

GRACE TO REIGN

Principles for Living in God's Favour and
Reigning in Life

Understanding the difference between the Old and the New
Testament

ONÓRIO CUTANE

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PREFACE

The time of grace brought to us by Jesus Christ reveals the loving character of God, our Father, and our creator. After his fall by sin, man shut himself off completely from God and opened the doors to evil in all its forms. God, for his love for humanity and through the blessing of his great will, rescued his masterpiece, sending his only begotten son to die on the cross, thus the beginning of a new time. In this way, he validated the New Testament based on the blood of Christ.

Jesus Christ enters God's program and complies with God's law in existence until then, improving it and reforming it radically until its abolition. Let us understand by dissolution: the perfect realization of the improvement and reform of the law. According to what the Holy Scripture shows us, new time, end of the Old Testament, or Covenant and start of the new time.

We have two fundamental periods outlined in the 66 canonical books in the Holy Bible: 39 of the Old Testament and 27 of the New Testament. Is the New Testament the result of the abolition of the Old Testament? Yes, but the New Testament doesn't cancel it, in fact, it is its continuation. God of the imperative orders, decrees and for forgiveness, atonements, burnt offerings, etc. A long history that traces the path and announces a coming light, that is, the Messiah and a time when God will be close to man.

The Old Testament is a historical foundation; it has a vital role in the chronology of events. It founds, that is, establishes our faith in the sacred scriptures and in the accounts of men and women of faith who have walked with God. Our Ancestors of the Holy Bible give us the importance of faith in God, like Patriarch Abraham, a

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friend of God and man of faith like Job, a man of undefeatable faith, and many others.

The New Testament comes to complete the history of the relationship between God and men – it confirms God as the Lord of all history and shows us a faithful and human God, a manifest in the person of Jesus Christ and radical in his love. That is why Jesus was named Emanuel, that is, God with us (Isaiah 7:14/Matthew 1: 23/Romans 1: 3-4). A God who questions specific practices, as we see when Jesus catches cobs and heals on the Sabbath. A God who integrates lepers, repentant adulterous women, sick people. A God who values people's faith and not their own degree to a tribe have no access between different people – lost sheep from their home Israel and puppies, that is, Gentiles. The new Covenant of universal openness of salvation to humanity. This Covenant is sealed by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ – the promised Messiah, the lamb of God – the integrator and synthesizer of what is God's plan. Against the fall caused by Adam's sin, Jesus Christ brings grace to humanity, and through grace, we enter the fullness, in the total enjoyment of what God reserves for us – he has secured since the world's creation.

A Grace to reign is an ability given to us by faith, prayer, and full communion with Jesus Christ, God's lamb. It is the result or consequence of perseverance in the life of every Christian. It is the result of total surrender to a God-oriented life, nourished by the Word, by the Holy Spirit, by the love for one's neighbor and God, a lifetime of forgiveness and liberation from any resentment or sorrow of a dark past. A life of intercession and acts of grace to the Lord.

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A requirement

However, to achieve grace to reign, we must become aware of what we are not and the greatness of the God we believe in and serve. The greatness of his mercy, leniency, compassion for humanity, and (God bequeathed his creation to us) over which we must rationally reign, administer, and collaborate with our work and creativity. With our intervention in the material field – God made us in his image and resemblance to collaborate with him as co-creators and keep his creation at the desired level. But his creation or materialization passes through the Spirit; this is where God gives us his grace to access holy virtues and divine abilities.

To have access to grace to reign in love is to love in fullness, friendship, and companionship with God. Grace is an apotheosis, a high point, a precious prize for those who walk with God and are at the service of their neighbor. God is love and only will be known and will exist and live in the hearts of those who genuinely love and above all conditions and circumstances, especially the adverse ones.

God calls us to return to our initial state, and his method and strategy are based on the love manifested in the various revelations that culminate with Jesus Christ. Our adherence must be in knowledge of the cause and attain knowledge. Multiple works of formation, instruction, meditation, and study are at our disposal to enrich ourselves and elevate us in our relationship with our savior. The book in hand is one of them that I wrote thinking of you, dear reader, to help you in your spiritual growth so that you may reign in life overall circumstances through Jesus Christ, our Lord. An organized and progressive study of Scripture allows us to embrace an incredible universe of divine knowledge.

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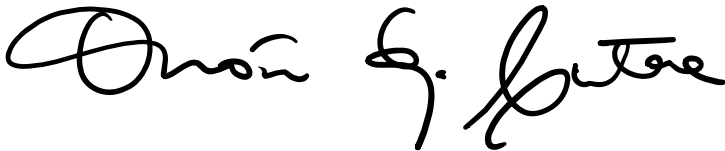
Grace to reign gives us a new way of reading and understanding the knowledge of God. Once again, our consciousness is called for contribution. It's with it we can move.

