

OVERCOMING THE MONSTER CALLED STAGNANCY

By

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PREFACE

The Lord our God said to us at Horeb, “You have stayed long enough at this mountain. Break camp and advance...” (Deut. 1:6)

To be able to see through the meaning of the above passage, which we shall use, as our text, we will have to marry it with another passage of scripture.

15 on the day the tabernacle, the Tent of the Testimony, was set up, the cloud covered it. From evening till morning the cloud above the tabernacle looked like fire. 16 That is how it continued to be; the cloud covered it, and at night it looked like fire.

17 Whenever the cloud lifted from above the Tent, the Israelites set out; wherever the cloud settled, the Israelites encamped.

18 At the LORD's command the Israelites set out, and at his command they encamped. As long as the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, they remained in camp.

19 When the cloud remained over the tabernacle a long time, the Israelites obeyed the LORD's order and did not set out.

20 Sometimes the cloud was over the tabernacle only a few days; at the LORD's command they would encamp, and then at his command they would set out.

21 Sometimes the cloud stayed only from evening till morning, and when it lifted in the morning, they set out. Whether by day or by night, whenever the cloud lifted, they set out.

22 Whether the cloud stayed over the tabernacle for two days or a month or a year, the Israelites would remain in camp and not set out; but when it lifted, they would set out.

23 At the LORD's command they encamped, and at the LORD's command they set out. They obeyed the LORD's order, in accordance with his command through Moses.

(Numbers 9:15-23NIV)

Now by the later passage we understand that the Israelites had before the above passage been obeying the Lord. The symbol or what they looked up to to know when to move and when to camp was the tent of meeting. There was a glorious cloud over this tabernacle. It was such that could not escape notice. In that when it is day, it was like smoke. People ten kilometers away can always notice a dense cloud in the sky. Because of their number, this is very significant. The bible records that they were something close to seven hundred thousand men of fighting age. That could imply that the whole crowd could be something around two million persons. Remember that God told them to keep a safe distance from the tabernacle. But with this thick cloud arising into the sky every body could easily notice the

position of the tabernacle and be able to observe its movement, even though there were also trumpet sounds for signals.

Clouds will not be visible at night, so the Lord turned the cloud into pillar of fire by night. Again fire, even a spark, is easily noticeable from a very long distance.

As long as the wilderness walk was concerned, God made sure they were not left in confusion as to how and when they should set out. It was he who sent Moses to Egypt to lead them out, and so, made adequate provision on how to coordinate their movement. Here is another of God's strong character; he does not desire to have his people roam about in confusion in their effort to do his will. When what should be his will is not clear, there is nothing wrong in waiting till you get his will.

One is obviously shocked after reading Numbers 9, when he comes to Deuteronomy 1, to hear God telling the Israelites that they had overstayed at Horeb. In Numbers we read that they obeyed God as long as mandate to move or stay was concerned. So what happened?

Hear this now. Most stagnant people do not know they are stagnant. Most of them say they are waiting for God's time, others feel they are avoiding moving with the crowd. Some think they are taking great care to do everything; others think they are striving to be holy.

It was a laughing matter to me when I was told as far back as 1970s a group of believers had ceased from evangelism and was practicing how to fly when the Lord Jesus comes. To them they were doing the Lord's will.

It is for this purpose the Lord has laid in my heart the burden to write this book. To awaken, as many as would listen, from the slumber of stagnancy. Stagnancy itself is a spirit whose embrace is like the embrace of sleep or death. Just like one with malaria; you are being squeezed alright, but by a friendly hug. You do not even know you are squeezed, until you wake-up from the fourth round of sleep. You deceive yourself it won't happen again, and discover you have just woken from the sixth round. You know something is eating you up from week to week, and then month to month and year to year. You look around you, what used to be colorful has lost its luster, what men clapped for some years back no longer interest them. The above experience could be terrible if it happens to a gospel minister. At times one shares a testimony that made the congregation jump months back, and they sit impassive, it is sickening.

WHAT IS STAGNANCY?

We are going to use a very common feature to define stagnancy. That is “stagnant water”. When water collects in a pot hole and does not flow and nothing flows into it, it is called stagnant water. This is different from a pond. At times a collection of water flows underground; such water looks fresh and in case of fresh water, is drinkable. It is not stagnant water.

Stagnant water is on its own. Receiving from no where and giving to no where. It collects dirt’s which decay in it and it soon begins to give out bad odor. Only animals that survive in dirty and lifeless places can stay in it. To be definite, the water is dead. It is not dead because it is dirty. In fact, the part of Port Harcourt where I currently live, there are salt seas around us in which people defecate, throw refuse and all kinds of indecent things, people still bathe in this water. I asked them, “why?” They told me, “It is a flowing water”. In some villages in Nigeria, where they depend on streams, people may be washing their dirty clothes at one end and others are drinking at the other end. I asked them “Why?” they say, “It is flowing”.

What makes water stagnant is not because it is dirty but because it is not flowing.

So it is in a believer’s life, in a local church or a business. The problem with the business is not the amount of money, the problem with the local church is not the lack of money or the number of people, the problem with believer’s life is not the fornication or stealing; the problem is stagnancy.

They stay at a place and not move at all.

INDICATIONS OF STAGNANCY

Like is said earlier, most people who are stagnant in career, do not know that they are in a stagnant state. Most pastors and preachers do not know that they are metamorphosed from waiting on the Lord to stagnancy.

Most young men who should have been married at their present age of forty and above, do not see it as stagnancy; they think they want to make money before they marry.

There was a lady who was giving what I must call testimony, as to how she missed the several men who would have married her. As at the time she was speaking, she was 50 years and yet unmarried.

- a. **In a local church.** One strong sign of stagnancy in a local church is bickering. Remember, the church in Jerusalem. (Acts 6) The bible made it

clear what Christ wanted the apostles to go on evangelism. They were to start at Jerusalem, then move over to Judea, and then to Samaria and finally to the ends of the earth. (Acts 1:8). But the apostles actually stopped at Jerusalem. It is true some people heard of what God was doing in Jerusalem, but Christ instruction was for them to go to them, not the reverse. They disobeyed a major principle, the same thing that happened at the tower of Babel. God intended that men should reproduce and fill the earth. Some men came together and tried to build a tower that will keep everybody together. Bible said that God confused their speech and scattered them (Gen. 11).

So in Acts of the Apostles some Spirit filled brethren repeated the same thing. They even set standard for any one to qualify to join their cult. (Acts 1:2-26).

WHAT WAS THE RESULT?

In those days when the number of disciples were increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. (Acts 6:1-7).

It is sad to note that instead of enquiring of the Holy Spirit to know the possible causes of this problem and how to resolve it, Peter and the Apostles immediately devised what they thought to be a way out and worsened the situation.

God had filled men and women with the power of the Holy Spirit and Jesus said in Peter's hearing that when this happens, they were to be sent out (Apostle Means the sent one) as witnesses, to continue from the point the earlier disciples met them. The apostles instead of sending them out allowed them to stay in Jerusalem and enjoy free food and test whose anointing was more than the other. When the reports of the bickering reached the Apostles, they went further in their error by choosing Spirit filled men to use the Holy Spirit's power to share food.

The bible said that this proposal pleased the brethren. The fact that your church council welcomes it does not mean God Okays it. The result is that God has now to use his own method to scatter them. To think that Philip, the man who single handedly conquered Samaria, was among those appointed to serve food.

