THE UNCOMMON BLESSING

Extraordinary. Exceptional. Noteworthy. Remarkable. Unique. Unorthodox.



MATTHEW ASHIMOLOWO

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of blessing is not strange to the twenty first century Christian. It is very common for people to part company with a “Bless you”, “God bless you” or better still “Remain blessed.” When some people are asked how they are, they respond with; “I am blessed and highly favoured!” The action of using this language to merely greet one another may be construed as a simple language for parting and therefore reduce our understanding of the benefit and power of the word ‘blessing’.

The word ‘blessing’ is also used as a way to describe the quantity of material things people own, it is construed as the presence of physical apparatus, which are indicators of a blessed life. However, when we look closely at the scriptures, we see that even when people had nothing, sometimes the scriptures will say, “And God blessed him and said, …” So when man did not have anything, other than a garden to till, the first opening statement from God to man shows us that he was blessed.

“Then God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it; have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over every living thing that moves on the earth.””
Genesis 1:28

This scripture shows us therefore that the blessing is God’s endowed power released upon man, giving him the capacity, ability and licence to prosper and be successful.

With this in mind, contrary to popular opinion, the blessing is more than material manifestation. It is an endowment which is intended to bring a notable change. Once a person recognises that he is endowed, his understanding must change. He must know that even without a physical manifestation, prosperity, favour and success have all been endowed upon him.

To fully appreciate what the blessing is, we need to clarify here that while many people focus on the product of the blessing, it is the endowment itself that is the blessing. So if the product, or physical manifestation is not there, it does not take away from the endowment received. Some will think that when

they have not received promotion at work, or do not have a car, or a house, they are not blessed. But the concept of endowment makes it clear that the blessing is that which God places on you. Promotion comes from God but it is not the blessing, rather it is the result.

"For exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south." ***Psalm 75:6***

A car is not the blessing; rather it is the result of what was endowed on a person. This error of focusing on the result as the very blessing is seen in various facets of our lives. When the wind blows and leaves move, the movement of the leaves is not the wind but the result of the wind made manifest. While we may not see the wind physically, yet we see its result. But the leaves that moved are not the blessing; it is the wind which we do not see.

So, acquiring material things are the result of the blessing. It is not the endowment itself. Therefore, when a person has not really, fully manifested a physical result, it does not take away from the fact that they are blessed.

We focus on the effect and miss out on the cause. If you do not know the difference, you will focus on the result and begin to believe that you are not blessed.

The endowment is intended to bring noticeable change wherever it rests. The endowment is intended to turn lives around. The uncommon blessing is not only an endowment, it is an empowerment.

"But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."" ***Acts 1:8***

There is an authority and a dynamic power released where the blessing rests. This is noticeable in the words of the angel to the teenager Mary, when she was to conceive and carry the baby Christ. The uncommon blessing was endowed upon her irrespective of her physical inability to show any prosperity or material things.

"And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Highest will overshadow you; therefore, also, that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God." ***Luke 1:35***

The blessing is also an enablement. It is that which gives you the power to do, the power to achieve.

The smell of the gravy is not the gravy itself. The sound of a cat is not the cat itself, it is just a sign that there is a cat somewhere. The barking of a dog is not the very dog, it is the effect made by the dog. The irony of that of course is that even if the sound of a barking dog is coming from a distant place and we cannot see the dog, we know there is a dog because of the effect.

So, our focus must not be on the effect but on the cause. This fundamental understanding is a necessity, so that a person does not denounce their own empowerment, endowment and enablement – just because they do not have a manifestation yet.

Understanding the blessing this way will ensure that you do not run after the blessing but rather understand that it is intended to pursue you and to manifest from your life, once you know the right steps to take.

"And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God." ***Deuteronomy 28:2***

In concluding this definition, may I use the illustration of two young boys who were taken to Jacob, their grandfather? As Manasseh and Ephraim were presented before him, Jacob recognised that it was time to endow the young men with the blessings which started with Abraham, was passed on to Isaac and then on to him, Jacob. Jacob makes reference to how the blessing was passed on to him in Genesis 48:4. Then he guided his hands wittingly to know who God had ordained for the blessing.

"Then Israel stretched out his right hand and laid it on Ephraim's head, who was the younger, and his left hand on Manasseh's head, guiding his hands knowingly, for Manasseh was the firstborn." ***Genesis 48:14***

Jacob ended up crossing his hands because his right hand was meant to be placed on the one who was to propagate the blessing, who was to be endowed with it. According to Hebrew culture, the right hand was used to convey the blessing. Ephraim was on his left, so he crossed his hands and placed his right hand on Ephraim to be the carrier of the blessing of Abraham.

CHAPTER 1 –

THE NATURE OF THE UNCOMMON BLESSING

Solomon states in Proverbs that the blessing of the Lord is what makes a man rich.

"The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it." ***Proverbs 10:22***

In Hebrew, the word 'bless' or 'blessing' conveys the concept of benefit, generosity, a gift, peace and happiness. On the other hand, when we bless God, the meaning is obviously different from God blessing us. When we pronounce blessings on God, we are describing His attributes, His covenant loyalty and His truthfulness.

"You shall supply him liberally from your flock, from your threshing floor, and from your winepress. From what the Lord your God has blessed you with, you shall give to him." ***Deuteronomy 15:14***

"And Saul said, "Blessed are you of the Lord, for you have compassion on me." ***1 Samuel 23:21***

"Blessed be the Lord, for He has shown me His marvelous kindness in a strong city!" ***Psalm 31:21***

When God blesses us, it is because He has these very attributes that He chooses to bestow His blessings upon us.

The uncommon blessing is God's enablement resting on our own ability. This enablement and endowment was what God placed on Abraham after He told him to leave everything behind to have a fresh start. And even though Abraham left physical things, he carried the endowment and the enablement with him and was able to prosper wherever he went.

When we come to know Christ, we are blessed because the blessing comes as part of the package of our salvation.

"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." ***Ephesians 1:3***

"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases, Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies, Who satisfies your mouth with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." ***Psalm 103:2-5***

Remember that Abraham left everything in Ur of Chaldeans. He could do so because he carried an endowment, an enablement and an empowerment, which the uncommon blessing procures and produces. The subsequent experience for Abraham was the manifestation of things that were very similar to what he left behind, and all because of the blessing he had in God.

"Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold." ***Genesis 13:2***

So, because we have the uncommon blessing, we are destined to produce results. When you have the uncommon blessing, happiness, fortune and an enviable life are the by-products. The Amplified Bible presents the Beatitudes of Matthew 5 by using the words, "*Happy, fortunate, enviable, irrespective of immediate circumstance is the blessed man.*"

CHAPTER 2 –

THE SCOPE OF THE UNCOMMON BLESSING

Dictionary.com defines ‘scope’ as the extent or range of view, outlook, application, operation, effectiveness etc.

What is the capacity of the uncommon blessing? What area does it cover? 3 John 2 gives us an insight.

