

THE NAZARITE

By

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The LORD said to Moses, "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of separation to the LORD as a Nazirite, he must abstain from wine and other fermented drink and must not drink vinegar made from wine or from other fermented drink. He must not drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins. As long as he is a Nazirite, he must not eat anything that comes from the grapevine, not even the seeds or skins.

"During the entire period of his vow of separation no razor may be used on his head. He must be holy until the period of his separation to the LORD is over; he must let the hair of his head grow long. Throughout the period of his separation to the LORD he must not go near a dead body. Even if his own father or mother or brother or sister dies, he must not make himself ceremonially unclean on account of them, because the symbol of his separation to God is on his head. Throughout the period of his separation he is consecrated to the LORD. "If someone dies suddenly in his presence, thus defiling the hair he has dedicated, he must shave his head on the day of his cleansing — the seventh day. Then on the eighth day he must bring two doves or two young pigeons to the priest at the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. The priest is to offer one as a sin offering and the other as a burnt offering to make atonement for him because he sinned by being in the presence of the dead body. That same day he is to consecrate his head. He must dedicate himself to the LORD for the period of his separation and must bring a year-old male lamb as a guilt offering. The previous days do not count, because he became defiled during his separation Num 6:1-12. NIV

Introduction

This book came out of great concern about the future of Prayer Network for Universal Revival (PNUR). I wanted to know from the Lord why PNUR came to existence and why it seems so different from most other ministries on the earth. Honestly most times I feel something must be wrong with me and the way I want things done. It is in answer to those questions that the Spirit of God began to explain to me the uniqueness of the Nazirite. It is not only for me but for all who wish to be involved in this mandate from more than a surface level.

Readers will observe that the author did not confine himself to the Old Testament interpretation of the Nazirite but went further to include the matters of discipleship. People like Daniel and Simeon who were never referred to as Nazirites in the bible were added to the number. Hence in the context of this book, the Nazirites refers to those who have decided to have a deeper walk with God.

This book is intended to provoke deep thoughts and raise questions which the author did not answer in the book. It is intended to push the reader to do more research and provoke inquest into deeper meaning of Christian service and pulpit ministry.

Forgive me to say that I never intended that everybody will like this book. Some will find it boring; others will think it holds extreme views of Christianity. It will not be a surprise if some leaders warn their members and wards to keep away from this book.

Having said all this, let us also add that this book has to its credit simplicity of language and centrality of bible views presented therein. Except where it cannot be helped, the author did all within his ability so that the teachings in this book are central truth of the bible and such that will weather the storm of time. Denominational dogmas are tactfully avoided and doctrinal conflicts which in themselves contribute nothing to the up-building of the believer are thrown aside.

Finally, let me apologize ahead of time to those who will be hurting by reading this book; those who will discover by reading this book that what they have held over the years as Christian service is nothing but rubbish. There will also be those whose doctrines and theology this book will recommend for the dustbin. I beg them to pardon me; though the pain was intended to bring them to this point so that they won't end-up in greater sorrow in eternity.

Let me boast that this book will raise a generation of God's arm that will rout the gates of Hades and uphold the purpose of the Messiah in this age. Hence the end-time army of Christ will find it helpful.

May the Holy Spirit lead you into all truth, in Jesus Name!

Chapter One

Consecration of the Nazirite

The Nazirite is one who has an oath of self consecration to the Lord. Our main text scripture says that it must have the will of the person walking in the vow. It will have to be the person who resolves to have this kind of walk with God. If we take it a bit further we can see that it is not something for everybody. A Nazirite is chosen from among God's people. Moses was to pass this instruction to the Israelites; implying the people of God. In today's context, the believers, the born again Christians, those who have already decided to walk with Jesus. The fact that someone did not make the vow will not imply that he is not to be seen as a believer. Even among the ministers of the gospel, it is not all the ministers that fit into the walk of consecration with the Lord. Among the followers of Jesus Christ, twelve men were chosen to be the Apostles, yet among the twelve, three distinguished themselves to be at the mount of transfiguration. This is only to remind us that we should not expect everybody to key-into a deeper walk with God. Looking at our text again we see that the Nazirite is the one who made the vow; he made the vow when every other person is busy at other things. The temptation is that when people are not walking with God as we are doing, we begin to feel bad, condemn them or even try to find satisfaction by finding a common ground; a meeting point between our consecration and their complacency. This is always a difficult task, as experience has shown that this is never possible. It is like walking with a pair of shoes, one high and the other flat. It then leads into compromise which is the first step to backsliding, or it lands us into emotional torture. We become offended and bitter. This undermines our consecration, if anything, it will deprive us of the joy of our devotion to our Lord and master. Again we become fruitless hence our objective is defeated.

In the Old Testament the Nazirite approaches the priest and declares his interest to walk in uncommon devotion and consecration to God. It is true that some like Samson were born as Nazirites, yet to prove that they have their choice he had the liberty to expose the secret of his power to Delilah. We will see more about this subsequently.

There is one major point in the matter of this Nazirite consecration; women were not allowed to be priests or to come close to ceremonial places of worship. But a woman can dedicate herself to be Nazirite. ***If a man or woman wants to make a special vow, a vow of separation to the LORD as a Nazirite.***

There are three major issues raised as one prepares to make this consecration. These are things the one approaching to consecrate himself to God must consider. Jesus Christ said that he ought to count the cost. He should keep in mind that his consecration will cost him.

Abstain from Wine

It is interesting to note that as at the time of this instruction, wine was regarded as a sign of God's goodness to a nation and a man. The psalmist says that wine gladdens the heart of man (104:15), God promised to protect the wine of his people, so that aliens will no longer deprive them of it, so that the people of God would drink their wine in the presence of the Lord.

The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his mighty arm: "Never again will I give your grain as food for your enemies, and never again will foreigners drink the new wine for which you have toiled; but those who harvest it will eat it and praise the LORD, and those who gather the grapes will drink it in the courts of my sanctuary." Isa 62:8-10 NIV

It is wonderful that God sealed this promise with an oath. When wine was lacking in the land, God asked the people to pray and mourn for the loss, so that God will restore it.(Joel 1:9-10).

The point I wish to make here is that what God expects the Nazirite to sacrifice is not sin. Sin has neither spiritual nor physical value. Sin is worthless; the Christian who is still far from the ground of deeper walk with God still views sin as something good and sees it as a sacrifice to leave sin.

Wine here means merry making, in Apostle Paul's language, living like a civilian (2Tim2:3-). Wine means the carefree living. There is the kind of lifestyle that intoxicates just like wine. Materialism intoxicates, the more houses you build, greater demand they make on your time and person, the more business you command, the more distracted you become to handle the things of God. God had obviously been calling Elisha, but he had twelve yokes of oxen, he had salaries to pay, he had customers to supply many more bags of wheat every year; many more tractors break down and many more repairs to be made; many more loans taken and many more to pay back. Deep down in his heart Elisha knew God wanted him to give him more time, but he was intoxicated by his business. What was the result? Elijah stood on mount Carmel all alone with a hell of personal assistant who did not know how to stand and wait for the

rain to show-up, without distracting the man that did the praying alone. When Elijah told him to go, he was quite glad to leave (1kgs 19:3-4). He had no part in that ministry, no portion in its costs and blessings. He was just standing there because somebody had to attend to the man of God.

How about Elijah? ***“I am the only one left” (1kgs19:14)***, He cried. Oh! The loneliness, the frustration, the agony of working with somebody who lacked spiritual sight, somebody who was at the same geographical location, but very far away as long as the spiritual location was concerned. The agony of trying to upgrade a mind that is bound to the below, bound to this earth and its ways, when there is an assignment for the mountain tops. Those were the agonies of Elijah while Elisha drove his yokes of oxen (1kgs19:19). You can see now why he begged to die – it was not as much about the threat of Jezebel, it was the loneliness, the forsakenness. That was the way Jesus Christ felt in the Garden of Gethsemane too. “Could you not pray with me for just an hour?” (matt26:48) he cried. “Can’t you see the challenges around the ministry, around my family, around the work I do?” But at that time they were mere men. Believers? Yes, they were, but there was needed something to be done in them to upgrade them. That was not the first time. Each time he spoke about “Yeast”, all they remembered was bread, each time they saw a storm, all they knew was to cry, even while talking about his death, it was a political issue to them. Their concern was who will be his replacement. Such was the pains of Jesus Christ with soulish leaders in his ministry; men who saw the Cross as a reproach. One of them stood before him to rebuke him, “You must not talk about death, not to mention death on the cross. You must not talk about suffering or persecution. Don’t talk about the price for the reward. You can have the crown without the cross; you can make gain without pain”. If you are a leader walking in the spirit perhaps you have felt this way yourself and Elijah knew that pain too.

The Nazirite must not be a man who leaved on the below, he must not be a man involved in what intoxicates. Any other person can do that, and God will continue to bless them, but not the Nazirite. His standing with God is different; his journey with God is further. What God is doing with him is deeper; hence, the lifestyle must be different.

