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Name

Prophetic
Blessings

DR. E. BERNARD JORDAN

Prophetic Blessings

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Preface

The blessings of the Lord are extravagant. What does it truly mean to be blessed? Do you have any idea what it entails to receive the blessings of the Lord?

We can never outgive God. God is teaching us to obey by keeping our tithes holy and being generous in order for us to detach from the power of money. Sometimes we worship money. Even in the Christian church, there are money-worshippers — idolaters — who need to repent and turn away from greed and pride. God is teaching you the principle of prosperity, and usually it is not in the way the world teaches you. The world can only teach you to generate limited wealth. However, when you obey the ways of the Lord for prosperity, then you can receive abundant and eternal blessings.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

<i>Chapter 1</i> THE FIRST MENTION OF BLESSING -----	1
<i>Chapter 2</i> GOD IS THE SOURCE OF ALL BLESSINGS -----	13
<i>Chapter 3</i> GOD PROMISES BLESSINGS THAT OTHERS CAN SEE AND BE BLESSED FROM -----	25
<i>Chapter 4</i> GOD'S BLESSINGS REPRESENT HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH US -----	39
<i>Chapter 5</i> THE WEALTH OF JACOB – CHASING AFTER THE BLESSING -----	52
<i>Chapter 6</i> THE BLESSING OF THE LORD MAKETH YOU RICH -----	66
<i>Chapter 7</i> PROPHETIC BLESSING IS THE SPACE OF SIGNIFICANT PROSPERITY -----	79
<i>Chapter 8</i> "SEEK FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD" -----	93
<i>Chapter 9</i> BELIEVE THE PROPHET AND PROSPER -----	105
<i>Chapter 10</i> A THOUSAND TIMES MORE -----	117
<i>Chapter 11</i> BLESSINGS OF FRUITFULNESS AND PROSPERITY -----	130
<i>Chapter 12</i> BLESSINGS OF GOOD HEALTH AND LONG LIFE -----	142
<i>Chapter 13</i> BLESSINGS OF PEACE AND VICTORY OVER ENEMIES ----	156

<i>Chapter 14</i>	BLESSINGS OF BEING BLESSED BY FUTURE RESTORATION -----	170
<i>Chapter 15</i>	PROPHETS TEACH THE FEAR OF THE LORD -----	182
<i>Chapter 16</i>	GOD'S BLESSINGS CANNOT BE CHANGED BY PROPHETS -----	194
<i>Chapter 17</i>	GOD GIVES US A CHOICE BETWEEN A BLESSING AND A CURSE THROUGH A PROPHETIC WORD -----	205
<i>Chapter 18</i>	BLESSED ONCE, BLESSED FOREVER -----	217
<i>Chapter 19</i>	THE BLESSING IS MEANT TO BE ENJOYED -----	230
<i>Chapter 20</i>	YOUR WORK IS A CHANNEL OF GOD'S BLESSINGS -----	242
<i>Chapter 21</i>	BLESSINGS ARE SOMETIMES UNDESERVED -----	254
<i>Chapter 22</i>	YOU ALWAYS GET THE BLESSING YOU DESERVE -----	267
<i>Chapter 23</i>	BLESSINGS COME FROM TITHING -----	279
<i>Chapter 24</i>	GOD'S BLESSINGS IS RELEASED THROUGH FAITH -----	291
<i>Chapter 25</i>	THE CONDITIONS OF GOD'S BLESSINGS FOR THE PROPHET -----	303
	ENDNOTE -----	315

Chapter 1

The First Mention of Blessing

“Concentrate on counting your blessings and you’ll have little time to count anything else.”

Woodrow Kroll

POWER TRUTH

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 1:3 NRSV

BLESSINGS

❖❖ Bless you.” The thought of being blessed is such a wonderful concept in our culture that even people who don’t believe in God freely give and receive such a statement. Go online, look up the hashtag, “#blessed,” and find yourself staring at a screen with millions of posts containing the word. People certainly have no trouble claiming that they are blessed, nor do they shy away from saying it outright. It’s a word that crosses cultural, religious, and political beliefs and is universally wanted if not coveted.

“Bless you.” The thought of being blessed is such a wonderful concept in our culture that even people who don’t believe in God freely give and receive such a statement.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 1

However, what we need to know is that being blessed is not limited to having the latest clothes or flying to the most extravagant island. You can be blessed even if you don't have certain material things. People nowadays have twisted the word blessed and claimed it for their own without really understanding where the word came from in the first place.

*You can be blessed even if you don't
have certain material things.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 2

There is this thing we call “the law of first mention” in literature. This means that we go back to the very first mention of the word to qualify and understand what it truly means, all other influences and interpretations aside. As such, in our intention to understand the heart of being blessed and what being given a blessing truly means, we need to go back to the first time this word was ever mentioned. This takes place in the creation story found in the very first chapter of the very first book of the Bible:

²⁰ God said, “Let the seas be filled with living things. Let birds fly above the earth across the huge space of the sky.”²¹ So God created the great sea creatures. He created every kind of living thing that fills the seas and moves about in them. He created every kind of bird that flies. And God saw that it was good.²² God blessed them. He said, “Have little ones so

that there will be many of you. Fill the water in the seas. Let there be more and more birds on the earth.”²³ There was evening, and there was morning. It was day five. (Genesis 1:20-23)

Genesis 1:22, shows the very first mention of the word “blessing” in the Bible. From the beginning of the world, it has been in the Lord’s vocabulary, intrinsic in all that He does – He blesses.

Fascinatingly enough, the very first blessing was not made towards humans. It was not said over Adam and Eve. Rather, God blessed His creation on the fifth day, right before He created man on the sixth day. This highlights the fact that the Lord gives animals the ability to reproduce and multiply.

People even fear these creatures, in particular the sea creatures, believing them to be gifted with the divine.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 3

We still have several cultures in several nations up to this day and age who worship animals and plants, believing that they give us life and thus should be worshipped. People even fear these creatures, in particular the sea creatures, believing them to be gifted with the divine. However, this is quickly disproven in Genesis where we can see how it is the Lord who gave these animals the ability to just become, much less reproduce.

BLESSING IS MULTIPLICATION

It can easily be seen in the verse that the animals and creatures were blessed, followed by the statement that they were to go and reproduce. This is echoed the second time the word blessing is mentioned:

²⁶ Then God said, “Let us make human beings so that they are like us. Let them rule over the fish in the seas and the birds in the sky. Let them rule over the livestock and all the wild animals. And let them rule over all the creatures that move along the ground.”

²⁷ So God created human beings in his own likeness.

He created them to be like himself.

He created them as male and female.

²⁸ God blessed them. He said to them, “Have children so that there will be many of you. Fill the earth and bring it under your control. Rule over the fish in the seas and the birds in the sky. Rule over every living creature that moves along the ground.”

Very similar to the Genesis 1:22, God blessed Adam and Eve and then followed this with a statement on having children. Other versions of the Bible translate this as “go forth and multiply.” Needless to say, Biblical statements on blessings are very closely tied to multiplication.

You probably have heard of the story of Abraham and Isaac. Abraham waited a hundred years to have Isaac. For decades, even in his old age, he held on to the promise the Lord made him that

he would have children of his own with Sarah. When he did finally receive the promise of Isaac, the Lord decided to test Abraham's heart.

One day, the Lord called Abraham and asked him to take his only son, the one he loved, to a place called Moriah. He was to give his son there to the Lord as a burnt offering by sacrificing him in the mountain the Lord would show him. As if that was not clear enough, the Lord particularly mentioned the name of Isaac instructions. Scripture does not document how Abraham reacted to this or how his heart broke, but we can sympathize and walk ourselves through the story, familiarizing ourselves with the emotions Abraham probably felt at the time.

For decades, even in his old age, he held on to the promise that the Lord made him that he would have children of his own with Sarah. When he did finally receive the promise of Isaac, the Lord decided to test Abraham's heart.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 4

In the midst of the turmoil, Abraham got up early the next morning and loaded his donkey. I think that communicates something. He did not delay his obedience, nor did he give in to his emotions. He just did as the Lord asked him; and so he cut enough wood for the burnt offering, took with him two servants as

well as Isaac, and went on to go to the place God had shown him.

On the third day Abraham saw the place a long way off. He told his servant to stay with the donkey while he and Isaac go to the place to worship. Then he said that they will go back afterward.

Notice that Abraham said that he and Isaac will return to the servants after they worship. This implies that Abraham believes that God has a plan all along and that whether or not he gives up his son then, the Lord has more than enough ability to give his son back to him. This is why he is known as the father of faith! So, Abraham had Isaac carry the wood for the burnt offering. He himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them walked on together, Isaac couldn't help but notice that there was no lamb for the burnt offering and so he asked his father where the sacrifice was.

Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son", and the two of them walked on together.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 5

Abraham answered, "God himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son," and the two of them walked on together. After a while, they reached the place God had shown Abraham. There Abraham built an altar. He arranged the wood on it, then he tied up his son Isaac. We don't really know whether Isaac put up a fight and we don't know what kind of

explanation Abraham gave his son but considering that Abraham was beyond a hundred years-old and Isaac was a strong young man, we can only presume that he yielded to this turn of events and prepared to sacrifice himself as well.

After Abraham placed him on the altar and raised the knife to plunge through his son, an angel of the Lord interfered and called out to him from heaven. He was then instructed not to harm the boy, for now he knows that he would do anything for God – even preparing to give up his only son in the process. He then saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush and he took this to be a burnt offering instead of his son. So, Abraham named that place, "The Lord Will Provide." To this day people say, "It will be provided on the mountain of the Lord."

The angel of the Lord called out to Abraham from heaven a second time. Now, people say that this angel was actually Jesus, though he was not recognized in the Old Testament and thus could not be addressed as such. He gave Abraham the promise of blessing because of what he had done.

The Lord promised that He would make the children born into Abraham's family as many as the stars in the sky and as many as the grains of sand on the seashore. They won't just be many but they would take over the cities of their enemies. All nations on earth would be blessed because of his children and all those things were to happen because Abraham obeyed his God.

When the Lord wants to bless us He does so by multiplying what we have in our hands right now.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 6

We look back to the number of times the Lord has made similar promises to Abraham. He was told that his offspring would be as much as there are stars in the sky and sand in the seashore. That's quite a huge, innumerable number right there and it's all tied to the blessing of the Lord upon Abraham.

I do think that this extends beyond the multiplication of children. When the Lord wants to bless us, He does so by multiplying what we have in our hands right now. It is His desire to see us be fruitful in all that we do. At the end of the day we can either take what He gives us or turn it away.

Let's put this into perspective: think of the animals today. Did they go fill the water and the air? Yes, they did. And yet a lot of them are now endangered because of the way we responded to them growing in number. Think of the attacks of the enemy on us today. A good majority think of children as a burden, and couples get married under the agreement that they wouldn't have any simply because they want more time to focus on their careers. Animals are being neglected and soon enough there will be more plastic and waste in the sea than fishes. This is beyond a call to be environmentally friendly, although I do urge you to be accountable with what the Lord has entrusted us. I want you to be aware of the fact that there will be opposition to the Lord's blessings.

We have to obey the direction that is attached to the promise of blessing.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 7

When you look at our time today, it's rather easy to analyze and see that one of the things the enemy tries to hold us back on is multiplication. Whether that is multiplication of animals, people, even finances – there seems to be a barrier, something that wants to stop us. Seeing how the Lord actually mentions multiplication with blessing makes us understand why this is such an important matter to understand.

Notice in the passage above that Abraham had to pass a certain test before the Lord blessed him. We want to multiply. We want to bear fruit. To be able to do so, we have to understand what it means to truly be blessed. We have to obey the direction that is attached to the promise of blessing.

BLESSING IS SUPERNATURAL INCREASE

Blessings involve supernatural moves of God. We like to pinpoint daily things and consider them as blessings, and surely, they are. However, it is the big things, the milestone moments that make us stand amazed. These are grand things that take our breath away.

When the Lord blesses us, it's not just to increase, but it is to increase in a way that conveys His power. Try to think about the number of fishes in the sea, the birds of the air. I can't even wrap my mind around it. It's far too grand for my mundane mind to quantify.

When the Lord blesses us, it's not just to increase, but it is to increase in a way that conveys His power.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 8

I find myself just as baffled that the Lord wanted so many of us and that he knows each of us by name. There are eight billion people roaming around the world right now. That's quite a large number, a number we can't quite quantify. There are hundreds of babies being born every minute, and I'm pretty sure the statistics can't keep track of them all.

When the Lord wants to increase us, He doesn't just do so by giving us things twice over. The words "hundredfold" and "thousandfold" must be familiar to you; this is because we repeatedly claim such when we say that the Lord will bless us. He isn't a meager God. He is a God who gives grand, good things.

A lot of us try to increase through our own toil and effort. We think that we can work our way to better things. While there is truth that our faithfulness to our work and our diligence will be rewarded, only the Lord can truly bless and increase us.

Science can't explain how the five loaves of bread and two fish managed to feed five thousand families. We can only chalk it up to the blessing of the Lord upon the food; that's why it was able to multiply as it did.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 9

Looking to the time Jesus fed the five thousand, it's amazing how Jesus just blessed the loaves and fish and they supernaturally increased. There is no possible, logical reason to chalk up what happened to just some trick. Science can't explain how the five loaves of bread and two fish managed to feed five thousand families. We can only chalk it up to the blessing of the Lord upon the food; that's why it was able to multiply as it did.

Again, I have to emphasize here how we count our daily interactions with life and the people around us as blessings, which is good. This cultivates gratitude and wonder in our hearts. However, we also need to understand that there is so much more that the Lord could give us. This may sound selfish to you, but in fact, this is something He finds pleasure in doing. It is His joy and His glory that we are blessed, that we multiply, and that His capacity for supernatural increase is seen in and through us. We just have to receive this and believe in His kindness and goodness.

Jesus took what the people offered him - that is just five meager loaves and two tiny fish and increased

it far beyond what we can comprehend. That is what happens when we give to the Lord whatever we have and decide that our lives are for Him to use.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank You for Your heart that wants to bless and increase us. From the beginning, you have shown how generous and gracious you are in speaking blessings. I pray that I will receive whatever you want to give me. May I not demand nor interpret blessings the way I want to, but rather, let me hold on to you who supernaturally multiplies and gives increase – whether this is upon my work, studies, relationships, or family. May it be all of the above and more.

Help me go forth and multiply as spurred on by your power and grace, being accountable to you for the things you have entrusted to me. As Abraham held on to your promise of blessing, so will I. In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 2

God is the Source of All Blessings

“Have you heard God’s blessing in your inmost being? Are the words, ‘You are my beloved child, in whom I delight’ an endless source of joy and strength? Have you sensed, through the Holy Spirit, God speaking to you?”

Tim Keller

POWER TRUTH

²⁴ The Lord bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the Lord make his face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the Lord lift up his countenance upon you, and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26 NRSV

THE GOODNESS OF GOD

Growing up, I often heard the phrase, “God is good.” We sang it in church, the elders liked finishing each other’s sentences with it - it has become a statement that is widely spoken and widely heard. People who have never stepped foot in a church are probably just as familiar with the phrase as we are.

Growing up, I often heard the phrase "God is good." We sang it in church, the elders liked finishing each other's sentences with it - it has become a statement that is widely spoken and widely heard.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 10

However, while it's supposed to be a belief that we hold dear, considering the way it has been consciously and unconsciously pounded into our heads, it's not really something we know in our hearts. Even if goodness is an infallible attribute of God, most of us end up questioning how true this is. Sometimes, even when the things that happen to us are mere consequences of our actions, we point fingers and place all the blame on God. Then when good things come our way, we like to take all the credit and say that we deserve them.

We tend to neglect the fact that we are mere creations of God who have been given the privilege to delight in Him and the things that He gives us.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 11

We tend to neglect the fact that we are mere creations of God who have been given the privilege to delight in Him and the things that He gives us. Instead of approaching our days with the disposition of gratitude and joy, we tend to approach them with entitlement and cynicism. If this is so, then it shouldn't really be a surprise that we fail to see all the good things He gives us in between.

Let's take a young single mother who works for her child. The way she would approach her situation all depends on her disposition. If she sees her baby as a blessing, then she would eagerly work and delight in taking care of him at the same time. However, if she looks at her baby as a burden, then she would be making snide remarks about her baby. In fact, her child would probably be mistreated and neglected while she bemoans how she now has lost her opportunity to thrive in her career because of him.

Is it the baby's fault? Certainly not. The fact that he was created in the first place was definitely out of his control. However, this is the true story of thousands of men and women across the globe. They grew up scarred, neglected, unwanted – and why? Because the parents failed to see their children as blessings for which to thank God. Instead, they shook their fists at God and then turned to their children and laid their fists on them as well.

Meanwhile, there are thousands of barren women kneeling before God each and every day asking for the opportunity to raise a child. Biological or not is no longer of consequence, they just want to nestle a baby in their arms. Surely, the moment a child is bestowed upon them, they would be crying tears of joy, thanking the Lord that He has blessed them with such a gift.

It's so easy to apply this in our everyday lives. The student who complains about having to go to school fails to recognize that there is someone his age out there who walks two hours daily just to be able to go to school. The daughter who complains about having parents who check up on her fails to see that there are plenty of women who grow up unattended and end up living broken lives because their parents couldn't be bothered to care about them.

It's so easy to be blinded by artificial lights these days that we can no longer look at the One who gives us true light – the light that does not dim out.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 12

In fact, there's something we call "first world problems." It's all across social media. Having grown up privileged with easy access to whatever we want has turned us into brats who bark at any moment of small inconvenience. It's so easy to be blinded by artificial lights these days that we can no longer look at the One who gives us true light – the light that does not dim out.

ALL BLESSING IS FROM GOD

The Scripture exhorts us:

¹⁶ My dear brothers and sisters, don't let anyone fool you. ¹⁷ Every good and perfect gift is from God. This kind of

gift comes down from the Father who created the heavenly lights. These lights create shadows that move. But the Father does not change like these shadows. (James 1:16-17)

Every good gift comes from above. God does not settle for anything less than good. If we take a look at the first chapter of the Bible, we can see how important it was to God to state that whatever He created was good. In the second chapter, when He saw that it was not good for man to be alone, He immediately made moves to make it good.

*Our ability to work and produce
wealth comes from God. Our breaths
come from God.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 13

Everything we receive that is good comes from God. It does not come from us, our prominence, our wealth, or our abilities. We have to understand that whatever we have comes from God. Our ability to work and produce wealth comes from God. Our breaths come from God. Everything that we are able to attain and accomplish is still hinged on the goodness of God.

King David, someone who is widely known for having been very rich, approached the Lord with such a disposition: "God, have mercy on us and bless us" (Ps. 67:1). This is spoken by a man who has riches within his reach and men at his disposal. He acknowledges and recognizes that only the Lord can

bless him, and he understands that blessings are by the Lord's mercy.

Think about it this way. David never told God, "I deserve this because I have served You in so many ways. I slayed the giant Goliath, I submitted to King Saul, and I have led this nation to its prosperity." He never spoke about what he deserved because he knew that he deserved none of the things with which God has blessed him. He knew that what he truly deserved was punishment for his sins and death for the lives he has taken.

When we think about the things David has done, and his story spanned several books in the Bible, we would think that he deserved everything that was coming to him. In fact, he was "good enough" to have had not just Bible stories written about him, but he has also written a book that can be found in the Bible. Speaking about accomplishments for the kingdom of God, we can say that he probably deserves to have more given him than us.

*We are only able to bless other people
through the blessings God has al-
ready given us beforehand.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 14

Yet he never demanded. He never shook his fist at God and said, "I did this for you, so bless me with this." Let's be honest. We probably have done that at a certain point in our lives. But here is a man who has done so much for God and has demanded barely anything in return. He viewed serving God

as an honor and a delight, not a chore that had to be repaid.

We don't bless ourselves. We neither have the capacity nor the capability to do so. We are only able to bless other people through the blessings God has already given us beforehand.

God doesn't owe us anything and we don't deserve anything He has given to us. We don't deserve all the good things that are to come, as well. Yet because He is good and His heart towards us is kind, He gives anyway. Even if what we truly deserve is death, He gives us life and life full of His blessings.

BLESSINGS ARE GOOD

King David also went on to state in Psalm 16:2, "You are my Lord. Without You, I don't have anything that is good." It is impossible for something to be good and not be of God. It is impossible for something to be from God and not be good, because God embodies and reinforces the definition of that which is good.

It is impossible for something to be from God and not be good, because God embodies and reinforces the definition of that which is good.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 15

If you stole money for your mother's chemotherapy, can you still say that the provision that came upon you is good? Can it still be counted as a blessing if it's hinged on a crime? If we truly want

the Lord's blessings, we have to hold on to them in faith knowing that we are His children and that He will come through for us. This verse states it perfectly:

A single day in your courtyards is better than a thousand anywhere else.

I would rather guard the door of the house of my God than live in the tents of sinful people.

¹¹ The Lord God is like the sun that gives us light.

He is like a shield that keeps us safe.

The Lord blesses us with favor and honor.

He doesn't hold back anything good from those whose lives are without blame.

¹² Lord who rules over all, blessed is the person who trusts in you. (Psalm 84:10-12)

It's not a blessing if it's something done in evil. Only good comes from God and all that is from God is good. A way to delve into the goodness of God and what it truly means can be found in Psalm 73, in particular. Here the psalmist reflects on how good the Lord has been to Israel, in particular those who have pure hearts. He recounts how his feet had almost slipped and how he had almost tripped and fallen because he envied the proud and sinful people who were doing well. They were re-living their lives with no troubles, had healthy and strong bodies, and seemed to have less problems than most people. They may have had their fair share of problems, but they didn't suffer as other people do. From the outside looking in, it's not a surprise that our author began to long for what they had.

Here the psalmist reflects on how good the Lord has been to Israel, in particular those who have pure hearts. He recounts how his feet had almost slipped and how he had almost tripped and fallen because he envied the proud and sinful people who were doing well.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 16

They wore their pride proudly and were mean and sinful. There was no limit to the evil things they could think. Not only do they look down on others, but they also curse them and speak words of hatred. They threaten others with how powerful they are and brag as if they own heaven itself. They act as if they control the earth, and soon enough, many people believed that they did. Not only were they listened to, but they were feared. They also went about their days with no fear of the Lord, going as far as mocking Him and saying that He could not stop them.

The psalmist ponders on how it seems as if he has kept his heart pure for no reason. He washed his hands and kept himself clean and pure, but day after day he has been in pain while the sinful people don't have a care in the world, but they keep on getting richer and richer. He tried to understand it, as probably a lot of us do, but it was more than he could handle. He was troubled as it was, that is until he entered the Lord's temple and was once again confronted by

God's glory and righteousness. Then he understood what will truly happen to bad people in the end: the Lord will make them slip and fall and he will throw them down and destroy them – not because He is a God of hate but because He is a God of justice.

Through everything, the Lord held his hand and gave him wise advice to guide him.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 17

At one time, the psalmist may have been sad and bitter, but that is only due to the fact that he was ignorant. He now acknowledges that amidst all his emotions and perceptions, he really did not know anything after all to even act like a wild animal before the Lord. But at the end of it all, he knows that he remained with the Lord and the Lord remained with him. Through everything, the Lord held his hand and gave him wise advice to guide him. And when he dies, the Lord will take him away into the glory of heaven. I don't think there is a better promise.

Because of this, the psalmist states that he doesn't want anyone in heaven but God, nor does he want anything on earth besides Him. Though the body and heart grow weak, he acknowledges that God is the One who gives strength to his heart, and He will be everything he will ever need.

Those who reject the Lord and don't want anything to do with Him will die in every way and He will destroy those who aren't faithful to Him. But the

psalmist knows that as long as he remains close to the Lord, he is okay.

This mirrors what is in the hearts of most of us. Why does it seem that people who are bad and those who take advantage of others seem to be more “blessed?” How is it that even if I keep serving the Lord and even if I give my tithes, my neighbor who sells drugs is still richer than I am? This is because we box the goodness of God and what it truly means.

Having the ability to draw near to God, being able to talk to Him openly and without fear of condemnation is the greatest blessing we could possibly ever receive – if only we would recognize it as such.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 18

His blessings are more than the tangible. It is more than prosperity and fame. It boils down to, primarily, our relationship with Him and our relationships with other people. Having the ability to draw near to God, being able to talk to Him openly and without fear of condemnation is the greatest blessing we could possibly ever receive – if only we would recognize it as such. In the end, whatever draws us near to God is actually what can be counted as good.

The good thing about God’s goodness is that it’s constant. 2 Samuel 7:21 says that according to God’s heart, He does all these wonderful things for

us. He is not bound by time nor circumstance. He cannot be restrained by our mistakes and failures. God is good to us, even if we don't deserve it.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for all the good things that You have done for me. Thank you for being completely good in every way. I pray that You continually open my eyes to see all the ways in which You are good and let me acknowledge how all the good in my life comes from You.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 3

God Promises Blessings that Others Can See and Be Blessed

“I refuse to become panicky, as I lift up my eyes to Him and accept it as coming from the throne of God for some great purpose of blessing to my own heart.”

Alan Redpath

POWER TRUTH

Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of the prophecy, and blessed are those who hear and who keep what is written in it; for the time is near.

Revelation 1:3 NRSV

THE PURPOSE OF BLESSING

It's a joy to revel in the blessings that we have been given, isn't it? Being able to buy what we want and do whatever we want is a pleasure, to say the least. So, it should not come to us as a surprise when our train of thought when we have a certain amount of spending money is, how are we going to splurge it on ourselves. We usually end up wanting to buy that dress we've been trying to justify purchasing or we want to have dinner in that fancy new restaurant all the local newspapers are raving about.

As a man with access to just about anything, he afforded to do anything he could have ever wanted.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 19

Now, doing so would not be a bad thing. In fact, King Solomon said in his writings that he has seen what is good. As a man with access to just about anything, he afforded to do anything he could have ever wanted. The best of the land was always at his disposal, and he would barely bat an eyelash at whatever the cost may have been because he was wildly abundant. So, he knows and tells us from experience that it is good for a person to eat and drink and be satisfied with all the hard work that they have put in. According to him, that is what one should do during the short life God has given, as that is what a person is made for. When God gives a person wealth and possessions, He also makes it possible for that person to enjoy them. God helps them accept the life he has given them. God helps them to be happy in their work. All these things are gifts from God.

When God gives a person wealth and possessions, He also makes it possible for that person to enjoy them. God helps them accept the life he has given them.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 20

The Lord actually delights in us delighting in our blessings. We hear people tell us that we must enjoy the fruits of our labor and indeed, we shall. Our God is a loving Father, and He would want to see His children enjoying the best of the land, similar to how we would want our children to have and experience the best, as well. That's why parents make deliberate efforts to save money so that their children can go to the best schools, visit the most thrilling theme parks, and experience what it's like eating in the best restau

Similar to the heart of a father, it is in God's heart that we learn to share what we have. It's quite a common phrase we tell children as they grow up, we tell them to share their blessings. I have talked to parents who saw how their children gave and shared even without the need to tell them to, and you can sense the pride and joy that they have knowing that their legacy is developing a heart and spirit that is generous to the extent of their abilities. I can imagine God smiling down upon us, the delight of His heart brimming whenever we do the same. A quick look at the New Testament goes to show just that:

⁶ Here is something to remember. The one who plants only a little will gather only a little. And the one who plants a lot will gather a lot. ⁷ Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give. You shouldn't give if you don't want to. You shouldn't give because you are forced to. God loves a cheerful giver. ⁸ And God is able to shower all kinds of blessings on you. So in all things and at all times you will have everything you need. You will do more and more good works.

⁹ It is written,

“They have spread their gifts around to poor people. Their good works continue forever.”

¹⁰ God supplies seed for the person who plants. He supplies bread for food. God will also supply and increase the amount of your seed. He will increase the results of your good works. ¹¹ You will be made rich in every way. Then you can always give freely. We will take your many gifts to the people who need them. And they will give thanks to God.

¹² Your gifts meet the needs of the Lord’s people. And that’s not all. Your gifts also cause many people to thank God. ¹³ You have shown yourselves to be worthy by what you have given. So other people will praise God because you obey him. That proves that you really believe the good news about Christ. They will also praise God because you share freely with them and with everyone else. ¹⁴

Their hearts will be filled with love for you when they pray for you. God has given you grace that is better than anything. (2 Corinthians 9:6-14)

The overflow of the blessings of the Lord in and through our lives should cause others to worship Him. It is not just for us. Paul writes here that they have shown themselves worthy of what they were given. They give freely, joyfully, and they allow themselves to be emptied that God can fill them up to overflow yet again.

Now, Paul was pertaining to the Corinthian Church above, praising them for generosity. But there

is one more church mentioned in the chapter before this that spoke a great deal about what it truly meant to give.

He told the Corinthian Church that there has been grace upon the Macedonian Church, for as much as they have suffered immensely, they have found joy in their suffering - and not just joy, but joy that is more than full. In fact, they were so overflowing that even though they were very poor, they gave very freely.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 21

He started speaking about the churches in Macedonia, not necessarily to create comparison, as it is to create encouragement. He mentioned as such to honor the Macedonian Church for what they have done and at the same time challenge the Corinthian Church to give as they are able. He told the Corinthian Church that there has been grace upon the Macedonian Church, for as much as they have suffered immensely, they have found joy in their suffering – and not just joy, but joy that is more than full. In fact, they were so overflowing that even though they were very poor, they gave very freely. They didn't just give as much as they could they even gave more than they could. Even without Paul's exhortation

and encouragement for them to do so, they actually begged him for the privilege and chance to serve the Lord's people through that kind of giving. It started with them giving themselves to the Lord, and then them giving themselves over to the rest of the church because that was what God wanted for them to do.

I find that to be very amazing. There are thousands of us comfortably living the middle-class life, maybe not able to buy everything we could ever want without checking the price tag, but still have the luxury to buy things we may not need just the same. Yet can we say the same - that we give out what we have freely in rich generosity?

One more interesting thing to note here was that they gave even more than they could. Can you imagine that they barely had enough for themselves and yet they joyfully gave even if it cost them their food for the week? Some of us try to avoid donating clothes just because we can't give up that polo shirt we have not used for more than two years for the mere fact that we bought it regular price and not on sale. We try to justify that we can't possibly give to charity now because we have a designer bag we've been wanting to buy and somehow walking around with a Hermes is more important than getting food and water into the bellies of others. It's rather convicting when you think about it.

He went on to say that they were to say that they were to do well in everything else – not just in faith, but also in speaking, in knowledge and in complete commitment.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 22

Paul wasn't finished here. He went on to say that they were to say that they were to do well in everything else – not just in faith, but also in speaking, in knowledge and in complete commitment. Most importantly, they were to do well in the love the disciples have helped the church start. As they were taught this love through word and action, they were to make sure that they also do well in the grace of giving to others.

However, Paul wasn't commanding the people to do it. Rather, he does this as a test, to find out if they really love God. He wants to compare their love with that of others. He emphasized that they, of all people, know the grace shown by the Lord Jesus Christ and that even though he was rich, he became poor to help them. Because he became poor, they can become rich. So, they must go about it a certain way.

Before, they were the first to want to give and they were the first ones who actually gave. So, Paul commissions them to finish the work; that it wasn't enough that they desire to do it, they must put into action the same amount of effort they put into saying they want to do it. The Lord doesn't really ask them to give something so extravagant and give what they

don't have. They were to give on the basis of what they already had, no matter how much or how little that may be, for the gift is not measured by what someone doesn't have.

The Lord doesn't really ask them to give something so extravagant and give what they don't have.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 23

Now, a certain tension people have about charity and generosity is addressed here. It's not that we want others to have it easy at the church members' expense. The heart is that we want to be equal with everyone, not wanting to seem above but not necessarily having to sink below either. If right now there is the ability to take care of what other people need, then it only means that there must be the ability to provide for our personal needs as well. The aim is to even things out.

It can be that we are so active in ministry and that we know a million things in theology, but that won't cut it. We also have to make sure that we are doing good in the act of blessing others. It's not enough to just want to do it, we have to actually see through doing it. Good intentions will be conveyed successfully to others when we actually show them our ability to take action.

We want to love our neighbor as we love ourselves and in doing so, we also show how much we love God and how much we're willing to serve Him by serving the people around us.

Good intentions will be conveyed successfully to others when we actually show them our ability to take action.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 24

Jesus spoke a parable about this as well in the heart of imploring us to bless other people with whatever it is that we have:

³¹ “The Son of Man will come in all his glory. All the angels will come with him. Then he will sit in glory on his throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered in front of him. He will separate the people into two groups. He will be like a shepherd who separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep to his right and the goats to his left.

³⁴ “Then the King will speak to those on his right. He will say, ‘My Father has blessed you. Come and take what is yours. It is the kingdom prepared for you since the world was created.

³⁵ I was hungry. And you gave me something to eat. I was thirsty. And you gave me something to drink. I was a stranger. And you invited me in. ³⁶ I needed clothes. And you gave them to me. I was sick. And you took care of me. I was in prison. And you came to visit me.’

³⁷ “Then the people who have done what is right will answer him. ‘Lord,’

they will ask, 'when did we see you hungry and feed you? When did we see you thirsty and give you something to drink?' ³⁸ When did we see you as a stranger and invite you in? When did we see you needing clothes and give them to you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?'

⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'What I'm about to tell you is true. Anything you did for one of the least important of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' (Matthew 25:31-40)

Whatever we do to others, it would be as if we were doing it to Jesus. I think the last thing we all want is to face him one day at the end of our lives and be told that we have not fed him or invited him in. Anything we don't do for others we also don't do for him.

If we saw Jesus on the street, we would definitely bend over backwards trying to show him how generous we are and how much we want to share with him what we have. If such is true, then why can we not do the same to the very people God created, the people He breathed into?

*Anything we don't do for others we
also don't do for him.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 25

If it were Jesus in our shoes, what would he have done to all the homeless people that he passed? Would he have turned away and avoided them or

would he have extended a helping hand towards them? If our heart is to be Christ-like, shouldn't we act like he would have?

BLESSED TO BE A BLESSING

We have to understand that such statements were not just made in the New Testament. The heart of blessing others through what God has blessed us with goes back to Genesis when God made the rather famous and monumental covenant with Abraham.

When the Lord spoke blessing and glory upon Abraham, it wasn't just for the man's own ambition and desire. We actually hear nothing about what Abraham wanted to do or what his plans were before God interfered with his life. We just know the story of a man who obeyed, and in his obedience he was blessed, and consequently, the whole world was blessed. How? Out of Abraham's lineage came Jesus, and through Jesus we now can be called Abraham's ascendants and heirs to the promise that was spoken to him.

Going along that line of thought, we must also receive the promise that tells us that the world will be blessed through us. It must be in our hearts to bless all the nations of the earth, but how do we do this?

We bless the world when we obey and bring to fulfillment what Jesus said here. We must go and make disciples of all nations, baptize their people, and teach them to obey the words of Jesus.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 26

I believe it goes beyond giving others food or shelter, as much as those are important. People say that a person's last words are important and that once he makes a request before he passes, the ones still living will do whatever it takes to bring what was said into fulfillment. As such, we will also look at the last words of Jesus before he left this earth.

When he went over to his disciples, he declared that all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to him. So, he has the right to commission them and tell them to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, the disciples then and thereby all disciples now are called to disciple these people and to teach them to obey everything that the Lord has taught and commanded.

