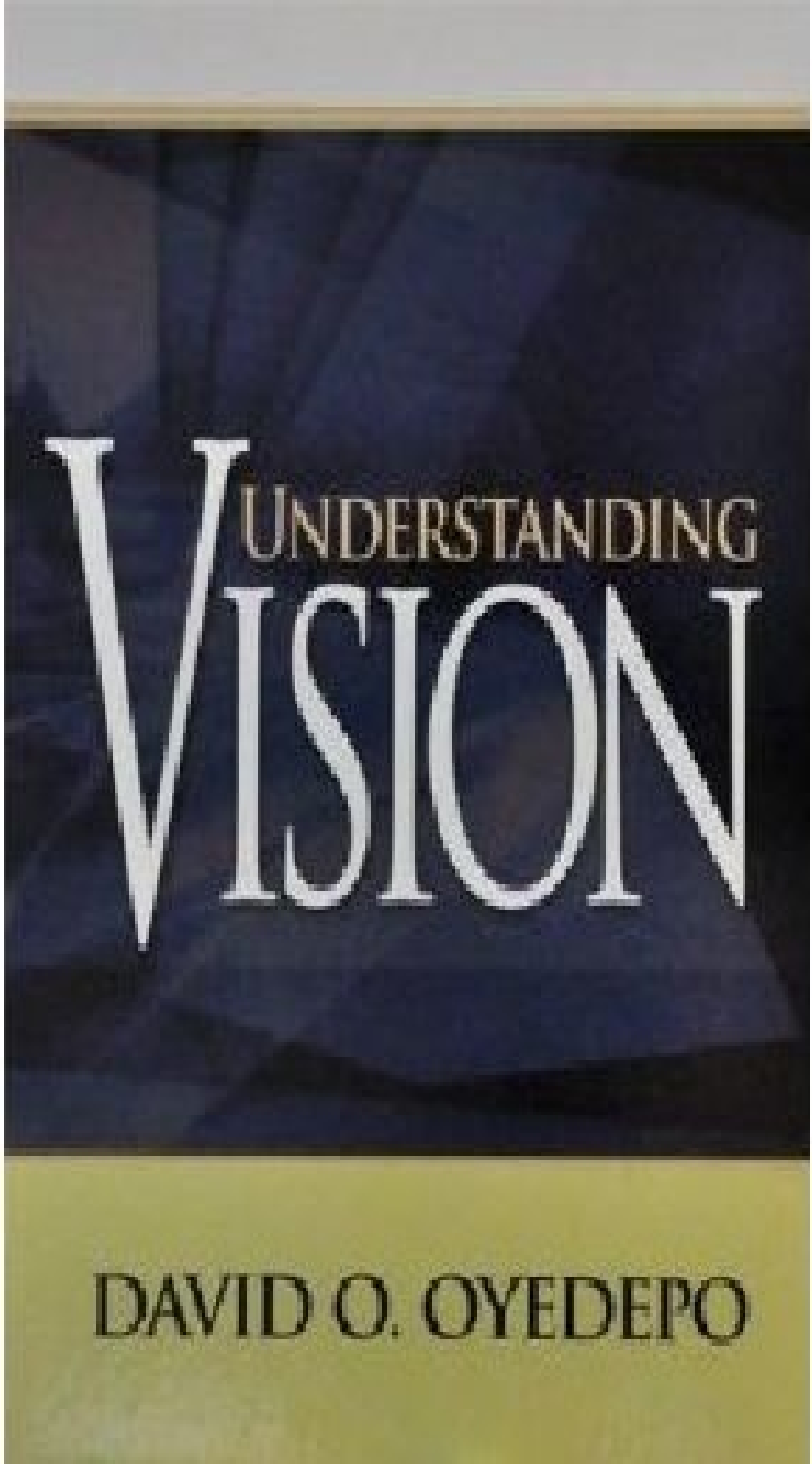

UNDERSTANDING
VISION
DAVID O. OYEDEPO

UNDERSTANDING VISION

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Introduction

The word, “vision” has been so grossly misunderstood today in the church that virtually every dream of the night is mistaken for a vision. On the other hand, the “spiritualist” churches use “vision” as their principal bait to secure fellowship. Every one of their “prophets” claim to see “vision” for people. Multitudes today are chasing after the shadows through their “traps.”

The question then is, what is vision? Is it what transpires in a trance or what obtains in one from of ecstasy or the other? The subject of vision is a most crucial one of successful living.

The word says, “where there is no vision, the people perish.” If we don’t want to perish, then we must have vision. The word “perish” here does not mean to die physically. From the original Greek text, it means “to be stripped of honour and dignity.”

We can conclude therefore, that vision is the pathway to honour and dignity. Come with me through the pages of this book as we explore this great asset called vision.

Knowing where you are going and what to do to get there generates confidence. The confident ones are the strong ones in the kingdom. They are men of extraordinary strength, men of exploits. These are the visionaries who

have sought for God and received His plans for their lives. They know where they are heading to. They know their end of this end from their beginning. They have a solid grip of this end. They have a solid understanding of how to get there. Their confidence knows no barrier. They run like horsemen. They leap like chariots.

One word comes to mind at their appearance: warriors. Their faces are set before them, eyes are fixed on a particular target in the future. They neither turn to the right nor to the left. To them, the sword is a play-thing. Pestilence does not hold them bound; famine does not know their address. Their presence sets confusion into the

enemy camp. They are mighty men of exploits; mighty men of valour. Now, they are extraordinary men, before, they were ordinary men. Their status changed when they laid hold on an extraordinary vision from God and dared to step out. They stepped out, their vision in sight and their God inside them. They know their visions and they know their God.

When you know God, you lay hold on strength, and when you have strength you do exploits.

One of the most unpleasant situations witnessed in life is seeing believers not attaining their extraordinary status in Christ Jesus. I delved into this problem and

discovered that he reason for their pitiable condition is ignorance.

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge"

Hosea 4:6

This is why the Holy Ghost led me to write this book. I pray that its purpose will be fulfilled in your life as you read in Jesus' name. Amen.

Chapter 1 - WHAT IS VISION?

Vision means to see. In our context, it means to see ahead. It is the ability to have a pre-knowledge of an upcoming event. It is more interesting to know that God has a plan for His people both as a body and as individuals. We serve a decent and orderly God. He is no author of confusion. He is a God of plans and purposes.

When He created the first man, He has a reason for it and had an assignment for him to carry out. He was to dress the garden and to keep it.

He was the king of Eden. And because "He is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Hebrews 13:8), He still has drawn out plans for every man on earth today particularly the saints of God.

Remember we are told that

"All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."

John 1:3

This explains that Christ is the force behind creation. The almighty God said about Himself, "*I am the Lord I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed!"* (Malachi 3:6). All through scriptures, we see God's plans unfold to His people. We have a predestination in God. We are

not creatures of chance, but of destiny. We serve a God of plan and purpose.

Concerning Jeremiah, God said,

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."

Jeremiah 1:5

Apostle Paul also claimed that God separated him from his mother's womb! He said, "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace" (Galatians 1:15). God still separates people today from their mothers' wombs. Your journey to destiny began at salvation. It was so

with Paul. His journey began when he acknowledged the Lordship of Christ.

Understand that you are born to fulfill a particular course. A discovery of that course is what is called a vision. Vision, therefore, can be defined as the unfolding of a divine plan as it related to a nation, a group of people or an individual.

The unfolding of God's plan about a man's life is the beginning of a great future. It is the beginning of that man's stardom in the kingdom. You never become a star until you operate within the scope of God's plan for your life.

Every believer has a peculiar plan, a peculiar function which has been assigned o him before he was born.

Hear what God told the prophet Jeremiah:

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations."

Jeremiah 1:5

Every one believer has been ordained to carry out a particular function. We are all members of the same body. We are the body of Christ.

"Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."

I Corinthians 12:27

Each member has a function to carry out. As a member of the body, you are a steward of a particular

function. God expects you to carry out this function. This is ministry, it is stewardship. It is not limited to the pulpit. Ministry is occupying your position as assigned by God.

Have you come across a body which is just one big eye? or one which is one big mouth? No! A body is made up of different members. Every member has a particular function and they all work together to the building up of that body. Ministry is carrying out a divine assignment. Everyone assigned to carry out a divine task is a minister.