Open your heart, awaken your consciousness, and have vigilance to read the signs of the fullness of time in your environment. Then, seek and find God to reign in all things and receive the grace of God to pray over all circumstances and be an empowered worker to the righteous causes of your creator.

To better use the revelations presented in this book, it is advisable not to read it superficially as if it were a newspaper but calmly and openly in prayer and meditation.

Dear reader, I pray for you that the Holy Spirit speaks to you and impacts your life and ministry as you read this piece. Now I invite you to travel with me through the pages of this book and take ownership of the revelations that will recharge your spirit and free your mind. Seize the grace to reign and live above the circumstances of this world.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Oron G. Gutre". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with large, connected letters.

CHAPTER I

The concepts and dimensions of grace

“For if by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:17 NIV).

What does grace mean? The word grace comes from the Greek term “*Charis*” and has to do with the divine influence on the Spirit of man and the results or impact it creates. The Holy Spirit carries out this influence in the heart of man producing in him a change for the glory of God. This word is also associated with the concept of charisma and thanksgiving. To understand grace, we need to look at it in two dimensions. These dimensions summarize the definition of this word. This term is not very common in today’s language because many people do not understand its real meaning.

Well, let us look at the two dimensions or levels of the manifestation of grace:

1. First: Grace means God’s undeserved (unmerited) favor

This denotes something you don’t have to work or sacrifice to have. For example, the Apostle Paul, explaining to the Church of Ephesus said, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV). This Scripture reveals that salvation is grace. In the Old Testament, it wasn’t like this, it was necessary to keep the ceremonies, and the law

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saved. We received salvation by grace. We didn't deserve it, but God didn't take our sins into account, and he decided to justify us by faith in his son Jesus.

The problem is that many people want to deserve it, and when God has specific blessings, peace, and salvation for us by grace, many believers cannot receive it. They think they have to achieve a level of holiness and glory to be accepted by God. But the Holy Bible is clear: "We are all saved by grace." Accept this fact and receive your salvation. It's like your Father is going to a shopping mall and paid foodstuffs and clothes for you.

Then he would come back and give you the payment receipt with the items already paid for and tell you to go to the mall alone and pick them up. How would you react? I'm sure you would go to the mall calmly and rested that your Father has already paid for it for you. You would just present the receipt and take the things home.

But that's not what many Christians do. They are like that son who goes to the mall crying and when there, starts rolling around on the floor and complaining of hunger and misery while he has the receipt in his hand. That's because he wants to deserve; he is not content with the fact that somebody paid for him, and his part is receiving and being grateful. The grace of Jesus Christ brings reconciliation with God and makes our lives shine.

God's grace as an undeserved favor embellishes our lives. Grace can beautify your life. Once, when I was still in my college days, some colleagues came to me: "Onório, your face is glowing, what kind of cream or oil did you apply? You bought expensive creams, so you're glowing". I answered, "Yes, it's the grace of God working in my life." Yes, grace covers your mistakes, your flaws, and your limitations and exposes the beauty and glory of God. Women

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go to healers looking for ointments or amulets to apply and attract men on the street. Ointments and charms won't work; only grace will be enough for him. It can make you shine in the eyes of your fiercest opponents. It can make you stand out in some situations, but incredible ones. It breaks the action of demons that prevent people from being appreciated at their fair value.

In the professional, social, family, and academic context, we see anomic and incomprehensible situations—people with rich and envious resumes without a job. Disagreements in homes, different conflicts culminate in hateful relationships between members of the same family—women without homes or expelled from homes. People without a good profile in society and so many evil works are the fruit of the influence of demonic spirits. But all this succumbs to the grace to reign. This grace removes the dark veil that prevents what people truly are or should be according to God's plan and program their creator. Grace restores, rebuilds, and puts man on his track.

I prophesy that God's grace begins to work in your life now, in the name of Jesus. The battle is not for the strong ones; the race is not for the fast ones, but for those that have received the grace of our Lord Jesus and walk in it. Grace produces light and favor in your life. So be it, from now and forever!

By grace, people will look and will see the light in you. That is why Jesus said, "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden" (Matthew 5:14 NIV).