I have this example. In Owerri – Imo state. There was this large church which has lawyers, doctors, and engineers etc. as ordained pastors whose only duty was to sit at the altar and do little things as the senior pastor would permit them. There were still other ministers who were not rich in this world's wealth; these were despised by the senior pastor. Even though

they were there before the rich ones, he exalted the rich ones above them. This was a church of about two thousand members and he ordains more every year.

When I worked there for about two months, you hear bickering, factions and the like. Today the state of that church and pastor is not what I would wish any good servant of God.

The second indication of stagnancy in a local assembly is when the pastor feels dry. He does not seem to have any more to offer the church. He struggles to preach or pray.

The third possible sign is when for a whole year no new member joined the church. Some assemblies have not gone to baptize any new member for the past five years. That is a sign of stagnancy.

IN PERSONAL LIFE:

To be able to uncover signs of stagnancy in your life you must create your own progress report and allow others judge you. Most people know how to justify their every action. They have a justifiable reason not to move forward. Like the man at the pool of Bethesda (John 5), he felt there was nothing he could do because he had nobody to help him. If Jesus just walked away then, he wouldn't have known he has just missed another opportunity to be healed.

Some people who have not grown spiritually always sight their stomach ulcer as a reason to excuse them from fasting. They do not know how many got instantly healed by challenging God and went into fasting despite the presence of ulcer

We will build more on this as we go to see factors that may lead to stagnancy.

Chapter two

FACTORS THAT MAY LEAD TO STAGNANCY

Achievers syndrome

Many years ago, a promising Greek artist named Timanthes was under the instruction of a well-known tutor. After several years, the young painter created an exquisite portrait. He was so thrilled with what he had painted that he sat day after day gazing at his work.

One morning, however, he was horrified to discover that his teacher had deliberately ruined his painting. Angry in tears, Timanthes ran to him and asked why he had destroyed his cherished possession. The wise man replied, "I did it for your own good. That painting was good, but it was retarding your progress. It is an excellent piece of art. But it was not perfect. Start again and see if you can do even better". The student too took his advice and produced a masterpiece called sacrifice of Iphigenia regarded by some as one of the finest paintings of antiquity.

This is a feeling of fulfillment. Some pastors were able to raise a congregation of one thousand members, owns two big cars, a personal building, a permanent site for the church and perhaps a nursery/primary school. All these get into their heads. He now sees himself as one of the "Gs" of the land. The great man of God. Instead of thinking of what to do to enlarge his coast further, begins to arrange for his bishopric enthronement and to make pilgrimage to Jerusalem. The man who built his church by compassion and humility; now feels too big to see ordinary people. He rather busies himself on how to meet the governor and commissioner to visit his church. This is not only so with ministers. A young man manages to furnish a bedroom flat and a shop with goods. This gets into his head. He stops thinking of building further.

Some brethren head a particular arm of the church that is in great demand. They have arrived. They begin to be rude at those who come for prayers, boasting and all that goes with it.

A young girl looks at herself in the mirror and thinks she is beautiful, and perhaps has a good job or wealthy parents, she says, "Before I give attention to any man he must ..."

In all the examples stated above, they stopped moving, to celebrate their achievements. When you stop, you may not know that you are dying, stagnancy sets in.

See how Apostle Paul resisted this –

Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Jesus took hold of me.

Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead. I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God called me heavenward in Christ Jesus. (Phil.3: 12-14)

The apostle said he has not obtained that for which he was called. Possibly he had achieved some things, but that was not why he started in the first place.

Some preachers will relax when they get a visa to the U.S.A, some will slow pedal when they get a big car and a congregation that is sizeable. I wish to state that every thing you have achieved, which keeps you from fulfilling the original call upon your life is a distraction from the devil.

The terrible side of this achievement factor is that most of the things you treasure will begin to depreciate with time, and when you decide to rise again to do it the way you did it at first, you discover you can no longer do so. Then you enter the painful side of stagnancy.

That you won ten souls into the church should encourage you to ask the pastor for permission to plant a branch. Do not sit in the congregation to show up. That you were able to fast for seven days and perhaps achieve some spiritual success should encourage you to move further.

That you made "A" class in your course should encourage you to move on to something else. Do not stand to count those you are better than, strive to meet those better than you.

In a race one thing you are advised against is to look back at those behind you. Achievers syndrome sets in when you begin to count those behind. It is in that process you stop to celebrate. There is nothing wrong in appreciating God for his goodness, but watch your heart (Prov. 4:23).

When Paul said, "I press on, striving, straining forward", all these suggest great efforts. Achievements have a way of blowing your ego, resist it. Whether in the ministry, personal life, school, office, career, etc. RESIST THE ENEMY.

Chapter three

THE TERRIBLE TRIPLETS

FEAR, PROCRASTINATION AND LAZINESS: I call them triplets because they look so much alike; you would not know when you move from one to the other. They look alike and act the same ways.

FEAR

Fear is the opposite of faith. There is a godly fear which Christians are encouraged to have for God (Job 31:23). This godly fear causes one to keep away from things that could displease God. It draws one closer to God in obedience and service.

The negative fear of our study doubts the ability of God to keep his word, promotes the fear of the created rather than the creator. Negative fear made a full-blown woman urinate on her body because a cockroach was blocking the entrance to the toilet. It made a man run into a moving ceiling fan for the fear of a snake of the size of a millipede. It can also keep one from doing anything meaningful to advance.

I break them into four: -

- i. **Fear of failure:** - this fear says, “HOW IF I FAIL?” and I wish you add, “AND SO WHAT?” If you know how to make this addition, you will always overcome this spirit. These fears magnify the consequence of failure so much that you are glued to a place, too afraid to lift a hand. **Idle hands make the rafters leak** (Eccl. 10:18). At times the consequence is that people will laugh at you if it does not turn out as expected. Now add, “And so what?” You discover that quite often the fear does not make sense after all.

I wish to state that failure is based on individual interpretation. What I mean is that what you call failure may mean a discovery to me.

There is this old account of Thomas Eistin as he experimented to discover electricity. The account said he failed ninety nine times and succeeded at the hundredth time. Journalists asked him how he felt when he failed those ninety- nine. He said he did not fail but discovered ninety nine ways one can't get electricity. So whereas men recorded ninety nine failures, he had ninety nine discoveries. They encouraged him to forge on.

At times a brother is asked to go and preach to the world. This evil fear says, “How if they do not accept my message?” to this add, “And so what?”

Most people you call successful today, have tried many things in the past and failed. How did they become successful? They did not allow the failures

to stop them. You become a failure when you stop trying. You may be at the point of a breakthrough.

ii. Fear of the unknown: some people teach that if God gives you an instruction, you should not move until you receive all the details from him. You will not be able to prove this from the scriptures without perverting the word of God.

By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even through he did not know where he was going. (Heb. 11:8).

Note, he obeyed and went without knowing where. To want to know all does not suggest total confidence in God. Some women had received a revelation about a man approaching them for marriage. God was telling them to go, but she goes around finding out that the man does not have a good job. She withdraws, because she could not see the man able to feed her in the future. She stays unmarried up to forty and the man marries some one else and God prospers him.

One thing I advice strongly is to find out what God is saying and then obey. There are companies that were doing very well some years back but today are bankrupt. Some believer had fought, given bribe, fasted and prayed, only to get into a company that went bankrupt after two years. The sad thing is that a poorer company was pleading with him to come and encourage them with his experience. He refused to go. He could not see the future. That company is rich now and he is still carrying application letters here and there.

