

Kim Clement: Conquer Your Mountain in 2013!

It's almost 2013! Many great things happened during 2012, and even though we faced hardships and trials, which are to be expected in life, we survived and even laughed a lot more than we had in previous years. How can we smile, have joy, and even get excited when we are faced with so much evil and darkness? Well, let's look at a few things before we travel together to the mountain in Israel and hear the Word of the Lord on Dec. 31.

We are NOT going to enter 2013 with one negative word on our lips, but rather the word **"CONQUER"** will resonate and prepare our path to many victories. You may be saying, "Kim, you're just too positive! How can we truly believe this?"

Sir Winston Churchill was once asked to give the qualifications of a person needed in order to succeed in politics, and he replied: "It is the ability to foretell what is going to happen tomorrow, next week, next month, and next year. And to have the ability afterwards to explain why it didn't happen." That is what is required for politicians, not God's prophets and messengers. Look at Isaiah as an example.

Isaiah's Day

Isaiah lived in momentous days, in critical days of international upheaval, and he wrote what many consider to be the greatest book in the Old Testament. You see Isaiah moved with fearless dignity through the chaos of his day, firm in his quiet faith, and steadfast in God. At a time when empires were rising and falling (as we see today), and his nation was in trouble, it was Isaiah who wrote, "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength."

I have been accused by some of being too positive and not

realistic. Why? Because I refuse to agree with the prognosticators screaming from avenues, the greatest being the news media, who have to admit that they are wrong most of the time, but rarely do. What a “ridiculous” statement for Isaiah to make at such a tumultuous time! “In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.”

And when a new generation faced the arduous task of rebuilding a ruined economy, a ruined nation, it was the words of Isaiah the prophet that gave them courage. “But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” Isaiah-type prophets are what we need to hear today, crying out as he did above the persistent repetition of world upheaval, “Comfort, YES, comfort My people.”

We don’t need prognosticators in pulpits. There are way too many of them, simply repeating what is apparently evident and in your face – false depictions of the future. Oh, I know there is trouble with the economy; we face war, we have weak leaders, yadda yadda, **but is that how we should be responding? By simply agreeing with these reports and falling to pieces?** Isaiah was much more than a prophet, he was an evangelist who presented Jesus Christ and the Good News of the Gospel. Isaiah’s “Servant Song” about Jesus (see Isaiah 52:13-53:12) is quoted or alluded to nearly forty times in the New Testament.

The prophet wrote about the birth of Christ (Isaiah 7:14, 9:6; Matthew 1:18-25); the ministry of John the Baptist (Isaiah 40:1-6; Matthew 3:1ff); Christ’s anointing by the Spirit (Isaiah 61:1-2; Luke 4:17-19); the nation’s rejection of their Messiah (Isaiah 6:9-11; John 12:38ff); Christ, the “stone of stumbling” (Isaiah 8:14, 28:16; Romans 9:32-33, 10:11; 1 Peter 2:6); Christ’s ministry to the Gentiles (Isaiah 49:6; Luke 2:32; Acts 13:47); the Savior’s suffering and death (Isaiah

52:13-53:12; Acts 3:13; 8:32-33; 1 Peter 2:21-25); His resurrection (Isaiah 55:3; Acts 13:34); and His return to reign as King (Isaiah 9:6-7, 11:1ff, 59:20-21, 63:1-3; Romans 11:26-27; Revelation 19:13-15). **He did all of this in critical days of international upheaval!**

It is this emphasis on *redemption* that gives Isaiah a message for the whole world. While it is true he ministered to the little nation of Judah, and wrote about nations and empires that for the most part are no longer on the world scene, his focus was on God's plan of salvation for the whole world. Isaiah saw the greatness of God and the vastness of His plan of salvation for Jews and Gentiles alike. Isaiah was a patriot, but not a bigot; he saw beyond his own nation to the gracious work God would do among the Gentile nations of the world.

My instruction from God when I was called to America in 1974: "Comfort My People" – and I'm not going to change it.

The English word "comfort" comes from two Latin words that together mean "with strength." When Isaiah says to us, "Be comforted!" it is not a word of pity but of power. God's comfort does not weaken us, it strengthens us. God is not indulging us, but empowering us. During Isaiah's time God's people were chastened and then RESTORED! **This is a period of restoration for God's people.**