

JANUARY

EMBRACING YOUR VISION OF DESTINY

As we pause to reflect on the coming days of this year, we are much like God's people, Israel, who came to the border of their Promised Land. Ahead of them lay a land they had not seen and unknown enemies.

The same is true for you. You stand at the threshold of a brand new year. Ahead of you lies the unknown. What new challenges will you face this year? What victories await you? What changes will occur throughout the world? How will your personal life, your ministry, and your family be impacted in the coming months?

God instructed Israel to follow closely behind the Ark of the Tabernacle, which was symbolic of His presence in the midst of His people. He told them to follow it "...*that ye may know the way by which ye must go: for ye have not passed this way before*" (Joshua 3:4).

As we think about the coming year, we too "have not been this way before." We do not know what joys and sorrows or victories and problems lie ahead. But one thing is for sure--we have the same assurance that God gave to Joshua at the border of Canaan:

Have not I commanded thee? Be strong and of a good courage; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest. (Joshua 1:9)

God has promised to be with you wherever you go. He has commanded you to be strong and of good courage and not to be dismayed. The presence of God is advancing before you into the coming year, just as the Ark led Israel into the unknown territory that lay before them.

During this year, we will follow the journey of Israel from their inception as a nation to their entry into their Promised Land. As we follow in the footsteps of God's chosen people, we will draw many spiritual parallels that apply to our own lives. There are some exciting times ahead for us as we look by faith to the future. God has tremendous victories planned for us in the coming days. There are some major challenges ahead also, but... "*...We are well able to conquer it...He will bring us into this land and give it to us...*" (Numbers 13:30; 14:8, AMP).

During the month of January, we will begin where Israel began. The pathway to their destiny began with a man named Abraham who received a vision and stepped out by faith to embrace his divine destiny. Through meditating on his story you will learn how a spiritual vision is conceived, developed, and birthed by faith. You will learn of the covenant promises Abraham received that are yours also--promises that assure that you will reach your destiny.

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JANUARY 1 WHERE THERE IS NO VISION

The Bible states in Proverbs 29:18, "*Where there is no vision, the people perish.*" The vision to which this verse refers is spiritual vision. Spiritual vision provides direction. It provides challenge and structure for life. Without it, people become spiritually dead.

Developing spiritual vision is the process of recognizing the purpose for which you have been brought into the Kingdom of God. Spiritual vision involves seeing beyond the natural world into the spiritual world. It is understanding the divine purpose of God and recognizing your part in His plan. Spiritual vision provides a clear image of what God wants you to do and then directs every step of your life towards achieving that goal.

Believers who are spiritually "perishing" are in one of the following categories:

- They do not have spiritual vision.
- They have received a spiritual vision but have been disobedient to it.
- They have a vision, but do not know how to fulfill it. They have tried and failed or perhaps have never tried at all.

Why is spiritual vision necessary? Why do people perish without it? The answer is found in an account recorded in 2 Kings 6:15-17. God's people, Israel, were surrounded by an enemy nation who had many soldiers, horses, and chariots of war. When Elisha's servant, Gehazi, saw the great force of the enemy, he was afraid and cried out to Elisha, "What shall we do?" Elisha told him:

Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.
(2 Kings 6:16)

Then Elisha prayed that God would open Gehazi's eyes and allow him to see into the spirit world. The request was granted, and Gehazi saw the spiritual forces of God surrounding Israel.

An important point in this story is that without spiritual vision the people of God cannot see beyond the natural circumstances of life. Like Gehazi, they are defeated by the powers of the enemy which they see at work in the natural world around them. Their vision is focused on their problems and their life becomes a cycle of crying out, "What shall we do?" Without spiritual vision, they cannot comprehend the divine plan of God.

To reach your destiny, you must have vision. As you progress through this devotional guide, pray that your spiritual eyes will be opened and that God will give you a clear vision of His plan for your life.

JANUARY 2 THE BIRTH OF A VISION

God wants to give you a spiritual vision and reveal to you the purposes and objectives which will enable you to fulfill it. As you experience the "birth of a vision" you will become a participator instead of a mere spectator in God's divine plan.

The natural birth process which brings a human baby into the world is similar to the process of the birth of a vision in the spirit world. For the next few days we will meditate on the birth of a vision. You will experience five stages as you give birth to spiritual vision: Conception, development, travail, transition, and birth.

Conception. "Conception" means to create. A spiritual vision is created in your spirit by God. Just as conception in the natural world occurs through intimacy, so intimacy with God is required to birth spiritual vision.

Development. When you first receive a spiritual vision, it is in "embryo" form. An embryo is a basic cell of life. Like the development of the human embryo, God develops your spiritual vision as it grows within you. The basic cell of life in a human baby is the embryo. From it all the basic human features are developed. If you try to change the embryo, deformity or death can occur to the child.

God conceives the basic vision--a spiritual embryo from which all the features of the vision develop. If you try to change the original vision, it will be deformed from the perfect plan of God or it may be aborted. The vision grows and develops as you mature spiritually. Its features will not be the same as yesterday, last week, or last month. But you must never forget the basic embryo of divine purpose for which you are called.

This development of a vision will be a stretching experience, as it is in the natural world within the body of a mother. If the vision does not develop, it will die. Just as a mother carries her child within her body, your vision is with you constantly. It becomes a vital, living part of you. It draws from your own life source as well as from the divine source which conceived it.

While the baby is developing, a pregnant mother will deny herself certain things that might harm the child. As your spiritual vision develops, you may have to do this also. You may need to deny your own plans and ambitions. You may have to lay aside worldly attitudes and conduct. You will have sacrifice time to prepare to fulfill God's purposes.

Have you conceived a vision of your divine destiny? At what stage of development is your spiritual vision? What changes should you make in your life in order for your vision to develop properly?

JANUARY 3 THE STAGES OF BIRTH

The natural birth process which brings a human baby into the world is similar to the process of the birth of a vision in the spirit world. Yesterday we meditated on conception and development of a vision. The next stage is travail.

Travail. Ecclesiastes 5:3 states: *"For a dream cometh through the multitude of business" (Ecclesiastes 5:3).* The meaning of the word "multitude" is "great". "Business", according to one Hebrew meaning, is travail--meaning difficulty. So a dream or vision comes through "great travail."

In natural birth there are facts about travail that parallel the spiritual travail which births a vision. Natural travail is a time of intense, concentrated effort to birth a child. This time of travail is also called "labor." As in the delivery of a child, a spiritual vision is birthed by intense mental, physical, and spiritual concentration.

In the natural world, during the time of travail the one giving birth must let the natural birth process take control. Physically forcing the baby into the birth canal before it opens can kill the child. The same is true in the spirit world. In order to birth spiritual vision you must let God take control of your life. If you try to birth the vision in your own strength it will abort the plan of God. Everything within you may cry out to push and bring the spiritual vision forth with natural abilities, but by self-effort you can destroy the vision.

