

# **FEBRUARY FOLLOWING THE PATHWAY OF DESTINY**

We are tracing the footsteps of the nation of Israel from its inception to their arrival in their Promised Land, learning from their experiences and applying vital principles to our own journey of destiny.

During the month of January we walked in the footsteps of Abraham, the spiritual father of the nation of Israel. We learned how his vision was birthed and the foundational promises upon which that vision rested, applying the truths we learned to our own lives.

When the vision was first given to Abraham, he was living among idolaters. His past had been unproductive and his present was no better. But he did not accept circumstances as they were, nor was he affected by the deadness of his own body or the barrenness of Sarah's womb. He embraced the promises of God--believing in hope when there was no cause for hope in the natural.

Perhaps your past has been spiritually unproductive and your present is unfruitful. But now you are receiving a vision of divine destiny. You are learning to look with spiritual eyes into the invisible and this will enable you to dare to do the impossible. As Abraham, you are looking with eyes of faith to the future knowing that "He who has promised is able also to perform it."

During this month, we will continue the story of the nation of Israel. We will follow the next sequence of events orchestrated by God to move His people towards their divine destiny. We will witness how God remained faithful to His covenant promises in the lives of Abraham's descendants--Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and the nation of Israel.

As you follow this segment of Israel's history, you will learn additional principles to apply to the journey along your own pathway to divine destiny.

| <b>Date</b> | <b>Reading</b>              |
|-------------|-----------------------------|
| 1           | The Vision Will Not Die     |
| 2           | Costs, Priorities, And Aims |
| 3           | How God Sees You            |
| 4           | In The Presence Of God      |
| 5           | Nothing Changed             |
| 6           | Wrestling At Jabbok         |
| 7           | Standing On The Promises    |
| 8           | Step-by-Step                |
| 9           | Understanding Your Position |
| 10          | Stop Struggling             |
| 11          | The Trap Of Compromise      |
| 12          | Taking The Lead             |
| 13          | Ready For Battle            |
| 14          | How Long Will It Take?      |
| 15          | Moving Closer To Destiny    |
| 16          | The Doorways To Destiny     |
| 17          | God Meant It For Good       |
| 18          | A Legacy For The Future     |
| 19          | God Knows Where You Are     |
| 20          | Eliminating Objections      |
| 21          | Taking Action               |
| 22          | Relying On God's Power      |
| 23          | The Rod Of God              |
| 24          | The Power Of The Blood      |
| 25          | No Lack                     |
| 26          | Entangled In The Wilderness |
| 27          | Nowhere To Go               |
| 28          | Bitter Waters               |
| 29          | A Mixed Multitude           |
| 30          | Seeing Into The Invisible   |

## FEBRUARY 1 THE VISION WILL NOT DIE

Isaac, the son of Abraham, was the promised child through whom the vision of the nations was to be manifested. God had declared:

*...Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. (Genesis 17:19)*

In a dramatic story recorded in Genesis 22:1-14, Abraham is commanded by God to sacrifice Isaac to the Lord. God said, *"...Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of"* (Genesis 22:2).

Why would God give Abraham a promised son, only to tell him to sacrifice the boy as an act of worship? We do not find Abraham questioning God's instructions. In fact, we are told that he "rose up early in the morning" to do as God had commanded (Genesis 22:3). Some of us cannot be bothered to get up early for a quiet time with the Lord, much less to fulfill a difficult command.

Abraham did exactly as God instructed. When he and Isaac arrived at the chosen mountain, Abraham told his servants, "You wait here while the lad and I go to worship." True commitment to God demands sacrifice. Sometimes the required sacrifice is what is nearest and dearest to your heart.

Although God intervened and Abraham did not sacrifice his son that day, the important point is that he was willing to do so. Abraham knew that no matter what--even if it meant the loss of his chosen son--God would fulfill His promises.

This road you are traveling to your destiny is not an easy one. God may ask you to sacrifice certain things along the way. Will you be willing? Will you consider whatever it costs you to be an act of worship, as Abraham did?

No matter what your losses--even if you lost what you thought was necessary to fulfill your destiny--the vision is greater than your losses. Abraham knew that if he was required to sacrifice his son, the vision would not die upon that lonely hill that day. God would remain faithful to His promises because He was greater than the vision.

What has God asked you to sacrifice? Are you able to lift it up to Him as an act of worship? What great losses have you experienced? Whatever the loss, your vision will not die because the One who gave it still lives. Whatever you have sacrificed, it was not necessary to retain it in order to fulfill your vision or else God would not have permitted the loss.

## FEBRUARY 2 COSTS, PRIORITIES, AND AIMS

Yesterday we saw the tremendous price Abraham was willing to pay in order to obey God. You will not reach your destiny without it costing something somewhere along the way.

In Luke 9:57-62, three men approached Jesus desiring to follow Him. To each of these potential disciples, Jesus revealed a different aspect of the requirements for fulfilling their purpose.

**Considered costs.** The first man attempted to follow through self-effort. He did not wait to be called by Jesus, but said "I will follow you wherever you go" (Luke 9:57-58). When Jesus shared with him the difficulties this would entail, there is no record that this man elected to follow. You cannot fulfill your destiny through self-effort. You will not be able to successfully confront the challenges that your spiritual purpose entails without a supernatural call from God.

**Proper priorities.** The second man received a call from Jesus, but he wanted to bury his father first (Luke 9:59-60). In Bible times when a person said he was waiting to "bury his father," it did not necessarily mean his father had died. It meant he was waiting until his father died in order to receive his inheritance. So when this man used this excuse, he was actually placing his future inheritance before the call of the Lord Jesus Christ. At the critical moment when Jesus summons you to embrace your destiny, nothing must be placed before that call.

**Absolute aims.** The third man desired to follow Jesus on his own terms (Luke 9:61-62). He wanted to return home first to tell his family goodbye. Bidding his family farewell sounds like a normal thing to do, but Jesus had called him to follow. Did he want to answer the call or follow his own plan for life? This man's aims in life were not settled. He was torn between the old life controlled by self and the new life to which Jesus called.

When you were called to follow Jesus in accepting salvation, you had to abandon the old life in order to receive the new. Your priorities changed. It may have cost your relationship with friends or family when you accepted Jesus as your Savior. The call to fulfill your destiny will also cost. Jesus said:

*For which of you, intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it begin to mock him, Saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish...So likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:28-30,33)*

Have you considered the costs of pursuing your divine destiny? Is the thing God is calling you to do your main priority, the absolute aim, the most important thing in life to you?

## **FEBRUARY 3**

### **HOW GOD SEES YOU**

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are mentioned frequently in scriptures as spiritual fathers of the nation of Israel.

Isaac, the son of Abraham, had two sons who were twins, Esau and Jacob. While these boys were in their mother's womb...

*...the children struggled together within her; and she said, If it be so, why am I thus? And she went to inquire of the Lord. And the Lord said unto her, Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.*  
(Genesis 25:22-23)

From before birth, Jacob's destiny was determined by God. Although he was the younger twin, he was chosen by God to receive the blessings and privileges normally reserved for the oldest son.

From the time of his birth, Jacob did not really understand the destiny that rested upon him. Even in the birth process, Jacob tried to prevent his brother from being born first by grasping his heel. Some years later, Jacob persuaded Esau to sell him his birthright for a bowl of soup. Later on, Jacob deceived his father in order to gain the blessing that was to go to the oldest son, his brother Esau (Genesis 25).

Jacob's life was a tangled web of adverse circumstances, most of which he caused himself. He was a liar. He was a deceiver. He was a coward, always running away from problems. He was a master manipulator. This doesn't sound like a man with divine destiny, does it?

