

A landscape photograph showing a mountain range under a cloudy sky. The foreground is a dry, sandy riverbed. The middle ground features a valley with sparse trees and a small stream. The background consists of rolling hills and mountains.

# The Holy Spirit Our Security in Famine

✿ '...And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.' Matthew 24:7

✿ 'What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.' Ecclesiastes 1:9

✿ 'They will not be disgraced in hard times; even in famine they will have more than enough.' Psalms 37:19

All the way from Genesis through to Revelation the Bible speaks of different occurrences of famines which impacted people to varying degrees. In Matthew 24, Jesus Himself tells us that the last days will witness multiple famines – which can also be termed recessions in today's context. And we are seeing a lot of this across the globe today.

While famines/recessions today and onwards will have their nuances, we know for certain that they will come. Our prayer as we delve into how to prepare for what is to come or already happening in some environments is that the Holy Spirit helps us understand what happened in the past, how best to position for what is to come and that He guides us through such seasons when they come so we are not overwhelmed.

## Day 1

### Relocation by Instruction

'The Lord had said to Abram, "Leave your native country, your relatives, and your father's family, and go to the land that I will show you"... At that time a severe famine struck the land of Canaan, forcing Abram to go down to Egypt, where he lived as a foreigner.' Genesis 12:1,10

There are many ways the Lord can guide us through a famine, one of which is relocation. Based on God's instructions Abraham left the comfort of his home territory and moved to a new land, shortly after which a severe famine struck. The Lord already knew there would be a famine, so why have Abraham leave everything familiar at such an inconvenient season?

'Then Pharaoh gave Abram many gifts because of her—sheep, goats, cattle, male and female donkeys, male and female servants, and camels... So Abram left Egypt and traveled north into the Negev, along with his wife and Lot and all that they owned. (Abram was very rich in livestock, silver, and gold.)' Genesis 12:16; 13:1-2

"My thoughts are nothing like your thoughts," says the Lord. "And my ways are far beyond anything you could imagine. For just as the heavens are higher than the earth, so my ways are higher than your ways and my thoughts higher than your thoughts.' Isaiah 55:8-9

The Lord had an enlargement plan for Abraham which involved him settling temporarily in Egypt due to the famine. Abraham may not ordinarily have gone to Egypt otherwise, but it was while in Egypt that he gained a lot of material possessions such that he left a wealthy man – still in the midst of a severe famine. Natural circumstances can never hinder what God intends to do.

Let's contrast this with Elimelech (Naomi's husband) who also faced a severe famine and relocated to Moab. Unfortunately, while there Elimelech and both his sons died, leaving 3 widows (Ruth 1). Both men relocated but the outcomes were very different. Before we make the move to another business, location, etc we must ensure we hear from God FIRST. The key to surviving a famine/recession isn't just in relocation, but in letting the Holy Spirit guide us regarding if, when and where relocation should occur.

**Prayer:** Lord I understand that what matters isn't what the environment currently looks like, but if it's Your plan for me because Your provision and preservation will always follow Your purpose. Show me what to do and how to go about it so I remain in the center of Your will for my life.

## Day 2

### Tenacity

“A severe famine now struck the land, as had happened before in Abraham’s time. So Isaac moved to Gerar, where Abimelech, king of the Philistines, lived. The Lord appeared to Isaac and said, “Do not go down to Egypt, but do as I tell you. Live here as a foreigner in this land, and I will be with you and bless you. I hereby confirm that I will give all these lands to you and your descendants, just as I solemnly promised Abraham, your father.” Genesis 26:1-3

After the famine that occurred in Abraham’s time, Isaac faced another famine and his response was to do what his father did, but this time the solution wasn’t in Egypt. Isaac stayed in Gerar and worked the land.

