

Lift Up Your Heads O You Gates

A Prophetic Word Of Encouragement



Randolph Barnwell

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Other translations and transliterations of the Scriptures employed are listed below with their respective abbreviations as they occur in this writing:

AMP	:	Amplified Bible	MSG	:	Message Bible
BBE	:	Bible in Basic English	NIRV	:	New International Reader's Version
CEV	:	Contemporary English Version	NIV	:	New International Version
ERV	:	Easy-to-Read Version	NKJV	:	New King James Version
ESV	:	English Standard Version	NLT	:	New Living Translation
GW	:	God's Word Version	NRSV	:	New Revised Standard Version
ISV	:	International Standard Version	TNIV	:	Today's New International Version
KJV	:	King James Version	YLT	:	Young's Literal Translation
MKJV	:	Modern King James Version			

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Introduction

The following study is more of a brief prophetic word or teaching than a systematic doctrinal study. I ask the reader to receive the contents as a prophetic word for your life designed for your encouragement and edification.

This exhortative prophetic word explores the symbolic significance of the biblical phrase '**LIFT UP YOUR HEAD**'. It is something we are commanded in to do; yet something that God Himself does for us. There is great despair, discouragement, anxiety, pessimism, gloom, negativity, etc. in the world today. These conditions cause the head to hang down. A downward facing or drooping head depicts hopelessness, which negates the faith and confidence we should exhibit as sons of God. God is calling upon us to lift our heads and traverse through life with certainty and an assurance that is rooted in our identity as His sons, and in His nature as our Father. Our head posture must become and befit who we are. We are God's sons and our heads, which often represents the entirety of one's well-being and life, must be held high especially in the most trying and difficult of circumstances.

My prayer is that the principles shared in this brief study will assist you in your bid to maintain a lifted-up head position. Look UP! Do not look down! Your restoration, re-instatement and redemption is near!

This document is not written in my usual writing style format, which tends towards comprehensive description and explanation of concepts. Here, I simply offer quick thoughts and ideas in small nuggets of truth. Thus I leave much opened for you to explore issues further.

Important: I suggest that these notes be read in conjunction with listening to the accompanying seven part audio teaching series, available from my website, www.randolphbarnwell.com [go to the 'resource' tab].

May great grace and peace be your portion.

Randolph Barnwell

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Chapter One

Human Actions Determine Divine Response

Psalm 24:7 Lift up your heads, O **gates**, And be lifted up, O **ancient doors**, That the King of glory may come in!

Psalm 3:3 But You, O Lord, are a shield about me, My glory, and the **One who lifts my head**.

Psalm 3:3 tells us that God is the ONE who lifts up our heads. Psalm 24 indicates that we, the gates, must lift up our heads. God will lift our heads as we adopt the position of the lifted-up head posture.

Many times, human actions determine Divine response.

When we draw near to God, He draws near to us

James 4:8 Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double

If you humble yourself, God will exalt you.

James 4:10 Humble yourselves in the presence of the Lord, and He will exalt you

When we humble ourselves, seek God's face and turn from our wicked ways, He responds by healing our land.

2 Chron. 7:14 and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin and will heal their land

It is God's glory to hide a matter, only for kings to search it out.

Prov. 25:2 It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, But the glory of kings is to search out a matter

Kings find what God has hidden, for they activate God's desire to reveal what is veiled because of their searching and enquiring disposition. If there is no human searching after things God has kept secret, there will be no disclosure by God of those things.

If we seek Him, we will find Him.

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

If we seek Him with all of our hearts, we not only find Him, but He restores what was lost.

Jer. 29:13,14a You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you,' declares the Lord, 'and I will restore your fortunes

If we seek Him diligently, we not just find Him, but we activate His nature as 'rewarder'.

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

The intensity of the search determines the specific response from the Lord.

So then, if we desire HIM to lift our heads in the day of crisis (Psalm 3:3), it demands of us that we be focused on maintaining an internal posture where we remain resolute about lifting up our heads (Psalm 24:7).

Let us firstly inspect the symbolic significance of GATES (doors) and then later we will explore the prophetic application in reference to 'HEADS'.

Before proceeding, prayerfully read and meditate deeply upon the following passage:

Psalm 24:7-10

- 7 Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in!
- 8 Who is the King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle.
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates, And lift them up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in!
- 10 Who is this King of glory? The Lord of hosts, He is the King of glory. Selah

What Do Gates Represent?

What Must Be Lifted Up?

In this chapter we discuss the prophetic application of GATES. The heads of the GATES are commanded to be lifted up. What does this mean for us? We are the GATES! But our representation as GATES has a range of applications. So as we discuss each of the applications below – the challenge is to LIFT UP, emphasise, focus upon and accentuate each of these dynamics in our personal lives as well as in our corporate identity as a church.

1. THE CHURCH, THE FAMILY OF GOD COMPRISED OF SONS, FATHERED BY A SPIRITUAL FATHER

Gates refer to the Church, the House of God (Bethel), which is the **gate of heaven**.

Gen 28:17 He was afraid and said, "**How awesome is this place!** This is none other than the house of God, and this is the **gate** of heaven.

'Gates' refer to the household or family of God comprised of sons, upon which angels ascend and descend. We the sons of God, being fathered as sons of men, are the interface between heaven and earth, and the corporate environment of the family of God provides a portal to the heavenly unseen realm. Our connection to apostolic spiritual fathers grants us the privilege of bridging two realms. Thus the injunction to 'LIFT UP YOUR HEADS O YE GATES' refers to the corporate church/son, FULLY AWARE of their function to represent the eternal in time.

ZION refers to the church (Heb. 12:22) and "**The LORD loves the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob**" (**Ps 87:2 NRSV**). To fully appreciate the fact that GATES represents the entirety of every characteristic of what constitutes the church, I suggest you read Gen. 28 fully. To assist you, here below is a brief extract from my study, "The Word of God in The House of God (Part 2)", from my study series, 'The Primacy of the Word':

Genesis 28:10-22

- 10 Then Jacob departed from **Beersheba and went toward Haran**.
- 11 He came to a certain place and spent the night there, because the sun had set; and he took one of the stones of the place and **put it under his head, and lay down in that place**.
- 12 He had a dream, and behold, a ladder was set on the earth with its top reaching to heaven; and behold, the **angels of God were ascending and descending** on it.
- 13 And behold, the **LORD stood above it** and said, "**I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac; the land on which you lie, I will give it to you and to your descendants**."

- 14 "Your descendants will also be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east and to the north and to the south; and in you and in your descendants shall all the families of the earth be blessed.
- 15 "Behold, I am with you and will keep you wherever you go, and will bring you back to this land; for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised you."
- 16 Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "**Surely the LORD is in this place, and I did not know it.**"
- 17 He was **afraid** and said, "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the **house of God**, and this is the **gate of heaven**."
- 18 So Jacob rose early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up as a pillar and poured oil on its top.
- 19 He called the name of that place **Bethel**; however, previously the name of the city had been Luz.
- 20 Then Jacob made a vow, saying, "If God will be with me and will keep me on this journey that I take, and will give me food to eat and garments to wear,
- 21 and I return to my father's house in safety, then the LORD will be my God.
- 22 "This **stone**, which I have set up as a pillar, will be God's house, and of all that You give me I will surely give **a tenth to You**."

Jacobs describes his entire dream as '**the House of God**' (Bethel means 'house of God') - Gen. 28:17. **Note the following elements within this 'House' - all of these must be 'LIFTED UP' - focused upon - emphasised - and made practical:**

- **A Ladder Connecting Heaven and Earth.**

Heaven is God's throne and earth His footstool. The throne is the place from where He expedites His will. The earth is the venue in which His will finds swift enactment and momentum. The focus of heaven is Earth. The Heavens resource Earth. **The environment of God's House is where both realms interact.**

LIFT UP ... the fact that the church connects heaven and earth. We are the GATE of the Heavens. Lift Up Your heads O you Gates!

- **Angels Ascending and Descending.**

Angels ascending and descending refer to apostolic spiritual fathers who are able by the grace of God given to them, to access revelation or the Word of God in the heavens and declare and implement it on the earth. Angels are messengers of God carrying a divine message. Every 'house' or local church is headed by an angel of God - an earthly spiritual father carrying a Word from God in the heavens [the term 'angel' means 'messenger carrying a divine message'].

Note the point of origin of these 'messengers' is from the earth – they first ascend into the heavens to access the Word of the Lord and then descend into the earth to release this Word. These are not 'out of body'

experiences. Mankind was always meant to engage two realms, viz. heaven and earth. With our spirits we engage God in the Heavens, and with our souls, through our bodies, we can engage man on the earth. The point to be made is that those ear-marked as messengers of Christ have a unique and divinely given ability to know and discern the mind of God - the will of God - the Word of God, and are able to communicate this to those who are placed under their care.

