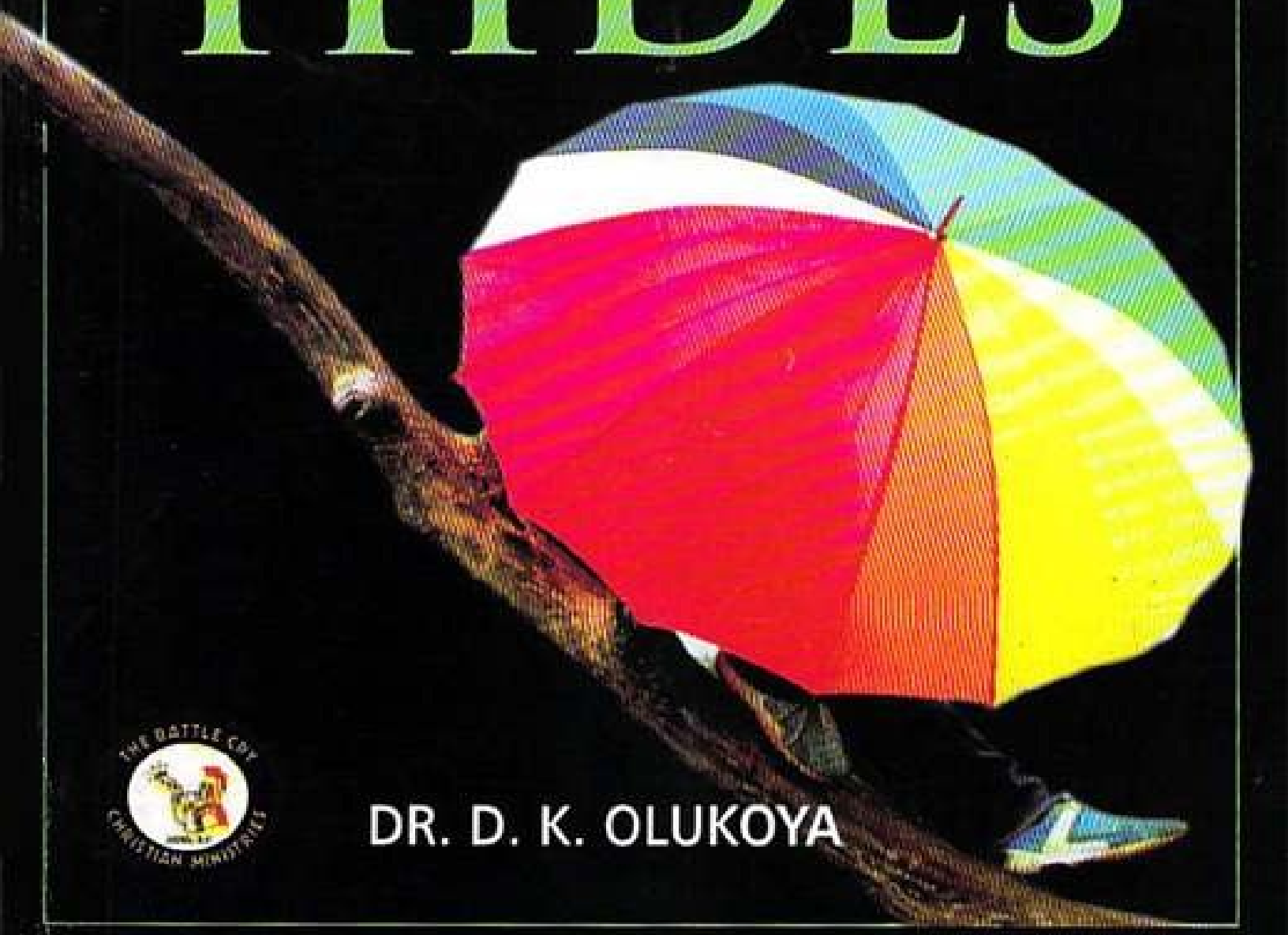
WHEN THE ENEMY HIDES



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When the ENEMY HIDES

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I salute my wonderful wife, Pastor Shade, for her invaluable support in the ministry.

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All Scripture quotation is from the King James Version of the Bible

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BACKCOVER

Chapter One

DEALING WITH THE STUBBORN ENEMIES

Satan is the arch-enemy of man. He hates man with perfect hatred. He is an unrepentant enemy, who has constituted himself as man's eternal foe. Satan started out as an enemy of God. He engineered rebellion and championed an ugly revolt against the Almighty. The rebellion brought the devil to a great fall. All the "I Wills" of Satan bagged him a great tragedy.

> *"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; That made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners? All the kings of the nations, even all of them, lie in glory, every one in his own house. But thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch, and as the raiment of those that are slain, thrust through with a sword, that go down to the stones of the pit; as a carcase trodden under feet."* Isaiah 14:12-19

> *"Son of man, take up a lamentation upon the king of Tyrus, and say unto him, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy*

mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones offire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more." Ezekiel 28:12-19

AN UNENDING WAR

As soon as Satan fell, he decided to wage an unending war against mankind. The devil had received many a fatal blow from many believers. In spite of the repeated blows, he has remained an unrepentant enemy.

Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not. Job 14:1-2

The Bible passage above made it crystally clear, that there is an enemy pursuing man.

Who is an enemy? An enemy is an adversary, a defiler, an antagonist, and an invader. The enemy is an attacker, an opponent, a competitor and an opposition. The enemy is a contender, a traitor and a rival. An enemy is an aggressor. A person, who feels hatred for you. A person, who makes harmful devices against you. An enemy is an opposing force.

