



# **GOD'S BLESSINGS**

## **IN THE MIDST OF ADVERSITY**

**Alade Agbabiaka**

© 2022  
Standard Word Christian Broadcasting Network (SWBN)  
God's Blessings in the Midst of Adversity  
by Alade Agbabiaka



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## **Preface**

Birthed by a mandate from God, the Standard Word Christian Broadcasting Network (SWBN) was created to proclaim the gospel of the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ to the church and the nations. SWBN operates to fulfill the prophetic declaration that “this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come” (Matthew 24:14).

Since its inception — to the glory of God — the channel has featured a rich supply of anointed messages proclaimed by ministries who have sought the face of the Lord. In this and other writings, SWBN delivers those life-giving messages for further consumption by God’s remnant and as many as have an ear to hear what the Spirit is saying.

## **About God's Blessings In The Midst Of Adversities**

In *God's Blessings In The Midst Of Adversities*, the Lord calls His elect to awaken from laxity and slumber. He calls Zion to follow after righteousness and zealously pursue the deliverance and redemption she once hoped for. In conveying this inspiring message, Bro. Alade Agbabiaka encourages God's own to expect His visitation again despite the many challenges they may be facing. The message wraps up with a powerful declaration that the set time to favor Zion has come, and the Lord has arisen to restore her.

There is no doubt that you will be touched as you digest and embrace by faith the anointed words delivered in this message.

May God bless you richly as you read. In Jesus' name.  
Amen.

## **Dedication and Acknowledgement**

Dedicated to the Almighty God.

We acknowledge the commitment of SWBN's transcribing team, editors, and supporters, whose efforts and contributions have made the publication of this book possible.



# **Chapter 1**

## **Awake, Zion, Awake**

I thank God for the privilege to share His word with you. In the chapters of this book, we will be examining the times that we are in with a view to discerning what God is saying to His church through the circumstances we are going through. The Bible tells us in 1 Corinthians 2:15 that he that is spiritual judgeth (discerns) all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. We are spiritual people, led by the Spirit of God. Therefore, we should know from the circumstances and things around us what God's word and direction is. We should be able to pick what God saying to us at this time.

Many times, we have looked at the sons of Issachar — one of the tribes of Israel — and seen that the character that they had is the character God is working in every one of us: that is, the ability to understand the times. God is working in us the ability to discern, from the things around us, what He is saying, what His plan is, and what He wants us to do.

The Bible says the sons of Issachar had understanding of the times, and they knew what Israel ought to do. Our prayer is that in this season, we shall not miss God. Rather, we will be able to look at the circumstances around us and tell in very clear terms what God is saying.

The Bible says, *"If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"* We pray that this trumpet God is sounding in this time shall give a clear sound, and the righteous shall be rightly directed by His Spirit.



## Our Salvation is Near

Let us now turn our Bibles to Isaiah 51:1.

It reads:

*Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.*

“Hearken” means “to listen.” So to the people this scripture is directed, it says, “listen, you that follow after righteousness.” I am sure one thing that we share in common is the fact that we all are following after righteousness. The Bible says in Matthew 6:33, “*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you.*”

We are following after the righteousness of Christ; thus, we are an audience in this Isaiah chapter fifty-one verse one. If indeed you are seeking the Lord like me, then this verse and this scripture is directed to you. It says,

*. . . look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged.*

There are two things we are asked to look at: the hole of the pit (you came from a pit, so look at where you came from) and the rock. Look at both.

Verse two says,

*Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.*

Many times, we say that Abraham's blessings are ours. We feel that we belong to the generation of Abraham: the people who believe God. For Abraham believed God, and the Bible says that "it was counted unto him for righteousness." I believe that we belong to that genealogy of Abraham who believed God and sought for a city whose builder and maker is God.

Verse three reads:

*For the LORD shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody*

We are in Zion. We know that Zion is not a physical location, but it is a people. Zion is a people who seek after God. The Bible says the LORD shall comfort Zion. Matthew 5:4 says, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted." The Lord shall comfort Zion because He will give us beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning and also the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

In verse four of Isaiah chapter fifty-one, the Lord says to us:

*Hearken unto me, my people; and give ear unto me, O my nation: for a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.*

A law is a word; it is that thing that directs your life, your pattern or mannerism, and gives you the urge to do that which gives a reward. The Lord says, “. . . a law shall proceed from me, and I will make my judgment to rest for a light of the people.” The judgments of God are right; the judgments of God are righteous.

The Lord says in verse five,

*My righteousness is near; my salvation is gone forth, and mine arms shall judge the people; the isles shall wait upon me, and on mine arm shall they trust.*

This sounds like the Lord is telling us there is good news for us. He says His righteousness is near. He is saying, “Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness” (Matthew 6:33). The Bible tells us here that the righteousness of God is near. This means that what we have been seeking is nearby and shall appear very soon. The Bible also tells us that now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. And here in verse five of Isaiah fifty-one, God says, “. . . my salvation is gone forth. . . ”

What is salvation? The salvation of God is the deliverance of God; the salvation of God is a triumph of

God; it is the victory of God. The salvation of God is the saving grace of God that comes to man. Romans 13:11 says, ". . . for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." The Bible also says in Acts 2:21, "And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." There is salvation promised unto Zion.

Verse six of Isaiah chapter fifty-one is very directional. It says,

*Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath: for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment, and they that dwell therein shall die in like manner: but my salvation shall be for ever, and my righteousness shall not be abolished.*

Brethren, the priority that we should seek is the salvation of God and His righteousness because that shall be forever, and His righteousness shall not be abolished.

Reading on, verses seven and eight say,

*Hearken unto me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is my law; fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings. For the moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool: but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation.*

Brethren, I believe God is making our priorities right. He is telling us that if we are indeed hearing the Word of God and seeking God, we should not fear the reproach of men. We should not be afraid of being condemned or rebuked by men, because we are closer to the promise of God for His people. He says His righteousness shall be forever, and His salvation, His triumph, His visitation, His deliverance, His mighty hand with which He will save us from generation to generation.

### **A Call to Awake**

*Awake, awake, put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon? . . . put on strength, O arm of the LORD; awake, as in the ancient days, in the generations of old. Art thou not it that hath cut Rahab, and wounded the dragon?  
(Isaiah 51:9)*

The ninth verse of Isaiah chapter fifty-one is the conclusion of all the things that have been spoken from verses one to eight. It is a call. It says, "Awake . . ." To "awake" means "to rouse oneself." It means "to stay up." It means "to be triumphant." When someone says, "Awake!", the person is drawing our consciousness, or attention, to something. It may not necessarily mean that we are asleep, but it means that God is saying, "This is the time. Look at this; let it draw your attention." And I want to ask us: Can we say from the things that are

happening around us that we are not hearing God say, "Awake, Zion, awake!"? I hear God saying that we should be sensitive to the things around us. If we are seeking the salvation of the Lord, and if we are seeking His righteousness, there is a call to awake.

Verses ten and eleven say:

*Art thou not it which hath dried the sea,  
the waters of the great deep; that hath  
made the depths of the sea a way for  
the ransomed to pass over?*

*Therefore the redeemed of the LORD  
shall return, and come with singing  
unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be  
upon their head: they shall obtain  
gladness and joy; and sorrow and  
mourning shall flee away.*

So we see here a call to awake, and like we said, "awake" here means to rouse (stir) ourselves up, to wake up from any laxity, to wake up from any slumber, to wake up from distractions, and to be focused on that which God is about to give us. And He says the first thing we should do is put on strength. Where do we get our strength from? We get our strength from the Lord. Ephesians chapter six verse ten says, "*Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.*" This is the strength the Lord is talking about. He is not talking about the strength from our going to the gym to exercise and build up muscles but rather our putting on the strength of the Lord, for the joy of the

Lord is our strength. Ephesians 6: 11-13 says,

*Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.*

So the strength that God is talking about in Isaiah 51:11 is the strength of the Lord. It is the strength about which the writer of the book of Ephesians says we should be "strong in the Lord and in the power of His might."

Now, we saw in Isaiah 51:11 the promise of God returning to Zion. He said the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come with singing unto Zion, and the joy that will follow after that will be everlasting — "*everlasting joy shall be upon their head.*" We may have been weeping and crying but, the Bible tells us that weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning. The Bible also says, "*the redeemed of the Lord shall return, and come with singing unto Zion.*" And the good news is that they shall obtain gladness and joy; sorrow and mourning shall flee away.

Let us look at Isaiah 51:17-18. It reads:

*Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem, which hast drunk at the hand of the LORD the cup of his fury; thou hast drunken the dregs of the cup of trembling, and wrung them out. There is none to guide her among all the sons whom she hath brought forth; neither is there any that taketh her by the hand of all the sons that she hath brought up.*

In verse seventeen of Isaiah fifty-one, we see a call again (as we saw in Isaiah 51:9) and it says, "Awake, awake, stand up, O Jerusalem . . ." Like we said earlier, God is drawing our attention. When there is a call to awake, God is saying let distractions stop; let the things that take our attention be no more. Let our attention be focused on the Lord. Just like in the evil days — these are the evil days — put on strength, because the essence of putting on strength is to make us stand.