Consider:

John 1:49-51

- 49 Nathanael answered Him, "Rabbi, You are the **Son of God**; You are the King of Israel."
- 50 Jesus answered and said to him, "Because I said to you that I saw you under the fig tree, do you believe? **You will see greater things than these.**"
- 51 And He said to him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, you will see **the heavens opened** and the **angels of God ascending and descending on the Son of Man.**"

LIFT UP ... the fact of your need for a spiritual father, who communicates to you God's Word and thoughts. Lift Up Your heads O you Gates!

• **The Lord Uttering His will for this House.**

See verse 13-15: The Lord echoes His will for Jacob. This is not something new but a continuation of the same promise made to Abraham and Isaac. Jacob is to explore nothing new except what was originally promised to Abraham. There is no place for personal ambition in the House of God. The will of God in the church has got to do with expressing His original design for mankind, viz. to represent Him fully in the earth both in terms of His nature (His character) and will (His purpose). Jacob, as a son to Isaac and grandson to Abraham, is to bring greater expression to the prophecies given to them. The same holds true for us today. We, as spiritual sons in the respective households to which we belong, must exist to simply give greater expression to the mandate of God given to our spiritual fathers in the Lord. The mandate given to spiritual fathers will also bear relevance to God's pre-existent design for mankind, viz. conformity into the image of Christ and to function representatively of Him in the execution of His purposes in the earth.

LIFT UP ... the fact of your need to embrace a greater and more corporate mandate attendant with your church – and this vested in and through your spiritual father – seek to support, galvanise, amplify and execute the assignment God has given him/her. Lift Up Your heads O you Gates!

• **The Realisation of the Presence of God**

See verse 16: The House of God has **the presence of God**.

Mat 18:20 "For where two or three have gathered together **in My name**, I am there in their midst."

Gathering in His name means a gathering in keeping with His nature and will. Where a gathering of the house or church of God depicts the nature of God and seeks to accomplish His will, then there is an assurance and guarantee of His presence.

LIFT UP ... the fact that you are committed to this - that every time you gather with other saints, that gathering will be hugely reflective of Christ's nature, will and authority --- for so we will be guaranteed of His presence. Lift Up Your heads O you Gates!

- **The House is the GATE OF HEAVEN**

The House of God is the gate of heaven. 'Gate' alludes to a point of access or entry. The portal to heaven is the church of God. The Kingdom of heaven is accessed through the House of God. The resource of the heavens is attained in the House of God. 'Gates' also symbolise authority and power.

Babylon refers to this world's evil beastly system, which we are called upon not to love. Babylon means confusion but also 'gate of the gods'. The world system is the portal through which satan finds access and influence in the world. The House of God is the portal through which God finds access and influence in the earth. The gates of hell will not prevail against the church that Jesus builds (Matt.16:18). Note – it is a **BUILT CHURCH** against which the authority of hell cannot prevail.

A BUILT HOUSE:

Mat 16:18 "I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock **I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.**

A built church is one which is built by laying down principles from the WORD of GOD.

Acts 20:32 "And now I commend you to God and to the **word of His grace**, which is able to **build you up** and to give *you* the inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Build = 'oikodomeo' = construct, confirm, establish

The word 'oikodomeo' has the idea of erecting a superstructure; of building up completely or fully. Repetitive and consistent exposure to the Word of God voiced through a spiritual father in the Lord has the effect of BUILDING YOU UP.

If the church is the GATE (portal/authority) of heaven and the gates of hell will not prevail against it as nations stream up to this 'Mountain of the Lord's House', then what constitutes and characterises the 'House of God' as BUILT?

- **The principle of family** (Refer to Session 8 in my teaching series, 'The Primacy of the Word')
- Each spiritual father must be **connected to a valid apostolic-prophetic grace resource** in order to **establish proper foundations** for building the House. (Eph. 2:19-22; 1 Cor. 3:10,11)
- The teaching and preaching of **relevant proceeding apostolic doctrine.**
- The **active obedient engagement** of the Word released. (Luke 6:46-48)

LIFT UP ... your personal commitment - that the church and you as an essential part of it is BUILT UP - in reference to the four bulleted points above, especially your heart and desire to building the spirit of FAMILY and your resolve to OBEY every Word. Lift Up Your heads O you Gates!

- **The Stone or Pillar of the House is Sonship**

In Gen. 28:18 the Hebrew word translated 'stone' is 'eben' – the root of which is 'ben' which means 'son, a builder of the family name'. The House of God builds sons through the Word of God, and sons build the family name, viz. the name of God (which reflects His nature and will). The stone served as Jacob's pillow when he had the dream. A pillow facilitates sleep which depicts a position of REST. Sonship produces the spiritual condition of REST which results from obedience (see Psalm 127). This stone then is anointed as a PILLAR. A pillar supports and strengthens the structure of a house. This pillar is also depictive of mature sonship.

Psalm 144:12 Let our **sons in their youth be as grown-up plants**, And our daughters as corner **pillars** fashioned as for a palace.

Pillars are sons, who have matured through obedience to apostolic doctrine.

Gal 2:9a and recognizing the grace that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were **reputed to be pillars**, gave to me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship.

LIFT UP ... the fact that you are a PILLAR in God's House – you are an obedient son. Lift Up your heads O you Gates!

- **A Commitment to Tithe in Response to what is the Revelation of God's House**

Jacobs commits to financially support what he sees in the house of God. His tithe is borne out of a revelation of the profound construct and internal dynamics of God's House.

[For a thorough teaching of 'Tithing', refer to my manual 'More Excellent Giving' freely downloadable from my website].

LIFT UP ... your commitment to consistently honour the Lord in tithes and offerings. Lift Up Your heads O you Gates!

Lifting up the head would be to lift up every dimension of all that the church represents as alluded in the points above. Lift up your heads church!

2. GATES - A PORTAL TO THE ETERNAL / UNSEEN

Gates imply access to everything Heavenly - unseen - eternal. As explained above, the church is the gate of heaven. The church is that domain - that portal that not only connects two realms, but also the access point that one (heaven) may find legitimate entry into the other (earth). So Heaven's will is done on earth in and through the medium of the church as the gate of God. You and I are God's access point into the earth. Lift Up your heads O you gates. In your own little private world, your family, your workplace, your business, your neighbourhood, etc., you become the expression of Heaven on earth. Lift up this reality within your life. God wants to infect your environment in and through your presence. Your job or occupation is simply God's excuse to affect that sphere in the earth. But He needs you. Lift Up your head O you Gates!

3. GATES / DOORS - THE NATURE AND CHARACTER OF CHRIST JESUS

Jesus elaborates the image of the gate ("door" in some older translations) in his Good Shepherd Discourse (John 10:1-17). Jesus calls Himself the gate.

John 10:9 (NRSV) **"I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved"**

The good shepherd "enters by the gate" and leads his sheep out through the gate of the sheepfold, an image of safety.

Hence, this challenges us to become all that HE is. If He is typified as a door and gate, then we are so. Thus, we as doors and gates must then model all that HE is – His nature and character in every way. Lifting up the heads of these gates and doors then means in this context, to elevate the level of your Christlike nature, character, behaviour, speech, decisions, etc. in every area of your life. Lift up Your heads O you gates!

4. GATES - AUTHORITY

Matthew 16:18 **I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.**

The gates of Hades or Hell represent the 'authority' of Hell. Gates also refer to authority. Our authority is vested in Christ, who is in us and we in Him. This authority flows out from who He is in us and who we are in Him. We are His sons and our authority emits from this place of anchored identity. If we do not know who we are, we will not know the authority attendant with our sonship in Christ. Be conscious of who you are in Christ and the power and authority that resides within you. Lift up your heads O you GATES!

5. GATES - STRATEGIC PLACES OF INFLUENCE

Immediately inside many city gates was an area where officials met and deliberated. Elders 'sat in the gates'. These were people of great responsibility and great influence. They had a legal function in that they determined policy by which the city would function. The phrase "**sitting in the gate**" implies the capacity to strategically influence key facets of city life. To "sit in the gate" implied **one's prominence in the community**.

God will cause many of His sons to occupy key positions in various sectors of human life. He will grant promotion and cause many to sit in key positions by which they will determine the legality or illegality of various behaviour and attitudes.

Lift up your heads O you gates - raise your capacity to make key decisions that will influence the thinking and behaviour and culture of whole communities.

At the visit of the angels to Sodom, Lot was sitting at the gate - indicative of the extent to which he had been drawn into the culture of the city (Gen. 19:1). Hence, this stresses the refusal to be assimilated into a leadership or position of influence where the sum total of your influence is negligible or negative as in the case of Lot. Lot could not positively influence Sodom with the ways of God, for by this time his soul was highly vexed and tormented by Sodom's lawlessness. He was rendered powerless to effect any change.