What does the light do? It shines, and the darkness disappears. Grace can lift and promote you. She makes you a prosperous person. It's not because of your intelligence, cleverness, or human ability, but because of God's favor acting in you. How

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many businessmen and women with good marketing and advertising systems are out there, but no customers come? If you are a child of God, then connect yourself to this grace now. Grace can enrich your life, and you can have more joy and more peace and see progress. The Scripture confirms this: “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9 NIV).

Grace removes bad luck and the entire dark cloak of your life. God’s grace makes you reach where your human efforts would not take you. We have a spark of how God’s favor worked on those who believed in him in the Old Testament. For example, Joseph prospered even though he was a domestic servant at Potifar’s house. Even in jail, God covered him with grace, and from slave and prisoner, he became Prime Minister of Egypt. Esther went from slave to queen. May God give you favor today. If you are a woman from home and your home is not stable, then you can pray with me like this: “Father, give me grace and favor in the eyes of my husband, in the name of Jesus.” If you do so, you will see changes at home. Where there was darkness or gloom, there will be light. May God give you grace in your marriage, in your work, and in everything you touch, in the name of Jesus.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the word of God that created the entire universe of things that are seen and those that are not seen. However, he left the splendor of Heaven and chose to be born in a crib, sharing accommodation with animals for the sake of himself and me. He made himself poor so that in his poverty, we would be prosperous. The favor of God enriches and doesn’t increase pain. It makes you acceptable. Grace qualifies people.

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Because of sin, we weren't qualified to enter the New Heavenly Jerusalem. But Jesus qualified us with his own blood so that we could be children of God. In your work sector, the boss doesn't look at your Curriculum Vitae; he simply liked you and gave you a job. The favor of God attracts good things to your life and brings joy and happiness. What you didn't deserve, you receive for grace. Refuse to be poor because Jesus made himself poor for you. Refuse to live sick and ill because Jesus carried your diseases and illnesses.

The favor of God is the beauty of God reproduced in the Spirit of men. That beauty can be visible in your life. People look at you and see the beauty and glory of God in your life. This beauty of God can manifest itself in all areas of your life and make it flourish. The favor of God blesses you, and the Scripture says: "The blessing of the Lord brings wealth, without painful toil for it" (Proverbs 10:22 NIV). This grace can cover you so that people look at you and see the glow of God. It destroys all the Works of the devil in the life of the believer. Say this with me: "Thank you, Lord Jesus, for your grace!"

Dear reader, when you start to experience this grace in your life, wherever you go, you are a source of admiration for many, a wonder. That is why David said, "In a wonderful and terrible way, I was raised." You become a surprise to many. Who would have thought that a slave such as Esther would be a queen?

Who would have thought that a mere shepherdder like David would be King of a nation? Who would have thought that a mere slave and domestic servant like Joseph would be prime minister of a country? Who would have thought that an evil, persecuting man of the Church like Saul would be transformed into the Apostle Paul and would carry sublime revelations from God? Who would have thought that a mere fisherman like Simon (Peter), James, and John

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would be instruments of God and conveyors of the message of salvation in Christ?

Who would have thought that a mere tax collector like Matthew would be an apostle of Jesus Christ? Who would have thought that a mere young man like Timothy would be pastor of the Church of Ephesus? Who would have thought that a woman found in adultery by Pharisees and doctors of the law who deserved to be stoned would be forgiven by the Master and given a chance at a new life, clean of her sins and without condemnation? Who would have thought the leper rejected by the Jewish community would be accepted by the Master and cleansed from his leprosy? Who would have thought that an impure woman by hemorrhage that lasted almost twelve years would touch the Master's robes, be healed, and be socially normal again? The answer is simple: it is all by grace. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for your grace in my life.

When you recognize that you didn't deserve to be saved and that Christ gave himself up for you, you will surrender to him and will live by grace. When you surprise many by grace and get where nobody thought you would get? They will ask you: "How did you get there without qualifications?". In response, you will say, "The blood of Jesus Christ has qualified me." By recognizing God's grace in your life, you become humbler. The Scripture attests: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble" (James 4:6 NIV)

How to walk in this grace? Surrender to Jesus. More grams of humility because you recognize that it is the work of Christ, it is the Holy Spirit in action. That's why you are going to thank God. Every day: "Thank you, Lord, Thank you, for grace, kindness, and life. Thank you". The more you thank, the more grace you will have. There will be a new stage where before asking, God will have answered. At this level, you live by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Each time God acts for men even without being qualified and deserving, we see God's grace in action. Grace gives you access to positions or places where your natural abilities would not allow you to get or reach. It makes you reign in life.