“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.” ***3 John 1:2***

The scope of the uncommon blessing is determined by the God who bestows it upon His people. It makes kings out of servants. It brings favour out of disfavour. It can bless a cursed womb. It brings the favours of the deep, the ones hidden in the sand. Its scope and manifestation is seen in the life of the patriarch Abraham, who was called by God when he was seventy five years old; he was an idol worshiper and childless and even though he may not have had much to his name, God still said he should leave everything behind and follow after Him.

This uncommon blessing was spoken into his life.

“Now the Lord had said to Abram: “Get out of your country, from your family and from your father’s house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.””
Genesis 12:1-3

A similar pronouncement was later to be made into the lives of the Children of Israel, as they journeyed onward to the Promised Land.

“And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God: “Blessed shall you be in the city, and blessed shall you be in the country. “Blessed shall be the fruit of your body, the produce of your ground and the increase of your herds, the increase

of your cattle and the offspring of your flocks. "Blessed shall be your basket and your kneading bowl. "Blessed shall you be when you come in, and blessed shall you be when you go out. "The Lord will cause your enemies who rise against you to be defeated before your face; they shall come out against you one way and flee before you seven ways. "The Lord will command the blessing on you in your storehouses and in all to which you set your hand, and He will bless you in the land which the Lord your God is giving you." ***Deuteronomy 28:2-8***

Seven things were said to Abraham in this passage, although later, we shall see thirty six blessings that were to later manifest in the life of Abraham. He was promised a blessing that was far more than material increase. His childlessness would change and he would be the father of nations. He would be blessed. He would have a name which exceeds all names and titles. He would become a blessing, a distributor of the blessings of the Lord. Whoever blessed or empowered Abraham would be blessed. Whoever had an adverse attitude, or placed a curse on Abraham would themselves be cursed. Lastly, his family would make progress and through him, the earth would be blessed by the advent of the Messiah.

As we see in the life of Abraham, the blessing touched every area of his life and extended beyond the physical manifestation of wealth.

CHAPTER 3 –

THE PATHWAY TO THE UNCOMMON BLESSING

Supernatural empowerment and enablement called the ‘uncommon blessing’ prepared by God for His people is premised upon following the pathway that leads to where and how it may be obtained. God has never kept us in the dark about the fact that obedience to Him is a major access key. Disobedience is what makes one lose everything.

It was disobedience that totally changed the course of the history of man in the Garden of Eden. So, God says if there is a will and obedience, the blessing will flow.

“If you are willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land.” ***Isaiah 1:19***

The demand of obedience from God is intended to simplify life and cause His people to enjoy what He has.

““Now it shall come to pass, if you diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God, to observe carefully all His commandments which I command you today, that the Lord your God will set you high above all nations of the earth.” ***Deuteronomy 28:1***

This great chapter, which shows the blessings God meant for His people as they stepped into the Promised Land, opens with the requirement of obeying His commandments. God’s instructions are for making life easy.

Obedience is the lever that will lift a man to his next level of blessing and promotion. It is the instrument of exchange in the Kingdom of God. It is non-negotiable. Even in the natural, every time a person is given a blessing, favour or opportunity above their level of obedience, they turn around in rebellion, neglect or disregard of the favour that has been shown to them. Only those in obedience to the heavenly vision enter the heavenly blessing.

We made reference to Abraham earlier on. For him, the quality of his obedience is reflected in the level of faith he expressed. Coming out of Ur of

the Chaldeans, the bastion, the foundation of religion and idolatry, his obedience was the expression of faith in a God that cannot be seen with the eyes. By his action, he impressed God. The Bible says that Abraham believed God.

"And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness." ***Genesis 15:6***

The word 'reckoned' or 'accounted' in this verse comes from the Greek word, 'logid zomai' which means 'logical calculation'. So, when a man expresses implicit faith or walks in hourly obedience, it will be logically calculated for right standing or righteousness. The walk of faith is the morning star of obedience. It is showing faith in God, believing that He is and that He is the rewarder of those who seek Him.

"But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." ***Hebrews 11:6***

The purpose of Christ's work of grace is to make us obedient children. While salvation is free, we are told to work out our future with the fear of God.

"Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;" ***Philippians 2:12***

It was obedience that marked Christ and His Father was pleased with Him. The Bible says He learnt obedience.

"Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered." ***Hebrews 5:8***

Obedience is understanding that God has an unquestioned right to your breath, your thoughts, moments and every capacity of your being. Obedience is not just the absence from wrong, it is leaning on God and taking Him at His word. What offends God the most is belittling, negating, disregarding or expressing unbelief in His Word.

"Making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."" ***Mark 7:13***

God delights in prompt obedience. When Abraham was called, he obeyed immediately, without delay. Delayed obedience is more like disobedience. Obedience has to be prompt or it is nothing at all. You do not stop and wonder if you want to obey or not. When God gives an instruction, He leaves no option but for us to obey.

Obedience to God is not a violation of your volition as a human being. There are areas where God has left us with a choice. Even obedience itself, we are told we can choose to disobey but we will face the consequence. Nature shows us the consequence of disobedience. If you disregard the laws of nature, you will meet with its consequence. A man who cannot swim and cannot float will break Archimedes' Law of flotation, which says, “Anything with a hollow will float”. If he jumps into a deep pool, river, lagoon or sea, he will sink because he has broken a law of nature.

As I write this book, I am sitting on the thirty fourth floor of a hotel overlooking Lake Ontario in Canada. Imagine if I jumped out from the window of this thirty-fourth floor. I would have disobeyed the law of gravity and would have to face the consequence.

Obedience must be practical. Abraham did not ask God if he could think it over before doing it. He obeyed promptly and practically.

Bad men also obey God, however it is only when it is fitting. A man, in moments of tragedy, danger or death will quickly repent of his sins but good men obey God even when they do not understand it.

Obedience is your access to this great uncommon blessing, your inheritance. God said to him, “Go to a place which you will receive for an inheritance” and he obeyed, not even knowing where he was going. When God demanded for his son, he obeyed.

Obedience delivers a man from weakness and folly. Obedience unfolds God’s blessing. It guarantees our entry into all that God has. Obedience is the doorway and there is no other. Once a person walks in disobedience, they shut the door against themselves.

Many times people will plead mercy but even mercy itself only gives you limited access. There are levels of joy and favour, particularly, the uncommon blessing, that man cannot operate if a man has not chosen to obey God. The

Bible says Israel could not enter into His rest because of their unbelief.

Unbelief is the opposite of faith. Abraham expressed faith and it was reckoned to him for obedience and righteousness. Israel expressed unbelief and it precluded them from the uncommon blessing. These are the results of obedience! We see from the life of Abraham that obedience cements relationship with God and makes one a friend of the Almighty.

"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going." ***Hebrews 11:8***

Obedience can turn an apparent failure into a blessing. When a man chooses to obey God and God endows, enables and empowers him with the uncommon blessing, what seems negative turns into a positive. Obedience made Abraham offer his son, and even though it seemed as though he lost a son, he immediately got back a nation.