Your positioning to a place of influence will be to facilitate God's redemptive purposes for many. God will position someone in a place of influence for your redemption in some respect; and God will also position you for someone else's redemption. Consider how God positioned Boaz at the gate to redeem Ruth (Ruth 4:1). Lift up your heads O you gates!

6. GATES - OPPORTUNITIES FOR BUSINESS/COMMERCE

Business transactions were concluded at the gate - hence **buying and selling** - 2 Kings 7:1.

2 Kings 7:1 Then Elisha said, "Listen to the word of the Lord; thus says the Lord, ' Tomorrow about this time a measure of fine flour will be sold for a shekel, and two measures of barley for a shekel, in the gate of Samaria.'"

God is poised to favour and bless his sons who are in business to a degree not before realised. So position yourself mentally for this. Live in expectation of it. Lift up your heads O you gates!

7. GATES - WHERE YOUR WORKS OR FRUITS JUSTIFY YOU.

'Gates' also refer to the possibility of one's deeds speaking on one's behalf.

The virtuous wife of Proverbs 31, amongst other things, is also pictured as a hardworking and successful businesswoman. Her works praise her in the gates.

Prov. 31:31 Give her the product of her hands, And let her **works praise her in the gates.**

God is about to bring honour and esteem to His faithful and virtuous sons in significant places of influence (gates). This will give them a greater platform of influence and increase their acceptance – opening new realms of impact. Get ready for your works to speak for you.

Consider:

- Cornelius' prayers and almsgiving came up as a memorial before God. A memorial serves as a focus for memory of something, usually a person.

Acts 10:4 And fixing his gaze on him and being much alarmed, he said, "What is it, Lord?" And he said to him, "Your prayers and alms have ascended as a memorial before God

Cornelius' prayer and giving to the poor was forever embossed on the memory of God. Because of this, it activated a series of events that brought Cornelius into the new season of God and a new spiritual experience of salvation and baptism in the Holy Ghost (see Acts 10:1-22).

- It seems like the motivating factor for Dorcas being raised from the dead by Peter was her good deeds - her garments which she sowed for many widows were presented to him. Your works speak for you.

Acts 9:39-40 So Peter arose and went with them. When he arrived, they brought him into the upper room; and all the widows stood beside him, weeping and showing all the tunics and garments that Dorcas used to make while she was with them. But Peter sent them all out and knelt down and prayed, and turning to the body, he said, "Tabitha, arise." And she opened her eyes, and when she saw Peter, she sat up

Your good deeds will be used by God to bring a resurrection to many dead and dormant aspects of your life.

- The report of Ruth's kindness reached the ears of Boaz, who redeemed her. Boaz' redemptive function and role in Ruth's life is first and foremost activated by a report of the kindness she showed Naomi (her spiritual father).

Ruth 2:11 Boaz replied to her, “All that you have done for your mother-in-law after the death of your husband has been fully reported to me, and how you left your father and your mother and the land of your birth, and came to a people that you did not previously know.

You will reap if you do not faint and become weary in well doing. Maintain your good works. Do not be weary in well-doing - for you will reap in due time. Lift up your heads O you gates!

Gal. 6:9 Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary.

Lift up your heads you gates – embrace the fact that your good deeds will testify on your behalf before strategic and influential people who will show unparalleled kindness and favour as a result. Lift up your heads O you gates!

8. GATES - THE ACCURATE POSITION AND FUNCTION OF SPOUSES IN MARRIAGE

Prov. 31:23 Her husband is known in the gates, When he sits among the elders of the land.

Prov. 31:23a Her husband is known in the gates,

Prov. 31:31b And let her works praise her in the gates.

'Gates' are places of influence, authority and business. The husband of the hardworking virtuous wife is known in the gates AND his wife's works praise him at the gates. He occupies a position of great prominence and influence. His wife's works bring her and him commendation at the gates and not dishonour or disrepute. The virtuous wife here protects and aids the honour of her husband. There is coming a greater responsibility on both husbands and wives to ensure that proper divine protocol is observed in their relationship and in the home, so that each one's righteous behaviour will advantage the other.

The wife's works consolidate her husband's esteemed position at the gates – where her works are praised. She does not bring discredit to him, but instead fuels his honourable place and function in society.

The husband's privileged place also encourages and advantages his wife's works and efforts in business (gates). Both parties bring benefit to the other. No one party is slack, parasitical and only reliant upon the other's efforts alone. Both are strong and have an advantaging effect upon the other.

9. GATES - A CONDITION, MINDSET, HEART, ENVIRONMENT IN WHICH WISDOM MAY BE HEARD LOUDLY

Wisdom cries out at the gates. Hence GATES also allude to a new **level of wisdom** – loud and clear.

Prov. 1:21 At the head of the noisy streets she cries out; At the **entrance of the gates** in the city she utters her sayings.

‘Lift up your heads O you Gates’ – thus also includes raising the level of wisdom with which one functions. Trust God for fresh expressions of wisdom in your life.

10. GATES - ENTRY INTO A NEW PHASE OR EXPERIENCE ACCOMPANIED BY RENEWED STRENGTH

Since the primary function of a gate was to provide entry, gates can symbolise entrance into any realm, experience and activity. In Scripture, we read of the following: Gate of heaven (Gen 28:17), Gates of death (Job 38:17; Ps. 9:13; 107:18), Gates of righteousness (Ps. 118:19), Gates of Sheol (Is 38:10), Gateways of the morning and evening (Ps 65:8 -NRSV) and the Gates of Thanksgiving (Gratitude) - Ps. 100:4. The ‘gate’ of each dimension here is an entrance into that experience. Let us just focus on two of these:

- **Gateways of the Morning**

Psalms 65:8 ‘You make the gateways of the evening and the morning shout for joy’ (NRSV)

Psalms 30:5 For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, But a shout of joy comes in the morning.

Psalms 110:3 Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew.

The womb of the dawn signifies the birthing of a brand new day with new joy (which comes in the morning). Morning indicates new possibility - new hope. Do not live in the weeping of your night when the joy of your new morning has already broken upon you. This is the day the Lord has made - I will rejoice and be glad in it. The freshness of a new day brings with it dew - which is likened unto youth - hence each new day brings a youthfulness filled with vigour, fervency. This indicates new strength and focus.

The new day could be literal or figurative. Figuratively, God is going to present to us new realms - the beginnings of some brand new phase of His gracious dealings with us. Lift up your heads O you gates! Lift up your head to look for the newness of a fresh experience, a new task, a different assignment, etc.

- Gates of Thanksgiving

Psalm 100:4 Enter His gates with thanksgiving And His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name.

Thanksgiving expresses gratitude for **that which God has done**. It also expresses gratitude to God for **who He is**: “Give Thanks unto the Lord for **He IS** good and His mercies endure forever”.

When Should You Give Thanks? The highlighted portions below provide the answers.

1 Thes. 5:18 In everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

Eph. 5:20 Always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

Heb. 13:15 Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.

Col. 3:17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

Why should you give thanks?

Generally we give thanks to God in response to what He has done. We express gratefulness for His blessing - “Now **thanks be** to God **for His** unspeakable gift” (1 Cor. 9:15). Thanksgiving must also be offered for the **PERSON of God**, not just for His **PERFORMANCE** only.

The following scriptures highlight **some of the reasons** to thank God: [These are from the NKJV]

Psalm 92:1 It is good to give thanks to the LORD, And to sing praises to Your name, O Most High;

Psalm 107:1 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good! For His mercy endures forever.

Eph. 5:20 Giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus ...

1 Cor. 15:57 But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom. 7:24, 25 Who will deliver me from this body of death? I thank God - through Jesus Christ ...

1 Tim. 1:12 And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He ...

Many scriptures exhort us to **GIVE thanks**. But other scriptures also challenge us to **BE thankful**.

Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.

There is a difference between **giving thanks** and **being thankful**. While ‘giving thanks’ should be a reflection that one ‘is thankful’, you can also utter thanksgiving without being thankful. The notion that we **give** thanks limits the experience of thanksgiving to simply that of thanks emitting from us to God. It reduces the experience to **an act** of giving thanks. Whilst this is biblical and correct to engage in, there must come a deeper dimension where the total sum of our lives and existence exudes profuse thanksgiving, so that what is uttered as thanks is simply the vocalisation of an entire heart and life that is soaked and pickled in

gratitude toward God. So, thanksgiving must not be something I only **'do'**, but **'thankful'** must be **who I am**. When you ARE something, to DO or EXPRESS IT is not only easy but also inevitable. Giving thanks should flow effortlessly from one who is THANKFUL. BE THANKFUL today. Be it. Then GIVE or express it.

