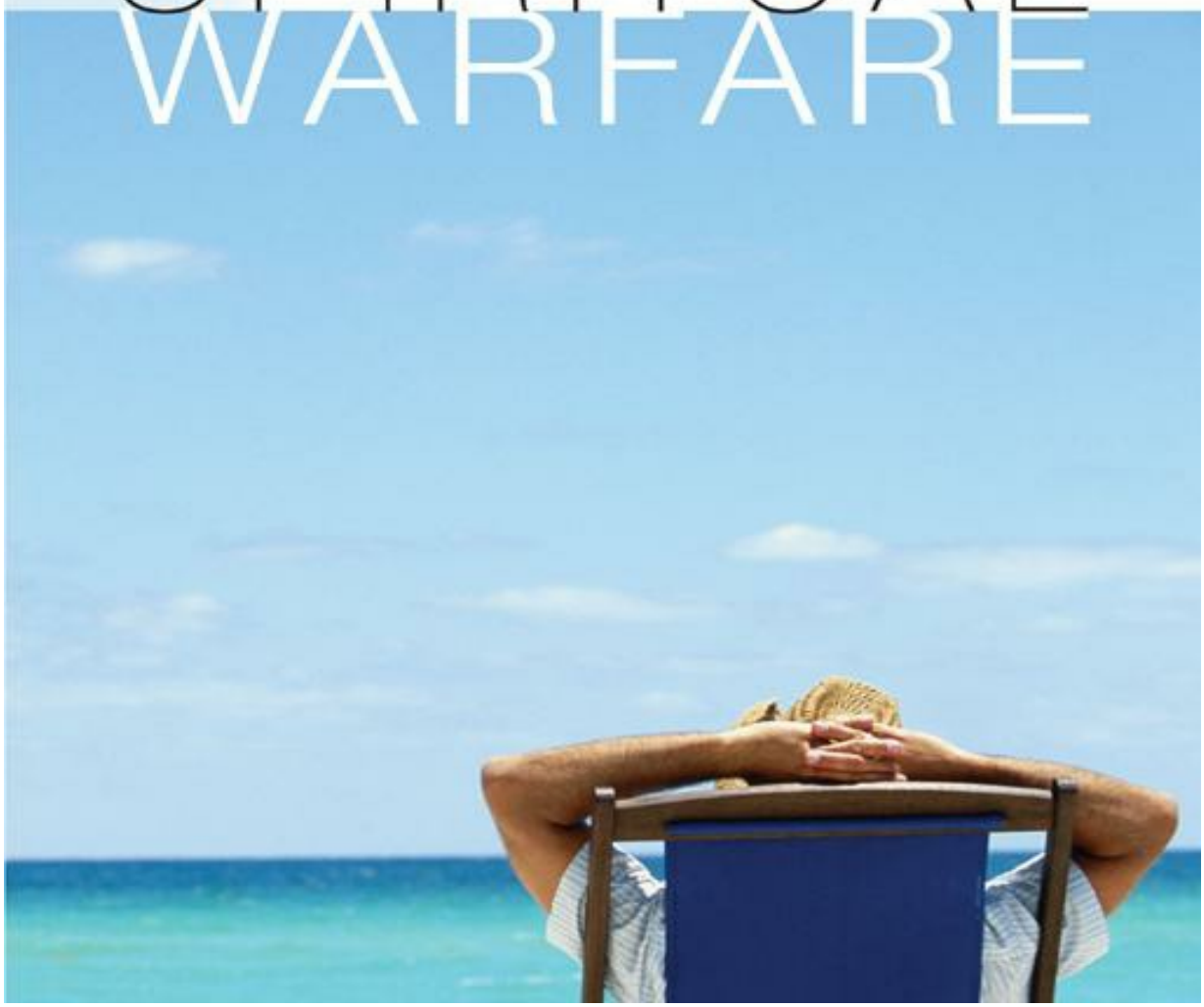
JOSEPH PRINCE

SPIRITUAL WARFARE



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Spiritual Warfare

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chapter 1

Stand With God's Armour

chapter 1

Stand With God's Armour



"Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."

Ephesians 6:11

The Devil Attacks God's Image

Spiritual warfare is a vital part of our walk with God. There is a war going on around us that is invisible. You can't see it in the physical. But it is real. Once you are born, you automatically have an arch-enemy dedicated to your destruction. His name is Satan. He is the enemy of every man, woman and child. Whether you are a Christian or not, he hates you because when God made you, He made you in His own image.

Sometimes, you see things happen to you that are out of the ordinary. When you notice that these things are happening regularly and you have tried unsuccessfully to deal with them in the natural, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to know that you are being attacked spiritually. The devil is a bit like a woman who has been rejected by her boyfriend. She keeps his

photograph and whenever she looks at it, she gets a bit psycho. She starts to attack the photograph, and to swear at it and to curse it. Holes and scratches soon appear on the photograph! If she can't attack her boyfriend, she can certainly attack his photograph.

The Bible doesn't teach us how to cope with our problems, it teaches us how to always walk in victory!

The devil does the same thing. He can't get God because God is too powerful for him, so he goes after God's image — you and I. But the difference is this: When there is an attack from the devil, if you are a Christian, God's Word tells you how to stand victorious in the victory that you have in Christ. On the other hand, if you are not a believer, then you are under the devil's dominion and he can pick your number any time.

Don't Just Cope, Walk In Victory

The good news today is that the Bible doesn't teach us how to cope with our problems, it teaches us how to always walk in victory! The world teaches us how to cope. There are seminars that teach us how to cope with depression, sickness and relationship breakdowns. But God wants us to overcome. His

Word shows us how to experience victory over these things. That is the difference between what God wants for us and what the devil wants to do to us.

Another difference is this: Once you believe in Christ, you have everything in Christ. Everything! The Bible says in Ephesians 1:3, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."* Notice how the tense used indicates a past action — He **has** blessed us — with **everything!**

The world thinks it has everything. People who don't believe in God can sometimes boast that they have a lot. They say, "I am very wealthy. I have a lot. Look at my house. Look at my car. Look at my bank accounts."

In Genesis 33:9 (NIV), Esau told his twin brother Jacob that he had plenty:

> **9 But Esau said, "I already have plenty, my brother. Keep what you have for yourself."**

Remember that Jacob had cheated Esau of his firstborn blessing from their father Isaac. So Esau became very bitter and hateful towards Jacob. Jacob ran away and the brothers were separated for many years. One day, they met each other again. Jacob was still afraid of Esau because of what he had done to him many years ago. But Jacob didn't know that God had melted Esau's heart. So Jacob sent gifts to Esau to appease him.

Genesis 33:10–11 says:

[10]"No, please!" said Jacob. "If I have found favour in your eyes, accept this gift from me. For to see your face is like seeing the face of God, now that you have received me favourably. [11]Please accept the present that was brought to you, for God has been gracious to me and I have all I need." And because Jacob insisted, Esau accepted it.

While Esau had plenty, Jacob had all that he needed! The world can boast that it has a lot. You know, it is possible to live in a big house with many bedrooms and not be able to get a good night's sleep in any of those rooms. It is possible to have all the money you want, and yet be so full of depression, restlessness and anxiety. But you, child of God, have everything. In Christ, you have everything. You have eternal life. You have all the promises of God written in the Bible. You have the Holy Spirit and you can have all the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness and self-control.

You look exactly like Jesus when you are wearing His armour.

But here is another important distinction between you the believer and non-believers: Not only do you have everything, the devil pays extra attention to you because you are made in

God's image. My friend, welcome to spiritual warfare!

Put On God's Armour

So how do we stand against the devil? What instructions has God given us to help us stand in the victory we already have in Christ? The answer lies in the armour of God! But what is the armour of God?

Let's look at Ephesians 6:10–18:

> **10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**
>
> **14 Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; 18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being**

watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.

Look at verse 13: *"Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."* The Bible tells us to take up the armour of God. God tells us to put on **His** armour. God has an armour. It is what Jesus wore when He walked on earth. He left the armour behind for us when He returned to heaven.

So we have the armour of God today. And when we put on His armour, the devil does not know who is inside the armour. All he knows is that that was the armour that defeated him 2,000 years ago! You and I look exactly like Jesus when we are wearing His armour. You might feel like you are a weakling, but when you are inside the armour, the devil sees you strong.

It is like being in Batman's suit. In the various Batman movies, the directors had different actors playing the role of Batman. One of them was Michael Keaton. Now, how many of you know that Michael Keaton is not very big in size? But once he put on that suit, he looked huge, muscular and indestructible. That Batman suit even has a "six-pack" built into it! Anyone would look great in that suit. So even though Michael Keaton is not very big, inside that Batman suit, he looked amazing.

Likewise, when you are in the armour of God, the devil doesn't know your weaknesses and he doesn't see the fears you may have. In that armour, you just look like Jesus to him!

Some of you may be familiar with a teaching that floated through the church some years ago in which Christians were

urged to “click on” the armour of God when they woke up every morning. So when you wake up in the morning, you “click on” your belt of truth, then you “click on” your breastplate of righteousness, then your shoes of peace and so on. I remember doing that for a while. So I used to feel like Batman putting on his suit and accessories!

The problem with this teaching is that you can get all caught up in the discipline of putting on all these pieces of the armour every morning that you forget what the pieces really mean. If you read the passage in Ephesians 6 carefully, you will see that each piece of the armour has a specific meaning and purpose. Yet, instead of focusing on the teaching behind each piece of the armour, I focused simply on the process of clicking the pieces into place each day. Boy, did I click on the pieces every day! I even felt naked when I didn’t. And all the while, I was missing the point!

God’s Armour Has Seven Pieces

Do you know that there are seven pieces in God’s armour? It is been said that there are only six pieces. But six is the number of man. God made man on the sixth day. Goliath stood six cubits and a span tall, his iron spearhead weighed six hundred shekels and he had a six-piece armour. Seven, on the other hand, is the number of perfection or completeness. God made the world in six days and on the seventh, He rested.

Now, to be accurate, the armour has five plus two pieces. The first five are defensive. The belt is defensive — it holds

the other pieces in place. The helmet is defensive — it protects your head. The breastplate protects your heart. The shoes protect your feet and the shield protects your whole being. But the last two — the sword of the Spirit and praying in the Holy Spirit — are offensive.

Before we look at each piece of the armour in detail, let's first find out more about spiritual warfare myths and truths.

chapter 2

Spiritual Warfare Myths And Truths

chapter 2

Spiritual Warfare Myths And Truths



"We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age."

Ephesians 6:12

The Truth About The Father Of Lies

Many things have been written about spiritual warfare. Some are myths, some are truths. Let's look at some of them so that we will know how to stand victorious. First and foremost, know that there is a devil. There are some Christians who don't believe that the devil is real! They don't believe that he exists. Some people try to tell us that the devil isn't real by saying, "Oh, that's just poetic imagery in the Bible."

At the other extreme, there are Christians who believe that the devil can do anything and everything! They believe in the devil so much that they think that he is active in their lives all the time.

Let me tell you the truth. The devil does not have the same

attributes as God. God is omniscient or all-knowing. The devil is not. He did not even know that Jesus would gain victory through the cross. In fact, he schemed to put Jesus on the cross. Had he known that the cross would spell his defeat, he would not have crucified the Lord of glory! (1 Corinthians 2:8)

So the devil does not know everything. And he cannot read your mind. He does not know what you are thinking until you open your mouth. If you are fearful, he doesn't know it until you open your mouth and confess it. He can only tell what is on your mind and in your heart by what comes out of your mouth. So watch your mouth! Watch your confession!

Second, unlike God, the devil is not omnipotent. He is not all-powerful. Do you know that the devil does not want you to read this book? He hates it when you hear God's Word because the Word reminds you and him of his defeat! Can he stop you from reading this book? Well, you are reading it now, aren't you? Congratulations!

