

The Pressing That Produces a Blessing

Zechariah 4:2-3, 12-14

2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all [of] gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which [are] upon the top thereof:

3 And two olive trees by it, one upon the right [side] of the bowl, and the other upon the left [side] thereof.

*12 And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these **two olive branches** which through the two golden pipes **empty the golden oil out of themselves**?*

13 And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord.

14 Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the LORD of the whole earth.

I. Review

1. I want to return to a thought that I began at the end of March in the message, “Maintaining Our Lamps,” where we discussed the need to stir up the gift that is within us.
2. We looked at the parable of 10 virgins and the importance of keeping a vessel and maintaining a trimmed wick.
3. Being filled with the Spirit and keeping a fresh supply of oil on hand, and keeping a prayer life that includes regular “coming clean” before God is essential.
4. We also talked about becoming a resource of fresh oil for others, like those “**anointed ones**” mentioned in verse 14.
5. These anointed ones are **not** the Mashiakh, the Hebrew word used to refer to the Anointed One, which usually refers to the Messiah, Jesus—Yeshua .
6. The word used here is yitshar, or “sons of fresh, shining oil.” This is **group** of anointed **ones** who are sons of the Anointed One.
7. And their role, in verse 12, is to empty oil out of themselves to provide fuel for the burning lamps, to keep the light from going out.
8. There are several things to note about Zechariah’s vision, there are: **[image:Zecharias vision]**
 - a. olive trees with branches full of olives,
 - b. pipes flowing from those trees that drain oil into a bowl, and a
 - c. bowl that feeds the lamps with fuel for light
9. But what is missing from this picture is how the olives in the trees actually produce a flow of oil.
10. For an olive to produce oil requires pressing.
11. So tonight I want to talk to you about “The Pressing that Produces a Blessing.”

II. When there is no revelation or fresh oil

A. No vision means no restraint

1. For contrast, I want to start by talking about what happens to us and our walk with God when there is no fresh oil.

2. When the pressing is not producing a fresh Spirit infilling.
 3. What happens when there is no spiritual revelation coming to us so we can get a clear vision of Him and His plan for us?
 4. That is what is in mind in this word from the Proverbs:
Proverbs 29:18 Where there is no [prophetic] vision [revelation], the people perish [are let loose, cast off restraint, run wild]: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he.
 5. Without a vision, we perish because we are left to run wild in our carnal, fleshly imaginations and desires.
 6. Having a vision from God about who I am prevents that.
- B. No vision means no light
1. Let us look at the example of how no vision will lead to spiritual disaster.
1 Samuel 3:1 And the child Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. And the word of [from] the LORD was precious [rare] in those days; there was no open vision. [revelatory visions were infrequent].
 2. During this time, because of the lack of spiritual vision and neglect by someone who was responsible for maintaining that vision, the light in the “church” was shut off.
 3. This was like a warning sign, that, if not addressed, it would be followed by a series of cascading bad events:
1 Samuel 3:2-3
*2 And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and **his eyes began to wax dim**, that he could not see;*
 4. This is describing the physical condition of the priest, but as is often the case, a reality in the physical realm can be a parallel of what is going on in the spirit realm;
3 And ere [before] the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; [that simply means that the lamp went out after Samuel went to sleep]
 5. This period was a critical time, but it was worsened by a lack of vision and slumber overtaking them.
 6. Even young Samuel, who had been “raised in church” by Eli the high priest, hadn’t learned enough about God to prevent the lights from going out:
1 Samuel 3:7 Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him.
 7. It is clear from the passage, that some things come only by personal revelation after knowing the Lord, but some things, like knowing how to keep the lamp burning, is something he could have been taught.
 8. But that didn’t happen. Again, lack of vision didn’t see it coming.
 9. But the point of focus tonight is that Samuel did eventually get a call from the Lord, but it was through hard times, that he “pressed out” a deep relationship with God.
- C. No vision leads to a cascading downfall
1. I mentioned that Eli’s missing the warning sign due to lack of vision, led to a series of cascading bad events.
 2. Here is a quick summary of them what Samuel saw: **[slide]**

- a. the priest's sons violated the commandments of God,
 - b. the priest's sons violated women, **and** stole from the offerings right in the tabernacle.
 - c. Israel was defeated by the Philistines in battle,
 - d. the ark of God was stolen by the enemy,
 - e. the two sons of the priest were killed in battle, and
 - f. the high priest, Eli, fell over backward and broke his neck, right in the sanctuary.
3. This was a result of a lack of vision that led to the oil running out and the candle going dark.
 4. That that is when change came.

III. The anointing that lights the church

A. Called but not sent

1. For more than 250 years, Israel had been had been living in the period of the judges, which ended with the rise of the Prophet Samuel.
2. That period was a period of Israel wandering back and forth between serving God and idol worship.
3. But now God called the young man Samuel to lead Israel as their prophet.
4. But Samuel's walk with God was "pressed out" during this period of great peril.
5. God called Samuel when he was very young to be something great for God, but it didn't happen immediately for him.
6. Just like how David was anointed as king of Israel, but didn't actually take the throne for 7 years.
7. Samuel had an early call:
1 Sam 3:19-21
19 And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground.
20 And all Israel from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD.
21 And the LORD appeared again in Shiloh: for the LORD revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the LORD.
8. Verses 19 and 20 are a summary of Samuel's life time of ministry that eventually happened in later years.
9. But verse 21 returns us to the present time when Samuel was young, and before his active ministry for Israel began.
10. The priest Eli was still alive at this time, and Israel was getting ready to experience those cascading tragedies I just mentioned.
11. The important thing to note is this: immediately after Samuel was called and heard the word of the Lord, Israel's greatest tragedies took place.
12. He had a calling, but then went through a series of tragedies before he was mightily used of God.