Joseph had a divine task. He was sent to Egypt to preserve lives. Gideon was not called to preach but to deliver

the people of Israel. Abraham was called to be established as an institution through which the families of the earth would be blessed. Callings and elections are not limited to preaching. You have a function. You have a divine assignment. A discovery of this function is what is called vision.

Vision is a divine insight into God's plan for you. The pursuit of this vision is what is called a ministry. It therefore goes that, no vision, no ministry.

You have a ministry and it is your duty to discover it. Just like the prophet Habakkuk, stand upon your watch and see what God has for you. Become a visionary. Only visionaries become

great in the kingdom. Locate your function and begin to manifest in it. The future of every believer depends on the discovery of his function.

Know this: No calling is of a low status. Every calling, every function is a high calling. Every calling culminates in glory.

Every member of a king's body has a royal aroma. You cannot say of the hand, "this is only the hand, it is not the king so it has no honour." No! Every part of the king is the king, and must be accorded the respect and honour due to it. So is it with every member of the body of Christ. Every function you are ordained to carry out leads to honour, dignity and stardom.

The Importance of Vision

Vision is very important in a believer's life. It puts an end to a life of a struggle (when you don't discover God's plan, you keep on struggling). This is because God only enables you to perform in the area He has assigned you to serve. This is where you make it seemingly effortlessly, smiling all the way.

Your vision gives stability to your life. You know where you are heading. You have a goal and aim for it with strong purposeful strides; not as one beating the air. Your attitude changes. Your actions change.

Others might bow with any wind of doctrine; they might do whatever they like and even succeed greatly in those things; but none of those things will move you. Your vision prevents you from going anywhere you like, or following after what others are doing. It gives you a definite focus. It gives you the consciousness of one on a divine mission.

Only visionaries will be enlisted into God's army. They will be men who know where they are heading. Men who know their mission and go about it with the strength of a horse. A man on foot cannot compete with a man on a horse. Vision gives you a horse to ride on. The prophet Joel tells us about the

end time army of God:

"The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run."

Joel 2:4

This army is made up of men with specific missions. Their faces will be set only towards accomplishing these missions. They shall not thrust each other. Each one shall follow his own path, his own calling, working separately, yet together; towards one goal.

"They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war; and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: Neither shall one thrust

another; they shall walk every one in his path: and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded."

Joel 2:7-8

These are the visionaries, the men who will show forth the glory of God this end time.

No man gives himself a vision. Every true vision comes from God. It is good for us to draw a line here between vision and ambition. Vision is God-given while ambition is man-made. Vision is from above while ambition has its origin on earth. Ambition is born out of an earthly drive to do it better than others. It springs mostly out of envy and a desire for power and self recognition.

These desires run so deep that men fix their eyes on their target and go all out for the catch using all manner of evil imaginations. Men driven by their ambition can kill, destroy nations and cities; pulling others down, just to achieve their goal.

Hitler was a man driven by his own earthly ambition. He wanted to rule the world. He wanted the German nation to bear rule over the whole world and felt that the Jews were those standing in the way. This brought about the devilish idea of exterminating the Jews. Hitler had an ambition and nothing was too evil for him to do in order to achieve it.

The great man of faith, George Muller, had a vision. He had a heavenly

dream. He wanted to put a smile on the faces of all the orphans left after the war.

He gave up everything he had to start the orphanage, looking unto God and God alone. He never had to go stealing, killing, defrauding or begging for sustenance. He was an ordinary man who had an extraordinary task and dared to step out in faith. This is a vision from God. God gives the vision and enables the visionary to bring it to fruition.

No man gives himself a vision. No one places himself in an office. God is the one who assigns offices to His children. He has set every member in the body as it has pleased him. He has

absolute prerogative in the placement of His people.

"And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

I Corinthians 12:28

Ephesians 4:11 also emphasizes this point. It says:

"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers"

God does the placement and leaves it with the minister to either make good use of his calling, or go to sleep with it. God gives a task and gives the gift to

accomplish it. When He gives, He never takes back.

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

Romans 11:29

Qualifications For Placement

It is important for believers not to mistake natural qualities for divine placement. God's placements are by grace and election, not expertise or strength. God wanted someone to bring out His people from Egypt and who did He choose? A stammerer, in the person of Moses. When He needed a man to build the walls of Jerusalem, He saw no one within the city of Jerusalem. He chose a slave boy in exile: Nehemiah.

"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath

chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."

I Corinthians 1:26-29

Your natural capabilities cannot qualify you for a divine task. Divine assignments require divine strength, and divine strength can only be made perfect in weakness. It is written,

"…my strength is made perfect in weakness."

2 Corinthians 12:9

Eliab, Jesse's first son, had all the natural qualities of a king, but the same qualities brought about his disqualification before God. David, on the other hand, was considered to be naturally unqualified. He was not even called out with the other sons. His natural disqualification however, qualified him for a divine assignment.

Never you think that your eloquence or high educational background is the reason why God has called you into a preaching ministry. If natural qualifications were to be considered, I would have been the most unlikely candidate for a preaching ministry. I was very slow-tongued and

also very sickly, but God called me and that made the difference.

God will always call you in your weakness so that you can rely on His strength for His assignment. God calls you in your weakness so you can get to know Him and rely solely on Him. When you know God, you lay hold on divine strength, when you have divine strength, you do exploits in your divine assignment.

A vision can be oral, pictorial, or both. Either way, it is a spiritual language through which God transmits His plans to chosen vessels.

A dream is not a vision, but a vision can be communicated with you according to your level of

comprehension. It might be through words or images. Images, however, ease comprehension. Until words are converted into images, and one can truly say, “I see, I see,” there is no full comprehension. Images give you what to fix your eyes upon. This is especially invaluable in moments of discouragement. During such moments, you can switch your mind back to the images you received in the vision and you are encouraged.

All over the world, an increasing number of people are coming up with one vision or the other. Some are genuine, others need to be passed more closely under God’s light; others still need to be dumped into the trashcan.

As you read on, the Holy Spirit will open your eyes to know where your vision belongs, as you grasp a better understanding of visions for effectual implementation.

Chapter 2 - THE GOD-APPOINTED VISION

The prize for every high calling of God is a crown and this crown is enthronement. Every genuine vision leads to enthronement. You therefore owe yourself the responsibility of ascertaining the genuineness of your vision before launching out in its pursuit.

How does one determine a genuine vision? This is our focus in this chapter. Let us see what the prophet Habakkuk has to say:

"I will stand upon my watch, and

set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it. For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith."

Habakkuk 2:1-4

One major characteristics of a genuine vision is that, it has its source in God. It is God's revealed plan and

has to be traceable to Him. Any vision that does not have its source in God leads to destruction. It might flourish for a while but certain destruction is inevitable.

Absalom, the son of David, had a desire. He wanted so much to become king that he couldn’t even wait for his father to die. His comportment and appearance gained the people’s approval.

Being pushed on by his own selfish vision, and the people’s, he declared himself king. His vision was not from God. For a while, it was sweet but sudden destruction overtook to glorification, so does every one not from God lead to destruction.

A young man serving under a man of God now suddenly thinks he can do it better. He becomes very critical of the existing authority. He tries all he can to show people how gifted he is. He gets encouragement from some quarters and is pushed on to break away from his parent ministry. He proclaims he has a vision.

This vision is surely not from God, for God does not encourage break-aways. Take a cue from King David, he has a divine calling.

He was anointed king in place of Saul, but as long as Saul was alive, he never sought to take the throne. He only ran away when it became apparent that his life was in danger.

A vision that is of God will not encourage divisions and break-aways, so, watch it. It's high time a stop was put to break-aways and factions in our churches. When your vision is of God, He will create a peaceful way out for you in His own time. Every God given vision is characterized by peace. Vision and peace are covenant partners. A vision you receive and rest is driven from you, and should be reexamined.

Abraham was an addicted visionary. For twenty-five (25) years, he held on to his vision – the promise of a son. He was at peace.

"He staggered not at the promise of God…"

Romans 4:20

A vision which has God as its source has peace as its companion. God will always speak peace to His people.

"I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints…"

Psalm 85:8

A vision is given in response to a heart desire. Desire leads to enquiry and enquiry leads to acquiring.