"Then the Angel of the Lord called to Abraham a second time out of heaven, and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the Lord, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."" ***Genesis 22:15-18***

Obedience produces a life of the highest blessing. The Bible says, "He learnt obedience."

When a man learns obedience, it takes away the sense of care and fear because you know that then your life is secure in the One Whom you have obeyed. When you walk in obedience, part of the fruit or by-product will be uncommon communion and fellowship with the Almighty. Then obedience will release an uncommon blessing that will be for generations, as we see in the life of Abraham.

CHAPTER 4 –

THE BLESSINGS OF ABRAHAM

Abraham was truly a reflection of the uncommon blessing. He was rescued out of Ur by the mandate God gave him to come out and be blessed.

"Now the Lord had said to Abram: "Get out of your country, from your family and from your father's house, to a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.""
Genesis 12:1-3

These instructions by God set the ground for the blessings. Let us first of all look at the basis of Abraham's blessing.

Get thee out of thy country

A man needs to step out in order to step in: If you cannot see where you are going, you will become a slave of your present location. Until you get out, yesterday can make you a slave of tomorrow. God demanded that Abraham come out because where he was, was the residence of 'yesterday' people. 'Yesterday' people tend to make you feel helpless about tomorrow. God's instruction also meant that Abraham needed to come out of what might stop the uncommon blessing because the familiar is always the enemy of the unfamiliar. The regular resists the irregular. It is not enough to leave the past behind, we must really, totally be free from even the remembrance of it.

If Abraham had stayed in Ur, he would have been caught up in the traditions of the land. You cannot keep playing in the old house and maintain the blessing of the new.

Then God said, 'to a land which I shall show you'

If you do not take your eye off the present, you cannot see the future. If you do not get out of your present location, country and family, you will treat an uncommon blessing as common. Many people have heard the call of God,

they got born again but they never really moved beyond salvation. Those who do not get rid of their past country in the emotional and mental sense will be buried in it.

Naturally, when you move from one country to the other, it may not really change you unless you see the opportunities there. You can move from country to country and remain the same. The slaves in Egypt were still slaves in the wilderness. Not everyone who crossed the Red Sea left Egypt's mentality behind. However, what God was saying to Abraham was, "You need to step out of the mindset of your previous kingdom to take on the mindset of the Kingdom of God."

Then He said, 'and from your family'

The word 'family' comes from the extended word 'familiar.' The number one hindrance to the Word of God is the traditions of man.

*"Making the word of God of no effect through your tradition which you have handed down. And many such things you do."" **Mark 7:13***

Once you become familiar with a thing, you tend to lose the power, punch and pathos it carries. Many people spend their entire lives just trying to get over their past. Family may also be the place of our birth and the weaknesses therein, or the setting of our upbringing. These settings can infest our lives with unbelief, weaknesses and limitations. The New Living Translation puts Genesis 12:2 as, *"Out from your relatives."*

Relocation is the first step in transformation. Relocation is necessary before deep revelation. Only relocation can bring you to your appropriate allocation.

And from your father's house

The uncommon blessing never rests upon many people's lives because they are still fighting the curse from their father's house.

*"You shall not bow down to them nor serve them. For I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generations of those who hate Me." **Exodus 20:5***

"Then Joshua, and all Israel with him, took Achan the son of Zerah, the silver, the garment, the wedge of gold, his sons, his daughters, his oxen, his

donkeys, his sheep, his tent, and all that he had, and they brought them to the Valley of Achor. And Joshua said, "Why have you troubled us? The Lord will trouble you this day." So all Israel stoned him with stones; and they burned them with fire after they had stoned them with stones. Then they raised over him a great heap of stones, still there to this day. So the Lord turned from the fierceness of His anger. Therefore the name of that place has been called the Valley of Achor to this day." ***Joshua 7:24-26***

""What do you mean when you use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying: 'The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge'?" ***Ezekiel 18:2***

The curse of the father's house is a big hindrance to the blessing of the future. That curse could be as simple as the small-mindedness of the family you come from, or their inability to handle greatness. Some father's houses have produced lazy people because it was the house of laziness, mentally and physically. Others infect you with fear. People who are raised in a house of fear cower at the raising of the hand. They are afraid of their own shadow. A father's house may be the bastion of unbelief. The chief reason Abraham entered the favour of God was that he did not stagger at the promise of God.

"He did not waver at the promise of God through unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God." ***Romans 4:20***

A father's house may be built on poor self-esteem. Those who were raised under a life which bowed to everything will never accept the blessing that has no limit. They will feel that it is too good for them. It is like the story of the girl who was raised in the days of the depression in the 1920s. The home she came from did not have much. At mealtimes, when they were to have some milk, lines had been drawn on the jug in which the milk was served. Lines were drawn to ensure that only the measure marked by the line was taken. The girl fell ill and was admitted to hospital. When it was time for her to be given milk in a jug, she said, "I cannot see the line." When asked to explain what she meant, the girl told the nurse how the system worked in her home. . The nurse lovingly told her, "Here in the hospital, we do not draw lines on the jug. You can have as much as you want. There is no limit."

A father's house could also push a person into developing a selfish nature. If you come from the house of selfishness, you foresee immediate

gratification. You exalt personal satisfaction above the chance of being a blessing. Abraham's primary calling was not just to be blessed but to be a blessing.

THIRTY SIX UNCOMMON BLESSINGS OF ABRAHAM

1. God will make you a great nation

God made Abraham's power to rest in the One in Whom he believed and God blessed him to become not just one person but a nation.

"May the Lord God of your fathers make you a thousand times more numerous than you are, and bless you as He has promised you!" ***Deuteronomy 1:11***

Every promise of God made to Abraham in Genesis 12 did not expire. It accommodated everyone who believed in Christ and made them sons of Abraham after the Spirit.

2. I will make your name great

Included in this statement is material greatness.

"Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold." ***Genesis 13:2***

"The Lord has blessed my master greatly, and he has become great; and He has given him flocks and herds, silver and gold, male and female servants, and camels and donkeys." ***Genesis 24:35***

God promised Abraham and truly made it happen by making him rich in cattle, silver and gold.

Spiritual greatness.

"And it came to pass at that time that Abimelech and Phichol, the commander of his army, spoke to Abraham, saying, "God is with you in all that you do." ***Genesis 21:22***

Abraham did not only increase in material greatness, he had a spiritual depth and following of God. His faith was not only to obtain, it was also a faith to please God and to even see Him face to face.

"By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he dwelt in the land of promise as in a foreign country,

dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God." ***Hebrews 11:8-10***

Social greatness

"Hear us, my lord: You are a mighty prince among us; bury your dead in the choicest of our burial places. None of us will withhold from you his burial place, that you may bury your dead." ***Genesis 23:6***

Because of this hand of the Lord upon him, his name became so great that even though he was not a king by earthly ordination, he ruled and had a name that was greater than that of kings.

