

A Higher Standard of Holiness

Beloved, I call your spirit to attention, and I invite the Prophet portion to come explore how God has designed you to enrich the world in your very own way.

Prophet, you are well known for insisting on a higher moral standard in your community. This is a gift indeed (although you are more commonly criticized than celebrated for this gift).

Your tribe is also legendary for personally embracing disciplines of holiness that are much higher than what they expect from others. Again, it is a gift to the community to see holiness incarnated in this way.

However, there is a third kind of holiness that is even a greater gift to those who walk with you and to those who walk at a distance but watch your daily life. This is the holiness that comes from being profoundly cleansed after having become unholy.

Prophet, I so wish that cleansing was a part of our culture. Sin is quite painful and the guilt that follows can be horribly destructive.

It has been argued that the Prophet tribe suffers the deepest anguish after having been unholy. Perhaps it is true, and perhaps it is because of your deep anguish that you are commissioned by God to share with the world the magnificence of holiness that comes from true spiritual cleansing after a season or an act of sin.

Your work is represented by the great altar at the entrance to the Tabernacle and the Temple. While some might see it as a harsh requirement by an angry God, you see it as an immeasurable blessing. Because of the cleansing from the blood sacrifice, every other good gift from God is once again available to you.

Consider the first Prophet, Eve, who had to face the enormity of the consequences of her sin in the spiritual, social and natural ecosystems. All were vastly disrupted by the chain of events that she initiated.



Was she guilty? Yes, yes, a thousand times yes. Are the results of her choices still ravaging the world? Undeniably. But did Eve wallow in her guilt and shame? No, she did not. Instead she focused on restoration.

In the midst of the judgment spoken over her by God, there was also redemption, and she seized on redemption holding it close to her heart. It would come through a man child! So when she had her first born child and it was a boy, she shouted with the intensity that only a restored sinner knows: **"With the help of the LORD, I have brought forth a man!"**

With the help of the LORD! This is the gift the repentant Prophet offers to the world. There **is** help! There **is** hope! There **is** holiness again after the most abject sin. And it comes from the Righteous Judge of the Universe who is first in passion to restore our holiness.

The Prophet who has lost his own holiness through the insanity of his own choices is a tragic figure on the stage of life. But the Prophet who has then gone to the altar and been cleansed to the very core of his being knows the immensity and extravagance of the power of God.

This Prophet is passionate about giving the gift of restored holiness to those in the community who have yet to discover the majesty of the altar in all its ugliness.

Miriam is another Prophet who knew about that divine restoration. Her sin was public, and her judgment was even more public. The leprosy on her spirit showed all over her body in a gruesome way. Her transgression stopped the progress of the entire nation for one week, while she suffered the mandatory exclusion from the camp.

Miriam could never erase her sinful statements and actions. They are recorded in Scripture for all to see for all of time. Ah, but who can imagine what it feels like to have the leprosy of spirit and body removed by divine decree in a single moment. She was suddenly clean! Completely restored, made holy, embraced by the Most High! Who could speak more passionately about the holiness of restoration than Miriam?

Or take Peter, the Prophet, who botched his response to the arrest of Christ worse than any of the other apostles. His shame and guilt overwhelmed him, and he fled from the face of the Christ he had sinned against.



So that same Christ pursued him, met with him face to face on various occasions until he could receive forgiveness at the very core of his being and be made holy again.

It was this Peter, the sinner, whose holiness was restored, whom God selected as the Prophet to preach a sermon of condemnation on the day of Pentecost. Why him? Because he knew restoration to holiness and could extend it as the consummate gift to those who could accept it, after they were convicted.

Top honors go to the Prophet Hosea who embraced unholiness in his wife. She could not receive all the restoration to holiness that he offered at first, so she returned to worse sin than before. But in the end, Hosea triumphed. With skill, wrapped in tenacity, spiced with uncommon love, he persuaded the harlot to receive the abundant gift of restored holiness. And she did!

Only a Prophet!

What a gift!

Holiness is a treasure to be guarded carefully. Restored holiness is a vastly greater treasure to be shared with all who have dropped their guard.

So we welcome you in our midst, Prophet. We who fear you because of your uncompromising stand on holiness are learning to treasure you because of your knowledge of restored holiness. You are most welcome among us as you teach us the depths of this vital truth. We bless you in the name of our King, Jesus Christ.

At the Centrum B & B
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