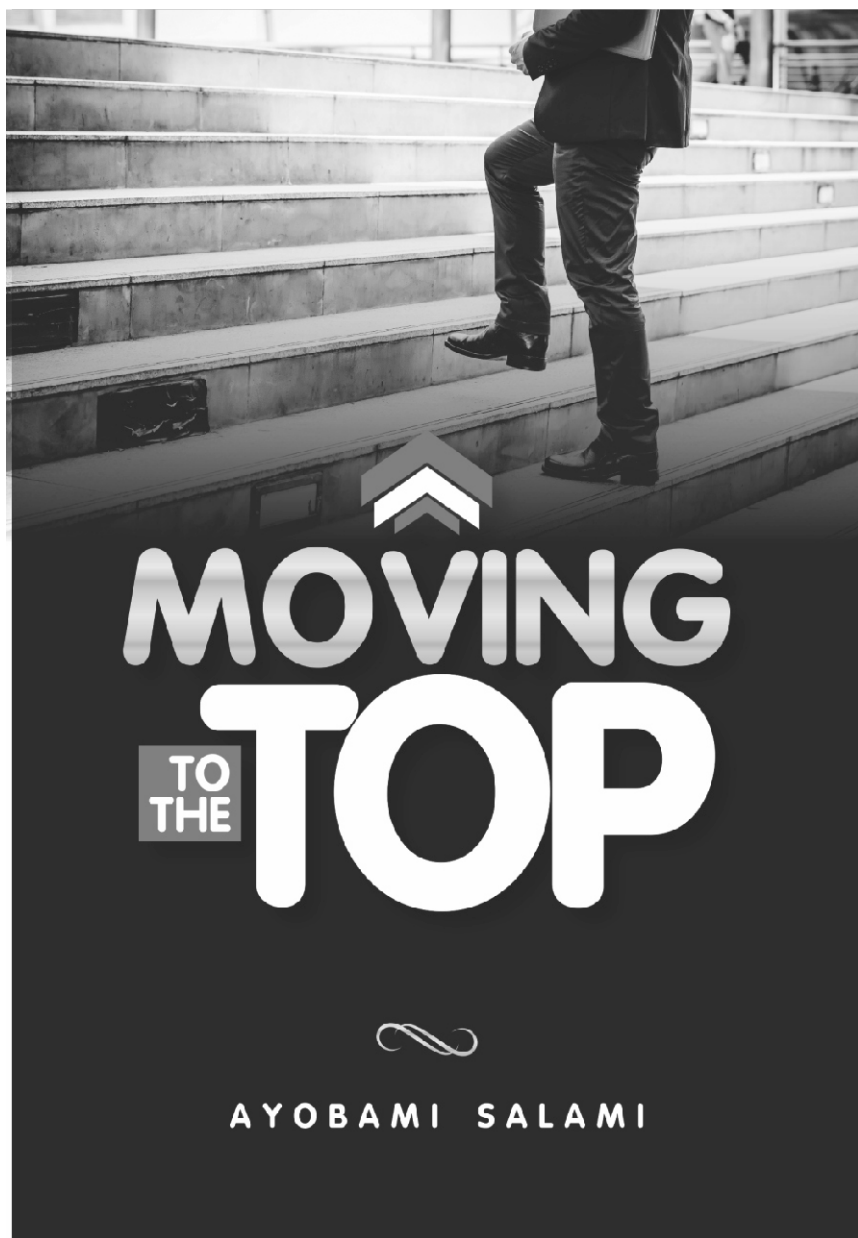




MOVING TO THE TOP



AYOBAMI SALAMI



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ISBN 978-978-982-196-9

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Published

Cedar Generation Gospel Outreach (Inc.), Nigeria

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Design and Printed

Waltodany Visual Concepts, Nigeria

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS



The initial prompting to write this book came from my interaction with and counseling of the teeming members of Cedar Youth Network (CeYNet). I owe them a load of gratitude for their emotional enrolment with the tripodal thrust of the Ministry: striving to be a generation that is *Holy, Healthy and Highly Successful*. Without this, the current book would not have been conceived. I greatly appreciate the sacrifice, resilience and contributions of the indefatigable Head of our Publication Unit, Bro. Oluwale Omikunle in the production of this book. I wish to register my profound appreciation to my darling wife who dotted the “i”s and crossed the “t”s before the book was published. Finally, I am eternally grateful to my Lord, Jesus Christ, for giving His grace to be His vessel.

Ayobami Salami

April, 2020

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PROLOGUE



Naturally, every serious-minded person has a desire or wish to climb the ladder of greatness in life. Therefore, it is neither a sin nor a crime to have lofty aspirations and dreams for the top. However, attaining enviable height in one's career is not just a wishful thinking but involves making concerted efforts, physically and spiritually. Furthermore, it must be noted that there are some things that God will do for you, there are some you need people to do for you and there are some you must do by yourself (John 11:43-44). In a nutshell, you have a role to play in climbing to greatness in life just as God has a role to play. God also raises some people to help you reach your promised land, but yours is just to possess it; following some time-tested principles (Leviticus 20:24). That is why it is needful for you to pray, plan and take steps which will usher you to the next phase of your life.


You don't have to wait for perfect condition because it may never come! Just make a move and take action (Ecclesiastes 11:4). As you aspire to move up and go higher in any endeavour, you only need to wait for the right time and not the perfect time. As you go through the principles espoused in this book, I trust God to release the grace to be sensitive to the divine timing which is always the right time. In addition, the role of passion and amazing power of expectation in moving to the top cannot be over-emphasized (2 Kings 9:1-6; 17-20). Let there be high expectation and passion in whatever you do. Let me hasten to add, at this juncture, that this book is not an attempt to motivate you because the author is not a motivational speaker or writer. The book dwells on divine principles that will bless you and give you a push in life. It does not matter when you started the race of life but how you run it is very important.

“And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you heed the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them.” Deuteronomy 28:13 (NKJV).





The above scriptural text explains the plan of God for His obedient children. I mean those that obey His words and do according to His will and pleasure.

*Heaven is not a
consolatory
prize for the
frustrated.*



“You shall be the head, and not the tail; you shall be above only...” I usually tell people that *heaven is not a consolatory prize for the frustrated*. The fact that you want to go to heaven does not mean that you should live a life of mediocrity. Making heaven is the best but, it is not a tenable reason not to make a mark in life. God intended us to be kings and priests; this implies that life is a complete package consisting of divinity and royalty. Divinity connects us with eternity and its unlimited resources while royalty makes available the benefits of good life. This is why I am sure that *heaven is not a consolatory prize for the frustrated!* God has destined you and me for something great.

God's spoken word at creation, that we should subdue the earth, means that you are central, cardinal and pivotal to His creative plans. You are to be in charge, dominate and rule the world! Therefore, take control and don't just result to fate. However, the big question is *are you actually where God expects you to be or are you aspiring to be where God wants you to be?* Nobody gets a prize for being in the popular side of life. Friend, you can only be noticed in the V.I.P pavilion. During football matches, whenever the camera beams on the popular side of the stadium, you see the crowd. When it beams on the V.I.P stand, you see the dignitaries and crème de la crème.

—  —
*Divinity connects
us with eternity
and its unlimited
resources while
royalty makes
available the
benefits of good
life.*
—  —



The basic fact is that the crowd is faceless and has no identity or recognition. For instance, if somebody is mobbed; there is usually nobody to arrest and prosecute because nobody recognizes the mob. The action is usually termed as mob action by the law enforcement agents. You need to move from the popular side of life to the V.I.P section. Unfortunately, so many people are too complacent about their lives. There are a lot of people who wake up every day and feel satisfied with much less than what God has in plan for them. **You shall be the head and not the tail!**

This book will be opening your eyes to see what you need to do to get to where God wants you to be. However, there are certain processes you need to go through in order to get to your God-ordained destination. Most times, the problem is that many people just want the product but they don't want to go through the process. It will interest you to know that the product is not credible if the process is faulty.

In Nigeria, there was a time a man called Abalaka claimed he had discovered a cure for HIV. Waoh! Millions of Nigerians were so excited and happy that his so-called discovery was going to write the name of the country on the world map of scientific breakthroughs. Unfortunately, he could neither defend nor prove his latest *discovery* when he was asked to come and subject his procedure to standard protocols. He was only thinking that his drug would be taken just like that and accepted as the antidote to HIV. The truth of the matter is that

if the process is not credible, then the product cannot be authentic!

Many people are under the illusion that all they need is a miracle. How wrong they are! Yes, we all need miracles but, miracle is occasional divine intervention from time to time but principles guide every day of our lives. God may decide to bypass these principles temporarily to wrought a miracle as a demonstration of His sovereignty but, His will is to run the system of the world based on well-established principles. That is why we have time and season, day and night, light and darkness, terrestrial and celestial, etc. I welcome you on board as I take you through these principles and processes.

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*If the process is
not credible,
then the product
cannot be
authentic!*
—  —

A CRYSTAL-CLEAR VISION



*"It is not enough to be busy, so are ants.
The question is, what are we busy about?"*

-Henry David Thoreau

Chapter 1

A CRYSTAL-CLEAR VISION



*The world of great opportunity is available now,
as it has always been, only to those with great vision
- Andrew Carnegie*

The first requirement needed to move to the top in life is a clear vision. The world, in which we live today, is meant for the visionaries and those that will dominate it must be envisioned. You don't walk the journey of life with legs but with vision! Many people are crippled not because they don't have legs but because they simply lack vision. You cannot go farther than you can see because only vision gives direction! If you don't have vision, you are going nowhere. What you see determines what you pursue and eventually what you get! After Lot had departed and greedily chosen the 'good' portions of the land, God told Abraham to lift up his eyes and look through all the four cardinal points of the earth. He promised to give him and his seed all the land he saw (Genesis 13:14-15). This points to the

fact that you cannot go beyond your vision. If you climb a tree, you will see farther than when you stand on the ground. And when you are in the plane, you see much more. The more you see, the more inspired and motivated you become. And whatever you see is part of your territory of exploits. Therefore, you need to see far so that you can go far in life!

Vision has a number of definitions and it is not basically restricted to the physical sense of sight. Vision is the unfolding of God's plan and purpose for your life. Greatness is not a product of luck but of purpose. Do you know the divine blue print for your life? Are you serving God's purpose or you are merely running the rat race? You must discover His plan and purpose for your life because without discovery, there cannot be recovery. Vision also means seeing clearly, knowing what you want and where you are going. I pray that your eyes of understanding will be enlightened in the name of Jesus. Vision means an ideal or a goal towards which you aspire and are driven. Vision is the fuel for reaching the pinnacle of success in life; it is the combustion for passion. Stop following the multitude if you must succeed in any endeavour, follow your vision.

COMPONENTS OF VISION

Vision has three basic components as highlighted below:

(a) The Hindsight – It works like a car rear-side mirror(s) used for viewing the backsides. With hindsight, you are able to review the past and spot any danger behind that may hamper your progress. Good drivers realize the importance of rear

mirrors. It makes you sometimes to regulate your speed and decide when to change lane on the highway. It is difficult to avoid accident on a journey when there is no rear mirror. Without rear mirror, you may not be able to drive fast enough even when your windscreen is intact. Just as no responsible driver will venture on a journey without rear mirrors, no man of purpose will venture into life's endeavours without hindsight.

(b) The Insight – This is defined as the capacity to gain an accurate or deep understanding of something. Insight works like a microscope used for observing minute organisms. Many things that are not obvious to ordinary eyes are shown clearly under the microscope. A man of vision is a man of insight. He can see opportunities where others see nothingness. Vision makes you to see more than your peers and motivates you to drive hard where others are just taking things easy. Insight is like introspection which allows you to discover your hidden potentials and latent energy. This gives you the will-power from within, and an intrinsic motivation that lubricates your vortex of passion, so that you can easily gain traction on the path of progress.

© **The Foresight** – Foresight is the ability to predict or gain an understanding of what will happen in the future. It works like a telescope used to bring far objects nearer. A view with telescope brings distant objects nearer and makes it larger and clearer. In essence, when you have foresight, you are not


discouraged by how long or what it will take to get to your destination. The picture of where you are going may not be clear or significant to others, but since you have the vision (the telescope), you focus on the big picture that only you can see on the screen and you are driven by inexplicable passion to push ahead. That was what made Jesus to endure the cross. It was foresight that strengthened Abraham.

“...he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God” Hebrews 11:9-10 (NKJV).

What was clear to Abraham, a man of vision, was oblivious to others. It is difficult to dissuade a man of vision, because he sees what others are ignorant of.

You have to first see the picture of the future you desire before you can get there; otherwise getting there remains a mirage. If you don't know where you are going, even if you get there by accident, you won't be able to take residence or occupation since you lack realization.

Don't allow any present predicament to becloud your vision of a better tomorrow. Understanding will make you outstanding and thereby stand you out.

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*It is difficult to
dissuade a man
of vision,
because he sees
what others are
ignorant of.*

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Don't let anybody plan your life for you, know God's will and purpose for your life. Be visionary like the eagle which has three eye lids. The eagle's eyes are twice the size of the human eyes and its eye lens is six times the focal length of the humans. To climb to the top on the ladder of success, you must have extra vision beyond what ordinary eyes can see. Every vision must be writeable and readable which must pass the test of SMART (Specific, Measurable, Accurate, Realistic, Time-bound)! In other words; always write out your vision clearly, run with it as you patiently await its time of manifestation.

“Then the Lord answered me and said: write the vision and make it plain on the tables, that he may run who reads it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time: but at the end it will speak, and it will not lie. Though it tarries, wait for it; because it will surely come. It will not tarry.” Habakkuk 2: 2-3 (NKJV).

Your greatness and happiness in life is coded and preserved in your vision. Show me a visionless man and I will tell you that he is on the path of destruction and extinction. Vision lightens your way and gives you direction even in the midst of confusion.


“Where there is no revelation, the people cast off restraint; But happy is he who keeps the law.” Proverbs 29:18 (NKJV).

There is a Chinese proverb that says *action without vision is a nightmare*. Some people are just navigating through life without any purpose and as such they keep beating about the bush. They do not galvanize efforts towards a particular direction and that is why they labour but have nothing to show for it. The first thing you need to do in order to move to the top is to be a **man of vision**. There are some pertinent questions you must answer to know whether or not you are a man or woman of vision.

First, where do you see yourself in the next 5-10 years? Where will I meet you in the next 15-20 years? Where do you see yourself on the ladder and map of life in about 30 years from now, if the Lord tarries? Second, is it possible to get there if you go at the present pace? Your seemingly humble background or surrounding circumstances should not be the yardstick to measure how far you will go in life. God has given us all things we need to succeed in life.

“As His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue.” 2 Peter 1:3 (NKJV).

There is no limit to what we can do or attain in life as Apostle Paul said in Philippians 4:13 (NKJV), ***“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”*** Don't worry about the hurdles or

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*Action
without vision is
a nightmare*


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obstacles on your way because they are just your stepping stones on the path to success.

Somebody once said, *he that cannot conceive the spectacular cannot receive the miraculous*. What is that thing you see in your mind as the vision for tomorrow? Dream big, conceive ideas that are bigger than you; that is when God can miraculously step into your situation. If you can explain things that happen to you, it means God is not there. For instance, if I earn a salary of ₦100,000 per month and I have a budget of ₦50,000 in a month; I can justify my spending. On the other hand, if I earn ₦100,000 a month but I'm able to easily fund projects worth ₦500,000 without compromise or fraud; then it is extraordinary. The vision being discussed is not about thinking on a micro level or on the basis of your ability. It is simply aiming for the best that God has reserved for you.

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, and what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints” Ephesians 1:18 (NKJV).