We bless the world when we obey and bring to fulfillment what Jesus said here. We must go and make disciples of all nations, baptize their people, and teach them to obey the words of Jesus. More than the material and temporary blessings we could offer other people, the best blessing we could extend to them is the best blessing that we have received and that is the blessing of salvation in Christ Jesus. This is the last thing that we should be selfish about, the last thing we should want to keep to ourselves.

Whenever we watch a good movie or when we discover a new restaurant that serves good food, we seem to always want to scream to the world this good new thing that we have found, wanting them to share in the joys of what we experienced. In the same manner, it must be in our hearts to want to share the blessing of salvation to other people.

More than the material and temporary blessings we could offer other people, the best blessing we could extend to them is the best blessing that we have received and that is the blessing of salvation in Christ Jesus.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 27

If you found the cure for cancer, wouldn't you be doing everything that you possibly can to spread that antidote across the world as soon as you possibly can? You would probably find all means necessary to broadcast the availability of such a cure, and this is just a cure to extend life temporarily here on earth. What we have is the cure that can extend life for all of eternity. Shouldn't we do everything that we possibly can to share this cure as well?

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for your promise of blessing, not just to me but to the people around me, as well. Thank You for Your heart to see all people all across this world blessed. I ask that You give me the heart to keep on giving to others, to not think of what I want first and to focus on what is truly needed. I pray that You give me more of the ability to deny myself and my temporary, earthly desires in order to bless others with a joy that will echo all throughout eternity. Mark in my heart at all times that I am blessed not just for the sake of being blessed, but I am blessed to be a blessing.

This I pray In the Name of Jesus. Amen.

Chapter 4
**God's Blessings Represent His
Relationship with Us**

*“God will either give you what you ask, or something
far better.”*

Robert Murray McCheyne

POWER TRUTH

**¹² Blessed is anyone who endures temptation.
Such a one has stood the test and will receive the
crown of life that the Lord has promised to those
who love him.**

James 1:12 NRSV

BLESSING FROM RELATIONSHIP

I love gifts. I love receiving gifts, but I honestly think I love giving gifts more. I could walk past a store and see something that would remind me of a certain person, and I'd end up buying the item and gifting it to said person just because I know he will really like it. There's just this joy found in watching the people that you love enjoy what you have given them.

*There's just this joy found in watching
the people that you love enjoy what
you have given them.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 28

Of course, it takes a certain level of relationship before I can actually do that. I have to know the person enough to know the things he would like or wouldn't like. I have to be close enough with him before I can actually feel like I want to surprise him and make him feel happy.

I think the same desire can be found in the hearts of most, if not all, parents. You want to give the best to your children, and you would do your best in order to get them that new toy or dress they've been swooning over. The same goes for anyone dating. For some strange reason, when you get into a relationship with someone, you end up thinking about the things they want first. You save up for that diamond ring, you contact every person that you can in order to get that limited edition action figure he's been wanting.

*Having a relationship with someone
means wanting to give all that you can
to the best of your ability.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 29

It doesn't even have to be necessarily expensive. Suddenly, you're buying chocolates and roses for no reason at all other than to surprise them,

knowing that they would love it if you do so. Having a relationship with someone means wanting to give all that you can to the best of your ability. Even if it's not within your current capability, you find yourself stretching that threshold just so you can give more. It's a truly amazing thing.

If we, mere human beings, have the heart to bless and give to those we love, then how much more God who is love and who set the standard of giving and blessing for all of us? Paul perfectly puts it this way:

³¹ What should we say then? Since God is on our side, who can be against us? ³² God did not spare his own Son. He gave him up for us all. Then won't he also freely give us everything else?

³³ Who can bring any charge against God's chosen ones? God makes us right with himself. ³⁴ Then who can sentence us to death? No one. Christ Jesus is at the right hand of God and is also praying for us. He died. More than that, he was raised to life. ³⁵ Who can separate us from Christ's love? Can trouble or hard times or harm or hunger? Can nakedness or danger or war? ³⁶ It is written,

"Because of you, we face death all day long.

We are considered as sheep to be killed."

³⁷ No! In all these things we are more than winners! We owe it all to Christ, who has loved us. ³⁸ I am absolutely sure that not even death or life can

separate us from God's love. Not even angels or demons, the present or the future, or any powers can separate us.
³⁹ Not even the highest places or the lowest, or anything else in all creation can separate us. Nothing at all can ever separate us from God's love. That's because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done. (Romans 8:31-39)

Truly, if God did not even spare His own son, then how much more everything else? And this is all due to the fact that He loves us, and nothing can separate us from the overflow of this love. This love gives us liberty to be in a relationship with Him even if we don't deserve it. He has made us right with Him and it is because of this that we can now receive all that He has to offer.

This love gives us liberty to be in a relationship with Him even if we don't deserve it. He has made us right with Him and it is because of this that we can now receive all that He has to offer.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 30

The root word for blessing is the Hebrew "brk" and it has been used in the sense of giving thanks, establishing the idea that there are good relations between the people involved.¹ Blessing and being

blessed always had less to do with the material and more to do with the relational aspect of things. Receiving a gift from someone would imply that you have a good relationship. If not, then think of enemy kingdoms giving gifts to each other. Even if they did not have good relations prior to the exchange of gifts, the actual act of giving a gift implies to all parties concerned that they want to establish a good relationship with each other moving forward.

With that in mind, let's once again go back to the first time God blessed man. It was during the time that Adam and Eve were still in perfect harmony with the Lord, no hint of sin nor discourse that could mar their relationship. But because they disobeyed against God and sinned, the opposite of blessing came upon man, that which is called cursing. Even from there, we could see how relational dynamics affect the dynamics of God's blessings.

Blessing and being blessed always had less to do with the material and more to do with the relational aspect of things.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 31

Adam and Eve bore sons and a little further down the line came Noah, famously known for the one building the ark before the great flood. Because of his obedience and righteousness, the Lord blessed Noah. Generations after Noah came Abraham, known as the father of many nations and the one many nations can trace back their ancestry

to, then Isaac, then Jacob. Sometime later was Jesse, who fathered King David, who bore King Solomon, and it was out of this lineage that Jesus was born into this world.

Most of us can probably recall how the Lord blessed Abraham and the generations of his family following him. It seems rather significant how this particular lineage has been blessed by God due to the patriarchs' relationships with Him.

In the same way, God wants to bless us, and He wants us to be in the position to receive the blessing. We think of His commandments as things that hold us back. In fact, we begrudge His laws and try to make it seem as if all of that gets in the way of us living life to the full.

However, the truth is that God gives us these commandments so that we can be guided as we walk through this life, and the closeness of our relationship with Him hinges on our obedience. This is not salvation through works. Rather, this can be considered as works borne by salvation.

So, what is known to be the greatest commandment now makes sense if we view it through the lens of God wanting to bless us:

³⁴ The Pharisees heard that the Sadducees weren't able to answer Jesus. So the Pharisees got together.

³⁵ One of them was an authority on the law. So he tested Jesus with a question.

³⁶ "Teacher," he asked, "which is the most important commandment in the Law?"

³⁷ Jesus replied, "'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul. Love him with all your mind.'

³⁸ This is the first and most important commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it. 'Love your neighbor as you love yourself.' ⁴⁰ Everything that is written in the Law and the Prophets is based on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:34-40)

I know of some people who accuse God of being a narcissist, citing the fact that He made the greatest command be all about all people loving Him. How startling it is to realize that there is no truth to that at all. Rather, He wants us to love Him so that we can be in right standing with Him, thus being in the position to be given blessing in the first place.

We think of His commandments as things that hold us back. In fact, we begrudge His laws and try to make it seem as if all of that gets in the way of us living life to the full.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 32

Does God bless only the “good” people? No. Does that mean that those who are evil will not receive “blessing”? That’s a no, as well. Recall what we spoke of a few chapters ago, it all boils down to what you consider a blessing. As David points out in Psalm 37, God will give what is due all of us in time.

He reflects on how one must not be upset because of sinful people and that we must not be jealous of those who do wrong. It may appear as

though they are living luxurious, wonderful lives, but soon enough they will dry up and die like grass and plants that have not been watered by the streams of God. Rather, one must just trust in the Lord and do good even when it seems appealing to do otherwise. A person must learn to seek and find delight in the Lord and completely trust Him. It is then that He will give what the heart really wants, and it is then that one can truly enjoy the goodness of the land.

A person must learn to seek and find delight in the Lord and completely trust Him. It is then that He will give what the heart really wants, and it is then that one can truly enjoy the goodness of the land.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 33

He exhorts the reader to commit their life to the Lord. For if you do, He will make the reward for your godly life shine like the dawn. He will make the proof of your honest life shine like the sun at noon. It may be easier to take matters into your own hands but be still and wait patiently for the Lord to act. Don't be upset when other people succeed. Don't be upset when they seem to successfully carry out their evil plans. Sinful people will be destroyed, but those who put their hope in the Lord will receive the land. We may not see it and we may think that the Lord just sits back and allows things to happen with no consequence,

but He laughs at those who do evil. He knows the day is coming when he will judge them.

Those who do what is right may have very little, but it's better than the wealth of many sinners. The power of those who are evil will be broken, but the Lord takes good care of those who do what is right. All that they have is temporary and just of this earth, but those who are without blame spend their days in the Lord's care. What He gives to those who are His will last forever.

When trouble comes to His people, they will have what they need. When there is little food in the land, they will still have plenty. But sinful people will die. The Lord's enemies may be like flowers in the field now, numerous and seemingly beautiful, but they will be swallowed up and they will disappear like smoke. The Lord will give the land to those He blesses, and He will destroy those He curses.

The Lord's enemies may be like flowers in the field now, numerous and seemingly beautiful, but they will be swallowed up and they will disappear like smoke.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 34

David encourages, put your hope in the Lord and live as He wants you to. He will honor you by giving you the land. When sinners are destroyed, you will see it. He tells the tale of how he saw a mean and sinful person who was doing well, like a green tree

in its own land. But soon enough, he passed away and was gone. Even when David looked for him, he couldn't be found for he did nothing that would last for eternity.

David recognizes here that as much as there are sinful people who are successful, they will eventually get what is due them in eternity. When they pass away, they leave no more than a superficial legacy. On the other hand, He will richly reward those who obeyed Him and trusted in Him – and these are rewards that can be enjoyed not on earth but in heaven for all of eternity.

The Lord's heart before giving out blessing is that we first and foremost fix our eyes on the One who gives the blessing. It's very easy to enjoy the glitz and glamour, but not all that sparkles is gold. Sometimes the greatest blessing the Lord can give someone is to not give them too much finances as He knows that this particular person has the tendency to be selfish and greedy and might be swallowed up by his money if He does so. You may not see it now, but it's a blessing that the Lord didn't give you that man you've been desiring, as God knows that somewhere down the road that relationship will destroy you.

*The Lord's heart before giving
out blessings is that we first and
foremost fix our eyes on the One who
gives the blessing.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 35

It is only when we have a relationship with God that we have the lens to view all these things as blessings. What we know for sure is that He wants the best for us and will give what is best for us. If we have our hearts set on Him and not the material possessions and temporary fame, then we would take all these things as good.

We have to understand that His blessings represent His relationship with us. Any person who has felt the love of God and encountered His kindness would bear witness to the fact that we have a relationship with Him is blessing enough. But more than just that, our relationship with Him is marked by faith, love, joy, and goodness.

As such, all the blessings we receive from Him are marked by His goodness and love. The blessings that we have are a mere overflow of His affection toward us. We are now set apart, called His beloved. It should come as no surprise that He shows us that we actually are His beloved.

See, our relationship with God is not like what we see in the world – easily broken by mere decisions and indecisions. It's tied by commitment to God and His commitment to us. It's not fickle or halfhearted. His love for us is whole, complete, and sure. He was certain when He chose you and He's not changing His mind.

He doesn't change His mind about the blessings He gives us as well. He knows what He's giving us and He's not halfhearted about them. It's not like He's playing with us and dangling something in front of us that He won't give us. He won't make us go through loops and do tricks before He gives us a treat. We don't have to perform in order to receive. He doesn't work like that.

See, our relationship with God is not like that we see in the world - easily broken by mere decisions and indecisions. It's tied by commitment to God and His commitment to us.

It's not fickle or halfhearted.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 36

Rather, God gives unconditionally to those that He loves, the same way that His love for us overflows unconditionally. We don't have to twirl a million times in a tutu skirt and clap our hands three times. We just have to be sons and daughters who know they're sons and daughters, so they act like sons and daughters.

Going back to the very same passage in Romans, Paul reminds us that those who are led by the Spirit of God are children of God. The Spirit you received doesn't make you slaves. Otherwise, you would live in fear again. Instead, the Holy Spirit you received made you God's adopted child. By the Spirit's power we call God, Abba. Abba means Father. The Spirit himself joins with our spirits. Together they tell us that we are God's children. As his children, we will receive all that he has for us. We will share what Christ receives. But we must share in his sufferings if we want to share in his glory. (Romans 8:14-17)

We are His heirs, and we know that we will receive all that He has for every single one of us.

That is, as long as we are willing to live out what it truly means to be a child of God. Let us live up to the name, and without a doubt He will live up to His.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank You for Your heart to build a relationship with me. Thank You, because You withhold no good thing from your children. Give me the heart to cultivate my relationship with You at all times and to love You with all my heart. May I fix my eyes not on the blessings, but on the One who gives the blessings.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 5
**The Wealth of Jacob – Chasing After
the Blessing**

*“The Lord has given us a table at which to feast, not
an altar on which a victim is to be offered; He has not
consecrated priests to make sacrifice, but servants to
distribute the sacred feast.”*

John Calvin

POWER TRUTH

**Happy are those who do not follow the advice of
the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or
sit in the seat of scoffers;**

Psalm 1:1 NRSV

THE TALE OF JACOB

People usually know him as the dreamer’s father, if at all. Not all Christians have a complete idea of who he is and his story. Some people probably know him as part of the trio, who are patriarchs of Christianity, but only known by name, “Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.” There is not much talk about his life. Movies aren’t made about him, and he is far less talked about than his grandfather.

*Jacob enters the story in Genesis 25.
He was born with a twin named
Esau and he came out holding on to
Esau's heel.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 37

However, I've always thought of Jacob as one of the most interesting characters in the Bible. He lived quite a colorful life, and no one can quite conclude whether much of that is good or bad.

Jacob enters the story in Genesis 25. He was born with a twin named Esau and he came out holding on to Esau's heel. The Bible first went into the personalities of the two, with Esau enjoying the open country, while Jacob was happy to stay at home. As such, Esau was Isaac's favorite, while Jacob was Rebekah's favorite.

Not long after this introduction, the drama begins. Esau went back to their house after hunting, terribly hungry and thirsty. Jacob refused to give him food until he gave up his firstborn birthright to him, and so Esau did. But that's not all. Eventually, Jacob ended up deceiving his father into giving him his blessing as well. He went to amazing lengths just to convince his father that he was Esau – all to receive his father's blessing.

The Bible first went into the personalities of the two, with Esau enjoying the open country, while Jacob was happy to stay at home. As such, Esau was Isaac's favorite, while Jacob was Rebekah's favorite.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 38

The story took place when Isaac had become old. His eyes were so weak he couldn't see anymore. One day he called for his older son Esau and Esau presented himself before his father. Isaac told him that as he is now old and he doesn't know when he will die, he will give his blessing to Esau that same time. He told Esau to get his weapons, bows, and arrows and to go out to the open country to hunt some wild animals for him. He asked Esau to prepare tasty food and give it to him so he can give his blessing to his son.

Now when all of this was going on, Rebekah was eavesdropping and listening to this conversation take place. When Esau left for the open country to hunt for a wild animal and bring it back, Rebekah told Jacob of the situation and the development. She instructed her son then to go out to the flock so he can bring her two of the finest young goats. She had a plan, and she wanted Jacob in on it for his benefit. She tells him that she will prepare tasty food for Isaac, just the way he likes it, then he must be the one to give it to his father, subtly implying that he will pretend to be his brother.

But Jacob raised a concern to his mother, Esau's body is covered in hair. The moment Isaac touches Jacob, he would know his son was trying to trick him and would instead give a curse. Rebekah, ever showing favor to her son, told him that if such happens, she will bear the curse for him. In the meantime, he is to do as he is told.

Rebekah, ever showing favor to her son, told him that if such happens, she will bear the curse for him. For the meantime, he is just to do as he is told.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 39

So, he went and got the goats and brought them to his mother. She then prepared some tasty food, as Isaac would like it. The clothes of Esau were in her house. So, she took Esau's best clothes and put them on Jacob. She covered his

hands with the skins of the goats, as well as the smooth part of his neck. Then she handed to Jacob the tasty food and the bread she had made.

Once everything was ready, Jacob went to his father and told him that he was Esau. He presented the meat and asked his father to eat what he claimed he had made from what he said he had hunted. When Isaac questioned how he managed to make the food so quickly, he said that the Lord gave him favor and success.

At this point, Isaac probably had a few doubts because he asked Jacob to come closer so he would know whether or not it was truly Esau who was there. Upon touching him, Isaac pointed out that the voice was the voice of Jacob, but he knew those hands to be Esau's. Isaac didn't recognize Jacob because Jacob's hands were covered with hair, like those of his brother Esau.

*From the very beginning of his story
we see how desperate Jacob was to
receive blessing.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 40

His doubts not yet completely appeased, Isaac once again asked Jacob if he is really Esau, to which Jacob said that he was. He then brought the food and wine for Isaac to eat and drink. Afterward, Isaac asked his son to draw closer so he can kiss him. Jacob went to him and kissed him. When Isaac smelled the clothes, he gave Jacob his blessing, saying that it really is the smell of his son, like the smell of a field that the Lord has blessed.

From the very beginning of his story, we see how desperate Jacob was to receive the blessing. He was quick-witted, if not deceptive and manipulative, and he used all of that to his advantage.

Now, we're not going to go and encourage you to do the same. You have to understand that this happened during the time when the law reigned over grace and people had to outwit each other. They did not have direct access to the Lord and

the riches of His mercy, as the veil was only torn after Jesus died on the cross. We're privileged to live during a time when the Lord gives generously as we can easily draw near to Him, but in Jacob's time, they had to sacrifice animals and shed blood in order to be considered worthy to approach the Lord again. They lived during the time when blessings had to be fought over and when blessings seemed scarce. While Jacob lacked integrity, we see how important being blessed was to him. He longed after the blessing, and he chased it as deliberately as he could – and that's just the beginning.

JACOB'S BLESSING

One of the stories I love the most that happened in the life of Jacob is that of his and Rachel. I easily cite it as one of my favorite love stories, because Jacob not only waited for Rachel, but he labored for her for seven whole years, and under certain unfavorable circumstances he was deceived and ended up marrying Leah, Rachel's older sister. He ended up having to wait and labor for an additional seven years for Rachel – making the time he doted on her total to fourteen years! But according to the Bible, Jacob didn't mind at all. In fact, those years felt like just a few days to him because he loved her so much (Gen. 29:20).

In this particular context, we can consider Rachel to be the blessing from the Lord, as Scripture tells us that he who finds a wife finds what is good and has found favor in the Lord (Prov. 18:22).

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 41

Here, we can see once more the persistence of Jacob. In this particular context, we can consider Rachel to be the blessing from the Lord, as Scripture tells us that he who finds a wife finds what is good and has found favor in the Lord (Prov. 18:22). Yet again, Jacob chased after the blessing even if it meant having to work and even if his father-in-law took advantage of him. He knew what he wanted and he wasn't going to give it up.

Now, many years after with a good number of children, he left Laban and his household. As constant in the life of Jacob, it wasn't without drama. But he knew that the Lord called him back to Canaan. He knew that the promise of the Lord was there for him and his family and he was going to go after it - another case of Jacob chasing after the blessing.

As constant in the life of Jacob, it wasn't without drama. But he knew that the Lord called him back to Canaan; he knew that the promise of the Lord was there for him and his family, and he was going to go after it.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 42

There was an event that took place while he was on his way back to his homeland that is particularly interesting:

²² That night Jacob got up. He took his two wives, his two female servants and his 11 sons and sent them across the Jabbok River. ²³ After they had crossed the stream, he sent over everything he owned. ²⁴ So Jacob was left alone. A man wrestled with him until morning.

²⁵ The man saw that he couldn't win. So he touched the inside of Jacob's hip. As Jacob wrestled with the man, Jacob's hip was twisted. ²⁶ Then the man said, "Let me go. It is morning." But Jacob replied, "I won't let you go unless you bless me."

²⁷ The man asked him, "What is your name?"

"Jacob," he answered.

²⁸ Then the man said, "Your name will not be Jacob anymore. Instead, it will

be Israel. You have wrestled with God and with people. And you have won.”

²⁹ Jacob said, “Please tell me your name.”

But he replied, “Why do you want to know my name?” Then he blessed Jacob there.

³⁰ So Jacob named the place Peniel.

He said, “I saw God face to face. But I’m still alive!” (Genesis 32:22-30)

People point to this as the time Jacob wrestled with God. Now, this is persistence on a whole new level. He knew that he was wrestling with a physical manifestation of God, which is why he was insistent on asking for the name of the man and being blessed by Him.

Jacob has always been all about chasing after the blessing. He would use any means necessary.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 43

Jacob has always been all about chasing after the blessing. He would use any means necessary. The blessing was always material, it was always a manifestation in the physical for him. Money, herds, women, recognition – those are the blessings he sought after. But eventually, wisdom and God caught up to him:

Then God said to Jacob, “Go up to Bethel and live there. Build an altar there to honor me. That’s where I

appeared to you when you were running away from your brother Esau.”

² So Jacob spoke to his family and to everyone with him. He said, “Get rid of the statues of false gods you have with you. Make yourselves pure by washing and changing your clothes.

³ Come, let’s go up to Bethel. There I’ll build an altar to honor God. He answered me when I was in trouble. He’s been with me everywhere I’ve gone.” ⁴ So they gave Jacob all the statues of false gods they had. They also gave him their earrings. Jacob buried those things under the oak tree at Shechem. ⁵ Then Jacob and everyone with him started out. The terror of God fell on the towns all around them. So no one chased them.

⁶ Jacob and all the people with him came to Luz. Luz is also called Bethel. It’s in the land of Canaan. ⁷ Jacob built an altar at Luz. He named the place El Bethel. There God made himself known to Jacob when he was running away from his brother.

⁹ After Jacob returned from Paddan Aram, God appeared to him again. And God blessed him. ¹⁰ God said to him, “Your name is Jacob. But you will not be called Jacob anymore. Your name will be Israel.” So he named him Israel.

¹¹ God said to him, “I am the Mighty God. Have children so that there will

be many of you. You will become the father of a nation and a community of nations. Your later family will include kings. ¹² I am giving you the land I gave to Abraham and Isaac. I will also give it to your children after you.” ¹³ Then God left him at the place where he had talked with him. (Genesis 35:1-8, 9-12)

Here's when it all shifted for Jacob. Notice how there wasn't a promise of blessing when the Lord told him to go to Bethel. The Lord told him to go there so he could honor Him. Jacob obeyed out of fear of God, not out of desire to gain something from the Lord. The end result - the Lord still blessed him and the generations that were to come after him.

Sure, let's properly acknowledge how shrewd Jacob was. His idea to take the speckled animals from Laban and turn them into a strong flock was amazing. He was so faithful in what he did for Laban that Laban nor his children can make false accusations about him even if they wanted to.

The prophet reminds the people that He is the Lord God who rules over all, and His name is the Lord. He exhorts the people of Jacob that they must return to their God, hold on to love, do what is fair, and trust in their God always.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 44

But it all boils down to seeking God and being desperate for Him and His hand. Hosea tells us that even before Jacob was born he was holding on to his brother's heel. When he became a man, he struggled with God. At Peniel he struggled with the angel and won. But Jacob wept and begged for his blessing, and then God met with him at Bethel, and He talked with him there. The prophet reminds the people that He is the Lord God who rules over all, and His name is the Lord. He exhorts the people of Jacob that they must return to their God, hold on to love, do what is fair, and trust in their God always.

I want to reiterate here how as much as chasing after the blessing is not entirely wrong, it always boils down to chasing after the one who gives the blessing. We can see how in his story his mindset shifted from him being the reason why everyone around him is blessed, to him acknowledging that God blesses even when he doesn't deserve it. His regret and shame when he finally saw Esau again is enough proof of that.

The greatest blessing that Jacob could have received was not his sheep, his gold coins, or even his children. His story marks character growth and a life that learns to surrender. His story is that of redemption.

Such is the blessing we all truly want. If we take a closer look at his life, he has always wanted more than what he had. He wanted to be the firstborn son. He wanted to have more than his brother. Then he wanted to have more than his father-in-law. In fact, going back to his origin, people even made fun of the fact he was holding on to his brother's heel. He wanted to be more than just second place. He wanted to be more than just Jacob.

The prophet reminds the people that He is the Lord God who rules over all, and His name is the Lord. He exhorts the people of Jacob that they must return to their God, hold on to love, do what is fair, and trust in their God always.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 45

Taking on that perspective, his persistence would make so much sense. And God understood. He also saw more in Jacob, and He ended up giving him so much more. Jacob just wanted what he thought he deserved, but God gave him more than what he deserved. God gave him a new name. He gave him his own inheritance. He gave him his own birthright. Eventually, Jacob came to find that he had enough. In fact, he had more than enough – enough to give some away.

That should be our heart when we approach God for blessings, that more than blessings, in the events that are to come with the blessings, we find more of Him and His faithfulness. Our intention in being blessed should not be for mere selfishness, it should be out of hope and desire for redemption and reinstatement, not just for our own names but for our families and the people around as well.

The greatest blessing Jacob received was his own personal encounter with the Lord, and out of it a changed life.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 46

The greatest blessing Jacob received was his own personal encounter with the Lord, and out of it a changed life. God was no longer just the God of his father. God became his own God. He became the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank You for being a God that redeems and restores. Thank you for giving to your people what is due them and so much more. I ask that you give me a heart that is not ashamed to want what you have given. May I be tenacious in the way I seek not just you, but also your blessings. But at the same time, give me integrity and a heart that knows you as my God and I will receive true blessings as such. In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 6

The Blessing of the Lord Maketh You Rich

“Jesus is moved to happiness every time He sees that you appreciate what He has done for you. Grip His pierced hand and say to Him, “I thank Thee, Savior, because Thou has died for me.” Thank Him likewise for all the other blessings He has showered upon you from day to day. It brings joy to Jesus.”

Ole Hallesby

POWER TRUTH

³ Beloved, while eagerly preparing to write to you about the salvation we share, I find it necessary to write and appeal to you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints.

Jude 1:3 NRSV

MONEY

Money opens a boatload of conversations that people either really want to get into or really want to avoid. There is no in-between when it comes to this topic, and I hope it doesn't make you feel uncomfortable. Right now, we'll be tackling biblical truths that speak about money. The last thing I want you to do is turn your heart away from this part because it makes you feel uncomfortable

Money opens a boatload of conversations that people either really want to get into or really want to avoid.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 47

Money is an important topic that has frequently been addressed in the Bible simply because its impact and hold on our lives is very real. If we don't address it in the way that the Scripture addresses it, we would have very wrong outlooks and views when it comes to money.

I don't know about you, but I have encountered several people who have what we call a poverty mindset because of the way they were brought up and because of the beliefs that religion instilled in them. You might not be aware of it, but it's possible that even you unknowingly have it.

Money is an important topic that has frequently been addressed in the Bible simply because its impact and hold over our lives is very real. If we don't address it in the way that the Scripture addresses it, we would have very wrong outlooks and views when it comes to money.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 48

You know someone has a poverty mindset when they believe that they have to be poor in order to be close to God. They shun and look down on the rich and they live their lives afraid of getting more money or not knowing how to handle it when it comes.

The thing is, we see so many people fall because of money, so we learn to cultivate apprehensiveness towards prosperity, thinking it's a trap and that we're better off without it. While it may be wise for some who really have money problems to be wary of money, even those faithful with the little things refuse to accept much just because of fear.

However, having money problems does not lie in simply having money. The problem lies in you and the way you manage your money. Even the poorest of the poor can have money issues that have yet to be unearthed.

Being rich on its own is not inherently a sin. It becomes a sin when you mismanage your being rich. In the same way, having money is not inherently sinful. It's the way you handle your money that may make you sinful.

We need money for everything. We need money to eat, we need money to drink, we need money for our daily necessities. Sometimes, we personally want to have more than enough, than not enough.

Jesus states that the eye is like a lamp for the body.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 49

We have to see what the Bible says about being rich, lest we speak about money being the root of all evil.

In the book of Matthew, Jesus tells the people, as I pass on to you today, do not gather for yourselves riches on earth. Moths and rust can destroy them. Thieves can break in and steal them. Instead, gather for yourselves riches in heaven. There, moths and rust do not destroy them. There, thieves do not break in and steal them. Your heart will be where your riches are.

Jesus states that the eye is like a lamp for the body. Suppose your eyes are healthy. Then your whole body will be full of light. But suppose your eyes can't see well.

Then your whole body will be full of darkness. If the light inside you is darkness, then it must be very dark inside of you.

Despite people talking about balancing and we can manage loving God and loving money, Jesus says otherwise. No one can serve two masters at the same time. You will hate one of them and love the other, or you will be faithful to one and dislike the other. At the end of it, no matter how you try to justify it, you can't serve God and money at the same time.

But Jesus, understanding still the need for money, follows up this statement by reassuring us that we don't need to worry. Don't worry about your life and what you will eat or drink, and don't worry about your body and what you will wear. He reminds us that there is more to life than eating and there are more important things for the body than clothes.

One look at the sky should reassure us that we will be well taken care of. For example, the birds of the air don't plant or gather crops, nor do they put away crops in storerooms. But the Father who is in heaven feeds them still.

Jesus promises that if we put God's kingdom first and do what He asks us to do, then all these things will just follow without us having to strive so hard for them.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 50

Jesus then throws the question to us: Aren't you worth much more than they are? Can you add even one hour to your life by worrying?

Take the wildflowers, for instance. They don't work or make clothing, but not even Solomon in all his royal robes was dressed like one of these flowers. If that is how God dresses the wild grass, then trust that He will dress you with better.

Jesus then rebuked the people here about having faith so small and that is the last thing we want to hear for ourselves. Don't say, "What will we eat?" or, "What will we drink?" or, "What will we wear?" It is those who are ungodly that run after all those things, but our Father who is in heaven knows that we need them. Jesus promises that if we put God's kingdom first and do what He asks us to do, then all these things will just follow without us having to strive so hard for them.

Jesus said that we should not chase after riches – and I agree, we shouldn't. That is not where our devotion lies. Rather, if you put God's kingdom first, do what He wants you to do, then all those things - food, clothing, money – will also be given to you. The root of all evil is not money on its own. It is the love of money that springs up evil (1 Tim. 6:10).

As mentioned in the passage above, Jesus is very aware of our need for money, and he doesn't really plan to withhold it from us. He just wants us to first get our priorities in order before he entrusts us with money, not out of spite but out of his kindness.

In the same way, the Lord does not want to give us anything that He knows could harm us in our current state. He has to wait for the time we are ready to handle those tools, in this case money, before He gives them to us simply because He's looking out for us.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 51

Think of it this way: would you give a hammer and nail to your son because you trust in his potential to be a craftsman? And then would you put in a saw and a drill because he's bound to be really good at it? Of course not. That makes absolutely no sense. In the same way, the Lord does not want to give us anything that He knows could harm us in our current state. He has to wait for the time we are ready to handle those tools, in this case money, before He gives them to us simply because He's looking out for us.

HOW TO GET RICH

Now that we understand how seeking God and His kingdom wholeheartedly first will bless us, we also need to understand the practical ways that the Lord

gives us riches. Since wisdom is an utmost priority when it comes to handling riches, let's take a look at what the wisest man who lived has to say:

⁴ People who refuse to work want things and get nothing. But the desires of people who work hard are completely satisfied. ⁷ Some people pretend to be rich but have nothing. Others pretend to be poor but have great wealth.

⁸ A person's riches might save their life. But a poor person is not able to do anything about danger. ¹¹ Money gained in the wrong way disappears. But money gathered little by little grows. (Proverbs 13:4,7-8,11, NIRV)

Notice how King Solomon points out that a person's riches could save his life, while the poor would be left defenseless. We have to understand that some poverty is not due to a person's direct fault, but due to some injustice that happened to him or his family. There shouldn't be guilt or shame attached to that – or to poverty in general. But what we must have is an attitude that steps forward and claims all that the Lord has for us.

*He makes us work and helps us gather,
little by little, and as our character builds,
the riches do as well.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 52

God made us to work. It's the very first thing man was tasked to do way back in the beginning. We have to work hard if we want to be blessed. This is not some

“get rich easy” scheme. He makes us work and helps us gather, little by little, and as our character builds, the riches do as well. Again, once the Lord sees that you can be entrusted with little, know that He will also entrust you with much.

Now let me tell you, work does not include gambling, lottery, or betting of any kind. It’s not out of legalism but out of wisdom. Search your heart why you would want to gamble in the first place. To get rich fast? The passage above clearly tells us the Lord increases us as our character allows. To have fun? Okay, but is it Biblical and does it please the Lord? More often than not, it could simply be out of greed that you do not wish to acknowledge within you.

King Solomon in his wisdom and experience tells us this:

² Riches that are gained by sinning aren’t worth anything. But doing what is right saves you from death.

³ The Lord gives those who do right the food they need. But he lets those who do wrong go hungry.

⁴ Hands that don’t want to work make you poor. But hands that work hard bring wealth to you. ²² The blessing of the Lord brings wealth. And it comes without painful work. (Proverbs 10:2-4, 22, NIRV)

Notice the words he uses. He didn’t say blessing doesn’t come with hard work. He doesn’t say that you just need to sit back and relax and let the blessings of the Lord come to you. In fact, he tells us the contrary. He tells us that hands that work hard bring wealth. But we can rest in the fact knowing that the blessings will come to us without painful work.

In fact, he tells us the contrary. He tells us that hands that work hard bring wealth. But we can rest in the fact knowing that the blessings will come to us without painful work.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 53

Hard work and painful work are two very different things. Hard work is blessed by God. Painful work is something He doesn't wish upon us. He just wants us to be diligent, not hurt.

RICHES AS A CURSE

All this is due to the fact that sometimes, riches can be a curse to people instead of it being a blessing. But when the Lord gives wealth, He doesn't intend for us to get hurt in the process. It doesn't come with sorrow or pain. Rather, it comes with joy and contentment.

Consider how it was King Solomon who wrote that – arguably the richest man at the time. If you knew his story, you would envy his riches. Since King David was his father, surely he had an inheritance. As King, there must be the riches of the kingdom.

Now see here, God hears the cries of those people and God has not turned His back on them. He gives money to those He can entrust it to, to those He knows can impact the lives of other people, in this case, the king of Israel.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 54

But God added to that. God gave him his own riches even without him asking for it. You must be wondering why, what made Solomon deserve this when there are millions of people in poverty that are crying out. Now see here, God hears the cries of those people and God has not turned His back on them. He gives money to those He can entrust it to, to those He knows can impact the lives of other people, in this case, the king of Israel.

More than that, however, Solomon pleased God. As says in 1 Kings 3, The Lord appeared to Solomon at Gibeon. He spoke to him in a dream during the night and told him that he could ask for anything he desired.

