

**BURY THE DEAD OUT OF YOUR SIGHT**  
*Freedom from offence and bitterness - the silent enemies that kill*

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## **Dedication**

My indispensable companion, the Holy Spirit.

Apostle Paul Humberstone, a father in the faith, whose life and ministry has greatly imparted my life and ministry. This book is a product of some of the things I learned under your ministry.

## **Acknowledgment**

I did not get to where I am all by myself. I had helping hands along the way. God has used gifts in the body of Christ to help me. I sincerely acknowledge the impart of Dr. Tunde Bakare and Dr. Noel Woodroffe upon my life and ministry. I am eternally grateful.

My sincere thanks to friends and partners of this kingdom vision and those who laboured to made the publishing of this book possible.

Life and ministry is exciting for me because of the love and understanding of my priceless family. Thanks to my faithful wife, Joan and my precious sons, Oshiokhai Goodness and Oshioke DavidPaul - You are dear to my heart.

My dear reader, thanks for reading.

## **Introduction**

This book is a collection of some of the intense dealings I have gone through in life and the teachings I have done over the years. I have a passion to see the nations heal and be restored to God. I believe the Lord used this inner passion to compel me in putting these knowledge and experiences into a book format. I have no doubt that lives will be reached, affected and healed through this resource material. Please do not allow my style of writing to offend you or stop you from getting the message in this book. It does not really matter if you enjoy my style of writing or not; what is most important to me is that you get the revelation of the message into your heart. My joy is not to put a book in your hands but a well tested spiritual resource in your heart, that will eternally change your life and help you to fulfil your destiny.

Now let's talk about the book. There is a way that leads to the fulfilment of prophetic destiny in life and only a few may find it. Every one of us is on a spiritual journey and this trip is an everlasting one. We need to be informed and equipped spiritually to undertake the journey or else we may fall by the wayside. That is why we need our sight or vision if you may, to help us embark on this journey. Because for every time and season there is a message coming to us from the Spirit of God which comes expressly through the mouth of the Lord to the listening ears and seeing eyes of God's servants. And this is usually for the sole aim of advancing God's Kingdom and purposes on earth, in and through His elected ones. Therefore we his elect must be attentive to the Spirit, focused and clear sighted to see what the Spirit is showing us.

The heartbeat of our heavenly Father for His people in this season is made plain and can be understood through the pages of this book. I therefore present this work in very simple and unbiased manner, to help my readers to understand that every Christian is on a spiritual journey on earth and there is no end to this journey until 'self is dethroned and Christ is enthroned' upon the altar of the heart.

For this purpose God gives us sight and He wants us to maintain the sight so that we can finish our race well. The greatest and most important sight we can have is the sight of the Lord, and the sight of our prophetic destiny follows. The importance of sight cannot be over-emphasized. God gives us sight so that we can have a life of fulfilment. When He comes to us, He comes for the sole purpose of giving us sight. When He speaks to us He speaks to give us sight, or to adjust or sharpen our sight. God ensures that we have sight at all times so that we will not be discouraged and give up on our destiny.

The scripture clearly agrees with this 'where there is no revelation (prophetic vision/sight), the people cast off restraint; but happy is he who keeps the law' Proverbs 29:18. This is to say that it is the prophetic sight that keeps people alive and going in life.

If you understand the power of prophetic sight, you'll not be amazed why people get discouraged, confused, depressed and indeed why they commit suicide. People get to this state when they become hopeless and have no inward strength to push on and cannot see the way out of their predicament. This simply means that they lack prophetic understanding of their destiny. Lack of sight has made many to erroneously shut the door against God's grace in their life.

It is this prophetic sight Abraham had for the journey before him. He was so consumed with it to the extent that he was not going to allow anything to distract him from it. He took time to mourn his late wife, Sarah and decided to bury the dead body of Sarah out of his sight so that he could continue his prophetic journey. He was conscious of his destiny and its fulfilment. His spiritual journey could have been truncated or aborted if he had not buried the dead body of Sarah out of his sight. He chose not to give his life and the power meant to fulfil his destiny to the dead body of Sarah.

Like Abraham, we must do likewise. We should bury 'our dead bodies' out of our sight so that we can have strength and clarity to fulfill God's purpose for our lives. I know someone would likely say, "I have no dead bodies to bury." Just wait a minute to see if it's true because in this book, I have identified the 'dead bodies' that most people are living with and are giving their life and power to instead of burying them out of sight. The most common 'dead bodies' people keep with them includes: bitterness, offences, malice and unforgiveness. Are you surprised? Yes, they are lifeless like the dead body of Sarah and they are also powerless but if you give your life and power to them, they will come back to life to live in your life and relationship. Are we not all conversant with the havoc they cause us - our families, churches, organisations, communities etc? Yet we are full of them.

Today many destinies are paralysed and handicapped because of them. They are the silent enemies that rob us of our health, of our God ordained relationships. They tear us apart and stop us from fulfilling our destinies. These silent enemies are the cause of most of the crisis in our lives, families, churches and communities. They may appear harmless but they are very powerful and dangerous.

The Bible clearly tells us that the destiny of such people like Cain, Absalom, Ahithophel, John the Baptist, etc, were stopped and cut short by bitterness and offence. If we only know the devastating effect of offence, especially if handled negatively, we would know better to give the word of God first place in our hearts.

The devil knows this. He knows that when we get stuck in resentment, bitterness, offence and unforgiveness, we get distracted from following God and the pathway of our destiny. For this reason, he does everything to make us accommodate them.

Jesus taught us that offence will come and that it is the problem of the world. Let's understand that offences will come and when they do come, our goal should be to know why they come. The reason why we stumble, become miserable and become enslaved by them is because we do not understand the sovereignty of God, why these things come and what they intend to accomplish within us.

Your life would be worth living and you can enjoy it abundantly if you do not allow these spiritual parasites to feed on you, dominate and destroy your God-given power. If you really want to have and enjoy abundant life, good health and sound relationship with God and people, then you must see them from the perspective of the word of God instead of giving them room in your life.

You must not allow anything or any issue to take your prophetic sight (whether of the Lord or your destiny) because it is your greatest treasure. Some issues must be regarded as dead and buried and out of sight if you must live your God ordained life. Your life and strength must not be used to attend to issues that ought to have been dead and buried long ago.

**Book One**  
**Sight and Destiny**

Chapter One  
**Bury The Dead Out Of Your Sight**

Abraham, patriarch and the father of many nations was divinely called by God to abandon the family idolatry and tread a new path of righteousness that will bring about new nations of righteousness on earth. This encounter with God became the turning point in his life and the history of mankind.

*Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you....."*

*"I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him that curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." - Gen. 12: 1-3.*

He was going to be used by God to birth a human race of purpose and righteousness. Through Abraham, God was going to close a chapter and open a new one in His prophetic agenda concerning mankind. God's aim was to accomplish that which couldn't be accomplished in Adam.

In the first Adam we were cursed, corrupted and fell short of the glory of God because of Adam's disobedience in the garden. However, God was not going to give up on His vision to bless the family of the earth.

When God raised Abram who later became Abraham after mighty dealings and processes in the hands of God; He told Abram clearly, *"In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."* In other words, God was going to use Abraham to reverse the effect of Adam's sin on the family of the earth. The Bible has this to say, that Abram responded immediately he heard the word of the Lord.

*So Abram departed as the Lord had spoken to him, and Lot went with him. And Abraham was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran - Genesis 12:4.*

The conviction of what God said to him was so strong that he departed from Haran (idolatry) by faith. He set out from the realm of the known and visible to the unknown and invisible realm. He started a journey of what the Bible describes as, "The just shall live by faith." He was persuaded about what God told him and was not going to allow the word of the Lord to go unfulfilled or fall to the ground.

From the moment he received and believed the word of God for his life, he became purpose conscious and driven. He aligned his life with God's divine will. He saw the Father's purpose as the ultimate of that which is worth living for. He spent his time and energy imagining how the families of the earth shall be blessed if he obeys God.

## **Sarah, Partner in Destiny with Abraham**

The purpose of God was not going to materialize in and through Abraham without the agreement and partnership of his wife, Sarah. His wife was part of the plan and programme of God to see the families of the earth blessed. Sarah was there when her husband set out on a journey from certainty to uncertainty. She was encouraging and helpful. Sarah was an important part of Abraham's life and was very useful to him. They journeyed and lived all their life together. They had their bad and good moments; they also had their ups and downs together as a couple. They received the word of the Lord, processed it and saw the fulfilment.

It must have been a painful and challenging moment for Abraham when Sarah died. He must have looked at the dead body of Sarah again and again and hoped for a miracle to happen that would resuscitate her. It would have been a moment of celebration for Abraham to see the dead body of Sarah revived and alive again. Nobody wants to see his or her loved one die and depart forever. When it happens we comport ourselves and accept the inevitable. The Bible recounts that he mourned and wept for her, and afterwards did what must be done so that the journey into the fulfilment of God's word could continue.

### **What Abraham Did**

One day Abraham summoned courage to do what must be done. What did he do concerning the dead body of Sarah? He buried Sarah out of his sight. Sarah has to be buried because her dead body was of no relevance to the prophetic journey of Abraham. There was no amount of love that could make Abraham keep her dead body in the home where he could be seeing the lifeless body every day. Would he be dragging the dead body with him as he continued his divine mission on earth? The answer is a resounding No. Though Abraham loved his wife but he could not keep her dead body with him in the house because of love. So, Abraham sought for help from the sons of Heth to bury the dead body of Sarah out of his sight.

*So Sarah died in Kirjah Arba (that is, Hebron) In the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah and to weep for her. Then Abraham stood up from before his dead, and spoke to the sons of Heth, saying: I am a foreigner and a visitor among you.*

*Give me a property for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight....Gen. 23: 1-19.*

The dead body of Sarah was not part of the package for destiny fulfilment. He has a destiny to fulfil and until the lifeless body of Sarah was buried out of his sight, he might not be able to accomplish what God has for him.

Abraham said explicitly:

*I am a foreigner and a visitor among you. Give me a property for a burial place among you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight - Gen. 23: 4.*

The above scripture tells us that Abraham was not particular about the dead body of Sarah as much as he was particular about his sight. He did what ought to be done. He mourned and wept for her because he loved her. The scripture says that he stood up before his dead. He acknowledged the fact that Sarah was dead and rose from the state of mourning and weeping to face the challenge before him. He admitted that what is dead is dead and it has to be buried. He took the critical decision to bury the dead body of Sarah so that he can continue his sojourn on earth. Abraham knew that the only place that was good enough for the dead body of Sarah was the grave, where dead bodies should be found. So Abraham buried Sarah to free himself.

*And after this, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of the field of Machpelah, before Mamre (that is, Hebron) in the land of Canaan - Gen 23:19.*

### **For Abraham, Sight is Everything**

Again I say that, Abraham's decision to bury the dead body of Sarah was motivated by his passion to maintain his sight and be focused on his divine assignment on earth. Abraham was a man who was purpose-driven. He was conscious of his destiny and assignment on earth and he was not going to allow anything to stop him from fulfilling it, not even the dead body of his beloved Sarah.

The Bible is detailed about everything written in it. Every word is significant and carries inherent reality. We cannot read and study the Bible out of context. It is important we find out why Abraham said what he said. Why did Abraham say, 'that I may bury my dead out of my sight?' Abraham could have simply say, 'that I may bury my dead.' He said this to indicate that keeping and maintaining accurate sight was important to him and the fulfilment of his destiny. Perhaps, the dead body of his beloved wife was becoming an obstruction to his sight.

You see, 'Abraham's sight' is the main issue here. As at the time of Sarah's death, Abraham still had an unfinished assignment that must be finished before his own death. There was so much that Abraham needed to accomplish for God that he had not done at the time.

It takes sight to walk with God. Once a man is unable to see spiritually, he cannot walk with God. Anything that wants to take away your sight or ability to see spiritually must be resisted and defeated. How far you go with and for God will depend on your sight. You can only run with what God told you according to the degree you can see prophetically. Abraham must keep his sight sharp and focused and free from anything that hinders his ability to see clearly.

At the time Sarah died, Abraham still had two major goals to accomplish before his own death. First, Abraham had to marry for Isaac. Second, he had to help Isaac locate his place and portion in the kingdom of God for the continuity of what God started with him (Abraham).

*Now Abraham was old, well advanced in age; and the Lord had blessed Abraham in all things.*

*So Abraham said to the oldest servant of his house, who ruled over all that he had, "please, 'put your hand under my thigh, "and I will make you swear by the Lord, the God of the heaven and the God of the earth, that you will not take a wife for my son from the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell, "but you shall go to my country and to my family, and take a wife for my son*

*And he said to him, "Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I take your son back to the land from which you come?"*

*But Abraham said to him, "Beware that you do not take my son back there.*

*The Lord God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land,' He will send His angels before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there.*

*And if the woman is not willing to follow you, then you will be released from this oath; only do not take my son back there*

*So the servant put his hand under the thigh of Abraham his master, and swore to him concerning that matter - Gen. 24:1-9.*

You can see from the conversation that Abraham had with his servant, Eliezer that he took Isaac's marriage very serious. Why was he so particular about the choice of woman for Isaac? After all, Isaac could choose for himself. He went to the extent of making the servant to swear. His spiritual journey on earth would not be a complete success if Isaac was not married to the right woman so that they can have holy vessels for the holy seed to preserve God's heritage. Abraham must also give to Isaac what God gave to him for his descendants. There must be a generational transfer of that which he had received from God in the course of his journey on earth. Abraham did not allow the dead body of Sarah to take away his sight when he was yet to accomplish these all-important tasks.

**Abraham found something that he must transfer to Isaac**

Abraham found God's righteousness and the revealed knowledge of God as Elshaddai, the all-sufficient. He unlocked the dimension of the Elshaddai; God that is more than enough. He was not going to die and take that which he had found to the grave. What he found must be deposited into Isaac. Abraham discovered for himself what the grace of God is and that God is able to do anything and this profound truth must be imparted into his son.

God revealed Himself to Abraham as Elshaddai. This revealed knowledge of Elshaddai was God's vehicle for transporting Abraham from his state of fear of the future and hopelessness into becoming the father of many nations. When it was impossible medically and scientifically for Abraham and Sarah to have a child, they did not stagger at the promise of God because they knew Him who had promised. He therefore locked up himself into this dimension of God.

*And not being weak in faith, he did not consider his own body, already dead (since he was about a hundred years old), and the deadness of Sarah's womb. He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God And being fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform - Rom. 4:19- 21.*

God did not bring His word to pass because of Abraham's faith only, but also because of His name and character "Elshaddai" that has been released upon the earth through Abraham. God has to honour His name that Abraham was walking in. Once the revelation of God comes to the earth, God will ensure that it becomes flesh. It must become visible; that which can be seen, touched and felt. God's word cannot return to Him void, it must accomplish that which God has said. God who declared to Abraham that He is Elshaddai would watch over His word to perform it; nothing would be strong enough to stop the manifestation of that name on the face of the earth.

Don't forget that what God gave to Abraham was the revealed knowledge of Himself as the Elshaddai God. This dimension of God must not stop at Abraham's table but it must be passed on to his seed.

*And God spoke to Moses and said to him: "I am the LORD. "I appeared to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, as God Almighty, but by My name Lord I was not known to them - Exodus 6:2-3.*

This is the deposit of God that Abraham had unlocked in the course of walking with God, which must be released to Isaac. Abraham was not going to die with the dimension of God that he has been able to press into. He has unlocked a technology for himself and his descendants. If Isaac should make the mistake of marrying one of the daughters of the Canaanites, that would be the death of the holy seed of God that should be transferred from Abraham to him. Isaac would have no one to transfer into what he had

received from his father. The seed in Isaac will either die with him or would be transferred to corrupt vessel that will ultimately defile it. The process of God to have vessels that will take the seed to the next generation would be aborted.

Because of this, Abraham had to ensure that he was fully involved with the whole process of Isaac's marriage. He was involved with the choice of who should be his wife. He was not doing this because he was domineering and full of control, but because of generational deposit he was carrying for the next posterity. Isaac understood what his father was doing and allowed him to guide him. When Abraham's servant suggested taking Isaac back to the place God took them from just in case the woman chosen would not want to come with him; Abraham replied by telling him, "*Beware that you do not take my son back to where God brought me out from.*"

The next verse of the scripture shows clearly that Abraham had not lost his prophetic sight. He was still holding on to the vision that he received from the Lord. He knew that God is not a man that He should lie and whatever He promised, He is faithful to keep and bring it to pass in His time. If God said it, it does not matter the situation around, He will surely bring it to pass in His time.

*The Lord God of heaven, who took me from my father's house and from the land of my family, and who spoke to me and swore to me, saying, 'To your descendants I give this land,' He will send His angels before you, and you shall take a wife for my son from there.*

Abraham had held on to this word of the Lord all through his life. He knew that God would bring it to pass. His sight was kept active so that he would not lose track of God regarding this prophetic word, 'to your descendants I give this land.'

Abraham tracked the word of the Lord for his life and descendants to the extent that he literally chose a wife for Isaac so as to avoid whatever would lead to the death of the promise. Obviously, there would be no descendants if Isaac makes the mistake of marrying any of the daughters of the Canaanites. The offspring of that marriage will not be holy unto the Lord therefore they will not possess the land.

### **Abraham was sight conscious**

What Abraham was conscious of when he spoke concerning the dead body of Sarah was his prophetic sight. He wanted to maintain his sight concerning what God had spoken to him. He did not want the dead body of Sarah to stop him from seeing the manifestation of the word of God. He knew that the dead body of Sarah was capable of stopping him from seeing the promise of God coming to pass. He knew that once his ability to walk in the invisible realm of God is taken, he would discontinue the process of seeing the promise.

He had a choice to either stop and abort the process because of Sarah's death or continue to press further into the prophetic promise but he made the right choice to press on. He could have spent the rest of his life mourning and sorrowing over Sarah's death without continuing his spiritual journey on earth. He could have decided he was old; and God would still do what He would do without him. But he didn't do that. He did not only guide his son on the choice of wife; he also imparted into him the revelational deposit of God as the Elshaddai. He gave to him that dimension of the Elshaddai of God that he had handled.

### ***And Abraham gave all that he had to Isaac - Gen. 25:5***

Abraham was a Man of Sight

When God came to Abraham to reassure him of His promise, He spoke to him about his sight. God knew how important sight and birthing of His prophetic word for his life and generation was to Abraham.

*"And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are- northward, southward, eastward, and westward For all the land, which you see I give to you and your descendants forever And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you - Gen. 13:14-17.*

*And behold the word of the LORD came to him, saying "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to Him, "So shall your descendants be." And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness - Gen. 15:4-6.*

God was speaking to Abram about the power of sight. He was sharpening his sight and dealing with distraction and fear in him. He was giving him clarity. This is what God does for us too when we are getting weak, fearful and distracted from His vision, purpose and pattern for us. He comes to speak to us and to refine and make the vision clearer.

### **In all your getting, get prophetic vision first**

Every believer must learn how to acquire sight and to maintain it. God wants us to be a people of sight, that is a people of prophetic vision. He does not want anything to blur or take away our ability to see accurately. He wants us to have absolute understanding of the times and seasons like the sons of Issachar.

*Of the sons of Issachar who had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do, their chiefs were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their command - 1Chron. 12:32.*

The sons of Issachar were a people of sight who had the capacity and ability to lead and give direction to their brethren.

Have you realized that when God speaks to us, He speaks to give us sight? God is so much concerned about our sight. He wants us to see and be focused. He fights anything that wants to take away our sight from Him and from our purpose and destiny. He comes to us through the written word, trances, dreams and open vision to give or sharpen our sight so we can have enough strength and momentum to finish our assignment - *Matt. 6:22, 23.*

Be a Person of Sight

When people lack the ability to distinguish between where they are going from where they are, they get discouraged, hopeless and frustrated and sometimes commit suicide. What keeps people going and give them happiness in life is their ability to track the pathway of their destiny and follow it.

*Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint, But happy is he who keeps the law - Prov. 29:18.*

Prophetic sight gives you access into the supernatural realm of God and cause you to walk in the invisible realities. God wants you to have eyes that see only the invisible. You see that which is not visible to the natural eyes of men.

*By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing Him who is invisible - Heb. 11:27.*

Moses could tread this path because he had prophetic sight. He saw beyond the natural realities. When you have sight, you become bold and courageous to face every challenge and trial that comes your way.

People of prophetic sight rule the world. Sight keeps you at the cutting edge of what God is doing on earth and even concerning your purpose. People who have sight dare the enemies. They do not evaluate or judge or see the greatness of their enemies by their sizes, numbers and the weapons they possess. But they judge the enemy by the greatness and almightiness of their God because they see the invisible.