Some wonderful brothers go as far as enquiring from familiar spirits. To them, they do not want to get into trouble. This is a sad story. The Lord has given us a means to know his will in decision making, even if you can not hear a voice from heaven. "Let the PEACE of Christ rule in your hearts..." (Col. 3:15). Anything you want to do search for that inner assurance from the Holy Spirit. An inner peace. If it is there, move on, if not desist.

There are other ways God can speak to us. Read my book, "Dreams and interpretations. How they work". You are not given the spirit of fear; so do not fear.

iii. Fear Of Danger: - The sluggard says, "***There is a lion in the road, a fierce lion roaming the streets***" (Prov.26: 13). Some people have the philosophy, "SAFETY FIRST". Before they undertake anything they first access all the risks. Such will never go for mission work. They can see that those who went were always killed on the field. You don't make them learn to use a new machine, because it may explode and "Only heaven knows what will follow". They avoid any kind of risks. Suggest going to do business in a far country he will see either armed robbers or some security men depriving them of their hard earned money. Such people will never

allow somebody else to use their computer or head their business because, “there could be mischief”.

Pastors in this category are always careful how the youths handle the microphone and of course, when they do not handle them, they leave the church for him. He also makes sure the doors of the church are always shut, so that armed robbers do not come and carry away the wall clock.

Hear me, my reader; there is no life without a risk attached. To think you can live without risk is to decide to die. Those who fear danger are always much more prone to danger.

I could not really understand why the bible said the fearful (the cowards NIV) will have no place in heaven (Rev. 21:8) until I saw a man full of fear. He was a junior pastor in one of the largest congregation in Port Harcourt. After going through the teaching manual series (my books on prayer and deliverance), his senior pastor asked him to feel free and market the books in the church. I handed him close to three hundred copies of the three in the series.

Our friend was afraid he could loss any of the books and perhaps he will be rebuked. So, what happened? After two months, he sold eighth copies and lost twenty copies. Job said “what I feared has come upon me” (Job 3: 25).

I do not tend to underscore taking care in ventures and in the ministry, but it should not be the rule in our ministry and life. To overemphasize caution will under score faith.

iv. Fear of disappointment: - in some cases, somebody has a pressing need and all he needs to do is to express this need, but this spirit says, “How will I be able to walk away if he says no?” At times a proposal for a contract or asking for help from a brother or sister in the church, it could be making a marriage proposal. Like I said earlier, you have nothing to lose if you are turned down. Let’s take for example if a man walks up to his pastor and says, “Pastor, I want to be a part of the prayer team”. What do you expect if the pastor feels he is not qualified to be in the prayer cell? Do you think he will scold him for being that daring? I think the pastor will be happy he had the desire and think of how to encourage him to meet up. But in a situation he is turned down, I don’t think it makes sense to begin to shrink.

This spirit has killed more businesses in a year than armed robbers, inflation, lack of fund and all the natural disasters put together. Some monies lost when a bank liquidated should have been invested into a venture. Some have delayed making a change because of fear of the unknown and all the money went under. Some afraid they may never be able to feed their wife and children have remained single into their old age.

The bible said we have not received the spirit of fear (11 Tim. 1:7 and Rom. 8:15) but of power.

PROCRASTINATION:-This is the habit of postponing indefinitely what should be done today for tomorrow. Again this is a terrible spirit and a principal cause of stagnancy. It looks harmless and sincere but a destructive habit. God rebuked Israel for this attitude through the man of God, Haggai.

This is what the Lord almighty says: “These people say, “The time has not yet come for the Lord’s house to be built”. Then the word of the Lord came through the prophet Haggai, “Is it a time for you yourself to be living in your paneled houses; while this house remains a ruin?” (Haggai 1:2-4).

We see one evil side of procrastination. From a distance it looks as if the person in question simply did not do what he ought to do. But looking closer you discover he actually did something, but something less important. They were supposed to build God’s house but instead they were building theirs. Yet they simply argue that the time to build has not come.

I have seen many believers who say that though they know that there is a definite call of God on their lives, they wanted to put one or two things in order first. At times to first finish schooling, build a house, and make some money etc. You still meet these brothers after ten years not making progress spiritually or in their personal endeavors.

At times it is about developing your prayer life through fasting and prayer may be getting involved in one wing in church to be built-up for God’s program; to others it may be at the point of tithing. No matter what is your case, just know that if you do not obey first instruction, you will not receive the second.

In business and social life, procrastination has kept many stagnant. A girl may receive a proposal for marriage, for one flimsy excuse or the other she delays her response, you find such girl latter roaming from prayer house to prayer house asking for marriage partner.

The principal causes of procrastination are: -

- i. **Indecision:** - this is inability to decide fast on a matter. Such person may even enquire from more mature brethren, but makes too many enquiries thereby confusing himself. This is a terrible spirit that those who go through them should go for counseling and prayers. If you meet the right person, you have to go through deliverance because it has spiritual influence.

Proverbs 26:14 says

As a door turns on its hinges, so a sluggard turns on his bed.

The bible calls it turning on hinges. Always thinking but never able to make a move.

- ii. **Lack Of Zeal:** -Romans 12:11 says ***“Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord”***

This is true spiritually as well as physically. Many carry this through their physical life into the church. He never goes for adventure. He keeps away from any subject he cannot understand easily. For such a person if you discuss your vision with him he will pour cold water over you. In the church, if a pastor is blessed or rather cursed- with this kind of members, he is in soup. Each time he suggests holding a program in the church they have good reasons why they should wait. In a case where he goes ahead, he will see himself doing everything. Some deceive themselves they are waiting for God’s time, but God says, “You have stayed too long here!”

Some even argue that they are following the old time Christianity. And like in every stagnant water, dirt of sin gather and one begins to hear some abominable things from that assembly. If the pastor does not do something about it, you see him fall along with his congregation.

I wish to state again that this is mostly spiritual problem than physical. You can only resolve it by spiritual methods. For an individual, besides going for prayers and counseling, you need to make friends with people who are aflame. But let them know your problem. My observation is that such people who came near me wanted to be in control. They want me to reduce the time of prayer for their sake, reduce the hour of fasting for their sake, and reduce the days of hospital visitation for their sakes. At the end you will become like them, if you obey them.

- iii. **Laziness:** - Laziness looks harmless. I have heard of people disciplined in living churches for stealing, fighting, fornication and adultery etc. but I have never heard of people disciplined for laziness or idleness. Yet the bible did not hide the danger of this evil to the body of Christ.

He who is not with me is against me and he who does not gather with me, scatters (Luke 11:23).

Laziness has some cloaks it hides under: -

- a. **Demand of every detail:** - While coordinating the inter-denomination spiritual warfare retreat for 2006, I was trying to bring a young man to be part of the prayer team. He asked one question after another and one of the coordinators tried to answer. I stopped the coordinator because I know it was laziness expressing itself. Quite often such persons want to know the end from the beginning.

b. **Catching on every excuse available:** -Many people would have become millionaires today if they let go of excuses and move forward. “You know I do not have enough money, and you see the man is from another tribe and I live very far. Before I will get up from sleep others would have been there.”

Some even begin to accuse others of one thing or the other as reason they did not do what they were too lazy to do.