If the devil is all-powerful as some Christians make him out to be, then he would also stop you from going to church. In fact, he would have stopped you from receiving Christ. But the fact that you got saved shows that he is not all-powerful. Now, if he is really all-powerful, wouldn't he have killed you long ago?

No, the devil is not omnipotent. 1 Peter 5:8 says, *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."* Notice it says, *"seeking whom he may devour"*. This tells us that he can't just devour anyone he likes — he is not all-powerful.

The Bible calls him a liar too. (John 8:44) Think about this: Why would the devil need to lie if he has all the power to do what he likes to us? People lie when they don't have the power to make things happen. People who don't have the power have to lie or give an impression that they have the power. My friend, Christ has defeated the devil and disarmed him. (Colossians 2:15) The only "power" or weapon that he has against you are his lies.

Third, the devil is not omnipresent or everywhere all the time. Only God is omnipresent. You might say, "Well, Pastor Prince, last night I had a terrible attack from Satan in my home." Friend, it was probably not Satan. Don't flatter yourself. Satan was probably out last night picking on someone like Billy Graham. When Jesus was on the earth, it was Satan himself who personally attended to Jesus. Why? Because you and I know that we can't completely trust our subordinates with the most important tasks. That is why I am telling you that it was probably not Satan who attacked you last night, but one of his junior evil spirits. He can't be everywhere all the time, attacking anyone he wants.

God does not need you to defeat the devil because Jesus has already defeated him.

It is important to realise that God has given us resources to

enforce the devil's defeat. The devil once had a measure of power, but all the power he had was stripped from him at the cross. Colossians 2:15 says, *"Having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it."* Who destroyed the devil's power? Jesus did! Who de-fanged the devil? Jesus did! 1 Peter 5:8 says that *"the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour"*. But don't forget that he has no more teeth! That is why he roars — to frighten you. Some Christians are so full of fear that they allow the devil to gum them to death!

The Right Approach Leaves You Standing

The way in which you approach spiritual warfare is very important. If you enter it trying to win a battle that has already been won by Christ, then it is a form of self-righteousness. So your approach must be one of standing in the victory that Christ has already won for you.

There are some Christians who are trying to defeat the devil. They think to themselves, "Well, you know, God has given it to me to defeat the devil." My friend, that is a form of pride. God does not need you to defeat the devil because he has **already** been defeated. Who defeated him? Jesus did! And He gave you the victory. Your part is simply to believe and stand in the victory.

That is why you find the word "stand" repeated four times in the passage in Ephesians 6. Verse 11 says, *"... **stand** against the wiles of the devil."* Verse 13 says, *"... with**stand** in the evil*

day, and having done all, to ***stand****."* And verse 14 says, *"****Stand*** *therefore…"* Four times in this passage, the Holy Spirit tells us to "stand". We are to stand, stand, stand and… stand! So when you take part in spiritual warfare God's way, you will be left standing.

What does it really mean to "stand"? Have you ever watched the classic shoot-outs in cowboy movies? You know the typical scene: Two guys stand alone. Then, they slowly walk away from each other down the main street of town. Suddenly, they both draw their guns, turn and bang! For a second, no one knows who has been shot. Then, one of them drops to the dirt and the other guy is left standing. The guy left standing is the victor. My friend, if you face spiritual warfare God's way, then you will be the one left standing too!

It is the same in Japanese samurai movies. Two guys face each other with their swords. They come together and clash their swords in a duel to the death. All of a sudden, you see one guy slash the other guy, but you are not sure who cut whom because they moved too fast. One guy is facing one way, the other guy is facing the opposite direction. They stand there for some time and for a while, you don't know who has won. Is it the good guy or the bad guy? Suddenly, the bad guy smiles as if he has won. But then you see blood trickling out of the side of his mouth. He drops to the floor. He has lost the duel. The good guy triumphs again!

The devil's number one tactic is to make you

think that you don't have what you already have.

The point is that the one left standing is always the victor. God wants you to be the one left standing. He mentioned the word "stand" four times in Ephesians 6:11–14. Now, to stand means that you don't have to fight. So you don't fight, you stand. To stand means that you have already won. The victory is already yours. Who gave you the victory? Jesus did!

Call The Devil's Bluff

The Bible says in Ephesians 1:3 that we already have everything in Christ — *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ"*. So the devil's number one tactic is to make you think that you don't have what you already have. Let's say you are believing God for financial blessings in your life. You need to pay off your house and car loans. You look at the available balance in your bank account and you say, "It's pathetic." The devil comes and attacks you by saying, "Yes, it's pathetic. You don't have much financial supply at all. In fact, you also don't have this and you don't have that…"

What should your response be? You must call his bluff. So you say, "I am not **trying** to be rich. I **am** rich. In Christ, I am rich! In Christ, I have everything!" Remind yourself of God's promise in Philippians 4:19 — *"And my God shall supply all*

your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." It doesn't matter if you have been retrenched. Why? Because God is the one who supplies. And He does it according to His riches in glory, not according to the state of the economy. So He will supply you with a better job and better pay. No man on earth is your source of supply. Man will only make you poorer. No, God is your source of supply and He supplies you according to His riches in glory.

My friend, it really does not matter how much you have in the bank. You are rich because you are in Christ. And as your need arises, you will find that the supply will be there if you believe that you are rich in Christ. It is the same with healing. The devil will try to attack you with symptoms in your body. He will try to place pain in your body or make you feel lousy in certain areas of your body. He will try to make you feel weak and make you think that you are coming down with a sickness. His aim is to make you believe that you don't have your healing. What should your response be? Again, you must call his bluff there and then. Say to him, "No! I am not **trying** to get healed, I **am** healed! I am already on victory ground that Jesus gave me. I **have** healing! And you are not taking it away!"

Don't Fight For Victory, Fight From Victory

It makes a world of difference when you enter spiritual warfare with the knowledge that you have been given victory. That is the way God wants you to "fight". You are not fighting **for** victory, you are fighting **from** victory. If you think that you

are not healed and you say, "I must persuade God to heal me. Oh, God, please heal me!" then you have actually fallen from your high ground. You have played right into the hands of the devil. He wants you to think that you don't have what God has given you. So you must call his bluff. Say to him, "No, devil! I have the victory!"

Now, he might respond by saying, "If you have it, then how come you have this pain and that pain?" Well then, you declare, "In Christ I have it, devil. These are just temporal. Your words are lies. I am not **trying** to be healed. I **am** the healed!" Do that and you will find those symptoms you are experiencing going away in Jesus' mighty name.

But if you fall for his trap and say, "Well, I guess I'm not healed. I do feel that pain and I do feel that weakness. Oh, God, please heal me!" then you just gave up your high ground. Why? Because now you are fighting **for** victory, instead of fighting **from** victory. There is a big difference between the two.

The Master Of Deception

Ephesians 6:11 says, *"Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."* What are the "wiles" of the devil? They are his lies and deception. Remember, Christ has stripped him of his power, so he has to resort to deceiving you. He makes you think that you don't have what God has given you, when you actually do because God has already given you everything in Christ. And because

he is powerless, he will trick you into using your own power against yourself. The devil is the master deceiver, the father of lies. (John 8:44)

God gave Adam and Eve everything in the Garden of Eden. Yet, the devil pointed them to one single tree which God had told them not to eat from. He made them feel like they were missing out on something.

Men, you can be married to one of the best women in town, yet the devil can make you think that you don't have all that you really need. You might be living in a beautiful home, yet the devil can trick you into thinking that you need a better home. He always causes you to think that you don't have enough or that you don't have what God has already given you. That is why he is the father of lies.

Don't Buy The Devil's Lies

Let me tell you another story to illustrate my point. One evening, a guy strolled into a small village. He walked straight up to the village chief and declared, "I have a magic stone that can make everything perfect. For example, if you put this magic stone in your food, it will taste delicious."

The chief was very excited. "Really?" he asked.

"Sure," said the man.

"Sir, can I have this stone?" the chief asked.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," said the man. "Normally, I don't let people use my stone, but I'll make an exception for you. But you must promise me that you will follow my instructions." The

chief agreed.

So the man told the chief to get ready some ingredients. Then, he said, “Take this chicken meat and that rabbit meat, and mix them with potatoes, carrots and onions. Add these spices and those herbs, and throw my stone into the pot. Finally, stir it all over a small fire for an hour.”

When the meal was ready, the chief tasted it. “My goodness, this is delicious!” he said. The chief’s family and all the villagers ate the food. They invited the man to eat it as well. Everybody ate the food until they were full.

When they had finished, the chief said to the man, “Excuse me, sir, but may I please have the stone?”

“With all due respect,” replied the man, “is it not enough that I let you use my stone in your food? And now you want me to let you have it?”

“Yes, I’d like to buy it from you,” the chief said.

“Well,” said the man, putting his arm around the chief, “I kind of like you, chief, so I’ll sell it to you.” The chief was overjoyed and offered him a big sum of money for the stone.

This man had just eaten a good meal at the villagers’ expense and now, he was also being offered money!

The next morning, he took the money and left the village. Towards the evening, he came to another village. But before he entered the village, he spotted another stone by the roadside, picked it up and entered the village looking for the chief!

How many of you know that this man was simply a good cook who received a free meal, a bed to sleep in and some easy money every day? The devil tries to do the same thing with

you and me. Even when everything has already been given to you, he makes you think that you still need something more.

Who Is Your Real Enemy?

Ephesians 6:11 says, *"Put on the whole armour of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."* The devil is very, very wily! Verse 12 adds, *"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places."*

Don't see people as the problem. Your battle is not with flesh and blood.

My friend, there is a hierarchy in the powers of darkness. There are levels of power in the spiritual realm. There is a chief demon and there are his underlings. There is a "gangster-boss" devil and there are "gangster" devils. That is how it is in the kingdom of darkness. If you are starting to feel a little fearful right now, don't! We don't need to worry about these dark powers because God has given us His armour to protect ourselves from their wiles and attacks. Notice that the first phrase in verse 12 says that *"we do not wrestle against flesh and blood",* but against powers of darkness.

If you are a believer, you need to wake up and realise this. Your battle is not against your boss at work. You may say, "Pastor Prince, my boss is the problem. For some reason, he picks on me all the time. I do everything right, go the extra mile, work overtime and he still doesn't like me!" Listen, if that is the case, his dislike for you is probably supernatural. So what do you do? To start with, don't hate him. Instead, love him and forgive him. If you are going to attack anyone, attack the devil in the name of Jesus. Your battle is not with flesh and blood. It is not with your boss. Your battle is with the powers of darkness behind him.

I have seen couples quarrelling in front of me. Now, you can just look at the situation in the natural and try to find out who is at fault. But this is how I respond: I say, "In the name of Jesus, I bind the spirit that is causing this strife!" I find that after a while, the couple stops quarrelling and they begin to make up. They begin to talk nicely to each other.

Some years ago, there were some poisonous and defamatory email messages being circulated. They were about me and my church. The Lord showed me that the devil was trying to stop my ministry and the effectiveness of the church to impact more lives. You see, we were really impacting many peoples' lives by the grace of God. So I could see that the devil was trying to stop us. One day, I came to know the identity of one of the writers of those email messages. But my heart was not filled with bitterness towards the person because I knew that my battle was not against flesh and blood, but against the powers of darkness behind the person.

Don't see people as the problem. The problem is not of flesh

and blood. In Daniel 10, Daniel had been praying for some time and yet his prayer did not seem to bring results. In fact, the answer to his prayer didn't come until 21 days after he began praying. In Daniel 10:12–13, we see that an angel appeared and told Daniel:

> **12…"Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. 13But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia**.

From day one, God had heard Daniel's prayer and had sent the angel to give Daniel the answer. But the prince of Persia, a power in the air over Persia, stopped the angel from going to Daniel. You know, it was only in the last century that the British began to call Persia, Iran. There is a power above Iran and Iraq because these nations were once known as ancient Babylon. The problem has not been Saddam Hussein. You can kill Saddam Hussein, but another "Saddam Hussein" will just rise to power because the real power is a demonic force. We must understand that the answer is in prayer. If Christians will bind that power of darkness, it will not be able to operate.

