

AUGUST

ACCESSING PROVISION FOR DIVINE DESTINY

In Joshua chapter 5, God told Israel that the manna He had supplied for them in the wilderness would cease. God had provided for His people on one level--the manna level which had lasted throughout the forty years of their wilderness journey. Now it was time for Israel to move to a new level of supernatural provision. They would eat the fruit of their Promised Land:

And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year. (Joshua 5:12)

God has provided for you on one level in times past, but as you face the challenges of entering into your divine destiny, you must learn how to tap into a new dimension of supernatural provision. Like Israel, you are crossing over to claim new territory and that requires a new level of faith.

You may have been in a barren wilderness for years. You may be lacking in finances, wisdom, talents, or abilities. But God wants to bring you spiritually into a land of brooks, water, fountains, vines, fig trees, and pomegranates--a land where you will know no want, where every need will be met.

When Israel entered their Promised Land, they carried with them the wealth of Egypt. God also bestowed upon them the blessings of their new land. They ate fruit from trees they had not planted. They harvested grain from fields they had not sown. As they battled their way across their promised land, they did not have to worry about food for their armies. God provided for them as they conquered their enemies. The wealth of the wicked Canaanites literally fell into their hands.

God does not want you to be constantly struggling in any area of your life. Whether it be finances, wisdom, or abilities for ministry. He wants you to experience sufficiency for every need. He wants you to know how to enter into His supernatural cycle of divine provision.

The provision we seek is not that where one lives lavishly and selfishly consumes resources by satisfying extravagant, materialistic desires. The abundance God wants you to experience is where your needs will be met so you will have resources to sow into the Kingdom of God to extend the Gospel to the nations of the world. If you allow finances and talents to flow *through* you, He will give finances and talents *to* you. He wants to supply adequate provision in every area your life so that you can accomplish your divine destiny. This month's devotional readings provide powerful strategies that will enable you to do this

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AUGUST 1 ABUNDANT PROVISION

When Israel reached their destiny, God reminded them that during their wilderness journey “*Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years*” (Deuteronomy 8:4).

How would you like to have a pair shoes that grew as your feet grew? That’s exactly what happened to the Israelites in the wilderness! For forty years their clothes and shoes adapted to their size and never wore out!

If you are to enter into the supernatural provision God has planned for you, then you must hold on to the promises in His Word:

Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him. For the Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills. (Deuteronomy 8:6-7)

You may have been in the wilderness for many years, but God has promised to take you to a land that flows with milk and honey. Hold on to that promise. Do not be swayed by fear or doubt. God is bringing you into a land where you will experience sufficient provision to accomplish your destiny:

A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full, then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee. (Deuteronomy 8:9-10)

As circumstances in the economic world deteriorate, God wants you to know how to tap into His abundant provision. Like Israel, He wants you to eat of the good of the land. No more manna. No more scrambling around each day collecting provisions.

You will experience abundant provision in every area: Finances, abilities, and wisdom. You will have sufficient supply to accomplish divine purposes. Supernatural supply. That is God’s promise. It is your inheritance. Are you ready to claim it?

AUGUST 2 OUR GIVING GOD

From Genesis to Revelation, God clearly reveals that He always provides for His people. The prosperity He has planned for you to enjoy is abundant provision, both materially and spiritually, enabling you to fulfill your destiny. God doesn't want you to see Him as stern and uncaring. He wants you to embrace Him as a loving and giving Heavenly Father who desires to bless His children in every way.

From the time Israel became a nation, God expressed His desire to bless His people. He declared:

*Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the Lord thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he swore unto thy fathers: And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he swore unto thy fathers to give thee.
(Deuteronomy 7:12-13)*

Does this sound like a God who wants His people to live in need? No! It is God's plan for you to have sufficiency in every area of your life, and that includes your finances. Sufficiency doesn't necessarily mean wealth--although God blesses some people in this way. But it does mean that your needs will be met.

Note that in this passage God declares, "...if you hearken to these judgments". To what judgments is God referring? He is talking about the principles revealed in His Word. This includes His plan for divine provision--not a scheme for selfish extravagance, but a plan for supernatural provision of your needs.

How you perceive God has a tremendous impact on your finances. It will affect how you view material blessings, how you give to God and others, and how you perceive the rich and the poor. The Bible reveals that God is an extravagant giver. Everything we know about Him reflects a lavish, divine generosity. Examples of His giving surround you in creation, redemption, your abilities, and your personal provision.

Jesus said, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?" (Matthew 7:11). Jesus reminded people that God was their Father and--like all fathers--He loves to bless His children with gifts. Then Jesus pointed out that, unlike human fathers, God will not promise and then fail to deliver. God's generosity to His children is far greater than that of your natural parents or even yourself as a parent.

How do you perceive God in terms of giving? Is it time to change your perspective?

AUGUST 3 TWO MAJOR GIFTS

The Bible describes God in two major areas which illustrate His amazing generosity. It identifies Him as *Creator* and as *Redeemer*. God is the One Who gives both natural and spiritual blessings.

These titles reveal the essence of God, and throughout the Bible He is worshiped in both of these roles. In Revelation 4:11, the elders sang, "*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*" In Revelation 5:9, they sang: "...*Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nations...*"

The Bible repeatedly celebrates God's twin gifts of creation and redemption:

*Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins: Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.
(Colossians 1:12-20)*

Verse 16 praises God because "*by him all things were created*" and verse 20 for "*having made peace through the blood of his cross.*" These are His gifts of creation and redemption.

The biblical record starts with a description of God's gift of creation and reveals that God's first recorded words to humanity were, "...*Behold I have given you...*" (*Genesis 1:29*). These words reveal God's nature at the outset of His relationship with mankind. He is a giver, and creation is one of His greatest gifts.

Take time to look around you today at the wonders of God's creation. His amazing, abundant generosity as a Creator is revealed in the beauties that surround you. The one who has provided all of these wondrous things will surely provide the resources necessary for you to achieve your destiny.

AUGUST 4 THE GIFT OF CREATION

God blessed Adam and Eve with all that was needed in order for them to prosper:

*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. **And God blessed them**, and God said unto them, **Be fruitful**, and **multiply**, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth. And God said, Behold, **I have given** you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, **I have given** every green herb for meat: and it was so. (Genesis 1:27-30)*

The story of Noah's ark highlights the diversity of the Creator's giving (Genesis 6-7). A boat the size of a massive ocean liner was needed to preserve a sample of all the known species. Whenever God gives and whatever He gives, there is endless variety. Why are there so many species of birds and insects? Why is every snowflake and fingerprint unique? Why are there so many differences in peoples' appearances? It is because God is such an extravagant giver!

When people think about God as Creator, they often assume that His creative work ended in Eden, but God's extravagant giving through creation still continues. Right up to the end of time as we know it, God will continue to create--including the great creative act spoken of in Revelation 21:5 where He declares, "... Behold, I make all things new ..."

Meditate on Psalm 104 which details God's gifts in creation. It describes how God laid the foundation of the earth, created light, and set the boundaries for the water. The mountains and valleys of the earth and the fish, fowls, and animals are described in this wonderful psalm.

Psalm 104 alternates between what God *did* at creation and what He *still does* for creation. Verses 27-29 reveal that the continuing existence of all creation depends on the Creator's extravagant, continuous giving. Verse 30 makes it clear that God's creative giving is ongoing: "*Thou sendest forth thy spirit, they are created ...*"

The psalmist concludes with the declaration, "*O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches*" (Psalm 104:24). Creation is a tremendous example of our giving God who wants to supply all that you need to accomplish your destiny.