Not only wine should he abstain from, but things that are close to the family of wine though they may not intoxicate. The scripture says even grape juice. So why should they avoid these things. There is a beverage in Nigeria called “Maltina”, it is non-alcoholic, but to suit the taste of those who drink alcohol, they blended it with

mash- mash is used in brewing beer. It is the foaming agent. It makes you feel like you are taking beer when you are actually taking non-alcohol. The Lord says that the Nazirite should not tolerate things that are near the things that intoxicate. They should avoid them as they avoid wine. They must shun all appearances of evil. The enemy of their consecration is always looking for ways to desecrate them. He is always looking for in-roads into their spiritual life. That goes to warn us as Christians who have resolved to live lives of deep consecration about interaction. Bible says that it is easier for bad communication to corrupt good manners than the reverse (1Cor. 15:33). A man desiring a deeper walk with God should keep off men who see it a punishment to deny themselves of wine. Keep away from believers who see nothing wrong in gambling. Keep away from men who see nothing wrong with bringing comedians who make jest with the name and cross of Christ in to their church building to entertain their congregation. Keep away from men who spend hours watching football marches and home videos. Keep away from men who see godliness as a means of material gains, so employ all manner of deceitful methods in fund raising. Keep away from Christians whose attitude to fashion is not different from women of night-clubs. Keep away from brethren who see nothing wrong with ordaining prostitutes and the sexually immoral as church workers. Keep away from men who no longer see sin as sin, but has broken them into different categories. Keep away from musicians who borrow musical beats from **Babylon** and **Egypt**. Keep away from them in all their categories. It does not matter how many their members may be or how generous they claim to be or how popular they have become. Yes, at times they are the ones that if you invite them as speakers to your church, many people come to hear them in your program. But keep away from them. They will desecrate you. They will put a divide between you and your savior. You then become as a fool before him, who makes a vow but not able to keep your vow. (Eccl. 5:4). It was by choice you are a Nazirite, keep away from them. They chose not to because, like Lot, they want to have a land like Eden, near the Nile of Egypt, yet of a truth near Sodom. It will not be long and they will be captured as one of the kings of Sodom. Though you rescue them, they will yet sit as city elders at the city gate of Sodom. If by intercession you, like Abraham, pray them out, they will return empty and even their seed will be nothing different from the daughters of Sodom, who are skilled in getting men drunk and dragging them into sexual sin. (Please read Gen.13, 14 and 19). You see now why you have to keep away from them. They will never be complete again even in their escape, for Lot and his wife have become one flesh, yet she is of Sodom and there she must end up even as a reminder to brethren who got unequally yoked to rich

unbelievers because of what they tend to gain. John the beloved says that their sin is on to death.

If anyone sees his brother commit a sin that does not lead to death, he should pray and God will give him life. I refer to those whose sin does not lead to death. There is a sin that leads to death. I am not saying that he should pray about that. All wrongdoing is sin, and there is sin that does not lead to death. 1 John 5:16-17NIV

It has gone as deep as your consecration to God. As far as the East is from the West are your sins removed from you (Ps103:12), and in the same distance you are apart from them. Flee!

Chapter two

Unkempt Hair

The Nazirite must let his hair become unkempt- because the symbol of his separation to God is on his head. We need to go to the New Testament to understand this clause. Apostle Paul stated that it is shameful for a man to grow long hairs,

Does not the very nature of things teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a disgrace to him, 1 Cor 11:14 NIV

If this is the case, why then did God command the Nazirite to leave his head to grow bushy? The Nazirite is to lose his personal ego and honor. By making the choice to be a Nazirite, he was humbling himself, he was saying, "I will never seek my own interest during the period of this consecration". He is to submit himself under the government of God and his Holy Spirit. There will not be another interest wrestling with God's interest in his life. Family ties mean nothing to him, for not even the death of his own father will compel him to shave his head. Apostle Paul says that through the cross of Jesus Christ he was crucified to the world and the world was crucified to him (Gal.6:14). Who wants to keep company with a man wearing some stinking long hairs? He took up the long hairs to make himself repulsive to the world, it was deliberate, he meant to separate himself from the world and therefore he kept himself in a condition there will not be attraction to the world. The world did not want him as much as he did not want the world. The world did not put up the divide. The world will never put up the divide. The world is always looking for a way to break that barrier so it can come into us. It was fool hardy for Lot to think living near Sodom will hold no challenge. He did not intend to live inside Sodom; his interest was only the beautiful land that had a common boundary with Sodom. But it was not long Sodom swallowed him up.

I wonder whose spirit the Holy Spirit is striving with at this point. I wonder who is about to pitch his tent near Sodom because of some earthly honor. Don't fool yourself. Remember Samson, he had deceived himself he will be able to hold out against Delilah. You know the rest of the story.

There is this sad example of a highly respected man of God in Nigeria who preached against sin on Television and everywhere he went. He was known for that and those who hated him for his Nazirite stance called him all manner of names. His members were known for their spiritual discipline and character, if you ask me he

was a Nazirite. There came a governor of his state who got very generous to the point of building him a house. Our brother soon began to attend political meetings with people he condemned before this time. He even joined in campaigning for that governor as he contested for presidency. The same governor holds the record of the most notorious governor ever of his state, many extra-judicial killings took place under his regime, cult groups multiplied under government sponsorship and finally he was disqualified due to his corrupt practices. Our brother had to face his congregation once to explain why a man like him should back such a notorious character. Thank God he was able to recover. He wanted honor, he wanted reward, and he wanted to stand with the “Who is Whos” of the society. But how could he do that with the sign of the consecration of his God on his head?

If we look through the bible we find that most men who walked with God were lonely men. We are going to see more of this ahead. You cannot put your interest ahead and yet walk in consecration. Jesus Christ shares the views of Paul in this matter.

"If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters — yes, even his own life — he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. - Luke 14:26-27NIV
I don't know of anything more difficult as for a natural man to lay down his honor. Let me add that when a man begins to overcome self-will and self-interest he begins to make room for the Spirit of God. That now explains why God will want a man desiring a closer walk to lay down his own honor.

Keep Away from Death

The Nazirite must avoid the defilement caused by sudden death. We have to break this into two sides.

Jesus said that our righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees and Sadducees; otherwise we cannot enter the kingdom of God (Matt5:20). What is the standard of the righteousness of the Sadducees and Pharisees? ***Thou shall not...., thou shall.....*** wait to be driven by the law of necessity before we obey any command of God. They will obey the commands of God, if failure to do so will attract punishment. On the other hand, they may obey if there is a reward promised; like tithing and first fruit harvest. In other words the law of sin and death. You obey a particular law to avoid God's wrath or earn his blessing. This is a very elementary walk with God. Such believers cannot have a deep walk with God.

The Nazirite is not walking in that lower region of things. Death occurs before him, and desecrates his head because he was not listening to the Holy Spirit. Otherwise, the Holy Spirit would have warned him before the death occurs. This speaks of consistent walk with the Spirit of God. Because he is walking under consecration to God, he has to be led by the Spirit of the Lord. And the bible says that as many as are led by the spirit of the Lord are the sons of God. He is confined in the Lord, he cannot move on his own. The government over him is not the natural government but a spiritual one. If ever he takes judgment by what he sees, by what he hears or out of mere instinct, emotion or sympathy, he is at risk of exposing himself to spiritual death, consequence of defilement.

Naturally one would say, "What wrong of his is it that somebody died in his presence?" This is for the ordinary believer. For the realm he operates it is serious enough to take any action outside the government of the Holy Spirit. To show that he understands and accepts the government of the Spirit he is to be punished for it and he submits himself to the discipline. He is to start all over again. He does not say, I have come thus far in this thing, how can I go back? God understands. Even though I started this thing outside the government of the Spirit, I will continue. I will be careful next time but I will continue with this one. No! He has to go back. He has to retribute that money, he has to say to the young rich woman he plans to marry, beloved, this decision was as a result of acting outside the government of the Spirit that guides me. It is okay for others to walk in this way, but for me it is death. It is defilement. The way this ministry started may be okay for others, but it is death to me. Others may do this job and make money, but not for me. It is the realm of death. It will mean my walk outside the government of my kingdom. And they ask him, "Do you intend to lose all privileges accruing to you? Do you intend to let yourself be humiliated? Do you know what people will say about you? Do you know what even other Christians will think about you? They will call you a fool, a weakling, a coward and scared rat".

Yes I know. But you see, I am not like others. I don't seek my own honor; I don't seek my own praise. Can't you see my head; can't you see that I am living in shame already? What shame is greater than these long hairs? That was what I signed that day that I stood out before the high priest of my profession, the Lord and Master of my soul. For you it is time because any time is right for you (John 7: 6). But I have to wait for Him. Any person walking like this is a mystery to his generation (1 Peter 4:4).

The Realm of Death

The next point is that the Nazirite must avoid the realm of death. The just, the righteous the kingdom citizen live by faith, and not by sight. The only thing that keeps him alive is faith. As oxygen is the only gas that keeps animals alive, faith is the only thing that gives him life. As only the country's currency is the only legal tender in the open market, so faith is the currency for the Nazirite. Anything done outside faith is death. He avoids the realm where men make judgment and take decisions based on what they see, hear or feel. It is the realm of death. Why? The government over his head says a total, "No!"

Chapter three

The Conflict of the Nazirite

Anyone who chooses to walk this way is a wonder to his generation but also God's indictment on those who live as if God does not exist. When God raises Nazirites in the land it is his way to challenge those living carefree to change their ways. But more often than not, the opposite is the result. The Nazirite instead of being honored and encouraged is despised and persecuted. In a dispensation men are trying to deceive themselves that God does not exist, the Nazirite says, "No! God exists." What is the effect?

Therefore, since Christ suffered in his body, arm yourselves also with the same attitude, because he who has suffered in his body is done with sin. As a result, he does not live the rest of his earthly life for evil human desires, but rather for the will of God.....

They think it strange that you do not plunge with them into the same flood of dissipation, and they heap abuse on you. (1 Peter 4:1-2, 4)

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you. Matt 5:10-12 NIV

Those who live like this, draw the anger of the devil, his demons, agents and the systems of this sin impoverished world to themselves. They are an offence to the worldly Christian, who would want everyone else to dwell on the below. This is no surprise to God who raised the Nazirite and the prophet. It is the mind of God to judge the church, the world and the devil's kingdom through the ministry of the Nazirite. He tends to condemn the three by displaying his great wisdom and power through the Nazirite. But it will not be a fare contest except there was a conflict. The prophet and the Nazirite come in to provoke this conflict. Let us consider some who lived like this in the past.

Abel

A certain bible writer captures this quite strongly.

Do not be like Cain, who belonged to the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own actions were evil and his brother's were righteous. 1 John 3:12NIV

That is the verdict; Cain's work was evil, Abel's work was righteous. It was not about sacrifices but about moral standing. Why would he want to kill me because I did my thing my way? I did not stop him from doing his thing his way but now he hates me for doing my thing my way. I love my God and will only give him the best from my possessions. He claims he loves God but willingly gives him the despised and rejected things from his possession. I find satisfaction in what I do and the way I do it. He seems to lose his peace after doing his own thing his own way. Instead of thinking of how he can improve on his way of doing things, he is thinking of how to stop me from doing that which gives me peace and satisfaction. He hates me for being myself to the point of wanting to take my life. The bible says that this cannot be ordinary; whether he knows it or not he is under external influence, that influence is the devil. He has sold himself and devil only uses him to do his will.(2 Tim 2: 26).

