

Pandemic Survival Secrets



How to Plan and Prepare for Pestilence, Plagues, and Perils

RANDRICK CHANCE

STRATEGIC
SECRETS

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Printed in the United States of America
ISBN: 979-8-6739-5652-6 (paperback)
ISBN: 978-1-005-20812-7 (eBook)

*“The prudent sees the evil
coming and hides himself but
the simple pass on and are
punished.”*

– King Solomon



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Introduction

Hi. Welcome to a journey that will change your life and bless others. I'm so glad you took action to read this book and arm yourself with relevant knowledge. You are going to learn how to plan and prepare for pestilence, plagues, and perils. If you implement all the things you're about to discover in this book, you will not only be able to protect yourself and your family, but you will also be a big blessing to others.

I'm Chance, a US Navy veteran, pastor, and author of thirteen books and six online courses. My wife and I have traveled to over twenty-six countries, on six continents, impacting the lives of countless individuals. One of the things we've also been blessed to do is to work with different organizations to respond to crises, such as hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, and food shortages in different parts of the world. This has been an eye-opening experience for us, as we have seen humanity at its best and at its worst.

Some of those experiences will be revealed to you as you read this book. Now, when the world is trying to come out of a pandemic, it is especially important

for you to have gotten your hands on this material. I hope you will implement what you learn here. I don't want you to just read this information. You'll get the maximum benefit when you apply the strategies you're about to discover.

Through *Strategic Secrets*, we create resources that help people to achieve greatness and success in different areas of their life, such as business, career, health, relationships, and spirituality. This book is part of that vision. If you'd like to delve deeper into this subject, I invite you to our online course as well. It's called *Pandemic Survival System* and can be found at www.strategicsecrets.com/pandemicsurvivalcourse. In addition to the course, you will also get access to some awesome bonuses and other great content not found in this book, such as *Coronavirus Contingency*, *Survival Secrets from the Exodus Saga*, *Survival Secrets for Surviving Armageddon and the Seven Last Plagues*, and *Rich Lessons from Poor Widows*.

I hope you're ready to gain practical insights, my friend. Again, welcome to *Pandemic Survival Secrets*. Let us now learn together how to plan and prepare for pestilence, plagues, and perils.

Overview

We can all agree that we are living in trying times. Currently, the entire world has been affected by the Coronavirus Pandemic. Never in my lifetime have I seen anything like this! Society has drastically changed, and every facet of life seems to be affected in major ways. Life will not simply go back to normal. In fact, social distancing, wearing face masks, shutdowns, stay-at-home (shelter-in-place) orders, massive unemployment, fear, social unrest, domestic violence, depression, and financial woes are the new norms. And that's not all!

Many industries were not prepared for this kind of disruption. People's educations have been affected. Schools remain closed in many places; others are being forced to reopen. We see national cemeteries and public institutions like museums closed and many outdoor activities totally halted. Churches too are closed – some permanently, which undoubtedly has affected people's spiritual lives. Their entertainment has also been affected. Most sports, concerts, movies, etc. experienced shutdowns, cancellations, and delayed openings, or they had to go totally online.

Now think of the economic impact all this brings! It has created a situation where people are losing hope, where they are living in despair. Many families and businesses had already been strapped financially, and this just made things worse. People have declared bankruptcy; they have lost their jobs or customers, fallen behind on payments, and so much more. Is this not a recipe for mental and emotional stress beyond comprehension?

But do not panic, my friend! That's one of the reasons why I wrote this book – to help you, to restore hope, and to give you a blueprint to move forward in faith. Yes, a lot of people may be hoarding and making life difficult for you. That's something people always do during times like these. It's just one of the normal human reactions.

People go into overdrive, but you and I want to have a different approach. There's no need for us to give in to total doom and despair. I want you to choose faith over fear because God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). Therefore, let us use our sound minds to make good decisions during this time of crisis and uncertainty.

Otherwise, we will just be contributing to the negativity happening in our nations and in the world.

What we need are effective solutions, and we need them right now. How then do we provide solutions to these problems, instead of wallowing in self-pity? That is the purpose of this book. There is a way. There is a system. There is a process. And I'll break that down for you over the following four sections of the book.

But before I do so, you must be willing to both plan and prepare. When the trial comes, if you are prepared you will not have to worry. Sit back, relax, and take notes because, again, you don't want to just consume this content for the sake of the information. You want to study this diligently and take action.

Section One is all about *Practical Planning for Times of Trouble*. Here we will lay out the preparations necessary to withstand various types of crises that may come your way. We'll discuss the primary strategy of boosting your immunity. You'll discover how to do this in your spiritual, physical, financial, and social life. When you have these strategies in place, then it doesn't matter what the future throws at you. You'll have a greater chance of protecting yourself and your family – because you'll have a system to do just that.

Section Two is all about *How to [Still] Succeed in Times of Crisis and Uncertainty*. Life goes on, whether there's a pandemic or not, whether there's pestilence or peril or not. But you don't want to simply endure.

You want to thrive – even in the midst of trials and afflictions. When you examine many of the biblical crisis narratives, you’ll find that even in the midst of severity and trying situations people of faith were still able to succeed.

Section Three goes into the *Seven Skills You Need to Develop While in Lockdown or Quarantine*. These skills, these strategies, will help you to excel, to win, and to come out of any crisis empowered to face the future. No matter what’s going on, you’ll always have yourself to manage. There are things that we should do even when the situation seems out of control. These key skills are beneficial for you at the beginning of a crisis, during a crisis, and at the end of a crisis. But they’re especially necessary to face the effects crises bring.

After every major crisis in history, there has been a paradigm shift. Therefore, learning these essential skills will help to prepare you, your family, and your loved ones for the new normal – for the new future that will result from having faced an actual crisis like a boss.

Then **Section Four** will bring us full circle as we take a look at *Biblical Emergency Response Lessons*. There’s nothing new under the sun, and since history repeats itself, it behooves us to study Sacred Writ for divine revelation and assurance of God’s emergency management strategies. Discover heaven’s stimulus plan for people of faith and revisit

the stories of Noah, Joseph, and Job for rich lessons. Rightly understood, these stories will arm you with wisdom, from multiple angles, to survive and find peace in the midst of any storm.

Now you're ready to master the *Pandemic Survival Secrets*—keys to help you plan and prepare for pestilence, plagues, and perils. I'll see you in Chapter One.

Section 1

Practical Planning for Times of Trouble



Chapter 1

Boost Your Immunity

Let me ask you a few questions. How prepared were you going into the current crisis? Were you caught off guard? How prepared are you generally for yearly disasters and emergencies?

You know, as people of faith, we have this challenge from the wisest man that ever lived, found in the book of Proverbs 22:3 and Chapter 27 verse 12: “*A prudent person foresees the evil* (danger or trouble) *and hides* (protects or prepares) *themselves. But the simple* (foolish or gullible) *passes on and is punished.*” In other words, they suffer the consequences for not doing anything about what they saw coming.

Notice the contrast between the prudent (wise) person and the foolish (gullible) person. Both see the danger in evil crises, pandemics, pestilence, plagues, and perils. And what do they do about it? Their responses are all that separate them. What makes one wise and another foolish is simply their reaction, their response, their preparation.

I would rather be that prudent person who sees what is coming and makes plans and preparations to meet the crisis. How about you? We are all aware that something bigger is coming. No matter who you are, no matter what your level of faith, do you not sense that something major is behind these upheavals? It's like everyone feels the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis. And in many ways, it is! What are you going to do about it?

Many of God's people do not prepare because they think that to do so is to deny their faith. Being safe is not a denial of faith. Planning is not a denial of faith. Yes, God promised that our bread and water will be sure, but this does not mean that we should not plan and prepare.

Joseph knew there was a famine coming upon Egypt and he prepared for it. Did he not? Noah knew there was going to be a flood and he prepared for it. He planned well. As a result, he and his family were safe and saved.

So do not let anyone guilt you into believing that planning, preparation, and being safe are a denial of faith. In fact, I would say that taking precautions during times of trouble and following health guidelines is actually being Christ-like. How? Because it follows harmonious biblical principles like the Golden Rule – where we do unto others the

same good things we would want them to do unto us (Matthew 7:12). It's also loving our neighbor as ourselves (Matthew 22:39), practicing good communal health (Leviticus 13-15), and being a morally upright (good) citizen (Romans 13; 12:13-21; 1 Peter 4:8-16).

If you look closely, you'll see that there's a biblical mandate for preparing and planning. You are not going against the Bible by being safe. One of the things that you must realize is that having faith does not mean that you should be presumptuous. There's a big difference between presumption and faith. The former is rash, opinionated, guessing; it comes off as being bold. The latter calls for you to take practical steps and wise actions based on the word of God, not simply on feelings and emotions.

When you look at the life of Jesus, the epitome of true faith, it is clear that He trusted God, His heavenly Father. Yet He did not throw himself down from the pinnacle of the temple when tempted to do so by Satan (Matthew 4:5-7). The Devil told Him to cast Himself down since God would send His angels to help Him. Now, angels could indeed have protected Jesus. But He did not throw himself down in presumption because He also understood that it would be tempting God. Rather, He chose to act in faith, based on a clear "It is written!"

God has given us all beautiful minds, and we must use our faculties to their highest capacities. If you are going to implement the things we're going to talk about in *Pandemic Survival Secrets*, you must have trust. Yes, that's faith. You must also exercise wisdom; wisdom is not a denial of faith. Don't forget to use good old common sense, too.

Practical planning for times of trouble is not simply about responding while the crisis is occurring. Sometimes that's too late. You also want to know what to do *before* the crisis hits. To wrap this all up into one secret strategy, I would say the best thing you can do to plan and prepare for any crisis is to boost your immunity. Boosting your immunity before, during, and after a crisis situation is a game plan that so many have overlooked and continue to overlook.

When you are immune you can repel whatever seeks to disturb your equilibrium. There are four crucial areas that I want you to focus on to boost your immunity, starting today. They are your spiritual, physical, financial, and social wellbeing.

If you will prioritize these now, you can deal with whatever may come at you – it won't matter, because you've been strengthening your immunity in advance.

When your immunity is strong, you can withstand and even overcome any crisis (and crises come in different shapes, sizes, and durations). Let's look at each of these areas – starting with your spiritual immunity.

Chapter 2

Spiritual Immunity

There are three important qualities you need to develop right now. When these qualities of faith, love, and obedience are present, you will have the internal fortitude to withstand any situation. Many people are anxious and fearful. And when you are in those frames of mind, panic is bound to set in. That's why people end up making so many irrational decisions. Instead of using their sanctified mind and enlightened reasoning capabilities to make sound decisions, they're driven by impulsive emotions. You don't want to be stuck in panic mode, because you'll put yourself and loved ones at risk.

Here then are the three most important qualities you should develop in order to boost your spiritual immunity. The first is faith. That's why I said to choose faith over fear. What is faith, you ask?

Faith is when you cannot see tomorrow, yet you choose today that which you desire for tomorrow. Faith is seeing what the naked eyes cannot see. Faith does not wait for the manifestation of a thing to be realized. Rather, faith sees the accomplishment, even

before the manifestation. Or, as A.T. Jones and E. J. Waggoner noted in their book, *Lessons on Faith*, “Faith is taking God at His word, believing and expecting the word of God only to accomplish exactly what it promises.”

The Bible tells us that the just shall live by faith and by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God (Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38; Deuteronomy 8:3; Matthew 4:4). Faith is also the confident assurance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1). It comes by hearing and by applying the word of God (Romans 10:17).

As you can see, faith is very important for weathering times of trouble. Faith is what keeps hope alive – even in the most dismal situation. Faith is necessary to believe the promises of God and to apply them to ourselves. Faith says that you can still have peace in the midst of the storms of life. You can still succeed in times of crisis and peril. You can still come out as a conqueror. Why? Because faith is the most crucial component in activating all the necessities, requirements, and blessings of Almighty God!

But lest we become presumptuous and perish for lack of knowledge, do know that you’re not going to grow in faith or be immune in this era if you don’t

acquaint yourself with the Word of God and apply it to all areas of your life. If you need an in-depth study on becoming a stalwart of faith, then check out my book *Living the Life of Faith*.

The next crucial quality to be developing right now is love – the bedrock of godly living. Love is the only way that people will recognize us as true disciples. Remember when I said earlier that being safe, planning, and preparing is like following the Golden Rule and loving our neighbors as ourselves? That's because when we're in a crisis we've prepared for, we're not going to be selfish and undermine the fruit of the Spirit with unholy character traits.

We know that our neighbors need help, and we'll gladly help, especially in times of crisis. They might not have prepared as well as we have, so we should not withhold ourselves from them. We should have mercy and extend help to those in need (as much as we're able).

For example, during the early months of this current pandemic, when we were still able to move around without restrictions, I went to the store one evening to purchase a few items. And, of course, most of the shelves were empty. Though we normally have what we need at home in advance, I figured it would be prudent to get extra disinfectant. Needless to say,

when I got to the aisle with the household cleaning items, just about everything was gone. There were only two disinfectants left. Now, another gentleman came into the aisle for disinfectant as I picked up one. I then thought to myself,

*We definitely have disinfectant at home.
And I know that my wife has the skills
to make more if we run out. So I'm
going to leave this here for someone else
to get. This gentleman is going to buy
one. There might be somebody else who
comes in and needs one of these things.
Therefore, I'm just going to leave it here.*

That's what I mean when I talk about having love during a crisis. In this situation, out of love and compassion, I looked out for others who are in the same pandemic but may not know what to do. I am perhaps better able to survive because I've been through several crises before. We've learned a lot about contingency plans, natural remedies, controlling our emotions – different things like that. We could create an alternate disinfectant if we needed to. So why not let someone else have this one?