AUGUST 5 THE GIFT OF REDEMPTION

You are learning about your giving God, laying a proper foundation to enable you to receive adequate provision to accomplish your destiny. You have viewed His generosity through creation. Now let's look at His gift of redemption.

In Old Testament times, sacrifices and offerings were vital in the lives of the Israelites. God used these for generations to prepare His people for the day when Christ would offer His life as the only sacrifice sufficient to permanently cleanse mankind's sin. The sacrifices and offerings were necessary because without the shedding of blood there is no remission for sin. The Old Testament sacrificial system served as a reminder of the need for a Savior who would die once and for all for the sins of all mankind.

Centuries later, God sent Jesus to the world as His greatest gift to mankind. He gave His only Son willingly as a sacrificial offering for our sins: *"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).*

God sent Jesus to earth in the form of human flesh to bear your sins, to shed His blood, and to restore you to fellowship with Him. Jesus shed His blood willingly. No one took His life from Him, but He laid it down of His own free will:

Hence, when He (Christ) entered into the world, He said, Sacrifices and offerings You have not desired, but instead You have made ready a body for Me (to offer); In burnt offerings and sin offerings You have taken no delight. Then I said, Lo, here I am, come to do Your will, oh God; (to fulfill) what is written of Me in the volume of the Book. (Hebrews 10:5-7, AMP)

Because of this one perfect sacrifice, those who repent are forever set free from sin:

Whereas this One (Christ) after He had offered a single Sacrifice for our sins (that shall avail) for all time, sat down at the right hand of God, Then to wait until His enemies should be made a stool beneath His feet. For by a single offering He has forever completely cleansed and perfected those who are consecrated and made holy. (Hebrews 10:12-14, AMP)

There is no further sacrifice necessary to redeem you from sin. No longer is it necessary for you to offer burnt offerings to God. You are able to enter into relationship with God through that one perfect sacrifice. Through the blood of Jesus, you have been granted free access to God whereby you are able to come fearlessly and boldly into His presence to receive all you need from Him. God's greatest gift is His only Son--especially the death of His Son. Titus 2:14 describes Jesus as One *"Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works."* First Timothy 2:6 says that Jesus *"gave himself as a ransom for all."* Paul declares that you are *"bought with a price" (1 Corinthians 6:20).*

AUGUST 6 GOOD GIFTS FROM GOD

God loves you so much that He gave His only Son to die for your sins, so should it not stand to reason that every good gift in your life comes from Him? The Bible confirms that *"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32).*

Every good gift in life comes from God: *"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).*

Your family, friends, health, ministry, talents, and financial resources--every positive thing in your life is a gift from God. Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, the Apostle Paul describes the immensity of God's giving nature:

But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 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. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. (Ephesians 2:4-10)

From Genesis to Revelation, God is depicted as a giving God. Because He gave His best to you through creation, redemption, and the good gifts you have received, you should be willing to give your best to Him.

As God has given you all things through Christ, you must be willing to present your body as a *"living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Romans 12:1)*. You must not withhold anything from God, but must give yourself to Him totally--heart, spirit, mind, soul, and body. When you give yourself one hundred percent to God, then you will not withhold anything from Him--your time, your talents, or your finances. You are to give God the very best you have as an act of worship.

It is God's will that there be financial resources and sufficient laborers for the work of extending the Kingdom of God. It is His will that you have the necessary finances to accomplish the divine mandate He has given of evangelizing the world. It is God's will that you have finances, wisdom, talents, and abilities sufficient to accomplish your destiny.

AUGUST 7 FINANCING THE HARVEST

We are living in God's end-time spiritual harvest and we are under a divine commission to take the Gospel to the nations of the earth before Jesus returns. Jesus said, *"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come"* (Matthew 24:14).

To be able to accomplish this task, we must have a breakthrough in our finances. It costs money to travel and spread the Gospel. It is expensive to produce Bibles and training materials. It requires funding to build churches and plant missions. Christian radio, television, and internet ministries all require finances.

Satan has hindered the work of God for too long. Satan has sown lies and robbed many believers from the blessing of giving to God and receiving financial blessings in return. As a result, the flow of finances into their lives and their work for God has been hindered.

As believers, we have unlimited riches reserved for us to abundantly meet every need in our lives and ministries. The problem is, many of us do not know what these resources are or how to access them.

Again, it must be emphasized that the purpose of divine provision is not to amass wealth and material possessions. The purpose is to empower you to fulfill your divine destiny. Another important point to emphasize is that this revelation can only be understood by a spiritual mind. Divine provision is a spiritual revelation based upon the Word of God. This is why you must be a true believer in Jesus Christ in order to understand and apply these truths.

God provides adequate resources for your spiritual harvest. He seeds your need:

And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: As it is written, He hath dispersed abroad; he hath given to the poor: his righteousness remaineth for ever. Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness;) Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. (2 Corinthians 9:8-11)

Whether you have a limited income or a substantial one or whether you live in a poor nation or a wealthy country, God wants to bring you into a position of dependency upon Him. Look to God for provision for your family, your ministry, and your personal needs. Trust God to finance your spiritual harvest and your divine destiny.

AUGUST 8 A NEEDY PERSON

Do you consider yourself to be a needy person? In some ways, it is good to be needy. We are not talking about needs that lead to dependency on others or deprivation, rather we are talking about being needy before God. It was said of the church at Laodicea:

Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. (Revelation 3:17-18)

Because they failed to perceive their true needs, the Laodiceans became lukewarm and self-sufficient. Perhaps because of their material wealth they thought they had no needs, but spiritually they sure did!

Philippians 4:19 declares, *"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."* God supplies according to need. Take away the need, and there is no supply.

The right kind of need attracts supernatural resources, the divine provision about which we are studying. The bigger your spiritual purpose--your dreams, goals, and objectives--the bigger the supply God has reserved for you. The more resources you need to accomplish His purposes, the larger the provision of finances, talents, and abilities.

A needless life is an unproductive life. A great spiritual leader named Oswald Chambers declared, *"If we are ever free from the sense of need, it is not because the Holy Spirit has satisfied us, but because we have been satisfied with as much as we have. A sense of need...keeps our life rightly related to Jesus Christ."*

God knows your need before you ask: *"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isaiah 65:24).* God wants to provide for you abundantly. The Bible declares that He is *"...able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20).*

God's Word to you today is: *"But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God" (1 Corinthians 2:9-10).*

AUGUST 9 JOINT-HEIRS WITH CHRIST

You are a joint-heir with Jesus Christ. As the pre-existent Son of God, Jesus was coequal with God. All that the Father possessed belonged to Him, yet He chose to become poor: *"For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich"* (2 Corinthians 8:9).

The word "poor" in this verse is translated from the Greek word *"ptocheuo"* which means "to be destitute." Jesus willingly gave up His vast wealth so that you might be made rich spiritually. Jesus did not come to earth with the wealth of a king. He totally stripped Himself of all that He had, came in the form of a servant (Philippians 2:5-7), and experienced the pain, suffering, and poverty of this world (Hebrews 2:16-17).