So we see the Lord in Isaiah 51:17 calling us again to "**Awake, awake** . . ." When the alarm rings, it rings once. When it rings a second time, it is a means to tell you that you cannot afford to delay anymore. This thought is expressed in Joel 2:1, which reads:

*Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the LORD cometh, for it is nigh at hand . .*



God is saying "Awake, awake" the second time. This time, He is telling us "**Stand up, Zion.**" The first time, He said, "**Put on strength.**" Friends, we are in the evil days (see Matthew 24:12-13). So God is calling us, in Zion, to awake and to stand, because if we do not stand in this evil day, we have missed it. Ephesians 6:14 tells us, "*Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness . . .*" The time that we are in are times in which we need to be righteous; we need to receive the strength of the Lord to stand up.

Let us examine Isaiah 51:22-23,

*Thus saith thy Lord the LORD, and thy God that pleadeth the cause of his people, Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again: But I will put it into the hand of them that afflict thee; which have said to thy soul, Bow down, that we may go over: and thou hast laid thy body as the ground, and as the street, to them that went over.*

What is God telling us? He is telling us that we have, until now, been subjected to fear. He says,

*. . . Behold, I have taken out of thine hand the cup of trembling, even the dregs of the cup of my fury; thou shalt no more drink it again . . .*

He is talking to you and me; God is taking away trembling and fear from us, because 2 Timothy 1:7 says that *"God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."* Therefore, as God is calling us at this time to awake, God is actually calling us to a time to stir up the sound mind, power, and love of God that is in us.

### **Divine Instructions and Promises**

Let us turn to Isaiah 52:1. Here we will see a third call to awake. We saw the first call in Isaiah 51:9. We saw the second call in Isaiah 51:17, and now we are seeing another call to awake in Isaiah fifty-two from verse one. It tells us:

*Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O  
Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O  
Jerusalem, the holy city . . .*

What are garments? Garments are coverings, those things that we use to hide our nakedness. And He did not tell us about dirty garments but beautiful garments. The beauty of holiness. When God is our covering, we put on the beauty of holiness. So God is telling us to put on holiness, to put on God, which is our covering. It goes on:

*. . . for henceforth there shall no more  
come into thee the uncircumcised and  
the unclean.*

Isaiah 52:2 contains the third instruction, which is:

*Shake thyself from the dust . . .*

Dust accumulates when a thing is idle. If you park a car on a dusty street and keep the car immobile and motionless for two or three days, you will find a lot of dust on it when you come back. So if God is telling us to shake off the dust, it means there has been a lot of inactivity in the body of Christ. How can you shake yourself from the dust? By waking up from your inactivity; by stirring up the spirit of a warrior, the spirit of a righteous man and of them that seek the Lord; and by pressing on and not drawing back unto perdition.

The fourth instruction, still in Isaiah 52:2, is:

*... arise, and sit down, O Jerusalem ...*

How can God say, "Arise" and at the same time say you should sit down? "Arise" means that in your spirit, there is a quickening; you are no longer sleeping. And you are not like the five foolish virgins, but you rise up. Although you rise up, you do not rise up in your own power, because we see from Scripture that when you sit down in the things of God, you are allowing God to take control. Let us look at this in John chapter six verse ten:

*And Jesus said, Make the men sit down. Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand.*

Now we know that in this story, the Lord fed five thousand with two fishes and five loaves of bread. So when God begins to ask you to sit down, it means God is saying, "Rest in me." The Bible says in Hebrews 4:9 that "*There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of*

God." When God begins to say, "Arise," and at the same time says, "Sit down," it means that He is saying, "Wake up in your spirit, but rest in me."

We proceed with the fifth instruction, still in Isaiah 52:2, and it is:

*. . . loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.*

Isaiah 52 was written to the children of Israel who were in captivity in Babylon. If you look at you and me, you will see that we are in captivity. We are in some situation where we are yet to come forth in the fullness of God, and there is a lot holding us back. But God is saying that now is the time to visit His people. He gives us the fifth instruction saying, "*Loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.*"

Verses three to eight of Isaiah chapter fifty-two read as follows:

*For thus saith the LORD, Ye have sold yourselves for nought; and ye shall be redeemed without money. For thus saith the Lord GOD, My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause.*

*Now therefore, what have I here, saith the LORD, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the LORD; and my name continually*

*every day is blasphemed.*

*Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am he that doth speak: behold, it is I.*

*How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!*

*Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice; with the voice together shall they sing: for they shall see eye to eye, when the LORD shall bring again Zion.*

Verse nine, which contains again another instruction, is the sixth instruction of what we should do. Remember, the first instruction, in Isaiah 52:1, was "**Put on thy strength.**" The second one was "**Put on thy beautiful garments.**" The third was "**Shake thyself from the dust.**" The fourth instruction, "**Arise and sit down.**" The fifth, "**Loose thyself from the bands.**" Now in verse nine, we see a sixth instruction:

*Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.*

And verse ten says,

*The LORD hath made bare his holy arm  
in the eyes of all the nations; and all the  
ends of the earth shall see the salvation  
of our God.*

Verse eleven gives us the seventh instruction. It says,

*Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from  
thence, touch no unclean thing; go ye  
out of the midst of her; be ye clean, that  
bear the vessels of the LORD.*

There is a sound that God is coming! I hear a sound of God speaking to us, saying that the Lord had made bare His holy arm in all the eyes of the nations. We see the things that are happening, and we begin to see that God is giving us, those of us who are spiritual and can discern, the ability to know that He is saying, "This is the time that I want to show my deliverance. I want to save my people. I want to give victory to the church. I want to give justification to the church. I want to send help to Zion." So God is telling us that we should awake. God is promising us in this time of awakening that He shall redeem us. The Bible says in Daniel 11:32 that "*such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits.*"

Now, the Lord is assuring us from the sixth verse of Isaiah chapter fifty-two that His people shall know His name. In the seventh verse, we see Him promising us salvation. There is a publication; there is a pronouncement. There is an announcement of God that

salvation has come to His people. Moreover, as we go on, we see that God is giving us another promise in the eighth verse of Isaiah chapter fifty-two, saying:

*Thy watchmen shall lift up the voice;  
with the voice together shall they sing:  
for they shall see eye to eye, when the  
LORD shall bring again Zion.*

God is calling our attention to the signposts of His salvation. One of them is the unity of His watchmen. He says in Isaiah 62:6, *"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence . . ."* You and I are watchmen, and the Bible says we shall see eye to eye. Again, the Bible says in Psalm 133:1, *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"* The Lord is telling us that He will bring unity. In verses two and three of the same chapter, He says:

*It is like the precious ointment upon the  
head, that ran down upon the beard,  
even Aaron's beard: that went down to  
the skirts of his garments;  
As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew  
that descended upon the mountains of  
Zion: for there the LORD commanded  
the blessing, even life for evermore.*

God is telling us that one of the promises that we shall see in this time, as we awake, is that He is going to restore Zion, and its watchmen shall begin to see eye to eye.

Going back to Isaiah chapter fifty-two, we find another promise in verse nine:

*Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem: for the LORD hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem.*

As we wake up in this season, as our consciousness is coming up, we see that God is comforting His people. He is redeeming Jerusalem. He says that the salvation of the Lord shall be forever. The Lord shall direct and lead His people roundabout. He will go ahead of us, and He will be behind us.

Verse fifteen of Isaiah chapter fifty-two says,

*So shall he sprinkle many nations; the kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they consider.*

God shall give understanding to every one of us. Church, there is a call for us to awake. And the call of God is not without its promises. The promises of God are yea and Amen. God says He will redeem us. God says He will protect us. God says He will surround us with His glory. God says He will bring unity to our watchmen. God says He will bring comfort unto our household; God says we shall know His name. They that know their God shall be strong. And the Bible says **His name is a strong tower, the righteous run into it, and**



**they are safe** (Proverbs 18:10). I believe God is promising us that we shall find His name as a good hiding place. Even in these times, we shall run into His name and we shall find safety.

I am excited because I see the promises of God made available to all of us as we wake up to this consciousness that these are not times in which we should be slack. These are not times when our attention should be taken away. But these are the times wherein as we run this race, laying aside every weight and the sin that doth so easily beset us, our gaze, our focus shall be on Jesus, the author and the finisher of our faith.

May the Lord bless us. May the Lord encourage us. May the Lord stir us up such that rather than drawback in these times, we shall press on. We shall look unto Him from whence cometh our help. Our help comes from the Lord who made the heavens and the earth.

The Lord bless you, and keep you, and make His face shine upon you. Praise the Lord.





# **Chapter 2**

## **Divine Restoration: the Shunamite Encounter**

We will be looking at the topic "Divine Restoration: The Shunammite Encounter," and we will be taking our text mainly from the second book of Kings chapter four. Verses eight to eleven read:

*And it fell on a day, that Elisha passed to Shunem, where was a great woman; and she constrained him to eat bread. And so it was, that as oft as he passed by, he turned in thither to eat bread. And she said unto her husband, Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed, and a table, and a stool, and a candlestick: and it shall be, when he cometh to us, that he shall turn in thither. And it fell on a day, that he came thither, and he turned into the chamber, and lay there.*

We are reading the story of a woman and her husband who lived in a town called Shunem. Shunem was a city of the tribe of Issachar. Issachar, we know, was the tribe of the people who "had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do," according to 1 Chronicles 12:32. We are told that this woman perceived that she was meeting a man of God, and she decided to open her house and be hospitable to him. She prepared a chamber, constrained him, and it was very glorious **(for God is a rewarder of any man who diligently treats, loves, and seeks Him)**. This man of God, Elisha — which

means "God is my salvation" — came with his servants. The Bible tells us that she made a little room, and she put there a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick, four items of furniture. A bed for the man of God to rest, a table for him to do his work and study the Word of God, a stool for him to relax, and a candlestick for there to be light in the house of God.

