

33B '18

**Jeremiah: "Call upon me and I will answer you;
I will bring you back from every place"**

*There will always be times when we feel discouraged.
But let us not keep a chair for it, let us not entertain it,
let us not allow it to eat from our plate.
We were made for these times.*

We recently completed - shall I say survived - another election cycle. Some say we are at a moment in our country's history without precedent - a roiling at each others' throats that reveals a sickness that has touched every aspect of life in our country and her leaders.

**"Call upon me and I will answer you;
I will bring you back from every place."**

Some say we are at a moment in our church's history that is without precedent, a sickness that has touched every aspect of life in our church and her leaders.

**"Call upon me and I will answer you;
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Let me introduce to you Clarissa Pinkola Estes, an American poet, post-trauma specialist and Jungian psychoanalyst, and author of the book, *Women Who Run With the Wolves*. This is an article she wrote titled. "*We were made for these times.*"

"My friends, do not lose heart. We were made for these times. I have heard from so many recently who are deeply and properly bewildered. They are concerned about the state of affairs in our world now. Ours is a time of almost daily astonishment and often righteous rage over the latest degradations of what matters most to civilized, visionary people.

"You are right in your assessments. The lustre and arrogance some have aspired to while endorsing acts so heinous against children, elders, everyday people, the poor, the unguarded, the helpless, is breathtaking. Yet, I urge you, ask you, gentle you, to please not spend your spirit dry by bewailing these difficult times. Especially do not lose hope.

Most particularly because, the fact is that we were made for these times. Yes. For years, we have been learning, practicing, been in training for and just waiting to meet on this exact plain of engagement. Everything that has

happened to us up till now has been a direct preparation for what we are facing now.

"Those who sail recognize a seaworthy vessel when they see one. There have never been more able vessels in the waters than there are right now across the world. And they are fully provisioned and able to signal one another as never before in the history of humankind. When a great ship is in harbor and moored, it is safe, there can be no doubt. But that is not what great ships are built for.

"In any dark time, there is a tendency to veer toward fainting over how much is wrong or un-mended in the world. Do not focus on that. There is a tendency to fall into being weakened by dwelling on what is outside your reach. Do not focus there. That is spending the wind without raising the sails.

"We are needed for these turbulent times, that is all we can know. And though we meet resistance, we will more so meet great souls who will hail us, love us and guide us, and we will know them when they appear.

"Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of them that is within our reach. Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this poor suffering world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good.

"What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to, adding more, continuing. We know that it does not take everyone on Earth to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale.

"One of the most calming and powerful actions you can do to intervene in a stormy world is to stand up and show your soul. Soul on deck shines like gold in dark times. The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire. To display the lantern of soul in shadowy times like these - to be fierce and to show mercy toward others; both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity."

"Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it. If you would help to calm the tumult, this is one of the strongest things you can do. There will always be times when you feel discouraged. I too have felt despair many times in my life, but I do not keep a chair for it. I will not entertain it. It is not allowed to eat from my plate.

"The reason is this: in my uttermost bones I know something, as do you. It is that there can be no despair when we remember why we came to Earth, whom we serve, and who sent us here. The good words we say and the good deeds we do are not ours, they are the words and deeds of the One who brought us here.

I just came across a book yesterday by Michael Leach of NCR titled, "*Soul Searching*." It's about seeing God, the world and ourselves with the eyes of the soul. He says soul-searching is not about changing the world, it's about changing the way we see the world. Soul searching sees the light that breaks through the cracks in our lives.

*Just remember in the winter
far beneath the bitter snow,
Lies the seed that with the sun's love
in the Spring becomes the Rose.*

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