

KEEPING THE PROPHETIC BALANCED

I am concerned that among my friends who have strong prophetic gifts, there has been a trend toward imbalance in the last few years. This imbalance often involves an intense and one-sided view of complex socio-political situations. It may be strongly for or against a political figure or issue. In fact, the very focus on the politics in itself is part of the imbalance.

Let us remember that Jesus himself lived in an era under the Roman governor Pilate, who was the representative of an imperialistic dictatorship and known for acts of extreme cruelty.

Luke 13:1-3 (NKJV)

There were present ... some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus answered and said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? 3 I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.

In this case Pilate intervened from the Gentile government in a Jewish religious practice; both overstepping his authority and committing murder. Jesus responded not on the political issue, nor by taking sides as to who was more right or wrong. He called for everyone to repent. His view of morality was that all had sinned and that all needed to repent, regardless of political, racial, or religious background.

In another situation, it was again demanded of Jesus to take sides in a very inflammatory political crisis.

Luke 20:21-25 (NKJV)

21 Then they asked Him, “Teacher, we know that You teach rightly, and do not show personal favouritism, but teach the way of God in truth: 22 Is it lawful for us to pay taxes to Caesar or not?”

23 But He perceived their craftiness, and said to them, “Why do you test Me? 24 Show Me a denarius. Whose image and inscription does it have?” They answered and said, “Caesar’s.”

25 And He said to them, “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”

If Jesus agreed to pay taxes to Caesar, He would not only be submitting to an evil “anti-Christ” type government, but in effect be supporting and endorsing it. From a prophetic viewpoint, this would seem obviously wrong: of course, we do not pay. Of course, the disciples of the Jewish King Messiah will fight against the evil satanic government. However, Jesus decided to see the issue in a different perspective. He saw “both sides of the coin.” He was not endorsing Caesar, yet He had a different focus. He came to preach a different kind of kingdom, a different agenda, a different solution.

He refused to be “one-sided” on the issue. He refused to let political activism take priority over the gospel of the kingdom message. His “balanced” approach was rejected by the Jewish radicals of His day as being lukewarm and compromising.

In Israel today there is such harsh antagonism among the different political leaders, that the country is being torn apart socially, ethnically, and religiously. Pro-Bibi, anti-Bibi; Ashkenazi-Sephardi; religious, secular; left, right; pro-Arab; anti. The tone of the dialogue is embarrassingly violent and insulting. Waves of verbal violence are spreading to schools, families, synagogues, and media.

Many have compared the current tone of Israeli society to the internal divisions and warfare that were present during the Great Rebellions of 70 and 135 AD, in which Israel was totally destroyed. The internal conflict was greater than the external threat.

I use that as an example by comparison to our spiritual situation in the body of Christ. Everyone is so sure he is right on social, political, theological debates, that they are willing to split the community into pieces. Particularly those of us with “prophetic” gifts seem unable to compromise and deal with the complexities of the issues.

For my prophetically gifted friends, may I mention three warnings:

1. Gospel First – if we are focusing on a socio-political issue MORE than the gospel of salvation in Yeshua, then we have missed the priority.
2. Universal Repentance – if we are calling for one side of an issue to repent, claiming that we are right and they are wrong, we have already missed the point. We are all wrong and need to repent ourselves; and call both sides to repent.
3. Rebellion/Stubbornness – heavenly wisdom is pure, peaceable and easy to be reconciled (James 3:17). We are called at times to disobey governments, when involving religious freedom and moral absolutes. But we are also called to submit to governing authorities.

There is a delicate balance here. Peter refused to obey the governing authorities in Acts 4, yet told us to submit to all governing authorities in I Peter 2. Paul spent much of his ministry in jail but told us that to resist the government is to resist God (Romans 13).

It is interesting to compare Revelation 13 and Romans 13. The first speaks of a world-wide government run by a demonic figure; the second speaks of government workers as ministers of God doing a divine service. There are a variety of ministries and gifts in the body of Christ. They are called to work together in cooperation, thus complementing and balancing one another from extremist views.

Ephesians 4:11-13 (NKJV)

11 He ... gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God...

There is safety in this teamwork. Prophetic ministries were designed to be overseen by someone with apostolic insight. A prophetically gifted person should be in a local community with pastoral oversight for their personal and family needs; and also be submitted to a team with apostolic oversight for their ministry direction.

When prophets seek to operate outside this team model, they are more likely to be deceived. Some 'prophets' today believe they have received a word and run to social media to announce it. Many of them have no accountability at all. The New Covenant focuses on Ephesians 4 teams that work together.

Such cooperation helps prevent imbalance and rebellion. There are different structures and styles in which this teamwork can take place. I am not promoting one form or another. However, we need mutual submission to guard against extremism and deception during these times of intense conflict.

Throughout biblical history, the prophets spoke to the nation, sometimes in encouragement and sometimes in criticism. Today as well, we greatly need the gift of clear and balanced prophetic discernment in our midst.

Source: *Asher Intrater – Revive Israel*