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Solicitude

The Abbots' Letters of Reflection

The Angel of Prophecy

A characteristic feature of the Abrahamic traditions is prophecy--the ability not only to peer into the future or the distant past, but also to critique the present moment and the human condition from the perspective of heaven. As the world rushes toward some unknown tipping point into a new and undetermined future, we are in need of the clarity of the prophetic voice as never before. We want desperately for the Angel of Prophecy to speak clearly. We desire to hear the voice of our guardian angels.

The prophetic tradition in its oldest Hebrew form was filled with a cry from the courts of heaven concerning the dysfunctions of human society and the human condition. The prophetic voice was often shrill and the seeing was sharp-eyed and keen, breaking through all the rhetoric that kept humans blind and in delusion. That was the role of prophecy, helping humanity to break through into clarity and understanding. One has only to read briefly the pages of the prophets to hear this full force. Over and over again, Yeshua's voice was the same. Often it too was harsh in its critique of the blindness and ignorance that held sway in His day, and against the powers that kept people in chains of bondage, injustice and fear. He cried out against spiritual blindness and ignorance and He also cried literally for the weak and abused and the marginalized and He loved them. His was the voice of the prophetic Angel. The Angel of prophecy spoke through Him. He became its Word. His voice was the voice of prophetic unveiling, *apocalypsis*.

Such voices are on the rise in our own day and the reasons are the same. I am reminded of a voice that spoke in the last century against the rise of Nazi authoritarianism, and one that was snuffed out for the very same reasons as Yeshua's. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Lutheran pastor in pre-

World War Germany, saw the dark clouds rising up and became the voice of the prophet and the Angel.

Below is a sample:



Stupidity is a more dangerous enemy of the good than malice. One may protest against evil; it can be exposed and, if need be, prevented by use of force.

Evil always carries within itself the germ of its own subversion in that it leaves behind in human beings at least a sense of unease. Against stupidity we are defenseless.

Neither protests nor the use of force accomplish anything here; reasons fall on deaf ears; facts that contradict one's prejudgment simply need not be believed – in such moments the stupid person even becomes critical – and when facts are irrefutable they are just pushed aside as inconsequential, as incidental. In all this the stupid person, in contrast to the malicious one, is utterly self-satisfied and, being easily irritated, becomes dangerous by going on the attack.

For that reason, greater caution is called for when dealing with a stupid person than with a malicious one.

Never again will we try to persuade the stupid person with reasons, for it is senseless and dangerous.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906 - 1945)

"On Stupidity" - Letters and Papers from Prison

He understood his society and he critiqued it like the prophets of old. The Angel of Prophecy spoke through him. Ignorance and stupidity are both dangerous and difficult. It is not safe to strip the veil off of ignorance and remove the mask of stupidity. It is dangerous work and Bonhoeffer paid the price. There is no cure for this human condition except to raise the level of human consciousness, which is precisely where the work of the wisdom sage begins.

In our own day, given the circumstances that we face, there is no greater need than to hear the stream of Prophetic Tradition. The first is the stream of Apocalyptic Unveiling and the second is

the stream of Wisdom Teaching and transmission--*Sophia Perennis*--the Universal Wisdom, whose Source is infinite compassion, beauty and power.

When Wisdom speaks, it too addresses the human condition, not simply to critique it, but to raise it to another level of seeing and knowing. Human consciousness must be raised or we will never be able to take another step in the direction of spiritual transformation and evolution. The Angel of Prophecy is not only a cry for justice speaking truth to power, it is also the Voice of Love speaking with compassion to the human condition in order to change the trajectory of our collective and personal histories, lifting us out of ignorance and stupidity into Wisdom's light. That Voice is also speaking, guiding and guarding us at this perilous and precious moment in time.

The Voice of the Angel of Prophecy, almost mad with ecstatic poetry, spoke through the blessed Jalaluddin Rumi. He lived in his own most perilous of times when the Mongol hordes were sweeping out of the East and literally destroying his world. That Voice said:

Be kind to yourself, dear friend.

Be kind even to all your follies.

Forget any sound or touch that does not help you dance.

You will come to see at last that everything evolves us.

So put your heart against the earth with me,

in serving every creature,

and the Beloved One will enter us from the sacred realm,

and lift us and we will be filled with bliss.

~~ Lynn Bauman (Abbot)