But God was not looking at Jacob as he was. He was looking at Jacob as a man who would birth the twelve tribes of Israel. God is not looking at you as you are. He is not shocked back by your failures and faults. He does not see you bound with fear and unbelief. He does not see you weak in the faith.

God looks at you the same way He looked at Jacob. He sees someone who, when endued with His power and walking in obedience to His Word, will be a mighty person of valor. Many of the great men of the Bible experienced failures: Moses, David, Peter, and John Mark--yet God used these men as people of destiny.

Do you see yourself as you are, or do you view yourself as God sees you? Perhaps it is time to change your perspective.

## FEBRUARY 4 IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD

In Genesis 28, we see a lonely man fleeing from his home. Jacob left Beer-sheba and traveled toward Haran on the way to his Uncle Laban's house, running away in fear from the problems he had created. At the end of a long day of travel, Jacob settled in as night fell with only a couple of stones for a pillow. This sad, solitary figure huddled in darkness on the cold ground does not seem like a man of God-given destiny.

But that night, Jacob had an amazing dream. He saw a ladder set up on earth, with the top reaching to heaven and the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Above it stood the Lord, who reconfirmed the promises He had made to Abraham saying:

*I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth, and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of. (Genesis 28:13-15)*

What a marvelous experience! Jacob heard the voice of God, he was given powerful promises by the Lord, and his God-given destiny was revealed. When he awoke, Jacob made vows and paid tithes. He also built a monument and anointed it (Genesis 28:16-21).

Jacob had been in the presence of God, but, sadly, his life had not changed. He was the same old manipulator. He tried to make a deal with God pledging, *"If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on so that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God" (Genesis 28:20-21).*

Jacob tried to strike a bargain with God to bless his plans, supply his needs, and protect him--not realizing that God had already promised these things. All Jacob needed was readily available through the covenant promises given to Abraham, passed down to him, and reconfirmed in his dream. Jacob was in the very presence of God, yet he was groveling, begging, and seeking for what already had.

What are you begging God for that is already yours through the covenant promises? Are you trying to bargain with God by saying "...if You will, then I will"? Instead of trying to make deals with God, just claim His promises and begin to act upon them.

## **FEBRUARY 5 NOTHING CHANGED**

After the experience recorded in Genesis 28, Jacob's troubles continued because he had not changed. He deceived and was deceived by his Uncle Laban, married two wives, had many family problems, and was a man who could not control his household. Same old Jacob.

Why had Jacob not acted upon the revelation God gave him at Bethel? Genesis 32 reveals several things that hindered him--issues that can also prevent you from receiving your spiritual breakthrough.

**-Denial.** Jacob ran away from situations instead of confronting them. He fled from Esau, then he fled from Uncle Laban (Genesis 32).

**-Deception.** Jacob was deceived into thinking that material blessings were evidence of God's favor (Genesis 32:13,20). God wants to bless you financially, but wealth alone does not indicate you are walking in God's favor.

**-Fear of man.** Jacob fled from his home in fear and he returned back home in fear (Genesis 32:7,11).

**-Manipulation.** Instead of trusting God, Jacob continually was trying to manipulate people and circumstances to obtain what he wanted (Genesis 32:7-8).

**-Compromise.** Jacob sought safety, acceptance, and his own will at any cost, regardless of the compromise required (Genesis 32:19-20).

**-Relying on the arm of flesh.** Jacob was continually manipulating his circumstances to achieve his own plans and desires (Genesis 32:1-2).

**-Religion instead of relationship.** Jacob knew the Lord as the God of Abraham and Isaac, but he did not really know Him as his own God.

Nothing had changed. Jacob had not yet comprehended or claimed the promises of God given to him some 21 years previously.

What about you? Are you denying problems by running away from them? Are you deceived into thinking that financial blessings are a sign of God's approval? Are you a fearful, manipulative, and compromising person? Are you relying on yourself or others instead of God? Do you really know God, or are you depending on religion instead of true relationship?

How long will you wait to make a change?

## FEBRUARY 6 WRESTLING AT JABBOK

It had been over 21 years since Jacob extorted the birthright that belonged to his older brother, Esau. Jacob had also deceived his father, Isaac, into giving him the blessing which by tradition should have gone to his brother.

Esau was enraged after losing both the birthright and the blessing and he vowed to kill Jacob. With his mother's help, Jacob fled to Haran where he worked for Uncle Laban. While there, God blessed Jacob with wives, children, and a large number of livestock, despite his continued deceptive and manipulative behavior.

Then one day God told Jacob to return home. In Genesis 32 we find him on his way, but extremely fearful that Esau would still be angry about the stolen birthright and blessing. In Jacob's absence, Esau had become a powerful man with an army of soldiers and Jacob was afraid his brother would kill him and his family.

On the way home, Jacob encountered the angels of God. He named the place where they appeared to him "Mahanaim" meaning "two hosts" as a memorial of the experience he had there with God. Despite this supernatural revelation of the host of angelic beings that surrounded him, Jacob continued to be fearful concerning his circumstances.

Jacob also had the promises of God upon which to rely. He knew what God had promised him and even quoted it in his prayer saying, *"The Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee."*

Despite the angelic visitation and the promises made by God, Jacob was still fearful as he prepared to meet his brother at a place called Seir--which means "rough or bristly." That seems to be an adequate description of Jacob's circumstances up to this point in time--rough and bristly. Jacob certainly had some deep soul-searching to do, so he sent his wives, children, servants, and all that he had over the ford at Jabbok and remained behind.

The meaning of the word "Jabbok" means "emptying or pouring out," and that is exactly what Jacob experienced. As he tarried there alone, there came a supernatural being--the Angel of the Lord--who wrestled with Jacob until the breaking of day. During the struggle, the Angel of the Lord touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh, causing a painful dislocation. Despite the intense pain, Jacob continued to wrestle. The wrestling match finally ended with Jacob's name, life, and nature being supernaturally changed (Genesis 32:24-30).

Have you experienced a spiritual Jabbok? God wants to change your life, but in order for this to happen you must--like Jacob--come to the end of yourself. You must allow God to supernaturally touch your life and transform your entire nature. Despite the difficulties of your past or the pain you are presently experiencing, you must persevere to receive the life-change you are seeking.

## FEBRUARY 7 STANDING ON THE PROMISES

Jacob had experienced several personal encounters with God since leaving home and he had been blessed mightily as far as family and material benefits were concerned. But still, in the recesses of Jacob's mind there lingered the memory of the threat that his brother had made to kill him.

Jacob was looking at his circumstances in the natural, from the standpoint of what he deserved rather than on the basis of what God had promised. If we could just learn to see things as God sees them and adopt His point of view, how different our lives would be!

If we could see as God sees, we would never need to ask "Why, God?" But spiritual cataracts often blind our eyes so we cannot perceive our circumstances as they really are. We usually get our understanding of situations from what we see, what we hear, what someone tells us, or what we imagine might happen--but that is not God's perspective.

Jacob was fearful to return home and confront Esau, but the reality was this: During Jacob's absence from his homeland, Esau had amassed plenty of wealth himself. Esau did not plan to kill Jacob. He was actually on his way to meet him and welcome him home.

There is a verse in the book of Proverbs that says, "*The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion*" (Proverbs 28:1). When your heart is not right with God, you will flee when there is nothing to fear. When you are right before God, you know that you have nothing to fear. You can stand in faith on His promises on the basis of His imputed righteousness that provides assurance of His Word. You have no righteousness in yourself because "*...we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*" (Isaiah 64:6). As a believer, however, you are partaker of His righteousness and that instills within you the supernatural faith of God:

*But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (1 Corinthians 1:30)*

In Christ's righteousness you are able to see as He sees, think as He thinks, and react as He reacts: "*Let this mind be in you, which also was in Christ Jesus*" (Philippians 2:5).

