

Positioned for Strength Fullness

Preamble

- Many recognising the spiritual shift we are in, awakening, spiritual hunger, dreams and encounters, surprising conversions
- National leaders, Our own senior team
- The first two weeks of prayer and fasting - hunger, deep work

Introduction - Understand the Times

- 2024 a year to become **Strong** and grow **spiritual enlargement** and **capacity**
 - Personally
 - In our relationships
 - As an Apostolic Family - spiritually and practically
- 2025 Begins 20 years of flourishing and fruitfulness - acceleration, beginnings - harvest

Promise of Divine Impartation

- **Give strength to your legs**, they will run, turning through the land and the nations
- **I will strengthen your voice** - your voice will cause shift and movement. Your voice will silence confusion and bring clarity.
- **Prophetic, sharpness to your eyes**, they will sparkle and they will have prophetic, piercing, focus
- **Open your ears**, alert and poised

Lord how will this happen: - *'If you spend extended periods of time with me, I will do the above as a gift.'*

Three Key Bible Passages - Stories

- **Elijah on Mount Carmel** - 1 Kings 18
 - Much mixture in the land - Baal and Asherah worship, idolatry
 - People, wavering between two opinions, famine in the land
- **Early Disciples** - Acts 6
 - Experiencing growth but that growth bringing pressure
 - Rumbblings of discontent and seeds of division
- **Flourishing under pressure** - Daniel 1
 - Huge cultural pressure on Daniel as a teenager
 - But he demonstrates a life of devotion, holiness and prayer

- With a bold public witness

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. [2] So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. [3] Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them [4] and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." [5] This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. [6] They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. [7] So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith. **Acts 6:1-7**

1. **Restore community** - common unity

1 King 18V30 - 'Come here to me.' They came to Him'

- They were a divided people
 - Worshippers of Baal,
 - 7,000 followers of God (1 Kings 19.18),
 - Many wavering 'How long will you waver between two opinions' 1 Kings 18.21

Acts 6.2 - 'so the twelve gathered all the disciples together'

Acts 6.3&5

- Choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom
- Priesthood of all believers - Everyone gets to play

"My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, [21] that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. [22] I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one- [23] I in them and you in me-so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. **John 17:20-23**

2. **Restore priority** - V2

V2 - It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word and prayer

- Time with the Lord had been squeezed out

- They knew the danger of working for the Lord without abiding in him

V4 - We will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word

- It's worth recognising here that they were already making disciples V1&V7
- Relationship with the Lord - Prayer and ministry of the Word
- Relationship with others - Make Disciples -

Then Elijah said to all the people, "Come here to me." They came to him, and he **repaired the altar of the LORD**, which had been torn down. **1 Kings 18:30**

- Had been torn down
- Had been forgotten
- Had been neglected

Altar

- The meeting place with God
- The place to bring a sacrifice
- The place to bring ones prayers

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. **Daniel 1:8**

3. **Restructured to increase capacity** - V3

V3 - Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them

- For them it was a restructuring and releasing of people
- For us it might be restructuring our day or week
- Examine where our time and priority is spent
- This can be done with friends or family - community

4. **Rapid growth resulted** -

V7 - So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith.

- Recognising that things needed attention
- Restore relationship with the Lord