But there are enemies and powers in different categories, when you want to identify your correct enemy.

THE ENEMY

Your enemy is any power, spirit, force and personality, that does not want you to fulfil your destiny. Beloved, an enemy is a relentless foe. The enemy is always behind you, ahead of you and right around the corner. The enemy always makes you constantly uneasy. The enemy is the one, that makes your life to be troubled, doubt, despair, face difficulties and problems.

The enemy is a tireless enemy. He is a glued pursuer. Every church, every person, every Christian, faces the determined and fearful enemy. It is the enemy, that you are constantly running away from, and yet, never entirely escaping.

THE UNKNOWN ENEMY

Several years back, twenty one Christians had problems. They were going to church; they were praying, reading their Bible and doing quiet times. They tried their best to live what is called a holy life, but, yet, they found trouble all over their lives.

They decided to hold a meeting to identify, who the enemy was. So, they concluded on going for a twenty one days fasting and prayers. They prayed, that God should let the enemy manifest, and be put to shame. At the end of the fasting programme, one of them prophesied, saying "the enemy has been identified and the enemy is ourselves."

Beloved, the greatest enemy you will face is yourself. It is an ancient truth. The most persistent enemy you will constantly face, and really wrestle with, is yourself. A Whiteman composed a song, and the content of the song is, "It is me who is my enemy". It is me, who beat me up. It is me who make myself a monster and scare me".

The Bible says the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. The Bible says, he that trusts his own heart, is a fool. The greatest deception you will have in your life, is the deception you put upon yourself.

For the enemy to come against you and succeed, there must be a ladder. It is you, who will create the ladder through, which the enemy will come in. The greatest deception your heart perpetrates is upon you, and not anybody else. The pride of your heart could deceive you. If you commit sin, and you feel nothing will happen to you, you are deceiving yourself. When your going to church is just because of religion, and has no depth in your life, you are deceiving yourself.

SELF DECEIT

You can deceive your friends, you can deceive your enemy. but, it is a tragedy, when you deceive yourself. It is a tragedy when you go to church and what they do, does not penetrate your heart. You are deceiving yourself and you are your own enemy. Open yourself to the truth. A person with pride can blind himself from the truth.

The Bible says, be not deceived, God cannot be mocked for whatsoever a man soweth he shall reap. A lot of people come to the church of God, but, by the time they think, they will realise that they are their own enemy. What a tragedy for you to shoot yourself. You need to deliver yourself from yourself, and God will deliver you from your enemies.

A lot of people are busy tormenting themselves.

The Bible says:

> *"And when he was gone forth into the way, there came one running, and kneeled to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"* Mark 10: 17
>
> *"Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatsoever thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions."* Mark 10:21-22

Here, was a man, that wanted salvation for his soul. When the salvation came, he walked away. The man walked away from Jesus Christ, who could save him. A lot of people are locked up within themselves. You may be a prisoner to yourself.

THE SCHOOL OF DECEPTION

Beloved, it is possible that you may hear nothing, but your own voice. You may see nothing except yourself. You need to cry out in desperate prayers to God, that He should deliver you from yourself. You need to deliver yourself from the tentacles of your body. You need to deliver yourself from your heart and mind.

A lot of people are full of their own ideas and opinions. They are, completely, blind to God. Your greatest prison is yourself. It is the prison of self, that has put

many people into a bad school, the school of self deception.

THE STUDENTS

In the school of deception, there are various students.

1. When you deceive yourself.

> *"But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves."* James 1:22.

2. Those, who say they have no sin.

> *"He was not that light, but was sent to bear witness of that light."* John 1:8

Why you are not where God wants you to be in the spirit, is sm.

3.When you call yourself something, and you are nothing, you deceive yourself.

> *"For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself."* Galatians 6:3.

The things you have achieved and the degrees you have attained, cannot make you something, but, when you have God and the power of the blood of Jesus is on you, then, you are something.

4. When you think you are wise in your ownself, the Bible says, you are deceiving yourself.

> *"Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise."* I Cor3:18.

When you are cleverly concealing your sins, and pretend to be a holy person, you are deceiving yourself.

5. Those, who think they will not reap, what they sow are deceiving themselves.

> *"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap."* Gal 6:7.

All the evil things you have done, will definitely have consequences. If you, as a

father, cannot finish a cup of iniquity before you, your children will come and finish the rest.

6. Those, who think the unrighteous will inherit the kingdom of God, are deceiving themselves.

> *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortiners, shall inherit the kingdom*

Chapter Two

THE MYSTERY OF THE LAST DAY

Several years ago, I went for an international conference and prominent personalities were called to the high table, including me. I was told to give the opening prayers. Immediately, I started praying, God told me; Tell the people on the high table, that there is one among them, who is an homosexual. The person should repent, or else, die, in seven days.

I was shocked, thinking I might be embarrassed, but I could not but, say it. I continued praying, but before I could end the prayer I noticed movements on the high table. When I finished the prayer, and opened my eyes, surprisingly, I was the only one left on the high table. The rest had left, and joined the congregation.

I saluted their courage, because if they had stayed, that was how they would die before their time. If you want to work with God, you have to be opened, sincere, because God cannot be deceived. Those, who think that they can associate with bad company and not be corrupt, are deceiving themselves.

"Be not deceived: evil communictions corrupt good manners." I Cor 15:33.

THE END

This is why the Bible said, the flesh profiteth nothing, because a decree has come upon the flesh, "dust thou art and unto the dust thou shall return". The agenda of the flesh is to pull everybody down. The flesh is the greatest enemy you have.