As a mother in travail hides herself from public gaze, so those in travail spiritually must be alone with God. The birth of a vision--the revelation of your divine destiny--will not occur if you are constantly busy, surrounded by people and projects. As a mother about to give birth, you must seek seclusion for the spiritual birthing process.

Travail is not easy. If you have been going through difficult times--through no fault of your own--could it be that God is birthing a new vision in you? Many times people blame Satan for circumstances that are actually engineered by God to take them to their destiny.

Take time to be alone with God during the difficult time of travail. Let the Holy Spirit bring forth the vision in God's perfect timing. Let God maintain control of the process because if you try to bring your vision to pass in your own strength, you will abort it.

Spiritual birth, like natural birth, is a process.

JANUARY 4 THE TIME OF TRANSITION

We are meditating on the natural birth process and applying it to the birth of a vision. The stages we have discussed previously were conception, development, and travail. Next comes the time of transition.

Transition. In the natural birth process there is a time during labor known as the time of "transition." It is the most difficult time of travail right before the birth canal is open to permit the child to be born.

This parallels the birth of a vision in the spirit world. When God births in you a spiritual vision, you will experience a time of transition. Transition means change. As God gives you new spiritual vision it will require change in your life. It will call for a new commitment and dedication.

You may experience pressure in every area of your life. Everything within you may cry out for relief from the spiritual birth pangs of what God is bringing forth. This is the point where many fail to receive their spiritual destiny. Repeatedly, God has brought His people to the time of transition to birth His vision through them, but because the transition was too difficult many have turned back. They could not take the pressure of this most difficult time. A new vision required changes in thoughts, actions, and lifestyle which they were not willing to make. They could not abandon their own self-effort and traditions. They would not set aside their own ambitions and desires to embrace the plan of God.

This is what happened to the nation of Israel:

Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in Thy sight, O Lord. We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it were brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen. (Isaiah 26:17-18)

Travail and transition are painful experiences, but it is only by these that the vision can be birthed:

...for as soon as Zion (God's people) travailed, she brought forth her children. Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the Lord: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God. (Isaiah 66:8-9)

The pain you have experienced and are experiencing is birthing something new in you. You are giving birth to your divine destiny.

JANUARY 5 THE BIRTH

We are meditating on the natural birth process and applying it to the birth of a spiritual vision. The stages we have discussed previously were conception, development, travail, and the time of transition. The final stage in the process is the actual birth.

The birth. The development of a spiritual vision has an expected end, just as in the development of a human embryo. That anticipated end is birth. Your vision becomes reality.

Premature birth and delayed birth can result in death, both in the natural birth process and in the birth of spiritual vision. Do not move ahead of God and do not lag behind. Keep right in step with Him during the birth of your vision and you will be well on your way to your divine destiny.

After birth in the natural world, a child needs constant care as it continues to grow and develop. After birth of a spiritual vision, that vision will continue to develop, but like a child you must protect and nourish it. Your vision will develop different features and form, but every feature develops from that basic cell of spiritual life which is the vision.

Let's review the stages of the birth of a vision upon which we have been meditating:

- Conception: Occurs during times of intimacy with God.
- Development: Requires time and patience.
- Travail: Difficulties arise as you near the birth.
- Transition: The most difficult time right before the vision is birthed.
- The birth: The vision becomes a reality.

Birth requires change. In the natural world, the child must leave the security of the womb. When you were born-again you had to leave the old life of sin. You had to let Jesus change your thought and action patterns.

Are you ready to receive spiritual vision? Are you willing to experience spiritual travail in order to birth something new in your life? If you are not willing, you had better read a different devotional guide. Once you glimpse the vision of your divine destiny shared in these pages, your life will never again be the same.

To give birth to spiritual vision also requires change. It requires courage to step from the known into the unknown. And that brings us to Israel's story which began with a man named Abraham.

JANUARY 6 TARRYING IN HARAN

The story of Abraham is the beginning of the saga of Israel's divine destiny. His story relates to you, as you will see during the next few devotional readings that are centered on this man. Abraham's story is recorded in Genesis chapters 11-25.

Abram--as he was first called--lived with his family in a city called Ur in ancient Babylon. He was the son of Terah and married to a woman named Sarai. She was barren, and they had no children.

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

Terah, Abram's father, took his family and left Ur for Canaan. We are not told how Terah received the idea of going to the land of Canaan, but somehow he envisioned a better place for his family than the evil environment in which they were living. But the family never made it to Canaan during Terah's lifetime. What hindered their vision from becoming a reality? What aborted their divine destiny? Two major factors emerge, hindrances that we must avoid as we pursue our own destinies.

First, they settled where they were. On their way to Canaan, the family came to the city of Haran which was a junction for three major caravan routes and consequently a great commercial emporium. It was easier to settle here in a prosperous city than continue on into the unknown. **Second, they served other gods.** Joshua reveals this fact in his final message to the Israelites (Joshua 24:2). We are not told what gods they served, but it is likely that they embraced the idolatrous ways of the people among whom they lived.

As you journey towards your divine destiny, you, too may be tempted to settle down. It might be easier to remain where you are than to move across the country or around the world to fulfill God's call. You may be comfortable in your present environment. You may be tempted by the "idols" of this world--a good job, a career path, material, possessions, etc. But if you remain where you are, you may die without fulfilling your vision.

Terah died in Haran. He never fulfilled his dream. He never reached Canaan. You may remain secure where you are, surrounded by what you know, enjoy, and love. But you will die spiritually if you remain where you are and do not pursue your divine destiny. Do not live the "settled for" life.

JANUARY 7 ONE MAN WITH A VISION

At age 75, while living in Haran, Abraham--the son of Terah--received a call from God to go to an unknown land that the Lord would show him:

Now the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Genesis 12:1-3)

God also told Abraham that He would make his descendants a great nation (Genesis 12:1-3). The promise must have seemed unbelievable to Abraham because his wife, Sarah, was elderly and childless, but Abraham obeyed God and began the long journey into the unknown (Genesis 11:30-31; 17:15).

Abraham traveled south along the trade routes from Haran, through Shechem and Bethel, to the land of Canaan. This was a populated area, inhabited by the war-like Canaanites, so Abraham's acting upon God's promises to even begin this journey was a tremendous declaration of faith:

By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God. (Hebrews 11:8-10)

Like Abraham, you too have a divine destiny. Your ancestors may have missed it, as Terah did. Your parents may have not fulfilled it. But if you will act upon God's mandate, you won't miss it!

How do you do this? By faith. The scriptures say, "By faith Abraham obeyed and went out..." You may not understand the details of the destiny to which God is calling you but, like Abraham, you must step out by faith and start your journey into the unknown. Abraham knew God had called him to a promised land. He knew he had a divine purpose, but in order to reach his destiny, he must make the first move. So must you!