My friend, there is a spiritual war going on and it is not apparent in the physical realm. Our real enemy is not of flesh and blood, and he uses lies as his weapon because Christ has stripped him of his powers. We already stand on victory

ground because of Christ's finished work. And we can remain on this high ground and stand against the wiles of the devil because we have the armour of God!

chapter 3

The Belt Of Truth

chapter 3

The Belt Of Truth



"Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth."

Ephesians 6:14

The Truth Holds Everything Together

Truth is your belt and it is the first piece of the armour mentioned in Ephesians 6. By the way, Paul often refers to Roman images. During his time, Roman soldiers were everywhere. If you have ever watched those religious epics like Cecil B DeMille's *The Ten Commandments* or William Wyler's *Ben-Hur,* it is very likely that you would have seen a Roman soldier in full armour. The soldiers wore bronze-coloured breastplates.

I remember watching *Ben-Hur* for the first time. I thought that the Roman commander Quintus Arrius, who adopted Judah Ben-Hur as his son, looked magnificent wearing his breastplate and helmet. But I was shocked when he took off his breastplate because his large paunch came sliding out! And,

boy, did he look unfit! He should never have taken it off. As long as the breastplate and helmet were on, he looked cool.

Now, why is your belt important? For a start, your belt holds your sword's scabbard. It can also hold your small daggers. There is another very important purpose for the belt — it is very hard to fight if your trousers are loose and falling down around your ankles! It is very hard to fight with one hand holding up your trousers and the other hand holding your sword! The enemy might stop the fight and say, "Hey, are you going to tighten your belt or not? It's very distracting fighting a man with loose trousers!"

So you wear truth as your belt. If you don't have much truth in your life, you will not be able to hold the armour of God together. In the same way that your belt holds everything in place, truth will hold the other pieces of the armour together. Without truth, the other pieces of the armour will not be secure.

The Truth Dispels Darkness

But why is truth the first piece of the armour mentioned here? Well, when you became a Christian, your life changed. It changed because you received the truth. You were set free because of the truth. Jesus made you free by giving you the truth. He said, "*And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* (John 8:32)

When I was a young boy, I used to play with small rocks. I would lift them up to see how strong I was. Sometimes, as I

lifted the rocks off damp soil, I would discover small white ants and even a scorpion scurrying in all directions. You see, the ants and the scorpion loved the darkness under the rocks, and when light entered their darkness, they scattered.

It is the same with our lives. If I could take a spiritual X-ray of your head, there may be areas that are bright now because the light of God's Word has entered those areas. For example, you were once fearful about being condemned in God's presence, but that fear no longer exists because the truth of God's grace has entered and scattered that fear.

But there may be other areas that are dark. That may be why you are fearful and full of worries in those areas. Those dark areas have yet to be saturated with God's truth. All of us still have dark areas in our lives. That is why I pray this almost every day: "Father, unveil to me truths that I need to know so that I will be set free." I pray this prayer because I still have areas of bondage in my life. But praise God when I look back at my life, there are areas in which I have been set free. In fact, the devil would be silly to attack me in those areas again, since I have already received lots of truth in those areas.

The more truths you receive, the more victory will manifest in your life.

How do you know if an area of your life is still dark? Well,

whenever you have fear or worry in an area, it generally means that the light has not yet entered fully into that area. You need to pray, "God, there is this area in which I am still in the dark. Unveil Your truths to me in this area. Show me the truths I need to know." My friend, the truth will set you free.

Do you know that in God's eyes, truth and victory are synonymous? Let me show you evidence from the Bible. Quoting from Isaiah, Matthew says, *"A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench, till He sends forth justice to* ***victory****."* (Matthew 12:20) Notice the last part says *"justice to victory"*. The actual quotation in Isaiah 42:3 in the Old Testament says, "*A bruised reed He will not break, and smoking flax He will not quench; He will bring forth justice for* ***truth****."* The original Old Testament quotation says "truth". Yet, the New Testament says "victory". What that tells us is that truth and victory are synonymous. In other words, the more truths you receive, the more victory will manifest in your life.

Once you know the truth, the devil cannot fool you any more. You see, he can only thrive in darkness. As long as you are in the dark or ignorant about something, you will be fearful and you will be vulnerable to the devil's deceit. Let me give you an illustration. When you start to feel sick or pain in a certain part of your body, you start to worry about it. You don't know what is causing the pain and your imagination runs wild. You become fearful and concerned. When you finally go to your doctor, he says to you, "This is very common. I have done some tests and you have absolutely nothing to worry about." All of a sudden, your fears and worries disappear. How

did that happen? The doctor revealed to you the truth that you were not aware of and the truth set you free.

The devil can come up to a man and whisper, "Watch your wife, she's taking advantage of you. She doesn't respect you any more." And yet, all the while, the man's wife is totally innocent. The devil plays mind games with us and we have got to watch out for his tricks.

Don't Fall For The Devil's Mind Games

Let me give you another illustration. Joyce and Judy are talking to each other. Irene, not too far away, is minding her own business. All three of them are friends. Then, Irene notices that her two friends would look at her every now and then as they talk, laugh and giggle. Irene soon becomes suspicious. She starts to think that her friends are saying bad things about her. Now, that is the evil genius of the devil. He will play mind games with you.

The next day, Joyce calls Irene and says, "Hello, Irene, are you doing anything tomorrow? Judy and I would like to take you to this really happening restaurant in town."

"Well, I'm not sure! I am quite busy nowadays," says Irene.

Sensing tension in Irene's voice, Joyce asks, "Irene, is everything okay with you?"

"Yes," says Irene.

Not convinced, Joyce asks again, "Is anything wrong?"

"Nothing is wrong," Irene answers. Now, whenever you hear that kind of answer, trust me, something is wrong!

Joyce persists: “Look, Irene, we would really like you to come. We insist!”

“Okay, all right, I’ll come.” Irene finally gives in.

The next day, Irene goes with her two friends to the restaurant. When she steps into the restaurant, she sees a crowd of friends and family there, and they shout, “Surprise! Happy birthday!” Ribbons are flying around the room and balloons are floating everywhere! Joyce and Judy are right in the middle of it all shouting, “Hey, Irene, happy birthday!”

It is amazing how we can spend days being angry about something that doesn’t exist.

Then, Joyce laughs and says, “You know what, Irene? Yesterday, while we were discussing your birthday party, we saw you looking at us and we thought that you had figured out what we were doing. We thought that we had given our plans away. In fact, I think you knew that we were organising your birthday party, right?”

Isn’t it amazing how we can spend days being concerned or angry about something that doesn’t exist, that is based on a lie? Sometimes, we even spend weeks or months consumed with self-pity, fear or worry because we unknowingly believed in a lie. What a waste of time and energy!

Knowing The Truth Sets You Free

The truth alone does not set you free. It is when you **know** the truth, that you are set free. Jesus said, *"And you shall **know** the truth, and the truth shall make you free."* (John 8:32) When Irene knew the truth, she was set free. She was no longer angry with her friends.

Let me give you one more illustration. Once, I had a nightmare. I dreamt that I was in BMT. For those who don't know, that is "basic military training". And I was late for my first day of training. The sergeant was standing in front of me and shouting angrily.

"Something is wrong here," I said to the sergeant. "Why am I going through BMT again?" You see, I had already completed basic military training in my younger years.

In my nightmare, the sergeant ignored me and continued to shout all kinds of profanities at me. "You're late! You're late!" he yelled.

I stared at him and said, "This is not supposed to be happening!"

He looked me in the eyes and said, "Now listen, you are marked! In fact, you are marked for the next three months!"

"Something is wrong!" I repeated.

Then, I woke up. I soon realised that it was all just a bad dream and I was so relieved.

Boy, what a relief when you know the truth! You are set free when you know the truth!

chapter 4

The Breastplate Of Righteousness

chapter 4

The Breastplate Of Righteousness



"Stand therefore… having put on the breastplate of righteousness."

Ephesians 6:14

Your Righteousness Is A Gift

The second piece of the armour mentioned in Ephesians 6 is the breastplate of righteousness. What is the breastplate for? It is for protecting your heart. You see, if you receive a cut to the leg or arm, you will survive. But if you get stabbed in the heart, chances are, you will die. Now, when the devil attacks you, he wants to shut down your faith. So what does he do? He goes for your heart, your spiritual heart.

1 John 3:21 says, *"Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence towards God."* So the devil attacks your heart with accusations. He will tell you things like, "You call yourself a Christian? You are such a hypocrite. You are such a lousy Christian. You are such a backslidden Christian. You haven't prayed and fasted long enough. You haven't read

enough chapters of the Bible." Or he might tell you, "You said the wrong thing yesterday. And last week, you made a bad decision." With the devil, it is always about something you have done or not done.

To protect your heart from such accusations, you have to know what the righteousness of God is and is not. It is not based on what you have done right or done wrong. No, being right with God is a **gift**. In Romans 5:17, Paul tells us that *"those who receive abundance of grace and of the* ***gift*** *of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ"*. So righteousness is a gift and it is based on what Christ has done. Moreover, Daniel 9:24 says that Jesus brought in *"everlasting righteousness"*. That means you cannot lose this righteousness. It is everlasting!

If you believe that righteousness depends on what you do, the devil will get you every time.

Let's say you wake up in the morning and you feel moody. There are times when we all wake up feeling moody. Then, you hop into your car and as you drive to work, you find yourself caught in heavy traffic. Suddenly, someone cuts into your lane. You lose your cool, and you overtake him and shout at him. As a believer, you know that you should not have done that. Then, the devil comes and condemns you. Now, are you still

righteous? You may not feel like it but yes, you are still righteous because your righteousness is a gift that is not based on what **you** have done, but what **Christ** has done. So if you have just shouted at someone in anger today, know that you have not lost your right standing with God. Your righteousness is a gift from God.

Some Christians still believe that we have got to learn to conduct our affairs in all righteousness. In other words, they say that righteousness is what we **do**. If you believe that righteousness depends on what you do, then all the devil has to do is point at something you have just done wrong and you will feel condemned. Friend, if righteousness depends on what you do, the devil will get you every time. Even when you have done some things right, he will tell you that it is not good enough, or he will point you to the things you have done wrong. Either way, he gets you because you are depending on your own performance.

So you must know that righteousness is not based on what you do, but what Christ has done. God gives it to you as a gift because of Jesus and He says to you, "Even when you fail, I still see you righteous." That is the only kind of righteousness that is going to carry you through. The more you realise that your righteousness is a gift from God based on the obedience of Christ and not your obedience, the more you can defeat your bad temper, the more you can defeat moodiness and the more you can defeat pride. Let me ask you: When you know that you have failed and you are still right with God, does it make you want to sin more? No, not at all! In fact, you will love God more! Once you wake up to this fact that you are

righteous in spite of your failures, you will not want to sin. Paul told the Corinthians, *"Awake to righteousness, and do not sin."* (1 Corinthians 15:34) When you awake to righteousness, when you recognise how righteous you are in Christ, you will not want to sin.

Be Convicted Of Righteousness, Not Sin

Jesus said of the Holy Spirit in John 16:8, *"And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment."* What sin is that? It is the sin of unbelief — *"of sin, because they do not believe in Me"*. (John 16:9) Once, before you were a Christian, you were convicted of that sin. Then, you repented and believed in Jesus. So the Holy Spirit no longer needs to convict you of this sin. What does He convict you of then? He convicts you the believer of righteousness, not sin!

Let me explain. When Jesus was on the earth, people could see the approval and acceptance in His eyes. Now, let's say John, the youngest of the 12 disciples, sees a pretty Jewish girl walk by one day and he looks at her longer than he should have. When he realises it, he says, "Oh, my goodness! I shouldn't have looked at her like that!" He turns back to look at Jesus. Jesus looks directly at him. And John still sees the acceptance in Jesus' eyes! What has just happened? John has just been convicted of righteousness! He is still accepted by Jesus, who is there with him. But some time later, Jesus goes back to be with His Father and John sees Him no more. So who

will convict John of righteousness now, especially when he fails? The Holy Spirit will. He is on the earth today to convict believers, not of sin, but of righteousness — *"of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more"*. (John 16:10)

Sadly, some Christians still believe that the Holy Spirit is the "convicter" of their sins. They have made Him look like a fault-finder or nagger, and no one wants to live with a nagger!

