

Prophetic Year Word for 2023

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Context

Early in November I was walking on a hill behind our house, praying and seeking God for his heart for 2023, for our church, city and nation, as well as the Body of Christ and nations globally. On my way back **down the hill**, I walked a **different, new route** through the grass and rocks, not on the existing pathway. I saw a large **tortoise** positioned against a rock and on closer inspection, realised it was dead and that a colony of **bees** had made a hive and were producing **honey** inside the partially broken shell. God started to download things in my spirit regarding my walk on the hill, the tortoise and the bees and honey, that I will elaborate on further. In the weeks following this “download”, it’s been amazing to see how many things about honey and bees have been appearing in nature, on signs, featured on online nature clips and that there is even a bee design on our new South African One Rand coin, scheduled for release in 2023! God has been confirming this word over and over again! I want to challenge you – watch and see and believe and trust God for signs and wonders in the coming days and weeks regarding this word. Look for the honey, look for the bees, look for the pointers. I believe God is going to reveal some of those markers, just for us to see as confirmations.

The Hill

1) New Paths

- I felt that as we go into 2023, we will take a path that we have not walked before – there is a new season that God is taking us into.
- Walking down the hill, I sensed that we would be coming down from a “mountainous area” into the “valley”. The “*valley of the shadow of death*” (*Psalms 23*) is where we can become more aware of the presence of God! This Psalm speaks of a feast prepared for us (a “*six-course meal*” in another translation) in the presence of our enemies, so this is good news!
- It was when I “turned aside” (*Exodus 3:3-4*) that I actually saw the tortoise and the bees. We need to lean in to the Holy Spirit’s promptings, to find the deeper things!

The Tortoise (*Judges 14*)

2) Longevity in Life and Health

- Tortoises symbolise longevity. I experienced that people’s lives will not be cut short, but that they will live long if they are connected accurately and honourably (*Exodus 20:12*).
- This longevity also has to do with health and I experienced that God wants to restore health to people in local churches.

3) LOCAL CHURCHES WILL BECOME HOUSES OF REFUGE AND PROTECTION, WHERE GOD IS RESTORING COVENANT CONNECTIONS

- Regarding the tortoise and its shell, in the context of *Judges 14:19* where Samson returns to his father’s house, I believe that God is restoring covenant connections, which are not connections of convenience. We will start to see local churches become houses of refuge/protection. Where people are not connected in covenant in spiritual houses, is where the enemy would want to come and steal. I felt that the tortoise’s shell symbolised spiritual houses, local churches which are protected. God is busy in the house with something unique and special. There is a fresh

emphasis of covenant and covenant relationships that God is busy restoring in the Body of Christ. There has been a lot of breakage of covenant, where people have become born again, but they are not covenanted anywhere in relationship and are not built in. God is busy establishing spiritual houses that value covenant and offer protection. *Judges 14:4* speaks of God looking for an occasion to come against the enemy and God is wanting to use spiritual houses, local churches, to offer protection as we go out against the enemy. David had troops withdraw from Uriah and he was killed in battle because he was on his own (*2 Samuel 11:15*). We can't do this in the body of Christ. We need to be committed, united, connected and covenanted in relationship, because whatever exploits we do outside, we need backing for – business, politics, education, etc. Whatever we are doing out there, requires of us to be rooted and protected in the local house. Jesus died to see the church born – local churches are on the agenda of God! There is re-emphasis on accuracy and connecting in covenant relationships in local churches. We've seen a lot of people "float" out of local churches or become uninvolved because of Covid. Covenant relationships and standing with people is so important!

Honey (*Judges 13 & 14*)

4) Unique Revelation of the Word

- I believe we will see unique revelation of the Word come to the Body of Christ in a fresh, new way. We read about this in many scriptures including: *Psalms 119:105 (Your Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path)*, *Colossians 1:27 ((God willed to make known...Christ in you, the hope of glory)*. There is an illumination of who we are and who God is that we are going to see. Things are going to open up and people are going to see clearly, because truth sets people free!
- The Word of God is like honey. *Ezekiel 3:3 (NKJV) "And He said to me, 'Son of man, feed your belly, and fill your stomach with this scroll I give you.' So I ate, and it was in my mouth like honey in sweetness."*
- There will be a grace released in the next season, where the sweetness of His Presence will be tasted and seen in a new way. This will be what satisfies you and me. We will experience this sweetness of His presence in a fresh and new way in the new year, individually and corporately.
- 2023 will be a year where unsaved people will be drawn to the Light like never before! *Isaiah 9:2 & Matthew 4:16 (Those who walked in darkness have seen a great light)*, *Isaiah 60:1 (Arise shine, for your light has come)*. Expect healings, miracles, salvations, signs and wonders – we will see an increase of these things next year!