3. I will bless you

Again the word 'barak' or 'bless' here means 'to be divinely empowered by God, to be abundant and to have increase of favour.'

4. Thou shalt be a blessing

In other words, you will receive the power to become a distributor of the blessings of God. To be a blessing means to carry favour above the regular. To be a blessing is like being a depot from where distribution is made. To understand this picture very clearly think of a man who sells bottles of drink in a corner shop, he cannot be compared to the depot that supplies it by trucks. One is blessed, the other one is a supplier of blessings.

The uncommon blessing is not intended for selfish use or aggrandisement; rather, it is God's empowerment for us to turn around and support the Gospel with that which is provided.

"But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." Matthew 6:33

Empty hands cannot give the kind of support needed. Serving the anointing under which God has placed you, requires that you have something in your hand.

*"So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper."" **2***

Chronicles 20:20

Being a distributor also gives us the ability to bless the poor, build orphanages, give education, relieve poverty and break cycles of limitations and failure.

5. I will bless them that bless thee

God's commitment to us is as it was to Abraham. That is, to empower whoever believes in Him and also empower whoever decides to support whom God has blessed. By rights of the covenant relationship between Abraham and God, it meant that whoever blessed Abraham received a blessing and whoever cursed him, the curse turned back on them because you cannot curse what God has blessed.

6. I will curse them that curse you

The scriptures are clear on curses; that they cannot rest upon a person without a just cause.

"Like a flitting sparrow, like a flying swallow, so a curse without cause shall not alight." ***Proverbs 26:2***

For the believer today, the finished work of Christ potentially gives us power over curses.

"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." ***Galatians 3:13-14***

However, every one of the blessings of redemption must be personally, definitely and clearly appropriated. Just because it is provided, does not mean that it is already yours.

7. In you all the nations of the earth will be blessed

Again, we must remember that the word 'blessed' means to be empowered, endowed and enabled. God selected Abraham out of a myriad of people and planned that through his family, the original protoevangelium of Genesis 3:15 would be fulfilled; that the Saviour would emerge for the deliverance of mankind. Through the family of Abraham, God proffered a line of salvation.

This certainly is the ultimate of all blessings.

8. I will show you the land

Land is the basis of all wealth, the heritage of wise people, of the thrifty and of the prudent. Over a thousand times, the Bible makes reference to the land…land…land…because it is the one valuable thing that never depreciates. God gives it to His people eternally as a place to possess. It is a sign of the blessings from God.

"For those blessed by Him shall inherit the earth, but those cursed by Him shall be cut off." ***Psalm 37:22***

It was the way God sealed His covenant with His people.

Then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and My covenant with Isaac and My covenant with Abraham I will remember; I will remember the land." ***Leviticus 26:42***

God gave Abraham land as an access key to acquiring wealth, equity and the development of prosperity for the future.

"A land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive oil and honey;" ***Deuteronomy 8:8***

9. I will give this land to you and your seed forever

"Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your descendants I will give this land." And there he built an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him." ***Genesis 12:7***

"And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him: "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are—northward, southward, eastward, and westward; for all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever. And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered. Arise, walk in the land through its length and its width, for I give it to you."" ***Genesis 13:14-17***

By right of the covenant of God with Abraham, God not only put the land in Abraham's life to make him prosper, He perpetuated it in the life of his children.

10. I will make your seed as the dust in number

"And I will make your descendants as the dust of the earth; so that if a man could number the dust of the earth, then your descendants also could be numbered." ***Genesis 13:16***

Abraham moved from barrenness to a man whose children became as countless as the dust of the earth.

11. I am your shield

"After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."" ***Genesis 15:1***

God permitted no one to do them harm.

12. I am your great reward

"After these things the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision, saying, "Do not be afraid, Abram. I am your shield, your exceedingly great reward."" ***Genesis 15:1***

13. Your son will inherit that which God provides for you

"But Abram said, "Lord God, what will You give me, seeing I go childless, and the heir of my house is Eliezer of Damascus?" Then Abram said, "Look, You have given me no offspring; indeed one born in my house is my heir!" And behold, the word of the Lord came to him, saying, "This one shall not be your heir, but one who will come from your own body shall be your heir." Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So shall your descendants be."" ***Genesis 15:2-5***

"A good man leaves an inheritance to his children's children, but the wealth of the sinner is stored up for the righteous." ***Proverbs 13:22***

True wealth is not in what a person displays in their lifetime but the capacity to create generational blessing.

14. Your seed shall be as stars in number

"Then He brought him outside and said, "Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them." And He said to him, "So

*shall your descendants be.”” **Genesis 15:5***

*“Blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies.” **Genesis 22:17***

15. Those who oppress you will be oppressed

*“And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.” **Genesis 15:14***

The scripture becomes fulfilled when Abimelech the king of Egypt tried to oppress Abraham by taking his wife. God fought for Abraham and restrained Abimelech from doing such evil.

16. I will bring your seed out of every bondage

*“And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.” **Genesis 15:14***

Every time Israel have found themselves in bondage of slavery because of disobedience, this covenant blessing has perpetually worked for them and brought them out of difficult places.

17. I will bless your seed with great material substance

*“And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.” **Genesis 15:14***

This covenant of blessing from God has held sway from the day Abraham was called to this day. A man of Jewish descent is known in almost every economy to be at the top of the ladder, not because of his economic prowess or ability, but because of the perpetual blessing pronounced by God upon Abraham and his seed.

18. You will die in peace

*“Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.” **Genesis 15:15***

19. You will be buried in a good old age

Longevity is a blessing of following after God. In Genesis 6:3, God established that man would live for a hundred and twenty years. However, Abraham was blessed to live for an even longer period.

“This is the sum of the years of Abraham’s life which he lived: one hundred and seventy-five years.” ***Genesis 25:7***

Longevity is a proof of God honouring a man.

“With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation.”” ***Psalm 91:16***

20. I will make an eternal covenant with you

“As for Me, behold, My covenant is with you, and you shall be a father of many nations.” ***Genesis 17:4***

“Then Abraham fell on his face and laughed, and said in his heart, “Shall a child be born to a man who is one hundred years old? And shall Sarah, who is ninety years old, bear a child?”” ***Genesis 17:17***

A covenant is an agreement sealed with various proofs that both parties will be committed to each other. God’s agreement with Abraham was sealed with blood, with the exchange of name and with the commitment from God that everything He promised Abraham would come to pass, both in his lifetime and in the lives of his children.

This became manifest from Isaac to Jacob and onward.

