



A Godly Response in Crisis

I. WHY DIFFICULTY?

- A. He Wants Free-Will Lovers:** YHWH has always desired (and will ultimately have [Hosea 2:16, Revelation 22:17]) a “spousal” partnership with humans who choose Him of their own free-will. He provided the opportunity for forgiveness through Yeshua’s sacrifice that is the only entry point (John 14:6) providing a relational connection between a holy God and a sinful people. Israel was the people who this Promised Seed was foretold to come through. The beginning place of response to God’s invitation is for a person to realize their need before Him.
- B. The Storms of Difficulty:** The free-will opportunity God provides at its most basic level brings about the evil and difficulty in the world. For people to have the opportunity to love God, means they must also have the subsequent opportunity not to love and serve Him—with real consequences for our choices. Otherwise, we are all robots. The resultant storm proceeds from God’s gift of free will; it is the collision of high and low-pressure systems. The high pressure of the redeemed who love God and want to walk in His ways colliding with the low pressure system of those who hate God, His people, and who detest His ways....and actually want Satan to rule instead. The clash of these two groups of people is not neutral or passive and always produces a storm. God’s intention is that this storm awakens His people and shakes them off the fence and into one of two clear camps—either to love and serve Him or to hate Him with its resultant negative actions.
- C. God Wants Others to Freely Choose Him:** Most Believers responded to the LORD in a time of difficulty or crisis. Difficult times tend to cause each of us to ask questions we wouldn’t ask if it wasn’t for the challenges. Yah wants to use these difficult circumstances to draw us to Him.
- D. God’s People Will Be in Crisis:** Especially in the time directly preceding Yeshua’s return, God’s people will go through crises. It is important for us to be aware of these things and to prepare for what is coming.
- E. He Tells Us Beforehand:** God tells us these things beforehand so we are not taken by surprise.

II. NOTHING CAN SEPARATE US

A. What Can Separate Us? None of these things:

35 Can anything ever separate us from Christ’s love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have:

1. trouble,
2. or calamity,
3. or are persecuted,
4. or hungry,
5. or destitute,
6. or in danger,
7. or threatened with death?
8. Actual Death:

36 (As the Scriptures say, “For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.”)

B. Victory is Ours

37 No, despite all these things,

overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us.

38 And I am convinced that nothing (including the past listed items) can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. 39 No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

C. Psalm 107

1. In this psalm there are four categories of people who are all in great trouble and distress

- a. Some were homeless wandering hungry & thirsty (:4-5)
 - b. Some were in darkness and affliction because of their own rebellion against Yah (:10-12)
 - c. Some drew near to death because of their own sin and iniquities (:17-18)
 - d. Some were on a business trip traveling over the seas when they encountered a storm (23-28)
2. The solution for all categories of people was the same uniform cry to YHWH: *Then they cried to YHWH in their trouble, and He delivered them from their distress (:6, 13, 19, 29)*
 3. Best Prayer: *Help me Yeshua!*
 4. With Yah the help comes but it's often more of a slow, crock-pot type of deliverance/pleasure that is more lasting but usually not instant and dramatic. The counterfeit gives us an instant rush/buzz but is not fulfilling or lasting and comes with negative side effects.