During His life on earth, Jesus was poor according to the world's standards. He was born in a humble stable in a lowly manger. He owned no houses or lands. Jesus told one man who wanted to follow Him, *"The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head"* (Matthew 8:20). During His ministry, Jesus lived with friends and ate at their tables. When He died, His body was placed in a borrowed tomb.

Although Jesus was considered poor, all the resources of heaven were at His disposal. He had none of the world's wealth, yet He possessed an abundance of all that He needed. He did not rely on the world's limited resources, but He trusted in His Father's supernatural provision. Acts 10:38 indicates that Jesus went about doing good. The word for "good" in this verse means to be generous and liberal. Jesus did not own cattle, houses, or land, yet God provided all that was needed in order for Him to accomplish His divine mission in this world.

When there was a multitude of 5,000 men plus women and children who were hungry, Jesus did not send them away without meeting their needs. He drew from His Father's reservoir of riches. He said to Philip, *"Where are we to buy bread, that these may eat?" And this He was saying to test him; for He Himself knew what He was intending to do. Philip answered Him, 'Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.' One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to Him, 'There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?'"* (John 6:5-9, NAS).

Instead of sending the people away hungry, Jesus took the available resources and multiplied them. He took five loaves of bread and two small fish, blessed it, divided it, and gave it to His disciples to feed the people. Not only did they have enough for everyone to eat and be satisfied, but there was an abundance of twelve full baskets left over! This is an excellent example of the divine provision God intends for you to experience today--enough to meet every need with plenty left over.

AUGUST 10 UNLIMITED RESOURCES

Immediately after Jesus was born, He and his family were forced to flee to Egypt to escape the wrath of King Herod. How was their trip financed? Through the gifts that had been brought by the wise men: The valuable gold, frankincense, and myrrh. Whatever was needed to fulfill His destiny, Jesus received it. As a joint-heir with Christ, all of your needs will be provided to enable you to fulfill your divine destiny.

Jesus became the supreme sacrifice through which we are reconciled and restored into fellowship with the Father. Through His blood, you have entered into a New Covenant by which you have been made a joint-heir with Jesus:

The Spirit Himself (thus) testifies together with our own spirit, (assuring us) that we are children of God. And if we are (His) children, then we are (His) heirs also: heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ-sharing His inheritance with Him ... (Romans 8:16-17, AMP)

As a joint-heir with Jesus Christ, you are not limited by the resources of this world. You have direct access to the Father and all that He has belongs to you. You do not need to rely upon your own limited resources to accomplish your divine mandate to spread the gospel to the world because you have unlimited access to the resources of heaven.

What is your inheritance in Christ? It is all you need to meet your personal needs and to do your part in extending God's Kingdom. The Bible declares, "*But my God shall supply **all** your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus*" (Philippians 4:19). All means exactly that: All. Everything you need--not the "name it and claim it" idea of confessing mansions, expensive cars, and jewels--but your **needs**. That is your inheritance through Jesus Christ. Your supernatural resources are not just financial blessings. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are in Christ (Colossians 2:2-3). You are enriched in Him in all things (1 Corinthians 1:5-6). The Bible declares, "*Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich!*" ... (1 Corinthians 4:8, NIV). The tremendous spiritual power Jesus has given you is something that cannot be purchased with money:

And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. (Acts 8:18-22)

Through your covenant relationship with God which Christ made possible, there is total provision for every need in your life--salvation, protection, health, peace, deliverance, power, security, and finances. In addition, God has given you spiritual gifts, talents, and abilities to accomplish your divine destiny. Indeed, you are very rich!

AUGUST 11
EXCEEDINGLY ABOVE

Before Jesus returned to Heaven He told His followers:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it.
(John 14:12-14)

You need divine provision to accomplish these greater works and that is why God wants to bless you in every area of your life. Through your covenant relationship with Him, there is supernatural abundance--no lack of talents, wisdom, or finances.

One of the greatest gifts Jesus gave believers when He returned to Heaven was the gift of the Holy Spirit:

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. (John 14:16-26)

The Holy Spirit gives you power to accomplish your divine mission. Jesus promised: "...ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The key to accessing these unlimited resources in Christ is simply to ask: "If you ask anything in my name, I will do it!" The Bible indicates God is able "...to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us" (Ephesians 3:20). God is able:

- To do...
- To do exceedingly...
- To do exceedingly abundantly...
- To do exceedingly, abundantly above all that we ask...
- To do exceedingly abundantly above all that we think.

...And the power to do exceedingly, abundantly, above all you ask or think is already within you: "According to the power that works in you!"

AUGUST 12 PROSPERITY FOR PURPOSE

When we speak of divine provision, it is not to advocate a "name it claim it" mentality, where one seeks material blessings for selfish purposes. We are seeking divine provision in order to free us to extend the Gospel to the nations of the world and accomplish our God-given purposes.

God's provisions are not for the purpose of luxury, but are designated to meet our basic needs so that we can be freed financially and spiritually to be part of God's end-time, harvest-time cycle. The word "luxury" comes from a Latin word that means "excessive". It refers to having an abundance of money, time, and possessions which one uses selfishly.

It is important to understand, however, that in some nations certain things are necessary that might be viewed as luxuries in other nations. For example, in Los Angeles, California, a car is considered necessary for a pastor to fulfill his duties. The city is huge and in order to visit his congregation, the many rest homes, hospitals, etc., he needs transportation. In a small village in India where one can walk everywhere, a car might be viewed as a luxury. More finances are needed to build a church edifice in America than what is needed to construct a simple building in a rural village in India.

This means you cannot judge the standards of living in another nation as wrong or right. A person's needs and living standards vary from nation to nation. It is a matter of heart motive. Why do you have what you have? Why are you seeking to obtain what you think you need? Is it to further the extension of the Gospel or to fulfill your own selfish desires?

It is not a sin to be rich. Prosperity is not a dirty word. Prosperity means "to succeed or experience success". The Apostle John declared, *"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth"* (3 John 2).

Wealth itself is not wrong. It is the love of money that is wrong and what you do with the finances you are given that is important. Your money represents your time, talents, abilities, and hard work. Money is not evil in itself and can either be a blessing or curse in your life.

If you use finances wisely and are liberal in giving to God and the needy, then you will be blessed. If you love your money so much that you hoard it for selfish reasons and refuse to give to the work of the Lord, then it becomes a curse.

AUGUST 13 EXTENDING THE KINGDOM

In recent years, there has been much teaching about finances that was self-centered and resulted in people being more concerned about getting their own selfish desires met than about doing the work of God. Some believers spend more time working to build up their bank accounts, enjoying the pleasures of this world, and acquiring material possessions than they do in extending the Kingdom of God.

Instead of setting their affections on things above (Colossians 3:2) and laying up treasures in heaven (Matthew 6:20), some believers are busy accumulating the wealth of this world for their own selfish purposes. They are not satisfied with having their needs met, nor are they content with what they have. They are constantly seeking more wealth and material possessions. Jesus warned His disciples:

...Guard yourselves and keep free from all covetousness-the immoderate desire for wealth, the greedy longing to have more; for a man's life does not consist and is not derived from possessing overflowing abundance, or that which is over and above his needs. (Luke 12:15, AMP)

Many believers have put confidence in their bank accounts, paychecks, and financial investments instead of depending on God. Jesus warned those in Laodicea who were trusting in worldly riches:

... because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew you out of My mouth! For you say, I am rich, I have prospered and grown wealthy, and I am in need of nothing; and do not realize and understand that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind and naked. (Revelation 3:16-17, AMP)

Because of so much errant teaching concerning finances, many have lost sight of God's purpose for prospering them. God does not prosper you so that you can consume it upon the lusts of your flesh and heap up treasures here on earth. No way! Believers who are doing this will someday have to give account before God! God is a God of purpose and He has a specific reason in pouring out financial blessings upon you. That purpose is to finance your divine destiny for the purpose of extending God's Kingdom.

