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The Unshakable Kingdom in a Shakable World -Keys for 2012 and Beyond

26 And His voice shook the earth then, but now He has promised, saying, “YET ONCE MORE I WILL SHAKE NOT ONLY THE EARTH, BUT ALSO THE HEAVEN.” 27 This expression, “Yet once more,” denotes the removing of those things which can be shaken, as of created things, so that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore, since we receive a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us show gratitude, by which we may offer to God an acceptable service with reverence and awe; 29 for our God is a consuming fire. (Hebrews 12:26-29 NASB)

Christians worship a king whose kingdom “is not of this world” (John 18:36). Yet they are to pray that His “kingdom comes . . . on earth” (Matt. 6:10). Jesus told us to pray this prayer because He wants His kingdom to be here “as it is in heaven.” Evidently, He believes that prayer will help bring His kingdom to earth. You will note in the two portions of Scripture mentioned above that there are at least two kingdoms: the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of this world (see also Matt. 4:8; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 12:10). One is shakable; the other is not. It is our job as believers to pray that the unshakable kingdom will come to earth.

Prophets see the clash between the kingdoms. They see the parts that can be shaken (even Jesus Himself spoke of them in Matt. 24). And since prophecy is the testimony of Jesus (Rev. 19:10), it is always redemptive in nature (“And they shall call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins”). Therefore, whenever true prophecy is in operation, something of the nature of our Savior is being revealed. Even the Old Testament prophets, who prophesied the various judgments of God, only did so in order to try to turn the nation of Israel back to Him. As the book of Jonah illustrates, God’s mercy always triumphs over even the prophesied judgments of God. And as the book of Judges illustrates, God uses judgment to bring His own people back to Him. The great prophet Isaiah understood this clearly:

At night my soul longs for You, Indeed, my spirit within me seeks You diligently; For when the earth experiences Your judgments, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness. (Isaiah 26:9)

Isaiah’s longing for God produced in Him the understanding that God’s judgments would produce righteousness on the earth. Today our world is in desperate need of righteousness, and judgment and discipline are used by God to turn nations back to Himself whenever they have veered off course. A cursory reading of any daily headline will be ample illustration for how far a nation is from the will of God. One need not be a rocket scientist to recognize that there is great alignment needed between heaven and earth, between the nations and God.

And so shakings are here and they are coming, not for destruction, but for purification . . . to bring people back to dependence on God, and ultimately to prepare the earth for His return and the fullness of His kingdom to be established.

2012 and beyond, depending on your vantage point, will be either great or terrible. The global economic crisis has only begun. Increasingly, there will be a divide in the Western world between the rich and the poor and the middle class will be hit the hardest. The economic center of the earth will continue to shift, as the US loses its stronghold on the global marketplace. The war of Islam against all other world religions will manifest in violence and more tumult the Middle East. Only a prayer life commensurate to the prayer life of the Muslims will defeat its advance into Western nations. If the Church does not pray, the Christian nations will lose to the onslaught of Muslim advance. This is not a war of terrorism, nor of bullets, but a war in the spirit which only will be won through prayer. The spirit of the great prophet Elijah, a man just like us (“but he prayed”), must come upon the Christians who desire to keep their nations moored to the Christian foundations of their forefathers.

In September 2009, I was in Europe on the last day of Ramadan, which also happened to be the first day of Rosh Hashanah that year. These two spiritual calendars do not always coincide like that, but on that day, I clearly heard the Lord say, “It is the calm before the storm.” Let me unpack what I understood Him to be saying by that. He caused me to understand that there would be a period of relative calm, but that soon there would be great storms in the Middle East, as spiritual calendars of Islam and Israel collided. From the first month of 2011, the whole world has watched the storms in the Islamic nations break out . . . and there is more to come.

My concern is that these storms could escalate into national military threats between Middle Eastern nations (particularly Iran) and Israel. We have already seen, from the beginning of 2011, the tumult of the Muslim nations. They are in upheaval, setting the stage for either greater freedom or greater terror. Spiritual calendars are colliding. The increasing economic pressures will also be a factor in drawing nations into military alliances. The polarities of the religious ideologies will manifest, not simply in terrorism, but in national military initiatives. We must really pray for the peace of Jerusalem like never before.