Take note: grace is not an opportunity to continue to sin deliberately. It is a chance that God gives to start fresh again. Grace empowers you not to continue to sin. Do you remember the adulterous woman brought to Jesus and the religious people who wanted to stone her? According to the Old Testament, she should have been stoned till death according to the law. But she was brought at a time in which Jesus got the advent of the New Testament. He didn't condemn her; on the contrary, he forgave her by saying: "I do not condone you, go and sin no more." The woman stood before the grace of Jesus Christ, undeserved favor. She should have died, but Jesus allowed her to start her life again free of sin. You and I were sinners and deserved death, but, by grace, Jesus died for us and gave us his life. That is called undeserved favor. Dear reader, understand that the life of the believer is a product of God's grace. That is why there is no failure in us. God's beauty is in us and manifests itself every day. Glory to God!

2. Second: Grace as divine empowerment

Grace also means the unique ability or divine empowerment. It has to do with the power of the Holy Spirit that empowers you to do or accomplish extraordinary things above your human capacity or ability. That is why Apostle Paul said: "But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10 NIV). Paul had reached the level of understanding that everything he was able to do for the Kingdom of God and the Gospel had not been his force or human ability but

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the mere grace of God. He meant that he worked empowered and supported by the Lord's grace. At this level or dimension, grace is understood as divine empowerment, that is, an influence of the power of the Holy Spirit on the Spirit of Man, empowering him of doing and accomplishing supernatural things.

God's grace is divine equipment and equipping of God in the heart of man to accomplish God's work or fulfill his will in some issues. In fact, those whom God calls to his work, He empowers them, and that ability is done through his grace. A deep look at the Holy Scriptures reveals that most people God called and used in his work received a portion of the Lord's grace. The fact is that nobody will do God's work with their own force, intelligence, or human faculties. Because the things of God are supernatural and often appeal to an intervention above this world's resources, which only God can do through man. In this sense, man becomes an instrument skilled and empowered by God through divine power, that is, by grace, to walk, work or run strengthened in his inner man.

How did unlettered and ignorant men like Simon, Peter, James, and John manage to preach God's word boldly and perform outstanding work for the kingdom of God?

From a human point of view, men were not qualified to stop before thousands of people and teach or preach a message with such power. What qualified them?

It was the grace of Lord Jesus. God uses grace as a resource so that at the end of the day, man will give glory and praise to the Highest, recognizing that "it was not by his own strength, but by God's grace."

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For instance, there was a time when the apostles Peter and John were brought before the Sanhedrin to be questioned about the miracle that had happened to the man who hadn't walked for nearly forty years. The Sanhedrin was the national council of religious affairs at that time. This body governed spiritual matters and was composed of the high priest, Pharisees, Sadducees, who were different religious sects, but all under the law of Moses. They didn't want to hear about Jesus Christ or the fact that he had risen from the dead. So one of the primary missions of the first apostles was to witness the fact that Christ had risen from the dead, preach repentance and forgiveness of sins, and proclaim that salvation was in Christ.

Consequently, whoever accepted this fact and believed in it with their hearts was saved by faith in Jesus Christ. The religious leaders did not want that; they wanted to continue to guard the law of Moses and observe the rituals of the Old Testament, ignoring the fact that the Messiah had arrived. For them, the Messiah was yet to come. And because of that, they were the most significant detractors and persecutors of Jesus Christ, his apostles, and the Early Church.

They wanted to maintain a religion without power, without life, and the presence of the Holy Spirit. They wanted to serve God in the flesh, in their human capacity without God's grace that was in Christ. They tried to pretend to swim toward God without a boat or ark that is Jesus, who was already available to bring all those who believed in him to their heavenly Father. To this day, the religious leaders and conservators of traditional and religious rituals have been the biggest persecutors of men and women of God in the entire world. They fail because they do not know the Scriptures and do not even understand God's power. They dissociate the word of God from the power of the Holy Spirit, which shouldn't happen.

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The word and the Spirit always go hand in hand because it is the word that reveals God's character and nature. It is the word of God that reveals God's will, his plans, and purposes to the man he created on the one hand, and on the other, it is the Holy Spirit that confirms the word with signs and wonders. It is him who materializes God's promises in our lives, turning material, that is, visible and tangible what God promised in his word. We see that in the process of the universe's creation: the Spirit of God moved on the face of the abyss, above the front of the waters, and God said: let there be light, and there was light. God would speak, and the Holy Spirit would materialize, creating what God spoke in his word. But the religious leaders at that time were more attached to the law than to the Spirit. They were not spiritually or psychologically flexible to read the times and understand that salvation had come with Lord Jesus Christ. As they couldn't understand it, they started attacking.