Solomon then replied by recounting his father David and how his relationships with God was and how great were the shoes he needed to fill. Now, the Lord had put him in the place of David, but Solomon saw himself as a little child who had no clue how to go about his duties. He wasn't sure that he could answer to the responsibilities presented before him. He was to rule among God's chosen people, a great nation that is more than anyone could count. Factoring it all in, Solomon just asked for a heart that understands, the ability to

differentiate between right and wrong, so he can rule over the Lord's people.

The Lord was pleased that Solomon had asked for wisdom that he did not ask to have a long life, nor did he ask for wealth. As such, it also pleased the Lord to give wisdom to him and He promised Solomon that there has never been nor will there ever be a man like him. More than that, the Lord will give him what he did not ask for. He promised the king wealth and honor. He reassured Solomon that as long as he lives the way God wants him to, he will receive long life as well.

We see a heart that wants to serve his people no matter what it takes, and thus the Lord knew he can be entrusted with much.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 55

The starting point of it all was God was pleased with Solomon and his heart not to actually ask for wealth. Here we see how he sought for the wisdom of the Lord. We see a heart that wants to serve his people no matter what it takes, and thus the Lord knew he can be entrusted with much.

Think about this: if the Lord told you right now that He would give you anything you ask for, what would you ask? Almost all of us would probably ask for something material. If not cold hard cash, then a private jet with a pilot and crew fully paid for so we can travel anywhere and anytime we want. Or you'll ask for a large mansion with a swimming pool, home theatre, and bowling alley.

You may even ask for just enough to pay your student loans and family debts, or money to pay for your tuition fee and allowance. But that's still money.

The effects of his wisdom echoes all throughout eternity and to this day and age he's still known for it.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 56

Solomon asked for something priceless, something that was not bound by the material things of this world. It will not run out. The effects of his wisdom echoes all throughout eternity and to this day and age he's still known for it.

Riches that are from God are not ill-gotten. They do not come from gambling or scheming. Riches that are from God will not cause us to stumble. It will not be the reason why we backslide, and it won't make us lust after many things because the fact that He has given it to us would mean He trusts that we have the ability to properly manage it.

If not, either it may not be from God or God will take it away eventually rather than it being the reason for our downfall.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank You for being a God who gives in love and wisdom, gauging our standing and character and never giving more than we can handle. I pray that I examine myself correctly at all times and not demand nor compare. Help me seek first Your kingdom and righteousness before wealth and riches. And when You do give me blessings, let me receive them in joy and contentment, not entitlement.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 7

Prophetic Blessing is the Space of Significant Prosperity

“God bestows His blessings without discrimination. The followers of Jesus are children of God, and they should manifest the family likeness by doing good to all, even to those who deserve the opposite.”

F.F. Bruce

POWER TRUTH

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

1 Peter 2:9 NRSV

TYPES OF BLESSING

It’s rather fascinating for me to think that there are many types of blessings. For most of us, they have always been encompassed as a whole and it didn’t really need to get any more complicated than that. When we reminded each other to count our blessings, we didn’t really proceed with an explanation of the categories of blessings thereafter.

It would help us to be aware of how they work and why they can be counted as blessings in the first place.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 57

However, for us who want to understand the fullness of all there is to blessings, it is highly profitable for us to know that there actually are different types of blessings. It would help us to be aware of how they work and why they can be counted as blessings in the first place.

A quick look at the Scriptures would show us several kinds of blessings. Let's start by breaking down those that can be found in Deuteronomy 28. Moses begins the chapter by saying that the people should make sure to obey the Lord completely and emphasizes this by saying again that they should be careful to obey the commands he was giving them, for if they do, the Lord will honor them more than all the other nations on earth.

If they fully obeyed the Lord, then they were promised that they will be blessed in the cities and in the country. Their children, crops, and livestock will be blessed.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 58

If they fully obeyed the Lord, then they were promised that they will be blessed in the cities and in the country. Their children, crops, and livestock will be blessed. Even their baskets and bread pans will be blessed, for they will be blessed whatever they do and wherever they go. Enemies may rise up against them, but the Lord will help them win the battle. They will come at the people from one direction, but they'll also run away in every direction.

The Lord will bless their barns with plenty of grain and other food and will bless them in the land that He was giving them. The Lord will make them into His holy people and will set them apart as He promised He would, should they obey all that He has instructed to them.

All the nations on earth will see that they belong to the Lord, and they will be freed. Furthermore, the Lord will give them more than they need. They will have many children. Their livestock will have many little ones. Their crops will do very well. All of that will happen in the land He promised to give them and to their people from long ago.

The Lord will also open up the heavens, where He stores His riches. He will send rain on their land at just the right time. He'll bless everything they do. They will lend money to many nations and won't have to borrow from any of them for the Lord will make them leaders, not followers. They will always be on top and will never be at the bottom – that is should they not turn away from the commands given.

The Blessing of Acclamation

The Lord promises here that if Israel would obey His commandments, He will exalt them above others. They will be one cut above the rest. Now

thanks to the new covenant, this promise of blessing will apply to all of us who are God's people as we are now part of His kingdom.

The Lord promises here that if Israel would obey His commandments, He will exalt them above others. They will be one cut above the rest.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 59

We hear it so many times being claimed, but it's already something that the Lord has spoken over our lives if we just follow Him: we will be the head and not the tail. We will be on the top and not the bottom. In fact, He specifically said never at the bottom.

Now, this does not mean that you will always be the boss and that you will never experience an entry-level position. This just means that in whatever you are doing, a janitor or a CEO, you will be recognized, and the work of your hands will be blessed. He will make you a leader in whatever career-path or industry that you're in. But once again, mind the condition, it's all as long as you obey Him.

The Blessing of Fruitfulness

Do you remember how we discussed the blessing giving us the ability to bear fruit? Now, the Lord promises that in every aspect of our lives. Notice how He takes time to point it all out one by one: your children will be blessed, your crops will be blessed, your animals will be blessed – they will all be fruitful.

More than that, He hints on caring, down to the smallest detail of your life, even your bread pans will be blessed. He will make fruitful each and every aspect of your life that you could possibly think of.

The Blessing of Prosperity

He will bless you with not just the necessary, that is grain, but also with plenty of other food in which you can indulge. It was frankly stated that you will have more than you need, and that people will see how it's all coming from God.

When He promised to open the heavens for you, think of the sky opening and an insurmountable amount of blessings falling down on you. It's not a phrase that is hyperbolic, it's something that can be quite true.

He will bless you with not just the necessary, that is grain, but also with plenty of other food in which you can indulge.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 60

In fact, the area of finances was really touched in this passage. You will lend to many but borrow from none. I think that in and of itself it speaks of just how much He intends to prosper us.

The Blessing of Victory

I love how it says here how people tried and dare to attack you, and enemies tried to come at

you, but in the end they ran away because the Lord was fighting with you. So very often in Scripture, this blessing has been reiterated. In fact, it's one of the greatest blessings the Lord has given us – victory not just over our physical enemies but also our enemies in the spiritual realm. In fact, more than that, He gives us victory over death, the one thing everyone seems to be losing. The world could cower in fear from death and everyone else could keep searching for the fountain of youth. As for us, we know that the victory is already ours.²

SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

I don't know if you noticed, but all these blessings have one thing in common: they can be measured and can be tangible. It's easy to take one look in your life and pinpoint all the areas that have received these blessings and it doesn't take much to know whether or not other people see you as blessed in these areas as well. Other than victory, which is very much applicable to enemies in the flesh as well, all the others can in fact be considered as material.

These are the blessings that are intangible and have more to do with our spiritual life, although they also overflow and manifest in the physical.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 61

Now, we're going to look into what can be considered as spiritual blessings. These are the blessings that are intangible and have more to do with our spiritual life, although they also overflow and manifest in the physical. This is what Paul meant when he said to the church in Corinth, "God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8, NIV).

The Blessing of Grace

The whole basis of our faith and the only reason we are able to call ourselves followers of Christ is entirely by the grace of God. Without His grace, we wouldn't be here breathing today. I wouldn't be writing this book and you wouldn't be reading it. Without His grace, we probably would all be burning in hell right now, in fact, because that's what our sin calls for, and whether we want to admit it or not, it's simply what we deserve.

One of the things Paul always enjoyed emphasizing is the extravagance of God in all things, and in particular, His grace. Get level-headed with me for a second here and think about it. It makes absolutely no sense that the Holy God who crafted the universe would care about what happens to mundane beings like us. The universe is ever expanding and grandness of it all. Most kids I've talked to dream of being astronauts, as admittedly I did when I was their age. Some days, I still like to think about it. Why? Because we all would love a glimpse of how glorious it actually is out there beyond the atmosphere.

Without His grace, we probably would all be burning in hell right now, in fact, because that's what our sin calls for and whether we want to admit it or not, it's simply what we deserve.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 62

Now, as God was capable of doing all that, why would He give us sinners and brats who make demands of Him as if He's our own personal genie the time of the day? In what way are we more beautiful and lovely than the stars and planets floating out there in the galaxies?

Yet, He does give us the time of the day. In fact, He gave us not just the time of the day, but He also gave us His son as sacrifice for our sins, because He wants us to share in His glory with Him. All of us have sinned and fallen short of God, so He bridged the gap for us.

I don't know about you, but honestly, if I were God, I wouldn't even think about giving up my son, who is obedient, loving, kind, and selfless and have him die for a people who are evil, malicious, and selfish. These people don't love me. They trash my name, and they disrespect me. I know full well they're going to do the same to my son. I can't quite fathom doing it, but I might probably consider it if these people are holy, righteous, and loving.

He gives His love freely to all who are willing to accept it and to all who are willing to love Him in return. It is absolutely ridiculous. And that is grace.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 63

But God did it for all of us who are unholy, unrighteous, and unloving. He didn't nitpick by race or by level of attractiveness and financial status as most of us measure each other. In fact, He didn't even nitpick by level of previous sin. He offers His grace to do-gooders and murderers alike. That might be difficult to swallow for some who cry justice, but our just God sits on the mercy seat. He gives His love freely to all who are willing to accept it and to all who are willing to love Him in return. It is absolutely ridiculous. And that is grace.

It is also grace that we even get to receive His other blessings and promises. Sometimes we feel as if we're entitled to them. Other times, we outright demand them from God and complain if we are not given the things that we want. The fact that we even get to do that and are not hit with a lightning bolt on the spot is grace. It is all grace and grace abounding.

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It is also grace that we even get to receive His other blessings and promises.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 64

Jesus coming to die for our sin and redeem us from death and give us life is enough of redemption in and of itself. But as is with God and His extravagance, there's more.

Romans 8 is easily one of my favorite chapters in the Bible and I want you to see why:

²⁸ We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him. He appointed them to be saved in keeping with his purpose. ²⁹ God planned that those he had chosen would become like his Son. In that way, Christ will be the first and most honored among many brothers and sisters. ³⁰ And those God has planned for, he has also appointed to be saved. Those he has appointed, he has made right with himself. To those he has made right with himself, he has given his glory.

³¹ What should we say then? Since God is on our side, who can be against us? ³² God did not spare his own Son. He gave him up for us all. Then won't he also freely give us everything else? ³³ Who can bring any charge against God's chosen ones? God makes us right with himself. ³⁴ Then who can sentence us

to death? No one. Christ Jesus is at the right hand of God and is also praying for us. He died. More than that, he was raised to life.³⁵ Who can separate us from Christ's love? Can trouble or hard times or harm or hunger? Can nakedness or danger or war?³⁶ It is written, "Because of you, we face death all day long. We are considered as sheep to be killed."

³⁷ No! In all these things we are more than winners! We owe it all to Christ, who has loved us.³⁸ I am absolutely sure that not even death or life can separate us from God's love. Not even angels or demons, the present or the future, or any powers can separate us.³⁹ Not even the highest places or the lowest, or anything else in all creation can separate us. Nothing at all can ever separate us from God's love. That's because of what Christ Jesus our Lord has done. (Romans 8:28-39, NIRV)

God works all things together for our good. That means that no matter how horrible your situation may seem right now, no matter what mistake you have made and no matter what people have said or done against you, victory is still promised to be yours no matter what. Nothing can keep Him from chasing us down with His love and goodness.

We are all being redeemed, moment -by-moment. Whatever situations we have that seem irredeemable, as we love Him and align our lives to Him, we will see how mighty His hand is and how He can work around the most impossible of circumstances.

Nothing can keep Him from chasing us down with His love and goodness.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 65

But we also have to understand here that the redemption promised isn't simply of this earth. As Paul wrote in the famous chapter known as Hall of Faith:

¹³ All these people were still living by faith when they died. They didn't receive the things God had promised. They only saw them and welcomed them from a long way off. They openly said that they were outsiders and strangers on earth.

¹⁴ People who say things like that show that they are looking for a country of their own. ¹⁵ What if they had been thinking of the country they had left? Then they could have returned to it. ¹⁶ Instead, they longed for a better country. They wanted a heavenly one. So God is pleased when they call him their God. In fact, he has prepared a city for them. (Hebrews 11:13-16, NIRV)

God has also prepared redemption for us in the heavens, a reward that we have yet to partake of in the present but will enjoy for all of eternity. Is there any greater blessing than that?

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank You for Your grace so abounding that you give not just in the physical but also in the spiritual. Your goodness and extravagance knows no bounds. Give me a heart that enjoys and celebrates your blessings in every turn, whether it be in my life or in the lives of the people around me.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 8

“Seek First the Kingdom of God”

“What can I give back to God for the blessings he’s poured out on me? I’ll lift high the cup of salvation – a toast to God!”

Bono

POWER TRUTH

**¹⁶ All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
2 Timothy 3:16 NRSV**

SEEKING THE KINGDOM

We initially looked into these two chapters, but now we’re going to take an in depth look at what it truly means to seek the kingdom of God and how we are supposed to go about it.

When you talk about seeking the kingdom of God, many people have a lot of things to say about it. It sounds more mystical and can sometimes be taken to an extreme, so we need to tackle this with our feet firmly on the ground.

We have to understand that we can feel as if we're being good followers of Christ and are seeking God as we should, but sometimes we tend to be unaware of what truly lies in our hearts.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 66

The first thing we need to consider is if we truly are seeking the Lord's kingdom first. We have to understand that we can feel as if we're being good followers of Christ and are seeking God as we should, but sometimes we tend to be unaware of what truly lies in our hearts. That is, instead of seeking God and Him alone, we are actually also seeking the blessing, the security, the recognition, and the approval. In fact, you can be filling what you think to be the requirements and are only seeking to be a good Christian, whatever that may mean.

We must ask ourselves, in the deepest parts of our souls, are our intentions toward God and His glory? Do we put Him first, above everything else that we have going on in our lives? Do we prioritize His purposes over our own and do we crave Him before all things of this world?

This just means that we know how to put everything in its proper place and recognize what matters to God the most.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 67

Now this does not mean that we neglect our daily duties and our physical needs. This just means that we know how to put everything in its proper place and recognize what matters to God the most. This is much, much more than having the perfect Sunday attendance to church.

I know a lot of us will say that we love God and put Him on top over everything else, but let's examine it this way. Between tithing and buying that new bag that you want, what do you put first? Would you rather read your Bible and spend time with the Lord or watch your favorite TV series and catch up on the latest movies? Do we care more about preaching the Gospel and praying for the sick or our own comfort and conveniences?

Now let's take this to another level. When we are hurt and offended by others, do we respond in anger and resentment or forgiveness and love? When we go through trials, do we count it as joy, or do we grumble and complain? Do we care more about our reputation and defending ourselves more than living the truth that is the Word of God?

Now you may say that these, our natural reactions and are part of being human, but I am inclined to point out that the source of all of these are still pride and unbelief. So again, I ask you, can we really say that we're truly seeking the kingdom of God and its righteousness? Do you live as if you get to call all the shots in your life or do you really have Jesus as Lord?

ENTERING THE KINGDOM

Please know that the last thing I want to do is to make you feel condemned. That is not my intention in any way, as I personally know that I still sometimes fall short as well. There are times that I would rather spend my time sleeping and watching TV than getting

into Scriptures and seeking the face of God. Even when there are moments that I know that the Holy Spirit was leading me to talk to that random stranger on the subway and pray for said person, but I hesitated because of fear and self-consciousness. I'm just as in this journey as you. If the Holy Spirit convicted you in any way upon this realization, as he did me, then let's understand how to keep on seeking the kingdom of God.

*This constitutes a deliberate turning
away from sin.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 68

First, we need to live a life of repentance. This isn't just about saying sorry and being apologetic for what you have done. This constitutes a deliberate turning away from sin. It's not only when you feel like it. This is a decision to consciously follow the Lord even when temptations come.

When Jesus said here to seek first his kingdom, he doesn't mean that we need to look for an actual kingdom, with actual people. In this particular passage, it pertains to the life and salvation that we get to achieve because of his reign.

*To seek God and His righteousness is
to seek His salvation, not in the sense
that we ever really lose it, but in that
we embrace all that comes with it.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 69

To seek God and His righteousness is to seek His salvation, not in the sense that we ever really lose it, but in that we embrace all that comes with it. Paul puts it this way:

¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.

²⁰ We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (2 Corinthians 5:17-21, NIV)

Even if we are already saved and consider ourselves to be followers of Christ, we must keep in step with the journey of sanctification that the Lord is putting us through. James exhorts the church:

³ When you do ask for something, you don't receive it. That's because you ask for the wrong reason. You want to spend your money on your sinful pleasures.

⁴ You are not faithful to God. Don't you know that to be a friend of the world is to hate God? So anyone who chooses to be the world's friend becomes

God's enemy. ⁵ Don't you know what Scripture says? God wants the spirit in us to belong only to him. God caused this spirit to live in us. Don't you think Scripture has a reason for saying this? ⁶ But God continues to give us more grace. That's why Scripture says, "God opposes those who are proud. But he gives grace to those who are humble."
⁷ So obey God. Stand up to the devil. He will run away from you. ⁸ Come near to God, and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners. Make your hearts pure, you who can't make up your minds. ⁹ Be full of sorrow. Cry and weep. Change your laughter to mourning. Change your joy to sadness. ¹⁰ Be humble in front of the Lord. And he will lift you up. (James 4:3-10, NIRV)

See, repentance is probably the ultimate sign of humility. It is acknowledging the fact that we have sinned against God and are willing to make amends. Yet at the same time, it also conveys that we know we cannot we need His forgiveness and grace, because no amount of good that we do will let us work our way to heaven.

As we repent and allow ourselves to be sanctified, we learn to live a life that walks in obedience in the Lord. We learn to seek His heart and ways before we seek His hand. To seek the Lord and His righteousness is to seek His will and to do whatever it is He requires for us at whatever cost.

As we repent and allow ourselves to be sanctified, we learn to live a life that walks in obedience in the Lord.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 70

Proverbs tells us that wisdom speaks what is true and hates what is evil. Every word from the mouth of wisdom is honest, never twisted nor true. And wisdom lives with understanding that is knowledge and good sense. Wisdom dictates that respect for the Lord means to hate evil, pride, bragging, and any evil way and word, for one with wisdom walks the paths that are right and in the ways that are honest. With wisdom comes riches, honor, lasting wealth, and success. Its fruit is better than fine gold and its gifts are better than the finest silver.

Now, seeking God requires wisdom. Those who are unwise would try to run away from the Lord and His commands, while the wise would ponder on every word that comes from His mouth. The foolish would try to fool themselves and live a life that seems righteous but is actually not, thinking that keeping up an act to convince the people of this world is enough, while the wise know that in fooling others they also end up fooling themselves, and so they choose to walk in integrity.

The foolish would try to fool themselves and live a life that seems righteous but is actually not, thinking that keeping up an act to convince the people of this world is enough, while the wise know that in fooling others, they also end up fooling themselves, and so they choose to walk in integrity.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 71

Once we have wisdom, we will understand exactly what it is that we are to walk into. The wise know that it's rather impossible to live in a world with such fine-tuned properties and particles were it not for someone who designed everything to be the way it is, while the foolish would say that everything is by chance and that we have our lives in our own hands.

HIS KINGDOM COME

I'm very excited to get into this part of this chapter. Most of us have heard this phrase before. It's a part of what we call the Lord's Prayer, in which we ask His kingdom to come and His will to be done here on earth as it is in heaven.

"As it is in heaven," what a powerful thing to ask God. Looking at the history of humans here on this earth, we must have come to the conclusion that we all do less than outstanding job governing ourselves. I mean, really, we're quite bad at it. A nation that is currently on the top in this generation will fall on the next and vice

versa. There seems to be this never-ending cycle of up and down when it comes to the success of the nations, which should really come as no surprise considering how what was effective in one generation will probably not be in the next, and the selfless ruler of a particular nation might be replaced by one who is corrupt.

"As it is in heaven", what a powerful thing to ask God.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 72

I love the prophecy that was touched by Daniel when he was speaking to King Nebuchadnezzar, as we see in Daniel 2. Daniel began by explaining the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, a dream that he had not told anyone else before but was revealed by God to Daniel. He affirms that King Nebuchadnezzar may be the greatest king of all as the God of heaven had given him all the power, might, glory, and authority he could fathom. Not only were all the people under his control, but the wild animals and the birds were also under his authority – and it didn't even matter where they lived for the Lord has made him ruler.

But after him, another kingdom will take over and it won't be as powerful as his. Then a third kingdom will come and rule over all the earth. Finally, there will be a fourth kingdom, and this one will be as strong as iron, and iron breaks and smashes everything to pieces. This fourth kingdom will crush and break all the others. Even when the fourth kingdom is divided up, it will still have some of the strength of iron. It will stand partly strong and partly weak. This fourth kingdom will be made up by all kinds of people, although they won't hold any more

than iron mixes with clay, as going with the vision of King Nebuchadnezzar.

Now in the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom and this kingdom will never be destroyed. No other nation will ever take it over. It will crush all those other kingdoms and will bring them to an end, and it will last forever.

God is setting up a kingdom that will not be destroyed and will live on forever. We also see this in the book of Revelation, when John had a vision of the kingdom of God being established here on earth. What an amazing sight to see the day of the Second Coming come to pass.

The struggles for power, the superficial riches, and the status symbols – all of it would be moot and useless to us if we have our eyes set on that which is eternal.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 73

If we seek that kingdom, the kingdom that is to last throughout all of eternity, the kingdom that God is to establish here, then we would not be fixated on the earthly things that we have here. The struggles for power, the superficial riches, and the status symbols – all of it would be moot and useless to us if we have our eyes set on that which is eternal.

If our hearts are set on having His kingdom come, then we will the lives that He has meant for us. We will live as if we're actual citizens of heaven, people who have

seen the face of God and people who cannot bear to be apart from His presence. We will look as if we're people of God, our nationality and identification written all over the way we act and interact with the people around us, the culture of heaven permeating from our actions. We will, at all times, live in a manner that pleases Him and manifests His glory. We will live a life that is under his oversight and dominion, having Jesus as our Ruler.

His laws are the ones we uphold and fight for, not the political parties to which we adhere, for example, divorce and homosexual unions. All political correctness and sensitivities aside, the bottom line is this: what does Jesus have to say about it? Would it still adhere to how his kingdom should be if these were to be allowed? What do you think his holy kingdom would look like and how do you think the people will be interacting with each other there?

His laws are the ones we uphold and fight for, not the political parties that we adhere to.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 74

While we may not be there yet, we are on our way. We must not be so tied to what we have here that we dare not be excited about all the things that the Lord is to bring to fully redeem all of His creation. As the rest of creation groans for this time, so must we.

PRAYER

Dear God,

We thank You for all the things that You have done and all the things that You are going to do in our lives. As we praise You for all the things You are doing in the nations, we ask for Your help in gathering Your people together as a Kingdom. May this be the time of unity, a time when we will take our stand against the kingdoms of the enemy. May we live lives that have You as our Ruler and may we keep our gaze set on You for all of eternity.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 9

Believe the Prophet and Prosper

“An infinite God can give all of Himself to each of His children. He does not distribute Himself that each may have a part, but to each one He gives all of Himself as fully as if there were no others.”

A.W. Tozer

POWER TRUTH

²⁶ But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you.

John 14:26 NRSV

BELIEVE

When someone tells me to just believe, I sometimes balk and stare at said person in doubt all the more. For some reason, I think that if someone were to say that, it would imply that what he is saying is rather unbelievable and common sense would dictate that I actually not believe him.

If you've been walking with Him, I'm pretty sure He has asked you to do at least one strange thing in your life, something that doesn't make sense to you nor to the people around you.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 75

Such was the case when my dad told me to close my eyes and extend out my hand. I hesitated, knowing that teasing tone in his voice. He continually coaxed me to just do it and to trust him, so I did, only to end up having a grasshopper crawl down my arm.

I'm pretty sure I'm not the only one who has been pranked that way, and you probably have done it to a younger sibling or to a friend. Jokingly, we end up making people do things for our own sake of fun, and while common sense would have told the other person not to do it, they ended up doing it anyway, much to their chagrin and regret later on.

The good thing is that such is not the case with God. If you've been walking with Him, I'm pretty sure He has asked you to do at least one strange thing in your life, something that doesn't make sense to you nor to the people around you. For instance, I know the Lord has asked people to give up jobs that pay six figures so they could be full-time ministers in a nation of poverty where they're paid basically nothing. It should come to us as no surprise that their families and friends thought they were crazy. I also know of people who felt led to give up to the very last dollar in their pocket when they themselves had difficulty paying their own bills.

The Lord always has a purpose for the things He wants us to do, and more often than not, it's actually for our good.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 76

But all of these are never in vain, nor do they leave us with nothing to show for it. Those who felt led to give an amount of money that seemed big at the time, ended up receiving literally a hundredfold in return, some even within the same day! The Lord always has a purpose for the things He wants us to do, and more often than not, it's actually for our good.

STORIES OF THE PROPHETS

We're going to look at stories of prophets, who were the Lord's mouthpiece during the Old Testament, who made people do certain things that appeared weird, only to find that it all eventually made sense.

The Lord was instructing him to go right away to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and to stay there for the Lord had directed a widow there to supply you with food, so Elijah went to Zarephath.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 77

First up in our list is the famous prophet Elijah. 1 Kings 17 speaks of the time he declared that the land would be in drought for a few years, and so it was. The brooks dried up and it hadn't rained in the land for quite a while when a message from the Lord came to him. The Lord was instructing him to go right away to Zarephath in the region of Sidon and to stay there for the Lord had directed a widow there to supply you with food, so Elijah went to Zarephath. When he came to the town gate, he saw a widow there gathering sticks. He called out to her and asked her to give him water in a jar, so she went to get the water. Then he asked for a piece of bread too. This time, however, she told him that she doesn't have any bread. In fact, all she had was a small amount of flour in a jar and a little olive oil in a jug. She was gathering a few sticks to take home so she can make one last meal for herself and her son, and then die thereafter.

But Elijah told her to not be afraid and to go home and do as she had said. However, she had to first make a small loaf of bread for him using whatever she may have had at the time. After she does, she can make food for her and her son. He told her how the Lord said that the jar of flour will not be used up and the jug will always have oil in it, and that she will have flour and oil until the day rain comes to the land once again.

She did as Elijah told her and so Elijah, the widow, and her family had food every day for what the Lord said came to pass. Sometime later, the son of the widow became sick until it got so bad that he stopped breathing. The woman, in her grief, questioned Elijah and if he came to kill her son. Elijah was unfazed and asked for her son. He took him from her arms and carried him to the upstairs room where he was staying. He put him down on his bed then he cried out to the Lord to give the boy's back to him.

*The Lord answered Elijah's prayer.
He gave the boy's life back to him.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 78

The Lord answered Elijah's prayer. He gave the boy's life back to him. So, the boy lived. Elijah picked up the boy and carried him down from the upstairs room into the house. He gave him to his mother, and the woman acclaimed that truly, Elijah was a man of God and now she knows that the message he has brought from the Lord was really true.

One thing we need to know from the onset is that widows at the time were looked down on. In a culture wherein the woman's value was attached to her husband, the death of her husband basically meant she wouldn't have anyone to provide for her and her children, if she had them. She would have lost her place in society.

Since the widow in this story no longer had any money, especially with the drought, she felt as if there was no reason for her to live. She was hopeless and had given up on life itself when she met Elijah. Think about it. If you were in her shoes and it was the worst day of your life, in fact you were preparing for you and your son to die, how would you have reacted to this strange stranger's request?

The fact that she followed Elijah's instructions, even if she didn't really know who he was or if she could trust who he said he was in the midst of her lack and poverty, speaks volumes. Sure, she initially had doubt and just stated what her eyes could see but hope and faith started to bloom in her heart again. What if, just what if? She could try, at the very least. She held on to what the Lord God told her through Elijah even if it sounded impossible.

The Lord will always try to solicit the response that your heart has towards Him when He asks for the impossible before He will actually go and do the impossible in your life.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 79

The Lord will always try to solicit the response that your heart has towards Him when He asks for the impossible before He will actually go and do the impossible in your life. It's not so much to make fun of us, as it is to test us and see what our heart's disposition towards Him is truly.

But even after the obedience and blessing, trials came. Her son died, and she hurled accusations towards Elijah – her faith that believed for the impossible at the beginning was tested. So, this prophet cried out to God, for he knew and understood that the Lord's plans and purposes were to bless this woman and her child. Surely, the Lord had not forgotten about them and about what they have done for him. It was all to increase her faith, and probably even Elijah's in the end.

It may have initially started out with addressing physical needs, but the Lord ended up giving them more than they bargained for. Not only did Elijah get to be blessed with food and water, but the woman and her child were also blessed with provision and new life.

Now, we're going to look at what we can get from the story of Elisha, another famed prophet of the Old Testament. He started out as Elijah's apprentice of sorts but ended up being blessed double the anointing that

Elijah had and ended up doing marvelous miracles and building a reputation completely in his own right. In fact, he did something close to Elijah's story, providing oil for a widow and her son when they had nearly nothing left.

Prophets at the time were known to carry the presence of God, and in the Old Testament, as the veil had not yet been torn, normal, everyday people and citizens actually did not have the access to God as we do these days.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 80

But the passage we're going to examine is a different case. If you look at the Bible and search the story in its entirety, you will see how the latter part of the story is in some ways similar to the story of Elijah, the widow, and her son who was brought back to life. However, what we're going to take a look at is the first part of the story, the one part that truly stands out from the rest:

⁸ One day Elisha went to the town of Shunem. A rich woman lived there. She begged him to stay and have a meal. So every time he came by, he stopped there to eat. ⁹ The woman said to her husband, "That man often comes by here. I know that he is a holy man of God. ¹⁰ Let's make a small room for him on the roof. We'll put a bed and a table in it. We'll also put a chair and a lamp in it. Then he can

stay there when he comes to visit us.”

¹¹ One day Elisha came. He went up to his room and lay down there. ¹² He said to his servant Gehazi, “Go and get the woman from Shunem.” So he did. She stood in front of Elisha. ¹³ He said to Gehazi, “Tell her, ‘You have gone to a lot of trouble for us. Now what can we do for you? Can we speak to the king for you? Or can we speak to the commander of the army for you?’”

She replied, “I live among my own people. I have everything I need here.”

¹⁴ After she left, Elisha asked Gehazi, “What can we do for her?”

Gehazi said, “She doesn’t have a son. And her husband is old.”

¹⁵ Then Elisha said, “Bring her here again.”

So he did. She stood in the doorway. ¹⁶ “You will hold a son in your arms,” Elisha said. “It will be about this time next year.”

“No, my master!” she objected. “You are a man of God. So please don’t lie to me!”

¹⁷ But the woman became pregnant. She had a baby boy. It happened the next year about that same time. That’s exactly what Elisha had told her would happen.
(2 Kings 4:8-17, NIRV)

Notice what’s curious from the very beginning of this story. This rich woman - and in our heads we tend to start imagining fancy young women with their heads and chins held high - begged Elisha to come over her house and eat a meal there.

Now, I want to emphasize and make clear that this is certainly not about her making a move on Elisha

in the hopes to receive some sexual favor. Prophets at the time were known to carry the presence of God and in the Old Testament as the veil had not yet been torn, normal, everyday people and citizens actually don't have the access to God as we do these days. While we now understand and even take for granted the fact that we can speak to God anytime we like and have access to His Presence when we simply draw near, in that time before, only the high priests had access to Him – and once a year at that.

This woman was seeking after the presence of God and would do whatever means to have His presence stay.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 81

And so, when this woman begged Elisha, she wasn't longing for him as a person himself. What she truly wanted was to be close to the presence of God that he carried with him. This woman was seeking after the presence of God and would do whatever means to have His presence stay.

In fact, she was so intent on that that they decided to give him his own room. They literally disrupted their everyday lives with the noise, hassle, and disturbance of construction just so they can get just a little more time with him, just so they can have him close. She took responsibility for all that he would need. More than that, she took the initiative. She didn't just give Elisha his own room complete with furniture; she even gave him his own servant! She saw the need and foresaw the needs that Elisha would have and was more than willing

to accommodate all of these, and I'm sure had Elisha demanded for more, she would have given more. That and all the other things that she has done already reflect so much of the sincerity that is in her heart.

She was so content in just giving to this man of God that she didn't even bother demanding for a miracle.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 82

When Elisha told her that she would have a son, pay close attention to her reaction. It wasn't so much unbelief as it is disbelief. She was so content in just giving to this man of God that she didn't even bother demanding for a miracle. Surely, she had experienced false hope if not broken hope before when it came to this area, and she didn't want to believe again. But if we are consistent with her character and how she valued God, His Word, and His people, we can make the inference that she, in fact, believed in the end.

Have you ever had someone promise you something and you didn't want to believe it but deep in your heart you did? It's like you couldn't stop that swell of hope inside of you. Well, it was probably the same for that woman. And true enough, she was given a son the same time next year.

Remember Deuteronomy 28? We are told that we have to make sure we obey the Lord completely. We have to be careful to obey all his commands. And if we do all that He commands, He will honor us and give us blessings. Truly, we see not just in the Scriptures but also here in the present age that the Lord truly does bless all who have faith in His word and believe.

Truly, we see not just in the Scriptures but also here in the present age that the Lord truly does bless all who have faith in His word and believe.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 83

I'm not quite sure if you've ever received a prophetic word before, but I have. Now we do have to be careful in discerning the spirits and knowing what is from God or not, especially if there is instruction. However, if you know deep down in your soul that the Lord is confirming this certain prophetic word to you, then you have to obey it even if it looks and sounds silly. The Lord even explicitly tells His people through His prophet in Eze. 20:37,

"I will take note of you as you pass under my shepherd's stick. I will separate those who obey me from those who do not. And I will give the blessings of the covenant to those of you who obey me."

The Lord pays attention to what we do, and He pays attention to what we obey and if we actually listen to the things He says. These days, we may have gotten comfortable with the idea that He speaks to us directly, but He still does use other people to speak into our lives.

Similar to the way the prophets operated in the Old Testament, prophets still speak to people today to correct, rebuke, affirm, and teach. Sometimes, our paths and our ways of living do need to be corrected and sometimes, we do need other people to teach us

and tell us where to step and how to go about things. So, I do hope in the same way, we also open our hearts while keeping discerning spirits that we may not miss on God's instruction and the blessing that could possibly end up coming with it.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for being One who rewards obedience and faithfulness. I pray that you will make me sensitive to Your words and the people that You use to speak into my life in this particular season. Give me a heart that is receptive and a life that follows and obeys no matter it is what you tell me. No matter how silly, ridiculous, or foreign it may seem to me, may I trust that Your purpose is always to take me to a place where I could be closer to You more than ever before. In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 10
A Thousand Times More

“Christ frequently gives us the desires of our heart, though not at the peculiar time we desired, but a better time.”