Take the first step towards your destiny today. Your first step might mean making plans to relocate geographically. You might need to enroll in school to learn a special skill. You might need to learn a foreign language to prepare for the mission field. What is your first step towards the fulfillment of your vision?

JANUARY 8 MOVING TOWARDS DESTINY

We learned in yesterday's devotion that Abraham stepped out in faith and began moving towards his divine destiny. Had he not done so, he might have died in Haran just like his father.

You will never reach your destiny by remaining where you are spiritually. All throughout scripture, God responds to those who move out in faith:

- We are told to ask, seek, and knock--then we receive the answer.
- We are told to give and we will receive.
- When you come boldly before the throne, you find grace to help in time of need.
- When you come to Christ for salvation, He extends forgiveness.
- As you forgive others, you are forgiven.
- The poor widow made dinner for the prophet first, then her own needs were met.
- The woman in debt was told to get empty pots. When she did, God filled them.
- Moses was told to stretch out his rod over the Red Sea and the waters would part.
- The priests were to step into the Jordan and it would open before them.
- Jairus came to Jesus for help for his daughter and she was healed.
- The woman with the issue of blood pressed through a crowd to touch Jesus and received her healing.

We are not necessarily talking about changing your geographic location--although that may be involved. We are talking about a spiritual move. If you stay where you are spiritually, nothing will change. Businesses that remain stagnant and do not advance are passed up by other firms. If you need a job, you cannot expect to get one if you do nothing about it. You must send out resumes, search the help wanted ads, and arrange interviews. If you want a college degree, you must enroll in classes. You must take a new step of faith.

There were four lepers in Old Testament times who decided they would die if they remained where they were, alone and without basic provisions (2 Kings 7). It was risky to go into the enemy's camp, but they rose up and did so. They made the first move, and their destinies were changed when they found a deserted camp filled with abundant provisions.

Likewise you will die spiritually if you remain where you are. Your vision will fade, and your dream will die. When you start to move towards your destiny, God begins to move in your behalf. When you make a move in faith, God responds.

Moving towards destiny...what step of faith do you need to take today?

JANUARY 9 LEAVING LOT

The Lord said to Abraham, "...*Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee...*" (Genesis 12:1). Note that Abraham was to leave his kindred behind. Yet, in Genesis 12:4 we read, "*So Abram departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him; and Lot went with him.*" A short statement, but one with a depth of meaning.

Lot and his family turned out to be nothing but trouble for Abraham. Problems first arose when the land could not support both of them and their livestock, and strife arose between their herdsmen. Genesis 13, records how Abraham gave Lot the opportunity to choose land and separate from him. Instead of choosing property somewhere in Canaan, Lot chose to live near Sodom and Gomorrah. It was a beautiful and fertile place, but the cities were filled with sinful, idolatrous people. Sometimes things that look good on the surface are not so good when you take a closer look through eyes of faith. Why didn't Lot choose some land in Canaan? The Promised Land was well-able to support both him and Abraham.

Abraham took Lot with him when he left Haran, and Lot's problems became Abraham's problems. Genesis 14 records how Abraham had to rescue Lot when he was taken captive by the enemy. Genesis 19 records the final judgment of Sodom and Gomorrah and how Abraham had to intercede to save Lot.

When an angel came to rescue Lot and his family from destruction in Sodom, Lot tried to persuade his sons-in-law to go with them, but they refused and even mocked him. During the evacuation, Lot's wife looked back in violation of God's instructions and she died. Lot's daughters later committed incest with him because their husbands had remained behind in Sodom and were killed. Are you beginning to see why God told Abraham to leave his kindred behind?

As you travel towards your own spiritual destiny, you, too, may be required to part with family or friends. Some partings may be simply the result of your need to move on to the next part of your spiritual journey. But there may be times when God commands you to separate from someone, and if and when He does, you must do it! If you do not obey and remain attached to that person, their problems will become your problems.

It was only after separating from Lot that God spoke to Abraham once again.. "*And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him...*" (Genesis 13:14). Abraham was about to receive the details of his divine destiny. And it happened after the separation from Lot.

Has God shown you someone or something from which you must separate? You may not receive revelation of the next step in your journey towards destiny until you do so.

JANUARY 10 BELIEVING THE PROMISES

"Get up. Leave your country, your kindred, and your father's house," God commanded Abraham. Abraham was 75 years old when he stepped out by faith to embrace his destiny. Do not let age be a factor in your obedience. God knew your age when He called you. The psalmist David declared, "*Behold, thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and mine age is as nothing before thee*" (Psalm 39:5).

An aging man, walking alone beneath the stars--now God speaks to him once again:

And the Lord said unto Abram, after that Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. (Genesis 13:14-17)

Separation leads to revelation, and revelation leads to destiny. God tells Abraham, "Your destiny is unlimited. Look north, south, east, and west. I will give the land to you!"

A great story—but much more than a story. More than a historical record of the birth of the nation of Israel and the beginning of the destiny planned for God's chosen people. More than the story of one man. It is the story of a divine covenant—the supernatural promises of God—intended to pass from generation to generation, down through the centuries. It is the story of divine destiny--and it affects you!

God made specific promises to Abraham to which He committed Himself. This contractual agreement has been called the "Abrahamic covenant." The Bible records several occasions where God appeared to Abraham to make, confirm, or amend these promises.

The provisions of this agreement, which ultimately would result in blessing all the families of the earth, were not only extended to Abraham, but to his seed after him—Isaac, Jacob, and the nation of Israel. Abraham would be the father of Israel and many other nations (Genesis 17:5). Though childless at the time, with a barren wife beyond child-bearing years, Abraham believed these promises from God and acted upon them: "*For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*" (Romans 4:3).

God's promises to you may seem impossible right now, but if you act upon them in faith as Abraham did, they will become reality.

JANUARY 11 HEIR TO THE PROMISES

You are about to discover a spiritual truth so tremendous that, when you grasp it, your entire life will change. You are an heir! You may not have a rich relative or a financial endowment that has been passed down to you, but you are a spiritual heir of an inheritance that is far greater. It is an inheritance so great that it encompasses every area of your life. It has the capacity to heal every painful experience you have ever had, supply every need, and equip you for victorious living and effective service in God's Kingdom. This spiritual inheritance is called "the Abrahamic covenant." The Abrahamic covenant will take you beyond a blessing into a realm that makes the impossible possible.

As God had promised, Abraham was eventually blessed with a son, Isaac, through whom the nation of Israel was birthed:

Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. Therefore sprang there even of one, and him as good as dead, so many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the sea shore innumerable. (Hebrews 11:11-12)

In the book of Revelation, the "stars" represent the church. Throughout scripture, the land--the dust or sand--is representative of Israel. As believers, we do not replace Israel, but we are recipients of the same covenant blessings. Just as they did for Abraham, these promises and blessings will enable you to fulfill your divine destiny.