Now, if I hadn't developed this aspect of love beforehand, and respect for others, then it would have been all about me, myself, and I. During crises, most people's mindset is all about themselves and their

families. But that's not the attitude you want to have, my friend. You want to have an attitude of compassion in everything you do.

Love fulfills the law of God and is greater than all other qualities under the sun. It must be Christ-centered and other-people-directed. It bears all things, believes all things, and endures all things – crises included. Epidemic, pestilence, or famine upon the land, it doesn't matter what it is. Once you have love in your heart, especially the love of God, then you can withstand what the average person cannot, because you will not lose faith, hope, and love. Love hopes for all things, is patient and kind. Love never fails!

Interestingly, one of the things we've realized during the Coronavirus pandemic is that when people were in lockdown, domestic violence spiked. You would think that an increased quantity of time together would increase the quality of folks' love for each other, but on the contrary, people start getting on each other's nerves! (We'll address this more in the chapter on boosting your social immunity.) One of the underlying reasons for these unfortunate family dramas is the missing component of true love. They needed to have developed a loving disposition prior to going into this state of emergency. The crisis just exposed loopholes in their love relationship.

Look up the following Scripture passages, John 3:16; 13:34-35; 14:15; 1 Corinthians 13; Romans

13:8-10; 12:9-10, 17-21; Matthew 22:36-40; 25:31-46 (you can find many more if you wish), to discover additional ways to harness the power of love in your life. Again, I don't want you to just have the information, I want you to study and apply it.

As Mother Teresa once said,

Much of the suffering in the world is caused because of want of food, want of clothes, but it is caused even more because of the want of love. Many people are hungry not for bread only, they are hungry for love. Many people are not naked for a piece of clothes, they are naked without human dignity that has been stolen from them.

Let's now discuss the third quality to develop if you want to boost your spiritual immunity. It is obedience – which is really an action. When I was a child, I learned this song:

Obedience is the very best way to show that we believe. Doing exactly what the Lord commands, doing it happily. Action is the key, do it immediately. Joy you will receive. Obedience is the very best way to show that you believe. O-B-E-D-I-E-N-C-E, Obedience is the very best way to show that you believe.

Many people say they believe or that they have faith, yet do not demonstrate it in action. The book of James is very powerful on the subject. Such people don't exercise faith. They don't plan. They don't prepare. They just "live by faith" (so-called). That's not what faith is really all about, friends. Another way to view this is through the lens of obedience. Like faith, obedience is an action word.

We knew that Abraham had faith based on what he did. We know that Jesus had faith based on what he did as well. Obedience, then is how you show that you believe there's a crisis coming and you're going to prepare for it. If you don't prepare, you don't truly believe. It's like being certain you that it's going to rain but doing nothing about it because God has everything under control.

Now, if God gives you an umbrella, but you don't use it because you figure that somehow you will be miraculously sheltered from the rain, what should we call that? The skies are cloudy and dark. The meteorologists all say there's a one hundred percent chance of rain. My friend, to go outside without an umbrella, without the necessary preparation in this situation, is actually presumption. That's not safe and it is certainly is not faith. True faith says, "I believe in the signs of the times and I'm going to plan. I'll be ready when the rain falls."

That's why Noah is known for his obedience. Noah was warned that there was going to be a flood. He didn't sit down and say, "Well, since God spoke to me about this, He will shelter me from this." Oh no! He prepared.

We also have the story of Joseph in Egypt. He was warned that there was going to be seven years of famine, so he prepared in advance. He did not sit back, relax, and say, "My bread and water will be provided in the midst of this famine." Oh no! He prepared. He made plans and because of that, they were able to survive the crisis of their day. You have to do that as well.

There will indeed come a time when there's nothing else we can do. At that time, yes, God will provide for all that we need. But leading up to that moment, you would show wisdom by planning and preparing now. Do not depend upon others to do for you that which you refuse to do for yourself. Love is faith manifesting itself in obedience, thus evidencing one's spiritual claim on the precious promises of God Almighty.

The word of God also teaches that partial obedience is still disobedience. The ancient seers taught that to obey is better than to sacrifice, or even to say, "I'm sorry" after the fact (1 Samuel 15:22; Ecclesiastes 5:1-6). The righteous perceive, know, and see clearly because they're reading the signs of the times to understand what key actions they need to take.

Now more than ever before, we need wise folks who can discern the times to know what families, communities, nations, and the world ought to do in the midst of a global pandemic and societal unrest. Where are the voices of the men and women of God who ought to have understanding of the times to counsel us on the strategic moves we should be making? At the dawn of Israel's kingdom, the sons of Issachar had the understanding of the times to know what Israel ought to do (1 Chronicles 12:32). How relevant is this text for us right now? Where are the modern-day sons and daughters of Issachar?

All one has to do is look at the headlines these days and it's overwhelmingly clear that we are living in trying times! This turbulent climate has dashed the hopes and ravaged the dreams of many. In light of these undeniable realities, what are you doing at this moment to protect yourself and your family? What should the people who should know the mind and Word of God (Jeremiah 33:3; James 1:5; 1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5) be doing in times like these? Can we discern the signs of the times and give a clarion call to rouse the souls of humanity to act in a certain way?

Isn't that the message Jesus sought to convey by saying, "So you also, when you see these things happening, know that it is near – even at the door" (Mark 13:28, 29)? He was giving us a prophetic word of divine wisdom in that statement. He warned His followers to discern the times, but not from a

knowledge-only perspective. We are to take strategic action when we notice certain realities.

For example, in Matthew 24:15-18, Christ says, “Therefore, when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (*whoever reads, let him understand*), “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes.” It is recorded that not one Christian lost their life during the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Why? Because His followers understood this prophetic revelation and took action when they saw the signs of the times.

Likewise, when you see a lot of people getting sick, you know that there’s going to be a health crisis if nothing happens soon. When you see the markets falling consistently, millions of people losing their jobs, and big businesses filing for bankruptcy, you know there’s a financial crisis. And guess what you should do when you see these things? Protect yourself! Make the necessary moves to pivot with reality. You don’t just sit back and say, “Well, everybody is getting sick and losing their money so let me do what they’re doing and let others decide what’s best for the masses.” Oh no! That’s not obedience. That’s not boldly claiming the promises of God.

There are many promises given in scripture that can only be attained by willing and explicit obedience. We call these conditional promises. So many people think that they're just going to receive the blessings of God, but these blessings are based on conditions. You must meet the specified conditions or requirements of the promise. God is not going to cut you some slack if you don't prepare accordingly.

Many people suffer unnecessarily because they did not do what was needed when they had the time. In Luke 12:54-56, Jesus rebuked the multitudes for their nonchalant attitudes saying,

Whenever you see a cloud rising out of the west, immediately you say, 'A shower is coming'; and so it is. And when you see the south wind blow, you say, 'There will be hot weather'; and there is. Hypocrites! You can discern the face of the sky and of the earth, but how is it you do not discern this time?

Why suffer unnecessarily when you don't have to? Don't bring the time of trouble early upon yourself if you can help it. Exercise obedience to what you already know and things will go better for you when crises arise.

There you have it, my friend. These are the three crucial qualities to boost your spiritual immunity during times of crisis and uncertainty – faith, love, and obedience. If I could only suggest two qualities, I would suggest you develop faith and love. And if I could only suggest one quality then it would be love. Why? Because people will always want to bless and help someone who is loving and lovable. But ultimately, love leads to faith and obedience. It's a cycle.

Chapter 3

Physical Immunity

Let's now talk about boosting our physical immunity. Before, during, and after a crisis, it's important for us to preserve our physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing. Please make sure that you're paying very close attention to this, my friend. If you don't have your health, then even wealth is of little worth, because as the saying goes, *your greatest wealth is indeed your health.*

Right now, being healthy will not only help you to endure the crisis, but it will also help to prevent compromises. You'll not only be better positioned in terms of physical and spiritual stamina; you'll also be able to withstand the pressures that derail many people in times of peril. So how do you preserve your health during a crisis?

The Bible gives us plenty of advice on health and it's all basically free, so don't worry about having to pay a whole lot of money for the *secrets* to wellness. God is concerned about all facets of our lives, not only the spiritual but also the physical. His intentions for His people in this regard are declared in 3 John

2, “Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.” For a crash course on boosting your physical immunity, you can peruse the books of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, Psalms, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.

I like to think of boosting your physical immunity in terms of the king and the queen of health. These two things are foundational; they are the most essential. The king and queen of boosting your physical immunity are nutrition and exercise. Of course, there are many components of good health, but these two are integral to overall wellbeing. If you don’t have them, none of the others will really help you much. People are not only dying from external things, they’re also dying, maybe more so, from the inside – from what they’re consuming. The foods that we put inside our bodies will either do us good or bad. We must put the best in to get the best out.

Let’s start with the king. What are the principles of good nutrition? More scientific research is confirming the need to make our diets simpler by consuming superfoods like fruits, grains, nuts, and vegetables. Whole foods, natural foods, and plant foods have proven to bless the human body abundantly in boosting its immunity. They have everything the body needs. They have everything you need for peak performance. When there’s a disaster or prolonged emergency, as we’ve seen from this pandemic, most people can’t buy certain foods, or their money is tight. It then behooves

you to make sure that you're eating only the best to survive.

Your meals should include a combination of proteins, carbs, fats, fibers, amino acids, starch, etc. Try to grow some of your own food if possible. You can start a garden in your backyard as we have in ours. This will come in handy if you cannot go to the store to get things like key vegetables. With a garden, you'll have some things to keep you going. If you need some help starting a family garden, enroll in the *Pandemic Survival System* course. When you do, you'll also get access to a free bonus called *How to Live Off the Land – Even if You've Never Left the City*.

Exercise, too, is crucial. This is the queen of health. You can have the best diet, but if you're not exercising, guess what's going to happen? The lack of exercise will undo some of the good things you've been putting into your body. We have found that people in a crisis overeat, they stress and worry. And a lot of that has a negative effect on the body and mind. During a lockdown, stay-in-place or shelter-at-home order, people tend to develop unhealthy lifestyle practices because they are not moving around much. Some binge-watch TV for hours on end; they get out of routine and end up gaining weight and becoming sluggish.

I'm not here to tell you all the things you need to know about exercise or the hardcore equipment you need to get. Everything I advise will be simple because

we're talking about crisis preparation here. In the present pandemic, not many people are going to gyms. So keep it simple and don't confuse simplicity with being simplistic. As Jim Rohn used to say, "*Things that are easy to do are [also] easy not to do.*"

So you don't have to get all fancy. Just stay fit by doing a combination of aerobic and anaerobic exercises. Consider the basics, like walking, swimming, gardening, and weight training; or play sports like tennis, soccer, basketball, etc. And all you need is 30 to 60 minutes – at least three to five times a week (more if you can), preferably outdoors. If you can do that consistently, my friend, then you will be among the few who are leading daily active lives.

Now we've established that the king and queen of health are nutrition and exercise – the framework, as it were. What is the backbone of health – the thing that keeps the frame together in the middle? The backbone is also comprised of two things: rest and prayer. Whoa! You might be wondering how these are essential to health. It has been proven that sleep deprivation compromises our immune system. We see it everywhere, including in the healthcare field. Personally, when I don't get enough rest, I cannot perform to the best of my abilities – I get tired faster and run out of energy faster.

What then are the principles for having a strong backbone? Start with a good night's sleep. Get at least

eight hours' worth each night and go to bed between nine and ten p.m. The professionals tell us that anything after midnight robs us of quality sleep and that every hour of sleep before midnight actually counts for two hours' worth after midnight. So the earlier you go to bed, the better quality and quantity of sleep you'll get. Your body will both thank you and reward you for it.

You also want to enjoy the weekly Sabbath Day of rest from all work. Imagine that! God gave a command encouraging work but balancing it with rest. Are you taking that essential Sabbath day's rest every week – without guilt and with pure joy? If not, you're missing out on your God-given blessing. Take it. And while you're at it, take your vacation days also. As I've said before in our training at StrategicSecrets.com, most Westerners don't take all their vacation days – because we're so *busy* in our work, work, and more work.

Another principle is taking sabbaticals. Some do it every 10 years. I recommend you take a sabbatical at least every seven years so you can reassess your life's journey and make the decisions and changes needed to stay aligned with your vision. If you do these things, you'll be at peace with yourself and God and make a lasting impact.

Now let's look at prayer. I will not give you an in-depth treatise on the subject here because I've written an entire book about it before called *Prayers That Move Heaven*. Plus, in the *Pandemic Survival System*

course, there's a bonus download on the seven key benefits of prayer. Suffice to say, prayer is indeed a vital component of health and happiness. It is the most frequent prayer request we're getting on social media during the current crisis, as people deal with mental and emotional issues they've never had to face before.

The isolation is taking its toll on children and adults. Businesses, hospitals, and churches have had to do the same work (and more) with less staff, ramping up anxiety and depression among workers. Simple compassion is waning. Some people find the situation unbearable and are thus in great need of prayer and reassurance. That's where faith comes in, and it's why boosting spiritual immunity was the first thing we covered.

In these times of crisis, treasure the words of E.M. Bounds: "*Four things let us ever keep in mind: God hears prayer, God heeds prayer, God answers prayer, and God delivers by prayer.*" Therefore, do not be wise in your own eyes. Seek out the wisdom of God instead. The wise King Solomon said in Proverbs 3:5-6, "*Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will direct your paths.*" That's why I recommend prayer. Although there are actions you can take on your own that are helpful and necessary, there are strategies that only divine wisdom can provide.