In verses 6 and 7 of chapter 4 of the text of Acts of the Apostles, we read: "And Annas the high priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high priest, were gathered together at Jerusalem. And when they had set them in the midst, they asked, by what power, or by what name, have ye done this?". Read with me verse 8: "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them (...)". In this context, all Peter said in response to the religious threats and persecutions was through the Holy Spirit's empowerment. He did not have to prescribe what he would answer or how to answer. He had the solution, the answer within his inner man, in the person of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit was and still is the most incredible ministerial resource that Jesus bequeathed to the apostles, to the early Church, and to us today. They lived full and filled with the Holy Spirit every day. That is why Paul said: "Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one

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another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:18-19 NIV).

Peter spoke boldly and bravely the word of Christ. Remember that this is the same man who recently denied Jesus for fear of being killed. Three times he denied he knew Jesus until the rooster crowed. But, even so, fear wouldn't let him at ease. It didn't let him accept being associated with Jesus Christ, his Master. But, this time, he had received the grace of the Lord Jesus.

He had received the gift of the Holy Spirit and had been empowered by it. He was a different man, full of wisdom and boldness, produced in his heart by the grace of the Lord. We need this level of grace to progress in life. We need this grace to bring the Gospel to places considered dangerous. It takes courage, that is, fortitude in your Spirit, and for that to happen, pray and ask for strengthening of the Lord. He will do it.

I remember when I was still a teenager and was going to evangelize the house of one of Boane's greatest healers (witches, wizards). Some had advised me not to go because the healer (witch, wizard) was dangerous and could send a thunderstorm upon me. But I had received the grace of Jesus Christ and recognized it in me: “He who is in me is greater than the demons in that healer.” So I went there boldly and filled with Christ's compassion in me. I evangelized the man, and he and his family accepted Jesus, and his children came to Church with me; glory to God! The Holy Spirit is our greatest resource in life and ministry.

Apostle Peter, along with John, was no longer a fearful man. The body and face of Peter were the same, but in his heart, something had happened; the power of the Holy Spirit has corroborated him; he had received the grace of Jesus. The words

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flowed more naturally from his Spirit and mouth. He knew what to answer and how to respond in any situation because of grace. That is why Paul said: “My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power so that your faith might not rest on human wisdom, but on God’s power” (1 Corinthians 2:4-5 NIV). The preaching of the Gospel is not philosophy or tales of wisdom or human experience; it is a message taught and preached by men and women filled with grace and confirmed by the Holy Spirit. Mark 16:20 states that when the apostles were preaching the Gospel, the Lord cooperated with them by demonstrating the word through signs that followed.

Notice verse 13 of Acts 4: “Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.”

Men were astonished by the intrepidity (courage, firmness, certainty, clarity, and coherence) with which Peter and John spoke. They saw that it was something supernatural and recognized the communion that these men had with Jesus. Dear reader, you need to spend time with God in prayer and study his word to activate God’s grace within yourself. Dear reader, understand this: for each mission or task God gives you, he will also give you the necessary grace to fulfill it successfully. All you need in life is the grace of the Lord.

CHAPTER II

An analytical look at the Old Testament and New Testament

As we read the Holy Scriptures, we understand that the law given by God to the People of Israel through Moses prevailed in the Old Testament. God gave Moses the ten commandments and civil laws to which people were to obey. Being a population recently taken from the Slavery of Egypt to the promised land, they still had no constitution that governed their country. So, God gave them these commandments as a constitution. And, whoever obeyed in full would live and would prolong his years on earth. However, those who didn't keep the commandments would be punished. The Scriptures talk about the system of resuming evil or good: "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise" (Exodus 21:24-25 NIV)

In the Old Testament, this meant that if someone offended or did something wrong to the other person, the offended or injured person should retaliate in equal measure. For instance, if someone hurt you in the face (a slap on the cheeks), you had to retaliate in equal measure. That is why the law was so heavy and brutal. Law brought death. For this reason, many people died because they could not comply with the law in its entirety. For example, if you kept the nine commandments and failed one, you would be considered guilty of not complying with the law. God wanted perfection. The Scripture attests: "...ye shall be holy; for I am holy" (Leviticus 11:44/20:26 KJV)

People died mercilessly in the Old Testament. You may question: "Why did God give them the law even though he knew

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they wouldn't be able to obey it?" Well, the answer is simple: it's because the law was to take them to Christ. It served as a tutor to make them understand there was nothing they could do with their own strengths and human abilities to please the holy and almighty God. The Book of Galatians 3 23-26 KJV says: "But before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith has come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus".