‘When Isaac planted his crops that year, he harvested a hundred times more grain than he planted, for the Lord blessed him. He became a very rich man, and his wealth continued to grow.’ Genesis 26:12-13

‘There is a wide-open door for a great work here, although many oppose me’ 1 Corinthians 16:9

Isaac did his part in working the land and the Lord brought multiplication. This tells us that the answer to recession isn’t in the location, but in God who is able to bring increase in any environment. We should note though that even though God gave Isaac the instruction to stay, he still faced challenges in the process. The Philistines contended with him for his wells, filling them with dirt and arguing with him for new wells he dug. For context, this was a desert area so water was in high demand. By contending with his wells, the Philistines were challenging a critical resource that could heavily impact Isaac if it wasn’t available. However Isaac didn’t give up. His response was to continue to dig wells until he no longer faced contention.

That the Holy Spirit gave us an instruction doesn’t mean working it out will be without challenges. There will always be adversaries, however the Lord is faithful. If we persist in doing what He instructed us to do without giving up, we will win. Perhaps the Holy Spirit is telling some of us to remain in the country, business, company and we’re facing challenges which are causing us to doubt if we heard Him or not. That’s just a tactic from the enemy to try and get us to give up. But if we stay doing what He asked us to do, He will do what He promised.

**Prayer:** Lord give me the strategy, strength and endurance to withstand and overcome the challenges I may face as I follow Your instructions. I trust You and know You will do what You’ve promised.

### Day 3 Foresight

'He called for a famine on the land of Canaan, cutting off its food supply. Then he sent someone to Egypt ahead of them— Joseph, who was sold as a slave.' Psalms 105:16-17

Nothing takes the Lord by surprise. He already knew in advance about the famines Abraham and Isaac experienced and provided for them in the middle of it. We see from Joseph's life that He also prepares us in advance so we are not caught unawares when famine comes. In Joseph's case, the Lord gave pharaoh advance information about what was to come so Joseph could provide the solution and preserve the Lord's people.

'Joseph responded... God is telling Pharaoh in advance what he is about to do... The next seven years will be a period of great prosperity throughout the land of Egypt. But afterward there will be seven years of famine so great that all the prosperity will be forgotten in Egypt. Famine will destroy the land.' Genesis 41:25, 29-30

Joseph not only understood that a famine was coming, he also had the solution for how to prepare for it in advance so that not only would Egypt not suffer, it would create wealth from the people who would come to purchase grain. Famine was coming for sure, but in the midst of it, the power of foresight and wisdom brought a solution.

'Ask me and I will tell you remarkable secrets you do not know about things to come.' Jeremiah 33:3

'When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own but will tell you what he has heard. He will tell you about the future.' John 16:13

The Holy Spirit tells us what is to come so we can prepare for the future. If the Lord could show pharaoh what was to come, how much more His children who carry His Spirit? It's one thing to know what is to come, it's another to know what to do about it. The Holy Spirit gives us access to divine wisdom, understanding and all the equipment we need to make the right choices so we are preserved in the midst of any existing or future famines. Jesus already told us to expect them so we need to be aligned with the Holy Spirit and what He's saying per time so we don't miss valuable foresight and strategy.

**Prayer:** Lord please show me what is to come and give me the understanding and wisdom necessary to know what to do in times of famine

## Day 4

### The Right Company

"One of [the prophets] named Agabus stood up in one of the meetings and predicted by the Spirit that a great famine was coming upon the entire Roman world. (This was fulfilled during the reign of Claudius.) So the believers in Antioch decided to send relief to the brothers and sisters in Judea, everyone giving as much as they could." Acts of the Apostles 11:28-29

In the previous famines we studied the response was from only one person. However in the time of the Apostles the believers came together to send relief to those that would be most affected by the famine. They could have decided not to do so since they weren't going to be directly impacted, but as an act of love they gave as much as they could. It may not have been convenient to do, but they gave willingly.

"Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples." John 13:35

"There were no needy people among them, because those who owned land or houses would sell them and bring the money to the apostles to give to those in need." Acts 4:34-35

The answer to a famine may not always lie with only one person but sometimes relief comes from being part of a community that chooses to be unselfish. There will be times we have access to vital information that may be beneficial to others. There's no lack in God's kingdom so we lose nothing by sharing what we have: skill, resources, information, etc. Rather by doing so we demonstrate the love of the Father in heaven.

The community was also very strategic as they didn't wait for the famine to start, but sent relief in advance through trusted resources. As we fellowship with a community of believers, we each have a role to play and something to contribute. No one should be a spectator in the things of God.

"They will not be disgraced in hard times; even in famine they will have more than enough." Psalms 37:19

"Share your food with the hungry, and give shelter to the homeless. Give clothes to those who need them, and do not hide from relatives who need your help." Isaiah 58:7 NLT

Even in outside seasons of famine, there will always be people who have more than enough. Whatever surplus we have isn't meant to be consumed on self, but to be made available to those who do not have so that no one lacks. We are meant to be the hands and feet of Jesus, extending grace and resources as He provides for us.

**Prayer:** Lord thank You for showing me that I am an extension of You and the resources You make available should also be used to help others.

## Day 5

### Prophetic Utterance

'And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word." I Kings 17:1

The Bible introduces us to Elijah as a man who spent time in God's presence, so much so that his words were sanctioned by heaven. Because Elijah's words carried power, the spirit realm responded to his instructions and consequently there was no rain in Israel for 3 years.

"So Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground" I Samuel 3:19

"Now acquaint yourself with Him, and be at peace; Thereby good will come to you... You will also declare a thing, And it will be established for you; So light will shine on your ways." Job 22:21, 28

"Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us" Ephesians 3:20

The key to power in our words lies in our proximity to God: the personal relationship we have with Him and how yielded we are to the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit is in charge of our lives, we become more like Him, reflecting His character (the fruit of the Spirit Gal 5:22) and power such that the words we speak will be as though the Lord Himself spoke. When we intentionally invest in getting to know God in prayer and His word, we go through a process of transformation on the inside that we may not initially be aware of. As we remain consistent in our pursuit of Him, we start to find that we function more from the realm of the supernatural to the point where we can also engage elements.

"Later on, in the third year of the drought, the Lord said to Elijah, "Go and present yourself to King Ahab. Tell him that I will soon send rain!"... Then Elijah said to Ahab, "Go get something to eat and drink, for I hear a mighty rainstorm coming!" 1 Kings 18:1, 41-42

"When Jesus woke up, he rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Silence! Be still!" Suddenly the wind stopped, and there was a great calm." Mark 4:39

As we become more like Jesus maturing in the things that please God, our words begin to carry weight such that we can address situations, instructing them to work in our favour. We carry the same Holy Spirit that was in Jesus, so the capacity is available, however the room we give Him determines how much He can do with and through us.

**Prayer:** Lord help me make seeking You my priority, so I can daily give You more room to make me like Jesus and walk in the fullness of the power of God

## Day 6

### Revealing The Root Cause

'There was a famine during David's reign that lasted for three years, so David asked the Lord about it. And the Lord said, "The famine has come because Saul and his family are guilty of murdering the Gibeonites"' 2 Samuel 21:1

Famines and other difficulties in the economy or in our personal lives occur for a variety of reasons and if we don't know the root cause, we may not respond accurately. Israel experienced a 3-year famine, but no one knew the reason until David asked and the Lord revealed that it was because of Saul's actions. Had David not made enquiries, Israel would have remained in that state for more time to come.

'If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.' James 1:5

There was nothing in the physical that would logically connect a famine to Saul's actions, especially as Saul was already deceased and David was king. The time lag between Saul's actions and the outcome would also have caused people to speculate on other reasons for the famine, perhaps even blaming David, yet they would have been wrong. No planning or strategizing David would have done in the natural would have lifted the famine without a revelation of what was really going on.