God declares through the prophet Jeremiah, “Call unto me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things which you did not know” (33:3). That means there are secret insights you can tap into to plan and prepare for pestilence, plagues, and perils that you can only get when you call upon Almighty God. Did you know that one-third of Americans say they use prayer to facilitate healing? This is according to Anne McCaffrey, M.D., of Harvard Medical School. She also noted that 69 percent of respondents claimed prayer improved their health.

To say then that prayer is powerful is an understatement. Whether or not you believe in the power of prayer, it’s hard to discount the fact that it has been with us for centuries. Kings, sages, poets, and prophets of antiquity have handed down by precept and example this rich practice, and today, countless scientific studies are shining the light on the true benefits of prayer.

Again, when you look at most of the crises in the Bible, you will find that God always gave some kind of wisdom, whether to Elijah, Elisha, or Jesus. So wait patiently on the Lord. Noah didn’t build an ark because he was a genius. He got instructions, a divine download from God, about how to survive that global catastrophe. In Egypt, where the seven years of famine ravaged nations, Joseph got spiritual revelation from God and wisdom to know how to plan and prepare, thus saving his people.

Remember, God cannot lie (Numbers 23:19; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18), because what He has uttered, He must fulfill. He must be true to His own word or He'll be found to be a liar. That's why I encourage you to pray, believe, expect, and depend on the certainty of His promises. Your prayers can move the arms that move the world because prayers move heaven, "where are treasured the boundless resources of omnipotence" (E.G. White).

Here's the thing. I don't want to get sick, but if I do, I'm going to use some of the natural remedies and the contingency plans found in the bonus handouts in the *Pandemic Survival System* course. I do what I have to do because I believe in having practical faith. I have a prayer network of brothers and sisters at church who help me pray during the difficult seasons of life. I've seen miracles because of this. I'm confident you need to add prayers to your immunity regimen; it'll do wonders for you in every area of life.

But as people of faith, we also know that even if we should lose our life, that's not the end. There will be a resurrection. And one day God "will wipe away every tear from our eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:4). So why not pray now and ask God for divine wisdom – so you can know what to do, when to do it, and what *not* to do. Pray for big bold miracles,

blessings, and healings. Pray and trust to God those aspects of your current situation not in your control.

** Additional free health tips can be downloaded in the Pandemic Survival System course at the end of the lesson on physical immunity.*

Chapter 4

Social Immunity

Now let's talk about boosting your social immunity. This is another crucial piece to the larger puzzle of surviving crises. Too many overlook the psychosocial element of life and neglect to build solid relationships. When you are depressed and discouraged, having loving and supportive people around you is essential because they help you to rebound much faster. We are not in this world as hermits. We are in it as a community – as a family.

Do a quick online search for the phrase, “domestic violence during Coronavirus” and you’ll notice several reports about its rise during the pandemic. Generally, when people are financially stressed, it impacts them spiritually, physically, emotionally, mentally, and socially. We’ll talk more about financial immunity in the next chapter. For now, let’s focus on developing loving relationships, as it pertains to emergency crisis management.

The fact is, no one wants to be around people they cannot get along with, much less in times of crisis. If you don’t build good relationships now, it can cost you

later if you find yourself in need of help. What then are some of these key relationships necessary to boost social immunity? Couples should start by making their marriage a top priority. Parents should strengthen their bonds with their children. Next, extended families should connect more frequently with distant relatives. Friends and colleagues should also build deeper trust and support networks.

The strength or weakness of a marriage is especially revealed during a crisis. For that reason, the couple's union should be fortified by good communication, unified trust, personal responsibility, and management of resources. Homing in on these early on can help to patch any holes in your relationship. Whatever is broken, try to restore as best you can. As a couple, take full responsibility for your actions. If you can unite now with one another, establish similar goals, dreams, and vision, you'll have unity of effort in any future crises.

Your spouse should know what you're thinking and what you're planning to do, or not do. It's important to be on the same page, even though you may not agree on everything. Keep a close-knit family and decide together how to handle your resources wisely. This would be a good time to make sure you have everything in order. That includes managing yourself, your body, your time, and caring for each other. If you do these things, you'll have greater peace and smile more during a disaster situation.

Now let's talk about parenting. How deep is your bond with your children? Parents and children may have been arguing with each other before a crisis, and the anger may be so great it hinders them from seeking reconciliation. In a pandemic situation, when they really need each other, some children may not want to have anything to do with their parents. That's why I'm hammering on the necessity of restoring family ties during this time. Play with your children, worship together, and just love one another as much as you can. The tighter the bond, the better it is.

When it comes to extended families, you don't want them to hear from you only when you have a need or when there's a crisis. Don't be a stranger! Start reaching out before there are emergencies and do so often. Call, visit, or message your cousins, nieces, nephews, uncles, aunts, and grandparents. Check in every so often and they'll be more than happy to lend a helping hand when it's needed. This can also heal any old wounds that might exist between relatives.

As for your friends, you'll need to have deeper connections than the superficial ones on social media. I'm talking about friends in real life – in person. They should also include your coworkers and acquaintances. I believe that if you can grow and build in these particular areas, when there's a crisis, you will have a support network you can count on. They can also count on you to render your help. Do you have at least three very close friends and one key confidant whom

you can depend upon at all times? I'm talking about a community approach, instead of just you and your family alone. Who knows, you may need to leave your children with a friend, or at the neighbor's. What if you're not on speaking terms with them?

Yes, as children of God, we have to protect ourselves and families as our primary responsibility. But our concern should go beyond our survival only. We should also be an arm that others can lean on for support and assistance. Let's just say you're caught in another city or state during an emergency. Who's going to take care of your animals? Who's going to take care of your house? And if the shoe were on the other foot, no doubt someone else could use a friend like you. That's why these vital relationships should be established early.

Your coworkers can be influencers, so show your concern for them and help them as much as you can. A coworker might help you get a promotion, or you may be able to help them climb the ladder. In a crisis situation, they'll be prone to reciprocate kindnesses you've shown them, by covering a shift for you so you can take care of other pressing matters, for example. The last thing you want, especially if you're stuck in another country, is to have the additional stress of worrying about the kids, your job, or personal belongings. As you can see, having this extra layer of supporters is an effective contingency strategy for crisis preparation.

Therefore, build your marriage, build your parenting skills, reach out to extended family, and grow your network of good friends. If you do these things, you will boost your social immunity – and that is very important.

Chapter 5

Financial Immunity

Of all the areas of immunity previously mentioned, this has to be the most overlooked in any crisis. But not with you, my friend. If you implement this preparation strategy, it'll set you apart from the masses. All crises have an economic impact. This is called a domino effect – the cumulative effect or chain reaction produced when one event initiates or triggers a succession of similar events. This means that a financial crisis could come on the heels of an epidemic, trickling over into the economy and causing many people to suffer beyond the physical.

Think about it, every natural disaster or man-made catastrophe that destroys homes, commercial buildings, communication channels, transportation systems and the like, has an economic toll that can crumble markets. For example, the 2018 wildfires in Paradise California burned over one hundred and fifty-three thousand acres, resulting in billions of dollars in damage. Some reports estimate that the 2019 wildfires in Australia killed at least one billion wild animals and burned over forty-six million acres! That's a toll on

both ecology and the economy – to the tune of \$100 billion.

That's why you must have a strong economic framework and immune system, because if you don't, it can actually extend your crisis. You may be lingering in your own personal or family financial crisis long after the original crisis has ended. For example, during the Coronavirus pandemic, a health crisis quickly became a financial crisis – compounding the harsh realities of life. Millions of people have lost their jobs, and businesses and industries have tanked as customers spend less, travel less, and have to worry about their own survival. They have shifted to buying online, further damaging local businesses that have been forced to close their doors by the economic toll.

When people cannot go to work, or their jobs are no longer available due to national and global crises, how are they going to pay their bills? The government cannot prop them up indefinitely. And to do so is to build another financial tsunami for our children and grandchildren. Obviously, this creates further stress, which creates more fear, panic, domestic violence, depression, and anxiety. It's a vicious chain reaction, to which many seem oblivious. But I believe it is signaling a new beginning to a new reality.

Financial crises have dire effects on nations and individuals alike. If you don't get a good grip on your financial resources, you are going to suffer greatly in

the future, or you may have to compromise your long-held values. Simply take a look at the debts of most of the countries of the world and it's not hard to see that there's a big problem looming on the horizon. At the time of this writing, the *national debt* of the United States is over \$27 trillion, Japan's is over \$12 trillion, and China's is over \$7.3 trillion. You can find this information for your own nation. But I want to home in on the USA. Taking all other debts (like unfunded debt) into account, she's actually more than \$80.8 trillion in *total debt*. Now that's another recipe for disaster, but only the future will tell.

During the biblical famine of Egypt, there was also an economic crisis brewing and, eventually, the money failed throughout the land (Genesis 47:15-17). The people had to give up all their hard-earned possessions just to eat bread – losing their freedoms and dignity for the sake of survival. If there were a severe famine like that today and you couldn't buy food, how would you survive? The apocalyptic book of Revelation prophesies a time in the not-too-distant future when no one will be able to buy or sell unless they receive the mark, or name of the beast, or the number of its name (13:17). If you desire and choose to stand with God's true people by not receiving the mark of the beast, then you will not be able to buy or sell because you refuse the mark. Are you ready for such an economic crisis and will you endure hardship for what you believe in and value?

People need to buy and sell in order to continue living and keep the world running. Since everything is tied to money in some way, it's time to boost your financial immunity and take charge of your life. One thing you must ask, and answer, is, how long can I/we survive without receiving a paycheck or another payment from my business or job? Before giving you my strategic secrets to boost your immunity in this regard, I highly recommend you read these two books or have them in your library for reference: *The Coming Economic Earthquake*, by Larry Burkett and *The Financial Crisis in Bible Prophecy*, by Tim Aka.

For starters, study Bible passages such as Haggai 1-2, James 5, Revelation 6, 13, 16, and 19. These all teach valid principles of economic crises, past, present, and future. Another thing that you'll want to research is the Kondratiev (also spelled "Kondratieff") Wave theory of economics, founded by Nikolai D. Kondratiev. It postulates that, historically speaking, there are long-term cycles that help to explain downturns (economic winters), which usually occur every 40 to 60 years (sometimes 70 years). At the end of each cycle, there's generally some major economic crisis or multiple crises (shown by a sharp decline or dip on the various economic charts).

However, after the financial crisis or collapse, new industries emerge, creating new opportunities and new realities, as the slope goes upward again, beginning a new cycle. For example, the end of the agricultural age gave

birth to the industrial revolution. The next economic winter signaled the beginning of the information age, which we are currently in. Interestingly, some of the models and charts have predicted the next economic winter as occurring between 2020 and 2021. The question is, what will the end of this current cycle (hammered by a global pandemic and economic crisis) give birth to? Some experts are predicting the new leading industry to be biotechnology or something to do with a different aspect of health, especially psychosocial health. This makes sense due to the sharp rise in various mental health challenges around the world. According to *Nature* magazine, depression is one of the leading causes of disability worldwide.

My personal take is that whatever “new thing” emerges after this economic winter, it’s going to be coupled with or enhanced by artificial intelligence. So those are three possibilities for the new economies that are being projected to develop when this crisis is over. If you have eyes to see and ears to hear, then you’ll want to position yourself for the rise of biotech, psychosocial or holistic health, and artificial intelligence. These industries will mean new career fields, new degree programs, new products, and new services. Who then will be wise enough to see what is coming, adapt, and take advantage of this foreknowledge?

Now let’s talk about some down-to-earth ways we can boost our financial immunity. Be forewarned that this is not intended to make you rich. We need

effective strategies now, not fluff. By the way, *Strategic Secrets* is in the process of creating a full course on finances, but in this section, we're focusing specifically on financial immunity and peace of mind for crisis preparation. What follows are the nuts and bolts, grassroots approaches to staying strong.

The first thing you must do is change your financial habits and lifestyle. This is the most difficult part, because people don't like change. Yes, change is sometimes hard, but unless you choose to implement these strategies, don't expect much to be different. Remember, the time you now have to prepare should be spent making the necessary spiritual, physical, social, and financial adjustments. Otherwise, when hard time comes, life will be that much more stressful and difficult. A crisis is not the time to be preparing for a crisis.

Start right now by setting aside twenty percent of all your income. This is what Joseph did in Egypt's economic crisis. Next, aim to establish an emergency fund of at least \$1,000, then increase it to three, six, or twelve months of living expenses saved. You also want to consistently invest ten to fifteen percent of your income. Work on this now and, hopefully, by the time a crisis hits you will have a cushion to buffer you from running out of funds.

Some might say, "But it's hard to save twenty percent!" Then start where you are and build from

there. Work within your means. If you're making more money, then set aside more money. If you're not making that much, then do what you can, but don't settle for doing absolutely nothing. In such cases, something is truly better than nothing at all. Again, remember the story of Joseph, he saved twenty percent for seven years, and that discipline helped him to survive another seven years of economic crisis and famine.

If you do likewise, it will help you survive a crisis, and instead of being a burden, your family will be a burden bearer. But as previously asked, how long can you go without receiving another paycheck? How long can your family sustain itself before having to file for bankruptcy? If you have three months' worth of expenses set aside, then you can at least function normally for three months before having to stress out about providing for your loved ones. But if you have twelve months' worth set aside, then you have a full year to survive without necessarily diminishing your lifestyle. That also gives you sufficient time to bounce back, find a new source of income, or pivot to a new industry or career field. So, the sooner you get started building that emergency fund, the sooner you'll have a financial foundation should an emergency arise. And should that time come sooner than expected, your family will have help when they need it most, because you took action early to put that cushion in place.