So what is the Church to do? Isaiah 40 is a key Scripture for this hour of human history. For myself, it is a Scripture which brought about great personal alignment in my heart, as one of the greatest visitations of my life occurred when I was 18 years old, while praying Isaiah 40 in my university dorm room one evening. At that time, my whole room lit up with a golden glow and I had an out-of-body experience where the Lord showed me His sovereignty over all the nations (even nations in war and conflict) . . . and over my own life. I heard His audible voice saying, “I am Lord of the nations. And I am Lord of you. . . .” and He gave me specific instructions that would change the course of my life. My entire future was set in motion from that one experience. I experienced what I will call “a theocentric shift,” meaning that from that

experience, I understood that my life was not my own; rather, I was created for a divine destiny, before-ordained by God Himself (Eph. 2:10).

I have recently been meditating on Isaiah 40 again, and the Lord has been speaking to me about a great shift coming to the Body of Christ. It will be a theocentric shift, where the world will understand the sovereignty of God over all the nations. As Isaiah 40 clearly points out, God is Lord of the nations. In fact, they are a “drop in the bucket to Him . . . less than nothing and meaningless” (Isa. 40: 15-17). John the Baptist quoted Isaiah 40 as he prepared Israel for the first coming of the Messiah. At this time, there was a shift of heart and focus proclaimed by the “voice in the wilderness.”

Isaiah 40 is a key Scripture for the time that is unfolding on the earth. When natural, economic, and national shakings break out over the earth, we must understand that God is Lord of the nations. He is sovereign over every nation, and He is ultimately making the wrong things right.

3 A voice is calling,
 "Clear the way for the LORD in the wilderness;
 Make smooth in the desert a highway for our God.
 4 "Let every valley be lifted up,
 And every mountain and hill be made low;
 And let the rough ground become a plain,
 And the rugged terrain a broad valley;
 5 Then the glory of the LORD will be revealed,
 And all flesh will see it together;
 For the mouth of the LORD has spoken."
 (ISAIAH 40: 3-5)

God is Lord of the nations, and He is Lord of His Church. There will be a preparation of the earth itself before His return. Mountains will be made low and rough ground will become a plain. There will also be a great shift in the nations where He will cause those who know Him not to fear, but to say, “Here is your God.”

9 Get yourself up on a high mountain,
 O Zion, bearer of good news,
 Lift up your voice mightily,
 O Jerusalem, bearer of good news;
 Lift it up, do not fear
 Say to the cities of Judah,
 "Here is your God!"
 10 Behold, the Lord GOD will come with might,
 With His arm ruling for Him
 Behold, His reward is with Him

And His recompense before Him. (ISAIAH 40: 9-10)

As God deals with the nations of the earth in an intensified way, the earth will understand that “The Lord, he is God!” (1 Kings 18:39). “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof.” (Psalm 24:1). He is sovereign over all that is coming – and He knows what is coming.

There is such good news in this reality! The best is yet to come! When God prophesied through the major prophets in the Old Testament about the coming Babylonian invasion, He also gave them the solution and the understanding of what to do for the season of discipline and purification. They were to go peacefully, to build houses and settle in Babylon (Jeremiah 29:5ff, 28). He gave them instruction how to overcome when the judgment came. As cited above, judgments from God are meant to teach the world righteousness. Judgment – godly judgment – is coming. The answer of how to endure and overcome is the most important thing to understand for 2012 and beyond. So what is God saying?

All over the world believers who know the nature of God are responding to the sound of judgment with a cry for mercy. This cry is coming from the exploding global prayer movement. The coming hour will necessitate a new wineskin. The great wineskin shift for this hour of church history will be from an ego-centric model (seeker- sensitive, equipping-oriented, geared to the people), to a theo-centric model (the Father’s house, with ministry to the Lord Himself). As we stare deeply into the face of God, we will be overcomers in the coming season (Rev. 12:11).

For mercy to triumph over judgment, we will need to change in the way we do church, returning to the biblical understanding that God’s house is a “house of prayer” (Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46). It is theocentric in its orientation. I believe that unless we build God’s house as a house of prayer, the Church will not have the spiritual strength to overcome in the increased shakings we are about to endure. Rather, we will be like many of the disciples in Jesus’ day, who “withdrew and followed Him no more” (John 6:66).