The eyes of your understanding are not the physical but the spiritual eyes. Some people have understanding but their eyes are not enlightened, so they are spiritually blind. Every born again

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*He that cannot
 conceive the
 spectacular
 cannot receive
 the miraculous.*

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Christian has the eyes of understanding but those eyes need to be enlightened to see what God wants us to see. It is not just an automatic sight! I pray that the light of His word shines upon your eyes for spiritual illumination in Jesus' name. **Vision is a mental or clear picture of your preferable future.** Vision is when you have a clear idea of where you want to be, where you want to see yourself in the next 10, 15, 20 or 30 years.

Sometimes ago, I read an interesting story which excited me. The story was about a king who had three sons. When the king was about to die, he needed to choose among his children who would sit on the throne after his demise. He then subjected his three children to a very simple test. He called them together and said, *“My sons I am about to go to the land of my fathers, but before I stop breathing, I want you to go to the top of the mountain and bring something for me. When you bring it, I will then decide which of you would be the king but you have to be fast with it because I am about dying.”* So, all of them immediately started running and climbing the mountain.

After a while, the first son came back from the mountain where he saw some green leaves and plucked in a hurry the quantity that he felt would be good enough for his father. He brought the leaves to his father and said: *“Father, I am the first to come. While climbing the mountain, I got to a place where I found trees with evergreen leaves and I said this would be good. My father, here is the thing I brought for you.”* The father asked him to hold on till his brothers return. Meanwhile, as the other two brothers


continued their journey, they passed the region of the trees and leaves, they got to the region where they found round pebbles and the second son picked some pebbles and said *“I have tried enough, at least I have climbed the mountain, I have left the portion of the leaves and the place where there are no trees again”*. So, he came back panting and enthusiastically showed the father the pebbles he brought for him. The father said *“my sons, let us wait for the return of your youngest brother”*.

The youngest one continued climbing until he got to the top of the mountain and looked far ahead and then realized that time was going and his father was dying, so he ran back. On getting home, he said *“Father, I am very sorry for coming late; I am coming last among your children. I climbed and saw the trees with evergreen leaves, but I decided to move on. I got to the place of pebbles but didn't stop. I climbed to the top of the mountain and when I got there, I looked far ahead, I saw the hills, falling and rising, I saw beautiful gardens, water falls, I saw them making a touch with the horizon, the stars in harmony with the moon, I was so impressed and got carried away by what I saw and longed to reach unto the scenery of the beauty that I saw far ahead. I wish I could get there but I remembered that I was getting late and started running back, and because I was in a hurry, I couldn't pick something but have only come back with this story and the vivid picture of that beauty still dominates my thoughts. My father, please forgive me for not bringing anything home”*.

The father said *“My son, you will be the king! You have nothing in your hands but you have something precious inside of you. It is not what*

you have in your hands but what you have inside of you that really matters, and because you have a vision of what is ahead, you will be the king. I won't pick your brother who has some leaves in his hands, I won't pick your brother who has some pebbles, I will pick you because you have nothing in your hands but you have something great inside of you and that is the most important". What you have in your hand is bread, what you have inside of you is vision! Bread is for now but vision is for the future!

Sometimes, we just want to look at what we can see and something we can have. Interestingly, what is inside of us is more important than what we have at hand. As a civil servant, don't come home at the end of every month only with a pay packet but also with vision. As a business man, if you come home daily with only your sales book; stop this routine and embrace vision. Most students are basically in the university to get certificates. Don't only graduate with certificate but with laudable vision. The future is not about the course you studied; the future is the vision you have with it. The course may give you the platform, but the vision will give you the traction. The vision you have determines whether or not you will go far in life. As you live your life, ask yourself "Do I have any vision?" Don't just struggle to have but strive to be! When you strive to be and you become that which you ought to be, then you will get all that you would have struggled to have.

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*Bread is for now
but vision is for
the future!*

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I read in one of the Nigerian national dailies about a business man that deals in furniture items who said *“I am better than my friends who are Professors”*. When he was asked why? He said *“Some Professors retired without having their own roofs over their heads. It was when they came back to their village or home town that they were just laying the foundation of their houses, waiting endlessly for their gratuities but I have built my house and I am already living there. Although, I didn't go to the university but I am better than them”*. Why? It is a fact that those professors had formal education and money but they had no vision for life after retirement.

As a student, have a vision for life after graduation! In fact, the reality of unemployment in the country usually dawns on an average Nigerian graduate after the completion of the compulsory national youth service. You don't have to get to that stage before you start working on your dream and vision. Even if you have a First Class certificate, it cannot carry you far without vision. There are First Class graduates who never went far in life, but there are some Third Class graduates who are making waves in life. I learnt that Frank Edoho, the anchor of **“Who wants to be a Millionaire?”**, a popular T.V. show in Nigeria, studied Animal Science. He is far better than many graduates of Mass Communication, English or Journalism? The future is the vision you have, not where you are now!

WHAT VISION DOES FOR YOU

1. **Vision drives and motivates you**

Vision puts fire in your bones! Unfortunately, not everybody is visionary. When you are envisioned, you are consumed with the fire of passion. Little wonder, Jesus Christ said

“The zeal of my Father's house has consumed me...” John 2:17 (NKJV).

When you have vision, you are on fire as you are driven and motivated by it. Let me ask you a question “What drives and motivates you?” Do not be driven by frivolities but be passionately driven and motivated by vision. Most times, it is discovered that people who complain too much have no vision. Stop the complaints and be ready to take the bull by the horn. Anybody who has vision is always thinking about the solution and way forward even when there are obstacles and barriers.

You will hear such people say *“even if I can't climb the mountain, I will bore a hole through it.”* When you have vision, you have motivation! Someone once said *“My interest is in the future because I am going to spend the rest of my life there”*. Can you imagine that? The future I am talking about is not in 10 or 20 years' time. The future I am talking about starts the moment you stand up from where your mindset is at present and capture your vision.

There was a woman called Helen Keller who was blind and deaf. What a double tragedy indeed! After some time, her sight and hearing were miraculously restored and she later launched a big campaign to raise help for the blind. A group of journalists then went to meet her and asked her, *“why are you so passionate about the blind, is it the worst thing in the world?”* She answered *“No!”* *“So, do you mean there is something worse than being blind?”* She said *“Yes!”* When she was asked what is worse than blindness? She answered, *“Having sight and not being able to see.”* The 'seeing' here is not with the physical eyes but it is about having the eyes of tomorrow. It is having your eyes of understanding being enlightened. Let vision be your driver and motivator!

2. Vision differentiates between distractions and attractions

It is very obvious that a number of things called attractions are just mere distractions. During events or programmes, side attractions are usually included which may turn out to eventually become distractions to the participants. There are some things that simply distract you from the right path of life. When the four Hebrew men; Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego got to the king's palace and were presented with everything (food, meat, wine, etc.), they rejected all those royal delicacies because they saw them as distraction to their vision. They rather chose to eat common beans or pulses they had been used to.

On the other hand, the remaining young men were attracted and happy seeing it as 'a woof' (freebies). But Daniel and his colleagues said “No, *this is going to be a distraction, we will not defile ourselves with the portion of the king's meat*”. Why? They had their eyes on the future! It is a pity that many young girls are deceived by men who often tell them lies and their heads begin to swell. They are oblivious of the fact that it is just a means of making a minced meat of them. In the same vein, many guys are attracted by the world of fame, fashion, fun, music, entertainment etc., embracing them as the main purpose of life.

When you are focused, you have vision; when you have vision, you will know what is important and what is not. You will not go for the fake in lieu of the original and then think that you are gunning for the best. There are so many good things you can do with your life but when you have the best, why do you have to worry about the good? Your vision will help you focus on what is best for your life.

3. Vision gives you a sense of purpose

“Now also when I am old and gray headed, O God, do not forsake me, until I declare Your strength to this generation, Your power to everyone who is to come.” Psalm 71:18 (NKJV).



Look at what David was saying, he said “*even when I am grey headed, forsake me not until I have shown your strength to this generation and thy power unto everyone.*” The vision of David was

not to 500 or 1,000 people, but unto generations. He was not talking about size of congregation, he was targeting generations. He was a man of purpose whose aim was to show God's strength to his generation and everyone that would come around him. He was a man who knew what he was supposed to do and was gunning for it. Is there something that galvanizes your effort which seems to define your life and your whole being? Can you really identify it just like David? When there is a sense of purpose, there is a sense of urgency! Time will always be enough when there is no sense of purpose. To a lazy man, time is not a problem; he has time for everything and everyone that comes his way.

4. **Vision helps to benchmark your life**

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”. 2 Timothy 4:7 (NKJV).

Everybody has a course charted for him by God. Life is just like a physical race which entails following a number of rules guiding it. In the relay race run by athletes, there are always lanes where each athlete runs. If any athlete crosses the lane, in the course of the race, he is disqualified. Likewise, in the race of life, everybody has a lane or a path to follow. Please, discover your own lane and run on it. Don't run on the lane of another person, don't worry about what is happening on the other lanes, concentrate on the race on your lane.

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*When there is a
 sense of purpose,
 there is a sense
 of urgency!*
 —  —

No matter how fast and skillful you run on a wrong lane, you will be disqualified. Apostle Paul said *"I have finished the race..."*

You can only win the medal when you get to the finishing line on your *course*. When you have a vision, it helps you to benchmark your life. There cannot be envy or jealousy because you know where you are supposed to be, you follow suit and you are happy with yourself. When you see people who are jealous or envious, they don't know what God has called them to do. They don't have a vision and race of their own. They use *giraffe* method, looking at what is happening to other people and they are not contented. If you want to get to the finishing point, concentrate on your own lane! Envy and jealousy sometimes make some people to cross lane, and when they do, they are crushed. I personally know a few examples.

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you; before you were born I sanctified you, I ordained you a prophet to the nations". Jeremiah 1:5 (NKJV).

From the above text, it is crystal clear that everybody has been ordained. Yes, anointing oil is poured on some people to be pastors, but everyone has been ordained right from his/her mother's womb. God did not create anybody without a purpose. When you know your purpose and vision, you begin to benchmark your life. The question you should ask yourself is how far are you moving close to your preferred future? How

far are you from it and what do you need to do to close the gap between where you are and where you ought to be?

“For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell asleep, was buried with his fathers, and saw corruption.” Acts 13:36 (NKJV).

Although, David made some mistakes and errors but yet he accomplished his vision because he was sold out to it. Yes, as a man, he had faults and he was not infallible. If you continue to list his mistakes, you are just wasting your time. Some people are specialists on criticism; they point at the faults of others so much that they don't even have time to think about what is good in their own lives.

5. Vision helps you realize the shortness of your life

“Whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appears for a little time, and then vanishes away”. James 4:14 (NKJV).


When you see a person's obituary, you will see his/her age or lifespan clearly stated. For instance, an inscription like '1909-2020' may be written on the cenotaph. This simply attests to the fact that there is an entry point and there is also an exit point! However, what he/she did within the time frame is the most important. From the womb to the tomb lies a time frame! What an individual achieved within the time spent on

earth is a product of vision fulfilment or mission derailed or aborted.

Life is not measured by length but by purpose and vision. It is not measured by success but by achievement, not by prosperity but purpose. It is good to have long life but the quality of life lived is better than attaining old age without living in purpose. For instance, what other information do we have about Methuselah apart from being the longest-lived man on earth? He lived 969 years on earth but yet he died without making any known landmark. May you leave positive landmarks for the coming generation. Life is about making definite and positive impact! You will live long and fulfill your divine purpose in Jesus' name.

Look at the life of J.F. Kennedy who died at the age of 46 years as the youngest American President. He became the President of America at the age of 43 and up till today, J.F. Kennedy was still the youngest American President. Bill Clinton became President at the age 46, and Obama at the age of 47.

In other words, J.F. Kennedy still has the record! Martin Luther King Jnr. lived for only 39 years. I have lived longer than Martin Luther King Jnr., I have lived longer than J.F. Kennedy

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or aborted.*

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but do I have as much impact? It is not by length of time but by impact! What are you filling the gap with? Between your arrival date on earth and your departure date from it, what are you trying to put in the blank space? I mean in-between when you were born and when you will die, what are you putting in that wide gap? What impact are you going to make? What is that legacy you are going to leave behind? What is that thing that will outlive you? That is vision and purpose! To move to the top, the starting point is vision.

“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”. Jeremiah 29:11(NKJV).

God has beautiful thoughts towards you, He has fantastic ideas about your tomorrow and He has planned so many great things for you. But you need to catch the vision, you need to walk and work with the vision so that you will not take distraction for attraction. If Joseph had not been a man of vision, he would have messed up himself with a five-minute *enjoyment*. Consequently, he would have mortgaged his destiny with the distraction that looked like an attraction.

Statistics shows that most ladies from 22-30 years have committed abortion at least once or twice in their lifetime. Why? They don't know that they are supposed to preserve their destinies. What they think as enjoyment is actually a

distraction to their lives. It doesn't matter if you have been missing it or have made mistakes in the past. If you can decide for the Lord today, God is opening a new page for you in the name of Jesus. Repent from your sinful ways and chart a new course in life.



*"Give me six hours to chop down a tree and
I will spend the first four sharpening the axe."*

-Abraham Lincoln

Chapter 2

IMPERATIVE OF PREPARATION



First I prepare. Then I have Faith.
- Joe Namath

In chapter one, it was established that vision gives meaning to your life. However, you will recall that it is not enough to just have vision. If you have vision, it will not automatically come to pass. You must go beyond the excitement of having vision because there is the need for adequate preparation. Why do you need preparation? When God gives you an idea or a vision, He does not give you a blue print about how that vision will be accomplished. What God does is to give you a guide post.

What is a Blue Print/Guide Post?

A blue print gives detailed information while guide post just gives sketchy information about something. For instance, a blue print description of traveling from O.A.U. Campus Gate, Ile-Ife to Ibadan will state that you will see an overhead bridge,

then T-junction, then turn to your left and continue to go straight etc. On the other hand, what God does is to show you an arrow to follow. It is now left for you to sort out the details. It is often said that the will to succeed is important but what is more important is the will to prepare. If you already have vision, then there is need for adequate preparation.

Why is Preparation important?

David needed just one stone to kill the boastful giant called Goliath but out of adequate preparation, he took five. When you slay a giant, remember that he still has some brothers. For instance, Goliath's brothers allowed David to celebrate his victory as a champion before pouncing on him (2 Samuel 21:15-22). Be well prepared to resist the devil at all times (1 Samuel 17:48; Hebrews 12:14). The enemy tries to launch attack at a time he thinks that you are feeble and vulnerable. There is need to feed your spirit with *meat* and not *milk*; I mean you must get the real stuff and not just soft food alone (Hebrews 5:13-14).

“Prepare yourself and be ready, you and all your companies that are gathered about you; and be a guard for them. After many days you will be visited. In the latter years you will come into the land of those brought back from the sword and gathered from many people on the mountains of Israel, which had long been desolate; they were brought out of the nations, and now all of them dwell safely.”.
Ezekiel 38:7-8 (NKJV).

1. Preparation is a determinant which comes before visitation

Preparation determines your success or failure in life. God has given visions to many people but not everybody's vision has been realized. No matter how ordained a vision is, no matter how divine, no matter how authentic; if there is no preparation, that vision cannot come to pass.

“And that servant, who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes”. Luke 12:47 (NKJV).

Many people are experiencing 'beatings' in their lives (marriage, academics, business, etc.) because of little or no preparation. If you don't want to be receiving the 'beatings' of life, you have to make adequate preparation.

2. Preparation is important because opportunity does not come to those who want but to those who prepare

You don't just wait for opportunities; while you are waiting, prepare yourself. While you are waiting for intervention or visitation, be busy preparing yourself. There are certain opportunities that just come up unexpectedly; it is only those who are prepared that enjoy those opportunities. That is why you need to get prepared.