"Through desire a man, having separated himself, seeketh and intermeddleth with all wisdom."

Proverbs 18:1

A vision is sought for and acquired by man. Everyone through separation seeks his own vision. No one can seek a vision for another person. The prophet,

Habakkuk says:

"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved. And the LORD answered me, and said, Write the vision, and make it plain upon tables, that he may run that readeth it."

Habakkuk 2:1-2

Vision is an individual, persona affair. This is seen in the repeated use of the first person pronoun in the above text. It is not a collective affair. A man who desires a vision, a man who desires wisdom, must necessarily separate himself from every distraction make enquiries from God.

Ascertaining Your Area

Genuine visions are plain, "…make it plain upon the tables…" They clearly state what to do, when to do it, where to do it, and how to go about it.

I have seen a lot of preachers coming up to claim that they have received a vision from God, but when asked what that vision is, they say: "God has sent me to preach the Bible!" This normally amuses me because God can never send an individual to preach the whole Bible!

You are too small to preach the whole Bible. The Bible is loaded with matter. It is loaded with substance. A vision from God will point you to the specific substance you are to preach.

When the Lord called me into ministry, He made the vision plain before me: “Go forth and liberate my people from all oppressions of the devil through the preaching of the word of faith.” This was plain. The job was to liberate the people of God and the tool for this liberation was the word of faith. A vision is a specific task assigned and revealed to an individual by God.

If you are still prowling around, claiming that God has called you to preach the whole Bible, it’s time to change your thinking. Get back to God and ask for your specific assignment.

Visions are plain. This is why great men of God today are identified with specific, clear callings. For one man of

God, it is salvation; for another, it is faith and healing, yet for another, it is prosperity. God is not an author of confusion. When He calls you, He makes your calling plain.

Zeal

A God-given vision always imparts a divine drive in the beneficiary which drives him on to accomplishment. This divine drive is zeal.

Zeal is that inward excitement that pushes you forward to accomplishing your mission. When the zeal of God consumes you, every other factor becomes subsidiary. God cannot call you to a task without giving you the zeal to perform it.

The Time Element

Vision from God always has a time element. Timing is very important in God's programme. There is always the time for take-off. John the Baptist was on a divine mission. It had been said of him, even before he was born, that he was going to prepare the way of the Lord. He knew it but he didn't go about it immediately until he came to the fullness of age. He waited for God's time. The Bible says:

"And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel."

Luke 1:80

Jesus also knew of His mission but He waited for 30 years carrying out menial jobs before finally launching out after receiving John's baptism and the baptism in the Holy Ghost.

The time God calls you to ministry is not necessarily the time for you to step out. Always get God's appointed time and walk in it.

A vision does not become a ministry until it is pursued. The pursuit of a God-given vision is what is called a ministry.

"That he may run that readeth it"

If your vision must be accomplished, you must run. You must pursue it. Every calling of God

culminates in glory but there is a demand to press.

"I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:14

There is of necessity, a pressing on attached to every prize. No press, no prize. Paul had a vision, so he ran, he pressed, and he fought.

So run! Press on! Don't go about minding other people's ministries. God has not called you to be a referee. Referees don't win any prizes! Be least concerned about how others are pursuing their visions. Have a sense of mission to effectively pursue your vision.

Great success is recorded on diligent pursuit. You don't succeed by accident but by a conscious pursuit of your vision – doing what it takes to get to where you are going. Pursue your vision, and receive your crown. You can't get the juice out of an orange without squeezing it. So, press on and obtain your prize.

The vision you will not pursue; you will not fulfill. A vision that will not be realized is one whose challenges you will not rise up to. So get on your feet. Rise up to the challenges of your vision.

A Speaking Forth

A genuine vision speaks at the end:

"For the vision is yet for an

appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry."

Habakkuk 2:3

The source of any vision is made apparent for all to see at the end; it speaks louder than words. If it is God, its good fruit will be made manifest, and everyone will see it. If it is not of God, its bad fruit will also be shown to all.

A vision is like a seed whose full dignity only emerges at the end. At the end, it shall speak by an abundant harvest if well nourished and cared for. a grain of wheat does not become a full corn overnight, it matures in stages

until it is ready for harvest.

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come."

Mark 4:26-29

A vision, like a seed, produces of itself if pursued. The full corn does not appear at once. The source of a vision will not be a hidden secret after its execution. Surely, the vision will speak

and not lie.

Chapter 3 - SECURING A VISION

Vision gives direction to life. God's path for you is in the vision He gives you. Without vision you cannot get your bearings right; so, get your vision, locate your place in God and let the light of God shine on your path. How then do you secure a vision? Do visions fall down from heaven like mangoes from a mango tree? No! Genuine visions come from God; yet, man has a part to play.

A man who seeks a vision has to stretch out his hands to God to receive

it, just like the man who desires the gift of salvation has to step out and confess the Lordship of Jesus. The visionary has to step out and call on the name of the Lord. There is a separation involved. There is an asking involved, be it revelation or salvation, they only come to those who call on His name.

In this chapter, we are going to talk about what this stepping out involves.

Realizing Your Need

What you don't need. God cannot supply. He will only supply all your needs according to His riches in glory (Philippians 4:19). Only a fool will despise the need for a vision because the word of God clearly spells out the consequence for the lack of it.

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."

Proverbs 29:18

Lack of vision can bring ruing to a while generation. It can lead to the destruction of the saints of God. There is need for every believer to have a

vision. It is not God's wish that anyone should perish. He wants everyone to enter into his Canaan and only vision can take one there.

Do you want to enter into your promised land? Do you want to possess your possession? Then you need a genuine vision from God in your life. Vision is the gateway to greatness in the kingdom. Vision makes a man. Let us see what happened to one of our covenant fathers.

All his life, Jacob had been a trickster and a usurper until he met with God at Bethel on his way to Laban. This was the turning point of his life. His personal encounter with usurper was gone. The trickster was

buried. He made a covenant with God and a new life began. He arrived Laban's place without a vision but he had a determination to live right.

However, this was not enough. For fourteen years, he sweated and laboured for the woman he loved. He was cheated and relegated to slavery. At the end of 14 years, he only had two wives and a battalion of children to show for his sweat. No substance, no future.

Then the need arose and with it cam a vision. He remembered his covenant with God. He asked and received a terrific insight into cattle rearing which he promptly put to work. He pursued it and he prospered. The scripture says in

Genesis 30:43 that,

"*And the man increased exceedingly, and had much cattle, and maidservants, and menservants, and camels, and asses.*"

The potential for greatness was in him, but until he saw the need for insight into the ways of God, he never received. Vision brings about positive covenant changes in your life. See the need for it and you are prepared to receive it.

See God's Willingness To Reveal His Plan

God is always willing to reveal His plans. He didn't make His plans for Himself, He made them for you and I. He devised them so that through them, we can arise as stars and bring about the re-establishment of His kingdom on earth. I used the word "re-establishment" because Adam transferred the dominion of the earth to Satan at the fall.

God is eager to see the re-establishment of His power and authority on earth. This is why His

eagerness to reveal His plans to you knows no limit.

"…I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go."

Isaiah 48:17

God has taken upon Himself the responsibility to lead you into your destiny. How does He do this? By revealing His plans, and by showing you your own little portion in His master plan for your life. It was specially designed for you, so go for it. God is eager, don't you waver. He is just waiting for that moment when you will step out to receive it from Him.

Seek God In Prayer

Prayer draws the hand of God in a situation. It is the link that connects man to the throne room of God. If you want to know the ways of God in any situation, you must pray. You must ask Him.

The man Daniel was a man of visions and revelations. He was also a man of prayer. He received his vision and revelation through the instrumentality of prayer. A time came when he discovered the set time for the captivity of Israel. He then took it upon himself to seek the face of God in prayer concerning the restoration of

Jerusalem. He prayed and God released His plans to him in a vision (see Daniel 9).

God only reveals His plans to those who ask Him. If you will not ask, you will not receive. Prayer is a means of receiving God's plans. Speaking through the prophet Jeremiah, God said:

"Call unto me, and I will answer thee, and show thee great and mighty things, which thou knowest not."