When God entered into a covenant with Israel to prosper them above the nations of the earth, He had a divine purpose. He wanted the world to see His supernatural blessing upon His people and recognize that their God was the one true and living God. He financed their mission to the world, as He will do for you also.

As the seed of Abraham, you have not only inherited the same promises which belong to Israel, but you have a covenant with God that has been established on even better promises: *"But the ministry Jesus has received is as superior to theirs as the covenant of which he is mediator is superior to the old one, and it is founded on better promises"* (Hebrews 8:6, NIV).

AUGUST 14 A KINGDOM FOCUS

God is going to have an end-time people, raised up for a divine purpose, through whom He manifests His supernatural power. These people will present their lives as living sacrifices to reach the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They will give freely of their talents, time, spiritual gifts, and finances to accomplish His divine purposes.

These people will be proof-producers--men and women who not only will articulate the power of God, but who will also allow that power to be demonstrated through them by salvation, miracles, healing, and deliverance.

It is upon these people that God will release a special financial anointing, set them free from indebtedness, and launch them into a divine cycle of supernatural provision. God will do this for a specific purpose: The extension of His Kingdom. Jesus said...

...Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat; neither for the body, what ye shall put on. The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment. Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls? And which of you with taking thought can add to his stature one cubit? If ye then be not able to do that thing which is least, why take ye thought for the rest? Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith? And seek not ye what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, neither be ye of doubtful mind. For all these things do the nations of the world seek after: and your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things. But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you. (Luke 12:22-31)

God is raising up a people whose focus will be on the Kingdom. They will not worry about what they eat or drink, their clothing, or where they live. They will seek first the Kingdom of God, and all other things they need will be provided.

As a believer, you are called to divine purpose. When you change your focus from your personal needs to the goal of extending the Kingdom, you will be amazed at the divine provision that follows.

Where is your focus? Is it on making money, getting ahead materially, and fretting about your debts, or is your focus on extending the Kingdom of God?

AUGUST 15 LACKING NOTHING

The Israelites did not have direct access to God. It was necessary for them to approach Him through their sacrifices and gifts which were offered by the priests. Now, in our new covenant relationship, we have direct access to the Father. Whatever you need to accomplish the task He has given to you, God will provide it. Jesus said: *"Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you ...ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full"* (John 16:23-24). He also declared:

*"Which of you, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you, then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, **how much more** will your Father in heaven give good gifts to those who ask him!"* (Matthew 7:9-11, NIV).

Did you note those words "how much more"? Apply this phrase personally:

- How much more will your Heavenly Father supply your needs!
- How much more will your Heavenly Father prosper you!
- How much more will your Heavenly Father use you to extend the Kingdom!

God wants to bring you out of spiritual and financial bondage into a new position of strength where you are looking to Him as your source and depending upon His divine provision to accomplish supernatural purposes.

Before you can fulfill God's purposes in this end-time spiritual harvest, you must have a breakthrough where you are no longer depending upon your own limited abilities, but you are looking to God for His supernatural provision. You must stop focusing on your resources and your selfish desires and place your focus on His Kingdom.

When Jesus first commissioned His disciples and sent them out on an evangelistic campaign to preach the Gospel, He sent them without money or food. He told them, *"Take nothing for the journey-no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, no extra tunic"* (Luke 9:3, NIV). Why did Jesus send His disciples out with nothing? He did this so they would learn to depend upon God's supernatural provision. He did not want them to trust in their own limited resources, but to learn how to draw from God's unlimited reservoir. As they went from city to city, God supernaturally provided their needs. There was divine sufficiency and they did not lack anything. Later, Jesus asked them, *"When I sent you out with no purse or (provision) bag or sandals, did you lack anything?"* They answered, *"Nothing!"* (Luke 22:35, AMP).

Jesus sent the disciples out with nothing, yet they lacked nothing. That is truly divine provision! You may have nothing in the natural world, but you will lack nothing that you need to accomplish God's mandates.

AUGUST 16 DIVINE SUFFICIENCY

Regardless of the financial problems you are facing, God promises divine provision wherein you will lack nothing. Paul told the Corinthians: *"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work"* (2 Corinthians 9:8).

Note the word "sufficiency" in this verse. God has promised that you will have all sufficiency in all things so that you can do every good work that you need to do. Here is the key to experience this sufficiency:

Now he that ministereth seed to the sower both minister bread for your food, and multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness; Being enriched in every thing to all bountifulness, which causeth through us thanksgiving to God. (2 Corinthians 9:10-11)

Note the words "multiply" and "increase" in these verses. God has promised to multiply what you give so that not only will your needs be met, but you will be able to sow additional resources into the Kingdom of God. Even in times of economic famine, you will experience increase if you walk in obedience to God.

For the next few days, we will examine this truth as we follow in the footsteps of the Prophet Elijah. In 1 Kings 17, there is a tremendous example of divine provision during an economic famine. At the time of this account, there was a great drought throughout the land. It was judgment from God because of the sins of the people. The heavens were shut up and there was no rain, fulfilling the Word of the Lord spoken by the prophet Elijah. The land was barren and parched and the crops withered in the fields.

After Elijah's prophetic declaration regarding the coming drought and famine, God directed His servant to go to a brook called Cherith where he would receive supernatural provision. Elijah might have questioned, "How am I going to get food out here by a little brook? I did what God told me to do and now I am being sent to a remote location where there will be no food. I will be there all by myself and I am surely going to die." Is that what Elijah said? No! First Kings 17:5 tells us that Elijah ... *"went and did according unto the word of the Lord."*

God may be telling you to take certain steps of faith during your own famine. Maybe you haven't expanded your business because you have been paying too much attention to the financial horror stories in the news. Perhaps you have been afraid to tithe in obedience to God's Word because you fear it will cause personal lack. In times of economic or spiritual famine, you must listen only to God and act upon the direction He gives you.

AUGUST 17 GOD GUIDES AND PROVIDES

In a time of economic famine, Elijah obeyed God and went where He directed. In the natural, it was a place where it would be hard to survive. But look what happened: *"So he went and did according unto the word of the Lord: for he went and dwelt by the brook Cherith, that is before Jordan. And the ravens brought him bread and flesh in the morning, and bread and flesh in the evening; and he drank of the brook" (1 Kings 17:5-6).*

In Bible times, ravens were regarded as omens of misfortune, death, or tragedy and were considered unclean because of their scavenger habits. God chose unclean birds to feed His prophet! God will provide for you, but it may not be according to your preconceived ideas. Sometimes God provides through natural means and at other times through the supernatural, but you can be assured that *"... God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).*

Elijah had been in seclusion for some time by Brook Cherith when the Word of the Lord came to him saying, *"Arise, get thee to Zarephath, which belongeth to Zidon, and dwell there: behold, I have commanded a widow woman there to sustain thee" (1 Kings 17:9).* Elijah had already learned one of the key principles of financial provision: To be in God's place at God's time. So at the Word of the Lord, Elijah departed from Cherith and went to Zarephath:

So he arose and went to Zarephath. And when he came to the gate of the city, behold, the widow woman was there gathering of sticks: and he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going to fetch it, he called to her, and said, Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand. And she said, As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but an handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die. And Elijah said unto her, Fear not; go and do as thou hast said: but make me thereof a little cake first, and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth. And she went and did according to the saying of Elijah: and she, and he, and her house, did eat many days. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord, which he spake by Elijah. (1 Kings 17:9-16)

When you face a financial crisis, it is crucial for you to be able to hear the Word of the Lord concerning your circumstances and to act in obedience upon what He directs you to do. When God directed Elijah to go to Cherith, he went. When God told Elijah to leave Cherith and go to Zarephath, he immediately started on his way. You must be able to discern God's direction during difficult times and when you hear His voice, you must respond in obedience. Where God guides, He provides.