Genesis 21-35 records the story of Isaac, Abraham's son. As you read through it you will see the tremendous blessings of God upon his life. The provisions of this covenant then passed on to Isaac's son, Jacob. Despite a rough start, Jacob's life was eventually supernaturally changed and with it came a new name--"Israel." Jacob was mightily blessed of God through the provisions of the Abrahamic covenant, then these promises were passed on to his children, and the nation of Israel was birthed.

The tremendous blessings of Abraham extend even further than the nation of Israel, however. The Apostle Paul declared: "*The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together*" (Romans 8:16-17). Romans 4:16 declares that Abraham was the "*father of us all.*" As Abraham's spiritual seed and a joint-heir with Christ, you are an heir to these covenant promises. The Apostle Paul declared, "*And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise*" (Galatians 3:29). These promises will make your destiny a reality, just as they did for Abraham.

JANUARY 12
WHEN THERE IS NO HOPE

We are walking in the footsteps of Abraham enroute to the Promised Land as we make our journey towards spiritual destiny. As you have learned, as a true believer, you are Abraham's spiritual seed and the promises that God made to him extend down through the centuries to you:

That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. (Romans 9:8)

Everything you need to reach your destiny--spiritually, physically, mentally, and financially--is provided by the Abrahamic covenant. Yet, there are few believers today who comprehend this and are claiming these amazing covenant privileges.

These blessings from God are so great that they extend to areas where man would say you are crazy to even have hope. Abraham "...*against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be*" (Romans 4:18). The Abrahamic covenant will enable you to believe when there is no hope in the natural:

- The blessing of Abraham goes where the doctor has said, "No hope."
- It goes where the banker has said, "No hope."
- It goes where the attorney has said, "No hope."
- It goes where the marriage counselor has said, "No hope."
- It goes where those around you have declared, "No hope."

Claiming your inheritance under the Abrahamic covenant will renew your hope and give you supernatural faith to persevere and reach your divine destiny.

When Abraham first received this powerful covenant, it was so great that he fell on his face before God (Genesis 17:17). But the Bible declares that Abraham "... *staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform*" (Romans 4:20-21).

These promises are so great that they could cause you to stagger in unbelief. Like Abraham, however, you must be fully persuaded that the provisions of this covenant are for you and that God is able to bring them to pass in your life.

By faith, be fully persuaded of the amazing promises of God. Every provision has already been made to enable you to achieve your destiny.

JANUARY 13 THE COVENANT

The blessings of Abraham—and all of God's promises—are based upon a covenant relationship with God. A covenant is an agreement between two people that make promises to one another. The Hebrew word for covenant is *b'rith*, which means cutting. Biblically, this refers to a custom in Old Testament times where two people making a covenant passed through the bodies of slain animals after making an agreement.

When one “cut covenant” in Old Testament times, it involved a statement of the terms of the agreement; an oath from each party; a curse upon whoever should break the agreement; and the sealing of the covenant by a blood sacrifice. Violation of such a covenant was considered a heinous act.

The truly remarkable thing is that God consented to enter into this amazing covenant with mankind. In the Old Testament, God made a covenant with Abraham and his seed, stated the terms, swore by Himself, and sealed the agreement with the blood of sacrificial animals. In the New Testament, this covenant was reconfirmed through the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ:

In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

The Greek word for “covenant” used in the New Testament, means “a contract or a will.” Simply stated, our covenant with God, is the title deed to our inheritance. It is a legal, spiritually binding agreement between God and man.

When God called Abraham to leave his home and go to the Promised Land, He declared that He would make Abraham a great nation with many descendants. In Genesis 15 Abraham questioned this promise because of his advanced age and childless condition, and the Lord reaffirmed it. Abraham's response to God's promises is a model of believing faith: *"And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness" (Genesis 15:6).*

Over the years, God has made many promises to you. Some promises are directly from His written Word. Others may have been specific prophetic promises that are in line with Scriptures. Do not question these. Embrace them by faith.

JANUARY 14 A CONFIRMED COVENANT

Genesis 15 describes a ceremony commonly used in the ancient world to formalize a covenant. The custom was that both parties making the covenant would walk together between the pieces of slain animals (Jeremiah 34:18-19). This custom confirmed that the terms of the covenant were mandatory on both parties. If one party violated any part of the covenant, it would free the other party from the necessity of fulfilling his promises.

But this ceremony, which occurred between God and Abraham to confirm the covenant, was different in one very important aspect:

And when the sun was going down, a deep sleep fell upon Abram...and it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram. (Genesis 15:12, 17-18)

Abraham and God did not walk together between the slain animals, as was the custom. God put Abraham in a deep sleep and God alone--in the form of a smoking oven and a flaming torch--walked between the pieces of the sacrifice. This meant that the fulfillment of the covenant was based solely upon God's grace, regardless of response of Abraham or his descendants.

Abraham could not be responsible for the covenant, but could only be a recipient of it. He might fail, but the covenant would remain intact. God would never fail, for He promised, *"My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips"* (Psalms 89:34).

You are a recipient of this powerful covenant with all of its promised benefits. It is passed on to you as the spiritual seed of Abraham. No matter how weak you think you are spiritually, the covenant promises are not dependent upon you. You are only a recipient. The fulfillment is based solely upon God's grace and His faithfulness.

You are a spiritual heir of every blessing of the Abrahamic covenant. The words "bless" and "blessing" are used repeatedly in these promises. The root word is *barak* and means "to confer abundant life and to endue with power for success, prosperity, and long life".

God's covenant with you is confirmed in His Word. If you have failed in the past, the covenant remains intact. The promises are not dependent upon you. They exist independently of you, but only through your obedience will they be manifested in your life.

JANUARY 15
ABUNDANT LIFE

The blessings God conferred upon Abraham which are passed on to you as his spiritual seed, endue you with power for an abundant life. They assure power for success, prosperity, fruitfulness, healing, blessing, and long life. The blessings of Abraham were given from God through Christ to you:

The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds", meaning many people, but "and to your seed", meaning one person, who is Christ. (Galatians 3:16, NIV)

If you are a born-again believer, then these blessings are yours. This is what makes an understanding of this covenant so vital. Many believers are living far below their spiritual heritage because they do not understand that this covenant extends to them. They do not understand its provisions or how to receive the benefits. This lack of knowledge results in many living defeated and desperate lives. God's Word declares, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge..." (Hosea 4:6).