Beloved that is the conflict; ***light has come into the world, but men love darkness because their works are evil (John 3:19).***

Go through the streets of any city, go through the congregation of any church, go to any gathering of gospel ministers, go to any place where people say they are serving God, this conflict is there. There is a deliberate effort to try to cut off light and righteousness. In this also Cain was judged and cut off. Even though he did not die immediately, his generation was eternally cut off from this earth and his memory only used as a curse and warning to turn others from following his example. How about Abel? He triumphed. The bible said that even though he died physically then, he still speaks (Heb. 11:4). The memory of the righteous is a blessing and we can say with certainty that where the righteous goes there Abel has gone to wait for the rest.

Noah

In an age when the bible says that God regretted creating man, a single man stood out to say, "Though all fall away, I will still stand in my faith".

By faith Noah, when warned about things not yet seen, in holy fear built an ark to save his family. By his faith he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness that comes by faith. Heb 11:7 NIV

Did you read where it says, ***He condemned the world?*** That is what the Nazirite does; he condemns the world and their systems. It is now only expected that that which he condemns will fight back. Persecute him! Try to take him out of the way!

Mordecai

In his days, every other Jew felt there was no need to fight on. The other nations had since surrendered. Haman was the king's man, no matter his reputation, the king has chosen him, if any man wants to be alive, he must bow to Haman. It does not matter what the bible or any preacher was saying. When God wishes to stop this non-sense he will first kill Haman. So everyone bowed, but suddenly somebody discovers that one man will not bow. Not out of stubbornness, but out of duty to his God. Those around him got uncomfortable.

After these events, King Xerxes honored Haman son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, elevating him and giving him a seat of honor higher than that of all the other nobles. All the royal officials at the king's gate knelt down and paid honor to Haman, for the king had commanded this concerning him. But Mordecai would not kneel down or pay him honor.

Then the royal officials at the king's gate asked Mordecai, "Why do you disobey the king's command?" Day after day they spoke to him but he refused to comply. Therefore they told Haman about it to see whether Mordecai's behavior would be tolerated, for he had told them he was a Jew. Est 3:1-4 NIV

Why were they begging Mordecai to bow? What profit was it to them? Even Haman did not notice the one man who would not bow. Mordecai's devotion condemned them, his attitude exposed their compromise. His integrity implicated them. If only Mordecai will bow, it will make everyone equal, so they plead with Mordecai, "Please, our friend Mordecai, bow as we bow. We know you are not afraid of death as we are, but your continuing to stand in the midst of our shame and compromise is torturing us. For the sake of your friends' conscience, please bow." It was not about the king and his command, for in their closets they break his command, but they were tortured by a single man's commitment to his God. When pleading and seduction failed they resorted to force. If he will not bow in peace he will bow in pieces. The battle starts or rather changes gear; Mordecai against the king's nobles, Haman, the king himself who had commanded that he bow to a vile man and other Jews who had bowed. Yes, let us understand that many other Jews had to bow for fear of their lives. Remember what happened when Moses first approached Pharaoh over the release of the Israelites.

Pharaoh knew how to quell canal Christians. Send them a little more affliction, and they will abandon God, his prophet and the church.

That same day Pharaoh gave this order to the slave drivers and foremen in charge of the people: "You are no longer to supply the people with straw for making bricks; let them go and gather their own straw. But require them to make the same number of bricks as before; don't reduce the quota. They are lazy; that is why they are crying out, 'Let us go and sacrifice to our God.' Make the work harder for the men so that they keep working and pay no attention to lies." Ex 5:6-9 NIV

Pharaoh called the message from God lies. He only needs to turn the heat a bit and they will all fall into place. They accused Moses for their woes. The many years of bondage now seem better than a little more challenge that could lead to a life time of liberty. Pity a Christian leader with carnal followership.

When they left Pharaoh, they found Moses and Aaron waiting to meet them, and they said, "May the Lord look upon you and judge you! You have made us a stench to Pharaoh and his officials and have put a sword in their hand to kill us." Ex 5:20-21 NIV

The battle starts but in that battle, the nobles, Haman and the carnal Jews were judged. It was through that conflict that the whole Jewish race and indeed the whole earth were delivered from the menace called Haman.

Chapter four

Daniel and the battle against Babylon and her systems.

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Dan 1:8 NIV

In the above scripture another Nazirite declares war against Babylon and her systems. Babylon had conquered Judah the people of God. Daniel believed that Babylon did not win the war; it was the sin of Israel that defeated her. In Babylon, Nebuchadnezzar tries to exercise the powers of one who won a war. He asks his nobles to choose some young men, the best of every nation he had conquered and reprogram them to what he considered the superior wisdom and teachings of Babylon. They were also to be fed from his table, which he considered the greatest table in the world, they have to learn the language and literature of what he considered the greatest kingdom on earth. Such was the thoughts and instructions of the king. The young men in this group were looked upon as lucky. To move from captivity to the palace, it was a breakthrough. But to some people it was not so. Daniel said that amounted to defilement; what others considered rich food, Daniel called ***defilement***.

But Daniel resolved not to defile himself with the royal food and wine, and he asked the chief official for permission not to defile himself this way. Now God had caused the official to show favor and sympathy to Daniel, but the official told Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king, who has assigned your **food** and drink. Why should he see you looking worse than the other young men your age? The king would then have my head because of you." Daniel then said to the guard whom the chief official had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, "Please test your servants for ten days: Give us nothing but vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then compare our appearance with that of the young men who eat the royal food, and treat your servants in accordance with what you see." So he agreed to this and tested them for ten days. Dan 1:8-14 NIV

Here Daniel comes into his conflict; to call what others call royal food defiled food was daring the throne of the king. But he had an authority over his head. Obedience to that authority was more important than anything else, in spite of the calamity that had befalling him and his people. Daniel was saying, "I don't want to be what the king wants me to be." He was standing against the so-

called healthy food of this world and her systems. After ten days of experimenting here is the conclusion,

At the end of the ten days they looked healthier and better nourished than any of the young men who ate the royal food. Dan 1:15NIV.

That was the verdict, the delicacies of Babylon is here judged and sentenced. Whoever relies on the meals of Babylon for health, strength and wisdom is in error. If you have any doubt, take a look at Daniel and his team. The next is the teachings, literatures and language of Babylon. Daniel and many young men were to be groomed to help the king on matters of the kingdom. In pursuant of this they were to be schooled for three years. But this is the bible verdict-

To these four young men God gave knowledge and understanding of all kinds of literature and learning. And Daniel could understand visions and dreams of all kinds. At the end of the time set by the king to bring them in, the chief official presented them to Nebuchadnezzar. The king talked with them, and he found none equal to Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah; so they entered the king's service. In every matter of wisdom and understanding about which the king questioned them, he found them ten times better than all the magicians and enchanters in his whole kingdom. Dan 1:17-20 NIV

It was God that gave them; it was not the teachers of Babylon that gave them. It was not the literatures of Egypt that helped them. Do you have any doubt? Listen to the verdict; the king himself talked with them and found none equal to those who did not eat his food or rely upon his teachers. They were ten times better than all the wise men of Babylon. Here is the verdict, the teachings and literatures of Babylon are useless for meaningful upbringing for the purpose of the throne. History has proved this right, otherwise where is Babylon today? These have to be proved beyond reasonable doubt, so in Daniel chapter two God gave Nebuchadnezzar a dream and made him forget it. All the wise men, astrologers and enchanters could not help him even at the threat of death. This is their submission-

The astrologers answered the king, "There is not a man on earth who can do what the king asks! No king, however great and mighty, has ever asked such a thing of any magician or enchanter or astrologer. What the king asks is too difficult.

No one can reveal it to the king except the gods, and they do not live among men." Dan 2:10-11 NIV

But a few days after, this is the verdict -

Arioch took Daniel to the king at once and said, "I have found a man among the exiles from Judah who can tell the king what his dream means." Dan 2:25 NIV

Here again judgment is passed on Babylon and her systems. After he had interpreted the dream see what followed-

Then King Nebuchadnezzar fell prostrate before Daniel and paid him honor and ordered that an offering and incense be presented to him. The king said to Daniel, "Surely your God is the God of gods and the Lord of kings and a revealer of mysteries, for you were able to reveal this mystery." Dan 2:46-47 NIV

Try to understand what happened; it is like a man took time and filled a black board with what he calls rules for life,- and a lot of people do that today in the name of education, teachings for success, scientific discovery, up to date religious view and what have you? They speak with such assurance and confidence that those who disagree with them appear stupid. And Daniel, the Nazirite walks up to the board in full view of those who believe in them with a duster in hand and wipes them all out and says, "This is rubbish!" and Nebuchadnezzar says, "I agree with you."

Such was the warfare of Daniel and his friends. You can now see why it was difficult for his friends to attempt to bow down to the image Nebuchadnezzar erected. Those Babylonian gods had been shamefully humiliated in warfare. They have been proved as nothing at all; Nebuchadnezzar was a witness to that conflict. But the Nazirite is always in conflict for standing out for the truth. Backsliders and political opportunists always use them to buy cheap favor from ego-centric people. And their God showed forth in the fire. You can further understand why Daniel could not negotiate his prayer with men or rulers. He has this walk with God borne out of years of very close relationship. He knows if he keeps to the authority over his head, that authority is able to hold his ground. From conflict to conflict, from persecution to persecution, he was more than a conqueror through Christ Jesus. For Daniel Babylon was a noise, that entire glamour was a fading glory. The reality is Zion; hence his prayer was directed that way. But not everybody lives this way. Most believers live in the now, they

respond to what their eyes can see, when weather changes, they change.

Simeon and Anna

Again these two were in the temple when all that decay which Jesus described in Matthew chapter 23 was going on; a total falling away, believers and ministers living as if God is no longer interested in the church. These two held their ground in fasting and prayer, trusting God to send the Messiah while they were alive. How men will look down on them. How other young widows mock Anna; those Paul said they were dead even when they were still breathing (1Tim.5:4). But the authority of God was over her head. She would not do what they do, she would not go where they go or eat what they eat. What was the result? Other people were seeing a baby from Mary, Simeon and Anna recognized the Messiah. They declared their generation blind and insensitive to God and his purposes. As I write this, I hear the Holy Spirit announce to my spirit that God is in dire need of such men and women today; Men, whose lifestyle testifies for God, defend God and his ways. Lord please send them now, and if possible oh Lord, use me!