Beloved, barring the return of Jesus Christ, everybody is going to die, whether you like it, or not. The question is not are you going to die? When you are going to die, how are you going to die? The question is, when you die, where are you going? It is the self, flesh, that will decides, where you will go, when you are dead.

The important thing about death is not death itself, but, what follows after death. There are only two ways to die. You either die in the Lord, saved, as a child of God. Or, you die outside the Lord, lost, as a child of Satan. You either die heading for heaven, or hell fire. You either die a forgiven saint, or a forsaken sinner. Death has no respect. There are only two ways to die. It is either death, or by rapture.

THE FLESH

Everything depends on the flesh. Death has no respect for the anointing. Elisha, the man of God, with double portion of the anointing, died. His dead bones raised the dead, but he was still dead. Death has no respect for holiness.

A lot of people, who failed and those, who did not fail in the Bible, all died. Moses never felt sick, but he died, at last. Death can take the old and the young, the poor and the rich away from this earth.

DEATH IS INEVITABLE

Beloved, in life there is nothing inevitable like death. It is unavoidable and diabolic enemy of man. Men hate death, some desire not to die at all. Some even, prefer to postpone it. Death is the silent ever present enemy of man. Death is an inevitable appointment. Death reminds us of immortality. Death makes you to realise, that you are indispensable. It makes you know, that your soul is brief here on earth. Men appall death. Men decree against death, but none has been able to stop it.

Glorious kings, power and authority were buried by death. Entertainers, military and others, who believed they could be forever, were snuffed out by death. The reign of popular people, who thought they were unbeatable, were disgraced by death. The rich people who thought they had all what it took, were all dealt with by death. The death marching order is, "dust thou art and unto dust thou shall return".

Death accepts no deal from anybody. Death can outsmart any intelligence. Farmers, businessmen can not negotiate with death. Death is an appointment we must all keep, but, where you end up after death, is determined by the flesh.

DEATH IS SURE

If death does not take you, then, it will be the rapture. It will be worldwide. The trumpet will sound and the true believers shall be taken away. When the rapture takes place, every country will experience chaos. Government of each country will act quickly to prevent anarchy and terrorism. Millions will, suddenly, disappear. Massive of infants will disappear. The airports and the road will be in shambles. There will be massive amounts of accidents, which will send some people to hell fire. People shall be, frantically, forced to locate their loved ones.

THE RAPTURE

The events will make people, to wail at the rapture. Communication will be disrupted. Many key people shall disappear. Hospital will overflow, due to massive accidents. The Red Cross and other emergency units will not be enough. Opportunists will add to the confusion, by killing, raping and stealing people's property. There will be chaos everywhere. A lot of people will be taken. The Bible says, one shall be taken and the other will be left behind.

The question is, when the rapture takes place, are you really sure you are going? If you are not sure, there is no point in deceiving yourself. Jesus Christ needs sincere people. There is no point going to the house of God, without encountering God. There is no point for the enemy to be gaining at you.

There is no point, when you do not make it for rapture and you pray very well. Do not deceive yourself and do not make yourself your enemy. Ask God for mercy, and sort out yourself before the Lord.

Chapter Three

AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE LORD

Experiencing, or encountering the Lord, is different from going to church. A person could sit in the church, until he wears his bottom out on the seat and not meet the Lord. He could meet people, have church post, be extravagant and flamboyant, but, never really met the Lord. He cannot point to an experience, where he had encountered the Master.

Once you have seen the Lord, no problem will stand before you. No problem can stay, where Jesus is. When you have seen the Lord, who is a witch, that can stand before you. When you have seen the Lord, spirit husband, spirit wife, or familiar spirit cannot withstand you. What is sickness, when the Lord is standing? Something happened to Paul on his way to Damascus, he saw Jesus and died. So, he, who was pursuing Christians, now began to preach the same gospel, that he wanted to terminate. Therefore, the road to Damascus, became the personal Calvary of Paul.

YOUR CALVARY

What is your own personal Calvary? When did you die? Is Jesus living in you now? Has your anger died? Has your bitterness died? Has your unforgiving spirit died? Where and when is your own Calvary? When did the old pass away in your life? When did your Saul die, to give birth to Paul? When Paul became a new man, he preached the gospel.

Paul saw Jesus and died. No wonder a songwriter says, "It is no longer I that liveth, but Christ that liveth in me." John the apostle, the writer of the book of Revelation, saw Jesus and his life was never the same. You can observe, that right from the first chapter of the book.

Having an encounter with the Lord, or the experience of seeing Jesus, is fundamental to genuine Christian life. The reason some people backslide, or are

not able to appreciate their salvation, is due to lack of this encounter. Sometimes, people backslide, because they have never seen the Man of Galilee. The day God opens your spiritual eyes, and you see Him hanging on the cross, with blood dripping down, and suffering, the reality will dawn on you, and all other things will be insignificant. The experience of seeing Jesus, is so fundamental to the Christian faith.

TWO TYPES OF PEOPLE IN THE CAMP OF GOD

In the camp of the Lord, you can see two types of people.

1. Those, who have met the Lord.

2. Those, who have met the church. That is, those, who practise church, or religion.

Those, who have not met the Lord, lose their temper easily. For example, when they go somewhere and somebody takes up their seat, they would shout, "Get up from there, do you know, when I arrived here. Get away." They know how to pray fire prayer, but they have not met the Lord. This is a tragedy.