The same God who opened the eyes of Elisha's servant to see the invisible realm is also your God. He is able to open your eyes too to see what is not visible to the physical eyes.

If you can see the invisible, you will no longer be afraid of your enemies (the visible) just like Elisha's servant - *2Kings 6:15-17*.

In this day of the Lord, our prayer is that our eyes of the spirit should be opened to walk in the invisible realm.

Chapter Two  
**Sight and Destiny Fulfillment**

Every genuine apostolic ministry has the mandate and grace of God to release sight to God's people, so that they can get hold of their destiny and fulfill it. God's people and the nations of the earth need sight to behold Christ as he is, and sight to walk in their destiny. The sight of the Lord is the best you can ever have. We are living in the day of the sight of the Lord.

*Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen - Rev. 1:7.*

### **Blind Bartimaeus saw Christ as He is**

Bartimaeus was nicknamed 'blind Bartimeus' because of his predicament, which was his inability to see. He must have heard of Jesus Christ and His miracle ministry; and wished that Jesus could come to where his condition had positioned him in life. The prayer of blind Bartimaeus was answered when Jesus came to Jericho and he was determined to receive his sight that day. Blind Bartimaeus was desperate, determined and focused about his miracle of sight. If only we can be like him in regards to his resolute pursuit. When he met with Jesus, he got what he wanted: He needed his sight. Though the crowd tried to stop him, but he was unstoppable. Sight was so important to him that he was not going to allow anything or anyone stand in his way.

*"Then many warned him to be quiet; but he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!"*

*So Jesus stood still and commanded him to be called. Then they called the blind man, saying to him, "Be of good cheer. Rise, He is calling you." - Mk 10:48, 49.*

The crowd represents people who have eyes but cannot see beyond the realm of their five senses. They have no eyes to see spiritually. Bartimaeus knew that the healing of his sight was all that was needed for him to be restored to the part of fulfilling his destiny. So beyond his physical blindness, he was also blind to the issue of purpose, destiny and the knowledge of Christ. He came to Christ for his eyes to be opened, so that he could walk in his ordained purpose and destiny.

*"And throwing aside his garment, he rose and came to Jesus. So Jesus answered and said to him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" The blind man said to Him, "Rabboni, that I may receive my sight."*

*Then Jesus said to him, "Go your way; your faith has made you well." And immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus on the road. - Mk. 10:50-52.*

He knew what he wanted and the moment he got it; he started his prophetic journey immediately by following Jesus. He received his sight to walk in his prophetic destiny. I want you to follow closely the actions of this man: He threw away his garment, rose and went to Jesus. These are prophetic messages for sons of the kingdom in this day and hour of the unveiling of the Son of God, Jesus Christ in His house. We have to cast

away the garment of religion that has bound us to the old that is passing away. We must rise up and embrace the reality of Christ. God is taking us beyond the realm of shadows into the substance, which is Christ. For this blind man, the garment which speaks of 'covering' was good as long as he was still blind and religious, but now that he has found the truth and the essence of his life, the garment would no longer be needed.

This is the day of prophetic sight and our walk in the revelation knowledge of Christ. The hour has come for us to see Christ like Bartimaeus did. You have to see Christ for yourself. You need a personal encounter with Christ. You need the true knowledge of Christ. You need to understand the issues of your individual walk with Him in order to fulfill your destiny. These things are paramount this day.

The voice of the Lord is coming clearly to us, His sons and daughters, to rise up and walk in our prophetic destiny. We must become violent and determined, like blind Bartimaeus, in order to break through the religious and humanistic systems that keep us down and make us unproductive. We must refuse to be spiritual eunuchs who cannot birth the purpose of God for their lives. God wants to see us walking in our destiny, now. Let's cast away every false garment of religion, condemnation, shame, rejection and hurt. Like Bartimaeus, we can meet with the Lord Jesus Christ outside the camp (*Heb. 13:11-14, Ex. 33:7*). Jesus Christ reveals Himself to the believers who have put away the garment of religion and come out of the harlotry religious system of the church to meet with Him outside the camp. It's outside the camp, we see Him as He is.

Let's accept and agree with the name God calls us. You have a name and your name is your destiny and identity. It is the calling and anointing of God upon your life.

*"Lift up your eyes on high, and see who has created these things, Who brings out their host by number; He calls them all by name, by the greatness of His might and the strength of His power, not one is missing" - Isa. 40:26*

*"He counts the number of the stars; He calls them all by name" - Ps. 147:4*

Your prophetic destiny is that name that God calls you, and you cannot walk in it without the clarity of sight. You need to know your name just like blind Bartimaeus knew his name and followed Jesus. When a man receives sight, he has received understanding.

### **Jesus gave sight to Lazarus so that he can fulfill his destiny**

The thing that fascinates and grabs the attention of many of us about the life of Lazarus is that he was dead for four days and was brought back to life. What for? We can hardly see the prophetic picture painted for us here. Jesus did not just bring Lazarus back from the dead but he also released his prophetic sight to enable him walk in his destiny. Sight has come into play here again like the life of Abraham and Bartimaeus.

*"Jesus said, "Take away the stone"..."*

*Then they took away the stone from the place where the dead man was lying. And Jesus lifted up His eyes and said, "Father, I thank You that You have heard Me....."*

*Now when He has said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go." - John 11:39-44*

Death seized Lazarus when he had not yet completed his divine assignment, but Jesus came and gave him back his life. Lazarus came out of the grave with the grave clothes over his face. His hands and legs were bound. Why all these? What was the purpose of coming back to life still bound and unable to fulfill destiny? Can you imagine Lazarus out of the grave and standing or lying down, his legs and hands bound and his face wrapped with grave clothes? He was unable to walk or see. Yes, he was alive but still bound in regards to fulfilling his predestined purpose. His hand speaks of his works, the leg speaks of his walk and the face speaks of his vision and prophetic sight. Jesus spoke prophetically to them, "Loose him and let him go." Lazarus was freed from the grave clothes to fulfill his destiny.

The true spirit and operation of the apostolic ministry today are those words spoken by Jesus, "Loose him and let him go." The apostolic spirit and ministry releases 'Lazarus' from the grave. The stones must be rolled away from the grave so that those who are dead spiritually would be called forth, and concerning issues of destiny, there would be fulfillment. The stones could represent the religious system that some of us find ourselves in. It could also be anything that hinders people from walking in their God given destiny.

The apostolic ministry is to release those who have been imprisoned by the system of religion and give them a prophetic vision concerning their lives. God is giving and releasing grace and wisdom to His true apostles to go to the nations and call forth the 'Lazarus' of our generation back to life. It is our mandate to bring them out of the grave of religious systems and spirits of self-worship, condemnation and rejection, in order to serve the Lord.

God's people must be set free from the present Babylonian church system; the system that makes merchandise of God's people and keep them in perpetual bondage all in the name of serving God. A religious system that is full of self-worship, condemnation, rejection and judgment. A system that can give you prosperity and riches but will never allow you to receive the true revelation of Christ for your life and destiny. This religious system, soothes your emotion, makes you feel good about yourself, yet, leaves you more carnal, backward and spiritually blind.

What Jesus said at the tomb of Lazarus many years ago still echoes today in the spirit, "Loose him and let him go." This is what the Lord is calling us to do today. It is the core spirit of the apostolic and the gospel of the kingdom. It is the apostolic heartbeat; it is its

voice and message. We ought to say yes to God's mandate for our season and time, "loose him and let him go to fulfill destiny." Now is the time to bring God's people out of the grave of religion to fulfill their destiny. The religious church system has imprisoned so many believers and it's our responsibility to break the gates and doors to set them free like Jesus set Lazarus free.

### Chapter Three **Come Out of Babylon**

#### Unmasking Babylon – the perverted and purposeless Church

It's good news that Lazarus came out of the grave and stepped into his destiny. But, do we have to celebrate the deliverance and breakthrough of Lazarus from the grave of despondency, while there are still thousands of Lazaruses in the grave of religion who are unable to walk in their God given destiny? Countless number of Christians in our churches know nothing about their individual destiny. While, there are those who knew they have a destiny but are doing nothing about fulfilling them. This is what Babylon does to people – keeping them to service the system without fulfilling their individual destiny. Babylon has no regards for the individual destiny of God's people that are locked up in her system.

The grace of Jesus Christ releases God's children from the bondage of religion that has imprisoned and stopped them from fulfilling their God-given destiny. Religious spirits are the strongest devils, the believers contend with. You talk of religious spirits; the spirit of Python, Jezebel and Absalom will jump at your face. These spirits are invading the soul of the church of Christ and they are making mockery of the finished work of Christ on the cross. They deceive Christians to focus on their religious rituals, conducts and efforts to be accepted by God instead of having faith in the perfect sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

The scriptures tell us clearly of these spirits:

*"For all that is in the world--the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life--is not of the Father but is of the world." - 1John 2:16.*

*Woe to them! For they have gone in the way of Cain (jealousy, fear, intimidation – spirit of Jezebel), have run greedily in the error of Balaam for profit (love of money – spirit of python), and perished in the rebellion of Korah (pride and politics – spirit of Absalom)  
- Jude 11.*

*Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth - 1Tim.4:1-3.*

*But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:  
For men will be lovers of themselves (self-conscious, pride), lovers of money (python), boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God - 2Tim.3:1-5.*

## **The Spirit of Python**

*Give no regard to mediums and familiar spirits; do not seek after them, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God - Lev. 19:31*

*And the person who turns to mediums and familiar spirits, to prostitute himself with them, I will set My face against that person and cut him off from his people  
- Lev. 20:6, 27*

***You shall not permit a sorceress to live - Exo. 22:18***

This is a religious devil that expresses itself through divination and sorcery. The spirit uses deception to get people and takes advantage of their ignorance and keeps them under spell. The ultimate goal and motive of this evil spirit is to keep people in bondage and make money from them. Money comes first and people are made to pay for revelations and prophecies in any place or church where this deceptive spirit is in operation.

This is the spirit that worked through Balaam the false prophet (Numb. 22:15-22). He was after the money (gain) rather than doing the will of God. Also, this spirit of divination worked through the slave girl in Acts chapter 16, though she gave an accurate message about the person of Paul and his colleagues, but her motive was to position herself and her master for fame and gain, which is money. The spirit of divination can be very accurate about the mind of God for you, but with a wrong motive. The motive will either be to put you in bondage or make money from you. Child of God, it's not how accurate a prophecy is that matters, but what matters is the source of the man or woman's spiritual resource. (Jn. 8:44). Child of God, the accuracy of a prophecy is not as important as knowing the spiritual resource of the person. Do not validate a person or ministry because of accurate prophecies and miracles, but because you know the spirit that is at work in his or her life and ministry.

Our churches are full of them. In this end of the age, the activities of this spirit are clearly seen in our churches and on some of the religious programmes on our televisions and radios. Indeed, this is the hour of great deception and lying wonders – the very elect of God can be deceived.

Simon, the sorcerer operated by the spirit of python (divination), and he had a great hold on the people as he was making merchandised of the people. His religion business came to an end when Peter, the true messenger of Christ showed up with the accurate gospel of the kingdom. The scripture says Philip "preached Christ to them." Christ was Philip's message to the people of Samaria. What message do we preach today to God's people? (Acts 8:5-13)

Paul, vehemently, confronted and rebuked Elymas, a sorcerer and false prophet, who was being used by this spirit, when he refused to accept that his business has come to an end, and got blindness for his stubbornness.

*Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus, who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God.*

*But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith.*

*Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?"*

*"And now, indeed, the hand of the Lord is upon you, and you shall be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." And immediately a dark mist fell on him, and he went around seeking someone to lead him by the hand.*

*Then the proconsul believed, when he saw what had been done, being astonished at the teaching of the Lord - Acts 13:6-12.*

Paul has given us a holistic description of this spirit of divination. Therefore, there is no hiding place for it. He said, "The spirit is full of all deceit and fraud. It is of the devil and it is enemy of all righteousness. Worst still, it perverts the straight ways of the Lord."

Divination or sorcery (Python) is an enemy of righteousness, that is, it does not permit people to live according to the dictates of the Holy Spirit. People are not allowed to grow and be led by the Holy Spirit but they are tied to some rituals and rites of a church or ministry.

It perverts the straight ways of the Lord. To pervert means to distort, that is, misinterpret, or morally corrupt. The messengers of this satanic spirit deliberately misrepresent the truth for the purpose of keeping people in darkness and bondage. They make people to believe a lie and thereby enslave them. The word deceit speaks of craft, or guile. Fraud speaks of making money from people unlawfully. Incredible, Paul rebuked him of fraud. What is fraud here? It is a conscious and deliberate act or effort to deceive the gullible and ignorant with an evil intention of keeping him/her in bondage and making money from the victim.

One of the goals of this spirit of python (divination) is to corrupt, attack and stop every true messenger of God and his message. Let every true messenger of God watch out for the spirit of python.

### **The Spirit of Jezebel**

Jezebel was the daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians. The Sidonians are worshippers of Baal. She married King Ahab, who was the seventh and worst king (*1Kings 16:33*) of Israel. She influenced her husband, Ahab negatively to the point of his destruction *1Kings 16:29-34*. She used the power of seduction, manipulation, witchcraft, intimidation, etc. to get her ways and results.

Today, Jezebel represents a system and order that has the characteristics of Jezebel. This spirit expresses itself through witchcraft, intimidation, control, seduction, turning men to eunuch so as to hinder or stop them from fulfilling their destiny and bring forth fruit to righteousness.

The spirit hates the truth, confrontation and opposition because she believes that she is in control. She fights others that are better than her. She wants others to always submit to her and she is threatened by the progress of others. She is full of jealousy (*Gen. 4:1-*

11). She leads people astray and permits the worship of idolatry. Idolatry is the worship of self, money, beauty, fashion, gift, etc, anything that comes before God in your life.

Jezebel was able to intimidate Elijah the prophet of God out of his land of assignment. This was just after Elijah single handedly and successfully executed 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah, who eats at Jezebel's table. The mission of this spirit as at that time was to silence the prophetic voice in the land - *1Kings 19:1-5*.

The vineyard of Naboth that King Ahab could not take from him, by whatever means, was given to him by Jezebel - *1Kings 21:1-16*. How did she take the vineyard from Naboth? She seduced the people to believe what was not true. She manipulated and intimidated those who probably knew she was lying.

Jezebel spirit is addressed in the book of revelation as a spirit that seduced the servant of the Lord - *Rev. 2:20-21*. How does she seduce God's servants? This woman seduced God's servant to embrace another gospel and prostitute with strange spirits thereby living a perverted lifestyle, just the same way she seduced Ahab to embrace other gods and lived a perverted lifestyle.

### **The Spirit of Absalom**

Absalom, means father of peace. He is the son of David, king of Israel and he was a favourite of his father. By birthright, he was supposed to be the next king of Israel, being the first born of David, but he brought dishonour and destruction upon himself and died shamefully. He was full of himself and proud. He saw himself as better than every other person in Israel. He felt he was most qualified than his Father, David to be the king of Israel.

This is a subtle spirit that expresses itself through politics in the church or ministry, pride, rebellion, opposing spiritual authority and not submitting to authority. This is the spirit that destroyed Absalom and Korah.

People that operate with the spirit of Absalom have a way of turning people against authority. They tell you things that make you to start opposing authority. At anytime you start thinking or feeling that you are more qualified than the man or woman chosen by God to lead you or carry out a particular assignment, you might be walking in the spirit of Absalom. It is needless to tell you of the danger of accommodating the spirit that led to the untimely death of Absalom.

Aaron and Miriam spoke against Moses, God's servant and authority. They questioned, withstood or opposed the authority or office of Moses. They were simply saying to Moses, there is nothing special about what you are doing. Everyone, or anyone of us could do it even better. God does not like that - *Num. 12:1-10*.

Korah, Dathan and Abiram rebelled against Moses' authority and leadership. They questioned his God given mandate and authority. They gang-up against Moses. They formed a political group in the camp and were going to caused division in the camp. And they died for their rebellious heart - *Num. 16:1-35, 41-50*.

Nadab and Abihu went beyond their boundary and died for not respecting order set by God. They were not anointed for what they did. It was not their calling or office to offer incense to God but to assist Aaron their father - *Leviticus 10:1-2, 24:1, 9, Num. 3:1-4*. In *3John 9, 10* Diotrefes is describes by John as someone who loves to have preeminence among the brethren.

Pride says that you can take it if others refuse to give it to you. Absalom tried to take the throne by force but he died in the process. He never got to enjoy the throne that he so desired.

David had the opportunity of killing king Saul and thereby taking over the throne, but he did not (*1Sam. 24:1-7, 24: 5-25*). David could have allowed Abishai to kill Saul and turned around and say, "after all, I did not kill him." He restrained him. David knew God was well able to perform His word.

## **The purposeless Church**

The world and its system has never been the problem of God and His Christ. Even, when Jesus came in the flesh to die for our sin, His greatest opposition was the religious system. He was, vehemently, resisted by the crooked religious system, and eventually got killed by the system.

Jesus was upset and uncomfortable with the pharisaic religious that shut the doors of revelations of God and access to God against people. Though the people desired God but could not see Him because the scribes and Pharisees stood on their way and only permit them to see and know what they wanted them to see and know. Is it different with us today?

*"But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you shut up the kingdom of heaven against men; for you neither go in yourself, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in - Matt. 23:13.*

You can almost feel His righteous anger through those verses of the scriptures, as He confronted and rebuked the religious folks and system that imprisoned God's people in their lifeless religious system.

*"Serpents, brood of vipers! How can you escape the condemnation of hell?"*

*Therefore, indeed, I send you prophets, wise men, scribes: some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogue and persecute from city to city*

*That on may come all the righteous bloodshed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.*

*"Assuredly, I say to you, all these things will come upon this generation.*

*"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.*

*See! Your house is left to you desolate. For I say to you, you shall see Me no more till you say 'Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!'"*

*- Matt. 23:33-39.*

You can see why Peter the Apostle exhorted the religious folks of his days in *Acts 2:40*, "*Be saved from this perverse generation*".

There is something about the religious system that is so hard to deal with or defeat. The religious system seems to be the most organized, adored and revered system on earth, and yet very dangerous, abusive and lifeless. The system has the ability to promote jealousy, hate, oppression, superiority, slavery, prejudice, gender discrimination, and worst still, it kills. Worst still, the system takes away the sight of the Lord from God's people by keeping them busy with lifeless religious rituals and activities without allowing them to know Christ and fall in love with Him. People get so engrossed with religion without seeing and hearing Jesus Christ.

Without argument, you can hardly find a Christian, marriage, family, business, or even, a ministry/church where one of these religious spirits is not in dominance. This might be as a result of our ignorance of them or we know that they are there, but not willing to confront and defeat them.

### **The true Babylon is the confused and purposeless Church**

Is Babylon really the world? I heard someone said, "Babylon is the world." I want to say in the light of the written word of God that the true Babylon is the perverted and purposeless church that is not unveiling Jesus Christ to creation. Any church that is not advancing and fulfilling the eternal purpose of God is called Babylon. A church or ministry can be advancing and fulfilling it's own vision or the purpose of the set-man, and not God's eternal purpose. The eternal purpose of God is Jesus Christ. To reveal or make Jesus Christ known in all His glory is the eternal purpose of God. This is the passion of the Father – that Jesus Christ is unveiled.

Any system (church) built by a man to keep people in the grave or prison of religion and make them unproductive, thereby, stopping them from fulfilling their individual destiny

in God is called Babylon. Whichever way we look at it, Babylon seeks to hinder, paralyse and stop God's eternal purpose on earth.

We can therefore say, anytime, a man or woman, marriage, family, business, ministry, etc. is not advancing or fulfilling the eternal purpose of God – be informed that is Babylon. Another word for it is lawlessness (*Matt. 7-21-23*). In a summary, if the principles that run your life, marriage, business and ministry are contrary to the eternal purpose of God, my friend, that is lawlessness and Babylon. Whatever we build must express a dimension of Christ. The Holy Spirit diffuses the fragrance of Christ through our lives, families, marriages, ministries and careers. Jesus Christ must be felt, heard, seen from the pulpit of our ministries, marriages and careers.

*Now thanks be to God who always leads us in triumph in Christ, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place.*

*For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing 2Cor. 2:14-15.*

For this reason God who builds all things (*Heb. 3:4*) share His power to build with us. So that we can build homes, families, ministries and careers that diffuse the fragrance of Christ to humanity. Unfortunately, very often, man uses this power to build for himself instead of God.