When I was running my Masters programme at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, I determined that rather than

spending the normal two years, I would spend a year which actually was unrealistic. Ideally, you need one year for coursework and at least one year for thesis. The normal thing is to conclude the coursework before kickstarting the thesis. After concluding my registration for coursework at the commencement of first semester, I went to my then Head of Department (Retired Bishop Prof. Osunade) and told him I wanted to run my thesis concurrently with my coursework. He said that I must be joking because it is never done. He said if I didn't concentrate on my coursework, I would not be able to make the PhD grade. He was right, but I told him to give me the privilege as a benefit of doubt.

He eventually agreed to give me a chance and I am eternally grateful to him for this. Lo and behold, by the time I finished, an opportunity for a United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) scholarship came up and somebody else was already being considered for it. But by the time I was through with the Masters programme, the Department decided I was better suited for the scholarship. It was my preparation that God used to qualify me for that opportunity. That scholarship was what eventually charted my career path in life till date. If I didn't realize that it was God inspiring me to be “unrealistic” at that time, I would have missed the opportunity and who knows what could have happened to my career trajectory?

Look at the case of Joshua who never knew Moses would not take them to the Promised Land. The Israelites thought

Moses would lead them into the Promised Land but incidentally Moses died in transit. When God wanted to choose a leader for his replacement, He chose the person who was prepared. When Moses died, Joshua was already prepared to assume the leadership role! The basic fact is that those who fail to prepare will be forced to repair. I see many people who are still repairing their lives because they failed to prepare. Unfortunately, many people are trapped in the process of repairing their lives till they go to the grave.

HOW DO YOU PREPARE?

A. Map out your strategy and be committed to it

God is a God of strategy! In fact, it is not an overstatement to say that He is the Master Strategist.

“For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it, lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish'?” Luke 14:28-30 (NKJV).

The above scriptural text is talking of strategic planning. When you have any vision or goal, do you ask yourself 'how do I get there?' So many people are active players on the field of life without a game plan and they are clueless. I make bold to say that such people are suffering from what is called intellectual aridity. They are not thinking of strategy to adopt either as a

result of lack of clues or due to laziness. They neither have any idea nor plan on how to achieve their goals. What do you want God to bless? It is a simple equation: $0 \times 10^7 = 0$. What often determines who wins or who loses in a game is the strategy used. Many people play a lot of games in life but they don't score goals. When Moses and the Israelites got to the Red Sea; God asked him, *"What is in your hand?"* If Moses had come to the Red Sea with empty hands, what would have happened?



"And the sons of the prophets said to Elisha, "See now, the place where we dwell with you is too small for us. Please, let us go to the Jordan, and let every man take a beam from there, and let us make there a place where we may dwell." So he answered, "Go." Then one said, "Please consent to go with your servants." And he answered, "I will go." So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan, they cut down trees. But as one was cutting down a tree, the iron ax head fell into the water; and he cried out and said, "Alas, master! For it was borrowed."

2 Kings 6: 1-5 (NKJV)

The sons of the prophet were neither happy nor satisfied with their small dwelling place. They had a vision and were thinking big that they needed a bigger place. However, they didn't just have a vision, they also had a strategy. They said they were going to Jordan to cut trees for building a more spacious place of abode. They also decided that everybody would carry

a beam and that Elisha would go with them. Does that not involve thinking, planning and strategy? But when they were going, they didn't tell Elisha that they didn't have an axe of their own. Many erroneously believe that they need resources before they start articulating a vision. Conversely, you need a vision to attract the resources. Purpose precedes provision.

The only thing these sons of the prophet had was vision. Although, the sons of the prophet had vision for expansion without the required material resources, they did not go empty-handed as they went to borrow an axe-head. It was when they were cutting that the axe head fell into the river and Elisha then got to know that it was borrowed. Despite being the sons of the prophet, they didn't say they would just ask the prophet to prophesy and the trees would be cut down. Even when they did not have the tool, they went to borrow it. All these were part of their preparations and strategies! A great vision can hardly be accomplished without strategic thinking. God does not expect us to behave like robots when He has endowed us with comprehensive intellectual architecture.

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*Purpose
 precedes
 provision.*
 —  —

B. You must go through the discipline of training

“For a dream comes through much activity, and a fool's voice is known by his many words”.
 Ecclesiastes 5:3 (NKJV).

Greatness in life is not just by talking about success or progress. Although, it is good to confess it; but after you might have confessed it, do something about it. Do you think the person who got the gold medal in an Olympic event won the medal on the day of the event? No! He had already won it during the time of training. Doctors did not become medical practitioners on the day of induction; it was during the period of training. You have to go through the training process. How much of training do you have to reach your vision? A research conducted shows that poor people all over the world sleep more than the rich who have less time to sleep. In the advanced countries, poor people are more obese than the rich because they eat and sleep more every day without working. You must go through the discipline of training and endure it. Train your stomach against excessive food and moderate your sleeping hours. All these are part of the discipline of training.



C. Preparation requires hard work

“But Jesus answered them, My Father has been working until now, and I have been working”.

John 5:17 (NKJV).

“*My Father has been working*”, can you imagine that? If Jesus Christ says His Father works and He also works, then who are you not to be hardworking? The truth is that laziness is against God's principle. At creation, God worked for good six days and only rested on the seventh day! When you see a Christian who

is lazy, he is a bastard because a true son of a father must resemble his father. Work is the attitude of God and Jesus Christ; so, it must be your own attitude too. Therefore, you must shun laziness in any form and every shade!

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*Every shortcut in
lieu of hard
work is fraught
with danger.*
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“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep” Proverbs 6:10 (NKJV).

Some people sleep eight hours in a day because of the common saying that it is medically recommended that eight hours of sleep per day is good. Apologies to those in the medical field, I think it is a colossal waste of time. If you sleep eight hours per day, that is one-third of a day, it means a third of your lifetime is spent sleeping! Have you ever considered that? I am not saying that you shouldn't sleep but I think six hours per day is good enough. There is no shortcut, every shortcut in lieu of hard work is fraught with danger. When you look for shortcuts, you want people to make you. When people make you, they can pull you down; and when people make you, they will get the glory.

D. Preparation requires commitment to your goals and vision

You must be committed to your goals and vision. This means that you must be careful of deceptive conveniences when you are pursuing your vision. When you are preparing to get to the

finishing line, there would be some deceptive conveniences. Commitment is both an inner voice and force that keeps you on course. When you are pursuing your goals, there are things that can really derail you if you do not have that inner voice or force to keep you on course. So many people set out well to reach a particular goal but along the line, they derail because of the lack of inner voice and force.

“And Terah took his son Abram and his grandson Lot, the son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, his son Abram's wife, and they went out with them from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan; and they came to Haran and dwelt there. So the days of Terah were two hundred and five years, and Terah died in Haran.” Genesis 11:31-32 (NKJV).

Terah was a man of vision who was meant to fulfill a purpose. Unfortunately, after he died, the only thing recorded about his life was the number of years he spent, not the vision accomplished. What happened? He got to Haran, but rather than leaving Haran and moving forward, he settled down there. And what was Haran? Haran was a land of plenty and commerce where barley was in abundance. When Terah got to Haran, he saw barley in abundance and therefore, settled down. He fell for the allure of barley, he gave up the vision and he died eating from hand to mouth. When Abraham was called, he decided to abandon Haran and moved to the land of

Canaan. Abraham inherited a *legacy of barley*, but gave it up for his vision. Your vision must cost you something significant! What are you giving up for your vision? Is it significant enough? What is the worth or price of your vision? Are you not settling down just for little things?

I was once informed of a Mall in Kampala with a big signpost that reads “*Work here for 5 years and get a Television Set*”. The salary was poor and secondary school certificate holders were applying for the job to stay on for 5 years so that they could have a free television set. Within those 5 years, their colleagues had gone to the university and came back becoming CEOs while they were still working for a television set! Sometimes ago, a brother who was teaching in a private secondary school and at the same time undergoing his Master's Degree programme came to me for counselling. The salary he was earning was hardly sufficient to keep his body and soul together but not enough for him to settle down in life. He was being threatened on the job that he should choose between his postgraduate programme and the teaching job.

I advised him to forget about the job. It is true that life was going to be a bit difficult but I was convinced God would see him through. I told him “*with that job, you cannot plan your life; face your masters degree and in few years to come, these people who are pushing you out will see you and respect you*”. He concentrated on his postgraduate programme and today he is better for it. What are you giving up for your vision? You must be committed and

give up anything that will make you lose focus. You must have an inner voice and inner force to stay on course.

E. Preparation involves confronting giants even when it is risky

No one can get to the Promised Land without confronting giants. Do you know that Caleb had to climb Mount Hebron which was occupied by giants? Caleb decided to climb the mountain and fought the giants so that he could possess the land. Most times, we don't want opposition, we don't want to go through struggles. We usually think that things will just come easily and cheaply. God has never promised you a smooth journey, the only thing He has promised you is a safe landing. That is why you must prepare yourself and be ready to take risks when it is necessary.

“Now there were four leprous men at the entrance of the gate; and they said to one another, ‘Why are we sitting here until we die? If we say, ‘We will enter the city,’ the famine is in the city, and we shall die there. And if we sit here, we die also. Now therefore, come, let us surrender to the army of the Syrians. If they keep us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall only die.’” And they rose at twilight to go to the camp of the Syrians; and when they had come to the outskirts of the Syrian camp, to their surprise no one was there. For the Lord had caused the army of the Syrians to hear the noise of chariots and the

noise of horses the noise of a great army; so they said to one another, "Look, the king of Israel has hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the kings of the Egyptians to attack us!" Therefore, they arose and fled at twilight, and left the camp intact their tents, their horses, and their donkeys and they fled for their lives. And when these lepers came to the outskirts of the camp, they went into one tent and ate and drank, and carried from it silver and gold and clothing, and went and hid them; then they came back and entered another tent, and carried some from there also, and went and hid it."

2Kings 7:3-8 (NKJV).

There was famine in the land and the whole city had been taken over by the Syrian army. The city, where there used to be food, had been under siege by the army of Syria. It was too risky for anyone to go there for fear of being killed. Able-bodied people were starving to death let alone lepers. They were in the valley of decision for so long until they came to their senses and said *"Let us take the risk! If we sit here, we are going to die and the worst the Syrians could do is to kill us anyway. But there is still a chance that when we get there, they are going to spare our lives"*.

Eventually, they decided to take the risk and entered into the host of the Syrians but surprisingly, they met it empty! They then found out that while they were suffering, not only food

was waiting for them; they also had silver and gold. They initially became selfish and started packing, carrying and hiding the loots. However, the point is that if they did not take the risk, they would have just died of hunger thinking that the Syrians would kill them. Most times, what we need is on the other side of fear, if we can only overcome it.



Many people are afraid of taking risks today because they are scared of what lies ahead, they are afraid of the giants and opposition. In fact, they are afraid so much that they are staying on the same spot. You must take a step, go ahead and confront the giant. Until you take a bold step, God will not back you up. Many of us are afraid and we want God to fix just everything for us. Nobody can experience the beauty of the deep blue sea if he is too afraid to leave the comfort and safety of the shore.

If you have travelled on the high sea before, you would probably have seen the beauty of the sea in its middle. I have been there before; it is very boisterous but very blue. The middle of the sea is fearful but a lovely scene to behold because of its beauty. Whoever is afraid to leave the safety of the coast can never experience the beauty of the deep blue sea. Launch into the deep, don't stay glued to a spot, confront your giants and the Lord will give you victory! You must never give up on your vision, put the end in focus. The Bible says for the sake of the glory that was ahead of Him, Jesus Christ submitted Himself to the death of the Cross. What mattered to Jesus was

not the pain, shame, trauma, blackmail or the suffering on the Cross. He was basically concerned with the glory ahead of Him.

“And you will be hated by all for My name's sake: but he who endures to the end shall be saved”. Mark 13:13 (NKJV).

Endurance, patience, perseverance, consistency, tenacity, etc., are the recipes you must not be lacking. When you face a setback, do not take a step back but instead, recalibrate and re-launch, do not just give up. Yes, there might be some initial failures, frustrations; these are just a preamble. You must never give up; you must keep on pushing and at the end of the day, you will be there. At the beginning of achieving your goal or vision, make the decision that no matter what comes your way, you will not give up. Quitters never win and winners never quit! Sometimes, a seriously beaten and battered boxer still manages to come back for the next round. The man might be bleeding profusely but he will still come back because it is not yet over until the whistle is blown. At times, the man that is being punched the more will be the one to win. Usually, it is at the point of giving up that people tend to receive their miracles. Don't give up because your miracle is on the way!

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When you face a setback, do not take a step back but instead, recalibrate and re-launch, do not just give up.
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I once read the story of a brother who had a crippled brother and the two of them were the only children of their parents. This brother has been a Christian all his life and he started telling God, *"The only thing I want you to do for me in life is let my brother walk like me"*. He continued praying year in-year out; but his brother still remained crippled. After several years, he finished fasting and praying one evening and went straight to his brother's room. Seeing his brother lying on the bed still unable to walk, he felt very bad. He then went to the balcony and said *"Lord, now I am giving up on you, because you have disappointed me. For years, I have served you faithfully and committedly. I have never asked for money, gold or silver. The only thing I was expecting you to do for me has remained unanswered. Up till now, my brother has not walked. Forget about me Lord, I am no longer with you"*.

After this complaint, he heard some noise from behind and he immediately turned back. Lo and behold, his brother was walking towards him. As he broke down in tears, he heard a voice *"Loveth thou me always?"*. He didn't know that God had already answered his prayers. His brother was so happy and said, *"As soon as you entered my room this evening and closed the door, I just felt the power in me, I was initially wondering what was happening. I then had an urge to stand up. I suddenly discovered that I can walk. Then I started looking for you all around the house, I didn't know that you were in the balcony"*. The brother felt so little that, at the point of celebrating the miracle, he blasphemed the

name of the Lord. Never give up on your vision and pursuit in life! When you give up on your vision, it means you never believed in it from the beginning. Finally, you have to be resilient and unbending.

“For surely there is a hereafter; and your hope will not be cut off”. Proverbs 23:18 (NKJV).

Behold, there is an end to your trouble and adversity; there is likewise an expectation to your pursuit and aspiration. As the righteous of the Lord, be rest assured that your expectation shall not be cut off. You must decide to stand by your vision no matter what happens. Even if it means you are standing alone, stand by your vision!

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*Even if it means
 you are standing
 alone, stand by
 your vision!*
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YOUR TIME IS IN YOUR HANDS



*"For the present is the point at which time
touches eternity"*

- C.S. Lewis

Chapter Three

YOUR TIME IS IN YOUR HANDS



*The only reason for time is so that everything doesn't happen at once
- Albert Einstein*

At the beginning of this book, it was said that you must have an idea of where you are going. This is otherwise called vision. You also have to know the importance of preparation if you are going to be the right person for the top. In this chapter, we shall be focusing on **'Your time is in your hands'**. Yes, time is in the hands of God, the creator of times and seasons, but He has placed a sufficient portion of it in your hands. The 24 hours that make a day, the 7 days that make a week, the 4 weeks that make a month and the 365 days that make a year are all in your hands. God will never spend the time He has allotted or apportioned to you. As long as you live, it is in your power to make use of time! The fact is that the way you handle your time determines whether or not you will actually get to the top.

“I returned and saw under the sun that—The race is not to the swift, Nor the battle to the strong, Nor bread to the wise, Nor riches to men of understanding, Nor favor to men of skill; But time and chance happen to them all”. Ecclesiastes 9:11(NKJV).