A time will come, when all those proclaiming to be Christians, shall be distributed into two clear camps. The first group is the group of the goats, and the second group is the group of the sheep. The Bible says, that eventually, the goats would be cast away into the lake of fire. This is because, they did not really encounter the Lord.

> *"And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit. He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal. If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour."* John 12: 20-26:

EMPTY RELIGION

Certain Greeks came to an annual religious feast in Jerusalem. They saw men, who were practising religion. They looked at everything, followed all the rituals and attended all the meetings, but were careful enough to note, that in all those ceremonies, something was missing. They were still empty. But, there was somebody in town, who had the real thing, so, they began to ask: "Sir, we would see Jesus." You may ask, what their motive was. Maybe it was curiosity, or that they wanted to get something out of Jesus, or they wanted to solve a problem, or they just desired to know this man, that people were talking about, or they decided to encounter the truth, in reality.

AN ESSENTIAL CONDITION

But, if you want to encounter the Lord in reality, there is an essential condition, that regulates such an encounter. We can find that in the response of Jesus to the request, "Sir, we would see Jesus," in John 12: 24. It says, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." Herein lies the spiritual law, that regulates God's dealings with men, for God is a God of law. This has nothing to do with your post, or qualification. It has nothing to do with being a pastor, or having attended Bible colleges, and having studied theology.

Several years ago, a man, who had a PhD in Bible Knowledge was invited to a Christian meeting somewhere in Lagos, Nigeria. The meeting was filled with illiterates, carpenters, bricklayers and market men and women. He was supposed to give them a lecture on knowing God. He started by telling them the meaning of the phrase 'to know.' He spent about fifteen minutes on that, and, then, went further to explain "God", for another fifteen minutes. After this, he went into the lecture proper, and gave a beautiful lecture.

HAVE YOU MET JESUS?

When he finished, one carpenter, who did not even attend any school said, "Excuse me sir, I have a question for you. Have you met Jesus yourself? Can you claim that you have experienced Him?" The PhD teacher did not understand, what the man was asking him, so, he replied, "I am sorry, I don't have an answer to that question." The carpenter now sat him down, and gave him a lecture on

practical Christianity. The lecturer was trying to teach others about the man he did not know. God is a God of law, Who works by divine principles. When you discover these principles and comply with them, it will bring you into line with God's will.

God Himself has a pattern. Everything in heaven is well patterned. If God gives you a little opportunity of seeing heavenly organisation, you will not want to stay on earth anymore. There is nothing on earth, that is as beautiful and orderly as in heaven. This was why God told Moses, "And look that thou make them after their pattern, which was shewed thee in the mount" (Exodus 25: 40). This means, that if Moses had decided not to follow the pattern, nothing would have happened.

THE PATTERN

People write to me, suggesting we should use drums, and allow people to dress the way they like, even, if it means dressing indecently, so, that more people can come. I always tell them it was not the pattern shown to me, and I prefer to stick to the divine pattern given by God. Listening to such proposals will be tantamount to disobedience. If you want to build a house, you look around and see the one that you really like and want to fashion yours after it that will become your model. So, the only way we are ever going to see Jesus here, and in the world to come, is by dying to self.

> John 24: 12 says, *"Except a corn of wheat falls into the ground and die, it abideth alone. But if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit."*

AN ENCOUNTER

In Exodus 33, we read about an interesting encounter. Moses knew that the Israelites were a very stubborn and proud people. He was meant to take them to the promised land. He knew what he had faced with Pharaoh, and knew that he could not go by his own strength. He realised the impossibility of the task, unless God Himself went with him.

> *"Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. And he said, My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest. And he said unto him, If thy presence go*

not with me, carry us not up hence." Exodus 33:13-15

"And he said, I beseech thee, shew me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy." Ex 33:18-19

O LORD OF LOVE

There is an ancient powerful hymn, by one man, called Wesley, which says,

"To thee O Lord of love, I bow and I prostrate at your feet.
By faith, I am seeing you passing now, but now I ask for more.
A glimpse of you may not suffice but I want your presence.
I cannot see your face and live. Then let me see your face and die."

A GRAIN OF WHEAT

This song means, that his longing to see Jesus was more important than life itself. Herein, then, lies the great truth. No man can see the face of the Lord, unless he is prepared to fall into the ground, like a corn of wheat, and die.

Prophet Isaiah saw God, and his life was never the same. But, before then, he had unclean lips. When he saw the Lord, he became what is known as the messianic prophet. Some people also call him the evangelist of the Old Testament, because in the book of Isaiah, you see the gospel clearly preached, and also the prophecies about the Lord Jesus Christ.

COALS FROM CALVARY'S ALTAR

Twice in Isaiah chapter six, he said, "I saw the Lord." Having seen the Lord, then, he saw himself. And when he saw the Lord, he said, "I am undone, I am a man of unclean lips. I live in the midst of people with unclean lips." He knew, who he was. Immediately, he identified his problem, the Lord said, "Yes, now you are ready. You seraphim, take a coal of fire and drop it on his dirty tongue, to purge his sins out." This was foretelling the moment, when the Holy Spirit would take coals from the altar of Calvary, and take away our sins. When this happened to Isaiah, another request went forth: "Who shall I send, who will go

for us. Then, he said, Here I am, send me." So, the only man that is qualified to go, is the man, who had died; the man, who had seen Jesus. This is very important.

WHEN YOU SEE THE LORD

The reason some people are busy criticizing others, instead of looking at themselves, is probably because they have not seen the Lord. The truth is that you really cannot see yourself clearly, until you have seen the Lord. Have you encountered the Almighty God? Have you really encountered the "I Am?" If you have encountered Him, your life will have been reversed.

