WISE HER STILL

Sheep Amongst Wolves: A Message to the Elijahs, Josephs and Davids of Today

Tiffany Buckner • June 7, 2016

Dear Prophet,

I have to share my testimony with you so that you will not only be encouraged, but you will pass this test that you are enduring. I'm sure you've heard the adage, "The way up is down...." This sounds like nothing more than a cute play on words, but I can honestly say at this stage in my life that those words are true. It's funny; we all have our ideas about what God intends to do with and for us, but the truth is we have no real idea of what God has planned for us. The reason for this is because we have a tendency to think that our lives are centered around our wants and needs, therefore, when we imagine God working things out on our behalves, we oftentimes imagine Him working hard to give us the desires of our hearts. Of course, God does give us the desires of our hearts, **but** He does this **after** He has changed our hearts, or better yet, renewed our minds. In other words, we don't always get what we want when we want it; we get what we want when our desires match God's will for us. Any prayer that does not match God's will for us is a prayer gone amiss.

I moved to Conyers, Georgia in June of 2015. I was truly excited about moving to Georgia altogether because the Lord had spoken to me in 2010 and said that He would be moving me to Georgia. He'd also sent two or three prophets to confirm the move, so when I got the green light to finally relocate

to Georgia, I was ecstatic. I had recently connected with a ministry in the Conyers area and I thought I was finally in my season of reaping, so I couldn't wait to get to Georgia. I packed my clothes, endured the opposition and prayed my way through every red light that tried to stop me from making that move.

When I finally arrived in Conyers and saw my apartment for the first time, I wasn't too impressed, but at the same time, I knew that God had a plan, so I wasn't too disappointed either. I remembered a friend of mine telling me that I would go through culture shock, but of course, I didn't believe her. After all, I'd lived in Mississippi, Florida and Germany... all of which are very different culturally, so I thought Georgia would be a breeze. At the same time, I'd traveled to many countries and I thought I could live amongst just about anyone. *I was wrong.*

Almost immediately, I noticed how different the people's attitudes were. In Florida, or at least where I'd lived in Florida, most of the people I came in contact with daily had a sunny disposition. Sure, we didn't know one another personally, but for the most part, we were cordial with one another. I walked daily, so I would always run across the same people, and in many cases, we'd stop and chat before continuing on with our walks. In Georgia, things were different and I noticed this almost immediately. First, many of the women appeared to be insecure. In the area that I lived in, most people didn't walk often. I'd seen maybe one other woman who walked often and I only started seeing her maybe nine months after I'd moved to Conyers. As a matter of fact, she had recently moved to Georgia from Florida as well. Additionally, I saw one or two men who jogged daily and that was that, so it goes without saying that having a single woman walking everyday in a community where people didn't ordinarily walk raised some (real and fake) eyebrows. Within the first week of me moving to Georgia, I'd received a few eye rolls, been followed by a woman in a van and I'd done the one thing a single woman NEVER wants to do in a not-so-great area and that is... stand out. Nevertheless, I was able to

shrug my shoulders and keep on living because I thought I was where God wanted me to be and I believed that I had the connections He wanted me to have. I felt safe, reassured and excited about what was to come. I told a few of my friends that if a woman is suffering from low self esteem, she'd definitely get a self esteem boost in Georgia. It was just that bad, or at least, my experience was.

Months passed and before long, I could sincerely and passionately say that I hated Georgia... or at least, I hated Conyers, Georgia. God had disconnected me from the ministry I had been connected to and I was struggling to see what my purpose was in that city and that community. And if things weren't bad enough, one of my neighbors happened to be into drugs and the smell of his drugs would often fill my apartment. For a few months, I thought the sewerage was bad, so I complained to the apartment's office about the smells, but to no avail. I didn't realize that the foul smell that kept taking over my apartment was the smell of drugs being made or smoked until one of my younger neighbors told me what it was. It smelled like bad sewerage mixed with the odor of an enraged skunk, but the smells would come through the bathroom in my bedroom, so I learned to keep my bathroom's door closed. There were many mornings when I woke up and went to the bathroom, only to be slapped in the face by what I can only describe as the most putrid smell I've ever had to breathe in. That experience in itself was pure hell.