The provisions of this covenant are yours, passed on to you from God through Jesus Christ. The covenant is confirmed in your life the same way it was in the life of Abraham--by God alone. Jesus Christ walked alone to Calvary and, through His blood sacrifice, paid the price for your salvation and the spiritual benefits of this covenant:

Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God; Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts. (2 Corinthians 1:21-22)

The fulfillment of this covenant is not dependent upon you. It is only dependent upon your obedience to accept and act upon the terms of the covenant. You must believe in Jesus Christ and accept Him as your Savior in order to become the spiritual seed of Abraham:

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. (Romans 10:8-10)

The promises of the Abrahamic covenant are attained by grace, through faith, just as your salvation is secured: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).

JANUARY 16 SPIRITUAL CIRCUMCISION

You cannot enter into this covenant without a personal relationship with God. It is not *what* you know about this covenant—its terms and provisions—but *Who* you know that will make these blessings a reality in your life. God’s covenant with Abraham was based on relationship. Abraham was called “the friend of God”:

*And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.
(James 2:23)*

How do you become a friend of God? You accept Jesus Christ as your Savior and develop personal relationship with Him through prayer, praise and worship, the Word of God, and doing His will. You will never fulfill your purpose in life--you will never reach your divine destiny--until you are living in covenant relationship with God.

After God gave the powerful promises of this covenant to Abraham, He commanded that the agreement be confirmed by the shedding of blood. Abraham was commanded to circumcise himself and all the males in his household. This was a sign of the covenant relationship between God and the nation of Israel (Genesis 17:10-14).

So what does circumcision represent to believers today? As people called and ordained by God, desiring to walk in the provisions of His promises, we must bear the marks of change upon our lives. As New Testament believers, we no longer circumcise the flesh, but we are circumcised in heart:

In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, but in a [spiritual] circumcision [performed by] Christ by stripping off the body of the flesh (the whole corrupt, carnal nature with its passions and lusts). [Thus you were circumcised when] you were buried with Him in [your] baptism, in which you were also raised with Him [to a new life] through [your] faith in the working of God [as displayed] when He raised Him up from the dead. And you who were dead in trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh (your sensuality, your sinful carnal nature), [God] brought to life together with [Christ], having [freely] forgiven us all our transgressions, Having cancelled and blotted out and wiped away the handwriting of the note (bond) with its legal decrees and demands which was in force and stood against us (hostile to us). This [note with its regulations, decrees, and demands] He set aside and cleared completely out of our way by nailing it to [His] cross. (Colossians 2:11-12, AMP)

Our circumcision is spiritual, of the heart instead of the flesh. It results in external signs, however, just as the men of Israel had visible evidence of circumcision in their flesh. Are the signs of spiritual circumcision evident in your life?

JANUARY 17
BLESSED TO BLESS

The covenant promises made by God to Abraham are not for everyone. They are only for those who have entered into the blood covenant with Jesus Christ by accepting His sacrifice for their sin. It is for those who have allowed God to circumcise their hearts and who bear the marks of change upon their lives. The promises are for those who obey God's directives to step out by faith and claim His promises.

What is the covenant of Abraham of which we are heirs? They are promises that will enable us, like Israel, to reach our spiritual destiny. In Genesis 12:1-7, God promised Abraham that he would give him a land, make him a great nation, make his name great, bless him, and make him a blessing to others. God also promised to bless those who blessed him and curse those who cursed him. How does this apply to your life? God has promised to bless those who bless you and curse those who curse you. When people rise up against you, you won't need to defend yourself. God will deal with your enemies because you are walking in the provisions of this covenant. God has a spiritual "land"—a divine destiny for you. He has a specific plan for you, an expected end: "*For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end*" (Jeremiah 29:11). God wants to bless you so that through you, the nations (families) of the earth will be blessed. You are blessed in order to be a blessing.

In Genesis 13:15-17, God promised Abraham that the land—his inheritance from God—would be his forever and that he would pass this blessing on to his seed. While this has a specific application to the nation of Israel, it also applies to believers today. The inheritance God has given you is eternal, without end. No exclusions. No disclaimers. Had Israel really comprehended the meaning of this covenant, they never would have turned back from entering their Promised Land.

God also promised Abraham that his heirs would be as the dust of the earth. Even if you are barren and without natural children, God wants to birth through you a spiritual seed that will reproduce throughout the nations. God declares over you:

Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited. (Isaiah 54:1-3)

Like Israel, God has blessed you so that you can bless a lost and dying world. What are you doing today to bless others? Is your life impacting the nations?

JANUARY 18

NO SMALL THINKING

In order to embrace God's promises, you will need to enlarge your spiritual borders (Isaiah 54:1-3). You must put aside small thinking, because the blessing God is about to pour out on you will not fit within the parameters of your natural reasoning.

This blessing will not be poured into the old vessels of tradition. It will not be limited by the parameters of your present life. You will break forth on the right hand and the left. You will inherit the Gentiles (the nations). You will march into the desolation of sinful cities, violent slums, dangerous prisons, and drug houses to deliver people from the very gates of Hell. This is your divine destiny!

God commanded Abraham to walk through the land and declared that He would give it to him. Applied to us spiritually, this means we can walk through "the land" of our households and claim our children for God. We can walk through the desolation of our cities and nations, knowing God has given this territory into our hands spiritually.

There was a widow lady in Old Testament times who was in deep debt. She owed so much money to her creditors that they were about to seize her sons to serve as indentured servants to pay off the obligations (2 Kings 4).

The prophet of God told this woman to obtain as many empty vessels as possible from her friends, family, and neighbors. Then he told her to use the little oil she had and fill the vessels. She obeyed, and as she poured into the empty pots, the oil was multiplied. The oil continued to multiply as long as there was an empty receptacle. The miracle was only limited by what she had room to receive.

If you are to reach your destiny, you must put aside small thinking. Open your heart and mind to an unlimited God with unlimited resources that He longs to bestow upon you. Everywhere Abraham set his foot, God gave it to him. He will do the same for you spiritually.

Get rid of the limits you have placed on God. He is not limited--except by your small thinking. Your destiny is bigger than you think. God has greater plans for you than you can imagine.

Rise up today in the spirit world. Walk through "the land" of your household, your ministry, your community, and your nation. As an heir of the Abrahamic covenant, God has declared: "I will give it unto you!" Claim it in the name of Jesus. Get rid of your small thinking.

JANUARY 19 YOUR SHIELD

The journey to your destiny will not be an easy trip. That is why you need protection. One of the promises God gave Abraham in Genesis 15:1-21 was, "I am thy shield." This is one of the most powerful declarations of the covenant: God is your shield!

-This shield is your salvation: *"Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation..."* (Psalm 18:35).

-This shield lifts you up from despondency and discouragement: *"But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head"* (Psalms 3:3).

-This shield surrounds you with favor: *"For thou, Lord, wilt bless the righteous; with favour wilt thou compass him as with a shield"* (Psalms 5:12).

-This shield is your strength and joy: *"The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him"* (Psalms 28:7).

-This shield is your help in every situation: *"Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield"* (Psalm 33:20).