Robert Murray McCheyne

POWER TRUTH

¹⁶ “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.”

John 3:16 NRSV

A THOUSAND-FOLD

I'm not quite sure if you've heard it before, but if you pay close attention to the exhortations done during tithes and offerings, you will come across the word “thousandfold.” It's something we all like declaring over others, almost as much as we declare it over ourselves. It speaks of multiplication many times over and it gives the impression that we're going to get much more than we ever gave. How is that ever a bad deal?

It speaks of multiplication many times over and it gives the impression that we're going to get much more than we ever gave.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 84

Now while the term thousandfold is familiar, have you ever heard of the thousandfold anointing? It sounds quite marvelous doesn't it? We have heard of double-portions, surely, as Elisha asked to have double the portion of the anointing upon Elijah. Now think that, except it's a thousand portions.

I would love to be anointed in that way, to be granted something that implies multiplication, an increase that isn't just a hundred times more but a thousand times over. It means that there's a baseline and you were given something that has gone above and beyond the measure of that baseline.

We see this term being used in the Old Testament, marking the 40th year since the time that the Israelites have left Egypt, right before they chose the twelve to scout the promised land. Moses in Deuteronomy recounts how the Lord spoke to them in Mount Horeb and told them that they have stayed long enough in that mountain so they should take their tents down and go into the hill country of the Amorites and go to all the people who are their neighbors. The Lord instructed them to travel to the mountains and the western hills, to the people along the coast and to the land of Canaan and Lebanon. He asked them to go even further, to the great Euphrates River.

The Lord instructed them to travel to the mountains and the western hills, to the people along the coast and to the land of Canaan and Lebanon.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 85

He told them this so that they would know what belonged to them, for He had promised their fathers the land and so it is also theirs as He promised He would give it to their children. Moses went on to address the Israelites:

⁹ At that time I spoke to you. I said, “You are too heavy a load for me to carry alone. ¹⁰ The Lord your God has caused there to be many of you. Today you are as many as the stars in the sky. ¹¹ The Lord is the God of your people. May he cause there to be a thousand times more of you. May he bless you, just as he promised he would. (Deuteronomy 1:9-11, NIRV)

The promise here was that the Israelites will be multiplied a thousand times more than, they were at the time, even when there were many of them enough as it is. Once they obey the Lord and do as He commanded, they will be blessed a thousand times more than they were during that time.

You have to understand that the Israelites lazed and wandered around for decades because they kept daydreaming about the life they left back in Egypt. While it may not have been luxurious and

ideal, out of their hardened and entitled hearts, they started thinking that it was – or at the very least it was better than wherever the Lord was bringing them.

Once they obey the Lord and do as He commanded, they will be blessed a thousand times more than they were during that time.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 86

This was the promise that was to remind them of how much more God actually has for them if they will only get their minds out of what they think they already know and if they weren't so tied to what they saw and experienced. He had to get them out of a place of comprehensible blessing into a place of incomprehensible blessing. While they may be used to the fruits back in Egypt, the Lord will bring to a land flowing with milk and honey, where fruits are several times larger than their normal sizes. If they thought they could quantify the best blessings of the Lord, God was set to prove them wrong.

Funnily enough, the Lord actually promises innumerable blessings. This means that we cannot even imagine counting or quantifying how much He is willing to give us. This is why His promise, initially to Abraham and then to his descendants, is so revolutionary:

¹⁶ He said, “I am giving you my word that I will bless you. I will bless you because of what you have done,” announces the Lord. “You have not held back your son, your only son. ¹⁷ So I will certainly bless you. I will make the children born into your family as many as the stars in the sky. I will make them as many as the grains of sand on the seashore. They will take over the cities of their enemies. ¹⁸ All nations on earth will be blessed because of your children. All these things will happen because you have obeyed me.” (Genesis 22:16-18, NIRV)

Who among us know how many stars there are in the sky or how many grains of sand there is on the seashore? We couldn't even imagine beginning to count them! I picture myself going on a beach trip, putting a hand through the sand, and scooping up all that can fit without spilling. It causes a headache just thinking about how many there are in that hand, and that's probably just 0.000001% of all the sand that there is in just that particular beach.

Since God doesn't limit His blessings toward us, we shouldn't even limit the faith that we have toward Him and His kindness.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 87

And if such was promised to Abraham, a thousand times more was promised to Moses. And we, the descendants that followed them as people of God, carry this same promise within us.

Since God doesn't limit His blessings toward us, we shouldn't even limit the faith that we have toward Him and His kindness. If you would look at the stories of the prophets and the miracles they did in the past chapter, you would notice that like the widow that Elijah visited, we will be given with far beyond what we asked for. She was about to have her last meal but after obeying God, she found herself not lacking flour nor oil. She suddenly had enough to go through many days, if not weeks and months or even years.

We have also previously looked at the story of the feeding of the five thousand. However, what we looked at the last time was from the passage of Mark. Now, we'll take a look at Matthew's version of the story to greater understand certain emotions that went on in the story.

Scripture tells us that when Jesus came ashore, he saw a large crowd. He felt deep concern for them and so he healed their sick people. Now when it was almost evening, the disciples came to him and told him that it was already getting late so he should send the crowds away. That way, they can go and buy some food in the villages. But Jesus replied and stated that they don't need to go away. In fact, it is them who should give the people something to eat.

The Lord knows that we have certain desires that cannot simply be filled with merely enough. And in His goodness, He's willing to give until we are satisfied, however this is to His glory and purpose and not just for our own selfish desires.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 88

This troubled the disciples and they pointed out how they only have five loaves of bread and two fish. Jesus, undeterred, asked them to bring this food to him then he directed the people to sit down on the grass. He took the five loaves and the two fish, looked up to heaven and gave thanks. He broke the loaves into pieces then he gave them to the disciples, then the disciples gave them to the people. Now everyone there ate and were satisfied. The disciples even picked up 12 baskets of leftover pieces, even after feeding the 5,000 men, as well as the women and children who were not counted in that number.

The miracle that happened there could very well be what we call a thousandfold miracle. What initially started out as five loaves and two fish ended up in food for thousands of people, who all ate until they were satisfied. I think that's one thing to note in this passage. The Lord knows that we have certain desires that cannot simply be filled with merely enough. And in His goodness, He's willing to give until we are satisfied, however this is to His glory and purpose and not just for our own selfish desires.

While there are certainly times that the Lord will discipline us and keep us in check as we can sometimes be like spoiled children who wail and cry until they get what they want, He is still filled with concern for us. And at the very least, He will meet our most basic, most urgent, most important of needs.

Jesus had the option to send them away and on their own ways, he had every right to tell them to go home and buy food for themselves since he never really asked them to be there in the first place. The disciples understood this train of thought and deemed it right to do so, why certainly it was seemingly the most practical option. However, Jesus had other plans. He wasn't just about the practical. He wanted to meet the need that was set before him, in a way none of them there could have anticipated or imagined.

At the end of the day, it's still about how great and mighty he is to even be able to do such a feat in the first place. It's also to increase our faith and challenge us to believe in him and his power; how he can still do so much more.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 89

Notice that what Jesus met here was something that was needed in that particular moment, and yet I'm sure that with how much the people ate, they would've been satisfied enough up until the next meal. See, he

doesn't give the thousandfold blessing just to meet one need. He gives it to make an impact that will surely stay and be talked about for the time to come.

There's more to the blessing than just us receiving. At the end of the day, it's still about how great and mighty he is to even be able to do such a feat in the first place. It's also to increase our faith and challenge us to believe in him and his power; how he can still do so much more.

HOW TO GET A THOUSANDFOLD

As with any blessing and any promise, the thousandfold blessing and promise comes with a condition. In Moses' case, there were direct instructions on what to do and where to go, so that they will be able to go to the place where they will increase a thousandfold.

We actually have to be willing to get out of a certain place or a certain mindset in order to go to the land where the Lord will give all that He had promised.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 90

In the same way, we are given instructions before we can be given that kind of multiplication. We actually have to be willing to get out of a certain place or a certain mindset in order to go to the land where the Lord will give all that He had promised. We have to do our part and we have to do it the way God wants us to. Contrary to popular belief, blessings are not handed to us on a silver platter. While they're technically not something we have

to work for, they're still something we should receive by faith. And if by receiving it by faith means that there is a certain step that should be taken, then we have to take that step.

A good example of a promise or a prophetic word that was given with instructions that needed to be obeyed is that to King Jehoshaphat:

¹⁵ Jahaziel said, "King Jehoshaphat, listen! All you who live in Judah and Jerusalem, listen! The Lord says to you, 'Do not be afraid. Do not lose hope because of this huge army. The battle is not yours. It is God's. ¹⁶ Tomorrow march down against them. They will be climbing up by the Pass of Ziz. You will find them at the end of the valley in the Desert of Jeruel. ¹⁷ You will not have to fight this battle. Take your positions. Stand firm. You will see how the Lord will save you. Judah and Jerusalem, do not be afraid. Do not lose hope. Go out and face them tomorrow. The Lord will be with you.'" (2 Chronicles 20:15-17, NIRV)

The fulfillment of the prophecy heavily relied on the people heeding the instructions that were given to them – and yet it goes to show that the action taken need not always be something as big as walking on water. If it takes more faith for you to stand firm and take your positions, to not move rather than to go, then it makes most sense for the Lord to ask such a thing from you. If He tells you not to lose hope and to not be afraid, then go do that too.

The fulfillment of the prophecy heavily relied on the people heeding the instructions that were given to them – and yet it goes to show that the action taken need not always be something as big as walking on water.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 91

His conditions and instructions vary per person and per situation, but they always lead to the fulfillment of the promise. The enemy has every intention to rob you of your promise, don't forget that. It won't be of help to us to stay lax and indifferent. We need to be alert and be sensitive to the things He wants us to do.

As God gave Adam and Eve clear instructions not to eat the fruit of the tree of good and evil, the enemy will try to twist it and make it appear as if all the things we were told by God are just optional. He comes to steal, kill, and destroy, not just your life but also the things that give you life – in this case, the fulfillment of a promise and the increase that is received by God's people.

The problem back then was that the enemy managed to convince Eve that God was holding out on them. He deceived them into thinking that if they eat the fruit, they will be like God, and somehow God was painted as the one that cannot be trusted in the eyes of Eve. In the same way, we will be tempted to doubt God and to think that He is holding out on us – which honestly really does happen to the best of us. But the prophet Isaiah reminds us:

² “Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes. ³ For you will spread out to the right and to the left; your descendants will dispossess nations and settle in their desolate cities.

⁴ “Do not be afraid; you will not be put to shame. Do not fear disgrace; you will not be humiliated. You will forget the shame of your youth and remember no more the reproach of your widowhood. (Isaiah 54:2-4, NIV)

We need to prepare ourselves for the thousandfold. We need to enlarge our tents and lengthen our cords. We need not be afraid for He promises not just to bless us, but He also promises to not put us to shame. The Lord cannot fill a cup that is already full. We have to prepare bigger cups.

We need not be afraid for He promises not just to bless us, but He also promises to not put us to shame.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 92

Think of Noah as he prepared the ark. Up until that thing, there had not been a single drop of rain that came upon the earth. When the Lord told him to build the ark for there will be a flood, he didn't know what a flood was either. He just knew that the Lord told him to, so he did. And true enough, rain came, and the floods filled the earth. It was thereafter that he received the Lord's

promise to him, a rainbow marking the continuance of the human race because of Noah's obedience even when he didn't really understand what was to come. In the same way, prepare yourself to receive the thousandfold that is to come.

PRAYER

Dear God,

You are One who does not skimp on His promises and blessings. You don't just give, but you give a thousandfold. Everything I ever thought I blessed other people with, you can give and return it to me over and over again. May I never limit your ability and willingness to give such good, amazing things. Thank You for the grace to live a life that is always ready to receive whatever it may be that You want to give, and may I obey the instructions and conditions that come with it.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 11
**Blessings of Fruitfulness and
Prosperity**

*“God has a way of giving by the cartloads to those
who give away by shovelfuls.”
Charles Spurgeon*

POWER TRUTH

**²⁸ But he said, “Blessed rather are those who hear
the word of God and obey it!”**

Luke 11:28 NRSV

THE TRUTH ABOUT PROSPERITY

A bundance is a tricky thing to talk about in Christian circles, to be completely honest with you. The prosperity gospel has taken over Christian circles with promises that do not necessarily align with God’s and most of us balk at the mere thought of engaging in talk about it.

*We need not be afraid for He promises
not just to bless us, but He also
promises to not put us to shame.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 93

It's as if because the concept of prosperity has been so overused and driven in some church communities that we would rather not venture into thinking that it's a remote possibility. We'd rather ward off all thoughts about it as a whole, declaring it taboo for "true" Christians. It's far easier to just shrug it off and tuck it away than tackle the nitty gritty of it.

But believe it or not, the Lord actually wants to bless us with prosperity. People who think that the poor are more spiritual and are closer to God would refuse to accept this, but it's true. I hope that as we have gone through the past several chapters, your heart is opening to all that God wants to bless you with.

You see, some of us take the concept of prosperity to the extreme. We think that to be considered truly prosperous, we have to have 5-hectare mansions with infinity pools and private theatres. It's not uncommon to hear of a pastor who lives in such an area – and there's certainly nothing wrong with that. He has every right to delight in what the Lord has blessed him with.

There's the dynamic that since we live in such a day with huge disparities between social classes, we try to navigate wanting to appear financially well-endowed and still caring for the poor as we are them, a line people tend to have difficulty finding.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 94

But there's also the fact that people who truly, deeply care for the less fortunate are put off by Christians who live their lives like princes. It is because of this that others would feel safer siding with that end. There's the dynamic that since we live in such a day with huge disparities between social classes, we try to navigate wanting to appear financially well-endowed and still caring for the poor as we are them, a line people tend to have difficulty finding. It just seems as if it has to be one or the other and there's no in between.

We can truly understand where both sides are coming from if we really take the time to investigate and look beyond facades. I know people who are completely turned off by people who are even remotely considered rich, and I know others who are completely turned off by those who would even dare imply that we should be deliberate about sharing with those in poverty. There's the mindset that since they seemingly worked for it, they have every right to withhold.

That is something I want to address before diving into this. I understand the feeling of not wanting

to give because you were the one who toiled, so why should they get it for free and without basically any effort? But we need to look at this simple balance: God grants us prosperity to help those who are in poverty. It's never just for our own purposes and certainly not for our own glory.

There are groups who absolutely refuse being open to financial blessings just because they view it to be sinful and wicked. But it would never be in God's heart to give us something that is wicked and sinful. It is simply us who take something beautiful and make it into something evil, but nonetheless, being prosperous and having money is a good thing.

But we need to look at this simple balance: God grants us prosperity to help those who are in poverty. It's never just for our own purposes and certainly not for our own glory.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 95

It's insane to think about how often we shun away God's goodness to us simply because of twisted theology, so we need to get that straight here. We are God's children and in many ways are formed to be royalty. I don't mean that in this sense that we are all to have our weddings broadcasted by international news outlets nor does that mean that we have people waiting on us hand and foot. In fact, when you think about the true model of royalty, the heart has always been to be in a position of influence to be able to take

care of the people. It is only in our selfishness and wicked ways that humans started taking advantage of the monarchy, but that was never the true design.

I think if we learn to take on the mantles of true princes and princesses, we will understand the true weight of responsibility that they bear on their shoulders. They have to set an example to millions of people watching their lives and they have to make decisions that will benefit all parties as much as possible. I perceive the role of a monarch to be somehow weightier than a president, in the sense that there is a lineage to carry so there are legacies of those who have gone before to uphold. Also, the responsibility becomes so much more personal. Presidents can forego their duties after a term, but monarchs have to carry that from the time they are born to the time they pass away.

If we look at our roles as monarchs, princes and princesses who are heirs to the Kingdom, it should come to us as no surprise that we would be prosperous. In fact, it would make us utterly useless if we are royalty without money because then, we wouldn't have the ability to provide for the people we care for.

So it is with the parables, where Jesus told his disciples to use worldly wealth to gain friends for themselves so that when all of that is gone, they may be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 96

We can take the time to dissect and discuss all the verses said against having money, but what we need to understand is that the Lord was never against money. He was against the way we made money our God. So it is with the parables, where Jesus told his disciples to use worldly wealth to gain friends for themselves so that when all of that is gone, they may be welcomed into eternal dwellings.

The bottom line was this: Whoever can be trusted with very little can also be trusted with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. One who has not been trustworthy in handling worldly wealth will surely mishandle true treasures and if someone has been dishonest with someone else's property, then surely they cannot be entrusted with property of their own.

The famous verse goes, no one can serve two masters. Either you will hate the one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money.

We should actually take time to acknowledge the fact that the Lord mentioned here that he who is faithful with little, will be entrusted with more. This means increase. This means more money. His target here was the heart and intention of wanting to have money. Is it to make him and his ways known through us by loving others with our money or do we care more about loving ourselves with money?

They were to remember how the Lord led them all the way in the wilderness for forty years, to humble and test them in order to know what was in their hearts and whether or not they would keep His commands.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 97

The Lord also wanted to deal with this not just in the New Testament, but also in the Old Testament. This was His issue with the Israelites, and it should come to us as no surprise that we can find Him dealing with the exact same thing in our hearts. The problem lies not with the money but with the heart, after all.

In Deuteronomy 8, Moses reminds the Israelites to be careful to follow every command he gives them, that they may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to their ancestor. They were to remember how the Lord led them all the way in the wilderness for forty years, to humble and test them in order to know what was in their hearts and whether or not they would keep His commands. The Lord caused them to hunger and then fed them with manna, something that has never been known before, to humble them and teach them that man did not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet swell even through the years in the desert. This was to emphasize one thing: the Lord disciplined them because of His love for them and not the lack thereof.

This was to emphasize one thing: the Lord disciplined them because of His love for them and not the lack thereof

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 98

Then Moses once again ushered them to observe the commands of the Lord, walking in obedience to Him and revering Him for the Lord was going to bring them into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and they will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and they can dig copper out of the hills.

But once they have eaten and were satisfied, they were to praise the Lord for the good land they were given and they were reminded to be careful that they do not forget the Lord your God nor fail to observe the commands, the laws and the decrees that He had, which Moses was passing on to them. At some point, they may think that it is by their own power and strength that they were able to produce the amount of wealth that they had, but they have to remember that it is the Lord who gave them the ability to produce wealth, and such confirm His covenant with their ancestors.

God began this statement by saying that we should keep His commands so that we can increase and possess the land that is filled with abundance. This is the land where there are flourishing blooms and greens, where there is no scarcity nor lack, where what we will build are not tiny houses, but fine ones. We will

see our flocks and herds grow large and our gold and silver increase.

If that's not a statement of prosperity, I don't know what is. It is very evident here that He desires to see us become prosperous. However, the bottom line was this: don't forget God and that He was the One who gave all of that.

OPEN DOORS TO PROSPERITY

I like to think that there are countless of opportunities for prosperity that surround us. Paul tells us in Eph. 1:3 that God has given us every spiritual blessing and that they belong to all who have Christ in them. We are all blessed, and we all are given opportunities to increase those blessings.

We are all blessed, and we all are given opportunities to increase those blessings.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 99

But these open doors and opportunities can only be passed through and entered with and in obedience. In fact, examine your life right now. Maybe you're in the midst of grumbling and complaining, comparing your situation with the people you work with and wondering why they appear to be more prosperous than you. The correct question to ask first is this: are you doing what God is asking you to do? Have you surrendered all that He has asked you to surrender?

The Lord puts it to John this way:

⁷ "Here is what I command you to write to the church in Philadelphia.

Here are the words of Jesus, who is holy and true. He holds the key of David. No one can shut what he opens. And no one can open what he shuts. He says,

⁸ 'I know what you are doing. Look! I have put an open door in front of you. No one can shut it. I know that you don't have much strength. But you have obeyed my word. You have not said no to me.⁹ Some people claim they are Jews but are not. They are liars. Their worship comes from Satan. I will make them come and fall down at your feet. I will make them say in public that I have loved you. ¹⁰ You have kept my command to remain strong in the faith no matter what happens. So I will keep you from the time of suffering. That time is going to come to the whole world. It will test those who live on the earth.

¹¹ 'I am coming soon. Hold on to what you have. Then no one will take away your crown. (Revelation 3:7-11)

Maybe the Lord opened a door in front of you and you haven't quite walked into it yet out of fear and doubt. He gets that. In fact, He acknowledges here that He knows we don't have much strength to do so anyway. But despite that, should we step into the doors He opens for us then we can trust that we will be rewarded in the lifetime to come.

*We need to ask and seek Him
regarding what way He actually
wants us to take.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 100

We also have to acknowledge that the open door might not look like we want it to. Some of us may have been waiting for a door to open, completely neglecting what has actually already been opened for us. Some of us may be asked to leave a certain door and walk into another one. These are the things we need to submit to God. We need to ask and seek Him regarding what way He actually wants us to take.

For some of us, there may be numerous open doors and we don't quite know which one to walk into because they all appear good. Maybe the Lord gave you clear direction on what to do, but for others, maybe He seems to be leaving the decision up to you. In that case, utilize your freewill and lift the decision up to God.

There are plenty of open doors they're all around us. There is always an opportunity to minister to those who are in need of God. There is always an opportunity to give to those who are in lack. There is always an opportunity to increase your skill and take ownership of the things that have been given you. We need not wait for an explicit command from the Lord to do all these things when they have been previously commanded in the Bible. These are doors that we should be walking into each and every day.

We need not wait for an explicit command from the Lord to do all these things when they have been previously commanded in the Bible.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 101

Maybe it's time we stop looking at prosperity with the mentality of a pauper and believe that we are called to an inheritance, and this inheritance is something that we're going to give out to every person we get to meet; this identity is something that we will live out in each and every circumstance.

And we can trust that as Jesus exhorted in the parable we looked at earlier, if we are faithful in all the little things we are asked to do, we will be entrusted with much more.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for being a God who prospers and who would want nothing more than to see me claim every inheritance that you have for me. I pray that you will break all my mindsets and prejudices as I take ownership of the call you have placed over my life. I pray that you will indeed open doors that lead me to prosperity and that you will give me the grace to walk into them.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 12
**Blessings of Good Health and Long
Life**

“However many blessings we expect from God, His infinite liberality will always exceed all our wishes and our thoughts.”

John Calvin

POWER TRUTH

¹⁰ Bring the full tithes into the storehouse, so that there may be food in my house, and thus put me to the test, says the Lord of hosts; see if I will not open the windows of heaven for you and pour down for you an overflowing blessing.

Malachi 3:10 NRSV

THE BLESSING OF GOOD HEALTH

Unsurprisingly, the blessing of good health and long life is one that Christians frequently disagree over. There are a lot of questions about people who are unhealed, children who died early, and that right there is a whole theological minefield waiting to blow-up in that conversation alone. In fact, that would require one whole different book entirely.

*One of the names of God is Jehovah
Rapha, meaning the God who heals.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 102

That's why I'm glad to say that we're not really going to go into so much of that today. We're simply going to take a look at what the Bible has to say about it and let all that speak for itself.

What we first need to understand is God's heart and His character towards the matter. One of the names of God is Jehovah Rapha, meaning the God who heals. We need to know that God does not change and that He is constant. This means that in every situation, for every person from whatever nation, He remains to be the God who heals. There are a lot of doubts in regard to this and I can't quite say I blame the jadedness, but nonetheless, we have to be convinced that more than God being able to heal us, He is actually willing to heal us as well.

A look at how Jesus lived this out constantly and consistently can be seen all throughout the New Testament. A chapter in Matthew chronicles how one time, as Jesus came down from the mountainside with crowds of people trailing him, a man who had a skin disease came and got down on his knees in front of Jesus and told him that if the Lord was willing to make him clean, then surely the Lord can do it.

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man, stating that he was willing to do it, and right away the man was healed of his skin disease.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 103

Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man, stating that he was willing to do it, and right away the man was healed of his skin disease. Then Jesus commanded him not to tell anyone of what happened. Instead, he was to go and show himself to the priest and offer the gift Moses commanded, as doing such will make him a witness to everyone.

Continuing on this journey, Jesus entered Capernaum, and as soon as he did, a Roman commander came up to him and asked him for his help as one of his servants is suffering and cannot move. As such, Jesus asked him if he wanted him to go to his house so he can heal the servant. The commander shied away, saying that he was not good enough for the Lord to even come into his house, so all he needed was Jesus to just say the word so that his servant may be healed since he himself is a man with authority and if he has the power to tell his servants what to do, then surely Jesus had even greater power.

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and he said to those following him that in Israel, he had not found anyone whose faith was that strong. Then Jesus told the Roman commander to go for it will be done just as he believed it would. Unsurprisingly, his servant was healed right at that very moment.

When Jesus heard this, he was amazed and he said to those following him that in Israel, he had not found anyone whose faith was that strong. Then Jesus told the Roman commander to go for it will be done just as he believed it would.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 104

Now when Jesus came into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law who was lying in bed for she had a fever. Jesus simply touched her hand, and the fever left her. She got up and began to serve him.

When evening came, many more people controlled by demons were brought to Jesus. He drove out the spirits with a word. He healed all who were sick. This happened so that what Isaiah the prophet had said would come true. He had said,

"He suffered the things we should have suffered. He took on himself the sicknesses that should have been ours"

In this chapter of Matthew alone, Jesus went on to heal people in at least three separate incidents. I love how the stories really went to state that Jesus himself was willing to heal the man with skin disease. I love how the Scriptures say that he healed all who were sick. This makes us see that he shows no partiality to whom he heals. He does so to all who come to him and truly have faith in him. It really isn't a matter of whether God wills it anymore, because He does.

Interestingly, Gal. 3:13 states that Christ has set us free from the curse of the law by bearing the curse

for us. And what is included in the curse of the law? Deut. 28 tells us that all kinds of diseases and sickness are part of this curse. Thus, if Christ has already set us free from the curse of the law when he bore the cross for us, then it should also come to follow that we are already free from all things that fall under the curse of the law – sickness included.

Thus, if Christ has already set us free from the curse of the law when he bore the cross for us, then it should also come to follow that we are already free from all things that fall under the curse of the law – sickness included.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 105

We need to be reminded that this is Christ's heart for us, this is how moved he is toward us:

³⁵ Jesus went through all the towns and villages. He taught in their synagogues. He preached the good news of the kingdom. And he healed every illness and sickness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he felt deep concern for them. They were treated badly and were helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then Jesus said to his disciples, "The harvest is huge. But there are only a few workers. ³⁸ So ask the Lord of the

harvest to send workers out into his harvest field.”

Jesus called for his 12 disciples to come to him. He gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every illness and sickness. (Matthew 9:35-38, 10:1)

This was part of the commission of Jesus, to the point that he even gave his disciples the authority to heal every illness and sickness on his behalf. Note the word every. This isn't just for a select group of people as Jesus possibly wills. This was for everyone, and he trusted that his disciples would also know and move knowing that it is for everyone.

The prayer offered by those who have faith will make the sick person well. It can only be possible with faith.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 106

A lot of Christians adhere to the phrase “if it's God's will,” and that certainly has been my battle cry for many seasons in my life. Such submission to His plans is only right. However, Jesus was God's will walking on earth, and if the Bible tells us that he healed all that were sick, we better believe that he will keep healing those who remain to be sick.

We need to remember that we need to hold to our prayers in faith, we ask in faith. Paul exhorts the church:

¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Then that person should send for the elders of the church to pray over them. They should ask the elders to anoint them with olive oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer offered by those who have faith will make the sick person well. The Lord will heal them. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. ¹⁶ So confess your sins to one another. Pray for one another so that you might be healed. The prayer of a godly person is powerful. Things happen because of it. (James 5:14-16)

Notice how Paul words it. The prayer offered by those who have faith will make the sick person well. It can only be possible with faith. If we stand in the gray, uncertain area of “if God wills to heal,” then how can we truly bring in the faith? In this following story, we will see how Jesus emphasizes the importance of faith in the process of healing.

Mark 5 tells of a time when Jesus went across the Sea of Galilee in a boat. A large crowd gathered around him as soon as he set his foot on land and a synagogue leader named Jairus came up to him and fell at his feet. He begged Jesus to go with him for his little daughter was dying and he believes that if Jesus would just place his hands on her to heal her, then surely she will get well.

Jesus went with him, and a large group of people followed and crowded around him. A woman who had a sickness that made her bleed for 12 years was there. She had gone to many doctors and had spent all the money she had but she was only getting worse, not better. She heard about Jesus and so she came up

behind him in the crowd and touched his clothes. 28 She thought that if she just touched his clothes, she would be healed. As soon as she did touch his clothes, her bleeding stopped, and she felt in her body that her long suffering was finally over.

She thought that if she just touched his clothes, she would be healed. As soon as she did touch his clothes, her bleeding stopped, and she felt in her body that her long suffering was finally over.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 107

Before she can rejoice too much, Jesus spoke up and asked the crowd who touched his clothes for he felt power go out of him. Then the woman came and fell at his feet. She was shaking with fear, but she told him the whole truth. 34 He reassured her and told her that her faith has healed her so she may go in peace for she is now free from her suffering.

While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus and told him that his daughter was already dead so he shouldn't bother to bring Jesus anymore. However, Jesus heard what they were saying and reassured Jairus to not be afraid and to just believe. At that point, he only let Peter, James, and John follow him to the house of the synagogue leader.

When they got there, people were crying and sobbing loudly. Jesus told the people that the child was only sleeping and that she was not dead, but they laughed him off. He made them all go outside and took

only the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him to where the child was. He took her by the hand and told her to get up. Right away she stood up and began to walk around and everyone was amazed at this.

We are called to treat our bodies as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and this isn't just in the spiritual and sexual sense but also in the physical sense.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 108

Imagine the amount of faith the woman had, for her to think that if she could get just close enough to Jesus, she would be healed. And notice his words when he confronted the woman of what she had done. "Your faith has healed you." Following this incident, when he reached the house of the synagogue leader, he reassured him to not be afraid and to just believe. To look at these passages and discount the importance of faith in the manner of healing and good health would be incredibly unwise and ignorant. It is the Lord's will to have all of us live full lives that are healthy and we should be confident in this fact.

The balance is this though: are we actually taking good care of our bodies? We have been given freewill and are accountable to our actions and the way we live our lives. If you decide to binge on junk food and fast food while claiming the Lord's blessing of good health, then you should really take a good look at what is in your life. We are called to treat our bodies as the temple of the Holy Spirit, and this isn't just in

the spiritual and sexual sense but also in the physical sense. Are you taking good care of the body that the Lord has entrusted you with, the one He took the time to design in detail and function?

We've already been given the blessing of body and the blessing of good health, but like all other blessings, we should learn to take care of the blessings that we receive.

THE BLESSING OF LONG LIFE

²⁵ Worship the Lord your God. Then he will bless your food and water. I, the Lord, will take away any sickness you may have. ²⁶ In your land no woman will give birth to a dead baby. Every woman will be able to have children. I will give you a long life. (Exodus 23:25-26)

Aside from the blessing of healing and good health, we have also been given the blessing of a long life. Now I know that statement may appear controversial considering how many honorable people have died young – martyred, even. And while there are personal callings and the grace to live out those personal callings, there is also a corporate grace and blessing that is given to the people of God and that is long life.

Aside from the blessing of healing and good health, we have also been given the blessing of a long life.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 109

And this isn't long life in the sense that we will all live for eternity. This is the long life with extensive years in this land. Right after the giving of the Ten Commandments, this statement was made:

³² So be careful to do what the Lord your God has commanded you. Don't turn away from his commands to the right or the left. ³³ Live exactly as the Lord your God has commanded you to live. Then you will enjoy life in the land you will soon own. Things will go well with you there. You will live there for a long time. (Exodus 20:32-33)

If it is merely the Lord's will to have us all enjoy eternal life immediately, then He might as well have killed us the moment we received the gift of salvation. However, He opted not to do that but rather, we are given instructions to live the life that we have been given here on earth to the fullest.

While the concept of martyrdom attracts some and it is never wrong to consider the cause of Christ worth dying for, we should also primarily think about the fact that He died so that we could live.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 110

I know some people would rather just get this life over with, and it's not wrong to look forward to spending eternity in the unmasked presence of the Lord, but we are still given this life to live. Again, we must be accountable for what we are given. While the concept of martyrdom attracts some and it is never wrong to consider the cause of Christ worth dying for, we should also primarily think about the fact that He died so that we could live.

We need to be reminded of the fact that God breathed life in us, and as long as His air keeps running through our lungs, we shall live our lives the way He designed it to be. He once again reassures us in Exo. 23:25-26:

You shall serve the Lord your God, and he will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from among you. ²⁶ None shall miscarry or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.

He said that He will fulfill the number of our days. This may appear to us as if our days are numbered and that may have a negative connotation, but when you think about it, our days being numbered actually is a positive because it means that our days are being watched over and that He is watching over all of our days.

When you think about it, all the resurrection miracles that God has done were done to young people – Lazarus, brother of Mary and Martha, would probably be the oldest. Why? This probably means that they still did not get to live the number of their days. It might as well be a protest to immature death, although that may seem stretching it.

Nonetheless, the bottom line is this: if it is God's will that we continue on in this life, it should be His will that we do so in good form and health to continually fulfill the very reason why He still hasn't let us die – and we have every right to claim the fullness of those years.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 111

Nonetheless, the bottom line is this: if it is God's will that we continue on in this life, it should be His will that we do so in good form and health to continually fulfill the very reason why He still hasn't let us die – and we have every right to claim the fullness of those years. He heals so that we may continue to live on and fulfill our number of years. King David got it right when he wrote this psalm:

¹⁰ The years of our life are seventy, or even by reason of strength eighty; yet their span is but toil and trouble; they are soon gone, and we fly away. ¹¹ Who considers the power of your anger, and your wrath according to the fear of you? ¹² So teach us to number our days that we may get a heart of wisdom. (Psalm 90:10-12)

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for being a God who heals and gives life. I ask that You continually show me just how You move in these areas, and I pray that You will give me the eyes to see how You're moving even when it's difficult for me to see. Let me lean on to all that you have said in your word and trust that you are a God who does not change. Your heart for us does not change and the way you want to give us good health and long life is synonymous to that.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 13
**Blessings of Peace and Victory Over
Enemies**

*“The greatest blessing in the whole world is being a
blessing.”
Jack Hyles*

POWER TRUTH

**Those who are careful about what they keep
themselves out of trouble.**

Proverbs 21:23 NIRV

VICTORY FROM GOD

The concept of victory is taught to us humans from a very early age. We encourage children to play sports not just so they can grow in the physical athleticism and social teamwork, but we also hope that somewhere along the way, they learn sportsmanship – something that has to be had in this adult world of winning and losing. And as we grow older even more, there are no more participation trophies given out. Instead, it’s all about competing with each other to be first in the class. It gets worse in the career world, where almost every work culture is all about competing with your workmates for that next promotion and pay raise.

We desire victory in every aspect of our lives, and some don't have qualms doing whatever it takes to win.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 112

In the midst of it all, competition and the need to win is unconsciously pounded inside of us. Everything ends up a competition, in fact, to the point that it's about having the better car, the happier family, the higher salary, and the more exotic vacation destination. We desire victory in every aspect of our lives, and some don't have qualms doing whatever it takes to win.

Now the thing is, some people prefer winning on their own, without the help of others. This is mostly due to the need of either proving something or because they crave a sense of control, and they couldn't leave their win in the hands of other people lest they mess up.