SAMUEL

There are those who made themselves Nazirites and there were those who were made Nazirites by others, like Samuel. The case of the birth of Samuel is a case when somebody moved God's hand by asking him of something close to his heart-beat. This was what happened in the case of Hannah asking God for a male child. Before this time she had been saying to God "Please give me a child, all my age mates have their own children by now". There was no response. Perhaps she changed her topic, "Please give me a baby, because the bible says there shall be no one barren in the house of God". There was no response. Then she allowed the Holy Spirit to take over her prayer life, and Holy Spirit perhaps told her, "Get out of the picture, get out of the way; let us talk about the matters of God's kingdom. Stop being selfish, God has his own problems too. Offer yourself to be used to solve God's problem and all your problems will be gone". Then Hannah prayed,

In bitterness of soul Hannah wept much and prayed to the LORD. And she made a vow, saying, "O LORD Almighty, if you will only look upon your servant's misery and remember me, and not forget your servant but give her a son, then I will give him to the LORD for all the days of his life, and no razor will ever be used on his head." 1 Sam 1:10-11NIV

That was the prayer that brought forth Samuel; her mother promised to offer him to the Lord as a Nazirite. That prayer was prayed in the line of the yearning of God. There was such a spiritual and moral decay in Israel that the children of the chief priest were called children of the devil, without exception of one. God was in a difficult situation which was different from Hannah's case. He was as troubled as Hannah in his own affairs without anyone to cry to. Here was this woman who came talking about herself every day until one day she brought his problem into her petition. She was saying, "God, use me to solve your problem. I see the need in your house, but my state as a woman limits me from doing anything about it. But you can use my womb to resolve this problem". God's response was, "Yes, I will use your womb". The result was Hannah's breakthrough. (1Sam.1).

Like never before, in Church history has God been in a tight situation as He is today; like never before has God been in need of men who will lay down their lives as Nazirites. Yet, what do we hear everywhere? God do for me, God give me, God, me, me and me.....

I ask you to quietly bow your head at this point and make a heart commitment to God today. Ask Him to use you. What are the factors that makes impossible for you to serve Him? Lay those matters before Him now. Pray on!

Chapter five

Desecrating the Nazirite

We have been saying that the mere existence of the Nazirite is offensive to the worldly person. He reminds him of the true standard which he is no longer walking by. One would think that the carnal Christian or religious person will be challenged by his life and aspire for it, but sad to state that the opposite is often the case. See the case of Moses;

Moses thought that his own people would realize that God was using him to rescue them, but they did not. The next day Moses came upon two Israelites who were fighting. He tried to reconcile them by saying, 'Men, you are brothers; why do you want to hurt each other?' 'But the man who was mistreating the other pushed Moses aside and said, 'Who made you ruler and judge over us? Do you want to kill me as you killed the Egyptian yesterday?' Acts 7:25-28NIV

Here again is another area of the conflict of the Nazirite. Apostle Paul said that his challenge was not only from the enemy outside, but from false brethren within. Whether it is from within or from without, there is a general conspiracy to desecrate the Nazirite. He is marked species. The worldly man want to get him out of the way and the only way they can get him out of the way is if they can desecrate him. He has a thickness that can only be perforated by sin. Remember we said he is walking in a higher level of consecration, so what we will consider a serious offense on his side may not be anything to some other person. So what is the object target of his opponents?

I also raised up prophets from among your sons and Nazirites from among your young men. Is this not true, people of Israel?" declares the Lord. "But you made the Nazirites drink wine and commanded the prophets not to prophesy. Amos 2:11-12NIV

I wish that you note that God raised the Nazirites, but men made them drink wine. In this we know that wine for the ordinary person means nothing but the consecration on the head of the Nazirite makes it wrong. So we deduce that making them drink wine means to make them violate their covenant with God, and this means lose of power.

Samson: Man just like every other man

Some time later, he fell in love with a woman in the Valley of Sorek whose name was Delilah. The rulers of the Philistines went to her and said, "See if you can lure him into showing you the secret of his great strength and how we can overpower him so we may tie him up and subdue him. Each one of us will give you eleven hundred shekels of silver." So Delilah said to Samson, "Tell me the secret of your great strength and how you can be tied up and subdued."

Samson answered her, "If anyone ties me with seven fresh thongs that have not been dried, I'll become as weak as any other man." Judg 16:4-7 NIV

Samson was a perfect model of what is called the Nazirite in every sense. We have been referring to persons who had a close walk with God as Nazirites, but about Samson it was said,

The angel of the Lord appeared to her and said, "You are sterile and childless, but you are going to conceive and have a son. Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean, because you will conceive and give birth to a son. No razor may be used on his head, because the boy is to be a Nazirite, set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines." Judg 13:3-5 NIV

To bring the Nazirite to the point he can be subdued is to bring him to the level of every other man. That was Samson's submission. Apostle Paul called some believers mere men.

You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? 1 Cor 3:3NIV

Chapter Six

Qualities of mere men

Whether Delilah understood what her request implied is a subject for theological discussion, but it is clear from Samson's response that he knew what it implied. Apostle Paul who himself lived the life of the Nazirite takes time to tell us what it means to be mere men.

Worldly- the term worldly clearly shows that Paul was talking about people whom the bible says should not be part of the world even though, he lives in the world. To be worldly is to be sensual; to be governed by the will and wiles of the flesh. Because the flesh has alliance with the devil and the world, being worldly is same as obeying detects of the devil. You know a worldly believer through his attitude to fashion. No matter what his church is talking about missions and evangelism he is accumulating more cloths, modern cars and building more houses. He goes to church when it suits him. The bible is only a tool to know what he can get out of God. He draws his opinion from the view points of the worldly influential and political leaders. It does not matter whether he is a pastor or just a congregational seat warmer, a worldly believer is worldly.

Milk dependant-

I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready. 1 Cor 3:2NIV

For most believers they don't ever outgrow the basic doctrines of Christian faith; you plead with them to go for immersion baptism, to consider in-filling of the Holy Spirit, though five years in the church they are still struggling with alcohol, cigarette, sexual immorality. They are never able to learn personal devotion and witnessing. An unfortunate person he is, who pastors a milk-dependant congregation, and they are never ready for something solid.

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Heb 5:11-12 NIV

Divided over persons and tribes-

For when one says, "I follow Paul," and another, "I follow Apollos," are you not mere men? What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe — as the Lord has assigned to each his task. 1 Cor 3:5NIV

The faith of mere men as Christians is built on one great man of God or the other, the wall of their homes, their offices, their cars, their wrists and all what not, carry pictures, images, and bangles of the “idol” they worship. They follow leaders not because of what Christ has made him for them but because of the faction he stood for. Their faith is not built on Christ but on men or on things. If for any reason their idol who is but a man himself stumbles, their faith crashes. And like it or not, this will happen often because man is man whether he bears the anointing or not. When this happens the mere man either changes church or sits at home. His argument, “How can such a great man make this kind of mistake? In fact Christianity is full of hypocrites”. Many turn to occult groups who teach that they have discovered a great “Messiah” different from Jesus Christ. In his house again you see pictures, images and things that show the problem why he couldn’t stand as a Christian. He continues to argue for his new idol as he argued for his former Christian idol. The point is that the idols block him from looking onto Christ as the author and perfecter of his faith. His faith can never be perfected because he stands on the wrong foundation. The problem here is that persons outside do not know the difference between this kind of person and the real child of God. The attitude of mere men has often been used to judge the Church; I make bold to say that this is not only wrong but also unfair. Yet it is boring to have such as a neighbor whether in church or at home.

Manifestations of the flesh-

You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere men? 1 Cor 3:3NIV

As a young Christian I used to use Paul's letter to the Galatians church to preach to unbelievers. But to be frank it is difficult to reconcile some of the terrible things said about that church with our conventional idea of what a believer should be.

Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort? Gal 3:3NIV

The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

Gal 5:19-21 NIV

These were said to a body of believers, and if you ask me their leaders inclusive. If you see this attribute in any life whether a minister or church member he is but mere man, he has become a fool, no longer in touch with the mind of Christ.

Unable to please God- No one who lives as stated above can please God-

The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. Rom 8:7-8 NIV

This is a terrible verdict, and if this is not coming from Apostle Paul we may be compelled to discard it. The ways of God and his Christ is strange and difficult for the mere man, for him it is narrow and full of thorns (that was what I was taught as a young Christian in an orthodox church). So he revolts against it, kicks against it and criticizes it. Well, a Pastor can sit him down and explain to him why he should submit to it, but he ***does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.*** We see here the struggles of most believers in church as they try to be better Christians. As long as they remain on the below, on the realm of mere men, they cannot please God.

This is what Samson understood that Delilah wants to make of him; Delilah was talking of tying him up and subduing him, Samson said that the pathway to this is to bring him to the level of mere men. In other words, if Samson does not come down to the level of mere men, no one can subdue him. That goes for you too.

Chapter Seven

John the Baptist- at the realm of death.

We see another model of a perfect Nazirite in John the Baptist. Of him it was said, ***Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John. He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He is never to take wine or other fermented drink, and he will be filled with the Holy Spirit even from birth. Luke 1:13-15 NIV***

John was powerful before God and men. His ministry turned many to the Lord and he was fearless. He was arrested and put in prison because of what he stood for. His preaching was targeted at issues and his intention was to make men see the views of a righteous God as regards their every day activity. He was arguing for God and demanded God's right as he spoke his view.

