

After the virus

I believe the Lord wants to use this season of “sheltering in place” to give us all an opportunity to reassess where we are in our walk with the Lord, and what He has really called us to do. When we exit “Coronaville,” I believe that we are all to enter into new places of fruitful service for the Kingdom of God.

I find it interesting and significant that we are approaching the Passover season. This is the Biblical New Year, so it is a time for “new beginnings.” I believe that this is the time to get ready to leave your personal Egypt. The Hebrew word for Egypt is “Mitzrayim” which means “constrain” or “bind” (as in shackle or imprison), or bondage, or slavery. I believe that the Lord wants to deliver us all from any bondage to the “gods of Egypt.” That is, those influences, natural, human and demonic, which inspire thoughts, and the feelings those thoughts generate, which are in fact lies that constrain, bind, imprison and enslave you.

This is the season for freshly hearing the voice of God call you into new levels of freedom as you embark on your own personal Exodus from wherever and however “Egypt” still operates in your life. As you make the choice to “leave Egypt,” you can reaffirm and renew your faith in the New Covenant realities the death and resurrection of the Messiah offers you.

We are all called to bear “much fruit” (John 15:8; Colossians 1:10), as we overcome the many enemies we encounter, as we enter into the spiritual battle of conquering our own spiritual “Promised Land” which flows with “Milk and Honey” (Genesis 26:2-5; Leviticus 20:24; Numbers 14:8). This “Promised Land” is your personal inheritance, calling, and destiny in the Lord. The “Milk and Honey” promised to us is the “much fruit” you bear and the great reward you will receive, as you faithfully steward your gifts, talents, and all that has been entrusted to you (Matthew 24:45-47, 25:19-23; Luke 12:42-44, 19:11-19; 1 Corinthians 4:2; Colossians 3:23; 1 Peter 4:10).

QUESTIONS

We are all aware that we are now living in serious and transformative times. The Lord does not want His people to return to the “old normal” but to enter into new realms of fruitfulness for His Kingdom. To help us pursue that goal as we “shelter in place,” I am asking a series of questions that I pray will help you probe the depths of what the Lord is speaking in your spirit (1 Corinthians 2:10-12).

What has the Lord called you to do?

What has God truly spoken to you?

What Scriptures has the Lord given you concerning His will for your life?

What prophetic words given to you are challenging, confirming, and encouraging you?

Do you want to fulfill God’s plans and purposes for your life?

What are the gifts He has given to you?

Are there gifts and talents that you are burying?

Why are you burying them?

Is there anything that stops you? What is it? Why do you allow it to determine your destiny?

What can you do about it? What is the first step you can take?

What and whose “words” are you believing?

Are they words of life or death? Of faith or unbelief? Are they words that encourage and help you?

Or words that discourage or even stop you?

Is there anyone who stops you? How do they do it? Why do they do it? What is their motive?

Why do you let them influence you?

Why are their beliefs about you more significant than your own beliefs about yourself?

Why are their words and actions more valuable to you than your own?

Are their words more important to you than the Word of the Lord? Why?

LIES

Are there “thorns” (lies) that are strangling your potential fruit for the Kingdom? (Luke 8:14)

Are there lies that have defined you in the past?

Are there lies that you still believe about yourself? your future? your gifts and callings?

What defines you? Who defines you? How is your Identity defined?

If I ask you to fill in this blank, what things would you say about yourself: “I am a _____.”

When lies define us, they create a false “self-image.” When we believe lies about ourselves, we don’t live in honesty with ourselves, with others, or with the Lord. When we live in a false self-image, we believe that “I am this kind of a person,” when you are actually not. Or, you believe, “I am not that kind of a person,” when in your heart of hearts, you know you are.

As the Lord deals with us about His plans for our life, we can sense this conflict and dishonesty in the depths of our spirit. If we don’t overcome the lies that create that dishonesty, we eventually surrender to them, and believe that is just who we are. We end up living very superficial mediocre spiritual lives with minimal fruit, and justify our life choices by believing, “Well that is just who I am.”

When we learn how to “cast down those lying thoughts” (2 Corinthians 10:5), and take off the “old self” which is built on those lies, and put on the “new self” – which is being renewed after the image of the Lord (Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 3:10), then the truths of God’s Word to us, His gifts and callings, will create in us a solid supernatural identity of who we are “in the Messiah” (2 Corinthians 5:17). Building upon that identity, “no weapon formed against us can succeed,” (Isaiah 54:17). No one’s words or behavior, no wrong thoughts or bad feelings, no false human or supernatural authorities, nothing and no one can stop us from fulfilling all the Lord has called us to do (Romans 8.31-39).

