

It's a New Year; Should You Fear?

If there were ever a time in recent years for humans to collapse in panic and defeat, the last two years qualify as the best choice. Without question, nearly everything that could be thrown at us to blast our peace and crush our courage viciously descended on us. From disease to cyberbullying to government overreach, civil unrest and societal slaughter, this period in modern history slung it all at us.

The one thing that keeps us alive on the planet no matter what strikes it is the power of human resilience. Resilience is that bounce-back toughness that refuses to stay down and cannot help but try, try, try-again and again and again. Resilience is the gut grit that says, "Times are tough, but I am tougher."

Most people have it, even if they don't always know how to voice it. In difficult and at times impossible situations, they push back on catastrophes, summoning instinctual gut grit to weather crises with enigmatic resolve.

That said, the message for the hour is take to heart and hold the line. Stand against what preys on your soul to safeguard your human dignity. Determine to fight and not take flight; bolster your courage and resolve to leave 2022 victorious over its disasters.

Taking Stock to Take Back

We live in the most distressingly opportune times to befall us on earth in ages. "Distressing" because traumas and calamity swamp most people's lives every day. "Opportune" because we get to face off with what's happening in the world and maneuver how it impacts us.

The best phrase for addressing this duality could be “taking stock to take back.” Such a proactive response to this era is best summed up as “where we are, what we face and taking the lead.”

Taking the lead calls for a surge of thought leaders committed to the health, wealth and wisdom of this and future generations. Their task is to think through and activate solutions to terrorists’ depressive campaigns forced upon us daily. Thinkers should come first, and soon, because they see things from the head to the heart to make sense of the senseless. Pray to God for intelligent and prudent thinkers who have His and His people’s interests and objectives at heart.

The year 2022 must birth countless thinkers to ponder what befell and ensnared us over these last two years, because none of it is magically or quickly going away. Dismantling the demolition strategy working against the human race seeded itself in our existence so long ago that its stronghold is now vascular. The damage done to us is so embedded in our systems and institutions that they freely operate and circulate throughout all our organs.

How did this come about? Gradually, often imperceptibly. Fraudsters talked us into buying their facades and out of defending ourselves against them. From there they cunningly persuaded us to voluntarily surrender our powerful place in the world little by little. Subtle downgrading—and at times derogatory—terms and commentaries spun their way into our language to make us its subjects.

Our everyday talk holds words and phrases that invite attacks on our way of life. New phraseology so appealed to our quest for novelty that we popularized takeover elements meant to soften our convictions. They made us doubt and disdain the character of our very nationality. To war against our souls, anarchists steadily shredded our identity. They cunningly

numbed our self-preservation instincts with novel-sounding phrases such as “social engineering,” “critical race theory,” “wokeism” or “wokeness,” “racial equity,” “social justice” and “antiracism,” among so many others.

Collectively, they struck frustrated nerves that motivated us to unconsciously permit their social architects to devalue and demean our beings and our lands under the guise of fixing the problem. Before we rush to respond to all this, we must first answer two questions: First, why did it work? And second, what made it so successful? The two questions must to be answered—ideally, as one—for us to rebound from the devious assaults contrived to maim and dismember us.

One of the things that gave these tactics their strength was relaxation. This speaks to the recreational obsessions, overenjoying the fruits of our labors that made us who we were. Fun-seeking preoccupations can easily slip into slackening that quickly breeds indifference. Distractions then give way to inattention and foster attitudes that take blessings for granted. Being consumed with pleasure and leisure seduces people into neglecting their responsibilities to their successes. Losing sight of what is at stake, they fail to keep what was entrusted to them (see 2 Tim. 1:14). A good deal of this contributed to what we tussle with today.

Excessive commemoration of long-standing or generational success as a nation lulled America into drowsy inattentiveness. We thus exposed our nation to the resolve of those who would seize our victories and enslave us for being too smug to notice them slipping away. On this note, I would like to say that whenever I instructor advise leaders, I tell them this: “No. 1 has only one problem, No. 2. No. 2, on the other hand, has a single obsession, which is unseating No. 1.”