Now Herod had arrested John and bound him and put him in prison because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, for John had been saying to him: "It is not lawful for you to have her." Herod wanted to kill John, but he was afraid of the people, because they considered him a prophet. Matt 14:3-5 NIV

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The ax is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." "What should we do then?" the crowd asked. John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same." Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?" "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them. Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely — be content with your pay." Luke 3:7-14 NIV

John's life was built on faith of what he has not seen but has accepted and declared to his hearers. He had close touch with heaven hence could recognize the Christ when he saw him. His was not a ministry propelled by selfish ambition but built on divine revelation that was why he could introduce his flock to Jesus and

even encouraged them to follow him. There was no place for jealousy and fleshly competition. The devil tried to create inroads into his life by making people bring him some report of the new ministry that was coming up from the man he baptized only a few days ago.

They came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan — the one you testified about — well, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him." To this John replied, "A man can receive only what is given him from heaven. You yourselves can testify that I said, 'I am not the Christ but am sent ahead of him.' The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. He must become greater; I must become less. John 3:26-30 NIV

Here we see a man under divine authority, his dream and drive is to fulfill the pleasure of the one who sent him. And for him it is a thing of great joy when he does. If you find such a ministry anywhere it carries anointing and commands heaven's respect and backing. Devil and men, just like Herod, are afraid of such a man and his ministry. They continue to look for inroads to him and seek how they can subdue him. As we saw earlier, that the only way to subdue him is by first desecrating him. The only way to desecrate him is to make him sin against his covenant hence lose the divine cover that keeps him. The lifestyle of John and his commitment to duty made this impossible. If John will be brought down it has to be him stepping down from his safe abode. How can this happen? Through questions and doubt; if the devil can raise questions in his heart regards God's love and faithfulness, and keep him from turning to the **One** that sent him for the answer, John's heart will be turned from eternal things. When this happens he will begin to question his very testimony, messages he had preached begin to look stupid to him, and then he begins to look for another gospel. The Nazirite in this has left the realm of faith and comes to the realm of human reasoning. No matter what may be the reason for this, he loses the power he should have, because that power only functions if the Nazirite remains in the realm of the Spirit. And the realm of the Spirit which is the realm of life is the realm of faith.

But my righteous one will live by faith. And if he shrinks back, I will not be pleased with him." Heb 10:38 NIV

We have said this before and see the need to repeat it; the only thing that keeps the righteous man alive is faith. It is his very life

and the whole essence of his existence. It is the evidence of everything he believes and lives for. If he is disconnected from faith every other thing caves in. and his life becomes hollow and void and then doubt sets in. he is turned into himself, and when this happens he is shocked as to how far he is from civilization and all that occupies other men. His language changes because even though in his physical appearance he is still a Nazirite, his reasoning has become that of mere men.

As I write this I am reminded of some men of God whose attitudes have become strange; Men who had condemned Roman Catholic priests for lording it over their followers, do more today. Men who had condemned the orthodox priests for their religious attires wear more religious attires today. Men who had condemned women who use complexion cream and vain jewelries, use all those things today. Men who had warned others of the danger of an eternity in Hellfire make mockery of those who do so today. Most times one cannot distinguish between the prostitutes in night clubs from some pastors' wives because of what is called fashion. Pursuit for money has only exposed the spiritual decadence in the life of men we thought were still on the Way of Life. When you confront some of them, they tell you they have a better understanding of the bible today. Some even attend prayer meetings where they are told to pray without mentioning the name of Jesus Christ. They do all this and still strut about with no pinch in their conscience.

Lord, help us!

Why has all this happened? They are offended at Christ, their Lord and Master.

When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me." Matt 11:2-6 NIV

And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me. Matt 11:6 NKJV

God was not acting the way he expected him to. I don't know if there is anybody who has not felt this way one time or the other about God and his ways. We often feel God isn't doing enough for His own kingdom, that He is allowing us bear all the burden. When

we hear of the many Christians killed by Muslims all over the world; when we see how someone we know is a false preacher is making merchandise of the name of Jesus, and how God will not hurry to rescue those he is plundering of their hard earned money, we feel disappointed. We hear of how many children of missionaries are driven out of school because of inability to pay school fees. Honestly I feel offended at God. My father, who was a missionary church planter died when I was only five years, and left his young widow with six young people to feed. It was difficult for me to go through primary school. When I think of all that my mother and her children went through because of our father's absence, I wondered if God really cares. Today I celebrate all this and I can see that even though everything looked hopeless God had a laid out plan to raise us children. None died of hunger nor was there one who could not get basic education. The ministry he left behind did not fail. Praise to God!

When the Nazirite stops walking in the paths of Life he goes into Death and the glory that shields him leaves him, then the inevitable happens. The enemy treats him as he treats mere men.

Chapter Eight

Mere men in the hand of their enemy

When Samson betrayed his covenant he became a mere man, subject to things that harass mere men. It was not when the seven locks of hair was cut that he lost the presence. It was when he despised it and exposed the secret of his strength. Nobody would have dared to lay hands on Samson when the presence was on him; whether he was awake or asleep, for HE that keeps Israel does neither sleep nor slumber. There was no physical muscle for the Philistine to see that was why they asked where his strength was. The strength of the Nazirite was in his covenant with God. Now he has betrayed God, the presence left. He began to feel the way mere men feel. They plugged off his eyes; and everybody agrees with the view that the eye of a man represents his Vision; his ability to contend with others in the race of life is dependent on his vision. Here we see that mere men on the street are blind.

The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God 2 Cor 4:4 NIV

Devil is involved in a blinding business; he robs men of vision and keeps them groping in darkness and grinding the mills in Satan's torture stations. That is all mere men live for, buffeted by the storms without hope of deliverance, harassed by demons, witches and wizards, kicked here and there by government policies and news media reports. If they are religious, they pray from one pastor to another, with all kinds of anointing oil backed up with fasting and prayers; always learning but never able to grasp the truth. This is principally because they exist within the reach of the devil and his agents.

John was beheaded and Samson ground the mills and entertained those that once feared him. This is what Delilah was asking from Samson and she got it. Let me state categorically, this is what the devil is asking for any genuine child of God. But Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego were able to hold their ground in the realm of the Spirit and faith. We know the rest of the story.

Before we move on from here let me mention that the bible says that a living dog is better than a dead lion. Samson proved this point. Even though he had lost his sight, he knew that God was only a prayer away. For the enemy who knows no mercy, he cannot imagine that the thrice Holy God will reach out His holy hand to help a backslider. But Samson knew better about this. I wish to

announce to anybody reading this book, who might have issues of broken relationship with God to stop now and borrow Samson's lesson. Fall on your knees before God and cry out to our loving and compassionate God. No matter how low you have sunk, he can bring you out. The presence will return again. Yes, the presence will return.

Part 2

Let us review some things we have been saying. A deeper walk with God is not for everybody, even though God will appreciate if all men walk that way. The Nazirite is the one who decided on his own to make his walk with God closer. In doing this he keeps to some standards of living that distinguish him from others. He abstains from wine, things that appear like wine, keeps his hair unkempt and does not come in the presence of death. We stated that what he avoids is not sin. We argued that sin is valueless so that no serious Christian sees abstinence from sin as a sacrifice. The lifestyle of the Nazirite is used by God as an indictment on others who live as if God is dead. He says, "God is alive and watching you". This incurs the wrath of carnal people and initiates a battle for the Nazirite. The battle takes various forms but in this warfare the Nazirite and his God are vindicated.

We also said that even though the carnal man knows for whose sake the Nazirite is keeping his consecration, he continues to research on ways to neutralize him; that is to make him lose his power and become like every other man. We discovered that the only way to bring him to this level is by making him break his vow to his God and sin against the government over his head. If this happens the Nazirite becomes ordinary man and the devil and his agents can now oppress him. We used Samson and John as case studies.

In our studies earlier we also noted that some on their own, - we may say prompted by the Holy Spirit- make themselves Nazirites, but there are times when God unilaterally raises some Nazirites, but no Nazirite is inferior to the other.

Chapter Nine

When God breaks into the affairs of men

God will not allow things to go out of hand forever; He will not allow evil to triumph for all times. Whatever we see around us, there is a time when God stands up and says, "Now, people, this nonsense has got to stop and now. Let us turn to another leaf". If there is nothing else you gain from reading this book, don't forget this point. God will not tolerate sinful man and his ways forever. There is a time he gets up and puts things in order. This is the moment sinful man always tries to wish away. Some say there is no God; this is to quench the agitation of their conscience against their ways. Some say there is no Hellfire; some argue one vain doctrine or the other. Some who think they have gone too neck deep into some sin argue that God does not see anything wrong with those things.

These efforts and arguments are unnecessary as God does not depend on our arguments to prove his word as truth. For the church of Jesus Christ, God has done this in different generations, I can confidently announce to you that it is about to happen in this our generation. The signs are everywhere. That is why he is getting this book into your hand. It is one of the ways he starts such moves, by announcing it.

I was given a reed like a measuring rod and was told, "Go and measure the temple of God and the altar, and count the worshipers there. But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months. And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth." These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands that stand before the Lord of the earth. If anyone tries to harm them, fire comes from their mouths and devours their enemies. This is how anyone who wants to harm them must die. These men have power to shut up the sky so that it will not rain during the time they are prophesying; and they have power to turn the waters into blood and to strike the earth with every kind of plague as often as they want. Rev 11:1-6 NIV

Measuring rod: what is God's measuring rod? God's measuring rod is his word. Men may call anything or any place by whatever name they like but only God has his own idea about everything. For example men may put up anything and call it ALTAR but when God looks at that thing in the light of his word what does he call it? Men

may ordain anybody to minister on the altar of God but when God sees the same vessel does he recognize such instrument as instrument fit for his service? Men may explain away some negative attitude which the bible condemns, but God's word is His standard of judgment. God's word is his measuring rod. Before the next move of God in this our generation, he will of necessity consider things by his own standards. Let me sound a note of warning here.

Temple: There are two things held in view as we talk of the temple here. One is the original temple; the human body in which he says that his Spirit will live. Another is the gathering of his people. When someone gives his life to Christ he becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit. But how if that one is only among God's people but refuses to make a heart decision for the Lord? Men may put that one in a leadership place and confer titles on him but when God looks at him in the light of his word he may say this one is not my temple. He may have been a temple before but defiles himself therefore grieve the Holy Spirit into abandoning him. He deceives people with his old testimony but God's yardstick is his word.

It is the same for the gathering of people; we may brag and say that where two or three persons are gathered in his name he will be there in their midst. But let's go to God's word.

