

GOD'S 5 PART ACTION PLAN IN CRISIS

I. II Kings 4 and 5

- A. Naaman (Syrian), the leper, dips in the Jewish river. He thinks it's crazy. If God gave something hard, you would do it. Why not do this?
 - 1. Simple, neglected in world today, ONLY plan that works
 - 2. Must be intentional and clear
 - 3. God says: "Do what I ask and I will do what I promise"

II. Joel 1: 12

- A. Describes people in Israel during locust plague as utterly hopeless.
- B. Part of God's intention was this: NO hope *outside* FAVOR OF GOD (which is *released by long-term, corporate, wholeheartedness*).
- C. God is raising up people who have *long-term, corporate, wholeheartedness*.
- D. God will place earth into Divine checkmate
- E. By reading/studying Joel: We want to conclude that ***before*** the *crisis* mounts, there ***IS*** wisdom to gather together & operate in principles of Book of Joel. Only place of immunity & Ps 91 safety. *It is a preemptive strike for good!!*

PAUSE: Tell the Lord thank you. A gift of GOD!

III. Joel 1:13-14

- A. Heart of the message of the Book
- B. Parallels Joel 2:17-18
- C. Focusing exhortation on spiritual leaders of the nation

- D. Come & DO THIS (grain offering/drink offering = ministry before the Lord)
- E. Joel 1:14: 5 Step Action Plan
 1. Consecrate a fast
 2. Call a sacred assembly
 3. Gather the elders
 4. Gather all inhabitants
 5. Cry out to god
- F. Required response, how to posture ourselves together for future.....BEFORE the *crisis*.

IV Joel 1:13

- E. Exhorting *leaders* to walk out 5 step process of verse 14
- F. *THEY* are to gather elders of the land (i.e. exert energy to do this). Zech 12:10: Not now enough leaders with a spirit of prayer on them
- G. Releasing these to His people all over the world
- D. Zech 12:10 → Spirit of grace & supplication (prayer). It takes grace to have a spirit of prayer
- E. Every prophetic promise is an invitation to cultivate and cooperate for its' release
- F. Joel (End-Time) & Song of Solomon (Intimacy) MUST GO TOGETHER. Forerunners energized by intimacy.
- G. Even drunks (Joel 1:5) are invited into this. When God gives an invitation, it implies the promise of enabling. Parallel passage = Is 56:6 (joy in prayer)
- H. Hope of America *is* Body of Christ lead by leaders who have intentionally *cultivated the promise of Prayer and Fasting*. Principle is in Judges 5:2 → *WHEN leaders lead & people will volunteer freely...Bless the Lord!*

- V. **Essence of Mandate of Joel 1:13-14:** Come and lie all night in sackcloth (i.e. Get in presence of God for purpose of prayer = wholeheartedness). A divine mandate. Not Joel's preference!!!--> **A MANDATE FROM HEAVEN** to the earth that is in line for coming crisis.

- A. Joel 1:13→ Come. An exhortation to act. Often we gather to talk, write papers, discuss, agree, publish and announce it...but not come & pray all night. Even intercessors do this
1. This IS *extreme & radical*
 2. Sackcloth = humility. The point?: The priests had beautiful garments (Ex 28) but were to lay them down (position of privilege) and everybody was to be on *equal* ground, in the crisis, before The Throne. Take off titles, badges, status, degrees....ALL on equal ground here in humility.
- B. Joel 1:13→ Gird yourself, lament and wail
1. Jesus used it (Luke 12:35). Put your belt on. Get ready to go to work *or* war . Joel: get ready to go to *work of prayer* or *war of prayer*. Prepare action. Make necessary preparations to enter into this invitation.
 - a. Get out your daytimer and rearrange your schedule; the way you spend time & money. Be ready when the novelty wears out.
 - b. Sobering!! IT WILL NOT happen automatically on the run, but will be done *intentionally with an element of violence* (spiritual violence Matt 11:12). Make radical decisions (economic, social, schedule, spiritual)
 - c. Do the follow-through. There *is* a place where we are fascinated; also a place where we are NOT.(i.e. our body wants to run out into day to day business)
 - d. There is work to prayer. (Keeping body steady when the heart gets bored). Stay in position where the fire is. Voices beckon us from *everywhere.!!!*
 2. Lament & Wail: The heart focus
 - a. Over WHAT?
 - i. The *disaster is real*. Humans really die, hurt, etc.
 - ii. It's not enough what we possess now.. It's a pain, a hunger, a desperation. (Matt 5:4) There *is* a mourning necessary before the breakthrough
 - b. Don't be content to seek human strategies as solutions. Enter into God's compassion and God's vision.