However, at the end of the day, we all need someone to fight with. I don't know about you, but I'd rather fight a war with someone who knows his way around the battlefield than one who doesn't.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 113

And I think that can be the case when people think of God winning our victories for us. Some balk at the thought and don't even dare think that God could care so much to fight for them. Others roll their eyes and declare that they can manage it without Him. However, at the end of the day, we all need someone to fight with. I don't know about you, but I'd rather fight a war with someone who knows his way around the battlefield than one who doesn't.

In Exodus 23, the Lord tells the Israelites that when His angel goes before them and brings them to their enemies and he blots all of them out, they shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them. Rather, they shall overthrow them and break their pillars into pieces.

The Lord will send His terror before them and will throw into confusion all the people who come against His people, and He will make all their enemies turn their backs to them.

²⁸ And I will send hornets before you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites from before you. ²⁹ I will not drive them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. ³⁰ Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and possess the land. ³¹ And I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates, for I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. ³² You shall make no covenant with them and their gods. ³³ They shall not

dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”
 (Exodus 23:28-33)

See how God laid out the battle plan for Moses and the Israelites. Can you imagine the God who created the universe saying that your enemies will be His enemies and that He will fight whoever who fights you? What a huge advantage and privilege. And that’s what He has promised not just the Israelites, but all of us, should we choose to remain under His guidance and care.

They were told to not rebel against Him and to pay careful attention to Him and obey His voice, for if they do all that God says, then, He will be an enemy to their enemies and an adversary to their adversaries.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 114

In the preceding verses, the Lord stated that He sent an angel before them to guard them on the way and to bring them to the place that He has prepared. They were told to not rebel against Him and to pay careful attention to Him and obey His voice, for if they do all that God says, then, He will be an enemy to their enemies and an adversary to their adversaries.

What a promise, and that’s certainly something we all want in our lives. Imagine the Lord being an

enemy to your enemies. You might even choose to not make them your enemies out of pity, because they just don't stand a chance.

Now if you notice, He mentioned in the Scripture above how He will drive the enemies out little by little. It's a rather curious thing if you ask me. The Israelites probably wanted Him to do it all at once to get it over with, but He opted to do what He knew would be best for them. He knew that if they were all driven out immediately, it would have caused more commotion and more enemies would have ganged up against the Israelites.

Such is what it means to have God fight for you. You don't make Him submit to your battle plan, you adhere to His and go along with what He thinks should be done.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 115

Such is what it means to have God fight for you. You don't make Him submit to your battle plan, you adhere to His and go along with what He thinks should be done. We must remember that the victory actually comes with conditions. He will only be able to fight for us if we actually allow Him to, and to allow Him, we must submit to what He wants us to do. We should let Him fight for us the way He wants to fight for us. It would make absolutely no sense for the Lord to fight for the people that refuse to submit to Him, and contrary to romanticized Christian belief, He won't. He fights for

those who are His and so first and foremost, we must actually be His.

VICTORY WITH GOD

Another story that I like to look back on has the same characters, being Moses and the Israelites, but this took place before the incident mentioned above. This particular one occurred right after the Israelites left Egypt and before they went through the wilderness.

Picture that you were one of the Israelites at the time. You just got out of Egypt and were still rejoicing in that fact when you suddenly received word that Pharaoh changed his mind. Feel the fear and uncertainty charge through your heart yet again. Just when you thought you had won, you find out the battles not yet over. You start running.

Feel the fear and uncertainty charge through your heart yet again. Just when you thought you had won, you find out the battles not yet over. You start running.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 116

You feel the ground shaking underneath you and hear the roars of all of Pharaoh's horses and chariots as well as his horsemen and army. They're getting closer by the second and you feel enclosed in – and soon enough, you literally are. The Egyptians have pursued you and have now cornered you.

Seeing the predicament you are in, all of you start turning on Moses. You can't help it as the emotions and frustrations take over you. You're all quite literally dead now and you start thinking that you'd rather have lived a servant life and not have left Egypt at all if it meant that this death is the price you have to pay for wanting freedom. Moses shushes all of you and confidently states:

¹³ And Moses said to the people, "Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will work for you today. For the Egyptians whom you see today, you shall never see again. ¹⁴ The Lord will fight for you, and you have only to be silent." (Exodus 14:13-14)

People like to take out verse 14 here and leave it to stand alone, without any clue of the context. However, if you look at the bigger picture and what happened after said statement, you would discover that said verse would actually be null and void, considering what the Lord said afterward.

¹⁵ The Lord said to Moses, "Why do you cry to me? Tell the people of Israel to go forward. ¹⁶ Lift up your staff, and stretch out your hand over the sea and divide it, that the people of Israel may go through the sea on dry ground. ¹⁷ And I will harden the hearts of the Egyptians so that they shall go in after them, and I will get glory over Pharaoh and all his host, his chariots, and his horsemen. ¹⁸ And the Egyptians shall

know that I am the Lord, when I have gotten glory over Pharaoh, his chariots, and his horsemen.” (Exodus 14:15-18)

See, it wasn't that He wouldn't fight for them. It's that they had a part in it too. They weren't to just sit back and relax they had to step out in faith in order to see Him move. We don't just place it all on the Lord's shoulders, dust our hands, walk away, and watch from a distance. He's there in the nitty-gritty with us and He's there to fight harder as long as we do our part so that He can do His part.

We don't just place it all on the Lord's shoulders, dust our hands, walk away, and watch from a distance.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 117

Let's go back in character as one of the Israelites. At this point, you are exhausted with the enemy behind you and the sea before you. The Lord ordered Moses to stretch his hand over sea, so he did. And you start seeing the ocean part in the middle, the waters going to one side and the other as dry ground starts appearing on the ground. You are entranced and the feeling of awe starts overtaking you. You know that the Lord has come for you and you're a little more confident than ever.

You walk across the sea, mildly aware of the Egyptians following your back but you know God must have something up in His sleeve. After you have all crossed to safety, you watch Moses raising

his staff yet again and watch the two parts of the ocean meet again in the middle, crashing over all the Egyptians that followed you. Stunned, yet now even more certain, you know you have won the victory.

Now when the Lord instructed Moses to lift up his staff, it wasn't because He needed Moses to be able to do it. Rather, He wanted to make Moses and the rest of the Israelites a part of the fighting. He wanted them to be in the experience with Him so that their faith in Him will also increase.

Think about this: if God willingly did such feats for His people then, then surely He will do the same for His people now. It may sound unusual and a tad too spiritual to our modernized, western minds, but if you visit Africa or Central Asia, you would be surprised to hear all the miracles God has been doing there to ensure their protection and their victory.

*The thing is, we may not always see
how the Lord is fighting for us. We may
not see how He surrounds us with
angel armies to guard us.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 118

The thing is, we may not always see how the Lord is fighting for us. We may not see how He surrounds us with angel armies to guard us. Such was the case with Elisha's servant, who was so struck with fear that he couldn't see. This was when the king of Aram waged war against Israel. He had several strategies up his sleeve to trap and fight the

Israelites, but Elisha was one step ahead of him and had warned the king of Israel about all these things.

Understandably, this made the king of Aram angry. He thought there were spies and double agents, but one of his officers informed him that it was actually all Elisha's doing. They knew that even if he was all the way in Israel, he knows all the things that were spoken of on the side of Aram.

This made the King count Elisha as a serious threat and so he sent men and chariots to capture Elisha. The story goes on this way:

¹⁵ When the servant of the man of God got up and went out early the next morning, an army with horses and chariots had surrounded the city. "Oh no, my lord! What shall we do?" the servant asked.

¹⁶ "Don't be afraid," the prophet answered. "Those who are with us are more than those who are with them."

¹⁷ And Elisha prayed, "Open his eyes, Lord, so that he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. (2 Kings 6:8-17, NIRV)

Some of us may be in situations wherein we're struck and trembling in fear, thinking that the Lord has abandoned us. We may have put ourselves out there to protect other people and later on, we were the ones in the wrong. It was only in our heart to do the right thing, only to find ourselves stuck in the crossfire. And when that happens, we would have regrets and hesitations, maybe some questions.

*Some of us may be in situations
wherein we're struck and trembling
in fear, thinking that the Lord has
abandoned us.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 119

But Elisha stood in his confidence while his servant shrunk in fear. We may magnify the things that we see in the physical, counting the odds against our favor and thinking that there's no possible way we can win.

Thank the Lord that He moves even when we can't see and that He knows how to win the fight. Paul exhorts us:

¹⁰ Finally, let the Lord make you strong. Depend on his mighty power.

¹¹ Put on all of God's armor. Then you can remain strong against the devil's evil plans. ¹² Our fight is not against human beings. It is against the rulers, the authorities and the powers of this dark world. It is against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly world.

¹³ So put on all of God's armor. Evil days will come. But you will be able to stand up to anything. And after you have done everything you can, you will still be standing. ¹⁴ So remain strong in the faith. Put the belt of truth around your waist. Put the armor of godliness on your chest. ¹⁵ Wear on

your feet what will prepare you to tell the good news of peace. ¹⁶ Also, pick up the shield of faith. With it you can put out all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ Put on the helmet of salvation. And take the sword of the Holy Spirit. The sword is God's word. (Ephesians 6:10-17)

We will never be able to fight with the ability that the Lord does. Goodness, He can win the whole fight completely on His own. But He won't, because He wants us in it with Him. And if we want to be equipped in this fight, if we want to go out there and actually stand a chance, we need to put on the full armor of God. As promised here, as we do, we will be able to stand up against anything.

And if we want to be equipped in this fight, if we want to go out there and actually stand a chance, we need to put on the full armor of God.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 120

What an amazing promise, as this assures us that we will have victory over all that comes our way, be it in the physical or in the spiritual. And it's not because we are strong, but it's because He is. The Lord will make us strong as we depend on Him and on His power.

BLESSING OF PEACE

It is only because we are assured of victory that we can live life in peace – not all in the external, but completely internal. This is the gift of God and certainly not something we can earn no matter how hard we try to make things okay. Think of all the people who get anxious so easily, even if they do their best to align all things and control all things outside.

But if you have God's peace, then all the worries and problems of this world will seem to fade away, simply because we are secured of the Lord's victory. We know that things will all turn out well in the end. As was written to the church in Philippi, so it echoes to us today: do not be anxious about anything, 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 our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:6-7).

*The peace of the Lord will transcend
all understanding. It transcends
circumstance, social class, and seeming
severity of issues.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 121

The peace of the Lord will transcend all understanding. It transcends circumstance, social class, and seeming severity of issues. It will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus, secure of what he has done and secure of all that he has yet to do.

You see, it's rather impossible to have peace if we are not assured of the outcome. A simple look at all the things going on in the world today will leave one restless, but if we know that the Lord has promised us victory at the end of it all, then we can allow ourselves to calm and rest.

The very famous Psalm 23 in God's Word Translation now takes on a whole new meaning:

- The Lord is my shepherd. I am never in need.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside peaceful waters.
- 3 He renews my soul. He guides me along the paths of righteousness for the sake of his name.
- 4 Even though I walk through the dark valley of death, because you are with me, I fear no harm. Your rod and your staff give me courage. (Psalm 23:1-4)

Such is our assurance of victory in him. We can walk our lives in peace, because He has won, and we will see Him do it over and over again.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for sending Jesus to win the victory for us. The war is surely won, but the battles are not yet over. Equip me in all that I need and help me lean on you and your strength, trusting that you will take care of me and that no harm will come upon me no matter what. In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 14

Blessings of Being Blessed by Future Restoration

“When you focus on being a blessing, God makes sure that you are always blessed in abundance.”

Joel Osteen

POWER TRUTH

¹⁰ Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your comrades who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Revelation 19:10 NRSV

THE STORY OF RESTORATION

People like to say that the Bible is one whole story of love, redemption, and restoration. And that is very true. When you look at it from the perspective of reading one long story, you will see how there was good at the beginning, then downfall and a lot of tribulations in between, leading up to the grand happy ending of victory. This is why fairytales exist and this is why we are so obsessed with “and they all lived happily ever after.”

People like to say that the Bible is one whole story of love, redemption, and restoration.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 122

Even the most cynical person, in their heart of hearts, wants that kind of ending. No matter how many times they try to convince themselves and others otherwise, insisting on tragedy and heartbreak stories considered these days as realistic, it's rather difficult to not want a happy ending at the end of it all. We all do, we're wired that way. We know that we were always meant to be in a better place, we know that this broken world is not at all how things should be like.

We all long for hope and we want something to hold on to. We want to know that things will get better because if they don't, then what's the whole point of all of this in the first place?

We all long for redemption, not just in the grand scheme of things but even in our lives right now. We want to know that the blunder we made at work last week will not hinder the rest of the team nor harm the project that we were all working on.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 123

We all long for redemption, not just in the grand scheme of things but even in our lives right now. We want to know that the blunder we made at work last week will not hinder the rest of the team nor harm the project that we were all working on. We want to find a way to make up for the mistakes that we made and do our best to woo all the people involved. We loop through hoops just to be able to get our professor to allow us to revise and make up for the paper we somehow managed to mess up. We all want redemption, be it by our own hands or by the hands of others, and we just want to know that somehow, things will turn out okay.

And if we look at the Bible, more than mankind and all creation being redeemed as the over-arc theme, there are details of how one nation, that being Israel was repeatedly saved and redeemed from their sins and mistakes. In fact, if you look at the entire history of Israel, counting this century, you will see how the Lord still continues to redeem them.

The book of Ezekiel captures a good part of this story as it focuses on Israel, her sins, and the way God extended grace towards her for her to be redeemed. The thing is, we are all never just one redeemed. Each and every day, we are continuously being redeemed. And after all we have done, as God's heart is for the Israelites, so is His heart for us.

In chapter 34, God starts to say that He Himself will search for His sheep and that He will look after them, as a shepherd cares for and looks after his flock, no matter how scattered. He emphasizes how He will save His people from where they go when it's dark and cloudy, when their judgment may be driven by their emotions. He will call them out from wherever they are and then gather them together.

Each and every day, we are continuously being redeemed. And after all we have done, as God's heart is for the Israelites, so is His heart for us.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 124

He goes on to promise that He will bring them into their own land and that they will eat in all the fields of Israel and in the best places on Israel's mountains. He talks of how He will search for the lost and keep them in safety. He will bring back those who have wandered away and will bandage those who have been injured.

While all of these appear rather general, He delivers the clincher: He will place one shepherd above His sheep, and this shepherd will come from the line of David. And as this shepherd is a servant, he will also be a prince. After such, He then declares that He will make a covenant with the people, a promise to give them peace. He will get rid of the wild animals in the land so that His sheep can live safely in the desert and sleep in the forests. He will make them and the places surrounding my holy mountain of Zion a blessing. He will send down rain at the right time and there will be showers of blessing. The trees will bear their fruit and the ground will produce its crops. The people will be secure in their land.

Not just that, but the Lord promised to break the chains that hold them. He will save them from the power of those who made them slaves that they will know that He is the Lord. The nations will not carry them off anymore nor will wild animals eat them up

for they will live in safety and no one will make them afraid. He will give them a land that is famous for its crops and they will never again be hungry there. The nations will not make fun of them anymore so they may know that the Lord is truly with them for He is the Lord their God.

The Lord was giving them assurance of restoration, but as it is with prophecies, it spoke of a future that had yet to come.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 125

Now the interesting part of this story is that this was not to be fulfilled until Jesus comes. The Lord was giving them assurance of restoration, but as it is with prophecies, it spoke of a future that had yet to come. We can look at this scripture in two ways. One is to take it as God speaking of His people in general, as we usually do, and such would make sense. He talks of sheep wandering away and Him bringing them back home, He talks of calling His people out of whatever nation they are in and gathering them together. This would certainly pertain to how His salvation is not limited to Israelites – knowledge that will only be acknowledged in the New Testament.

As we live in the days today, the particular quoted Scripture above would certainly minister to us. This reassures us of a future that we will no longer be made fun of, that we will be secure in our land. We can take this Scripture as it ministers to us and claim it.

However, we can also take this as God speaking to just the Israelites, who are known to be His people at the time. This word was before the time of Israel's destruction and once again if we look at the historical events that proceeded to happen after this word was given, we could see how they all align with what God had spoken through the prophet.

Let's dig a little into Israel's history. In 586 B.C., armies of Babylon destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the temple of David. Around fifty years after, the Persians defeated Babylon and Cyrus the Great allowed the Jews to go back to Judah and rebuild the Temple. Because of this, the people were restored to the land, although they were still under the Persian Kingdom. After 200 years, Alexander the Great then conquered the land, making the Jews a part of the Greek Empire.

*As promised, it was He who searched
out His people. He knew them by
name and gave them opportunities to
know Him in return.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 126

In 162 B.C., the Seleucids, one of the kingdoms under the Greek empire, tried to impose their culture on the Jews and they rebelled, finally letting a Jewish kingdom be birthed. However, after 100 years, the Romans conquered Jerusalem and so it was even when Jesus was born. In fact, in 70 A. D., the Romans went on to destroy Jerusalem and the temple yet again, but this time the Jews were scattered to the rest of the

world. It was only 70 years ago in 1948 that the Jewish kingdom was once again brought into existence.³ After centuries of living in other nations, the Jews started finding their way back to their home country.

As promised, it was He who searched out His people. He knew them by name and gave them opportunities to know Him in return. Once again we see promises of peace, safety, and provision. But even as King David recognized God as his Shepherd in the very famous Psalm 23, the allusion of God here to being likened to a shepherd is foresight into Jesus letting himself be known as Israel's Shepherd (Jn. 10:1-14).

It was a promise of restoration for the Israelites, that though they will disperse at a certain point in time, they all will come together once again, and Jesus will reign from Jerusalem.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 127

In fact, the Old Testament is peppered with prophecies of future restoration (at least at the time) as they all pertain to Jesus Christ as the Messiah. It was always said that a Son of David will rule for all of eternity. From the very beginning, after Adam and Eve were sent out of the garden, God already spoke of a day when their offspring would crush the serpent's head. It was all always a promise of redemption to be fulfilled sometime in the future. It was a promise of restoration for the Israelites, that though they will disperse at a

certain point in time, they all will come together once again, and Jesus will reign from Jerusalem.

Now no matter how you look at the Scripture above, you can't go wrong either way. The Lord is faithful to all His people. This point was further proven by Jesus when He died on the cross and went on to resurrect from the dead. Paul puts it this way:

³ It is the same with us. When we were children, we were slaves to the basic spiritual powers of the world. ⁴ But then the chosen time came. God sent his Son. A woman gave birth to him. He was born under the authority of the law. ⁵ He came to set free those who were under the authority of the law. He wanted us to be adopted as children with all the rights children have. ⁶ Because you are his children, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. He is the Holy Spirit. By his power we call God Abba. Abba means Father. ⁷ So you aren't a slave any longer. You are God's child. Because you are his child, God gives you the rights of those who are his children. (Galatians 4:3-7)

Through Christ, we are now restored to our place in God's kingdom. What was lost by Adam and Eve is now found in Christ. Think of the parable of the prodigal son. Sometimes, like the son, we end up being dissatisfied with what we have in God and we throw everything away for temporary pleasures. We willingly remove ourselves from His care and presence and opt to live completely independent of Him. For a while, we try to make things work by ourselves even if we are already at our wits' end.

*There is no shame nor accusation
there is only restoration.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 128

However, like the prodigal son, the moment we decide to go back to the Father and act on it, we are welcomed with open arms. For him, he wasn't even after being restored as a son. He just knew that he was better off in the house of his father no matter if he was just a servant. But because of his story, we know what it's going to look like even if we feel as if we no longer deserve to be recognized as children of God. There is no shame nor accusation there is only restoration.

THE PROMISE OF FUTURE RESTORATION

As stated in Rom. 8:28, the Lord works for the good of those who love Him. This means that He will always, always restore. And I think that's one of the best things He could ever promise us.

I don't know about you, but I constantly end up messing up. It's so easy to fall down and regress, and it's difficult to pick myself back up. I doubt whether I could be as good as I am in a certain season. When I allow the enemy to steal from me, I mourn the loss and beat myself up, wondering if I could ever get back what was lost. To know that more than having the ability to do so and that God is actually willing to do so is rather mind-blowing.

A look at the book of Revelation shows how God has every intention of establishing here on earth. Everything went downhill from the fall of man, and we see wars, crimes, and every form of wickedness around us. Children are being raped and sold into

slavery, women are being abused and used for their bodies, and men are being stepped on and murdered. It's an appalling, unbelievable thing to witness that even if we have encountered such stories hundreds of times over, the shock in our system never fades. This is because we are all longing to be restored to the way things were before – to the time of innocence and purity and unhindered fellowship with the Lord.

*This is because we are all longing to
be restored to the way things were
before – to the time of innocence and
purity and unhindered fellowship
with the Lord.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 129

Isaiah 35 tells us the eyes of those who are blind will be opened, the ears of those who can't hear will be unplugged, those who can't walk will leap like a deer, and those who can't speak will shout for joy. Even in the physical, those that appear to have been stolen because of the fall will be restored. Even better, the Lord tells us in Isaiah 65 that He will make things new and will create new heavens and a new earth. Babies will no longer die, and old people will go on to live for a very long time. In fact, those who die by the age of 100 will be thought of as children when they pass away. We will live far beyond that. We will finally get to enjoy the things that we work for as much as we can.

And I think those are things that all of us will look forward to. Most of us have lost someone close to us

so young, we have heard of babies dying before they are even born, we have watched sickness paralyze and eat bodies away. But the Lord will restore all of that and He will make everything better for His people.

Even better, the Lord tells us in Isaiah 65 that He will make things new and will create new heavens and a new earth.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 130

This Scripture perfectly sums up the magnificence of the restoration that will be given to us:

⁴ ‘He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death.’ And there will be no more sadness. There will be no more crying or pain. Things are no longer the way they used to be.”

⁵ He who was sitting on the throne said, “I am making everything new!” Then he said, “Write this down. You can trust these words. They are true.” (Revelation 21:4-5)

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for being One who has always had a plan. From the beginning, Your intention was always to restore things to their former glory – if not more so. May I hold on to the blessing of restoration. Give me a heart that is fully convinced of this and will claim this blessing in every area of life. In You and through You, the best is always yet to come.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 15
Prophets Teach the Fear of the Lord

*“A blessing is a circle of light drawn around a person
to protect, heal and strengthen.”
John O’Donohue*

POWER TRUTH
12 singing with full voice,
“Worthy is the Lamb that was slaughtered to
receive power and wealth and wisdom and might
and honor and glory and blessing!”
Revelation 5:12 NRSV

REVERENCE

Christians these days like to bank so much on the love of God that sometimes it’s all that they center on. In fact, church doctrines revolve around the fact that God is love that it’s all they teach to their members. They seem to neglect the fact that God has plenty of other attributes that demand a different form of response from us other than fluffy feelings. A tendency the church today actually has is packaging theology that leans so much on love and tolerance that the Lord’s justice, jealousy, and righteousness gets completely ignored.

A tendency the church today actually has is packaging theology that leans so much on love and tolerance that the Lord's justice, jealousy, and righteousness gets completely ignored.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 131

While we now so frequently reinforce the fact that Jesus is our friend and that we can relate to him as we would a friend, the prophets of old had another way of going about it. They could talk to the Lord the same way we do as they were given that access to Him, but they also did so with a heart of reverence. For them, it wasn't just like talking to a friend. It was talking to a friend they honored and greatly respected.

I'm not sure if you've encountered the term before but in my circle, the phrase "non-practicing Christian" tends to get passed around. While they consider themselves as part of the church, they lack the relationship with God that would lead them to respond to His glory the way they should. They prefer to live on in the ways of the world while claiming the perks of His salvation, failing to acknowledge that as He is love, He is also holy.

You cannot just worship someone you love; you worship whom you revere and adore.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 132

The thing about reverence, as I have mentioned, is that it is a response to the revelation of who God is. This is why we are not able to worship without reverence for the Lord. You cannot just worship someone you love; you worship whom you revere and adore. This is not possible if we cling on to pre-conceived notions of God and force Him into the box that we want Him in.

It is fascinating to note that in the King James Version, love is only mentioned 311 times while holy is mentioned 633 times. That's more than half the number right there. Another fact is that in the Bible, the Lord was never mentioned to as gracious, gracious, gracious or loving, loving, loving. We should be aware of the fact that in the original language of the test, there were no exclamation points for emphasis. Particularly in the Bible, any word that is repeated means emphasis. Repetition thrice means finality. And the only attribute of God ever repeated in such a way was holy, holy, holy. Such was the encounter of the prophet Isaiah when this happened and how the response of reverence was invoked from him:

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord. He was seated on his throne. His long robe filled the temple. He was highly honored. ² Above him were seraphs. Each of them had six wings. With two wings they covered their faces. With two wings they covered their feet. And with two wings they were flying. ³ They were calling out to one another. They were saying,
“Holy, holy, holy is the Lord who rules over all. The whole earth is full of his glory.”

⁴ The sound of their voices caused the stone doorframe to shake. The temple was filled with smoke.

⁵ “How terrible it is for me!” I cried out. “I’m about to be destroyed! My mouth speaks sinful words. And I live among people who speak sinful words. Now I have seen the King with my own eyes. He is the Lord who rules over all.” (Isaiah 6:1-5)

The holiness of God invoked reverence – and fear. Not fear in that one would fear a man that is wicked and would do harm. We must never approach God in that sort of fear, as He is good. But the fear that we have must be one that comes from a place of knowing God’s place. It’s rather similar to the way we would fear our parents or grandparents. We love them, we adore them, we can freely approach them, but there is also this sense of respect and fear of not wanting to do disobey them or do anything they would deem as wrong.

*The holiness of God invoked reverence
– and fear.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 133

The enemy will try to twist it and cause you to fear the Lord in a way that would be dishonoring to Him, but the Lord’s holiness and love are not contradictory. The enemy will also try to diminish the magnitude of the Lord’s glory in the minds of the people, as he has effectively done so to this generation. But the Lord’s

magnificence is unchanging and as it was in the time of Isaiah, so it is today. He may have torn the veil and given us accessibility, but none of that changes the response that is demanded from us when fronted with His glory.

The enemy will also try to diminish the magnitude of the Lord's glory in the minds of the people, as he has effectively done so to this generation.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 134

All throughout the Psalms, amidst all his turmoil and anguish, David always went back to one thing: the greatness of God. Even in the midst of his trials – when Saul was chasing him down in attempts to murder him, when his son with Bathsheba died - his heart always had the disposition of reverence. And while we can see this theme in almost every Psalm, here's one I'd like to highlight for us right now:

¹ Praise the Lord

I will extol the Lord with all my heart in the council of the upright and in the assembly.

² Great are the works of the Lord; they are pondered by all who delight in them.

³ Glorious and majestic are his deeds, and his righteousness endures forever.

⁴ He has caused his wonders to be remembered; the Lord is gracious and compassionate. ⁵ He provides food for

those who fear him; he remembers his covenant forever. ¹⁰ The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise. (Psalm 111:1-5, 10)

He always set his gaze on the Maker of the mountains he can't quite climb and trusted that He will come through still. He held the Lord's sovereignty much more valuable than he did his own preferences and comfort. The key to revering the Lord is truly pondering on the works of the Lord and I don't mean that we take five minutes to think about it, smile, and go through our day.

When we say ponder, we mean conscious meditation. It means staying on a thought until you have squeezed everything that you can out of it. And when we do so, we will live our lives in wisdom. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. If we acknowledge Him in all our ways and if we ponder on Him in everything that we do, the way we live our lives will reflect that.

REVERENCE AND BLESSING

Another thing I'd like to zoom in towards in the scripture above is verse 5, stating how He provides food for those who fear Him. Beyond the literal sense of provision of food, we can take this as provision in every aspect. Then David goes on to say that it is because He remembers His covenant forever.

To confide in someone is such an intimate act and is one that goes beyond the normal surface relational. This involves a meeting of minds and a meeting of hearts.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 135

Having a covenant implies that there is a relationship between two parties, and so this means that those who the Lord blesses have a relationship with Him; those who fear the Lord have a relationship with Him. This was further emphasized in Psalm 25, where David said that the Lord confides in those who fear Him.

To confide in someone is such an intimate act and is one that goes beyond the normal surface relational. This involves a meeting of minds and a meeting of hearts. And David says that the Lord will personally instruct those who fear Him in the ways that they choose. He will whisper to them what is wrong and what is right. He tells them what He thinks about certain circumstances and certain decisions.

Not only that, but they will also be prosperous in the land that they are in – each and every day of their lives. And it is not only them who will be prosperous, but their descendants will inherit their blessings as well. I don't know about you, but that sounds like a very good promise to me.

*The wisest man on earth is that sure
of how reverence and blessing works,
and it would do us good to be mindful
of it as well.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 136

King Solomon also understood this and emphasized this in Ecclesiastes 8, where he gave the comparison of the wicked man and the wise man. He acknowledged that while the wicked man who does evil may live for a rather long time, a point that we discussed in the previous chapters, he is sure that it will go better with those who fear and revere the Lord. In fact, he even goes as far to say that it is because the wicked do not fear the Lord that things will not go well with them. The wisest man on earth is that sure of how reverence and blessing works, and it would do us good to be mindful of it as well.

If you look through the book of Ecclesiastes, you will see how he keeps saying that everything is meaningless. He went through women, fame, riches, power, and properties as if they were nothing and he discovered that truly, all of these are pointless. King Solomon here is saying this as someone who has tried and experienced the sin of the world and one who has decided to turn away from it.

He also goes on to say that the life of a wicked man is just a shadow. We may take this in the same way we consider the metaphor as usual: his life is fleeting and is but for a moment. But we can also look at it this way: the life of a wicked man

is a prelude to the eternal darkness that is waiting for him after his life on earth passes, a true shadow of what is to come for him.⁴

He also goes on to say that the life of a wicked man is just a shadow. We may take this in the same way we consider the metaphor as usual: his life is fleeting and is but for a moment.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 137

We have constantly emphasized how God being a Father to us impacts the dynamic of Him giving us blessings and we just mentioned in this chapter how this also affects the way we far Him. Especially for this generation, the value of being a cool parent is viewed by society to be of utmost importance. For the Western civilization, the respect and fear that have been instilled in the generations before is proven to be lacking.

In fact, one look at the posts on social media sites proves this. Teenagers provide screenshots of conversations with their parents that show how cool their parents are in the sense that they get to curse at their parents and their parents wouldn't even bat an eyelash. They would even jump on the train and go on to have a verbal spat with their children, putting in as many insults and curses there as possible. It shouldn't really come as a surprise, the fact that people now cannot quite reconcile the idea of fear and discipline with parenthood.

However, parenthood goes far beyond having an easy relationship with your children. That's the reason why parents are first and foremost parents, not really friends. There is greater importance of fathers and mothers guiding their children in the way that they should go and raising them to do right over hanging out with their kids and drinking beer with them. It may seem fun for the moment, but it doesn't really take much to see how negatively this has impacted society.

We need to understand that to fear the Lord is to keep His commandments. It's not to act like a brat when things don't go our way.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 138

We need to understand that to fear the Lord is to keep His commandments. It's not to act like a brat when things don't go our way. A good Bible character example of which is Job. He was a righteous man and one who was known to fear the Lord. The Lord has blessed him for being so. But in a turn of events, the Lord allowed Satan to strike those that belong to Job as the enemy was saying that it was only because God gave Job everything that he feared the Lord in the first place. This was because He knew that Job was a man who truly feared Him, properties and blessings aside, and this was proven at how Job responded when everything was taken from him. All his children were killed, his livestock stolen, and his property destroyed by natural disasters, his entire body swollen with boils – and yet not once did he curse the name of the Lord.

His own wife was already telling him to just curse the Lord and die, but he stood in his faith because he revered and feared the Lord. He may have wrestled with emotions, as we all do, but he never shook his fists towards God, nor did he dishonor the name of the Lord. He never hurled accusations nor demanded reward for all the righteousness that he had done.

At the end of his trial, he acknowledged that the Lord is sovereign, that no plan of His can be thwarted, and that he was but someone subjected to the Lord's will. He proved that he revered the Lord and His decisions whatever they may be. The Lord blessed Job for it. Not only were all his fortunes restored, but they were double than what we had before. He even had more livestock and children than he did before this trial came into his life. And it was all because he truly feared the Lord, not just in word and in blessing but also in action and in trial.

*At the end of his trial, he
acknowledged that the Lord is
sovereign, that no plan of His can
be thwarted, and that he was but
someone subjected to the Lord's will.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 139

In the same way, far more than the blessings, we have to have an attitude of worship at all times – in good times and in bad. To fear the Lord is to exalt Him and to know His place. It is knowing how to interact with Him in a manner that is due Him out of a heart

that loves Him and not just parts of Him. It is seeing Him far more than a friend; it is knowing that this friend, this Father is also the Lord over all, the Creator of the universe and all that lives within it. And as the prophets were called to fear the Lord, so are we.

PRAYER

Dear God,

I ask that you open my eyes to all of you. Let me see and take in all that you are. Keep my heart set on your glory even when my mind wanders. Lead me back to you at all times. Instill in me an awareness of your holiness and majesty even when I am surrounded by the mundane. Give me the grace to live in an upright manner, in a manner that is pleasing to you.

In Jesus Name. Amen.

Chapter 16
**God's Blessings Cannot be Changed
by Prophets**

“Our real blessings often appear to us in the shape of pains, losses and disappointments; but let us have patience and we soon shall see them in their proper figures.”

Joseph Addison

POWER TRUTH

¹⁸ Children, it is the last hour! As you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now many antichrists have come. From this we know that it is the last hour.

1 John 2:18 NRSV

THE CERTAINTY OF BLESSING

To say that Christians will certainly be blessed no matter what, may seem presumptuous, if not outright heretical. It seems like such a selfish thing to say. We're much better at telling people, "God bless you," than we are fully receiving it. We may nod our heads, smile, and say thank you when we do receive a blessing, but mostly it flies over our heads. We don't really stop to allow ourselves to receive the extension of blessing.

It's not quite that people don't believe that they are blessed, but there's difficulty in claiming something that you're not sure is meant to be yours in the first place.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 140

It's not quite that people don't believe that they are blessed, but there's difficulty in claiming something that you're not sure is meant to be yours in the first place. It's like when you see someone waving across the hall and you're not certain that you're the person being waved to. You automatically raise your hand to return the wave, but you stop yourself, hesitating because you don't want to be embarrassed if the greeting turns out to be not for you.

Then there's the fear of something being turned against you because we are all so cynical. I don't know about you but personally, when things seem like they're going too well at the moment, I brace myself in anticipation that something bad will happen next. It's like I'm Cinderella waiting for the hour to always strike midnight because good things get taken away.

Humans are bracing themselves for the worst when something

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 141

The same thing happens when it comes to blessings and promises. Humans are bracing themselves for the worst when something good happens. You probably have talked to countless people who have received a wonderful blessing and yet they can't fully allow themselves to embrace and enjoy the blessing because they think it's a pre-requisite for something bad to happen. It's like receiving the blessings are but for a season, and they can easily be taken away.

And while it is true that the material things we receive can easily be taken away, as seen in the life of Job, the promise of blessing stays. Paul tells us in Romans that if our God is for us, no one can be against us. Who dares get in the path of the Almighty God who created all in the first place? God did not spare His own Son for us, and if so, then how can we even consider that He would withhold anything else from us and for us?