Babel or the Tower of Babel where the word 'Babylon' is derived is described as "confusion and man's conspiracy to defeat the eternal purpose of God." God had a goal and He brought man into partnership to accomplish it, but man seized the opportunity to build a city and make name for himself. God's goal was that the whole earth should be occupied by man, but Nimrod, a man described as "a mighty hunter before the Lord" (*Gen. 10:8-9*), had his own goal diametrically opposite of God's goal. According to Genesis chapter eleven, Nimrod set out to defeat the eternal purpose of God by seeking a name and an empire for Himself.

We can gain more insight about Babylon by considering *Gen. 11:1-9*, where the name Babylon is derived.

*Now the whole earth had one language and one speech. And it came to pass, as they journeyed from the east, that they found a plain in the land of Shinar, and they dwelt there. Then they said to one another, "Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly." They had bricks for stones, and they had asphalt for mortar. And they said, "Come, let us build ourselves a city, and a tower whose top is in heavens: let us make a name for ourselves, lest we scattered abroad over the face of the whole earth."....So the Lord scattered them abroad from there over the face of all the earth, and they ceased building the city.*

*Therefore its name is called Babel, because there the LORD caused the language of all the earth...Gen. 11:1-9.*

One thing that is obvious here is that these people had a common vision, understanding, focus and decision, coupled with a great determination and enthusiasm to build a city of their pride. The journey they started from the east was not supposed to be aborted. The east is a place of illumination, sight and understanding - (*Matt. 24:27*). They ought to have continued in their understanding of God's eternal purpose, instead of stopping at the Plain in the land of Shinar. It was at Shinar they decided to build a city and a tower with bricks instead of stones. God did not ask them to build a resting place.

Journey speaks of onward, forward, march, be on his way. While, the plain speaks of that which is appealing, enticing and lovely and makes you feel like resting from your journey. It was here, they decided to make bricks for stone and asphalt for mortar to build a city and a tower that would connect them to heaven. They knew that God builds with stones but they decided to use bricks. They wanted an access and interaction with God in their own way. Interestingly, they knew of a city but not the city of God that Abraham was searching for. What I found disturbing about the intention of these people is that their motive of building a city was to make name for themselves. I found that really scaring. Are we not constantly organizing religious programmes and going into projects and building structures to make name for ourselves? God have mercy!

The intention of God is that we should continue the journey we started at Passover until we get to the fullness of Christ. Though, we build ministries, churches and structures, but they should not stop the journey process. They should be seen as means to the end. Your journey into God and His inheritance must not be sacrificed at the altar of seeking name for yourself.

They wanted a name for themselves. There is something about name and empire that I am yet to understand. I said this because, our problem today is not different from Nimrod's. Jesus Christ, the Owner of the commission, commanded us to go and make disciples of all the nations but, instead of making disciples, we are after names and empires, like Nimrod.

*"...Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit ...Matt. 28:18-20*

Remember that Babel means confusion. Confusion in Longman Contemporary English Dictionary means "when you do not understand what is happening or what something means, because it is not clear." Does it sound like not understanding the purpose of a thing?

From the spiritual perspective, we see 'confusion' as when a man takes God's resources or grace and use it to make name or build a city (empire) for himself. This is the highest level of confusion, or maybe, illness of mind.

To keep you on track, I want you to know that Babylon was built by Nebuchadnezzar. Let's hear the words of his mouth:

*The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honour of my majesty Dan. 4:30*

Men build Babylon, the system of religion; but Jesus builds His church.

At this juncture, we need to ask ourselves a question, who is Nebuchadnezzar? Interestingly, the scripture gives us an absolute answer right in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar's dream.

*"You, O king, are a king of kings. For the God of heaven has given you a kingdom, power, strength, and glory;  
And wherever the children of men dwell, or the beasts of the field and the birds of the heaven, He has given them into your hand, and has made you ruler over them all – you are this head of gold - Dan. 2:37-38.*

Nebuchadnezzar was a choice servant of God. He was chosen to showcase the glory of the Lord in Babylon and all the earth. But he rebelled against God in his heart.

*"O king, the Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar your father a kingdom and majesty, glory and honour.  
"And because of the majesty that He gave him, all peoples, nations, and languages trembled and feared before him. whomever he wished, he executed; whoever he wished, he kept alive; whomever he wished, he put down.  
"But when his heart was lifted up, and his spirit was hardened in spirit, he was deposed from his kingly throne, and they took his glory from him.  
"Then he was driven from the sons of men, his heart was made like the beasts and his dwelling was with the wild donkeys. They fed him with grass like oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heavens, till he knew that the Most High God rules in the kingdom of men, and appoints over it whomever He chooses - Dan. 5:18-21.*

This man was really blessed and honoured by God. But did he know that God was the secret of his majesty? Again, let's hear what Nebuchadnezzar says about the position given to him by God.

*The king spoke, saying, "Is not this great Babylon, that I have built for a royal dwelling by my mighty power and for the honour of my majesty - Dan. 4:30.*

This is the statement of a man who is truly confused. How can a man in his right mind take credit for what he got by the sovereign act of God? Indeed! This is confusion. God gave him the kingdom, wisdom, power and glory to build like we read in Dan. 2:37, but he turned around, and said, "He was the one that built it." He was able to build Babylon because of God's spiritual resources given to him. **Babylon was built to express the dimension of God that was given to him. In other words, men were supposed to see God, when they behold Babylon. Babylon was supposed to reveal God to humanity but Nebuchadnezzar became confused about the reason why he was chosen and anointed by God, and decided to defeat that purpose of God.**

Like Nebuchadnezzar and the great Babylon built by him; there are churches and ministers who are not building God's eternal purpose on earth – they are not unveiling Christ to mankind. What they are doing has no bearings with God's eternal purpose. In a plain talk, they don't know what the eternal purpose of God is. A man or woman may be called and anointed by the Lord, like Nimrod and Nebuchadnezzar, but not still in touch with God's eternal purpose.

### **Babylon in The Book of Revelation**

Let's take a trip to the book of revelation and check out who Babylon is. The book of revelation chapter 17, 18 and 19 will help us to understand Babylon clearly.

Rev. 17 gives a clearer picture of Babylon:

*"Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and talked with me, saying to me, "Come, I will show you the judgement of the great harlot who sits on many waters With whom the kings of the earth committed fornications with her, and the inhabitants of the earth were made drunk with the wine of her fornication." - Rev. 17:1-2.*

Babylon is addressed here, as the harlot who sits on many waters. Men and women prostitute with the harlotry church system, all in the name of serving God. They are getting impregnated by the system and they are truly running with the visions of the system. Her wine speaks of her doctrine, and it's a good drink for the inhabitants of the earth. The inhabitants of the earth are drunk with the wine (doctrine) of her fornication.

- In verse five, the Spirit of Christ plainly says that, this system of religion is the mother of prostitutions. It reads:

*"And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."*

If you have not still comprehended that Babylon is the perverted church, I am sure that the above scripture can help you to paint an accurate picture of who and what Babylon is. The scripture tells us that Babylon the great is the mother of harlots and of the

abominations of the earth. Please, don't get distracted, it is still talking about the perverted and purposeless church that sits on many waters.

*Then he said to me, "The waters which you saw, where the harlot sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations and tongues - Rev. 17:15*

Can you see now that Babylon (the harlotry church) sits on people and stop them from fulfilling the purpose of God for them?

- Revelation chapter 18, went further to tell us, how this harlotry system promotes herself and values, and the defeat of the system. The system is a habitation of demonic activities, foul spirit, unclean and hated bird.

*And he cried mightily with a loud voice; saying, "Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird! - Rev. 18:2.*

- There is a warning that God's children should come out of her because she is being judged for her deception, sorcery, abomination, etc.

*And I heard another voice from heaven saying, "Come out of her, my people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you receive of her plagues" - Rev. 18:4.*

- Those who have embraced the religious system will mourn and lament for her, when she is brought down.

*The kings of the earth who committed fornication and lived luxuriously with her will weep and lament for her, when they see the smoke of her burning "standing at a distance for fear of her torment", saying, "Alas, alas, that great city Babylon, that mighty city! For in one hour your judgement has come" - Rev. 18:9-10.*

- The merchandise of Babylon shall come to an end. She trades on gold and silver precious stones and pearls, fine linen and purple, silk and scarlet, every kind of citron wood, etc....

And cinnamon and incense, fragrant and frankincense, wine and oil, fine flour and wheat, cattle and sheep, horses and chariots, and bodies and souls of men - Rev. 18:12-13.

I am shocked at this, that Babylon has the counterfeit of every precious gift given to God's children. And she trades with them and on the souls of men. This same system promotes her perverted lifestyle through music.

*The sound of harpists, musicians, flutist, and trumpeters shall not be heard in you anymore. No craftsman of any craft shall be found in you anymore, and the sound of a millstone shall not be heard in you anymore - Rev. 18:22.*

- The greatest weapon of Babylon is sorcery, which is the same thing as divination:

*...For by your sorcery all the nations were deceived - Rev. 18:23.*

*But there was a certain man called Simon, who previously practiced sorcery in the city and astonished the people of Samaria, claiming that he was someone great, to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, "This man is the great power of God." And they heeded him because he had astonished them with his sorceries for a long time - Acts 8:9-10.*

*Now when they had gone through the island to Paphos, they found a certain sorcerer, a false prophet, a Jew whose name was Bar-Jesus, who was with the proconsul, Sergius Paulus, an intelligent man. This man called for Barnabas and Saul and sought to hear the word of God. But Elymas the sorcerer (for so his name is translated) withstood them, seeking to turn the proconsul away from the faith. Then Saul, who also is called Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?"*

*- Acts 13: 6-12.*

- The harlotry church (Babylon) persecutes, silences, and even, kills the voice (message) of the true messengers of the Lord.

*"And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth." - Rev. 81:24 (Read Matt. 23:34-37).*

- In Revelation chapter 19, Babylon the great is fallen and defeated, the saints of God celebrate her defeat, and there is a manifestation of Christ.

*After these things, I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honour and power belong to the Lord our God!  
"For true and righteous are His judgements, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her - Rev. 19:1-2.*

Glory to God! Babylon is taken on every side. This Babylon that is trading on the souls of men and has imprisoned destinies is brought down. As the true message of the kingdom of God is declared in all the four corners of the earth, the children of God that have been enslaved and imprisoned in the "harlotry church" will come to the knowledge of the truth and they will be delivered.

## **HIGHLIGHTS of the Characteristics of the Purposeless Church**

- The church that is not advancing the eternal purpose of God for humanity
- The church that is not working with God to make man in the image and likeness of God
- The church that is not heavenizing the earth with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea
- The church that is not unveiling Christ on earth with power and great glory
- The church that is not baptizing God's people into the name (Greek: Onomai: character and nature) of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit
- The church that is denying the saints access to sight and revelation of their individual destiny and ministry
- The church that is not equipping the saints for the work of the ministry
- The church that is keeping the saints in the house as workers and members to serve the church system of man instead of releasing them to fulfil their individual destiny and ministry
- The church that is more interested in having church members instead of raising disciples for Christ
- The church that is busying constantly with religious activities and programmes, but does not bring the people closer to God or bring God closer to the people or help the people of God to see and fulfil their destiny
- The church where the saints help the overseer to fulfil his or her ministry while they are imprisoned in the house of Saul unable to see and fulfil their own ministry

When Jacob came to a realization of his destiny and that of his family, he made a decision to come out of his uncle, Laban's prison so that he could take care of his own household. Listen to Jacob as he speaks to Laban *"For what you had before I came was little, and it has increased to a great amount; the LORD has blessed you since my coming. And now, when shall I also provide for my own house?" Gen. 30:30*

Based on what we have discussed on Babylon so far, you can understand why Paul the Apostle prayed for the church in Ephesus that their eyes of understanding should be enlightened and they should know the hope of their calling, that is, they should walk in God's predetermined purpose for their lives instead of being religious and serving the religious church system.

### **The heartfelt prayer of Paul for the Ephesians**

Paul knew this subject about sight and the need for the believers to bury 'dead religion and past' out of sight and walk in their purpose and destiny, therefore he wrote to the Ephesians about his prayer for them.

*Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, Do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,*

*The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,... - Eph. 1:15-21.*

He knew that it takes sight for people to walk in their prophetic destiny.

### **God gives sight - the Devil takes it**

*The hearing ear and the Seeing Eye, the LORD has made them both - Prov. 20:12.*

The whole package of salvation is to give us the sight of the Lord and the sight of our destiny. If we cannot appreciate salvation from this perspective of the sight of the Lord, and our individual and corporate destiny, then we will settle for religion.

Jesus came to wake us up from our sleep of religion to gain the consciousness of the Father and our destiny. Being born again is waking up from spiritual sleep of religion and ignorance to gain sight of the Lord. When a man is born again he comes into spiritual awareness of the Lord and his destiny simultaneously. Knowledge of the Lord and your destiny are the two things that holistic salvation must deliver to you.

It is only God that can cause a man to wake up from the slumber of religion and ignorance of the Lord. We will end up in the sleep of death (*Psalms 13:3, 18:28, Jer. 51:39*), if the Lord does not wake us up.

The Lord demonstrated this when he caused Jacob to wake up from his sleep of religion and ignorance of the Lord and his destiny. Jacob woke up and became a different man. He woke up into undeniable consciousness of the Lord and his destiny.

*...Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it." - Gen. 28:10-19.*

Jacob did not wake up by himself. It was what he saw and heard that caused him to awake. It was an encounter. In his encounter, he received the revealed knowledge of the God of his fathers and his destiny. It is the knowledge of the Lord and your destiny that causes you to wake up from the sleep of religion.

Two things happened in his life when he woke up: He became conscious of the ever-abiding presence of God and his destiny. Just like Jacob woke up as a result of what he saw and heard from the Lord, so, also you must see the Lord and hear what He says concerning you in order for you to wake up from the sleep of religion.

It is this personal knowledge of the Lord and your destiny that is the key to deal with the spirit of religion, hopelessness and fear.

Religion is one the greatest obstacles that hinder people from gaining the sight of the Lord and their destiny. Religion makes people to settle for activities and rituals, instead of pursuing the knowledge of the Lord and the fulfillment of their destiny.

### **Paul gained the sight of the Lord and his destiny**

Saul, whose name was changed to Paul, was called to ministry in a manner that was dramatic and without room for choice. Before his meeting with the Lord on the road to Damascus, he had been actively involved in the work of the ministry according to the law and the tradition of the elders. He was religious, zealous and very knowledgeable in the law of his people.

*.... Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?"*

*Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one, but they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither ate nor drank - Acts 9:1-9.*

On the way to Damascus, he bumped into God and fell to the ground. It was an unforgettable experience for Paul. He became blind for three days as a result of the encounter. God made him to go blind for those three days to prove to him that he was indeed blind concerning the things of the Spirit and his purpose in life. God blinded him before He gave sight to him. He had zeal, but his zeal was not according to the knowledge of the truth. It was based on the law, which has already been fulfilled in Christ.

His blindness was to grant him the understanding that he was blind spiritually and until he calls on the Lord like blind Bartimaeus did, he would not have sight. For three days, he was without sight as he searched for the true God. The three days was indeed prophetic.

*And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and having his hand on him he said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit - Acts 9:17.*

Not until he accepted his blindness, like blind Bartmaeus, did God give him sight to his prophetic destiny and a revelation into the person of Jesus Christ. Paul responded positively to the destiny call, unlike the Pharisees, Sadducees and Scribes who believed that they knew everything and there was nothing to learn. They were blind, but refused to acknowledge their spiritual blindness, therefore, Jesus could not give them sight (*Matt. 23:16, 17, 19, 24, 26*).

The challenge we have is that we do not want to accept that we are blind. It seems we are either proud or ashamed of our spiritual blindness. We try to act as if we can navigate our ways by ourselves. We prefer to go about our lives, businesses, ministries and

relationships blindly, trusting that we will get things done well. But a blind man is truly blind.

The ministry of Our Lord Jesus Christ is the ministry of life. He came to give life. The life He gave us is available to everyone; those who have accepted their spiritual blindness have equally received sight. Sight is connected to life. You only have the life of Christ according to the level of sight (knowledge and understanding) that is available to you.

### Chapter Three

#### **The Devil Is After Your Sight**

The devil wants to take away your ability to see and walk in the invisible realities of the Spirit thereby shutting you down and stopping you from operating in the supernatural realm of God. He hates to see us walking with the Lord and fulfilling our divine assignments on earth. He has no problem with you being a Christian or a believer or even being committed to your local assembly as long as you don't have the prophetic vision to see and fulfill your ordained destiny. He'll do all in his power to make sure you do not have prophetic vision in order not to fulfill your destiny.

The devil would do everything he can to hinder us from gaining visions and revelations of the Lord. Why would he want to watch you being caught up to God and His throne (*Rev. 12:5*), knowing that it would cause him and his kingdom great pains?

Paul had a supernatural encounter with the Lord and we today can have such encounters but the devil hinders us from such. He wants us to remain at the level of being born again without experiencing the reality of Christ and his tabernacle like Paul did.

*It is doubtless not profitable for me to boast. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord*

*I know a man in Christ who fourteen years ago-whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows such a one was caught up to the third heaven*

*And I know such a man whether in body or out of the body I do not know, God knows How he was caught up into Paradise and heard inexpressible words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter - 2Cor. 12:1-4 (Read also Heb. 9:5).*

Paul was caught up to Paradise. It is also called the third dimension of God, the third heaven, the tabernacle or the Most Holy Place. It was a superb encounter. This is our abode.

### **Season of visions and revelations of Christ**

We are in a season of incredible visions and revelations of the Lord. In this season, sons of God are experiencing the manifest presence of God in a unique way. The Holy Spirit is making all things plain to us. All form of ambiguity concerning our faith is being done away with. We are being caught up (rapture) to the third dimension in God where God speaks with us plainly (*Heb. 9:5, 2Cor. 12:4, Rev. 5:1-5*).

*But I make known to you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ - Gal.1:11-12.*

*For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles- if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),*

*which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:*

*that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power  
- Eph. 3:1-7.*

*That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him - Eph. 1:17.*

*Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ  
- Eph. 4:13.*

*Now it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, on the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the River Chebar, that the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God - Ezek. 1:1.*

*He stretched out the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my hair, and the Spirit lifted me up between earth and heaven, and brought me in visions of God to Jerusalem, to the door of the north gate of the inner court, where the seat of the image of jealousy was, which provokes to jealousy.*

*And behold, the glory of the God of Israel was there, like the vision that I saw in the plain - Ezek. 8:3, 4.*

John was one of the disciples and an apostle of Jesus Christ who knew Jesus Christ so well to the point that He could lean on His chest. The Bible describes him as the disciple whom Jesus loved. Other apostles like Peter approached John to get special information from Jesus. In spite of their closeness and intimacy John did not receive visions and revelations of Christ while He was here on earth in human form until He resurrected. It was after His resurrection that John received visions and revelations of Christ. When he saw a vision and revelation of Jesus Christ in the spirit he cried and fell at His feet as dead.

*When Jesus had said these things, He was troubled in spirit, and testified and said, "Most assuredly, I say to you, one of you will betray Me."*

*Then the disciples looked at one another, perplexed about whom He spoke.*

*Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of His disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore motioned to him to ask who it was of whom He spoke.*

*Then, leaning back on Jesus' breast, he said to Him, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I shall give a piece of bread when I have dipped it." And having dipped the bread, He gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon.*

*Now after the piece of bread, Satan entered him. Then Jesus said to him, "What you do, do quickly." - John 13:21-27.*

*Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, "Lord, who is the one who betrays You?" - John 21:20.*

John had a spiritual encounter with Jesus Christ while he was in the island of Patmos. We need such spiritual encounters in our day. If you ever experience or touch the truth in the dimension of the Spirit it is awesome and has the power to change your life.

*I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

*I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last," and, "What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea."*

*Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band.*

*His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength.*

*And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, "Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last - Rev. 1:9-17.*

If we compare *John 13:21-27, 21:20*, with *Rev. 1:9-17*, we will deduce that the Jesus, John leaned on His chest is different from the Christ he saw in the island of Patmos.

The visions and revelations of the Lord changes our perception of the Lord and how we worship Him. They reposition us and bring us to a place of deeper and stronger intimacy and connectivity with God. I pray that you will come to the dimension of vision and revelation of who Christ is.

The greatest sight you can possess is the 'sight or vision of the Lord.' The second greatest sight is that of your prophetic purpose. The greatest attack the devil can bring upon you is not cancer or abject poverty but it is to get you blind from seeing the glory of Christ and your core purpose of existence.

We are living in the days of God's encounter so don't allow the devil to steal your vision of the Lord. Do not give up on your passion and tenacity to see Christ the way He is. Don't give up on the hunger and thirst of your soul for God. Please don't give up on your desire and prayers to walk in your God given destiny.