Be Established In His Righteousness

Hebrews 10:15–17 tells us that the Holy Spirit witnesses to us that God remembers our sins no more. The emphasis here is the forgiveness of sins. We are now settled about that — all our sins are forgiven. So today, we have no business being depressed, sad or oppressed. All our sins are forgiven!

As a believer, you must be settled about your forgiveness and your righteousness in Christ. If you are not settled about these things, you will never know Christ or know God intimately, or know the power of His resurrection. Paul said in Philippians 3:9, *"... not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection…*" If you want to walk in the power of His resurrection, you must be settled in the knowledge that you are the righteousness of God in Christ, and that this righteousness is not based on your performance, but His performance — what Christ has done.

Isaiah 54:14 declares, *"In righteousness you shall be established; you shall be far from oppression..."* By the way, oppression includes sickness. Acts 10:38 says, *"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were* ***oppressed*** *by the devil, for God was with Him."* Sickness is an oppression. So when Isaiah says, *"You shall be far from oppression"*, it also means that you shall be far from sickness!

Sometimes, we see symptoms of the curse in our lives. We may face oppression, depression, discouragement, limited resources or even sickness. These are symptoms of the curse, and once you see that, you can immediately have a way out. And the way out is this: Be conscious of your right standing before God. Right there and then, declare, "I am the righteousness of God in Christ!"

Once you are made righteous, you cannot become unrighteous.

Now, in whose righteousness are we to be established? Our righteousness? No! If it was our righteousness, we would be asking questions like, "How long should I pray?" and "How many chapters of the Bible must I read each day?" No, Isaiah 54:17 declares, *"... their righteousness is* ***from Me****, says the Lord."* And Romans 5:17 reminds us that this righteousness is

a gift — *"... how much more will those who receive God's abundant provision of grace and of the **gift** of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ."*

Be Righteousness-Conscious

We are told that when we receive Jesus, we receive the gift of righteousness. The Greek word for "receive", *lambano*, implies a continual receiving. Does this mean that we can lose our righteousness? No! But we can lose our consciousness of it. When you fail, it is time to *lambano* your righteousness. It is the time to say, "I am the righteousness of God in Christ!" The moment you say that, something happens to you. Like a balloon that has been pressed down into the water, you rise quickly to the surface again. The devil cannot keep you down for long. You rise up again because you awake to your righteousness. It is not something you earn. It is something given to you because you have Jesus.

Some Christians aren't aware that they have been given the gift of righteousness. It is important to understand that just because you have Jesus, it doesn't mean that you will walk in the blessings of that righteousness. You can have righteousness, and still be distressed and oppressed because you are not conscious of what you have.

You Cannot Become Unrighteous

Do you know that once you are made righteous, you cannot

become unrighteous? It is like a caterpillar that turns into a colourful butterfly. The caterpillar has reached the next stage in its life when it becomes a butterfly. It cannot turn back into a caterpillar. It is a butterfly for the rest of its life!

You were once a caterpillar. In other words, you were once a sinner. One day, you went through a born-again experience. You metamorphosed into a butterfly. In other words, you were born again as a Christian. You are not a caterpillar any more. You are not a sinner any more. So you can't go around saying, "I'm a sinner saved by grace." Why? Because you were **once** a sinner, but no longer! You were **once** a caterpillar, but no longer!

Once in a while, a butterfly may fly onto a rubbish heap, instead of a nice flower in the garden. Is it still a butterfly? Of course! It doesn't transform back into a caterpillar just because it lands on some rubbish. And it won't remain on the rubbish heap for long because it won't like it — it is just not its nature to like rubbish and to hang around flies. In the same way, a Christian sometimes does sinful things, but that does not make him a sinner again because he has already metamorphosed into a new creation. He is just a Christian who has done sinful things. The opposite is also true: If a sinner does good deeds, it does not make him a Christian.

My friend, when we know that we are righteous, we will reign with Christ. (Romans 5:17) And when we walk in His righteousness, oppression will be far from us. (Isaiah 54:14) Do you want to reign in life? Do you want the devil's attacks to have no effect on you? Then, get a deeper understanding that you are righteous in Christ. And wear that breastplate of

righteousness with confidence!

chapter 5

The Gospel Of Peace

chapter 5

The Gospel Of Peace



"Stand therefore… having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

Ephesians 6:14–15

Remain In His Peace

The next piece of the armour is the gospel of peace. In John 14:27, it says, *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* Jesus, who is the Prince of Peace, gave us His peace!

Now, this particular piece of the armour is actually on your feet. Ephesians 6:15 says, *"And having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace."* Romans 10:15 says, *"How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!"* Many of us are given opportunities to share the gospel of peace with our friends and relatives. That is what this scripture is referring to. Your feet are always ready to bring good news to people. That

is why God says that your feet are beautiful! You are wearing your *"gospel of peace"* shoes.

Why the gospel of **peace**? Because God knows that it is so easy for us to become troubled in our minds and our hearts. John 14:27 says, *"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* Philippians 4:6 says, *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God."* The devil cannot manage a Christian who remains in peace. He can't do it because the devil himself has no peace. In fact, he is restless. Matthew 12:43 says that evil spirits go about seeking rest, but find none.

The devil wants to disturb your mind, trouble your heart and agitate your emotions. No wonder the Bible says in 1 Peter 5:8 that he goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. But the verse before that says, *"Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you."* So a Christian who practises casting all his cares to the Lord cannot be devoured by the devil.

In spiritual warfare, it is vital you put on your gospel of peace shoes. Soldiers take their feet and boots very seriously. In fact, keeping their feet healthy and boots in good condition is very important during war. You never know where the battle will take you. You could end up fighting in swamps or walking for days up and down rough terrain. And if you can't walk or run because your feet are injured, your whole body will be in danger when the enemy strikes.

Boots are also useful for crushing scorpions, snakes and

cockroaches. That is what believers are meant to do. Luke 10:19 declares, *"Behold, I give you the authority to trample on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you."* So put on your spiritual boots!

Peace Is Your Umpire

In fact, when you walk in peace, you are unconsciously allowing God to lead you. You don't have to be smart to follow God. Often, the Holy Spirit leads us by the presence of peace within or the absence of it. That is how I make decisions for my church. Some things sound very reasonable, but if I don't have peace in my spirit about them, I don't do them. Likewise, some things don't sound very wise, but if I have peace about them, I do them.

The peace that Jesus bequeathed to us includes well-being, health and prosperity.

Colossians 3:15 says, *"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts..."* The word "rule" here in the Greek means "to be an umpire". So in everything you do, let the peace of Christ rule or decide as an umpire. We have all seen umpires preside over tennis matches. If the umpire calls "out", there is no point

arguing with him. You can shout "in" all day to no avail. You can throw down your racquet like John McEnroe used to and shout, "It was in!" but the umpire has the final say. So let the peace of Christ rule or decide as an umpire in your heart.

'My Peace I Give To You'

John 14:27 says, *"Peace **I leave** with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* For years, I didn't fully understand what the word "leave" really meant in this verse. One day, I studied the word and found out that it doesn't simply mean "allow to remain behind" or "not take along with" the way someone would say, "Okay, I'll **leave** my bag here with you." No, the word actually means "bequeath". In other words, Jesus is saying, "I bequeath My peace to you."

But what does the word "bequeath" mean? A dying man may have his children gather around him so that he can bequeath his estate or business to them. That is what the word "bequeath" means — to give or leave an inheritance by will after one's death. So when Jesus was about to die on the cross, He bequeathed to us our inheritance — His peace. It was not just any peace. Jesus said, "My peace". It was literally **His** peace that He bequeathed to us.

I also discovered something else about the verse. I had always thought of "peace" as "peace of heart" or "peace of mind". Now, it does include that, but one day, the Holy Spirit opened my eyes. I began to realise that Jesus was talking to

His fellow Jews. So He would have used the Hebrew word "shalom". He would have said to them, "Shalom I leave with you, My shalom I bequeath to you, not as the world gives, do I give to you."

In Strong's Concordance, we find that the definition of the word shalom includes "well-being, health, prosperity", not just peace in the usual sense. The peace that Jesus left behind for us is literally His health and prosperity too! So when He said, "My shalom I leave with you", He bequeathed to us as an inheritance, His very own health and prosperity too.

I also looked up the word "peace" in a Greek lexicon and found out that it means peace and rest in contrast with strife. The word denotes the absence or end of strife. And as influenced by the Hebrew word "shalom", it also means a state of health, a state of untroubled, undisturbed well-being. Now, I like that! God wants you in a perpetual state of shalom. That is what Jesus left behind for us. But always remember that the devil will try to disturb that sense of peace.

One day, my wife returned home from our daughter's school and told me that the teacher had just informed her that our daughter Jessica enjoys chasing a particular boy around in school. Not only that, when she grabs the boy, she kisses him. I said, "What! My four-year-old girl is chasing a boy?" I immediately realised that my heart was troubled. Now, I had already shared this particular revelation of peace with my wife. So when she saw my anxious response, she turned to me and said, "Let not your heart be troubled!" I felt all right after she said that.

Not long after that, I attended a Father's Day presentation at Jessica's kindergarten. The children were outside in the field playing when my wife came to me and said, "Darling, see that boy Jessica is running after? That's the boy!" I took a good look at the boy. I saw my daughter chasing after him and he was running away from her. I have to admit, I didn't like it at all! I didn't want my daughter running after any boy! You see, I would prefer the boys to run after her!

On the way home, I stopped the car, turned to my daughter and said, "Jessica, that boy is ugly!" She looked at me with her big eyes. I said to her, "He doesn't even look like Prince Charming!" My wife looked at me and shook her head. Before the day ended, I repented before the Lord. I said, "Lord, I'm sorry I called that boy ugly." Can you believe that even a pastor like myself can be troubled by something so small? My friend, in big or small things, God wants us to walk in peace.

Healed Of Insomnia, Panic Attacks, Sinusitis, Gastritis

For nine years, a man in our church was afflicted with insomnia. For nine long years, he could hardly sleep. His doctor gave him sleeping pills. He would take three pills and get about one to two hours of sleep. Then, he would wake up and not be able to go back to sleep. So he would take more pills. He ended up popping six pills every night and became addicted to them.

It all started when he was retrenched in 1995 and couldn't find a permanent job after that. Without a proper job, he could

not provide well for his family and that stressed him out.

Then, he suffered from bad sinusitis with mucus trapped behind his cheekbones and he couldn't clear it. So he had three operations to fix the problem, but it didn't improve. His left cheek became constantly infected and he had to take expensive antibiotics to clear the infection. He also had to visit the hospital regularly to drain out the mucus. His money was also being drained away!

Due to the antibiotics he was taking, he started to suffer from gastritis. His stress level increased and he simply couldn't sleep naturally. A psychiatrist said that he was suffering from stress and depression, and gave him more pills. Every day, he was taking up to 30 tablets for depression, stress, insomnia, gastric pain and infection!

Being broke, he went into the construction business, hoping that the situation would improve. It didn't. He had more stress at work and he began to wish that he could just die in his sleep. Then, he started having panic attacks. Whenever they struck, he couldn't leave the house, drive or do anything. His wife had to stay home and look after him. So his family suffered too. And although he could not eat well, strangely, he began to put on a lot of weight. He ballooned from 46kg to 56kg!

Then, in April 2003, he felt the Lord telling him to just speak in tongues. He obeyed and began to pray in tongues regularly, although he could only speak a few syllables initially.