The sluggard says, “There is a lion in the road, a fierce lion roaming the streets”. (Prov.26: 15)

In the above passage it looks as if he was afraid, the truth is that he is too lazy to work.

c. **Pride:** -How can a whole me do this kind of thing. I am really too big for this kind of job. Look when I get the kind of job and make the kind of money I am talking about ...” This is laziness cloaked in pride and self established wisdom.

The sluggard is wiser in his own eyes than seven men who answer discreetly. (Prov.26:16).

You find such men who take time to cut their nails neatly, iron their clothes and sit down to eat free food in an untidy house. They say they are waiting for something befitting but are idle. In the ministry you see such young men who do not want to pay the prize of planting or even pastoring a small church. They love to go from church to church, ministry to ministry. They have used some of their idle time to read some books. So before you can say anything, he starts replaying what he had read.

If you meet a lazy pastor he tells you he is too big to invite these small evangelist boys, who are hopping from place to place. To him he knows what to do but is only preparing himself.

“Pastor, why not night vigil?

“There is a way we pray here; you see God is not a Methodist. We pray here. You see God is moving here.”

Yes, God is moving by exposing illegitimate pregnancies even among your own daughters- laziness in a cloak of pride.

Many young men who are jobless today are because they are lazy. In the area I currently live in Port Harcourt we have to depend on some Hausa boys to supply us water on trucks. Some boys from this part of Nigeria will get up from sleep and go about looking for Hausa boys to supply them water. Why not do it themselves? They are simply put, lazy.

Caution: - Another cloak laziness wears is caution. “I don’t want to make a mistake. How if I fast and catch ulcer? How if...? How if..?”

The bible says,

“Do you see a man wise in his own eyes” There is more hope for a fool than for him” (Prov. 26:12)

Let it suffice if I say that one principal reason for poverty is laziness. It is not lack of education (most prominent and wealthy men in Nigeria are total illiterates), not lack of money (you can always start like the ant- from a little), not lack of connection (somebody needs what you have) and not family curses (Esau prevailed over his curses) and not witches and wizards (you can not possibly have more enemies than Joseph, son of Jacob had). The principal cause of poverty is laziness.

***Go to the ant, you sluggard;
Consider its ways and be wise;
It has no commander, no overseer or ruler,
Yet it stores its provision in summer and gathers its food at harvest.***

***How long will you lie there, you sluggard?
When will you get up from your sleep?
A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest-
And poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an Armed man (Prov. 6:6-11)***

***I went past the field of the sluggard, past the vineyard of the man who lacks judgment; thorns had come up everywhere, the ground was covered with weeds and the stone wall was in ruins.
I applied my heart to what I saw;
A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest – and poverty will come on you like a bandit and scarcity like an armed man.(24: 30 – 34).***

It is true there is a spiritual side of this but the bible amplifies:-

If a man is lazy, the rafters sag; if his hands are idle, the house leaks (ECC.10:18)

UNBELIEF/ DOUBT

See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. (Heb. 3: 12)

Unbelief is another catalyst to stagnancy. It looks harmless too. I called it a catalyst because it induces a reaction but itself is not involved. Unbelief is inability to trust God to do what he said he can do. A man is faced by a challenge and God through his servant or his word tells him to take a step

forward to come out of the present predicament, he would not because common sense does not support it. He rather goes to enquire from an unbeliever like himself. How many visions and dreams have been slaughtered on the altars of unbelief? Many love to talk about Abraham from the pulpit but how many of these pastors can do what Abraham did. Otherwise, why is there congestion of churches and ministries in the cities, whereas some neighboring villages do not have a church hall? Could it be God is not calling somebody to these areas, which would rather stay where he is sure of feeding allowance?

I once shared with a great man of God my desire to obey God and go on international ministry, even though I did not have money at the time to meet the challenges. He totally discouraged the move, as according to him it demands a lot of money, which I did not have. At least I went to Ghana and God has been faithful ever since.

I shared with another preacher my desire to write a book. His view sounded like this, "Who are you to write a book? Who will read the book? "My sixth book is circulation now. Somebody said," If you wish to be inspired, do not listen to men who are expired".

Be careful who you share your visions and dreams with. Look around the man with spiritual understanding before you approach him. If he is full of unbelief, he is likely to offload such on you. That he is rich is not the yard stick. Saul was a king but almost destroyed David's future and suffered himself. Eli was aging and tired but encouraged Samuel to hear the voice of God.

The passage we read above said an unbelieving heart turns away from the Lord. It will try to get help alright, but from the wrong place.

Some people are sick and even though the word of God said that we look up to God for our healing, their total confidence is on drugs and doctors. They will take all their money to pay for drugs, rather than make a fat offering to the Lord and pay their tithe. To such people Satan is more real than God.

I am not against orthodox medicine, but any doctor who wishes to be truthful will tell you there is no cure for more than seventy percent of the diseases he deceives you to believe he can cure. He only tries to regulate some and plays on your mind to re-adjust to overcome the rest.

Unbelief is the principal reason people are more conscious of Satan than God. They recognize the presence of demons than of angels. They do not just believe the word of God. Ministering to such people is often difficult because the bible said,

***But, when he asks, he must believe and not doubt,
Because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea,(James1:6)***

From our text in Deut. 1: 6-7, we see that the principal reason the Israelites lost touch with the Holy Spirit was because of sin in the camp. They had sinned and they have heard the sentence from God and right before their eyes the manifestation has begun. They were overcome by what they know.

The Bible said that the righteous is as bold as the lion (Prov. 28: 2). When sin enters, the child of God loses boldness. The consequence is that things he would have ordinarily dealt with begin to deal with him.

David suffered this way. Even though he was still the king of Israel, his conscience would not allow him have peace, after he killed one of his faithful soldiers and took his wife. (II Sam. 11-12). He had done this art underground but a guilty conscience pricked him. I believe that one of the reasons God sent Nathan the prophet was to deliver David from bondage to his conscience. If this did not take place his kingdom would have gone under and outsiders will not be able to interpret why such a dynamic ministry suddenly went under. If a giant came at David at that point people would have been surprised to see David flee. Why? Because he knows that he has lost the divine presence he carried when he confronted Goliath. This is a common factor in the Church. Some sisters who were serving faithfully in the music ministry become dry and begin to suffer stagnancy after they fell into sexual immorality.

Some ministers, who will charge into the deliverance room years back, will withdraw this day. He does not confront evil habits from his pulpit these days, because he has some sin partners in the church. Some people lost their confidence to challenge God over tithe since they added ill-gotten gains into their business. Even when prayer topics are demanded, are not bold to step forward. At times it is mere disobedience to God's instruction to them, and they find themselves sinking.

That is why Bible called sin a heavy load. At times, you want to claim the promises of God in His word, but the accuser of the brethren, is quick to remind you that just claiming the promises are not enough. You now discover you have stopped and only exist among the brethren in number but not in heart. This is a terrible state to find oneself. In David's case he was glad when God addressed the matter and the idolatrous fruit of the illicit relationship died.

Chapter four

HOW TO DEAL WITH POLLUTION OF SIN

There are three possible ways to handle this problem. In fact, I wish to acknowledge that this is the most deadly of catalysts to stagnancy.

a. Break-up the sins into categories:-

Settled Sin	Scars of sin	Besetting Sin
Abortion committed as unbeliever. Murder done while an armed robber in the world. Lies told while in the world That led some body into trouble etc.	Sins committed in the past against God, which you still bear the consequence, but no longer commit them- e.g. Damaged womb, which cause barrenness, AIDS, Children born through adulterous relationship etc.	Habitual sins clawing on you even though you are now a believer. Fornication, smoking, Drunkenness, Masturbation, Lesbianism, Wife Beating, Quarreling, etc

In the chart above, I have tried to give as much example to make myself understood; you can fill in to suit your case.

