

Pioneering in '09

When God allows us to be hemmed in by impossibilities, He is merely setting the stage for us to experience the miraculous!

Jesus warned that the last days would be typified by wars, rumors of war, earthquakes, and famines. (Matthew 24.6 & 7). While it is hard to absolutely state we are in the "last" last days, the years of 2008 & 2009 certainly are experiencing the very things Jesus spoke of. In a parallel prophecy, Haggai predicted everything that could be shaken *would be* shaken! (Hag.2.6 & 7). As with Jesus' prophesy, Haggai's is in many way being fulfilled, as well. Everything from the global economies and politics to the weather patterns have been shaken over the last few years. Historic cold and snow in places like S. America and S. Africa, the western world economies being shaken (complete with the island nation of Iceland basically bankrupt) and as 2009 began- fierce fighting between Israel and Hamas terrorists in Gaza. As if that were not enough there is the fighting in Iraq, Afghanistan, the heightened tensions between Pakistan and India, and the genocide, which has taken, place in Darfur, and a severe cholera epidemic in Zimbabwe!

There is a very different side of the coin regarding these prophecies, however. On the one side are the disasters- natural, economic, war and the threat of war. The mitigating factor, herein, is fear. The fear factor of these disasters is exponentially multiplied far beyond the mere sum of the events. Completely contrary to naturally minded thinking regarding the state of the world, however, is what God has spoken and is speaking! Haggai encouraged us to not be afraid- due to the fact that God's Spirit is abiding in our midst. Jesus Himself stated that when all of these things were to happen to not be afraid, nor to let our hearts grow cold- dulled through fear and unbelief.

Jesus' words of encouragement were that in this time of great difficulty the gospel would be preached to all peoples. Haggai's encouragement was that in the midst of the shaking, the glory of God would fill the house- both in a supernatural and natural ways. Haggai chapter 2, verses 7-8 read: "[I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the wealth of all nations, and I will fill this house with glory,' says the LORD of hosts. 'The silver is Mine and the gold is Mine,' declares the LORD of hosts."

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For those who truly know God, the glory of His presence far exceeds the glory of gold or any other treasure of this world. At the same time, silver and gold (money) is a vital tool given by God to facilitate the work of the Kingdom. The wise men brought gold as a gift to Jesus when He was born! I believe that Joseph and Mary saved the bulk of that gold and it financed some of the ministry Jesus and His disciples did later on. These prophecies of God's favor and provision being with us during dark and difficult times bring me to what I believe God is saying regarding this New Year.

2008 was for many a transition year. It was a season of metaphorically crossing over "Jordans" into the "Broad Place" of His long awaited promise(s). (See the article entitled "the Beauty of the Burnt Stones" on our website) One of the key differences between the younger generation who crossed over the Jordan compared with the previous generation who did not was faith that God would be with them to face the giants, the iron chariots, and the fierce enemies within the Promised Land. God is calling the contemporary church to not focus on the stock markets, the unemployment, the wars, and rumors of war. Rather we are to focus on the economy, provision, power, wisdom, and revelation of God's Kingdom which knows no lack whatsoever. When one invests in the Kingdom of God, one's stock is always at a premium.

The number "eight" Biblically speaking is symbolic of new beginnings. "Nine" is symbolic of fruitfulness and completion. The number "3" according to Bible numerology is symbolic of perfection and completeness. There is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit that comprise the trinity of God Himself. Time is comprised of the past, the present, and the future. Matter consists of mineral, vegetable, and animal. Nine is the number three squared! And speaking of fruit- there are the nine "flavors" of the "fruit of the Spirit" according to Galatians chapter 5, verses 22 & 23. As well, there are the nine gifts of the Spirit, which comprise the "Charisma" supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit. And speaking of the Charisma gifts these are actually comprised of three groups of three gifts- the three power gifts, the three revelatory gifts, and the three discernment gifts which when added up, again, equal three squared! For more than just a few reasons "nine" can be equivocated with great fruit, Biblically speaking!