- c. Setting our heart in a resolute way to encounter God in the crisis that IS coming. NOTE:**** *THERE ARE* very specific social stigma & dilemma when you do this. One group thinks it's weird ; the other group feels rebuked by it. Believers **and** unbelievers will not just be thrilled that you are wailing & lamenting & going *night and day*.

C. Joel 1:14 5 Part Action Plan: All can do it; ANYBODY! Raise up a corporate lifestyle together doing this BEFORE crisis mounts. A gift, one to another. We *cannot* do this alone.

1. Consecrate a Fast

- a. The call to grace of wholeheartedness (Joel 2:15)
- b. Will increase our capacity to live wholehearted
- c. Not about earning anything
- d. Corporate wholeheartedness (Joel 2:12-13 elaborates on Joel 1:14). Matt 22:37: Bridal intimacy; lovesick worshippers

2. With Weeping, Fasting & Mourning

- a. Expressions that intensify & express wholeheartedness

3. Rend your heart, NOT your garment

- a. Tear your heart, not your shirt
- b. Take cold heart & put it before God's bonfire (Matt 5:30) = spiritual violence. Be radical to align your life to a place you can move on in this.

4. Return to God

- a. Nation as a whole; corporate obedience

VI Essence of Fasting

- A. Essence: we embrace voluntary weakness in order to embrace God's strength as the solution.

1. Fasting IS essential...ask for the grace to do it. Mandatory for wholeheartedness.
 2. We *cannot* face the crisis without weapons of wholeheartedness
 3. Become a gift of God to many
- B. Call a Sacred Assembly
1. Call gatherings. Not enough for individual devotion (to answer the *crisis* that **IS** coming).
 2. God, as a Father, has a heart for the Family!.. It is the *only place* fullness is given: together. WHY? → There is a ceiling in the Spirit. We can only go so high individually. Fullness = Family.
 3. It takes *effort & courage* to call a sacred assembly (i.e. Lou Engle= TheCALL DC, 2000). These don't happen automatically. Takes *persistent effort and courage*.
 4. Solemn Assemblies ARE going to the stadiums of the earth!!!
 - a. Sacred; Solemn; Consecrate: something solemn, weighty, Important to God. Not casual & not optional. A priority to God.
 - b. There IS a sacred trust (stewardship) dimension to taking our place on the wall.
 - c. Sacred = dedicated or set apart for worship (not IF you're in the mood). Devoted exclusively. Entitled to reverence. Highest importance.
 5. All dimensions MUST be followed
- C. Gather the Elders (leadership)
1. Most difficult group in Body of Christ to gather
 2. Lives filled with aggressive ministry agendas, divine mandates, etc.
 3. Gather them...**WHATEVER IT TAKES** (energy, cast the vision, convince, persuading, relationship building). Mobilize church staff; full time workforce. Fund it & release it.

D. Gather All Inhabitants

1. Gather into 1 place; stadiums
2. Gather the region
3. Will do it by Divine inspiration & direction
4. It IS God's plan for Crisis
5. Joel 2:15: Blow the trumpet. Joel 2:16: Sanctify the congregation. Make it top priority for people under your leadership. You can't do this AND run ministry "business as usual". It is disruptive. It stops the machine; needs are unmet, people are mad. **JUST DO IT!!! CRISIS IS COMING!**

E. Cry Out

1. Not necessarily *loud* but in earnest with an engaged heart
2. Come into deep agreement about what God is saying about a particular geographic area.
3. Revelation of the mystery of intercession. A broken fallen person *on the Earth* can say what's in God's heart back to Him and it looses it.
4. Have to **pray** in the prayer meetings.