As a true believer in Christ Jesus, are you seeing as He sees, thinking as He thinks, and reacting to your circumstances as He would react? Are you standing on the promises of God. or are you cowering in fear?

## **FEBRUARY 8 STEP-BY-STEP**

You should get the true picture of your circumstances from what God has to say about them, not from what you perceive, from what man has to say, or from what natural circumstances seem to dictate.

Your shelves may say, "Look, I'm nearly empty. There's no food left. You will soon run out of provisions and you will starve to death." If your understanding is based on that empty cupboard, you are not understanding the situation as it really is because the Word says: "... *my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus*" (Philippians 4:19).

Your checkbook may reflect that you can't afford gasoline for the car to get to work or for money to buy a warm coat needed for cold weather. But you must not get your understanding from your bank account, but from the Word of God which says, "*No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly*" (Psalm 84:11).

The newspaper or nightly television news may claim that conditions are perilous because crime is rampant, but the reality is that God says to you:

*Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness. (Isaiah 41:10)*

What the newspaper people, television personnel, and even your friends and family may not know is that although the facts may be true, there is no accurate understanding of a matter if they are devoid of God's promises.

For every single situation in the world, for every fearful and overwhelming problem, God has the right viewpoint and is able to turn any situation completely around and give you victory. He reigns over every circumstance in your life. Every single one!

That is why it is important to know the truth of your situation is in the sight of God. Even if He doesn't give you complete understanding of your circumstances, you can trust His understanding with utter confidence.

From birth, Jacob was led step-by-step by God to fulfill his destiny. God is leading you step-by-step also. You can trust Him to lead you each step of the way because He sees your circumstances as they really are and not as you perceive them to be.

## FEBRUARY 9 UNDERSTANDING YOUR POSITION

In John 10:10, Jesus says, *"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy."* The thief is Satan, and one of the things he seeks to steal is your position before God.

Self-esteem is defined as confidence in your own merit as a person, the quality of feeling worthy of esteem and respect by yourself and others. Low self-esteem is when you feel unworthy, alienated, and incompetent. But there is a difference between self-esteem and Christ-centered esteem. It is not who you are, but who He is and what He has done in your life. *"Let him who boasts boast in the Lord. For it is not the one who commends himself who is approved, but the one whom the Lord commends"* (2 Corinthians 10:17-18). Apart from Christ, you can do nothing and are nothing (John 15:5). Because Christ is in you, you are programmed for success. When you see yourself as a failure, however, your unbelief shuts you out of the promises of God just as Israel's unbelief prevented them from claiming their Promised Land.

Like Jacob, many believers have not come to the place where they fully comprehend their position in God. In Genesis 32, Jacob is involved in a wrestling match. The match is taking place between a physical human being and a spirit being. The Bible says "man" but we know from the text that Jacob's opponent was an angelic being. Isn't it strange that an angelic being has to ask Jacob, a human being, for permission to leave? (Genesis 32:26) Can you imagine yourself right now wrestling with a heavenly being and suddenly having that being ask you, "Would you please let go of me?"--and yet that is exactly what happened to Jacob. The impact of this is compounded when you realize that the Angel of the Lord had such tremendous power that he touched the hollow of Jacob's thigh and made him a cripple. Jacob's thigh came out of joint and he walked with a limp for the rest of his life. The angelic being had that much power over Jacob, yet he was not able to leave the presence of this man without his permission. Jacob didn't wrestle to get God's power. He already had God's power. Jacob already had the resident power of God within him, although he didn't realize it for years. Finally, through this encounter with the angel, Jacob realized who he really was in God and that he had power to be an overcomer.

When the angel said, "Let me go, for the day breaks," Jacob declared, "I will not let you go, except you bless me." The angelic being blesses Jacob, but before he does, he tells him, "Jacob, you have power with God and with man and you have prevailed." After making that statement, the angel blessed him. The blessing did not give him the power, because Jacob already had it lying dormant within him. The angel recognized something that Jacob himself did not realize. He recognized that Jacob had power with God. He certainly wasn't acting like it. He wasn't using it, nor was he demonstrating it in the circumstance of his life.

Could this be a picture of your life? God has given you supernatural power--just as He did Jacob. Do you really understand that you have power with God and man? That is your position in God. Start acting from this position of authority as you face the circumstances of life today.

## **FEBRUARY 10 STOP STRUGGLING**

In Genesis 32:28, the angel told Jacob that he already had something that by human effort he was still struggling to attain. Jacob did not need to struggle for God's power. He already had sufficient power, given to him years previously by the Lord.

As a believer, God has given you His power to meet every challenge in life. Could it be that this God-given ability to overcome any problem or circumstance is lying dormant within you, just waiting for you to recognize and activate it?

When will you stop struggling? When will you stop wrestling to obtain God's power to help you face your circumstances? When will you stop battling in your own strength for spiritual breakthroughs in your ministry? These things do not come by struggling, but by faith in the power of God's promises.

Jacob's problem was that he was not partaking of the provision that already had been given to him through the covenant blessings of God. What Jacob needed to do, what the Church of Jesus Christ needs to do, and what you need to do is realize the tremendous power God has placed within you and begin to act upon that knowledge.

For years, Jacob did not realize the truth of his position in God. He lived up to the meaning of his name--Jacob--a manipulator, deceiver, sinner, and a fearful man. That's who Jacob thought he was and why he acted the way he did, always running, hiding, manipulating, and being tormented by fear.

The Angel of the Lord knew who was wrestling with him, so why did he ask Jacob for his name? Because Jacob didn't realize who he actually was in God. The Angel of the Lord asked his name so that Jacob would be forced to answer. The angel said, "What is your name?" Jacob said, "It is Jacob." The angel said, "No, you are mistaken. Your name is Israel."

In essence, the angel said, "You think your name is Jacob? Well, it's not! God has changed your name from Jacob, meaning the "deceiver", and renamed you Israel--meaning that you have power with God and man! You have supernatural power and you don't even know it! You are running, hiding, and manipulating--and all the while, inside of you, you have the supernatural power of God Almighty available to draw upon."

This is the condition of many believers. They do not realize who they are in Christ. They do not comprehend the meaning of the name by which they are called: Christians, members of the church of Jesus Christ. If only you would see yourself as you are seen by God! God knows you not as you are, but as you will become when you learn to access His resident power within you. But you must come to the place where you can recognize this yourself.

So starting today, let there be no more running, hiding, and manipulating. Inside of you resides the supernatural power of God that is sufficient to face every circumstance of life.

## **FEBRUARY 11**

### **THE TRAP OF COMPROMISE**

Because of lack of understanding of God's promises, Jacob almost succumbed again to the trap of compromise. God had told Jacob to return to his homeland, that it would be well with him, and that he would be blessed. Doubting God's promises and acting out of fear, Jacob made plans for compromising with his brother who he perceived to be his enemy. He decided he would try to pacify Esau with bribes and gifts.

One of the greatest temptations believers face when we encounter challenges is to compromise. For example, a church may sincerely want to reach a city for God. They have the spiritual power and authority to do this, but what they do instead is compromise biblical standards to try to attract people to the church. They try wooing them by worldly activities instead of creating an environment where the supernatural power of God is manifested. They let down their godly standards to achieve what the world calls "success" in their ministries.

There are many believers who began their work for God on a proper foundation. They built their ministry on the scriptures, prayer, and the moving of the Holy Spirit. Somewhere along the way, however, they became sidetracked. They tried to become "somebody" by compromising with the world. They yielded to those who said they would donate substantial finances if they would do things a certain way.