-This shield provides grace, glory, and all good things: *"For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly"* (Psalm 84:11).

-This shield of truth is your protection: *"He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shalt not be afraid for the terror by night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; Nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee"* (Psalm 91:4-7).

-This shield of faith enables you to stop the enemy in his tracks: *"Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked"* (Ephesians 6:16).

This one promise, "I am thy shield," encompasses every need in your life. It lifts you from the despondency of painful experiences. It protects you from evil and enables you to stop the enemy in his tracks.

God is your shield. No attack of the enemy against you will be successful as long as you are obedient to His Word. You will reach your destiny intact!

JANUARY 20 YOUR GREAT REWARD

God told Abraham, "I am your shield." He also told Him, "I am thy exceedingly great reward." This promise includes both spiritual and material blessings. Abraham was not only blessed spiritually by his relationship with God and through his ministry to the nations, but he was also blessed materially. He possessed great wealth, as did his immediate heirs, Isaac and Jacob.

God blessed Abraham materially because He knew that Abraham would use his wealth wisely for the extension of God's purposes. He knew that he would honor God with the tithe of his increase (Genesis 14:18-20).

God wants to give you both spiritual and material blessings. God is the one who gives you the power to get wealth, declaring:

...thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he swore unto thy fathers, as it is this day. (Deuteronomy 8:18)

The power to get wealth is part of the Abrahamic covenant. As you will learn later this year in the devotional readings, God gives you the power to secure what you need for yourself, your family, and your ministry. Cast aside "welfare mentality" and reject all negative thinking regarding your finances. You have an inheritance!

God blessed Abraham because He knew Abraham would use his resources wisely to extend God's purposes. If you will put the Kingdom of God first in your finances, you will be blessed: "*But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you*" (Matthew 6:33). The financial blessings of the covenant are released when you give liberally of your resources to God:

Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 3:8-12)

When Israel gave their tithes and offerings, they were blessed. When they did not give, they were cursed. Do you want to live under a curse or a blessing? Is God your great reward, or is your focus on material possessions?

JANUARY 21 LIVING LONG ENOUGH

In Genesis 15:15, God promised Abraham "...*thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age*" (Genesis 15:15). He promised Abraham long life, followed by eternal life with his ancestors who had passed on.

Now God is not promising that you will live as long as Abraham, but He is declaring that you will live to a "good old age" spiritually--meaning that you will live long enough to accomplish your destiny.

You may ask, "But what about those who die young?" When we live under the Abrahamic covenant, we will live long enough to fulfill our God-given destinies. For some, that will be sooner than others.

One tremendous example of this is the story of five missionaries martyred by the Auca Indians in Ecuador years ago. When they died, they were young in terms of chronological age, but these men lived long enough to fulfill their destinies. They opened the way for the gospel to reach these tribal people.

Even today, their legacy lives on through books and films like "*Through Gates Of Splendor*" and "*The End Of The Spear*" and in the lives of the Auca believers. The story of their sacrifice has resulted in multitudes responding to the call of God to the mission field over the years. These men, although they died young, lived long enough to accomplish their destinies.

In the provision given to Abraham, God also guarantees eternal life--that we will be "gathered to our fathers", the saints of God who have preceded us in death:

*But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.
(1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)*

You will live long enough on earth to accomplish your destiny and you will live forever in eternity, your ultimate destiny.

JANUARY 22 A NAME CHANGE

Genesis 17:1-22, records that as part of the covenant, God changed Abram's name to Abraham, meaning "father of a great multitude". God also changed Sarai's name to Sarah meaning "princess of a multitude."

Often in Bible times, new names were bestowed to reflect a changed nature. In Old Testament times God changed Jacob's name to Israel and in the New Testament Saul's name was changed to Paul.

How do these name-change promises apply to you spiritually? God wants to take your old sin nature, your past, and your failures and make everything new:

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. (2 Corinthians 5:17)

The new name that God wants to give you will attract the Gentiles (the nations) because they will see a difference in your life:

And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name. (Isaiah 62:2)

What is the new name by which you are to be called?

Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name. (Revelation 3:12)

God's name rests upon you. You are called a Christian: "*And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch*" (Acts 11:26). You are no longer a servant of sin. You have a new name!

You bear the name of Jesus Christ upon your life. Walk worthy of that name! Paul admonishes us to "*...walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory*" (1 Thessalonians 2:12).

You are called by Christ's name. Are the plans you have made for this day worthy of His name?

JANUARY 23 MULTIPLIED SEED

God declared that Abraham's seed would be multiplied, that he would be exceedingly fruitful, and that he would be the father of nations (Genesis 17:1-22).

God promised Abraham that Sarah--who was beyond child-bearing years--would bear a son. Abraham was 90 years old when he received this promise! This was an unnatural, seemingly impossible promise. God's Word to you includes amazing promises. Believe God for great things--even for the impossible!

God told Abraham that from his own loins would come a son with whom the covenant would be established. While God would bless his son, Ishmael, and make a great nation of him, it was Isaac and his seed who would receive the covenant promises. How does this part of the covenant apply to you spiritually? Let's trace the story...

Initially after receiving the promise of a son, Abraham tried to bring forth this covenant blessing through self-effort. Ishmael was born of a servant girl named Hagar, with whom Abraham had relations. Abraham knew God wanted to make him the father of a great nation and it seemed impossible that an heir could come through his elderly and barren wife, Sarah. So Abraham took matters into his own hands and Ishmael was born.

But whose power was behind Ishmael, that of Abraham or that of God? Was the attempted fulfillment of the promised blessing man-made or God-made? Was it birthed by the flesh or by the Spirit? Ishmael represents your attempts to achieve God's blessings. You can bring an "Ishmael" on the scene any time through your own efforts, but an "Isaac" must be birthed by God in His timing.

Who is the source of your blessings? Who is the source of your spiritual vision? Who is the source of your ministry? Is your vision a useless striving of the flesh to attain power and fame, or is it birthed by the Spirit of God? It is time for "Isaac" to be birthed in your spirit and in order for this to happen, "Ishmael"--the flesh--must be cast out. God told Abraham that Isaac, the son of the Spirit, could not abide in the same house with Ishmael, the son of the flesh.

God is saying to you as He did to Abraham: *"Grieve not for Ishmael [self-effort], for in Isaac shall your seed be called."* The fulfillment of divine destiny comes by the Spirit of God, not by the works of your flesh. Put aside all self-effort, your plans, your ambitions, and your preconceived ideas.

"Ishmael", birthed by your flesh, must be cast out so that your spiritual "Isaac" can flourish.