Category A:- In this case the reason it is troubling you is because of lack of knowledge of God's word concerning you. A sister in Owerri, who had committed abortion as a young lady, but is now a married woman with children, a faithful worker in a living church, was finding it difficult to believe that God has forgiven her. In fact, each time she prayed she weeps about that sin. This is nonsense.

I, even, I, am He who blots out your transgression, for my sake, and remember your sins no more. (Isaiah 43: 25)

I have swept away your offences like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me for I have redeemed you. (Isaiah 44:22)

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1John 1: 9)

I wish to let you know that our neighbors, friends, brothers and sisters may not believe this. Even you, yourself may doubt it, but these scriptures are what God thinks about you and the sins in category A.

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the spirit of life set me free from the law sin and death.(Rom.8:1-2).

What you need to understand is there is no Christian that has no past tense.

Without past tense, there won't be present tense.

All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath. But because of His great love for us, God who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions- it is by grace you have been saved. (Eph.2:3-5)

The plain truth is that you have been forgiven those sins, and God cannot remember them any more. They no longer exist in his records. These were the sins Christ died for and hence, have suffered on your account. You are free from them forever. When you believe this, you will experience a liberty that will help you to break from the chain of self condemnation and advance into God's will for your life.

Category B:- To be candid, this is the category which troubles believers most.

David was forgiven for taking Uriah's wife, but he was to live with the consequence all his life. And he did one thing; David embraced God all through this and never grumbled.

I have seen a loving sister who contracted HIV/AIDS, who died of same. The man of God Jimmy Baker of USA went into erroneous teaching of prosperity. God out of His mercy caused him to be jailed for five years. In prison God got his attention. He served his term and came out. He is still preaching today but lost all the wealth he had earlier.

***Why should any living man complain when punished for his sins?
(lam.3: 39)***

This should be our attitude in this case. It is hard to bear the reproach of childlessness, amputated leg and widowhood, etc. but a positive attitude is the only thing that could move God again. Some began to use their situation to advice others, other people immersed themselves in God's business.

There was this sister who removed her womb as a prostitute. After some time she repented and joined a living church in Port Harcourt. Knowing she could no longer have children, she forgot about praying for life partner and gave herself over for God's service. She belonged to the prayer cell and also

worked as an usher. A brother noticed her and proposed to her for marriage. Not knowing her past, he only saw her as a faithful sister in the church. Our sister turned down the proposal. When pestered by the church, who could not understand her reason, she revealed her past and encouraged the young man to obey God's voice. The young man prayed and God encouraged him to go ahead and marry her in that situation. They were wedded. After three years, while nobody was expecting it, our sister became pregnant and brought forth a pair of twins-two boys.

It may not work the same way for you. But obviously God will not leave you without consolation. Jimmy Baker does not have a big church anymore in USA, but God has opened door for him to travel round the world as guest speaker.

I acknowledge that some of these consequences will inhibit you greatly but take peace in Christ. There is one blessed assurance- an eternity of bliss in heaven without those scars.

Category C: - Of a truth sin is a serious matter. Sin closes heaven over a believer, over a ministry, over a business. The bible says that it separates between us and God (Isaiah 59:1-2). God does not hate a sinner; God does not delight in the punishment or death of a sinner. God does not delight in pronouncing curses on sinners. If anything, God is deeply in love with the sinner and so, sent His only begotten son to die for him while he still lives in sin.

The problem is that sin throws a canopy over the sinner which hinders God from touching the sinner. Sin pollutes the sinner, so that his prayer gives a stench instead of a perfume. Sin misrepresents sinners. That is why every child of God should not toy with sin. Once or twice we may stumble into something sinful; we should repent and move on. At times the enemy would want to catch you at category A, but you must believe the word of God and move on.

What we are concerned with at this category is when a particular sinful art becomes a life style. Most of them are carried over from the worldly life, as we saw in Ephesians 2:3-4.

How could this factor lead to stagnancy?

They will lead to stagnancy because the Holy Spirit will keep reminding you that they do not work in the kingdom of Christ. When approaching for infilling by the Holy Spirit, you are reminded that God can not fill a dirty vessel. How could he still be bold to ask for infilling? When approaching to cast out a demon, you are reminded that you do not have the moral standing to challenge demons because you have sin in your life. If you are appointed to teach Sunday school, you will always see your unworthiness.

There is a level of prayer you cannot go into as long as a particular sin governs your life. Most believers in the church who are never able to graduate spiritually, this is their problem. If it is an assembly where people graduate in the school of ministry by mental power, this brother will be ordained a pastor but he will be without the anointing power. They may make-up with head knowledge among men, but the truth is that there is no man whose service God will recognize without his being empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Some have pleaded helplessness in dealing with besetting sin but the fact is that they have not seen it for what it is. Some are even trying to see how to manage them and reduce the number of times they involve in them. Some new generation churches underscore them and encourage their members not to take them serious. I say here that the only thing that can make you not to take it serious is that you do not have genuine salvation or you lack a balanced understanding of scripture and your walk with God.

Instead of saying you can not stop them, just say that you do not want to stop them. When you see them for what they are and where they are taking you in eternity- hell fire- you will fight with all the strength in you. Most sin habits have breeding places. A girl who feels she is afflicted by the spirit of lust who always hangs around men and at times in lonely places is simply deceiving herself. She is devil's agent to seduce men. A man who is bound by the spirit of masturbation but watches pornographic sites is deceiving himself. Those who are bound with the spirit of drunkenness should know the kind of friends to keep and they won't drink. I advice those in this category should tell themselves the truth.

If you wish to make progress, you must report yourself to a church authority and submit to supervision. Report your sin partner; open up all the secret places your sin of lesbianism and the like thrives. When you do this, even the demons will flee from you. Demons hate to be exposed to light.

RESENTMENT

There is this thing we do not call sin, but it is as evil as anything else. **RESENTMENT** is permitted in some Christian circles as "Our way ". Some churches do not believe that other believers belong to the same God as they. "You must marry from among our people ", they say. Some even encourage tribal sentiment. Some white men still see Africans as naked apes. This is what is called Apartheid. There are occasions where your contact for advancement is among this people you do not like, and you see such brethren begin to rationalize.

One example of this trait in the Bible is Peter. He was brought up as a normal Jew, with the view that other races are unclean. When Jesus came,

he first sent them to the lost tribes of Israel (Matt. 10:5-6). This seemed to have made Peter's resentment stronger. A time came when God decided to reach the gentiles through Peter. Despite the great manifestation of the Holy Spirit in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10), Peter could not shake off his tribal resentment. We see Paul giving an account of how he rebuked Peter at Antioch.

When Peter came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong. Before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those of the circumcision group. The Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray. (Gal.2: 11-13).

Most people who have this problem eventually land in confusion, because they do not know if to obey the conviction of their heart or their negative fear.

You will be shocked that some Christians obey the "Osu" caste system (outcast) and so will not wish to marry a brother or sister who had that background.

I warn again – your "Canaan" may be that place of your resentment. I am not talking of a believer going to unbeliever, but unnecessary factionalizing among believers.