Another financial immunity strategy is to always keep \$500 to \$1,000 dollars on hand. I'm perfectly

aware that we're in a digital world. I love technology myself. But I know what I'm telling you here is sound advice. Now, of course, this nest egg can be in the form of a debit card, but in times of crisis, cash still reigns as king. So, I recommend you keep some physical cash accessible. Having responded to hurricanes, earthquakes, tornadoes, and other such crises in the United States, we've noticed how difficult it becomes for people to get life's essentials during moments of crisis. People have to wait in long lines to fill up their gas tanks, get water, or even leave the city. Sometimes they barter or offer money to get in front of someone in line.

Also, and specifically during the 2008 and 2012 financial crises, several banks closed altogether and others did not open for regular work hours. Then there were those that did open but refused to allow cash withdrawals at certain times. Of course, when there were power outages or road blockages, getting to ATMs was problematic at best, and stores couldn't serve customers or process regular payments. That's yet another reason why it's better to have access to cash for times of disasters. Plus, no one knows when a particular bank may fail. Some banks that seem strong now may collapse during economic storms, so it behooves you to have monies available to hold you over until the next paycheck or until you can get digital access to your funds again.

That's just what our household does. We keep some physical cash in addition to debit cards. If I go somewhere and the debit card isn't working, I don't want to be stuck, or have to go home and come back again – the lines might be wrapped around the building by then.

Yet another financial immunity-boosting strategy is to own your vehicles, home, and land. Why is this important? Because if you own these things, you don't have to worry about making monthly payments during a crisis. These are the things that cause us stress. Research shows us that the majority of Westerners are living paycheck-to-paycheck – that's not too far from being homeless if their one source of income vanishes. Even many celebrities do not have money set aside. If you lose your job or your business, or the crisis causes you to be unable to work, then you can't pay for the car or the phone or pay off loans, credit cards, and so many other things.

The secret to financial immunity is to both pay off all your debts and/or make more money. Yes, now would be a great time to begin paying down your credit cards, convenience cards, student loans, and non-essential subscription programs. This more than anything else, I believe, will give you the most freedom and peace of mind during a crisis. And why not? If you have an emergency fund, several months of living expenses saved, cash on hand, and most or all of your

debts paid, you certainly won't have to worry about where the next paycheck or meal is coming from.

Think about it. If the average car note is about \$500 a month, that's \$500 you don't have to worry about and \$500 extra that you could be using to invest or bless others. Most people have at least three or four credit cards, while others carry five and more. So, if you got rid of most or all of those, or kept the balances at zero, then, during a severe crisis, you'll at least have access to that credit. But, if you are maxed out, you won't have access to anything and could be putting yourself (and family) in a vulnerable situation. So, pay down those cards ASAP (though I personally recommend you pay them off altogether). What if you also got rid of your biggest monthly expense and finally owned your home? Would you have to worry about eviction?

Now, I'm fully aware that different people have different views about these things. I'm not going to fight you on the specifics. I am just saying that in light of the economic realities of our times, boost your financial immunity by taking charge of your financial habits. Take gradual steps and begin small. Do what works best in your context and with what you have – but don't knock what has consistently worked, even in biblical times. Save \$500, \$1,000, then one month's worth of income, three months, six months, 12 months, and so forth. Tackle debt strategically and if you have windfalls or make a lot of money, then pay

off your mortgage also – that includes your home or business or church, etc.

Interestingly, I saw this in action when I took the mantle as senior pastor of two churches in South Texas. At one church, resources were slim for ministry and evangelism because most of the funds went to the mortgage. I also knew that in times of crisis, the first thing people stop doing is giving to charitable causes. It's just reality. And, I thought, why put an extra burden on the church members when they too will be very concerned about providing for their own families in times of crisis? With that framework in mind, I charged the congregation to make a commitment to pay off the mortgage as a top priority. They embraced the vision and we all determined to make the dream become a reality.

When we had significantly paid down the debt to a level where it was no longer a burden at all, we began to cruise towards the finishing line. But the last push to pay it off entirely came in December 2018. We invited a reputable faith-based economist to do a weekend seminar on biblical economics – based on two of his books on the subject. He's the one who introduced us to the Kondratiev Wave and clearly showed its correlation to important prophetic world events. This was a reminder that we had been divinely led to accomplish our goal; so we made the final payment in January 2019 and held a mortgage burning ceremony in February. The church then voted

to reallocate the majority of what we'd been paying towards the mortgage to fund needed evangelism and other key ministries.

One other effective strategy to boost your financial immunity right now is to play good offense. The strategies just mentioned will give you a cushion, but they are primarily defensive moves. Hey, who says good defense can't win the game? But I equally want you to play good offense, and the best way I know to do that is to have multiple streams of residual income. You've probably heard that many times. But in times like these, you simply can't rest your laurels on one source of income. If you haven't done so already, now is a good time to get a side gig, an extra job and extra hours, start a business, or provide some service that others will value and pay for.

The Internet allows you to do that easily today. Especially now in the age of COVID-19. More families and organizations have become comfortable doing business online, taking classes online, purchasing online, worshipping online, and attending online events. So why not capitalize on that? This opens options for you to live and work remotely and make extra income at the same time! Here are some online business models that are easy to start and can bring in extra revenue to build wealth, get out of debt, and contribute to causes you believe in: podcasting, blogging, freelancing, coaching, consulting, affiliate marketing, digital advertising, teaching/tutoring, and

creating books, courses, and other digital products. To learn more about doing this without disrupting your main source of income, check out my book and course called, *Monetize Your Skills*. It teaches how to turn your education, expertise, and experience into products, programs, and services, especially online.

Here's a final bonus for you. Continue giving faithfully to bless others. I firmly embrace a generous way of life and believe that it is indeed more blessed to give than to receive. Both the Old and New Testaments teach the power and principles of biblical generosity and the blessings that continue to flow when we share heaven's bounties with those who need it most. If you do all that is recommended above, my friend, you'll be uniquely positioned to be a blessing and helper in times of crisis. Now, that doesn't mean you won't need help yourself, and if you do, by all means, accept the help. But do your part first. If you take advantage of the times we're living in and the opportunities to get ready now, you will reap the blessings of adequate preparation on the other side.

You're not doing this for yourself alone. God wants to use you to be His hands and feet for humanity in its time of need. You can be a source of hope and help in an otherwise bad situation. We are called to be a loving people. We are called to be the Josephs of our time. If we heed the voice of God now, we will be the ones others come to for help and answers in times of disaster. There's no shame in needing help, but, like

the sons of Issachar, let us be in the positions to tell the nations what to do. Let us be the head and not the tail. Let us be our brothers' and sisters' keepers. Let us be so immune that we can help others boost their own immunity as well. May God bless you as embark on this journey; I'll see you in the next chapter.

Section 2

How to [Still] Succeed in
Times of Crisis and
Uncertainty



Chapter 6

How to Thrive in The Face of Difficulties

Welcome back to *Pandemic Survival Secrets*, the blueprint on how to plan and prepare for pestilence, plagues, and perils. In this section, you will discover how to *still* succeed in times of crisis and uncertainty. Why the word *still*? Because one must believe and know that it is possible to not only endure a crisis but thrive in one. If you implement the strategies already recommended, then this part will make a whole lot of sense. If you have planned and prepared properly you will thrive. The core objectives of this chapter are to learn how to maximize your time and impact during a crisis, how to protect your mental and emotional wellbeing during times of uncertainty, and how to prepare yourself to come out and win big (when a crisis passes). So, how exactly can you thrive in the face of difficulty?

The first thing you want to do is be proactive, not reactive. What does proactive mean? It means to

create or control the situation by causing something to happen rather than responding to it *after* it has happened. In other words, you'll need to be energized, driven, and bold, now. When people are *reactive* they go into panic mode: they begin to stockpile, they loot, they hate, they cave in, and they do all sorts of inhumane things – because fear has taken over, especially when the crisis takes them by surprise. And that's when survival instincts kick in, but it's not always for the best. That's why you must plan and prepare in advance, my friend. You don't want to be caught off guard; so pay attention to the signs, then take action to do something about them.

In the many disaster relief efforts we've taken part in, we've seen the worst of humanity, unfortunately. It generally happens because people are reactive rather than proactive. You can be proactive by practicing self-care and safety. We've already said that being safe is not a denial of faith. You don't want to do foolish things that might put yourself or your family in harm's way. Self-care is also very important. As they say on the plane, you have to put your own mask on before you can help someone else. When gearing up for a crisis, you must take care of your body so your body can take care of you. We've already covered a lot of this in the chapter on boosting physical immunity.

You don't want to be under severe stress when a crisis strikes. Being depressed, fretful, fearful, pessimistic,

or full of panic for prolonged periods makes you that much more open to attacks and breakdown. Now is not the time to eat all sorts of things and let your body get out of shape. Oh no! You want to stay physically active. You also want to be eating those superfoods we discussed, getting enough sleep, and getting enough recreation. Even in the middle of a crisis, it is still a good time to relax, to pull back from all the busyness of living, pull back from all the grinding that people are doing out there – hustling and bustling just to survive. This can be an opportunity to really recoup and let your body actually get the strength it needs to perform well under adverse conditions.

The next step is to do some house cleaning. Do some mental and emotional cleansing while you're at it, because over time we all acquire baggage and it weighs us down. After all, it's not always what you're eating that's killing you, but what's eating *you*, from the inside. That means you have to detox yourself of emotions and attitudes like guilt, shame, envy, negativity, bitterness, resentment, and the like. One of the best ways to do so is by forgiving yourself, forgiving others, and releasing the power of toxic relationships over your life. If you don't, you might weaken your physical immunity and suffer from psychosomatic illnesses. Some people are sick all the time and don't understand why. In some cases, there are unresolved things eating them from the inside. Until they cleanse themselves of these issues, they'll

continue to suffer unnecessarily into the future. Take care of yourself, my friend, and do this inner work sooner rather than later.

Another thing to help you *still* thrive in times of crisis and uncertainty is to keep a regular routine. During a crisis or disaster, life may move at a much slower pace, and this might continue for days or weeks (even months). Don't allow it to throw off your rhythm too much. After all, when the plague passes and it's time to get back up and get moving into high gear, you don't want to be sluggish or have lost your drive and motivation. You want to stick to a regular routine because it keeps you focused and disciplined.

Instead of binge-watching all the latest TV shows and movies, try binge-learning and binge-reading. I'm not saying you shouldn't have some entertainment, but don't waste time being idle and unproductive. Use time wisely to develop yourself and your key relationships. Work on you. If you haven't had a chance to read or study anything new in a while, now would be a great time to take a new course and learn a new skill. Do something that'll help you to become better. By becoming better in some way, you'll be that much more valuable to your team and family – helping them to succeed and thrive, too.

Besides being proactive, you also want to be reflective. What does this mean? To be reflective is to be contemplative, meditative, and thoughtful. There

are several ways to do this. Make time for just thinking. Yes, thinking. Many of the problems that we have in our lives go unsolved because we have not taken quality time to think deeply about them to discover the best solutions. You can change that immediately with prayer and meditation. I encourage you to seek God for wisdom, knowledge, and understanding in anything that perplexes you. Heaven has given us a grand invitation in Hebrews 4:16 and Jeremiah 33:3, where He bids anyone to *“Call unto Me and I will answer you and show you great and mighty things, which you do not know.”* Therefore, if you lack wisdom, why not ask God, who promises to give it to you freely without fault-finding (James 1:5)?

Go ahead. Tap into God’s unlimited power and abundant resources to solve your problems. Don’t try to do it all on your own. The challenges confronting the world today and into the future cannot be solved only by human knowledge and money. The Coronavirus pandemic is a case in point. Politicians and scientists cannot even agree on the best solution for attacking the problem. One time they say do this and another time do that. It’s as though they’re just guessing – throwing anything against the wall and hoping for something to stick. Even though Western nations have the greatest wealth in the world, they’re still not able to weather the storm after more than six months, nor can they bail out every family affected by the economic aftermath. Human know-how and wealth can only go so far. What we need is divine intervention. We need the men

and women of yesteryear who know how to move the arms that move the world. We need families who know how to pray, and that requires thoughtful moments of reflection.

This is also a good opportunity for you to get clear about your dreams, goals, and visions. Revisit your WHY, reclaim your passion and rekindle your flame for the things that once got you excited about life and living. Don't settle for the mundane – just going through the motions, longing for each day to end. Get reconnected with who you are, what you want from life, where you're going, and what your legacy will be. I highly recommend a journal for this process. Chronicle your thoughts and ideas. Journaling is also therapeutic and useful when cleansing yourself of negative feelings and emotions. Begin this practice today and by tomorrow you may already notice a surge in your motivation and resilience. You simply must recapture the true you as soon as possible.

You need you. Your family needs you. Friends are counting on you. And if you're a business owner or organizational leader, your people need you to lead during a time of crisis. They don't want to just survive; they want to thrive. I still have two other tips for you. Not only do you want to be proactive and reflective, but you can also be productive. It means to produce large amounts of goods, crops, or commodities. In whatever you do, be fertile – blossom and bloom wherever you are.

When we examine some of the biblical stories about crises, we see God's people thriving in the face of difficulties. Egypt was steeped in famine, but Joseph still thrived in the midst of it. Noah and his family were able to survive and thrive in the midst of the flood. The widow of Zarephath was able to thrive during a famine that humbled Israel because she followed divine wisdom and instruction. These are the kinds of attitudes I want you to have, without being nonchalant about any of it. You can thrive in good times and in bad times because of who you are and whose you are!

Next, get organized. Organize your life, organize your bills, your room, and your office. Clean up your house and do some repairs. That might make the family happier; it might bring them together to help. How about preparing for a new career? As you behold the signs that are happening in the world, you might notice a paradigm shift taking place, and because you're prudent, you might decide to pivot. Don't settle for the old models of earning income or stay in a career that's dying. Start moving towards those fields that are part of the new industries, instead of fading out with the obsolete.