Day after day, priests had to kill innocent sheep and send space goats to the desert to cleanse people of their sins. Once a year, the high priest had to enter the sanctuary (in the holiest place) to present an offering (a sacrifice) for the people of Israel before God. Nobody could appear before God or in his sanctuary without the blood of sheep or lambs. Blood symbolized the life of animals that died in place of a sinner. The Old Testament is filled with accounts of the blood of lambs and steers because God required the soul that sinned to die. The Scriptures state, "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 6:23 KJV)

There was no mercy in the law of Moses. If you sinned, you would be stoned and killed. For instance, an act of adultery was punishable by the death penalty. By reading the Pentateuch and especially the books of Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, you will see that life was callous. Why all this? Simple, God wanted to teach humanity, the entire world through the people of Israel that he is a holy God and that no man should get close to him in his terms and conditions, but in those required by God.

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The Scripture states that sin was in the world, but it wasn't considered without the law. In Romans 5:13, we read: "For until the law, sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law." However, death reigned from Adam to Moses. Even upon those who didn't sin like Adam, the supposed figure of the ideal man. This reveals that until the time of Moses, people did not know clearly what sin was. However, sin has existed in the world since the fall of Adam and Eve, the first human beings created by God, from which we all descended. Sin existed, but there was still no law to put it into effect or in the spotlight.

An important note

We don't read abundantly in the Scriptures where patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob explicitly asked for forgiveness of some sins before God.

In fact, they were not under the law because the law came with Moses hundreds of years after Abraham. To Abraham, for example, was made the promise of a posterity, that is, he would be made the Father of nations and from his seed would come the savior who would bless all nations of the earth (Genesis 12:1-3). The Scripture states that Abraham believed it, and this was imputed by justice (Genesis 15:6). Thus, Abraham was considered righteous by God through his faith in God's promise and not by the works of the law.

Abraham's justification was by faith. What can we understand here? The story of the world's creation, of man, and the revelation of God to men, begins in the book of Genesis. However, the law and the Old Testament came with Moses when he released the people of Israel from the Egyptians and received the ten commandments and civil laws for the people, which he ratified with the blood of lambs. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob did not live under

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the written law. That is why they are called patriarchs, founding fathers of the nation of Israel. We Gentiles would be blessed by the eternal Savior – Jesus Christ. The law was a divine strategy to show the man he could not save, redeem nor justify himself before God without a righteous and holy mediator, who is Jesus Christ.

Abraham lied before Pharaoh of Egypt by saying Sarah was his sister and not his wife, fearing being killed. As a result, Pharaoh gave him wealth, camels, and servants, thinking of a possibility of having Sarah as his wife and Abraham as his future brother-in-law (Genesis 12:11)

God reprimanded and wounded him from plagues to Pharaoh's house, and he discovered that Abraham had lied. Even with this lie, Abraham was not penalized by God. Of course, this lie on Abraham's part was also passed on to his sons Isaac and Jacob. Some theologians don't consider this a lie because Abraham and Isaac were both related to their wives. They believe this to be inbreeding, consisting of mating between related individuals. It was a consistent practice at the time.

The fact is that they were married (husband and wife), but in both cases, Abraham and Isaac withheld this fact for fear of dying. For instance, Isaac also lied before Abimelech that Rebecca was his sister when she was his wife (Genesis 26:6-9). Jacob, whose name was changed to Israel, lied to his father Isaac and subtly deceived him by making himself look like his older brother Esau to receive the blessing of being the firstborn in place of his brother, who was the immediate heir (Genesis 27:19). All of these were not punished by God for lying because they did not know clearly what sin was. Remember: sin is not taken into account when there is no law. Therefore, the law came with Moses to enhance God's holiness and

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make it clear that man is a sinner and cannot be saved with his own works or deeds but by the grace and initiative of God himself.

Time of ignorance versus time of repentance

After Noah's flood, humanity was consumed by the waters, only saving eight souls (Noah and his family); people multiplied on earth and generated sons and daughters. From the Generation of Noah to the construction of the tower of Babel, many didn't know God and didn't even invoke him in a personal and intimate way. Due to this ignorance about God – although nature and creation revealed him as the creator – men made their gods out of images and sculptures. That is why God called Abraham and made him the promise of posterity.