AUGUST 18 COMING TO THE END

The widow who lived at Zarepath was at a point of starvation. She was at the end of her own natural resources, at the point of her greatest need. She was fearful, had lost hope, and was preparing to die. The good news is that this is exactly when God steps in--when you get to the end of your own natural resources. It is when it seems all hope is gone that the resurrecting power of God speaks life into your negative circumstances. Like the little widow lady, you may feel there is no hope in your situation. The famine may have been so long and so dry that you are ready to give up. But when you have the sentence of death in the natural, then the resurrecting power of God steps in to do a miracle!

Elijah asked the widow woman to bring him some water and make him a cake to eat. She responded that all she had was a handful of flour and a little oil, that she was fixing it as a final meal for herself and her family, and then they would prepare to die. This woman's natural resources were totally exhausted and she was fearful and hopeless. She was actually making plans to starve to death! Talk about a financial famine! This may be where you are today. Your "handful of flour and oil" may represent your meager paycheck or bank account, your limited talents and abilities. As long as you keep your eyes on your own resources, you will remain hopeless. The more you look at your financial problems, the more fearful you will become and the more impossible your situation will seem. If you continue to look to your own resources, you will die spiritually and financially.

The prophet's first words to this widow woman were, "Fear not!" Then he directed her to use the small provisions she had to make a meal for him first and then make something for herself and her son. Then Elijah gave the widow woman God's promise: *"For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth" (1 Kings 17:14)*. This woman received the Word of the Lord, believed it, and acted upon it. She put obedience to God's commands ahead of her own needs. She baked a cake for Elijah first and then she discovered she had enough oil and flour to meet her own needs. Just as God promised, the jar of flour and the jug of oil did not run empty. Each day of the prolonged famine, as the widow reached down into the jar the flour was sufficient. As she poured from the vessel of oil, there was plenty. God may not send a huge inheritance to fix your financial problems. However, if you will put Him first and release what you have at His command, your needs will be met--even in times of famine.

The Apostle Paul confirmed this principle when he wrote these words: *"For we would not, brethren, have you ignorant of our trouble which came to us in Asia, that we were pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that we despaired even of life: But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us" (2 Corinthians 1:8-10)*. When you come to the end, God steps in.

AUGUST 19

PRINCIPLES FOR FINANCIAL FAMINE

Recession, inflation, and economic hard times have been with mankind since the beginning of time. They are not new situations demanding new solutions. Biblical answers for dire economic conditions appear early in book of Genesis: "*And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham...*" (Genesis 26:1). During this difficult time, God gave Abraham's son, Isaac, specific instructions to follow in order to prosper. These are principles which you can adopt during your own times of financial famine.

-Remain faithful to biblical principles. Many believers become inconsistent in times of economic pressure, growing lax about their personal devotions, their giving, and their church attendance. Deviating from these basic principles only creates more problems. The Lord told Isaac that He would bless him because his father, Abraham, "...*obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws*" (Genesis 26:5). God blessed Abraham because he walked faithfully in God's ways regardless of the circumstances of life and he looked to God as his Source. God directed Isaac to follow Abraham's example so that he would prosper, despite the famine.

-Do not follow the pattern of the world. Because of the famine in Israel, everyone was leaving for Egypt, where they heard things were better economically. But the Lord had a different plan for Isaac. He told him: ... "*Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and I will bless thee...*" (Genesis 26:2-3). Most of the time if you look at what the world is doing and then do the opposite, you will be in harmony with God's plans because the principles of the Kingdom of God are usually opposite those of the world. In times of crisis, do not look around and do what others are doing.

-Remain in the center of God's will. Remember that God can bless you in any location, so remain where He has placed you unless He directs you to do otherwise. "*Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field*" (Deuteronomy 28:3). In economically hard times, do not make any move--geographically or financially--without God's specific guidance. Even though you might hear rumors of prosperity in other locations, do not move without God's direction. Remain in His will, and--like Elijah--move only at His command.

-Sow generously during the famine. Isaac remained where God directed him and ... "*sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold: and the Lord blessed him*" (Genesis 26:12). Sow generously into God's work during times of financial famine and you will reap an abundant harvest.

God established these strategies of biblical economics in a time when dark clouds of adversity loomed on the horizon. Isaac followed these principles and was blessed. He prospered, despite the famine--and so can you!

AUGUST 20 REMOVING A MAJOR BARRIER

There is a major barrier that can hinder the divine provision of God from flowing into your life. You must eliminate it not only in order to receive financial blessings, but also to be able to fulfill your destiny. Let's start with the revelation from the Word:

"Therefore if thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath ought against thee; Leave there thy gift before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift" (Matthew 5:23-24).

Did you recognize the barrier? God's Word declares that if you bring your gift to the altar and there is anything wrong between you and another person, you are to first be reconciled to them and then offer your gift. If you are presenting your gifts with an unforgiving heart, they will not be accepted. Forgiveness is not just a reluctant handshake, a forced smile, and mumbled words. It is a true change in feelings and attitudes that comes from deep inside your spirit. The fault is swept away and its negative influence on your emotions, thoughts, and actions cease. You can only do this when you have been forgiven yourself and you understand the true concept of forgiveness. Here are five practical steps to extend forgiveness to others and open the way for your gifts to God and your blessings from Him to be received:

Step one: Deal with your anger. When you are hurt, anger often results. If you try to forgive before you have dealt with your anger, then forgiveness will not be genuine and will not last. Ask God for forgiveness for your anger.

Step two: Accept what happened. It is sometimes difficult to come to terms with the reality of the hurts you have experienced. You hope that everything will return to normal, but it won't. You must accept that the incident happened. You cannot undo it. You cannot dismiss it. You cannot return to how it was before the problem happened.

Step three: Recognize that the offender is valuable to God. The offender, like us all, is flawed because they are human. Do not minimize the evil they have done, but consider their positive points, their strengths, and their potential. Try to see them as God sees them, as valuable, important, and lovable despite their sins.

Step four: Acknowledge your part in the offense. In human interaction, it is rare for a broken relationship to be totally the fault of one person. Admit your part in the offence and seek forgiveness from God and the offended person.

Step five: Offer unrestricted forgiveness. God's forgiveness is offered without any conditions, despite His full awareness that we are completely untrustworthy beings who will fail again in the future. Do not demand any guarantees from the person to whom you are offering forgiveness. Forgive as God has forgiven you. Do you harbor unforgiveness against someone? Does someone have something against you? Deal with these issues, then bring your gifts of finances, time, and talents, and present them to God.