Continuing in Second Kings chapter four; verses twelve to fourteen read:

*And he said to Gehazi his servant, Call this Shunammite. And when he had called her, she stood before him. And he said unto him, Say now unto her, Behold, thou hast been careful for us with all this care; what is to be done for thee? wouldest thou be spoken for to the king, or to the captain of the host? And she answered, I dwell among mine own people. And he said, What then is to be done for her? And Gehazi answered, Verily she hath no child, and her husband is old.*

The man of God, Elisha (God is my salvation), sees the attitude of this woman and how she reaches out with all her heart and might to please him, and he says she needs to be given a reward. So he comes to her and says, "What is it that you want to have?" And she says, "*I dwell among mine own people.*" What is the implication of this for the woman from Shunem, from the tribe of Issachar, a people who had an

understanding of the times and knew what Israel ought to do? She knew that it was time to open up herself to the Lord and to trust God to visit her since her husband was old.

The Bible says in verses fifteen to seventeen that:

*. . . he said, Call her. And when he had called her, she stood in the door. And he said, About this season, according to the time of life, thou shalt embrace a son. And she said, Nay, my lord, thou man of God, do not lie unto thine handmaid. And the woman conceived and bare a son at that season that Elisha had said unto her, according to the time of life.*

We see that this woman received the visitation of the Lord. The Lord spoke to her; He encouraged her through the word of Elisha, and there was a reward. Elisha gave the word of God to her, and he said, "You know, you shall conceive at this time." The good news is that God knows our need, even before we ask him.

The Bible says in Matthew 6:6–8 that:

*. . . thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain*

*repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.*

Look at this woman. She needed a child and God visited her and her old husband, just like God visited Abraham in the time of old age. God visited Manoah in the time of old age; He also visited Hannah in the time of old age. He gave them words of promise, and it came to pass just as the Lord had spoken.

Friends, we have encouragement from God that He is faithful; He is a rewarder of every man that seeks Him. In Isaiah 54:1–6, He says:

*Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.*

*Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.*

*Fear not; for thou shalt not be*

*ashamed: neither be thou confounded;  
for thou shalt not be put to shame: for  
thou shalt forget the shame of thy  
youth, and shalt not remember the  
reproach of thy widowhood any more.  
For thy Maker is thine husband; the  
LORD of hosts is his name; and thy  
Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The  
God of the whole earth shall he be  
called.  
For the LORD hath called thee as a  
woman forsaken and grieved in spirit,  
and a wife of youth, when thou wast  
refused, saith thy God.*

Verse ten says,

*For the mountains shall depart, and the  
hills be removed; but My kindness shall  
not depart from thee, neither shall the  
covenant of my peace be removed,  
saith the LORD that hath mercy on  
thee.*

I believe the Lord is comforting us at this time. We may not have brought forth the fruit of this vision, but God is saying that the time of our visitation is near. God is saying that the set time to favor Zion is now. God is saying that we may have travailed; we may have wept all through the night, but joy comes in the morning. God is saying that He is not untouched by our infirmities. But there is a set time.

Ecclesiastes 3 tells us that there is time for everything



under the sun. A time to travail, a time to lack, a time to cry, a time to worship, a time to serve God, and a time for God to visit us. That woman is a type of the church. And God is saying even in the midst of them that have the vision, them that have an understanding of the times and have obeyed to do what Israel ought to do, the set time to begin to visit us and to begin to come to us, to begin to bring succour to His people has come.

Church, let us be encouraged. Let us, like the Shunamite woman, know that God is visiting us again. God is coming to us again. This vision shall bring forth. There shall be a consummation of that for which we have laboured these many years; we have not laboured in vain. God is a rewarder of every man that diligently seeks Him. Let us be encouraged as we meditate on this word; let us trust that as God was faithful to that Shunamite woman, He will visit His people again. He will come to us, and He will reward us. Elisha means "God is my salvation," and Gehazi means "the vision in the valley." The Lord is with us. The Lord shall guide us. The Lord shall follow us. The Lord shall send His strength upon us. The Lord shall be gracious unto us.

The Bible says the woman opened her chambers unto him and put a bed, a table, a stool, and a candlestick. And as a reward for her diligence, hospitality, and goodness, the man of God asked her, "What is it that I can speak to the king concerning you?" We also read about how the woman thought of it, and Gehazi told the master that this woman did not have a child, and the woman said, "*I dwell in the midst of my people . . .*" Then the Lord gave her a child of promise, even in that old age, as a reward for her diligence. We also saw that the Lord is speaking to the church in Isaiah chapter fifty-four verses one to ten.

Let us read on in 2 Kings 4:18-23,

*...when the child was grown, it fell on a day, that he went out to his father to the reapers. And he said unto his father, My head, my head. And he said to a lad, Carry him to his mother. And when he had taken him, and brought him to his mother, he sat on her knees till noon, and then died. And she went up, and laid him on the bed of the man of God, and shut the door upon him, and went out. And she called unto her husband, and said, Send me, I pray thee, one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may run to the man of God, and come again. And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, It shall be well.*

We see the story of this child of promise that was given to this woman of the city of Shunem from the tribe of Issachar. The Bible says about this child of promise, this gift from God, that it got to a time when the child fell sick, and then the child died. Can you imagine this happening to something given by God? And you may say, "God, but You gave me this vision; how come this child died?" But look at the countenance of this woman. She looked and knew; she did not murmur. First Corinthians chapter ten verse ten tells us, "*Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.*"

God was not happy with the children of Israel because they murmured. May we not murmur even when we do not understand the challenges that come our way. This Shunamite woman trusted God; she looked and said that she would go up to the man of God. Now look at the interesting response of her husband in verse twenty-three,

*And he said, Wherefore wilt thou go to him to day? it is neither new moon, nor sabbath. And she said, It shall be well.*

Praise God for the faith of that woman. The husband felt that there are certain seasons during which God would visit us. God does not need any particular time in order to bless us. The visitation of God is not dependent on any special season, time, or dispensation. God is sovereign. Many of us believe that "Oh, it is not the time of fasting or the time of Passover. How can God bless me? How can God visit me? It is not Sunday." Brethren, God can bless you anytime. God can hear you anytime. It is not a case of, "you missed fellowship last Sunday, so God may not bless you on Monday." God can bless you on Sunday. He can bless you on Saturday.

This woman knew; she had a countenance of encouragement. She knew that it shall be well. May we have faith. The Bible tells us that without faith, it is impossible to please God. Every man that comes to Him must believe that He is and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6).

Reading on, the Bible in 2 Kings 4: 24–29 says,

*Then she saddled an ass, and said to her servant, Drive, and go forward; slack not thy riding for me, except I bid thee. So she went and came unto the man of God to mount Carmel. And it came to pass, when the man of God saw her afar off, that he said to Gehazi his servant, Behold, yonder is that Shunammite: Run now, I pray thee, to meet her, and say unto her, Is it well with thee? is it well with thy husband? is it*

*well with the child? And she answered, It is well.*

*And when she came to the man of God to the hill, she caught him by the feet: but Gehazi came near to thrust her away. And the man of God said, Let her alone; for her soul is vexed within her: and the LORD hath hid it from me, and hath not told me.*

*Then she said, Did I desire a son of my lord? did I not say, Do not deceive me?*

*Then he said to Gehazi, Gird up thy loins, and take my staff in thine hand, and go thy way: if thou meet any man, salute him not; and if any salute thee, answer him not again: and lay my staff upon the face of the child.*

We see the attitude of this woman: she believed God even in the midst of confusion. (This woman is a type of the church.) I believe God is speaking to us by this encounter. God is telling us that there is no temptation that shall come to us that is not common to man, but in every temptation, He will make a way of escape. This woman had the situation, but her countenance was still strong. She believed that God would help her even in the midst of challenges. Yet, for many of us whom the Lord has given visions, we begin to say, "What happened? God if it was you that gave me this vision, what happened to it? Why am I going through this situation?"

But God sent help to her; 2 Kings 4:31–36 reads:

*And Gehazi passed on before them, and laid the staff upon the face of the child; but there was neither voice, nor hearing. Wherefore he went again to meet him, and told him, saying, The child is not awaked. And when Elisha was come into the house, behold, the child was dead, and laid upon his bed. He went in therefore, and shut the door upon them twain, and prayed unto the LORD. And he went up, and lay upon the child, and put his mouth upon his mouth, and his eyes upon his eyes, and his hands upon his hands: and he stretched himself upon the child; and the flesh of the child waxed warm. Then he returned, and walked in the house to and fro; and went up, and stretched*

*himself upon him: and the child sneezed seven times, and the child opened his eyes.*

*And he called Gehazi, and said, Call this Shunammite. So he called her. And when she was come in unto him, he said, Take up thy son.*

*Then she went in, and fell at his feet, and bowed herself to the ground, and took up her son, and went out.*

The woman did not bury her son. She took her son and laid the child upon the bed of Elisha. She was not celebrating the death of her son. She was looking up to the resurrection. Let us look up to the power of His resurrection. That is the message God is sending to us.