Chapter five

SPIRITUAL CAUSES OF STAGNANCY

It is necessary to state that most people, churches or businesses in stagnant states are actually under demonic bondage. Some are bound under curses. As these ones make effort to come out this state, the demons that enforce their bondage now manifest. Some see them in the dream and in other cases, there are glaring indications that our brother is going through something beyond the ordinary. My expectation is that as you begin to take steps, we will be able to come to the root of it all.

Jesus sent two of His disciples, saying to them

“Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there, which no one has ridden, untie it and bring it here. If any ask you, ‘Why are you doing this? Tell him, “The Lord needs it and will send it back here shortly”

They went and found a colt outside in the street, tied at a doorway. As they untied it, some people standing there asked, “What are you doing, untying that colt?”

***They answered as Jesus had told them to,
And the people let them go. (Mark 11:1-6).***

The account of this colt is an example of how many people were born to be great but eventually die bound to a tree. The colt in this story is a product of cross breeding of a donkey and a horse. It is an expensive animal and highly regarded. It was created to be used by kings and nobles and to enter palace gates. But it was tied to a tree. We see also that some men were positioned there, not to feed this colt (of course it does not belong to them) but to make sure it is not delivered from its bondage.

The rope at its neck allows only a limited movement around the tree. Year in, year out, this animal with excellent destiny is bound to a tree by the rope of limitation.

This is how people are bound spiritually under the yoke of stagnancy. In their own case, demons are positioned to monitor them. Any time any help will get to them, these demons frustrate the help and even send signals to witches and wizards and other satanic stations to work and block out the promotion.

Also like the case of the colt, it is only the word of Jesus himself that can set such people free. I believe that by the time you finish this book the anointing of the inspiration of this book will release you from the yoke of stagnancy, in Jesus name. Amen.

Say this prayers before you continue:-

1. Father God Almighty, thank you for opening my eyes to discover my stagnant state. I pray that you further expose all the satanic yokes that have bound me over the years, in Jesus name. Amen.
2. Let the Holy Ghost fire destroy every evil covering devil and his demons will want to place over my eyes and mind at this time.
3. By the power in the name of Jesus, I bind every spiritual watcher placed over my life, be destroyed this hour by the fire and thunder of the Holy Ghost.
4. By the authority in the name of Jesus Christ, I bind all the evil spirits that have accepted the assignment to keep me in bondage of stagnancy.
5. By the fire of the Holy Ghost, I destroy every evil chain, fetter or yoke or ropes placed over my waist, neck, hands or legs, in the powerful name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

STAGNATED BY DEMONIC BONDAGE

When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tomb to meet Him.

This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain.

For he had often been chained hand and foot. He tore the chains and broke the iron from his feet.

Night and day among the tombs and in the hills, he would cry out and cut himself with stones. When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of Him.

A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs, allow us to go into them. He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs.

As Jesus was getting into the boat, the man who had been demon possessed begged to go with Him. Jesus did not let him, but said, "Go home to your family and tell them how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you".

So the man went away and began to tell in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him. And all the people were amazed. (Mark 5:2-20).

The above story is an example of those who had been bound by demons. I have a very personal friend and he was my classmate, he was above average as a student and very bright and talented. When we met again after about eighteen years of separation, I was surprised at his appearance. His father did not encourage him to continue his education. He struggled and gained admission into the university. During his university days, he caught tuberculosis. It is only God's mercy that is keeping him alive today. TB has strongly limited him. There are many things he would have done if not for the ill-health.

When the insane man in our story above was born, nobody could predict he was to be a city-wide evangelist, but the demons knew. So at a very early stage they captured and bound him with what men thought to be insanity. It possibly started little by little and neighbours proffered one solution or the other, but he was not getting better. Finally, they decided to bind him with chains, at least to stop him from sleeping in the cemetery. But he tore the chains away. None was wise enough to consider that demons were in operation. The whole city itself was under bondage to demons, for they raised pigs and when they saw a power that could upset their dirty business, they forced Jesus to leave, even if it meant leaving the rest of their people under possible demonic attack. I consider it was this reason that God sent this man; to liberate the cities from bondage of those terrible demons.

It is possible that God could have sent some other prophets and deliverance ministers. The account of what could have happened if Jesus did not calm the tempest, suggest that these demons in their network with marine spirits could have killed or drowned them. So our friend remained in bondage until the master came himself.

As I pass by the roads I see some men and women reputedly mad. Some could be captured soldiers. Some sisters who could have been serving God faithfully were diverted due to childlessness and witchcraft attack.

To obey the direction of scripture as to how to get out of this kind of bondage, the person in question should visit a deliverance minister or ministry. The client cannot minister to himself. Proper assessment should be made and the client sent into the deliverance room or as the Lord would direct the deliverance minister.

It may take time, but by the power in the name of Jesus Christ, victory is sure.

STAGNATED BY NEGATIVE LABEL- JABEZ:

Jabez was more honourable than his brothers. His mother had named him Jabez, saying "I gave birth to him in pain".

Jabez cried out to the God of Israel, “Oh that you would bless me and enlarge my territory!

Let your hand be with me and keep me from harm so that I will be free from pain”. And God granted his request. (1Chron. 4: 9-10)

Jabez is an example of persons suffering under stagnation not his making. **“His mother named him Jabez”**, which means pain or sorrow and this began to manifest in his life. His mother had given him a name that placed a yoke of curse on his life.

Enlarge my territory (Coast KJV). He had been suffering under stagnation. Rise and fall, near success syndrome, abortionist factor. Year in year out, he would not make significant progress. On the outside, people saw him as a successful person and he was a man of integrity (more honourable than his brothers) but, **“His mother named him ...”**

Like I said earlier, most people who suffer stagnancy do not know it. Jabez would have been a very careful person to discover his state, even though he was above his peers. He hadn't the achiever's syndrome.

“Jabez cried out ...” Also note that the demon possessed man we studied earlier also cried out day and night.

In Jabez's case he went into strategic prayer.
He lined out his prayers.

- i. Bless me
- ii. Enlarge my territory (Coast – KJV)
- iii. Let your hand be with me
- iv. Keep me from harm – accidents and calamities that draw me back and make me stagnant.
- v. And that I will be free from pain-the root of my problem-my mother's label.

The way Jabez spelt out the prayers suggests that this was not one day prayer. I strongly believe he backed it up with fasting, perhaps, five days fasting.

People in this category should follow Jabez's example. They may call in a minister if they feel like but they should be willing to pray for themselves. And God who answered Jabez will definitely answer them.

THE PEOPLE OF JERICHO – GENERATIONAL CURSES

The men of the city said to Elisha, “Look, our Lord, this town is well situated, as you can see, but the water is bad and the land is unproductive”.

“Bring me a new bowl”, he said, “and put salt in it”. So they brought it to him.

Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying, “This is what the Lord says: I have healed the water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive”. And the water has remained wholesome to this day, according to the word Elisha had spoken. (II Kings 2:19-2).

The land of Jericho was cursed by Joshua, the man of God (Joshua 6:26). In I Kings 16:34, a man called Hiel, bore the consequences of this curse and lost his whole family in his zeal to rebuild Jericho. I believe that many people would have lost their lives by attempting same. Not very long the curse developed and bound the whole land. Business and agricultural ventures in Jericho were adversely affected. The aquatic life was endangered and those who drank water from Jericho’s river died or became sick. The elders noticed that this is not the case with their neighbours. Fruits and crops that flourished in neighbouring lands, suffered in Jericho. Businesses that thrived in the neighbouring towns failed in Jericho.

