

CBS for Thursday, November 24th, 2011

Topic: Flourishing in Famine: Deductions & Lessons

Text: Genesis 26:1-25, Genesis 41:1-57, Deuteronomy 28:15-68, 1 Kings 17:1-24, 2 Kings 6:24-33, 2 Kings 7, Psalm 92:5-15, Proverbs 10:3, Matthew 24:1-14

Words in Marble: *"In the midst of famine there are two classes of people: those who famish in famine and those who flourish in famine"* **Pastor Tunde Bakare (25/08/11)**

We started highlighting the principles from series on flourishing in Famine with a view to align and position ourselves with God's plans and purpose for the righteous in famine. (Proverbs 10:3). The principles are **(1) Have God (Relationship) (2) Hail God (Praise/Worship) (3) Hear God (Communion) and (4) Heed God (Obedience)**.

We have examined **Have and Hail God**. Today, we consider **Hear and Heed God**.

3. HEAR GOD (Communion): An expected end-result and dividend of worship is communion. According to Dr Tunde Bakare, the three major outcomes of divine encounter are illumination, inspiration and revelation. In the midst of famine Divine direction remains a key to moving from survival, to being buoyant and ultimately experiencing abundance.

Our fathers of faith operated under Divine Direction. It ensured Isaac was not derailed in famine (Gen 26:1-14). Joseph under the influence had clear interpretation of Pharaoh's dreams and knew what to do before famine hit the land of Egypt and the rest of the world (Gen. 41:1-36, vs 56). Similarly, Elijah knew where to go in the midst of famine (1 Kings 17: 9) and God's word in the mouth of Elisha produced a major turnaround in Israel during famine. (2 Kings 7:1&18) God's counsel comes in diverse forms-dreams, visions, prophecy, word of knowledge, word of wisdom, small still voice within, His spoken and revealed word (Rhema) and circumstances around us. All these are made possible by the Holy Spirit, God's seal of son ship. (1 Cor. 2:9-10).

Under prophetic unction, Dr Bakare warned of an impending crash in the stock market and it came to pass. A major global economic melt-down that devastated not a few individuals, corporate organizations and nations was the outcome. God speaks and He lives! (Gen 41:45, Isaiah 30:21). Is anyone listening?

Poser: as a son and daughter of God, have you heard from your father lately? Have we by compromise, negligence or outright disobedience on the last instructions now miss the privilege of hearing Him? Eli was anointed but became dull of hearing. 1 Samuel 3: 1-4; *Ability to hear is relative to obedience to earlier instructions.* Hebrew 5: 11-14, Psalm 25: 14; Genesis 18: 17, 18, 33; Psalm 110:1.

4. HEED HIM (Obedience): Whenever God speaks, He expects us to hear Him, believe Him and obey Him. Hearing without heeding can only produce failure and hardship in life not only in periods of famine but at all times... Remember **"...Believe in the LORD your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper."** (2 Chronicles 20:20b) The only proof of belief is obedience!

It is absolutely unimaginable what would have become of Isaac, Joseph (and even Pharaoh!), Elijah and Elisha if they had not obeyed God? Destruction!! (Deut 28:15-68, Isa 1:20).

Obedience is not only the highest form of worship but an act that activates the manifestation of God's promises and His power. (Deut. 28:1-14). According to Isaiah 1: 19, if we are willing and obedient, we shall eat the good of the land.

In these days, as believers, we must translate divine information to action in order to experience God's transforming power and favour. The media is full of discouraging facts and conflicting signals. (Isaiah 66:6). However, God's counsel remains the only beacon of hope and comfort in famine. Let us set aside doubts, unbelief, rebellion, strife and covetousness and embrace obedience as an enduring lifestyle (Heb.12:1). . ***The 'sermon on the mount' is lived out in the midst of men after descent.***

SYNOPSIS

Finally, we have not only been taught about flourishing in famine but we have living witnesses that modeled God's pattern before us. (Hebrews 12:1-2) In our day and age Our Serving Overseer is a close example. Therefore, it is important that we do not become sluggish, but imitate those who through faith and patience inherit the promises. (Heb 6:12) Global famine is already here with us. God has not only warned us about famine but has prepared and made provision for us to flourish in famine.

Establishing covenant relationship with God by the blood of Jesus Christ is the connecting point. Worship and Communion reinforce the relationship by ensuring constant flow of heart-to-heart communication with the father. Obedience to divine counsel will ultimately ensure that we enjoy the benefits of the covenant relationship in famine and through lifetime.

PRAYER FOCUS: O Lord give me hearing ears, seeing eyes and a willing heart to obey You in Jesus Name.