The Bible says God has made everything beautiful in its time, which means that God has arranged time for everything under the earth. So, if you want to make it to the top, the question is this: *how do you handle your time?* The Bible says, **“The race is not to the swift, the battle is not to the strong, but time and chance happen to them all.”** When you see successful people, God has made an arrangement of time and chance to work out for them. Time is everything in our lives! There is time for everything and if you miss the time and chance for your life, that is a very terrible thing. God has arranged time in a way that certain things must happen at a particular time. It is only when you align your life with the time of God that your vision begins to speak for you.

There are three important things you should know about time:

- a. Know the nature of time
- b. Know how to deal with time
- c. Know what to do with time.

“And of the children of Issachar, which were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do; the heads of them were two hundred; and all their brethren were at their commandment.” 1Chronicles 12:32

You need to understand the concept of time and what you need to do at a point in time. The men of Issachar had an appropriate understanding of time and what Israel ought to do at any point in time. Some people have understanding of time but they do not know what to do per time. You need an understanding of what time is all about because without the understanding of time, it will be difficult to attain the enviable top position.

NATURE OF TIME

1. **Time is two-dimensional, it is like a coin**

If time is considered as a coin, the first side has chronological dimension; the other side has divine dimension.

“Is anything too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto you, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son”. Genesis 18:14 (NKJV).

When you look at the above passage, the time has two dimensions. The Bible says, **“At the time appointed, I will return and according to the time of life and Sarah shall have a son”**. There is the appointed (divine) time and the

time of life. According to the scriptures, Sarah was 90 years old when this word came to Abraham. So, the first dimension of Sarah's time was chronological because she had already passed the time of child bearing. Thus, chronologically, Sarah had passed menopause but divinely it was to be *menostart* for her. In other words, in terms of divine dimension of timing; that was the time God had purposed. Chronological timing was not on her side, but divine timing was on her side. That is why the Bible says **“At the time appointed, ... and according to the time of life...”**. The appointed time did not coincide with the chronological expectation. Man can exceed chronological dimension of timing, but when you are in the will of God, you cannot exceed divine dimension of timing.

2. **There is an Appointed Time**

“You will arise, and have mercy on Zion: for the time to favour her, yes, the set time, has come”.

Psalm 102:13 (NKJV).

God has set time for you and me, but my own set time could be different from yours. God has set time because He is organized; God wants to prepare us, test our hearts to know maybe it is after Him and to also confirm our obedience to His words. Unfortunately, many people have landed themselves in irredeemable regrets because they *designed* their own time for themselves. A lot of promising destinies have been aborted as a result of inability to wait on God's appointed time.

It is not an overstatement that we live in a world where a teenager wants to buy the latest car in town. Why? The world system does not understand the concept of divine/appointed time. That is why youths of today must be wary of friends they keep so that they don't land themselves into trouble. A number of teenagers and youths take to criminal activities like internet scam (*yahoo yahoo, yahoo plus*), drug trafficking, kidnapping, armed robbery etc., because they want to *hit it* very fast and big. Friend, wait for your appointed time and don't cut corners because your set time may just be around the corner!

3. Time is Dynamic

“And the children of Israel were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them. Now there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph”. Exodus 1:7-8 (NKJV).

Time changes, it is not static! During the time of Joseph, the children of Israel were fruitful. They had liberty and freedom and were walking like princes and princesses. They had affluence, influence, abundance and prominence, but they did not know that time changes. At a point in time, there arose a new king in Egypt who knew not Joseph. What lesson do we learn from this story? There is no permanent condition, no situation is static! Circumstances change with time and

season; that is why you have to look at the phase you are in. If it is not palatable, do not worry, it will soon change. If it is good, maximize it because you are just there for a time. I usually say that only Jesus Christ is the Champion of all times, nobody can be a champion forever. Like a saying in Yoruba goes “*Igba l'aso, igba l'ewu, igba l'omo bibi inu iya, igba l'odere koko ni'le Ilorin*” (translated as *everything is dependent on time or season and neither lasts forever*). Hence, if God visits you at a particular time; know how to use it. If you are passing through a terrible time, just know that it will pass away.

4. **Time has Signs**

There are signs of time which you need to be sensitive to.

“Then the Pharisees and Sadducees came, and testing Him asked that He would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said to them, “When it is evening you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red'; and in the morning, 'It will be foul weather today, for the sky is red and threatening.' Hypocrites! You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times?”

Matthew 16:1-3 (NKJV).

If you are sensitive to the signs of time, you will know the right time for something. For example, before Moses died, there were enough signs that Joshua was going to take over the mantle of leadership. Why? All along, God had been preparing

Joshua as the next leader for the people of Israel. On some occasions, Joshua would go and fight wars and Moses would just sit down. It was a sign that Joshua would eventually fight the battle that would take the children of Israel to the Promised Land but Joshua did not decode the sign. So, when Moses died and Joshua was discouragingly mourning, God had to tap him on the shoulder and say *“Look Joshua, arise, my servant Moses is dead, you are now the one that I have chosen as the leader of My people”*.

A long time before David became the king, with bare hands, he single-handedly killed a bear that wanted to attack his flock. It was a sign that he was going to be a great man of war but he was also oblivious of that fact. Eventually, when the Philistine giant was challenging the Israelites and all the Israeli soldiers were urinating in their trousers, David remembered that he already had a sign. As a result of this, he was able to stand and say *“Who is this uncircumcised Philistine?”* If you are spiritually sensitive enough, God will give you signs of time. A lot of havoc can be averted or voided if you are sensitive to the signs of time.

A member of our church shared a testimony of how she was divinely saved from an accident at a popular market in Ile-Ife. According to the woman, who was heavily pregnant at that time, she was waiting at the road side for a commercial transport to convey her home. While waiting, she heard an audible and clear voice ordering her to move away from the

spot she was. Immediately she left that particular spot, shifting aside some distance, there was a head-on collision involving two motorcycles at that very spot! The accident was so serious that one of the motorcycle riders had leg fracture after ramming into nearby shop. The other one lost consciousness and sustained varying degree of injuries. Only God knows what could have happened to this sister if she had not been sensitive in the spirit.

The Bible says **there is only one step between life and death**. Spiritual sensitivity is crucial in life, be spiritually sensitive and obedient to the prompting of the Holy Spirit.

5. **Time has a Purpose**

Myles Munroe quotes *“Without purpose, abuse is inevitable.”* Therefore, it means that everything has a purpose. For instance, a cup has its own purpose; a car has its own purpose; money has its own purpose, etc.

“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven.” Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NKJV).

So many people abuse time because they do not understand its purpose. There is a time to be a student. As a student, the purpose at that time is to study and not to begin to live as a worker. If you are single, the purpose at that time is to prepare for the future and not to enjoy the benefits of the married life through the back door. When you don't do things in their right time; it leads to misery, regrets and sorrow. There is a purpose

for every time, so do not mis-use the purpose of your time. You have to know the phase you are in and how to work within the phase. Don't begin to look at the phase you have not entered into; galvanize your effort and fulfill your purpose for the phase at that time. Ask yourself *what is the purpose of the time I am in now?*

6. **Time defies Human Control**

There are a number of proverbs/wise sayings buttressing the uncontrollable nature of time, among these include "*Procrastination is the thief of time*", "*A stitch in time saves nine*", "*Make hay while the sun shines*" etc. The bottom line is that whatever vision or aspiration you have should not be unnecessarily delayed because time waits for no man. Remember the old nursery school rhyme that says "*Tick says the clock, tick! tick!! What you have to do, do quick.*"

Anything you cannot control, you cannot predict. There was a time in Nigeria when we had a young Military Head of State who had fantastic plans for the country, but unfortunately he expired suddenly through a bloody coup. No matter how good the plans and intentions he had for the country were, he could not achieve them because his time was up. Since you then know that you don't have control over time, it means you have to surrender everything to God. As a matter of fact, you must yield your whole life unto God who knows the end from the beginning. As a mortal being, you cannot even add a cubic measure to your life.

HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH TIME?

A. **You should not react to time but you should be proactive and pre-emptive**

You have to anticipate time. A man called Jeremiah Taylor said *“All achievements and attainments are conditioned by the use of time.”* Look and plan ahead of time. What is your plan for next year or next decade? If you do not conquer time, time will conquer you! Those who don't anticipate time become victims or slaves of time. Negative reaction to time does not stop the hands of clock from moving and counting.

B. **Do not occupy or utilize time, but maximize it**

There are three things you can do with time: you can occupy time; utilize time or maximize time. When you occupy time, you just whirl away the time. You continue to mark time without making a mark. Methuselah is a good example of a man who occupied time because, the only record he had was that he lived the longest years so far. He was the oldest man on earth. Longevity of life was his only achievement.

Some people utilize time. When you utilize time, you get less than the best from time. Although, you get something but you do not get the best of time. But when you maximize time, you get what is allocated to you by God. There was a time the king of Israel was under the torment of the king of Syria. The Syrian army was a thorn in the flesh of Israel. The king of Israel went to Elisha, crying and weeping.

I could imagine Elisha was thinking that the king was pondering on what was going to happen after he might have passed on because he was already old. He told the king to take his bow and arrow and then shoot. The king shot the arrow and Elisha called that the *arrow of deliverance*. The king was overjoyed. Then he told the king to take his spear and strike, but the king of Israel struck the ground three times and then stopped. Elisha was angry thinking that he would have struck many times so that he would have totally annihilated the army of Syria. Then, Elisha said *“Now, you have only struck three times, it means you are only going to defeat the Syrian army three times”*. The action of the king is an example of how to get less than the best from an opportunity presented by time but Elisha was a man who knew how to maximize time while making request.

When Elijah asked Elisha to make a request, he said *“I want a double portion of your anointing”*. So when Elisha instructed the king of Israel to strike, he was expecting him also to do it with that kind of passion. Maximize every opportunity that you have, knowing fully well that time changes. Don't just settle for the less! Enoch remains a shining example.


“And Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him.” Genesis 5:24 (NKJV).

Are you really getting the best out of life and time now? When God gives you an opportunity, ponder on how you can lawfully and gracefully maximize it.

C. Do not procrastinate, but seize the moment

“But when Felix heard these things, having more accurate knowledge of the Way, he adjourned the proceedings and said, “When Lysias the commander comes down, I will make a decision on your case.” So he commanded the centurion to keep Paul and to let him have liberty, and told him not to forbid any of his friends to provide for or visit him. And after some days, when Felix came with his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, he sent for Paul and heard him concerning the faith in Christ. Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, “Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.” Acts 24:22-25 (NKJV).

Unfortunately, Felix was not saved; although he had the opportunity and was given the chance. The Bible even says he trembled, but he was waiting for a more convenient time. If you are waiting for convenient time, it may never come. The truth of the matter is that many people have been waiting for convenient time; many people have perished waiting for better time. What you can do today should not wait till

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tomorrow. Unfortunately, many people live on the promissory note of what to do tomorrow. Today is your legal tender, so maximize and use it effectively. Between a thousand tomorrow and a million yesterday, there is only one today. So, maximize your time today! Which phase are you in life? Are you still postponing? Procrastination is simply waiting for a better time which may not come.

Elisha Grey, an electrician in Chicago, would have gotten the credit if he was fast enough to file his invention. Both Elisha Grey and Alexander Graham Bell, a University Professor, were working on the invention. The two of them recorded success about the same time. But in the morning, Alexander Graham Bell woke up very early and went to file his invention.

Elisha Grey probably thought he still had some time, thinking he had gotten the solution and that the whole world was waiting to celebrate him. He went to file his own invention two hours after Alexander Graham Bell had already filed his. At the end of the day, Alexander Graham Bell was credited with that invention while Elisha Grey lost fame and fortune due to two hours delay. History recorded it that he missed immortality by the slimmest of margin. Today, everybody talks about Alexander Graham Bell. Can you now see why you must not procrastinate?

Before I conclude this chapter, I want to briefly dilate on an allegory in the Yoruba land. It is the allegory of '*aso etu*' and '*itan*

etu'. In a typical Yoruba community; a king who wanted to honour just one person, chose two persons who must appear before him in a special regalia called '*aso etu*' to compete for the honour. The dress is a very special, colourful and expensive one among the Yoruba attires then. None of them had '*aso etu*' but they had to go and borrow it from the only wealthy man who had just one. When the first man got there, he found the wealthy man eating '*itan etu*' (the leg of antelope). The sweet aroma of the well spiced and skillfully prepared soup of *itan etu* welcomed him at the door as a testimony to the culinary expertise of the chef of the house. He was invited to join at the table. He quickly sat down, washed his hands and joined the '*alaso etu*' (the owner of the regalia) in eating.

The second man came and was also asked to join in the eating but he said no, that he came for a more serious business as he had not come to eat but to borrow '*aso etu*'. The first man looked up, quickly washed his hands and said that was exactly what he actually came for. The wealthy man then said “No, *that is not your priority; you came for itan etu (the leg of antelope) not aso etu (the regalia), you have already missed it. This other man came for 'aso etu' and he got it.*” Eventually, he missed the honour and a lifetime opportunity to make it to stardom. Do not delay, do not waste your time, do not procrastinate!



*"Colleagues are a wonderful thing - but mentors,
that's where the real work gets done"*

- Junot Diaz

Chapter Four

STANDING ON THE SHOULDERS OF GIANTS




Mentoring is a brain to pick, an ear to listen, and a push in the right direction.

—John Crosby

Sir Isaac Newton said, *“If I had seen further, it is because I was standing on the shoulders of giants. If I can distinguish myself among my colleagues, it is by standing on the shoulders of giants.”* So, I asked myself *“Why did this man say such? What could make this great man say this at the latter part of his years?”* Then I interrogated this statement further by looking into the background of Isaac Newton and found that he was not meant to be a man of consequence.

He was not meant to be a man that would go far in life, let alone having his name written in the annals of great men with indelible ink, for the whole world

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to know. His father died when he was still in his mother's womb, so he never had the opportunity of knowing his father. As if that was not enough, he was also born prematurely. His mother said he was so small that he could be put in a little container. He had a very terrible upbringing, a very unpleasant childhood experience. Three years after that, his mother abandoned him to marry another man.


When the mother came back after the second husband died, she wanted him to be a farmer. So, as far as the mother was concerned, he was supposed to be relegated to the backyard of life. Isaac Newton said *"No, I don't want to be a farmer, I want to be a scientist"*. It was his uncle that encouraged the mother to allow him go to school. Even when the mother agreed that he should go to school, he had to work to pay his own fees in the university. Eventually, he got a job in the university. There was nothing fantastic about his first degree as he just managed to pass. But luckily for him, when he went back for his Masters degree, there was somebody who took interest in him.

He had a mentor, whose name was Prof. Isaac Barrow, who noticed his potentials for greatness and decided to mentor and tutor him. Young Isaac submitted himself to the tutelage of Isaac Barrow. After he got his Masters degree, Isaac Barrow decided to retire but recommended that Isaac Newton should be his successor and he was appointed a Professor. Interestingly, he became a Professor without having a PhD just a year after his Masters degree, because somebody recommended him.

Thereafter, he promised he was not going to disappoint his mentor. Isaac Newton went all the way to become a great man, an intellectual giant and an academic colossus.

He propounded the theory of motion and universal gravitation. He discovered the infinitesimal calculus widely studied in Further Mathematics. He propounded the general binomial theorem and revolutionized Physics. He was the father of Newtonian Physics, even though he was a Professor of Mathematics. Newton's law of motion is very popular in the modern-day Physics. He was able to achieve all these because he had a mentor! In this chapter, I am focusing on the importance of mentorship in making it to the top. Most great men in the world never had great or spectacular background but, there is no great man who never had a great mentor.