AUGUST 21
LIVING UNDER AN OPEN HEAVEN

Would you like to live under an open heaven where all of your needs are met--financial, spiritual, and physical? The key to doing is so simple, yet so profound that it will change your entire life and ministry.

Here is the key:

Bring all the tithes--the whole tenth of your income--into the storehouse, that there may be food in My house, and prove Me now by it, says the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of Heaven for you and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer (insects and plagues) for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine drop its fruit before the time in the field, says the Lord of hosts. (Malachi 3:10-11, AMP)

God said to bring all the tithes--the tenth of all your income--into the storehouse. As part of His covenant with His people, God required them to give a tithe of all they received. This was not optional. The tithe was considered holy and belonged to the Lord.

In God's plan for divine provision, He intended for the tithe to be the means by which He blessed and prospered His people and by which there would be no lack in the work of God. God directed Moses to tell the people to tithe on everything--flocks, grain, fruit, etc. (Leviticus 27:30,32).

God said, "Bring all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be food in my house." The storehouses in Bible times were the chambers in the temple where the tithes were stored. The storehouse today is not a single church or a particular denomination, but the overall work of God throughout the world.

Your tithes are to support the ministers of God--the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers--so that they can give themselves to the ministry of the Word of God. Your tithes are also to be used to support the needs of the local church, God's work around the world, and to meet the needs of orphans, widows, and the poor.

God never intended tithing to be a hardship on His people. As they were faithful in giving, God blessed their crops until there was such an abundance that not only were their own needs met, there was sufficiency for His work and for the needy.

Tithing was the key which opened the windows of heaven and released God's blessings into the lives of His people. The same principle is true today. Are you living under an open heaven?

AUGUST 22 PROVING GOD

You may be at a point where it seems there is no way out financially. You may feel that you are so far in debt that there is no hope of ever being debt-free. You have tried everything you know to do, yet you just can't seem to get ahead. You have confessed God's promises concerning His divine provision, yet for some reason you have not seen a manifestation of His blessings upon your finances.

Let us review the key we learned yesterday. God said: *"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"* (Malachi 3:10-11).

The word "prove" is translated from a Hebrew root word which means "to try or test; to investigate or examine." God's challenge is to prove Him to see that His promised blessings are true. His storehouse is full of everything you need and more, far greater than anything you can ask or think. The answer to your every need is there, stored up for you, and God is just waiting for you to act in obedience so He can prove Himself to you. God is saying, "Prove me--give me your tithe and test me to see if I will do what I have promised."

There are many believers who are being robbed of the joy and blessing God intended for them to experience through tithing. Many give their tithes simply because they feel it is their Christian duty. It has become a dry, lifeless ritual instead of a way to worship God. They give their tithes, but there is no joy, faith, or expectation of the blessings God has promised.

Other Christians give their tithes grudgingly. They consider it a hardship to give tithes. Others do not believe that the tithe belongs to God. Instead, they give God their leftovers --whatever is left after they have paid their bills and taken out money for other expenses.

God wants you to put Him first--above your own needs and desires, above the needs of your family, and above the needs of your ministry. Jesus said, *"But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you"* (Matthew 6:33). Many Christians are waiting for God to meet their financial needs first. They are waiting for Him to increase their income before they give their tithe. But God says, "Give Me your tithe first, then prove Me to see how I will pour out My blessings upon you."

AUGUST 23 CONSIDERING YOUR WAYS

God promised to open the windows of heaven and command His blessing upon Israel when they obeyed Him and gave their tithes. As long as they were obedient, Israel lived under an open heaven. Not only did God promise to give fruitful seasons so that their crops would prosper, He promised to guard them from anything that would spoil the crops before they were gathered. He said, *"I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes."* He told them they would reap such a blessing *"...that there shall not be room enough to receive it."* They could expect not only a harvest sufficient to meet their needs, but more than enough--an abundance. Divine provision in every area of their lives.

When the nation of Israel was disobedient and failed to give to God, they lived under a curse and the heavens were closed to them (Deuteronomy 28:15,23-24). Despite their knowledge of this promise, the people failed to recognize the reason why they were not prospering. God used the prophets Haggai and Zechariah to reveal that the conditions they were experiencing were a result of their disobedience:

Consider your ways (and set your mind on what has come to you). Now therefore thus says the Lord of hosts: Consider your ways (and set your mind on what has come to you). You have sown much, but you have reaped little; you eat, but you do not have enough; you drink, but you do not have your fill, you clothe yourselves, but no one is warm; and he who earns wages has earned them to put them in a bag with holes in it...You looked for much (harvest), and it came to little; and even when you brought that home, I blew it away. Why? says the Lord of hosts. Because of My house which lies waste, while you yourselves run each man to his own house (eager to build and adorn it). Therefore the heavens above you (for your sake) withhold the dew, and the earth withholds its produce. And I have called for a drought upon the land and the hill country, upon the grain, the fresh fruit juice, the oil, upon what the ground brings forth, upon men and cattle, and upon all the (wearisome) toil of men's hands. (Haggai 1:5-6, 9-11, AMP)

God told Israel to consider their ways--to look at how they were living to determine why they were not experiencing God's blessings. He told them, *"You looked for much (harvest). and it came to little; and even when you brought that home, I blew it away. Why? says the Lord of hosts. Because of My house which lies waste, while you yourselves run each man to his own house (eager to build and adorn it)" (Haggai 1:9, AMP).*

Many believers are living under a closed heaven and wondering why they are not being blessed. Some people blame their difficulties on Satan, when sometimes their problems are actually a result of their own disobedience to scriptural principles concerning finances. Are you continuing to incur debt? Are you co-signing for the debts of others? Are you not paying your bills? Are you refusing to forgive someone? Are you neglecting to tithe? All these are violations of scriptural principles that prevent the blessings of God. It is time to stop and consider your ways.

AUGUST 24 REVIEW, REPENT, RENEW

"You have planted much, but have harvested little. You eat, but never have enough. You drink, but never have your fill. You put on clothes, but are not warm. You earn wages, only to put them in a purse with holes in it." This is what the Lord Almighty says: "Give careful thought to your ways" (Haggai 1:6-7, NIV).

Do you feel like this--you have planted, but not harvested? Do you earn money and it just seems to disappear? If so, then God is saying to you, "Consider your ways." Examine your life and ministry to see where the problem lies. Here are some steps to take:

-Review your ways. Reevaluate your business practices, your giving, and your financial dealings. If you have not been tithing and are violating other scriptural principles, then you are living under a closed heaven.

-Repent of your transgressions. Ask God to forgive you for failing to give your tithes and offerings or violated scriptural financial principles. God doesn't want your excuses. He wants your repentance. Ask God to forgive you if you have neglected the work of God and put own your needs and desires first.

-Renew your covenant with God. If you are violating scriptural financial principles, stop! If you have not been tithing, begin to do so immediately. Be faithful and consistent in giving your tithes into the storehouse of God. Remember that tithing is the required minimum you are to give to God. You should also give offerings over and above your tithe.

The components of the financial covenant which Israel had with God required giving their very best consistently in both tithes and offerings. They pledged to give for the expenses of the work of God, declaring: *"We will not neglect the house of our God"* (Nehemiah 10:39, NIV).