He told me, "Pastor Prince, the moment I began to speak those few syllables in tongues, I felt a rest!" He said that sense of peace inspired him to pray in tongues even more. The more

he prayed in tongues, the more he felt peace. So he kept praying in tongues. His sinus problems began to clear up and he was also healed of gastritis.

This man said to me, "Every day, I did two things: I prayed in tongues and I listened to your sermon tapes." Whenever he dared to drive somewhere close by, he would play the tapes in his car.

Slowly, the fears and panic attacks left him too. He also started to have quality sleep without the sleeping pills! The Lord even taught him how he was to eat — two meals a day, but to eat whatever he wanted. Today, he is back to his normal weight and waist size!

Then, the Lord led him to start a business. Because his previous employment had led to more stress and anxiety, he was reluctant to return to the same job. The Lord asked him, "What is in your hand?"

The peace of Jesus is strong, abiding and unaffected by outward circumstances.

He responded, "I have nothing in my hand except my ability and passion to repair computers."

The Lord said, "That is what is in your hands!"

So he started providing a computer-repair service. Today, his business is flourishing and he is blessed financially. He is

also blessed with good health. And he is able to spend quality time with his family. His wife says that she has found a new husband and his three children say that they have found a new daddy!

This man learnt to find rest and stay in peace. How? In Isaiah 28:11–12, it says, *"For with stammering lips and another tongue He will speak to this people, to whom He said, 'This is the **rest** with which you may cause the weary to rest,' and, 'This is the **refreshing**'..."* This is one of the few Old Testament verses that refer to speaking in tongues. And Isaiah calls speaking in tongues the "rest" and the "refreshing". When that brother suffered from panic attacks and didn't know what to do, he just prayed in tongues. And the Holy Spirit caused a supernatural peace to guard his heart.

Only Jesus Gives Lasting Peace

Now, the world promises peace as well. The world says, "If you listen to soft new-age music, turn down the lights, burn some incense and practise meditation, you too can feel peaceful."

But guess what? It is all just emotional. Once the music stops, once the incense stops burning and the lights come back on, the peace ends. Why? Because it is all outward peace, not inner peace.

Only Jesus gives true and lasting inner peace. And the peace of Jesus is strong, abiding and unaffected by outward circumstances. If your peace is affected by outward

circumstances, then it is not peace.

Peter knew what real peace was. He was arrested, put in prison and bound with two chains. But *"constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church"*. (Acts 12:5) I believe this means that the church prayed in tongues for him. They prayed constantly for his deliverance. That night, while Peter was sleeping, *"an angel of the Lord stood by him, and a light shone in the prison; and he struck Peter on the side and raised him up, saying, 'Arise quickly!' And his chains fell off his hands"*. (Acts 12:7) You see, Peter must have been in such a deep sleep that the angel had to hit him to wake him up! This angel — this heavenly being — came from the presence of God in answer to prayer and the man was sleeping on the night of his trial and possible execution! That is real peace, friend!

Some of you can't sleep the night before you are to give a presentation at work. Some of you can't sleep the night before the doctor's report is due. Peter was about to be tried and probably executed the very next day, yet he could sleep so well! If he had depended on nice-smelling aromatherapy oils, he wouldn't have found peace because the prison would have been smelly! If he had depended on soothing new-age music, he wouldn't have found peace because he would have heard the groans and curses of the prisoners!

No, Peter relied on the peace that Jesus bequeathed to him and he slept peacefully. It reminds me of another Man who slept in a boat in the middle of a great storm. (Mark 4:38) All the others were panicking around him. Yet, like Peter in the prison, Jesus was sleeping!

'It Is Well'

If your child should die in your arms, would that affect your peace? It happened to a woman in the Old Testament. 2 Kings 4 tells us that the prophet Elisha gave a promise to a Shunammite woman who had no children. The man of God said to her, *"About this time next year you shall embrace a son."* (2 Kings 4:16) And so the woman conceived and bore a son when the appointed time had come.

One day, when the boy went out to his father in the field, he became sick. The father took the boy and brought him to his mother. The boy sat on his mother's knees till noon and then died.

My friend, God can give you something and then the devil can attack it. How do you respond? The woman laid the boy on the bed of the man of God, shut the door and went out. What a mother! Most mothers would hold the child, and cry and cry and cry! That would be the natural response.

But she called to her husband and said, *"Please send me one of the young men and one of the donkeys, that I may run to the man of God and come back."* (2 Kings 4:22) Her husband said to her, *"Why are you going to him today? It is neither the New Moon nor the Sabbath."* And she said, *"It is well."* (2 Kings 4:23) In Hebrew, she only spoke one word: "Shalom"! In the context, it means, "It is going to be all right!"

So she saddled a donkey, departed and went to the man of God at Mount Carmel. When Elisha saw her from a distance, he said to his servant Gehazi, *"Look, the Shunammite woman! Please run now to meet her, and say to her, 'Is it well with*

you? Is it well with your husband? Is it well with the child?'" The Shunammite woman answered, *"It is well."* (2 Kings 4:25–26) Now, was she lying? No, because she was imitating the God who calls those things which are not as though they were. (Romans 4:17) If we read on, we find that Elisha went to the dead boy and raised him up by the power of God.

My friend, this woman knew a peace that the world would call extraordinary. No new-age meditation or aromatherapy could have given that to her! Jesus has bequeathed to us His peace. It is our inheritance. God wants you and I in a perpetual state of shalom, a state of untroubled, undisturbed well-being, a state of health and prosperity. It is well — in Christ!

chapter 6

The Shield Of Faith

chapter 6

The Shield Of Faith



"Above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one."

Ephesians 6:16

Don't Accept Thoughts From The Devil

The verse begins with the words, *"Above all"*. When you see the words "above all", it means that what it is referring to is of top priority. In other words, of all the pieces of the armour, the *"shield of faith"* is of paramount importance.

The shield of faith can *"quench all the fiery darts"* that the wicked one throws at us. What are the fiery darts? They are thoughts. When the devil throws them at you, you can quench them or accept them. If you accept them, then the devil can make inroads into your life.

Remember the illustration of Irene and her two friends who threw her a birthday party? From that illustration, we learnt that the devil throws thoughts into our minds to trick us. Poor Irene

thought that her friends were conspiring against her when in truth, they were conspiring to bless her! Unfortunately, Irene accepted those fiery darts from the devil.

It is not about having faith in your faith, it is about having faith in His faith.

When we accept the thoughts that he throws at us, he is able to instil in us fear, self-pity, condemnation, feelings of rejection, feelings of betrayal and so on. For example, a symptom may present itself in your body. The devil then throws a thought at you: "It's cancer! Remember that your grandfather died of that disease?" If you accept the thought and start to entertain it, you will begin to fear.

Don't accept them, my friend! Ephesians 6:16 says that the shield of faith will help you quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. So how should you respond? Well, your part is to simply keep the shield of faith up to quench the fiery darts coming at you from the north, south, east and west. You don't have to worry about where the thought darts are coming from. You don't have to worry about how many darts are being thrown at you. All you have to do is keep your shield of faith up because it will quench **all** the darts, not just some.

The main question you have to deal with is this: Am I living in faith? Am I acting in faith? But it is not about having faith in

your faith, it is about having faith in **His** faith. How does faith work? It works when we know how much God loves us. (Galatians 5:6) The fiery darts thrown at us from the devil are designed to counter the pieces of our armour. The darts try to stop us from trusting in God's truth. They try to stop us from believing in our righteousness in Christ. They try to stop us from walking in peace. But as long as you know that you are living in faith, you don't have to worry where the fiery darts are coming from because they will be quenched.

The apostle Paul often used images of warfare in his writings. Here, he is using imagery of futuristic battles as well. In many science-fiction movies such as *Star Wars,* the large spaceships often have an invisible shield around them. When shot at by their opponents, the laser beams simply bounce off the invisible shield. The only way to shut off the shield is to sabotage the spaceship from within.

We are a little like those spaceships. Our invisible shield is our faith. And the devil tries to bring it down by attacking us from within with thoughts and accusations. And if we start to entertain and believe those thoughts, we are left without a protective shield and the fiery darts can hit us and cause damage. But if you are living in faith, then you are protected from the devil's fiery darts. If your shield of faith is up, I don't care how many thousands of fiery darts are being launched at you and from which direction because the shield will quench all the darts.

Now, some Christians do the opposite. They bring out a shield of doubt and quench all the blessings of God! So make sure your shield is a shield of faith, not doubt.

'Rest In My Faith'

Not too long ago, I had a chronic skin condition. One day, I said to God, "I believe that this pain will leave me now."

Then, the Lord spoke to me and said, "Son, has it left?"

"No, it hasn't," I replied.

He asked, "Do you believe that I have faith for your miracle?"

"Of course,I do!"I said.

He said, "Rest in My faith."

I rested in His faith and that day, the condition disappeared from my body! I didn't feel anything out of the ordinary. I didn't feel the brush of angels' wings on my face. But it left!

You see, faith is simple, so don't make it so complicated. Some of us are trying so hard to have faith or build faith that it becomes faith in **our** faith. "Do I have enough faith? Have I confessed enough scriptures? Have I confessed in faith? Maybe I should do this…" No, you should just rest in **His** faith. Just believe that **He** has the faith for your miracle. Just believe that He can and that He is willing to bring your miracle to pass because He loves you. When you see His grace towards you, when you keep your eyes on Him and just believe in Him, that is faith without you being conscious of it!

One Sunday, during one of my sermons on healing, a lady in our church was busy sending SMS messages to her friend who was at home. The messages contained points and scriptures from the sermon. She also told her friend to just believe and confess, "By Jesus' stripes, I am healed!" You see, her friend

had cancer. Well, her friend read the text messages and confessed that by Jesus' stripes, she was healed. When she went back to her doctor that same week, he could not find any trace of cancer! I believe that she was healed the same day she believed that by Jesus' stripes, she was healed.

Now, I wish that every sick person could receive the manifestation of his healing within a day! But it doesn't always happen so quickly. So I can't tell you how long you should confess, "By Jesus' stripes, I am healed" before the manifestation of your healing comes. But one thing is sure: It is God's Word and God's Word cannot return to Him void. If you have to confess it for a month, then confess it for a month, knowing that Jesus has the faith for your miracle. Just do it until your healing manifests. Hebrews 10:35–36 says, *"Therefore do not cast away your confidence, which has great reward. For you have need of endurance, so that after you have done the will of God, you may receive the promise."* And as you confess God's Word, simply rest in **His** faith, not yours. Simply believe that **He** has the faith for your miracle!

chapter 7

The Helmet Of Salvation

chapter 7

The Helmet Of Salvation

"And take the helmet of salvation."

Ephesians 6:17

Hope Is A Confident Expectation Of Good

Now, let's look at the helmet of salvation. Some of you may be thinking, "I'm saved through Christ, so I already have the helmet part under control." But in the Bible, salvation is not only about being saved from hell. That is just the beginning. In the Greek, the word "salvation" also refers to preservation, wholeness, health and prosperity.

In 1 Thessalonians 5:8, the apostle Paul says, *"But let us who are of the day be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet the hope of salvation."* So what is "hope"? In the Bible, hope is a positive or confident expectation of good. Today, we use the word hope too glibly. People use the word all the time, saying, "I really hope that I don't get retrenched" or "I really hope that I score top marks in my test." Often, we say in general conversation, "I hope not" or "I hope so". This kind of hope means that you are not at all sure about something. But the biblical meaning of hope is a positive or confident expectation of good. So when God says,

“Have hope”, He wants you to have a confident expectation that good things will happen.

Do you know what is going to happen in your life this week? You probably don’t know. But God wants you to put on the helmet of salvation by having a confident expectation that good will happen this week. Know in your heart and declare with your mouth that it is going to be a good week, during which you will see God’s preservation, wholeness, health and prosperity. When you have that kind of attitude, you are actually putting on your *“helmet the hope of salvation”*.