It was official... I was in the type of community that I'd fought so hard to get away from. I was back in the ghetto, but this time, I was in a well disguised ghetto. I'd moved to my community after viewing its website and I'd even had the minister I was connected to to check the place out for me. Obviously, she'd visited the community in the earlier part of the day because she'd come back with a great report. Honestly, I understand how she came to think the place was good. The community was gated and the apartments were well maintained. If you were to visit the place before three in the afternoon, it

appeared to be a well-desired community. Nevertheless, as the evening approached, the truth about that community would make itself known. The community would be crawling with half-dressed young women, sex-starved men who had nothing but the bass in their cars to get those women's attention and a few mature people who'd just learned to live with it. I was disappointed; angry even, because I was working hard and paying rent for a place that no one could have paid me to stay in. Additionally, I was paying more in rent than I had paid in Florida, but with fewer perks. As a matter of fact, the higher rent was what made me think that the place would be in a nice, quiet community. The price of living in Florida is higher than the cost of living in Georgia, so I assumed that I was moving into a quiet gated community. *Again, I was wrong.*

One of my trades is photography, but I noticed that anytime I came outside with my camera, a couple of my neighbors would rush into their homes or stare at me whenever I walked around taking pictures. I laughed because it was obvious that a few of the seedier ones questioned who I was; after all, no one saw me leaving to go to a job (I have my own business and I work from home), plus, I walked daily (this was obviously a foreign act in that community). A few of my friends even joked that some of my neighbors obviously thought I was a police plant, and while this was funny, it did help me to realize that I needed to be careful, so I stopped bringing my camera outside. I stopped photography altogether. I had to put away one of my passions because I was in a season of humbling; I was in a season where I was forced to look at myself and deal with my own hatred towards the very mindset that I was in the midst of.

The next thing the enemy began to attack was my peace of mind. My neighbors would have what I thought of as their daily "stump" routines where they'd stump, run and drop things for an hour or two each day. It was so bad that my dog would be running around and looking for intruders. He'd be startled out of his sleep every day and it would be hard for me to do anything

until they ended their routine. My leader at the time had even given me a word of knowledge, telling me that my neighbors wanted me gone and their stumping was not only intentional, but it was the enemy using them to try to drive me out of that place. It almost worked. You will never know the value of peace until someone takes it away from you. I was frustrated, so I talked with the female neighbor a few times (she appeared to be nice) about the stumping. She'd apologize and tell me that they were going to work towards being quieter, but after a while, I stopped talking with her about the stumping because it seemed that every time I said something, the stumping got louder and lasted for longer periods of time. I never believed it was her that was stumping; it was her live-in boyfriend. My friends even questioned why I didn't complain to the community's office about the stumping or call the police about the smell of drugs and my answer was always the same. I was a single woman with no connections. The office wouldn't have evicted the people; they would only confront them and this would only intensify the warfare. Additionally, calling the police to report the making and manufacturing of drugs is only good when you have actual evidence. Complaining about smells and other behaviors would only spark an investigation, but at the same time, it could easily have put me in danger; after all, I was a single woman living alone.

One night, I noticed my dog acting strangely. He was panicked, breathing profusely and his pupils were dilated. I kept hugging him and I could feel his heart racing and his body trembling. I felt horrible. Honestly, I don't think I could have felt any lower than I did at that point. I felt like I'd taken him from a city and state that he loved so much and brought him into a place that we both hated. I did everything to calm him down, but to no avail. My heart broke seeing him in that condition and I didn't know what to do. I prayed for him, rebuked the devil on his behalf and even called the leader I was connected to. Nothing seemed to work; he only seemed to be getting worse. Finally, I loaded my dog up at four in the morning and took him almost an hour away to see a

veterinarian. The drive seemed long and I couldn't hold back the tears because the one sure thing I felt I had was my dog and his life was on the line. My hatred for that community and the culture in that community was intensifying. I found myself referring to many of the people there as cockroaches, and of course, this was error. To see them in that way meant that not only had I begun to objectify the people, but it was clear that I saw the only remedy as extermination because no one attempts to train an insect. God was truly breaking me and I hated every moment of it.

What had happened to my dog? I remembered my drug pushing neighbor passing closely by him maybe twenty minutes before he started "tripping" and I suspected that he'd either dropped something that my dog had consumed, gave my dog something or maybe it was the fumes that kept evading my apartment that had finally gotten to him. At the same time, I'd opened up my apartment that evening to a couple that my leader had warned me earlier that day to not let in my apartment, so I questioned whether the attack was physical (drug related) or spiritual (demons).