Jeremiah 33:3

Every showing, every vision from God must be preceded by a calling. No calling, no showing. The word "shew" talks about revelation. This is revelation of what has to do with you

as contained in God's plan.

This can only come to your through prayer. This call is resounded all over the scriptures. God has been saying it, in case you have not heard; He is saying it over and over again. "Call on me, ask of me" e.t.c. So, ask and receive so that your joy may be full.

Be Watchful

Visions are received during watchful moments. You make yourself available to receive God's plan through watching. The prophet Habakkuk said:

"I will stand upon my watch, and set me upon the tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer when I am reproved."

Habakkuk 2:1

Watching and praying are two different things. Prayer is calling upon God, while watching is conditioning your spirit man to receive from God. It involves getting your spirit man linked

with heaven in order to receive heaven's signals. It is not praying. The two go hand in hand. The prophet, Habakkuk, prayed to God, then set himself to watch and see what God would say. He had to quit praying, he was now watching.

Most people who talk about having received God's plan did so in moments of watchfulness. God's plan could be revealed to you at any time – while going about your daily affairs, or at the wheel of a car driving e.t.c. As long as your spiritman is tuned to receiving from God, His glorious plan will drop into it. The light comes – light so real and vivid, you cannot deny it.

The vision for this ministry was

received through watchfulness. It happened when I had a budging to visit some old friends of mine. I got to their house only to discover that they had moved. I wasn't happy to have come all that way in vain. As I turned to go back, the Holy Ghost said to me: *"All things work together to the advantage of them that love the Lord."*

It was a flash into my spirit man. A flash so sweet, it made me relax. I could have missed it if I were not watchful. It flashed and I caught it. That word was undoubtedly from God. I had never heard the interpretation of that verse all my life. "All things work together to the advantage…" (Romans 8:28). It was clearly and vividly put. I

repeated it and told myself that the situation was to my advantage and watched for further instructions which came shortly.

The Holy Ghost told me to go to a quiet place for a private discussion with Him. So, I checked into a hotel, knelt down and did not move for 18 hours. The vision for this ministry was received during hose watchful hours.

Being watchful is very important if you want to receive from God: you may pray all you want, but if you are not watchful, you will miss your vision. Very often, spiritual truths are sent forth as tiny seeds that can be ignored if one is not watchful. So, watch and lay hold on God’s plan for

your life.

Chapter 4 - PROVING THE VISION

A vision that is not proved is not a vision to be pursued. A word not tested is not a word to be relied upon. There is a path God has prepared for everyone born of Him. He forbids anyone turning from his path either to the right or to the left.

Your success in life depends on how well you keep to this path. When you stay away from the path of God, you are always to blame. Beloved, the blame is always yours.

God holds you responsible. The

devil may have beguiled you. People may have pushed you on; but the blame is always yours. Why? because you have authority over the devil. You have authority over all external influences. The devil beguiled Eve through his subtlety, but Eve was punished. This calls for caution in our eagerness to hear words or revelations from people.

I have seen believers lured away from their calling all because they received a word from someone. Before you star running with your vision, before you start running with any word you receive, subject it to an examination. Check out on its accuracy. Sieve off the unwanted elements and hold on to the substance.

The word of God had to be tried, not once, but seven times.

"The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times."

Psalm 12:6

If the word of God could be subjected to testing, then every vision or revelation must be properly scrutinized. God has sounded the instruction:

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

Proverbs 14:12

Do you know that the devil himself can appear as an angel of light? Don't go running with just anything you

receive. Prove it first. How do you determine the accuracy of your vision?

The Tool For Proving

God’s word is the only authentic tool for proving a vision. When you receive a vision, illuminate your spirit in God’s word for a backing, before you step out. by so doing, you have the double assurance that it is from God because God will only back up what He says.

A young pastor was praying one day in his house when the word came: “You are the Elijah who is to come before the saviour comes back.”It seemed so good and real, and he was excited. Then the thought came that he should get a scriptural backing for the revelation. He went into God’s word

and he got to the place where Jesus told His disciples that Elijah had already come in the person of John the Baptist.

He went to his pastor for more illumination and he was told the same thing. Then he knew that the vision he had received was not from God. The devil knows the scriptures and quotes them to confuse you.

Jesus, the son of God, was faced with this trick of the devil on the mountain of temptation. The devil quoted scriptures to Him, but He was not moved. He has the right scriptures to set him on the run.

Before pursuing any revelation, first get into the word of God for proofs. Compare scripture with

scripture and unravel the truth behind the vision.

Identify The Personality Behind The Voice

The atmosphere is full of voices. Since visions involve some form of communication or the other, it becomes necessary to ascertain the personality behind the voice you have heard.

Not all voices are God's voice. There is the authentic voice of God, there is the voice of your spiritman, and there is the voice of the devil. Only one of them is reliable and dependable, and that is the voice of God.

I once heard something and I

though it was from God. The Lord questioned me about it and I reminded Him that that was what He said, but He told me, “No, that was the voice of your spiritman, you heard yourself.”

The voice of your spiritman is not absolutely reliable. It may be biased because it might have some element of carnality in it. This is where you must watch it. You might be able to detect the devil’s voice easily, but your own voice is not that easily exposed. Why? The ways of a man always seem right in his own eyes. So your voice, to you, always seems to be saying the correct thing. The way that seems right to you is the way of your own voice.

On his way to Damascus, Saul

(Paul) and his team were struck by the power of God. The voice of the Lord came to him, he identified it and asked:

"Who art thou, Lord?"

Acts 9:5

The others heard the voice, but they had no idea who was speaking. It is important that you identify the voice behind your vision, and you will not be led into error.

Ascertain The Content Of Your Vision

The content of every vision has to be ascertained. Get a good understanding of the content of your vision before you start to run with it. God has no pleasure in your confusion. He is excited at your having direction. Get back to Him with your vision asking for further illumination on each content. As you engage yourself with Him, He will sort everything out. Learn to ask God for complete illumination into your vision. His assurance and further revelation will give you the courage to run with

effectiveness.

Commit your vision and revelation to God in prayer. The prayer force involved here is a prayer of commitment. The word of God says:

"Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass."

Psalm 37:5

After I was called into ministry, I needed some clarification so I took the matter to God. I asked, "Lord, are you asking me to start an independent ministry or to serve under an existing one?" I threw the matter to God. All I wanted was His will. I committed my ways to Him and relaxed. Then the answer came. I was to start off a new

ministry.

A time came when we were to set up the operations headquarters of the ministry, Ilorin looked very attractive. As far as I was concerned, it was the ideal spot. My wife and I, however, committed the matter to God. We threw it open to him, ready to obey whatever he would say. And the Lord spoke, He said, “Arise, go to Damascus.”

The Lord made it plain that Damascus stood for Kaduna – the city of persecution. Coming here, therefore, to witness Islamic uprisings was no news to me. I was well acquainted with my role in it. No force on earth could stop me from playing my part because

this was what I was anointed for. God's voice helps you to operate under an extraordinary confidence.

Friends, be inquisitive about your visions. Ask him about everything up to the minutest detail. Get him to give you a good understanding of the content of the vision before you step out. When Moses was called to go and deliver Israel from Egypt, he asked all manner of questions. There was no question he asked for proofs, and ne got them. He asked for a mouth and he got one. Moses got a better understanding of his mission and how to go about it by asking God questions.

So ask that you may receive direction. The prayer of enquiry is the

prayer that offers direction. This is a major tool for determining direction in life.

You need God's direction in every venture you are embarking upon. Ask Him for direction by committing your ways to Him and He will direct your path. He knows the end from the beginning and before Him all things lay bare. You don't do greater exploits than how accurate the content of your vision is. God's voice offers strength and His strength leads to exploits.

Things To Guard Against

There are, however, certain things you should guard against:

Fleeces

One of them is asking for direction with fleeces. What does this mean? This means saying something like this: “Father, if I go to see my pastor and the first thing he tells me is “Jesus loves you,” then I know you have called me to work under him.” You cannot use this method to get clarification on your

vision. The word of God says that as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Not as many as are led by fleeces.

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Romans 8:14

You may argue that Gedeon did this and it worked for him. Yes, but Gideon was under the old covenant and under this covenant, they had no indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. You are of the new covenant and have the Spirit of God in you. He is there to lead you so ask him for illumination.

