

Dangerous Praises that Erode Our Blessings

Reflection: Daniel 4:28-37, Acts 12:20-23

As much as we work on ourselves to stay humble as followers of Christ, we may find ourselves unconsciously accepting undeserved praise for things God has done through us, out of excitement. I don't know about others, but there were times I did things I was impressed about and screamed, "Yes!"; but I thank God for the Holy Spirit, who quickly reminded me how I got them done. The wise thing to do when we have been put in a position to take credit for the things God has done through us, is to promptly give it back to Him. He could easily have used anybody or anything, but He gave us a chance. He used a donkey (Numbers 22:21-34); the ravens (1 Kings 17:4-6); the fish (Jonah 1:17, 2:10); and *unworthy* Rahab, the prostitute (Joshua Chapter 2).

The Self-Glorifying Praise Seeker

King Nebuchadnezzar set himself against God when he attempted to take His glory. He ascribed accomplishments and successes to himself (Daniel 4:28-30). God then stripped him of his status as a king, and moved him to the jungle, where he ended up on his knees with wild animals and lived like them for seven years. He was transformed into a beast (Daniel 4:33). Nebuchadnezzar spent time in the jungle, until he learnt that the Most High God rules over the kingdoms of the world and gives them to anyone He chooses (Daniel 4:31-32). The case of another king, called Herod, was even worse. Prideful Herod accepted the people's worship instead of giving God the glory. Herod was not given a second chance like Nebuchadnezzar - death was his own portion. His cup was full, I guess (Acts 12:20-23).

We set ourselves against God when we attempt to take His glory. God empowers and uses us in different capacities for signs and wonders, as a blessing to others, and for the benefit of the Body of Christ, all for His Glory. We are what we are and have what we have by His grace. We must point men to Him, not ourselves.

Some spiritual leaders are in trouble today because others put them in this position. Others looked up to them at some point, idolised, and gave them the glory due to God, while they consciously or unconsciously basked in it.

The Praise Giver

When you fail to acknowledge that it is God who blesses - as all good and perfect gifts come from Him (James 1:17), and that human beings are only vessels He uses, you may find yourself worshipping the creature instead of the Creator - a grievous sin called, **Idolatry**. This is quite rampant today, as folks idolise mere mortals: Hopping from church to church, following false preachers, getting easily swayed by heresies and deception, and blindly giving their all to support selfish and vain causes in their desperate pursuit of miracles. God will never give His glory to another, nor His praise to graven images. He made that clear in *Isaiah 42:8*.

Appreciate the vessel God placed on your path for your good; but give Him alone the glory - not Him and the vessel. All glory and power belong to God forever and ever, Amen.

Shalom!

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