Don't allow the devil to steal your sight of the vision and revelation of the Lord. If the devil succeeds in stealing your spiritual sight, he will give you religion that will never allow you to come to visions and revelations of Christ. You cannot be a vibrant Christian without daily encounter with the Lord. What you need is an encounter with the Lord like Paul on his way to Damascus and John in the island of Patmos.

Do you know what happened to Samson, the anointed man of God? Do not allow the devil to steal your sight like he did to Samson. The devil got him because he was distracted from his prophetic destiny.

### **Samson lost his sight**

The same devil who took away the sight of Samson, a man of God and tried to turn him into an entertainer is working hard today to take our sight too and turn us into entertainers of God's people if we allow him. Samson lost his ability to track God and became distracted. The devil took advantage of his fall to attack him before he could gain his sight back.

Samson was a man of sight walking in his prophetic purpose and destiny but it was really pitiful for him that the devil literally plucked out his eyes to demonstrate the kind of hatred he had for him. The devil could have gone for any other part of Samson's body but he strategically went for the eyes, which represent the prophetic vision of his life and generation. The devil got him because he was distracted. But when he repented, he sought for vengeance and it was devastating for the Philistines.

I believe what happened to Samson, the anointed man of God is a spiritual lesson to alert us that the devil is waiting eagerly to strike any believer that is careless about his deception therefore we should focus on our God-given assignment doggedly.

#### Chapter Four

#### **Identify What You Must Bury Like Abraham Did**

As the Bible says, we are of the seed of Abraham who was a man of sight. And so we must follow in the footsteps of our father, Abraham. Unfortunately many believers have been robbed of their sight by the devil through offence, bitterness and unforgiveness. Our ability to see clearly has been weakened because we have refused to bury certain 'dead bodies' out of our sight, such as past hurts, shame, offences, bitterness and unforgiveness. These are the things that have stolen our sight.

I do not know of anything that robs a believer of his or her sight like these 'dead bodies.' They make you focus on what was done to you, why it should not have been you, why the person(s) must be punished and how you would want the person (s) to be punished. By so doing, you tend to forget what God and His word says about the matter. This can make you lose sight of who you are in Christ and you might not be able to hear the voice of the Holy Spirit as He tries to encourage or help you.

It is somewhat unfortunate that many people especially women are imprisoned by their past mistakes, failures, disappointments, etc. Some issues must be reckoned dead and buried and out of sight. Just like what Abraham said concerning the dead body of Sarah.

Like Abraham we must be ready to bury the dead out of our sight or else we choose to live with them. Even so, it is time you buried your own dead, out of your sight.

We are going to consider this critical subject in two ways. Firstly, we are going to identify some of our own 'dead bodies' that are living with us. Secondly, we are going to take back the power we gave to them to rule over us and bury them out of our sight like Abraham did.

A problem is half solved, when we are able to identify the root of it. We must understand that these bodies are lifeless but they receive life from us to survive in our lives. They are powerless but draw power from us to conquer and rule over us. They are parasites that feed on the victim. They are like 'tenants' who render the house owner powerless because of sheer ignorance and then take over the house. Their ability to live and survive in us, and prevail over our lives, decisions and all that we do has everything to do with the fact that we have empowered them to do so. It is to the degree we empower them that they rule over us.

It is vital for you to understand that it is your responsibility to identify the dead bodies in and around you and then take back the power you have given to them and proceed to bury them out of your sight.

I will attempt to discuss some of these dead bodies and how you can identify them and bury them out of your sight so that they no longer hold you hostage.

## **The past**

The past has the ability to hold us captive. So, you must take pains to undergo the spiritual and psychological exercise of burying your past out of your sight. Put away the past and the failures you've experienced, they are only stepping-stones to a greater future. The obstacles and failures of yesterday no longer count. What does matter is that your life can change if you're willing to forget the past. Your yesterday is gone, your today is yours while your tomorrow has not yet come; it is still in the womb.

Do you know that your past is lifeless except you continually give power to it? You can spend your precious life sorrowing and regretting over your past especially some costly mistakes you must have made. Does that change the fact that you made them? No! But you can give God a chance to come into your heart and put your life together again and heal your memory.

It takes a decision. Make up your mind through the power of the Holy Spirit to bury your past out of your sight. Some people hold on to their past more than their present and future. Unfortunately, they get tormented by their past experiences. They remember every bad thing they did and sorrow over them daily. But they fail to remember the good they might have done to someone. Always bear in mind that the power and victory you have over your past is what you do with your present.

## **You need to do something about your memory**

You need to deal with memories of the past or the ones that do not give honour to God. There are some memories that must be deleted. Negative memories have the power to torment you and make you see yourself as a person who deserves death just because you have not been able to forgive yourself and others of past mistakes.

I have always maintained that “the past is passed” and there is nothing you can do about it, but you can determine your present and your future by walking in agreement with the will of God for your life. It is impossible for you to go back to yesterday and make all things new, but you can turn to the Lord Jesus for healing, wisdom and strength to go forward in life and have a happy life.

Take some time to meditate on this life transforming thought of Bishop T.D. Jakes. “Life is too short to allow yourself to be an inmate in the prison of bad choices, weak decisions *and failures of yesterday.*” (Words in italics added by me).

When you come to the knowledge of God and the fact that the blood of Jesus has set you free, that settles it. It settles your past, present and future. Perhaps your father or uncle abused you sexually, emotionally, psychologically or physically and you are still being tormented by it. It's time to bury it out of sight and move on with life. You still have life to live.

Whatever pains or disappointment your dad or mum must have caused you can be buried out of your sight. It does not matter if you were rejected and abandoned by your parents and you did not really enjoy parental affection, your heavenly Father was there for you even when you did not know Him. He was always there to watch, protect and provide for you.

You must not try to hide under the cloak of shame, but bury the dead out of your sight. Do you have any “Ishmael” in your life? Ishmael represents that which we acquire by our power in an attempt to help God make things happen. Ishmael is a product of the flesh. Do not try to shift the blame or try to hide from your 'Ishmael,' but accept your mistake and take responsibility for your action. There is none of us that have not messed up in life, no, not one. But we must learn to put the past behind us and move on with lives.

## **The dead is dead**

In a bid to satisfy the ancient worthless and lifeless custom and tradition of some communities, most women are forced to live in the consciousness of the death of their husbands for a prolonged period of time. This is to their disadvantage as it hinders them from living their own life and fulfilling their purpose in life. In some cases, the women take personal decision, which is made blindly and ignorantly for their loved ones. But it

is advisable for such women to bury their dead out of mind and sight so that they can move on with their lives. Of course, woman, you still have your life to live.

## **Relationship**

Whatever it is that no longer have life in it should be buried out of sight! It could be a relationship, an unpalatable experience or personal issue. God blesses us with godly relationships. God's ordained relationships are designed to increase us and help us to fulfill our individual and corporate destiny.

If you are in a relationship that is not increasing you, it's better to call it quits and bury it out of sight. There are relationships you give your time, energy and money to, yet, they would not work. But you still stick to them because there is uncertainty about the outcome and you are afraid of letting go for fear of starting all over again or being alone. You will get suffocated in such relationship if you refuse to quit. Agreeably, some relationships are not meant to last forever. It is advisable to find out the purpose of God for every relationship you enter into.

When you try to keep and sustain relationship that God has not ordained for your life, it may cause you pains and disappointments. Do not give your attention to any relationship that is not ordained by God for your life and destiny, because they will suck life out of you, frustrate you and get you distracted from your purpose in life. It is better to identify such relationships and bury them out of your sight in order to focus on the relationships God has ordained for your glory. Every one of God's ordained relationships for your life and destiny should bring increase to your life and affect your spirit, soul and body positively.

## **Disappointment in your spouse**

What is that thing your spouse or partner did to you that is causing your heart to bleed? Your spouse may have done something that you consider unforgivable, but there is nothing that cannot be forgiven as long as you have the mind of Christ. It can be forgiven and buried out of sight. Maybe you are so disappointed in your spouse to the extent of wanting to seek for divorce, please hold on; whatever it is can be buried out of sight. Is it that you are too disappointed in your spouse and you find it really difficult to show him/her true affection again, please make up your mind to bury the dead out of your sight.

## **Disappointment in your person**

Perhaps you are totally disappointed in yourself because of self-inflicted pains. You know what? We all have been disappointed in ourselves, and we have also caused ourselves pains out of ignorance. Haven't you? Don't give up on yourself but forgive and release yourself. If God has forgiven you, who are you not to forgive yourself?

You may feel all is going well with your friends and family members and nothing is happening for you. It may actually seem as if nothing fascinating is happening in your life. You may feel it is because of your past life and you hold yourself responsible for your pains. Yes, you might be responsible but you can forgive yourself and bury whatever you must have done in the past out of your sight.

### **Disappointment in your leader**

If I fail to address those who are disappointed in their leaders, their pastors and local churches, I would not have done a complete job. Yes, there are many people who are grieved and bitter, they are disappointed in their pastors and churches but cannot speak out. They are always complaining and murmuring. And there are also some who have stopped attending church meetings because of bitterness and offences. It is time to forgive and bury it out of your sight.

It is true that there are bosses who treat their staff disdainfully, but that boss is not your enemy; pray that God will open his or her eyes to the knowledge of the truth. It is time for you to bury whatever he or she has done to you out of your sight. Every negative thing that ever happened to us and caused us pain and shame should be considered dead and must be buried out of sight now and forever.

### **Take stock of your ministry activities**

In ministry sometimes we are so wrapped up with activities and programmes in order to keep the work of the ministry. Some of these activities and programmes may be self-motivated and designed to satisfy the ego of the set-man, while some of them may be genuinely organized to strengthen the people. Some of our programmes may be worthless and may not birth the purpose of God and the reality of the nature of Christ in God's people but we still hold on to them. They have become 'idols' that we worship. Every man or woman of God must evaluate and take stock of his or her ministry every now and then in order to weed off the chaff.

There are church programmes that genuinely touch the lives of the people and give strength to them, but have now become boring that they weaken the people spiritually and mentally. There are others that get the people connected to God but now get them connected to 'strange spirits and demons.' Why would you spend your time, energy and money to organize a conference or seminar, and you end up in debt, frustrated and unfulfilled? If the praise and worship or certain songs used in the church have become lifeless and no longer get God's people connected to the frequency of the Spirit, then they should be buried out of sight. My friend, it takes sight and courage to do this. Remember, you can never have the new wine except you give up on the old wine and put away the old wine skin.

## Chapter Five

### **Now Bury Your Own Dead Body**

Now concerning what Abraham said and did about the dead body of Sarah, it was not make-believe but a reality and it is a prophetic message for the church of Christ today.

As Abraham buried the dead body of Sarah out of his sight, you should also bury your own 'dead bodies' out of your sight now. Having identified some of these dead bodies, you are going to take back the power that you gave to them and render them powerless. You do not stop at just making them powerless but you must bury them out of your sight. You need to get your prophetic vision back and this will not happen until you bury the dead bodies of your past mistakes and disappointments out of your sight.

You cannot love the dead body of your loved one enough to keep him or her from being buried. If you do, you will remain sorrowful, visionless, unfocused and not able to live your own life. There is always a time to bury a dead body and accept the reality that the person is dead and gone. But if you decide on living with a dead body, it is because you are dead also. Spiritually speaking, dead people live with dead bodies while men and women of the Spirit and prophetic vision deal with the living and bury dead bodies out of their sights.

Medical practitioners have revealed that dead tissues, cells and organs get life from other parts of the body and cannot generate their own life. In fact, they hinder the normal flow of blood in the body and breaks down the body mechanism. When we peep into the realm of the Spirit, we will discover that dead bodies feed on the life of the house owner. There are a lot of dead bodies living in us and they are there because we permitted them. They survive and prevail for weeks, months and even years because we accommodate and empower them.

For more understanding, please permit me to call these 'dead bodies' living with us as "foreigners," who come as tenants but have taken ownership of the house. In order to reiterate, these dead bodies are bitterness, unforgiveness, offence, malice, disappointment, hurts, etc, and the house they have taken ownership of is your body. It is astonishing how these dead bodies come into us to stay and later take over our mind and use it against God's will. The devil uses what we have against us. He takes hold of our mind and accuses us until we fall into condemnation that makes us hide from God.

The most shocking part of it is that, these 'dead bodies or foreigners' cannot come into us to stay without our permission. In other words, we are the ones that invite them to dwell with us and they come and eventually take over our lives. You know what? They will not stop at just that, but will become our master while we become the slave under their torment.

### **They have no life and power**

They have no life or power of their own but they use the life and power you give them to operate in your life, in your relationship and in your marriage. It is you who empowers them to deal with you while you groan under their torment.

Anger and bitterness cannot jump on you, so you become angry and bitter. It is your choice to be angry and bitter. You can choose to be angry over another man's opinion about you or you can choose not to be. If you are angry and bitter because of what someone says about you, it means that you agree with the person and what he says. Guess who suffers it? It's you of course.

Malice has no power of its own to function in your life except the power you give to it to dominate you. Malice is nothing but a lifeless word that becomes active, forceful and dangerous when you give it power to rule in your life, relationships or family. It is you who has given power to these dead bodies to live and rule in your life.

Abraham could have spent the rest of his life sorrowing over the dead body of Sarah thereby aborting his spiritual journey on earth. He could have given his remaining life on earth to mourn over her dead body, thereby, truncating his own life and destiny. Yes, he would not have achieved his life's aim. That is what happens when you give your life and power to these 'dead bodies': they live while you die. They take away your power to live.

They take away your health and relationships. They cut short your life and your life's goal comes to ruin.

Do you know how many destinies have been truncated because of bitterness, unforgiveness and offence? What about relationships and marriages that have failed and crushed because of the evils of these dead bodies?

Some people especially women think that they are in charge of their lives, but these invisible 'dead bodies' are the ones in charge. They have taken over the lives of many people and are dominating them. They regulate and determine what their victims should do daily, where they should go and who they should relate to. They tell them when they should be happy and when not to be, and who they should be happy with. In fact, they go as far as telling them when they should smile and laugh.

Honestly my dear, let us not sit down and fold our hands while these 'dead bodies' rule and ruin our lives, our relationships and our families. This is the time for us to take up arms against them and take back what we have given to the devil, which he is using against us.

### **It's time to take it back**

Take what back? You may ask. Take back your life and power that you have given to the 'dead bodies.' Get up! My friend, take back the power you have given to malice, bitterness, shame, disappointment and offence. It is time to tell these 'dead bodies' that they are dead and powerless, and should not live with you any longer. Tell them enough is enough, and you want your life back. You want your power to live back. Yes! Take it back because you have a right to it. And believe it, you have a right over your life because God gave it to you.

Now stand your ground and tell these dead bodies that there is no room for them any more in your life, your relationships and marriage. It is time to break free from every agreement you have made with malice, unforgiveness, bitterness, rejection, condemnation, low-self esteem, inferiority complex, etc. Announce to them that there is, no more room in your life for them. When you do this, you will become strong and gain back your God-given power to live a meaningful life and enjoy sound health.

We are a people of power, strength and understanding. It is incredible how powerful we are because of the Holy Ghost inside of us. We are loaded and well equipped for any battle and to win any war. But we fail and get defeated at the battlefield because of these 'dead bodies.' They simply hand us over to the devil to torment us.

I have discovered by observation, even from my own life and the lives of people around me that whenever we give our lives and powers to these 'dead bodies' to be in control of our lives, we become weak and sickly. Do you want to know why? It's because we have no power and faith to face the present and we have no hope for the future. Do not give your life and power to 'dead bodies' to be in-charge of your life. In whatever means they come into your life, do not accommodate them.

You must be alert so that the devil will not deceive you to give away your power to the 'dead bodies.' They only come to steal your joy and mar your destiny. People become frail and powerless when they give their God-given power to them to rule their lives. Ordinarily, no child of God should feel hopeless, powerless and defeated except he or she is under the influence and manipulation of these 'dead bodies.'

Paul addresses this issue of being taken advantage of by the devil through ignorance. And he warns us to avoid giving room to the devil to occupy. I think we have given the devil rooms to occupy in our lives and homes. Now he has become the boss instead of a servant.

*Now whom you forgive anything, I also forgive. For if Indeed I have forgiven anything, I have forgiven that one for your sakes in the presence of Christ, Lest Satan should take advantage of us for we are not ignorant of his devices*  
- 2 Cor. 2: 10, 11.

*"Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, Nor give place to the devil - Eph. 4: 26, 27.*

One of the good things about knowledge is that it brings empowerment and freedom to whoever has it. I am a believer of the word of God and I know according to the Word of God that, knowledge acted upon brings freedom. When knowledge is acted upon, it is translated into energy or force or power that breaks chains and shackles of bondage and liberates the people. This is why the easiest way to empower and change a people is by giving them proper knowledge. Knowledge is light; it illuminates and dispels darkness.

*"And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." - John 8: 32.*

If you will allow what you are reading in this book to be internalised and to become flesh in you, it will bring about absolute change in your life where it is required. I am not talking about head-knowledge but heart-knowledge that has the capacity to change the way you see yourself and the way you think.

If you have not made up your mind to put to action what you are reading in this book, I humbly ask you to decide now if you want your life to get better. You can decide if you want to remain the way you are or be liberated. My dear reader, you do not have to continue on this same road of bitterness, offence and unforgiveness. You don't have to

remain as you are now. You can change all that if you truly want to and live the life God has ordained for you.

Something supernatural, which is of the Holy Spirit, is going to happen to you as you make up your mind to let go. You can lay hold on healing and deliverance even as you release your offenders. You can be healed from every hurt, shame and abuse now. Forgiveness is all yours. Salvation is all yours. Jesus Christ has given it freely to all of us.

## Chapter Six

### **Give The Devil No Place**

The devil will always look for a platform in your life, relationship and marriage so that he can carry out his obnoxious attacks on you and your loved ones. But I want you to become desperate and determined not to give the devil any place in your life, relationship and marriage to carry out his wicked attacks. It is important you understand that the devil cannot come in unless you open the door for him. Also, he can do nothing unless you give him the platform and power to operate.

The easiest way to open the door for the devil or to give a platform to the devil is through unforgiveness, offence and bitterness. When you vehemently refuse to walk in love and forgiveness towards others especially those who have offended you, by so doing you, you are giving the devil a platform to rule. Since we expect the Lord and people to love and forgive us when we err, we should also love and forgive others when they sin against us.

### **Satan's weapon of havoc**

The devil works hard to ensure there is distrust and disunity in a relationship or home where there is harmony. He uses the platform of animosity to carry out his wicked acts on people and family. The devil works round the clock looking for the vessel he can use to cause pains and tears of sorrow on earth. Because we are insensitive about his strategy, we open the door easily through offence, bitterness and unforgiveness and thus

allow the devil to come and wrought havoc in our lives and relationships. Don't give the devil any platform to operate because of your selfishness, spiritual blindness and deafness.

The present church focuses on external enemies more than the internal enemies. While we focus on the external enemies and how to defeat them, the enemies in us are gaining more grounds in our lives and causing our fellowship with God and the brethren to be weak and unproductive. The enemies living in us are stronger and more harmful than the external enemies such as witches, wizards, demons etc. **The external enemies cannot do much harm; they must have a platform in us before they can touch us.** No wonder Jesus said *...for the ruler of this world is coming, and he has nothing in Me (Jn. 14:30).*

These invisible platforms; offences, bitterness, unforgiveness, fear, regret etc are the seats and thrones of Satan in homes, families, organizations, churches, etc. These are the enemies that must not be accommodated as companions by anyone who love his or her life because they would attract the external enemies. Also, they would not allow you to be free so that you can love and be loved by others. Nor will they allow you to live your life maximally.

We spend more time in prayers casting down the external enemies like witches, wizards and demons instead of concentrating on overcoming the internal enemies like offence, unforgiveness, bitterness, malice, resentment, etc. If we are able to overcome these, we can then enjoy the true freedom that is given to us by God.

Again, I say, the internal enemies are more dangerous than the external enemies. If you can take care of the internal devils and demons, the external devils and demons would become idle and powerless over your life. This is prayer made easy.

There are those among us who pray for the external enemies to 'fall down and die' without understanding that, what can be offended in us and the internal enemies are the true enemies that must 'fall down and die.'

In actuality, the internal enemies are the ones who invite the external enemies to attack you. The moment there is presence of bitterness and malice in your life, it does not matter if your reason for bitterness or malice is justified. It will automatically become a platform for demons and devils to invade your life and the lives of your loved ones. The presence of bitterness and offence in our lives would automatically shut the door against the Holy Spirit and open the door for the demons to attack us.