“Now it came to pass in the third year of Hoshea the son of Elah, king of Israel, that Hezekiah the son of Ahaz, king of Judah, began to reign. He was twenty-five years old when he became king, and he reigned twenty-nine years in Jerusalem. His mother's name was Abi[a] the daughter of Zechariah. And he did what was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that his father David had done. He removed the [b]high places and broke the sacred pillars, cut down

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the [c]wooden image and broke in pieces the bronze serpent that Moses had made; for until those days the children of Israel burned incense to it, and called it [d]Nehushtan. He trusted in the Lord God of Israel, so that after him was none like him among all the kings of Judah, nor who were before him. For he held fast to the Lord; he did not depart from following Him, but kept His commandments, which the Lord had commanded Moses. The Lord was with him; he prospered wherever he went. And he rebelled against the king of Assyria and did not serve him". 2 Kings 18:1-7 (NKJV).

The above biblical reference talks about the story of king Hezekiah. What made this man prosper in everything he did? What made God give so much to him? The story of Hezekiah might look good, but his beginning was terrible. He was the son of king Ahaz, a terrible man who became king but forsook God. He broke down the temple of God and shut its gates. He made the children of Israel worship Baal and he even killed some of his own children, sacrificing them to idols. He was dreaded by those who loved God as a man of notorious reputation and earned the status of a celebrity among idolaters.

In fact, it was actually by miracle that Hezekiah escaped. But while Hezekiah was growing up, in the midst of idolatry, he found a mentor. He had a vision that his lot would not be the same as his father. Therefore, he decided to find a mentor in

Prophet Isaiah. It was Isaiah who mentored Hezekiah and made him to know that what his father was doing was wrong. It was Isaiah that changed his psychology and mentality by mentoring him in the way to go. Eventually, this mentorship made everything Hezekiah laid his hands upon to prosper. He had a terrible biological father but he sought for a godly mentor. Do you have a mentor? Stop complaining about your background, boss or teacher! Locate a mentor who can guide you in moving to the top.

WHO IS A MENTOR?

1. A Mentor is a Role Model

He guides and assists you to fulfill the purpose of God for your life and not for you to be like him. Joshua was full of wisdom because Moses laid his hands on him. Moses did not make it to the Promised Land but Joshua did, but he wouldn't have made it without Moses. A mentor assists you on the path of destiny in accomplishing the purpose of God for your life. The truth is that nobody has been created to make it on his own like some people claim to be self-made. Any self-made man is most likely to end in self-destruction!

2. A Mentor is a Friend

He is someone you can approach irrespective of your age or his own status. Mentorship goes beyond the barrier of age, status, profession etc. It is not compulsory to have a mentor of your age group, age bracket, profession, clan/tribe. A mentor is

actually a friend who relates with you without any fear or discrimination. If the presence of your mentor scares you, then something is wrong with the relationship. There must be freedom and a flow of friendship between you and your mentor.

3. **A Mentor is a Teacher**

“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.” 2 Timothy 2:2 (NKJV).

Apostle Paul was a mentor to Timothy. A mentor teaches his mentee and puts him under tutelage. Is there someone you have identified to mentor you? If you have not done so, you are missing a cardinal principle in the process of moving to the top. The earlier you find a mentor, the better for you. A mentor has a lot of experience and wisdom that he will impact into your life, just like Moses did to Joshua and Paul did to Timothy.

4. **A Mentor is Generous**

A mentor does not hide the secret of his success from his protege. He does not see his mentee as a competitor. He is so secured that he is not afraid of losing his relevance or position to you. Hence, he is not jealous of your progress or achievements.



“And so it was, when they had crossed over, that Elijah said to Elisha, “Ask! What may I do for you, before I am taken away from you?” Elisha said, “Please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me.” So he said, “You have asked a hard thing. Nevertheless, if you see me when I am taken from you, it shall be so for you; but if not, it shall not be so.” 2 Kings 2:9-10 (NKJV).

When Elijah was to ascend up into heaven, he requested for what Elisha wanted and he asked for the double portion of Elijah's anointing. Elijah did not say “*You are a covetous man*”. I mean Elijah could have accused Elisha of being covetous by asking for the double portion of his anointing, saying Elisha wanted to be greater and more popular than him. Not many people would have acceded to the demand of Elisha. He made a great demand because Elijah as at then was well known and was almost everything in Israel. This gesture of Elijah demonstrates that a mentor does not use his own achievement to peg your progress. His dream and vision are for you to go farther in life than himself.

5. A Mentor does not intend to make a clone out of you

Mentorship is not a cloning process. You are not supposed to be a satellite permanently operating only within his orbit. You are not expected to be an exact replica of him; if you are, then you are just a duplicate and not an original. Rather, you are to imbibe his principles that will propel you to fulfil your destiny.

If your mentor makes a clone out of you, he will be distracting you from fulfilling God's purpose. You will only be fulfilling his agenda and running in his shadow. That is not the essence of mentorship! A mentor does not also struggle to be represented in your success. You choose of your own volition to reference him in your success story.

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However, a mentor does not take the entire burden of going through the process away from you. He only assists to guide you with the aim of reducing the burden.

WHY DO YOU NEED A MENTOR?

The path to the top will be very difficult if you don't have a mentor.



“And Mordecai had brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter, for she had neither father nor mother. The young woman was lovely and beautiful. When her father and mother died, Mordecai took her as his own daughter. So it was, when the king's command and decree were heard, and when many young women were gathered at [a]Shushan the [b]citadel, under the custody of Hegai, that Esther also was taken to the king's

palace, into the care of Hegai the custodian of the women. Now the young woman pleased him, and she obtained his favor; so he readily gave beauty preparations to her, besides [c]her allowance. Then seven choice maidservants were provided for her from the king's palace, and he moved her and her maidservants to the best place in the house of the women. Esther had not [d]revealed her people or family, for Mordecai had charged her not to reveal it. And every day Mordecai paced in front of the court of the women's quarters, to learn of Esther's welfare and what was happening to her.” Esther 2:7-11 (NKJV).

Why was Esther, an orphan and an inconsequential person, celebrated? Mordecai was Esther's uncle who mentored her while he was working as a palace attendant. He discovered an opportunity to tutor her, so he started mentoring her by giving her instructions and Esther was very obedient. Many people want to have a mentor but don't want to listen or obey. You can't be mentored when you are not submissive, teachable, humble and patient to take instructions. Esther did not reveal Mordecai as her kindred because he told her not to do so. Even though, it was not easy for Mordecai to see Esther but he defied all odds. He devised means of communicating with her using certain codes. He never abandoned Esther as he was always going to the palace to check on her every day. That is the

role of a mentor! Without a Mordecai, there would not have been an Esther?

God wants you to be great by getting to the top, but He has also destined you to have a mentor. It is pretty difficult to accomplish a vision, no matter how promising it seems, without a mentor. Moses wanted to be doing everything by himself but if he had died like that, who would have taken over from him? It was the process of mentorship that produced Joshua. So, no matter your anointing, no matter your brilliant destiny; locate who God has ordained for you as a mentor to guide you and lead you to your destiny fulfillment. Vision might be frustrated, paralyzed or even die if there is no mentor.

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“And when Saul had come to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles. And he declared to them how he had seen the Lord on the road, and that He had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus”. Acts 9:26-27 (NKJV).

Saul, whose name later changed to Paul, was a man who had a

real encounter with God on the way to Damascus. But the believers didn't accept him and even the apostles rejected him not until he met Barnabas. When everybody rejected Saul after the divine encounter, he became frustrated that he couldn't move forward in faith. It was then that Barnabas took him, tutored him and taught him about the christian culture, faith, etc. and persuaded the disciples to grant him acceptability. Eventually, Saul went on to become greater than Barnabas. Where would be Paul (formerly called Saul), if there was no Barnabas? Barnabas didn't even write a single epistle (at least none was canonized if he did), but Paul wrote 16 epistles. If Paul had not found Barnabas, he might have ended up being a frustrated man.



Mentoring makes a whole lot of difference between the experts and the exceptional! Do you remember the story of Elisha and the sons of the prophet? It was basically mentorship that differentiated Elisha from the sons of the prophet. They possibly had every skill that Elisha possessed. The sons of the prophet had the expertise and the experience but lacked mentorship. Consequently,

the sons of the prophet came back bowing to Elisha. The experts will bow down to the exceptional at the end of the day.

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Training can make you become an expert, but mentorship will make you become exceptional. There are so many men of skill but not all men of skill are men of substance; mentorship makes the difference. In life, everybody needs a platform for destiny fulfillment and God gives individual his/her platform through the process of mentorship.

Finally, a mentor connects you with a greater grace than he is carrying. Not many people heard about Isaac Barrow though he was a Professor, but this was the man that mentored Isaac Newton. On the other hand, Isaac Newton has become a household name in the world of science. Isaac Barrow is only remembered as Isaac Newton's mentor but if you don't dig into history, you may never know him. That is why your mentor cannot be jealous of your achievements. We have talked about Barnabas who did not write any epistle but connected Paul to a greater grace than his. Mordecai was just a palace attendant who had never entered into the inner court of the king but connected Esther into a greater grace that made her live in the palace as a queen. Although, Moses died with the regret of not making it to the Promised Land, Joshua, his mentee, took the Israelites into the Promised Land.

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Know that the greatest giant on whose shoulders you can stand for divine connection to a greater grace is Jesus Christ. Do not

stand on the shoulders of any giant if you are not standing on the shoulders of Jesus Christ. It becomes more meaningful, profitable and proper to stand on the shoulders of any giant when you are already connected to Jesus Christ. When you stand on Him firmly; He will connect, lead, guide and give you instructions. It is not a matter of merit; it is a matter of mercy, not a matter of promotion but that of preference. What is your relationship with Jesus Christ? It becomes easier to get to the top with Jesus Christ on your side. Ask for divine preference, leading and connection.



*"There is no passion to be found playing small -
in settling for a life that is less than the one
you are capable of living"*

- Nelson Mandela

Chapter Five

THE AMAZING POWER OF PASSION



*I have no special talent, I am only passionately curious.
- Albert Einstein*

In the previous chapters; we have discussed about vision, preparation, timing and mentorship as principles you need to understand in order to move to the top. In this chapter, we will be looking at the amazing power of passion.

“And the Lord will make you the head and not the tail; you shall be above only, and not be beneath, if you [a]heed the commandments of the Lord your God, which I command you today, and are careful to observe them.” Deuteronomy 28:13 (NKJV).

Do you want to move to the top? You need to be passionate!

“Because zeal for Your house has eaten me up; and the reproaches of those who reproach You have fallen on me” Psalm 69:9 (NKJV).

“Then his disciples remembered that it was written, zeal for Your house has eaten me up.” John 2:17 (NKJV).

Anybody who will get to the top must have a consuming passion. The passion I am talking about is not of the flesh that produces immoralities. I mean it is not about the erotic passion that is agitated by the flesh. It is about the inspirational passion that fires up your spirit, that galvanizes your effort and focuses on purpose of life. Passion is an intense display of powerful emotion in pursuit of purpose; it is an intoxicating enthusiasm for a particular purpose. A cursory look into the life of every successful man reveals passion as a major secret.

If you don't stand for something, you will fall for everything! Someone who is not passionate about anything cannot go far in life. Look around you and tell me about a successful man who has been outstanding but is not passionate about that which he does. Yes, you need to pray, but if you pray without having any passion; you are just wasting your time. Likewise, if you have vision without passion, you are also wasting your time. If you set a goal and don't demonstrate passion for that goal, you are wasting your time. Don't forget the remark of the Lord Jesus Christ **“The zeal of thine house has consumed me”**.

THE ROLE OF PASSION

A. **When you have passion for goal, you will drive furiously**

Driving furiously does not mean driving your car angrily or recklessly because that may even be suicidal! It involves using all your energy and strength to drive your vision and goal. I mean you must be like Jehu who was branded for speed, alacrity and promptness.

“So the watchman reported, saying, “He went up to them and is not coming back; and the driving is like the driving of Jehu the son of Nimshi, for he drives furiously!” 2 Kings 9:20 (NKJV).

“Now when you arrive at that place, look there for Jehu the son of Jehoshaphat, the son of Nimshi, and go in and make him rise up from among his associates, and take him to an inner room.” 2 Kings 9:2 (NKJV).

God called Jehu, from among his brethren, and anointed him as king because He saw a unique passion in him. Most times, people say the promises and covenants of God are not being fulfilled in their lives. The problem of many people who complain of unfulfilled promises is that the plan of God for them has not met with their own passion. When the plan of God is not complemented with the passion of man, the end result is frustration! You must be branded with your passion. There cannot really be any progress in your life if you don't work with passion.

God knew Jehu was a man of passion; that was why God made him to arise from among his brethren to become king over Israel. Do people know you with passion for your dream? Do people know you with passion for your goal? What do you believe in? God will only bring your vision to pass when it is backed up with passion. Some people can go fasting for many days and consequently develop ulcer without having any result to show for taking that spiritual measure. Some people can anoint their heads and can even drink anointing oil to the point of having diarrhea, yet without anything to show for it. If you apply all these spiritual principles without being passionate about what you are doing, it is just useless. The plan of God must be met and complemented with the passion of man.

B. Passion does not consider the expenses or the encumbrances, it goes for the exploit

When you see a passionate man, he does not consider the expenses but he goes for the exploit. The Bible says, **for the sake of the glory ahead of Him, Jesus endured the cross.** He did not consider the expense but he focused on the exploit. Each time I read the following passage about Paul, I see why he was distinguished.

“Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they ministers of Christ? I speak as a fool, I am more: in labors more abundant, in stripes above

measure, in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.” 2 Corinthians 11:22-27 (NKJV).

I can see why Paul single-handedly wrote most books of the Bible in the New Testament. I can see why somebody who was not named among the twelve disciples could do so great exploits for God. Paul was not even chosen after Judas Iscariot hanged himself and they wanted to choose a replacement. That means he was probably not even considered to be one of the second eleven by the disciples. Obviously, the replacement for Judas was made from those, adjudged by the apostles to be, on the reserve bench. However, his teachings and doctrines are the pillars of the church today. Why? His unparalleled passion for the Kingdom! Despite all the sufferings Paul encountered, he was never dissuaded from his passion. He was passionate both as a persecutor of the saints and later as a preacher of the gospel.

A man of passion neither looks at obstacles on his way nor considers discouragement on the path to the top. Paul did not consider all the troubles and obstacles he faced. He didn't say *"people are not helping me, nobody is thinking about me"*. He fixed his gaze on the goal, he did not go back but kept pushing towards the mark. That was Paul who did so many great things for God because he was a man of passion. Little wonder, he towered high and above all other apostles. It didn't just come on a platter of gold, it was not just a fluke but a product of passion. Do you have a dream, goal and vision? Are you backing it up with passion or you are expecting it cheap only in the place of prayer? Yes, God answers prayers but He wants His plan for you to be complemented by your passion; that is when you can sing the song of victory.

C. Passion releases power to achieve the unbelievable

Power answers to passion! This explains why Paul was so anointed that he was ready to dare and venture. Power gravitates towards passion! Are you looking for grace, anointing and power? Develop and have passion for something! One thing about God is that He does not waste His resources. To be candid, God is a capitalist who expects great turnover from every of His investments. The power of God will answer to the passion in you. Until you demonstrate passion, it may be difficult for you to really experience the overflow of power. It is when you dare something impossible that the power of God that achieves the unbelievable gravitates towards you.

“And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul:” Acts 19:11

God wrought special and outstanding miracles by the hands of Paul. Don't just look for success, seek outstanding success. God wrought special miracles through Paul because he was a man of passion. I say emphatically again that power responds to passion! Are you looking for grace to do something? Demonstrate enough passion for that thing; power, grace and anointing will flow.