To this man, God promised to create a nation with divine principles, values, and laws. He would be the Father of nations. The only country whose King was God himself that later the children of Israel would reject him and asked for kings in the likeness of other countries. This was called the time of ignorance, where men did not know God nor had an intimate relationship with him. To this day, there are still many people that do not know God. As a resource, they worship anything and call it God. That's because the human being is a worshiper by nature; and when he does not know the real God, he worships idols until he finds the true God – Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:14)

With Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God already had a reference or distinctive mark to reveal himself to humanity beyond the created universe. That is why when Moses appeared in the burning bush, God presented himself as the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob (Exodus 3:15). This was his reference as God

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the creator of the universe and revealed to the patriarchs to distinguish the false gods who were worshiped at the time.

The Scripture says: “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent because he hath appointed a day, in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead” (Acts 17: 30-31 KJV). Jesus Christ is now the reference of the eternal, authentic, and creator God. He is the visible image of the invisible God. That is why he stated: “Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me” (John 14:6). He brought us grace and the kingdom of God to turn us into citizens of the kingdom of Heaven.

God chose the nation of Israel to bring the Messiah into the world and give us a reference to his identity and his will.

By analogy and comparison between the Old and the New Testament, we understand both sides of the revelation:

A. Egypt in comparison with the world: the Israelites were freed from Egypt, and the believers were released from the world and sin into the kingdom of God;

B. Moses in comparison with Jesus Christ: Moses freed the people of Israel and brought the Old Covenant based on the blood of goats, sheep, and lambs, Jesus brought liberation to all mankind, to those who believe in him and brought the New Testament based on his bloodshed on the cross of Calvary;

C. Pharaoh (of ancient time) versus Satan: Pharaoh’s defiance of letting go of the people of Israel resembles the devil’s

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and his demons' fears of letting go of people's lives. That is why Jesus said that when an unclean spirit has come out of someone, it looks for ways to return to the old house that is the person is possessed. Upon finding it swept away and adorned, that is, unoccupied, it goes and takes seven others with him to dwell in that person, and the last stage of this man becomes worse than the first (Luke 11:24-26). Pharaoh did this by going after the people of Israel to take them back to Egypt. God had hardened his heart. Glory to God, Egyptian soldiers, have been consumed by the waters of the red sea! (Exodus 14);

D. Oppression in Egypt in comparison to oppression by the kingdom of darkness: the Egyptians oppressed the people of Israel physically, demons, and the kingdom of darkness seek to oppress humanity spiritually by blocking their lives and destinies;

E. Israel, in comparison to the Church;

F. The law in comparison to Grace + Faith;

G. Canaan in comparison to the kingdom of Heaven, new Heavenly Jerusalem; Canaan was the physical destiny of the people of Israel – promised land where Joshua made them come; the kingdom of Heaven is the spiritual destiny of believers now.

H. The external law written on tablets as a constitution for the people of Israel of the Old Testament compared to the fruit of the Holy Spirit: Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, kindness, faith, meekness, and temperance. The fruit of the Spirit represents the character and nature of God implanted and reproduced in man's Spirit when he is born again by faith in Jesus and receives the grace to reign.

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You are loved by God

It was not the man that initially sought God, but God began the reconciliation with the humanity he had created. Even when Adam sinned, it was God who called him: “Adam, Adam, where are you?”. To this day, dear reader, God calls for him, for He wants to save him and give him eternal life through Jesus Christ. When Cain killed his brother Abel, it was God who asked, “Cain, where is your brother?” in other words, “What did you do? Repent and do good”.

God always loved humanity; He loves you. It was Him who drew the plan of salvation so that Christ would rescue humankind. But the world had to reach a level of recognizing three factors:

1. We are sinners;

2. We need a savior, a mediator between God and men;

3. Jesus Christ is the second Adam, the mediator between God and men: the eternal savior of the world. He is God’s love manifest to us. That is why the book of John 3:16 attests: “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” God gave us Jesus so that through him, we may live.

Therefore, God had to give the law to the people of Israel through Moses so that they could understand the existence and wages of sin, so that in the end, they would know they needed a savior who was perfect in everything.

Thus, God freed the people of Israel from the slavery of Egypt and gave them the law through his Servant Moses. What was the intention of the law? It was to make them recognize that they were sinners and then lead them to Christ. Unfortunately, no men were

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able to comply with the law in its entirety, including Moses and Aaron. They too didn't enter the promised land, although they had freed and led the people of Egypt to the desert. Joshua completed the mission started by Moses: freeing the people from the slavery of Egypt and introducing them to the promised land – Canaan.

