

The Brink of Breakthrough

Imagine this: You're heading for destiny, moving with confidence in the right direction. Suddenly, you're distracted by something demanding your attention. But when you stop to attend to the matter, your path is altered forever.

Such was the case with Paul and Silas in Acts chapter 16. En route to a prayer meeting, they met a fortuneteller who was rebuked by Paul because of her mockery of him and Silas as men of God. Paul commanded the evil spirit to come out of her, and the girl was set free.

She was a slave, however, and because her masters were no longer able to profit from her psychic powers, they had Paul and Silas thrown in jail. The ministry duo was suddenly thrust from prayer to prison.

Think about that. On your way to what God has for you, there's a detour in your well-constructed plan. Although painful, such times are common in the life of every believer. But what do you do when you're passing from one season in life to another, when it's 11:59 midnight—in your life?

Transition occurs because God is altering His plans for us. There is a three-step process during such times: burden, birthing and breakthrough.

First comes the burden. On their way to jail, Paul and Silas were dragged into the marketplace to face the authorities. Even the crowds participated in their humiliation. They were

beaten and stripped, and then thrown into prison. But they were not alone.

Life's transitions may leave you feeling attacked. You may feel beaten and stripped of your spiritual and personal dreams. It may seem as though layers of divine protection have disappeared. This stripping simply means God is taking off the old and exposing you to new life and new assignments.

Then comes the birthing. To be beaten means God is molding us into His image. Jeremiah 18:6 says: "'O house of Israel, can I not do with you as this potter?' says the Lord. 'Look, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so you are in My hand, O house of Israel'" (NKJV).

Think of a muscle. Have you ever had a really good workout, but the next morning felt sore? Your muscles were in a breakdown stage, which is critical. Without it, the muscles can't rebuild themselves.

It was humiliating enough for Paul and Silas to suffer, but why did the crowd have to participate? Our transitions are often similar. It's not enough to suffer in silence or privacy; it seems as though God chooses those broken moments to put us on display.

Paul and Silas were confined to prison, but at about midnight—perhaps it was 11:59 confinement birthed their true assignment: prayer and praise. In the midst of confinement, they blessed the Lord.

Lasting change is birthed out of pain and often filled with isolation. But there's no better time to feel God's presence

than during your “spiritual 11:59 p.m.” During these times, praise God for who He is. Recall past victories, and in spite of how you feel or what you see, praise Him for His promises. Your worship will promote stability and assurance.

Then you’re ready for the breakthrough. Paul and Silas’ prayer and praise caused tremors in the realms of darkness. Suddenly, a violent earthquake shook the building, and the doors were opened.

Explosive breakthroughs will come in your life as you continue to lift up the name of Jesus. Breakthroughs bring the favor of God on your life, which releases His plans for you.

Soon, your doors will swing open, chains will fall off, and those standing by will marvel at your life. When we become a testimony of God’s faithfulness during painful transitions, not only are we blessed, but others will observe our breakthroughs and will be touched by our release. Desperation will prompt them to ask, as the jailer did, “What must I do to be saved?”

The passage in Acts concludes with the jailer restoring Paul and Silas as the magistrate sent word to release them. Likewise, God can cause the same people or situation that imprisoned you to bless you.

When your clock strikes 11:59 p.m., know that it’s time to rejoice. Whether you are in a period of burden or birthing, remember that explosive breakthroughs are born around midnight. So, let the celebration begin.

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