

The Price You Pay as a Useful Vessel (I)

Certain things don't come cheap. Some people go through severe persecution and spiritual attacks just to speak the truth and spread the Gospel (usually depending on the level and the scope of their assignment). I have had my own share, as well. While some forge ahead after much endurance, strong determination, unwavering faith, and more, others drop off along the way, as a result of impatience, disobedience, spiritual laxity, and the cares of the world.

Using Mel Gibson as an example: The movie, **The Passion of the Christ** was an enormous box office hit in 2004, taking more than \$600 million worldwide after attracting huge numbers of religious filmgoers. Mel Gibson was its Director/Producer. Thousands (if not millions) of souls all over the globe received Christ after seeing this movie. I personally know an agent of darkness whose life changed after watching the movie.

Not only was the movie despised in Hollywood (for obvious reasons), it also did not receive the Academy Awards it deserved. All it received were nominations. Reputable sources have said that Mel and other key actors knew what they were getting into but were determined to bring us this life-changing movie. One of the key actors was actually struck by lightning while filming. Not just that, Mel's acting career wasn't doing well for a good while, after he released the movie. He has also been in and out of deep trouble with the law (mostly, for the poor choices he made – let's be real) and had personal woes since then. He just wasn't himself anymore. Then there was backlash for his choice of cast and crew, and claims that the movie was centered more on catholic beliefs. Mel was obviously a target for the enemy; and the attack to ruin him was heavy.

While this write-up of mine may be discouraging, the positive side of things and the profound influence the movie has had on numerous souls is what we should focus on. Could Mel Gibson have handled things better? Yes. I personally believe his spiritual laxity played a part in his unending adversities. Spiritual warfare is real, beloved – expect it. And this is why we must have the full armor of God on, always – just as instructed in *Ephesians 6:11-18*. We need the full armor of God to win on the battlefield. Followers of Jesus Christ have been freed from the authority of satan. That said, we must do the needful, and never let our guard down (1 Peter 5:8).

I know little of the man Mel Gibson, or his faith; but whatever his motives were for giving us this priceless movie, souls were led to Christ, and many are still being led to Him, today. Let us remember Mel Gibson in our prayers.

Shalom!

Deborah O Daniel (Toyin)