Lastly, I also want you to be innovative. Innovation follows productivity but they're not the same. Someone can be productive while operating in an outdated system, creating more of "what was" or simply maintaining the status quo. Innovation has to

do with altering, transforming, improving, recasting, renovating, reorganizing, and restyling. In short, changing for the better, creating that new thing, launching into new frontiers – as the world recently witnessed with the SpaceX program. Innovation is what's driving our future. It involves imagination or original ideas, especially in the production of creative work. When you tap into your innovative zone, you can produce something inspiring. It doesn't matter what your background is, what your industry is, whether you're in academia, business, ministry, or the nonprofit arena; now is the best time to bring forth your creative genius.

Things are changing so rapidly, and many of the barriers to innovation have crumbled with the rise of advanced technologies. It's your time to shine. What will you create? Grab a pen and paper now and begin to write your vision and make it clear. Will you build something or create a new process or strategy? What new system can you put in place to help your team or family function better? What can you improve upon to accelerate your goal achievements? Can you write a book, produce a course, or come up with a secret formula? Think about all the people you can bless if you let your expertise shine in new and innovative ways.

You never know the massive impact you might have by creating something of substance. It will help

people but also benefit you. Whatever your education, expertise, or experience, you owe it yourself to bring something to life. Make it. Build it. Write it. Produce it. Just do it! If you have any questions or need some ideas on making this a reality, check out our various resources and training at www.StrategicSecrets.com.

Section 3

Seven Skills to Develop While in Lockdown or Quarantine



Chapter 7

Crisis-Proof Skillsets

Welcome, my friend, to the third section of *Pandemic Survival Secrets*, where we are learning how to plan and prepare for pestilence, plagues, and perils. You're about to discover the seven skills that you need to develop while in lockdown or quarantine. These crisis-proof skills are necessary to effectively pivot and position yourself for the "new normal" or the new future. This is highly achievable if you but master at least two or three of these skills now. Of course, developing all of them would be best. However, with even two or three, you'll be better in dealing with the new realities that generally emerge after every crisis. Are you ready to know what they are?

Number one is **Accelerated Learning**. Don't be quick to judge it. Some may not see it as a skill, but it is an essential skill, my friend. Especially now, in this world of accelerated change, accelerated growth, and globalization, we must accelerate our learning as well. How? Let's start by learning to use smart technologies effectively. Don't fall into the anti-technology attitude that some people adopt. As with everything in life,

there's good and bad in technology. But let's be absolutely honest; is there any area of society that is not dependent upon technology in some way? There's no slowing down to it, either. But you don't have to know all about technology or master every aspect of technology to use it to your own advantage.

Short-cut your learning curve by knowing how to use various apps that are applicable to your lifestyle. Know how to search for information online by leveraging search engines like Google, YouTube, Amazon, Bing, and DuckDuckGo. Whatever you need to know about history could be as simple as asking Alexa or Siri. This puts information at your fingertips in record time, so you can do other things that matter.

Utilize audiobooks to accelerate your reading. It is said that most people don't read even one book once they graduate from college. Some are intimidated by the time it takes to read a good book. Well, you can speed up the process, since we can hear faster than we can read. I finished seventy-five books in one year by both reading and listening to audiobooks. This has greatly enhanced my learning skills and ability to process information quickly. One of my mentors has a saying: "Readers are leaders and leaders are readers." I one hundred percent agree! Now you can be a leader in your own right by consistently listening to audiobooks and podcasts.

All of these things are readily available on our phones and other mobile devices. Imagine how fortunate we are today to have immediate access to the brightest minds on the planet in the palms of our hand! You can learn absolutely anything by leveraging most of these free platforms. Whatever you're interested in, you can type the phrase into YouTube and have a variety of experts both show and tell you how to do X, Y, and Z. This is how you can positively use technology to accelerate your learning to stay ahead.

Information is moving too quickly for us to spend even four years in a classroom learning something that will most likely be obsolete within a few weeks or months. That's why online education is on the rise, and now because of the Coronavirus pandemic, academic institutions and businesses who were afraid or skeptical of the new learning methods have been compelled to go virtual or tank. Some have closed their doors because they failed to acknowledge reality. Don't let that be you, my friend. Your colleagues could be mastering this skill while you still dabble with "what was." Accelerate your learning to accelerate your earning.

Skill number two is **Social Media Management**. Because we live in this new world of social technology, it behooves us to know how to handle and manage social media from a positive perspective. Decide first to master two or three social media platforms – be they Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc. Don't

try to use them all (unless you have a very compelling reason to do so). Commit to being consistently present on the ones where your ideal customer, client, student, member, or donor is also present. Ask yourself, where is my audience hanging out? Go to the platforms where they already are and communicate with them using the tools they're currently using. Don't push against the current. If they're primarily using TikTok, don't force them to be on Facebook, and if they only use Twitter, why have them join you on LinkedIn? They're already telling you where they are; meet them there.

The third skill to master during a lockdown or quarantine is **Video Streaming**. Content is king in the online world, and more people are watching videos than reading. So, if you are into marketing, if you have a business, if you have a nonprofit, anything that you are doing where you need visibility, you need more videos. When a pandemic causes mass stay-at-home orders to go into effect, everyone clearly sees just how valuable video streaming is. As with the social media platforms, pick one, two, or three video streaming services so you can deliver your content to your tribe. The options are plentiful.

There's YouTube, Ecamm, Vimeo, Zoom, Facebook, StreamYard, etc. Take your pick. Remember, if you want to get your voice, your message, your vision or mission seen and heard, you must now become proficient in utilizing video streaming. Be visible where your people are. Are they using Facebook more than

Vimeo? Then stream primarily to Facebook. Better yet, stream to both Facebook and Vimeo or YouTube (if they frequent YouTube). I personally use YouTube, Facebook, Ecamm, and Vimeo (in that order). So which one(s) will you master?

Skill number four is **Digital Marketing**. This is perhaps my favorite crisis-proof skill, because if everybody is using their smartphones to buy, learn, and connect online, then it makes sense mastering the *how-to* of reaching them. This generation is always connected, and digital marketers serve them what they want, when they want it, and how they want it. You should also know how to utilize online marketing principles in some way, shape or form to reach your customers, clients, patients, donors, supporters, and family. At the very least you should know how you are being marketed to. If you have followers online, or do anything online for that matter, you should know something about digital marketing.

For those who are looking to pivot into a new career, this is a very lucrative field to enter. And it doesn't require years of study or degrees that put you in more debt. Plus, many digital marketers, even young folks, are making more than university professors because of this skill set. So, let's break it down just a little bit. What can you expect in the world of digital marketing?

Well, the name of the game is traffic. Traffic is the lifeblood of anything that we do online. If you have a

blog, podcast, course, membership, etc., and no one visits your site, then no one is going to know about you, what you do, or what you offer. Some people have fancy websites with all the bells and whistles, but they sit there collecting dust like an old record player.

If you don't get eyeballs on your pages, then no one is going to buy your product, your program or service. That's why traffic is so crucial to any online venture. That's what a good digital marketer will be able to do, get you visibility and connect you with your ideal audience who will support what you do and stand for. And who would not pay (handsomely) for that kind of service and exposure?

Advertising has not changed, but it has morphed. Basically, all that was done in the old world or in the traditional sense is now being done in a digital sense. For example, instead of regular radio stations, people are now listening to podcasts. Instead of print newspapers, they're reading blogs. Instead of huge billboards, ads are served to them via their social media feeds and while they're watching streaming shows. That's the name of the game and that should simplify the process for you. Simply switch from old media to new media and save a whole lot of money.

I don't think print advertising is necessarily dead, but it is dying. Your money can go much further with digital marketing than with traditional advertising – not to mention the precise reach to your ideal audience

and the better analytics to know exactly how your ads are performing and how people are responding. Test it out for yourself. Try placing an ad on TV and then place the same ad on Facebook, YouTube, or Brandzooka, then tell me which gave you the bigger bang for your buck. Again, if you're online, you need good digital marketing, period! It's the fastest way to get your "thing" seen, heard, read, and experienced, especially these days. Just ask Hollywood, musicians, Netflix, Amazon, or your church down the street.

The fifth skill is **Creative Collaboration**. This might not be what you would expect, but since we're living in a globally interconnected world, you must hone this essential skill. Globalization calls for increased diversity, so if you're able to function in this kind of environment, you'll be in demand. What does creative collaboration entail? It's not simply about getting along with people. It requires you to improve your Emotional Intelligence (EQ). Having a high IQ and low EQ will not cut it on today's track to success. According to HelpGuide, EQ is the ability to understand, use, and manage your own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict. It is commonly defined by four attributes, self-management, self-awareness, social awareness, and relationship management.

For me, emotional intelligence is simply the ability to succeed and thrive based on intrinsic

drives, motivation, and knowing and understanding people. No wonder such a high premium is placed on this skillset in today's marketplace. Anywhere you go in the corporate world, this skill can be seen and experienced. You cannot form joint ventures and affiliate propositions without having people connect and collaborate to promote each other's products, programs, and services.

Collaboration is also necessary in your family and intimate social relationships. Leadership is greatly enhanced through collaborative teams and group synergy. That's why you have many people who can make to the tune of six and seven figures annually as a result of joint venture partnerships, affiliate promotions, project management, and the like. Learn how to bring people together, motivate and inspire them and you won't have to worry about what new market emerges when the dust settles after a crisis.

I hope you're seeing how this skill can make you a valuable asset to your company or to any organization. Your family life will also benefit since you'll be better equipped to handle the various personality types of relatives. Think about how much you can accomplish with virtual collaboration with great minds from all over the world. You can leverage tools and platforms like Slack, Monday, Freelancer, and UpWork. I've found great people online to bring several creative projects to life – that's because I've been honing my

collaborative skills for a few years now. You can do the same.

Skill number six is **High-Performance Hacking**. If you want to become an industry leader, if you want to thrive in the new world, in the new reality, in the new normal, in the new future – whatever we want to call it – then high-performance hacking will be crucial. It is the ability to tap into what makes you perform well at high levels. It is also utilizing the proven success strategies of super achievers to reach your lofty goals. Here are some of the qualities necessary to becoming a high-performance hacker.

* **Implementation.** We are now living in a world where people are not so concerned about how much you know. You may know a whole lot of things, but what separates winners and losers is one word, implementation. Implementers have a bias for action. They execute swiftly on what they know. This is the secret that makes some great while others remain average. Success loves speed and time kills deals. These are not just cute sayings; they're applicable to crisis preparation as well. It's not just about knowing that you need to prepare, or even about knowing how to prepare. At the end of the day, it's those who actually prepare who will reap the benefits and avoid unnecessary suffering.

Consider this: not everyone who is sick is sick because of the illness itself; they're sick because they

have not practiced or implemented good lifestyle habits. One of the reasons why people are not doing better financially is because they have not implemented financial discipline. Knowledge is important but applied knowledge is more important. So, what strategies or wisdom principles do you need to be implementing in key areas of your life? What good thing do you know you need to do but have not yet done it?

* **Consistency.** Closely connected to implementation is this power principle of consistently taking action, over time. This will help you not only to succeed but to sustain your success and efficiency as well. You don't want to be a one-hit wonder. The Good Teacher says, "Whoever endures to the end will be saved." Some start well but don't finish. After all, you can't eat broccoli and spinach for one week but not touch them for another month. You can't save from one or two paychecks only and expect to become debt-free or wealthy. Such behavior is not consistent and will likely not produce phenomenal results. The same holds true for emergency preparation.

When you apply both consistency and implementation together, you become a powerhouse for good. Consistency also begets trust. Especially in the digital world. The same goes for family life. Think about it. If you only tell them you love them once in a while, if you only demonstrate love when you feel like it, how confident do you think they'll feel about your love? You're not going to build trust like that because you

haven't been consistent. Therefore, develop consistency in the important things now; and when troublesome times arrive, you'll reap untold dividends from your consistent and disciplined lifestyle practices.

* **Motivation and Inspiration.** Now, these two words are related but not necessarily the same. Motivation is the drive, the energy, the motive for doing something. The one who can stay motivated the longest in the face of difficulties will endure and come out a winner. What motivates you and what do you do to stay motivated? To maintain motivation, I encourage you to surround yourself with people and things that build you up. In the morning, set your mind right. Listen to motivational speeches, watch motivational videos, and read motivational books.

But you'll also need inspiration. Being inspired naturally breeds motivation. When I'm inspired, I get it done. Many people keep waiting to be motivated in order to act (and then they blame lack of motivation for their inaction). Inspiration, on the other hand, is like having something that tickles your heart. It pulls you forward. Don't get me wrong, both are essential. But notice the man or woman who is truly inspired, and you'll find someone who is living on purpose. Generally, when you are inspired, you will get the motivation. But there are many people who are motivated, but not inspired to do anything that matters. Find out what inspires you and you will live a satisfied and happy life.

* **Creativity and Innovation.** We mentioned a little bit about this in one of the previous lessons about being productive. It is of utmost importance to know your creative times and what makes you creative. Ask yourself, when am I the most creative? Am I a morning or evening person? I'm most creative in the evening, when there's not much noise, or when I'm in the shower. I take long showers for this reason, so I can think and process. I find that I get special downloads during these times, which I then chronicle in my journal. With this inspiration, great things generally happen, as long as I act swiftly. But if I wait too long to implement these ideas, I find I miss opportunities.

* **Peak States.** This is where having a consistent routine becomes crucial. Peak states are *when* you are at your absolute best. If you get up in the morning and you do certain things a certain way, if you keep doing them consistently, it gets you into a peak state. When this happens on a continuous basis, you'll replicate success almost effortlessly. You must study yourself to learn about yourself. Experiment until you understand who you are and what makes you tick. When you figure this out, your performance will skyrocket and there'll be no limit to what you can do and who you can become.