Do you want your ministry to be God-controlled or man-controlled? Compromise results in a ministry that is man-controlled and devoid of the power of God. Compromise affects your integrity, your standards, the Word of God, and your destiny.

Jacob's name was changed to reflect who he was in God. He had all the power he needed to face any circumstance. He didn't need to resort to bribes and compromising. As a believer, you too have been given a new name that reflects who you are in Christ. You are a "Christian" and have been given the Name of Jesus with all of its inherent power. You do not need to resort to worldly tactics in order to succeed.

What spiritual compromises are you making? Are you listening to unwise counsel from those around you who are telling you to compromise in your life or ministry? Compromise is the arch enemy of divine destiny.

Do not listen to the lies of the enemy. Do not consider the unwise counsel of those around you. Determine that you will never compromise with the enemy in order to achieve success. It is not necessary because you have supernatural power within you that is equal to any task!

## FEBRUARY 12 TAKING THE LEAD

On the way to meet Esau, Jacob organized his family into three groups. He was probably thinking, “All right--you in the first group go on out and meet Esau. He is coming with 400 mighty men, probably to kill me. When you see him, bow down, give him these gifts, and tell him they are from his servant, Jacob.” Jacob still didn't get it! He wasn't Esau's servant. Esau was Jacob's servant. The prophetic word, even before their birth, was that the elder would serve the younger (Genesis 25:23).

You are not a servant of your circumstances. You need not bow or bend in the face of the enemy. There are powerful prophetic words that have been spoken over you by God Himself who has said: “*Behold, I give you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy*” (Luke 10:19). God said: “*And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail*” (Deuteronomy 28:13). He has said: “*Thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath*” (Deuteronomy 28:13). And He has said: “*The Lord shall cause thine enemies that rise up against thee to be smitten before thy face: they shall come out against thee one way, and flee before thee seven ways*” (Deuteronomy 28:7).

As Jacob organized his family and possessions, he most likely thought: “When Esau kills the first group, perhaps the second and third groups will be able to escape. I will put everyone else in front and I will march behind them. For sure, I should be able to escape!”

But something amazing happened after Jacob's experience with the Angel of God. In Genesis chapter 32, Jacob is organizing his family and possessions and planning to take up a position in the rear. In Genesis 33:3 however, we are told that Jacob passed over before them. Jacob took the lead and went ahead of them to meet Esau. He may have still been wondering if he might die, but he faced his fear in the power of the Lord. Instead of an angry confrontation, Esau ran to Jacob, embraced him, and kissed him.

From this account we learn that when we view our circumstances in the natural, we may be tempted to retreat, manipulate, or compromise. But when we look at our circumstances through spiritual eyes, recognize who we are in Christ, and acknowledge the power of God resident within us, we will not cower at the rear of the procession. We will take the lead!

God went before Jacob and took care of every circumstance. There was no need to scheme or compromise, no need to be afraid. God had already taken care of the situation before Jacob arrived on the scene.

Today, God has already taken care of every situation you will face before you arrive on the scene. Release the supernatural power of God that is resident within you and march fearlessly towards your divine destiny. Enter into this day knowing that God has already gone before you.

## FEBRUARY 13 READY FOR BATTLE

The truth of Jacob's circumstances is revealed in Genesis 32:28. Jacob was not a weak, defeated, fearful person who needed to run, compromise, and bow before men. He was a son of God who was called, ordained, and given power to meet every circumstance of life. The angel said, *"Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."*

Was Jacob someone special, that God would do this for him? Is God a respecter of persons? Would He give one of His children the power to overcome the circumstances of life and not give the same ability to another?

Of course not! What God did for Jacob, He has done for you. He is just waiting for you to view your circumstances from His perspective, to see yourself as you really are in Him, and to advance fearlessly to embrace your destiny.

Like Jacob, you have within you the power to face every challenge. This supernatural power is yours through your birth into the family of God. When you received Christ, your spiritual name was changed. Your nature was changed. As a child of the King you have power with God sufficient to prevail in every situation.

Life is made up of circumstances. Some are good, others are bad. Nearly every person reading these words has some spiritual battle going on in their lives, some adverse circumstance to overcome, some victory that needs to be won. If not, and you have a temporary respite, be aware that a battle is sure to come in the future.

It is a fact of the Christian life that you will experience battles: *"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"* (2 Timothy 3:12). The devil will try to attack you so...*"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"* (1 Peter 5:8). You will experience trials: *"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you"* (1 Peter 4:12).

Right about now you may be thinking, "This isn't a very encouraging devotion today--talking about negative things like battles, difficult circumstances, and trials!" But you will face these things on the road to your destiny, and you need to be prepared. Remember that the purpose of these meditations is to prepare you to fulfill your destiny.

The encouraging truth is that God's Word has promised that you will be victorious in every situation because: *"...in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us"* (Romans 8:37). Claim this promise today!

## FEBRUARY 14 HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE?

Jacob was an heir to the covenant promises of Abraham, but he did not realize the truth of his position in God, so he struggled spiritually for years. He did not comprehend his divine destiny or the fact that he was to be the father of Israel. He did not enjoy the provisions that had already been given to him, but manipulated and deceived others to try to obtain what he wanted.

Faith is a fact, but faith is also an act. What Jacob needed to do—and what we as believers need to do—is realize who we are in God and act upon that knowledge. You are an heir of God's promises! You do not have to struggle to receive these promises. You do not have to wrestle to claim them. If you are a born-again believer, you are already an heir of the promises of God.

The name "Jabbok" means a "place of passing over and of sudden advancement". At Jabbok, Jacob got a spiritual breakthrough and came to the realization of who he was in God and the promises he had inherited. Not only was his life changed, his name was changed. If you would know yourself as you are known by God, you would realize that not only has He created and redeemed you, He has endowed you with all of the tremendous promises of the Abrahamic covenant.

At Jabbok, Jacob lost his greatest natural strength. He was always running. Running from Esau, running from Laban, running in fear from his problems. No more. During the "wrestling match", Jacob's hip was supernaturally touched and came out of joint. Jacob limped away from that experience a new man--weak in the flesh, but changed in his spirit. At Jabbok, he received a new name: Israel. His new name represented his new nature, that of someone who had power with God and man.

At Jabbok, Jacob came to know God through relationship rather than religion with all of its associated trappings of vows, traditions, and memorials. How long will it take you to come to "Jabbok" spiritually? It took Jacob a long time, and many heartaches to arrive there. Years later, Jacob declared, *"...the days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years of my life been..."* (Genesis 47:9).

God knew Jacob's weaknesses before he ever chose him to be an heir of the promises of Abraham and the father of the tribes of the nation of Israel. So why did God chose Jacob instead of Esau? Because He had to chose between a man who placed so little value on his birthright that he would sell it for a bowl of soup and one who wanted it so badly that he would manipulate in order to get it.

"Few and evil have been my days"--that was Jacob's testimony. What will be the testimony of your life? What epitaph would be written upon your gravestone if you were to die today? How long will it take for you to come to your spiritual Jabbok?

## **FEBRUARY 15 MOVING CLOSER TO DESTINY**

Despite the years of struggle Jacob experienced--despite his few and evil days--the emerging nation of Israel was still on point with destiny. Jacob--or Israel, as he was known by his new name--became the father of a young man named Joseph who became a vital link in Israel's divine destiny.

For the next few days we will learn how Joseph's personal destiny was intricately entwined with God's plan for His chosen people. We will see how--despite great adversity--Joseph fulfilled his God-given vision. And yes--along the way we will find additional spiritual truths to apply to our own journey towards destiny.