WORDS FROM OTHERS

Not only are we entering a season where we must make new internal choices, but we are moving into a season where we must not allow other people’s words or actions determine our destiny. You will not let anyone exercise an authority over you that is not from the Lord. All godly authority is motivated to “build you up” (2 Corinthians 10:8, 13:10) to “teach and train you” (Ephesians 4:11-13) to find and fulfill your gifts, calling, and destiny in the Messiah!

FORGIVENESS

This is also where the life transforming power of forgiveness can come alive in your life. As you forgive everyone for everything, you set yourself free from them, and anything they have said or done. Holding onto unforgiveness, bitterness, and resentment, is like swallowing poison and expecting the other person (or persons) to die. As it has been truly said, **forgiveness is a gift you give yourself!** Give yourself that gift. Forgive so you can forget and move on without those negative influences in your life. I know this is not easy to do, and I do not write it as if it is. When you come to the place where you find you just cannot forgive, turn to the Lord (which is exactly what repentance is) and ask Him, the Great Forgiver, to rise up within you and exercise His forgiving grace to flow into you and then through you. As you receive His forgiveness for yourself, you will find it enabling you to forgive others.

FAILURE

Don't let past failures or the fear of failure stop you.

So many people stop in their walk of faith because they have a fear of failure. Some because they are afraid of success. However fear operates in your life; do not let it determine your future or your destiny. God has not given us a "spirit of fear" (2 Timothy 1:7). Fear never comes from the Lord; it is always built on lies we believe. **When we expose the lies, the fear will die.** I have personally experienced the life transforming power of this truth.

Even if you fail, so what? Failure is not an issue for the Lord. Obedience and Faithfulness are. The Scriptures teach us that the Lord will say "Well done, my good and faithful servant," not "my successful servant," because God's measure of success is our faithfulness and obedience.

God's measuring systems is not like ours. In fact, Jesus taught us that the things people esteem are an abomination to God (Luke 16:15). We look on externals, God looks on the condition of our heart and at the fruit of our lives (1 Samuel 16:7; Jeremiah 17:10; Matthew 13:23; John 15:1-6). We are called to obey and leave the results to the one who "gives the increase" (1 Corinthians 3:7).

It is better by far to stand before the Lord on the Great Day of Accountability and say, "I obeyed and launched out in faith, although things didn't work out - it 'failed,'" than to tell Him that you "buried" what was entrusted to you, for whatever reason. The Lord will not be smiling at you!

When the Lord first called me into leadership in the Body of Christ, I was so aware of what I considered my own inabilities, weaknesses, and lack of qualifications, that I was very reluctant, resistant, and I discovered, rebellious to His calling. After many attempts to convince the Lord that He was making a mistake, and that He was only asking me because He actually wanted someone else, He said to me, "How dare you insult me!! If I wanted someone else, they would be here." That still did not convince me to accept His call. What finally did, was when He said these words to me; "It will be better for you on the Day of Judgment to become an Elder and fail, than not to become an Elder at all." That put the fear of God into me, and I became an Elder, and that started me on my journey into ministry.

We are all wise to follow the last recorded words of Miriam (Mary), the mother of Yeshua (Jesus), who at the wedding at Cana told the wine stewards, "Whatever He tells you, do it!" (John 2:5).

APPROVAL OF OTHERS

Don't seek for the approval of people, only for the approval of God (1 Corinthians 4:5; Romans 2:29). What ever you launch out to do, remember it is always primarily to please the Lord, and it is His approval, and only His approval we must seek. When you live in this place, you are truly free, and the words of Jesus become a reality in your life. "If the Son sets you free, you are free indeed!" (John 8:36) .

When the approval of anyone else is more important to you than the approval of the Lord, that person is now "Lord" of your life because you do what pleases them. So just put the word "lord" in front of their name and bow down to them. Because that is exactly what you are doing!

If you want anything more than the will of God, then that thing similarly becomes the "Lord" of your life. Put the word "lord" in front of the name of whatever it is and see how you bow down to it. It is the false god, the idol, that you truly worship and serve, because you do everything to get it, whatever it is.

MENTORS

Who in your life do you trust and respect? Invite them to mentor you into your next level of faithful and fruitful obedience.