JANUARY 24
AN EVERLASTING COVENANT

Paul compared the Old Covenant to Abraham's son, Ishmael, because it was dependent upon the flesh. He compared the New Covenant to Isaac because it is based upon faith and the quickening power of the Holy Spirit:

For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants...Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of promise...So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free. (Galatians 4, portions of verses 22-24,28,31)

God told Abraham that his promised seed would come through Isaac. We are children of promise because we are the spiritual seed of Abraham and Isaac, birthed by the Spirit and not by the flesh.

God gave Abraham the title deed to the land of Israel forever (Genesis 17:8). Oh, if Israel had only comprehended this promise! They never would have halted at the border of their Promised Land. They would not have feared, doubted, or been turned back to wilderness wandering. The land was to be theirs forever!

While there is prophetic meaning in this promise to Israel, there is also a spiritual application to believers. In Genesis 13:17, God commanded Abraham to *“Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee.”* God is saying to us, “Don’t limit me! Get up, walk through your spiritual inheritance—the length and breadth of it. I have given it to you!”

One of the most powerful declarations in this passage is that this covenant was established between God, Abraham, and his seed as an everlasting covenant:

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. (Genesis 17:7)

God declared that He would *“...be a God unto thee, and unto thy seed after thee.”* This is an everlasting covenant--meaning the covenant did not end with the death of Abraham. It did not cease with the death of Isaac. It was not voided when Jacob passed on. In fact, it was repeatedly reconfirmed down through the years. It is an eternal covenant, confirmed finally--once and for all--by the blood of Jesus Christ.

God's promises didn't die with Abraham, Isaac, or Jacob. They are extended to you through Jesus Christ. Rise up spiritually and walk through the land of your destiny. God has given it to you!

JANUARY 25 POSSESSING THE GATES

In Genesis 22:17, God promised Abraham, "...*thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies...*" In Old Testament times, cities had walls built around them for protection and the gate was the entrance into the city. To "possess the gate of an enemy" meant that you had conquered them.

God is raising up believers who will embrace this promise. Like Abraham, they will forsake all for the sake of God's call. They will be mighty warriors who will possess the gates of the enemy. The men and women God is raising up in this end-time are not weak, anemic believers. They are not people who must be nursed along and coddled spiritually. They are spiritual warriors going forth to take kingdoms and nations for God. They are embracing and living out the promises of the Abrahamic covenant.

This is what God wants to do through you, your life, and your ministry. Fathers and mothers, claim this for your children. Pastors, claim this for your church members. Ministers, claim this for your followers. Teachers, declare this over your students: Your seed will multiply, possess the gates of the enemy, and bless the nations of the earth.

God sealed the provisions of this divine covenant by His own oath, saying, "*By Myself have I sworn...*" (Genesis 22:16). In referring to God's covenant promises, the Apostle Paul declared:

*For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast...
(Hebrews 6:13-16)*

There is no one greater than God, so He swore by Himself that this covenant would be fulfilled. He also sealed these promises with an oath. You can trust God's promises because they are sealed by His sacred oath. He swears by them, and it is absolutely impossible for God to lie. Receive these promises as they are--the truth!

JANUARY 26
GOD'S IMMUTABLE WORD

God sealed the provisions of His covenant with Abraham by His own oath, saying, "*By Myself have I sworn...*" (Genesis 22:16). There is no one greater than God, so God swore by Himself that this covenant would be fulfilled. He also sealed these promises with an oath. The scriptures confirm that...

God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? (Numbers 23:19)

God provided two immutable proofs to end all doubt and uncertainty regarding His promises. They provide a sure and steadfast anchor for your soul, no matter what your circumstances, problems, or challenges.

The synonyms for the word "immutable" are "abiding, changeless, consistent, constant, enduring, ceaseless, continual, endless, permanent, stable, unchanging, unalterable, and eternal." Is that secure enough for you?

Concerning His Word, God declared:

So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it. (Isaiah 55:11)

If you want to reach your destiny, base your life and ministry on the Word of God. God told Joshua:

This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success. (Joshua 1:8)

God's Word will not fail. If you want a successful ministry, base it on the Word of God--not a political position, not a moral issue--but on God's Word.

In so doing, you will accomplish His purposes. You will change the lives of men and women and entire nations. You will prosper in all you do and you will fulfill your divine destiny.

God has sworn by Himself and sealed His Word with an oath. His promises will be fulfilled.

JANUARY 27 DON'T BE SHUT OUT

Impossible! Amazing! Awesome! These are the terms that describe the covenant promises of Abraham that we have examined during the past weeks. And these promises are yours through Jesus Christ! But remember—just like an heir in the natural world must lay claim to their inheritance--these tremendous promises are only yours if you take possession of them.

As you will learn during the coming months, one major reason Israel was shut out of their Promised Land because of unbelief. At Kadesh-Barnea, God directed Israel to advance and take possession of the land that was promised through the Abrahamic covenant. Caleb and Joshua encouraged them to do so, but when the Israelites heard the negative report of ten of the twelve spies, their hearts were filled with unbelief (Numbers 13:30-33).

Israel refused to believe Caleb and Joshua. They listened to the negative reports of the other spies which shattered their faith. They did not believe they could conquer the land. They refused to believe the promises of God. Hebrews 3:19 declares that “...*they could not enter in because of unbelief.*” Israel had all of the covenant promises of Abraham. They had a scriptural foundation to claim their land, but unbelief shut them out.

Why are the promises of the Abrahamic covenant not being manifested in the lives of many believers? Because of unbelief. They don't believe these promises are for them. We have studied the tremendous promises given to Abraham and learned how they are passed down to us, but if we do not believe and act upon this revelation, we will fail to receive it. Just as unbelief shut an entire generation out of the promised land, it will keep you from taking possession of these promises. Unbelief shuts off the supernatural life flow of God.

One of the saddest examples of people shut out from experiencing the mighty manifestation of God's promises is found in the Gospel of Mark. Jesus did mighty miracles everywhere He went. He healed the sick and raised the dead. He opened blind eyes and cast out demons. Yet, when Jesus came to Nazareth, He could do no mighty works:

And he could there do no mighty work, save that he laid his hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them. And he marvelled because of their unbelief... (Mark 6:5-6)

Jesus was not limited in Nazareth because His power or anointing had been depleted. The only thing that prevented these people from receiving the blessings of God was their own unbelief. Whatever God says, believe it! Do not let unbelief limit God's work in your life or prevent you from receiving these promises. Do not let unbelief shut you out. If you have difficulty believing the promises of God, cry out as one distraught father did, “...*Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief.*” (Mark 9:24).

JANUARY 28
GRASSHOPPER MENTALITY

Yesterday we talked about how unbelief will prevent you from fulfilling your destiny. In addition to unbelief, there is another powerful spiritual force that will shut you out of God's promises. That force is the spirit of fear.

When Israel heard the negative report of the spies, they developed "Grasshopper mentality" which kept them out of the promised land. They saw the enemy as a giant and themselves as grasshoppers and they were afraid to enter in to claim their rightful possessions (Numbers 13:33).