Some of the things that are so important to others, will lose their significance in your sight. All you would be interested in, is just serving the Lord at all cost. Event if you have to be sweeping the floor, it does not matter, you still have to please the master. Saul of Tarsus was a sincere man, but he was sincerely wrong. He was educated theologically and doctrinally sound, but he had one serious sickness - he had never met the Lord. Sir, we would see Jesus.

Chapter Four

THE SATANIC PRISON

There used to be a terrible prison, somewhere in North America. It had no walls and fences. Its surrounding was impenetrable and popular, because it was very far away from civilisation. The prisoners were flown there, because no road led to the place. It was somewhere in the middle of the forest. The hardships of trying to escape, discouraged any prisoner, who wanted to get out. As a matter of fact, the closest town to that place, was about 250 miles.

Prisoners, who tried to escape at a point in time, ran back after they had terrible encounters with poisonous snakes, wild crocodiles and awesome animals. You may be wondering why I had to go this far, to describe that notorious North American prison. The main purpose is to give you an accurate idea, of how terrible prison could be. But, here is a more terrible prison, than what I have just described. That prison is the human heart.

You may have seen prisoners before. But, the title of this message may begin to make you wonder, who the greatest prisoners are. A prisoner is a person kept a in stronghold, for committing an offence. The stronghold is not the best of place to be, for it is, usually, dreadful. It is not difficult to determine the purpose of a prison; it is to limit somebody's freedom, or sometimes, to eliminate the freedom totally.

THE HEART

It will surprise you to know, that the greatest battleground on earth is the human heart. The reason is this; most battlegrounds have only two foes - just two parties fighting each other. But, the human heart as a battleground, has three groups of people fighting to possess it. God is interested in the heart, and so is the devil, and the owner of the heart is himself, determined to keep it at all cost. Although, man sometimes does not wish to do, as much evil as the devil is suggesting to him, but occasionally, he finds himself doing so. This is very clear to the

Psalmist, hence, his prayer in Psalm 19:14:

"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer."

"That is to say, that the words of the mouth, and some thoughts of the heart, may be unacceptable before God. And, if you harbour unacceptable thoughts, it will put in spiritual trouble. This may also result in untold hardships and problems. This is why the book of proverbs tells us in Chapter 23 verse 7, that

"For as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee."

Meaning, that you are a product of, what you think you are. Proverbs 24:9:

"The thought of foolishness is sin: and the scorner is an abomination to men."

THE FOUNTAIN

The heart is where all our troubles begin, and when God, too, wants to start working in your life, He would start from your heart. If we had the capacity to open people's hearts, and show on a screen, what they have been thinking, repeatedly, many people will run away, before that operation is carried out on them, because they are afraid of the rottenness of their hearts and will not want anyone to laugh them to scorn, or pass bad remarks about them. This is indeed a serious matter, both in the physical and Spiritual realms. It was the wickedness, God saw in the heart of man, that prompted Him to decide on destroying man, and to wipe man out of the surface of the earth Genesis 6:5:

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."

EVIL THOUGHTS

It was the continual evil thoughts, that prompted God to destroy man. Remember the episode of the Tower of Babel in the Bible, when God confused the languages of the people. It was the wicked desires of man's heart, that brought about the unholy ambition. Genesis 11:6:

"And the Lord said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language;

and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do."

God decided to confuse their languages, because of the evil intentions of their hearts. This is why the scripture says in Proverbs 4:23:

"Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

That is to say, we should keep our hearts with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. The need to keep your heart with all diligence is important, because out of the heart, are the issues of life. There is, no doubt, that many hearts today, are fulfilled with iniquity. Above all things, the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked. And, the Bible asks who can know it? In chapter 12 from verse 34 to 35, the heart of man is seen as the fountain of all-evils. It reads thus, Matthew 12:34-35:

"O generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things."

THE EVIL FOUNDATION

The heart is the foundation of all evils. The Bible did not say the brain, rather it says, the heart. The heart of man can be blind, and the blind cannot receive the things of God. It is a pity that many now go about with blind hearts. Romans 1:21:

"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."

So, Biblically, too, die heart can be blind. 2 Cor. 4:4:

"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

Apart from being blind, the heart can also be mad. Eccles. 9:3

"This is an evil among all things that are done under the sun, that there is one

event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness is in their heart while they live, and after that they go to the dead."

UNSTABLE HEARTS

Therefore, it follows that a man's heart could be mad, unstable and uncontrollable. James 1:6-7:

"But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord."

So, it is easy to know now, why a person with a doubtful heart cannot be blessed. Mark 6:52, tells us, that a person's heart can be hardened:

"For they considered not the miracle of the loaves: for their heart was hardened."

Again, Psalm 101:5 says,

"Whoso privily slandereth his neighbour, him will I cut off: him that hath an high look and a proud heart will not I suffer."

Know this fact today, that God will not regard anybody with a proud heart. In addition to being proud, Mark 7:6:

"He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."

THE BANE OF HYPOCRISY

This tells us, that, the heart of man could be hypocritical. The source of unbelief and covetousness is in the hearts. A person's heart could be blocked, and, therefore, be incapable of receiving spiritual light. The heart of a man could be so blind, that what is obvious to a spiritual person, will be much of mystery to him. The heart is also where sins begin. It does not begin from the eyes, or from the hands.