Joseph had a difficult journey along the pathway to the fulfillment of his vision. You can read his story in Genesis chapters 30-50. Joseph's home environment was anything but pleasant. As we have learned, his father, Jacob (Israel), had a history of deception. His mother, Rachel, was continually in conflict with Jacob's other wife, Leah. Rachel was always trying to manipulate Jacob and gain his exclusive affection.

There was partiality in the home, which created rivalry and jealousy. Jacob preferred Rachel to Leah and Joseph over the other sons. The special coat given to Joseph by his father was more than just a beautiful garment. It was not the every-day work garment that shepherds wore, so it set Joseph apart as the favored child, one who would not be required to work as his brothers did.

As a young man, Joseph had a vision of his destiny which he shared with his family, and his brothers hated him for it (Genesis 37:8). (Be careful who you share your vision with!) They could not even speak peaceably to him and eventually they betrayed him by first casting him into a pit and then selling him into slavery (Genesis 37:24).

Joseph lived in a family dominated by deceit, immorality, manipulation, envy, and hatred. For seventeen years, he was raised in this dysfunctional family and then he was betrayed by his brothers. He could have blamed this environment for ruining his life and, in so doing, thrown away his future.

You may be able to identify with Joseph if you came from a home where you suffered abuse, rejection, or abandonment. The question is, will you let the pain of your past abort the future God has planned for you?

Like Joseph, you will experience many challenges as you rise up to embrace your destiny because Satan wants to abort your future. He wants to keep you captive in the pit of negative circumstances. He wants to keep you bound in the prison house of problems. You must recognize, however, that God is using every situation--both good and bad--to move you closer to your destiny (Romans 8:28).

## **FEBRUARY 16**

### **THE DOORWAYS TO DESTINY**

Joseph's early environment was not the only difficulty he encountered on the way to his destiny. In Genesis 37, we learn how Joseph's brothers stripped him of his coat of many colors and threw him in a pit. Then they sat down, cold and uncaring, their ears deaf to his cries.

Can you identify with this? Have you been crying for help, with no response from those around you? Little did Joseph think that he would someday look back on this great tragedy as the most significant event in God's plan for his life. The same may be true for you. The tragic situation you have experienced may be a doorway to your destiny. In Joseph's life, the pit led to a palace!

When an Egyptian caravan passed by, Joseph's brothers sold him into slavery. Then, in Genesis 39, you can read how Joseph suffered another tragic ordeal when, as a slave in Potiphar's house, he was falsely accused of immorality and thrown into prison.

Confinement is hard at any age, but Joseph was young and used to roaming the hillsides of Judea. Yet, he refused to give in to despair. In Genesis 39-40, we learn that Joseph was placed in a position of responsibility in the prison and ministered to a butler and baker who were confined with him, both of whom promptly forgot him when their situations changed.

Humanly speaking, Joseph had every right to develop a negative attitude. Family and friends failed him, he was falsely accused, imprisoned and forgotten by those to whom he had ministered. But little did Joseph know that every circumstance was moving him nearer to his God-given destiny. This is what God is doing in your life also. Every event in your difficult journey will be used by God to help you achieve your destiny.

Eventually, the butler to whom Joseph had ministered told Pharaoh about him at a strategic time when there was a need for the interpretation of a puzzling dream. Joseph interpreted the dream, was finally released from prison, became a ruler in Egypt, and saved multitudes from the impending death of a world-wide famine.

In every setback, the Lord was with Joseph (Genesis 39:3). God has been with you also, in that dysfunctional family and in the tragic experiences of your past. He has not abandoned you. He has a future planned for you. It is your divine destiny.

Negative experiences of your past cannot abort God's purpose for your life unless you allow it by holding on to them in bitterness and unforgiveness. The difficulties you experience and the pain you endure are divine doorways to your destiny.

## FEBRUARY 17 GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD

After becoming a ruler in Egypt, Joseph married and the names he gave his two children were symbolic of the events he had experienced (Genesis 41:51-52). The first child was named Manasseh, meaning *“God hath made me forget all my toil and all my father’s house.”* Joseph didn’t forget his father’s house, but he forgot the pain associated with the events that occurred there. You may never forget the difficulties of the past, but God wants to heal you of the pain of these experiences.

Joseph’s second son was named Ephraim, meaning, *“God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.”* Joseph was fruitful in affliction because he let God heal him of the pain of his past. You must deal with the past before you can experience a fruitful future and fulfill your divine destiny.

Because of the famine, Joseph’s brothers were finally forced to travel to Egypt to secure food. When they were summoned to stand before Joseph, they didn’t even recognize him. They bowed in respect before him, and then Joseph remembered the dream--the vision God had given him years before when he was just a young man. As a child, Joseph had dreams of being in a place of responsibility and authority. All through the long, difficult years, Joseph never lost that dream. When at last he stood in the place of his God-appointed destiny, he remembered the dream: *“And Joseph remembered the dreams which he dreamed”* (Genesis 42:9).

Then Joseph said to his brothers, *“Come near to me, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance. So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God: and he hath made me a father to Pharaoh, and Lord of all his house, and a ruler throughout all the land of Egypt”* (Genesis 45:4-8).

Joseph realized that the painful events of his past were not just “tough luck” or “unfortunate circumstances.” He declared, *“But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive”* (Genesis 50:20).

Your past may have been difficult, but God meant it for good. Every adversity is bringing you nearer to your destiny. Joseph went through many difficulties, but God used each circumstance to fulfill His purposes. Joseph was being prepared to save the world. What great thing does God have planned for you? How will He use the experiences of your past as you surrender them to Him?

## FEBRUARY 18 A LEGACY FOR THE FUTURE

Joseph lived to be 110 years old. At the time of his death, Joseph left behind a powerful confirmation of God's divine destiny for the nation of Israel:

*And Joseph said unto his brethren, I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt. (Genesis 50:24-26)*

God's people, now known as the nation of Israel, were living in Egypt at the time of Joseph's death, having gone there to survive a world-wide famine. But as an heir of the promises of his spiritual forefathers, Joseph knew Israel's ultimate destiny--and it wasn't Egypt.

Before his death, Joseph told the people, "You won't be here forever. God will surely visit you, and you shall go to the land which He promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob." Great men come and go, but the covenant of God remains unchanged (Psalm 119:89).

Joseph instructed his brothers to put his bones in a coffin and take the coffin with them to the Promised Land when they returned to Canaan. Even in death, Joseph did not lose sight of Israel's divine destiny. He knew that God's people would return to their Promised Land, and Joseph wanted to be interred there.

After Joseph's death, the children of Israel continued to multiply and fill the land of Egypt (Exodus 1:7). Eventually, a new ruler came to power in Egypt and, feeling threatened by the growing population and power of the Israelites, he made them slaves. What a dark period for God's chosen people. Their dream of returning to their Promised Land probably seemed to be just that--a dream.

For years, the Israelites toiled under the affliction of their taskmasters who made their lives miserable with hard labor. But the more the Egyptians afflicted them, the more the children of Israel multiplied.

All through these dark years and the endless days of toil and affliction, there stood that casket containing Joseph's bones, a promise of their legacy and their destiny. "Someday," Joseph had said, "God will surely visit you. You will not remain in Egypt forever!"

We do not have a casket to look back on, but we have an empty tomb vacated when Jesus Christ rose from the dead. Despite the affliction you may experience on the way to your destiny, you have the legacy of His death, His resurrection, and His promises for the future.