When people ask me, “Pastor Prince, what’s this week going to be like for you?” my answer is, “Well, it’s going to be great!” Am I a prophet? No, I’m not a prophet. But I know that it is going to be a great week in Jesus’ name! How do I know? Because Jesus did not say, “According to God’s will be it unto you!” He said, *“According to your faith let it be to you.”* (Matthew 9:29) He said, “According to your expectation be it unto you.”

Those of you who say, “Pastor Prince, this is going to be a lousy week, I just know it!” You are right. And those of you who say, “It’s going to be a blessed week!” You are also right. Each of you will have the kind of week you expect. Now, I am not saying that life every day will be a bed of roses if you expect good. I am just telling you that even if there is a storm, Jesus can give you the calm that you need. He can give you the peace that you need. He said, *“In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”* (John 16:33) So expect a blessed week!

Remember, Bible hope is not saying, "Well, I don't know whether I will get it, but I hope so! I am keeping my fingers crossed!" No, that is the world's kind of hope. Bible hope is this: A confident expectation of good!

Because you are in Christ, God sees you in all the beauties, all the glories, all the moral grandeurs and all the excellences of His Son.

The Bible says that you are to wear a helmet to protect your mind and guard your thoughts. If you are in trouble right now, whatever the trouble may be, you can put on the helmet of the hope of salvation. Remember, salvation is more than just being saved from hell. Salvation includes healing, prosperity and well-being. And you have a confident expectation that good is coming your way, that God will see you through this trial you are experiencing. It is only temporary, that is why you can have a confident expectation of good.

You may argue, "But Pastor Prince, isn't that faith?" No, faith speaks of now. Faith is believing that right now, you have the answer to your need in Christ even though you do not see it yet. Hope speaks of the future. Hope is a confident expectation of good to come. That is why the Bible calls the glorious appearing of Jesus *"the blessed hope"*. (Titus 2:13) We have a certainty that it will happen, but it is in the future.

Faith is in the now.

Be Assured Of Your Salvation

You must be sure of your salvation. There are a lot of misconceptions about salvation. So let me tell you some truths about salvation. Jesus didn't come to make bad people good, Jesus came to make dead people live. We were all dead in our sins, but God loved us so much that He didn't want to deal with us as ourselves. So He sent His Son to die on the cross. He took you with all your sins and He placed you in Christ. So now, when God looks at you, He sees you in all the beauties, all the glories, all the moral grandeurs and all the excellences of our Lord Jesus Christ!

1 John 4:17 says that *"as He is [present tense], so are we in this world."* This is how we can have boldness in the day of judgment. From now on, we must always see ourselves in Christ. We have found a new centre. We are no longer in and of ourselves. We are not limited to our own resources. We are in Christ. And in Christ, we have a new identity.

Now, I want you to understand this: When Jesus died on the cross, He didn't just die for our sins, He died as us! When He was buried, He was buried for us and as us. When God the Father raised Jesus from the dead, never to die again, Jesus was also raised as us. Not just for us, but as us. This is our new identity. Just as we were once identified with the old Adam, now we are identified with the last Adam, the second Man.

The Father raised Jesus far above Satan, far above all principalities, far above all power, might and dominion, far above every name that is named in this world and in the world to come. He is above everyone else. And when the Father made Him sit down at His right hand, the centre of the whole universe, where do we fit in? Well, we are actually seated with Him! With Him, we are crowned with glory and honour, far above Satan and every name that is named!

And that is what the devil doesn't want you to find out about your salvation. He wants you to think of yourself as separate from Christ. He wants you to think that you are on your own. He wants you to think that when you do good, then you are with Christ, but when you do bad, you are separate from Christ. My friend, the truth is that you are in Christ forever! Knowing that gives you the power to do good.

The good news is that once you are in Christ, nothing can separate you from Him and His love. Romans 8:35 says, *"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?"* We are in Christ forever!

Always Expect The Best

Now, Paul says, "Take the helmet of salvation." He wants us to take the helmet and wear it. Some people foolishly go to war without their helmets on. They don't understand how important it is. They think that the helmet gets in the way. When I was young, I didn't understand why soldiers had to

wear helmets. Helmets seemed like an unnecessary burden. But now that I am older, I understand how a helmet can protect your head and save your life!

Expect bad things and bad things will happen.
Expect good things and good things will happen.

It is just as important in spiritual warfare. When Irene saw her two friends talking, she thought that they were conspiring against her. Well, Irene didn't have her helmet on. The moment she saw her friends talking, she expected the worst. If she had been wearing her helmet, she would have had a confident expectation of good. That is what the helmet is designed to do for us — to enable us to expect the best, to expect good things to happen. And you can only do that if you are spending time in the Word of God. You can only have a constant expectation of good if you are more conscious of God's Word than anything else.

Have you discovered that when you expect bad things, bad things will happen? The opposite is also true: Expect good things and good things will happen. Unfortunately, it is human nature to gravitate towards bad news. This means that lots of people's heads are naked and exposed. They don't have the sense to put on their helmets. When the phone rings at an odd time, if people are honest, they will tell you that their first

reaction is to think to themselves, “Oh dear, someone is calling me with bad news!” But if you have the helmet of the hope of salvation on all the time, when the phone rings at an odd time, you will say, “I wonder who has good news for me at this time of the night!”

Some of you may disagree with me and say, “Pastor Prince, you never know what to expect.” Well, instead of expecting bad things to happen to you, you can expect good things to happen to you. After all, you are a child of the living God! God loves you! There is a Saviour watching over you! Angels have gone before you! There are more angels working for you than there are demons working against you. Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. (1 John 4:4) You have every reason to win! You have every reason to expect good things to happen to you!

chapter 8

The Sword Of The Spirit

chapter 8

The Sword Of The Spirit



"And take… the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

Ephesians 6:17

God's Word Is Sharper Than Any Two-Edged Sword

The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God. Do you know that it is one of the two weapons in God's armour that is offensive? (The other one is praying in the Spirit.) The belt holds everything together. Your breastplate protects your heart. Your shoes protect your feet. Your helmet protects your head. Your shield protects your whole being. But your sword is for attacking. That is why it is so important.

If you have served in the army, you would know how important your rifle is. I have spent some time in the army. One of the first things they teach you in the army, men, is that your weapon — for me it was the M16 — is like your wife! They show you your M16 and they say, "As long as you are in the army, this is your wife!" I tell you, I never had to clean and oil a

"wife" that much! I thank God that my wife Wendy doesn't need that much maintenance!

But if you are a soldier stuck behind enemy lines, and you have lost your boots, helmet and even your uniform, if you still have your M16, you can survive. With your M16, you can still shoot the enemy. Even if you are scantily clad, you can still fight! The enemy will die laughing at you!

God's Word is precise and extremely powerful. It can cut the devil to pieces!

So the sword of the Spirit is our offensive weapon. The writer of this passage on the armour of God, the apostle Paul, displays many modern insights. One of them is in Hebrews 4:12 (I believe Hebrews was written by Paul). He says, *"For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* Christians often say that the Word of God is a two-edged sword. In fact, the Bible says that it is **sharper** than any two-edged sword.

Now, what can a two-edged sword do? Well, it can cut both ways because the blade has two sharp sides. But back in Paul's day, nothing existed in the physical realm that was sharper than any two-edged sword. However, today, there is

something that is sharper than any two-edged sword. It is called a laser. A laser cuts every way and from any direction.

In the spiritual realm, the Bible — God's Word — is sharper than any two-edged sword. The Bible is to the spiritual world what the laser is to the physical world. It is a precise and extremely powerful tool. The sword of the Word of God can cut the devil to pieces!

Jesus Used The Written Word

To learn how to use this weapon practically, let's look at the master swordsman, Jesus. When did Jesus use the sword? He used it when He was attacked by the devil in the desert. How did He use it? He used it by saying to the devil, "It is written… it is written… it is written…" You see, Jesus knew what the scriptures taught. He had memorised the scriptures. And when the devil came against Him, He could say, "It is written…"

Now, if the sword is the Word of God and God's Word sometimes comes to us directly today through the Holy Spirit, then we could suppose that we use the sword against the devil by saying, "Devil, God just told me this morning that…"

Charismatics are famous for saying things like, "You know, this morning, God said to me…" and "Just now, God told me…" But Jesus didn't talk like that. When He faced the devil in the desert, He didn't say to him, "Just now, My Father said to Me…" He had good reason to tell the devil what His Father had just told Him after He was baptised in the Jordan river: "You are My beloved Son." (Matthew 3:17) But Jesus didn't

resort to that. He didn't resort to the **spoken** Word of God. Instead, He resorted to the **written** Word of God. Three times He said, "It is written", not "It is spoken". He said what the scriptures said. He quoted directly from what had already been written in the scriptures.

Now, if the Son of God had to say, "It is written…" to overcome the devil, how much more you and I should quote from the written Word of God! And how much more you and I should memorise scriptures in preparation for battle in the spiritual realm!

You may still ask, "But how do we apply the scriptures, Pastor Prince?" Well, I am going to teach you how because this is the most important part of the use of the sword. This is the part the devil wants you to miss.

Let's start with some promises in Psalm 91:

> **[1]He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. [2]I will say of the Lord, "He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust."[3]Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence. [4]He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler**.

How do you apply the sword of the Word of God in your life? Let's say that you wake up one morning and you read the newspaper. The main story states that one out of every five

men by the age of 50 will have XYZ disease. Whoosh! The devil has just thrown a fiery dart at you. You never know when his darts are fired at you. You may be watching a television programme and the presenter says, "This region can expect a big earthquake within the next five years!" Whoosh! The devil has just thrown another fiery dart at you.

When that happens, it is time to declare, "It is written, 'Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.'" (Psalm 91:3) What are you doing? You are countering the devil's attack with the sword of the Word of God! You are also deflecting his fiery darts and protecting your heart with the shield of faith!

Here is another scenario: You have just returned from the funeral of a Christian friend who died of a disease. She was the same age as you. By the way, we often don't know the full story of how and why Christians die. For instance, there are Christians who **want** to go home to be with the Lord. We are responsible for our own lives. But one thing we do know is that God loves us and He wants us to live long, healthy lives. (Psalm 91:16)

Release the Word from your mouth and turn its latent power into actual power.

Now, when you walk away from the funeral service, you are

all alone and right there, the devil throws a thought at you: "You know, she was such a spiritual Christian, such a nice Christian, such a wonderful Christian…" He throws another fiery dart: "If it can happen to her, it can happen to you." Now, fear starts to creep in. What must you do? You must say, "It is written, 'A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you.'" (Psalm 91:7) Counter the devil's move with the sword of the Word of God!

God's Word Is To Be Spoken

My friend, it is not enough to just know God's Word in your heart. You have to speak it out. That is when latent power becomes actual power! Jesus in the wilderness did not just think of the scriptures or hum them in His head. He spoke the scriptures out loud.

You can memorise thousands of scriptures, but if you don't learn to say, "It is written…", you won't actually release the Word. Until the Word is released from your mouth, there will be no actual power, only latent power. In other words, until the Word leaves your mouth, it is just power lying dormant inside you. You have got to speak it out. When you speak it out, it is like God speaking. God's Word in your mouth is like God speaking.

Here is another situation you may find yourself in: You wake up one day and you don't know why, but you start to think about your parents and grandparents who all died of a particular disease. Somehow, the thought begins to plague

you. The fears are unreasonable, but they still plague you. A thought enters your mind: "You will die of the same disease! You will die young! It's a generational curse!" What should your response be? Quote Psalm 91:16 out loud: "It is written, 'With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation.'" Speak the Word of God into your fear.

Use the sword of the Spirit against the devil and he will get the point every time!

I have discovered that you cannot reason away fear. You cannot analyse it away. There are some fears that come into my mind and I say, "Joseph Prince, what are the chances of that happening?" But it doesn't help. The fears are still there. I say again, "Come on, Joseph Prince, it will never happen to you." But the fears remain. So you can't reason away fear. Because our warfare is spiritual, the only way to defeat fear is to speak the Word of God into the fear by saying, "It is written, 'For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.'" (2 Timothy 1:7)

You need to memorise that one. It is a powerful scripture. I don't care what kind of fear comes against you. It could be a fear of growing old, fear of a particular disease, fear of losing your job, fear of failure… Whatever your fear is, use the sword of the Word of God. Declare, "It is written, 'For God has not

given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.'"