21. I will multiply you exceedingly

“And I will make My covenant between Me and you, and will multiply you exceedingly.” ***Genesis 17:2***

22. You will be the father of many nations

“No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham; for I have made you a father of many nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.” ***Genesis 17:5-6***

23. I will make you exceedingly fruitful

“I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and kings shall come from you.” ***Genesis 17:6***

24. Kings shall come from you

“I will make you exceedingly fruitful; and I will make nations of you, and

kings shall come from you.” ***Genesis 17:6***

25. I will make a covenant with your seed eternally

“And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you.” ***Genesis 17:7***

26. I will be a God to you and your seed

“And I will establish My covenant between Me and you and your descendants after you in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and your descendants after you. Also I give to you and your descendants after you the land in which you are a stranger, all the land of Canaan, as an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”” ***Genesis 17:7-8***

27. I will bless your wife

“And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.”” ***Genesis 17:16***

28. I will give you a son from her

“And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.”” ***Genesis 17:16***

For the Jewish person, a son was an important seal of his blessing, a carrier of his name and the proof of his manhood. God is specific here as to the blessing of a son. It does not negate or belittle the female gender however, the truth of God was revealed within a very patriarchal and male-dominated culture. This in effect shows that God was restoring the pride of Abraham by blessing him with a son.

29. You shall be a mother of many nations

Conversely God also turned around and blessed the wife of Abraham.

“And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her.”” ***Genesis 17:16***

30. Kings shall come from her

"And I will bless her and also give you a son by her; then I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of peoples shall be from her."" ***Genesis 17:16***

31. I will establish my everlasting covenant with your seed, Isaac and his seed

"Then God said: "No, Sarah your wife shall bear you a son, and you shall call his name Isaac; I will establish My covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his descendants after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation. But My covenant I will establish with Isaac, whom Sarah shall bear to you at this set time next year."" ***Genesis 17:19-21***

32. I will make your sons fruitful

"And as for Ishmael, I have heard you. Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly. He shall beget twelve princes, and I will make him a great nation." ***Genesis 17:20***

Ishmael was not a son of promise, he was not the one who was to carry the covenant; however God committed to prosper him also.

33. I will multiply your sons abundantly

34. I will multiply your seed as the sand in number

"Blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies." ***Genesis 22:17***

35. Your seed shall be the victor over their enemies

"Blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies." ***Genesis 22:17***

36. In your seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed

"In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice." ***Genesis 22:18***

The uncommon blessing, as was placed upon the life of Abraham, clearly shows that it had power over all predicaments in every facet of life. Once it is on your life and you are empowered by it, you can never be less than all that God promised.

CHAPTER 5 –

THE SOURCE OF THE UNCOMMON BLESSING

The quality of a promise or blessing rests on the ability of the promisor to make it good. Nations print bank notes but the value of the bank note is determined by the economy behind it. If the economy is weak, it means the promisor is unable to fulfil what may have been promised.

The beauty of the uncommon blessing is the One who has made the promise is too faithful to fail.

"Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful." ***Hebrews 10:23***

God, the Promisor of the uncommon blessing is committed to bringing everything to work in the favour of those who are to draw the blessings; those whom He has empowered, enabled and endowed with the blessing.

We are told that Sarah considered God, who had made a promise to Abraham, to be faithful.

"By faith Sarah herself also received strength to conceive seed, and she bore a child when she was past the age, because she judged Him faithful who had promised." ***Hebrews 11:11***

However, we must ask the question: if God is the Promisor, what gives us the assurance that this blessing is uncommon and will not fail?

As was mentioned earlier, the quality of a promise and its ability to be gain fulfilment rests on the promisor. God, the source of the uncommon blessing, is able to make it happen because of:

His immutability

This means that God is an unchanging God in an ever-changing world.

"For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself, saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for them an end of all dispute. Thus God, determining to

show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us. This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, even Jesus, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek." ***Hebrews 6:13-20***

The immutability of God means that He will never change.

"For I am the Lord, I do not change; therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob." ***Malachi 3:6***

Malachi 3:6 establishes this truth. He is constant, unlimited and omnipotent. His omnipotence means that His power is still not fully explored or used: It is unlimited.

He is immutable and therefore cannot lie.

"That by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us." ***Hebrews 6:18***

He is altogether faithful and true.

""And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, 'These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:" ***Revelation 3:14***

He is constant, the same as always.

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever." ***Hebrews 13:8***

Mutation is not in the nature of God. He is unchangeable and the truth of His Word is changeless.

Governments and economies of the world have gone through a shaking and economies have been downgraded in the past. Bank notes have sometimes become worthless. The nation that most recently went through such a hard and arduous experience was Zimbabwe, it had bank notes of up to a hundred billion Zimbabwe dollars but those notes could buy very little because of the magnitude of the country's rate of inflation.

God, on the other hand is changeless, perpetual. His truth is unalterable. The blessing He has pronounced is ageless and does not stop with the first people who heard it. It is as new as ever. It is sacrosanct to everything He does with you and it cannot be modified.

The greatness of God

"For when God made a promise to Abraham, because He could swear by no one greater, He swore by Himself." ***Hebrews 6:13***

God swore by Himself because there was no one greater. The irony of it is that if there was anything, anyone, anywhere greater than God, that thing, person or place becomes God. So, the uncommon blessing rests on the greatest being in the universe; our God Who by the words of His mouth made all things.

"All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made." ***John 1:3***

The immutable counsel of God

"Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath." Hebrews 6:17

The immutability of His counsel suggests the certainty of His promise which is rooted in the nature of God. God is unchanging. His Word and promise cannot change.

Purpose, as determined by God, is prefixed and no man can alter it; neither can it be frustrated.

By volition man can choose to reject his own purpose but the counsel of God always stands.

"There are many plans in a man's heart, nevertheless the Lord's counsel—that will stand." Proverbs 19:21

God's Word is His bond. If He said, He will do it.

"Then the Lord said to me, "You have seen well, for I am ready to perform My word."" Jeremiah 1:12

We say God is good because His Word is good. The degree of a man's faithful is determined by how reliable his word is too. If a man promises to

show up at an appointment by four o'clock and he comes by four thirty, that is the level of his faithfulness. However if his word never fails and it is 'semper fidelis' (always faithful), that person is reliable. One hundred per cent, God is good! Hundred per cent, His Word of good!

The design of God cannot be revoked. It is an uncommon blessing designed for you and no man can alter it. Once God is set and committed to a thing, He will not alter it.

He is committed to the believer's healing. That is part of the uncommon blessing.

"And said, "If you diligently heed the voice of the Lord your God and do what is right in His sight, give ear to His commandments and keep all His statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you which I have brought on the Egyptians. For I am the Lord who heals you." Exodus 15:26

He is committed to your prosperity.

"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers." 3 John 1:2

"Again proclaim, saying, 'Thus says the Lord of hosts: "My cities shall again spread out through prosperity; The Lord will again comfort Zion, and will again choose Jerusalem."'" Zechariah 1:17

In the immutability of His counsel, He is also committed to your deliverance from every kind of bondage.

"But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions." Obadiah 1:17

He is committed to your joy. These are promises that rest on God's ability to deliver. God never promises what He cannot deliver.

Is there anything God cannot do? Yes. It is interesting to realise that while we say that with God all things are possible, yet He has bound Himself by eternal laws not to do some things. In His counsel, He cannot lie, He cannot change, He cannot fail and He cannot disappoint.