One's eyes can be likened to a camera, because when it takes a picture, the

picture goes into the heart, and the heart develops it. The film's negative is right in the heart. Apart from developing the films, the heart passes information to every part of the body. Words that are spoken, are first conceived in the hearts. Any wrong word uttered is, therefore, a product of the heart. As a matter of fact, Satan operates his tempting power in the heart. John Chapter 13 verse 2, tells us, that Satan entered into the heart of Judas. Little wonder, then, that Judas did his wicked act. Sorrow also starts from the heart. That is why John 14:1,says;

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me."

THE GUARD

This is the reason, why we should guard our hearts. It is the greatest battle ground. Once you loose the battle of the heart, you will loose all the battles of life. The strongest hindrance, or limitation to joy, miracles, prosperity and successes is the heart. Therefore, the strongest prison, is the prison of the mind. The greatest prisoners, therefore, are those, whose minds are in bondage. This is highly a spiritual matter.

> *"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"* 2 Cor. 10:3-5

THE STRONGHOLD

The Bible makes it clear, that a man's heart is a stronghold; therefore, it has to be brought down and held captive. The scripture we have just read, reveals to us, that though we are conducting our affairs, as ordinary men, our battles are not fought with physical strength, education, or technology. It also tells us, that we fight and use weapons, that are mighty and operate beyond, what our eyes can see.

The weapons have to operate through God, because God, Who is the father of all spirits, can crush and destroy everything that goes against us. And through those weapons, we can cast down imaginations and every high thing, whether they are thrones, governments, politics, laws, decrees etc. We can bring down anything, that runs contrary to the knowledge of God, His promises, plans, love and

establishment. The verse of the last scripture tells us, we can arrest and bring into subjection every throne. By doing so, those thoughts can be made to conform to God's own will. Men have been imprisoned by their minds for ages.

Chapter Five

THE BATTLE GROUND

I remember the story of a gorilla, that has been in a cage all its life. Since the cage was not wide, the gorilla could only move the distance of 12 feet forward, and backwards. It got used to that distance, after a long period of time. But, something happened one day, a certain millionaire, who was passing through the place, where the gorilla was caged, stopped to take a look at the gorilla. He felt sorry for it, and sought out the means to set it free. He was told, that if he could pay for the gorilla, his goal would be achieved. He, promptly, paid the huge sum and was happy to see the gorilla walk away from its age long cage. But to the amazement of the millionaire, the gorilla kept moving 12 feet forward and 12 feet backwards. Unfortunately, that movement had become the reality of the gorilla.

What is the reality of you? Is it possible, that you have mentally accepted your life, as it is? Do you think there cannot be any improvement? Are you like that gorilla, only moving 12 feet forward and 12 feet backwards? Circumstances might have made you to accept that you cannot go beyond a particular level. Circumstances might make you to accept frustration, despair and depression as your lots. Non-friendly circumstances may have clouded your mind, and you have accepted a cramped prison as your limit. Maybe somewhere back in your life, you have, mentally, resigned yourself to imprisonment in an empty existence. Then, you must get out today.

NEW THOUGHT PATTERNS

Immediately you change your way of thinking, God, too, will change and things will start to work for you. But, if you remain thinking lowly the way you have been doing, and thinking according to the tail, you can only receive the benefits of the tail. The whole creation, as it is, is from the product of thoughts. The idea of fashioning the earth ,was I conceived in God's mind. It was planned first in His imagination. Your thoughts, therefore, have the power to create for you,

what you think. The powers of thoughts are released from within you, and they create your desire for you, when backed up by the Holy Spirit and the power of God. So, your thoughts are forces, you can send out to work on your behalf. They have the power to bring to reality your thoughts. If your thought is low, tail position is what you will have. If you are sending out on a daily basis, the thoughts of success, victory and breakthroughs, you will, definitely, make it in life.

It may take sometime, but you will get there. It takes sometime to reprogramme and reorientate people, who consider failure. Your thoughts are the invisible hands, that shape your life, it will then manifest in the physical. Let us consider apostle Paul's admonition in Philip. 4:8:

"Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

THE TEST

The Bible has clearly stated, what you should be thinking about. If you decide to think something else, then, you will attract evil things to yourself. When you think life, then, life comes, if you think joy, joy comes, if you think health, health comes, and if you think abundance, abundance will come. Your thought is that energy, through which you can get whatever you desire. Let me emphasise this fact again, that your thoughtful life will either bring good things, or bad things.

> *"For the thing which I greatly feared is come upon me, and that which I was afraid of is come unto me."* Job 3:25

The above scripture, tells us the source of the problem of Job, which he erroneous thought was from God. The source of Job's problem came from his heart. The fear in Job's heart gave the devil legal grounds, to bring evil things upon him. It is certain, therefore, that the source of all powers, and the source of all weaknesses is from within, and so, it is wrong for you to look for power and strength outside. The source of wealth, health and power for prosperity, success and victory is from within.

THE LAW OF CREATION

In God's law of creation, God has a way of compressing, what He wants inside a small thing. Then, when you plant that small thing, it grows to become big. For example, the tree started from a seed. So, everything that will turn to the leaf, to the branch, to the trunk, to the root, is kept in the ; small seed. It is the same thing with the heart.

The source of sickness, poverty, lawlessness and sorrow is in the heart. Laziness, failure and evil thought, are from within. Therefore, the key to unlock the doors to abundant life and to convert trials to triumphs, foes to friends, weakness to strength, trials to testimonies, fears to courage, sickness to health and failure to success is within. The most powerful forces are, those forces of thoughts, which you send out. Your thoughts and imaginations count, both in the physical and spiritual realms.