III. WHAT DO WE DO? (Taken from Mike Bickle's teachings)

- A. World's Response:** *The mere fact that men are frightened and insecure, that they grasp at optimistic slogans, run more frequently to church, and seek to pacify their troubled souls by cheerful and humanitarian maxims, is surely no indication that our society is becoming "religious." In fact, it may be a symptom of spiritual sickness.* – Thomas Merton
- B. Watch & Pray:** This is the context; but what do we do within that context
1. *Yeshua's Pastoral Counsel:* The pastoral counsel that Yeshua gave His people was to watch and pray. Nine times in the Scripture Jesus exhorted His people to "watch" related to end-times pressures (Mt. 24:42; 25:13; Mk. 13:9, 33, 34, 35, 37; Lk. 21:36; Rev. 16:15). Four times, He combined the call as: "to watch and pray" (Mt. 26:41; Mk. 13:33, 38; Lk. 21:36).
 2. *The World's Response:* Weighed down by
 - a. dissipation (party it away): we want to party it away – we just want to have fun – eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die; we desire external stimuli and fun things to distract us from going to Yah.
 - b. drunkenness (deaden it away): we deaden it away through many means - excessive alcohol, drugs
 - c. cares of this life (distracted away): these distractions steal our focus from watching and praying
- C. Godly Heart Responses:** What is the trajectory of the watching and praying. Seven responses to YHWH are given for the growing crisis (Mic. 7:7-20)
1. Response #1 is to look to God, pray and wait on Him to act to openly fulfill His promises (7:7).
⁷*Therefore I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation; My God will hear me. (Mic. 7:7)*
 - a. **Therefore:** In light of the crisis in 7:1-6, we are to grow in deep in relationship with Jesus.
 - b. **I will look to the Lord:** We look to the Lord to be our primary source of safety and justice. We must be intentional about redirecting our thinking to see our God as our source.
 - c. Our natural response to pressure is to "look to" (be preoccupied with) the people who mistreat us, the growing crisis in the culture, or the governmental leaders or laws that perpetuate the pressures and pain in life and in society. In a democracy, we should try to change sinful laws in our government yet look to God as our primary source.
 2. Response #2 is to have confidence in God's faithfulness even in the face of great darkness (7:8).
⁸*...when I fall, I will arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD will be a light to me... (Mic. 7:8)*
 3. Response #3 is to patiently bear the Lord's loving discipline (7:9a).
⁹*I will bear the indignation of the LORD, because I have sinned against Him... (Mic. 7:9)*
 4. Response #4 is to acknowledge all our sins and respond in deep repentance (7:9b).
 5. Response #5 is to pray that the Lord intervene in power to fulfill His promises (7:14).
¹⁴*Shepherd Your people...¹⁵"As in the days of...Egypt, I will show them wonders." (Mic. 7:14-15)*
 6. Response #6 is to worship God for His unique kindness—in freely pardoning our sins (7:18).
¹⁸*Who is a God like You...passing over the transgression of the remnant? (Mic. 7:18)*
 7. Response #7 is to delight in mercy towards others since God delights in mercy (7:18).
¹⁸*...because He delights in mercy.¹⁹He will have compassion on us...and subdue our iniquities. (Mic. 7:18-19)*

IV. DIFFICULTY INTENDED FOR ULTIMATE GOOD

A. Godly Discipline: His discipline is motivated out of love to bring positive change in us.

“My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the LORD, Nor faint when you are reproved by Him; 6For those whom the LORD loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives.”

7It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom *his* father does not discipline? 8But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. 9Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? 10For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. 11All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness. Hebrews 12:5-11

1. Earthly Picture, Greater Heavenly Reality: We understand the earthly parent’s discipline which is motivated out of love for good; how much more YHWH’s discipline of us as His kids.

B. Catastrophes

1. Will Increase in the days to come—especially as we get closer to Yeshua’s return
2. Intended for a Good End: catastrophes are intended to work in the heart’s of the lost to have them more responsive to eternal realities and to draw them towards YHWH
3. Reaching to Those in Need: We need to be ready to help others in times of trial and trouble.
 - a. the Gospel is good news
 - b. Special Offering: for the Lebanese/Middle Eastern Believers

V. CONCLUSION

A. God Squads: We will need to continue to draw together as Believers in smaller numerical units for encouragement, training, and engagement.

B. Transformative Prayer:

1. Individual Prayer Times: 24/7 Prayer Chain to be able to sign up for on-line
2. Corporate Prayer Times: intercession times in Englewood parks (check the monthly calendar)
3. Geographic Prayer Groups: Encourage folks to start prayer meetings in your geographic area

C. The Western Culture Church is Changing

1. Decentralization
2. Unity of Believers across tribal identity focused on geographic areas
3. Disruption of pre-existing power structures
4. Call to persecution & suffering
5. Breakthrough & awakening is coming. Crisis allows us to leapfrog and to go further, deeper, and faster.