When you speak His Word, you will see that it really is sharper than any two-edged sword. In the book of Revelation, when John saw the Lord, he said that *"out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword". (Revelation 1:16) In the Greek, it is "two-mouthed sword"*. Why? Because the Word leaves God's mouth first, then it leaves yours. That is when it becomes a two-edged sword! That is when it becomes powerful! When you speak His Word, when you agree with it, it becomes a two-edged sword. Sometimes, you have to say it a few times. Sometimes, you have to say it in the morning, then in the afternoon and again in the evening. If the devil wants a fight, give him one! Use the sword of the Spirit against him and he will get the point every time! There is something about the sword of the Spirit that the devil doesn't like. He doesn't hang around God's Word too much. It reminds him of someone — Jesus! And Jesus reminds him of his defeat!

A Scripture For Every Need

There are many powerful scriptures for every area of need. If you have financial problems, go to the Bible, take out your notebook and write down scriptures on finances. You will find scriptures like, *"And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."* (Philippians 4:19) Even if your employer retrenches you, say, "My God shall supply all my needs according to **His** riches". It is not

according to your employer's riches. Your employer is not your source, God is! If your employer is your source, then you are very poor. If God is your source, then you are very rich! If God is your source, you will no longer be afraid of losing your job. And you will have such a confident expectation of good that if you do lose your job, you know that God has a better one waiting for you.

I recently had a bad case of jet lag. Now, this was spiritual warfare because it was the first time I had experienced jet lag and it was bad! Wendy had it too. We were both so tired. Yet, I couldn't sleep. So I memorised scriptures. I quoted Psalm 4:8 before I went to bed: *"I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety."* I also quoted Proverbs 3:24: *"When you lie down, you will not be afraid; yes, you will lie down and your sleep will be sweet."*

I said these scriptures aloud as I lay down, "It is written, 'You will lie down and your sleep will be sweet.'" After a little while, I got sleepy, and I started slurring and saying, "Your sleeeeep will be sweeeeeet. Your sleeeeeep will be sweeeeeeet." Then, it became just, "Sweeeeeet…. sweeeeeeeet." You know, I fell asleep and it was one of the sweetest sleep ever!

Words from the Bible are so powerful. They are pregnant with power because those words came from the same source that created the heavens and the earth. When you declare the scriptures aloud, the Word of God fights for you. The devil has no defence against the Word of God. He has no defence against the sword of the Spirit. It cuts him every way!

And there is a promise in the Bible for every need. Write them down, memorise them and declare them. If you like, you can start quoting each scripture by saying, "It is written…"

If you are concerned about your family, find scriptures on family life. For instance, Proverbs 11:21 (KJV) says, *"...the seed of the righteous shall be delivered."* Psalm 128:3 says, *"Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the very heart of your house, your children like olive plants all around your table."* If the devil says to you, "You will die young!" your response should be, "It is written, 'With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation.'" (Psalm 91:16).

If you are experiencing fear — for example, you may be afraid of your boss — Hebrews 13:6 says, *"The Lord is my helper; I will not fear. What can man do to me?"* If you wake up in the morning and you feel like it is going to be a bad day, declare, "It is written, 'This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.'" (Psalm 118:24)

So go and do your homework. The Bible is full of powerful scriptures. Find scriptures that speak to you and write them down in a notebook or on 3-by-5-inch cards. Memorise the scriptures and speak them forth. I look for scriptures that speak to me and I write them down on 3-by-5-inch cards. And I carry them with me wherever I go!

chapter 9

Prayer

chapter 9

Prayer



"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit."

Ephesians 6:18

Pray In The Spirit At All Times

The last piece of the armour is prayer — *"praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit"*. Like the sword of the Word of God, it is an offensive weapon. But what does praying in the Spirit mean? It means praying in tongues. (1 Corinthians 14:14) If you are experiencing a season of evil, my encouragement to you is this: Learn to constantly pray in the Spirit. If you are going through a tough time, pray in tongues whenever you can and wherever you go. When you wake up in the morning, pray in tongues. When you drive your car, pray in tongues. When you are in the train, pray in tongues, but do it under your breath or people may look at you strangely!

What is so special about praying in tongues, especially when you are going through a difficult time? Well, praying in

tongues will recharge your batteries, so to speak. The Bible says that speaking in tongues provides rest and it refreshes you. (Isaiah 28:11–12) Praying in tongues will keep you flowing with God. (1 Corinthians 14:2) Praying in tongues will also help you emotionally. (1 Corinthians 14:4) And according to Christian psychiatrist Carl R Peterson, MD, praying in tongues for an extended period of time will even help boost your immune system.

Let me show you something else about praying in the Spirit. Have you ever prayed for something, believing that it will happen, and yet, you had to wait for the manifestation of the answer? I want to show you how praying in the Spirit can help you receive the manifestation of what you are believing God for.

While waiting for the manifestation of your miracle, stay in prayer.

In Mark 11, we see that Jesus saw an unfruitful fig tree and He cursed it. Now, the effects of the curse were not obvious straight away. The tree did not dry up instantly. It wasn't until the next day that the Bible records that the fig tree had withered as a result of the curse. What happened between the curse and the withering? Well, whatever happened will reveal to us what we can do in the period between praying and seeing

the manifestation.

Look at Mark 11:12–14:

> **12 Now the next day, when they had come out from Bethany, He was hungry. 13 And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs. 14 In response Jesus said to it, "Let no one eat fruit from you ever again." And His disciples heard it.**

Then, on the morning of the next day, verse 20 tells us that *"as they passed by, they saw the fig tree dried up from the roots"*. So what happened between verses 14 and 20? Well, this is what happened: After Jesus cursed the fig tree, He went into the city of Jerusalem. He went into the temple there, and began to drive out those who bought and sold in the temple. He overturned the tables of the moneychangers and the seats of those who sold doves. And He would not allow anyone to carry merchandise through the temple.

In verse 17, Jesus said something very interesting:

> **17 …"Is it not written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"**

Let's retrace our steps. Jesus is on His way into Jerusalem when He passes by the fig tree and curses it. Then, he goes into the city of Jerusalem and overturns the moneychangers'

tables in the temple. He leaves the temple and stays overnight outside the city. The next morning, Jesus and His disciples pass the fig tree again. What do they see? They see the fig tree dried up from the roots.

What did Jesus do between the cursing and withering of the fig tree? He cleansed the temple and restored it as a house of prayer. My friend, what Jesus is showing us is that after we have prayed over a situation, while waiting for the manifestation of our miracle, we should stay in prayer. If you don't see anything happening, don't worry. Just keep praying in the Spirit. Make your body a house of prayer, and you will eventually see the whole problem wither and die!

Keep praying in the Spirit, and the more strength, health, vigour and life will abound in you.

If you are experiencing a sickness in your body, know that once prayer is offered, your infirmity is destroyed at the roots. It is like using weed killer in your garden. The weed killer doesn't make the weeds go all brown and dead immediately. But the moment it is poured, the problem is dealt with at the roots. Though it might take a while for the weeds to turn brown and die completely, death actually sets in the moment the weed killer is poured. The moment we curse the disease or tumour, it dies at the roots. But the manifestation of complete healing

may be seen only later.

Drive Out The Thieves From Your Temple

So between the cursing of the fig tree and the visible manifestation of the curse the next day, Jesus cleansed the temple in Jerusalem. In John 2:19, Jesus referred to His body as the temple by saying, *"Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."* Today, what or who is the body of Christ? We, the church, are His body. And our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. In 1 Corinthians 6:19, the apostle Paul says that *"your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you"*.

So as you pray in the Spirit while waiting for the manifestation of your miracle, God is removing "thieves" from your temple. What are these thieves doing? They are stealing health, vigour and life from your body. These thieves have been stealing from many of us because many of us don't see our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. And when we fail to realise that, we also fail to keep our bodies as houses of prayer. But if we will wake up, and start treating our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit and houses of prayer, our bodies cannot remain as or become dens for thieves.

My friend, if you allow the devil to camp around your body, he will rob you of health and strength. In John 10:10, Jesus says, *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy..."* He will steal your health by destroying your organs or limbs with disease. You have a choice. Either your body is a house of prayer or it becomes a den of thieves.

Choose to make it a house of prayer, praying at all times in the Spirit!

When you pray in the Spirit, it is like fumigating your body. It drives away all the thieves from your body. In the Old Testament, incense was used in the temple of God. The incense supposedly drove away snakes, scorpions and reptiles. In the same way, allow the incense of the Holy Spirit to drive away the thieves in your body as you pray in tongues. That is how you manifest your healing.

The less you pray in the Spirit, the more your body becomes a den of thieves. They may begin to come in small numbers, some here and some there, but soon, they may be everywhere and you will be in trouble. Now, other Christians can lay hands on you in faith to drive out the thieves, but a better way is prevention. Just keep praying in the Spirit to keep your body free of thieves, and the more strength, health, vigour and life will abound in you.

Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 6:18–20 that our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit:

> **18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body. 19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's**.

If you really believe that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, would you want to commit adultery? Would you allow thieves to camp there? Believe 1 Corinthians 6:18–20 and recognise that your body **is** the temple of the Holy Spirit, and you will treat your body the way it is supposed to be treated. Your body is not your own, it is the Holy Spirit's.

While waiting for your healing to manifest, while continuing to believe God for the manifestation of your miracle, you cannot afford not to be praying in the Spirit. Some of you may still ask, "What has this got to do with praying in the Spirit, Pastor Prince?" Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit. His prayer language is a spiritual language. In Romans 8:26, we see that the Holy Spirit helps us pray:

> **[26]Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered**.

What is our weakness here? It is that *"we do not know what we should pray for as we ought"*. For example, you may be going through a trial and you don't know how or what you should pray for. But the Spirit helps by praying through you. He prays through you with groanings, with tongues — that is His language and His prayers are perfect prayers. Praise God that the Holy Spirit has come to help us with that weakness! So praying in the Spirit is His way of helping us overcome that weakness and manifest what has been prayed for.

Some of you have been robbed. You have had this

revelation before, but somewhere along the way, the devil stopped your flow of praying in the Spirit. And life has stopped flowing for you. At this point, you may ask, "Pastor Prince, what is the best way to start flowing in life and peace again?" The best way to start the rivers of life or rivers of living water flowing again is to pray in the Spirit. In John 7:38–39, Jesus connects the rivers of living water flowing from our innermost being with the Holy Spirit. So praying in the Spirit activates this flow of living waters in your life.

If you come to a place where you cannot sense God any more, even though He is still there, one of the best things to do is to start praying in tongues. When you start to pray in the Spirit, it may feel like there is only a little stream inside you, but if you press on, that stream will grow into mighty, roaring, life-producing rivers that not only bless you, but others too!

King Hezekiah Cleansed The Temple

In the Old Testament, we see another example of someone cleansing the temple. 2 Chronicles 29 tells us that King Hezekiah cleansed the temple. By the way, King Hezekiah was a good king, a righteous king, a godly king. Verse 3 says, *"In the first year of his reign, in the first month, he opened the doors of the house of the Lord and repaired them."* Why did he do that? Well, in 2 Chronicles 28:22–24, we see that the previous king, Ahaz, had shut the doors of the temple:

[22]Now in the time of his distress King Ahaz became

increasingly unfaithful to the Lord. This is that King Ahaz. [23]For he sacrificed to the gods of Damascus which had defeated him, saying, "Because the gods of the kings of Syria help them, I will sacrifice to them that they may help me." But they were the ruin of him and of all Israel. [24]So Ahaz gathered the articles of the house of God, cut in pieces the articles of the house of God, shut up the doors of the house of the Lord, and made for himself altars in every corner of Jerusalem.