WRONG THINKING

A lot of Christians require deliverance, from wrong thinking. A lot of people are in heart bondage, and this is the strongest prison. One sister came to me, requesting that we should pray an agreement prayer, concerning a certain establishment she was visiting for contracts. We prayed, and she went there. But, when she got there, and saw richly dressed women, those she perceived as society women, she refused to go into the office, where the contracts were being given out. She reasoned, that she was nobody compared to the society women, she met at the entrance of the place. She, then, returned in fear to me, narrated her story, and, then, requested for more prayers.

I told her, that there was no need to pray again, but to go back to the place. The assurance, that she will get the contract motivated her to return to the place. She had a particular problem common to many people today. Her heart was her problem. She thought very lowly of herself. Such thoughts even compel many people, to terminate their lives.

YOU NEED DELIVERANCE

If you are like, thinking of killing yourself, then, you need deliverance from mind bondage. When your heart is not aligned to the direction of God's will for you, then, you will be in trouble. Instead of sitting down to pray, some brothers and sisters sit down to imagine themselves growing grey hair, with no husband and no wife.

The devil will be happy to show them that picture, just to bring their minds into bondage. Many businessmen think of business collapse. Many people are thinking of imprisonment. When some believers have headache, the first place their minds go to is asylum. Thoughts of uncertainty, fear, hindrance, confusion and thoughts of wickedness, now reign supreme in many hearts.

CAGING THOUGHTS

A lot of people even think of paralysis, they think they will be paralysed and will, therefore, not be able to stand up again. Thoughts of poverty, disappointment, backsliding and failure in marriage, now enjoy a reign of terror in many hearts. You must get out of this prison, by renewing your mind with the word of God, and by fighting spiritual warfare, to pull down strongholds.

Your hearts will keep you at a low level, until you fight your way out of it. Many do not know the fact, that a person who is in the bondage of the heart, is gradually digging his, or her spiritual grave. The thoughts of God are backed up by God's power. The thoughts of the devil are also backed up by the devil. If you must remain undefeated, you must align your hearts, with the thoughts of God.

When God's thoughts become your thoughts, a serious power is generated in you. When the devil begins to operate against the believers, he starts with the heart. This is where the trouble starts. When somebody sits at home, and is planning to come and steal in your house, you can hold him captive with your prayers, if you pray like this: "I take every thought of robbery and violence against me captive and put it under the subjection of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Any robber planning against you is rendered useless, because his thoughts have been taken captive. The foundation of all spiritual defeats is to allow your enemies, to use your thoughts against you. Make a list of those thoughts and imaginations, that give you the greatest anxiety, the ones that bother you most. If you do not write them down, the devil will confuse you.

THE SCRIPTURES

Take them one after the other, and demolish them with prayers of fire, in Jesus' name. That is what you should do. If the thoughts of your life for example, are failure in marriage, sickness, cancer etc, write them down one after the other,

and demolish them with prayers of fire. If anyone of them tries to persist, plead the blood of Jesus on your heart.

Then, get two, or three scriptures concerning them and begin to pray to pull down the strongholds, commanding the arrows of evil thoughts to go. Or, if there is anybody somewhere, fashioning evil thoughts against you, command their imaginations and evil thoughts to fail. That is how to handle this situation. Regular renewal of your mind, by the word of God, is compulsory, if you want to pull down your spiritual strongholds.

THE GREATEST PROBLEM

Without any controversy, this is the biggest problem of many people. They have their hearts, but they have no control of them, for something else is controlling their hearts. This is the reason, why the enemies of some people find it easier, to use remote control against them.

The enemy knows, that you, normally, think of failure and will always ensure that you harbour such thoughts. We were praying for three sisters in England, to receive baptism in the Holy Ghost. The first one was flowing in tongues, and the second was flowing too in the spirit. Then, we prayed endlessly for the third one, but to our surprise, nothing happened. After some time the sister sat down and started wailing that failure was always her pattern in life. She cried, that things that worked for everybody, never worked for her. Since she has negative mind, things would not work for her. We, then, advised her to hold her thoughts of failure, and backwardness, captive, if she wanted to succeed in life.

THE BATTLE ARENA

The battle of the mind is the most intensive battle to fight. Although, it is easy for you to pretend, because nobody can see the heart. But you know, that what you have within may not help you. I remember the story of that king, who was keeping a pig, as a pet. He got the piglet, immediately, it was born. The king took the piglet into the palace, and the piglet never saw anything called mud.

The king used to dress the piglet in suits, and all kinds of things. One day, the king took the piglet for a walk. To the uttermost surprise of the king, the piglet, in spite of the three piece suits it had on, abandoned the king and ran into the mud. The problem was, that the king took the pig out of the mud, but did not

take the mud out of the pig. It is the same thing with people, they may be taken out of Egypt, but Egypt may still remain in them.

All imaginations of the heart and thoughts, that are against God are strongholds, which must be pulled down.

PRAYER POINTS

1. You stronghold of evil thoughts and imaginations, I pull you down, in the name of Jesus.
2. Blood of Jesus and the fire of the Holy Ghost, purify my heart, in the name of Jesus.
3. Evil imaginations and evil thoughts, I will not give you a place in my heart again. I enthrone Jesus in your place, in Jesus' name.
4. Holy Ghost Fire enter into my heart, in the name of Jesus.
5. Spirit of the living God, purge me from every evil food, in the name of Jesus.
6. I nullify, every activity of strange children in my life, in the name of Jesus.
7. Every secret of strange children, Lord, reveal them to me, in the name of Jesus.
8. I arrest every evil breeze, that has been sent to me, and I sent them back to the sender, in the name of Jesus

Chapter Six

YOUR PERSONAL STUMBLING BLOCK

When Joseph was about settling down to enjoy the new favour which he has found in a strange land, the devil organised another private roadblock. The road block at this time was a very tough one. The devil often mounts his highest roadblocks whenever he knows that you are at the edge of uncommon supernatural breakthroughs.