Review, repent, renew--when you have taken these steps, get ready to receive! God will open the windows of heaven and pour out His blessings in such an abundance there will not be enough room for you to receive them. You will walk in a covenant relationship with Him where you are living in a continuous cycle of divine provision in every area of your life and ministry.

AUGUST 25 SUPERNATURAL DEBT RETIREMENT

Your main focus in reducing financial debt and receiving supernatural sufficiency should be fulfilling the spiritual destiny that God has for you. If you keep your focus on your financial situation, you will never dare to believe that God can release the provision necessary to fulfill your vision. God wants you to focus on His unlimited resources.

There is a tremendous Old Testament story in 2 Kings 4:1-7 that illustrates supernatural debt retirement. A widow woman came to the prophet Elisha with a desperate need. Her husband died and she had no source of income--no possible way to meet the needs of her family. She was in debt, and the creditor had come to take her sons as slaves in payment of the debt--a custom of that time. If ever anyone needed a miracle, she did. She had already lost her husband and now she faced the possibility of losing her sons. In her desperation, she cried out to the prophet Elisha for help.

Elisha answered, "What shall I do for you? Tell me, what do you have in the house?" The woman answered that she had nothing except a jar of oil. Elisha told her to borrow as many vessels as possible from her neighbors--not a few, but as many as possible. Then she was to go into her house, shut the door, and begin to pour her oil into the vessels she had collected.

Why was she to shut the door? To close out the unbelief of friends and family who might have criticized her and to shut out the dire circumstances around her. Do you need to shut the door on unbelief, criticism, and negative circumstances that are hindering your own faith for a supernatural miracle?

The widow acted upon the word of the Lord's prophet. She collected the vessels, entered into her house, shut the door, took her small bottle of oil, and began to pour. As she poured, the oil began to multiply. Can you imagine the joy she experienced each time she poured the oil and filled another vessel? She kept pouring and pouring until every empty vessel she had collected was filled to the brim. Then the prophet Elisha told her to sell the oil, pay her debt, and free her sons.

You may think your circumstances are so bad that you do not have anything with which to start. God multiplied a small supply of oil to meet this woman's need. Begin to act in faith upon God's Word and use what you have, no matter how small it may seem to you. There is a miracle in your house and it starts with what you already possess. Your "pot of oil" may be an idea, a talent, or an ability that--when presented to God--will result in financial freedom and sufficient provision for your needs. You may have limited resources, like the little lad in New Testament times who presented his loaves and fishes to the Master to feed a multitude. Take what little you have, present it to God, and watch what happens.

AUGUST 26 A TRANSFER OF WEALTH

So where will the money come from to retire your debt and finance your vision? If you will obey God in using your finances--give your tithes and offerings and follow scriptural financial principles--God will bless you in unexpected ways. He may give you wisdom and knowledge of how to invest wisely. He may give you an idea for an invention or a new business. He may give you a talent or ability that is needed in the market place.

He may also choose to supernaturally place in your hands the wealth of the wicked: *"For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to him that is good before God..." (Ecclesiastes 2:26)*. Do not just look to the natural. Focus on the supernatural. God may even use unbelievers to finance your destiny! The Bible mentions several such transfers of wealth from unbelievers to the righteous.

-Abraham. When Lot was taken captive by the enemy, Abraham rescued his nephew and took the spoils of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah.

-Isaac. God transferred the wealth that should have belonged to Abimelech and his people to Isaac to such an extent that the king told him: ... *"Move away from us; you have become too powerful for us "* (Genesis 26:16, NIV).

-Jacob. When Laban told Jacob that he could pay him only in speckled cattle that were birthed by the herd, God caused a majority of the cattle to have speckled calves. When Laban said that he would only pay in striped cattle, most of the calves birthed were striped. *"Thus the man increased and became exceedingly rich, and had many sheep and goats, and maidservants, menservants, camels, and donkeys" (Genesis 30:43, AMP)*.

-Joseph. The wealth of the nations was transferred into his hands for a divine purpose: To save the world from famine. To accomplish this mandate, Joseph lost all that was familiar and dear to him and experienced many trials. But Joseph remained faithful, and the wealth of the world eventually flowed into his hands.

-Solomon. When God told Solomon he could ask for anything and it would be given to him, Solomon asked for wisdom to rule God's people properly. His request so pleased the Lord, that He made him the most wealthy man alive at that time. Heathen kings and nations gave great wealth into his hands (1 Kings 3:10-13).

-Israel. When the people left Egypt, they took with them the wealth of Egypt. Years later, as they battled across their Promised Land, Israel was blessed with abundance as they conquered their enemies and took the spoils of war.

Don't be surprised if God does the same for you!

AUGUST 27 TOTAL RESTORATION

Perhaps you have lost it all. Your job is gone, you have lost your house, and your investments have vanished. Perhaps you have lost your ministry and even your reputation. You have lost everything. Do not despair, for God's Word is a marvelous record of divine restoration.

To the Israelites who had lost their economy due to plagues resulting from their sin, God said: *"And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten, the cankerworm, and the caterpillar, and the palmerworm, my great army which I sent among you. And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, that hath dealt wondrously with you: and my people shall never be ashamed"* (Joel 2:25-26).

Even though the economic devastation Israel was experiencing was the result of their own sins, God promised restoration when they returned to Him. Perhaps your financial or spiritual crisis is your fault because of unwise decisions or violations of scriptural principles. Regardless of the reason for your crisis, God wants to restore all you have lost.

Perhaps the losses you are experiencing are not your fault. Have you done everything you know to do right and still lost everything? You are not alone. Two men in the Bible experienced total devastation and divine restoration:

Job: "Everything is gone!" In essence, these are words Job declared when he said, *"...Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly"* (Job 1:21-22). Job lost his children, his house, and his flocks--the latter which represented his income. His wife turned against him, and Job was afflicted physically, but still he refused to blame God or grow bitter. Instead, Job worshipped the Lord. In the end, God blessed Job with more than he had before his devastating losses (Job 42:12).

David: David experienced similar devastation when he lost everything at a place called Ziklag. The Amalekites invaded the city and took the women captive, including David's wives. Everything the people owned was gone and the city was burned to the ground. David and his men wept until there were no tears left to shed. It was a desperate situation, and David's men were so upset that they even talked of killing him because they blamed him for their losses (1 Samuel 30:1-6). In the face of this devastation, David encouraged himself in the Lord, took his troops, and returned to the battlefield to reclaim all that was rightfully his (1 Samuel 30:18-19).

Job and David recovered all--and then some! God wants to restore all you have lost also. Do not remain in the midst of financial or spiritual ruins weeping over your losses. Encourage yourself in the Lord, then rise up and begin to act in faith to claim total restoration.

AUGUST 28

GOD IS YOUR SOURCE

The story is told that when Lawrence of Arabia was in Paris with some of his friends after World War I was concluded, he took them to see all of the famous landmarks of the city. The group visited Napoleon's tomb, the Louve, and the Arch of Triumph.

But these amazing sights did not impress them as much as the water faucet in the bathtub in the hotel in which they were staying. They spent a lot of time turning the faucet on and off. How amazing! They could just turn the handle and get all of the water they needed.

When the time came for the group's departure from Paris, the story is told that Lawrence found his Arabian friends in the bathroom with wrenches trying to remove the faucet so they could take it with them.