If you don't have anyone in your life you trust and respect, ask the Lord to give you such people. Seek them out, they are out there. There are lots of true shepherds in the Body of Christ. There is an old saying, "When the student is ready, the teacher appears." Let the Holy Spirit guide you. Remember "If you seek, you will find. If you knock, the door will open" (Matthew 7:7; James 4:2).

The Lord may even use the internet to help you find the mentors, guides, pastors, or shepherds you are seeking. As you search, be wise and cautious. Godly mentors and shepherds are motivated to help you find and fulfill **God's will**. As they pour into your life, they are worthy of your support. The "wolves in sheep's clothing" (Matthew 7:15) are only interested in how they can use you or what they can take from you. They are experts at intimidation, manipulation, and control. God's servants will always endeavor to express "the wisdom which comes from above" (James 3:13-18). They will never intimidate, manipulate, or control you.

Perhaps you are being called to open your life and begin to mentor others, and that is the new season for new fruit for you. Is God calling you to open your home for prayer, or worship, or Bible study? You don't have to proclaim yourself as some great teacher; just as a fellow student, wanting to learn, change and grow and help others do the same. Is He calling you into other forms of service? The call to serve is as diverse as the needs we see all around us.

NEW SEASON

This is the season of making a determination, that come what may, you will be found faithful on that day. You will be one of those to whom the Lord says, "well done." Not because you never failed, but because you always were a "good and faithful" steward of that which has been entrusted to you (Matthew 25:20-23; Luke 19:16-19).

So beloved, what is the Lord telling you to do? What has He told you in the past? What stops you? Who stops you? Decide that it, or they, or both, will not determine your destiny anymore!! When we all leave "Coronaville" let us go on into new realms of faithful obedience and increasing fruitfulness for the Kingdom of God.

Wisely use this time to deal with those "gods of Egypt" that desire to keep you enslaved, and hear the Passover call to rise up and leave. **Go** where you have never gone before! **Do** what you have never done before! **Become** who you have never been before!

Remember Jesus taught us that "Everyone who is born of the Spirit is like the wind. You don't know where the wind came from or where it is going" (John 3:8). When God called Abraham, in whose spiritual footsteps we are following (Romans 4:16), to leave his home, he left "not knowing where he was going" (Hebrews 11:8).

Several years ago, we received this prophetic word in Minnesota. The Lord said, "You are going into uncharted waters where no one has gone before." Of course, when you hear something like that, you just keep it in your heart and test it. About six months later, I was ministering in the UK, and at the end of a meeting a sister had a prophetic word for us. The Lord said, "I have the charts, and where you are going, I have already been." Janet and I were amazed and knew exactly what this word meant, as it confirmed and completed what was said to us months earlier in another part of the world.

I believe the Lord is now saying to the whole Body of Christ, that "You are going into uncharted waters, where you have never been before, but I have the charts, and where you are going, I have already been." This is the

time for each of us to reset the sails of our life of faith and move into those “uncharted waters.” If you don’t do it now, when will you ever do it? Live your life with no regrets, no buried gifts, talents, or callings.

FREE FROM THE SPIRIT OF RELIGION

Some years ago, the Lord told me that He was “going to deliver the Body of Christ from the Spirit of the Christian Religion.” When He spoke that to me, I saw a picture in my spirit of a small country church with a pitched roof and a tall steeple. As I watched, the church was split in half by a huge tree emerging from the base of the building and breaking the building in two.

I believe the Lord is calling His people to get free from anything, or anyone, that seeks to intimidate, manipulate, and control them. Do not let any beliefs or people stop you from launching out into your personal deep waters, into your own “uncharted waters, where you have never gone before!”

Use this time at home to go before the Lord in prayer, worship and study of the Scriptures. You can freshly hear His voice, so that when the virus is defeated and life returns to “normal,” you don’t return to your “old normal”!

Launch out and take the risk of faith! As you do, you will learn, change, grow, and bear new fruit. You will go where you have never gone before! You will do what you have never done before! You will become who you have never been before! You will bear new fruit for the Kingdom of God and will stand before a smiling Jesus hearing Him say to you, “Well done....” (Matthew 25:20-23; Luke 19:16-19).

My offer to mentor you toward this goal.....

If, as you read this, something in your spirit is connecting with me and you think that I can be a mentor to you in your pursuit of God’s purposes for your life, email me, and we can begin to discuss how that process can unfold.

Shalom and Blessings
Dr. Howard & Janet Morgan