These are the words of the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation..... You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent.

Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me. Rev 3:14, 17-20 NIV.

God is dissociating himself from such ugly conclusions. He was telling the church – the Temple- that He was not in their midst but was helplessly outside hoping that one of them will permit him to pass through him and then gain access into their gatherings. Not every “church” building or so-called Christian gathering is the temple of God. What is the source of the money for building the church? How did the church start? Who are the pioneers? Do their religious practices agree with the bible truth? What is their definition of sin and righteousness? Who is honored as Lord in their midst; Christ or Man?

These God will prove when he assesses such gathering under the scrutiny of his word and then he will pass his own judgment. Woe to the people whom the Lord will assess and then find them wanting. My prayer is that all those who think that God will make do with anything that is done in His name, will read this book and make amends before it is too late.

Altar: Altar represents those that labor in the said place of the altar; the ministers of the gospel. The altar was to be measured by the same reed; the standard for assessing the temple will be same for those who minister in the temple as ministers.

For it is time for judgment to begin with the family of God; and if it begins with us, what will the outcome be for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And, "If it is hard for the righteous to be saved, what will become of the ungodly and the sinner?" 1 Peter 4:17-18 NIV

Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. James 3:1NIV

In this age when people are given the title of "Pastor" just to satisfy the one who so ordained them without recourse to what the bible says. Let me state that this is not new.

In addition to all your other detestable practices, you brought foreigners uncircumcised in heart and flesh into my sanctuary, desecrating my temple while you offered me food, fat and blood, and you broke my covenant. Instead of carrying out your duty in regard to my holy things, you put others in charge of my sanctuary. This is what the Sovereign Lord says: No foreigner uncircumcised in heart and flesh is to enter my sanctuary, not even the foreigners who live among the Israelites. Ezek 44:7-9 NIV

Remember them, O my God, because they defiled the priestly office and the covenant of the priesthood and of the Levites. Neh 13:29 NIV

The Lord has his standards for those whom he considers as ministers on his altar. For any benefit of doubt the bible spelt the qualifications.

Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. Now the overseer must be

above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money. He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him with proper respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God's church?) He must not be a recent convert, or he may become conceited and fall under the same judgment as the devil. He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap.

Deacons, likewise, are to be men worthy of respect, sincere, not indulging in much wine, and not pursuing dishonest gain. They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience. They must first be tested; and then if there is nothing against them, let them serve as deacons. In the same way, their wives are to be women worthy of respect, not malicious talkers but temperate and trustworthy in everything. A deacon must be the husband of but one wife and must manage his children and his household well 1 Tim 3:1-12 NIV

It is not without reason that the Spirit of the Lord laid in the heart of his servant to put this down for those who will come after. There is even a further warning against ordaining people to the office of pastors or deacons in haste.

Do not be hasty in the laying on of hands, and do not share in the sins of others. Keep yourself pure. 1 Tim 5:22 NIV

The Apostle tells us that he was laying down principles of how we ought to conduct ourselves in the church.

If I am delayed, you will know how people ought to conduct themselves in God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth. 1 Tim 3:15 NIV

It is then clear that anyone who claims to be a servant of God called to stand before the Lord who falls short of these standards is not recognized by the Lord as his servant. It is needful then that that one should make haste and cleanse himself or flee before the Day of Judgment comes upon him. The Lord shall not accept those things that fall short of his standards. What then shall we say concerning those who say that they are gay – homosexuals- and yet claim to be ministers of the Lord. Paul said that the marriage that one ought to have is with one woman. And this is vice versa. That

is the way people ought to conduct themselves. Why is this very important? The church of Jesus Christ is the pillar and foundation of the truth. Cult groups like Grail-Message, AMORC etc can go on wagging their tongues, but Jesus remains The Way, The Truth and The Life; nobody comes to God except through Him. No standard for life makes sense except that enshrined in the Word of God.

Worshippers: Are you a worshipper or a bench warmer. I may fill up my pews with all kinds of people using all manner of means as we see today but God has his terms for those who worship him. Suppose you are Jesus Christ and meets a woman that has some basic knowledge of the bible like the Samaritan woman, won't it be proper to immediately draft her into the Sunday School department? How if you had just a few days asked your little congregation to pray that God should send laborers into his field, and on this wonderful day a large crowd begins to follow you. Won't it be ideal to see it as answered prayers? This is where Christ is so different from us.

Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." John 4:23-24 NIV

Large crowds were traveling with Jesus, and turning to them he said: "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers and sisters — yes, even his own life — he cannot be my disciple. And anyone who does not carry his cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. Will he not first sit down and estimate the cost to see if he has enough money to complete it? Luke 14:25-28 NIV

Honestly I won't spell this out for a crowd following me in the face of the present day competition for members in our different denominations but Jesus says that God is not just looking for people who come around but those whose heart and soul are with him; those whose worship is not a numerical make-up to the assembly; those who worship in spirit and truth. How if they have followed for long and come a long way? Yet God wants to know how much they have separated themselves from the world and her systems. He wants to know if they are Nazirites. Christ says that only Nazirites are regarded as disciples. This is hard saying but that is the standard of the measuring reed. It is something that calls for a serious search of the heart and mind. This is much so important in a situation when the denomination thinks you are

okay the way you are. In a situation when your pastor has gone ahead to honor you with the duty of an usher or church secretary. Yes, perhaps you are the song leader in the church and have done it for long. Stop now and consider the terms of the measuring reed again. Is your Christianity the way “yourself” would allow it? Then you are not yet a disciple. The kind of Christian that is “your job” friendly; the kind that makes no sacrifice that upsets your convenience; then know that Jesus says that the Father does not accept it.

There is a forceful adverb used above; **“MUST”**. As a pastor I have been confronted several times with such question, “Must I be forced”. Well, here is a situation where you MUST. If you don’t measure up, then the Father says, “I can’t have anything to do with you.” Let the believer know that God has already begun to throw out the reed and measurement has already begun. After this measurement the Lord shall go ahead to permit Satan to purge the church of the chaff in her midst.

Chapter Ten

Deliverance for the Church-

But exclude the outer court; do not measure it, because it has been given to the Gentiles. They will trample on the holy city for 42 months.

Like we stated earlier God will not continue to allow Satan and sinful men to mess up the church. Here God's word makes it clear how he will rid the earth and the church of things that defile. The gentiles are the tools he will use for this. In Nigeria the gentiles are at work as at the time of writing this book. A terrorist group known as "Boko- Haram" have killed more than three thousand of people the press call Christians. But I don't believe a Christian has any business in a bar by 8pm in the night. If you find a brothel or night club in Northern Nigeria it is owned by "Christian". When some of the "Christians" fled Northern Nigeria and came to the south we saw sexual immorality of an order not common among unbelievers. Whereas HIV/AIDS is in every part of Nigeria, it has a record precedence among them. It is then not a surprise why God unleashed the "Gentiles" to trample them. Europe is another part of the world the "Gentiles" has just begun to trample. America will not be left out in this.

He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power. 2 Thess 1:8-9 NIV

America and Europe have ganged up against God and his word. They have not only endorsed the abomination of same-sex marriage but are putting pressure on other nations to do same.

Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are

senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them. Rom 1:26-32 NIV

Modern civilization in America and Europe has said that their ancestors made a mistake by serving Jehovah and have turned away totally from God. Which generation has invented more ways of doing evil than this generation? Which generation has asked for freedom more than ours? Modern man is asking for freedom from God and His laws through every means. What we call freedom today is to abandon God completely. Churches and their leaders are not innocent of this charge. They have turned away almost totally and even so-called preachers are not ready to lay down their lives for Jesus. It is shameful that Islamic extremists are dying for a god that is no god at all, and those who answer children of the true God cannot stand up for their beliefs. Who will argue that God is not just by handing them over to be trampled? Jesus agrees with this,

"You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men. Matt 5:13NIV

Let the nations of the world read this and take heed. Let the churches read this and take heed. Before the next move of the Spirit the church must face persecution. Persecution is what will prove those who are genuine and fake. In this matter let no genuine child of God be troubled because there is a sure promise in His word.

Then I saw another angel coming up from the east, having the seal of the living God. He called out in a loud voice to the four angels who had been given power to harm the land and the sea: "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God." Rev 7:2-3 NIV

Praise His Name!

"For I will give the command, and I will shake the house of Israel among all the nations as grain is shaken in a sieve, and not a pebble will reach the ground. All the sinners among my people will die by the sword, all those who say, 'Disaster will not overtake or meet us.'

***"In that day I will restore David's fallen tent. I will repair its broken places, restore its ruins, and build it as it used to be,
Amos 9:9-11 NIV***

Amen! Do so Lord!

We need not fear for it is our God who will give the command. In giving the command he is not careless but has assured us that no genuine child of God, no matter how weak, will be lost to the sifting of the enemy. No grain, no matter how unhealthy will fall to the ground. The essence of the sifting is not to waste the church but to deliver her from things that make her weak. Sinners and sin is the principal cause of weakness and confusion in our midst. God is now ready to deal with sin. Let my reader take note because the time has come. If you are currently living in sin thinking that God is not serious about it, watch out. Disaster is around the corner. God cannot send the revival we are looking for in the midst of this sin. There needs to be purging. It is after the purging that the restoration will come. The Lord is about to restore the glory of the church as it was in the beginning. He wants to bring the church back to the place of power. But he has to first repair broken places and restore ruined parts of the master plan and then build it back. It is always God's pattern. He cannot build in the midst of ruins. Whether in the case of an individual or a body, the rule remains the same. We can fasten his intervention if we purge our self, and that will be quite safer and better for us.

Chapter Eleven

Empowered for conflict-

And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy for 1,260 days, clothed in sackcloth."

Here we see why the purging has to come first; there need to be the empowerment but like we said earlier, God cannot in His character empower a contamination. He cannot empower a mix-up. Thank God for all the wonderful testimonies in Babylon but the temple cannot be built in Babylon. Babylon means mixture. It is after the mixture has been cleaned up that the empowerment comes.