* **Environment.** Your environment can make or break you. Therefore, create an environment that works for you and that brings out the best in you. Does your environment inspire and motivate you in

its present condition? Does it put you in a peak state of mind or does it drain, depress, or derail you? If your surroundings are dirty and disorganized, how does that impact your level of creativity?

I generally like my surroundings to have white and yellow paint because I like to see things bright, and I like the sun to come in. I also like seeing nature green, as it seems to lift my mood. When I wake up, I go downstairs and open all the blinds immediately, because I want to welcome the daylight into my house. I also like to have books around me; they make me feel smart (even if I don't get to read them all). Just looking at them inspires me to write my own. What kind of environment is ideal for you?

Set up your environment just the way you want it. If you like plants and beautiful things, whatever they are, be sure to have them in your surroundings. Don't neglect your bedroom. Your sleep routine is important to overall health and peak performance, so your bedroom should inspire you to sleep. If you have an office, the same guidelines apply. Help your environment help you. Hack your work environment for efficiency and innovation; when they're coupled with motivation and inspiration, you'll have a bastion of support for life's vicissitudes.

And last, but certainly not least, is skillset number seven, **Forecasting**. Why do we need to develop the ability to forecast during lockdown or quarantine? I

think it's self-evident by now. The good book says that the prudent (wise) foresee what is coming and takes precautions (Proverbs 22:3; 27:12). We can call that person a forecaster. Jesus said that when you see these things happen, you [should] know that it is near, even at the door (Matthew 24:32-33). He even rebuked the people by saying, "you know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times" (Matthew 16:2-3). Just as we can tell that it's going to rain when clouds are dark, we should be able to look at the signs of the times and know what we ought to do (like the sons of Issachar – 1 Chronicles 12:32). That is forecasting in a nutshell.

If you're going to thrive in the new world that comes after a major crisis, you have to be able to analyze trends well. We see the value of this skill in the investing world. Analysts look at a lot of data and are able to spot trends and recommend that investors buy or sell. Some analysts are so good that they help their clients to make money whether the market is up or down. How? By understanding the times and the science of trends. You too must be able to make similar decisions in your personal, spiritual, physical, social, and financial life.

How can you spot the next wave? Based on the scriptures above, you should look at what's happening in and around you. When you've seen all that's going on, what do you think is the best action to take? Is it time for you to pivot right now? What effect do

the rampant mental and emotional health-related problems plaguing society have on your analysis of the situation? If you had to change career paths, would something in the allied health field make sense now? If technology is leading innovation in most industries, would it make sense to get into something to do with cybersecurity or coding? From what you've observed about the Coronavirus pandemic, what will you do better or differently in the future should such a crisis strike again?

This valuable skillset requires a canny ability for sorting and mining data – another trend that seems to be opening lucrative doors. Unfortunately, the children of this world are wiser than the children of light in many ways. Countless companies the world over are mining the proliferation of information by the second. Over time, they develop a profile about you, based on your website browsing, and try to predict your habits. They notice key trends and patterns, and then make decisions based on observations of your behavior. Then they spend massive advertising dollars to put “trinkets” before your eyes, because, as it were, you told them to – based on your digital footprint across the web or on their site.

If, for example, every Monday, at 12:00 p.m., you go to Chipotle for lunch, then Google can show you an advertisement at 11:55 a.m. reminding you to go to Chipotle for lunch. Why? Because your device's location history shows you've been going there consistently

around that time – it has now become your predictable trend. And why shouldn't they? You've given them a pattern. They have seen your signs. Therefore, they can make certain forecasting based on data mining.

You can also use this approach to your advantage when planning and preparing for crises. Utilize free programs like Google Trends and Google Keyword Planning Tool. Simply search Google trends to see what is trending and the keyword tool to see what people are searching for online. By testing the pulse of your city, state, or nation in this way, you can position yourself and your family to make necessary adjustments before it's too late.

If you're in business or ministry and want to serve relevant content to your tribe or prospects, first see what they're already interested in and create content based on that Google keyword or phrase and Google trend. Furthermore, what are people buying the most on sites like Amazon and Alibaba? Right now, masks and sanitizers are big. People are buying up all sorts of emergency supplies. It means that's something is going on and people are responding accordingly. Even if the professionals say it's safe, the people are saying otherwise, based on their buying patterns. It means they don't feel truly safe.

Facebook, Mashable, Reddit, Medium, BuzzFeed, Trend Hunter, and YouTube are also excellent places for collecting data to help you with forecasting. What

are the most frequently watched videos? Which videos are going viral? This will tell you a lot, and if you have eyes to see and ears to hear, you'll make better decisions instead of shooting in the dark (so to speak). All of these platforms are places where you can get data about almost any subject. Use this knowledge for good and be a blessing to yourself and your family.

Section 4

Biblical Emergency Response Lessons



Chapter 8

The Blessings of Prophets and Prophecy

*“Surely the LORD GOD does nothing,
unless He reveals His secret to His
servants the prophets.”
(Amos 3:7)*

In these times, people are not perishing for a lack of knowledge, they perish for rejecting the knowledge of God (Hosea 4:6). In the days of patriarchs and prophets, God often revealed His divine will and plan for mankind to prophets who in turn shared God’s revelations with the people. The apostle Paul instructed the believers in Thessalonica, *“Do not despise prophecies [prophesying]. Test [prove] all things; hold fast to what is good”* (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21). We, as people of faith, are exhorted to *“Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper”* (2 Chronicles 20:20b). My friend, if you don’t want to suffer unnecessarily in life, embrace the gift and blessings of prophets and prophecy.

In the stories which follow, you'll discover vital lessons about God's emergency management strategies. He shares them with someone – generally a prophet – to bring about deliverance from crises. This pattern is replete throughout the Scriptures, so much so that the prophet Amos declared, *"Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets"* (Amos 3:7). As a person of faith, who has the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16; Philippians 2:5), you should never be in the dark concerning disasters upon the land. For *"Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand"* (Mark 4:11, 12). This is your strategic advantage!

Imagine the privilege it is to have the God of the universe see fit to share such things with us. But are your eyes and ears open to see and to hear? History repeats itself, my friend. Therefore, you can tap into the secret wisdom of God, revealed to and through His prophets, and make appropriate applications to similar life situations of your own. *"We also have the prophetic word made more sure, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts"* (2 Peter 1:19).

What then is the purpose of prophets and prophecy? Biblically speaking, a prophecy is a message from God, communicated to a human [prophet], who then shares

it with the intended audience. Especially in these end times is prophecy made relevant. Says the prophet Joel (and as quoted by Peter on the Day of Pentecost):

And it shall come to pass afterward,
that I will pour out my Spirit on all
flesh; your sons and your daughters
shall prophesy, your old men shall
dream dreams, and your young
men shall see visions. Even on the
male and female servants in those
days I will pour out my Spirit. And
I will show wonders in the heavens
and on the earth, blood and fire and
columns of smoke. The sun shall be
turned to darkness, and the moon to
blood, before the great and awesome
day of the LORD comes. (Joel 2:28-31)

* See also Acts 2:17-19 and Numbers
12:6, 8.

To thrive in the great day of trouble before us, discerning the voice of God and prophetic revelations are important. Of course, you should test the spirits and beware of deceptions. “To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, *it is because there is no light in them*” (Isaiah 8:20). I have an entire sermon series on how God speaks today, including the purposes and peril of prophecy. However, here are seven blessings of prophets and prophecy:

1. **Prophecy Keeps You Safe.** *“But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then know that its desolation is near. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, let those who are in the midst of her depart, and let not those who are in the country enter her. For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled”* (Luke 21:20-22). This prophecy concerning the destruction of Jerusalem (AD 70) was no surprise to Jesus’ followers. Couched within His prediction that, “There shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down” (Matthew 24:2-3) were also strategic insights on what to do when they saw the signs. Because they heeded the prophetic utterance, not one Christian lost their life during that siege.
2. **Prophecy Prevents Deception.** *“And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many”* (Matthew 24:4, 5). If you are not grounded in the Word of God and aware of what shall be, chances are high that you will be deceived. Jesus even warned that “there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, *if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect*” (Matthew 24:24). That’s why He has warned us beforehand. These strong delusions can only be withstood with a firm, “Thus says the Lord!”

3. **Prophecy Warns the Ungodly.** And the LORD spoke to Moses, “Go to Pharaoh and say to him, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Let My people go, that they may serve Me. But if you refuse to let *them* go, behold, I will smite all your territory with frogs”’” (Exodus 8:1, 2). Here we see that clear pattern where God reveals His intentions to His servant, the prophet, before it happens. (The same was the case when He appeared to Abraham before the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. He also sent Jonah, the prophet, with a message to Nineveh about their impending disaster, unless they changed.) If the ungodly heed the voice of the prophet, they experience God’s divine protection (just like the godly). This is contrary to the negative picture some paint of God. Out of His own mouth He declares, “*‘As I live,’ says the Lord God, ‘I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Turn, turn from your evil ways!’*” (Ezekiel 33:11)
4. **Prophecy Warns the Godly.** “*So you, son of man: I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore, you shall hear a word from My mouth and warn them for Me*” (Ezekiel 33:7). God sends ample warnings to both the just and the unjust. He gives everyone opportunities to avert peril. But if people of faith ignore the voice of the prophet and reject God’s message, then they will suffer the same

fate as the wicked who cling to their evil ways (see verses 12-20).

5. **Prophecy Brings Spiritual Maturity.** Spiritual gifts include prophets and prophecy “for the perfecting of the saints, *for the work of the ministry*, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12). “*Prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe*” (1 Corinthians 14:22). If you’re a person of faith, this applies to you – heed the prophetic voices of yesteryear and of today.
6. **Prophecy Strengthens Faith.** “*Now I [Jesus] tell you before it comes, that, when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He*” (John 13:19). When you see things happen that have been foretold in the Scriptures and prophecy, in particular, it should boost your confidence in who you are, whose you are, and what you believe. Stand firm on the promises of God because He who is faithful has promised and cannot lie.
7. **The Ultimate Purpose of Prophecy is to Reveal the Messiah** – Jesus Christ, as foretold through the prophet John in his apocalyptic book, Revelation (1:1-3). “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified *it* by His angel to His servant *John* ... *Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy,*

*and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is **near**.*” Jesus, God in the flesh, Himself messiah and prophet in helping His disciples to comprehend the significance of prophecies surrounding His death, burial, and resurrection, took them on a scriptural journey, “beginning at Moses and *all the prophets*, He expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning Himself” (Luke 24:27). He further instructed the people to “Search the scriptures; for in them you think you have eternal life: and they are they which testify of Me” (John 5:39).

My friend, see to it that you do not reject God’s prophets and, by all means, do not reject His voice in our times. For *“God, Who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son... See that you do not refuse Him who speaks. For if they did not escape who refused Him who spoke on earth, much more shall we not escape if we turn away from Him who speaks from heaven.”* (Hebrews 1:1-2; 12:25) Hear ye Him!

Chapter 9

Heaven's Stimulus Package

*“Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have
entered into the heart of man the things which
God has prepared for those who love Him.”*
(1 Corinthians 2:9)

The world is in desperate need of answers to the constant chaos we are experiencing. In just a few months of the novel Coronavirus, over thirty-four million people have been infected, and over one million are dead. In the United States, over twenty multi-million-dollar companies have filed for bankruptcy. Among them are popular names like JCPenney, Hertz, Neiman Marcus, J. Crew, Gold's Gym, Sizzler, Century 21, Lord & Taylor, Virgin Atlantic, and GNC. But God is still on His throne and while we're saddened by the deaths from COVID-19, we're still grateful that more people have recovered than have died. We praise God for the businesses that

are still thriving and those exhibiting resilience in the face of this compounded crisis.

Many are still in shock. They are wondering why all this is happening and are asking, how long is it going to last and, when will it all end? In such a time as this, the verse from Luke 21:26, resounds loudly, “*Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken.*” But as people of faith, we must never lose hope nor give in to utter despair. Prayers still move the arms that move the world! We can trust in the unseen, because we see through the eyes of faith, knowing that there is One who upholds the world and that bad times don’t last forever. Yet, we do not turn blind eyes to the reality of trials and tribulations around us.

People’s worlds have been turned upside down, and they’re finding it hard to adapt to the new realities of life and living. Add the pressures of surviving financially and it’s understandable that many are at their wits’ end. According to a headline in the *Washington Examiner*, “Nearly Half of Americans Live Paycheck to Paycheck.” Another in *Forbes* said, “78% of Workers Live Paycheck to Paycheck.” *Investopedia* carried an article titled, “Why Upper-Middle Earners are Living Paycheck to Paycheck – *Even those with six-figure incomes can struggle financially.*” To remedy this, the US government decided to put together a stimulus

package. Of course, no one will turn down money, but it only scratches the itch for about a month. What happens after that one month's rent, mortgage, or bills have been paid?

Now let's consider the role of a stimulus package. Merriam-Webster defines the word stimulus as something that rouses or incites to activity. The idea is to create a *specific* response. Similar words include incentive, encouragement, boost, inducement, inspiration, motivation, and provocation. In an economic sense, a stimulus package, according to *Investopedia*, is a coordinated effort to increase government/consumer spending, employment, and investment and lower taxes and interest rates in order to stimulate an economy out of a recession or depression. On March 26, 2020, the U.S. Senate approved a \$2 trillion stimulus bill to bolster the economy against the impact of the coronavirus.