It was almost five in the morning when I arrived at the vet, and to my disappointment, the veterinarian looked and sounded like a druggie himself. His voice was slow and slurred and his hair was disheveled. I could tell that he thought maybe I had been doing some drugs and my dog had gotten into my drugs, but I assured him that not only did I not do drugs, but I had never done drugs in my entire life. The vet did nothing but stretch my dog's limbs, shine a flashlight in his eyes and tell me that his pupils were definitely dilated. *Duh!* He told me that he'd likely gotten into some drugs *(duh again)* and he told me that my bill was close to two hundred bucks for his assessment. *I honestly got more information on a Google search.* He also offered to do some blood work, but he warned me that the blood work wouldn't identify what was in the dog; it would just tell him that a foreign substance was there. Either way, I'd have to let whatever my dog had ingested run its course. I opted to not get the blood

work. Instead, I chose to go home and stay awake until my dog's actual vet's office opened, hoping that she could tell me more. By the end of the day, I was out of more than four hundred bucks and I still had no answers. It took whatever was in my dog's system two days to run its course. Not long after that, God disconnected me from the ministry I was connected to, so I found myself alone in a city I hated, amongst a mindset that I hated and fighting to maintain my love. I was in absolute warfare and I knew it. I wanted so badly to be connected with my sisters and brothers in the Lord, but somehow, I felt hidden... almost invisible. Before I'd disconnected from the church I had been connected to, my then leader said something to me that had stayed with me. She said that I was Elijah; I'd allowed Jezebel to drive me into a cave and this was true. All of the warfare I'd endured had finally taken its toll. I didn't want to be a part of a church family for a long time; after all, God had fed me in my desert and He'd confirmed this to me and through my old leader. I found myself fantasizing about living in a home on a hill in England, surrounded by miles and miles of valleys with absolutely no neighbors. Don't get me wrong; I wasn't bitter, but I was tired. I didn't realize it then but the enemy was engaging me in a new level of warfare because I was in a new season and in a new place. I was where God called me to be and the enemy was trying to drive me out of that place, or at least, drive me into mental bondage. Nevertheless, even though I was dealing with the attacks, God had placed me in the right place at the right time to minister to the right people. I was dying to myself daily because if I had continued to live (in the flesh), my flesh would have gotten the best of me. I also kept remembering a prophecy that I'd gotten before moving to Georgia. A young woman on a prayer line had told me that I was about to meet two demons that I'd never met before. It's funny how when we hear prophecies like that, we never imagine the testing period being almost unbearable.

Months passed and after what felt like a grueling and intense year of warfare, my lease was finally coming to an end. I started looking for houses far away

from Conyers because I felt alone, attacked, misunderstood, judged, disconnected and persecuted. It was so bad that I actually considered moving back to Mississippi if I didn't find a place outside of Conyers. It was so bad that I found myself questioning whether I'd moved to the wrong place or if I'd moved to the right place in the wrong season. In my time in Conyers, the enemy had attacked my name, my character, my peace, my dog, my health, my finances, my love, and my ministry. Nevertheless, in that season, God took me through many deliverances in that apartment. I found myself crying out to God like never before. I found myself laying mindsets at the altar that I didn't realize I had. I found myself letting go of perceptions and prejudices that limited my love for God's people, thus, limiting the effectiveness of my assignment. After an intense battle, God finally moved me to a city and in a community that I felt peace in. It goes without saying that the enemy fought hard to keep me out of my new home, but he failed.

I've only been in my new city for a week, but already, I feel a release here. I stay in a quiet community where people go to bed around ten in the evening. I don't have people passing by my house or parking in front of my house blasting their profane music. (When I was in Conyers, I'd even stormed out of my house, knocked on folks' car windows and firmly pleaded with them to turn their music down. I didn't care that they could have reacted violently; I was just tired... really, really tired.) I don't live in an apartment anymore, so I don't have neighbors stumping and running for hours at a time. And what's even better is... my dog loves our new home. He didn't react to it the same way he reacted when we'd moved to Conyers. Instead, he has been exploring our new house with a wagging tail and he adores his new fenced in backyard.