When you as the GATE of God abound in your disposition of thanksgiving, then the gates of thanksgiving will open up to you specific blessings promised in God's Word. Here are a few:

- | | |
|---|-----------------------------|
| ✓ Peace: | Col. 3:15; Phil. 4:6,7 |
| ✓ Completeness and Wholeness: | Luke 17:15-19 |
| ✓ The Miraculous; Multiplied Provision: | John 6:11; John 11:41 |
| ✓ Freedom and Liberty: | Jonah 2:9,10; Acts 16:25,26 |
| ✓ Maturity and Spiritual Growth: | Col. 2:6,7 |
| ✓ Divine Access: | Psalm 95:2 |
| ✓ Praise and Worship | Psalm 100:4 |

Psalm 100:4 does not imply that there are steps in approaching God, eg. first come with thanksgiving, then with praise, then worship. **The principle of Psalm 100 is that there comes a degree of ease in accessing the courts once gates have been opened.** The gates are described as thanksgiving and the courts are called praise. When gratitude abounds and overflows in your life, praise will be the most spontaneous thing, and worship will be the natural consequence and outcome.

Lift up your heads you GATES! Lift up your nature as a THANKFUL son of God and excel in the expression of thanksgiving. Lift up your heads O you gates!

11. GATES - A DEFENSIVE MECHANISM BARRING INTRUSION OF ALIEN THREATENING ELEMENTS

A city wall was its first defense against external enemies. The gates represent the most vulnerable part making the city susceptible to invasion. It is said that if you broke through the gates, you in essence conquered the city. If the gate fell (was "possessed"), the city itself was considered to have fallen (Gen 22:17; 24:60). If you take the gate, you have essentially taken the city. Hence the phrase, "POSSESS the enemy at the gate" – Gen. 22:7.

Gates were the focal point of attack, hence the priority for the gates to be fortified, strong and impenetrable.

The lament of Nehemiah over Jerusalem was that the walls were broken and the gates were burned. When gates are burned down, walls are more easily broken.

Neh. 1:3 They said to me, "The remnant there in the province who survived the captivity are in great distress and reproach, and the wall of Jerusalem is broken down and its gates are burned with fire.

Gatekeepers controlled entry into and exit out of the city. The position of gatekeeper implies the act of guarding against illegitimate entry. The Lord promised to be a strength to those who are able to turn away the battle/onslaught at the gate.

Isaiah 28:6 A spirit of justice for him who sits in judgment, a **strength to those who repel the onslaught at the gate.** (NASB)

Isaiah 28:6 strength to those who **turn back the battle at the gate** (ESV)

If the onslaught is thwarted at the gate, the city is protected from invasion. We need people to arise as gatekeepers. These need to lift up their heads, which in this context speaks of consolidated strength and heightened vigilance. Lift up Your heads O you gates!

Gatekeeping could also refer to being watchful over the 'gates' or access points to the domain of our souls, e.g. the eyes and ears - what we see and what we hear deeply affects the state of our spirits and souls. Hence we need to 'turn back the battle' at these gates too. LIFTING up one's head thus also implies greater watchfulness over what you personally allow into your life - into your mind - into your soul - into your spirit. Lift up Your heads O you gates!

On another level, gatekeeping could also allude to vigilant sons in a household of faith neutralising any behaviour or mentality that seeks to insidiously creep into and negatively affect the biblically established culture of the local church as determined by the spiritual father of that house. Jesus drove moneychangers out of the house for they misrepresented and abused His Father's original intent for the house and its culture, claiming that it should be a house of prayer, but they made it a den of thieves. Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and elevate your obligation to ensure that the culture of your father's (Heavenly Father and spiritual father) house is not violated. If left unchallenged and un-dealt with, error can pose a threat to the overall effectiveness of the house. Lift up Your heads O you gates!

12. OPENED GATES REPRESENT A CONSCIOUS DESIRE TO INVITE OR LURE PEOPLE INTO THE KINGDOM

In ancient times, gates of cities remained opened during the day (although still guarded). Opened gates are indicative of the inviting, attractive and relational quality of the city. This highlights the inviting nature of the household of faith - all nations will stream up to her and say 'teach me your ways' (Isaiah 2 and Micah 4).

Isaiah 60:11 "Your gates shall **always be open**; day and night they shall not be shut" (NRSV).

Rev. 21:25 The gates of the New Jerusalem "will never be shut by day- and there will be no night there" (NRSV)

This verse indicates that the gates will not be shut because the night element is removed (“there will be no night there”). If the element of the night - the darkness - is extracted, then the gates remain perpetually opened. Night or darkness alludes to ignorance and works of the flesh. When these are non-existent because of the brightness of the character of the Christ amongst us, then this is (a) our greatest protection from external attack and attempts at dilution of the strength of the Christ culture, and (b) our greatest motivation and draw card to reel people into the Kingdom.

Luke 14:23 And the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled.

Compel = anagkazo = to necessitate, constrain, to drive, to entreat.

Open gates depict the fact that the church is so strong and so immune to defeat by intrusion of foreign or alien elements that its gates can remain open. It can invite men in because it is convinced of its power to transform. Ultimately it will not even have walls (Zech. 2:4).

‘Compel’ men to come into the Kingdom of God and be a part of His Church, the Body of Christ. Beyond your responsibility to minister the gospel to all men, also actively invite people to meetings hosted by your spiritual father at your church. ‘Compel’ people to come “that my house may be filled”; constrain and entreat them. Use all available technology as well to broadcast and give exposure to kingdom events, e.g. facebook, twitter, email, text messaging (e.g. whatsapp, BBM), etc. Your lifestyle of complete devotion and obedience to God, and your Christ-like character, should ultimately be the greatest advert you have to cause people to want to attend Church gatherings. Lift up your heads O you gates!

Lift Up Your Head

Lift up your heads, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors,
That the King of glory may come in

Psalm 24:7

In this section we look at the prophetic and symbolic meaning and application of 'heads' in the phrase 'lift up your HEADS O you gates'. Gates refer to us, the church; as well as to specific dispositions that should be present within us, or areas of influence we need to consciously appropriate.

The opposite of a lifted up head is one that hangs down. The hanging head suggests despair, discouragement, hopelessness, depression, etc. There is medical condition called **Dropped Head Syndrome** - also known as 'chin-on-chest'. It is a serious medical condition where the person is unable to lift up the head. They always look down, having their constant perspective only as earthy; they have problems swallowing food and problems breathing. Many things cause it, but common causes are weak back muscles - especially those close to the back of the neck; a curved spine is also a cause. Can you see the spiritual application of these things? It affects your swallowing of food (WORD); and breathing (SPIRIT). It also affects perspective and spiritual sight.



Significance of the Head:

The head is probably the most **vulnerable part** of our bodies. Decapitation results in instant death. Thus, the psalmist affirms and is confident that it is God who protects his head.

Psalm 140:7 O God the Lord, the strength of my salvation, You have **covered my head in the day of battle.**

The helmet of salvation protects our minds - thought life - mentality.

1 Thess. 5:8 But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a **helmet, the hope of salvation**

Eph. 6:17 And take the **helmet of salvation**, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God

Isaiah 59:17a And a **helmet of salvation on His head**

Symbolically, the Lifting up of the Head Alludes to the Following:

1. SHARPENING ALL THE SENSES OF THE HEAD - Spiritually:

The head contains vital organs essential for effective function:

- ✓ **Brain / Mind** = Mentality; Thought; Mindset
 The renewal and renovation of the mind. The need for correct thinking and belief.
 - Lift up your head! Lift up your mentality and thinking and align it accurately to God's thoughts; Lift up your ability to understand God's word and voice.

- ✓ **Eyes** = Prophetic Sight
 God said to Abraham - 'Lift up your eyes - look north, south, east and west'.
 Accurate prophetic sight required a lifted-up head posture.
 - Lift up your head! Lift up your capacity to see spiritually and prophetically.

- ✓ **Nose** = Discernment
 - Lift up your head! Lift up and harness your power of discernment of spirits and your capacity to judge accurately.

- ✓ **Ears** = Hearing the Lord
 Lift up your head! Lift up your hearing ability!

- ✓ **Mouth** = Utterance (Speech)
 Lift up your head! Lift up your power of accurate grace-filled speech.

2. THE WILL AND ABILITY TO SPEAK AGAINST INACCURACY

John the Baptist opposed and spoke out against the moral evil of the unlawful union between Herod Antipas and Herodias. For doing this, his head was decapitated (Mk 6:24-28). John's head represents not only his death but also a cessation of his vocal disapproval of this unrighteous behaviour of the couple. A decapitated head and one that hangs down represents one who no longer stands up against inaccuracy, immorality, etc.

A lifted up head then is suggestive of one who does not overlook error, immorality or any attitude and behaviour that violates God's will and standards. Lift up your head and be vocal where God's ways are diluted. Be intolerant of blatant, flagrant and willful violation of God's Word and moral standards. Silence is a subtle form of surrender and it gives tacit approval to that which is erroneous. Be guided by the spirit of God in your approach to challenge any departure away from Biblical norms and practices - use wisdom - speak in love - let your motive always be redemptive.