We see above that the ones to be empowered are those clothed in sack cloth. The Nazirites are the ones to be empowered. The Nazirites are those Jesus Christ called his disciples. The disciples are those who worship in truth and Spirit. To worship in truth and spirit means that they have to pay the price. The price is what Jesus means when he said that they must be ready to pick up their cross and follow after him. It is not an off and on thing. They are clothed in sack cloth. Their clothing is sack cloth. That means continuous consecration, consecration that has become a lifestyle. I wish that we observe that it was the consecration that attracted the empowerment and consecration is needed to retain the empowerment.

These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands that stand before the Lord of the earth. Rev 11:4 NIV

Let's understand this imagery mentioned here. They are connected to Zachariah4

Then the angel who talked with me returned and wakened me, as a man is wakened from his sleep. He asked me, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a solid gold lamp stand with a bowl at the top and seven lights on it, with seven channels to the lights. Also there are two olive trees by it, one on the right of the bowl and the other on its left." I asked the angel who talked with me, "What are these, my lord?" He answered, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my lord," I replied. So he said to me, "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit,' says the Lord Almighty.....Then I asked the angel, "What are these two olive trees on the right and the left of the lamp stand?"

Again I asked him, "What are these two olive branches beside the two gold pipes that pour out golden oil?" He replied, "Do you not know what these are?" "No, my lord," I said. So he

said, "These are the two who are anointed to serve the Lord of all the earth." Zech 4:1-6, 11-14 NIV

Their ministry is a living ministry; living trees pouring out fresh oil into lamps. It was a ministry produced through the practical life of the ministers. The oil was not artificial, stale or borrowed. It was sending the oil directly through the pipes to the lamps; no middle man. It points to the same thing; the power manifested by these servants of God is the product of their consecration. This kind of consecration attracts God's blessing. Besides God's choice by election, their personal discipline made room for them in God's program. Whenever you see a lamp giving light by burning the wicks it says there is no grace. Grace is given by God, but also developed through life of consecration through prayers. We will understand this better if we consider Gideon's army. Gideon did not train them; it was the same trumpet blast that invited others that brought them. God or Gideon did not discriminate against them. The question was only as to their heart attachment and personal discipline.

Announce now to the people, 'Anyone who trembles with fear may turn back and leave Mount Gilead.'" So twenty-two thousand men left, while ten thousand remained.....But the Lord said to Gideon, "There are still too many men. Take them down to the water, and I will sift them for you there. If I say, 'This one shall go with you,' he shall go; but if I say, 'This one shall not go with you,' he shall not go." So Gideon took the men down to the water. There the Lord told him, "Separate those who lap the water with their tongues like a dog from those who kneel down to drink.".....Three hundred men lapped with their hands to their mouths. All the rest got down on their knees to drink.

The Lord said to Gideon, "With the three hundred men that lapped I will save you and give the Midianites into your hands. Let all the other men go, each to his own place."

So Gideon sent the rest of the Israelites to their tents but kept the three hundred, who took over the provisions and trumpets of the others. Now the camp of Midian lay below him in the valley. Judg 7:3-5, 6-8 NIV

Yes, God used them, but they contributed their personal discipline. This is stated because somebody who may be reading this book, may get up and begin to ask God to use him. I wish that God can use you, but there is the place of your personal consecration. Remember that Gideon did not train them. The bible says further- **But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. Heb 5:14 NIV**

How did they mature? They trained themselves....by constant habitual exercise of spiritual matters by relating with spiritual things. When they knelt there to drink water it was not God or Gideon that told them never to bury their faces in whatever opportunity they may find on their way in life; whether it be money, fashion, food, sex, favor or family. They used the water as a mirror to watch their backs; they ask, "Why has God given me this? Why has God brought me here? Even though God has provided this, is it not possible that the enemy may still attack me here". Hence, they were at their watch out.

The others are examples of those who see every miracle as an end. God told Gideon that He cannot use such persons for such a sensitive assignment. They may fit into other things of God at home, but not great things of God. They cannot join God on the mountain top. They have not trained themselves for that. It was their lifestyle that disqualified them, not God or Gideon. I can remember many ministers I have met in my years of travelling who wish God will use them in the international ministry, but they have not trained themselves.... What is the result of this self-training?

The result of this lifestyle is that –
They stand before the Lord of all the earth.

The Elijah boasted,

And Elijah the Tishbite, of the inhabitants of Gilead, said to Ahab, "As the Lord God of Israel lives, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, except at my word." 1 Kings 17:1 NKJV

The result of this is that

But which of them has stood in the council of the Lord to see or to hear his word? Who has listened and heard his word?... But if they had stood in my council, they would have proclaimed my words to my people and would have turned them from their evil ways and from their evil deeds. Jer 23:18,22 NIV

Perhaps that is why many don't have message from God but steal message from one another.

"Therefore," declares the Lord, "I am against the prophets who steal from one another words supposedly from me. Yes," declares the Lord, "I am against the prophets who wag their

own tongues and yet declare, 'The Lord declares. Jer 23:30-31NIV

May God save our generation from the proliferation of such counterfeit prophets; May God give us men with a living message, hot baked bread from the altar in heaven.

They attract conflict. We saw that earlier. The Nazirite is hated by the world and Satan. But here is encouragement; fire come out of their mouths and consumes their enemies. Here is a radical anointing that is equal to every challenge. Nature obeys them because they shut the heavens and open it at will. Heaven respects their will.

I know my reader will think this is a very wonderful privilege. Yes, it is but it is not for all. We are going to see how to get to this level of power, or the ingredients that produces this level of power. If you like you may say the components of the sack cloth.

Chapter Twelve

The ingredients for the Militant church anointing

It is noteworthy that God will not commit himself or any serious business to the hand of somebody he cannot truly trust. Honestly this is the main reason many people who are asking God to use them in a mighty way are not seeing the answer to their prayers.

In a large house there are articles not only of gold and silver, but also of wood and clay; some are for noble purposes and some for ignoble. If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. Tim 2:20-21 NIV

For God, the work of the ministry is not as important as the vessel for the work. We see this in the life of Moses. At about the age of forty Moses began to observe what must be considered as injustice and oppression of God's covenant people. For anybody it calls for urgent attention. Anybody would conclude that in the face of the present urgent need God will be glad to use anybody who offers himself. History also supports the timing. God had told Abraham that the people would stay in Egypt for four hundred years and only ten years left. It is not out of place to start preparation for exodus. So Moses made the move. Somebody said that if the Holy Spirit does not move you, move the Holy Spirit. The question which every servant of God must face on the way to his ministry was thrown at the one who tried to move God.

"But the man who was mistreating the other pushed Moses aside and said, 'Who made you ruler and judge over us? Acts 7:27NIV

Rulers and judges among God's people are made. They are not impostors. Most people who rise up these days are mere impostors. Some use their money to buy their places among Christian leaders. Their intimidating flashy cars and eloquence make men push them to the front as the people did Alexander at Ephesus.

The Jews pushed Alexander to the front, and some of the crowd shouted instructions to him. He motioned for silence in order to make a defense before the people.

But when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours Acts 19:33-34 NIV

They shouted him down. There was a need and people were looking for any kind of vessel that has courage and oratory. I remember more than one occasion when a “great guest preacher” had to run to me to get scriptural reference to the title of the message he was to preach. An American evangelist invited me to his hotel room. He wanted me to teach him how to minister healing and deliverance to people. He was an expert in fund raising but the people were expecting him to minister baptism of the Holy Spirit. I took more than two hours to teach him. When I returned the next day to find out how it went, with downcast look on his face, he told me he couldn’t attempt my instructions. Yes, there are limits to things the impostors can fake.

For they mouth empty, boastful words and, by appealing to the lustful desires of sinful human nature, they entice people who are just escaping from those who live in error.

They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity — for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him 2 Peter 2:18-19 NIV

Impostors can talk. See how many words above refer to talk; ***mouth, empty boasts, words, appealing, entice by talking, and they promise.*** Talk is cheap but power costs. Moses had to take forty years to bring the answer to that question, ***“Who made you.....?”*** and when he did there was a corresponding evidence of power, signs, wonders and miracles. Let no servant of God be contented with any kind of ministry that lacks evidence of divine power but runs on words of mouth. For God, everything depends on the readiness and trustworthiness of the vessel. It was like God had lied to his friend Abraham. He had promised Abraham that they will stay in Egypt for four hundred years but it took additional thirty years for the vessel to be ready. God may as well forget about the whole vision rather than take the risk of sending a vessel he can’t trust. I wonder who the Lord is pinching in his conscience now with the question, “When will you be ready?”

There were some basic ingredients which Moses could not get in the convenience of Pharaoh’s palace. Those materials are too costly to be found in the palaces of this world. Jesus in talking about John the Baptist said this,

As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. Then what did you go out

***to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.
Matt 11:7-9 NIV***

Prophets and men with extraordinary anointing are prepared in the desert - wilderness. This should bring us to one of the basic ingredients for the militant anointing.

Chapter Thirteen

Wilderness- suffering. Up to date it is still a wonder to me that God does not have confidence in a man who has not suffered. Perhaps because of the crisis that resulted in the ministry of two bible examples who came to prominence without passing through the road of pain; Samson and Solomon. Samson was born with the anointing and did not have the need to grow with the power. The result is a woeful fall. Like we said earlier it was not the day his locks of hair were cut that he lost the presence. It was the day he treated the covenant with levity. Solomon inherited a throne he did not fight for; hence his pass-time became marriage relationship with those he should have fought wars against. He too fell woefully and became a sad reminder of those who abused the grace of God. Someone could think that suffering only comes to purge away sin. Not so. For the bible says about Jesus the sinless one,

Yet it was the Lord's will to crush him and cause him to suffer, and though the Lord makes his life a guilt offering, he will see his offspring and prolong his days, and the will of the Lord will prosper in his hand. After the suffering of his soul, he will see the light [of life] and be satisfied; by his knowledge my righteous servant will justify many, and he will bear their iniquities. Isa 53:10-11 NIV

Here we see that suffering preceded the glorious ministry and the light of life. After the suffering there is the knowledge which enables him to justify many. To justify is to bring into the position of righteousness; this is only possible through knowledge he gathered in the wilderness.

Before the glory must first come the suffering.