"You see, " they explained, "we live in a very dry country. We need faucets, because if we have them, we can get all the water we want." Lawrence had to explain to these men that the faucet depended upon the water system to which it was attached. If there was no system attached, no water would flow through it.

This story is humorous, but it is actually a good example of how many believers look to sources other than God for financial blessing. They look to their jobs, to relatives, to the government, or to the social welfare system. If they lose their job, they are devastated. If their rich relatives die, they mourn that their source of finances is shut off. If the government fails and they lose their benefits, they panic.

Your source of financial blessing is not your job, your relatives, or the government. God may use these "faucets" to deliver finances to you, but He is actually the source of your income. It is God who directs the flow of provisions into your life. If one "faucet" ceases to deliver, then He will provide another. When the manna ceased to fall, Israel ate of the crops of their new land.

It is the connection to the water source that makes the faucet effective. It is your secure connection to the Source that will keep the flow of finances pouring into your life.

Is your faith in the Source or the faucet?

AUGUST 29 THIS IS YOUR SEASON

Just as God had a purpose for prospering the nation of Israel, He has a divine purpose for prospering you. You are living in the most crucial hour the church has ever known. You are living in God's end-time harvest. You are part of the labor force that must reap the spiritual harvest of the nations of the world before it is too late.

During World War II, the British were the last line of resistance against the powerful Nazi oppression that was sweeping across Europe. Britain was under relentless attack and was in danger of collapse because they lacked the resources to see the conflict through to victory. British Prime Minister Winston Churchill issued an appeal to the world: "Give us the tools, and we will finish the job." He knew that without help, they would not be able to persevere to win the war. The world responded, and victory was achieved.

There is a call coming from the nations of the world today, "Give us the tools, and we will finish the job." Believers around the world are under the relentless attack of the enemy as they are battling for the souls of men and women and boys and girls. They are calling for help--for training materials, technology, books, supplies, and financial resources--so that they can get the job done. God wants to position you and your ministry financially so that not only will your own needs be met, but you will be able to answer this critical call.

This is your season, the time God has appointed you to reap the greatest spiritual and financial harvest you have ever received so that you will be able to sow resources into the Kingdom of God. Now is not the time to give up! Don't doubt! Don't fret! God's Word will be fulfilled just as He promised! Don't speak negatively about your circumstances because--as you have learned--there is tremendous power in your words: *"Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof"* (Proverbs 18:21).

If you feed on doubt and unbelief, you energize Satan. Do not speak words that encourage your enemy because... *"...by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned"* (Matthew 12:37). Instead of grumbling and complaining about your lack, begin to praise God for the abundance you are going to experience: *"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you"* (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

As you face the future, focus on the supernatural provision of God. Thank Him for His divine provision. Every morning and evening, give thanks to the Lord. This will keep your focus on God, who is your true provider. An attitude of thanksgiving focuses your thoughts on God and eliminates anxiety over the future.

AUGUST 30 ONE MAN AND GOD

Among the greatest examples of what can be accomplished through simple faith in the promises of God is demonstrated in the ministry of a man named George Muller. When God put it in this man's heart to build orphanages in England, Muller had only two shillings (50 cents) in his pocket. From this humble beginning and throughout his entire ministry, Muller never made his needs known to any man, but only to God alone. He never sent out financial appeals or took offerings. He never contacted donors or had a fund-raising program.

By trusting God alone, some \$7,000,000 in U.S. funds were given to Muller to build and maintain orphan homes in Bristol, England. Near the time of Muller's death, there were five immense buildings which accommodated two thousand orphans. In all the years since the mission was launched, the orphans never went hungry. One of the greatest effects of Mueller's ministry was to inspire others to follow his example, resulting in at least one hundred thousand orphans being cared for in England alone some fifty years after Muller began his work.

In addition to directing the orphanages, Muller preached three times a week from 1830 to 1898. When he turned 70, he fulfilled a life-long dream of missionary work for the next 17 years until he was 87. He traveled to 42 countries, preaching on average of once a day, addressing some three million people. From the end of his travels in 1892 when he was 87 until his death in March of 1898, Muller preached in his church and worked for the Scripture Knowledge Institute which he had founded.

His funeral was held in Bristol where he had served for sixty-six years. Tens of thousands of people reverently stood along the route of the simple procession. Men left their workshops and offices, women left their homes, all seeking to pay their last respects to a man who by faith alone had so greatly impacted his generation. George Muller's advice was:

"Trust in God, not in man, not in circumstances...not in natural prospects, not in former donors, but solely in God. This is that which brings the blessing. If we say we trust in Him, but in reality do not, then God, taking us at our word, lets us see that we do not really confide in Him; and hence failure arises. On the other hand, if our trust in the Lord is real, help will surely come...We serve a God with unlimited resources and power, all the resources of the Godhead are at our disposal."

This is an example of what God can do through one man who places his confidence in God as his Source. What God did for George Muller, He can do for you. What God did for Israel and others down through the centuries, He will do for you. You have access to supernatural sufficiency--all that is needed to achieve your divine destiny.

AUGUST 31 FACING YOUR FINANCIAL FUTURE

As you implement the knowledge you have gained this month and apply it to your life, your ministry, and your finances, God will continue to multiply your resources. The Greek word for multiplication is *plethuno*, which means, "to increase, to cause to multiply." Within God's cycle of divine provision, supernatural multiplication continuously occurs. Here are some specific guidelines to assure that you continue to experience divine provision.

Look to God as your source. Don't think that just because you are living in a poor nation or working at a low paying job that God cannot provide abundantly for you. If you live in a developing nation, don't look to America for funding of your ministry because when the United States suffers economically, you will also. Some of the greatest churches in the world are being built in economically-challenged nations without help from other regions. Don't look to your rich friends or family for provision. Don't look to your job, your boss, your investments, your talents or abilities. God is your source.

Understand that God uses need to direct your life. As you learned in the story of Elijah, when provision at Cherith Brook ceased, Elijah was directed to where new provision awaited. When the brook runs dry financially or spiritually where you are, perhaps it is time to relocate your residence, redirect your ministry, or attain a new job. God provided for Elijah "there"--in the place to which he was directed by the Holy Spirit. Where God guides, He provides. Don't spend the rest of your life sitting by a dried-up brook lamenting over the fact that resources are no longer flowing to you.

Remember that the key to increase is release. Give what you have, and God will increase it (Proverbs 11:24-25). Faithfully give your tithes and offerings. Give of your time and talents. As you give, so shall you receive.

Never forget what God has done for you in the past. Don't ever forget how God blessed you and brought you out of financial and spiritual bondage. Remember His faithfulness and how He has fulfilled every promise.

Be diligent in applying scriptural financial principles. If you are not familiar with these, obtain the Harvestime publication entitled "*Divine Provision*". Divine provision does not mean you will never have financial challenges. Jesus was clear that "*In the world ye shall have tribulation*", but He said, "*...be of good cheer; I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33). Jesus delegated to His followers power over all the power of the enemy, and this includes the enemy's diabolical power to steal finances, provision, and blessings from you (Luke 10:19).

Continue to seek the Lord. It was said of King Uzziah, "*...as long as he sought the Lord, God made him to prosper*" (2 Chronicles 26:5). Sadly, "*...when he was strong, his heart was lifted up to his destruction: for he transgressed against the Lord his God*" (2 Chronicles 26:16). Learn from this example.