5) How Provision and Solutions Come Will Seem to Look Upside Down

- Honey also speaks of provision and abundance, something tasteful and sweet! God has warned us prophetically about economic challenges and difficult times lying ahead. Things like recession, depression, etc. are starting to happen, which we might see more of across the world, but even in that we need to remember that there was a Joseph. God is raising up such people across the earth, even as we have been warned to make certain preparations, etc. Nations will go bankrupt in a day, a lot of economic turmoil will happen, but we have God's Word and He is a perfect Heavenly Father who knows what we need before we ask Him! Even in 2023, against the backdrop of the "economic reset" that is happening on earth, a spiritual reset will be happening as well, which is a positive thing. Be encouraged, even as everything is being shaken.

- *Judges 14:19 (NKJV)* says, “Then the Spirit of the LORD came upon him mightily and he went down to Ashkelon and killed thirty of their men, took their apparel, and gave the changes of clothing to those who had explained the riddle. So his anger was aroused and he went back up to his father’s house.” I believe that we will see Godly provision. We read in *Judges 14* how Samson had to honour his word to provide clothing for whoever could solve his riddle, despite the Philistines’ deception in getting the answer. God’s Spirit came upon Samson and sent him to Ashkelon and so we realise it was a Godly initiative for Samson to go down there and kill the thirty Philistine men, whose garments he took for the pledge. We may have committed/agreed to certain things and God is promising to make a way, that is “upside down”, to bring about provision for the church, the body of Christ. If someone deceived you through how they did things with you (as with the Philistine men against Samson) God’s Spirit will come upon you and the “changes of garments”/provision out there will come back to you. I feel that things will open up and the Spirit of God is raising us up to turn things around financially and to see provision come through, despite the deception of the world in business and economies. God is saying, “I want to turn things around.” The Spirit of God will be raised up in people, to bring that which is in darkness, to its rightful place. The Bible says that the wealth of the wicked is laid up for the righteous (*Proverbs 13:22*). God is about to bring judgement on darkness, where the “garments of 30 men” get restored to the purposes of God. The purpose of God will be fulfilled. If He has to turn things around economically, He will do it, but He will raise up a standard. There will be provision and a fruitfulness that will flow and be produced with those connected to Kingdom and Kingdom-minded local churches.
- In *Exodus 3:8* it says: “So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up from that land, to a good and large land; to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites.” What did God’s people have to do? Occupy! God has called us to occupy. He is not coming on a rescue mission to fetch us. There is a second coming, but we are to occupy this place, to build and establish His Kingdom on earth, as it is in Heaven. There is a place that God wants us to take hold of. God would want to bring forth a year of Godly provision and abundance. The Promised Land is a place of provision, fruitfulness and obedience to the word of God. In the wilderness, God supernaturally provided food and clothing didn’t wear out, but when the people went into the Promised Land (which already had gold, crops, iron, etc.), God gave grace to people to actually multiply and produce fruitfulness through their own hands (*Deuteronomy 8:3, Matthew 4:4*). God wants to do things through the church, through our hands in the Promised Land. The supernatural now comes through obedient hands!

6) Fruitfulness is Coming to Areas of Our Lives That Feel Dead

- *Judges 13:3* speaks about Angel of the Lord (Jesus) that appeared to the woman (symbolising the church). She was barren, but was told she would conceive and she bore a son. We are going to see a fruitfulness that we haven’t seen for a long time, in different areas of our lives. It might seem like all we have seen is pruning, fire, purifying. But with pruning comes fruitfulness – without it there is no fruitfulness. There has been a lot of pruning and internal recalibrating taking place and I feel that we are going see fruitfulness in our lives and what we are doing. Fruitfulness will come to areas of our lives that might feel ‘dead’. Just like the barren woman, God is saying, “There is something that I want to bring forth from your life that is going to be fruitful. You are not going to be barren anymore.” Kingdom is always fruitful and the Kingdom of God is within us. God has called us to be fruitful in whatever we put our hands to.