When Elisha sent the servant Gehazi, he sent him with a staff (which is like sending Elisha himself). Gehazi went with the staff to raise the boy, but the child was not raised. We see here that the word alone did not bring the boy back to life. The Bible says that the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life upon the dry bones. Prophesying on dry bones is not what brings life; it is the breath of God that brings life.

Verse thirty-four of Second Kings chapter four tells us that Elisha went in himself and he did four things. He laid upon the child, he put his mouth upon his mouth, he put his eyes upon his eyes, and he put his hand upon his hand. We see God visiting us. The vision may have tarried for a season, but God is coming again. God is bringing His breath upon the vision. That Shunamite woman is like the church. God is visiting the church

again. God is overlaying us by His Spirit. God is connecting His mouth to us, giving us a new song to sing. God is touching our hands again and blessing our hands. God is causing breath to come again. He is putting His eyes on our eyes so that our vision might be renewed. I am excited, Church, because we see that God is setting us on fire; He is reviving us again. Hosea 6:2 says, *"After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight."* The Lord is visiting us at this time, Church; let us be encouraged. Seven is the number of perfection. God is reviving our vision again.

What happened when Elisha, the man of God, came upon the boy and he laid upon him? The Bible says he laid upon him, and he put his mouth upon his mouth, he put his hands upon his hands, he put his eyes upon his eyes; and the boy sneezed. Not once, not twice, but seven times. Seven is the number of completeness; it is the number of achievement; it is the number of perfection. The Bible says after the boy sneezed seven times, Elisha returned and walked in the house. He went up and stretched up himself upon the boy, and the boy was revived.

In verses thirty-six and thirty-seven, we see the rejoicing and the restoration of the child. Blessed be God! I am so quickened and excited because I see the encounter of this Shunamite woman as God speaking to the church again. God is telling the church that this boy, like the vision that God has given us, shall not die. God is saying that this vision shall live again. God is saying, *"this vision, even though it tarries, wait for it."* And this takes us to Habakkuk chapter two verse three, which says,

*For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*

How many of us have received visions from the Lord, and it looks like those visions have died? But the Lord shall revive those visions again. The Lord has come to visit us again. The Lord has come to give us fresh life, like that woman who was dwelling in the midst of the tribe that had an understanding of the times and knew what Israel ought to do. We are in the midst of the sons of Issachar. We know that now is a set time for God to visit us again. The Scripture says,

*After two days, He will revive us. And on the third day, He will raise us up and we shall live in His sight (Hosea 6:2).*

I believe, Church, that we are in the time of the third day. God has revived us again. God is saying, "What is that vision that I have given to you? What is that commission that I gave to you? What is that ministry that I committed into your hands? What is that promise that I gave to you? You have lost hope; you have forgotten; you have forsaken your first love. You have said, Oh God if you were there, why would this vision die?" But God is saying that this vision even though it tarries, it shall come. God is saying "Wait for it." Believe it, Brethren.

I believe that God is speaking to the church. There is something He has given to us, and it looks like we have been battered. We have been beaten on every side. We have been torn aside and have been put in different



conditions that we might lose the enthusiasm and faith that God is with us. But if God be with us, who can be against us? Church, like that woman in Shunem, let us believe God. Let us change our confession. Let us, like her, say, "It is well." Isaiah 3:10 says, "*Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him . . .*"

God is saying that it shall be well with us. It shall be well with that vision. It shall be well with that ministry. It shall be well with that promise that God has given to you. Lift up your eyes and look up to the hills, and see the help of God coming forth unto you again. God is coming to visit us again. God is coming again to set upon us a new vision. He is coming to renew our vision, to stir us up again, and to cause the church to rise again. Let us not lose hope. Let us be like that woman, never murmuring and complaining. Let us not be like the children of Israel.

We see the visitation of God, but when it looks like there are challenges and it looks like there are temptations, we begin to wonder and say to ourselves, "Oh, God has forsaken us." Let us not be foolish, but let us arise and let our faith be renewed. Let us believe that God is not slack concerning His promises. God has built and will build His church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. This woman believed God and she went off; she did not listen to the counsel of her husband. She was not waiting, as was the woman who was asking at the well where the place of her worship was. In John 4:21 and 23, we read that:

*Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.*

We are not seeking special ceremonies, or a "Shiloh," that we might get a visitation from God. Your "Shiloh" might be in that bedroom of yours. Your "Shiloh" might be in that living room of yours. Your "Shiloh" might be in that space of yours where no one is, where there is no noise. Just like Elijah, who was looking for God. He looked for God in the thunders and in the earthquakes, but he found Him in a still small voice.

God is going to visit His church. He is still going to send a mighty revelation unto us. God is still reviving us. He is still sending the vision and making it plain upon us. Church, let us be encouraged. Let us know that God has come again to overlay us by His Holy Ghost and to bring his mouth unto our mouth that He might give us a new song. He has come again to bring His eyes unto our eyes that He might renew our vision. He has come to touch our hands so these hands shall carry the glory of God again.

Let us be encouraged and let us arise. Let us not be weakened, for the whole creation is groaning and waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. I want you to make a promise wherever you are right now, and

say, "God, this vision shall not die. I believe you. This commission that you have given to me, this thing that you laid in my heart many years ago and the enemy has made me feel that it has gone, will not go, and it will not die."

Father, we thank You. Lord, we are encouraged by Your word, and we believe that your word will stir us up. Your word will revive us. Your word will cause us to live in your sight that we shall follow on to know, for Your going forth is as the morning.

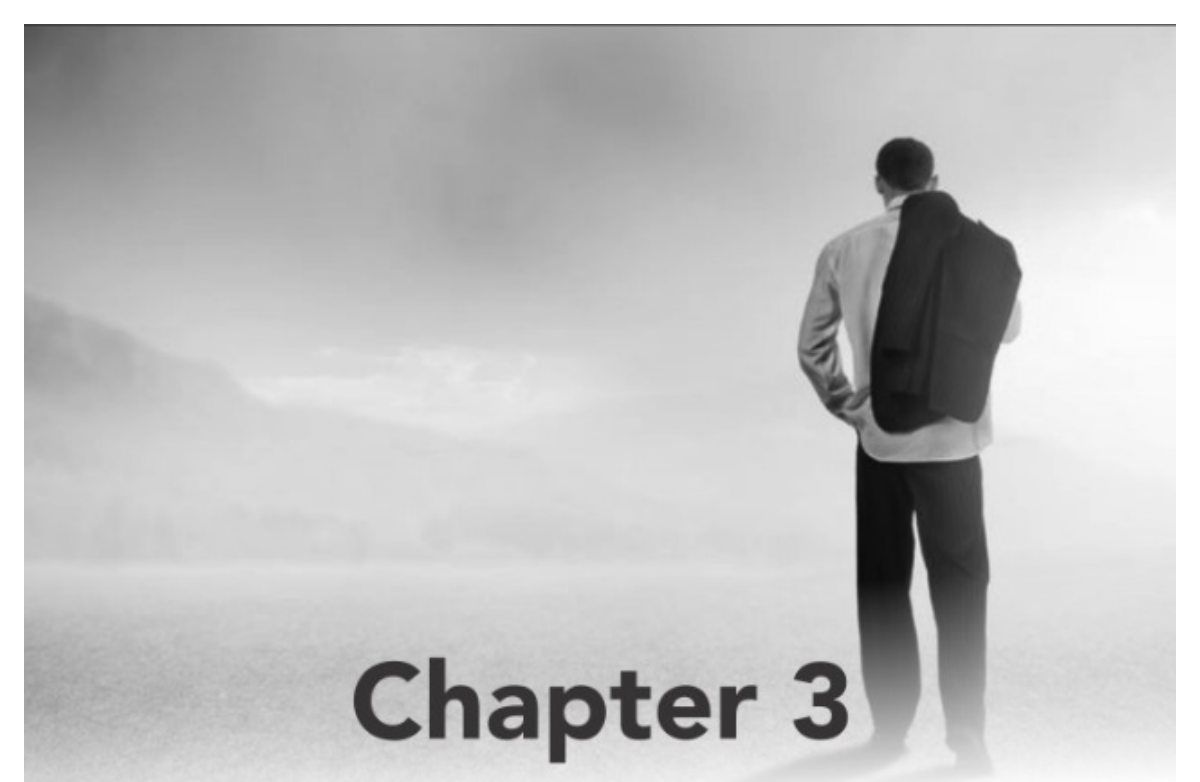
Thank God for the faith of that Shunamite woman. I believe that God is encouraging us to believe Him, even in these challenging times. He is encouraging us to trust Him and to know that He is God, to know that our Redeemer liveth, and to know that He is able to make all grace abound unto us. He is calling us to believe, like Abraham, that He will raise up our Isaacs — those things that were very dear to us and we think have gone. We think we have given them up as sacrifices unto God, but God will revive us again.

I bless God for His word. I pray that the spirit of that Shunamite woman shall be the Spirit of God in us, and we shall be quickened to trust God even in uncertain circumstances. I pray that we shall also be quickened to trust God in difficult circumstances, when we pass through all manner of challenges, knowing that the trial of our faith will work patience, and patience will work hope, and hope will make us not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.