This message is to encourage the Elijahs, Josephs and Davids out there... those of you who are being pursued by the enemy, persecuted, overlooked, misunderstood, threatened (yeah, I dealt with that too), demonized and driven into caves and prisons. Your experiences are not indicative of you being

outside the will of God. Oftentimes, it's the opposite. Your cave experience is to kill your flesh and get you to understand that it is not you who God has assigned to confront Jezebel; your assignment is to let God confront Jezebel through you. Remember that David in the Bible did not confront Goliath in his own name; he confronted and overcame Goliath in the name above all names.

Prophet of God, you are a game-changer; God NEVER judges a place until He has sent a prophet into that place to deal with, warn and rescue whosoever He wants to reach. That's why you endure what you endure. In my experiences, I have learned what it means to not faint because I now understand what it's like to be truly weary. I'd endured a lot of warfare in my life, but nothing compared to the warfare I endured in Conyers, Georgia. I am sure every Elijah, David and Joseph will agree with me when I say... no warfare compares to the level of warfare one endures when they are in or heading towards their assigned places in the Lord. I've fought against witches and witchcraft, but the greatest fight I've ever had to engage in was a fight against myself. Tiffany had to die all the more, and I can truly say that dying to self is a life-long process. God has to kill you in the areas that He wants to use you in the most. With each new season, you will come to a new revelation about yourself and these new revelations won't always be good. Sometimes, you're not going to feel godly enough to be used by God simply because your eyes are open, meaning, you not only see the specks in other folks' eyes, but more than anything, you see that giant speck in your own eyes. I think that's what made it even more intense for me. I had to be honest with myself and admit that I couldn't "stand" ghetto people and this meant that I couldn't effectively minister to someone I felt was ghetto. God took me through a fiery process designed to help me see the demonic culture of hip hop and separate it from the people who'd been affected by it. Sure, there are a lot of people out there who have submitted to this demonic culture, but God loves them and wants to renew their minds. At the same time, I grew up in ghettos and even though I've never liked many of the mindsets I'd seen growing up, I must admit that I had once submitted to

that culture. That's how I ended up with the word "Scandalous" tattooed on my arm. I had to go back to where I came to find myself; I had to find the love that I'd lost so that I could love and minister to God's people from all walks of life. It's funny... I've been to many countries and I could tolerate many mindsets, but it was the culture that I'd grown up in the midst of that I loathed with every fiber of my being.

You wouldn't be called if you didn't suffer persecution; you wouldn't be anointed if the enemy didn't see you as a threat, and you wouldn't be used by God if you weren't tried and proven. Not everyone will make it through the tests to be used by God because not everyone will be willing to admit when they're wrong or be willing to release every ungodly mindset that they have. The reason for this is because when God is trying to deliver you from a way of thinking, the enemy will use that time to justify that mindset all the more. In other words, you end up with the proverbial devil on one shoulder and angel on the other. You essentially have to choose (yet again) which god you will serve. I've found that choosing YAHWEH is a continuous process because people don't have a problem choosing Him when things are going well. Many don't have a problem choosing Him when things aren't going so well, but it's when the fire gets turned up that the motives of our hearts and the strengths of our bonds with God are made known. I was dying to self, but I refused to let go of God. I was being tried and persecuted, but I refused to let go of God's unchanging hands. I cried, but I didn't let go. I complained, but I didn't let go. I even found myself using the word "hate" more than I'd ever used it in my life, but I never let go of God and I refused to let the enemy steal my love from me. In refusing to let go, I had to watch Tiffany die time and time again, and even though there were times when I wanted to rescue her, I knew that if I'd intervened, my testing period would be longer, more intense and I could end up failing my test. The Tiffany that died was not the person I am called to be; she was birthed through her own experiences, and that's why God had to give me new experiences in order to renew my mind.

Dear Elijah... your cave experience is only temporary. Jezebel drove you there, but God is going to bring you out. You can't hide forever; after all, you are assigned to walk with God and do many more great works in the earth! Jezebel ALWAYS falls off her wall and Ahab won't survive the battle that his prophets told him he'd win. You weren't sent amongst them to save Ahab and Jezebel; God sent you to release His people. Once the prophet enters the place, judgment follows the prophet and Jezebel's fall is inevitable!