D. Passion does not necessarily follow the rule of logic

Passion succeeds where logic fails! When you want to be totally logical about every issue and you look at the difficulties, you begin to withdraw. I was made to understand that during training of pilots, they are told to point the nose of the plane upward whenever they encounter turbulence. They are told to always point it upward because if they point it downward out of panic, the turbulence may pull them down. Although, there may be some discomfort, but the plane will not crash. As long as you point the *nose* of the *plane* upward, you will soar above the *turbulence*. In other words, when you are facing troubles, just look up to the above and not to the abroad. The Psalmist said **“I will lift up my eyes unto the hills, from where comes my help”** (Psalms 121:1). You don't consider the problem, you consider the goal. You don't stop moving as a pilot, you don't stop flying in *turbulence*, but point the *nose* upward. Logic may suggest that you retreat in

the face of obstacle. Passion does not always respond to or follow the rule of logic.

Look at the example of the woman with the issue of blood. For twelve years, she had done every logical thing but got no result; but the day she decided to take illogical step was when she got the solution. She had passion for the healing she wanted and acted immediately. By their cultural tenet in those days, a woman was not supposed to touch a man in the public. A woman going through her menstrual period was also not supposed to appear with the crowd in public. It was not logical and it was alien to their tradition and culture.

Despite the mammoth and intimidating crowd which could even make a man afraid, yet she pushed through. She kept on pushing despite being stepped on, elbowed, knocked and pushed. Still, she didn't worry but was just focused on touching the hem of Jesus' garment. Her passion and faith produced an amazing result as she was healed the moment she touched the hem of His garment. Likewise, Zacchaeus would not have been able to see Jesus Christ due to his height disadvantage and the crowd ahead of him. He had to bypass the crowd and ran ahead to climb a sycamore tree.

The story was told of an Ethiopian man (**Abebe Bikila**) who in Rome won the Olympics marathon barefooted in 1960. Is it logical to go to the Olympics without wearing any canvass? Not even for 100m sprint but for marathon race! He had

passion for marathon, he knew he could be a star and kept on training despite being poor. Unfortunately, his country could not even afford to provide him with the entire sport kits required by the time the Olympics started. But he said “*Kit or no kit, put me on the plane*”.

To say the fact, everybody thought he was joking. When he got to the Olympics, he became a laughing stock to many people mocking him. At the end of the event, by sheer passion, he won the gold medal. He could have abandoned the project because he had little encouragement and it was illogical to run marathon race barefooted. Are you thinking of abandoning a project because of discouragement or lack of helper? Friend, don't call it quits; passion, prayer and grace will give you the needed breakthrough.

E. Passion has no room for mediocrity. Passion goes for excellence and makes a man to work hard

“Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with your might;” Ecclesiastes 9:10a (NKJV).

Do you know that it was passion for creation that made God work for six days non-stop? God could have just declared everything into existence but He showed an example of being industrious. If God could work for six days non-stop, then who are you to sit down in your room and be decreeing things to happen without working? You must work hard! Passion

makes a man to be a workaholic. God Himself is a workaholic. Jesus Christ confirmed this when He said **“My Father works, I must also work.”** A man of passion goes for excellence; he is not satisfied with average. May the Lord deliver you from the mentality of average. A man of passion is not satisfied with being in the crowd; he wants to be in the limelight and therefore, pushes hard.

F. Passion is what makes an ordinary, inconsequential man aim for excellence and attain an extraordinary feat

“Is this not the carpenter, the Son of Mary, and brother of James, Joses, Judas, and Simon? And are not His sisters here with us?” So they were offended at Him.” Mark 6:3 (NKJV).

Can you imagine the scenario from the above scriptural reference? Some people were looking at the genealogy and historical background of Jesus Christ and they found nothing worthy of adoration. By His antecedent and background, they wondered how He could be doing what He was doing. While those people were still surprised, then the disciples of Jesus Christ got the secret code.

“Then His disciples remembered that it was written, zeal for Your house has eaten me up.”
John 2:17 (NKJV).

When He demonstrated enough zeal, God lifted Him above the limitations of His earthly background and history. The Lord will take you above your background and history and promote you in Jesus' name. Your history is not a prison! Some people see their history and background as a prison, so they cry inside it. No, it should not be!

“Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13 (NKJV).

“But when they did not find them, they dragged Jason and some brethren to the rulers of the city, crying out, “These who have turned the world upside down have come here too.” Acts 17:6 (NKJV)

The so-called ignoramus turned the world upside down. Beloved, if you want to get to the top, you must be ready to demonstrate uncommon passion. If you want to be above your colleagues and contemporaries, let your passion be above theirs. This is what is called tip-toe philosophy. If you are standing with people of the same height; then, you need to stand on your toes to appear taller than them. As long as your passion is on the same level with theirs, you should expect to fit into their mould and be like one of them. Without passion, you will be lost in the crowd. Be known for passion and be driven by it! Like Jehu, *drive* furiously and God will make you to arise among your brethren.

- G. Passion makes a man sensitive to opportunities.**
When a man is passionate about something, he becomes sensitive; his antenna is out to pick opportunities

“Now Moses was tending the flock of Jethro his father-in-law, the priest of Midian. And he led the flock to the back of the desert, and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. And the Angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush. So he looked, and behold, the bush was burning with fire, but the bush was not consumed. Then Moses said, “I will now turn aside and see this great sight, why the bush does not burn.” So when the Lord saw that he turned aside to look, God called to him from the midst of the bush and said, “Moses, Moses!” And he said, “Here I am.” Exodus 3:1-4 (NKJV).

I still ask myself *what if Moses had continued to walk ahead, what if he didn't turn aside? What if he didn't bother?* When you are passionate enough, you must also be sensitive to opportunities around you. God will bring opportunities your way but if you don't pick the signal, then you will miss the point. Many of us have so much drive for prayer, but we are not sensitive to what God is saying. We have time for fasting, but we don't have time to be sensitive and receptive. As you are praying and expecting from God, you must be sensitive to opportunities around you.

The fact is that God will sometimes bring opportunities through circumstances and situations.

The man who first produced the cotton bud being used today was poor and wanted to be rich. He had been praying but yet suffering and he thought God would give him a big contract. But one night, his wife could not sleep because their baby was crying. At a point, the woman took a match stick, rolled a piece of cotton wool around the top and used it to pick the ear of the baby, then the baby slept off. From there, he imagined millions of mothers in that same shoe and developed the concept of cotton bud. What brought about that invention? Just sensitivity! If he had not been a passionate and sensitive father, he would have continued to wallow in abject poverty. He became a multi-millionaire simply because he discovered a solution to what was once a problem. When you have passion, always be on the lookout, be sensitive!

God has left many things to your personal preference and choice. Moses could have chosen to walk away. May you not walk away from your point of blessings. It may be in reading a book like this that God will drop something in your mind. If you are sensitive enough to pick it, then things will change for you. May you not live an anonymous life in Jesus' name. Do you know what it means to live an anonymous life? It is when you are not known for something that you live among the crowd. John, Paul, Peter, Elijah and even our Lord Jesus Christ were not anonymous. You must not live an anonymous life;

so, you must demonstrate passion for your dream. People must brand you for something. Ask yourself, what are you known for among your friends? Some people are known for things that cannot add value to their lives. Live for nobility and not for frivolity!

H. Demonstrate passion for your vision, dream, goal etc. but above all for the Kingdom

If you cannot invest your time, energy and other resources to bring a soul to the Kingdom, then you are not a profitable servant. Whatever success you have in life, if you have not really invested everything or anything in the Kingdom, then you are a fool.

I read the story of two friends who resided in Texas, United States of America. One was a preacher while the other was a business man. The business man was so successful and then one day, he invited his preacher friend to have a dinner with him. After the dinner, he took him to the pent-house and showed him around and said *“Every oil field dotting the landscape is mine, look behind you over there, the plantation you see over there is mine, look to the East, every skyscraper you see, I have bought everything, look to the West, all the cattle grazing over there are mine. God has really blessed me so much, I want you to thank God for my life”*. He expected the preacher to complement him but the man just looked at him and said *“Friend, what do you have in this direction (pointing upward)? Everything you have is in the North,*

South, East and West but how much do you have in the heavenly direction?" It was then the reality of investing in the Kingdom dawned on that business man.

Thank God it was not too late for him to make amends. Beloved, I ask you too *what investments are you making towards the heavenly direction?* Are you just amassing wealth, fame, power, certificate etc., for your personal aggrandizement? I implore you not to lay your treasures only on this earth where moths, caterpillars and worms destroy, but lay up your treasures in heaven where they are secured.



*"The most incredible thing about miracles
is that they happen."*

- G.K. Chesterton

Chapter Six

THE X-FACTOR



Be realistic: Plan for a Miracle
- Osho Rajneesh

Retrospectively; we have discussed vision, preparation, timing, mentorship and passion as essential requirements for moving to the top. In conclusion, I will like to talk about what I call the **x-factor**. I am not referring to the popular TV program called the '**X-Factor**'. The x-factor I am talking about is the factor that you cannot define. Looking back at the elementary Mathematics, I try to put the following simple linear equation to serve as illustration:

$$y = x + 1$$

Statisticians and Mathematicians postulated that there are dependent variables and independent variables. In the above simple linear equation, the only factor that is not defined is the x-factor. Y is defined because it is equal to $x + 1$, and the

positive integer is 1. The moment you solve for x, you will get the value for y, so y is already defined. It is only x that is not defined and that is what I call the x-factor. Vision, preparation, timing, mentorship and passion are good but all these things put together do not necessarily equate getting to the top. They are just necessary conditions, but not sufficient enough. There is an x-factor!

“And I will give this people favor in the sight of the Egyptians; and it shall be, when you go, that you shall not go empty-handed.” Exodus 3:21 (NKJV).

Who were these people? They were the people who were despised, hated and tormented. They were the people that Pharaoh and his people wanted to remain in bondage. When you look at all factors, no single factor favoured them. Nothing was working for them, but God said *“I will give this people favour...”*. The only reason they would not go empty-handed is God.

“And the Lord gave the people favor in the sight of the Egyptians. Moreover the man Moses was very great in the land of Egypt, in the sight of Pharaoh's servants and in the sight of the people.” Exodus 11:3 (NKJV).

The Lord favoured them! Moses was great neither because he was a giant nor muscular. The only reason he was great was because God gave him favour. He was great not only in the

sight of his own people but also in the sight of his enemies. God made him to be great in the sight of his competitors, Pharaoh, the magicians and astrologers. This was not earned but was bestowed upon him by the x-factor, the undefined factor; which is the **God-factor**. Let me say this, you can only make the effort to succeed or get to the top; it is God that determines the outcome. In other words, man makes efforts but God is the determining factor. That is the x-factor! The x-factor gives you the solution to the question; without the x, that means you don't have a solution. If you solve for x in the equation, you get the value for y. No matter the effort you make, if God is not there; it amounts to waste of time.

In the world we live today, what do you have that other people don't have? When you go to the university and you make First Class, are you the first person to make it? Yes, you are brilliant; but are you the only brilliant fellow? There was a time we had 6 vacant positions in an establishment where I worked but 800 candidates applied. Majority of them were well qualified with minimum entry qualification; they all had the required certificate but just 6 people were to be employed! Can you imagine?

In this competitive world, what you have is not special again, in terms of qualification and achievement, but something must make you unique. Even if you claim to *know* people, there are other people who *know* people better than you do. You can say *yes, I know the Chairman, Commissioner or DPO* but

some people may know the Governor, Minister, I.G. or even the President. So, what are you talking about? There is no end to *long leg* if you want to depend on *long leg* to get things done. The truth is that divine favour is far better than human help.



Let me tell you, this world is not fair! If this world were to be fair, then everything I have talked about should guaranty you success and push you to the top. But this world is not fair! You see graduates with First Class or Second Class Upper being unemployed while those who made Third Class are being given jobs. People who have graduated many years ago are roaming the labour market, while those who recently finished in the university are getting juicy offers. So, if you were expecting to be paid based on your effort or ability, you would be making a big mistake. Thus, the x-factor (the God-factor) operates on the basis of grace and mercy. After you have put in place the aforementioned in the previous chapters, then you need this particular factor. I am not saying that you should depend only on the x-factor without having others because they are also necessary. You need to add the x-factor, the God factor, which operates on the basis of grace and mercy.

What is grace? Grace is basically unmerited favour given by God. Nobody earns grace and nobody works for it! It is not in the nature of man to give grace. The nature of man is an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. It is a matter of give and take as you don't get anything for free. It is often said that *there is no free lunch in Freetown*. As a living witness, I was there and I had to

pay for my lunch in Freetown. Nothing comes freely from man, only God gives grace and mercy that you do not deserve or merit.

Grace is summarized favour! In this chapter, I will like to dwell more on mercy. Why? It is because mercy is an inexplicable help. In other words, it means help that you cannot explain. You cannot just explain how, where and why the help comes. It does not come because you have somebody in position of power or you are connected with an influential person.

Grace is more about the response of God to sinners, while mercy is the response of God to His children who are in need. Grace applies to the unbelievers but mercy is basically for the people of God. So, children of God are beneficiaries of grace and mercy. Mercy is the attitude of God! That is why I said it is an inexplicable thing. When God looks at His children who are in need,

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*Mercy overrules
all things.*
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He responds to them through mercy. I don't know if you have cried, fasted, prayed and made some efforts to no avail; may I challenge you to ask for mercy? Can you drop the worries for a while and cry for mercy? Apart from being an inexplicable help, it is also said that mercy overrules all things.

Many people are held down by the facts about their lives; the truth which people see and which enemy can lay hold on. If we consider the old testament where mercy was first mentioned,

the Hebrew word for mercy is *kupendth* which means to cover. Truth reveals but mercy covers; that is, mercy overrules truth. Truth says *yes, you have written that exam, you were supposed to answer 5 questions but you have only answered 3 questions; therefore, you cannot score more than 60%*. That is the truth, there is an important part of the question which you did not attend to; that is the truth, but when mercy comes in, it overrules the truth. As a student, when you finish each examination paper, why don't you spend at least one minute laying your hands on the script and cover it with the mercy of God.

Each time I fill any form online, one thing I always say before I click 'submit' is *I send forth this form with the mercy of God. As it goes on the internet, let the mercy of God cover it*. I have discovered many times I apply for anything and cover it with God's mercy, I usually get it. When I review the quality of my submission after acceptance, sometimes I laugh. Mercy overrules truth and mercy is by preference! In other words, God gives mercy by His divine preference.

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*Truth reveals but
 mercy covers.*
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“But I tell you truly, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elijah, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, and there was a great famine throughout all the land; but to none of them was Elijah sent except to [a]Zarephath, in the region of Sidon, to a woman who was a widow.

And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian.” Luke 4:25-27 (NKJV).

There were so many suffering widows in the land of Israel who needed help and comfort during the time of famine. Elisha was not sent to any of them except to the widow of Zarephat. By divine providence, that was the person who qualified for God's mercy among the widows in the land. Likewise, there were many lepers in the land of Israel who God by-passed but He asked Elisha to go to Naaman in Syria. Was Naaman an Israeli? There were so many lepers who needed to be healed in Israel, but unto none of them was Elisha sent except a Syrian. How do you explain that? It doesn't follow human calculation. Sometimes, we want to base things on our ability, effort, logic, capacity and understanding. Doing that amounts to making a big mistake!

“For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion.” So then it is not of him who wills, nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy.” Romans 9:15-16 (NKJV).