In the next chapter, we shall talk more on the Holy Spirit and His role in

visions.

People's Confirmation

Another thing you should guard against is people's confirmation. This is not wrong in itself. God can use people to help you but a lot of them will end up leading you to confusion. When I received my vision to go into ministry, I told a great man of God about it. He opened his mouth and told me that God had not called me! If I had not heard God clearly, this would have sent me off the track. But I heard God and I struck to my calling.

Nehemiah could not have

succeeded in his mission if he had revealed it to people for confirmation. He did the surveys by himself and gave the people information on what they were to do. If he had asked for their advice, he would have been led off his path.

Look unto God alone, and He will verify your vision for you. There was a time that I though a successful ministry was only possible in America. I decided to start off the ministry there. I was looking to America instead of God, and He told me “son, you have two eyes; can you make one look up and the other look down at the same time?” I wondered what he meant, so I tried it and I couldn’t. Then the message sank

in. I can’t look to God and America at the same time. Successful ministries are founded in God not in America.

Beloved, look up to God and hear his voice. He alone is able to lead you in the path He has chosen for you.

The Acid Test For A Genuine Vision

As earlier mentioned, God has commanded to *"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good"* (I Thessalonians 5:21). *"All things"* include visions. This signifies that not all visions are true!

We are also told that there are two voices clamouring for man's attention: the voice of the Shepherd and that of the stranger.

"And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know

his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers."

John 10:4-5

Because there are voices, there must be a way of knowing which one is genuine and which is counterfeit. Here is the simple proof.

The word declared:

"I will hear what God the LORD will speak: for he will speak peace unto his people, and to his saints: but let them not turn again to folly."

Psalm 85:8

PEACE is the proof of a genuine vision!

When God, the good Shepherd leads, He always leads beside the still

waters. Still waters connote peace and rest. If a vision then is truly of God, it will be accompanies with peace in the heart. This is the authentic proof that the vision is from God (the author of peace and concord).

Whenever the peace of God eludes a believer in the pursuit of a "purported" vision, there is need to check it. This is the simple reason: Except God is actually involved, no vision can be accomplished. In Zechariah 4:6, it is stated, regarding the vision of Zerubbabel:

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."

This is reiterated in Psalm 127:1, *"Except the LORD build the house*,

they labour in vain that build it." What more shall we say? "*For by strength shall no man prevail"* (I Samuel 2:9). The Master Himself concludes it with a seal of finality thus:

"…without me ye can do nothing." John 15:5

It is clearly evident from all the above scriptures that every vision requires the direct involvement and intervention of God to be accomplished and fulfilled.

We are told that, "*Faithful is he that calleth you who also will do it"* (I Thessalonians 5:24). In the final analysis, it is God who works in the vessel to accomplish the vision He gives. "*It is God which worketh in you*

both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Philippians 2:13). However, if God must work in man, man must necessarily be at rest. We have this blessed assurance in the Word that we need not be otherwise for "The Lord will fight for you (while) you hold your peace" (Exodus 14:14).

If God must take over, man must hold his peace. God does not take over our battles and pursuits until we hold our peace. You may ask, "But why?" Because He does not share His glory with anyone.

"My glory will I not share with any one"

Isaiah 42:8

Also, "That no flesh might glory in

his presence" And more importantly, "Be still and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth" (Psalm 46:10).

This is the truth: Until you are at REST, God cannot be at work. If you must see God at work then you have to be rest. This is the secret behind the peace that attends all heaven-borne visions. With peace in your heart, triumph in your pursuit in guaranteed.

Chapter 5 - SPIRITUAL SENSITIVITY

The believer who will matter this end-time is he who is led by the Holy Spirit. The sons of God, the stars of God, are those led by God, not those who stay in church; they are not those who preach 24 hours a day either.

The Bible says that the world is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God. So, we want to know who those sons are. God's word proclaims:

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God."

John 1:12

This means that when you receive Jesus, you only receive the power to become a son. You are just a child. The Bible also says that an heir is no different from a servant, while he remains a child.

"Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all."

Galatians 4:1

This means that you cannot enter into your inheritance in God until you become a son. Of course, it is your right to be on the throne; but the throne is not for children! The Bible says "*woe unto you when your king is a child*" (Ecclesiastes 10:16).

Listen, your rightful position can never be yours except you outgrow your childhood. Only sons can ascend thrones. Thrones are for sons not for children. The subject of sensitivity to the spirit therefore, is crucial to our achievement of success, because the Bible classifies sons of God as those led by the Spirit of God. Only those led by the Spirit can ascend their thrones.

An eight year old child who is declared king only carries the title. He cannot make decisions. So you can only enter into the place God has for you when you outgrow childhood to sonship.

At new birth, the power to be sensitive to the Spirit is deposited in

you. You are a candidate for spiritual sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. It is your birthright to be led by the Spirit of God. Until you appropriate this right, you cannot become a son. It is your birthright to be able to hear the Holy Spirit talk to you on life's issues.

The Holy Spirit is also the principal tool for effectual analysis of your vision. He tells you what is wrong from what you claim is right. He tells you what interpretation is faulty. He is the chief executive for analysis of vision. Your sensitivity to Him determines how accurate the analysis of your vision will be. The Bible says:

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me."

John 10:27

If you are born of God, you are expected to hear His voice, and His voice is the voice of the Holy Ghost. Children don't have to go to school to learn their parent's language. The greatest dummy in the world naturally understands his mother tongue. God says, I know you. You are mine, and you know my voice; my voice is clear to you.

The ability to hear God's voice does not belong to ministers alone. Everyone born of God has that ability in Him. The day you were born again, there was a spiritual turning that took place. This is what gives you the capacity to understand God's voice.

Hearing God's voice is not a gift but a birthright.

The men who have attained great heights in Christ today are known for their super-sensitivity of the Holy Spirit. They are men of honour and dignity because they are working in the plans of God.

Do you know the secret behind the success of the ministry of Jesus? This is it. He said it Himself:

"I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge."

John 5:30

As he heard, He acted, he moved. He was in constant communion with God. When He was told about the sickness and eventual death of Lazarus,

He didn’t go running down there. He waited to hear from the Father before moving. You too can hear. Your ears are created to be hearing ears – capable of hearing the voice of the Holy Spirit.

A time came when the great man of God, Elijah, was stranded, the great man of Mount Carmel cried unto God to take his life. He waited for God to answer Him and God did. God spoke to him telling him what to do. He heard and this took him to other phase of ministry. Elijah came to his weak point and God’s voice paved a way for him. The voice of God came, offered direction and established his office (1 Kings 19:11-18).

Today, those who sweat in ministry

are those who are deaf to the Holy Spirit. They do what is right in their own sight, and not what God tells them to do. It is very crucial that you be sensitive enough to receive from God when He speaks.

Below are a few ways you can enhance your sensitivity to the Holy Ghost.

Importance Of Quietness

There is a notable thing in the experience of Elijah. There was an earthquake, a very wild wind, and then a fire, but God's voice was not heard in them. When it finally came, it was a still, small voice. The word "still" is worthy of note. There is no way you can receive signals from heaven without the practise of quietness. The word of God says that God's voice is behind.

"And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it…"

Isaiah 30:21

If God's voice comes from behind, then you need to be very quiet to hear it. Except you are in the practise of quietness, you cannot understand the mystery of receiving from God. Practise quietness on your inside and outside. The Holy Spirit is always there to instruct you. He never goes on break. Get quiet and receive instructions from Him daily. God's word will drop on you when you are quiet.

You cannot afford to be deaf to the leading of the Holy Spirit. Stop rushing around doing things. Maintain quietness in your spiritman and also around you and the mysteries of God will drop in on you.

Worship

Worship is adoration. It is bowing down at the feet of God hallowing His name. You are laying down your crown before Him. When you do this, you are ready to receive from Him. If you want to increase your hearing ability, you must learn to worship Him. When you worship God, you receive revelations.

"But now bring me a minstrel. And it came to pass, when the minstrel played, that the hand of the LORD came upon him. And he said, Thus saith the LORD, Make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the LORD, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye

see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts."

2 Kings 3:15-17

As the minstrel played on the instrument and the heart of Elisha rose up to God in worship, the word of the Lord came unto him.