'And the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him— the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord' Isaiah 11:2

'Then the king ordered that they bury the bones in the tomb of Kish, Saul's father, at the town of Zela in the land of Benjamin. After that, God ended the famine in the land.' 2 Samuel 21:14

If we don't know why something is happening, we won't know what to do about it and consequently may either remain where we are or even make things worse. This is where the Holy Spirit comes in as He alone gives us access to the accurate wisdom and understanding required for the situation that deals with the root cause, not just the symptoms.

**Prayer:** Holy Spirit, please help me seek Your wisdom first in every situation as You alone can go to the root of a matter and bring permanent resolution.



## Day 7

### Supernatural Turnaround

“Some time later, however, King Ben-hadad of Aram mustered his entire army and besieged Samaria. As a result, there was a great famine in the city. The siege lasted so long that a donkey’s head sold for eighty pieces of silver, and a cup of dove’s dung sold for five pieces of silver.” 2 Kings 6:24-25

The king of Aram laid a siege against Samaria which resulted in a famine that was accompanied by massive food inflation that lasted so long some people turned to cannibalism. Yet in this terrible and seemingly hopeless situation Elisha brought a word from the Lord that everything would turn around in 24 hours.

”Elisha replied, “Listen to this message from the Lord! This is what the Lord says: By this time tomorrow in the markets of Samaria, six quarts of choice flour will cost only one piece of silver, and twelve quarts of barley grain will cost only one piece of silver.” The officer assisting the king said to the man of God, “That couldn’t happen even if the Lord opened the windows of heaven!” But Elisha replied, “You will see it happen with your own eyes, but you won’t be able to eat any of it!” 2 Kings 7:1-2

“Behold, I am the Lord, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me?” Jeremiah 32:27

The king’s assistant couldn’t imagine how the terrible season they were in would dramatically turn around in just a day. He wasn’t wrong by human standards, but he made the mistake of placing human limitations on the Lord. Even though Aram’s army laid a physical siege, the Lord ambushed them with angels and used four lepers to signpost the victory. The Lord has a million ways to resolve any famine we may face, but sometimes our hearts become so hardened due to the hardship we’ve faced that we start believing that the situation is bigger than God. The danger of focusing on the situation rather than God is that we won’t be partakers when He brings relief.

“...Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper.” 2 Chronicles 20:20

Our walk with God is one of faith, trusting that He is who He says He is and will do what He said He will do. This is why we must always have a word from God that we’re holding on to. It doesn’t matter if we don’t know any prophets, the Bible is a sure word of prophecy that shines light in dark places, showing us who God is and giving a glimpse of what He can do. Famines attack our faith, but we must hold on knowing that nothing is ever impossible for God.

**Prayer:** Lord help me protect my heart and faith in You in spite of whatever may be going on around me. I trust You will bring me through with Your strong and mighty hand.

## Day 8

### The Power of Obedience

'Stay here in this land... then hear the Lord's message to the remnant of Judah. This is what the Lord of Heaven's Armies, the God of Israel, says: 'If you are determined to go to Egypt and live there, the very war and famine you fear will catch up to you, and you will die there.' Jeremiah 42:10,15-16

While Judah was under the control of Babylon there was a situation that led to the remnant of Judah planning to flee to Egypt to escape the wrath of the king of Babylon as a result of what happened (Jer 41). At this time, the people asked Jeremiah to seek the Lord's counsel on what to do and the Lord's response was to stay put. Not only that, but the Lord also assured them that if they disobeyed, He would sponsor a famine to meet them in Egypt.

'Whether we like it or not, we will obey the Lord our God to whom we are sending you with our plea. For if we obey him, everything will turn out well for us.' Jeremiah 42:6

'But Samuel replied "...Listen! Obedience is better than sacrifice, and submission is better than offering the fat of rams. Rebellion is as sinful as witchcraft, and stubbornness as bad as worshiping idols.."1 Samuel 15:22-23

'Father, if you are willing, please take this cup of suffering away from me. Yet I want your will to be done, not mine.' Luke 22:42

Doing God's will won't necessarily be convenient or comfortable and may even appear downright difficult at the time. However, while we may not always understand or agree with what God is asking us to do, in His instructions are the safety, provision and promotion we need. When we get an instruction from the Lord (whether through an imprint in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, a nudging to do something, or however the Lord chooses to speak to us) and we ignore it or do otherwise, there will be consequences. Sometimes the famines we experience in our finances, careers, businesses, etc. are a direct consequence of disobedience on our part to specific instructions the Lord has given us. In such cases, the way out is to recognize our fault and ask God to show us mercy.