May the Lord bless us. May the Lord richly empower us to live in His sight in these times. May the Lord awaken in us again the consciousness that we are people called by His name, brought from the dark, and delivered from shame. We will not go back. God will not forsake us; God will not leave us; God will not allow us to be put to shame. Our enemies will not triumph over us. We shall not be a people who shall be forsaken, who will say, "Oh, God has abandoned us." God cannot abandon us. Brethren, let us be encouraged. Let us be strengthened and let us trust God in these last days. For we know that perilous times shall come, and the Bible says in Matthew 24:12-13 that *"Because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."*

May we be among the company of them that shall endure till the end. May we be among that company that shall say, "It shall be well." May it be our song; may it be our testimony. May it be our confession that it shall be well. *"Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him . . ."* (Isaiah 3:10). May the Lord bless us, keep us, strengthen us, and equip us in these times to withstand the terror at night and the noisome pestilence that flieth at noonday. For the Bible says that *"we shall not be afraid for the terror by night; . . . nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness . . ."* (Psalm 91: 5a, 6a).

May the Lord bless you and keep you, and may the Lord make His face to shine upon you. In Jesus' name. Amen.



**Chapter 3**  
**Returning to Zion**  
**with Favor**

God has been laying in my heart that He is returning to Zion. He is returning to Zion with favor, grace, joy, and all that will bless us and keep us for the times that we are in. What is Zion? Is it a city? Is it a location? Is it a habitation? In Hebrews 12:22-24, the Bible says,

*But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.*

So we see, by way of definition — the Bible being our instrument of definition — that Zion speaks of a people. Zion is not a physical location. It is not a particular zone or geographical site, but it is a people whose hearts are unto God. Various things are spoken by God about Zion because God loves Zion. In Psalm 87:1-3, we read:

*His foundation is in the holy mountains. The LORD loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob. Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God. Selah.*

So God loves Zion. God loves the gates of Zion. He looks at Zion as His dwelling place, a place where He will come and bring forth His glory. The Bible says in Obadiah 1:21,

*And saviours shall come up on mount Zion to judge the mount of Esau; and the kingdom shall be the LORD's.*

God has great plans for Zion. He has great hopes and projects, which He has set for His people who dwell in Zion. We are the children of God, and like the sons of Issachar, we need to have an understanding of the times we are in and know what Israel ought to do. We see that God, in this time, is planning and intending to favor Zion.

What is favor? Favor can be defined as something that is done or granted out of goodwill, rather than from justice or remuneration. That is, God giving you something, not because you have a right to it nor because you are entitled to it, but because He wants to give it to you just as an act of kindness. So God is coming to favor Zion, not because Zion has merited it, but because it is God's wish to visit us and show us His mercies.

Let us turn our Bibles to Psalm 102:12-13. It reads:

*But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations.  
Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon*

*Zion: for the time to favor her, yea, the set time, is come.*

The Psalmist is saying that the set time to favor Zion has come. You may say, "Oh, well, the psalmist said that many years ago." But now is the time. I feel in my spirit that God is going to unleash favor upon Zion in this time. God is returning to Zion. God wants to bring forth His glory out of Zion.

The Bible says, as we read from Psalm 102:14–16,

*For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favor the dust thereof.  
So the heathen shall fear the name of the LORD, and all the kings of the earth thy glory.  
When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory.*

The Lord wants to come forth in His glory out of Zion. And the Bible tells us here that when the Lord shall have built up Zion, He shall appear in His glory, which means the glory of the Lord shall be seen through Zion.

In verses seventeen to twenty-one, we read that:

*He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer.  
This shall be written for the generation to come: and the people which shall be created shall praise the LORD.  
For he hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the LORD behold the earth;*



*To hear the groaning of the prisoner; to  
loose those that are appointed to  
death;  
To declare the name of the LORD in  
Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem.*

It is such a delight to be in Zion at this time. It is such a delight to be a child of God, someone upon whom God's mercies and favor have been released. We are that people. I am not saying this to make us arrogant. But I am saying it so that we can build up our confidence. I am saying it so we know that this is the time and trust God. Let joy arise in our hearts, and let there be gladness. Let the people of God begin to know that we are a people of God; we are called by His name. God has precious and glorious plans for us.

In Psalm 12:5–7, the Bible says,

*For the oppression of the poor, for the  
sighing of the needy, now will I arise,  
saith the LORD; I will set him in safety  
from him that puffeth at him.  
The words of the LORD are pure words:  
as silver tried in a furnace of earth,  
purified seven times.  
Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou  
shalt preserve them from this  
generation for ever.*

These are the promises that are given concerning Zion, and we shall look at a few of them. We will get excited because we know that God's word shall not come back

to Him void, but it shall accomplish the purpose for which it was uttered. God has promised to bring forgiveness to Zion.

Let us look at the book of Micah 7:18–19:

*Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea. Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham, which thou hast sworn unto our fathers from the days of old.*

Glorious things are spoken concerning this city of God called Zion. We bless God because though we have transgressed, it is the will of God to forgive and give Zion a chance to go forth upon the world.

Let us look at the account and prayer of Mary in Luke 1:16–48:

*And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord,  
And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.  
For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden:*

*For, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.*

Mary is a type of the church that brought forth Christ, the Redeemer.

Verses forty-nine and fifty read:

*For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name.  
And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation.*

This is not just a prayer; it is a prophetic word. We are that generation that came after Jesus Christ. And we are that generation upon whom mercy has been promised from generation to generation.

Verses fifty-one and fifty-two say:

*He hath shewed strength with his arm;  
he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.  
He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.*

In Zion, we might be a people of low degree, but God has decided to exalt us.

Verses fifty-three and fifty-four provide that:

*He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.*

*He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy;  
As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever.*

We are excited because we are hearing the great things that are spoken about us. The Bible says faith comes by hearing and hearing the word of God. We thank God because as we hear His Word, it gives us confidence; it gives us strength, and it makes us know that our God reigneth.

The book of Acts, chapter thirteen verse thirty-two says,

*And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers,  
God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.*

And verses thirty-four to thirty-nine of Acts chapter thirteen say,

*And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David.  
Wherefore he saith also in another*

*psalm, Thou shalt not suffer thine Holy One to see corruption.*

*For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption:*

*But he, whom God raised again, saw no corruption.*

*Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins:*

*And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.*

All that believe in Jesus are justified from all things. We are that generation, Church, and we are Zion. The Bible says all that believe are justified from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses.

Verses forty to forty-one of Acts chapter thirteen continue as follows:

*Beware therefore, lest that come upon you, which is spoken of in the prophets; Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.*

We shall not fulfill negative prophecy; we shall believe the Word of God and believe that He came to justify us.

Indeed, glorious things are spoken about Zion. Let us look at the book of Zechariah as we examine the things that are spoken of this generation. We are not a location, but we are people called by God, walking and moving by the Spirit in God.

In Zechariah 8:1-3, we read:

*Again the word of the LORD of hosts came to me, saying,  
Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.  
Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain.*

When God says He is jealous, He shows that He loves you. A person who loves you is the one who is jealous for you. A wife is jealous for the husband; a husband is jealous for the wife. The Lord says He is jealous for Jerusalem. He says that He has returned to Jerusalem and will dwell in the midst thereof. (When you hear "Zion" and "Jerusalem", God is speaking about the same people.) So in verse three, He says,

*Thus saith the LORD; I am returned unto Zion, and will dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and Jerusalem shall be called a city of truth; and the mountain of the LORD of hosts, the holy mountain*

The people have looked at the church, and they have called the church all kinds of names. But God says that the nature of Zion shall be the city of truth. And the mountain of the Lord shall be called the holy mountain. God shall sanctify Zion; He shall bring truth in our inward parts. God shall make us walk and live in truth. This is the word and favor that God has decided to bring down to Zion. And even though we pass through difficult times, Brethren, let us lay hold upon the Word of God, knowing that His Word is true, and it is "yea and Amen."

Verse four of Zechariah chapter eight reads:

*Thus saith the LORD of hosts; There shall yet old men and old women dwell in the streets of Jerusalem, and every man with his staff in his hand for very age.*

The Bible says in Psalm chapter ninety-one verse sixteen, "With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." God is telling us that old men and women shall walk on the streets of Jerusalem, that holy city of God, which is Zion. Premature death shall not be our portion because God is saying that He will bless us with long life. He will cause us to walk in the streets of Jerusalem with our staff in our hands.

Verse five says,

*And the streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in the streets thereof.*

Verse five makes me know that Zion is not only for old men, but children shall be part of this holy city. Our children and our children's children shall be in Zion. The promise that God gave to us shall be extended to our children. They, too, shall taste of this favor, and they shall partake of the goodness of God.

And in Zechariah 8:6, the Word of God says, *"Thus saith the LORD of hosts; If it be marvellous in the eyes of the remnant of this people in these days, should it also be marvellous in mine eyes? saith the LORD of hosts."*

Verses seven and eight carry another very powerful promise for Zion. They read:

*Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Behold, I will save my people from the east country, and from the west country; And I will bring them, and they shall dwell in the midst of Jerusalem: and they shall be my people, and I will be their God, in truth and in righteousness.*

Praise God! In Revelation 21:3, the Bible also says that this is the city, the holiest City of God. It reads:

*. . . Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.*



God is saying that He will dwell in us, and He will move in us.