A lot of ministers around the world today do this. They ask for a tune to be struck on the organ while ministering to the afflicted. Normally, it is a soft tune that goes on an on. This enhances their sensitivity to instruction from the Holy Ghost.

The Psalms and Hymns are very good tools for worship. I have noticed that I feel armed with super confidence

anytime I enter into a deep realm of worship in palms and hymns.

Meekness

This is coming to God on the platform of nothingness. It means coming to God devoid of all your so called knowledge. Coming to God empty with the understanding that only He can full you up. God's word says:

"The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek will he teach his way"

Psalms 25:9

God says put away your ideas and receive my instruction with meekness. When you do, you will possess the earth because only the meek will possess the earth. If you want to

possess the earth, you must embrace meekness.

Meekness leads to obedience, and obedience leads to possession. Don't be too wise for God to instruct. Don't be like King Ahab who was too wise, too full of himself for God to instruct, make yourself a Jehoshaphat instead. Respect God's instructions and obey promptly. As you obey promptly, you will receive more instructions. There is no way the Holy Spirit will continue to give you instructions if you have not obeyed the previous ones.

Ahab had no respect for God's word. He had never carried out any of God's instructions. When Elisha was called upon to give King Ahab and

King Jehoshaphat a word from God, Elisha the prophet said,

"…were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee."

2 Kings 3:14

Jehoshaphat always listened to and obeyed the word of God. No wonder he prospered.

When you follow all these "hearing aids" listed above, your sensitivity to the Holy Spirit will be heightened. You will flow in the realm of revelations. Your sonship will be sealed, and you will start to manifest your position in Christ Jesus.

Chapter 6 - THE PLACE OF PLANNING

No venture producers without planning. You may have all the materials required for a building project. However, it takes planning to put up the building. Every physical structure requires planning to be in position. Your vision is a kind of building and it calls for planning to have it fulfilled.

Apostle Paul referred to his vision/assignment and service as a construction venture: He said:

"According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise

master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon."

1 Corinthians 3:10

This implies that whatever calling we may have is one form of contribution to the kingdom or another. It is a form of building. We are all called to build on the foundation which Christ has laid! And just as in any construction task, planning is most pertinent; so it is with the pursuit of any vision.

Planning is not optional but obligatory for any vision that will thrive. It takes planning to excel in life. Excellence is a product of good

planning. It is written about Jotham:

"So Jotham became mighty because he prepared (planned) his ways before the Lord his God"

2 Chronicles 27:6

Unfortunately, a great number of the charismatics have undermined the place of planning in the name of being led by the spirit. While it is true that we are to be led by the Spirit, it is equally true that whatever the Word commands is the Spirit's command also. The Scripture says:

"…. There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one."

I John 5:7

Again, Jesus said:

“….the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

John 6:63

Therefore, if God in His Word commands that we plan, the Holy Spirit cannot lead us to despise planning.

God Himself, when He had the vision to create this world, engaged the weapon of planning to make His vision a reality. The Bible says:

“The Lord by wisdom (which is reflected in planning, being the principle ingredient of planning) hath founded the earth; by understanding hath he established the heavens.”

Proverbs 3:19

Again, we are told in the Psalms;

“O Lord, how manifolds are they works! In wisdom hast thou made them all: the earth is full of thy riches.”

Psalm 104:24

The world we see today is the proof of God’s vision, which was activated by wisdom, made manifest by quality planning. All creation in their perfect order is an evidence of wisdom at work. There has never been a need to revert His creation. Truly, wisdom produces perfection.

A VISIONARY IS A BUILDER

It is written:

"Through wisdom is an house builded; and by understanding it is established: and by knowledge; shall the chambers be filled with all precious and pleasant riches."

Proverbs 24:3-4

As earlier stated, it takes planning to build. The quality of the planning determines the quality of the final outcome. The Living Bible brings the truth of Proverbs 24:3-4 out much more beautifully.

It states,

“any enterprise is built by wise planning, becomes strong through common sense, and profits wonderfully, by keeping abreast of the facts.”

This is a very exciting translation. The subjects of this translation include:

“Any enterprise” – every area of human endeavour all callings.

“Is build by wise planning” – this implies that wise planning is required to accomplish every given task.

“Becomes strong through common sense” – application of all forms of acquired knowledge.

“Profits wonderfully by keeping abreast of the facts” – there are related

facts to every given task. There are, for instance, facts about driving, which includes a working knowledge of the gear system, the steering wheel. The brakes, accelerator, clutch system, the lighting system, etc.

If one is called to preach the gospel, it becomes relevant in his planning to know what message he is called to preach.

“The voice said, Cry. And he said, what shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field.”

Isaiah 40:6

A messenger without a message will never have impact. If anything, he will only end up a frustrated

confusionist.

One of the foremost facts required for a successful preaching ministry is to know what message you have been commissioned to preach.

The next very important fact is to know where you are sent – the city and people you are sent to. When Jesus sent His disciples out, He told where to go

“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, go not into the way of the Gentiles and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

Matthew 10:5-6

When God called Jonah to go to Nineveh and he headed for Tarshish

instead, he paid dearly for it.

We have defined vision as a divine plan, hence divine (scriptural) facts are required to accomplish it.

God sent Apostle Paul to the Gentiles. He had a very profound ministry to them. All the humiliations he suffered were inflicted on him in Jerusalem. Why? God did not send him to the Jews! In Acts 20:22, he said:

“And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there.”

And you know that whenever the Spirit of the Lord is (leasing), there is liberty. Paul had no liberty in his spirit to go to Jerusalem, because God had not sent him there. God has a place of

effect for the vision He has given you. It has to be located.

Chapter 7 - THE APPOINTED TIME

An understanding of God's time schedule puts you in the centre of God's programme. Every vision from God has a divinely appointed time. The time you receive a call may not necessarily be the time for its take off. Don't forget our text in Habakkuk:

"For the vision is yet for an appointed time…"

Habakkuk 2:3

The vision is yet for an appointed time. The word "yet" means the vision is not for now. the prophet Habakkuk

sought a vision, and he received it; but the Lord told him, “don’t expect what I have told you to happen now. it will surely happen, but its time is yet to come.”

All visions have their appointed time. The timing is determined by God and God alone. God’s time is the time of safety. God’s time is the time of miraculous (divine) provisions. It is the time of favours for accomplishment. God’s time is the time when He by Himself goes before you to make the crooked places straight.

An understanding of this time schedule is a sign of maturity. Children hear things and want them immediately. They keep on pestering

their parents until they wear them out. But maturity is having an understanding of all the intricacies involved in whatever you have heard. When understanding comes, caution is exercised, and a lot of sweat is avoided. Maturity calls for working in the centre of God's programme for your life, according to His timing.

There is always a time for the showing up of every calling of God. John the Baptist had to remain in the desert until the time of his showing to Israel.

"And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, and was in the deserts till the day of his shewing unto Israel."

Luke 1:80

If he had stepped out a day before that time, he would have wrecked his mission.

Jesus spent 30 years at the carpenters shed. The Son of God was carrying wood and mending broken tables and chairs for 30 years! He knew who He was right from the beginning. He knew His mission. He voiced it out at the age of 12.

"…Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

Luke 2:49

But He waited for His appointed time. He heard John preaching the gospel of repentance, but He didn't rush out to start off His ministry. He

exercised caution. He waited. He humbled Himself, then the heavens opened. The beginning of His ministry was declared and He came to Cana in Galilee. The wine ran out at the marriage feast and Mary, His mother, asked Him to intervene. He made a statement that everyone should bear in mind. He said:

"Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come."

John 2:4

Timing is very important in the pursuit of any vision. When you miss the right timing, you will fall on your back. After the Lord called me into ministry, I didn't step out for months.

A time came when I began to sense

it was time to step out. I decided to go to God, hoping to hear His marching order. I can be very slow, but when I get it, that ends it. I shout of like a rocket! I separated myself to ask for His timing. I called upon Him in prayer. When I opened my eyes after hours of praying, I saw a bright light in the room. It was as if heaven's musical gadgets were turned on to release heaven's music. The sound I heard which flooded the room was, "Be in time, be in time."