If last year was a year for getting "out of the gate", this year is symbolic of pioneering new Holy Spirit inspired endeavors for taking the land. Our eyes must

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not be focused on the impossibilities of the world and its fallen systems, but rather the eyes of our hearts must be focused on the God with whom all things are possible. This is a year to behold the Lord of the Hosts who is standing outside the contemporary Jericho's- the seemingly impenetrable armed fortresses the enemy holds which God is calling us to bring change to. When God allows us to be hemmed in by impossibilities, He is merely setting the stage for us to experience the miraculous.

I believe God is going to be releasing supernatural Kingdom vision, strategies, wisdom, people, provision, and power for fresh initiatives in seeing lives saved, healed, and delivered from the deception and entanglements of the devil. I believe this is a year for gearing up according to the supernatural provision of heaven and then stepping out in the faith of God, which only comes about by hearing God (Romans 14:17).

One point I would like to stress is simply that we don't need any new heroes! We simply need a bigger revelation of the majesty, power, and compassion of Christ Jesus. When it came time for the miraculous, the first generation out of Egypt all focused on Moses, the great man of God. With all the people watching he stretched forth his staff - his anointing, and the waters parted. We are now called to be an emerging "Joshua people". When Joshua led the people and they came to the flooded Jordan rather than have them focus on the great-anointed leaders- Joshua and Caleb, God had the priests themselves step into the impossible. While keeping their eyes were focused on the Arc- His presence, they were to step into the very wet water. It was then, when the feet of the priests touched the waters, and not before, that the miraculous came into play. God wants everyday Christians to look past the impossibilities and see the potential of God, then step right into the flood of the impossible. As we do so by the leading of the Holy Spirit the miraculous will take place, but not before our feet step into the seemingly impossible.

According to Revelation 5:10 we are both a Kingdom and Priesthood to our God. We are all to be led by the Spirit into the miraculous as the mature sons of God (Romans 8:4 & 15). The time for cult of personality within the camp of God's people is over. God is calling each of us to behold both the Lamb of God AND the Lion of the Tribe of Judah! It is only out of a bigger revelation of God that we can more fully understand in our hearts who we are called to be- the mature Christ like sons of God, led by the Spirit as our Lord Jesus was! As God said to the Hebrews

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who were about to cross the flood waters- keep your eyes on My presence for you will be going a way you have never gone before and I will then do wonders in our midst!

According to the Oxford American Dictionary the word "pioneer" means "a person who is among the first to explore or settle a new country or area." Just as the Hebrews who crossed the Jordan river began to explore, conquer, and settle new lands promised them by the Lord, many Christians, churches, and leaders will, I believe explore, conquer, and settle new areas of ministry. While it is true that there is nothing new under the sun, it is also true that God has more for those who love Him than we can even imagine. I believe this will be a great year of breakthrough in new areas of ministry as well as great fruitfulness for many.

Additionally, 2009 will be a year noted for the miraculous on many fronts. It will be a year when many begin to move from glory to glory, rather than mere critical insight to critical insight. It is no longer a time to try to mimic someone else in order to generate their experiences in God. It is a time to set the eyes of our hearts on the God of our Lord Jesus and the Father of all glory. In so doing the promise of Ephesians 1.17-19 will kick into gear. We will experience first hand the hope of the calling we have in Christ, the experience of His surpassing power towards us who believe, and to have a sense of our true inheritance- His glory in our lives.

One final point: I believe there are going to emerge many Josephs and Daniels in places of great importance. Some may be in the realm of government while some may be in areas of great economic importance. They will be Spirit filled men and women of integrity who have the ears of the kings of this world. And like the Joseph and Daniel of old they will be used by God to impart wisdom from above in great times of need!

"behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome... And I saw between the throne (with the four living creatures) and the elders a Lamb standing, as if slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God, sent out into all the earth." Revelation 5.5 & 6

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