Most people whose businesses are suffering are because of location. I once planted a church where more than three churches had failed. The church grew to about fifty members within two months and scattered. Those who lived within the same property are currently finding it difficult to feed. All the lock-up shops there normally end-up in debts.

In considering stagnancy consider where your business or church is situated. If you are on a cursed land or property, you just must relocate. If the property is yours, then follow the example of the people of Jericho, invite a land liberation minister.

At times the client is from a village or family under a curse, this also has a strong spiritual influence on him. The important thing in this case is to first come to awareness of the problem, and then it is half solved.

Chapter six

ARROWS IN GOD'S QUIVER

I have tried to do an extensive work on this issue of stagnancy. To be total about it, there is one important category we must not neglect. These are the ones the Bible calls, "Arrows in God's quiver".

2 *He made my mouth like a sharpened sword, in the shadow of his hand he hid me, and he made me into a polished arrow and concealed me in his quiver.*

4 *But I said, "I have laboured to no purpose, I have spent my strength in vain and for nothing. Yet what is due me is in the Lord's hand, and my reward is with my God.*

14 *But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me".*

15 *"Can a woman forget the baby at her breast
And have no compassion on the child she has born?"*

There are people who are experiencing delay now because God is preparing them for something or preparing a place for them. It is not because they have sinned or are lazy, not because of a curse or a demon, but simply because they are undergoing a divine process. They may be ministers and children of God who is preparing for ministry or for a particular promotion like he did for Joseph the son Jacob. Perhaps they are like Job, facing an examination that will determine their promotion. It is easy to misunderstand these as being stagnated. But when God is through with them they shall come forth as gold (Job 23:10).

The essence of this book is to stir thoughts in the heart of believers who have overstayed God's time in a place. Like I said earlier, when we overstay, all kinds of things begin to happen. A pastor who overstays in a station can begin to experience reduced resistance to sin and rebellion of his members to his authority. In most cases they stop taking care of him as they should.

Some church workers should move to a higher place of authority, delay could kill their zeal and possibly expose them to shame and disgrace. My prayer is that the Holy Spirit will stir you like he stirred the Israelites in our text.

This book is for believers in Christ Jesus. If you are not born again, the first step to take is to give your life to Christ. If you have decided to do so now, I wish you say this prayer from your heart and see a pastor of a living church after.

PRAYER

Dear Lord Jesus Christ, I thank you for dying for my sins. I repent of my rebellion of accepting you as my Lord and personal saviour in the past.

Today, I welcome you in my life as my Lord, Master and Saviour. I reject Satan and his cohorts. I renounce every covenant and initiation done over my life in the past. By the power in the blood of Jesus Christ, clean my name from the book of death and write it in the lamb's book of life.

I suggest you report yourself to a pastor of a living church around you. I will be glad to hear from.

YOU ARE NOW READY TO CARRY ON!

IT IS TIME TO COME OUT OF LIMITATIONS THAT BRING ABOUT STAGNANCY

Still making references to the colt in Mark 11; try to picture an animal tied to a tree. Imagine that animal makes effort to some level and you see that rope pull it back. Around the neck of this colt are wounds which have developed as a result of this struggle. Much struggling at times reduces the length of the rope and amounts to trampling the few grasses within its reach. Some of the grasses are overgrown and dry; because he does not eat that species; others can not be allowed to form well before it bites it again some so that it is stunted due to over use. Year in, year out, this colt wonders when will help come. There are actually persons around this colt but their assignment is to make sure this colt is not liberated from bondage. They do not attempt even to transfer it to another place for greener pastures.

I wish to state that this is the picture of the history of some men and women you meet on the street. Right now in Onitsha, Nigeria, a medical doctor is roaming the streets a mad man. It is not that this is very strange, because there are others who are trained Lawyers, Engineers, Architects and so on. Some of these men and women put up a big fight to get out of the shackles of limitation to stagnancy, and the only way the enemy could hinder him any more is by striking him with madness. Medical doctors would carry out tests on such people and give out some of their jaw breaking "grammars". But their eyes and minds are not trained to discern the spiritual.

I have seen some bright persons on the streets, the stories have been that of rise and fall, some young ladies, beautiful and attractive, I keep wondering why no marriage. Some fine men, I keep wondering what kept them bound to poverty and failure. If this is where you are now, by the

powerful name of Jesus Christ, I have come to declare your liberation. The Bible says that it was not possible for the power of death to keep its hold on Jesus Christ, the son of God. By implication, you too can not be bound anymore because your life is buried in Christ and Christ in God.

Before you go on, lay your hands on your chest and say this prayer:

Father God, I believe I have come to the point of my total deliverance. I key-up my spirit, soul and body to your anointing of the hour. By the power in the name of Jesus Christ, I position myself for your touch in the powerful name of Jesus. Amen.

Yes, this time you are carrying this book is very important. It does not matter how long you have been tied to the tree. Get what I mean? You see that colt could have been bound but she existed in God's program. Men or demons could bind her but within divine timing she had a part to play. This was to carry the son of God into Jerusalem in a triumphal procession. The glorification of this colt is tied to a divine program. It could have suffered deprivation of good house, good school, good certificate, good food, good clothing, good job, etc. she would have had a bad medical history as a result of malnutrition and scars created by the long stay at that tree, but that is as long as God's time to use her has not come. When God's time to use her comes, Jesus himself sent word for its deliverance. And when he commanded it, there was no more delay.

Child of God, I hope you are making a sense out of what I am saying? May be it is your ministry as a servant of God, may be your business, may be health and so on. There is unction for you now. Because you have come thus far on this book the presence of the Holy Spirit is already around you. Why are we talking about divine timing? The angel Gabriel said of Elizabeth.

EVEN ELIZABETH YOUR RELATIVE IS GOING TO HAVE A CHILD IN HER OLD AGE, AND SHE WHO WAS SAID TO BE BARREN IS IN HER SIXTH MONTH. FOR NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD (Luke 1:36-37).

Men called Elizabeth barren. Thank God she had a God fearing husband, and so was not sent packing from her home. Everything around her spelt "BARREN". As she walked on the street people pointed their fingers and move their noses at her and then say in hushed voices, "BARREN". Her medical history reported "BARREN". Her age, for the angel said she was in her old age, reported "BARREN". Even her God fearing husband concluded he married a BARREN woman.

Elizabeth said she had been living in disgrace.

After this his wife Elizabeth became pregnant and for five months remained in exclusion. “The Lord has done this for me,” she said “in these days he has shown favour and taken away my DISGRACE among the people”.

Elizabeth was living in disgrace among the people. But note she said, “IN THESE DAYS...” In what days does she mean? In the days of divine program. If demons shut her womb, within THESE DAYS, they can do it no more. If satanic kingdoms of witches and wizards, occult or native doctors are monitoring her womb from their covens and shrines, IN THESE DAYS they can do it no more. THESE DAYS are the days of divine agenda and God needed the womb of Elizabeth for some business, no one can stop it.

Men called her BARREN but her God was only preserving her womb for the appointed time. Satan could have been celebrating her captivity, but he was deceived and will always be. The womb was waiting for a divine assignment. This is the story of most women called BARREN in the Bible. Sarah’s womb was preserved to produce the heir of promise, Isaac. Rebecca’s womb was preserved to produce Esau and Jacob. Rachel’s womb was preserved to produce the royal prince of Egypt, Joseph. Hannah’s womb was preserved to produce the Prophet, Samuel. The womb of Minoa’s wife was preserved to produce the strongest man that ever lived on the surface of the earth, Samson. So, here again Elizabeth’s womb was preserved to produce the forerunner of the son of God, John the Baptist. That is why I advised you not to take lightly this season you have this book in your hand. It is linked to a divine agenda for your life.

