

If I Could Turn Back Time

By Pastor Marvin R. Barham

Ecclesiastes 8:5 *Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart **discerneth both time and judgment.***

God told us that this would be a year of shaking, remaking, decision, and manifestation. I believe that according to the principles of God's Kingdom the shaking, remaking, and manifestation are proportionate to the decisions we make, in or out of the will and realm of God's authority in our lives. I believe the fundamental principles God will execute in this year will be either His favor and grace, or His judgment. Either way, lines will be drawn or choices must be made in the hearts of men. It has been said that it is easy to make policy and harder to change the results of it. Every idea, action and word spoken produces results and consequences. Our founding fathers had good intentions, were divinely inspired, yet many of their words left vague have today been torn apart for relative interpretation, resulting in a degradation of our social moral underpinning. Oh, that we could turn back time. Better yet, that we could discern and redeem the times as God has commanded us.

Luke 12:56 *Ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky and of the earth; but how is it that ye do not **discern this time?***

Ephesians 5:15-17 *15See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, **16 Redeeming the time**, because the days are evil. **17**Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.*

There is a film called *Time Changers*. In this film one Bible college professor writes a book and wishes his colleagues' endorsements. However, one strongly disagrees with a statement that "if we teach the morals of Jesus without offending them with Jesus then society would be better." His friend attempts to convince him of the devastation this idea would bring to the society of tomorrow if you separate the authority of Jesus from the teachings of Jesus. The friend finally gets him to take a trip in his time machine and see for himself. Have you ever wished you could turn back time? Have you ever said or done things you wish you could change? Have you ever made bad choices then wished you could go back and change them? Have you ever wished you could change the future?

In **2 Kings 20** God did just that at the word of the prophet Isaiah for a king named Hezekiah. First we find where God tells Hezekiah to set his house in order and that he will soon die. Hezekiah cries out to God. He reminds God of the times he had honored God.

Hezekiah's prayer reveals to us the testimony our lives should be before God:

1. That we should walk before God in truth and a perfect heart.
2. We should keep God's law and live in righteousness.

In verse 4, before the prophet even leaves the middle courtyard, God answers the cry of Hezekiah. God has the prophet go back and change the report. As a result of Hezekiah's immediate heart's cry to God a new message was given – a message of life because of his cry from a decision of the heart. The prophecy changed because of the heart change. This is the mercy of our God. God heals him and gives him another 15 years to live. We find in verse 6 the foundation of Hezekiah's cry and the motive of God's response. Hezekiah was from the lineage of David and was without a son to succeed him on the throne of Israel. So, for the sake of God's will and the promise to David, God grants him to live and bear a son.

Hezekiah then request a sign of which to obey what God had commanded of him on the third day. The awesome thing here is that God first prophetically heals him, delivers him, and then turns back time by causing the shadow to recede instead of extend. Not only was time turned back but God caused the earth to revolve backwards 10 degrees. Prayer reflects the decisions of the heart and can change things, even the very course of nature. We find in Proverbs 18:21 and James 3:6 the power of the tongue relative to the course of nature.

Proverbs 18:21 ***21**Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*

James 3:6 *6And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.*

All is well until Hezekiah allows his heart to be changed by the flattery of men and the vanity of his riches. The idols of his heart were revealed by God and Isaiah then prophesies of the captivity to come because Hezekiah had opened himself to the enemy. Hezekiah is relieved that he would escape the judgment and would not see it in his day.

Hezekiah's actions are often indicative of God's people. With our lips we cry out to Him in our time of need, but once delivered, our selfish nature is again revealed. Signs and wonders of God's glory could surround us and yet not change us if we have not first decided to remove the idols of our heart. I believe that God is calling us in this hour to a third day encounter with Him in the house of the Lord. I believe the days of complacent, convenient, compromising, politically correct Christianity is coming to a close and God wants a covenant people. In this hour we must reemphasize our commitment to prayer, recommit ourselves to His Word, and reconnect with the heart and Spirit of Father.

We find in Hezekiah's experience four secrets of answered prayer:

1. We must live a life pleasing to God.
2. We must come to God with the right attitude and motives.
3. We must believe who He is.
4. We must diligently seek Him.

Too often it is easy to slack off in our diligence to prayer and seeking the face of God when blessings rain down, miracles happen, signs and wonders follow, and things seem to be well. When in fact, this is the time to keep up our guard and dig a little deeper.

In no way do I endorse Cher or her music. I do believe that the words of her song "*If I Could Turn Back Time*" represent the broken heart cry of many in our culture today. In her song the artist writes:

*If I could turn back time, If I could find a way
I'd take back those words that hurt you and you'd stay
I don't know why I did the things I did, I don't know why I said the things I said
Pride's like a knife it can cut deep inside
Words are like weapons they wound sometimes.*

James 1:16-18 tells us "**16***Do not err, my beloved brethren.***17***Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.* **18***Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.*"

We might not be able to go back and fix our mistakes or change something we said or did. But we serve a God, who in grace and mercy, can heal, deliver, redeem, and restore. He who created you by His own will and Word of Truth, He upon whom there are no limitations of time, He can make you whole again. He can make a new creature of you. He can change your heart, mind, and life forever. You cannot turn back time but God can redeem it. You can redeem the time by deciding to live the way God desires us to live. Now is your time to live for Him.