* Sarah, where both of their identities (the core of their being), are confirmed by the change of their names; in one moment they are changed forever. There can be no mistake that Abraham and Sarah were made co-equal as partakers of the covenant, i.e., one is *not* less than, which is the mistake they both made contemplating the idea of having Hagar bear them a son (Gen 16).

It should be noted that they did not understand the relevance of their decision to the covenant because that specific and critical portion related to Sarah had not yet been disclosed, which was part of the reason Abram agreed to Sarah's idea. Dare I say that

this revelation of Sarah's co-equal status would result in the sharpest of turns, if not a complete reversal, of many disciples of John MacArther, that would include entire denominations of Reformed Baptist persuasion as well as others so aligned. Alas, it has not been revealed to them either. I leave it to the Spirit and those He calls to take the land of the *MacArtherites*, *for it must be taken*. Their well-documented preaching that half of the Lord's army are second rate and should, "Go home," was the sound of nothing other than the hyena's laughter in censorious unison against Beth Moore and daughters of Christ she represents. Theirs is a doctrine of demons, designed to undermine the call of women everywhere Jesus died for. No doubt the MacArtherite tribe would have countermanded the Lord's prestigious directive (and the angel's in Mark's account) for Mary Magdalene to testify to the disciples (Mt 28:1-10; Mk 16:4-11; Jn 20:4-18) that she had met the resurrected Christ, and that they were to meet Him in Galilee. They would have conveniently and ludicrously overlooked the fact that Jesus did not tell her to, "Go home." This doctrine of demons taught by MacArther, and those who embrace his nonsense, requires scorn, for the gates of his doctrine will not prevail against the Church of Jesus Christ. Jesus' command to preach His resurrection is directed to all in His Church and they (represented by Abraham and Sarah ~ male AND female) are to embrace the leadership that He, not man, gives to them. Feel free to ask me what I really think about it.

We now turn our attention to Moses. In the account of Moses' call by the Lord to deliver the Hebrews from their bondage in Egypt, Moses balks at the mission. We know that Moses had no interest, asking the Lord to find someone else. During the encounter, set forth in Exodus 3 and 4, Moses is looking for a way out, *any way out*, of performing the mission the Lord has described. When Moses finally relents, he requests that his father-in-law allow him to return to Egypt with his family. Moving now in obedience to what the Lord has commanded, the Lord releases final instructions (Ex 4:21-23). What Moses did not foresee was that an abrupt and potentially deadly right turn was dead ahead.

In Exodus 4:24, the Bible records that, "...at the lodging place on the way that the Lord met [Moses] and sought to put him to death." Welcome to the Lodge at Cliffs Edge. It was Zipporah, his wife, who realized what was happening and who acted in accordance with the Covenant, otherwise she would have had a corpse on her hands. Clearly, she didn't like what had to be done, blaming Moses for being a bridegroom of blood (Ex 4:25). Their household was not properly aligned with the covenant of circumcision the Lord had made with Abraham.

Genesis 17:10–14 (NASB95) ¹⁰ "This is My covenant, which you shall keep, between Me and you and your descendants after you: every male among you shall be circumcised. ¹¹ "And you shall be circumcised in the flesh of your foreskin, and it shall be the sign of the covenant between Me and you. ¹² "And every male among you who is eight days old shall be circumcised throughout your generations, a *servant* who is born in the house or who is bought with money

from any foreigner, who is not of your descendants. ¹³ “A *servant* who is born in your house or who is bought with your money shall surely be circumcised; thus shall My covenant be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant. ¹⁴ **“But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people; he has broken My covenant.”**”

Moses had committed a sin of omission, and because of it, he had arrived at the pinnacle risk of being cut off. The threat was real - cut off *his son's foreskin or be cut off*. We must acknowledge that questions arise regarding this encounter. Why didn't the Lord discuss the matter of his son's circumcision before he obediently set out to Egypt? Clearly it was a priority! However, we must realize again that encounters are designed to accomplish what hearing alone from the Lord does not. A branding in the innermost being of a person must be realized if they are to be entrusted with the fulfilling of the covenant in their era, which in this case, our protagonist is now feeling the heat from *The One who is an all-consuming fire* (Heb 12:29). I submit that it was an encounter he would never forget. Having experienced the truth that death is the penalty for breaching the covenant, and having survived, he was eminently qualified to preach the truth to those, undoubtedly to his continual dismay, who would not hear and would die instantly. I have to believe that the echoes of Moses past encounter reverberated when he turned to Aaron after fire came out from the presence of the Lord instantly killing Aaron's two sons, Nadab and Abihu, as the direct result of committing a presumptuous sin, saying, “It is what the Lord spoke, saying, ‘By those who come near Me I will be treated as holy, and before all the people I will be honored’” (Lev 10:3). For leaders who are called by the Lord in our time to minister the fulfillment of the New Covenant of the Spirit, be forewarned and hear the word of the Lord ~ Ananias and Sophira's judgment solemnly testify that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb 13:8).