- There is a fruitfulness, protection, as well as provision, that the Lord would want to bring out of experiences of loss and death. The Spirit of Resurrection is about to resurrect that which seemed dead and lost. I believe in this time, that there is resurrection life that God would want to bring about, because of things that have 'died'. *John 12:24 (AMP)* "I assure you and most solemnly say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone [just one grain, never more]. But if it dies, it produces much grain and yields a harvest." I believe there are a lot of things (dreams, visions, etc.) that have died in many Christians' lives, but that resurrection life is going to come in certain areas, to give you new hope, new dreams and new vision. Sometimes things have to die, because what comes to your hand next is only what God can put in your hand, what only God can resurrect. So, if there are areas of life where you feel you have no hope, God, says, "I am the resurrection life and I am going to restore and give you hope in a new, fresh way." I really feel that in the body of Christ, there is new hope, new strength, that is going to come, because the resurrection life of the Spirit of God is going to raise new things up again in people's lives that seem to have died. I believe we will also see a lot of resurrections of the physical dead, so look for opportunities to raise the dead!

Bees (*Judges 4, 13 & 14*)

7) We Are Going to Experience the Spirit of the Deliverer Come Upon the Body of Christ

- The book of Judges was written in a time where God raised up specific men and women as judges in Israel, to bring about deliverance for Israel, who was often found living and stuck in sin and regularly under the control of their enemies for periods of time. (This seemingly extreme Old Testament pattern of literal deliverance from physical enemies, often involving death, was a foreshadow of things to come. In the New Testament we understand that we don't wrestle against flesh and blood and that the Holy Spirit convicts us of sin to bring about internal change.)
- As symbolised by the Old Testament judges, we are raising up a new standard. As the church, we will rise up in certain things, in a new dimension and awareness of the authority God has given us to pronounce judgement – not on people, but on darkness. Scripture says that we are co-heirs, who rule and reign with Jesus (*Psalms 110:1, Matthew 22:44, Acts 2:34*) and co-labourers. Adam and Eve were put on earth to rule and reign (*Genesis 1:28*) and God has put us on earth to do the same. So, the spirit of deliverance is coming. Yes, people will be delivered from things, but this is not the focus. The spirit of deliverance refers to the church becoming a place and company of people, who start to speak things and bring about a transformation in different areas and fields. This will be because we carry a prevailing spirit, to be able to rule and reign over our own spirits, but also in the spirit realm and in certain situations. In Christ, we are the highest authority in a place. When a higher authority comes in, every other authority must bend its knee (spiritually) – deliverance! Enough is enough! We've seen a number of things happening and ungodly laws being passed in the world, as well as in our nation. But there is coming a time where there is standard being raised to rule and reign and the impact of the spirit of the Deliverer being seen. There is a boldness that's coming upon the church like we have never seen before, where we will not just be a noise, but a voice in society, school, business, etc. *1 Corinthians 13* – through love, we will not just be a clanging noise, but a sound that starts to bring influence.
- *Judges 13:1* – Israel was delivered into the hands of the Philistines for 40 years. If we look at the world today, things are looking bad. However, Heaven's perspective looks very different to ours! We see here in Judges that because of sin, people were in captivity and the enemy was

ruling and reigning in the nation. Through the church a new ruling and reigning must come, a prevailing over the enemy. Samson was raised up in a time when Israel was under the rule of the Philistines. Because of evil and the effect of evil, there are consequences. But that is why we, the church, are here. In the church and through the church, people will see the Living God, in His wisdom and grace, bring about transformation.

- We read further in *Judges 13* about Samson's father and his mother, who was barren. In verse 3, the Angel of the Lord (Jesus) appeared to her, telling her she would bear a son and how she was to raise him for God's purpose – that he would begin to DELIVER Israel out of the hands of the Philistines. A year of deliverance is coming on the church to see certain things turn in our nation/s. The condition of the city/nation is a direct result of the condition of the church!