This brought tears to my eyes and I found myself weeping. God had sounded it. The time was ripe. Everything was set. I left there with a commissioning programme set in my

mind. I knew who was to do the sending forth. It was a pastor I had never met in my life. I got the name of his ministry and his address and wrote to him. he wrote back begging to be excused because he had other engagements lined up in Port Harcourt, Nigeria on the same day as my commissioning date.

Unperturbed, I wrote back, telling him that the Lord said that his Port Harcourt meeting was his own personal meeting, but that my commissioning ceremony was the Lord's. I had just sent my letter when I received another from him saying that the Lord had instructed him to put off the Port Harcourt meeting to be at the

commissioning! We met for the first time at the ceremony, but the Lord had His way.

"*For the vision is for an appointed time.*" There is an appointed time for take-off. There is an appointed time for move from one phase to another. There is an appointed time to be at a particular place. God is a perfect planner , He has time for everything He has ordained.

There is an appointed time for the rain and another for the moon and the stars. There is a time for rain and another for sunshine. There is an appointed time for everything.

"to everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the

heaven."

Ecclesiastes 3:1

In 1985, I thought the Lord wanted me to reach out to different cities in the country with the Word. I mapped out a plan and pasted it on my board.

One day, I looked at it, feeling quite pleased with myself. Then the Lord spoke: "Take off that plan from the board." When I asked why, He replied: "This is not my plan for you for now. I want you to do further digging in this place where you are. It is time for you to get your root deeper into the land and bear more fruit. When it is time for you to reach our I will let you know."

I removed the plan from the board

and asked for another plan for the year. He gave me a growth plan, through a sound teaching of the Word. And in 1986, we had a 91% increase.

"For the vision is for an appointed time."

Every phase in ministry has its timing. If you miss out on the timing, you miss out on God. And when God is not with you, sweat results. It appears as if you were not called by God.

As a minister of God, fix your programme in accordance with God's timing. Don't go rushing off to just anywhere you are invited to.

A call came to Jesus, to come to Bethany to heal Lazarus who was sick. The call was from His loved ones, yet,

He stayed back, waiting for divine instructions. The word came only after Lazarus had died and was buried. He went at God's appointed time, and the glory of God was manifested. The anointing follows God's timing. God's power follows God's programme.

God is very particular about your working in His schedule. The vision is for an appointed time and all times are appointed by God. When it was time for this ministry to open up a branch in Lagos, the Lord spoke to me one early morning as I was worshiping at His feet, He said: "Arise, go to Lagos and raise Me a people." That same day, I dispatched my staff to Lagos to get a location.

When God speaks, the anointing for breakthroughs follows. Without sweat, we found a suitable location for the church and offices. We also got residential houses nearby for the pastor and other staff – all at giveaway prices.

Lagos is one of the most diffucl places in the world to secure an accommodation. But working in God's timing reduces tension. It produces instant results. Working in God's timing is the only way to guarantee success in life and ministry. There is a place to preach per time. There is a word fro each place. Don't go rushing everywhere just because others are doing it and are successful. You must respond to the time nudging of the

Holy Spirit.

If you are not sure of His timing, ask Him and He will tell you. You are a soldier in the army of God, don't go marching at your own orders. Wait for the Captain of the Hosts to give His orders and then follow. Listen for His matching orders before you move. Obeying God's timing leads to sweatless triumph.

Joshua experienced this at the fall of the city of Jericho. He obeyed God's marching orders and the city of Jericho fell.

"So the people shouted when the priests blew with the triumpets and it came to pass, when the people heard the sound of the triupet, and the

people shouted with a great shout, that the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they took the city."

Joshua 6:20

If he told the people that there was no point marching around the city seven times on the seventh day, and that they should do it only one, they would have faced the greatest defeat in history. Not being obedient to God's timing may put a seal upon your doom.

Learn from King Saul. The set time for him to wait for Samuel to come and offer sacrifice to God was seven days. Saul waited till the seventh day and lost his patience. He couldn't wait for

the day to end, to see if Samuel would come or not. He decided to offer the sacrifice. And as soon as he was through with it, Samuel arrived.

"And Samuel said unto Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which He commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever."

1 Samuel 13:13

Saul's impatience put an end to his reign. Don't be like Saul. Avoid haste. Listen for God's marching orders, adhere strictly to them and you will prosper.

Chapter 8 - THE APPOINTED PLACE

Every vision given by God carries a divine commission and there is a physical location where that commission can be carried out. Every commission has a location, a base from which its affairs are run.

It is true that God is the God of the whole earth, but there is a portion of the earth He has set aside for you. God's miracle, supplies and encounters will only meet you when you are in His chosen location. Every commission has a base and until you locate your base

you will continue to struggle. Always get your location from God or you will continue to wallow in sweat and poverty.

Remember Jonah. God sent him to Nineveh, but he decided to go to Tarshish. For punishment, he found himself in the belly of a fish. He languished there for three days and three nights. When he came to his senses, he was vomited on the shore.

"and the Lord spoke unto the fish, and it committed Jonah upon the dry land."

Jonah 2:10

Know that God always thinks good of you. Where He sends you to must be considered as the best place for you. He

must have seen a need there for which He has equipped you to meet.

There was every reason on this earth for me to refuse to go to Kaduna when God gave the word. I knew it to be an Islamic stronghold. I knew it to be the “mafia” headquarters. I knew all these, but I was not moved. Only one point was constant in my mind: god has sent me there, so no devil can be against me.

In the final analysis, this is the only thing that matters in the choice of a location. Has God sent you there? If you can answer this question with all sincerity in the affirmative, then you can go ahead.

God is concerned about location.

That is why when you analyze your vision, you must take not of the subject of location. This is one of the things you must be very precise about in detailing out your vision. Get the precise location for your vision from God. Covenant walk always has a divinely appointed place.

The rate of success in any location is determined by the degree of location precision. When God sends you to any location, He goes before you to straighten out all the crooked places.

"I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron."

Isaiah 45:2

He makes His supplies and provision ready for you. He prepares the people to receive you. In a location where others have failed and are withdrawing, you come out with resounding success.

Where God says “Go” is where your prominence will rise. If God says move to Katsina, and you remain in Lagos, you will die of hunger and thirst. Lagos may be a land flowing with milk and honey, but they will not flow in your direction. The place may be filled with your relatives and friends, but God will not lead any one of them to help you.

When God strikes a covenant, it has a particular location where it will

work; so get up, leave your people and go on to the land "*I will show you.*"

"Now, the Lord had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country and from they kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee."

Tracing the life of the covenant fathers, you will notice that anytime they left God's location, they fell victim of one thing or the other. When you go to a location appointed by God, your success is guaranteed, your protection is sealed, because that is where the angels of God will ascend and descend, attending to you.

When I moved to Kaduna, discouragement tried to set in from

people, but I was not moved by any of them. I knew it was God's city for me. So when asked what I thought of doing in such a place, I would reply: "To take the city." They would then say: "Look Brother David, this city is impossible to take."

If you make too much noise, you face being driven out by the Islamic vandals." This motivated me to make all the noise I could. I was ready for anything.

A day came and some men were shown into my office. One of them said, "We have an order for you to move your church from here within seven days. It is a residential area." I stood up from my seat, looked the man

straight in the eye and said with authority, “Are your mosques in the bush? All of you involved in this plot will be dead in seven days.”

The cigarette fell down from his mouth. He was shaking so much; he could hardly pick it up and find the door. He got to the road and came back begging. “Please sir, I was sent. I am only a messenger.” That was the end of the matter!

God fights for you in your location. He sets His angels there to fight on your behalf and every pronouncement you make is brought to pass.

Apostle Paul was commissioned to go preach the gospel to the Gentiles. His location was the cities of the

Gentiles as directed by the Holy Spirit per time. You will notice that each time he went to Jerusalem, he was arrested. Jerusalem was his own city, but he had no success there. Your location could be a place, a person or a mission. Each one constitutes a location.

The day you receive a ministry from God, you become a ministry gift. A ministry gift sent forth by God has a location, he has an address. When God calls you to pioneer a work, He will also give you a location. That location is your place.

If He calls you to serve under a ministry, then that person is your place. To the disciples, Jesus was their place.

He determined what they did at every point in time. When serving under a ministry gift therefore, he determines what you do.