The oath of God

"For men indeed swear by the greater, and an oath for confirmation is for

them an end of all dispute." Hebrews 6:16

An oath seals any argument, or fight, particularly where people take the oath seriously. An oath is an act for final confirmation. Without this confirmation there could always be a dispute.

God took an oath that He would keep His Word. He did not need to do that but He took an oath and swore by Himself, because He is the greatest.

God's oath ends all gainsaying. No matter what people say, you must always remember that God has sworn to keep the promise of the uncommon blessing. The oath of God puts a matter beyond dispute, that it shall come to pass.

God's oath is the end of all quibbling about the promises you are holding onto. If He said it and it can be established in two or three places in His Word, then all doubt, as to God's commitment to make it happen in your life, is erased.

"This will be the third time I am coming to you. "By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established."" 2 Corinthians 13:1

And God says it is only a matter of time. Once it has gone forth from His mouth, it cannot return unfulfilled.

"So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:11

So, the end of all issues in your life must rest with 'God said it.' And if He said it, backed by His oath, then it will happen. Many times we speak and act out of our emotion but the Word of God settles all things. It is great to receive personal revelation, dreams, Word of knowledge but all these can even be subjective. The Word of God is His final counsel and it cannot fail.

The reason God takes an oath is because He is confident in His Word. He is confident enough to put Himself on the line. So, in effect, God is the source of the uncommon blessing. And the blessings He releases to us are not empty.

Firstly, they are sure blessings.

"Saying, "Surely blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply you." Hebrews 6:14

It is certain and there is no doubt about them. This means that God will bless over and over again because what He has said is sure and cannot fail.

Secondly, it is an obtainable promise.

"And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." Hebrews 6:15

God made a pledge to Abraham and even though it was years before it happened, God made it manifest. Even when Abraham was past the age to bear children and his wife could no longer conceive in the natural, God kept His Word to this aged couple.

Thirdly, it is a promise which is our hope and anchor.

As I said earlier on, I am dictating this book, seated in a suite overlooking Lake Ontario, at the harbour. Almost every thirty minutes, a ferry comes to the harbour with passengers and it anchors safely before allowing the passengers to alight. The anchoring of the ferry ensures safety and prevents drifting.

"This hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the Presence behind the veil." Hebrews 6:19

The Word of God is our hope and anchor because it is secure and firm, unshakeable and unmovable by the waves of life. It is strong enough to guarantee our safety and security in our world. This blessing is a trustworthy anchor on the ocean of life. Once the anchor was used to secure the ferry, this great lake that is one hundred and sixty-three miles in length, with all the water in it, seven thousand square kilometres wide, is unable to move a tiny ferry because of the anchor.

The Word of God can help us to stay unbreakable, without draining or drowning. It makes our soul secure and firm. The uncommon blessing of God, that has its source in God is connected to the best place, the throne of God. It is connected to the God who sits beyond the curtains of heaven and keeps His promise to those who trust in Him.

CHAPTER 6 –

MANIFESTING THE UNCOMMON BLESSING

We have established what the uncommon blessing is, its nature and scope, and the God who is behind it. We have seen how it manifested in the life of Abraham. A person who would lay claim to the uncommon blessing would need to know exactly what he is to manifest or expect because God cannot take you past your expectation.

We are going to list them, not exactly in their order of importance because each one of them is important to the believer.

Divine remembrance

The definition of the word 'remember' in Hebrew is 'zakar' and it means God being mindful of you, calling you to mind, celebrating you, boasting of you. The concept of remembrance is almost an oxymoron, how can a God who knows all things, the God who is omniscient have to remember? The concept of remembrance in this concept is not as if God forgot and therefore remembers. Rather, the word is used to refer to God bringing you up for consideration, mentioning your name, pulling out your record because your season has come.

Divine remembrance is divine invocation of a person's blessing. To be remembered is to be named or to be thought of. When your season of remembrance comes, God makes everything preserved for you to manifest.

The birth of a new beginning

"Then God remembered Rachel, and God listened to her and opened her womb. And she conceived and bore a son, and said, "God has taken away my reproach."" Genesis 30:22-23

God gave Rachel a new start.

The keeping of covenant

God keeps His covenant with those who He has signed an agreement of uncommon blessing with.

"Then God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the animals

that were with him in the ark. And God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters subsided." Genesis 8:1

Being remembered for promotion

"That night the king could not sleep. So one was commanded to bring the book of the records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king." Esther 6:1

Breakthrough of answered prayer

"Then they rose early in the morning and worshiped before the Lord, and returned and came to their house at Ramah. And Elkanah knew Hannah his wife, and the Lord remembered her." 1 Samuel 1:19

The beauty of the uncommon blessing is that we have access to God through prayer. The Bible says, for us who are under the new covenant, to come without fear to the throne of grace.

"Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4:16

A change of position from poverty to prosperity

The redemptive work of Christ includes our salvation as well as our prosperity.

"Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Galatians 3:13-14

The best illustration of this is how David restores to Mephibosheth, the crippled son of Jonathan, all that his father and grandfather had lost.

"Now David said, "Is there still anyone who is left of the house of Saul, that I may show him kindness for Jonathan's sake?" And there was a servant of the house of Saul whose name was Ziba. So when they had called him to David, the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?" He said, "At your service!" Then the king said, "Is there not still someone of the house of Saul, to whom I may show the kindness of God?" And Ziba said to the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan who is lame in his feet." So the king said to him, "Where is he?" And Ziba said to the king, "Indeed he is in the house of Machir the son

of Ammiel, in Lo Debar." Then King David sent and brought him out of the house of Machir the son of Ammiel, from Lo Debar. Now when Mephibosheth the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, had come to David, he fell on his face and prostrated himself. Then David said, "Mephibosheth?" And he answered, "Here is your servant!" So David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually." Then he bowed himself, and said, "What is your servant, that you should look upon such a dead dog as I?"" 2 Samuel 9:1-8

Unforgettable blessing

Due to the uncommon blessing, there is favour that remains for the believer. He could never be forgotten.

"But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me, and my Lord has forgotten me." "Can a woman forget her nursing child, and not have compassion on the son of her womb? Surely they may forget, yet I will not forget you. See, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me." Isaiah 49:14-16

Divine release

A divine release suggests that after a dry and thirsty period, there will be blessing.

"The poor and needy seek water, but there is none, their tongues fail for thirst. I, the Lord, will hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers in desolate heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." Isaiah 41:17-18

"And they did not thirst when He led them through the deserts; He caused the waters to flow from the rock for them; He also split the rock, and the waters gushed out." Isaiah 48:21

"Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain. The Lord will make flashing clouds; He will give them showers of rain, grass in the field for everyone." Zechariah 10:1

"For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as

the waters cover the sea." Habakkuk 2:14

""So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the crawling locust, the consuming locust, and the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you." Joel 2:25

"Then I will give you rain in its season, the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit." Leviticus 26:4

"Then I will give you the rain for your land in its season, the early rain and the latter rain, that you may gather in your grain, your new wine, and your oil." Deuteronomy 11:14

"The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season, and to bless all the work of your hand. You shall lend to many nations, but you shall not borrow." Deuteronomy 28:12

"You shall increase my greatness, and comfort me on every side." Psalm 71:21

Divine restoration

The uncommon blessing restores to the believer all that he had lost before he came to know Christ.