## FEBRUARY 19 GOD KNOWS WHERE YOU ARE

The next important person along Israel's road to destiny was a man named Moses. The story of Moses' early life is recorded in the first few chapters of the book of Exodus. Moses was born at a time of great peril when the ruling Pharaoh was having Israeli male babies killed in an attempt to thwart population growth. Pharaoh commanded the midwives, who assisted in the births, to kill the babies, but they refused. (In a spiritual parallel of this, there are always "midwives" who will help birth and protect your vision against the enemy. Surround yourself with these gifted and loyal people.)

Moses' mother attempted to hide him, but he was found by Pharaoh's daughter who raised him as her own son. In an act of divine providence, Moses' own mother became his nursemaid. As Moses grew, she undoubtedly taught him of his Jewish heritage and about the things of God. This is evident in his response as a young adult when he witnessed an Egyptian beating an Israelite. Moses most likely already had a dream of delivering his people from slavery when he witnessed this violent scene. Moses reacted in anger and killed the Egyptian taskmaster. Then, knowing his life was in danger for this act, Moses fled to the backside of the desert. For forty long years, Moses lived with the memory of an aborted dream. He had tried and failed. Would God ever use him again? Have you been there? Are you there right now? You stepped out to do what God called you to do, only to fail. Have you, like Moses, retreated to the desert of isolation to nurse your broken heart and your shattered dreams?

Finally, one day while watching a flock of sheep in the desert, Moses saw a burning bush which, miraculously, was not consumed. He drew near to the bush, and...*"the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, "I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt." And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, "Moses, Moses." And he said, "Here am I." And he said, "Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." Moreover he said, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God. And the Lord said, "I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey; unto the place of the Canaanites, and the Hittites, and the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Now therefore, behold, the cry of the children of Israel is come unto me: and I have also seen the oppression wherewith the Egyptians oppress them. Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt"* (Exodus 3:1-10).

God knew exactly where Moses was, there in the backside of the desert. He had not forgotten him. God has not abandoned you either, out there in the desert-land of your failure. He has not left you to die with your destiny unfulfilled.

## FEBRUARY 20 ELIMINATING OBJECTIONS

There, exiled on the backside of the desert, Moses saw a burning bush that was not consumed and his dream was rekindled. There are three major principles revealed in this story that, when applied in your life, will rekindle the fire of your own dreams.

The first step is: **Reject reasons for remaining where you are.** Moses had a multitude of reasons why he couldn't fulfill his dream.

First, he argued, "Who am I?": *"And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" (Exodus 3:11).* Like Moses, many of us struggle with past failures or a lack of abilities. God's answer to Moses was, "It is not who you are that is important, but who I am!" It is not who you are that will advance your ministry, but who He is! You must act on the basis of who He is, not who you are.

Then Moses said, "I don't have the authority. Who will I say sent me?" (Exodus 3:13). God's answer to Moses was, *"Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, 'I AM hath sent me unto you'" (Exodus 3:14).* "I AM" has sent you also! God has given you authority over all the power of the enemy: *"Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you" (Luke 10:19).* You have the power and authority of God to walk into your destiny and fulfill it.

Next, Moses objected, "What if they don't believe me?" (Exodus 4:1). God's answer to this objection was, *"What is in your hand?" (Exodus 4:2).* In Moses' hand was a rod which represented God's power. Later on, this same rod was thrown down before Pharaoh and miracles happened, it was stretched over the Red Sea and the waters parted, and it brought forth water from a rock for a thirsty multitude. God is asking you the same question today: "What is in your hand?" You have talents, abilities, gifts, and skills that God can use if you will simply pick them up and begin to use them again: *"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance" (Romans 11:29).*

Then Moses questioned, "What shall I say?" God responded, *"I will be your mouth and teach you what you should say" (Exodus 4:12).* God's Word to you today is, *"The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach..." (Romans 10:8).*

In order to rekindle his dream, Moses had to eliminate all excuses. If you are to fulfill your divine destiny, you must do the same. Every reason why you "can't" do it must go. You must eliminate every objection in the name of Jesus!

## FEBRUARY 21 TAKING ACTION

Yesterday we learned the first step to rekindle the vision of your destiny is to reject reasons for remaining where you are.

- You may have committed adultery. It is not the unpardonable sin. You can be forgiven and restored, as was King David.
- You may have denied Christ as Peter did. Yet Peter became a key leader in the first church.
- You may be serving a life sentence in prison and wonder how you can ever have a purpose in life. Your circumstances of incarceration may not change, but you can change. You can find a new destiny, a new reason for living.

No matter where you are or what your circumstances, begin right now to speak the Word of God over your lost vision, your shattered dream. Declare this truth: *"I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me"* (Philippians 4:13).

Are you ready for the next step to rekindle your dream? The second step is: **Rise up and take action.** You must act upon the Word of God or otherwise you will remain right where you are in seclusion in your spiritual desert. Moses rose up and returned to Egypt to fulfill his destiny as their deliverer.

- God told Noah, "Rise up and build an ark."
- After Moses died, God told Joshua to rise up and take his position as leader of Israel.
- God told Nehemiah, "Arise and build!"
- After King Saul's failure, God told Samuel to stop grieving and anoint a new king.
- Jesus said "Arise" to a lame man by the side of the road, and he was able to walk again.

If you are still sorrowing over your lost ministry and your shattered dream, then it is time to stop. You will never have a future as long as you are living in the past. Get up and begin to act in faith. You must make a change, or a year from now you will be right where you are today. God's Word to you is:

*Arise from the depression and prostration in which circumstances have kept you, rise to a new life! Shine, be radiant with the glory of the Lord; for your light is come and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you! (Isaiah 60:1, TAB)*

You can remain where you are--sorrowing over the past, mourning your shattered dream--or you can rise up from the depression and prostration in which circumstances have kept you. It is time to take action and rekindle your dream.

## FEBRUARY 22 RELYING ON GOD'S POWER

We are taking steps to restore shattered dreams and visions. During the past two days we have learned the first step is to reject reasons for remaining where you are. The second step is to rise up and take action. Today, we take the third step: **Rely on God's power.** God told Moses, *"So I will stretch out My hand and strike Egypt with all My wonders which I will do in its midst; and after that he will let you go"* (Exodus 3:20).

Moses' first attempt to deliver Israel was through human effort when he reacted in anger and killed the Egyptian taskmaster. His efforts failed, and he was forced to flee to the desert. Moses is not the only biblical character who failed:

- David committed adultery.
- Naomi went out joyous, lost everything, and returned to Bethlehem in defeat.
- Peter denied Christ.
- The disciples all fled at the time of Christ's greatest need prior to His death at Calvary.
- John Mark abandoned the missionary team.

Like these men and women, you may have tried and failed, your dream was shattered, and your ministry ended. You are fearful to try again. But now it is time to step out in faith and let God birth through you new dreams, new visions, and new ministries. This time you will not fail because you are not depending on yourself, but upon the power of Almighty God.

From the sacred ground of the burning bush, Moses returned to Egypt to fulfill his calling. His shattered dream became a reality when Israel was delivered from their cruel taskmasters and he led them to freedom. This time, Moses relied on God's power instead of his own self-effort.

Moses' revelation came through a burning bush. A spiritual bush is burning for you right now. Its message is the same: God is not through with you, despite your past failures. Your destiny is not the wilderness where you are right now. Your destiny is the dream God has placed within you, the calling that refuses to die—no matter how hard you try to forget it.

God told Moses, "Take off your shoes." In essence, God was saying "I am going to walk in your shoes to take you to your destiny!" Perhaps, as an act of submission, you should remove your shoes right now. You are standing on holy ground. Your dream is being rekindled. Like Moses, God is giving you a new beginning, and this time you will not fail because God will be walking in your shoes, taking you to your destiny.