13. But instead of those tragedies knocking Samuel down, it transformed him from being a person with a calling, to being a person who was **pressed** toward the mark of the prize of that high calling.

B. Pressing toward the mark

1. Let's make this personal.
2. When you press through a trying situation, like what we are experiencing right now leaning on God,
 - a. you will find that God will develop and mature you like ripening fruit
 - b. and during the pressing, you will begin to produce fresh oil.
3. Let me explain that. When you press a lemon, it produces sourness, right? That is because of what a lemon has inside.
4. But when you press an olive, it produces oil used for cooking, flavoring, and fuel.
5. So what you are in your secret, hidden places will be revealed openly by the pressing.
6. **If you are called and anointed, the pressing you bear will result in a blessing you share, not a sourness you wear.**
7. So yes you have anointing on you. Yes you have a calling on you.
8. But don't allow the pressing to result in loss of vision or direction.
9. It wasn't until after the light went out in the tabernacle, and the oil supply had dried out due to lack of concern, that Samuel got his start.
10. And his start was not an easy one.
11. But if you let the periods of dryness, darkness, and pressing to produce oil that lights the lamp in the house of God, your pressing will produce a blessing for all to share in!

C. Who are the olive trees/branches?

1. Let's go back to the vision of Zechariah to put this all together to see how God wants to use those who are willing to trust Him and be used of Him during the pressing:
Zechariah 4:2-3, 6
*2 And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a **candlestick** all of gold, with a **bowl** upon the top of it, and his **seven lamps** thereon, and **seven pipes** to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof:*
*3 And **two olive trees** by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.*
2. Zechariah asked what the meaning of all this was, and the angel's first response was to emphasize the central focus of the vision:
*6 Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, **Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.***
3. We all play a part in God's kingdom, but regardless of how great your calling or anointing is, the central figure is always the LORD of hosts!
4. Now for the other pieces of the vision:
*Zechariah 4:12 And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these **two olive branches** which through the two golden pipes **empty the golden oil out of themselves?** ...*

*Zechariah 4:14 Then said he, These are **the two anointed ones**, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.*

5. As we mentioned before, the anointed ones are the called ones who are willing to be pressed.
6. Their pressing produces golden oil out of themselves. **MAKES ME WANT TO SHOUT!**
7. Because of their pressing out, they become a source of golden oil for the bowl that feeds fuel to the lamps/candlesticks.

D. What are the candlesticks/lamps?

1. As we have seen, we as the called saints of God are the ones whose lives press out oil so the lamps will burn, but what do the lamps and candlesticks represent?
2. The lamps and candlesticks are the same thing—the thing that burns the oil and gives light.
3. So using scripture to interpret scripture, we turn to Revelation 1 to identify what the candlesticks are:

Revelation 1:12-13, 20

*12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw **seven golden candlesticks**;*

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

4. Once again, not by might, nor by power, but by the Spirit of the LORD. Jesus must always remain in the center of the picture!
5. Next, the meaning of the candlesticks is revealed:
*20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and **the seven candlesticks** which thou sawest **are the seven churches**.*

6. The church is described as a candlestick or a lamp, and we are called to burn brightly with the Light of the world:

*John 9:5 As long as I am in the world, **I am the light of the world**.*

7. But because He went away, now:

Matt 5:14-16

*14 **Ye are the light of the world**. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.*

15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

8. The church can burn brightly with fire as long as we are wise, keeping our lamps trimmed, and a vessel full of oil.
9. And the way to be full of oil is to mature and grow in the pressing until your pressing produces a blessing.
10. And then your testimony to the dark world, and your good works among a disillusioned longing world, will make you like a city set on a hill, or like a candle put on a candlestick to give light to all!
11. Notice how Jesus said it is your good works that reveal His light to the world.

12. When you endure hard pressures, yet continue to show fruitfulness for God, the world will notice that you've got something they don't have.
13. That is the pressing that produces a blessing.
14. The church needs individuals who will be oil producers who will continue to pump oil into the church so that the fire and light of the church will burn continually.

IV. Conclusion

1. To one degree or another, this time is a pressing time for us. Some of you have been touched deeply by this corona virus pandemic.
2. We know of Sis. Warner and Sis. Karrie are among those hit personally with this sickness, and there are possibly others whose sickness was not treated as Covid-19, but it could have been that.
3. If it was not the sickness itself that was part of your pressing, your life has been **pressed out of measure** simply by all the drastic changes your life has experienced in the last month-and-a-half.
4. In some ways it seems like it has been so much longer than that.
5. Notice how fitting the following description is of the situation that we all find ourselves in right now:
2 Cor 1:8-10
8 For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life:
9 But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead:
6. That is how our pressing can produce a blessing. When we are pressed out of measure, it forces us out of our comfort zone—our old way of doing things had the sentence of death on it.
7. It forced us all to reevaluate our lives to ask, “What really matters?”
8. Is it our hobbies? Sporting activities? Our education? Our jobs? Our money?
9. When all of those things are removed, we realize we cannot trust in ourselves, but in God which raises the dead.
10. When all these former things died out, what remained? God was still there and family was still there.
11. And I trust you have grown closer to God and family during this pressing out of measure.
12. That passage ends with this:
2 Cor 1:10 Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us;
13. Past, present, and future, Jesus Christ the same—each generation seems to learn this anew, that Jesus is still the only reliable source for life and deliverance.
14. Jesus is the Anointed One who lights the world, but we can be one of the anointed ones, the sons of fresh oil, who can shine God's light in the world, and also keep the church on fire!
15. Let us pray that your pressing will produce a blessing.