<u>A restoration of position.</u>

"Now within three days Pharaoh will lift up your head and restore you to your place, and you will put Pharaoh's cup in his hand according to the former manner, when you were his butler." Genesis 40:13

This restoration includes all the wealth he lost, for God creates a season of surplus.

"Then let him count the years since its sale, and restore the remainder to the man to whom he sold it, that he may return to his possession." Leviticus 25:27

<u>A restoration of property</u>

Just as in the case of Mephibosheth, land, monies and all that was lost, shall be restored.

"So David said to him, "Do not fear, for I will surely show you kindness for Jonathan your father's sake, and will restore to you all the land of Saul

your grandfather; and you shall eat bread at my table continually."" 2 Samuel 9:7

A restoration of stolen goods

"And when the king asked the woman, she told him. So the king appointed a certain officer for her, saying, "Restore all that was hers, and all the proceeds of the field from the day that she left the land until now."" 2 Kings 8:6

"Restore now to them, even this day, their lands, their vineyards, their olive groves, and their houses, also a hundredth of the money and the grain, the new wine and the oil, that you have charged them."" Nehemiah 5:11

A restoration of everything you have laboured for, the fruit of your hard work

"He will restore that for which he labored, and will not swallow it down; from the proceeds of business he will get no enjoyment." Job 20:18

A restoration of joy and comfort

"Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me by Your generous Spirit." Psalm 51:12

A restoration of health, healing and long life

"For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds,' says the Lord, 'because they called you an outcast saying: "This is Zion; no one seeks her."'" Jeremiah 30:17

A restoration of the lost years

""So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the crawling locust, the consuming locust, and the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you." Joel 2:25

The blessing of a sevenfold restoration

"Yet when he is found, he must restore sevenfold; he may have to give up all the substance of his house." Proverbs 6:31

Promotion

""Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will

set him on high, because he has known My name." Psalm 91:14

This is being lifted to a place beyond the reach of the enemy. God's promotion includes honour, happiness and glory. It does not come from man. God orchestrates it Himself.

"For exaltation comes neither from the east nor from the west nor from the south." Psalm 75:6

Answered prayer

God will give you undivided attention, giving answers as you make requests to Him. Answered prayer is the benefit of the believer who comes under the canopy of the uncommon blessing.

""It shall come to pass that before they call, I will answer; and while they are still speaking, I will hear." Isaiah 65:24

The presence of God

From the Children of Israel travelling through the wilderness until today, the importance of the presence of God cannot be belittled.

"He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him." Psalm 91: 15

At other times, He may leave us in the hands of angels but in trouble, He will be there. He will give charge over us to keep us always. When we are in trouble, He will tell angels to stand by and take care of it Himself.

He promises that when the believer passes through waters He will be with them and through the rivers; the believer will not be overwhelmed.

"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned, nor shall the flame scorch you." Isaiah 43:2

When we go through fire, He promises to be there and when we lie down upon the bed of sickness, not only does He heal the sick, but He will make the bed and the pillow with us!

The blessing of deliverance

"I will deliver him".

““But on Mount Zion there shall be deliverance, and there shall be holiness; the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.” Obadiah 1:17

The blessing of long life

“I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.” Psalm 118:17

“With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation.”” Psalm 91:16

God wants us to know that while all of mankind may be subject to sickness, disease and laying down upon the bed of languishing, we must learn to be part of the prolonging of our lives by confessing what the Word of God says regarding long life.

“And the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”” Genesis 6:3

The Children of Israel’s lives were shortened by disobedience in the wilderness. Once we walk in obedience, we make ourselves candidates of longevity and protection.

Obeying Christ gives us access to gain the blessing of living long. He will make us experience the fact that it is natural to desire long life and that long life shall be one of the blessings which we will truly enjoy.

“For length of days and long life and peace they will add to you.” Proverbs 3:2

“Length of days is in her right hand, in her left hand riches and honor.” Proverbs 3:16

“Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.” Exodus 20:12

Your commitment to Christ guarantees you this blessing among all that comes and in our old age, we will still be bearing fruit.

“I am poured out like water, and all My bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it has melted within Me.” Psalm 22:14

The salvation of God

“I will show him my salvation”

God's promise of salvation means He will bring you an all-round deliverance. The word 'salvation', whether in Hebrew or Greek suggests all-round health, prosperity, security, safety, victories, healing; no matter what people say.

"So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth; it shall not return to Me void, but it shall accomplish what I please, and it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it." Isaiah 55:11

Honour

"He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him." Psalm 91:15

When God honours a believer he causes them to abound, to become heavy with blessing, to be distinguished in his chosen field and to enjoy glory and experience glorious things. They grow strong, and become greatly honoured, they make it in life and experience the riches of God.

Fruitfulness

There will be fruitfulness.

"Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them." Ezekiel 34:27

The uncommon blessing provokes results and stops the abortion of your business, marriage, and mental and physical life. It stops the abortion of opportunities, career and finances.

Safety

"Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land; and they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them." Ezekiel 34:27

God guarantees safety for His people as a flow of His blessing on their life.

"And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and no one shall make them

afraid." Ezekiel 34:28

Freedom

""They all come for violence; their faces are set like the east wind. They gather captives like sand. They scoff at kings, and princes are scorned by them. They deride every stronghold, for they heap up earthen mounds and seize it. Then his mind changes, and he transgresses; he commits offense, ascribing this power to his god."" Habakkuk 1:9-11

This passage talks of intense demonic entities upon the earth that would trouble people. God guarantees us freedom from these tormenting spirits and from all their antics.

"Oh, let the wickedness of the wicked come to an end, but establish the just;

For the righteous God tests the hearts and minds." Psalm 7:9

Deliverance

God will deliver the ones who hold onto His promise from that which paralyses blessings, saps joy and creates spiritual impotence.

"And they shall know that I am the Lord, when I have broken the bands of their yoke and delivered them from the hand of those who enslaved them." Ezekiel 34:27b

"Now there is in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate a pool, which is called in Hebrew, Bethesda, having five porches. In these lay a great multitude of sick people, blind, lame, paralyzed, waiting for the moving of the water." John 5:2-3

Abuse-free

You will no longer be a prey to anybody's plan, purposes and antics.

"And they shall no longer be a prey for the nations, nor shall beasts of the land devour them;" Ezekiel 34:28a

Provision

"I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore." Ezekiel 34:29

One translation says, *“I will provide for them a soil renowned for fruitfulness”* (AAT).