**Prayer:** Holy Spirit please search my heart, show me any areas where I have been disobedient to the Lord. For those areas, Lord I ask for Your mercy and the grace to make the necessary corrections.

## Day 9

### See that You're Not Troubled

'...See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in various places.' Matthew 24:6-7

Jesus told us in the Bible what to expect in the last days and we are beginning to see this play out in reality. It's worth noting that He referred to famines in the last days in plural which means we should expect several of them to occur be it in agricultural, economic or other forms. Since we know this will happen how then do we position? Jesus gave us insight in His statement, "see that you're not troubled". Which could be understood as: what we see determines whether or not we will be troubled. Which is where the Holy Spirit comes in to help us see properly.

'Pray that the Lord your God will show us what to do and where to go' Jeremiah 42:3

'I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye.' Psalms 32:8

'Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth.' Colossians 3:2

Seasons of famine can cause great confusion for those caught up in middle of it. Left to ourselves, all we may see in the season of a famine is everything that is wrong, not necessarily what God may be doing to take us through it. When we allow the Holy Spirit to guide the way we see, He directs our focus to the supernatural and superimposes God's perspective on what we see. He reminds us of who we belong to and the fact that God's kingdom can never lack resources. He also guides us on how best to navigate the seasons of famine such that we will not be victims. Rather He positions us, so we thrive in the midst of it all.

'Arise, shine; For your light has come! And the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, And deep darkness the people; But the Lord will arise over you, And His glory will be seen upon you.' Isaiah 60:1-2

As the world reels in the darkness famines cause, He causes His children to arise and shine so He alone will get the glory. It's as we reflect His glory in dark times that He draws people to Himself so they can also become part of His fold. It's time to arise and shine.

**Prayer:** Holy Spirit help me see as I should so that I can follow Your instructions and my life bring glory to the Father.

## **Day 10**

### **Victory over Worry**

“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.” John 10:10

Famines represent extreme scarcity in any area and we know that the earth has and will continue to experience different types and grades of famine. However Jesus keeps reiterating to us that in His kingdom no such thing exists. In fact it's quite the opposite because the Bible tells us that God is El Shaddai, the all sufficient one, Jireh, the source of all provision, He is also the I Am that I Am: He is whatever and whoever we need Him to be.

‘What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?’ Romans 8:31-32

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us” Ephesians 3:20

God is a giver and a generous one at that. He gives liberally and His giving isn't constrained by external circumstances. The only thing that can limit God at work in us is us. His power is unlimited, but if we place barriers around what we believe God can do in seasons of famine, our lack of faith will also restrict what the Holy Spirit can do. Imagine having an engine that can power a vehicle up to 100mph but only driving at 20mph. The capacity is inbuilt, but the driver dictates the pace of movement.

“For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7

“You will keep him in perfect peace, Whose mind is stayed on You, Because he trusts in You.” Isaiah 26:3

God's plan for us is to have joy and peace and famines bring worry and fear with them. The only resolution to the conflict is to surrender to the Holy Spirit. Not just to change the external, but to start a work in us first so we know who and what we carry and its implications for us. This is the only way we won't be overwhelmed by the externals. It doesn't mean we ignore the facts and fail to plan as required. It means we put God in charge of our perspective and plans by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Prayer:** Holy Spirit I yield to You today, please fill me with Your peace. Help me to find my rest in You because I trust that Your plans for me are for good and Your desire is for me to live without worry.

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