Anyone who wishes to dominate anything in this life cannot afford to dismiss this truth. If No. 1 foregoes its vigilance and lapses into complacency, No. 2’s dreams then come true.

Its wishes and visions take over, subjecting No. 1 to its whims and will. That is where we are today.

Walking Out 2 Chronicles 7:14

The last several decades found our nation consumed with self-celebrating rather than watching over and tending its accomplishments. We felt the No. 2s of the world were just as content with our triumphs as we were, and we failed to realize they too have bounce-back gut-grit. Their achievements so far apparently say they were more determined to become No. 1 than we were to stay there. The high hopes and aspirations of No. 2s concentrate on unseating the No. 1s in their world.

To tackle the arduous task of turning things around, we must start our takeback program not with blind recovery but with well-thought-out plans that follow Jesus' advice. We must be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves" (Matt. 10:16b). Based on His wisdom, we should mold our initiatives around acceptance and acknowledgement of our part in our current predicament if we want to get Him involved in it. This is critical because God's restorations start with humans taking responsibility for their part in earth's crises. That can only happen with truth. It alone breaks yokes and rescues souls from the social disease-causing agents that drove us to this place.

Often in eras like this, we quote 2 Chronicles 7:14, which petitions God to "heal our land." For Him to do so, though, we have to figure out what we did for Him to shrug us off in the first place. That answer relies on praying the right words. Our prayers cannot start and stop at "God, heal our land" because those words imply that He brought us to this place without cause. Such prayers cast a shadow on His faithful, suggesting He indifferently thrust us under His enemies' oppression, which is not the case.

Step One in our petitioning must be truth, particularly since

Jesus in John 8:32, 36 says that the truth sets people free. Truth is the soul's healing balm, the restorative therapy that treats the soul's inorganic disorders and dysfunctions. To get audience with our God, truth and honesty must pave the way. We should realize it's not enough to quote 2 Chronicles 7:14. We must practically, not just theologically, take steps to walk out this passage. We should explore what humbling ourselves under God's hand involves and uncover what moves Him to purge a devastated land.

When it comes to nations, people called by God's name humbling themselves for His forgiveness is mandatory, and repentance is the starting point. God's conditions of repentance suggest that something turned His face from us. We should discern what that is to get God to return His face toward us once again. For heaven to shine its favor on us again means turning from our ways and learning His.

Scripture tells us that spiritual steps must precede physical steps to bring healing to souls and lands. As one of the Almighty's realms, we must put teeth into our petitions, beginning with bluntly stating what closed the heavens over us and propositioning Him on what will reopen them. Jumpstarting all this relies on unifying Christ's body and consolidating its doctrine. The "unity of the spirit" (Eph. 4:3b) is how Scripture phrases it.

Relating God's eternal word to 21st-century issues is important for this and future generations to locate Him in the midst of their fiery trials. Thus, thoughts must lead to talk. If done responsibly, the two map out the new walk God's mercies impose on us.

Once revived by the Lord's forgiveness and invigorated by His replenishment, we are then equipped to tackle earth's matters with His mind. We are also equipped not only with His mind but according to His way and on His terms.

All of this hinges on well-rounded thinkers (and counselors) to circulate Christ's body with reparation truths that counteract cultural stratagems. If Christ's thought-leaders are well trained and well chosen, they will fit His ecclesia with intelligent self-defenses that, with the Savior's wisdom, subdue the darkness of this world.

A good way of doing this is for godly thinkers to agree on what God's way looks like. After that, enroll in Christ's truth classes to reinstate His destiny for you. Start out by revisiting your Bible to flesh out what heaven foreknew about these days. Adapt your conclusions (and expectations) to Scripture's foreknowledge to locate your role in where we are, what we face and taking the lead. You can then take these preliminary steps to transform your 2 Chronicles 7:14 petitions into experiential realities for yourself and all the earth. {eoa}

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