3. TO BE FILLED WITH HOPE AND CONFIDENCE CONCERNING GOD'S DELIVERANCE IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE

Lifting up the head also includes being filled with HOPE and CONFIDENCE in God that He will deliver you from any crisis.

Psalm 3

- 1 O Lord, how my adversaries have increased! Many are rising up against me.
- 2 Many are saying of my soul, "There is no deliverance for him in God." Selah.
- 3 But You, **O Lord, are a shield about me, My glory, and the One who lifts my head.**
- 4 I was crying to the Lord with my voice, And He answered me from His holy mountain. Selah.
- 5 I lay down and slept; I awoke, for the Lord sustains me.
- 6 I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people Who have set themselves against me round about.
- 7 Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God! For You have smitten all my enemies on the cheek; You have shattered the teeth of the wicked.
- 8 Salvation belongs to the Lord; Your blessing be upon Your people! Selah

Psalm 27:5,6 For he will hide me in his shelter in the **day of trouble**; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock. And now **my head shall be lifted up** above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing

Hope is a mental attitude of expectation regarding the future. The 'Helmet of Salvation' is part of our armory. A helmet of hope protects the mind from pessimism, discouragement and despair.

A Valley of Pain can become A Door of Hope : Read Hosea 2:14 – 23 (esp. v.15)

Hosea 2:14-15 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her, Will bring her into the wilderness, And speak comfort to her. ¹⁵**I will give her her vineyards from there, And the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; She shall sing there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt.**

Achor means '**trouble, tribulation or to make sorrow.**'

Achor is a valley in the Judean Desert and located between Judah and Benjamin (Josh. 15:7). Based on biblical references, the territory and valley were barren or a wilderness (Isa. 65:10; Hos. 2:15).

Achan was executed there for his treason (Josh. 7:24–26). The name 'Achor' means "pain" or "trouble" as does Achan's name. Achan impeded the forward movement of God's purposes for Israel because he disobeyed Joshua by taking the devoted things from Jericho. God dealt with him by ordering his death in the Valley of Achor. So God's judgement of Achan in the valley of Achor also represents God's just dealings with disobedience or any obstacle within a corporate company that prevents their advance into God's purposes.

Lift up your head because God has dealt with your disobedience and error, and now there is a door of hope – an entrance into new expectations of a positive and glorious future for you in God.

Achan could also represent a person – i.e. associations and friendships that do not facilitate our acceleration into Divine purpose. Once these are removed, the valley of Achor (pain, trouble, sorrow) becomes a door of hope.

God is transforming the Valley of Trouble and Pain into a Door of Hope; the experiences that brought pain and trouble is actually going to be the point of access (door) and entrance into a brand new experience. Read the entire context of the verse above: it relates to God bestowing supernatural provision from a place of wilderness. The wilderness becomes a vineyard. Anticipate new levels of abundance and provision from the Lord. Your 'Achan' characteristics have been removed and now the Achor Valley of pain, trouble, lack and wilderness becomes a door of healing, hope and abundant provision. Your wilderness will become a vineyard. Lift up your head!

Note verse 15: **"She shall sing there, As in the days of her youth, As in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt".**

God will cause such rejoicing as was present when He delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage – and He describes Israel in this phase of her journey with Him as being in her 'youth'. At times, when we mature in God we often become faithless to trust Him for significant miraculous expressions of His power and ability to deliver. I just sense that in the present season there is going to be reminders of just how powerful He really is. Expect hope to rise from contexts of trouble and tribulation. You will sing again! Lift up your head!

Consider Joseph:

Gen. 41:50-52

Before the year of famine came, two sons were born to Joseph. Asenath, the daughter of Potiphara priest of On, bore them to him. Joseph called the name of the firstborn **Manasseh**. "For," he said, **"God has made me forget all my hardship and all my father's house."** The name of the second he called **Ephraim**, **"For God has made me fruitful in the land of my affliction."**

Manasseh was so named for God's gracious and providential dealings in Joseph's life. God's dealings with him caused him to forget all the pain and trial attendant with the trouble his brothers brought him in his father's house. God made him fruitful (Ephraim). God allowed him to temporarily forget the pain of his father's house and blessed him, but before his prominent position in Egypt was to be used by God to effect divine purpose, he had to revisit the issue of pain from his brother's betrayal and hurt inflicted upon him – and he did this by forgiving them. One's 'Ephraimic' purpose is only practically released to effect divine purpose, when one revisits and deals with one's 'Mannasehic' experiences. Lift up your head! Forget the things which are behind and press forward for what lies ahead of you! Forgive your brothers who hurt you! Embrace a new level of double fruitfulness! Lift up your head!

1 Thessalonians 5:8 But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the **breastplate of faith** and love, and **as a helmet, the hope** of salvation.

In this verse, faith is described as a breastplate, which protects the area around the heart and vital organs. Hope is described as a helmet, which protects the head - the mind. Thus faith exists in the heart, and hope relates to the mind. Faith includes hope. Hope is a mental attitude of expectancy concerning the future. Faith is a firm condition of the heart – a strong internal conviction that you possess NOW in the present (“**Now** faith is ...” Heb.11:1). When you have faith, you have hope also. The world has hope without faith, but only hope based on faith will stand.

Heb. 11:1 - Faith is the substance (*of things*) hoped for ...

Hoped for = elpizo = to act with desire. Hope, a core ingredient of faith, is expressed by outward expressions or acts characterised by fervency and desire.

God has an awesome future and destiny for you. He has plans to give you a **HOPE and future** (Jer. 29:11 - NIV). Do not let despair, discouragement and hopelessness take root within. Like David did, learn the skill of encouraging yourself in the Lord.

One essential skill you must master is the capacity to encourage yourself in the Lord in seasons of aloneness or absence of support from people from whom you expected it.

1 Sam. 30:6 ... David was GREATLY DISTRESSED; for the people spake of stoning him, ... : but David ENCOURAGED HIMSELF in the Lord his God." (KJV)

Your spirit should lead your soul (which tends towards despair at times) to focus on the Lord, to hope in Him and praise Him for the help He is.

Psalms 42:5 Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? **hope** thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance

It is by the power of the Spirit that we abound in hope, as God, who is the God of hope fills us with joy and peace in our faith-filled belief in Him and His Word.

Rom.15:13 Now may the **God of hope fill you with all joy and peace** in believing, so that you will **abound in hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Lift up your heads O you gates! Lift up your focus upon your God, who is Your Hope, and will fill you with joy and peace. Lift up your heads and abound in hope by the power of the Holy Ghost. Lift up your heads and start to do works, acting with fervent desire as you execute plans into action - so that you might do God's will attendant with your life. Lift up your heads O you gates!

4. A SIGN DECLARING ONE'S INNOCENCE; DIVINE JUSTIFICATION

Job 10:15b If I am wicked, woe to me! And if I am **righteous, I dare not lift up my head.**

Righteousness or innocence here is equated with 'lifting up of the head'. I have the prophetic sense that for many in this season, God will divinely and sovereignly justify you in some respect where there has been false accusation. There will be no need for you to attempt to clear your name or seek to exonerate yourself from false accusation. Hold your peace, be still and see how God will bring acquittal to you. Lift up your head O you gates and do not become embroiled in bitter discussions of blame labelling of someone else in order to establish your innocence and rightness. Leave that to the Lord. Be lamb-like. Do not live under the torment and pressure of what people may think of you. Lift up your head O you gates and expect Divine justification.

5. THE MOST VIOLENT FORM OF SELF ASSERTION – AN INTENTION TO WAR; THE NON-ACCEPTANCE OF OPPRESSION

Lifting up of the head indicates an uproar of people rebelling against some inaccuracy, error, oppression, etc., which they refuse to accommodate or accept.

Psalm 83:2 For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have **lifted up the head**" (KJV)

With a negation, the phrase 'lift up your head' may symbolise submission to another power:

Judges 8:28 Thus was Midian subdued before the children of Israel, so that they **lifted up their heads** no more (KJV)

Hence to 'lift up the head' implies the non-acceptance of any oppressive element. This is not carnal rebellion, but a positive spiritual assertion for truth, accuracy and total liberty.

Another example can be found in Genesis 14 where kings, after being financially oppressed for 12 years, rebelled against Chedorloamer's exploitive financial tactics.

Psalm 27:5,6

- 5 For he will hide me in his shelter in the **day of trouble**; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will lift me high upon a rock.
- 6 And now my **head shall be lifted up** above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the Lord.

Lift up your heads O you gates! Do not accommodate oppression, exploitation, manipulation, etc. of any kind. Assert your right to freedom.

Gal. 5:1 It was for freedom that Christ set us free; therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.