If this is what is promised to us in the Bible, then even if your circumstances say otherwise, the Lord's blessing prevails. Even if your parents or even church leaders would release words that appear as if they are contradictory to the blessing the Lord has promised you, you can trust that the Word will still prevail.

For instance, the Word says that the Lord will never leave you nor forsake you. It says that in Christ, you have a hope and a future. Anyone who says otherwise, even someone you consider a spiritual giant or a prophet, cannot take that promise away from you. It is a blessing that the Lord wants to give you and He continues to want to give it to you even when others say He doesn't.

*It is a blessing that the Lord wants
to give you and He continues to want
to give it to you even when others say
He doesn't.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 142

In the Old Testament, there is Balaam who is a prophet of the Lord and Balak, the king of Moab. In Numbers 23, King Balak wanted to harm the Israelites as they have moved from Canaan on to his kingdom and he commissioned the prophet Balaam to do it. Balaam, while willing to curse Israel, first said that he would need the Lord's permissions before he is able to curse them as he knows in and of himself, he has no capability nor power to bless or curse apart from God. But the Lord told Balaam that he is not allowed to curse the people as they are blessed, thus putting a stop to whatever Balak's plans may be.

The funny thing about the story is that Balak did not stop trying to get Balaam to curse the Israelites and so he first got the prophet up to a high place they called Bamoth Baal in attempts of getting him to give a curse. Their method of trying to convince the Lord to get them to curse Israel was they kept offering multiple rams on numerous altars. Balaam then went to a bare hilltop and inquired of the Lord. When he went back to Balak, he spoke exactly what the Lord told him to, and he said that he cannot curse the people God hasn't cursed nor could he speak against those the Lord hasn't spoken against.

And now while this frustrated the king, he refused to give up. On his second attempt, he took

Balaam to the highest slopes of Pisgah. The prophet once again inquired of the Lord and when he returned to Balak, this was what he said:

“Balak, rise up and listen. Son of Zippor, hear me. ¹⁹ God isn’t a mere human. He can’t lie. He isn’t a human being. He doesn’t change his mind. He speaks, and then he acts. He makes a promise, and then he keeps it. ²⁰ He has commanded me to bless Israel. He has given them his blessing. And I can’t change it.” (Numbers 23:18-20)

You can imagine Balak’s frustration yet again. He asked Balaam to just shut up and told him that if he won’t give them a curse, he can’t give them a blessing as well. But Balaam replied that he was only doing what the Lord asked him to. And so, the king decided to go for it just one more time by taking him to the top of Mount Peor thinking that maybe the Lord will change His mind about cursing the Israelites then if Balaam manages to please Him enough.

To no one’s surprise, the Lord still hasn’t changed His mind and extended blessing to the Israelites.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 143

To no one’s surprise, the Lord still hasn’t changed His mind and extended blessing to the Israelites. In fact, Balaam didn’t even try to use black magic and he just proceeded to bless the Israelites. Now while

this may paint a picture of Balaam being such a good prophet, the truth was quite the opposite. He kept going along with Balak's plans to curse the Israelites because he was promised a reward and thought that he would become very rich if he did as the king asked. It's just that he was also aware of the power of the Lord and knew that he couldn't do anything about it if God Himself didn't want it to happen.

*Satan will try to use all the tricks up
in his sleeve to have you ruin yourself
because he knows that he cannot curse
you once the Lord has taken you
under His wing.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 144

He eventually found his way around it and managed to ruin the Israelites without going the direct route of cursing them. Balaam gave the Moabites advice on how to tempt the Israelites with sexual immorality and idolatry and soon enough the Israelites were all in sin and the Lord ended up punishing them for it. The prophet became infamous for this and in the New Testament, the believers were warned several times to be careful of people like him.

If there's anything we can get from this lesson though, it's that Satan will try to use all the tricks up in his sleeve to have you ruin yourself because he knows that he cannot curse you once the Lord has taken you under His wing. He will lure you with fame, greed, and temporary pleasures but he cannot harm you as directly as he wants to.

But more than that, it goes to show that no matter how hard people may try to alter the word of God for you and even if they try to go out of their wits in attempts to curse you, unless it's something you willingly walk into, none of their schemes can harm you.

THE LORD'S INTENTION TO BLESS

When the Lord called out Abraham to go into the land of Canaan, He promised that all the families of the earth will be blessed through Abrahams' descendants (Gen. 12:3). We need to remember that if God says all, He means all, and this means that it is in His heart to see all blessed. Paul reinforces this in Galatians, when he told the church that we were set free by Christ so that we may receive the blessing that was promised through Abraham. He wants us to receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. We have to trust in this and move in faith as He tells us to, knowing that He intends to prosper us and not to harm us. Ac. 3:24-26 tells us that the Lord has been planning for His people to receive His blessing for a long time now. In fact, the Scripture tells us that God sent Jesus was always meant for us. The covenant the Lord established with Abraham is now ours also.

We have to trust in this and move in faith as He tells us to, knowing that He intends to prosper us and not to harm us.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 145

The fascinating thing is that even through the blessings that Balaam spoke over Israel, the allusion to Jesus was present. He said that a star will come out of Jacob and a scepter will rise out of Israel. The implication of a king from the line of Jacob and a kingdom that he will rule is evident.

The fact that Jesus came and that all the prophecies about him came to pass only goes to solidify the concept of God intending to bless us. Jesus is the greatest blessing He could have ever given. We could have been showered with hundreds of material blessings and yet still not have what we consider to be the most important blessing. But God in His kindness and truthfulness fulfilled all that He had said.

We've seen this happen time and time again in the Bible and even past the Biblical times. A quick look at the life of Joseph, someone who was given a dream by God, would prove it. He dreamt that his family would bow under him and yet, he was sold by his brothers, he was accused of a crime he didn't commit, and he spent a good part of his years in prison. That doesn't really look very promising now, doesn't it? He probably doubted whether it was a promise that came from the Lord to begin with considering how his life went on to unravel. But in a grand turn of events, he went from prisoner to right hand man of Pharaoh in almost an instant. He ended up being entrusted with managing the resources of the kingdom of Egypt and finally, decades down the line, the prophetic dream given to him came to pass.

They didn't fully understand all the things Jesus was speaking to them when they were together and all they knew was that the man they thought to be the salvation of all was dead.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 146

Or what about Mary and Joseph? You can only imagine the kind of backlash this little lady had to deal with just because she chose to hold on to the Word of God upon her life. Joseph surely had his share as well. People who claimed to be priests probably judged them and made snarky remarks against them considering how it was the time of Pharisees. And yet no matter how many people said that it was not from God, no matter how much people and maybe even their own families doubted them, they knew that they have received the Lord's favor and they weren't going to let it go just like that.

Then there are the disciples; they knew for sure that Jesus was the son of God, but the moment he was crucified, surely the doubts and questions entered their minds. They didn't fully understand all the things Jesus was speaking to them when they were together and all they knew was that the man they thought to be the salvation of all was dead. Never mind that Jesus did countless miracles or that all the prophecies were pointing to him, the disciples themselves were not so sure about what it all meant anymore. Thomas was famously known to have asked Jesus for proof that he actually is Jesus. But even then, none of it changed

the resurrection nor did it change the fact that Jesus offered the death he has conquered as life for us – a blessing in every way.

Now this can happen in your life as well. The Lord could have promised you a specific sort of blessing and when you take a look at the odds and possibilities, you hesitate. You may think that just because people say it's not possible and the circumstances say that it's not possible means it is not possible. Rom. 15:8, states that Christ came to prove the truthfulness of God and to confirm all the promises He has made to His people.

*The Lord wants to offer that
reassurance to you today.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 147

The Lord wants to offer that reassurance to you today. You may feel like sometimes, even the spiritual authorities in your life are going against you. It may seem like you have no one in your corner. It may feel like the world has turned its back on you. You may feel not just neglected, but even cursed. There is even the possibility that you consider your demons far too strong at holding you back that you can't embrace the blessings God has for your life. But nothing can change the Lord's mind about you. We remember this by acknowledging that even way back in Genesis, the Lord blessed us. It has always been a part of His design and He hasn't altered this. If He said He will bless you, then He will bless you.

The truth we keep going back to is Paul's exhortation to the church in Philippi, reassuring

them that once the Lord has started a work, He will surely bring it to completion. And as He has spoken blessing to us long before we were born, so He will bless us still.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for being so sure about your intentions for me. Thank you for being a God who has not changed His mind about His people even if there were plenty of times that we were far more worthy of your curses than Your blessings. Remind me that nothing and no one can take away the blessing that you have spoken over my life.

In Jesus Name.

Chapter 17

God Gives us a Choice Between a Blessing and a Curse through a Prophetic Word

“Sometimes we don’t realize the blessings we have until we no longer have them. Appreciate all the blessings you have in your life, take none for granted.”
Catherine Pulsifer

POWER TRUTH

**²¹ because no prophecy ever came by human will,
but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit
spoke from God.**

2 Peter 1:21 NRSV

BLESSINGS AND CURSES

It would be very safe to presume that all of everyone walking on this planet wants blessings and would rather not venture into the territory of curses. In fact, if you say to your neighbor that someone had cursed him, he will just think that someone said something bad about him or someone uttered a dirty word in conjunction to his name. Curses aren’t really a reality that most people think about nor are they conscious of whether or not others have cursed them. It’s something confined to fairytales and stories of fantasy; something that probably happens somewhere in Africa or India where cultural traditions still ensue, but definitely not here in modern-day America.

It would be very safe to presume that all of everyone walking on this planet wants blessings and would rather not venture into the territory of curses.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 148

However, that really isn't quite true. In fact, a rampant number of curses are surrounding the nation and people go through their days without even acknowledging them. While they are so caught up in life and the pleasures of this world, they also tend to get de-sensitized to what is actually going on in the spirit. Take an honest look at what is going on in this nation and try to confidently state that there are no curses here. The widespread depression taking over a large number of people, the high suicide rate, the even higher divorce rate, the rampant celebration of homosexuality, the casual sex and fornication, the normality of affairs, the alarmingly increasing amount of gun violence and casualties – most have been so blind to see it. The sad thing is that they have allowed if not welcomed these things to enter their communities and to enter their lives, albeit unknowingly.

But the Word of God is timeless, and the consequences of our actions as they were then, so are they today.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 149

On the other end of the spectrum, it may be that you have been aware of this, so aware in fact as it has hit your life and you're left to wonder what you ever did to deserve it. Your family may have been hit with blow after blow and you watch your friends struggle with the same things. You wonder if it's ever going to get better and some days you question the goodness and sovereignty of God. However, one look at the Bible and a very frank and thorough examination of humanity today would quickly explain why it is the way it is. If anything, we brought it upon ourselves.

Moses wrote in Deuteronomy numerous laws, and most people tend to overlook these books because they are boring and irrelevant to today's time and day. We're living on the other side of the cross, we say. But the Word of God is timeless, and the consequences of our actions as they were then, so are they today. The fallibility and the cost of the decisions people make have not changed.

Chapter 11 in particular exhorts the church to love and obey the Lord. It reminds them to do whatever it is that He may require, trusting and doing His rules, laws, and commands. There were specifics mentioned toward the Israelites at the time, but it was promised to them that if they obey God, they will be strong and will live long. They are promised a land that is good and plentiful. They were urged to stay faithful and to love the Lord and serve Him with all their hearts and all their souls.

Now that in and of itself is a familiar command, a command that was repeated by Jesus in the New Testament and one that you probably try to live by until this day. However, here in Deuteronomy, they were promised that if they do so, the Lord will take care of them in their seasons. They will be well provided for and will barely have anything to become anxious about.

They are promised a land that is good and plentiful. They were urged to stay faithful and to love the Lord and serve Him with all their hearts and all their souls.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 150

But while that sounds all well and magnificent, they were warned of what will happen if they don't obey God. They were reminded to not do anything wrong. They were specifically told to not turn away and worship other gods for God will be very angry with them if they do so. They were instructed to remain true to God and to live exactly the way He wants them to.

And then Moses delivers the clincher. He told them that he was setting a blessing and a curse before them that day. He gave them the commands of the Lord and was explicitly told that if they obeyed these commands, they will be blessed and if they did not, they will be cursed. It's really as simple as that.

So, tell me, is this nation really living in times of blessing when the culture and lifestyle is blasphemous to say the least? Jokes about God are being put on mainstream television shows and His name is constantly being taken in vain and used as an expression. Most have certainly not loved Him with all their heart, soul, mind, and strength.

He gave them the commands of the Lord and was explicitly told that if they obeyed these commands, they will be blessed and if they did not, they will be cursed. It's really as simple as that.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 151

Then there's the issue of other gods. You may say that you don't have altars nor statues in your house that you bow down to, but that's not all there is to it. You can have other gods that you don't bow down to physically, but you do so emotionally. See, a god is anything that takes the place of God in your life. Whether this is money, fame, your family, your spouse, your children, your parents, your career, your friends, even if it seems like a good thing, if it places God at a lower place in your heart and in your life, then it is an idol that needs to be broken.

Now, blessings have been discussed for many chapters and not to be a downer, but curses are just as real. It also needs to be discussed exactly what kind of curses and judgments are listed in that chapter of Deuteronomy alone:

1. Cursed children

This is probably the last thing you would ever wish on anyone especially yourself. Even the most wicked of men would not want to willingly put into peril or harm their children or their children's children. But you probably know a lot of people now who live their lives in sin, and they don't think about the repercussions of all these things on their

children. Far more than the physical, emotional, and psychological trauma, there are true spiritual consequences on the children.

God is a kind God and He loved redeeming His people. If the offspring becomes someone who honors God and obeys Him, the curse could be cut off from his time on onward.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 152

This is the part people say that it's unfair and that the children didn't do anything wrong, but at the end of the day the parents are accountable for their decisions. Whether they like it or not, they are still considered spiritual coverings for their kids. And if they neglect to live godly lives, the curses can be passed down from generation to generation.

Now this is not to say that the curse will just go on forever. God is a kind God and He loves redeeming His people. If the offspring becomes someone who honors God and obeys Him, the curse could be cut off from his time on onward.

2. Confusion, Fear, and Madness

It's fascinating how mental illnesses seem so rampant these days. And while everyone should definitely create a safe environment for others who have been struggling and diagnosed with such, it's rather curious that all of a sudden, these kinds of sicknesses are very quickly overtaking actual physical ailments. Now, this is not to create

stigma, as that is the last thing anyone wants, but you must admit that this is probably a by-product of curses that has been passed on. Even if they manifest physically via hormonal imbalances and such, it could be that the cause is still spiritual and generational.

3. Sickness, Drought, Hunger, a
4. Poverty, Debt, Robbery
5. Oppression, Captivity, Slavery

These items don't need to be broken down anymore, as these are issues that you get to deal with each and every day of your life. These are the things that happen that lead you to question God and His love for you. However, you have got to stop placing all the blame on God. A good amount of the things that come your way, if they're not outright attacks from the enemy, are simply consequences of your actions and the actions of those who have gone before you.

*A good amount of the things that
come your way, if they're not
outright attacks from the enemy, are
simply consequences of your actions
and the actions of those who have
gone before you.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 153

THE CHOICE

All that said, your obedience to the Lord boils down to a choice. You can make a lot of excuses and justification but they all boil down to one thing: lack of commitment to the Lord. The prophet Hosea even puts it this way:

People of Israel, listen to the Lord's message.

He is bringing charges against you who live in Israel.

He says, "There is no faithfulness or love in the land.

No one recognizes me as God.

² People curse one another.

They tell lies and commit murder.

They steal and commit adultery.

They break all my laws.

They keep spilling the blood of other people.

³ That is why the land is drying up.

All those who live in it are getting weaker and weaker.

The wild animals and the birds in the sky are dying. So are the fish in the ocean.

⁶ My people are destroyed because they do not know me.

"You priests have refused to obey me.

So I will refuse to accept you as my priests.

You have not paid any attention to my law. So I will not let your children be my priests. (Hosea 4:1-3, 6)

Each and every time, God uses His prophets to speak into the lives of people and warn them. But

more often than not, these people straight up refuse to heed the words of God. And because they refused to accept Him and His laws, He also refused to accept them.

Each and every time, God uses His prophets to speak into the lives of people and warn them.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 154

Maybe you're uncomfortable at the thought because God is supposed to be a God who gives, but you also have to remind yourself that He is not your genie in a bottle. He doesn't cater to your whims and demands, and He certainly does not have to make Himself fit who you think He should be. If you choose to disobey Him, if you choose other gods above Him, then He will allow you your choice. He will give you over to your desires and you won't necessarily end up liking your decision.

And truthfully, it's the little choices that people make throughout the day that make up this one seemingly big choice. It's not just a one-time thing. It's not as if you say, "God I choose You and Your blessings" today and everything will just fall in to place. You choose God and His blessings when you say no to under the table dealings and get-rich-quick schemes. You choose God and His blessings when you turn away the fame and women that have been trying to pull you in. You choose God and His blessings when you don't allow yourself to be lured

in by the temptation that has been dangled under your nose. You choose God and His blessings when you choose to live your life in honor and glory of Him.

*You choose God and His blessings
when you choose to live your life in
honor and glory of Him.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 155

Ignorance or unawareness is not a reason for you not to choose God. You may want to cite it as an excuse, but another version of Hos. 4:6 says that His people (not His enemies) are destroyed because of their lack of knowledge. This lack of knowledge is because they themselves have rejected knowledge. They have chosen to ignore the law of their God.

Jeremiah 17:5 states that those who trust in human beings are under His curse. To say that they depend on human beings means that they depend on human strength and that their hearts are turned away from God. On the other hand, verse 7 speaks of how the Lord blesses everyone who trusts in Him and that He will do good things for the person who depends on Him.

Because at the end of the day, the choice boils down to trust. Do you trust the Lord enough that by doing His will and not yours, you will be truly satisfied? Do you trust that even if you have to give up the temporary pleasures of this world, you will find eternal pleasures in Christ? Do you trust that

even if you do not do what everyone else is doing, you will be found secure and successful in Him?

Lordship is all about faith and choosing God and His blessings require faith. There is a story of someone who was dating a billionaire of massive proportions – the kind you only read about in novels. Jet-setting across the world? Check. Designer items? Check. Luxury cars? Check. A mansion that lies on the edge of a cliff and an infinity pool that has a view of the city below it? Check. It was everything this lady ever dreamed of. However, some time into the relationship, the Lord told her to let these temporary things go.

*Lordship is all about faith and
choosing God and His blessings
require faith.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 156

She could have made the guy and their relationship her god, but she didn't. She could have made his money and possessions her god, but she didn't. She made God her God, and while it was difficult for her, she saw the fruit of all of it. She chose God and trusted that His blessings are greater than the temporary pleasures this world and the guy was offering her.

It boils down to that choice of placing God above everyone and everything else. What do you choose?

PRAYER

Dear God,

Give me a heart that chooses you above everything and everyone else. I give you permission to smash my idols and anything else that may take your place because at the end of it all, my heart is yours. May each and every choice I make in each and every day be a fragrant offering to you. May each decision I make be of pleasure to you and you alone – that I choose life and not death, blessings instead of curses.

In Jesus Name. Amen

Chapter 18
Blessed Once, Blessed Forever

*“We should certainly count our blessings, but we
should also make our blessings count.”*
Neil A. Maxwell

POWER TRUTH

**¹⁹ So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.
2 Peter 1:19 NRSV**

GENERATIONAL BLESSINGS

You’re all probably familiar with the concept of inheritance. If people are being completely honest, they will admit that they tend to get very interested in what other people get to inherit as well. It’s probably because it tells a story of the person who is leaving an inheritance. In some families, certain heirlooms are passed on from one generation to the next. Engagement rings are being passed from grandmother to daughter in law to granddaughter and it is just the most amazing thing. It gives them a link to their past, in some sort of way. Houses, companies, and even tiny sentimental trinkets such as fountain pens are considered and weighed. They are passed on because they matter, and they are meant to be used for the decades to come.

They are passed on because they matter, and they are meant to be used for the decades to come.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 157

Even if it's just a large amount of money, the money speaks of how shrewd and wise the person has been when it came to handling his finances. It means that more than spending it on things that would last them a lifetime, they decide to invest it and keep it properly so that it will be left to others even beyond their lifetimes.

Legacies are also very much an inheritance. For most, this is even more important and priceless than a piece of property or a sum of money. There is nothing more precious than recounting your ancestors fondly other than other people speaking of them and their lives just as fondly. You get to look back at stories of what they did, how they made an impact in society, and how they loved the people around them. Being known as a blessing is a great legacy.

Legacies are also very much an inheritance.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 158

Dare say being blessed is an even greater inheritance. Think about this: what if you were born with the covering of the queen of England? Your great grandfather did something decades ago that

made your family gain her blessing and protection, along with the promise of help whenever you need it. This blessing was extended to each and every one that would come from his line, for at least a hundred years to come. She and her people constantly check up on all of you, making sure that you're comfortable and well-provided for. Now isn't that something? People these days tend to belittle people with connections, but if everyone's being completely honest, they would love to have those connections.

And that's just the Queen of England. What if it was the president of the United States? Let's place you in an alternate reality of sorts. Say for instance, each US President has one person that they will commit to give favor to as a reward for utmost service, loyalty, and honor. This person will not only reap the benefits, but his descendants will as well for all these people are listed down in the oval office and all US Presidents thereafter are also sworn to honor the commitments the previous presidents have made to these people. Now if one from your family can just get that kind of commitment and promise from one president, it would be a dream come true. Such impossibility is something that people would strive for, an honor that people will be absolutely honored to have.

Him blessing Noah and his offspring when it meant that after the flood, all of the humans on earth in the future would have stemmed from Noah and his sons is enough proof of that. It is from Noah that the famous lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob came to be.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 159

If the topic was about generational curses during the previous chapter, now this chapter will delve into generational blessings. One thing you may notice from everything you studied is that God is a fan of blessing family lines. Him blessing Noah and his offspring when it meant that after the flood, all of the humans on earth in the future would have stemmed from Noah and his sons is enough proof of that. It is from Noah that the famous lineage of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob came to be.

Can you imagine having the Abrahamic covenant offered to you, being told by the Lord that He will make you and the generations after you a blessing to the entire earth and that your name will be great? Anyone would be all over claiming that promise in their life and in the lives of their children and grandchildren to come. But even if He hadn't given that one to you specifically, He has made personal promises on your life, promises that you can also believe will come to pass for your children.

A good story to dwell on at this point is that of David and Solomon. In 2 Samuel, you find King David living contentedly in his palace when he realized that while he was staying in a place of luxury, the Ark of God that carried His manifest presence around at the time found its shelter in a tent. But while David expressed this to Nathan, a prophet during that time and one who spoke into the life of the king, the Lord told Nathan that He will be the one to make David a house. While He enjoys the idea of David's initiative and willingness to build Him a temple, He primarily wanted to assure David of His covenant with him. He promised that when David's days are done here on earth and that he has passed away with his fathers, the Lord will raise up his offspring after him and He will establish the kingdom of his son.

The Lord mentions that He will discipline this son as His son and that he will be stricken with the rod of men when he commits iniquity, but rest assured His steadfast love will remain over this son.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 160

This son will be the one to build a house for the Lord and the Lord will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. The Lord mentions that He will discipline this son as His son and that he will

be stricken with the rod of men when he commits iniquity, but rest assured His steadfast love will remain over this son. Because of this, the house and kingdom of David will be made sure forever before the Lord.

David responded in awe and gratitude, wondering what he ever did to deserve such blessing from the Lord. He was in awe of the Lord's promises as well as His heart towards him. He understood that it pleased the Lord to bless him and his house forever for all generations to come and he fully accepted this blessing.

PASSING ON THE BLESSING

In 1 Chronicles 22, you see the continuation of this story. David prepared the men and materials needed for the building of the temple. At this point, he was already old in age. Not skimping on excellence for the Lord's glory, there were iron and bronze in quantities far beyond measuring, cedar timbers that were so great in number that they cannot be counted, 100,000 talents of gold, and a million talents of silver. In case the measure of weight means nothing to you, you must note that a talent weighs about 75 pounds. If you put a price on it in this day and age, the 100,000 talents of gold would be worth around \$38,535,000,000. Researchers today can't even go into how much the other materials and all the manpower cost.

David prepared the men and materials needed for the building of the temple.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 161

This was all because David wanted nothing but the best for his God. And so, once he gathered all the materials, he commissioned Solomon as the son the Lord has spoken of to build the temple. This reflects people today in many ways. A lot of you have your parents projecting their dreams on you, dreams that you personally do not have for yourselves, and other times you really want to continue on the family legacy and fully embrace the vision of what you could do as a family.

And in chapter 28, we see just how David really believed in passing on what the Lord has entrusted to him and his son:

⁴ “Yet the Lord, the God of Israel, chose me from my whole family to be king over Israel forever. He chose Judah as leader, and from the tribe of Judah he chose my family, and from my father’s sons he was pleased to make me king over all Israel. ⁵ Of all my sons—and the Lord has given me many—he has chosen my son Solomon to sit on the throne of the kingdom of the Lord over Israel. ⁶ He said to me: ‘Solomon your son is the one who will build my house and my courts, for I have chosen him to be

my son, and I will be his father. ⁷ I will establish his kingdom forever if he is unswerving in carrying out my commands and laws, as is being done at this time.'

⁸ "So now I charge you in the sight of all Israel and of the assembly of the Lord, and in the hearing of our God: Be careful to follow all the commands of the Lord your God, that you may possess this good land and pass it on as an inheritance to your descendants forever.

⁹ "And you, my son Solomon, acknowledge the God of your father, and serve him with wholehearted devotion and with a willing mind, for the Lord searches every heart and understands every desire and every thought. If you seek him, he will be found by you; but if you forsake him, he will reject you forever. ¹⁰ Consider now, for the Lord has chosen you to build a house as the sanctuary. Be strong and do the work." (1 Chronicles 28:4-10)

Notice the way he exhorted Israel to obey the Lord so that they can possess and pass on the land that they have to their descendants forever. David was a man who was keenly aware of what it meant to be part of a lineage that one would be proud of, and it was evident in his life how he loved getting to pass on something of value to Solomon. Not just that, but he was intent on leaving something good to the generations that will come after him.

David gave Solomon the plans and layout for the temple. He gave his son all the revelation he has received from the Spirit regarding this particular project and carefully instructed him about every aspect of what was to be done to the temple and in the temple.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 162

After this part of the passage, David gave Solomon the plans and layout for the temple. He gave his son all the revelation he has received from the Spirit regarding this particular project and carefully instructed him about every aspect of what was to be done to the temple and in the temple. He already computed and designated how much gold will be used in each particular piece. He did not just want to give God the best of everything he wanted to give God the best of himself. The time, resources, and amount of energy he put into this could only be said to come from the sincerest parts of his soul and he poured his everything into serving his God – only to have his son reap the blessings that come from it.

When the Lord told him that he could not be the one to build the temple and that it would be his son, David could have just walked away and left all the labor to Solomon, thinking that it's all up to his son to make something out of himself. But he didn't. Instead, he went completely in the opposite direction by preparing as much as he could, so he can still be involved with what was set out for his son.

And the truth is, so much of who you are and the things you are blessed with right now come from the sacrifices of the generations before you.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 163

The truth is, so much of who you are and the things you are blessed with right now come from the sacrifices of the generations before you. If you are an immigrant here, you know full well what this is all about. It was because of the men and women before you who decided to take a leap of faith, who made sacrifices and worked night and day just so they could give their children a better future.

In modern day America, this sounds like a hard thing to process. Americans are all taught to be independent, paying their own way through their studies, living far away from their parents and building a life that is not as intertwined with theirs, just basically be left to their own devices. They let their children build everything they have on their own. But while the good of that has taught them to work hard as they should and to not rely too much on being spoon fed, it also lessened their hearts to be involved in the legacies of their children.

While you must know some parents who are in amazing relationships with their children and involve so much of their heart and time to support their kids, you must also know of others who throw their children out if they cannot get anything beneficial from them. That is such a twisted way of thinking and is the complete

opposite of the intention of God when He created generational blessings. You may even know stories of parents who completely stepped out of their children's lives out of jealousy because their kids managed to succeed in something they couldn't, and they resent their own offspring because of it.

As he advises Solomon to acknowledge the God that he knows, he had it in his heart not just to pass on the crown, but, to pass on the baton of righteousness, the one that has been anointed by God.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 164

But then there's David, who as much as he wanted to be the one to get the privilege of doing all that for God, gave way for his son to be set up in his own throne. In fact, he probably loved the idea that his son gets to continue what he has begun. It was never just about him. In his mind, it was all about them, their family, and the legacy that they get to leave as a whole. It says so in the first part of what he said above: he has been chosen by God, and of his sons Solomon has been chosen. He is extremely grateful to the Lord for all of it.

As he advises Solomon to acknowledge the God that he knows, he had it in his heart not just to pass on the crown, but, to pass on the baton of righteousness, the one that has been anointed by God. He told his son to serve God wholeheartedly and willingly – and it was

the greatest advice he could have given Solomon. He wanted to make sure that it was not just he who had a relationship with the Lord. He wanted to make sure that Solomon wouldn't just reap off the blessings of the Lord because of who his father was. He knew that the greatest blessing he could pass on to his son is the blessing of knowing the Lord and being with Him; the blessing of receiving His counsel and favor. And by doing so, he was also ensuring the passing on of this blessing far beyond Solomon.

He knew that the greatest blessing he could pass on to his son is the blessing of knowing the Lord and being with Him; the blessing of receiving His counsel and favor.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 165

Not only is loving the Lord and serving Him the only way to truly obtain the true riches of generational blessings, but it is the way you get to keep this blessing in your lineage. Solomon wrote the book of Proverbs and in it, you see so many passages addressed to “my son.” What he learned from his father and what he has learned for himself are priceless nuggets of wisdom that he wants to ensure is passed on to the generation that is to come after him. And as chapter 3 of that book exhorts his son to keep the teachings of the Lord that he may be prosperous, we know that Solomon wanted the generation after him to reap all that he and his father has sown.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for the promise of blessing for not just me, but for the generations to come after me as I align myself to you and your plans for me. Your love abounds a thousand generations and may I have it in my heart to leave a legacy that is of You and for Your glory – a legacy that my children will not just be proud of but will pass on to the generations to come after them.

In Jesus Name. Amen

Chapter 19

The Blessing is Meant to be Enjoyed

*“How blessings brighten as they take their flight.”
Edward Young*

POWER TRUTH

Pursue love and strive for the spiritual gifts, and especially that you may prophesy.

1 Corinthians 14:1 NRSV

GENERATIONAL BLESSINGS

It's pretty much established that everyone wants blessings in their lives and it's unfathomable that anyone would ever deny that. But if people are also being really honest, for most, they struggle with the idea of fully embracing everything that the Lord has given them. They may have learned to accept them, even welcome them; however, some part of them still feels guilty over buying that thing that they want or taking that dream vacation because the cost could fund so many worthy causes.

The heart is not to rub the blessings that you have in their faces and show off for your glory, but you also don't want to hide these blessings away because you're too scared of what they may do to you.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 166

Now that in and of itself is not entirely a bad thing. It certainly is important that you learn to manage the resources and blessings God has given you not just for your own good and luxury, but also for the people around you. The last thing you want is to increase the disparity between you and the people out there who may be not as well-off. The heart is not to rub the blessings that you have in their faces and show off for your glory, but you also don't want to hide these blessings away because you're too scared of what they may do to you.

Sometimes, in your desire to not love material possessions, you may end up pushing them away and robbing yourself of the pleasure of really delighting in the goodness of your God. God gives these things to you so you may bless others, certainly, but He also wants you to have the opportunity to enjoy whatever it is that He places in your hands. He is not a killjoy, nor does He delight in watching you shy away from what He gives. There is certainly a way to not be ashamed of the blessings you have received and yet not be arrogant about them.

God gives these things to you so you may bless others, certainly, but He also wants you to have the opportunity to enjoy whatever it is that He places in your hands.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 167

Here's a good analogy. Think of your son, or a younger sibling if you will. You went out of your way to buy the latest action figure just for him and were very excited to see his face once you give it to him. But upon extending the toy to him, his arms were hesitant to receive, and his eyes held a shadow of doubt. When you ask him why, he tells you that as much as he wants the toy, he doesn't really think he can enjoy it because other kids don't have this toy and he feels guilty about having it.

As a parent or an older sibling, you would probably be torn about how to feel about this revelation. While you are glad that he's thinking about other children, you are sad because he can't even enjoy the good things that you want to give him. You dislike the fact that he has carried a burden that is false and misplaced.

And so, you look in his eyes and explain to him that you want to give this specifically to him and that him accepting this toy does not make him a bad or selfish boy. You remind him that the two of you can work together to help other kids but for now, for this moment, this moment is between you and him – between a parent and a child.

He lifts his eyes up to meet yours and nods, accepting the toy. But still, you see the hesitation. He may have accepted the toy, but he really doesn't play with it. You see that he wants to, but it's like he's scared to. You hate seeing how something that was supposed to be beautiful and lovely for him has been marred by false ideas and pre-conceived notions.

In the same way, the Lord's heart breaks when He wants to give you something and you mar it with seemingly noble ideas of how you should respond to the blessing.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 168

In the same way, the Lord's heart breaks when He wants to give you something and you mar it with seemingly noble ideas of how you should respond to the blessing. You may know people who have pushed away blessings from the Lord because they think that it's a test from Him and that they should show Him how they have no interest in anything that is material. The sad part is that the Lord's intentions were just to bless, not to test. He was sincere in extending the blessing.

And so, with this little boy, what one would do is look him in the eye and reassure him that he is free to share the toy he gets to receive. He can enjoy it to its fullest and still share the joy of receiving the blessing with others. You would tell him that instead of feeling bad about wanting it, he should know that you delight in seeing him delight in something that you have given.

It doesn't make him a bad person. If anything, it makes him your son.

Such is the disposition you should have when you have blessings waiting to be received in front of you. You should trust the Lord's hand when He gives them to you. You wouldn't give that little boy a \$500,000 Lamborghini knowing that he will crash and burn when he uses it. If anything, you would give him a \$50 remote control toy car knowing that at the moment, it's the best that he can handle.

The son shouldn't ever have to feel as if he needs to apologize for receiving what his father gave him. Sometimes, people feel the need to justify the good things that they purchase, afraid that people will think they're too extravagant. In some twisted way, it's like they're ashamed of having what they have. Or maybe it's not that they're ashamed, but it's that they don't want others to feel bad that they don't have what they have. However, they have to have the proper perspective.

*When the Lord asks you to give up
certain possessions, it's not because
He doesn't want you to have them.
It's only because He sees how
harmful owning them are becoming
to you.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 169

Now you may think of all the times Jesus has made comments about certain rich people with negative undertones. But you must understand the context. Each and every time, he saw that those people valued their worldly possessions more than godly treasures. When the Lord asks you to give up certain possessions, it's not because He doesn't want you to have them. It's only because He sees how harmful owning them are becoming to you. But if you have your heart in the right place and don't go on either extreme, you will find yourself in a really good position of receiving, fullness, and outpouring.

A good life to look at is the life of King David. If it's not apparent, he is one of the best illustrations to use, although you can't quite expect anything less from him who is known as the man after God's own heart. Here was a man who had his own kingdom, who had servants at his beck and call, and is one of the richest, if not the richest, during that time. And yet even in the midst of all his riches and even when he was living in a grand palace, he did not neglect his duty to God, and he did not fail to serve and give to his people.