Often times, people of God are sent to an existing ministry for training. You don't go there to determine what you do. This is where humility comes in. if you are not given an independent ministry, you will need to go through a private school of humility in that ministry where you are sent.

If a mission is your location, that mission determines your location and what you do from time to time and from place to place.

Your location is very important, so get it from God and get your

satisfaction. Satisfaction only results when you are in your proper location. Before you move, understand where you are heading to. Don’t let pride decide your location. If it is, you will end up in a pit. Let your location be by God’s direction alone, and your satisfaction, upliftment and future will be guaranteed.

Chapter 9 - THE PURSUIT OF VISION

There is a physical law that stipulates, “All objects assume a state of rest until a force is applied to it.” The same goes for the spiritual. Nothing will happen to a situation, desire, or vision that you do nothing about.

For instance, I heard the gospel over and again, but until I stepped out to ACT on what is required, that is, to repent of my sins and accept Jesus Christ as my Lord, I was not saved.

Faith is dead without action. Positive action is the only authentic

evidence of faith. Apostle James said,

"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."

James 2:14-18

"I will shew you my faith by my

works!” Men of action are men of exploits. The Bible is loaded with demands for action.

“And it shall come to pass, if thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD thy God, to observe and to do all his commandments which I command thee this day, that the LORD thy God will set thee on high above all nations of the earth:”

Deuteronomy 28:1

It says, If you will hearken diligently to the voice of the Lord your God (which includes vision) to observe (analyze and appreciate) and to do (act upon) all his commandments, then, He will ensure your lifting: He will set you “on high above all nations of the

earth.”

Action is the proof of faith. If you believe in the vision, act it out! Step out to prove that you believe in it.

No matter how great a farmer’s dream for a prize winning harvest, if he would not take a farm land, secure implementations to clear the land, plough, hoe, ridge, and sow seeds of desired crops, his dream will have no proof at the end of the day. His fantastic vision will follow him to the grace if he does nothing about it. Vision without pursuit is mere wishes. Someone once said, “if wishes were horses, even beggars will ride.”

Action is the word. No action, no accomplishment. Actors are winners,

and winners are kings. Yes, great is your vision, but equally great must be your drives, or your great vision will lead to great frustration. No reason should be strong enough for your inaction. Those who do nothing towards their goal, groan at the end. The Bible says,

"The sluggard will not plow by reason of the cold; therefore shall he beg in harvest, and have nothing."

Proverbs 20:4

There is no challenge-free track on earth. Whatever reason will not let you take steps in the direction of your vision will ultimately rob you of fulfillment.

For every vision, there is provision.

God will not reveal a plan without the resources to match. This is why I believe that every vision a man has received of the Lord, He has within Himself what it takes to accomplish it. God's commandments are not grievous. He will not send a man on an impossible mission.

This is why He said,

"…Write the vision, and make it plain"

Habakkuk 2:2

I have shown you what to do, and you have received of Me what it takes to do it, so un! Run!! Run!!! Move! Move!! Move!!! Take steps, it is within your reach.

Your Gift

A man is worth nothing except by virtue of what he has received from above. God makes the man because it is the gift of God in him that makes him.

"A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men."

Proverbs 18:16

What makes it the gift of God? It is neither the strength nor the smartness of a man but the gift of God.

The task you are called upon to undertake is spiritual. The gifts therefore are spiritual. Your spiritual

gifts set in motion spiritual forces, which create a way for you.

As you embark upon God's plan and purpose for your life, trust not in yourself. Whatever he has called you to do will be accomplished by His gift. God's callings are forever associated with His gifts. You know something? The gifts and callings of God are not taken back from you. God gives and does not withdraw.

"For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance"

Romans 11:29

When God calls, He endows you with what it takes to stand in that office. Remember Gideon. He called himself the least of the least.

But God said this is why I have chosen you so you don't rely on your own strength. There is a strength that is needed to accomplish a calling and God is the supplier of it. You cannot do what God has assigned to you with your own strength. Look unto Him and believe Him for His strength, and then His gift will go into operation to produce the needed results. In the final analysis, God makes the man and the ministry.

"…it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy."

Romans 9:16

So you can say like the Apostle Paul, "I am what I am by the grace of

God.” What makes a man is the grace of God. The grace of God is a free gift. It is unmerited favour from God. You don’t qualify for it. God’s strength is made perfect in weakness. When you are weak in your own self, then you are strong in God.

In the callings and elections of God, your human qualifications are your disqualifications, and your natural disqualifications are what qualify you. He chooses the base things, the weak things, those without reputation and He makes them.

“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath

chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."

I Corinthians 1:26-29

I was the least qualified for a preaching ministry in my eyes and in the eyes of the world, because I was very slow-tongued. Now, the situation has changed. God's enablement makes the difference. People sometimes complain that I speak too fast.

In his own eyes, Moses was the least qualified, but God knew that no matter how qualified he was naturally, he would fail in his assignment. So God told Moses, “I am your qualification. Go in my name and in my might, and get your job done.”

God is your qualification, without Him, you can do nothing. Battles are won by the grace of God. Feats are accomplished not by power nor by might, but by the spirit of God. Each time Samson fought and won, it was always precede with the phrase, “and the spirit of God came upon him.” Samson did not pay anything to get in. In fact, he did all he could to lose it through promiscuous living. The only

time he failed and was captured, it was recorded:

"…and he wist not that the LORD was departed from him."

Judges 16:20

When God leaves you, your nakedness is revealed. Why? It is God that gets the job done.

"Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain."

Psalms 127:1

God is the builder of your ministry. He is the one who gets the job done not you. He calls you and also does the job through you.

"Faithful is he that calleth you,

who also will do it."

I Thessalonians 5:24

The Lord sent me to set up a Bible training school; yet I had never been to a bible School. I had to settle down with Him and He gave me everything from the name to the courses and their outlines. Some of the courses offered here are not found in any other Bible School in the World.

All your strength is equal to nothing without God. If you must succeed, you must go along with Him. For you to be able to forge ahead, you have to be watchful not to stray from your calling, let your eyes be single and be steadfast in its pursuit.

"…give diligence to make your

calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall:"

2 Peter 1:10

Be watchful to keep to your calling. Avoid distractions. Keep your eyes fixed on your vision. Neither deviates to the left nor to the right.

"Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it."

Colossians 4:17

Crown are exchangeable, so take heed lest another take your own.

Chapter 10 - CONCLUSION

Consistency is the mark of champions. Everyone that desires to win requires persistency. Challenges of life are many, but all that will dare to stand in spite of all odds will make it.

All the covenant fathers have to contend with challenges and strong oppositions in the pursuit of their visions. But through persistency, they were able to overcome.

The Lord Jesus Christ himself taught us to recognize the place of pressing in the kingdom or vision pursuits.

"The law and the prophets were

until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it."

Luke 16:16

Any one who must successfully pursue his vision must accept this as part of the deal. Pressing is not often convenient – you will be squeezed, you will be roughened up, e.t.c. But that is a certain route for anyone who must win the prize.

Consider Apostle Paul. He walked in the light of this revelation in the pursuit of his vision. He suffered hunger, shipwreck, imprisonment on several occasions. At a time, he received thirty nine strokes of the cane. He went through a host of other terrible

experiences that would have frustrated and discouraged any man. But not Paul, none of these things moved him. He had the courage of a winner.

He pressed towards his goal. In Philippians 3:13-14, he revealed a secret for anyone who must win:

“Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.”

Pressing implies consistency. Many lose too cheaply because they quit too soon.

The name of the game is

consistency. That is your guarantee tor triumph and excellence in the pursuit of your vision.

Prayer

Having read this book, I pray that every scale that had hitherto blinded your eyes from seeing clearly be lifted in the name of Jesus. May you understand the unfolding of God's plan for your life per time and may God's grace be available all the time to help you. I decree that you will keep step with the Master's blue print for your life, proving the vision and running with it at the appropriate time. In the name of Jesus, I dislodge the spirit of insensitivity to the Spirit of God and pronounce that you will be prompt in carrying out His plans for your life. I

rebuke the spirit of disobedience and impart the grace to yield to His will no matter the case, in Jesus' name. Amen.

Confession

I believe the word of God and go forth to take conscious steps in the direction of His vision for my life. I will no longer walk in darkness but will walk in line with His plans for my life.

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