In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. Heb 2:10NIV

Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered and, once made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him. Heb 5:8-9 NIV

We see another strange thing in the above passage. That one is without sin does not mean that one is perfect. Jesus was without sin but suffering was the instrument that taught him obedience and obedience brought him to the place of perfection. He did not inherit his status as the savior of the world but paid the price through suffering. In fact immediately after the Holy Spirit came upon him at the place of his water baptism, the Holy Spirit led Him

into the wilderness. In spite of the urgent need of the salvation of the world, the desert was not overlooked. Forty days and nights were used to teach him to identify with human race and Satan was let loose at him. Here is the bible account,

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry.....

Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside.

Luke 4:1-2, 14 NIV

If this is Jesus' account then shouldn't ours be different? Unfortunately not so.

“because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.” Endure hardship as discipline; God is treating you as sons. For what son is not disciplined by his father? If you are not disciplined (and everyone undergoes discipline), then you are illegitimate children and not true sons. Moreover, we have all had human fathers who disciplined us and we respected them for it. How much more should we submit to the Father of our spirits and live!

Our fathers disciplined us for a little while as they thought best; but God disciplines us for our good, that we may share in his holiness. No discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it.” Heb 12:6-11NIV

Unfortunately the King James Version used “chastise” in the place of discipline. Here we see that it is not punishment but child-training according to verse eleven. It is the evidence of our sonship. Hardship should then be seen as discipline. What does it mean when we say that somebody is disciplined? It means that there are some borders in that person's life. There are some lifestyles and principles of conduct in that person's life. He is not wild and cannot fit into any how or anything. This is always painful for the natural man; hence it says that it does not seem pleasant at the time. Because it does not seem pleasant we always kick against it and do all manner of prayers to get out of it but God thinks that he will be making us illegitimate children if he lets us skip suffering. As we kick he is glad because he is achieving his goal. He is not going to stop until he receives his result.

Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. Rom 5:3-4 NIV

Suffering produces the ability to continue to advance in the face of difficulty; that is what is called perseverance. When we come to the point when we see or know no impossibility, the scripture says we develop character. What kind of character? The character of God; calling things that are not as if they are there (Rom. 4:17). We cannot call down fire from heaven unless we have this character. We will be rationalizing God and his power without this character. We will be okay on the lower side of the Christian faith and will easily compromise our conviction if we don't have this character. When threatened with death we will chicken out and will gladly accept our present state as God's best for us. That is why God will readily expose us to suffering and watch as the things that make us mere men are taken out of the way. God will not lead us beyond this point until suffering produces perseverance and perseverance must finish its work.

Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything. James 1:2-4 NIV

So as it is God's will that Jesus should suffer, he also wishes same for us as the path way to share in his glory.

Now if we are children, then we are heirs — heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. Rom 8:17 NIV

When the bible says that the servants of the Lord are clothed with sackcloth it also means they have taken the suffering of Christ upon themselves. Hence they share in the glory of Christ. Suffering is a basic ingredient to this militant power. If you are facing some pain now, then accept it as God's training for you. God is doing this because he is going to use you in extraordinary ways in this age. The cause of woeful failure in the Christian ministry is because of men who skip this essential- suffering. That leads us back to the Nazirites. In the Old Testament, Moses was told to mix four ingredients into the olive oil to prepare a special anointing oil used for ordination and consecrating the sacred things of the sanctuary.

"Take the following fine spices: 500 shekels of liquid myrrh, half as much (that is, 250 shekels) of fragrant cinnamon, 250

shekels of fragrant cane, 500 shekels of cassia — all according to the sanctuary shekel — and a hin of olive oil.

Make these into a sacred anointing oil, a fragrant blend, the work of a perfumer. It will be the sacred anointing oil. Ex 30:23-25 NIV

The vessel of God is no longer in the bottle or any such thing. Man is the present vessel of God. This does not mean that those who use oil to pray are wrong. But God is not in the business of filling things now. God wants to fill people with his supernatural presence. Just like when the Spirit of God came on Christ, God did not think he was complete until some basic things were added to his life. One of such ingredients is myrrh. Myrrh signifies suffering. But note that the myrrh was not used without the oil. I have seen some believers suffer in the name of consecration but there is no anointing in their lives. Such believers discourage people from coming to Christ. Jesus received the oil before the suffering. It was the oil plus the suffering that produced the power. Suffering without oil is bad news.

The second ingredient is devotion to prayer. The Nazirite like we saw earlier has his heart set on pleasing God. Pleasing God will be impossible if we don't surrender ourselves to prayer. Jesus started his ministry with a forty days and nights prayer. He withdrew often to seek the face of the father in solitary places. Fasting and prayer is part of the sackcloth situation. You cannot live like any other person and expect to do more than they are doing. If we are broken through suffering and prayer, it will be easy for us to humble our self under the mighty hand of God. Humility makes submission easy and submission makes patience easy. A submissive, patient humble man is well positioned for God's promotion in due time.

But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." Submit yourselves, then, to God. James 4:6-7NIV

Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. 1 Peter 5:6NIV

Chapter Fourteen

Vessels for a new dispensation

"No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. 22 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins." Mark 2:21-22 NIV

In bringing our meditations to conclusion, we need to clear some air on some matters we mentioned earlier. That a vessel was used by God yesterday does not imply that God must continue to use the same vessel whenever there is need. We must emphasize this matter as a warning not only for those God is using in a mighty way today, but those who are currently praying that God will use them now. When God looks at a vessel, he considers some qualities in that vessel before picking up the vessel for use. One of such qualities is its ability to take pressure. When we talked about Apostle Paul we mentioned that he could take pressure and still remain himself. In the above scripture Jesus refers to the old piece of cloth as something that cannot take pressure. When it is put under pressure it is wasted. The new move of God is referred to here as a new piece of cloth which will exert pressure on any other material connected to it. Jesus believes it will be a waste of material to commit this new piece to have contact with an old piece.

I was into boxing as a young man; one of the things any good coach will train his boy on is how to receive blows. Those who desire that God should use them must set their mind to understand that Satan, his demons and agents will not just fold their hands while we plunder them. They must fight back and God's man must be ready to resist them with God's divine power and resources.

New wine for a new wine skin- here again Jesus describes the divine vessel as a wine skin. From the background we got our bible, a wine skin is made from animal skin converted in to a vessel for putting wine with a cock over it. It is cleaned and placed over smoke of heath, possibly in the kitchen. When it is dried, they can now pour fermentable wine in to it. As the wine ferments, it increases in volume. Because it is in a new wine skin the wine enlarges with it. After a time the wine cannot enlarge any further. In the language of physics it reaches its elastic limit. Now Jesus means that no man who understands this business well will make the mistake of pouring out the old wine from the wine skin and replacing it with new wine. If this mistake is made, because the

wine skin has reached its elastic limits, it will burst; both the wine and the skin would have been wasted.

What we are trying to say here is that there are vessels that have served God in a great way in the past; some of these are still in active ministry today. Their wine is the old wine hence contained in old wine skins. It is not always that God has any problem with them or have found some fault in them. God does not always wait for something to get bad before throwing it away. Their use and the reason God raised them has passed, hence, they must give way for the new move of God.

As I write this many wonderful men and women of God come to my mind; vessels God has used as battle axes to pull down strong holds and rout kingdoms, men and women whose ministry has left a mark on the sand of time. In spite of these the Holy Spirit is declaring now that they cannot be used in this militant dispensation. They have served their use hence must give room for the vessels for this dispensation.

Why are we emphasizing this so strongly now? Most new vessels have come to the point of idolizing these vessels. They keep running to them to know how they achieved all they did. They ask them to lay hands on them and transfer their anointing on them. Most of these also make the mistake of encouraging these new wine skins to borrow patterns from them. Just like Saul encouraged David to borrow his armor. Yes, Saul's armor had helped on a number of important battles, but had been useless in the face of the present challenge. David made the mistake most new wine skins make today; he tried the armor on. Thank God he discovered before he had gone out to face Goliath that he was not fit into it and then put it off. Many did not discover on time but went out before their "Goliath" in the old armor and so failed woefully in the ministry.

New wine is for new wine skin. The next reason is what we said earlier, these old wine skins are not necessarily bad or useless. Just that they have reached their elastic limit. Any further pressure on them will waste both they and the anointing. The situations around them may be their age, size of their ministry, or care for their children, will not allow them to do some things anymore. It is needful that someone who is more flexible should take their places. This is what we saw when the Lord call in apostle Paul to lead the inversion of the gentile nations because Peter was no longer flexible enough to do that, even though he was the first person the Lord considered for the assignment.

Another reason could be mindset. Revival history account records that while on his way to bring over the properties of his wife, Charles Finney was accosted by communities who needed to hear the word of God. He stayed back to minister to them instead. As he travelled on his way more people called on him to proclaim the word of God to them, he attended to them. This carried on until by the sixth month he had to send the things he was carrying through a friend to his newly wedded wife. What shall we now say these days when young preachers cancel preaching engagement because of their parent's burial? Some defer going to pray for people because of a football match. You can see that many people who are asking God to use them are not ready. Apostle Paul says that a civilian lifestyle is not allowed among Kingdom soldiers if they must please their commander- Jesus Christ (2 Tim.2:3-4). Comfort seeking lifestyle is not allowed and has denied many their place in the next move in the Kingdom agenda.

Some new wine skins have so tuned their lifestyle that there is nothing new about them. They talk like the old wine skin, dress like the old wine skin, live like the old wine skin and almost always in the company of old wine skins. It is then risky, as Christ will say it, to commit the new wine into their hands, because it will also amount to waste of Kingdom resources.

And all who have this eager expectation will keep themselves pure, just as he is pure. 1 John 3:3 NLT

There is no better way to warn those who carry the hope of being use by God in the militant dispensation of the church.

If a man cleanses himself from the latter, he will be an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work. 2 Tim 2:21NIV

There is the cleansing and purifying needful for those who will want to be used by God in this way. Like we have been saying you cannot live like every other person and be better than they. The men we saw in Part One of this book who we referred to as Nazirites, were chosen by God because they disciplined themselves and were different in their generation. There is a good work to do in our generation. God wants to pour out the anointing for the last move of the Spirit before the coming of Christ, who is ready to purge, purify and cleanse himself?

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