The shower of God will be unique and it will be obvious that the Hand of the Lord has done it in your life.

Lack-free

“I will raise up for them a garden of renown, and they shall no longer be consumed with hunger in the land, nor bear the shame of the Gentiles anymore.” Ezekiel 34:29

The uncommon blessing is intended to bring to an end every kind of famine and release the believer into abundance in place of lack, fruitfulness in place of famine, supply in place of being broke.

CHAPTER 7 –

WHAT TO DO WHEN THE UNCOMMON BLESSING IS CHALLENGED

"I will make them and the places all around My hill a blessing; and I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing." Ezekiel 34:26

Ezekiel 34:26 opens emphatically with a statement that there shall be showers of blessing.

This statement is deeply rooted in the uncommon blessing of God. It leaves no room for doubt. There shall be! It leaves no room for disbelief. There shall be! Neither does it leave room for the devil. There shall surely be! The statement comes from the mouth of God; the One Who empowers, enables and endows with the blessing

However, the reality of life is very different from this. There are believers who do not manifest the uncommon blessing. Why has there not been an uncommon blessing? Why, rather have there been struggles? After all the scriptures announce to us that even creation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God.

"For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God." Romans 8:19

What could have gone wrong? Why does the income of many believers not seem to line up with their labour? If God could swear by two immutable things that what He said would happen, why are people walking in the opposite?

Before looking through what the believer should do when the uncommon blessing is challenged, let us see why it is sometimes challenged:

The intentions and the motives may be wrong

Why do you want to be blessed? If the motive is wrong, the manifestation will be.

“You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.” James 4:3

“He who loves pleasure will be a poor man; he who loves wine and oil will not be rich.” Proverbs 21:17

The love of pleasure is the beginning of destruction. Those who love pleasure have missed the godly purpose of the blessing.

If there is a need for adjustment in your character and person

The Bible says, *“If we regard iniquity, God will not hear us.” Psalm 68:18*

The word ‘iniquity’ means ‘wrong’ – wrongdoing, wickedness, vanity, harbouring troublemakers, causing harm, causing distress, bringing affliction. Iniquity is one of the six words that describe sin and it refers to crookedness of character.

The one who wants to experience the uncommon blessing and at the same time wants to use it to perpetuate something iniquitous may be precluded from the commonwealth of God.

A lack of prosperity may be because God is trying to get your attention

If a man is walking in disobedience, God can turn off the tap of uncommon blessing and stop the flow, in order to get the person’s attention.

“He who tills his land will have plenty of bread, but he who follows frivolity will have poverty enough!” Proverbs 28:19

You may not have really asked specifically

Generalised praying insults the God of the uncommon blessing. Prayer is not enough. It has to be specific, strategic, clear and within the remits of what may be called the principles that guard prayer.

Prayer is like any ball game and there are several of them: basketball, lawn tennis, soccer, American football, rugby, golf and many others.

The rules of golf do not apply in basketball; neither do the rules of soccer apply in lawn tennis. Bringing the laws of one game to into another would see you quickly reprimanded for committing a foul. It is possible not to have received because you have asked amiss.

“You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.” James 4:2

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.” Matthew 7:7

You may be walking in disobedience

A continuous flow of the uncommon blessing in an atmosphere of disobedience would contradict God’s original condition for favour, which is obedience.

“And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.” 1 John 3:22

“Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.” 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

“He who oppresses the poor to increase his riches, and he who gives to the rich, will surely come to poverty.” Proverb 22:16

“His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’” Matthew 25:21

You may have embraced satan’s provision and not God’s prosperity

There are clear indications when a blessing is coming from God. Part of it is that it does not come with sorrow; it rather increases your joy.

“The blessing of the Lord makes one rich, and He adds no sorrow with it.” Proverbs 10:22

God may be frustrating your own ability so you can depend on His ability

It is so easy to quickly drift into trusting our flesh, ability and strength; and fail to realise that nothing we achieve could be by our power or might.

“For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. In this you have done foolishly; therefore from now on you shall have wars.”” 2 Chronicles 16:9

“In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: surely God has appointed the one as well as the other, so that man can find out nothing that will come after him.” Ecclesiastes 7:14

“So he answered and said to me: “This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6

The lack of spiritual maturity

This can hinder the uncommon blessing because it can make a person become unfaithful, dishonour God, or became puffed up because of blessings. This person may also be demonstrating that they do not understand stewardship.

If a person is not spiritually matured, they may not come to that realisation that what God provided for them was actually intended to touch other lives.

You may want the prize without the price

People love to count but they do not want the cost. We would like to count our blessings but we do not want the cost of the blessing. True prosperity may mean more prayer and more surrender. Whilst God is the One who provides all things, still He regards and respects obedience from His people.

God is qualifying your testimony and level of obedience.

The expression in Psalm 23 about a prepared table suggests time. Meals that require preparation are probably more enriching than quick snacks. Every blessing demands a sacrifice, a time of preparation. The quality of time and the obedience demanded will make the testimony greater.

When the uncommon blessing has not manifested, it may be because the season for it has not come. It could also mean that God is calling you to a higher level of obedience.

We see this in the life of the man called Abraham, who when God told him, “Leave your homeland to a land that I will show you.” Abraham left the known for the unknown.

“I will make you a great nation; I will bless you and make your name great; and you shall be a blessing.” Genesis 12:2

That obedience provoked the blessings of God.

Check your sowing and reaping level

Harvest answers to seed sowing.

""While the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, and day and night shall not cease."" Genesis 8:22

Today's harvest is a product of yesterday's seed.

"But this I say: He who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. So let each one give as he purposes in his heart, not grudgingly or of necessity; for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

"There is one who scatters, yet increases more; and there is one who withholds more than is right, but it leads to poverty." Proverbs 11:24

A man who withholds seed has broken one of the cardinal principles for the release of the uncommon blessing. There must be a release before there can be an increase. There must be a giving out before there can be a coming in. So, when the blessing is not flowing, one of the reasons may be that the level of outflow is so small comparable to the inflow expected. A man cannot be eating like an elephant and be releasing waste like a rat.

So, what do you do when the uncommon blessing is challenged?

David speaks of the secret place of the Most High.

"He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty." Psalm 91:1

We must make God our close companion if His shadow is to fall upon us. Making God our close companion will require intimacy in the times of storm, getting into His Word and growing by His Word. This passage of scripture suggests communion with God, becoming God's permanent guest and staying in a place of His protection, refreshing and His comforting.

"Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge even the Most High, your dwelling place," Psalm 91:9

When the blessing is challenged, make the presence of God your mainstay.

""Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will

set him on high, because he has known My name." Psalm 91:14

A man who has an unmitigated love for God moves God to release the uncommon blessing. So, when other people hope in other things, your love of Him brings the blessing. The pursuit of God to the neglect of other things, automatically releases the best of God to you.

"Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ." Philippians 3:8

Total devotion to God makes it clear that He is our hope, our love and the proof of our gratitude is in forming an intimate relationship with Him.