From the above scripture, God is saying that *I will have mercy on whoever I will have mercy. You cannot protest, query or sue me. I will*

have compassion on whosoever I will have compassion. So, it is not of him that wills or runs but of God who shows mercy. It doesn't mean you shouldn't have a will or run, but apart from willing or running, you also need the mercy of God. The Bible says ***Paul planted, Apollo watereth, but God gives the increase.*** Paul needed to plant, Apollo needed to water, but the planting of Paul and the watering of Apollo does not equal increase. If there is no God's input, their labour would have become foolishness. According to an axiom in Yoruba language *“ise ko l'owo, ka ni ise l'owo ni, oba ati eru lo maa gun moto boginni”* (translated as *the quantity of work done or energy expended does not equate money; if it does, both the kings and the slaves will ride posh cars*). Besides every other right thing you have done, you need the mercy of God. For instance, if the race was for the swift, Ahimaz would have been celebrated not Cushie because Ahimaz started running before Cushie who overtook Ahimaz and got to the end point before him.

“But the Lord was with Joseph and showed him mercy, and He gave[a] him favor in the sight of the keeper of the prison. And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners who were in the prison; whatever they did there, it was his doing. The keeper of the prison did not look into anything that was under [b]Joseph's authority, because the Lord was with him; and whatever he did, the Lord made it prosper.” Genesis 39:21-23 (NKJV).



Joseph wouldn't have made it without the mercy of God. As a result of the dreams he had, he was sold into slavery, and eventually got into the prison. Even while in the slavery and prison, the mercy of God was still there with him. Your difficulty or what you are going through does not matter, with God's mercy, you will come out victoriously. Joseph was made the head in the prison because the mercy of God was with him. He was put in the same cell with two V.I.P prisoners (the chief baker and the chief butler) because he had the favour of God. Even as co-prisoners, not every prisoner had access to them, and not every warder had access to their cell.

Joseph's contact with these V.I.P prisoners marked the beginning of his route to coming out of the prison. Can you imagine what would have happened if Joseph had been in a different cell and had no contact with the chief butler and the chief baker? He would probably have died in the prison. When you are passing through difficulties; pray for God's mercy, He will give you the solution. No vision, dream or aspirations can become a reality without the mercy of God.

David is a vivid example of someone who had a clear understanding of this fact. He emphasized mercy again and again. In Psalms 126, he talked about worries for about 26 times in one chapter. In the whole book of Psalms, David made about 100 references to mercy. The only reason David is being celebrated today is because of mercy, do you agree with me? David himself recognized that fact. How would you

explain the sin of adultery he committed with Bathsheba and the eventual murder of Uriah, Bathsheba's husband? Personally, there is hardly any prayer I pray without asking for mercy. I make sure that mercy is a prominent and recurrent feature in my personal prayers, because I have discovered that truth reveals but mercy covers and overrules. If you can get what you deserve, then there is no need for God's mercy. Mercy gives you all the essential ingredients you need for success.



A friend of mine shared a joke with me about a lawyer who was very obese or huge in stature. He was in the court to defend a case and the opposing lawyer was also there. He came to the court with a pile of books to cite authorities for his defence before the judge. So, he brought a big bag of books, put it on the table and was quoting laws and citing authorities, one after the other. As he was pleading his case passionately, the other lawyer stood up and said *objection my lord!* The judge upheld that objection but as he wanted to sit down, the chair gave way and he fell down. When he got up, he said *my lord, even if you are not going to consider my case on the basis of weight of evidence, can you please consider it on the basis of evidence of weight?* And the judge said *no, I do not rule based on evidence of weight but on the weight of evidence.*

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*If you can get
 what you
 deserve, then
 there is no need
 for God's mercy.*
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Evidence of weight is objective but weight of evidence is subjective. What many of us do is to show God or people evidence of weight. I made First Class, I have 2.1, I do not fornicate, I do not steal, I am committed in church; that is evidence of weight but weight of evidence is subjective. Don't go into the world packing only the evidence of weight without going to God to weigh the evidence for you. God alone determines the weight of evidence while men see the evidence of weight. The mercy of God connects you to the following four things that you need for success or making it in life:

1. Creative Ideas
2. Divine Contact
3. Divine Provision
4. Wisdom



The mercy of God connects you divinely and gives you unique grace. If you have ideas but there are no provisions, the mercy of God connects you with provision. You need people in terms of how to go about it; His mercy divinely connects you with the needed contacts. You also need divine wisdom to manage resources.

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*Evidence of
weight is
objective but
weight of
evidence is
subjective.*
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“Then the king said, “Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?” And Ziba said to the king, “There is still a son of Jonathan who is lame in his

feet.” So the king said to him, “Where is he?” And Ziba said to the king, “Indeed he is in the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, in Lo Debar.” Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar. Now when Mephibosheth[a] the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, “Mephibosheth?” And he answered, “Here is your servant!” So David said to him, “Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually.” 2 Samuel 9:3-7 (NKJV).

Like Jonathan, Mephibosheth was the heir apparent to the throne but he was relegated to the backyard of life because nobody remembered him again. This world is not fair! He had been forgotten, his due was not given to him until the mercy of God sought him out. He had lost virtually everything until divine mercy spoke for him. There are so many Christians today who are also experiencing such. They are born again, spirit-filled, fervently serving the Lord but they are incapacitated. They have anointing and

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*God alone
determines the
weight of
evidence while
men see the
evidence of
weight.*
—  —

zeal but have been incapacitated by one situation or another. If you are in that shoe, God is saying today He will show you His mercy. When there is mercy, there is visitation; when there is visitation, there is restoration. When there is restoration, there is peace; which means you won't struggle again.



*"My cue is to take hold of the faithfulness of
God and use the means necessary to secure
bid results."*

- James O. Fraser

Chapter Seven

AN X-RAY OF JOSEPH'S LIFE



When you allow God to change your heart, He will also change your story

- Gift Gugu Mona



WHAT ABOUT DREAM?

Many decades ago, Martin Luther King Jnr., declared that he had a dream. Today, his dream of a better tomorrow for America is being fulfilled. Dream is still a very good means by which God communicates vital information and revelation to man. A good understanding and interpretation of dream will help one in fulfilling divine purpose and having breakthrough in life. I mean dreams emanating from God, because the kingdom of darkness can also *cook up* false dreams. Hence, a dream should neither be taken with levity nor treated with triviality. The spirit of discernment is often needed in distinguishing the divine dreams from demonic ones. However, it is not only when you sleep that you can have a dream. I mean you may

open your eyes in consciousness of what happens around you and yet have a *dream*.

A dream can be in form of creative ideas, thoughts, goals, vision etc. Interestingly, you can have a dream anywhere in the world. For instance, Joseph had the dream of greatness in a strange land, the land of Canaan (Gen. 37:1). In other words, dream does not have any geographical boundary or territory. Don't limit or restrict your dream! In addition to having a dream, Joseph was also highly diligent and resourceful. Along with his brethren, he was occupied with their father's business of feeding the flock. However, he was never part of their caucus as he was always bringing the evil report of his brothers to their father (Gen. 37:2).

It is also very pertinent to say that age is not a barrier to having dreams. At a very young age of 17 years, Joseph had dreams about his future. Joseph's ordeal with his brethren started when they discovered that their father loved him more than he loved them. Jacob's special love for Joseph was very obvious in words and actions, that he made him a coat of many colours. They hated him to the extent that they could not speak peaceably unto him. In fact, they unanimously started thinking and plotting evil against him.

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*A dream can be
in form of
creative ideas,
thoughts, goals,
vision etc.*
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BEFORE YOU SAY IT...

Unknown to Joseph, as a little boy, was the hatred his brothers had for him. So, when he dreamed a dream the first time, he told his brethren about it and they hated him yet the more (Genesis 37:5). What does this suggest to you? It is not everyone that will buy into your dream! In life, many people will not want you to get to the top. There is a popular proverb in my native language (Yoruba) that says “*opolopo alangba lo da'kun de ile, a ko mo eyi ti inu n run.*” It is translated in English language as “*every lizard crawls on its belly, you can't fathom which one is suffering from belly ache, meaning- out of the multitude, you don't know who your enemy is.*” It may be said that Joseph's trust in his brothers was due to his blood tie with them. Besides, he was too young to suspect any harm coming from his own very brethren. He was just a down-to-earth boy who was always going about his normal business.

A very important lesson from this is that you should be wary of who you share your dreams with. Prayerfully, carefully and selectively screen your friends. As a matter of fact, try to carry out a forensic audit of your friendship list. It is not everybody who smiles with you that actually loves you. Remember that out of the twelve disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, one betrayed Him. Yes, it is true that you need some people to help you interpret and bring your dream to fulfillment. However, you must *shine your eyes* very well. I mean think twice before you open the 'door' of your mouth and give out invaluable information about your laudable ideas and goals.

The funniest thing is that Joseph was even begging his brethren to listen to the dream he had (Genesis 37:6). Joseph's brothers expressly and correctly gave the interpretation of his dream. Hence, in quick succession, they asked him two rhetorical questions ***“shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us?”*** The Bible says

“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.” Gen. 37:8 (NKJV).

Joseph entered into more trouble with his brethren after he shared his dream with them. They hated him the more, not only because of his dreams but also his method of presentation. He was just too open and direct in his narration! His brothers must have thought that the dream was a confirmation of the reason for the special love their father had for him. Perhaps, they reasoned that their father must have had a similar dream of greatness about him.

Either out of sheer ignorance or pure innocence, Joseph still came to his brothers another time and told them of the second dream he had. The dream was also pointing towards the same direction of leadership. But this time around, his parents were also involved bowing down to him in obeisance. According to

the scriptures, worthy of note is the word 'obeisance' which they were making to him. The word 'obeisance' depicts royalty, rulership or kingship. God still speaks to His children through different means today.

In the days of Joseph, He used natural objects as symbolism for his greatness in leadership position. Let me ask you some pertinent questions. What is/are your dream(s)? Do you have any dream at all? What effort(s) have you made to know its interpretation? Are you taking steps towards its fulfillment? In Joseph's first dream, he was binding sheaves in the field, along with his brothers. You may have a dream about God's future plan for your life as a student, researcher, pastor, civil servant, trader, etc. I mean nothing is too small for God to show you the path of greatness or leadership in life. However, diligence is very germane to bringing your dream to reality. It is a divine principle that is highly required in the fulfillment of dreams.

Compounding the mistake of Joseph was the fact that he first told his brothers about the dream before telling his father. When he told his father, he initially rebuked him; however, he later considered its possibility. As a matter of fact, his father got the accurate interpretation and had the full understanding of the dream. On the other hand, his brethren chose to envy him! The truth is that one sin usually leads to another. They first started with hatred for Joseph but later graduated to envy and gravitated towards murder. Are you not envious of your brother, sister, friend or colleague about his/her

achievements? The fact is that God has programmed every individual's time for success or breakthrough in life. If it is your friend's time, don't envy him/her. Just wait for your time, it is very much around the corner and it will surely come!

THE UNFRIENDLY FRIENDS!

On his father's instruction to go and see whether or not it was well with his brethren and flocks, Joseph began the search. He was frantically looking for his brothers unknown to him that they were already devising and plotting evil against him. The young lad left the Valley of Hebron and came to Shechem, where his brothers supposedly were grazing the animals. Surprisingly, he did not meet them and the animals there. After wandering a lot in the field under the scorching sun, a certain concerned man asked him what he was looking for. When he narrated his mission, the man told him about his brothers' departure to Dothan.

Joseph was neither discouraged nor wearied as he continued all the way looking for them. Eventually, Joseph saw them with the grazing animals at Dothan. You can imagine how joyful he must have been seeing his brethren after a labourious search. Conversely, his brothers conspired against him as soon as they sighted him afar off. ***“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!”*** Genesis 37:20 (NKJV). The conspiracy was to kill him so that his dreams would not come to pass. In fact, by



collective agreement, they resulted to calling him a name 'the dreamer' Genesis 37:19 (NKJV).

Joseph was not yet suspicious of his brothers' evil intentions and plans to annihilate his dreams of greatness. He believed he was safe and secure in the hands of his brethren. I pray that God will deliver you from the hands of the unfriendly friends in Jesus' name. Innocently, Joseph walked into the midst of the evil plotters but God overturned their conspiracy. God used Reuben to change the initial plan of killing him to casting him into a pit in the wilderness. God's counsel over your life can never be truncated but the time of its fulfillment may only be delayed and elongated.

So, they all agreed to Reuben's suggestion of avoiding shedding their brother's blood. Immediately Joseph got to them; they gripped and stripped him of his coat of many colours (which was a source of their jealousy and envy anyway). They then took and cast him into a dry pit in the wilderness. While Joseph was alone in the dark pit, his brothers were busy eating and making merry. They were celebrating victory over the 'dreamer' and his dreams, while he was abandoned and almost starved to death. Do you actually know that Joseph's dream was momentarily *buried* while he was lonely in the pit? May every dream that seems to have been buried in your life receive the power of resurrection in Jesus' name.

The devil must have flashed thoughts of regret, discouragement and abandonment through the mind of Joseph while he was in the pit. When you are passing through the horrible *pit* of life, don't throw away your dream! Remember Job's statement while going through the tests and trials of faith, ***"I know that my Redeemer liveth."*** Just be resolute in your determination to stay glued and committed to your dream. At the end of every dark tunnel, light will shine. The light of God will shine through your life and dispel every form of darkness in the name of Jesus Christ.

As part of divine arrangement for the fulfillment of Joseph's dream, God made another provision. God is still in the business of arranging events, situations and circumstances to favour His own children. Through Judah, Joseph's brothers eventually saw no sense in killing him but agreed to sell him. Thus, he was sold to a group of Midianite traders travelling to Egypt. For just twenty pieces of silver, Joseph and his dream of greatness were mortgaged into slavery. Imagine the extent of damage envy can do to a laudable dream! That was how Joseph was betrayed by his own very flesh and blood brothers. The Bible affirms that ***"every man's household is his enemy."*** Have you ever experienced any betrayal of trust? I want you to know that human beings will always be human beings. It is only God that does

—  —
*When you are
passing through
the horrible pit
of life, don't
throw away your
dream!*
—  —

not and cannot disappoint. Man will continue to be man as long as the world exists.

To conceal their evil deeds, Joseph's brothers killed a kid of the goats and dipped his coat in the blood. They just wanted to make their father believe that Joseph, his beloved son, had been killed by a dangerous animal. They took the blood-soaked coat of many colours to their father for identification. It was quite easy for Jacob to identify the coat as that of Joseph because he was the one who made it for him. It looked so real that he concluded that an evil beast must have devoured Joseph. I cancel every prank of the devil and his cohorts over your life in Jesus' name. Jacob tore his clothes, put sack cloth upon his loins and mourned his son for many days. He refused to be comforted even when his children came to comfort him. In fact, he said he would mourn the death of his son till he himself went down into the grave.



FROM PIT TO POTIPHAR'S HOUSE

Upon their arrival in Egypt, the Midianite traders sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer of Pharaoh and a captain of the guard. The good news was that the presence of God followed Joseph from Canaan to the land of Egypt. In Genesis 39:2, the Bible says “*The Lord was with Joseph, and he was a successful man; and he was in the house of his master, the Egyptian.*” (NKJV). God's presence is not geographically-bound because He is the Omnipresent God! I mean the same God who was with Joseph in his father's house and in the pit was still with him in

Potiphar's house. Furthermore, God's presence produces evident result (Genesis 39:3). Potiphar, Joseph's master, also testified that the Lord was with him.

How did his master know? Everything Joseph did in the house of Potiphar became prosperous in his hands. The presence of the Most High God in the life of a man attracts grace that produces impactful, landmark and ground-breaking results. That is why, by divine arrangement, Joseph found grace in the sight of Potiphar. Grace opens doors, promotes, preserves, empowers etc. Nobody can obtain grace from man except God releases the grace. No man can receive divine grace unless the presence of God abides with him!