And yet even in the midst of all his riches and even when he was living in a grand palace, he did not neglect his duty to God, and he did not fail to serve and give to his people.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 170

In Psa. 34, he tells us to taste and see that the Lord is good. But how can you taste and see His goodness if you don't even want to take a bite? Now this passage alludes to simply having the Lord and there is certainly enough to delight about just having God. But there are still side dishes that amplify and magnify the goodness of your God, and those are His blessings.

King Solomon had the same disposition as his father. It's intriguing that he spent so much of Ecclesiastes telling people of how things of this world are meaningless. In the second chapter, he starts off by saying that he tried to test and see if pleasure will be enough to satisfy him only to find that that too is meaningless. He built houses for himself, had big projects, accomplished many things, and he still found these to be of no deep worth to him. He had thousands of slaves, had the most amount of gold and precious jewels in the land, as well as a harem, thinking that these may be enough to satisfy – but to no avail. He did all these things only to find himself coming up empty.

He began to hate life for he found the work exhausting and empty.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 171

He ranted about how he delighted in his labor and yet he found the reward meaningless. He took everything he wanted but his soul still ran dry. He began to hate life for he found the work exhausting and empty. But by the end of the chapter, he understood one thing:

A person can do nothing better than to eat and drink and find satisfaction in their own toil. This too, I see, is from the hand of God, 25 for without him, who can eat or find enjoyment? (Ecclesiastes 2:24-25)

Solomon spoke of how he thought it was evil for someone to work so hard and reap blessings and yet not have the ability to enjoy them. You frequently see that in this day and age. There are so many rich and famous people who seem to have everything anyone could ever want – and yet they end up being the ones who get depressed and commit suicide. That is because these pleasures have been received and viewed from a lens apart from God. And so, you learn an invaluable lesson: blessings in and of themselves are not enough to give us joy. You must receive them as God gives them to us.

Solomon further reiterates this thought in succeeding chapters:

¹⁸ Behold, what I have seen to be good and fitting is to eat and drink and find enjoyment in all the toil with which one toils under the sun the few days of his life that God has given him, for this is his lot. ¹⁹ Everyone also to whom God has given wealth and possessions and power to enjoy them, and to accept his lot and rejoice in his toil—this is the gift of God. ²⁰ For he will not much remember the days of his life because God keeps him occupied with joy in his heart. (Ecclesiastes 5: 18-20)

The Bible states that every good gift comes from the Father, and if these are good, then you must be glad to receive and enjoy them. Solomon gives a fascinating principle in verse 26: as the Lord gives the blessing, He also gets to bestow the ability to enjoy the blessing. That is, to the righteous, He gives blessings and happiness while the wicked toil without joy and satisfaction. That is because if all these things are received apart from God, they will never be enough. But if these are just add-ons, extras if you will, then they become a source of joy and wonder.

The Bible states that every good gift comes from the Father, and if these are good, then you must be glad to receive and enjoy them.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 172

See, if you already have the stamp of approval from God, you barely have anything to worry about. If your heart is really fixated in Him and you have every intention to love Him no matter what, then no matter what material possession is in front of you, you need not fear. You have nothing to worry about if your heart, your life, and your hands are in the right position before Him.

Think of the blessing like a 3D movie. Imagine yourself sitting in a theatre with the best of cinema screens, the highest quality of surround sound, and the most comfortable Lazy Boy seats. You have your favorite snacks and drinks with you as you sit in the plushiest of leather seats. It's about to be one of the best experiences, or so you think.

Then you realize that you have no 3D glasses to watch the movie with. The moving objects are all blurred, and you can't clearly see what's going on. What was supposed to be a set up for an amazing night ended up being horrible just because you don't have the right lens to view the picture. This is very similar to what happens when you don't view your blessings through the right lens and if you don't approach it with the correct point of view.

God wants you to enjoy His blessings without overthinking them or worrying about whether you become less righteous if you do.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 173

God wants you to enjoy His blessings without overthinking them or worrying about whether you become less righteous if you do. In all his wisdom, Solomon exhorts Christians this way:

⁷ Go, eat your bread with joy, and drink your wine with a merry heart, for God has already approved what you do.

⁸ Let your garments be always white. Let not oil be lacking on your head.

⁹ Enjoy life with the wife whom you love, all the days of your vain life that he has given you under the sun, because that is your portion in life and in your toil at which you toil under the sun. (Ecclesiastes 9:7-9)

What an amazing thing to be told that God has already approved of what you do. Better put, God has already approved of you. You no longer have to earn His pleasure or His adoration. When Solomon tells you to let your garments always be white, he reminds you to stay blameless. When he advises you to not lack oil, he means to always remain within the presence and anointing of God. And as you do, you get to fully enjoy life not just by yourself and not just with God, but also with the people He has given you. Because let's be honest – the people you get to love and the people who love you in return are probably the greatest “possessions” you could ever hope to have in this temporary world.

ENJOYING GOD

Each and every blessing points back to God. When God gives you blessing, it is not just that you enjoy it, but it is also that you delight in Him and His love and His kindness toward you.

When God gives you blessing, it is not just that you enjoy it, but it is also that you delight in Him and His love and His kindness toward you.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 174

Have you ever had a time in your life when you were thinking about wanting coffee or you were praying to buy a new bag when all of sudden, someone just

gives one to you from out of the blue? There may have been plenty of moments like that in your life. And for every time that it happened, may it be that you can't help but marvel at how much God cares about the tiniest of desires in your heart. May it point you back to Him.

That is the true heart in enjoying God's blessings – getting to enjoy a tangible piece of His love for you.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank You for each and every blessing you have given me. I'm sorry for the times I have tainted what you give with my selfish and mistaken notions. I ask that you cleanse my heart, and you give me the right perspective that I may truly delight in what You have delighted to give me.

In Jesus Name. Amen

Chapter 20
**Your Work is a Channel of God's
Blessings**

*“When I started counting my blessings, my whole life
turned around.”*
Willie Nelson

POWER TRUTH

**² but in these last days he has spoken to us by
a Son, whom he appointed heir of all things,
through whom he also created the worlds.**

Hebrews 1:2 NRSV

WORK IS BLESSING

There's something about conversations regarding work that have people either lighting up like a tree on Christmas day or closing off and shutting down like the best of the season is over. Some people absolutely love their work and what they get to do while others simply trudge along for a chance to have a form of income.

*This much is true today: when the
Lord gives work, He is in His
own way giving us blessing.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 175

However, no matter how you look at it, work is generally a blessing to them whether they realize it or not. They may gain mere financial blessing from it that they're not necessarily happy about or they may get true joy and satisfaction from what they do – either way, their work still has been a channel of blessing. Back to the time the Lord first blessed humans, He did so while giving us a task. This much is true today: when the Lord gives work, He is in His own way giving us blessing.

One's feelings certainly have to do with whether or not he perceives something to be a blessing, but his feelings do not dictate whether or not something actually is a blessing. Even if you find yourself tired, exhausted, and just plain frustrated with the work that you have to do, it doesn't change the fact that the Lord gave it out of His good will to you.

There are workaholics who have to be frequently reminded to rest, so to say that they consider their work a blessing is an understatement. As much as they enjoy taking vacations and rest days every now and then, they do understand that the Lord has used work to meet the need of humans to be part of something greater than themselves. There's just something about being able to contribute to an organization or a community that makes an impact in society.

One's feelings certainly have to do with whether or not he perceives something to be a blessing, but his feelings do not dictate whether or not something actually is a blessing.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 176

Now your work does not have to necessarily be highfalutin to be considered a blessing to yourself or to others. The mere fact that you get to do something is actually a blessing enough because it speaks of your ability and capability to do something that is useful and productive. I could never understand the people who look down on garbage men and waitresses, because without them, communities wouldn't be able to enjoy clean cities and not worry about getting their own plates and food in restaurants. These are people who are indispensable, valued, and should be appreciated much more than they actually are. It's the seemingly simple things that they do that add so much value to our lives.

We talked in the previous chapter about how God wants us to enjoy our blessings and the things that we have worked for. Ecclesiastes states that every man should eat, drink, and enjoy the good of all he has labored for, as it is the gift of God. Isn't it fascinating how what is stated as the gift of God and the enjoyment of our blessings is deeply tied to our labor? Psalm 128 states that when people eat the labor of their hands, they shall be happy. If they truly enjoy what they do and if they delight in the product of their work, then they can consider themselves blessed.

*If they truly enjoy what they do
and if they delight in the product of
their work, then they can consider
themselves blessed.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 177

Don't you find yourself most blessed with the people who go around doing their jobs with joy and gladness in their hearts? I absolutely love it when the cashier really appears as if he is engaged in his work and he thus engages each and every customer with whom he interacts. I get to build friendly relationships with waiters in restaurants and diners I frequent in because they care enough to pay attention, enough that they know the regular meals that I order. There on the cape of responsibility seriously and they do their jobs even in the midst of boiling heat, while caring enough to lend assistance to that old neighborly lady who is crossing the street.

Whether you are an admin working in front of a computer all day long while surrounded with piles of papers or you are a humanitarian who goes to nations on relief operations and active duty makes no difference – your work can be a channel of blessing to the people around you. It's the little things you do that end up echoing the biggest. In fact, just that extra patience you extended to the woman you are assisting or that kind understanding smile you offered to your officemate when she's a mess is enough to make and bring our own sense of wonder in our work that people stop and take notice. It's when you go beyond the job description and

really do this job as something God has entrusted to you that the work becomes a channel for the river of God to flow in and through your life.

WORK AS A BLESSING

After we have delved into how work is a channel of blessing to us, we will now go into the idea that our work is actually a channel of blessing to touch the lives of others. It isn't so much the career we are in as it is what we do on a daily basis, and I think a lot of it boils down to how you view your work in the first place. While we have established that our work is a blessing, do we actually fully embrace that and allow that mindset to overflow to the way we go about our work?

While we have established that our work is a blessing, do we actually fully embrace that and allow that mindset to overflow to the way we go about our work?

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 178

There are awards being made right now to recognize the people whom we consider to be everyday heroes. It's not so much recognizing people who do their jobs as it is recognizing people who go beyond their jobs as well as people who do things that are no longer included in what is required of them. We recognize humans who extend kindness and take time to pay attention to the other living

beings around them. The mere act of going to the trailer parks after work and setting up a soup kitchen seems small, but we never really know how many lives are affected by ours.

There are people who go viral on social media simply because they do things they don't necessarily have to do and it's these simple things that end up warming the hearts of others the most. It's not so much what they do in their lives as it is what they do with their life and that makes all the difference.

Scripture tells us that the Lord blesses the work of those who love and obey Him, those who do and obey what He has commanded. These are action words that we need to start acting on.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 179

We see the people on their way to their actual job when they take time to stop and feed a homeless person and we find that it isn't just the person who was given food that has been blessed, but us who get to see what has happened as well. People love saying that there is hope for humanity yet, and when we see acts of love and kindness being passed on forward, there are comments of humanity not being dead. And for us who are considered children of God, life breaks forth. It's when we act not just according to what our job is but, according to our identity in

Christ. When we ask Him to bless the works of our hands, we also ask Him to bless those who get to be touched by our hands.

Moses tells us in Deuteronomy that the Lord will bless the work of our hands. This implies that we actually have to do something so that He can bless what we do. If we're sitting back on our beds just waiting for blessing to come, then we better prepare to be disappointed. Scripture tells us that the Lord blesses the work of those who love and obey Him, those who do and obey what He has commanded. These are action words that we need to start acting on.

In the Scriptures, after Jesus was taken to heaven, the disciples continued to do the work Christ has called them to. They weren't limited to their jobs as fishermen, they continued owning the apostleship that the Lord has anointed them with. In the book of Acts, there's a story about when Peter and John were on their way to the temple. It was the time for prayer and crowds of people were there to intercede. A man who was unable to walk since birth was being carried to the temple gate, as people had done for him every day so he can beg from the people going into the courtyards. It was then that he saw Peter and John about to enter, and as he typically does, he asked them for money

In the Scriptures, after Jesus was taken to heaven, the disciples continued to do the work Christ has called them to.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 180

Now this man had been doing this for forty years before this incident with Peter and John. He probably expected the same reaction from them as he gets from other people. They would probably extend a coin or a piece of bread for him as others always do, as they did every single day he was there. However, Peter deviated from the script that the beggar had played out in his mind.

⁶ Peter said, “I don’t have any silver or gold. But I’ll give you what I do have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, get up and walk.” ⁷ Then Peter took him by the right hand and helped him up. At once the man’s feet and ankles became strong. ⁸ He jumped to his feet and began to walk. He went with Peter and John into the temple courtyards. He walked and jumped and praised God.

⁹ All the people saw him walking and praising God. They recognized him as the same man who used to sit and beg at the temple gate called Beautiful. They were filled with wonder. They were amazed at what had happened to him. (Acts 3:6-10)

It was just another day of the lame man going to the temple and begging. During that time, there were no other opportunities for handicapped people to earn money. In a sense, being a beggar was his job. It’s his way of living.

And for Peter and John, it was just another day of being them. They were on their way to the temple to pray. But the thing is, they could have just

walked past the beggar as we so often do these days, turning a blind eye to the need since the intent of why they were only really there to pray in the first place. They could have chosen to be just fishermen in that moment.

It was because they showed up and faithfully did what they were called to do as followers of Christ and not just as fishermen during that time that the life of the lame beggar got changed.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 181

But they didn't. They chose to fully embrace the call to heal the sick, cast out demons, preach and demonstrate the Gospel, and love others at all times. It was because they showed up and faithfully did what they were called to do as followers of Christ and not just as fishermen during that time that the life of the lame beggar got changed.

They could have reasoned that they did not have money and just let the beggar be. Let's be honest, it's what we tell ourselves when we just walk past the less fortunate, telling ourselves we have nothing to give them. But we do. By the mere act of stopping for them, praying for them, and extending a hand to them, we are being a blessing.

In the same way, we are called to go beyond our everyday jobs. We are called to use whatever our hands are capable of doing to be a blessing to others. In the end, we don't want to be a Dead Sea.

What do I mean by this? It is widely known that the Dead Sea is the saltiest body of water on the earth. It is nine times saltier than the ocean. No fish can live in it, no people can dive in it, and no sailboats can cruise over it. You must think that it's because there's no fresh water flowing into it, but that is not true at all. In fact, rivers and streams have never stopped flowing into the Dead Sea. It's just that the Dead Sea doesn't flow into anything outside of it and so all that water just evaporates in the dry desert heat.⁵

We must be willing to pour ourselves into other bodies so that they may get refreshed as well.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 182

The last thing we want to be is someone who has so many streams flowing into his life yet there's no form of outflow at all. We don't want to be stagnant water that doesn't get to be enjoyed because we chose to keep things to ourselves. We may think that all the good things stay with us, but all of that makes us toxic, poisoned, unproductive, and dead. We don't get to touch the lives of people and they don't get to rejoice being in our presence. If we allow ourselves to become that way, then all those blessings actually end up being a curse for us.

If we truly want to be blessed and let the blessing make us stay blessed, then we have got to keep things at a constant outflow in our lives. We must be willing to pour ourselves into other bodies so

that they may get refreshed as well. And we do that not just with our finances, but we allow our hands to hold water and pass them on to those who are thirsty.

To be a channel of blessing, we must have lives which water can flow in and out of. There must be no blockage to prevent the easy stream of blessings passing through us, no dirt that might be put on the people who will receive that which comes from us. Our lives are just there, utterly surrendered to the plans of Christ, that we're willing to be interrupted should we be on our way with our plans, working the day away, when a lame man suddenly asks for something from us out of nowhere.

There must be no blockage to prevent the easy stream of blessings passing through us, no dirt that might be carried on to the people, who will receive that which comes from us.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 183

We don't just consider work our blessing, nor do we just allow our work to bless others. We must work on being a blessing as well, at all times, no matter the circumstances, to all people.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank You for blessing me with the work that You have given me. I ask that You fill me with so much joy that people are blessed when they see me going about my work. I ask that You help me go beyond my work and go the extra mile to help people and be a reflection of Christ. May the works of my hand and the outflow of my life be a blessing to You and to the people around me.

In Jesus Name. Amen

Chapter 21

Blessings are Sometimes Undeserved

“If you want to reap financial blessings, you have to sow financially.”
Joel Osteen

POWER TRUTH

**²⁶ And so all Israel will be saved; as it is written,
“Out of Zion will come the Deliverer; he will
banish ungodliness from Jacob.”
Romans 11:26 NRSV**

WHAT DO YOU DESERVE?

When posed with this question, most people will have something they have to say, a thought about what they believe they deserve that they're not getting. There are plenty of people who say that they deserve a better life than others because they're nicer or because they've been generally better people. Some people go off when the raise and promotion they've been expecting ends up being given to someone else, because they believe that they worked harder than anyone else in the company and that they've been there longer. You personally may also complain about life being unfair.

There are plenty of people who say that they deserve a better life than others because they're nicer or because they've been generally better people.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 184

And the truth is, life is unfair. Everyone has had their fair share of “I don’t deserve this” situations passing through their lives. You may no longer count the number of times you have to stop in a day and ponder on how you don’t deserve any of the things coming at you.

You do not deserve what you are getting – not at all. Frankly, you deserve nothing. You deserve curses. You deserve death because you have sinned against God, and no matter how good of a person you seem to be, you have still fallen short of His glory. You don’t deserve the fact that right at this very moment, you still have breath in your life, giving you a chance to live better and love Him and others more. You don’t deserve the fact that He has given you people who love me and friends who support me through my ups and downs. You don’t deserve the job that you have been given and the income that comes from it. It’s not that you don’t just deserve nothing, you deserve less than nothing.

Most people have come to take for granted the things that they have and the lives that they get to live, ranting about not having better things and getting mad at God when they don't get what they want.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 185

This isn't some form of dramatization; it's the truth. Most people have come to take for granted the things that they have and the lives that they get to live, ranting about not having better things and getting mad at God when they don't get what they want. Let me tell you, if God gave you what you truly deserved, you'd be backtracking your words and taking everything back.

Think of the apostle Paul, easily one of the more known disciples of Jesus and one who has given us so many nuggets of truth and wisdom that we cannot possibly thank him enough. We would say he's indispensable to Christianity, as he has influenced billions of Christians' two whole millennia after his death.

But in Ephesians, it can be seen that he disagrees with this point of view completely. He writes to the church in Ephesus that he thinks he is by far the least important of all of God's holy people. He tells them that he is only able to do the things that he is doing because of God's grace and nothing

more. His ability and the theological things that has been pounded into him through his years as a Pharisee was not cited. He didn't brag about how much he knows or how much he has done for God. In his eyes, he knew he was not worthy of where he was and the things that he has.

He's just glad that he gets to be considered someone who has been saved by Christ, and all the amazing things give him credit for are not his works, as he has stated, but actually God's works as only done through him.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 186

That sounds a bit outrageous isn't it? If Paul, the author of several books in the New Testament and A.D. Christian extraordinaire thinks of himself that much as unworthy of the things God has given him – and he doesn't even have much financially, he is merely speaking about receiving life through Christ and being given the platform to preach the gospel, things he perceives to be much more valuable and considerable blessings than others – then how much more us?

He further reiterates this in 1 Corinthians, when he tells the church that he does not think he deserves to be called an apostle because he persecuted the church of God. He has fallen short, as

we all have, and he is greatly aware of this. Yet this mindset did not fill him with condemnation, it actually filled him with gratitude. He's just glad that he gets to be considered someone who has been saved by Christ, and all the amazing things that people give him credit for are not his works, as he has stated, but actually God's works as only done through him.

Some people actually use the things they do for God as leverage to say that they deserve more than what they have right now. Because they spend so much time in ministry, they think that God now has to pay them back for their labor. But Paul thinks otherwise. He believes that it is a privilege to be used by God and the mere idea of being saved by Him drives him to serve more.

But Paul thinks otherwise. He believes that it is a privilege to be used by God and the mere idea of being saved by Him drives him to serve more.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 187

This is kind of similar to the heart of Isaiah when he got to see the Lord. In chapter 6 of his book, he wrote of how the Lord was seated on His throne, with His robe spilling from it and filling the entire temple. He also saw how above the Lord were seraphs who had six wings. They used two wings to cover their faces, two wings to cover their feet, and two wings to fly. They were calling out to each other, declaring how holy the Lord is and how the earth is full of His glory.

The prophet was struck with wonder – and terror. The voices of the seraphs were causing the doorframe of the temple to shake, and the place was filled with smoke. His thoughts were going this way:

⁵ “How terrible it is for me!” I cried out.
“I’m about to be destroyed! My mouth speaks sinful words. And I live among people who speak sinful words. Now I have seen the King with my own eyes. He is the Lord who rules over all.” (Isaiah 6:5)

We have spoken about the fear of the Lord and how it all starts with knowing who God truly is and how we could never behold one like Him. People may try to make Him reachable and cut down His otherworldliness to people size so we can try and understand, but the truth is that we could never hope to do such a thing. He will always be beyond us.

Here, being awakened to the holiness of God made Isaiah realize how unworthy he truly is of the Lord’s mere presence. In the same way, you must fervently pray that your spiritual eyes will be opened to how glorious the Father truly is, so you will know your place when approaching Him and know what it is that you truly deserve.

In the same way, you must fervently pray that your spiritual eyes will be opened to how glorious the Father truly is, so you will know your place when approaching Him and know what it is that you truly deserve.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 188

People are all about empowerment these days, telling others that they deserve more, that they deserve better, that they only deserve the very best. It is a good thing to teach people who have extremely negative views of themselves. But there is also the fact that we must be careful how we can take this to the extreme, because the last thing we want to be is entitled brats.

We need to be careful about acting entitled and most of the time, our entitlement stems from self-righteousness. Jeremiah was an amazing prophet, but the last thing we want to do is lament and wail as he did in this passage:

¹⁵ Lord, you understand how much I'm suffering. Show concern for me. Take care of me. Pay back those who are trying to harm me. You are patient. Don't take my life away from me. Think about how much shame I suffer because of you. ¹⁶ When I received your words, I ate them. They filled me with joy. My heart took delight in them. Lord God

who rules over all, I belong to you. ¹⁷ I never sat around with those who go to wild parties.

I never had a good time with them. I sat alone because you had put your powerful hand on me. Your anger against sin was burning inside me. ¹⁸ Why does my pain never end? Why is my wound so deep? Why can't I ever get well? To me you are like a stream that runs dry. You are like a spring that doesn't have any water. (Jeremiah 15:15-18)

Notice how Jeremiah was basing his cry to God on what he thought he deserved based on his faithfulness and the things that he has accomplished for God. At this time, he was mad at Israel's faithlessness and was blaming God for not making things easier for him.

At this time, he was mad at Israel's faithlessness and was blaming God for not making things easier for him.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 189

Anyone can so easily fall into this trap in fact many do so often. While they are so slow to acknowledge their sins, recognize their failures, and admit their issues, they are quick to list down all the good things they think they do out of their own capability, when it is only by the grace of God that they are able to do any of it in the first place!

Church members list all the times they taught in Sunday School and ushered people. They count each and every person they led to Christ and present them as reasons to demand something better from him. They are so quick to brag about how they do their devotions daily and kind of look down on those who struggle with time, thinking that it makes them better Christians. Some probably even use the fact that they don't say bad words just to say that they are better people.

But if they're all being honest, this is who they truly are as articulated by Paul:

¹⁰ It is written,

“No one is right with God, no one at all.

¹¹ No one understands. No one trusts in God.

¹² All of them have turned away. They have all become worthless. No one does anything good, no one at all.”

¹³ “Their throats are like open graves. With their tongues they tell lies.” “The words from their lips are like the poison of a snake.”

¹⁴ “Their mouths are full of curses and bitterness.”

¹⁵ “They run quickly to commit murder. ¹⁶ They leave a trail of harmful actions. ¹⁷ They do not know how to live in peace.”

¹⁸ “They don't have any respect for God.” (Romans 3:10-18)

But the free gift of God's grace makes all people who are willing to receive this gift right with Him. It is because of this grace that you get to be where you are now, and you get to have whatever

you have now. It is because of this grace that you are still alive, and it is because of this grace that you get to have eternal life.

It is because of this grace that you get to be where you are now, and you get to have whatever you have now.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 190

Was there ever a time when you did something bad or horrible only to be treated with kindness and be given something you know you don't deserve? Here's a good illustration. Think of yourself as a burglar who has been set before the jury. The house you raided belonged to the son of the judge, so you know that the ball is definitely not in your court. Well aware of what you have done, you already pleaded guilty and were preparing for the sentence you were about to face. Completely prepared for the consequence and braced for the worst, you look at the judge for the sentence that is about to be passed.

The judge then looks at you and smiles. He informs you that he and his son talked things through, and they have come to a conclusion on what they want to be handed over to you. You hold your breath just a bit, scared even more for what is to come.

He then tells you that he's going to let you go without so much as a mark on your record. You're going to be let off completely scot-free. This alone makes your heart want to jump out of your chest. The fact that there would be no consequences is enough to make you dance for joy.

This alone makes your heart want to jump out of your chest. The fact that there would be no consequences is enough to make you dance for joy.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 191

But he's not yet finished with his sentence. He then tells you that you get to keep everything you have stolen. The flat-screen TV you managed to take out, the brand-new laptop that's worth a pretty penny, and even the family jewels that you took off with are now completely yours. This makes you feel a little dumb-founded and just a little more elated. It doesn't make sense to you, and you can hardly believe that its being recorded by the witnesses around you. This is definitely not what you deserved and you're more than ready to spend a good amount of time expressing your gratitude to the judge and his son.

Before you could get a word out, he cuts you off. You are further informed that you have been put into the will of the judge and you now have an inheritance alongside his son. You don't just get to keep the things from the house. Your name will eventually be put on the deed as the owner of the house. You went from criminal to heir within a matter of moments!

Now, if you still haven't picked up from the references, this is an illustration of what God has done for you through Jesus Christ. It should have been enough for you to have your slate wiped clean, but it wasn't enough for God. He then went on to give

you gifts, things that you get to keep in this season of your life, tangible materials that you could hold on to. All of that already sounds far and beyond more than you could ever deserve, but then He goes on to tell you that you are now an heir to the throne, counted as a child of the One who created the universe.

He saves them from going down into the pits they have dug for themselves and He satisfies them with the good things that they desire.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 192

In Psalm 103, David is seen acknowledging that the Lord does not give people what they deserve. He doesn't punish them for their sins as much as they should be punished. He doesn't pay them back when it comes to all the evil things that they have done. He doesn't render the charges that they deserve, and He doesn't stay angry with them for as long as He should and as much as He should – or at least, as much anger that should have been directed toward them. He doesn't pay them evil for evil. Instead,

He forgives all their sins and heals all their sicknesses. He saves them from going down into the pits they have dug out for themselves, and He satisfies them with the good things that they desire.

If that's not a good trade-off, I don't know what is. You have struck for yourself quite a good deal when you decided to commit your life to

Jesus. It is entirely true – with God, you get things you don't deserve. And you couldn't be anymore grateful that that's the case.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Your grace is always far above what I can imagine, and I praise You for being as generous as You are even when I don't deserve it – especially when I don't deserve it. I will never deserve You, but may You give me even more grace to live my life embracing all the goodness that You give. In Jesus Name. Amen

Chapter 22
**You Always Get the Blessing You
Deserve**

*“If you expect the blessings of God, be kind to His
people.”
Abu Bakr*

POWER TRUTH

¹¹ He came to us and took Paul’s belt, bound his own feet and hands with it, and said, “Thus says the Holy Spirit, ‘This is the way the Jews in Jerusalem will bind the man who owns this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.’”

Acts 21:11 NRSV

GIVING WHAT OTHERS DESERVE

In the previous chapter, we broke down how everything that we receive from God and all the blessings we have are completely grace. It is true we deserve none of the things we are given. However, the good thing about God is even if He does not give us the punishment we deserve, He always gives us the blessing that we deserve. It goes far beyond karma – it’s a part of His character. We saw how He is a God of grace and mercy when we talked about Him giving us what we don’t deserve and what we could never hope to earn. Now, we will see how He is a God who is just and how He uses this justice to bless us still.

However, the good thing about God is even if He does not give us the punishment we deserve, He always gives us the blessing that we deserve.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 193

Notice how the promises of blessing in the Scriptures are preceded with the task to obey God and follow His commandments. This is because for every action, there is a reaction. That's something we learned grade school as part of Newton's laws of motion but can be applied to our lives. Science definitely makes itself practical today. And as such, we will get the fruit of all the seeds we planted. Another science fact, if not common sense, is that you don't plant apple seeds and expect to get lemons. It doesn't work that way. You get to reap the fruit of that which you plant and if you plant seeds of bitterness, cruelty, and malice, then you shouldn't expect to reap good things.

You get to reap the fruit of that which you plant and if you plant seeds of bitterness, cruelty, and malice, then you shouldn't expect to reap good things.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 194

In 1 Peter 3, the church is exhorted to suffer for righteousness' sake. They are told to live in harmony with one another and bear with each other, which we do know is suffering of a kind as it is difficult to get along with people sometimes. But more than just putting up with each other, they are tasked to love each other as brothers and sisters.

Now, during that time in that culture, family was probably the most important thing, and they were all tight-knit. They kept each other and were responsible for one another. It's rather different from the relationships we see between the majority of siblings these days where most just shove each other under the bus and forget they exist until the family events. But if you were blessed with a family close to each other, you would understand.

Furthermore, they were told to keep a tender heart. I don't know about you, but I find this hard to do. In fact, one of my frequent prayers is that God would give me a heart of flesh, because it is far easier to just close your heart off and stay cynical. There is a reason why we have termed the phrases "cold-hearted" and "a heart of stone." If you look at the crowds of people around you, you will see a good portion of them classified as such. People have been hurt, used, broken, and they just don't allow themselves to be hurt anymore, so they choose to guard their hearts. But the Lord has commanded us to love, and the ability to love comes from a heart that is tender and yielded, and so no matter how difficult it may be, we must fight to keep our hearts soft and kind.

*But the Lord has commanded us
to love, and the ability to love comes
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it may be, we must fight to keep our
hearts soft and kind.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 195

And then there's the church being told to be humble. We Americans have somehow built ourselves up a reputation across other nations for being proud, if not arrogant. And we have to admit that as much as that sounds like an offensive generalization, if we're being honest, we can take a good look at how the nation is today and admit that there is truth to that. In fact, we rather look down on people who are humble believing that being loud, outspoken, boisterous, aggressive or pushy is better. But the Bible tells us otherwise. And so here, we find ourselves suffering just a tad more to obey what the Lord tells us through His word to do.

It gets even better (or worse depending on how you look at it). We are now told to hold our tongues and be conscious of the things we say. We must not speak any form of evil nor deceit. Now for a culture that celebrates gossip, this is hard enough. The tabloid culture has already been established and for some reason, people still believe in every single thing they read about celebrities. But more than that, we now live during

a time when people actually celebrate and applaud others who put the people they don't like down, this is a chore that we would rather not be responsible for. There is a reason why men and women across the nation spend hours a day watching reality TV show contestants tear each other apart. There is something about the drama that we enjoy, and so even if we're not directly a part of it, the fact that we condone and encourage it says enough.

Our position is to know who we are as God's children and to trust that it is God who will avenge everyone, and that all justice will be served in the end.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 196

You know how we all like to take justice into our hands? It's a natural feeling to desire justice and seek it out no matter what it takes. So, we celebrate people talking bad about other people and whatnot because we think they deserve it. We say that they only got what was coming to them because they started it in the first place. But this Biblical passage advises us not to repay evil with evil nor insult for insult. It is not our place.

Our position is to know who we are as God's children and trust that it is God who will avenge everyone, and that all justice will be served in the end. We may question all these commands and want to put them in our meddling hands but let us

not. The last thing we want is to place our hands in thinking we could do something only to find them empty because we have allowed ourselves to be robbed of the blessing that could have been ours. We must live by the fact that the Lord knows those who are righteous and those who do evil, and He holds it all together. Lest we reiterate, God is a God of justice.

Now I know that sounds good in theory, but I know for a fact that should the mistreatment be directed towards us or someone we love, we would have serious problems with not having a punch in. In fact, I can say that if we are slandered and we know that the Lord is telling us not to answer back, then we probably can find it in us not to. But if the mistreatment is towards someone we truly care for, then we find ourselves riled up and unable to control ourselves. That's when our faith really has to step in, and we have to trust that God cares about that person even more than we do and wants justice for him more than we can imagine. We have to trust that He has a plan on how to bring that through in the best way possible.

If we plant seeds of blessing even when the ground is unyielding, even when the season is dry, then we will be rewarded with blessing because it is God who waters the seed and makes it grow.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 197

The good thing is that we're not doing all these things for nothing. I mean sure, there are rewards in heaven, but we have to admit that we want certain things to be tangible. He promises us that if we do all these anyway, we will be blessed. If we plant seeds of blessing even when the ground is unyielding, even when the season is dry, then we will be rewarded with blessing because it is God who waters the seed and makes it grow.

GETTING WHAT WE DESERVE

We must know that the Lord is not indifferent to the sacrifices we make. Even if we are called to take up our cross and live the surrendered life Jesus did, He in no way takes that for granted. That's just how He is. While we may take for granted the blessings He gives us, He never takes for granted the things we do that makes Him want to bless us.

We all know that the book of Revelation paints a picture of the end times. I know plenty of non-believers who can recite the book from start to finish. They have read every possible translation and interpretation simply out of curiosity. But today, we're going to look at that book not in search of when the end times could happen but to look at a promise that Jesus has told us, something that we could hold on to when the end of all as we know it actually comes.

In chapter 22, John writes about how he saw and heard how Jesus declared Himself as the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. He is in all the in-betweens. As He tells John and as John relays to us, Jesus spoke of how he will come to repay each and every person for what they have done during their time on earth.

We get a lot of questions as to why certain things happen, and as God is sovereign, He also gave us free will.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 198

Now right before Jesus said this, he told John to let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy. Now He was not conveying that we stop sharing the gospel and just leave everyone as they are. What He meant was that at the end of the day, as people choose the path that they take, He will allow them to.

We get a lot of questions as to why certain things happen, and as God is sovereign, He also gave us free will. He won't force us to be righteous nor to be holy. He won't force us to choose Christ and accept what He has done for us on the cross. We have been given the freedom to choose. If the people were to choose evil, then so be it. At the end of it all, we will all get what we chose.

After, Jesus told John that he would bring all forms of compensation with Him as is due us, the blessed are those who wash their robes as they are the ones who have the right to the tree of life. They are the ones who get to enter the Lord's kingdom, the new kingdom that is to come.

When He said that blessed are those who wash their robes, He was implying that they are the ones who kept drawing near God and His grace, allowing themselves to be continuously rid of sin.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 199

Notice how the word Jesus used was present tense, not past tense. When He said that blessed are those who wash their robes, He was implying that they are the ones who kept drawing near God and His grace, allowing themselves to be continuously rid of sin. It is never just a one-time thing, but one that is done constantly and repeatedly.

Here enters the grace of God yet again. When we wash our robes, we don't really do it by our own effort. We don't wash our clothes on the river of good works and wash all our sin stripped away. In fact, chapter 7, says that the redeemed are those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Were it not for the blood of Christ Jesus, we would be washing our robes, to no avail. It is again just because of what He has done.

It's amazing how we suddenly have something that we deserve simply because God promised it to us. In fact, we can't even necessarily say that the blessing promised to us is something that is truly deserved. It's just something that the

Lord allowed us to receive in light of Christ's blood having cleansed us.