## Chapter Seven

### **Be Conscious Of The Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit does not dwell in a house where there is bitterness. This is one of the reasons why we must keep our lives free of bitterness, be as wise as the serpent and as harmless as the dove. *Matt. 8:16*. Dove is a symbol of the Holy Spirit. It is the only bird without gall (bile). Gall depicts bitterness. We must do everything possible through the power of the Holy Spirit to avoid bitterness in our lives.

The scriptures explicitly inform us in *Eph. 4:30-31* that the easiest way we grieve the Holy Spirit is by our attitude of bitterness. Paul said, *'And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption,'* he added, *'Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.'*

Genuine heart relationship and communion with the Holy Spirit is impossible in the presence of bitterness. If you really want to have and enjoy sweet fellowship with the Holy Spirit, you must not give a space for bitterness in your heart.

Fuchsia Pickett wrote in her book, "Understanding the Personality of the Holy Spirit" that, "Offending one of our brothers or sisters in Christ, our spouse, or our children, hurts the heart of the Holy Spirit, for He dwells in each of them." We grieve the Holy Spirit when we cause a brother or sister in Christ, or our spouse, or children to stumble. We have to be careful how we treat each other as believers. No wonder Paul exhorted the Ephesian Christians to, *"Be kind to another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in*

*Christ also has forgiven you" (Eph. 4:32, NAS). He carefully instructed Christians about responding to each other "with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:2-3, NAS). We will not hurt the heart of the Holy Spirit if we are conscious to live by these instructions.*

**Our lives, relationships and homes must be free of bitterness, offence and unforgiveness so as not to grieve and quench the Holy Spirit, thereby giving the devil a platform to attack us and our loved ones.** Remember, the devil can't strike until we first open the door for him. God forbid that we will be the instrument of destruction of the miracle of God in our lives and homes.

You see, it is for your good that you cast out bitterness, unforgiveness and malice from your life and home. The more of these you have, the firmer will be the grip of the devil on your life and family. If you permit bitterness or malice for a week, the devil will reign and rule in your life and family for a week. But the moment you cast off bitterness, he leaves.

These silent enemies are spiritual weapons of mass destruction that can wreck great and unimaginable havoc in your life, your family, the church, community, etc, if they are given the platform to do so. All we have to do to avoid great destruction upon our lives is to keep the door of our heart shut against offence, bitterness and unforgiveness.

I am yet to know of any weapon that is as effective and results guaranteed in the hands of the devil like the weapons of offence, bitterness and unforgiveness. The devil uses these weapons very well against God's people to rob them of their ability to acquire sight and to maintain it. They don't allow God's people to finish the race strong. You know, the devil does not mind how strong you start the race but he wants to ensure that you do not finish triumphantly. God is interested in us finishing the race strong like Jesus Christ and Paul did.

*Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work - John 4:34.*

This is the testimony of Paul before his departure from this realm of life.

*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing - 2Tim. 4:6-8.*

BOOK TWO

**Offence, Bitterness, and Unforgiveness:**

**The Noiseless Enemies That Hinder And Stop Us From Fulfilling Our Destiny**

## Chapter Eight

### **Common Grounds Of Offence**

People get offended for different reasons. I want to try and examine the obvious reasons that are common among us. It shouldn't amaze you to know that people get offended at God and His word for a number of reasons. Among them are tribulation and persecution. You and I know that we do not like pains. Therefore, you can understand why people stumble when they are being refined and purified by the word of God they had received and are holding on to.

*But he who received the seed on the stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy"*

*"yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation and persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles - Matt. 13:20, 21, Mk. 4:17.*

- **People get offended at God and His infallible word.**

The promise is always preferred to the process, hence, people get displeased and offended when God's word is processing them for the promise. In their imagination and thought they simply want to see the manifestation of the word they have received without being processed for it. No wonder some so-called breakthroughs actually break people down. It is the same word that we receive and believe that also refine us so that we will not become casualties and be destroyed by it.

People do not like change and even resist change when they are faced with it or challenged by others to change. We get offended because we do not like change when the proceeding word of God confronts us and exposes the dark areas of our lives. The word of the Lord is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart (*Heb. 4:12*). This word comes to correct, adjust and conform us to the image of Christ according to *2Cor.3: 18 But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as by the Spirit of the Lord - (2Tim. 3:16, 17, Rom. 8:29)*.

It is amazing how people expect God to give them microwave miracles and breakthroughs without the willingness to go through the dealings of God. These same people get offended when they feel God is coming too slowly. My dear friend, God makes all things beautiful in His time and not your time (*Ecc1 3:11*). Men who feel God has treated them unfairly become bitter against God. Some cannot hide their bitterness against God as they complain and castigate the church and those who God has called to a position of authority.

- **Christians get offended by their leaders, pastors and the entire ministers and break the bond of unity and fellowship.**

Sometimes the same offence that sent you out of your local assembly will also send you out of another one. Now, I do understand that there are genuine and obvious cases of abuse, grief and witchcraft from the pulpit in some churches that can lead someone to leave a local assembly for another one. My point is that offence should not be the reason why we break and abandon fellowship with the brethren. Instead of allowing them to tear us apart and give them rooms to occupy, let us be willing to deal with them by the power of the Holy Spirit even as they come.

- **People get offended at God at the death of their loved one**

Death is a painful experience. The death of a loved one can make you to stumble thereby stealing your ability to track God and be focused and pursue your purpose in life. People have ignorantly accused and blamed God for the death of their loved ones. It is like they feel that God was not God enough to watch over them and even allow their loved ones to die. They feel their commitment to God was enough to make God avert the death of their loved ones. They find it difficult to accept the fact that God would allow their loved one to die despite the fact that they are faithful in all areas to God. Let's face it. How faithful are we really to God? If God should go by our commitment and faithfulness to Him, who would be qualified to get any blessing from Him?

Instead of getting offended at God and drag Him to your "court of appeal" against the death of your loved one, please let us follow the path of David. When his child that Bathsheba gave birth to died according to *2 Sam. 12:15-24*, he was still committed to God. Do not allow your religious mind to contest and oppose what I am saying here.

Someone will say the child died because he was a product of adultery. Yes, he was. Again, I ask you, how clean and faithful are you? When the child fell sick, David fasted and prayed that God should heal and save the life of the child but the child died. David responded to the death of the child by washing and eating. He ate because he knew that being sorrowful and agonizing over the death of the child would not bring back the child to life.

These are the very words of David

*... "While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for I said, ' Who can tell whether the LORD will be gracious to me, that the child may live, But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" - 2Sam. 12: 22, 23.*

David did not have to condemn and crucify himself because of the death of his child, though he knew that the son's death was the righteous judgment of God for his sin of adultery. We have to understand that holding God accountable and blaming Him for the death of our loved ones is not a solution to our grief but accepting the reality of the death of your loved one and giving thanks and being grateful to God for the life he or she lived before death should be our response.

Maybe somewhere in your heart you still believe that what happened to David was what he deserved, so what would you say of Job, the righteous man, who lost all his possessions for a reason that only God can explain? Job understood the sovereignty of God to give life and to take it when it pleases Him to do so without seeking anybody's permission. He is the unquestionable God that is not answerable to any man. The Bible says that Job did not sin or accuse God when he lost his sons and daughters, servants and possessions in the day of his trial.

*Then Job arose tore his robe, and shaved his head; and he fell to the ground and worshipped. And he said: "Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away blessed be the name of the Lord." In all this Job did not sin or charge God with wrong - Job 1:20-22.*

God gives life and He has the power to take it when he wants. We are on this earth for divine assignment, and when we are done with our assignment, the Lord who sent us here will take us back to where we came from. It does not matter how we feel about it. There is no doubt that we would want our loved ones who died to live longer but God determines that your money, connections and whatever you have would not be able to do it. God knows why you and I are here on earth; He also knows when the assignment is accomplished. He knows the end from the beginning. He knows what would have become of the testimony and legacy of your loved one who died at fifteen years old, if he or she had lived up to fifty years old. **While we focus on longevity, God focuses**

**on purpose and fulfilment.** Let us be grateful to God for the privilege to be alive and be useful to Him and His kingdom.

- **Jesus' relations were offended at Him for being used of God to impart and transform lives - Matt. 13:54-58.**

The other day, a lady shared an experience with me of how she looked forward to her best friend rejoicing with her at the news of her wedding that was coming up. But instead, she got the shock of her life at the negative attitude and disappointment of her friend towards her. Her cold reception of the news was like **saying** something like this, "It should have been me, why you?" The good news she would have celebrated with her friend now brought jealousy, offence and disunity. The written word of God admonishes us to rejoice with those who are rejoicing (*Rom. 12:15*). When we refuse to rejoice with our friends, colleagues and or neighbours when God promotes them, we simply pass judgment on ourselves and shut the door against our own testimony. We pass a message across to God that we are not yet ready to rejoice even for ourselves.

Do not allow yourself to get jealous and offended at the breakthrough, victory and success of your friend, colleague or neighbour but be thankful to God for him or her. Do you know why? Because you understand that your own time will come too. A friend told me that "when we go to bed to sleep, we do not all wake up at the same time," God wakes us up at different times, so it is also with God's operations in our lives.

- **People get offended when their expectations are not met, like John the Baptist.**

*"Now it came to pass, when Jesus finished commanding His twelve disciples, that He departed from there to teach and to preach in their cities. And when John had heard in prison about the works of Christ, he sent two of his disciples. And said to Him, "Are you the Coming One, or do we look for another?" Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me." - Matt. 11:1-6.*

It is unbelievable that John the Baptist got offended for whatever reason best known to him. I think his reason is not far-fetched. It might be unmet expectation. Jesus left him in the prison. He expected Jesus to come to his rescue when King Herod imprisoned him. But that was not Jesus' mission. It was not part of Jesus' assignment to get him out of the prison. John did not like it at all. He began to doubt the Sonship and Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Really and truly, this is common among us. Let us look at a scenario of a young man who approached his uncle for some financial assistance to pay for an accommodation. As far

as this young man was concerned, the uncle has the financial muscles to meet his need. He should have no excuse whatsoever under the sun not to help him. Unfortunately for him, his uncle could not help him because he was having some financial challenges which he did not tell anyone, though he was still riding his flashy cars and went about his life as usual. Before his financial challenges came, he had bought tickets for the family holiday abroad. This was the same time the young man asked for assistance. The uncle tried to explain to him of his predicament and promised to help with little amount but he got disappointed and offended. The young man who sees only from his own angle and pains, refused to understand that the uncle was in a tight corner. He went to other family members and told them, "Uncle so and so is a wicked man; he could send his family abroad on holidays but could not help me." But this was not the true position of things. He had already bought the tickets before he approached him for assistance, besides, he promised to help with some amount of money.

It could happen between you and your boss in your office, even your fellow colleagues. When your boss is silent concerning your effectiveness in the organization before the management staff, what do you do? When you expect him or her to speak of your contribution to the success of his or her department but he or she says neither bad nor good of you, what will you do? This will definitely make you to be unhappy with your boss and may probably get you frustrated on the job. Your commitment and loyalty to your boss and the company will not be as effective again. Of course, your heart would be disappointed and it might lead to offence if not well taken care of.

Listen to me child of God, you are working for and representing God in your organisation. Please focus on your divine assignment and don't get distracted. God has the power to promote and bless you in the midst of jealousy, hostility, favouritism and oppression. Do not compromise your faith or violate the voice of your conscience because of some cheap favour and promotion. Do not get disappointed and offended when your expectations are not met, rather, be thankful to God who is constantly working behind the scene for your good.

Do you know why we look forward to hearing bad news of other people, especially those who have done us wrong? Some people who are offended and bitter look forward to hearing bad news concerning their offenders. It could be their colleagues, neighbours, family members, ex-lovers, etc, who had disappointed them and caused them pain. Their precious souls are inexplicably tormented each time they see their offenders excited or hear some good news about them. They want to hear that their offenders are paying for the pains they caused them. They wonder when God will judge them. And they ask, is God no longer God of vengeance? It shouldn't be so.

Some spouses get disappointed and offended and bitter with their husbands or wives to the extent that they do not wish them well in life. Disappointment in people and even yourself can make you stumble and weaken you, thereby getting you distracted from

staying connected to God and His word for your life. This might mean that you may abandon your purpose in life.

## Chapter Nine

### **Offence Did Not Start With You**

Offence is not peculiar to our generation and our time, it has been there from the day of Cain who got offended and killed his brother Abel. There are people in the Bible that stumbled before you and I were ever born.

- **The first person that readily comes to mind when offence is mentioned is Cain.**

He was offended that God accepted his brother's offering and rejected his. He decided to kill his brother, Abel. And he did kill him.

*"And in the process of time it came to pass that Cain brought an offering of the fruit of the ground to the LORD.*

*Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the LORD respected Abel and his offering. But He did not respect Cain and his offering. And Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell.*

*So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen?*

*"If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire is for you, but you should rule over it."*

*Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against his brother and killed him - Gen. 4:3-8.*

This clearly tells us that people can kill when they are offended. **Offence is behind most of the assassinations and murders in our communities and cities.** If we learn how to handle offence, there will be no need to kill to satisfy ego.

- **Joseph's brothers were offended at his dreams and favouritism by their father.**

The brothers did not like the fact that Joseph was going to rule over them as revealed by the dreams he had. They were already displeased and offended at him even before his dreams. They were not happy with him for being their father's favourite, and had a special coat of many colours given to him by their father. They also knew that he was disclosing their secrets to their father (*Gen. 37:3-28*).

*But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him (vs 4)*

*And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us?*

*Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words (vs 8)*

*And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind (vs 11)*

*Now when they saw him afar off, even before he came near them, they conspired against him to kill him.*

*Then they said to one another, "Look, this dreamer is coming!*

*"Come therefore, let us now kill him and cast him into some pit; and we shall say, some wild beast has devoured him.' We shall see what will become of his dreams!" (Vs 18-20).*

- **David's brothers were unhappy that David was selected and anointed to be the king of Israel.**

They were offended at David's selection as the future King. They probably felt more qualified than David, who was spending his life in the desert with the sheep. What has the bush boy got to do with the throne? You know how they were made to stand until David was brought in and anointed. At the battle field Eliab, David's older brother, showed his displeasure and offence against David by rebuking him openly for showing interest to fight Goliath.

*"And Samuel said to Jesse, "Are all the young men here?"*

*Then he said, "There remains yet the youngest, and there he is, keeping the sheep." And Samuel said to Jesse, "Send and bring him. For we will not sit down till he comes here."*

*So he sent and brought him in. Now he was ruddy, with bright eyes, and good-looking. And the LORD said, "Arise, anoint him; for this is the one!"*

*Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah - 1Sam. 16:11-13.*

*.... Now Eliab his older brother heard when he spoke to the men; and Eliab's anger was aroused against him, and he said, "Why did you come down here? And with whom have you left those few sheep in the wilderness? I know your pride and the insolence of your heart, for you have come down to see the battle." And David said, "What have I done now? Is there not a cause? - 1Sam. 17:26-29.*

- **Saul was angry, jealous and offended that the women praised David instead of him.**

Saul became distracted and could not execute his duty as the king of Israel because of offence. Instead of focusing on his primary assignment as the king of Israel, he spent time, energy and resources daily working on strategies to kill David. This is exactly what offence does to us. He got jealous and offended because David was praised for a good job done. He saw David as a threat to his throne. In an attempt to kill David so that he could preserve his throne, he got himself killed.

*"Now it happened as they were coming home, when David was returning from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women had come out of all the cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tambourines, with joy, and with musical instruments, So the women sang as they danced and said: Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands."*

*Then Saul was very angry, and the saying displeased him; and he said, "They have ascribed to David ten thousands, and to me they have ascribed only thousands. Now what more can he have but the kingdom?"*

*So Saul eyed David from that day forward" - 1Sam. 18:6-9*

- **Absalom kept malice (offence) for two years with his half brother, Amnon because he had raped his sister, Tamar.**

He took vengeance with his own hands and got Amnon killed. The offence that made him kill his brother was the same offence that killed him.

*However, he would not heed her voice; and being stronger than she, he forced her and lay with her - 2 Sam. 13:14.*

When Absalom knew that Amnon had raped Tamar, he kept sealed lips about the matter while he was strategizing in his heart on how to hit him back and take vengeance on him. Absalom struck his brother after two full years. Are we truly different from Absalom? Or are we better than him? Don't we spend months and years strategizing to take vengeance also? But remember what offence did to Absalom.

*"And Absalom spoke to his brother Amnon neither good nor bad. For Absalom hated Amnon, because he had forced his sister Tamar And it came to pass, after two full years,*

*that Absalom had Sheep shearers in Baal Hazor, which is near Ephraim; so Absalom invited all the king's sons...*

*Now Absalom had commanded his servants, saying, "Watch now, when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say to you, 'Strike Amnon!' then kill him. Do not be afraid. Have I not commanded you? Be courageous and valiant So the servants of Absalom did to Amnon as Absalom had commanded, then all the king's sons arose, and each one got on his mule and fled - 1Sam. 13:22-29.*

- **Ahithophel was offended at David because of the shame David caused his family**

Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah that David masterminded his death because of his interest in Bathsheba. Ahithophel was a member of David's cabinet. He was a special adviser or counsellor to David. His counsel was indisputable and beyond human questioning.

*Now the advice of Ahithophel, which he gave in those days, was as if one had inquired at the oracle of God. So was all the advice of Ahithophel both with David....2 Sam. 16:23.*

As much as he did not like what David did, he could not speak out maybe because of respect for authority or fear of being charged for insulting the king. He did show the extent of his offence when he had the opportunity to destroy David. He left the camp and government of David and joined himself to Absalom and his government just because he wanted to get his revenge on David.

David's encounter with Bathsheba and the death of Uriah is well detailed in, *2 Sam. 11:1-27*. And also read about Ahithophel in, *2 Sam. 15:12, 16:15, 20-23, 17:14*. From the above scriptures we could see that Ahithophel was the grandfather of Bathsheba.

*So David sent and inquired about the woman. And someone said, "Is this not Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam, the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" - 2 Sam. 11:3.*

*Eliphelet the son of Ahasbai, the son of Maachathite, Eliam the son of Ahithophel the Gilonite - 2 Sam. 23:34.*

How did Ahithophel end his journey in life? The Bible clearly tells us that he hung himself. Why? Offence killed him.

- **John the Baptist, the man who came to announce the coming of Jesus Christ was offended too**

Jesus affirmatively spoke concerning the life and ministry of John. He said, among the prophets there was none greater than John. He came to point Israel to the One they were waiting for. He had revelation of Jesus as the Christ and lived to prepare the way

for the coming of Jesus (*Matt. 11:1-6, Mk. 11:23-26*). When he was imprisoned for heralding Christ he became offended at the way Jesus ignored him while imprisoned. You can almost feel the undercurrent of indignation when John sent his disciples to ask, "Are You the One or should we expect someone else?" (*Matt. 11:2*). It would have been impossible for us to know that John was offended at Jesus, if not for the answer Jesus gave to John. He ended the answer with, "Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of Me." The word translated 'fall away' is actually 'scandalizo' meaning to be offended, stumble and adopt a wrong course.

I am really amazed at the fact that these people were the architect of their misfortune and death. They could have lived a more meaningful life but offence distracted and killed them. There is no doubt that we want to live a meaningful and fulfilling life. In order to have this, we must identify the things that get us offended and allow God to deal with them.

## Chapter Ten

### **Why We Get Offended**

We will cry out in bitterness and offence when we become too sensitive, jealous of our reputation before men, refuse to be vulnerable in the hands of God, caring too much what men think of us, too conscious of self.

- **Pride**

Pride has to do with feeling too important about yourself and taking yourself too seriously. People who take themselves too seriously get offended easily when they feel that they are not being respected as they deserve. Pride is simply when someone does not accept whom he or she is and want people to respect him or her for who he or she is not.

Humility is the opposite of pride. It is accepting who God created you to be. People who have accepted who God created them to be, do not get insulted or offended easily. It does not matter whatever name you call them, they do not feel insulted or offended because they know their true identity. People who have not overcome pride try to cover it by intimidating and oppressing others, they demand respect instead of earning it, they believe in where they live, what they wear and the friends they keep more than who they really are.

They talk tough when they truly feel small or little or inferior inward. You hear them talk like this, "Don't you talk to me like that! How dare you talk to me like that! Don't you know who I am?" They talk like that because they feel small or little in their own eyes. While those who have accepted who they are, believe in their God given identity. They know that their identity is not about where they live, who their friend is, what they wear - designer's stuffs. They don't try to put up an act every now and then to sell themselves or make them accepted.