6. THE RELEASE FROM IMPRISONMENT - ENCASEMENT - LIMITATION

2 Kings 25:27-30

- 27 Now it came about in the thirty- seventh year of the exile of Jehoiachin king of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty- seventh day of the month, that Evil-merodach king of Babylon, in the year that he became king, released Jehoiachin king of Judah from prison (*i.e. 'lifted up his head' in original Hebrew*);
- 28 and he spoke **kindly to him and set his throne above the throne of the kings** who were with him in Babylon.
- 29 Jehoiachin changed **his prison clothes and had his meals in the king's presence** regularly **all the days of his life**;
- 30 and **for his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, a portion for each day, all the days of his life.**

The phrase '**released ... from prison**' at the end of verse 27 is read literally in the original Hebrew as '**lifted up his head**'.

KJV : v.27 Evilmerodach king of Babylon in the year that he began to reign did lift up the head of Jehoiachin king of Judah out of prison (**KJV**)

The King of Judah is released from prison but still exiled in Babylon. In a sense this is still imprisonment. But there was a prophecy to be fulfilled regarding aspects of God's general will attendant with Judah. So while this played itself out, God ensured favour be granted to the king. I sense that even though you might not yet fully experience the fullness of our liberty in Christ or that you may not totally know by experience the fullness of prophetic promises, that God will give signs and indications of our full freedom that we reach out for, by favouring us in specific respects. These will be signs pointing toward total fulfillment. Lift up your heads and watch for the signs.

Note the following :

- **A king is a king wherever you place him**: He is set as king above other kings in Babylon. Rule in the midst of your enemies. Thrive in whatever situation you may find yourself. Lift up your heads O you gates!
- **His prison clothes are changed**: Start to dress (figuratively) characteristic of your next season in God. Prison clothes speak of confinement and limitation. Taking them off suggest a breaking of limitation. Clothes depict identity. Take off the image in your mind that you are still a prisoner. Change

your garments for the Lord is about to release you from confinement. Adopt a broader and limitless mindset within yourself. Clothes also indicate empowerment for service; prepare for a new assignment. Clothe yourself with Christ. Clothe yourself in righteousness. Put on the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness. Lift up your heads O you gates!

- **He had his meals in the King's presence:** His diet changed. A better quality of food was now given to him. Expect a higher qualitative provision from the Lord - both spiritually in terms of the Word, and practically in terms of physical provision.

The king ate with prisoners before, but now he eats with the king of Babylon himself. This alludes to dining with and before a new audience - new protocols, mannerisms and behaviours were to be adopted. God will set a table for you in the presence of your enemies (Psalm 23). "You cannot rule in the midst of your enemies until you learn to eat at a table before enemies" (Thamo Naidoo). Lift up your heads O you gates!

- **A regular allowance was given to him:** This speaks of a consistent flow of provision because of favour from a significantly influential person. Expect it. Lift up your heads O you gates!

7. RESTORATION AND REINSTATEMENT TO A FORMER POSITION

Lifting up the head also speaks of God's intention to restore and reinstate you to a former place or position of function - one that was lost because of disobedience, sin, indiscretion, unwise decisions, inaccurate associations, etc. But God is about to restore your function and cause you to take up again the mandate once previously given to you.

Example 1: Peter [This segment is extracted from my notes on Stages in Sonship; the 'paidon' son is still a developing son, not yet totally mature.]

John 21:4-6

But when the day was now breaking, Jesus stood on the beach; yet the disciples did not know that it was Jesus. So Jesus said to them, "**Children** (*paidon*), you do not have any fish, do you?" They answered Him, "No." And He said to them, "Cast the net on the right- hand side of the boat and you will find a catch." So they cast, and then they were not able to haul it in because of the great number of fish.

After Jesus' resurrection, Peter took off his mantle and went fishing. Jesus appeared to him and the disciples whilst they fished and essentially commissions them back to apostolic function. Peter places his mantle (coat) back on again and proceeds towards Jesus. This speaks of a remantling – a taking up again of a previous purpose and call.

Jesus, after the resurrection, at His third appearing to His disciples who went fishing, called them 'paidon', perhaps alluding to the fact that they reverted to a wrong preoccupation (fishing) for ...

- (1) failure to understand how the will of God was playing itself out,
- (2) failure to comprehend 'how' and 'where' Christ is to be recognised, revealed and understood in the current disclosure of Himself to the earth,
- (3) failure to discern the dealings of God with them in that season of their lives – and hence they, in discouragement, went back to a former engagement – but one in which they could not manifest any fruit (no fish), until they reconnected with the risen Christ.

At times the paidon son might not fully understand a specific season of his life, how God is dealing with him in that season, especially in reference to God's purposes for him and how this should play itself out. More so, it might seem as if the Lord has abandoned the son, for the son is somewhat unaccustomed to the new revelation of Christ that is wanting to break through to his mind in this time. Failure to fully understand these things may cause discouragement in the son; there is a sense of futility in regards to the time he has given himself to God's ways and will, and deems that all this has amounted to nothing (for the disciples it was three years). He may abandon his calling in God and the vigour with which he pursues it, although he is still in relationship with God. He might pursue a previous preoccupation or 'lesser' engagement (as in 'fishing') with little or no fruit of divine favour on it (they caught no fish).

I love the way the Lord deals with His disciples who displayed these tendencies. There is no harsh rebuke. Instead, He issues a command to cast their nets on the right side of the boat. They hear a familiar voice they knew for three years. They catch a massive haul of 153 fish, which in Jewish gematria signifies mega sonship – or mature sonship; this was symbolic of the standard of sonship to which they had been called – 'huios'. John recognises that such results borne to obedience to such a voice could only be the work of the Lord Jesus Himself. Peter then re-mantles himself – placing his garment back on which he had taken off in order to fish. This is symbolic of a re-commitment to his role as an apostle of Christ. Peter is then challenged to feed the lambs and sheep as an expression of his love for Christ and hears again the familiar command, "Follow me".

At times God may respond with great provision in order to teach the paidon son who is called to significant levels of commitment to God's purposes (as Peter was) that He will take care of him and that he need not revert to dependance on his own way to provide for his own need. This great divine provision accomplishes much more than this. It signifies to the son the great love and mercy of our Father and thus evokes a response within the son to undistractedly and wholeheartedly pursue God's will at any cost (this is evidenced in John 21 where Jesus unveils to Peter the type of death he would die and Peter's willingness still to follow the Lord in spite of this).

Lift up your heads O you gates and take up your original calling!

Example 2 : The Butler

The butler in Joseph's day was restored to his former position. Pharaoh imprisoned him, but then Pharaoh released him.

Gen. 40:13 within three more days Pharaoh will **lift up your head** and **restore you to your office**; and you will put Pharaoh's cup into his hand according to your **former custom** when you were his cupbearer.

Gen. 40:20 Thus it came about on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, that he made a feast for all his servants; and he **lifted up the head of the chief cupbearer** and the head of the chief baker among his servants.

There will be a turning in the heart of Pharaoh toward you. That person who orchestrated your incarceration, imprisonment - placed roadblocks in your path, frustrated your promotion and development, etc. - will now have a turned and altered heart disposition towards you. They will show you unparalleled kindness and put into play processes that will ultimately lead toward your total restoration of a mandate and purpose you need to execute for God. He/she who was once angry with you, will now begin to favour you. Jesus grew in FAVOUR with men; you too can GROW in favour with men. Expect to be the recipient of unusual acts of kindness. Lift up your heads O you gates!

God's anger is momentary, but His favour is generationally enduring.

Psalms 30:5a For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime.

Isaiah 54:7,8 For a brief moment I deserted you, but with great compassion I will gather you. In overflowing anger for a moment I hid my face from you, but with everlasting love I will have compassion on you," says the Lord, your Redeemer

Ps. 103:9-14 He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. For he knows our frame; he remembers that we are dust.

The butler was restored as the CHIEF Butler - not to a lesser position, but to the highest level in that occupation. God did much more for him than one would have anticipated given his circumstances. Expect this for your life too! Lift up your heads O you gates! God will do far beyond what you ask or imagine!

Meditate on the following Scripture prayerfully. Read each line slowly, thoughtfully, with insight and understanding:

Eph. 3:20 (KJV)

Now unto **HIM**
 Now unto him **THAT IS ABLE**
 Now unto him that is able **TO DO**
 Now unto him that is able to do that **WE ASK**
 Now unto him that is able to do that we ask **OR THINK**
 Now unto him that is able to do **ALL** that we ask or think
 Now unto him that is able to do **ABOVE** all that we ask or think
 Now unto him that is able to do **ABUNDANTLY** above all that we ask or think
 Now unto him that is able to do **EXCEEDING** abundantly above all that we ask or think
 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think
ACCORDING THE POWER THAT WORKS IN US

EPH 3:21: Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen

May your asking and thinking align itself fully to 'God's exceeding abundantly above all' capacity.