The Lord's requirements concerning our hearts are no less stringent, even though it requires His Holy Spirit to lead us in our sanctification. There are rules of engagement for those called to participate in the fulfillment of the Lord's covenant in the earth. Rest assured that we will be held accountable for anything that is out of order in our walk with the Lord. In short, He will confront us with our sin, and that can be more painful than being circumcised in our flesh. We know that in the days that we live in, the new covenant of the Spirit is in effect –

2 Corinthians 3:6 (NASB95)

⁶ who also made us adequate *as* servants of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.

The new covenant of the Spirit focuses on the issues of the heart, as the prophet Jeremiah wrote in Jer 31:31-33. Here the Lord declared that He would put His laws within us and write His laws on our hearts. I would endeavor to say that much of this must be done through encounters with Him. Rest assured, He is watching over His covenant with us. As He said to me one time, "I don't play games like the Church." If our hearts are entertaining sin, wandering outside of the boundaries He has set forth for His people, we will be confronted. This is what was happening to Moses. He was not walking in holiness with the Lord because he had failed to circumcise his son. The Lord called him on it and wasn't going to let him go without a reckoning of his sin. The reckoning of our sin, prior to being allowed to proceed in whatever the Lord has called us to, will be no less painful...and we should not be surprised if the pain lingers. We will in essence be branded and changed. But repentance culminating in *obedience*, is required for those called to minister His covenant.

We turn now to Joshua, the successor of Moses, chosen by the Lord to lead the Hebrews into the promised land. The stunning fact is that they *lodged* in Shittim before crossing the Jordan. It was there that Joshua had commanded the leaders to call the people to prepare to set out in three days and to consecrate themselves (Jos 3:5). Note to self – there is no crossing over into what the Lord has promised without consecrating oneself, i.e., surrendering oneself to the Lord for His plan and purposes that He will accomplish through us. And here again, the flint knife was on the horizon, that neither the people, nor their leaders or Joshua saw coming. Circumcision was not on their minds; what was on their minds was how would they cross over Jordan at flood stage. Miracle of miracles, the Lord, through a series of precise instructions given to Joshua, parted the river, and provided dry land for them to cross the Jordan. On to Jericho! Let's go! Nothing can stop us now!!

There was nothing in their minds to do but to move closer to Jericho, receive the Lord's battle plans, and wage war against the inhabitants. They never saw the requirement for being circumcised before waging war. Why on earth now!? Jericho is dead ahead. Ah, but the basic stipulations of the covenant must be satisfied if they are not to be defeated by the thirty-one tribes currently occupying the promised land. None of the sons who had been born in the wilderness had been circumcised. An oversight of the previous administration? One can only wonder.

The ritual of circumcision of the flesh was essential for them to start taking territory. A fresh circumcision of our hearts, wherever the Lord deems fit to cut, is similarly essential for the taking of any territory we believe we have been called to take. Yes, it is ours, given to us through the shed blood and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is our Joshua. But we dare not enter presumptuously, which many leaders in the Church would say is heresy. I can hear their dogmatic arguments from here. "The Lord has given us the land! We can and must take it! We have His promises...look, they are here in the Scripture!" Yet, we dare not forget the Lord's warning that presumptuous sin will be dangerous if not deadly in the days ahead, a warning He declared to me in 2020. We

are in the “days ahead.” If that isn’t enough, then we have only to reference what Jesus spoke to His disciples, laying a foundation for their ministry and for ours – “I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing. (Jn 15:5 NASB95)”

Undoubtedly, unexpected sharp turns and cliff edges, along with periods of painful waiting are dead ahead for all of us. He called us to take up our cross and follow Him. Unfortunately, we will not be perfect, but we are called to be faithful to His call. The sin of presumption is rampant among pastors and leadership as well as the laity in the Church. Many would rather do anything other than submit themselves to wait upon, listen to and move in obedience to the Holy Spirit. Anything but the cross! I relate to that. Yielding to the knife of sanctification in the hands of the One who knows us best at whatever point in the journey, though painful, will bring the greatest victory over the most important and difficult territory He has set out to conquer – ourselves. All praise, glory and honor to Christ Jesus our Lord!

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