Some people have a wrong notion of themselves. People who have wrong notion of who they are can either be proud or having inferiority complex. Though one can have a wrong picture of himself or herself; not necessarily because of pride, but as a result of past unpleasant experiences.

Past experiences and ugly memories can be responsible for the reason why some people get easily insulted or offended. Such experiences and memories can become strongholds in the victims and shape their attitudes and behavioural patterns. These kind of people can be full of inferiority complex. And people who have inferiority complex cannot be genuinely free with others. They get easily insulted or offended.

- **Expecting too much from people**

It is natural for us as human beings to expect people to help us and be there for us. We look forward to our friends, family and church members to give helping hands when we are in need and when they are unable to help us, we get disappointed and offended. Sometimes they really want to help us but are unable to help or fulfil their sincere promise within the time frame. When this happens we get disappointed in them and attack and assassinate their character. We should stop getting disappointed and offended because it is to our detriment.

- **Impatience with others**

The Bible admonishes us to be patient with each other, but we are too impatient as human beings. What impatience does is to get us disappointed and offended. Being impatient with others is a clear message about your person. An impatient person expects other people to be impatient like him or herself. You want people to do things at the same level or pace you are operating. Well, this is very common on Lagos roads, Nigeria, where almost every driver is in a hurry to get to someplace. A gentleman who drives pleasurably and slowly during the week on the ever busy road of Lagos would have himself to blame for the insults he would receive from some drivers. He will become an enemy and the object of offence of drivers who want to navigate through the traffic and catch up with some appointment. The point is that if we do not learn to be patient with people we will definitely get offended and shut doors against relationships with people.

- **Lack of wisdom to accept the weaknesses and foolishness of people**

We all have weaknesses and exhibit some level of foolishness every now and then. Or don't you? Nobody is without one. When we say we love people and we are not willing to accept their weaknesses and foolishness, we stumble. It is very possible for you to

accept and adore the good qualities in a man or woman while fighting his or her weaknesses. The same way you want people to accept you for who you are, you should also accept others for who they are.

If you ask people around you for their sincere opinion about your weaknesses and foolishness, you will be amazed at what you hear. Let us call it 'constructive feedback' on your person. Most of us cannot be bold enough to ask our colleagues, spouses, children, friends and those people we call our enemies about our attitude and behaviour because, we know that we would fail woefully; yet you get mad at others over their weaknesses and foolishness. We shouldn't stop at learning how to be patient with people but we must also learn how to accept people for who they are. It takes maturity in the spirit and wisdom from God to be able to accept people and their weaknesses and foolishness.

You cannot be calling people names and getting angry over their weaknesses and foolishness while you are full of errors too. Instead of analysing and judging people's weaknesses and foolishness, why don't you focus on their strength and the things they are doing well? It is not a good thing if you are always criticizing and judging others, and getting easily irritated at their mistakes and weaknesses. You have yours too. It takes nothing from you to appreciate people and speak well of them. Those who find it difficult to appreciate and speak well of others are probably full of themselves. As a matter of fact, if you appreciate and speak well of others, it shows that you appreciate yourself. Stop watching out for people's weaknesses, mistakes and failures because you will see more than you need to see and you will get offended.

Let us be determined to accept people for who they are while we trust God to change them. It is easy for us to love and accept people who make us happy and do things the way we want. But it is challenging to love and accept people who cannot meet up with our standards and do things the way we would like things to be done. This particular factor is responsible for most marriages and families that are in crisis and at the verge of collapse today. Couples can no longer accept each other unconditionally. It's what I call, 'Love for sale.' In other words you can have the love if you can buy it or meet the conditions.

- **You get offended because there is something wrong within you**

There are people who get angry and offended easily without understanding why they do so. They cannot do without offence in their life. Getting offended is part of living for them. They get offended before they realize it. Any issue no matter how trivial or irrelevant can trigger offence in them because that is how they have been wired. Their problems might be connected to their past experiences of abuse, disappointments, rejection and shame. Such people can be hard to please as they withdraw easily into their own world. Something is fundamentally wrong with the foundation of such persons, which must be corrected with the word of God. Their hearts and souls need spiritual operation by the Holy Spirit so that they can be healed and freed.

- **Seeing others and their situations from your perspective only**

Perception speaks of the way we judge people before we really get to know who they are. It speaks of seeing people the way we are. Perception says, "It's all about who we really are than the way we see people." We see the world as we are. Our judgment and perception speak volumes about who we are than the object of judgment. We see people through our weaknesses, inadequacies, fears, inabilities, failures and strength. We do not really see people the way they really are because of our wrong or poor perception (*Luke 6:41, 42. John 7:24, 2Cor. 10:7, 1 Sam. 16:7, Prov. 24:23*).

It is the driving force of the world. People who have not known the Lord and what it means to follow the inward witness go into relationships, friendships and businesses based on their perception. Their view is based on their mental knowledge instead of the inward witness. This can have serious adverse effect on them and their relationships, friendships, businesses. God and His word must adjust your perception; which is the true meaning of repentance. Paul says, 'I perceive.' He could say this because his perception had been adjusted and his heart was under the influence of the Holy Spirit (*Acts 27:9-10*).

It is when our perception is adjusted that we can begin to have inward witness and the Holy Spirit will be able to bear witness with our spirits. Then, we will be able to receive witness in our spirits. That is, witness of people, relationships and situations that are totally true. As long as our perception has not been adjusted, we will be misguided and deceived, thereby getting offended with people easily.

- **Lack of understanding of the sovereignty of God**

The scripture clearly speaks to us about God's sovereignty but many of us hardly believe or accept that God reigns and rules in the affairs of men. As it is written in *Dan. 4:35*, "*He does according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. No one can restrain His hand or say to Him, What have You done?*" *Phil. 2:13* also says, *... and it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*"

Based on this understanding that God is sovereign Paul admonishes us to, "*Do all things without complaining and murmuring that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.*" - *Phil. 2:14, 15*.

Paul also shared this understanding more plainly in *Rom. 8:28*, when he said "*And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.*"

Concerning His sovereignty, He spoke for Himself:

*"Now see that I, even I, am He, and there is no God besides Me; I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; nor is there any who can deliver from My hand." - Deut. 32:39.*

*I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create calamity; I, the LORD, do all these things - Isa. 45:7.*

*"If a trumpet is blown in a city, will not the people be afraid? If there is calamity in a city, will not the LORD have done it?" - Amos 3:6.*

The sovereignty of God is hardly revered and accepted by the church today. Your heart can bear you witness if truly you accept, agree and receive all scriptures in the Bible as God's word. There are scriptures that we do not want to read or study in the Bible, and we do not want to be taught about them because they do not agree with our theology or belief though they are in the Bible. It is called unbelief.

The challenge and confusion that we have is that there are too many God's advocates and attorneys (theologians and ministers), who are always defending God and His acts. They want us to believe that God is too holy and good to create or do evil. Because some of us have been deceived by their doctrines, we get bitter and offended when evil or what we do not like happens to us because we feel God must be unfair and unjust to allow such to happen to us. You ask, "What did I do to deserve this?" You ask as Job did. Most people never really learn this lesson of God's sovereignty. They may only believe it when they face life-threatening challenges or in their frustration and devastation in the face of false accusation or persecution.

*For the Lord will not cast off forever, though He causes grief, yet He will show compassion according to the multitude of His mercies. For He does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men...who is he who speaks and it comes to pass, when the Lord has not commanded it? Is it not from the mouth of the Most High that woe and well being proceed? - Lam. 3:31-39, (Read Job 2:10, Psalm 119:71-77).*

We must recognize and acknowledge God's sovereignty in all things, especially when we experience troubles, rejection, abandonment, shame, humiliation and false accusation. This is the kind of heart that God is fashioning in us. A heart that is free of accusation against God and men.

## Chapter Eleven

### **The Danger Of Bitterness And Offence**

Definitely there are consequences of bitterness and offence. You cannot accommodate offence and expect life to go on smoothly. No! It's impossible. Offence must cause you pains and rob you of something very valuable.

Any of the following points is what you stand to experience when you are offended and living in offence.

- **They have so much power to hand you over to Satan to torment you.**

Transgression opens the door for the enemies to come into our lives, relationships and families. They have the powers to destroy the good thing God has given to us. It literally empowers the enemy to rule over the offender. The scripture tells of a man who refused to forgive and pardon his fellow servant just as his master forgave him, and was delivered to the tormentors to deal with him until he learns how to forgive others. It was not his master that delivered him to the torturers but his hardened heart of unforgiveness and bitterness did.

*And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him - Matt. 18:34.*

- **They give the devil the right to afflict and rob us of our God-given health and strength.**

An offended person who lives in offence exposes his life and health to satanic attacks and becomes a handkerchief in the hands of the enemies. The way a handkerchief is in the hands of the owner so also is an offended person in the hands of the enemies. The enemies use, abuse and oppress the person.

The very first time God introduced Himself to the Israelites as the God that heals was when He was dealing with bitterness, resentment, offence, etc, in their lives. God was telling them that if they permit bitterness they would see affliction.

*"So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea; then they went out into the Wilderness of Shur. And they went three days in the wilderness and found no water. Now when they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah, for they were bitter. Therefore the name of it was called Marah*

*And the people complained against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?"*

*So he cried out to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a tree. When he cast it into the waters, the waters were made sweet. There He made a statute and an ordinance for them, and there He tested them,*

*And said, "if you diligently heed the voice of the LORD your GOD and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the LORD who heals you."*

*Then they came to Elim, where there were twelve wells of water and seventy palm trees; so they camped there by the waters - Exodus 15: 22-27.*

The above scripture gives us a clear understanding of the fact that diseases that evade our bodies can be linked to offence, but not all the time. God spoke against murmuring and complaining here, and made it clear that when we murmur and complain, it shows that we are not heeding the voice of the Lord our God or doing what is right in His sight. This act will attract diseases to our lives.

The scripture admonishes us to heed the voice of the Lord so that nothing will make us to stumble.

*Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble - Psalm 119:165.*

These parasites might be responsible for some of the diseases and crisis that are in our lives. We are helpless in their hands. The scripture admonishes us to keep our hearts and lives free of offence and bitterness because they paralyse our health.

*A sound heart is life to the body; but envy is rottenness to the bones - Prov. 14:30.*

*A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken. All the days of the afflicted are evil, but he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast - Prov. 15: 13, 15.*

## **My personal experience in the hands of bitterness and offence**

In July 2007, the Lord instructed me to shut down our local assembly that was five years old. It was a vibrant church of mostly young people between twenty and thirty years plus. It attracted single parents, the abused, hurting and those from broken families. It was a family for members. We laughed and cried together. We spent our resources to take care of ourselves. We pay house rent for our members and pay school fees for those in high schools and higher institutions. I would say that God was good to us as a church. We had everything going well for us.

My obedience of the Word of the Lord was what broke the bond of unity that existed between the members and myself. It was a moment of tears and bad feelings the Sunday I announced that our church meetings would no longer hold. I thought the people would understand that I was obeying God. The people were disappointed, offended and disagreed with me. Though the meetings stopped but there was serious internal crisis among us and the relationships we have built over the years came crumbling down. I felt bad that they could shut the door against me. Gradually, I started getting disappointed in them too. I started feeling bitter and offended. It got so bad to the extent that my health was seriously affected. Initially I did not know that it was bitterness and offence that were invading and tearing my health apart.

In the midst of my pains, I traveled to the United Kingdom for two reasons. United Kingdom is our mission field for kingdom and God's purpose advancement. I traveled for the work of the ministry and to vent my frustrations and disappointments. My health grew worse there to the extent that I could not sleep at night. My right hand to my shoulder would go numb without feelings, and I became very weak especially at nights. My heart was very heavy as if a mountain was upon it. One day I was at Burnt Oak in North London, I felt myself about to collapse and I cried to the Lord, He had mercy on me and strengthened me. I was able to sit at the bus stop for a while to regain strength and stamina before I took a bus to my home. I approached two health officers and told them the way I was feeling; one told me that I was suffering from partial stroke, while the other officer told me that my case was very serious and my health needs urgent attention and I should see a doctor urgently. I decided to return to Nigeria to see my doctors. My bones ached painfully; what looked like lumps would appear on my skin in the evening till the next morning everyday and it itched badly. On the left side of my head I could feel severe pains inside, it was like the veins on that side of my head wanted to pull out. It was like I was going crazy. I was scared to death. I felt myself starring at death especially at night. Some nights I would be unable to sleep because of the pains.

On getting to Nigeria, I consulted with my hospital, Lagoon Hospital, Apapa-Lagos, for medical examinations and test. The dermatologist did all her test but could not find the cause of the skin disease. Then, the orthopaedist examined me and gave me drugs, but the pains persisted. I did two x-rays but there was no clue. The doctor was worried about

my plight. He then asked me to go for MRI test. I did. Guess what? While I was waiting for the result, the Lord began to minister to my heart that bitterness and offence was responsible for the affliction that had come upon me and I should set myself free. I obeyed the Lord by releasing everyone from my heart. I prayed for them and some I called on phone to know how they were doing. Honestly speaking, how the skin disease, pains in my bones and head disappeared was a miracle. I visited the hospital for a reason that I cannot remember now, I ran into the orthopaedist who could not even recognized me. I requested for the result of the MRI test, it was brought. And guess what? It was negative. I smiled because I know where the problem came from and I was already healed and freed.

Can you imagine what I went through in the merciless hands of bitterness and offence? They almost killed me but Jesus had mercy on me. This is one of the reasons why I am passionate about helping people to keep their hearts, their lives and relationships free from bitterness and offence.

- **They do not allow us to flow in the joy of the Lord**

*Do not sorrow, for the joy of the Lord is your strength - Neh. 8:10.*

*Therefore with joy you will draw water from the well of salvation - Isa. 12:3.*

Someone said, "If the devil can keep your joy, he can keep your good." This is true. It takes joy to walk in the supernatural realm of God. Anytime the joy of the Lord is not flowing in your heart because you are bitter and offended, you simply open the door of your heart to frustration and depression, and they are not good for your health.

*A sound heart is life to the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones - Prov. 14:30.*

*Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad -Prov. 12:25.*

*A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance, but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.*

*All the days of the afflicted are evil, but he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast - Prov. 15:13, 15.*

*A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones - Prov. 17:22.*

*Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say; rejoice - Phil. 4:4, Rom. 12:12.*

*Rejoice always - 1 Thes. 5:16, 2 Cor. 6:10.*

*Count it all joy James - 1:24.*

These scriptures teach us of the importance of allowing the joy of God to flood in our hearts daily and always. Joy is of the Holy Ghost (*Rom. 14:17*).

- **Offence brings division and tears us apart**

It puts a wall of separation between relations and friends, neighbours and colleagues. It is responsible for some of our precious relationships and friendships that we have lost carelessly, and some of them we want to restore but offence will not allow us to pay the price to get them back. Are there no relationships or friendships you lost but somewhere in your heart, you want to have them back but you are not willing to let go what was done to you? Every now and then, you spend a minute or more to analyse what happened and justify your decision and position instead of breaking down the wall that has separated you from those you love. Do not allow offence to rob you of God's ordained relationships and friendships for your life.

Offence gets you distracted from the original goal, vision and dream. It takes away your power to live and power to pursue your goals, your vision and dreams in life. It will not allow you to have power to face the present and future because, you focus on the past and how to take vengeance on your offender(s). The past will become more important to you than your future.

You work round the clock in your heart, your thought and imagination, planning on how to revenge the wrong done to you and pay back those who wronged you. But by doing so, you channel your energy into the past instead of something more productive and fulfilling. Your precious time, your energy and wisdom that you would have used maximally to elevate and add meaning to your life, are used up in thinking, planning and strategising how to see your offender pay for his offence.

- **Offence affects and hinders you and not those who offends you**

The negative effect it has on your relationship with God is something that must not be over-looked and should drive us to stay clear of offence. It hinders or stop you from having lively and sweet fellowship with the Lord. There is no true believer that can be offended and still be prayerful and have great communion with the Lord. The boldness to come before the holy God and declare who you are and that you love Him will no longer be there. It takes away your boldness before God and the enemy.

*"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need - Heb. 4:16.*

*...But the righteous are bold as a lion - Prov. 28:1.*

Because the enemy knows that if he can get us into offence and bitterness we will not have the confidence to stand before God and enjoy a good communion. The enemy knows we would be disconnected from precious people that truly love us that is why he does everything to get us into offence. Offence hinders you from your journey into the next level in God.

- **It defiles and make you impure before God**

Bitterness causes defilement and makes the person that is offended to come short of the grace of God. When you are defiled, you can no longer follow 'peace' with all men but you will follow men with bitterness. Instead of becoming a peacemaker you would be causing trouble and ruining relationships. It is particularly interesting that the Bible tells us to pursue peace with all people and not some people. We are not to pursue peace with friends and those on our good record only, it has to include our enemies and those that despitefully use us. This is real faith. It takes genuine faith to do this.

*Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord; Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled - Heb. 12:14, 15.*

*Not what goes into the mouth defiles a man; but what comes out of the mouth, this defiles a man - Matt. 15:11.*

- **It breeds fear and makes one to be suspicious**

You become unnecessarily fearful and suspicious of people around you. Even when people with good intentions come around you, you shut the door of your heart against them because you are afraid of being wounded. You want to protect yourself from what happened before. The word of God calls it being careful for nothing. We fail to understand that our vulnerability is a weapon in the hands of God that makes us pliable, adjustable and useful to Him. Many believers are not vulnerable at all, especially those who have been abused, wounded and offended before. Because of fear of being abused, rejected, and wounded again, they shield themselves to the extent of self-imprisonment and affliction. They are not free with people and people are not free with them.

- **Offence imprisons you**

It cuts you off from others and builds a house for you in an island that is called "LonelyLand," where you smile and cry alone. Nobody smiles with you and nobody shares your pains with you. It does not allow you to relate freely with people. It literally makes you to stand and walk alone, and cuts off God's ordained relationships for your life. We need people and people need us.

It blinds the offender and takes away your sight - the ability to see from God's perspective (*Matt. 28:28-30*).

Offended people most times see the problem or issue that brought about the offence from their own perspective only. They justify their reason for permitting offence in their lives without understanding the God's view of it. Offence makes you see only from your own angle. It can make you abandon the church and cut off fellowship with the brethren, meanwhile you would praise yourself for doing the right thing. Even when the Holy Spirit wants to get your attention, you would not know because you are insensitive to the Spirit because of offence and bitterness.

- **Bitter and offended people make weak, careless and self-destructive decisions.**

Offended people allow themselves to make careless and weak decisions based on how they feel and also in order to harm their offender but the decisions can boomerang. Their decisions to harm their offender sometimes get them into more serious problem because of the state of their heart and the decisions are made carelessly without being mindful of the repercussion. And this makes them more frustrated and ashamed. It can be pretty difficult for an offended or bitter person to take godly and accurate decisions about the matter or issue that brought about the offence. Self-destructive decisions are easily made during moments of offence and bitterness.

In *Gen 27:46, 28:1-9* Esau decided to marry Canaanite women because he wanted to displease his parents. He did this because he was discouraged and bitter. How do I know that He was bitter and discouraged? The scripture speaks for itself. The reason Esau married Canaanite women was to punish his parents and make them grieve simply because he was bitter and offended and blamed them for what Jacob did to him.

*"When Esau was forty years old, he took as wives Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Basemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite. And they were a grief of mind to Isaac and Rebekah" - Gen. 26: 34, 35.*

Esau was upset and offended that Jacob stole his birthright and blessing and was supported and protected by his parents, so he decided to go against what pleased his parents. He did not realize that what he was doing was to his detriment.

*And Rebekah said to Isaac, "I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth; if Jacob takes a wife of the daughters of Heth, like these who are the daughters of the land, what good will my life be to me?"*

*Then Isaac called Jacob and blessed him, and charged him, and said to him: "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan."*

*Arise, go to Padan Aran, to the house of Bethuel your mother's father; and take yourself a wife from there of the daughters of Laban your mother's brother.*

*Esau saw that Isaac had blessed Jacob and sent him away to Padan Aram to take himself a wife from there, and that as he blessed him he gave him a charge, saying, "You shall not take a wife from the daughters of Canaan,"*

*And that Jacob had obeyed his father and his mother and had gone to Padan Aram.*

*Also Esau saw that the daughters of Canaan did not please his father Isaac.*

*So Esau went to Ishmael and took Mahalath the daughter of Ishmael, Abraham's son, the sister of Nebajoth, to be his wife in addition to the wives he had" - Gen. 28:1-9.*

- **Offence makes your offering unacceptable to God**

If we follow seriously the teaching of Jesus on offence, we will learn that God does not accept our gift or offering when there is offence in us.