I want you to stop and pray once more like this

(a) Faithful father, I thank you for bringing me to this time. I also thank you for opening my eyes.

(b) Father I command that every distraction the devil will want to send my way to hinder me from taking full advantage of this day be rolled away in Jesus’ name.

Pray for at least ten minutes before you continue.

I want you to note that it was Jesus himself who sent his disciples to where the colt was.

Jesus sent two of his disciples, saying to them, “Go to the village ahead of you, and just as you enter it, you will find a colt tied there..... (Mark 11: 1-2)

Jesus knew exactly where the colt was bound and chose the kind of men that he knows can untie her. This also means that Jesus knows where you are bound.

Maybe as a baby your parents took you to a shrine and dedicated you to demonic deity. Now you are a Christian, those demons are demanding your worship. They frustrate everything you put your hand to. You do not even know them, but they are saying that you belong to them. All over Africa, this is a common practice. Even pastors see themselves struggling under yokes they can not see.

Hear the good news, Jesus knows where you are bound and will send angels there right away.

Maybe like Hiel of Bethel, you are bound under community curses. The ancestors of your community had killed an innocent man for sacrifice or rituals, and the blood of the man is now crying out against all that belong to your community. Hiel (1 Kings 16: 34) lost his whole family and the land remained under the curse of Joshua until Elisha came.

One greater than Elisha is here, Jesus the son of God. He knows where you were bound. Maybe you are bound under family curses. Your family has been cursed and so premature death, poverty, sickness, confusion etc, are your second names. Jesus knows where you were bound. Maybe they took your cloth to a shrine, maybe an evil person laid hands on your head or planted cursed money into your business. Maybe images from the past is your problem or just that you do not have help to move to next level.

Hear me child of God, Jesus knows where you are bound. He sent the disciples with a definite instruction. He did not say, "If you do not find her here, go and try the other side" . No! He knew where the colt was bound. He knew at what tree she was bound as we have said earlier.

But there was also the rope. Yes, the rope was different from the tree. Satan, curses, witches and wizards etc have instruments they use to control lives. Many smokers you see are actually in bondage, many drunkards you see are actually in bondage. Most diseases have spiritual undertones. Many people will have accident or police case immediately some money get into their hands. Demons also attack people through their dream lives. Most women who miscarry say they see themselves attacked in the dream. The next day they begin to bleed.

Jesus knows the rope with which the enemy has been using to control your destiny and now he has decided to intervene. Daniel was thrown into the lion's den. Hear him-

My God sent his angel and he shut the mouths of the lions. They have not hurt me... (Daniel 6:22)

The same God of Daniel is the God I am serving. That was why I asked you to surrender your life to Jesus Christ earlier if you were not born-again. He

will send his angels to the points where you were bound. He will send angels of war: One of such angels passed through Egypt just one night and by day break, Pharaoh and his nobles were begging the Israelites to leave the country. The Bible said that they pleaded with them. One of such angels passed through the Assyrian camp and by daybreak one hundred and eighty thousand men were slain. God will send his angels, child of God and your captors will beg you to leave.

There was this account in the Bible where the Philistines captured the ark of God (1 Sam 4: 19) and put it in Dagon's temple. By daybreak- (hear that again, daybreak) - Dagon was fallen on its face before the ark of God. They lifted it up, but the next daybreak a worse damage was done. The head of Dagon was broken. They moved the ark of God to Ashdod, the mighty hand of God was at this time upon the Philistines for evil. Some had boils and tumors, many more died. The people of Ashdod cried out and the Philistines had to move the ark to the International center for witchcraft where Beelzebub reigns, which is Ekron. It was the enemy's highest point of power. But you need to read this yourself-

So they sent the ark of God to Ekron. As the ark of God was ENTERING Ekron, THE PEOPLE OF EKRON CRIED OUT, THEY HAVE BROUGHT THE ARK OF THE GOD OF ISRAEL AROUND TO US TO KILL US AND OUR PEOPLE: (2 Sam 5: 10)

In the next verse they said, "Send the ark of the God of Israel back to its own place, or it will kill us and our people". You may ask, "How does this concern me?"

It does not just concern you, it is you. The bible said as that ark was in those, so are you today. That ark was a collection of some cloths and metals. There were no strange things with which they were made. All the materials in the ark were common materials; one would have gotten any other place. The only difference was that it carried divine presence. The name of God was called over the ark. It was called, THE ARK OF GOD. That was all. And the bible said you are the temple of God because the spirit of God indwells in you (1 Cor 3:16-17). Can you see that? The same spirit that was over that ark is the spirit you carry.

It is like we have to come back to what we called divine timing.

When the ark of the Lord been in Philistine territory seven months the philistines called for the priests and diviners and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the Lord? Tell us how we should send it back to its place" 1 Sam 6:1-2)

The ark stayed in Philistine territory for seven months. Seven speaks for completeness; the number seven says the fullness of the time permitted. That is why I said, the period of your bondage has expired. You can not continue to remain in bondage. Your period of your captivity has expired. God has sent for his angels to intervene. The Holy Spirit in you has also

risen to your rescue. Bye- bye to limitations, bye-bye to stagnancy, bye-bye to Satanic bondage.

Are you ready to pray now? Make sure you do not have a pot on the fire at this point, make sure you don't have electric iron plugged. Anything can happen in the process of this prayer. You don't need to be on your knees. Where possible I prefer you on your feet at this point.

PRAYER TOPICS

1. Shout the blood of Jesus Christ seven times and say this prayer; Any evil covenant that binds me to an evil altar be broken by the power in the blood of Jesus.
2. Shout the blood of Jesus Christ three times- By the power in the blood of Jesus, I violate every dedication unto any spirit, demon, altar, shrine, done over me knowingly or unknowingly- Pray
3. Shout the blood of Jesus three times- Every evil curse said over my life, family, generation and kindred, be broken and cancelled by the power in the blood of Jesus- Pray
4. Shout the blood of Jesus three times- I command the fire of the Holy Spirit to torment every evil spiritual watchers or demons set by Satan to supervise my bondage. I blind them and bind them. I cast them to Abyss in the power in the name of Jesus.
5. Shout the name of Jesus three times- Every evil seed or demon on assignment in my body, in form of sickness, evil habits, fear etc. (You can mention the ones you know), be destroyed by fire of the Holy Spirit. (Say be destroyed ten times and repeat the prayer)
6. Shout the fire of the Holy Spirit seven times- By the powerful name of Jesus Christ, I command that the fire of the Holy Spirit destroy every evil image for evil purposes- Pray
7. Shout the fire of the Holy Spirit three times- let the fire consume and blind all the priests, diviners that serve at this altars in the mighty name of Jesus Christ- Pray
8. Shout the name of Jesus three times- I confuse all evil networks that is against my life and the kingdom of God in any place or anywhere in Jesus name.....Pray
9. Now lay hand on yourself and begin to pray for yourself. If you are praying for your loved one lay hand on him/her. If you are praying for your business, you need to get a bottle of olive oil, pray over it by faith and sprinkle the business place or office.
10. Sing praises to God, dance and glorify him.

I want to hear from you.

My address is at the end of this book.

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