Dear Joseph... your brothers may have persecuted you and tried to get rid of you because of their jealousy, but your time in prison is nothing but God preparing you to enter into your palace. The very brothers who once rejected and despised you will be fed by your hands and God will use you to save them from their own personal famines. Nevertheless, you MUST forgive them BEFORE you can enter the palace; after all, they are your brethren. To forgive them, you have to understand that even though they tried to hurt you, God allowed them to do what they did to get you to where you were called to be. You can't wear a crown of gold if you haven't endured a crown of thorns.

Dear David... Saul is already defeated. You do right to not persecute him because he was anointed by God, even though God has left him because of his rebellion. Though he throws darts at you, nothing he does will penetrate you, and before long, you will rise up and wear the crown he is no longer worthy of wearing. There was a season when you walked with Saul and ate alongside him, but the moment he realized that you were anointed to take his place, his jealousy towards you overrode his fear of God. Nevertheless, no weapon formed against you shall prosper. Know this: Saul will fall on his own sword and you will be king!

My time in Conyers was not in vain. It was necessary for me to go to that place and endure what I endured to get me to where God has called me to be. During my cave and prison experience, I learned that true ministry isn't glamorous at all. It's not a Hollywood set or an extended vacation. It is warfare, persecution,

rejection and dying to self daily, but more than that, it is the revealing of God's heart. It is being blinded by the glory of God so much so that the darkness that lives within you has no choice but to be made known, and if you allow God to purge you of that darkness, the glory of God will fill and radiate through you. It is then that God can use you the way He wants to use you and not the way you thought He was going to use you. Of course, I didn't share my entire experience in Conyers; after all, if I did, I'd just be rambling. Nevertheless, I shared what I shared with you to encourage you to keep pressing forward. Conyers was my wilderness experience. It was my cave, my prison and my place of testing. It was my refinery, and even though I failed the tests many times, I did not give up.

Right now, I'm in the house I prayed for, the community I prayed for and God has given me the desires of my heart, but again, He had to first change my heart before He could give me its desires. I've learned a lot while in my cave, and one of the most valuable lessons I've learned was the heavy price of the anointing. I knew it before I moved to Georgia, but the warfare I endured in Georgia made it all the more real for me. It was no longer just some cute adage that I could hoop and holler to whenever I heard it. My experiences took the leap out of me and now, when I hear someone speak of the price of the anointing, I can only nod my head and wave my hands. I can now truly say yes to the call on my life because I know the price tag behind that yes. A lot of people agree to preach and teach the Word of God; that is, until they've been tried at a level that their flesh cannot endure. Water doesn't start boiling until it reaches 212 degrees Fahrenheit, but it takes more heat to get oil to fry. Sure, most people can endure a few trials here and there, but a prophet of God will endure things that most people cannot endure. That's because the amount of pressure it takes to release the anointing would kill anyone who hasn't been graced by God to withstand that pressure. It is the heat that separates the true from the fake! This is to say that if you're still here, it's because God has graced you to endure whatever it is that you're enduring. That is, of course, if

you're in the will of God. It is foolish for a prophet of God to go outside the will of God, seeing as it is that the enemy is particularly targeting prophets in this hour. Why is this? Because God never judges a place until He sends the prophet and the enemy knows this! He figures that if he can stop the prophet, he can delay God's judgment and that's why God hides His prophets.

"Behold, I am sending you out as sheep in the midst of wolves, so be wise as serpents and innocent as doves" (Matthew 10:16/ ESV).
God did not say that He was sending His prophets out as sheep amongst other sheep. You won't always be religiously seated in congregations; you will often find yourself sent into the enemy's camp to warn God's people. Sure, you will go into God-filled sanctuaries to worship the Lord and be sharpened, but more than anything, God will send out the Elijahs to be the vessels He uses to destroy Baal worship and expose Jezebel. He will send out the Josephs to make a way for His people to survive the judgments that He is bringing upon the land. He positions the Josephs in high places to ensure that His people are not forgotten, especially in times like these when wicked rulers are in or will be in authority. He sends out the Davids to be trained under the Sauls because David is anointed to be king over His people. Understand this: God sends out His prophets as agents of change and that's why the wolves pursue us vigorously.

Be encouraged in the Lord, but more than that, stay on your post. Don't let Jezebel, Saul or your brethren overcome you. In due time, you will reap if you do not faint!