Going back to Zechariah chapter eight verse nine. It reads:

*Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Let your hands be strong, ye that hear in these days these words by the mouth of the prophets, which were in the day that the foundation of the house of the LORD of hosts was laid, that the temple might be built.*

We were not there on the day when the foundation of the house of the Lord was being laid. But this temple is the temple of the living God. The foundation of God is being laid even in this temple, because our bodies are the temple of the living God. So even though Zechariah 9:8 was spoken to those who heard the word when the physical temple was being laid, the Bible is a spiritual book and God is speaking to you and me who are hearing the Word of God (good tidings) now, because Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. God is again telling us the good news that He has glorious things, and He is returning to Zion that He might bring forth His glory upon us.

Zechariah 8:10 says,

*For before these days there was no hire for man, nor any hire for beast; neither was there any peace to him that went out or came in because of the affliction: for I set all men every one against his neighbor.*

That was then, but verse eleven tells us the now. It says, "*But now . . .*" Now is the time. This is the dispensation. This is the time God has proposed to visit us again. Thank God for now because now is the time when God will establish His purposes unto His people. Now is the time when God will show forth His glory through a people.

Verses eleven and twelve proceed thus:

*But now I will not be unto the residue of  
this people as in the former days, saith  
the LORD of hosts.  
For the seed shall be prosperous . . .*

We are that seed of God, the plantings are of God. What does it mean to be prosperous? It means to be successful. It means that which we touch shall flourish. If it is a ministry, it shall be a success. Prosperity means to be successful, to begin to thrive, and to flourish. The favor of God for Zion at this time is that thy seed shall be prosperous. That which we lay our hands upon shall be prosperous. If you are a student, God is going to bless you. God is going to cause His light to shine upon you. If you are a worker, God will cause His favor to come upon you. If you are a businessman, God will visit you. And in ministry, your ministry shall flourish. That is the word of God. It says,

*For the seed shall be prosperous; the  
vine shall give her fruit, and the ground  
shall give her increase, and the heavens  
shall give their dew; and I will cause the*

*remnant of this people to possess all these things.*

There shall be abundance. There shall be fruitfulness in these times. It may look like dark times. The economist might speak concerning these times and say, "Oh, we do not know how the economy of the world will be." But God's word concerning this City of God is the **word of life**. He says that there shall be prosperity and success in what we do.

I am not trying to excite you. I am just telling you the truth of the Word of God. I am only telling you that it is God's will at this time to visit His people with a lot of increase. In whatever we do, there shall be increase. I want you to believe that and to trust God as you move on in these days, knowing that it is God's will to prosper His people. It is God's will to set us free from the things that bind us and that limit us, for our God is a faithful God.

Verse thirteen of Zechariah chapter thirteen says,

*And it shall come to pass, that as ye were a curse among the heathen, O house of Judah, and house of Israel; so will I save you, and ye shall be a blessing*

...

Oh, blessed be God! This is a prophetic word. We may have been a curse, and it may have looked like things were negative for us. But God says that as we had been a curse, so will He save us. By "saving us," He means He will deliver us. He will heal us and cause us to be triumphant. He says, ". . . and ye shall be a blessing:

*fear not, but let your hands be strong*" (Zech. 8:13).

I am excited by the words and encouragement that I hear from God!

Zechariah 8: 14–17 says,

*For thus saith the Lord of hosts; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, saith the Lord of hosts, and I repented not:*

*So again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.*

*These are the things that ye shall do; Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates:*

*And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour; and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord.*

The Bible says in 2 Timothy 3:16–17 that *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."* God is speaking here. Every word that is spoken here is spoken for us. Look at Zechariah 8:16; it says, *"These are the things that ye shall do: . . ."* God is making a condition for people who are blessed. We should be careful not to fall into the wrath of God. He says, *"You people of God,*

I will bless you. I will reverse every curse. I will turn away every evil thing." But He says in verse sixteen:

*... Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour...*

Let us be a people of truth because the Bible says God is returning to Zion. And it says Zion shall be called a city of truth, and the mountain, a holy mountain. So we should speak the truth to one another.

Number two:

*... execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates.*

This is a second condition that God is giving to us as people who carry His glory. As beneficiaries of this favor in these last days, let us speak every man the truth to his neighbor, and secondly, let us execute the judgment of truth and peace in our gates.

Number three:

*And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour...*

This is the third condition. Let us not bear evil in our hearts against one another. We are the people of God, and God has said we should not imagine any evil in our hearts against one another.

Number four:

*... and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the LORD.*

This is the fourth condition. Brethren, let us not love the things that God does not like.

We bless God because He is faithful. He has decided that He will visit us and bless us. We pray that we shall be a people that shall carry His glory, even in these last days. We thank Him because He is making us understand that in these days, there is a knowledge of God. As Daniel 11:32 says, *"the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits."*

The Bible makes me understand that we are transformed by the renewing of our minds. If you know the things that are spoken of you by God, and you know that you are that City of God, then you know that God is visiting His people. Even though the devil tries to make you feel that you are a people forsaken, or you have come at the wrong time (a time when there are plagues, so you are a people that are covered by the plagues), you know better. The Englishman would say that "it gets darkest before dawn." But the fact that it gets dark does not mean we are a people that are forsaken, because the Bible tells us in Isaiah chapter sixty verse two that:

*... the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee.*

We are a people favored of the Lord; we are a people who carry the glory of God at this time. Let us know that even as the world walks in despair, rejection, fear and trembling, God is speaking to His people to fear not. God is speaking to His people saying, "Be bold and be courageous." No wonder the psalmist said in Psalm twenty-three verse four that, *"even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil."* He knew who he was serving. He knew who his Father is. He knew God is his Father.

Church, we are the children of God; we are not a people forsaken. We are not a people who would move through this land in misery. Even in these times, "Fear not," says the Lord. The Bible tells us that God has not given us the spirit of fear. But he has given us the spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind (2 Timothy 1:7). And when we hear these things that are spoken by God concerning us, to our generations and generations after us, then we know that we are people who walk into these promises. And if we are those people, what manner of people ought we to be? We ought to be people who are enlightened, whose faces are shining due to the glory of God. We ought to be a people whose hearts are glued to God's Word and a people who believe Him and know that if He be with us, no one can be against us.

God is returning to Zion, Church. God is coming again in His glory. The Bible says that when the Lord shall appear again upon Zion, He shall come in His glory (Psalms 102:16). We are those peculiar people that God has chosen out of darkness and brought into His marvelous light, that we might show forth the praises of

Him that has called us.

Brethren, this is a time of refreshing for us. It is a time of encouragement. It is a time of comfort, a time for us to know that even though there may be darkness outside, there is comfort inside the City of God, inside the holy Jerusalem. There is hope and there is gladness. I believe that God is sending this word and is quickening our hearts to know that we should not be hopeless, or fear like the people of the world fear. But we should know that because we have chosen to walk in the path of righteousness, God will cause His light to shine upon us.

I am so grateful, and I am so glad to share this message with you. I am glad to bring it to you at this time and to encourage your heart to know that we are not a people who should despair. We are not a people who should fear, or begin to curse our God, or walk in unbelief. Rather, we are a people who would trust God and know that His Word is settled in heaven. God's Word will not come back to Him void, but it shall fulfill every purpose for which it was uttered.

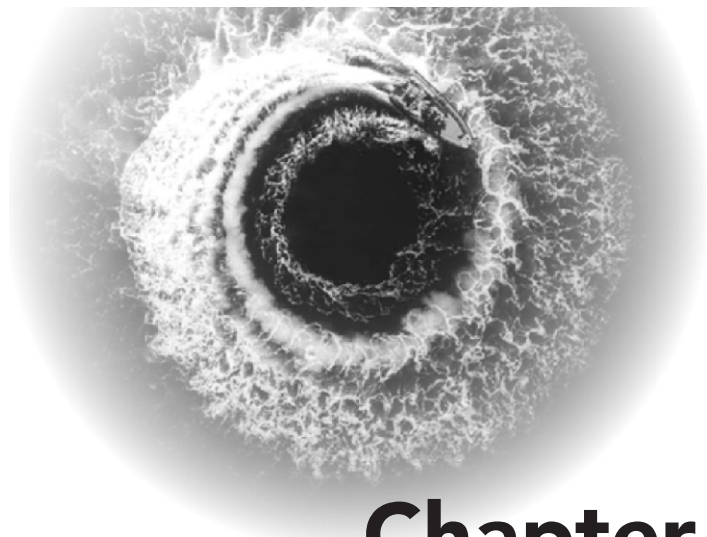
I see conquerors. I see people going through tough times and coming out victorious. I see people shining forth in these dark times; I see a people radiant in the glory of God, and I find in that people (you and me), the City of God, the Holy Jerusalem, who are called by the name of the Lord. The Lord will cause us to walk in this glory, for we shall stand in the place of favor and we shall receive it.

May the Lord bless you. May the Lord cause the light of His countenance to shine upon you. For these are the



times that God has purposed to favor us, and favor we shall receive because our God is faithful. Praise God and God bless you.





# **Chapter 4**

## **God's Blessings in the Midst of Adversity**

We are in very challenging times, times that you might call the times of adversity. But we thank God because His blessings are settled. His word concerning us are words of goodness. A version of the Bible says, *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end"* (Jeremiah 29:11 KJV). Another version says, *"... to give you a hope and a future"* (NIV).