Three steps to rekindle your dream:

- Reject reasons for remaining where you are.
- Rise up and take action.
- Rely on God's power.

## **FEBRUARY 23 THE ROD OF GOD**

At the command of God, Moses was on the way to fulfill his destiny as the deliverer of God's people, Israel. Forty years previously, Moses had tried doing this his way, acting in self-effort. This time, he went forth with the rod of God in his hand:

*And the Lord said unto Moses in Midian, Go, return into Egypt: for all the men are dead which sought thy life. And Moses took his wife and his sons, and set them upon an ass, and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand. And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go. (Exodus 4:19-21)*

This time, Moses not only had the vision of his destiny, he had the supernatural power necessary to accomplish it. Repeatedly in the negotiations with Pharaoh this "rod of God" was used to perform miracles. It became a serpent, was used to turn waters to blood and dust into lice, and it brought the plagues of frogs, locust, thunder, and hail.

When Israel left Egypt and were pursued by a relentless enemy, Moses stretched out this same rod of God over the Red Sea and it parted, enabling the people to pass over while drowning their pursuers. During the wilderness wandering, Moses used the rod of God to bring forth water from a rock for a thirsty multitude and lifted it over a fierce battle scene to secure victory for Israel.

As a young man, Moses had a clear picture of his destiny--he was to deliver God's people from slavery. What he did not realize at that time was that he could not do it in himself. Forty years later, when Moses approached his destiny with the rod of God in his hands, he was successful. It took Moses forty years in the desert to come to this point. How long will it take you?

Before Jesus returned to heaven, He told His disciples to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high--the spiritual rod of God, so to speak. In Acts chapter 2, the Holy Spirit baptized these men, and from that point on they embraced their destinies with power and authority. They healed the sick. They raised the dead. They stood firm in the face of adversity. Peter, a man who at one time could not confess Christ before a little servant girl, stood before a multitude and delivered a sermon that resulted in the conversion of thousands.

Do not try to accomplish your destiny without the "rod of God"--the power of the Holy Spirit. You must have more than a vision of destiny. You must have the authority of Almighty God empowering you to fulfill it.

## FEBRUARY 24 THE POWER OF THE BLOOD

The Bible teaches that the life of man and beasts is in the blood (Leviticus 17:11,14). Because the penalty for sin is death (Romans 6:23), and since life is in the blood, God established the principle that forgiveness of sin comes only through the shedding of blood: *"And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission" (from sin) (Hebrews 9:22).*

As Israel prepared to depart Egypt for their destiny, a powerful event occurred and is recorded in Exodus chapter 12. The final plague on Egypt was the death of all first-born sons. To protect the Israelites from this judgment, God's people were instructed to slay a lamb and put its blood on their doorposts. The Lord said, *"And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt" (Exodus 12:13).* This blood was a token of the blood of Jesus Christ that would one day be shed for the sins of all mankind.

In the Old Testament, the blood of animals was offered as sacrifices for sin and these offerings had to be made repeatedly whenever a person sinned. But in the New Testament, God sent Jesus to shed His blood for sin once and for all. It is no longer necessary that the blood of animals be offered: *"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by His own blood He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Hebrews 9:12).*

Just as Israel needed the blood applied before they left Egypt for their Promised Land, so you need the applied blood of Jesus Christ--not only to cover your sin, but to enable you to achieve your destiny. There is power in the blood because it...

- Was shed for the remission (forgiveness) of sins: Matthew 26:28
- Brought redemption from sin and sickness: Ephesians 1:7; 2:13; Isaiah 53:4
- Cleanses you from sin: 1 John 1:7
- Purges your conscience from sin: Hebrews 9:14
- Speaks for you--His blood cries out in your behalf: Hebrews 12:24
- Gives you access to God's presence: Hebrews 10:19-22
- Sanctifies you: Hebrews 13:12-13
- Justifies you before God: Romans 3:24-25
- Is the cup of spiritual blessings: 1 Corinthians 10:16
- Is the power that enabled the resurrection of Jesus: Hebrews 13:20
- Brings life: John 6:53-57
- Enables you to overcome all the power of the enemy: Revelation 12:11
- Provides protection: The blood on the doors of the Israelites kept them safe: Exodus 12:21-23
- Enables you to do God's will: Hebrews 13:20-21

If you are to reach your destiny, you must have the blood of Jesus Christ applied to your life and understand and claim the spiritual benefits of that precious blood.

## FEBRUARY 25 NO LACK

It has been said, "Where God guides, He provides." Despite four-hundred years in slavery, Israel left Egypt with great wealth. They took with them much cattle, flocks, and herds (Exodus 12:38). They also took with them the wealth of the Egyptians:

*And the children of Israel did according to the word of Moses; and they borrowed of the Egyptians jewels of silver, and jewels of gold, and raiment: And the Lord gave the people favour in the sight of the Egyptians, so that they lent unto them such things as they required. And they spoiled the Egyptians. (Exodus 12:35-36)*

When you start heading towards your divine destiny, God will place into your hands the finances you need, even funds accumulated by unbelievers. You will receive whatever is needed in order for you to accomplish His purposes.

Israel lacked nothing during their wilderness journey. God provided food, water, and shoes and clothing that did not wear out.

*For the Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand: he knoweth thy walking through this great wilderness: these forty years the Lord thy God hath been with thee; **thou hast lacked nothing.** (Deuteronomy 2:7)*

No lack--that is God's plan for His people. Not ostentatious wealth to be flaunted and used selfishly, but finances sufficient to fulfill your purpose. No lack.

The Psalmist recalls:

*He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes. Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them. He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night. The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven. He opened the rock, and the waters gushed out; they ran in the dry places like a river. For he remembered his holy promise, and Abraham his servant. And he brought forth his people with joy, and his chosen with gladness: And gave them the lands of the heathen: and they inherited the labour of the people; That they might observe his statutes, and keep his laws. Praise ye the Lord. (Psalm 105:37-45)*

Like Israel, you will need supernatural provision along the pathway to your destiny. (Later this year, during the month of August, you will learn details of how to access divine provision for this purpose.)

God abundantly blessed Israel for a spiritual purpose--that they might be a witness to the nations. God wants to bless you for the same reason. You will lack nothing needed to fulfill this divine mission. You will have no lack mentally, spiritually, or materially.

## FEBRUARY 26 ENTANGLED IN THE WILDERNESS

After the deaths of the first-born sons in Egypt, Pharaoh finally allowed the Israelites to leave. Over two million people departed, taking with them great wealth from the land where they had served as slaves.

God told Moses that the enemy would pursue and try to capture them and take them back to slavery. God warned: *"...Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in" (Exodus 14:3).*

Like Israel, many believers have escaped the bondage of Egypt, the blood of the Lamb Jesus Christ has marked their lives with redemption, and they are on their way to their destiny--but they do not realize that the taskmaster is hard on their heels. Once you have accepted Jesus as Savior and have determined to pursue the divine purpose for which you were created, the enemy wants to drive you back into bondage. Like Pharaoh, your enemy declares, "I will pursue them. I will overtake them." The enemy wants to entangle you in the wilderness of this world--the sins, cares, and circumstances of life.

Satan does not want to release you from the tyranny of bondage. He does not want you to embrace abundant life, rather he wants to take you captive back to the old life. The enemy does not want you to impact the lives of people and nations with the power of the Gospel. Satan wants to abort your dream and your destiny.

The entanglements of life are often the means by which Satan accomplishes his diabolical plans. You may be drawn back into former relationships that will entangle you in your old life style. You may become ensnared by the cares of the world--the demands of business, family, and everyday life. You may be shut in by loneliness, depression, or oppression by the enemy. You may be bogged down in the quicksand of worry, anxiety, or fear.