*"Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift - Matt. 5:23, 24.*

What got my attention and hit me like a thunderbolt in Jesus' teaching is this: 'If you remember that your brother has something against you,' it is not that you have something against your brother. It is easier to forgive and release your brother quietly in your heart without calling or telling him, but you cannot make peace with your brother who has something against you without conversation or communication. The altar speaks of your heart. Now, I don't expect you to leave your offering (money or worship) at the church platform and travel maybe to Ghana from Nigeria to reconcile to your brother before giving your offering. I do not have to tell you that someone will help to keep the money before you come back.

Jesus taught us that our offering is not as important as our heart, which is the real altar. He taught that the altar (heart) sanctifies the offering. Therefore, if the altar is defiled and unclean, the offering will automatically be unclean and worthless no matter the size. Often times, we bring offering or worship to the Lord and say to ourselves 'that was a great worship' but God says, no. It was not accepted because there was bitterness or offence in your heart. It was defiled by your heart. It is better you keep your money (gift or offering) in your pocket or purse on a Sunday service when there is bitterness or offence in your heart instead of giving it. God will not accept it because your heart has defiled it.

- **Offence kills**

It has the power to literally end the journey of your life. Do you understand this? I mean it can cut short your life. People like Saul, Absalom, Ahithophel and John the Baptist can tell us better about the power of offence.

Saul would start by telling us how he abandoned his throne as king of Israel and started chasing David in jungles and caves because of offence, and eventually he met his demise because of it.

Absalom would have to continue from where Saul stopped and tell us how he could have forgiven his brother, Amnon who took advantage of his sister, Tamar but refused to let go for two years. He kept malice with him for two years while strategising how to take revenge on him. Offence made Absalom kill his brother. He was sent on exile. Offence was the root of his ambition to become the king of Israel. This same offence killed him and terminated his destiny prematurely.

Ahithophel may probably interrupt Absalom because he has his own genuine experience on offence that he would want to talk about urgently. I am sure he would start by telling us how he was a respected and dependable member and voice in David's cabinet. He was a man whose counsel was from the heart of God. Though he was David's right hand man, he was also working secretly for the downfall of David because of offence. Ahithophel would explain to us that he would not have counselled Absalom to sleep with the father's concubines publicly if he was not bitter and offended and was taking vengeance on David.

Absalom's treason was only an opportunity for Ahithophel to carry out the hidden hurt and plan of his heart against David. Ahithophel must have been disappointed, offended and felt betrayed when David took Bathsheba, his grand-daughter and impregnated her. He was unhappy about what David did but could not speak out but waited for an opportune time to pay him in his own coins. And when the opportunity came for him to deal with David, he did not hesitate to give careless and weak counsel to Absalom that would cause David pain and shame. When his counsel was rejected, he felt insulted and offended the more, and decided to hang himself. Offence killed him.

John the Baptist would specifically speak to men and women of God to be very careful to finish the race without offence. He would talk to God's servants to be focused on their divine assignment and to finish strong. He would strongly warn against anything that will cause distraction from the assignment and get us offended. He knew what it meant for a man of God to be offended because of unmet expectations and desires. He would counsel every servant of God even in tears against offence because he knew first hand how it would cause your head to be chopped off. Do not get offended when you feel God is not meeting your needs or when the people are not encouraging you.

To recap this, I would say to you dear reader that you couldn't be offended without facing the consequences. If you allow offence in your heart and life, you are definitely inviting the merciless devil and his cohorts into your life.

Offence is one of the easiest and cheapest ways the devil gets a believer to fall and come short of the grace of God. You cannot be connected to God and proclaim to know God and live at the same time in bitterness, offence and unforgiveness.

This offence that wounds, destroys, tears apart and kills, is also good because it helps you to know your level of attainment in your spiritual journey.

## Chapter Twelve

### **Offence Is Good**

Offence is indeed good! When you can no longer be offended no matter what people say to you or say about you, or do to you, then you have come to maturity in Christ.

Offence comes to reveal your heart to you. It tells you who you really are. It is one of the ways you can know how much you truly love the Lord and love your neighbour as you love yourself. **When offences come, (and they must come,) they come to show you the problem is not with the person through whom the offence comes, but to show us what is in us that can be offended.** So offence is good because it shows you who you are and paint an accurate picture of yourself for you.

As long as there is still something in you that can be insulted and offended it means you have not seen and accepted yourself as the image of God yet. You can testify of victory when nothing in you can be insulted or offended because you have accepted who God created you to be in Him, and this is true humility. **Our ultimate victory and testimony is freedom from offence and bitterness.**

*Great peace have those who love your law, and nothing causes them to stumble -Psalm 119:165.*

The ultimate goal of the Father is to get us to a place in Him, where we will become all that Christ is. Becoming all of Christ involves getting some stuff like beliefs, fears, attitude, and pride, out of us. These are the common grounds for offence in us. We must set our heart on the ultimate victory, which is when nothing in us can be insulted, or offended again because we have accepted the name the Father God calls us.

### **Action must Agree with Confession**

When we gladly sing songs like "Lord, I want to be more like You" or "Lord, I want more of You," do we really mean what we sing? Do we have an understanding of what we are singing to the Lord? I guess we do not understand what we are asking the Lord to accomplish in us. It seems we only sing for the fun of singing, not even worshipping. Or probably the musical instruments move us to sing and dance just to catch some fun.

Jesus knew what He had to go through to become the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. On the cross, Jesus cried, "My God, My God why have You forsaken Me?" This tells us that it was not fun for Him to be hanged on the cross. Jesus knew that the cross was not

optional but it was compulsory for Him to carry it and die on it before He can be crowned our King and Lord.

Our dilemma is that we do not know what we have to go through for Christ to be formed in us so that we can be glorified and reign with Him, like the scripture says,

*"My little children, for whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you - Gal. 4:19.*

*And if children, then heirs heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together - Rom. 8:17.*

*For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake - Phil. 1:29.*

*This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him, if we endure, we shall also reign with Him, if we deny Him, He also will deny us - 2 Tim. 2:11, 12.*

*Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution - 2 Tim. 3:12.*

Admittedly, we do not know the pathway of suffering, humiliation and pains that God has made for each one of us to go through, so that, the character of Christ can be formed in us and then, we will be glorified with Him. The formation of Christ's character in us is not spontaneous but it takes a death process, which involves several dealings and breakings from the Lord. This is what Paul the Apostle meant when he said, 'I die daily.'

The writer of the book of Hebrews admonishes us that we should look unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. He should be our model and standard. Just as He went through humiliation, rejection and suffering to become the great High Priest so also we must go through many tribulations to enter the kingdom.

*Strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, "We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God" - Acts 14:22.*

## **Gethsemane**

Gethsemane is an experience in God. It's a dimension in the spirit where you surrender your will to the will of the Father. Jesus went through Gethsemane before his death on the cross. It was a place of loneliness, hopelessness, where His soul was exceedingly sorrowful. He endured the shame because of the joy that was set before Him. It can't be different with us.

*Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God - Heb. 12:1, 2.*

I think the reason why God will not tell us what we will go through in order for us to come to the full stature of Christ according to, *Eph. 4:13 "Till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,"* is because we will faint and discontinue the journey into the Promised Land like the Israelites in the wilderness.

The church in the wilderness (*Acts 7:38*) thought it was going to be fun and picnic all the days in the wilderness. They never imagined that God was going to put a demand on them for a change of lifestyle and character formation. They never knew that God was going to take out every 'Egyptian' mentality and lifestyle from them and inculcate into them the mentality and lifestyle of a kingdom believer. Probably they thought they were good enough for God the way they were, and they were just going to enjoy all of God's favour and blessings without being accountable to God. How wrong they were, just like some of us are today. God deliberately led the Israelites into the wilderness in order to prove them, test them, to see if they would murmur and complain about their circumstances, or if they would rest in the knowledge that God knows what He is doing?

Have you not read that it was the Holy Spirit that led Jesus Christ into the wilderness to be tested by Satan? Why would God send Jesus to the wilderness to be refined or tested by the devil?

*Immediately the Spirit drove Him into the wilderness - Mk.1: 12.*

*Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil - Matt. 4:1.*

God also sends you from time to time into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. There is no child of God that does not go to the wilderness to be tempted, purified and cleansed. **God can use circumstances that are unpalatable to our minds to get the evil in us to cry out so that He can deal with them as we permit Him.** This wilderness experience is what I called death process.

## Chapter Thirteen

### The Death Process

It is like we have a mindset that tells us that our relationship with God is a 'deal' and we have a say in it. We see our part as the worshippers who must worship God and get His job done on earth, while God does his own part by ensuring that He meets our needs and takes care of us.

Now, where does the offering and worship that you offer to God come from? Is it a sacrifice or the product of your flesh? Do you really understand that God will not take anything from you that haven't cost you your life? God only accepts offering or worship that must have cost you something worthwhile. In other words, God must first kill you and you will become a sacrifice, before you can offer anything to Him. If God has not succeeded in killing you first, whatever you offer to Him will be unacceptable because it is from the realm of carnality. It is only men and women that God has killed and made alive that can worship and touch Him. But the problem is that we do not want God to kill us, after which He would make us alive (quicken us) to worship Him. We want to remain as we are to worship the holy God.

The scriptures testify of this truth:

*Now see that I even I, am He, and there is no God besides Me, I kill and I make alive; I wound and I heal; Nor is there any who can deliver from My hand - Deut. 32:39.*

*"The LORD kills and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and brings up. The LORD makes poor and makes rich; He brings low and lifts up - 1Sam. 2:6, 7.*

*Come, and let us return to the LORD; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight - Hosea 6:1, 2.*

Can you see what I am talking about now? There is a harmony in the above scriptures that God kills us before He quickens us. He cannot quicken or cause us to live in His sight except He has killed us first. What it takes for us to live in His sight, that is, to become the carriers or vessels of His manifest presence, is death process. Remember, this is a spiritual experience that finds expression in our everyday life.

Our death process is the life that God receives as sacrifice. **When a man is dying daily, such a man is giving offering to God daily.** It does not matter if he does not have money to give as offering to the church, but his life of sacrifice is a sweet aroma to God. God smells it like the offering of Abel and Noah. If you are not dying, you are not giving an offering to God. There is no sweet aroma for God to smell. Your death is the sweet

incense in the Most Holy Place before the Lord. Do not be afraid to die. **We die to live and live to die!**

Many believers want to serve God like the rich young ruler that came to Jesus to ask what he must do to inherit eternal life and when he got the answer, he became sorrowful (*Luke 18:18-23*). He wanted Jesus to validate him without paying the price for a change. He wanted the kingdom without death process of selling all that he has and give to the poor. Like this man, we are not willing to give up on what we love, and pursue passionately the manifestation of the kingdom of God that is within us.

Do not allow any man to deceive you through enticing words of man's wisdom, saying, you don't have to crucify the flesh. To crucify the flesh is real. It is the same thing as death process. Death process is not easy and pleasant. But it is the only way to have life and have it more abundantly. It is also the only way to have and enjoy the manifest presence of God.

God has not given you and I the power to determine how Christ should be formed in us. In other words, we do not determine the death process that brings about the revelation of Christ in us. We have no choice or saying in this matter of death process that brings us into our calling to be sons of God that will deliver creation from the bondage of corruption according to *Rom. 8:19-21*

*For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God for the creation subjected to futility not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God*

It's God's prerogative to determine the longevity of your death process. He knows you better than you know yourself. He knows what He wants to correct or adjust in you, and He knows how best to do it, even the best person that is fit for the job of breaking you for the revelation (formation) of Christ in you. God have mercy! **God determines the nature of our death process just the same way He determined the nature of Jesus Christ death process.**

If God chooses to use your boss in your office who is not a Christian to kill anger or pride in you, so be it. You can complain, murmur and get offended but you cannot escape it. He can use your office messenger or neighbour to help you to see what is wrong on the inside of you that must be corrected. He can use your spouse. He does what He likes that brings glory to His name without asking for your permission.

In all of this, you must be sensitive to know what God is doing in you so that you will not see abuse as death process. God hates abuse and He does not want to see us abusing or taking advantage of each other. It is unscriptural and unrighteous to abuse a person.

An industrious young man shared with us, in the course of discussing about 'death process' in our local assembly, how he got a job in the banking industry in a particular geographical location in Nigeria. He liked the job and it was a good job with some great packages but his boss made life miserable for him. He shouts at him and calls him some ugly names. So he got offended and resigned when he could no longer stand the insults.

He relocated to another part of the country, after awhile he got another job in the same industry. It was a better job with better offers but with more insults and pains. The job that would have called for celebration was full of insults. The boss was the type that does not apologise for any mistake; he insults him and calls him names too. He would ask him rhetorical questions like, what kind of institution did you attend? Can't you use your brain? He concluded by experience that the former boss was a saint compared to the present boss. His decision was to resign and search for another job. It dawned on him that he resigned from the first job because of insults. Now if he has to resign because his boss is oppressing and insulting him, who knows what the next boss would be like? He made up his mind that he was not going to resign but to face whatever it was. It was during this time that he realized that there was something to learn and change is inevitable.

Seriously speaking, there are some bad intentions of people that can bring the best out of you like the case of Joseph. Your boss can be calling you names, shouting at you and frustrating you, but if you manage the situation wisely through the power of the Holy Spirit, it can bring the best out of you. It can force you to look inside of you and discover what you have. When you tap into your internal resource, believe me, you will prove your boss wrong that you are not who he or she thinks you are. But you can still react negatively by fighting back or resign. Please I want you to understand that offence is good; it all depend on how well you see.

## Ask Yourself Again, Why Do I Get Offended Easily?

Knowing why you get offended easily is a key to dealing with the root of offence and bitterness. Have you known why you get offended easily? You get offended easily because you are still full of yourself or maybe because you are still dying, or maybe you are not dying at all or not even willing to die.

The person who offended you is the one who has helped you to see that you are still full of yourself or you still have many miles to go on your spiritual journey before you attain the fullness of Christ. People get offended because they have not crucified their flesh. In other word, those who have truly crucified the flesh do not get offended easily. Better still, we say they do not live in offence.

Offended people cry out for revenge. Let us examine and compare some scriptures to get deeper understanding of those who cry for revenge and how God respond to them.

We can get an insight from *Rev. 6:9-11* and *Rev. 20:4*

*"And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony, which they held.*

*And they cried with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"*

*Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed - Rev. 6:9-11.*

Slain: sphazo - to butcher (especially an animal for food or sacrifice), to slaughter, to maim (violently), kill, slay, wound.

*And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who have been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands...Rev. 20:4.*

Beheaded: pelekizo - (an axe) to chop off (the head), i.e. truncate, behead.

The account in chapter six and twenty are different attitudes of believers in the present dispensation. The book of revelation is a present reality in the church and God's kingdom. It is not about some events that will happen some years to come but a present reality about the revelation of Christ and the body, which is the church (*Rev. 1:1*).

Let us consider the believers in Revelation chapter six first and we will go to the believers in chapter twenty. It is amazing that people cried to God for vengeance instead of God

to give them the desire of their heart and answer their prayers, He gave each of them white robe and told them to rest a while. The white robe implies righteousness, which is accurate standing with God or living according to the word of God. This tells us that believers, who continually want God to avenge them of their enemies, without realizing that the enemies are part of God's destiny package for us to help us to fulfil our heavenly assignment on earth, are praying wrongly. What a way to answer their prayer, the Lord gave them each a white robe.

Can you understand this now, that anytime you cry to God for vengeance maybe because you were offended, He will give you white robe; that is to say, He will bring you to another level of understanding of His righteousness. Those who cry for vengeance are given white robe because they have not yet overcome fully according to *Rev. 3:18*. They have not come to the fullness of Christ. They do not understand what it means to overcome evil with good. God knows when to avenge you of your enemies.

The believers in chapter twenty have come to maturity in Christ. They do not cry for revenge like those in chapter six. They have been beheaded, it means, they no longer lean on their senses or live according to their senses or flesh. Christ has become their head.

God does not want us to cry for revenge and to pay evil for evil. He created us to be people of love and compassion. In the midst of hatred and prejudice, He wants us to give love. We must conquer with love. Love is the only weapon God has given to us to live in this world. This weapon is God's nature. What the world needs for change is love. It does not matter what your theology or religion may be but I know that love is too powerful for anybody to resist. Love conquers all things (*1 Cor. 13*). When you have done all that you know how to do to touch someone and you are not getting result; I suggest that you give (agape) love.

*Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourself, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. Therefore "If your enemy is hungry, feed him, if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head."*

*Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good - Rom. 12:17- 21.*

We don't have to cry for revenge and start fighting fellow human beings as enemies according to our unregenerate mind. God said vengeance belongs to Him, so stay clear of it.

## **Ambassadors of peace**

We are God's ambassadors of peace (*Matt. 5:9*) to the nations of the earth. Peace is the nature of the lamb upon the throne of our heart. Peacemakers follow peace in contrast to bitterness according to *Heb. 12:14, 15 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God: lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled.*

Peacemakers are happy people. They are happiest when they have no enemies unlike others who are only happy when they have enemies to fight and kill. I welcome you to the company of peacemakers today. The life of God is a higher realm of life that we can only live and enjoy in the absence of offence, bitterness and unforgiveness.

Chapter Fifteen

### **So You Want Freedom, Walk In Forgiveness**

Mercy means to hold oneself back from punishing someone who deserves punishment. Forgiveness is an act of mercy you show through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ to

someone or group of people who have offended you or have wronged you. It is not optional, and you really do not have a choice when it comes to forgiving people who have offended you or done you wrong. It is a decision you make to no longer hold offence against another person or group. It is an act of obedience to the will of the Father.

Jesus talked about offences, offending and being offended. He said the kingdom of God is full of them. This was an incredible understanding that I received from the teaching ministry of Apostle Paul Humberstone.

In Hebrew the meaning of offence is, 'a stumbling block (obstacle, enticement, scruple). Cause to fall. The Greek meaning is, 'a trap-stick, snare, (cause of displeasure or sin), occasion to fall (of stumbling) offence, thing that offends. Figuratively, it signifies that which causes error or sin. Offence means, "off-end." By implication, the enemy wants to get you "off - ended" so that he can harm you.

The scandalon was the original word for the device to which bait was attached that would catch an animal. It is also a snare, a trap, something causing another to stumble and fall away. In another sense, it is a rock of offence like Jesus whose person and ministry were contrary to expectations.

To ensnare someone is to cause someone to stumble, giving cause to a person to distrust and desert another. It means to throw someone unawares into ruin, or give occasion for ungodly conduct. Offence is that which causes one to stumble and become unfruitful and unproductive in life.

Jesus knowing the devastating power of offence said, "Woe to the person through whom offence comes."

*"Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes" - Matt. 18:7.*

*The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His Kingdom all things that offend, and those who practise lawlessness, and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth - Matt. 13:41, 42.*

I want to say that forgiveness is a big deal. There is so much hate; bitterness, unforgiveness and offence in our homes today that at the slightest provocation, couples are ready to divorce in order to be free. Marriages are collapsing cheaply and it's alarming that divorce rate is on the increase. Couples are taking advantage of each other, setting traps for each other and engaging in character assassination and even outright murder all because of offence, bitterness and unforgiveness.

If any man thinks forgiveness is not a big deal, let him check his heart properly again to be sure there is no unforgiveness hiding within. If forgiveness is not a big deal, why do we all have problems with it? People of different sexes, colour, race and ethnicity struggle

to give it. We all stumble at the door of forgiveness and very few people are able to forgive one another. It is very difficult for people to forgive.

Have you not realised that it is much easier to give out your money to help others than to forgive them of wrongs done to you? We can willingly give our money, time and energy to support others, but we find it almost impossible to forgive the same people. There is no gainsaying the fact that it is possible to give your money to help your offender when in need and those who have abused and taken advantage of you while you still withhold forgiveness from them. If forgiveness is not a big deal, how come a woman can take her time to make a delicious dinner for her husband while she is bitter and unhappy with him and unable to forgive him his mistakes? How come a couple can live under the same roof and sleep on the same bed for a month or more, yet they do not relate well to each other nor have affection for one another.

**Unforgiveness and offence has done more harm to people, marriages, families and communities than we can ever know. They are responsible for some of the major crises in our marriages. They are the silent enemies that tear our lives, relationships and marriages apart while we watch helplessly.** You do not realize what you do to yourself when you get stuck in resentment or offence and refuse to forgive your offender. You endanger your life and give the devil the right to torment you.

*"Then his master after he had called him, said to him, 'you wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.*

*Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you? And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him So my heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespass" - Matt. 18:32-35.*

Obviously, it was unforgiveness that delivered this servant to the torturers. If he had forgiven his fellow servant he wouldn't have found himself in the hands of the torturers. It was not the devil that handed him over to the torturers, but unforgiveness.