One of the first things God said to Abraham when sharing the provisions of this covenant with him was "*Fear not.*" (Genesis 15:1). God knew that these promises were so great that Abraham might be fearful at their very magnitude.

Fear is a spirit that Satan uses to torment, control, dominate, oppress, and bind God's people. Paul told Timothy, "*For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind*" (2 Timothy 1:7).

Through fear and unbelief, Israel disobeyed God and failed to take possession of their inheritance. They forfeited their covenant promises and returned to wander in the wilderness for forty years. Every person twenty years of age and older died in the wilderness with the exception of Moses, Joshua, and Caleb.

Many believers do not realize that the covenant promises of Abraham belong to them. Not knowing what is legally theirs, they have forfeited their covenant rights and privileges simply because they did not claim them. Others know the terms of the covenant, but because of unbelief or fear they refuse to claim them. Both responses will shut you out of your Promised Land and abort your destiny.

What about you? Like the children of Israel, have you failed to take possession of your inheritance? Did you once arrive at the border of your destiny, only to turn back into the wilderness? No more!

Through the revelation you are receiving, you are learning what is rightfully yours. It is time for you to step across the border and claim your inheritance in Christ.

JANUARY 29
THE PURPOSE OF THE BLESSING

We have been on a powerful spiritual journey this month. We have been building a spiritual foundation for the pilgrimage to our divine destiny.

We have learned how God made an eternal, unchanging covenant with Abraham which extends down through the centuries to us today. We have explored its many provisions and learned how we can enter into it. One question remains: Why did God give us these tremendous blessings?

One reason, of course, is that God gave these promises because of His love for us, just as any good earthly father who passes on an inheritance to his sons and daughters.

Jesus declared, *“The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).*

Jesus wants you to have an abundant life. He came to this earth to impart new life, a spiritual life filled with blessings and privileges--including eternal life. All that is good in your life comes from Him:

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.
(James 1:17).

But there is a purpose much larger than simply enjoying these blessings. The divine purpose is clear: God blessed Abraham so that through him, the nations of the world would be blessed.

God extended the provisions of this powerful covenant down through the centuries to you so that you would be empowered to bless the world by fulfilling the great commission:

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. (Matthew 28:19-20)

Why--through these promises--does God pledge supernatural success? Why does He promise good things to you? Why does He declare He will be your shield and place provisions into your hands? Why does God want to bless you so much? The reason is that, like Abraham and his descendants, you have a divine destiny. You are blessed in order to be a blessing to the world. That is your covenant purpose.

JANUARY 30 YOUR SPIRITUAL VISION

Jesus told His disciples to lift up their eyes and look at the natural fields of grain that were ready to harvest (John 4:35). He used these fields as an example of the spiritual fields of multitudes of men and women around the world who are ready to be harvested for the Kingdom of God.

While standing in the middle of visible natural harvest fields that day, the disciples experienced the birth of a spiritual vision. They received the mandate for their divine destiny. It is the same vision Jesus wants to birth in your spirit. He wants to give you a vision of the spiritual harvest fields of the world which are ready to be reaped for His Kingdom. When you recognize the importance of that vision and understand your responsibility in fulfilling it, your life will never again be the same. Jesus clearly stated: "*The field is the world...*" (Matthew 13:38). Africa, Asia, Australia, North America, South America, Europe, the Islands of the sea--the harvest fields of the world are ripe with multitudes who have yet to hear the good news of the Kingdom of God. The vision has not changed. It is the same as it was when Jesus birthed it in the lives of His disciples. The will of God is the same because the work of God is not finished. There are untold millions yet untold. The vision is still the harvest fields of the world.

When Jesus spoke to His followers about the spiritual harvest, He outlined five steps--recorded in John 4:35--that would enable them to receive the vision. Today and tomorrow, we will meditate on these steps, as they are important in regards to your divine destiny. If your call, your purpose, your perceived destiny is of God, it will somehow relate to the harvest.

Step one: "Say not ye..." Many believers spend their entire lives talking about the harvest. They are like a labor crew trying to gather a harvest while sitting in a barn. They go to the barn (the church) each Sunday morning and study bigger and better methods of agriculture (for spiritual harvest). They sharpen their harvesting sickles--so to speak--and then go home. They come back that night to study better methods of agriculture, sharpen their sickles, and go home again. They do this week after week until the weeks turn into months and months into years, yet nobody ever goes out into the fields to gather the harvest. When Jesus said, "Say not ye" He meant that talking about spiritual harvest was not enough. You must become involved in the actual harvesting process. That does not mean everyone is to leave their jobs, seek financial support from the church, and travel to other nations as preachers of the Gospel. But each believer is to be involved in some way in the spiritual harvest. For some, it will be the fields that are right outside the doors of their home and church. For others, the harvest will be a foreign field. The point is that each believer is to be participating in and not just talking about the harvest.

How does what you perceive to be your divine destiny relate to spiritual harvest? Are you just talking about the harvest or are you reaping it right now, right where you are?

JANUARY 31 THE HARVEST-TIME VISION

The spiritual harvest-field of the world is the divine destiny to which believers are called. For some, that field is right where they are--their neighborhood, their job, their school, or their sphere of influence. For others, the harvest will be in a foreign land. Wherever our harvest field is, we learned yesterday that we cannot just talk about it. Here are four more steps to make the vision of the harvest a reality in your life.

Step two: "Yet four months." In order to become part of this harvest-time vision you cannot delay it. You cannot wait until some future time to become involved. Souls are dying in sin right now.

Step three: "I say unto you." God's ways are different from those of man:

*For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts.
(Isaiah 55:8-9)*

Men talk about spiritual harvest. They delay it. But what God says is different than what man says. He says...

Step four: "Lift up your eyes." You must lift up your spiritual eyes from the distractions of life. You must lift them from your personal problems, from discouragement, from business and worldly concerns. You must lift your eyes from the circumstances of life to...

Step five: "Look on the harvest." Turning your eyes from distractions to the harvest field is not enough. You must really look at the harvest. You must see the world through the eyes of God.

Many do not have spiritual vision because they have not really looked at the world spiritually. They have not recognized their personal responsibility to reap the harvest. They have not considered the conditions of the harvest-fields of our world today.

Israel was about to reap a mighty harvest when the enemy Midianites attacked to seize and destroy their crops (Joshua 6). Do not let the enemy steal that which God intended to be your destiny. Do not let the enemy destroy the vision of spiritual harvest to which you are called and destined.

Abraham had a divine destiny that involved the birth of nations. The nation of Israel had a divine destiny to represent God to the nations. You have a divine destiny in the harvest fields of the world. Do not delay. Do not just talk about what you are going to do for God someday. Begin to fulfill your destiny as a spiritual harvester right now--today.