However well-intentioned this stimulus plan may have been, did the package itself solve the health crisis? Did it solve the rising levels of anxiety and depression? Did it solve the domestic violence we've already highlighted? Did it fix the social unrest and put millions of people back to work? It may have been a Band-Aid, but it was insufficient to reverse the effects of a pandemic. Most of the problems created by such a crisis are not solved by money (alone). Where then can families find more than just temporary relief that leaves their other itches unscratched? The \$1,200 or \$2,400

stimulus check did not last long, and their problems still existed a few days or weeks after receiving it. What the world needs is a comprehensive stimulus package that's literally out of this world. They need a plan that covers all bases and won't add to the nations' already trillions of dollars in debt. What people urgently need is heaven's stimulus package. That's right! God has a stimulus plan that will scratch every itch in people's lives because heaven never goes into a recession. There are no downturns in heaven's stock market. God's economy enriches everyone, and His kingdom's citizens never have to worry about His government going bankrupt. That is the ultimate stimulus package and here's just a partial breakdown of what it entails:

1. **PROVISION:** Generally, the government is only providing for the financial health of the nation in its stimulus package. But not everyone used the money to stimulate economic growth. And while God may use the government for His purposes, do not look to the government to solve all your problems. They are not the source of your provision – God is! As a person of faith, your confidence should be firm in God's provision, because according to Psalm 23:1, "*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.*" His people shall not lack in times to crisis. They shall not want emotionally, physically, spiritually, socially, nor financially.

Why? Because God shall supply all their needs! Not according to His poverty, but according to His *riches* in glory (Philippians 4:19). They have no need to worry about food, clothing, and shelter since they put God's kingdom and His righteousness first in their life (Matthew 6:30-34). Hence you should always remember to be generous in good times so you can reap blessings in hard times (Proverbs 19:17; 3:5-10; Malachi 3:10-12).

2. **PEACE:** The psalmist David reminds us in Psalm 23:2 that, "*He makes me to lie down in green pastures: He leads me beside the still waters.*" The government's stimulus package didn't provide peace for the weary, battered, and bruised. But isn't it good to know that God gives peace in the midst of severe trials and afflictions? He provides rest for the weary, mentally, physically, and otherwise (Matthew 11:28). He doesn't give as the world gives. Oh, no! His peace brings calm to troubled and fearful hearts (John 14:1-3, 27). If that's not enough, He also gives an open invitation to cast *all* your cares upon Him because He cares for you (1 Peter 5:7). So whether there be pandemics, pestilence, plagues, or peril, "*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace*

of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

3. **PARDON:** The world is in desperate need of the pardoning grace of God. Says Psalm 23:3, *“He restores my soul: He leads me in the paths of righteousness for His name’s sake.”* Some are constantly seeking for the land to be healed, but there’s a covenant formula to claiming the blessings of 2 Chronicles 7:14. *If* His people who are called by His name will first humble themselves, pray, seek His face, and turn from their wicked ways, it is *then* that He will hear them from heaven, forgive their sin, and heal their land. It is therefore part of the duty of people of faith to do just what this verse requires. This is how you can be a major source of blessing to your nation. It’s that simple. God’s stimulus package includes love, mercy, grace, forgiveness, and restoration. That’s good for the human spirit, and all one has to do is repent and confess one’s sins and God will be faithful and just – not only forgiving but also cleansing from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:9). Guilt and shame weigh people down, and so many families have bitterness, resentment, and unforgiveness penned up inside them that it’s literally making them sick – if not killing them. This is a way to come clean and find healing for

the soul. The wise King Solomon once said, *"Whoever covers their sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy"* (Proverbs 28:13). God is near and can be found even in the heart of a pandemic or disaster. Simply return to the Lord and He will not only pardon but will do so abundantly, as stated by the prophet Isaiah (55:6-7). For where sin abounds, grace abounds much more (Romans 5:20).

4. **PROTECTION:** Disasters affect all people; therefore, everyone is subject to being touched in some way by crises. But there's divine protection that's readily available to you and your family. Psalm 23:4-5 says, *"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies: You anoint my head with oil; my cup runs over."* Evil can take many forms and is an enemy to our peace and prosperity. Death is an enemy. Disease is an enemy. Drought is an enemy. Depression is an enemy. But do not fear them, for even death is not final for the person of faith (Revelation 14:13; 21:4; 1 Corinthians 15:54-55). Plus, *"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore,*

we will not fear, even though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; *though* its waters roar *and* be troubled, *though* the mountains shake with its swelling” (Psalm 46:1-3; see also 91). God speaks protection to you, my friend, so be strong during this time. From His own lips He declares, “*Fear not, for I am* with you; be not dismayed, for I *am* your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.” (Isaiah 41:10)

5. **PROMISE:** Psalm 23:6 could be considered the ultimate promise of God. “*Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.*” This is the blessed hope available to everyone (Revelation 22:17) and which no crisis can steal. While we have one life to live in the here and now, God’s plan includes the gift of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (Romans 6:23; John 3:16). This is the abundant life spoken of in John 10:10. Yes, there are heavenly mansions and streets of gold – all PAID IN FULL! Yet the promise is not only for the hereafter but for right now, too. There are exceeding and

precious promises to claim for any and all crises that may come your way in this life. Therefore, accept heaven's stimulus package right now and share it. It is sufficient for all our needs! What more can you ask for? God's stimulus package has you thoroughly covered and pays dividends throughout eternity. *"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).

Chapter 10

Survival Secrets from Noah

“Since all these things are thus to be dissolved, what sort of people ought you to be in lives of holiness and godliness, waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn! But according to His promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.”

(2 Peter 3:11-13)

Genesis 6-9 records the global catastrophe – the flood – from which we can learn many valuable lessons about survival and emergency preparedness. First, Noah believed God’s prophetic warnings about the coming flood and he demonstrated his belief and respect for that divine insight by preparing for the disaster (Hebrews 11:7). He built the ark according to God’s specifications, not from his

own wisdom, but as God revealed it. Here are some other key takeaways:

- Don't be too caught up with living life that you get so comfortable and oblivious to what's really happening around you and in the world (Matthew 24:37-40).
- When you see the signs, do something about it. Get ready, be ready, and stay ready. Or else you may be caught off guard (Matthew 24:42-44).
- The way to remain in ready mode is to keep putting God first in your life and study His prophetic revelations in the Bible (Matthew 24:45).
- Remember, Noah had the ark finished *before* the deluge hit, so prepare yourself and family *before* the next crisis.
- Noah did not keep the message to himself; he warned other people about the impending peril. You must also warn your friends, family, co-workers, and even strangers when you receive divine downloads.
- Noah was not concerned about numbers and acceptance. He focused on his duty to prepare and to warn. He knew what he believed and followed his convictions. It may seem foolish to take certain actions because you are aware of dangers that do not appear to be urgent to

others. However, when disaster strikes, there's no time for regrets. You don't want to put yourself and loved ones in a vulnerable position because you're overly concerned with what others think about you.

- Noah did not mix up his priorities in life. He made sure his family was taken care of and onboard. They worked together to prepare, and this, no doubt, deepened their connections with each other. Noah did not neglect his responsibilities as a father or as a husband. Thus, his entire household was saved (1 Peter 3:20). You must also make sure to put on your own mask first, as it were, before you can help others. Your priority should be God, family, others, etc. In preparing to follow divine directions, include your family. God wants to save you all, together (Genesis 8:18).
- When evil goes unchecked, it becomes a catalyst for disaster. Genesis 6:1-7 gave the reasons for this crisis that broke the heart of God. The wickedness of human beings on earth was so great that it signaled some inevitable peril. So, likewise, when you see a rise in terrorism, repossessions, Sunday laws, anarchy, rampant violence and killings, destruction, martial law, and other civil unrest, you should go on high alert and protect yourself and family.

- God still gave the people probationary time to get their lives in order. This is in keeping with the character of God. As noted before, He often sends warnings to both the godly and ungodly before meeting out judgment. But do not presume upon His grace and mercy (Genesis 6:6-7).
- Noah and his family found grace in God's sight because they obeyed His voice and heeded His warnings. They did what was right in His sight (Genesis 6:8, 22). Hence the need for obedience, as noted in the section on boosting spiritual immunity.
- God specified to Noah the exact blueprint for building the ark, what to bring on board, and how much food would be needed to survive for the duration of the crisis (Genesis 6:14-21). In like manner, it is to your advantage to follow biblical injunctions for disaster preparations. We've already seen that in order to thrive, it will take more than governmental intervention, more than a stimulus check, and more than your own impulses. Just as Moses was given a blueprint to build the sanctuary, God has given us a heavenly blueprint for end-time living. Noah acted according to all that God commanded him, and so must you (Genesis 6:22; 7:5, 13-15; Hebrews 11:7).

- Noah gathered enough food for himself and the animals. This careful planning aided their survival. Invest in quality food sufficient for the needs of all your family members. Make sure it's enough to last a while, based on the number of people in your house. You will not always be able to buy or sell during certain crisis scenarios. Sometimes supermarket shelves go empty for days and weeks because others are stockpiling. Shipping may be delayed, so you may not get things when you need them most. Plan in advance for these eventualities. Remember, you can always review the chapters on boosting immunity for preparation tips. You can also ask God for wisdom concerning all these things (James 1:5; Jeremiah 33:3).
- After a while, there will be no more time for planning and preparing. The pandemic, pestilence, plague, or peril will hit, so use your present opportunities wisely (Genesis 7:1, 4).

Lastly, do not let others think for you, not even your leaders within and outside the Church or Christendom. Obey God rather than rulers (John 5:29; Psalm 118:8-9) when their counsel goes against the Word and voice of God. It is possible that when the people saw the exodus of animals going into the ark, people were momentarily impressed. But they still ridiculed Noah because none of their leaders validated

him. They discounted the possibility of rain because their leaders did not affirm the message. But after seven days, the rains came, and the flooding began (Genesis 7:7-10). Where were the leaders then? My friend, we must show respect for leadership at every level (Romans 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13; 5:5; Titus 3:1; 1 Timothy 5:17; 2:1-4; Hebrews 13:17). However, when you have a “Thus says the Lord,” it doesn’t matter what others may say or think. Follow God and leave the consequences to Him.

Chapter 11

Survival Secrets from Joseph

“Promotion comes neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the Judge: He puts down one, and exalts another.”

(Psalm 75:6, 7)

Genesis 37, 39-50 chronicles one of the most beloved stories of all times – the story of Joseph. It is set in the midst of a national and regional crisis, a devastating seven-year famine that caused neighboring countries to flock to Egypt to buy food. He’s even listed in the Hall-of-Faith chapter (Hebrews 11:22) along with the likes of Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, and Moses. Joseph’s inspirational pilgrimage gives hope, and rich lessons can be gleaned from each phase of his life – from his parents’ home to the pit, to Potiphar’s house, to prison, then to the palace, and ultimately as Prime Minister to Pharaoh – governor of all Egypt. Now would be a good time to study the story again for yourself to see what gems of wisdom you can unearth. Here are some of the crises and life lessons that stand out:

- Joseph knew that God was the source of his success and prosperity (39:2-5, 21, 23; 41:37-41). When you fully embrace this principle, you'll achieve greatness in every area of your life, kick excuses to the curb, and take full responsibility for your life. You will also be liberated from limited thinking and inferiority complex. There's no need to play office politics, game the system, or brown-nose your boss or supervisors. See also Psalm 1:1-3; 112; and Joshua 1:8.
- Joseph was faithful to God, loyal to his employer, and efficient in his duties (39:6). Promotion followed at each step – in Potiphar's house, in the prison, and in the palace. Be faithful where you are right now! Walk by faith and not by sight, because no matter your position or location, God can make you prosper. No one can stop your success. If God is going to bless you, He will bless you (36:22). Promotion comes from the Lord (Psalm 75:6-7). Become the most productive person you can, and when your boss can trust you with little or no supervision, you won't have to worry about being promoted. You'll notice that neither Potiphar, nor the Prison keeper, nor even Pharaoh concerned themselves with *anything* that was under Joseph's authority (39:6; 23; 41:40, 55). That's because Joseph was excellent in his work. Whatsoever his

hands found to do, he did it with all his might (Colossians 3:22-24). Even when others forget about you or break their promise to help you get to the next level, remember, God is your promoter, provider, and protector.

- Joseph was well-built and handsome in appearance (29:6b). He was healthy and took good care of his body and adornment. You too must take care of your body so your body can take care of you. In general, the fitter you are, the better you can and will perform. Carry yourself with respect. Dress well and smell good at all times. When you look good and feel good (about yourself), it radiates positivity throughout your body and boosts your self-confidence. For more creative ways to boost your physical wellbeing, review Chapter Two.
- Joseph had a great reputation because he valued a good name and remained loyal to both his God and his employer. He refused to betray the trust of those who believed in him and would not compromise his morality. He refused to engage in sexual gratification and adultery, which would be breaking the commandments of his God (39:7-12). He honored God and God honored him. Reputation capital is a major asset *anywhere*. As the wise King Solomon noted, “*A good name is to be chosen rather than riches, and loving favor rather than silver and gold*” (Proverbs 22:1).

- Joseph's innocence was evident, yet he still suffered for his integrity. He was sold by his brothers, accused of rape by his boss' wife, and forgotten by those he helped (37:23-28; 36; 39:13-20; 40:14-15). From this, we deduce that the world is indeed not always fair. And yes, bad things do happen to good people, just as good things happen to bad people. Sometimes faithfulness to God results in persecution, betrayal, loss, and other unjust treatment (Matthew 5:10-12, 44; John 15:20; 2 Timothy 3:12; 1 Peter 4:12-19) – remain faithful anyhow.
- Joseph got his wisdom from God (40:8; 41:16, 25). He understood the promises of James 1:5 and Jeremiah 33:3, that if he needed insights that were not of this world then he couldn't depend on himself or on doing things the world's way. We've already spoken about this at length. If perplexities should arise in your life, don't try to figure it all out alone; seek God for wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. Like Pharaoh and his officers, when you have troubling dreams, questions, and difficult decisions to make, seek out godly wisdom and counsel first (Psalm 1:1-2; Proverbs 11:14; 15:22; 24:6). Pray, then attack your problems with divine revelation.