**Many believers are tormented and oppressed by demons because of grudges, malice, offence, unforgiveness and bitterness in their lives. These are the greatest impediments to healing, divine health, happy family life, prosperity and fulfilment of destiny.** It does not matter how anointed and prayerful you are, the moment you allow offence in your heart you will become handicapped and a captive of the devil.

Do you know that some diseases and sicknesses that invade and weaken our immune systems are empowered by unforgiveness, offence and bitterness? They are spiritual parasites that feed on us - the house they occupy. Diseases and sicknesses like headache,

migraine headache, impotency, insomnia, high blood pressure, hypertension, stroke, dizziness, etc, can be traceable to these parasites.

The very first time in the Bible God introduced Himself to the Israelites, as the God that heals was when He was dealing with offence, bitterness and resentment in their lives. In other words, God was telling them that if they opened their hearts to bitterness they would be afflicted (Exodus 15:22-26).

One of the fundamental reasons man is failing in his divine responsibility to be fruitful and multiply, to fill the earth, to subdue it, and have dominion is because of the presence of offence, bitterness and unforgiveness in man (Gen 1:26-28).

We get easily offended, bitter and fall into unforgiveness more than the sin of fornication, adultery, stealing - you name it. These forces have the power to make man barren, though he is created with divine strength to succeed and excel on earth. **Our greatest victory is when there is no more room for offence, bitterness and unforgiveness in us.** I mean, when there is nothing in us that can be offended or insulted. We can testify of our victory when there is nothing in us that the devil can use to torment us.

*Great peace have those who love Your law, and nothing causes them to stumble - Ps. 119:165.*

The book, 'Into Abba Arms' by Sandra D. Wilson is very interesting and revealing. In her book she addresses this subject in very practical terms.

According to her, to forgive means to cease to blame someone or something; to grant pardon for a mistake; to free someone from penalty, to free the obligation of a debt.

Forgiveness is giving up the right to wrong or hurt those who have wronged or hurt us. It is also refusing to be overcome with evil (Rom. 12:21).

When we do not forgive, we get stuck in resentment, bitterness and offence; and we miss out on the freedom that forgiveness brings.

Walking in forgiveness keeps us connected to life while unforgiveness connects us to death.

Forgiveness frees us perhaps even more than it frees those who we forgive. The withdrawal of love and forgiveness as commonly practised by a believer is contrary to God's unconditional love for us.

It seems to me that we feel we punish people by refusing to love and forgive them. How funny and foolish it is. Even when people come to us to ask for forgiveness, we turn them

down and make them feel that they have committed a sin that the blood of Jesus Christ is not pure and powerful enough to wash away. If God should treat us in the manner we treat our fellow human beings, we certainly would not stand a chance to be forgiven our sins and accepted by Him. Oh! Lord have mercy!

The problem is that we do not realise that we only do ourselves a world of good by forgiving others. And if we refuse to forgive, we only punish and imprison ourselves.

*"For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses" - Matt. 6:14,15.*

Sandra also wrote about misconceptions on the subject of forgiveness and how it should be given, who should receive forgiveness and when we should forgive. There seems to be a misunderstanding of the scripture in the mind of the people.

One of the misapprehensions of the scripture is that; forgiveness should be given to those that ask for it. As a matter of fact, it should be given to those who are truly sorry for their mistakes. Is this the kind of forgiveness the Bible teaches? The Bible teaches that forgiveness should be given to the offender before he or she asks for it. We do not have to wait for somebody to ask for forgiveness before we give it. And when we wait for the offender to ask for forgiveness before we forgive him, it is no longer the forgiveness that Jesus Christ teaches us to practise.

Forgiving is two words joined together that is "for and giving." For, means in advance, giving it in advance. Do not let your feeling get in the way of your forgiving someone. Your feelings have nothing to do with it. If you go by your feelings, you will not forgive and you will fall into error with God.

Carefully consider these scriptures and the language of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors - Matt. 6: 12.*

*For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.*

*But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us - Rom. 5: 6-8.*

*Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they do."  
And they divided His garments and cast lots - Luke. 23: 34.*

*And he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, "Lord, do not charge them with this sin. And when he had said this he fell asleep - Acts 7: 60.*

We were still sinners and outcasts when Christ died for us. God did not wait for us to acknowledge our sins and ask for forgiveness before He forgave us. If it cost God the priceless blood of His Son Jesus to forgive us our sins, then, we must all understand that forgiveness is not as easy as we think. Forgiveness can be pretty difficult and painful. There are times you really want to let go, but you find it too tough to do so. Jesus cried on the cross because of the weight of our offence that was upon Him, I must be frank with you, sometimes you really have to weep and cry out because of the gravity of the offence you are trying to let go.

I have seen this happening in our 'Healing The Nations (HTN) Conferences.' As we minister to people especially women who are bound by bitterness, unforgiveness, offence, etc, you would actually see them as they struggle to let go. You would see it all over them, the cloud of darkness, that is, the heavy weight of bitterness on them. At the point of release and breakthrough, they break down and weep uncontrollably. And I have always said to them, "It is alright to weep, it will probably ease the pain and flush out the bitterness, unforgiveness, rejection and disappointment." You know tears can be very costly.

I remember the case of a woman who attended one of our conferences and made a request to see me after the conference. I gave her an appointment to see me in my office. When she came she told me how she had enjoyed a beautiful relationship with her parents until there was a misunderstanding between them, and this affected the love and trust they had shared over the years. She felt her parents were wrong, but they would not admit it or apologise. She was unhappy and shattered about it. As she talked to me, I could see that she genuinely loved her parents and she was fighting hard to avoid weeping before me. After listening to her, I counseled her and asked her to forgive them so that she could be free and happy.

To be candid, it was difficult for her and I saw it all over her. She was struggling with herself and trying so hard to withhold her tears. I remember saying to her, "I am going to leave my office for you so that you can fully express yourself and be free to cry out your heart to God until He hears and you feel the sense of freedom." I also encouraged her to pray for her parents. It was as if I gave her the license she needed at that time, before I stepped out of the office, she was already pouring out her heart in tears. She was still weeping and praying for her parents when I returned. Then, I prayed for her to be healed and to love her parents genuinely again. Praise God, her life and relationship with her parents are fully healed and restored.

Indeed forgiveness and healing is a process especially when it comes to deeply painful issues involving our parents or other significant people in our lives. When people fail us and we get disappointed by the ones we love, trust and hold in high esteem, it can be pretty difficult to restore such relationships and get the confidence back.

There was another woman who attended Healing the Nations Conference in Lagos, Nigeria. She is pretty and has an air of tranquillity. It would be difficult to look at such a woman and believe she could be hurt or battered, but she was. On this particular day, I taught on "forgiveness and healing." During the time of prayer and ministration I saw this woman unable to open her heart and mouth to pray effortlessly. I knew that something was wrong within her and the Lord was about taking it out, but she was not finding it easy. She was weeping. At a time, I closed my eyes, but her loud scream forced me to open my eyes. When I looked at her, I could see that her countenance had changed though she was still weeping profusely. After some days, she stood before the congregation and shared of the trauma that she was going through in her marriage. She felt betrayed by her husband and there was no hope of a happy family again. But on that day of the conference, she felt something leave her and she became free again.

I want to reiterate this fact: forgiveness is not as easy as we think. There are people you think you have forgiven, but if you search your heart deeply, you will find out that you are still upset and angry with them. You still wish them evil and you are looking for a way of revenge. Sometimes, you look forward to hearing evil news about them or their families.

**One of the surest ways to protect yourself against unforgiveness is to be committed to forgiving people as they offend you. You may say it this way "I forgive people in advance."** Always remind yourself that you are dealing with human beings that are imperfect and they will always hurt you especially those you love dearly and who are close to you.

Another misapprehension is that we think we can forgive people by our might and power. I want to let you know that the same way it is impossible to love people with the God kind of love without the help and power of the Holy Spirit, so it is to forgiving people without the help and power of the Holy Spirit. Forgiveness goes beyond the words of your mouth, "I forgive you." It is truly a heart issue that can only be operated upon by the Holy Spirit. The Bible tells us,

*So he answered and said to me: This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel:  
Not by might nor by Power, but by My Spirit,' says the LORD of hosts - Zech. 4: 6.*

Forgiveness is something spiritual and not physical; therefore you cannot do it by yourself. It takes the power of the Spirit of God to give it. Though you can make the decision to forgive, but you need the grace of God and the power of the Spirit of God to get it done. It is humanly impossible to forgive people without the power of God. Always tell yourself, "I cannot do it by myself."

Sandra says, forgiveness can be likened to an octopus. Just think about it, when you think you have it all wrapped up. Something else pops up. The "something else" can be new memories of old hurt or emotional storms that erupt as we work through hurtful

experiences. And these things can surface even after we have made a commitment to forgive those that hurt us. This does not mean we are failures. It means forgiveness involves an ongoing process of recommitting to our original promise to forgive. **Forgiveness should become your lifestyle if you sincerely want to enjoy freedom with yourself, people, situations and even freedom from the devil.**

Chapter Sixteen

### **Apology Is Not A Remedy**

A neatly dressed and elegant looking young lady that commands respect because of her great and irresistible looks walked into an eatery and almost all eyes turn to steal a glance at her. She is conscious of her irresistible looks and the attention she gets from her admirers because of it, so she likes it and uses it well to advantage.

The souls of men were arrested by her look. You could almost hear the cry of the souls of men, 'who will deliver us from what our eyes are seeing?' 'How can we let go off the hook?' While the souls of men were crying for help, something dramatic began to happen. Guess what it was! The waitress asked for her request but she refused to answer her because she felt offended that the waitress showed no manners and had looked at her with disdain. The waitress who wanted to be polite because of her job, tried to explain herself but our pretty lady would not even allow her to speak. After some few minutes of incredible and uncalled-for drama the waitress apologized to her because she demanded for it, though it was obvious that there was no need for it. She tried to become herself after the scene created by her but it was not easy because anger and pride had taken over the atmosphere. In a moment we saw a lady whose looks has the power to capture and captivate the souls of men walking majestically into an eatery and in another moment all that great looks became as nothing as pride and anger overshadowed her, and the souls of men were liberated. It was good that the waitress apologized to save her job and the situation but did the apology change what was offended or insulted in her? It did not change anything in her but gave her false hope of self-confidence.

Let us read the words of Apostle Paul Humberstone, "To think that someone's apology will change everything and make it all better is a mistake, apology only reposition, empower and reinforce what can be offended in us and creates a false restoration."

You know we believe in apology and demand for it when we feel insulted instead of focusing on how to defeat what is being offended in us. If there is nothing being insulted or offended in us, then there will be no need for apology. This is what Jesus was teaching when He said if your hand or foot causes you to sin (be offended or stumbled), cut it off, since it is better to enter life without a limb than to end up in hell with a complete body. Matt.18:7-9. This of course is to emphasize this message.

He added, "Offence will continue in your life. They are part of the processing of the kingdom to bring Christ into you. In the worst of offensive situations, Jesus did not react. At the table the night He was betrayed, (and haven't we all been betrayed), He just told Judas to get on with his business.

This same Christ Jesus is being formed in us at the expense of personal offences. That is how you know that Christ is taking you over. When you will come to a place that the offence does not offend you again, you are free.

The church and family must learn how to handle offences, or be resigned to disunity. Until we learn this, offences will remain cracks in our unity and divisions in our fellowship, family and community. There will be no end of them until Christ reaches the full stature in His body. So we must learn to embrace offences, not for the pain, but for their gain."

## Chapter Seventeen

### **Forgiveness and Healing**

Good health is closely related to having a free mind, of being able to love and forgive others, and releasing them from the hold of unforgiveness. It means not bearing grudges and forgiving others 'in advance' for wrongs they will commit against you.

I have realized by experience, especially having being involved with the battered, abused, rejected, and disappointed people that offence; bitterness and unforgiveness can disconnect people from God and their purpose in life and gradually bring about their death. They are obstacles that either hinder or stop the working of the grace of our Lord

Jesus Christ in your life. When grace stops working in your life, you are doomed to fail and you are bound to fall into shame.

You are the only person who can stop or hinder the working of God's grace in your life when you allow offence, bitterness and unforgiveness to come and stay in your heart. The devil cannot stop the working of God's grace in your life nor can the devil stop God from helping you but you can. Because the devil knows this, that is the reason he wants to see you get bitter, offended and stuck in unforgiveness. If you really want to enjoy the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ keep your heart and life free of offence, bitterness and unforgiveness.

Permit me to restate here that some diseases and sicknesses that invade our immune systems and bodies are empowered by bitterness, offence, unforgiveness and malice. These spiritual parasites are responsible for diseases and sicknesses like headache, migraine, impotency, insomnia, high blood pressure, hypertension, stroke, dizziness, etc. Does this shock you?

A life that is free of offence, bitterness and unforgiveness is a healthy, wholesome, prosperous and fruitful one. Good and sound health has a lot to do with sound and pure heart that is devoid of bitterness, malice, grudges, resentment, unforgiveness and offence.

Meditatively, read the following scriptures again:

*A sound heart is life to the body, but envy is rottenness to the bones - Prov. 14:30.*

*Anxiety in the heart of man causes depression, but a good word makes it glad - Prov. 12:25.*

*A merry heart does good, like medicine, but a broken spirit dries the bones - Prov. 17:22.*

*A merry heart makes a cheerful countenance but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.*

*All the days of the afflicted are evil, but he who is of a merry heart has a continual feast - Prov. 15: 13, 15.*

Again I say, bitterness, unforgiveness and offence are responsible for some of the major crisis in our lives, relationships and homes. And so we are admonished:

*Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice - Eph. 4: 31.*

*Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord: Looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled - Heb. 12: 14, 15.*

This is what Peter discerned as inhabiting the sorcerer in Samaria that offered money to buy the power of God. He was bitter because the accurate teaching of Philip, the evangelist, exposed his gimmicks and exploitation. The people that were held bound by his sorcery were delivered. His grip on the people of Samaria was broken. He was not happy about this though he pretended to be a Christian. Peter rightly told him,

*"For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity." - Acts 8: 23*

Indications are that, some women have been bitter all their lives. Some started being bitter as teenagers and now they are still bitter even as full-grown adults. And this bitterness does not allow them to be happy and be free to enjoy life. It will be difficult for any man to make such a woman happy in life unless she deals with bitterness first. Some ladies are full of resentment and bitterness, and they expect that marriage would perform magic and make them happy.

Until bitterness and offence are eradicated from the root in your heart, you might not enjoy freedom and a fruitful relationship. What causes people to stumble and become distracted from their original course in life is offence and bitterness.

I believe the day has come for you to cast down every offence, bitterness and unforgiveness in your life and relationship. This is the day of your salvation and healing. It is the day for you to arise and be healed so that you can live your life and fulfil your destiny. You don't have to remain in your hurt and despair for another second. God has made provision for your healing through His Son Jesus Christ. Jesus came to give us forgiveness and healing. He has brought forgiveness of our sins and healing for our wounded souls and sick bodies. Check this out:

*He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed - Isaiah 53: 5.*

We should not think that God does not know us or see and hear us. God sees your secret tears and hears the silent cry of your heart for help and healing. And he would not turn His back on you because, He is mindful of you. Note this:

*He heals the broken-hearted. And binds up their wounds - Ps. 147: 3.*

*For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin - Heb. 4: 15.*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, Who comforts us in all our tribulation that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God - 2 Cor. 1: 3, 4.*

The very moment our hearts cry out to God for help and healing, God reaches out to us too. God is more concerned about our salvation, healing and deliverance than we do, but a lot of us feel that God is too slow to help and deliver us. That is not true. Why it seems as if God is slow and far away is because of our wrong positioning. He would ensure that we are properly aligned to His will before showing up to glorify His name. There is a common saying; "God is never too late or early but He shows up right on time."

*So, Draw near to God and He will draw near to you - James 4: 8.*

*But Zion said, "The LORD has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me. Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are continually before Me Isaiah - 49: 14-16.*

## Chapter Eighteen

### **You Can Be Healed Now**

When you have done everything you know how to do, you have prayed and have been prayed for but there is still no solution or breakthrough, I advise you to look inside of you for the cause of your problem and even the solution. The answer is always in you, my friend. Think about that!

Look Inward And Not Outward!

Do you feel that there is something wrong with you, your relationship and marriage but you cannot figure it out? You have probably bound all the demons and broken all the curses, yet it is still not working. And you have attended seminars and conferences

without the desired results? Do you wonder why you are unhappy with yourself and not excited about your life, relationship and marriage? And you are so full of fear, bitterness, regret and guilt? There might be the possibility of the presence of hurts and wounds in your heart. And as long as there are hurts, wounds and bitterness in your heart, you will always feel miserable. Are you aware that bitterness embitters? Sure it does! Most of these wounds and hurts are buried and out of sight and get manifested at a time of intense difficulty and crisis. Women tend to cover up these wounds in order to survive without feeling too deeply wounded and move on with life.

Make today a special day in your life because you are reading a book that is a point of contact for your healing and freedom. Our Heavenly Father knows all that you have been through in life and what you are going through right now. He does care about your fears, pains and wounds. He is committed to your life and to give you an expected end so that you can declare His goodness among the nations.

Child of God, it is time for you to acknowledge the need for healing for your wounded heart and emotion. Do not shy away from the fact that you are wounded and broken-hearted and you need healing and restoration.

Though we have been taught and made to believe that "time heals (the wounds), and we should allow sleeping dogs to lie." But we know by experience that "time cannot heal anybody" but it is what you do with your wound and hurt within the available time that will determine if you will be healed or remain hurting. You can be wounded and broken at the age of thirteen and live with it for the next forty years. Also, instead of allowing sleeping dogs to lie, it is wiser if we resort to conflict resolution in order to gain a better understanding thereby avoiding reoccurrence.

So the word of the Lord said:

*Heal me, O LORD, and I shall be healed; Save me, and I shall be saved, for You are my praise - Jer. 17: 14.*

*Have mercy on me, O LORD, for I am weak; O LORD, heal me, for my bones are troubled - Psalm 6: 2.*

The fact that you have forgiven those who had abused, hurt and taken advantage of you does not mean that you have been healed. Sometimes after forgiving the offender, you need to go to the Lord Jesus to heal your wounded heart. You may end up living with that wound for the rest of your life, if you are never healed.

The enormity of your wound can be understood when you consider how hard you are trying to overcome your wound and be a happy person, but you just cannot because there is something in you that would not allow you to be happy. There is something wrong with the foundation of your being. Your personality has been crushed and marred.

Until the problem is eradicated from the root, you might be a miserable person that is always transiting from one mood into another.

Do you know that some people especially women have all the good things of life, they have comfort and fame but they are miserable, full of regret, disappointment and guilt? They are wounded spirits with bleeding hearts; and bleeding hearts with smiling faces.

Now, my dear friend, I release the grace of God upon your life and command your healing to take place now and be made whole. Receive the forgiveness of God for yourself and others whom you have offended.

I command the power of bitterness, offence and unforgiveness to be broken in your life, relationship, marriage, ministry and organisation.

I decree a release of the grace of God upon your life to forgive everyone that has offended you in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

I command you to be healed in your emotions, mind and memories.

I command your broken heart to be healed.

I command you to be healed of every form of abuse, rejection and abandonment.

I command you to be set free from the spirit of rejection.

I command you to be healed of inferiority complex.

I command your life to be put together again.

I command a restoration of God's ordained relationship for your life.

I command your marriage to be healed and made whole.

I break the power of the devil over your life and set you free from homosexuality, lesbianism and prostitution

I command you to be delivered from masturbation and pornography

I command your deliverance from drug and sinful addiction and alcoholism.

From this moment of your life, you will live above bitterness, unforgiveness and offence. You will walk in the realm of dominion and victory in Christ.

By the power of the Spirit of God, I release you today from every captivity and command you to be free to fulfil your destiny in Jesus' Name, Amen.

## **About the Author**

Patrick Enega, a minister of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle and separated to the gospel of the grace of God.

He is committed to the seed of God in people and wants to see every believer rooted and grounded in the extravagant love of the Father, growing in the amazing grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, enjoying the intimate friendship of the Holy Spirit and experiencing the supernatural daily.

He oversees **God's Standard International Ministry**, a kingdom ministry that is operating from Lagos, Nigeria and reaching out to the nations of the earth with the gospel of the kingdom of our Jesus Christ.

He is author of the books "Marriage and Family...God's Purpose Defined" "Knowing God as Your Father" and "No More Condemnation...Woman Arise and Be Healed" (A special book for God's daughter).

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