The house of prayer is the house that the Father chose for Himself (“My House will be a house of prayer . . .” Isa. 56), and it is the wineskin that will bring in the nations (it’s purpose has always been “. . . for all nations”). Like the tabernacle of David, it is birthed “so that the rest of mankind may seek the Lord.” (Acts 15:16). As the God of the nations, before whom all nations are meaningless, clears the way by leveling the high places and raising the low places, earth must come in alignment with all that He has revealed about Himself and His ultimate purpose for the earth. Those who experience a “theocentric shift,” by seeking Him in regular, consistent prayer, will understand that these coming shakings are part of the great preparation of the earth and its people for the return of Jesus.

The good news is that there will be justice for all, especially Israel, as a result of these shakings.

Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel,
 "My way is hidden from the LORD,
 And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God"?

God is moving in global justice. It may not look like what we expected, but God will bring justice none-the-less. Our part is to seek Him, to wait on Him for strength to endure and overcome, and for revelation on how to co-labor with Him as the kingdom(s) of this world become(s) the kingdom(s) of our Lord and His Christ (Rev. 11:15, KJV, NIV).

28 Do you not know? Have you not heard? The Everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the
 ends of the earth
 Does not become weary or tired
 His understanding is inscrutable.
 29 He gives strength to the weary,
 And to him who lacks might He increases power.
 30 Though youths grow weary and tired,
 And vigorous young men stumble badly,
 31 Yet those who wait for the LORD
 Will gain new strength;
 They will mount up with wings like eagles,
 They will run and not get tired,
 They will walk and not become weary (ISAIAH 40:28-31)

I encourage you to meditate on this Scripture and call the Church to pray. The theocentric shift of a praying Church will also ensure that God's people are filled with faith when shakings occur. Because we understand that our kingdom is unshakable, Christians will realize that it is our mandate and responsibility to preach the unshakable kingdom wherever the shakings occur. Shakings, when seen through the eyes of faith, will cause the people of God to rush towards the giant when the world is retreating in fear and confusion. We proclaim, manifest, and bring the kingdom of God to every arena that is shaking. We bring God's economy, God's life, God's power, God's character – the fullness of God's kingdom to the world. Expect that those who have insight will use the opportunities created to lead many to righteousness in this hour. Already God has positioned his modern-day Josephs and Daniels to take leadership positions in strategic worldly kingdoms of government, economy, arts and entertainment, sports, etc.... They are positioned there by God Himself to co-labor with Jesus to bring His justice, His mercy and the revelation of His dominion and preeminence in all things.

Finally, Acts 2 and Joel 2 give us great clues about how God deals with nations. He says:

“there will be signs in the heavens and signs on the earth . . . blood, fire and billows of smoke . . . and everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” He knows what is coming. He will shake the heavens and the earth – earthquakes and wars and rumours of war (Matt. 24:6-14) will be the backdrop for one of the greatest harvests the world has ever seen.

A primary fruit of this theocentric shift is the re-emergence of miracles of biblical proportions. As the understanding of gazing at God increases through prayer, so will the miracles that intimacy with God produces (Phil. 3:10). The true knowledge of God is experiential, not mental assent. Transformation occurs when we stare at God (2 Cor. 3:18)– we become like Him, partakers of His divine nature (1 Peter 1:4 NASB). The power that raised Jesus from the dead will become manifest in the daily lives of the disciples of Jesus, resulting in extraordinary miracles occurring through “average” believers. Believers will model what knowing God looks like in holiness, lowliness, and power.

2012 and beyond – a new wineskin is emerging – the house of prayer, producing victorious faith, incredible wisdom (Daniel 12:3,10) and a release of supernatural power unto an accelerated harvest of nations in the midst of judgment. The things that can be shaken will continue to be shaken so that the things that cannot be shaken will remain. What comfort to know that we are part of an unshakeable kingdom! Nothing in it can be shaken. A glorious, victorious, beautiful Bride will show forth the nature of Her Bridegroom. She will model His love and compassion by going to the poor, the broken, and the bewildered in the midst of shakings. She will display wisdom when none of the wicked understand (Daniel 12:10). When the nations shake in fear, the Church will model the unshakeable kingdom of God in love and power. And multitudes will turn to Jesus, satisfying His desire that we all will be with Him where He is (John 17:24 NASB).

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