I am burdened to share with us about the blessings of God in the midst of adversity. It is important to know that God's blessings are not limited to time; they are not limited to situations or to the economic climate. God's blessings are found in His Word. God's blessings are "yea," because His word is **yea and Amen**.

Let us read from Deuteronomy chapter twenty-eight verse one:

*And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth.*

In this promise, God said He would set us on high. Here, He is referring to the hearer, the believer, saying, "If you shall read these words, if you shall listen to God's Word, ensuring that you keep it and are obedient to it . . ." The first promise is that the Lord shall set you on high above all nations of the earth.

Brethren, we should believe and trust the Word of God. We should not just read the Word of God as a history or literature book; rather we should read it as a covenant that God has made with His people.

Verse two says,

*And all these blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt hearken unto the voice of the LORD thy God.*

The voice of the Lord God can be heard as we read His Word. He says that these blessings shall follow us. They shall come to us and not only come to us but also overtake us, which means they shall go ahead of us. And the condition is that we listen diligently and obey the voice of God.

Verse three:

*Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.*

God is telling us here that His blessings shall not be limited to any geographical location. A "field" is like a rural area, and the "city" is like an urban area. God can bless us even in that rural place, because whether in the field or in the city, what matters is that we are where God wants us to be and are also obedient to His Word.

Verse four:

*Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body,  
and the fruit of thy ground, and the fruit  
of thy cattle, the increase of thy kine,  
and the flocks of thy sheep.*

God is saying that if we listen diligently to His word, the fruit of our body shall be blessed. The fruit of our ground shall be blessed. The fruit of our cattle (our possessions) shall be blessed. The increase of our kine, the flocks of our sheep, and anything that we possess shall be blessed. Whatever we have and whatever we lay our hands upon shall be blessed by the Lord.

Verse five:

*Blessed shall be thy basket and thy store.*

In other words, wherever we keep our belongings and store our stuff shall be blessed by the Lord. Our investments, the Lord shall bless. The store houses — the places where we keep our things, where we keep the treasures that God lays in our heart — the Lord will bless.

Verse Six:

*Blessed shalt thou be when thou  
comest in, and blessed shalt thou be  
when thou goest out.*

Our coming in and our going out shall be blessed.  
Praise God!

Verse seven:

*The LORD shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways.*

The Lord is saying that when faced with those who war against us, He shall fight for us.

Verses eight and nine say that:

*The LORD shall command the blessing upon thee in thy storehouses, and in all that thou settest thine hand unto; and he shall bless thee in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.*

*The LORD shall establish thee an holy people unto himself, as he hath sworn unto thee, if thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, and walk in his ways.*

So we see the condition for God's blessing. God's blessing will come if we are obedient, and if we follow on and listen to His word.

Verses ten to fourteen say that:

*All people of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the LORD; and they shall be afraid of thee.*

*And the LORD shall make thee plenteous in goods, in the fruit of thy body, and in the fruit of thy cattle, and in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the LORD sware unto thy fathers to give thee.*

*The LORD shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the work of thine hand: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow.*

*And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do them:*

*And thou shalt not go aside from any of the words which I command thee this day, to the right hand, or to the left, to go after other gods to serve them.*

God is speaking very clearly here, saying that obedience is the condition for walking in His blessings, especially in these times. A second witness can be found in the book of Joshua chapter one verse eight, where the Lord told Joshua that:

*This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that*



*thou mayest observe to do according  
to all that is written therein: for then  
thou shalt make thy way prosperous,  
and then thou shalt have good success.*

We see God making His point very clear: that if we are obedient, we shall eat of the fruit of the land. I also want us to look at a typical case in the Bible, which we can find in Genesis chapter twenty-six. We will use this case as a context to see a physical application of God's Word and to learn from the things we will read. We will also see that God is a keeper of His promises.

Genesis 26: 1-2:

There was a famine in the land, beside  
the first famine that was in the days of  
Abraham. And Isaac went unto  
Abimelech king of the Philistines unto  
Gerar.  
*And the LORD appeared unto him, and  
said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in  
the land which I shall tell thee of . . .*

We see a setting in verses one and two above, which tells us that it was a time of famine. Famine is when there is drought in the land, when nothing grows. Famine is a type of adversity; it is a feature of adversity. We see that even in these times, there is a lot of hardship. We can liken it to famine in the land because things are not blossoming, and the economy is tight. People are hard-pressed and do not have much. We are in a typical situation, for even though we are not farmers, we are in

a type of famine here. So we want to see the things and instructions that God gave. What we learn from Isaac's situation can help us in times like these.

The Bible tells us that Isaac went unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar. Isaac was in an unfriendly environment, for the Philistines were not the best of friends to the people of God. The Philistines were adversaries, and Abimelech was the king of the Philistines. Isaac was in Gerar, so it was like Isaac was in the midst of contention (warfare) with people who were not friends of the children of God. But verse two tells us that:

*The LORD appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of . . .*

God made His instructions very clear, and **obedience is better than sacrifice**. Church, it is important for us to hear what God is saying. The Bible says in Romans 8:14 that *"as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."* If we hear the Lord, He will direct us. Isaiah 30:31 also says, *"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it . . ."*

So Isaac was blessed, and God told him, "Do not go to Egypt." We know that his father, Abraham, during the time of the first famine went to Egypt (Genesis 12:10–20). Abraham went to Egypt, but the word of God was not clear to him that he should not go. We see, again, in Genesis chapter forty-six that Jacob went to Egypt because God told him, "Go to Egypt!" and he

was blessed, for there he met Joseph. So there are situations where God permits you to go. But the Bible says, "Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help." If you go to Egypt when God has not told you, it means you are leaning on the arm of the flesh to get help, which is not from God. Wherever you are, whether in the field, or in a rural place, or in the city, what is important is this: "Are you where God wants you to be?" If you are where God wants you to be, the blessings of God shall be your portion.

The Bible says in Genesis 26:3–5 that the Lord said to Isaac:

*Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;  
Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.*

Brethren, we must learn from this. Some of us may be ascribing our situations to location, "Oh, I am passing through this because I am in Nigeria" or "I am passing through this because I am in this rural area." But I tell

you, Brethren, if you are where you are by the leading and the direction of God, He will prosper you. The Lord will provide for you. He will cause His promise to be established, notwithstanding the location in which you are. Here was Isaac in the midst of oppressors and enemies of God, but God gave him a word and thank God because we read here in verse six that "*Isaac dwelt in Gerar . . .*" This means that Isaac obeyed the word of God.

There is reward in obedience. The Bible says in Hebrews 11:6 that:

*. . . he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*

The seventh to eleventh verses of Genesis chapter twenty-six say that Isaac, a man of like passion, feared a little bit and lied concerning his wife, Rebekah. So in the midst of the enemy, he made some flaws but God delivered him from them.

Genesis 26: 12–14 read:

*. . . Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the LORD blessed him.  
And the man waxed great, and went forward, and grew until he became very great:  
For he had possession of flocks, and possession of herds, and great store of*

*servants: and the Philistines envied him.*

You see the reward of obedience already. Isaac, even in the midst of the adversity and amid the distance, obeyed God. He sowed in Gerar, in the place of contention, and God prospered him. The Bible says he waxed great, and he owned many possessions. Let us not ascribe our success or God's blessing to where we are. But know that if you are there by the direction of the Lord, the Lord will prosper you. Psalm 37:18 says, *"the LORD knoweth the days of the upright: and their inheritance shall be forever."* So what is important is that you are upright.

Are you hearing God? Are you walking in obedience to God? Are you hearkening to the word of God? Are you living by the commandments of God? If so, then you are an upright person. Psalm 37:19 says that *"they shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied."*

These are the days of famine. We are in a time of adversity. The global economic indices are showing negative. But the Bible says **that those who are upright, who walk diligently and hearken to the Lord in the days of famine shall be satisfied.** Even in the days of adversity and of economic downturn, the Lord shall cause us to rejoice. I want you to take this as a personal promise that God is making to you at this time. It is not for you to fear nor is it for you to despair. God's Word is true. God's Word is yea and Amen.

Let us look also at Isaiah 65: 13–25, which reads:

*Therefore thus saith the Lord GOD,  
Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye  
shall be hungry: behold, my servants  
shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty:  
behold, my servants shall rejoice, but  
ye shall be ashamed:*

*Behold, my servants shall sing for joy of  
heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of  
heart, and shall howl for vexation of  
spirit.*

*And ye shall leave your name for a curse  
unto my chosen: for the Lord GOD shall  
slay thee, and call his servants by  
another name:*

*That he who blesseth himself in the  
earth shall bless himself in the God of  
truth; and he that sweareth in the earth  
shall swear by the God of truth;  
because the former troubles are  
forgotten, and because they are hid  
from mine eyes.*

*For, behold, I create new heavens and a  
new earth: and the former shall not be  
remembered, nor come into mind.*

*But be ye glad and rejoice forever in  
that which I create: for, behold, I create  
Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a  
joy.*

*And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy  
in my people: and the voice of weeping  
shall be no more heard in her, nor the  
voice of crying.*

*There shall be no more thence an infant*

*of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them.*

*They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.*

*They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them.*

*And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.*

*The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.*

These are great promises that God has given us. When you hear promises like these and look around you, you may say, "I am not seeing these promises being fulfilled around me." But you had better believe the word of God. God is sending a word; He is telling you that as long as you are obedient, and you are where He wants

you to be, His blessings shall not depart from you. The blessings of God are settled, and God shall not allow us to lack any good thing. Many of us will be surprised to see that in the midst of adversity, the blessings of God shall not be suspended. In fact, God will cause us to prosper, even in these times.