EPHESIANS 3:20

**Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all
 that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us**

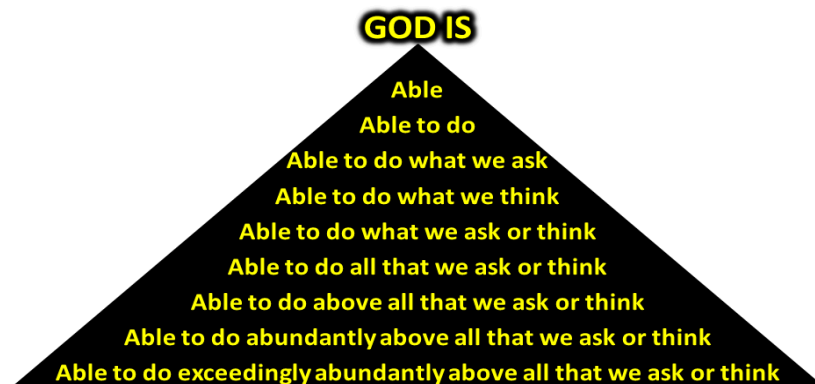


Diagram Source : New Covenant Fellowship

Do the same exercise with the following verse of Scripture:

2 Cor. 9:8 (Nasb)

AND
 And **GOD**
 And God is **ABLE**
 And God is able to **MAKE**
 And God is able to make **ALL GRACE ABOUND**
 And God is able to make all grace abound **TO YOU**
 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, **so that ALWAYS**
 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always **HAVING ALL**
 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all **SUFFICIENCY**
 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency **in EVERYTHING**
 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, **you may HAVE AN ABUNDANCE**
 And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance
FOR EVERY GOOD DEED

Two key words in this verse are 'all' and 'abound'. 'All' (inclusive of 'always') occurs five times.

2 Cor. 9:8 'And God is able to make all grace abound to you; that ye, always (*or at all times*) having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every (all) good work.'

Five is the number of grace.

- Note:
1. **ALL** GRACE
 2. AT **ALL** TIMES
 3. HAVING **ALL** SUFFICIENCY
 4. IN **ALL** THINGS
 5. FOR **ALL** GOOD WORK

2 Cor 9:8 is promised to faithful givers - those who are financially faithful and obedient have a right to claim this promise.

8. THE NEARNESS OF FINAL REDEMPTION AND FULFILLMENT OF PROPHETIC WORD

Luke 21:25-33

- 25 "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves,
- 26 men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the **powers of the heavens will be shaken.**
- 27 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.
- 28 But when these things begin to take place, **straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near."**
- 29 Then He told them a parable: "Behold the fig tree and all the trees;
- 30 as soon as they put forth leaves, you see it and know for yourselves that summer is now near.
- 31 So you also, when you see these things happening, **recognize that the kingdom of God is near.**
- 32 Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all things take place.
- 33 **Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away**

This prophecy was fulfilled historically – but all prophecy has an immediate and future prophetic/symbolic application. The latter is what I want to stress here in reference to our topic. Everything in heaven and earth is being shaken. There might be some shaking in your personal world too. But from this context, great redemption will issue forth. The kingdom usually manifests out from a context of crisis. Every crisis unveils a new kairos. Whilst going through great personal calamity, sonship identity and maturity come forth. Israel, God's firstborn son, was released from Egypt amidst great turmoil and crisis. Have the proper view of your present suffering or crisis. It indicates that some measure of redemption is imminent or near. Factor out complaint and negative speaking in your suffering; simply learn the God-ordained lesson quickly and come to obedience swiftly. There is a direct command in the passage above to LIFT UP YOUR HEADS when the context dictates that your head should be hanging down. The reason put forth is that YOUR REDEMPTION IS NEAR – i.e. you are so close to it – it is right at your door.

We suffer for righteousness sake and should not suffer for our own evil doing. The Father will subject His son to persecution and suffering as part of his process to maturing His sonship through obedience. Master whatever area of obedience God is calling you to. Lift up your heads O you gates! Your redemption is imminent!

9. THE REPRESENTATIVE HEADSHIP PRINCIPLE IN LEADERSHIP

'Head' also refers to the headship or leadership principle. Thus the requirement for leadership in any context to LIFT UP THE HEAD is essential.

This also is the representative principle in that if we do it, we cover those under our leadership, as well as inspire others to do the same. The word 'head' can designate an individual person, who is representative of a whole group, e.g. Joseph's head is representative of his whole tribe (Gen. 49:26; Deut. 33:16).

The husband is the head of the wife and the head of his home. Husbands' 'lift up their heads' - assume responsibility and lead purposefully. They must not abdicate their role and function.

10. ANOINTING ON THE HEAD

Heads of kings and priests were anointed before they assumed office. A lifted head is an anointed head ready and empowered for active service. But generally speaking, all of God's sons need to have an anointed head.

Psalm 23:5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You have anointed my head with oil; My cup overflows

The word 'ANOINT' in Hebrew means 'TO MAKE FAT' – symbolically indicating the profuse abundant oil used. In this is:

- (a) Protection.
- (b) Abundance, Prosperity, Favour, etc. (so that 'My cup runs over').
- (c) Doing things to be seen by God only (Matt 6:17).
- (d) Honour, welcome, etc. (Luke 7:46). It was a courtesy due to an honoured guest.
- (e) Empowerment for Service.

The origin of anointing was from a practice of shepherds. Lice and other insects would often get into the wool of sheep, and when they got near the sheep's head, they could burrow into the sheep's ears and kill the sheep. So, ancient shepherds poured oil on the sheep's head. This made the wool slippery, making it impossible for insects to get near the sheep's ears because the insects would slide off. From this, anointing became symbolic of blessing, protection and empowerment.

Ecc. 9:8 Let your clothes be white all the time, and let not oil be lacking on your head.

Anointing also alludes to the work and empowerment of the Holy Spirit within us.

Deut. 28:15 and 40

- 15 “But it shall come about, if you **do not obey the Lord your** God, to observe to do all His commandments and His statutes with which I charge you today, that all these curses will come upon you and overtake you:
- 40 “You shall **have olive trees throughout your territory** but **you will not anoint yourself with the oil**, for your **olives will drop off**.

Note here that the one who is disobedient will not have the capacity to ‘anoint himself’. ‘Anointing yourself’ is activated by obedience. Ruth was command by Naomi to ‘anoint’ herself (Ruth 3:3).

The Holy Ghost is given to them that obey Him.

Acts 5:32 “And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has **given to those who obey Him**.”

Lift up your heads O you gates! Through an obedient lifestyle maintain the Holy Spirit’s anointing within your life.

11. THE VICTORY AND POWER OF AN ENTHRONED KING – AN EXERTION OF GLOBAL RULE

Psalms 110:1-7

- 1 The Lord says to my Lord: “Sit at **My right hand** Until I make Your enemies a footstool for Your feet.”
- 2 The Lord will stretch forth Your strong **scepter from Zion**, saying, “Rule in the midst of Your enemies.”
- 3 Your people will volunteer freely in the day of Your power; In holy array, from the womb of the dawn, Your youth are to You as the dew.
- 4 The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, “You are a priest forever According to the order of Melchizedek.”
- 5 The Lord is at Your right hand; He will **shatter kings in the day of His wrath**.
- 6 He will judge **among the nations**, He will fill them with corpses, He will shatter the chief men over a broad country.
- 7 He will drink from the brook by the wayside; **Therefore He will lift up His head**.

Lifting up the head includes the embracing of God’s agenda to rule the nations. We must understand and actively support global apostolic initiatives in the nations of the earth. Lift up your heads O you gates!

Who is This King Of Glory?

The description of God who ‘comes in’ does not only highlight unique specific characteristics that are true to Him, but also that which He wants to specifically effect when He comes in. Every revelation of God is relevant to what He desires to effect. The person of God strongly relates to the purpose of God.

Psalm 24:7-10

- 7 **Lift up your heads**, O gates, And be lifted up, O ancient doors, That the **King of glory** may come in!
- 8 Who is the King of glory? The **Lord strong and mighty, The Lord mighty in battle.**
- 9 Lift up your heads, O gates, And lift them up, O ancient doors, That the **King of glory** may come in!
- 10 Who is this King of glory? The **Lord of hosts**, He is the King of glory. Selah

The Description of the One who Comes IN:

The King of Glory

The Lord - Strong

The Lord - Mighty

The Lord Mighty in Battle

The Lord of Hosts

Strong	=	izzuz	=	forcible; an army; power, strong
Mighty	=	gibbor	=	powerful, warrior, tyrant, champion, chief
Mighty in Battle	=			a mindset of warring on your behalf

He who comes into your world, experience, situation, life, etc. is Strong and Mighty – and He not only comes with might and strength but He expects us His sons to also exhibit a robust strength and might. Discouragement is replaced by encouragement; despair is replaced by hope; unbelief and doubt are replaced by faith; pessimism is replaced by optimism; weakness is replaced by strength.

