

Prepare Yourself for a Divine Turnaround

Samaria had reached its breaking point. The ancient capital of Israel was crumbling under the long oppressive siege by the Syrian army. Despair and desperation took hold of the people in the face of severe food shortages and runaway inflation (2 Kings 6).

In reaction, the king of Israel sent a search party for the prophet Elisha with the intent to kill him. The Bible doesn't say why the king wanted to kill him, but an online Jewish encyclopedia suggests the king would have killed Elisha if he didn't pray to God and get the famine off the land. Either way, when the king of Israel approached Elisha, the prophet already heard the word of the Lord. He said *this time tomorrow* the famine would be broken (2 Kings 7:1). It was a turnaround word and everything the prophet said came to pass. In just one day, Samaria had miraculously turned around and the Syrians did not get a foothold in Israel.

A turnaround is a "complete change from a bad situation to a good situation, from one way of thinking to an opposite way of thinking (Websters)." The word *turnaround* has come up in my heart again and again in recent weeks causing me to ask, "What is God up to?" In a season of tremendous change, I believe God is setting the stage for personal turnarounds as well as a turnaround in our nation.

The prophet Isaiah proposed a question. He asked, "Can a nation be *born* in a day (Is. 66:8)?" Some have reworded his question to say, "Can a nation be *saved* in a day?" The prophet was referencing the nation of Israel, but in the light of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ we can envision much broader possibilities. Jesus needs to get what He paid for. He died, not just for individuals, but He died for whole nations.

And so when it comes to the nations, specifically our nation, we are being challenged to lift our faith for divine turnarounds.

Why does God turn something around? And then, why do some things never get turned around? There isn't one answer to that question, but I do understand seasons. We are in a set-up season and not a set-back season. Jesus didn't redeem us to reduce us. He redeemed us to increase us. And so we refuse to reduce! We refuse to see our nation reduced! We are to prepare ourselves for a turnaround, because when God steps into a situation, everything has to move.

God Does Turnarounds Because He Is Merciful

The widow told the prophet Elisha her problem, "*The creditor is coming!*" The creditor was coming to take her two sons to be his slaves and we can only imagine her desperation (2 Kings 4:1). Elisha, again, received a turnaround word and then asked her what she had in her house. All she had was a little bit of oil. Elisha instructed her to borrow as many jars as she could, pour the tiny bit of oil into the jar, and then predicted how the oil would not cease as long as she had containers to pour them in to. Everything the prophet said came to pass. She then sold the abundance of oil, paid off her creditor, and saved her two sons. God is merciful, and in His mercy this widow received a turnaround.

Cry Out to God for Your Turnaround

Knowing that God is merciful, we don't have to settle for a reduced life. For example, King Hezekiah received a prophetic word from the prophet Isaiah to set his house in order because he was going to die. The king didn't settle for that, but cried out to God for a turnaround. That same prophet returned with a *new word* that he would live 15 more years and his enemies would be defeated.

King David wrote this, "The righteous cry out, and the Lord

hears, and delivers them out of all their troubles" (Ps. 34:17). Some of you have been in your situation for so long, it's become your identity. The Word of God is your identity! It's time to get a *new word* about that situation. Do you need a turnaround? Cry out to God! He is merciful and in His mercy, He turns things around.

Divine Timing

Joseph began having dreams in the night that he would rule. Unfortunately, those dreams demoted him when they should have promoted him. Instead of ruling, he became a slave. Instead of ruling, he was thrown in prison. Regardless of his situation, the gifts and callings of God are irreversible (Rom. 11:29). Even though his life looked hopeless, Joseph was still on divine assignment to save his people. When it was time to obey a destiny, God gave Joseph a turnaround.

Habakkuk gives us powerful instruction about the timing of things. He had received a vision from the Lord knowing that the vision was not for now, but for "an appointed time (Hab. 2:3a)." He further states, "If it delays, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not delay" (Hab. 2:3b). In other words, the vision will take time to come to pass, but when it's time for the vision to happen *it won't delay!*

Turnarounds are often attached to destiny and timing. God did a turnaround in Saul so he could obey Him. God did a turnaround in Israel (Exodus) so the nation could obey Him. We are often seeking breakthrough and turnarounds, but a turnaround happens when it is time to obey a destiny. It's not to free us to do our own thing or to make us more comfortable in our disobedience. When it's time for the vision to come to pass, it won't delay. Divine timing for an assignment, then, is what triggers our turnaround.

You Must Participate

Jeremiah was predestined by God to be a prophet to the nation

of Israel. "...before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as my prophet to the nations (Jer. 1:5)." Although Jeremiah was called as a prophet, he still had to participate with his call. God then instructs Jeremiah to get up and prepare for action (v. 17). In other words, he was not to sit down on the job or make any excuses. He was to get up and go.

That is a word to us all! We don't sit in our frustrations or wallow in our problems. *We get up and prepare for action!* The call of God does not come with perfect circumstances, but with many challenges to our obedience. There will always be an excuse to not participate with our call. His kingdom must come first in our lives because God, Himself, is first and our lives are to reflect who He is. Turnarounds come, then, because we are participating and faithful in our assignment. We have decided to be in the right place at the right time doing the right thing.

Turnarounds Are Often a Process

Some turnarounds are instant, but other turnarounds are a process. God is masterful in how He delivers turnarounds. He will turn some things s-l-o-w-e-r when we need time to adjust to our breakthrough. The turnaround is simply bigger than our capacity to sustain it.

When my husband, Ron, and I were assigned to lead a difficult church in a difficult city, my husband received this promise right from the word. The Holy Spirit said, "Little by little I will drive them out before you, until you become fruitful and inherit the land" (Ex. 23:30). Along the journey, we had instant turnarounds as well as mercy turnarounds. The core assignment, however, which was to turn a dying church into a life-giving church came very slowly. God, Who is purposeful, did that on purpose! He was making sure we could keep our victories and not lose them.

God doesn't want you to have a turnaround only to lose it because you can't sustain it. That is a word for us personally and a word to us about our nation. When things are shaking and changing, know that He is in that and setting the stage for turnarounds. Some will be instant, but others will be a process. When things are turning slowly, we don't sit and we don't quit. We stay active in our assignments because the vision will come on time. There will be a divine turnaround.

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