Let's go forward to chapter 29 again where we see that the first thing King Hezekiah did was that he opened the doors of the temple. Here, I want to give you an illustration of how prayer can repair your body. 2 Chronicles 29:16 says:

[16]Then the priests went into the inner part of the house of the Lord to cleanse it, and brought out all the debris that they found in the temple of the Lord to the court of the house of the Lord…

Verse 17 continues:

[17]Now they began to sanctify on the first day of the first month, and on the eighth day of the month they came to the vestibule of the Lord. So they sanctified the house of the Lord in eight days, and on the sixteenth day of the first month they finished.

In the same way, the repair of your body, which is the house

of the Lord today, begins when the "door" is opened. What is the "door" of your body? It is your mouth. David said in Psalm 141:3, *"Set a guard, O Lord, over my mouth; keep watch over the door of my lips."*

So when you open your mouth and pray in the Spirit, your body begins to be repaired from the inside out. Inside the "house", the lamps will be lit. Within a few days, there will be life throughout the whole house. And it will reach the vestibule of the house, that is, the porch, which means the outer part of your body. When that happens, you will see visible signs of repair to your body, the manifestation of your healing!

King Hezekiah's men began repairing and cleansing the temple from the inside out. How do you cleanse things? You do it with water. Water is a wonderful cleanser. How do you cleanse the temple of the Holy Spirit or the house of the Lord, which is your body? You do it with the rivers of living water. The more you pray in tongues, the more you give vent to the rivers of living water on the inside of you. The more you pray in the Spirit, the more the living waters will push out all the debris, cleaning out your house.

Now, the cleansing may not be accomplished overnight, but it will be finished if you persevere. It begins on the inside of you and extends outwards until you see visible signs of your miracle. You know, when they started cleansing the temple from the inside out, no one outside could see what was happening inside. It took a while before they could see cleansing on the outside. It took a while before the temple was cleansed both inside and outside.

Don't Let The Devil Shut Your Mouth

What does this teach us about our own lives? It shows us that the first thing we are to do is open the doors of our temples. We learnt that the door is our lips or our mouth. Psalm 141:3 says, "Keep watch over the door of my lips." In all the devil's attacks against you, has he managed to shut your door? Is the door to your temple shut?

You may be in a situation in which the rivers have stopped flowing in your life. This may have let the thieves in and they may be stealing from you. You may feel that you have no power to resist them. Looking back, you may remember that there was a time when you let the rivers loose inside you. You walked in power. If you were sick, you knew that you were getting better. But somewhere along the way, the devil managed to shut your mouth. He managed to shut your door.

I don't care what the reasons were, but your mouth was jammed. A spiritual demon called Ahaz closed the door. But like King Hezekiah, you are to open the door again! You are to flush out all the debris and thieves with the rivers of living water by praying continuously in the Spirit!

He who speaks in tongues builds and repairs himself.

No wonder on the day of Pentecost, the first thing God did

was to open the doors. Acts 2:4 states, *"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance."* Once the Holy Spirit made them living temples, God made them houses of prayer and power. Peter preached a powerful sermon and 3,000 people were saved.

Also, in 1 Corinthians 14:2, we see that *"he who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God, for no one understands him; however, in the spirit he speaks mysteries"*. No wonder the devil wants to stop you from opening your door. No wonder the devil wants to stop you from speaking in tongues. Because you are not speaking to men, you are speaking to God! Man does not understand what you are saying. You yourself, a man, do not understand either. But it is not for your intellectual stimulation. It is for God.

Now, some of you who love to rely on your minds to make decisions and to analyse things may not see the value of praying in tongues because the language doesn't make any sense to you. For you, the biggest problem is your mind — you need to understand with your mind before you will accept it. But 1 Corinthians 14:14 says, *"For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my understanding is unfruitful."* So you have to realise that when it comes to communicating with God in the Spirit, your understanding or mind cannot help you. It will be unfruitful. That is just God's way and you have to do it His way.

Speak In Tongues And Repair Your Body

1 Corinthians 14:4 states, *"He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church."* Now, there is no way you can edify the church without first edifying yourself. The word "edify" in the Greek is *oikodomeo,* which means "to build a house". So he who speaks in a tongue builds a house. *Thayer's And Smith's Bible Dictionary* also describes the word "edify" as "repair". This means that you are building and repairing the house whenever you speak in tongues. In other words, whenever you pray in the Spirit, you are building yourself up and repairing yourself!

You may say, "But, Pastor Prince, I thought that when a Christian speaks in tongues, he edifies his **spirit**?"Well, the Bible doesn't say that the speaker edifies his spirit. It says that the speaker edifies "**himself**". This means his entire "self" — spirit, soul and body! So he who speaks in tongues builds and repairs his body too. What about the mind? Your mind is part of your soul. Your "self" includes your mind. So you can repair and build up your mind as well by speaking in tongues. And whatever part of you is being repaired, the Holy Spirit will do a better job than the best doctors in the world!

The more you pray in tongues, the more you are conscious of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Pray in tongues whenever you can and as often as you can. Do it in the shower, as you are driving to work or when you are out jogging. Remember that you can pray in tongues under your breath when you are in crowded places. You don't have to pray loudly and scare people!

God wants you to open your door. And He is saying, "Get ready for the manifestation." It is going to push out all the

thieves that have been robbing you of your vigour and your strength. Jesus said in John 10:10, *"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy..."* Don't tolerate the thieves because Jesus didn't!

Stand Strong In Jesus' Armour

Yes, it is true that the devil tries to rob us of the blessings of God, but Jesus has given us His armour. In fact, Paul found out about the armour of God in Isaiah 59:14–18:

> **14 Justice is turned back, and righteousness stands afar off; for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. 15 So truth fails, and he who departs from evil makes himself a prey. Then the Lord saw it, and it displeased Him that there was no justice. 16 He saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor; therefore His own arm brought salvation for Him; and His own righteousness, it sustained Him.**
>
> **17 For He put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on His head; He put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak. 18 According to their deeds, accordingly He will repay, fury to His adversaries, recompense to His enemies; the coastlands He will fully repay.**

The very pieces of the armour that Paul encourages us to put on were what the Lord Himself put on to deal vengeance

on His adversaries, to enforce justice and to protect the righteous. In other words, when you put on the armour of God, the Lord will repay the devil for what he has done to you. So next time, he will think twice before he comes against you!

My friend, allow God's truth to shine into every area of your life and darkness will be dispelled. Walk in the gift of righteousness and as Paul says in Romans 5:17, you will reign in life. Rest secure in full assurance of His salvation, having only a confident expectation of good things to come. Protect yourself with the shield, which is faith in His faith that never fails. Agree with God's Word by speaking it forth. And pray in tongues at all times with all perseverance.

There will be times when you pray in tongues and you will feel the power of God! But there will also be times when you feel nothing. There will be times when you don't feel like there is a flow. And that is when you are to persevere. The devil will tell you, "Nothing is happening. You are just making it up. It's nothing but gibberish." But persevere and your tongues will flow in power!

God has given us His armour to make us strong in Him and in the power of His might, so put it on today!

Salvation Prayer

If you would like to receive all that Jesus has done for you and make Him your Lord and Saviour, please pray this prayer:

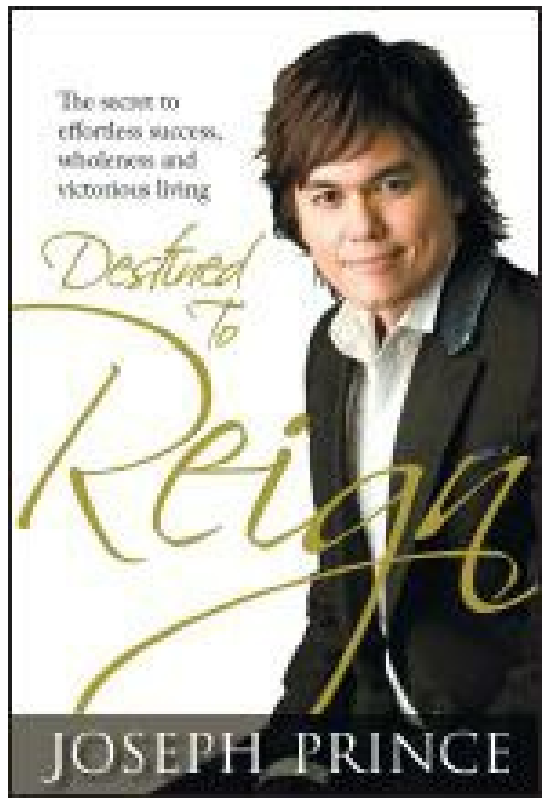
> **Lord Jesus, thank You for loving me and dying for me on the cross. Your precious blood washes me clean of every sin. You are my Lord and my Savior, now and forever. I believe that You rose from the dead and that You are alive today. Because of Your finished work, I am now a beloved child of God and heaven is my home. Thank You for giving me eternal life, and filling my heart with Your peace and joy. Amen**.

We Would Like To Hear From You

If you have prayed the salvation prayer, or if you have a testimony to share after reading this book, please send us an email at info@josephprince.com

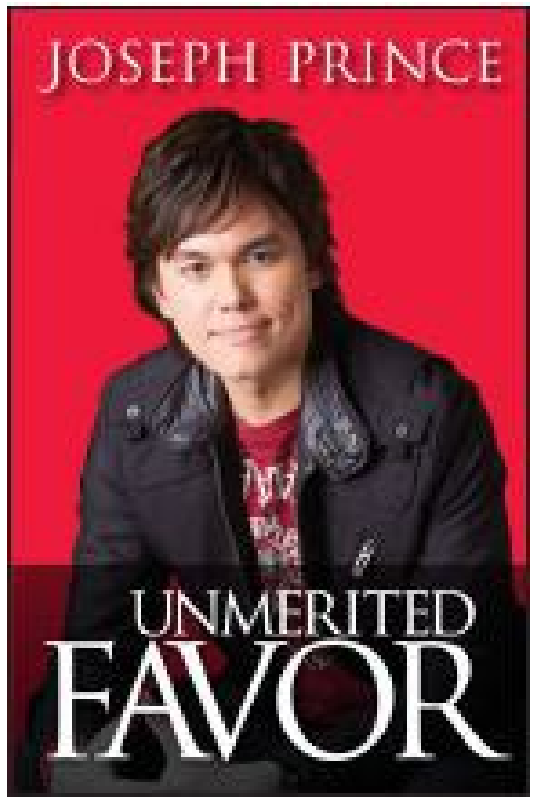
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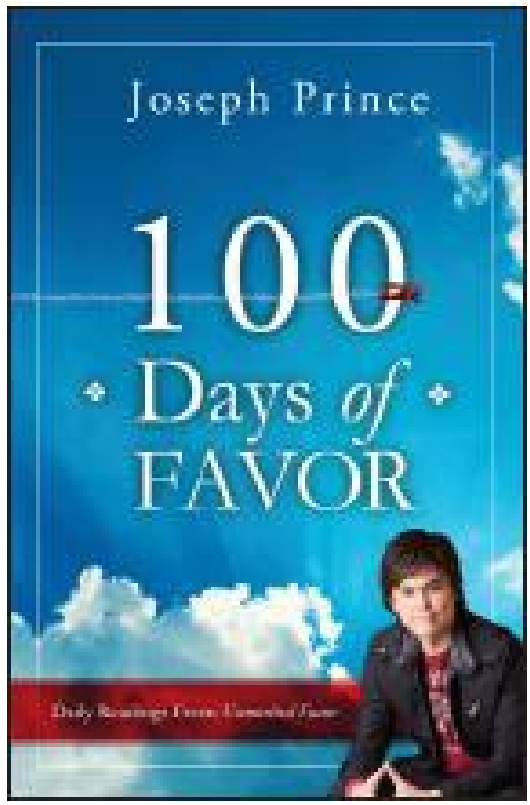
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