Let the weak say I am ‘strong’.

Joel 3:9,10 Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare a war; rouse the mighty men! Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up! Beat your plowshares into swords And your pruning hooks into spears; Let the weak say, “**I am a mighty man**” (NASB)

- KJV** - Let the weak say I am strong
- ESV** - Let the weak say, "I am a warrior.
- GW** - Weaklings should say that they are warriors
- BBE** - Let the feeble say, I am strong
- ERV** - Let the weak say, I am a strong soldier
- YLT** - Let the weak say I am mighty
- MSG** - Let the weak one throw out his chest and say, "I'm tough, I'm a fighter"

Note the emphasis on the word 'SAY' in the scripture above. It highlights the importance of accurate confession and speaking. By our utterance we assert and appropriate our inward reality and mentality. You are strong; you are warrior. So SAY it.

Lord of Hosts

Gen 2:1: Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts.

God is a man of war. He is a Mighty Warrior determined to destroy all His demonic enemies (Exodus 15:3-4; Isaiah 42:13; Revelation 19:11).

'Hosts' = Tsaba = a mass of persons (or figurative things), especially regularly organised for war (an army).

The Word 'Hosts' implies ...

1. Everything created to function with military precision; highlights God as a man of war.
2. The idea of servanthood – everything was created with order and ranking to serve a specific purpose.

So when the Bible refers to the **Lord of Hosts**, it is referring to the Lord as the **'Lord of armies'** or the **'Lord of people and things organised for war'**

As you lift up your head, see God in a war-like posture prepared to do battle on your behalf and expect every heavenly and earthly resource to be directed towards you by God's hand.

Lift Up Your Eyes - Help Comes

In lifting up your head, your eyes naturally will tend to be lifted up to. This depicts one who is fixated upon the Lord. It points to one who is full of faith, hope and confidence despite his/her circumstances - simply because of where the eyes are positioned - viz. UPON THE LORD.

Psalm 121:1-8

- 1 I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come?
- 2 My help comes from the Lord, Who made heaven and earth.
- 3 He will not allow your foot to slip; He who keeps you will not slumber.
- 4 Behold, He who keeps Israel Will neither slumber nor sleep.
- 5 The Lord is your keeper; The Lord is your shade on your right hand.
- 6 The sun will not smite you by day, Nor the moon by night.
- 7 The Lord will protect you from all evil; He will keep your soul.
- 8 The Lord will guard your going out and your coming in From this time forth and forever.

The lifted-up head posture is one where you have a revelation of God as your HELP. The recognition for the need of help is a cry for assistance from a source outside of yourself. It is a humble position devoid of pride.

In times of our need, we are called upon to approach God's Throne of Grace for HELP. This help is given when grace and mercy are dispensed.

Heb. 4:16 Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Grace is God's enabling power. His mercy is an act of kindness for which we are undeserving.

The Syro-Phoenician woman cried for mercy and later expressed it in simply saying, "Lord, HELP me" (Matt 15:25).

Whilst 'my help comes from the Lord' (Ps.121:1,2), help must not be seen as something God gives, but everything HE IS, for 'God IS a very present HELP in the time of trouble' (Ps. 46:1).

Help is not 'assistance' from God. Help IS God. The Spirit is called our Helper (John 14:26). Help is a person, not an expression of aid per se. Receive the HELPER, the Spirit, and the outcome of experienced help will be your portion. He, the Spirit of God, within you is your means of Divine Help. Help comes from God within you! Lifting up your eyes to hills from where your help comes is really a look within yourself to tap into and take full advantage of the Spirit's presence and power.

Lift up your heads O you gates, and lift up your eyes to see that God is intent on HELPING you by dispensing great grace to you and showing you great mercy. He who made the heavens and the earth wants to HELP you. His credentials are 'maker of the heavens and the earth' (Ps. 121:2) - He IS your help. There is

nothing too difficult for Him. Nothing is impossible with Him. Position yourself for the reception of a huge expression of Divine aid! Lift up your heads O you gates. Who is your Help? He is the King of Glory. He is the Lord, strong and mighty. He is the Lord, mighty in battle. He is the Lord of hosts. He is a VERY PRESENT HELP in the time of trouble.

Isaiah 49:8

NASB: Thus says the LORD, "In a favorable time I have answered You, And in a day of salvation I have helped You;

NirV: The LORD says to his servant, "When it is time to show you my favor, I will answer your prayers. When it is time to save you, I will help you.

The early part of King's Uzziah's fifty two year reign in Judah was characterised by significant and rapid success in many and different areas and respects, because he sought the Lord. This notable success was because God helped him – and God helped him 'MARVELLOUSLY' (wonderfully or miraculously).

2 Chron. 26:15b Hence his fame spread afar, for he was **marvelously** helped until he was strong

2 Chron. 26:16 But when he became strong, his heart was so proud that he acted corruptly, and he was unfaithful to the Lord his God

Unfortunately Uzziah became seduced and polluted by his own fame and success. Pride filled his heart and he began to act corruptly and disobeyed God by burning incense in the temple, a function reserved only for priests. When the priests corrected him, he refused to accept their correction and became angry with them. The Lord struck him with leprosy and he lived in a leper's house all his days until his death. Part of Uzziah's problem, amongst many things, was that he did not ACKNOWLEDGE that God was the source of his help. Always give conscious acknowledgement to God as the source of your help.

Prov. 3:6 In all your ways **acknowledge** Him, And He will make your paths straight.

Deut. 8:11-18

11 "**Beware that you do not forget the LORD your God by not keeping His commandments and His ordinances and His statutes** which I am commanding you today;

12 otherwise, when you have eaten and are satisfied, and have built good houses and lived *in them*,

13 and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and gold multiply, and all that you have multiplies,

14 then **your heart will become proud** and you will forget the LORD your God who brought you out from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.

15 "**He led you** through the great and terrible wilderness, *with its* fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty ground where there was no water; **He brought** water for you out of the rock of flint.

16 "In the wilderness He fed you manna which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do good for you in the end.

17 "Otherwise, you may say in your heart, 'My power and the strength of my hand made me this wealth.'

18 "But you shall remember the LORD your God, for it is He who is giving you power to make wealth, that He may confirm His covenant which He swore to your fathers, as *it is* this day.

Verse 12ff : **Disregard for God's Word makes one susceptible to pride and trust in one's own sufficiency and ingenuity, to the total dishonour and disregard for God.** You begin to function independantly of God. Regard for and obedience to His Word is the mechanism ensuring our perpetual acknowledgement of Him for all our successes and thus keeps us humble as we totally depend on Him for everything.

It is obvious in the above verses that there exists the possibility of coming into bountiful provision and contentment in having all physical needs met because of the gracious providence of God, and yet because of this very fact, be seduced away from God. This will be the case if one has **not established the priority of God's Word as a fundamental principle in one's life.**

Seeking to live exclusively in the realm of having one's every external need and want satisfied, without a deep, internal desire to hear and obey His word, is to be prone to deception and eventual departure from the path of accuracy and prophetic fulfillment.

Samuel consciously acknowledged God as the source of Israel's help. We would do well to consistently do the same.

1 Sam. 7:12 Then Samuel took a stone and set it between Mizpah and Shen, and named it **Ebenezer**, saying, **"Thus far the Lord has helped us"**.

Ebenezer means "The stone of help".

Lift up your heads, O gates, And lift them up, O ancient doors, That the King of glory may come in!

May great grace, mercy and peace from Christ be yours in ever increasing measure!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Randolph is happily married to Rene since September 1990. He has three sons [Matthew, Liam & Luke] and one daughter [Rae]. He has been serving the Lord since 1982, and has been engaged in active ministry since 1990. He has served in various leadership capacities within the context of local church and the community in which he grew up.

He is a qualified teacher/educator and taught at high school level for seventeen years, before entering full-time ministry as the senior elder of a local church, Eternal Sound Ministries, which he planted in Durban in September 2005. The church was renamed 'Gate Ministries - Durban Central' in September 2013.

The church is apostolic-prophetic in emphasis and functions with the following mandate, viz. to mature all people into the fullness of Christ, to facilitate the accomplishment of the eternal purposes of God, to accurately reflect God's image and glory, and to reconcile all things in Christ, both visible earthly and invisible heavenly realms.

Randolph's primary grace is that of teaching with an apostolic-prophetic emphasis. He is focused on the development of various resources, which capture and document eternal, un-altering principles for effective functioning in life to swiftly accomplish personal and corporate divine destiny. To this end he writes study manuals, books, records audio teachings in series format, and produces musical products.

He is also passionate about capturing principles of God's Word musically. He has written many songs used by many churches.

OTHER RESOURCES:

Spiritual resources from Randolph Barnwell designed for edification, enrichment and encouragement are freely downloadable from:

www.randolphbarnwell.com

www.thekingdomplatform.com

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