Moses, the greatest leader of the Israelites, understood the significance of God's presence. At a point in time, on their journey to the Promised Land enroute the wilderness, he emphatically told God **“we shall not go forward, unless You go with us.”** Many people are suffering because they lack God's presence in their lives, homes and ministries. As a child of God, you must passionately desire to dwell in His presence at all times. Dwelling in God's presence is not just a matter of coming to church, attending retreats or vigils. The presence of God is the secret place of the Most High as written by David in Psalm 91:1.

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God's presence attracts many attendant blessings like joy unspeakable, inner peace, confidence etc. In addition to grace, favour, mercy and prosperity; His presence provides divine security as you remain under the shadow of His wings. The grace which Joseph obtained from Potiphar granted him the opportunity to oversee his master's house. Therefore, he became the *General Overseer* in Potiphar's house; over all that he had entrusted into his hands. God then proved another point in Joseph's life, seeing his faithfulness, diligence and commitment. He blessed the Egyptian's house for Joseph's sake! It was an all-round blessing; all he had in the house and in the field were blessed. When Potiphar observed the divine turn-around and blessings upon his house, he simply left all he had in Joseph's hands. He was so sure that he could go to sleep while he entrusted his possessions to Joseph. In fact, the only thing Potiphar knew he had to himself was his wife and the food he ate.

THE DREAM KILLER AT WORK!

In the process of time, it came to pass that Potiphar's wife began to have some erotic feelings and strong sexual desire for Joseph because he was a good-looking young man. When she could no longer keep it to herself, she came to Joseph one day asking him to lie with her. Having caught the revelation and understanding of God's purpose for him, Joseph refused vehemently and said unto his master's wife, ***“Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my***

hand. There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?"

Genesis 39:8-9 (NKJV). Joseph termed that act of iniquity **"great wickedness and sin against God"**.

Many youths of today would have seen the 'offer' as an opportunity to further warm into the heart of Potiphar, thinking that maybe Mrs. Potiphar would have recommended him to her husband for double promotion with some fringe benefits attached. They would have done it; at least, it was the woman that was asking for it. Some would have said, it would be kept as a top secret; after all, nobody was seeing them. Friend, I tell you that you cannot hide anything from God who sees everything done in the secret!

Apart from having the fear of God, Joseph also understood the fact that committing the sin would make God's presence depart from him. Do you hallow or revere the presence of God? More importantly, he realized that Mrs. Potiphar was another dream killer sent his way by the devil to truncate his destiny. Remember that he escaped the first set of dream killers, his own brothers! The dream of many people today has been slaughtered on the bed of iniquity. A number of bright future and colourful destiny have been gruesomely massacred on the laps of the 'Delilahs' of our time. Don't mortgage your glorious future for the present mundane and ephemeral things of this world.

A dream killer is anything you do or love doing but does not offer any value addition to the fulfillment of your dream. It is a form of obstacle, hindrance, barrier and clog in the wheel of fulfilling your dream. Check your life and be sincere with yourself! What is that thing which has become habitual for you? Is it alcoholism, smoking, sexual immorality, masturbation, partying, occultism etc.? You must first surrender your heart to God by accepting the Lordship of Jesus Christ and then cry unto Him for deliverance. Moreover, you need to see servants of God for further deliverance and counseling on spiritual growth.

It must be mentioned that some habits may not necessarily be considered as sin but they contribute to the process of dream-killing. For instance; talkativeness, excessive sleep, addiction to watching television, gluttony etc. are part of the team of dream killers. Whatever can derail you from focusing on your dream must be avoided in its entirety! Metaphorically, dream killers are the 'Goliaths' you must conquer on the way to the fulfillment of your dream. Resolutely determined, Mrs. Potiphar continued throwing sexual advances at Joseph day-by-day but he never yielded to her request.



One fateful day, Joseph was in the house doing his work and there was no one at home except his master's wife. Perhaps, Mrs. Potiphar must have purposely sent other domestic staff on errands. While Joseph was engrossed in his official duties, his master's wife grabbed him from behind saying *“lie with*

me". Hurriedly, Joseph found the nearest available exit out of the house leaving his garment in the hands of Mrs. Potiphar. Worthy of note here is that Joseph did not negotiate with the adulterous woman. The fact is that no amount of persuasions and pleadings would have salvaged the situation.

A very good lesson to learn from this is that don't pamper sins and sinful pleasures, they destroy destiny! The Bible enjoins us to rebuke the devil and he will flee from us but we are also instructed to *flee from every appearance of evil*. Definitely, Mrs. Potiphar would be boiling and fuming over the narrow escape of Joseph. All the same, she believed that she had a very strong evidence against him. Joseph's garment left in the hand of the promiscuous woman, while running for his destiny, was the false evidence. Beloved, you need to run for your dear life in the face of the present day rampaging sinful temptations, attractions, distractions and sexual perversions.

Joseph too must have thought of that risky option of leaving his garment behind. He was, however, pleased with the fact that it was his clothes but not his body that Mrs. Potiphar had. You need to take some risks on your way to the top! It is part of the price to be paid for greatness in life.

Indeed, stepping out to pursue your dream is even a risk. For the second time, Joseph's clothe was being used as a means of his identification. The first time was when his brothers faked his



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*Don't pamper
sins and sinful
pleasures, they
destroy destiny!*
—  —

death by dipping his coat of many colours into animal blood and presented it to their father for identification. This time around, his master's wife was using it as an evidence for the offence he never committed. I pray that every garment of falsehood programmed to implicate you is consumed by fire in the mighty name of Jesus.

FROM POTIPHAR'S HOUSE TO PRISON

The desperate woman raised a false alarm calling the men of the house saying, ***“See he has brought in to us a Hebrew to mock us; he came in to lie with me, and I cried out with a loud voice...”*** (Genesis 39:14-18). Amidst shedding of crocodile tears, Mrs. Potiphar narrated the false story to her darling husband who instantly became furiously angry with Joseph. More so, the allegation and blame seemed to have been shifted to Potiphar for bringing a Hebrew boy into the house to sexually harass or molest Mrs. Potiphar.

Of course, as an officer of Pharaoh and captain of the guard, Potiphar had every political power and authority. He was just like the Comptroller General of the Correctional Centres in our contemporary times. Thus, he ordered the arrest of Joseph and consequently put him in a royal prison. You will recall that Joseph's

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*You need to take
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 top! It is part of
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 —  —

brothers lied to their father that a deadly animal had killed him. This was done in order to cover their atrocity and cruelty against their brother. In the same vein, Potiphar's wife lied against Joseph because he refused to lie with her. She used what is popularly called 'first attack' approach against Joseph. I mean she was the first to make a report about the incident to her husband. So, there was nothing Joseph could have said before his master that would have earned him fair hearing.

Whenever the enemy cannot overcome you, he brings some delays to ensure that you don't attain your goals. I encourage you to be strengthened from within your spirit. Don't give up to the antics and tactics of the devil! Lie is the direct opposite of truth. Most times, people form opinions about you and they tend to draw certain subjective conclusions about you. As if that was not enough, they spread it around as rumours or untrue stories. In a situation like that, don't grow cold and don't lose the steam. Hold tenaciously unto your dream because only God's counsel shall come to pass over your life.



Again, the Lord was still with Joseph as He showed him mercy and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. Can you imagine the extent of blessings Joseph was enjoying with God's presence? Apart from grace, the presence of the Lord in one's life attracts impeccable glory. In fact, the keeper of the prison was quick to identify it in Joseph's life. Hence, he committed all the prisoners into his hands. He did not stop at

that, he also made him responsible for whatever happened in the prison. Even while in the prison, Joseph yet continued to be prospering and leading in all his endeavours.

When God is with you, your prosperity knows no boundary! At the time of drought, Isaac sowed in the land and had bumper harvest. The same God was with Joseph through thick and thin and He delivered him from the hands of his wicked brethren and adulterous Mrs. Potiphar. He was also celebrated in the prison all because His presence was with him. The keeper of the prison must have discovered that Joseph did not deserve to be in the prison. A Yoruba adage says *“ori ye ye ni m'ogun, ti aise lo po.”* It is translated as *“a lot of innocent people are killed unjustly.”*



GOD WILL MAKE A WAY...

Credit is given to Don Moen who sang the song **“God will make a way when there seems to be no way. He walks in ways we cannot see, He will make a way for me. He will be my guide, hold me closely to His side. With love and strength for each new day, He will make a way, He will make a way.”** Most times, God shows up when we seem to have reached the dead end of the road. He can use anything or anybody to make a way for His children. God will make a way for you in the name of Jesus Christ.

—  —
*When God is
 with you, your
 prosperity knows
 no boundary!*
 —  —

I strongly believe that the offence of the chief butler and chief baker was divinely orchestrated in order to pave way for Joseph's release. At king Pharaoh's command, the duo was cast into the same prison where Joseph was. The butler and baker each had a dream the same night and were both confused and became sad the following morning. After narrating their dreams to Joseph, he accurately interpreted the dream to each of them. However, he told the chief butler that he should remember him whenever he was out of the prison. Unfortunately, the chief butler forgot about Joseph whom God used for him while in the prison. Perhaps, Joseph must have been wondering why the chief butler forgot about him so soon. In life, people may forget your good works but God, who never forgets, shall greatly reward you. Don't just be weary in doing good!

At the end of two full years, Pharaoh had two different dreams but there was nobody to interpret the dreams. So, king Pharaoh became troubled in his spirit and sent for all the magicians and wise men in the land of Egypt but they could not give the meaning of his dreams. It was at that point that the chief butler remembered Joseph and recommended him to the king. Immediately, king Pharaoh sent for Joseph, he was brought to the palace with automatic alacrity. Pharaoh informed Joseph that he had already

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*Most times, God
shows up when
we seem to have
reached the dead
end of the road.*
—  —

heard about his ability to interpret dreams. However, Joseph answered the king saying, ***“It is not in me: God will give Pharaoh an answer of peace.”*** (Genesis 41:16). This statement shows how humble Joseph was despite his rare gift and grace.



King Pharaoh then narrated his dreams which Joseph precisely interpreted. He did not just give interpretations to the dreams but he also made recommendations to the king. ***“Now therefore, let Pharaoh select a discerning and wise man, and set him over the land of Egypt...”*** (Genesis 41:33-36). Furthermore, he explained that the dream was repeated twice because God had already established it and would come to pass very soon.

FROM PRISON TO PALACE

The king and his chiefs must have applauded the precise interpretations and laudable recommendations made by Joseph. However, king Pharaoh could not think of any other discerning and wise man in the whole land of Egypt except Joseph. In fact, the king acknowledged that the Spirit of God was in Joseph (Genesis 41:38). This affirms that a believer should not just say s/he has God's Spirit in him/her. The Spirit of God cannot be inactive or passive in you! I mean the Holy Spirit will manifest His works, if truly He is dwelling in your life.

King Pharaoh, therefore, pronounced Joseph as the second in command over the land of Egypt. The king said he would only be greater than him by his throne. He then decorated and

empowered Joseph to the extent that the Egyptians would be ruled by his words. At the age of thirty years, Joseph became a strong pillar in the policy formulation and implementation, and the political landscape of Egypt. He eventually made it to the top! If you calculate from the time he had the dreams to the time of fulfillment, you will discover that it took him thirteen years. Thus, a critical analysis of Joseph's life reveals different events that unfolded in the process of time. At different times, different people also played different roles in his quest to becoming who God ordained him to be. This can be summarized sequentially with four 'Ps' i.e. Pit, Potiphar, Prison and Palace.

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*The Spirit of God
cannot be
inactive or
passive in you!*
—  —


Epilogue:

FROM UNEXPECTED TO UNIMAGINABLE!



You will face your greatest opposition when you are closest to your biggest miracle
- Shannon L. Alder



Christianity is like a marathon race in nature. In the race of life, the winner takes all and only the winner is usually remembered. On the other hand, in the spiritual race; every Christian can be a winner. Sometimes, God allows the unexpected so as to do the unimaginable. I am a living witness of this in my own personal life. The miraculous does not just come by chance or wishful thinking. The challenge is not the issue but your faith which is the key that opens the door to the miraculous. Great moves of God may not necessarily be accompanied by spectacular signs. What do you do when God says “*I will*” but it appears that He hasn't?

—  —
*Sometimes, God
allows the
unexpected so as
to do the
unimaginable.*



Small steps can lead to the extraordinary feat with God on the scene. Just hold unto the slightest hint from God before you take that step. Nobody can move to the top if he is not ready to take the first step. At least, the journey of a thousand miles begins with a step. As you act on the first thing, the next thing will follow. ***“The secret of stagnation is the fear of moving forward”*** (Genesis 26:12-13). Be prepared and ready to take that giant or bold step and trust God for the leading. Divine leading comes when you have the faith to move forward or do something new! Progress is in the motion and not in the station (Genesis 24:27).


The key to unlocking the divine promise is taking the step forward (Exodus 14:15). Don't ever wait for the perfect conditions before you take the step forward because it may never come. God wants you to move forward despite the seemingly astounding obstacles. Start moving forward in your mind and then take the needed step (Mark 10:48-50). Obey God's word and act on it without any further delay. When you begin to act on the word of God, then a time comes when He begins to act on your word. Match your goals with an action plan as God does not work without a plan (Luke 14:28-30; Acts 4:28). Set a strategy to reach your goals and commit yourself to them. On a regular basis; benchmark, track and evaluate your progress and make adjustments where necessary.

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*The secret of
 stagnation is the
 fear of moving
 forward”*
 —  —

Be value-driven and not frivolity-driven. Anyone who concentrates on frivolities cannot have regard for values. Set some grand rules for yourself and strictly follow them. Anybody who does not impose an order upon his/her life cannot live a disciplined life. Be discerning, observant and sensitive in the Spirit! Focus on the trophy and laurels waiting for you at the top (Judges 8:4). Never stop when you are tired or discouraged; stop only when you are done. Don't give in to discouragement, maximize the vision and don't allow distractions. Pursue diligence and self-denial (Proverbs 22:29). Develop drive and passion (2 Kings 9:20), anything done without passion cannot bring profit. Keep the right company (1 Corinthians 5:9-11).

Audit your friendship list and know the kind of friends you keep. Associate yourself with destiny helpers not destiny destroyers. Don't forget the proverb that says *evil communication corrupts good manner*. Finally, always remember the God-factor (Romans 9:15-16). The greatest thing you can

have in life is God. He is the only person that lifts one out of the dunghill and makes him to sit among the princes and kings.

—  —
*Never stop when
you are tired or
discouraged;
stop only when
you are done.*



Let me ask you this pertinent question: do you know God? In case you don't know Him or you have backslidden, I implore you to yield your life completely to Him today. Don't

procrastinate your day of salvation! God bless you as you decide for Him now. I look forward to seeing you at the top as we move together to the top. **SHALOM!**

Our Ministry



CEDAR GENERATION GOSPEL OUTREACH

OUR VISION

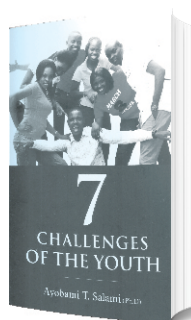
To raise a **Cedar Generation**, who will be holy, healthy and highly successful; radiating the beauty and glory of God in this perverse generation.

OUR MANDATE

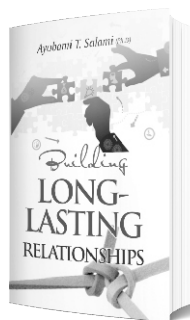
To build change agents, who receive anointing in the church, and make impacts in the world, as *Streetwise Apostles*.

OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR

7 Challenges of the Youth



Building Long-Lasting Relationships



Rubble of Discouragement

