

2012: Revive, Repair, Rebuild and Flourish

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At the beginning of each year, I take time to seek the Lord for direction and a scripture that will describe and launch us into the next year and season. I began seeking the Lord in October around Yom Kippur about the new season that He is unfolding before the body of Christ. The scripture that He gave me as a strategic and intercessory template is Ezra 9:8-9.

Ezra 9:8-9: *And now for a little while grace has been shown from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a peg in His holy place, that our God may enlighten our eyes and give us a measure of revival in our bondage. For we were slaves. Yet our God did not forsake us in our bondage; but He extended mercy to us in the sight of the kings of Persia, to revive us, to repair the house of our God, to rebuild its ruins, and to give us a wall in Judah and Jerusalem.*

After being released from Babylonian captivity by the mercy of God moving on their captors to release them to return and rebuild the house of God, we find them still in bondage to öBabylonianö thinking and ways. They are still not a wholly separated people to the Lord, but have intermarried with pagans taking up their mindsets and practices. They are mixed in their lifestyles with biblical worship and worldly friendship. Ezra realized how this has broken God's heart and offended Him, and how God's covenant people are in imminent danger. Ezra sets himself in repentant, humble intercession before the Lord for His people. The prayers he prays take complete ownership of the idolatry and disobedience, acknowledging their condition and telling the Lord that He has been more merciful than they deserve. Yet, in the midst of his anguished cry of confession, repentance and intercession, he also states, in hope, the fact that the Lord's purpose has not changed and it is still completely possible to see His glory restored and the community transformed.

We are living in much the same conditions of compromise, stress and imminent threats, both naturally and spiritually, making it seem almost hopeless for true kingdom breakthrough and revival to come. But, the Lord always loves to show Himself strong in the worst and most hopeless conditions, empowering an underdog remnant to overcome and glorify Himself! In spite of everything, there is still öa peg in His holy placeö from which, beginning this year, He will release breakthrough, revival and restoration.

Years of lack, reproach, idolatry and mockery, where darkness has grown darker, are about to be turned. Until the body of Messiah has been pruned from the Babylonian mindsets and ways, which include ambition, offense and bitterness (all of which are rooted in pride), etc, we are disqualified to bear authority and responsibility such as is now coming. Just like Joseph in Egypt (Gen. 49-50), until all vestiges of personal ambition and retribution had been dealt with, we cannot experience the fullness of God's promise.

We will begin to experience the glory of the Lord invading our lives, our meetings/gatherings, our businesses, etc, which will release authority and favor to rebuild and restore the local and

community-wide presence and power of God. Both individual fellowships and the corporate body of Christ in cities and communities will begin to experience restoration and wholeness. His glory will intensify and affect the people and systems at a community level. The ðwallö or hedge of His presence and glory (Zech. 2:5) around these places will begin to be restored. Large cities like Detroit and smaller communities (everywhere humble, passionate intercession and worship has been and is being offered) will begin to experience a shift in the spiritual and natural atmosphere. Some places will have quick ðinvasionsö because the people and the place have been prepared, and in other places, it will be incrementally (Judges 2-3) lest they be overwhelmed with the effects.

Gross darkness is upon us (Isaiah 60:1-3), and will become even ðgrosserö. But the promise is when this happens, the Lord will respond with glory arising upon/among us. Now is the time to pray and declare breakthrough and restoration. Hope is being restored and fruitfulness is beginningí .