> *For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries. 1 Corinthians 16:9*

It would have been terrible if Joseph had failed at that point. Of all roadblocks, the toughest one is what can be described as a private roadblock. The mystery of roadblocks is this: an external roadblock cannot prosper in your life except there is an internal roadblock within you. The enemy within will always open the door for the external enemy.

> *And he saith unto them, Are ye so without understanding also? Do ye not perceive, that whatsoever thing from without entereth into the man, it cannot defile him; 19 Because it entereth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth out into the draught, purging all meats? 20 And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. 21 For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, 22 Thefts, covetousness. wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: 23 All these evil things come from within, and defile the man. Mark 7:18-23*

THE SUBTLE ROADBLOCK

If you allow the roadblocks of anger, lying, carnality, immorality and spiritual laziness to weaken you, you will not be able to jump across the physical roadblock mounted against you. The enemy have decided to change his method

when he discovered that all the roadblocks mounted against Joseph were dismantled. The enemy's roadblocks came in form of a seemingly innocent request made by Portiphar's wife.

> *And it came to pass after these things, that his master's wife cast her eyes upon Joseph; and she said, Lie with me. 8 But he refused, and said unto his master's wife, Behold, my master wotteth not what is with me in the house, and he hath committed all that he hath to my hand; 9 There is none greater in this house than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me but thee, because thou art his wife: how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? 10 And it came to pass, as she spake to Joseph day by day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her. 11 And it came to pass about this time, that Joseph went into thehouse to do his business; and there was none of the men of the house there within. 12 And she caught him by his garment, saying, Lie with me: and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out. 13 And it came to pass, when she saw that he had left his garment in her hand, and was fled forth, 14 That she called unto the men of her house, and spake unto them, saying, See, he hath brought in an Hebrew unto us to mock us; he came in unto me to lie with me, and I cried with a loud voice: 15 And it came to pass, when he heard that I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled, and got him out. 16 And she laid up his garment by her, until his lord came home. 17 And she spake unto him according to these words, saying, The Hebrew servant, which thou hast brought unto us, came in unto me to mock me: 18 And it came to pass, as I lifted up my voice and cried, that he left his garment with me, and fled out. 19 And it came to pass, when his master heard the words of his wife, which she spake unto him, saying, After this manner did thy servant to me; that his wrath was kindled. Genesis 39:7-19*

This was a subtle roadblock. If Joseph had given in to carnality, that would have put an end to all his years of being disciplined and making uncommon sacrifices. The pressures of Portiphar's wife were overbearing. Yet, Joseph refused the lure of a cheap private sin.

THE LAST ENEMY

Joseph would rather die than offend his God. Joseph did not know that he was dealing with the last enemy. He did not know that he was standing before the last

hurdle or roadblock. Joseph played the man and God favoured him.

> *The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way. 24 Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand. 25 I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. Psalm 3 7:23-25*

Although, he found himself in the prison, he did not give up. This was Joseph's last trial. The deeper the depths of the dungeon the more Joseph shine like a star. God gave Joseph uncommon favour because he had an uncommon destiny.

> *But the LORD was with Joseph, and shewed him mercy, and gave him favour in the sight of the keeper of the prison. 22 And the keeper of the prison committed to Joseph's hand all the prisoners that were in the prison; and whatsoever they did there, he was the doer of it. 23 The keeper of the prison looked not to any thing that was under his hand; because the LORD was with him, and that which he did, the LORD made it to prosper. Genesis 39:21-23*

At the end of the day, Joseph's destiny was catapulted to great heights. From the lowly position of a common prisoner, he emerged the prime minister of the greatest nation on earth.

THE DIVINE LADDER

Joseph had crossed the last hurdle. The final roadblock had been dismantled. Joseph, therefore, attained a status that went beyond his native environment. He became a world class star. His star shine to a point when he became the greatest ruler, next to Pharaoh.

> *And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is? 39 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art: 40 Thou shalt be over my home, and according unto thy word shall all my people be ruled: only in the throne will I be greater than thou. 41 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. 42 And Pharaoh took off his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen, and put a*

gold chain about his neck; 43 And he made him to ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried before him, Bow the knee: and he made him ruler over all the land of Egypt. 44 And Pharaoh said unto Joseph, I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt. Genesis 41:38-44

What we have discovered is that God is a specialist in convening roadblocks to divine ladders. No matter what happens, the roadblock shall vanish. The fire of God shall roast every roadblock mounted against you to ashes. You shall emerge victorious.

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The Author

Dr. D. K. Olukoya is the General Overseer of the Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries and The Battle Cry Christian Ministries.

The Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries' Headquarters is the largest single christian congregation in Africa with attendance of over 120,000 in single meetings.

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Dr. Olukoya holds a first class honours degree in Micro-biology from the University of Lagos and a PhD in Molecular Genetics from the University of Reading, United Kingdom. As a researcher, he has over seventy scientific publications to his credit.

Anointed by God, Dr. Olukoya is a prophet, evangelist, teacher and preacher of the Word. His life and that of his wife, Shade and their son, Elijah Toluwani are living proofs that all power belongs to God.

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