In Matthew, we find what is known as the parable of the talents. A master went on a journey and entrusted to his servants a certain amount of talents. To one, he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one. He then went away. The one who got five talents decided to trade with his talents and thus doubled the talents that he had. The one entrusted with two talents also did the same. But the one who got one talent hid the talent in the ground.

When the master came back, he expressed pleasure over what the servant with five talents and the servant with two talents did. Because they have been faithful, he blessed them even more. However, he was mad at the one who had only one talent, as he had not done anything with what was given him. He was thus cursed and sentenced to oblivion.

If we choose to be faithful over what God has entrusted to us, then we better believe He will show us favor and bless us even more.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 200

It sounds like a very horrible thing, but this much is true: we decide what we get to do with what has been given us. If we choose to be faithful over what God has entrusted to us, then we better believe He

will show us favor and bless us even more. However, if we choose not to, it shouldn't be a surprise that we will receive what is due us. For all the times we demanded that we get what we deserve, we will do so eventually. There's just also the factor that once we accept Christ, we get to have far more than what we deserve.

We have constantly emphasized how the greatest blessing we could ever receive is the Lord's salvation and eternal life. Nothing is better than having a relationship with Him. And amidst all the material things that we get to receive because we feel as if we worked for them, we also owe it to God for having created the concept of blessing in the first place.

We have constantly emphasized how the greatest blessing we could ever receive is the Lord's salvation and eternal life. Nothing is better than having a relationship with Him.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 201

Think about it: He is the most Supreme Being in the universe. We were merely created from the dust of a planet that is tiny compared to millions of others in all galaxies. We should be nobodies, and we could have been made as slaves and been made to pay for our lives and existence. But He is a God who knew how to pay back what is due to us – and whether that is good or bad is all up to us and the way we choose to love or not love Him and the people we have around us.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for being a God who sees and who knows. Thank you for giving me the ability to do the thing that I am able to for You and for the people around me. Thank you because none of these go unnoticed. May I cling to the fact that you promised we will receive all that is due to us. I pray that I never demand from you but instead, give me a heart that is always grateful for all that you have done and for all You have yet to give.

In Jesus Name. Amen

Chapter 23
Blessings Come From Tithing

“When you are grateful – when you can see what you have – you unlock blessings to flow in your life.”
Suze Orman

POWER TRUTH

³⁵ In all this I have given you an example that by such work we must support the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, for he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”

Acts 20:35 NRSV

TITHING

A lot of Christians become sensitive over the topic of tithing. There are even several congregations and movements who opt not to speak about it because they feel like doing so will either offend a lot of people or cause issue that they would rather not deal with. And to a certain degree, we can understand where they are coming from. We have already established how money is a rather touchy subject, and we all probably agree to that

He has repeatedly spoken on what He thinks about money and how He wants us to use it as well. So, when it comes to the topic of being accountable for the money the Lord has given us, we should put on our brave faces and approach the topic without hesitation.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 202

However, we have to recognize that tithing is a topic that the Lord has not shied away from. He has repeatedly spoken on what He thinks about money and how He wants us to use it as well. So, when it comes to the topic of being accountable for the money the Lord has given us, we should put on our brave faces and approach the topic without hesitation.

Which isn't to minimize nor deny the fact that there truly have been churches out there who have used the concept of tithes to manipulate people into giving them money. We hear about such reports all the time, which fed the fear of pastors who were already hesitant to speak about tithes as well as the apprehension of the members of the church who would be sitting through a sermon about giving.

Our willingness to give our tithes shows whether or not we recognize God as the ultimate Provider.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 203

Still, none of it is an excuse to shy away from something the Lord has encouraged us to do. As the concept of tithing tends to be taken out of context, we hear church people say that we are no longer required to give our tithes as we are now in the new covenant. On the other hand, there are those who say that those who don't give their tithes will be cursed. So, what is it about God and tithing, really?

It's really not so much that He needs our money, as He wants our hearts. He knows that our approach towards money easily reflects whether our heart is fixed on material possessions or not. Our willingness to give our tithes shows whether or not we recognize God as the ultimate Provider.

The word "tithe" means the tenth part, or, in other words, ten percent. Now Genesis 14 marks the first time we see someone giving his or her tithe. The first tither in history is no other than Abraham, though at the time he was still known as Abram.⁶

When the enemy took possession of Sodom and Gomorrah, they also took Lot, who was Abraham's nephew, along with his provisions. Someone managed to escape and report to Abraham what had happened. As such, Abraham decided to go after those who kidnapped his nephew and take them down – which he and his forces did so successfully. Not only that, but he managed to get back all the possessions that were taken from the town.

God decided to require the tithe to support the priests and Levites as instituted by Moses through the old covenant.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 204

Upon his return, Melchizedek, otherwise known as the king of Salem and a priest of God, then brought out bread and wine and blessed Abraham. After which, Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. It is interesting to note that Abraham did this out of his own volition. We don't even know why he decided to give specifically the tenth percent and not five nor twenty. Not once was it suggested to him that this was something he had to do, nor was it commanded of him. While later in Israelite history we see that God did eventually command the tithe, it is wonderful to know that the very first tithe of the Bible was not something that was done out of obedience, but out of true willingness.

God decided to require the tithe to support the priests and Levites as instituted by Moses through the old covenant. Right before the Old Testament ends and right before the infamous 400-year silence, the Lord spoke this to the Israelites:

⁸ "Will a mere human being dare to steal from God? But you rob me!

"You ask, 'How are we robbing you?'

"By holding back your offerings. You also steal from me when you do not bring me a tenth of everything you produce. ⁹ So you are under my curse. In fact, your whole nation is under my curse. That is

because you are robbing me. ¹⁰ Bring the entire tenth to the storerooms in my temple. Then there will be plenty of food. Test me this way,” says the Lord. “Then you will see that I will throw open the windows of heaven. I will pour out so many blessings that you will not have enough room to store them. ¹¹ I will keep bugs from eating up your crops. And your grapes will not drop from the vines before they are ripe,” says the Lord. ¹² “Then all the nations will call you blessed. Your land will be delightful,” says the Lord who rules over all. (Malachi 3:8-12, NIRV)

One thing I think we need to learn is to recognize that it is God who has given literally everything that we have and everything that we own. If we think that way, we will have no hesitation about giving ten percent to God because we should be grateful that ten percent is all that He asks. He gave you a hundred dollars and all He asks for in return is ten, yet a lot of us even withhold that from Him thinking that He’s asking for too much. It sounds rather ridiculous when we put it that way and if we look at it from that perspective, doesn’t it?

If we give Him just a tenth of what we have, He will multiply it by the thousands and return it to us a million times over, until we no longer have room to store what He has given us.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 205

What's even more amazing is how God promises that once we give Him what is rightfully His in the first place, He will bless us even more. Now it's one thing for God to bless us as He always does, but for Him to say that He will open the windows of heaven means that there will be supernatural increase. If we give Him just a tenth of what we have, He will multiply it by the thousands and return it to us a million times over, until we no longer have room to store what He has given us. Not a thing we own will be plundered nor wasted.

Notice how the Lord told us to test Him in this. This isn't so much a dare as it is a declaration reassuring us that if we choose to invest in God and His purposes, we will not be out to shame. There may be bills to pay, and the debts may have piled up, but if we obey the Lord and put tithing first, we just might be able to see the financial breakthrough we've been longing for.

But what we need to understand is that from the very beginning, the tithe the Lord asks us to give the church is not the ceiling but rather, the floor. It is the bare minimum of what should be given to the Lord.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 206

I know several people who look at the ten percent like it is the ceiling for what to give the Lord. Strangely enough, back in the time of the Old Testament, the Israelites were actually giving three

forms of tithes. One was what they offered to support the priests. The other is to celebrate the annual sacred feast. Then once every three years, people were also required to give ten percent to the poor. If we compute all that, that means they give twenty-three percent of their income annually.⁷ That's nearly a quarter of what they earn! If we place such a sanction and made such a statement these days, I wouldn't be surprised to see the people marching in protests and demanding their rights to their money.

But what we need to understand is that from the very beginning, the tithe the Lord asks us to give the church is not the ceiling but rather, the floor. It is the bare minimum of what should be given to the Lord. This is why in some congregations the label for tithes is otherwise known as tithes and offering. They give the ten percent that is due to help finance the operations of the church and anything beyond that is an offering.

When we think of the tithe as something optional, then we probably think of ourselves as pretty great Christians if we give ours regularly. However, people back then never really thought of the tithe as something beyond returning what is due to the Lord. In a sense, they were paying back. The Bible never presented the tithe as something that was done only when people felt led to do so. They were never "led" to give their tithe that week. Instead, they presented their tithe or even paid their tithe. It was expected. Offerings even then were the ones marked as extra, the ones that were given when led by the Spirit.

It is our obedience to this that will show whether or not God is truly first in our lives.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 207

Now, make no mistake. We are no way saying that you will be cursed if you don't tithe. There are consequences if we fail to, of course, and we certainly leave ourselves out of a certain place of blessing that we can only enter into if and when we obey, but we will not be cursed as Jesus took on every curse for us. It should be, however, that we would be unconditionally and eagerly willing to obey considering what He has done for us.

It is our obedience to this that will show whether or not God is truly first in our lives. You can give and still not have God first, you know. We must be willing to give the Lord the first fruits of our crops and not just the leftovers. We don't give to God only when there's something left to give. We give to Him first, before we factor in all other expenses. The tithe should be the one mainstay in your budget plan even when funds seem to run particularly low that month. We touch the heart of God in a special way if we do.

Think of the story of Cain and Abel, the first sons of Adam and Eve. Abel took care of the sheep while Cain worked the fields. After some time, Cain decided to gather some of the things he had grown and took them before the Lord as an offering. Abel did the same and brought the fattest parts of some animals from his flock as his offering. These animals were not just mere ones randomly chosen, but he gave the firstborn animals of his flock. The Lord favored the offering of Abel while he wasn't pleased with Cain and what he had to give.

He would prefer to receive our whole hearts in whatever way we had to present it.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 207

Some people may interject here and say that the Lord will accept whatever it is we have to give – and He will. But that doesn't mean that He has some things He prefers to receive more than others. In this case, or in any case really, He would prefer to receive our whole hearts in whatever way we had to present it.

Because the Lord preferred Abel's offering to his, Cain became angry and sad. Upon seeing this, God told him that if he did what was right, he would be accepted. If he doesn't, sin is waiting at his door to take a hold of him because there is now a foothold. Sin may desire to control him, but he must overcome it.

The Lord was hitting at two things here. We all know that sometime later in this story, Cain goes after his brother and kills him out of jealousy. This is a form of warning from the Lord that if Cain continued to allow his emotions to take over him, then he will be overcome by them and he will do something he will regret. However, this also subtly points out the reason why God was not pleased with Cain's offering in the first place. The fact that Cain gave the Lord his leftovers, or at the very least his second best, was not right. And the fact that he did at this point in time means that he views something else more important than God. That in and of itself is idolatry, a sin, but there are so many sins that are bound to happen just stemming from the fact that the Lord did not have his whole heart.

The Lord was pleased with Abel's offering in particular because the first fruits were offered to Him. He was the priority. Before Abel ate his fill or gave the luscious fruits to his family, he first wanted to set what he had before the Lord. He wasn't just giving the Lord the remains of the fruit; he wanted to give Him what came first, because for him, God comes first.

The Lord was pleased with Abel's offering in particular because the first fruits were offered to him. He was the priority.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 209

Back in those days, a person's net worth was based on the number of animals they had and how abundant their flocks and fields were. In Deuteronomy 15, the people were told that they were to set apart every firstborn male of their herds and flocks. So much so that they were not to put these animals to work nor shear them. And if any animal had any defect, is lame or blind, or has any serious flaw, they must not be sacrificed before God. This isn't so much God telling us that He wants our sacrifices to be perfect as it is Him openly stating how He wants the very best we could give.

In the New Testament, we come across the story of Jesus watching some people in the temple give their tithes and offerings. The story goes this way four verses long, yet a mile of lessons to learn:

⁴¹ Jesus sat down across from the place where people put their temple offerings. He watched the crowd putting

their money into the offering boxes. Many rich people threw large amounts into them. ⁴² But a poor widow came and put in two very small copper coins. They were worth only a few pennies. ⁴³ Jesus asked his disciples to come to him. He said, "What I'm about to tell you is true. That poor widow has put more into the offering box than all the others. ⁴⁴ They all gave a lot because they are rich. But she gave even though she is poor. She put in everything she had. That was all she had to live on." (Mark 12:41-44, NIRV)

It didn't matter to Jesus that all those rich people were giving large sums left and right. They were surely helpful to the church. But He was watching the state of their hearts as they gave. For some of those people, it can be safe to say that they made a deliberate show of how much they were offering to the Lord. However, this small widow who had no money to live on decided to give not just the first of what she had, but all that she had. She was basically offering her life to the Lord in that very moment, telling Him that He is worth more than what she had. He was worth more to her than her very own life.

At the end of the day, it's never really about how much we tithe as much as it is about how much of our hearts we put in our tithe.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 210

She didn't shy away from giving because it was all that she had. Some of us are embarrassed to give to the Lord because we feel like what we have is too little. But as long as we are giving with God as our first priority, as long as we are giving with our whole hearts, then the Lord will look not at the amount but at how much of ourselves we are giving when we gave. At the end of the day, it's never really about how much we tithe as much as it is about how much of our hearts we put in our tithe.

PRAYER

Dear God,

Thank you for giving me the ability to produce wealth and thank You for giving me all that I have. Give me the discipline to give you what is due you and give me a heart that knows and understands that all this belongs to you. Strengthen my commitment to faithfully tithe no matter how big or how small my income may be at the moment.

In Jesus Name. Amen

Chapter 24
**God's Blessings is Released Through
Faith**

*“It is one of the blessings of this world that few people
see visions and dream dreams.”
Zora Neale Hurston*

POWER TRUTH

**¹³ When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide
you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his
own, but will speak whatever he hears, and he
will declare to you the things that are to come.**

John 16:13 NRSV

FAITH

Conversations about faith surround us on a daily basis, with people discussing a variety of things they put their trust in. It is so much about conflicting faiths and beliefs as it is about knowing and standing in what we believe. It's something that people could go on and on about for hours and days, never finding a lull to the conversation because apparently, the ability to even have faith is as much of a mystery to us as God is.

Conversations about faith surround us on a daily basis, with people discussing a variety of things they put their trust in.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 211

If truly pressed, people can come up with a thousand reasons why it's seemingly justifiable for us not to have faith. We can point certain things and circumstances in our lives and the lives of other people that would leave plenty of room for doubt and questions. But there is also a part of us that is designed and hardwired to have faith. Even those who say they don't have faith put their faith in their own logical reasoning as to why they don't have faith. People have faith in God, sure, but people can also place their faith in science, themselves, their families, their money, and just about everything else.

There are hundreds of stories of faith spread across the Scriptures, and there have been entire sermons, books, and doctrines built around the concept of faith and all that surrounds it. One of the most well-known verses regarding this can be found in Matthew 17:20-21.

A man approached Jesus while he was walking and got on his knees begging for the Lord to heal his son. He spoke of how he brought his child to the other disciples, and yet, no matter how hard they tried, they couldn't help the boy. Jesus was outraged and commanded the demon to leave the boy, and at once, the child was healed. When the disciples came to Jesus after, trying to understand why they couldn't

drive out the demon, Jesus told them that it was simply because their faith was much too small. He told them that if they had faith as small as a mustard seed, it would have been enough. If they ordered a mountain to move from one place to another, it would have moved with that mustard-seed faith, and nothing would have been impossible for them.

For the Lord to say that if we have faith as tiny as that, we can move mountains speak a lot about the power and ability of faith to break open a lot of doors and opportunities for us.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 212

To give you context about how big a mustard seed is, it is around one to two millimeters long. They are one of the smallest seeds to exist, yet when planted and taken care of they can grow up to twenty feet tall and twenty feet wide. These trees have the ability to grow in varying climates and weather, such as the dry desert or the cool rainforest. For the Lord to say that if we have faith as tiny as that, we can move mountains speak a lot about the power and ability of faith to break open a lot of doors and opportunities for us. Our faith, in and out of season, still has the ability to grow and bear fruit whether times are dry or rainy.

Additionally, when the trunk of this tree is cut, it just grows back up again. In the concept of seasons

of pruning and removing, there are moments that the Lord cuts us back in our lives so that the branches that need to be removed are removed, and as such, we will grow as we need to grow, better, healthier, and stronger than ever.⁸ Even if during that season, just a tiny bit of faith remains, we still have the ability to grow back into our roots.

*This is why even if our faith is small
as a mustard seed, miracles could
happen.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 213

Mark 9, gives us another angle to view this story. While the details covered started out similarly, Mark delves into certain details that were missed out on in Matthew. When the father asked Jesus to help his son, he punctuated his statement with the words “if you can.” He asked Jesus to heal his son if He can. Jesus then replied that everything is possible for the one who believes. The father, now desperate, cried out that he does believe. He then asked Jesus to help him overcome his unbelief.

I do think that’s a good way to approach the topic of faith. We are never truly able to manufacture faith on our own. Rather, our faith comes from the grace of God; still we are only able to believe because He helps us believe. This is why even if our faith is small as a mustard seed, miracles could happen. It has less to do with what we think the quality of our faith is. Rather, the Lord is able to work with whatever small amount of faith we present before Him.

Matthew 9, is a good chapter to dwell on should we want to see how the measure of our faith is being measured back to us. The chapter begins with Jesus healing a man who cannot walk because he saw that the people who brought him had faith. A few verses in, Jesus raised a dead girl and healed a bleeding woman in the same breadth. A synagogue leader came to Him asking if He could just place His hands on her, knowing that if He does, the daughter will live again. Such is an example of faith that is bold and sure of the power of God.

Concurrently, a woman who had been bleeding for twelve years touched the robe of Jesus, thinking that if she just touched His clothes, she would be healed. Jesus felt the power go out from Him and He turned to see the woman. He then reassured her that her faith healed her.

Afterward, two blind men followed Jesus and asked Him to heal them. He affirmed whether or not they truly believed He could do such a thing, which constitutes faith. They said yes, and Jesus healed them, telling them that it will be as they have believed.

The scripture goes on to tell us that He only managed to do a few miracles there because the people had no faith. This further emphasizes the fact that the Lord's blessings are received through faith.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 214

Did their faith have a factor on whether or not they were going to be healed? Yes. It can be recalled that when Jesus went to visit his hometown, Nazareth. Upon his arrival, people were amazed at his power and wisdom. However, they also started to question his identity since they knew him as Joseph and Mary's son, the child of a carpenter and someone completely ordinary. Their wonder turned into displeasure upon realizing this. The scripture goes on to tell us that He only managed to do a few miracles there because the people had no faith. This further emphasizes the fact that the Lord's blessings are received through faith.

It is rather similar to the gift of salvation. It is there within our reach, yet it boils down to whether or not we are willing to receive this gift. James tells us that God gives to us freely without finding fault. However, when we ask, we should not doubt and really believe that God will give us what we are asking. Such people were likened to a wave of the sea that gets tossed and turned around by the wind. These kinds of people should not expect that they would get what they are asking for because they cannot make up their minds about what they really want to do.

It is rather similar to the gift of salvation. It is there within our reach, yet it boils down to whether or not we are willing to receive this gift.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 215

PRAYING IN FAITH

Christianity today likes to simplify the concept of prayer by stating that it is simply talking to God, such is true. But in the midst of making prayer mundane and easily doable, the essence of faith that must be put in the act of prayer has been lost. While the mere act of praying implies that you have faith that God will hear you, there is also the faith that gives us the ability to state whatever it may be that is on our minds and in our hearts. Let's once again take a look at James and how he exhorts the disciples to pray:

¹³ Is anyone among you in trouble? Then that person should pray. Is anyone among you happy? Then that person should sing songs of praise. ¹⁴ Is anyone among you sick? Then that person should send for the elders of the church to pray over them. They should ask the elders to anoint them with olive oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer offered by those who have faith will make the sick person well. The Lord will heal them. If they have sinned, they will be forgiven. ¹⁶ So confess your sins to one another. Pray for one another so that you might be healed. The prayer of a godly person is powerful. Things happen because of it.

¹⁷ Elijah was a human being, just as we are. He prayed hard that it wouldn't rain. And it didn't rain on the land for three and a half years. ¹⁸ Then he prayed again. That time it rained. And the earth produced its crops. (James 5:13-18, NIRV)

Whether we are in trouble and sick, offerings of prayer in faith have an impact on how our situations go about. It says here that the prayer spoken by those who have faith will make a sick person well. Elijah, a mere human such as we are, prayed hard, persisting in what he was requesting of God. As such, it didn't rain in the land for more than three years. And when he prayed again, he didn't just pray as if speaking something so casually.

*Whether we are in trouble and sick,
offerings of prayer in faith have an
impact on how our situations go
about. It says here that the prayer
spoken by those who have faith will
make a sick person well.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 216

When we look at 1 Kings, we see this play out in detail. After three years of no rain, Elijah faced off with the prophets of Baal, proving once and for all that his God is more powerful than all the gods and idols that they claim. After this, Elijah began to hear the sound of heavy rain. He climbed to the top of Mount Carmel, bowed to the ground, and put his face between his knees. He ordered his servant to go and look towards the sea, to see if there is anything to see, signs of rainclouds forming and drawing near their land. However, the servant did not see anything. Elijah, still in that position, ordered his servant seven

times to go back and check. On the seventh time, the servant went back to Elijah and told him that he now sees a cloud, as small as man's hand, but it's coming over up the sea. Not long after, black clouds filled the sky and heavy rain began to pour.

The Bible tells us that faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the certainty of the things which are not seen.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 217

We would like to zoom in on how Elijah responded during this time. He kept his face between his knees, meaning that he was not able to see what was truly happening. There is reason to believe that he did this on purpose, choosing to hold on to what he has heard rather than what he sees. The fact that he made his servant go back and forth seven times meant that he was convinced something was going to happen and rain was about to pour.

The Bible tells us that faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the certainty of the things which are not seen. In this situation with Elijah, he definitely acted in faith when he chose not to base what God could do on what he could see.

The Lord has a lot of promises and blessings for us that we are unable to receive because we cannot open our arms wide to receive what is unseen. When we come across certain doubts, when we think we heard but could not see, we start second-guessing everything and ultimately, we just give up hoping for

the blessing to come. But the moment we allow our faith to be exercised and strengthened is when the Lord will manifest in the mightiest of ways.

PRAYING IN JESUS' NAME

When Christians pray, we usually tap into the name of Jesus, using it as a period to every prayer we pray, thinking that by doing so, our prayers will become a tad more powerful and effective. This stems from John 14, concerning the events that happened right before Jesus was taken away to be crucified. He told his disciples that He will do whatever they ask in His name, as it is then that the Father will receive glory for the Son. Again, he repeated it for emphasis as it was with writings from those times. They were assured that they may ask for anything in His name and that if they do, He will do it.

He told His disciples that He will do whatever they ask in His name, as it is then that the Father will receive glory for the Son.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 218

As these verses are taken out of context to fit how we want to perceive them, we must understand that when we do something in the name of Jesus, it means that we are carrying and exercising his power and authority. We see how this kind of practice came to play in the Old Testament, when Jezebel wrote letters in Ahab's name, thus operating under his authority and acting as if she the words were his himself; or hen

David faced Goliath and he told the giant that while the Philistine may come at them with sword, spear, and javelin, David came to him in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel's armies and angel armies alike. When the shepherd boy dropped these words, he signified that he was acting according to the wishes of the Lord as he believed them to do, trusting that this will please the Lord in whose name he came.

The name of the Lord then represents Him as a whole – His will, His wishes, His desires, His heart, and all that He stands for. When we pray for in the name of the Lord, we pray what we believe the Lord would want us to pray for. It isn't so much a magic word to bend His will over to ours as it is us acknowledging that we want His will to come to pass.⁹

The good thing about all of this is that the will of the Lord, as we have repeatedly established, is always to bless us. One thing we can be sure of is that we have a part in all the blessings and promises the Lord has spoken in His word. His will for us is good, pleasing, and perfect.

One thing we can be sure of is that we have a part in all the blessings and promises the Lord has spoken in His word. His will for us is good, pleasing, and perfect.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 219

We have the faith to claim those blessings and promises one by one, believing that it is to them then as it is to us now, knowing that the heart of the Lord toward us has not changed.

PRAYER

Dear God,

I ask you to forgive me for all the times I failed to believe. Help me with my unbelief. I do not want to miss out on all the blessings you have for me just because my flesh failed to believe in what the Spirit tells me. May faith start to rise, and may I be bold enough to speak out what I believe you promised over me.

In Jesus Name. Amen

Chapter 25

The Conditions of God's Blessings for the Prophet

“When we lose one blessing, another is often most unexpectedly given in its place.”

C. S. Lewis

POWER TRUTH

³⁸ give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap; for the measure you give will be the measure you get back.”

Luke 6:38 NRSV

CONDITIONS FOR THE PROPHET

The office of the prophet has always carried so much weight, just as much then as it does now. The mantles that the Lord gives us always leave us accountable for the way we function and move in them. In the same way that we will answer to how we use the blessings God has given us, a prophet will answer to not just the way they spoke the words that they receive but also in the way they move in every other aspect of their lives.

*The mantles that the Lord gives
us always leave us accountable
for the way we function and
move in them.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 220

It may sound like a heavy burden to bear, but it does help in keeping us grounded in the truth of the Word of God and not getting too caught up in the glitz and glitter of blessings, thinking that they are ours without needing to be responsible for them.

In the book of Revelation, John can be found being immersed in a vivid vision of what is to come until the second coming of Christ. But while it would have been ridiculously easy to exaggerate or minimize the things that he saw, he wrote about it very soberly, making sure not to add drama as he believes it would fit. In chapter 22, Jesus can be seen warning everyone who would hear the prophecies from the book. He warns that should someone add to what has been shown and written then, they will be plagued by the very plagues mentioned in the book of Revelation. Should anyone take away from the book, then God will take away from that person all the blessings that were mentioned. Not only that, but that person's share in the Tree of Life and his place in the Holy City will also be revoked.

He warns that should someone add to what has been shown and written then, they will be plagued by the very plagues mentioned in the book of Revelation.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 221

It may appear as if it is a tad too much, but such are the responsibilities of the people who carry words of prophecies with them. Prophecies are words from God and as such, we need to understand that maligning, manipulating, and misusing the word of the Lord will result in very serious consequences.

There is importance in preserving the faithfulness and truthfulness of the Gospel. All throughout history, people have seen how humans have tampered with and assaulted the Bible, not only interpreting it as they please but outright demeaning it and the things that are spoken in it – the Book of Revelation being one of the most favorite books to target and attack. Solomon, in Proverbs 3, speaks of how every word of God is tested and that no one should add to His words, or He shall reprove them and be proven a liar.

As believers, the approach towards the Gospel should be that of reverence. A true Christian would in no way want to deliberately tamper with the word of God. It is seen that David, in the Psalms, goes on and on about how much he loves the law of the Lord and how he treasures all of it. There may be plenty of ways people wish to make the Bible adjust to the way they want it to be, but the fact that it is something spoken of God must make them hold it to a higher standard than their preferences.

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Prophetic Blessing Principle # 222

In Deuteronomy, Moses was exhorting the Israelites to know and obey all of God's commands. In Chapter 4 of the book of Chronicles he told them to not add to nor subtract from the commands he was telling them. They had to live by the statutes and ordinances he was teaching them that they may go and possess the blessings God had for them. They were also instructed to make all of these known not just to their children, but also to their children's children.

Jumping from this, in Chapter 5, he reminded them once again to observe everything that the Lord has commanded them and to not turn to the right or to the left and be distracted as they eventually turn the wrong way. Instead, they shall walk in the entirety of what the Lord has commanded, promising that if they do so, it will go well with them and that their days in the land will be long.

Moving to Chapter 6, Moses reiterated yet again how the Lord is our God. In fact, he followed this statement up by emphasizing that the Lord is the one and only God. He then gave them what we now consider to be the most important commandment as mentioned by Jesus in the New Testament.

They are to love the Lord their God with all their hearts, soul, and strength. If they did so, then the commandments given to them would be written on the tablet of their hearts. Moses was so intent on having the importance of this conveyed that he stated how he wanted their children to know about these commands. They were to talk about them when they were at home or as they walked along the road. They were told to speak about them when they went to bed and when they woke up. If the emphasis was not enough, Moses went on to say how they were to write these commands down and tie them on their hands as a reminder, as well as their foreheads and on the doorframes of their houses, as well as their gates.

*They are to love the Lord their God
with all their hearts, soul, and strength.
If they did so, then the commandments
given to them would be written on the
tablet of their hearts.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 223

Basically, they were to surround themselves and revolve their lives around what the Lord had spoken to them. It may seem like a tad too much for people today, thinking that one must have a life outside God, but Moses tells us otherwise. He's not telling us that we are to spend our whole lives inside the temple. Rather, what he's trying to convey is that whatever people of God do, they are to do it with Him and His word in mind.

As much as Moses cites the promised blessing of the Lord to the Israelites, that is the land and the wealth of the land, they were warned to be careful not to forget the Lord in the midst of all these. They were to remember how He brought them out of Egypt, out of the land where they were slaves.

Then they were revealed the jealous nature of the Lord, since when they worship other gods, the Lord will get very angry with them. He knows that they are rightfully His, and so if they do turn away, He will destroy them from the face of the land. We have to understand, they have done this over and over again to the Lord, and they were further told not to test Him as they did before. If they live under His terms, they can be sure to not just own the good land, but to have the ability to drive out all their enemies so that there will be room for them.

*Trust is necessary in any relationship.
One's refusal to obey Him means he
does not trust Him enough. It means
that he does not trust that He and His
blessings will be more than enough.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 224

Even if these warnings were not directed to the people of this day in particular, it reflects one of the parts of God that most tend to ignore in this generation – His right to jealousy and anger should His people stray. Trust is necessary in any relationship; One's refusal to obey Him means he does not trust Him

enough. It means that he does not trust that He and His blessings will be more than enough. If one truly wants the blessings of the Lord, he must be willing to obtain them under the Lordship of Christ and whatever he may direct.

SUFFERING

A stunning revelation easily observed when one takes a good look at all the books of prophecy is that all the prophets did not live easy lives. If anything, they lived lives that were especially full of suffering. It's no surprise that Christians generally balk at the concept of suffering, but for the prophets of God this is very much a part of the package of calling.

Jeremiah, for instance, is famously known as the suffering prophet. A quick look through his book and his pains are laid out bare for all to see. He was warned by God that people in high places such as kings and priests would go against him, as well as the general population of Judah. People mocked him and refused to listen to his words, but the ridicule went far beyond verbal. He suffered physical abuse and was beaten, chained, and placed in a pit to die, among many other things.

One of the hardest things to do is to withhold an overwhelming emotion.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 225

And then there's Ezekiel, who was made to suffer in terms of a broken heart. The Lord asked him to suffer in this way so that he could communicate to the Jews in Babylon how evil the nation had been and how His

punishment must come to pass. This suffering came to pass in Ezekiel's life when his wife was taken away by the Lord with a stroke. But if that's not bad enough, God instructed him not to mourn for his wife. He was not to weep nor cry for her passing. He was not to accept any comfort that was offered to him as we typically extend to the relatives of someone who has died. Instead, he was to go about his day like any other, showing up to work without giving a hint of what horror had happened to him.

One of the hardest things to do is to withhold an overwhelming emotion. People tend like to say that they feel like their hearts are going to break and burst open should they not be provided an avenue to properly express how they feel. It is unimaginable how painful this would have been for Ezekiel, and yet he was called to it, and he responded to the call.

In the book of James, one of the exhortations to the church when it came to suffering was that they should look back and think about the prophets of old who feared the Lord. They are to be considered as examples on how to be patient in suffering. He talked of how people who did not give up are the ones who are considered blessed, as Job did not give up when all the trials and testing came into his life like a storm; and in the end, he reaped the fruit of what he had suffered.

In the book of James, one of the exhortations to the church when it came to suffering was that they should look back and think about the prophets of old who feared the Lord.

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 226

There is one important thing to acknowledge when it came to Job and how he suffered though, one very important fact that you should take into consideration and ponder on when it comes to you and how you respond to the sufferings that come through your life. When he found out that he lost his herds, his children, and his property in a day, this was how he reacted:

²⁰ After Job heard all these reports, he got up and tore his robe. He shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground and worshiped the Lord. ²¹ He said, “I was born naked. And I’ll leave here naked. The Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away. May the name of the Lord be praised.”

²² In spite of everything, Job didn’t sin by blaming God for doing anything wrong. (Job 1:20-22)

Job went on to suffer plenty of other things, such as getting boils over his body, intense fever, and skin discoloration. He felt as if his body was shriveled up and wasting away – and it was. His own wife told him to just give up and die, and the way she reacted to what was going on with him added to the pain that he was already enduring. In the midst of it all, Job remained faithful to the Lord.

There are others who have been sentenced to death, such as Zechariah and John the Baptist, and there is nothing glamorous or romantic about it. They were persecuted and were punished for proclaiming the Gospel and speaking God’s word to a certain time and land.

Jesus told the disciples in the book of John that if they persecuted him, they would persecute us as well.

He reiterates this in the book of Luke, which chronicles how he spoke of sending prophets and apostles, some of whom will be persecuted and killed for who they are and what they proclaim.

*Blessed are the people who are persecuted
by fellow men, blessed are those who are
reviled and those who are made fun of
because of their belief in Christ.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 227

But he also declared in the book of Matthew that all those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake will be blessed, and theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the people who are persecuted by fellow men, blessed are those who are reviled and those who are made fun of because of their belief in Christ. In fact, they should rejoice and be exceedingly glad for their reward in heaven will be great, as with the prophets who were persecuted before.

And it would only make sense that these prophets are persecuted, for Scripture tells us that all who live godly lives in Christ Jesus will experience some form of persecution. This is because if you were of this world, then the world would love and accept you if you were of it and a part of it. However, you are not of this world and are of Christ, therefore it is only natural that the world will hate you.

One lesson you need to understand though: in the condition of suffering, the Lord is extending His blessing. The Bible tells us this:

² My brothers and sisters, you will face all kinds of trouble. When you do, think of it as pure joy. ³ Your faith will be tested. You know that when this happens it will produce in you the strength to continue. ⁴ And you must allow this strength to finish its work. Then you will be all you should be. You will have everything you need. (James 1:2-4)

Trials and tribulations are to be considered as pure joy; they are to be considered as blessings. Hebrews 5 tells us that through suffering, Jesus learned what it was like to obey.

*Suffering makes Christians grow into
who they need to be.*

Prophetic Blessing Principle # 228

Suffering makes Christians grow into who they need to be. Were it not for these things, then the prophets would have never realized just how committed they were to the cause of Christ. They never would have known what it was like to be brought low and humbled, to have had everything taken away, and yet still be secure and founded in the promises of Christ. In the same way, the Lord's conditions for us are still, to be a blessing to us in the end.

PRAYER

Dear God,

We praise you for giving us guidelines on how to act and how to live. Thank you for not leaving us to fend for ourselves and figure out everything on our own. Instead, You tell us what you require of us. We ask for the grace to live lives that are of glory to You at all times; lives that know Your truth and don't malign Your truth for our personal desires. Whether I get what I want the way I want it, may this truth burn in my heart: You are my greatest blessing.

In Jesus Name. Amen

ENDNOTE

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