

The Feast Part 5

"Take your positions"

Feeling helpless in times of crises adds to our sorrow and distress. God has designed us to depend on Him for comfort, help and strength and to **position ourselves** to take action as he leads us.

Taking your position might mean being a front-line medical worker, working in the food industry or using skills of administration and communication. It can also mean being ready and alert at home to receive messages from others and pray specifically and earnestly trusting God for help and a change of circumstances.

Read 2 Chron 20. When God's people felt powerless against their enemy's work, they cried out *"God, you stop them! We are powerless. We don't know what to do, but we are looking to you for help"*

A voice from the crowd shouted **"Don't be afraid. The battle is not yours but God's"**. At our Zoom meeting on Sunday, Mike and Jill shared that verse.

God is working his purposes out through this difficult and distressing situation. He will bring out of it ultimate good. In line with this, He is instructing us to:-

"Take your positions....stand still and watch the Lord's victory. He is with you! Believe in the Lord (and in his prophets) and you will stand firm".

Believing in the prophets means focusing on what the Old Testament Prophets were pointing to- the Victory of **Jesus** over sin and death by his suffering, and his being raised and ascended. **His life of compassion and power is our pattern for revealing God's character and approach to people and situations.** We follow government advice, respecting authorities . We are also wise, understanding that modern day prophetic voices may give helpful revelation, but also prophesy in part and within their own culture, biblical interpretation and theological frame work.

With Jesus' spirit within us, we can face tough situations without the fear that disables a right response. The people were not aggressive and agitated. They took a united response, being thankful for God's goodness to them so far, and singing about his enduring love and faithfulness.

"Give thanks to the Lord. His faithful love endures forever".

So far, in "The Feast", we have prepared our own hearts and reflected on who we are as God's sons carrying his authority, and rising up as the Bride of Christ (ref also Maria and Sarah's podcasts which can be found here:

<https://soundcloud.com/kingschurchloughborough/sarah-benest-called-to-be-priests-832020>

<https://soundcloud.com/kingschurchloughborough/jacobs-ladder>). We are called to be priests, interceding for and blessing others.

Karen's dream and Dettie's revelation.

Karen has had a re-occurring dream about the Hebrews putting blood over their door posts so that the angel of death would "Pass over" them.

"It was by faith that Moses commanded the people of Israel to keep the Passover and to sprinkle the blood on the doorposts, so that the angel of death would not kill their first-born sons. It was by faith that... they passed through the red sea as though they were on dry ground, but when the enemy tried to follow them, they were all drowned" (Hebrews 11 28-29).

Karen's response has been to pray for protection and blessing for all those known personally to her, in her daily life /sphere of influence.

Dettie has placed oil on vulnerable people's homes (property that she is responsible for) in response to the prompting of the Holy spirit.

When I was praying for a family who were unwell recently, I imagined that I was standing outside their home pointing to blood over the door posts. I knew that the spirit of Jesus was within me. I imagined I was carrying a sword (symbolising God's word) and said out loud:-

"He cancelled the record of all the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. He disarmed the spiritual rulers and authorities, shaming them publicly by his victory over them at the cross" (Colossians 2).

I told the enemy to leave and then turned to bless the people in the house with peace, good relationships and health and provision. For those not yet knowing Jesus, I prayed for them to connect with Him, find a belonging with His people and give themselves to God's kingdom purposes.

This was so empowering! I was reminded in the film Avatar, how a disabled soldier was able to take on a new body and help to stop the destruction of a beautiful world that was being renewed. We may be naturally weak, but supernaturally, we can step into our heavenly bodies in the spirit realm, and travel to do good work in prayer without restriction!

"By faith their weakness was turned to strength, they became strong in battle and put whole armies to flight. Women received their loved ones back again from the dead" (Hebrews 11 28-29).

In contrast, the second half of Hebrews 11 tells of the suffering of God's people and how they persevered in faith, believing for a better future.

As I am writing this, I have just received news that two people known to me have died. Such news brings deep sadness and a feeling of vulnerability. Drawing on God's strength, I sent carefully considered condolences and gave telephone support. Yesterday I prayed with a work colleague whose daughter was in theatre having an operation to have a cancer removed. I prayed with her over the phone for healing. She was so appreciative when I said our church pastoral team were also praying.

We are entering an unprecedented time of sadness and sickness. We are not to be naïve, insensitive or triumphalist. Jesus was a man of sorrows acquainted with grief. However, to pray with compassion and faith is not to bring false hope. We are putting our hope in Jesus and helping others to put their hope in him. Just as Jesus did, we do what we see our Heavenly Father doing and respond to each unique situation with deep empathy, wisdom and courage.

Read Nehemiah chapter 4

Nehemiah was restoring the wall around the city /God's "Kingdom" when the enemy attacked the people. The enemy said "do they think they can build a wall in a day by just offering a **few sacrifices?**we will swoop down and destroy their work". The people said "They will come from all directions and attack us".

Nehemiah's response was to carry on doing the work, but with greater vigilance.

A "few sacrifices" of prayer, praise and good deeds can make a huge difference in building a wall to keep the enemy out and establish God's kingdom.

Nehemiah placed armed guards behind the vulnerable places (e.g. think of Alinde, as an NHS nurse, Jacqui working with families, Nickie and Sarah in adult social care. Think of the places across the world such as refugee camps, as Tracie reminded us, and South African townships. Think of Helen and the work of the Well-being cafe).

He stationed people to **stand guard by families**, armed with swords. (e.g. think of parents working and home- schooling children ,children with special needs, teenagers with mental health problems, the work of Small World Nursery)

Half the people did practical work and half prayed. For the pray-ers, "prayer is the work", as Rena reminded us on Sunday.

For some, it means balancing many responsibilities and praying into these areas.

"The labourers carried on the work with one hand supporting their load and with one hand holding a weapon".

Practical response

Consider individuals in your family, wider family, neighbours, work friends, various on line communities, people you care for and serve practically, those known to you working in vulnerable situations.

Pray for and bless them in line with Karen's dream.

Watch and listen to **the News** to be well informed. Choose to also stop listening in order to keep good mental well-being and to pray.

We were born for this moment! We did not wish for it, but it has happened to us.

Our spiritual feasting makes us strong to pray and work. Let's rise up and be all that God is calling us to be at this time.