Jesus warned, *"...take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with...cares of this life" (Luke 21:34 NKJ).* Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul warned: *"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage" (Galatians 5:1).*

Are you entangled in the cares of the world? Do you seem to be shut in by the wilderness? Israel was never without guidance, for God sent His angel to guide them and provided a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. You will not be ensnared by the circumstances of life today because the Holy Spirit goes before you to provide supernatural guidance. Satan may pursue, but you have power over all the power of the enemy!

## **FEBRUARY 27**

### **NOWHERE TO GO**

Amazing miracles occurred to enable Israel to be freed from Egyptian bondage. Ten dramatic plagues were sent by God to supernaturally deliver them. They were on their way to their Promised Land. They were excited and rejoicing. Four hundred years of bondage, but now they were free!

But it didn't take long for the Israelites to encounter a major problem. After their departure from Egypt, Pharaoh once again changed his mind about letting them go. He amassed a great army and pursued them to bring them back, along with all of the wealth they had taken with them from Egypt. Now, Israel stood before a great expanse of water, the Red Sea. Behind them was the enemy, ahead of them was an insurmountable obstacle.

Put this truth deep in your spirit: When you begin to move towards your destiny, you will encounter major challenges. Do you really think Satan is going to sit back and let you accomplish great things for God without trying to hinder you? You will not reach lost men and women, you will not affect cities and nations for God without opposition from the enemy. Do not be surprised when challenges arise. Just be prepared.

Israel faced three major challenges:

- The Red Sea lay before them: The pathway to their destiny was blocked by insurmountable circumstances.
- The enemy was behind them: Hot on their heels came a massive army determined to abort their mission.
- Their hearts were faint: This problem was the most dangerous of all.

But Israel had three powerful spiritual weapons:

- They had the promises of God--they were heirs to the Abrahamic covenant.
- They had a man of God--Moses.
- They had the "rod of God"--representing the supernatural power of God.

As a result, the waters of the Red Sea opened before them, they passed over on dry ground, and their enemy drowned as they tried to pursue them.

As you face difficult circumstances, you have the same three powerful weapons of deliverance:

- You have the promises of God--His Word.
- You have a man of God--Jesus Christ.
- You have the "rod of God"--the power of the cross of Jesus.

## FEBRUARY 28 BITTER WATERS

*So Moses brought Israel from the Red Sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter; therefore the name of it was called Marah. And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink? (Exodus 15:22-24)*

One of the greatest needs when traveling through a wilderness is water, and in this account, the Israelites faced a major problem: They had none. The waters they came to were bitter and unfit to drink. So how did the Israelites deal with this challenge? Instead of looking to God to meet their need, they began to murmur against Moses and demanded, "What are we going to drink?"

You, too, will encounter "bitter waters" along your journey in life. The term "bitter waters" can be used to represent the difficulties that come into your life through others around you, the circumstances of life, Satanic attack, your ministry, or perhaps your own transgressions. Whatever the source of your "bitter waters", the solution is not to grumble and complain against God.

Thankfully, Moses turned to God and "...cried unto the Lord; and the Lord shewed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet..." (Exodus 15:25). There is a powerful message in this symbolic act of casting a tree into the water. In Isaiah we read...

*And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of His roots; And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him, and the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord; And shall make Him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord; and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears. (Isaiah 11:1-3)*

When you stand on the banks of the "bitter waters" of negative circumstances, you must respond as Moses did. You must cast in the Branch. The Lord Jesus Christ is that spiritual Branch which must be cast into the circumstances of your life. He is represented by the tree on the bank.

God did not lead you to bitter waters to drink of them. He allowed them for the same purpose He did in Israel's experience. He permits difficult circumstances to prove you, to see whether you will drink of the bitterness and die spiritually or allow God to sweeten your bitter waters through the Branch of the Lord Jesus.

## FEBRUARY 29 A MIXED MULTITUDE

When Israel left Egypt, the Bible notes that a "mixed multitude" went with them (Exodus 12:38). This mixed multitude was not of Israeli descent. Most likely, they were residents who were unhappy with the government of Egypt. This group may have also included captives from foreign conquests who availed themselves of the opportunity to escape when Israel departed. Perhaps the plagues that had come upon Egypt may have motivated some of these people to join the exodus from the country.

It didn't take long before this "mixed multitude" caused problems for Israel. When they received only manna to eat--despite the fact this provision was a miracle sent from God--they "fell to lusting", complaining against God. It didn't take long for the Israelites to be influenced by them and join in their murmuring. The people recalled what they called "the good things of Egypt"--the fish, the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic (Numbers 11:4). Really? Somehow fish, cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic don't seem to make up for living in slavery. Yet we often look "back to Egypt", desiring to embrace the fleeting pleasures of this world which will enslave us.

In response to their sin of murmuring, complaining, and looking back to the old life, God sent a plague which resulted in many deaths. He sent a flock of quails which was consumed by the people *"...and while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague" (Numbers 11:33)*. The place where this sad event occurred was named "Kibroth-hattaavah", meaning "the graves of those who lusted."

When God calls you to go forth to your destiny, be careful about the "mixed multitude" that might want to join you. Without the same call and destiny, they will only cause you trouble. A "mixed multitude" that does not grasp your divine mandate will influence you negatively, just as they did Israel. They will murmur and complain about the circumstances and problems along the way, and--if you are not careful--you will fall prey to their negativity.

The "mixed multitude" is always looking back to the "good old days". You will hear comments like, "I remember when..." or "this isn't the way we do things around here". Your destiny does not lie in the bondage or traditions of the past. Jesus said, *"No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62)*. Your destiny lies in your future, not in your past. God says, *"Behold, I do a new thing..." (Isaiah 43:29)*.

Do not try to travel the road to your destiny with a mixed multitude. Surround yourself with people of like vision and destiny. Joe Larson, a popular professional speaker, once recalled: "My friends didn't believe I could become a successful speaker. So I did something about it. I went out and found me some new friends."

**FEBRUARY 30**  
**(Leap Year)**  
**SEEING INTO THE INVISIBLE**

Israel encountered many challenges on the road to their destiny. Most of their problems came from their lack of faith in the Lord. Despite the miracles God had done in Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea, and the miraculous provision along the way, they repeatedly doubted, murmured, and complained.

If you keep your eyes on negative circumstances, you too will murmur, complain, and fail God. You will be tempted to turn back to the old life. What you must do--and what Israel should have done--is get your eyes off of the visible and focus on the invisible. Only when you do this will you dare to do the impossible.

Moses was a man who, despite negative circumstances, kept his focus on the invisible. He is enrolled in the Hebrews 11 "hall of faith" because *"By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible" (Hebrews 11:27).*

- Moses saw the invisible and led two million people out of slavery.
- Elisha saw that the invisible army of God was greater than that of the enemy which surrounded him.
- Stephen viewed the invisible as he was being martyred, seeing the Son of God in the throne room of God.
- The prophets saw the invisible future and warned of things to come.
- The Apostle John saw into the invisible and received a great revelation of the end-times.

You will never reach your destiny by keeping your eyes on your visible circumstances. Peter walked on water until he took his eyes off of Jesus and looked at the waves of circumstance swirling around him. The Apostle Paul declared:

*For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal (2 Corinthians 4:15-18)*

Look beyond the challenges of negative circumstances and realize that everything that happens to you is for your sake and for His glory. Your story is for His glory! Your trials work in your behalf when you refuse to focus on things which are seen, and focus instead upon the unseen. Do not focus on the wilderness. Do not focus on the giant enemies. Focus on your destiny.