- Dreams, visions, and warnings may not always come through the godly or people of faith. They may also be revealed to the ungodly or to outsiders and those who may not [yet] know the true and living God. When this is the case, the godly should have wisdom and discernment to give understanding to the matter. For example, Pharaoh, his chief butler and chief baker needed Joseph to interpret their dreams (40:5-23; 41). Nebuchadnezzar and Belshazzar needed Daniel (Daniel 2, 5) to solve their enigmas. Cornelius needed Peter to direct him in what to do next after the heavenly encounter (Acts 10). The Ethiopian diplomat needed Philip to clarify scriptural doctrine and prophecy (Acts 8; Zephaniah 3:10; Psalm 68:31). This is another call to familiarize yourself with the Holy Writ now.
- Though some may forget you, momentarily, if you remain faithful and excellent at what you do, then your work will make room for you. Others will speak well of you and you'll stand before great people in due time. Keep doing well, anyhow, and when you do come into the presence of greatness, dress appropriately for the occasion.
- Joseph gave credit when and where it was due (39:9; 40:8; 41:16, 25). When you are promoted or accomplish great things,

acknowledge the true source of your blessing. He did not become arrogant when he was successful, but remained humble and pointed to God as the source of his success.

- Joseph was a good communicator – he listened well before he spoke. When others are speaking, listen carefully. Do not interrupt their flow. Joseph patiently listened to entire dreams of Pharaoh and his two officers before responding (40:8-18; 41:15-36).
- God does not leave things in obscurity or ambiguity. Again, we see that God always sends ample warnings before a great event takes place (41:25-36; Amos 3:7). He often sends repeated signs and warnings so that people will know that a thing is certain, is near, or will happen soon (41:32; Daniel 2:25). He revealed specifically to Joseph what was about to take place and what to do about it. The wise take heed, plan, and prepare.
- There will be seasons of prosperity and seasons of leanness (41:29-32, 46-52). No one is totally immune to the latter. In times of plenty, plan and prepare for the future, enjoy life and marry the spouse of your dreams, have children, honor God, and save and invest (20%). It will help you tremendously when crises arise. While you should not hoard, be sure to do your due diligence to have an emergency fund

– a storehouse, as it were. Become debt-free, own your house, transportation, and land, get food and invest in agriculture, and establish safe shelters (41:34-36). Include others in your preparations and don't try to do it all alone. Solicit help from diligent people and those who are upright (41:33-39).

- Pharaoh and his leadership team saw the wisdom in Joseph's interpretation and emergency management strategy. They also discerned the spirit of God within him. You too must have the spirit of discernment to know when God's messengers are presenting sound advice for living prudently – especially in preparing for the final conflict of the ages. If you are willing and obedient to the voice of God, people will also see His spirit reflected in you and the way you live. You'll be a source of influence to help others live well (41:37-39).
- Joseph was only thirty years old when he ascended to the highest position in the country, second after the king (41:46). He went from the pit and prison to the palace – a great depiction of what God can do for anyone. Your beginnings do not determine your ending. Joseph was a slave, a foreigner, and by all standards, destined for mediocrity at best. Now he was governor over all Egypt. Isn't God awesome? No one could say they made

Joseph great. It was God and God alone whose favor and blessings permeated every aspect of Joseph's life. What others meant for evil, God meant for good (50:20).

- When hard times hit and seasons of prosperity fade, they reveal who were wise stewards and who were not. Sometimes it takes a crisis to expose areas of neglect. Some thrive in famine based on how they managed good times, while others hit rock bottom because they failed to plan and prepare well. This is not to cast shame on the latter camp. Even Joseph's father and brothers ran out of food. The point is to be prepared when you can, because it's better to give than to receive. You want to be in a position to feed others instead of hoping to be fed. He who stored, saved, and invested in times of abundance will have plenty to eat in times of scarcity and can "sell" to those in need (41:53-57).
- Note too that it often gets worse before it gets better. As stated in the section on financial immunity, how long can your family survive if you don't receive another paycheck? In times of severe crisis, nations and individuals tend to look after themselves (first). They will do what they can to feed their people and themselves; so woe be unto you if you're absolutely dependent upon another person, city, state, or nation for

your survival. If and when it does gets worse, don't immediately jump to your reserves. Exhaust what you have first (47:13-26) and give yourself and family "rations," as it were, so you can manage your supply in an extended crisis situation. If you manage your resources well, you'll be a blessing to countless others and may literally save lives – including your own.

Chapter 12

Survival Secrets From Job

*“For God may speak in one way, or in another,
yet man does not perceive it. In a dream, in a
vision of the night, when deep sleep falls upon
men, while slumbering on their beds, then He
opens the ears of men, and seals their instruction.
In order to turn man from his deed, and conceal
pride from man, He keeps back his soul from the
Pit, and his life from perishing by the sword.”
(Job 33:14-18)*

This story has been a tough one to digest even for people of faith. In many ways, it seems unjust, and it raises the question asked by each generation, “Why do bad things happen to good people?” Job experienced multiple crises, including pestilence, peril, and economic hardship. The story starts off introducing Job as a God-fearing, upright citizen who was also rich. He had it all – a large family, a great reputation and honor in his society, and a firm spiritual relationship with God Almighty (1:1-5).

That's indeed the ideal life! But crises are no respecters of person – a harsh reality of life for many to still grasp.

First, Job faced character assassination, not only from his friends but from the sinister mastermind himself – Satan (1:6-12). While “*A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, loving favor rather than silver and gold*” (Proverbs 22:1), you will not always be able to defend your reputation. That's why your words and actions should stand on their own. Besides, wisdom also teaches us to “*Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips*” (Proverbs 27:2). When your character is maligned, it can be disastrous, but in the spiritual realm, true righteousness and justice will win in the final analysis. Therefore, always do well and speak truth, and let the consequences be what they may.

Next, Job faced a series of back-to-back disasters that would shake the foundation of any family. He lost his property (wealth) when terrorists, bandits, raiders – call them what you will – killed Job's employees and took his possessions [oxen, donkeys, camels] (1:3, 14-15, 17). Then fire burnt his sheep and servants (1:16). As if those events were not terrifying enough, in the midst of receiving those bad pieces of news, Job also learned that a natural disaster – a whirlwind – killed all *ten* of his children! (1:18-19, 2). Right here is where many lose their faith and cannot reconcile with these unpleasant realities of life. Yet, the man on whom all these tragedies fell had a surprisingly different

response, one that ought to inspire us with hope and uncompromising fidelity to God and principle.

What did he do? “Job arose, tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshiped. And he said: ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.’ In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong” (1:20-22). Wow! That’s a level of maturity and spiritual growth that is rarely seen in these times. The lessons are many. Job remained faithful and resolute in his crises. He did not allow his emotions to get the best of him (though it would have been understandable). The man held firm to his convictions, faith, and high moral values. But that was not the end of Job’s crisis-filled life.

The bulk of the story centers on Job’s health crisis and his interactions with those closest to him during the ordeal. Job was struck with a horrid skin disease – painful boils from head to toe (2:1-8). It brought such anguish and frustration that even his wife said he should “curse God and die!” (2:9). Yet Job maintained his integrity, even rebuking his wife, so that he would “not sin with his lips” (2:10). What strong character is this? When you most need the support of those in your household and it’s not there, what do you do? Will you remain faithful to God and what you believe, even when it’s taking a toll on your marriage and health? Oh, for a faith like Job’s in these last days!

We get a closer glimpse into Job's untold suffering and physical condition through the reactions of his three friends. When they heard of all the adversity that had come upon Job, each one came to mourn with him and to comfort him. "And when they raised their eyes from afar, and did not recognize him, *they lifted their voices and wept; and each one tore his robe and sprinkled dust on his head toward heaven. So they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights*, and no one spoke a word to him, for *they saw that his grief was very great*" (2:11-13 – emphasis added).

Before we take the customary accusatory tone hauled against his friends, let us first consider their genuine intentions and true friendship. When we face calamities, it's a blessing to have friends (and family) close by. These friends did not seek to comfort Job from a distance, they came close and they showed their support with their presence. Imagine spending seven days mourning with a friend because you're in total shock over the perils that have befallen them. Do you have your support team of friends (and relatives) who can and will be there for you when you need them most? Do you have confidants with whom you can share your deep personal challenges? If you don't, now would be a good time to compile such a list or strengthen your relationships accordingly. Review the chapter on boosting social immunity for more on how to do that.

But as we will see, life may throw such a lethal crisis your way that not even your friends or relatives can be your bastion of hope. They may even make your suffering greater, as did Job's friends. It therefore behooves you to deepen your faith and internal fortitude now so that if such uncertainty were to happen to you, you'll have a better chance of standing firm like Job. Even if your friends turn out to be "miserable comforters" (16:2). Remember too that while you want to have others be there for you, make sure you're also there for them. *Whoever has friends must themselves be friendly* (Proverbs 18:24). Don't be a miserable comforter yourself. Sometimes it is better to be silent, especially in times of grief, and let your presence and actions do the talking.

The bottom line is that pandemic, pestilence, plague, or peril will at some point befall every human being. Crises will happen and no one can stop them all, for various kinds are totally out of our control. Wisdom necessitates that we plan and respond with discretion to survive each challenge. I'd venture to add that it's good to come to terms with the reality of death. Live right and have no fear of what will happen. Make up your spiritual mind to stand immovable, like Job, who was willing to lose his very life while clinging to his faith. His words of counsel have challenged and encouraged generations from biblical times. *"Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him. Even so, I will defend my own ways before Him. Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has*

taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD” (13:15; 1:21).

We all love a great story ending and Job’s does not disappoint. Yet while it’s a beautiful ending, some do not end this way. But as people of faith, we know that *ultimately*, it ends well for those who love God and are called according to His purposes. When God is for you no crises can assail you to the point of hopelessness – provided you’re able to plan and prepare as noted throughout this book. The LORD restored Job’s losses when he prayed for his friends. Indeed, the LORD gave Job twice as much as he had before. Then all his brothers, all his sisters, and all those who had been his acquaintances before came to him and ate food with him in his house; and they consoled him and comforted him for all the adversity that the LORD had brought upon him. Each one gave him a piece of silver and each a ring of gold. (42:10-11)

Now the LORD blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning. He [now] had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, one thousand yoke of oxen, and one thousand female donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters. In all the land were found no women *as* beautiful as the daughters of Job, and their father gave them an inheritance among their brothers. After this, Job lived one hundred and forty years and saw his children and grandchildren *for* four generations. Job died, old and full of days. (42:12-17)

Wrap Up

Congratulations on completing this book. My friend, we have now covered the pandemic survival secrets necessary to effectively plan and prepare for pestilence, plagues, and perils. We have studied how to *still* succeed and thrive in times of crisis and uncertainties. We've looked at the seven key skills you need to develop while in lockdown or quarantine; as well as biblical emergency response lessons. These strategies, rightly applied, will help you not to be caught off guard in the next disaster.

We may be coming out of a crisis, but very soon, if we are still alive on this earth, we will be going into more crises. There is a great time of trouble yet to come, as is foretold by the prophet Daniel, "... there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation..." (Daniel 12:1). Do you now choose to make plans and prepare for these times and what shall be? (See Genesis 32:22-32; Revelation 13:12-15; 16:1-21). Will you do your best to save, to get out of debt, own your home and some land, perhaps, and develop the necessary qualities to meet the impending crises that are coming? Will you also accept full responsibility for your actions or inactions concerning what you learned from this book? Both positive and negative?

Pray and ask God for wisdom, for the courage to do your part, and for faith to trust Him to do His part (because we already know, God cannot lie ~ Numbers 23:19; Psalm 89:34; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18). I hope these pandemic survival secrets have been beneficial and you'll implement what you've learned. If you want to take your learning to the next level then enroll in the *Pandemic Survival System* online course at www.strategicsecrets.com/pandemicsurvivalcourse and get access to premium bonus downloads. You'll also find other great content there not found in this book, such as *Coronavirus Contingency*, *Survival Secrets from the Exodus Saga*, *Rich Lessons from Poor Widows*, *How to Live off The Land Even if You've Never Left the City*, *Survival Self Defence Guide*, *How to Build The Ultimate Survival Disaster Kit*, and *Survival Secrets for Surviving Armageddon and the Seven Last Plagues*. Now that you know these things, happy and blessed you will be if you do them. *I wish you and your family all the best.*

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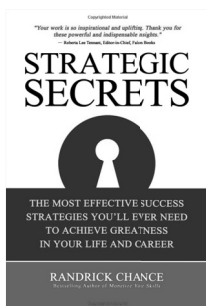
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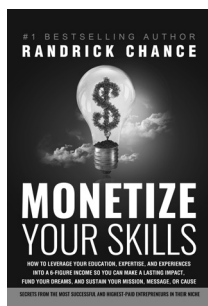
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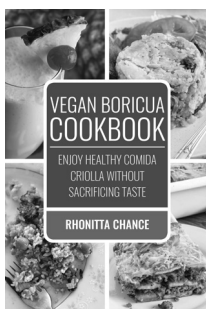
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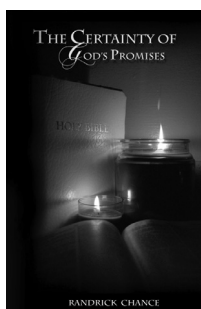
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