Let us go back to Genesis chapter twenty-six to see how God's word and promise stand sure in the midst of adversity. The Bible tells us in verse fifteen that because of the prosperity of Isaac in the midst of the Philistines, the adversary envied him. It says in verses fifteen to seventeen:

*For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth.*

*And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we.*

*And Isaac departed thence, and pitched his tent in the valley of Gerar, and dwelt there.*

So we see that Isaac decided, in this place of contention, to begin to dig the wells that his father Abraham had dug before.

Genesis 26:18 says,

*And Isaac digged again the wells of*



*water, which they had digged in the days of Abraham his father; for the Philistines had stopped them after the death of Abraham: and he called their names after the names by which his father had called them.*

The Bible says Isaac dug wells. And “wells” gives me the impression of digging to receive the revelation of God. The Bible says Isaac, even in that place of contention, was consistent in the search and diligent in his works, trying to get to know God and to get revelations of God. And the Bible says in verse eighteen that he dug the wells that Abraham his father had dug and the Philistines had filled with earth. Earth speaks of carnality. So if the Philistines had filled the wells, it means there were revelations that Abraham had brought forth and the Philistines in their carnality had filled with earth. But Isaac searched again for this true Word of God. He dug the wells again, and the Bible says, he named them after the names which Abraham gave them. I see something there that I want to talk about.

Matthew 13:52 tells us that Jesus said unto His disciples:

*Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.*

The Lord likens a man who is instructed in the way of the kingdom to a scribe who brings out of his household both new and old treasures. As we walk with God and

study His Word, we begin to receive revelations and we begin to see and get understanding of certain things. But let us know that as we receive new revelations, we will not discard the old truths, ancient truths that God had released to us even in times past. So we will bring out the new, and we will also bring out the old, because it is in the mixture of the old and new that the treasures of the kingdom shall be realized.

Returning to the story of Isaac in the midst of adversity, let us see the consistency of God's word in bringing forth His blessings unto him.

In verses nineteen to twenty of Genesis chapter twenty-six, we read:

*And Isaac's servants digged in the valley, and found there a well of springing water.*

*And the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen, saying, The water is ours: and he called the name of the well Esek; because they strove with him.*

So we see that this is the first well that Isaac dug. The Bible says that when he dug that well, the herdsmen of the Philistines strove with him and Isaac called it "Esek," which means "contention." Then we read in verse twenty-one:

*And they digged another well, and strove for that also: and he called the name of it Sitnah.*

“Sitnah” also means contention. So you can see the consistency of Isaac, even in the midst of adversity. Brethren, the Bible says we should shine forth as lights in the midst of a perilous and wicked generation (Philippians 2:16). So we are in the midst of a perilous and wicked generation, but we shall not give up. We shall not despair. We shall not run away. We shall not drawback, but we shall press on and God shall prosper us.

In verse twenty-two, we read:

*He removed from thence, and digged another well; and for that they strove not: and he called the name of it Rehoboth; and he said, For now the LORD hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land.*

You see that the consistency in Isaac's walk with God is beginning to pay. The Bible says he digged yet another well, but this time they strove not with him. So, he called it **“Rehoboth.”** Rehoboth means “wide places” or “streets enough” or “accommodation.” As we are consistent and press on to the things of God, the Bible says the Lord will grant us space, and accommodation, even in the midst of our adversaries.

Genesis 26:23–25 say that Isaac:

*... went up from thence to Beersheba.*

*... went up from thence to Beersheba.  
And the LORD appeared unto him the  
same night, and said, I am the God of  
Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am  
with thee, and will bless thee, and  
multiply thy seed for my servant  
Abraham's sake.  
And he builded an altar there, and  
called upon the name of the LORD, and  
pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's  
servants digged a well.*

We can see Isaac's consistency as he went to Beersheba. We see that a lot of stuff was said about Beersheba, and Beersheba means the **"seven wells oath."** We are not to give up in the midst of adversity; we must press on, Church. The testimony of Isaac is a prophetic direction to the church that even in these times, we should not be afraid; we should not draw back. We should not allow the adversity around us to intimidate us and make us not rise up and do the will of the Father who has sent us.

In Genesis 26:26–29, we read:

*Then Abimelech went to him from  
Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends,  
and Phichol the chief captain of his  
army.  
And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore  
come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and  
have sent me away from you?*

*And they said, We saw certainly that the LORD was with thee: and we said, Let there be now an oath betwixt us, even betwixt us and thee, and let us make a covenant with thee;*

*That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the LORD.*

This is an exciting development. It is an exciting development because we see that the Philistines approached Isaac, not after the digging of the first, second, or third well, but in the digging of the fourth well in Beersheba. And they came and said, "Now we see that the Lord is with thee." We are in the midst of darkness, and contentions will arise, but we should not be intimidated. We should just be consistent and stay righteous in our dealings and focused on our pursuit of God. In our day-to-day dealings, we should do the things that God wants and be consistent in our service of Him. Notice the attitude of Abimelech: he comes and says, "let us make peace." This is consistent with the word of God in Proverbs 16:7, which says that "When a man's ways please the LORD, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him."

Now these people came to him, and they said, "Look, the Lord is with you." They testified. Your enemies shall testify that the Lord has blessed you. Your enemies shall testify that you serve a living God. I am speaking to somebody because I hear the Lord saying that He shall

cause His enemies to bow before us. I hear the Lord saying that He shall bring us to that place of victory. I hear the Lord saying that we should not despair even though we pass through trials and temptations, that we should stand firm in what we believe. And we should know that our Redeemer liveth. I want to round up this sharing with you from Hebrews chapter ten verse thirty-five, which reads,

*Cast not away therefore your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward.*

We have confidence, and our confidence is that Christ in us is the hope of glory. Our confidence is that Christ is with us. If God be with us, who can be against us? Some of us we are beginning to feel weary; we are beginning to feel that God is taking a long time to visit us, that He is taking long to give us victory over our adversaries, and that He is taking so long to bless us in this land of adversity. But God is saying to you this day, "*Cast not away, therefore, your confidence...*" because there is a reward for your confidence.

What is confidence? It is your trust, your ability to hold unto a promise that was given to you. It is the ability to trust and to look up to that Person who had given you that word of assurance. Your confidence is that grace that keeps you holding on and not drawing back.

The Bible tells us in Hebrews 10:36:

*For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.*

Many of us are beginning to faint, but may we not be faint. May we not say, "But God, we have waited. God, when the economy was good, I waited, hoping you will bless me." God can bless you even in the height of adversity, and God is saying we should ask Him for patience. God is saying we need patience. He is saying that after we have done the will of God, we have obeyed the Word of God, we have hearkened unto His commandments and we have kept diligently to His word, we shall receive the promise.

Hebrews 10:37–39 say,

*For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry.*

*Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.*

*But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.*

Brethren, we are passing through very challenging times but the Word of God says we are not of them that draw back unto perdition. Let us hold fast our confidence. Let us trust God and know that even though this vision tarries, we should wait for it. It shall come; it will not lie. This vision shall have an expression. The blessing of God shall come to pass. God will not abandon us; He will not forsake us. God will not leave us in these trying times. It may be dark, things may be tough, but there is confidence. We are made partakers with God if we hold fast our confidence from the beginning to the end. We have held fast this confidence

for so long; let us not in this day of adversity allow our strength to be weak. Let us not draw back; let us not despair. Let us be like Isaac who despite the first and second wells of contentions still pressed on to the third well, and there was accommodation.

Maybe you are at that point where God is about to cause you to be accommodated, to make a wide space for you to operate on. And because you had two instances of contention from the adversary, you are already losing faith and are already declining. God is saying, **"Press on."** For we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but we are of them that **press on** to the saving of the soul.

Brethren, we are going to ask God to help us. We are going to ask God to give us strength that we, having gone this far, should not give up at this point. The Lord will help us to press on. The Lord will bring us to Beersheba. He will bring us to that place of the seventh oath, where our enemies will come and acknowledge with us that our God reigneth. He will bring us to the place where they will bow before us, and they will say, "Where is the God that you serve? We have seen that you serve a living God." Brethren, our eyes shall see the promise of God.

I believe that God is speaking to us. I want us to be encouraged. The cloud of witnesses are waiting for us, and they are watching us because they without us cannot be made perfect. They are looking at us, and they are waiting for us to run this race with patience. They are waiting for us to overcome and come to that point of victory. As we see in the story of Isaac, let us



know that weeping may endure for the night but joy comes in the morning. God is about to cause our joy to be fulfilled, and it does not matter the times that we are in. It does not matter how hard things are. It does not matter what the economists are saying about the times. It does not matter what false prophets have predicted about tomorrow. **Because Jesus Christ leads, our fear is gone.**

May the Lord bless you; may the Lord strengthen us; may He increase our faith in this time. May the Lord grant us grace to pass through these times of adversity, for we know our Redeemer liveth and our enemies shall not triumph over us.

The Lord bless you.

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