8) The Lord is Bringing Judgement on Darkness

- The Word of God, the revelation of God, the presence of God, the glory of God, the fruitfulness of God, the abundance of God, the provision of God – is coming to the body of Christ!
- *Judges 14* – Samson sought a wife from the Philistines, which God had planned to use as an “occasion” to come against the Philistines. God is looking for an occasion to move against what the enemy has intended. He is looking for a company of people who agree with Him and not with circumstance. Samson killed a lion, with supernatural strength, on his way to secure his Philistine bride and sometime later he returned to get her and saw a swarm of bees and honey in that lion's carcass. He ate some of the honey and also shared it with his mother and father. He gives the Philistines a riddle to solve involving the lion and the honey, promising 30 changes of clothing/linen to anyone who was able to solve the riddle or requiring the same from them if they couldn't. They threatened to kill Samson's wife and her family if she didn't help them with the riddle and she nags Samson for the answer and then passes it on to the men of the city. They give Samson the answer, but he knew they got it deceitfully. So, he killed 30 Philistines from another area, Ashkelon, and gave their clothing to the men of Timnah. Angry, he returned to his father's house, giving his bride to his best man.
- *Judges 13 and 14* describes the dominion of the Philistines and how God intervened. We see in *Judges 14:8* that Samson stops by the lion's carcass where he saw the bees and honey and took some, eating it as he went along and he also gave some away. He also gives the Philistines 30 garments, taken from their own people, because they were deceitful. Judgement is coming on darkness. Things that have happened in the dark, God is going to deal with. Make sure that the way you do business is Godly. Make sure that all your dealings are Godly. Things are going to come out. Part of the word for 2022 would be that things would be revealed/exposed and we have seen this happen in politics, etc. Judgement is coming, where people have hardened their hearts in certain things. As with Ananias and Sapphira in *Acts 5* – New Testament – the Holy Spirit brings conviction (and judgement came on their deceit) and they actually dropped down dead! So, there is an intensity with what God will do in the coming year.
- Remember that the book of *Judges* is about God raising up judges to execute judgement on the enemy, which was Old Testament. In the New Testament, there is certain judgement that we will bring. *Judges 4* speaks about Deborah, who God raised up to bring judgement on the enemy. The name Deborah means ‘bee’! She carried something of the anointing of the honey and we are going to start to see “Deborahs” being raised up and this anointing being released.

9) There is a New Kingdom Way and Lifestyle That People Will Be Drawn to Out of Jealousy, Because of What We Have

- Bees live in colonies; they don't fly individually like lone rangers. I really believe that God is raising up new Kingdom family, because there has been so much dysfunctionality in families. Like in the New Testament, people laid their lives down for one another. They shared what they had so all needs were seen to. There was a spirit of sacrifice, where everyone had everything in common. We have even seen this in our house, BCC! There is a grace released for a new Kingdom family and lifestyle, that accurately represents God. Church is not just a gathering of people on a Sunday, it is family – like a bee colony.
- Bees always return to the hive where the honey is produced. Consider how you are connected. You can go online and view/download different messages, but what you need is not there. You will find what you need in the place where you are accountable and transparent. The sheep do not determine what they eat – the shepherd does. That's why there are shepherds! Jesus is the chief Shepherd, but He gave shepherds to lead and help feed the sheep.
- Bees build the hive together – it is a place of activity, building, fruitfulness. It is important to pick up the importance of how this represents the family and the house of God and the grace released through doing life this way!

10) God Will Raise Up People in the Church to Bring Solutions Outside of the Church

- What is also interesting about bees is that they go out and get pollen, but the “pollen” from the outside will not become “pollution” on the inside of the house of God. There is enough pollution that has come into the Body of Christ. I believe there is a purity that is coming in a special way, a “pollen” that will come in that will not pollute the house of God. There are also answers to problems outside the church, that those in the church are going to have. This is not the institution, but believers who are built into the house and whatever field of society you are in (business, education, etc.), you are going to start to have answers and solutions. The world and the politicians don't have them, but you will. People, in high positions and places – whatever areas of society – will come to you and ask for your input/advice and you will speak things. It won't be the institutions, those with degrees, etc., but you will have the wisdom of God to speak and give an answer to the problem, because God has all the answers. If you go the right source, you will have the right answers.
- Joseph was in prison, but he had the answer for the most powerful person alive at the time! People in the highest positions will come and look for answers, because they don't have them. In whatever field you are in, God would want to use you as a vehicle to bring answers, because He doesn't hate this world – He loves it and has paid a great price for it!

What a privilege we have, being “co-missioned” to partner with God on this life journey! God's Word has come to us and now we get to proactively help it find its expression and accomplish its purpose through our lives! Let's do this!