The law was burdensome because men still did not have the Holy Spirit living in them. They wanted to comply with the law in the flesh, and the flesh was weak. The law was necessary. For instance, if no law stated that stealing and killing is a crime and susceptible to imprisonment by the courts, people would think it's normal (to steal and kill), just like what happens in the animal kingdom, irrational. Why? Because no law defines what is right and what is wrong in the country, although people, by natural intuition, have a sense of good and bad and right from wrong, by right or natural law.

Life was callous in the Old Testament: full of daily ordinances and rituals. Wash your hands, feet and do not touch sick people or lepers, or you will become contaminated and impure. You shouldn't even use the silverware or sheets touched or worn by a leper. They were dealing with people directly with Jehovah through Moses, and there was no mercy.

Dear reader, did you know that it was forbidden for people to mention the name of God? God wasn't evoked as Father as we do now in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, you would touch a leper and be contaminated and impure. In the New Testament, we touch a leper, and he is purified and healed. Glory to God for Jesus that brought us grace!

In the Old Testament, one shouldn't eat certain types of meat, such as pork, duck, etc., because you would be impure. The holiness

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of people was on the outside, in the body, in the delicacies, and the clothes. They did not understand that true holiness is in the heart, within man, because the Spirit of God lives in our hearts.

In the New Testament, there was a paradigm shift: from a merely external religion to an understanding in the kingdom of God installed in man's heart that produces communion and intimacy between God and men. The grace of God is communicated to the Spirit of man. Dear reader, it is essential to note that the law served as a script to lead them to Jesus, the immaculate lamb of God who takes away the sin of mankind (John 1:29). Moreover, according to the Old Testament, no one was allowed to enter God's presence empty-handed. The priest had to enter God's presence with the blood of lambs. Why? Because God is holy, and man is a sinner, he cannot get close to holy God in any way. Our God is a consuming fire. The Scriptures often say that God wanted to descend on Mount Sinai to speak to people. Even the animals were not allowed to come close to the mount; otherwise, they would die. The LORD is a Holy God. All this teaches us that in the New Testament, we should get closer to God through Jesus Christ and through his bloodshed on the cross of Calvary. He is the perfect sacrifice for humanity, man's replacement.

CHAPTER III

The difference between the Old and New Testament

It is essential to distinguish the difference between the Old and the New Testament. Life in the New Testament is not the same as in the Old one. The Old Testament was the shadow of the fundamental things to come. For instance, the animal sacrifices that God demanded from priests symbolized Jesus. The Lord Jesus died on the cross of the Calvary as a perfect sacrifice for the atonement of humanity's sins, that is, of the entire world. There is no longer a need to offer animal sacrifices to God: lambs, sheep, and goats, simply because Jesus Christ replaced them. Speaking of Jesus, the text of Hebrews 13:15 NIV says: "By him, therefore, let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name." The sacrifices that God wants from us now are praises, thanksgiving, and worship that spring from the heart grateful to God and are expressed through our lips: "Father, thank you for the salvation, grace, eternal life, and the Holy Spirit.

"Thank you for making me your son in the name of Jesus. Thank you for healing and liberation". That is why John the Baptist, looking at Jesus who came to see him in the Jordan River, exclaimed: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29 KJV). Jesus came to die in our place as a sacrifice of the atonement of our sins. From the treasure of his deep love for us, God sent us Jesus Christ to die for us and give us eternal life. The law of Moses brought death and condemnation. People tried unsuccessfully to please God through the law. No one can please God trying to keep the law because you cannot do it with your own strength. Because if you did, you would be going back to the Old Testament and live there while we are no longer there.

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The biggest mistake many Christians make is living the life of the Old Testament in the New Testament time. That is wrong according to the Scriptures, for it would mean to crucify God's son again or even invalidate the sacrifice Jesus made on the cross of the Calvary. Before his passion (death) and resurrection, the Lord Jesus ate the Last Supper with his disciples, in which, having broken the bread, he said: "This is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, this cup is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me" (Corinthians 11:24-25 KJV). The blood of Christ symbolizes the life he gave for us, thus marking the age of the New Testament for the Church.

The New Testament doesn't begin with Jesus' birth but with his death and resurrection, which allowed the birth of the Church. All of us who accept Jesus as our Savior and Lord were baptized in the same Holy Spirit of Christ and have become members of his body, which is the Church and citizens of the kingdom of Heaven (1 Corinthians 12:13). Thus, we were given a new law: the law of the Spirit of life and the rule of love. The Holy Spirit empowers us and helps us please God and love our neighbor unconditionally, in the likeness of God, our Father.

We are now children of God adopted through Jesus Christ. The text of John 1:12 attests: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

We are now living in the New Covenant mediated by Jesus Christ, son of the house and heir of Father (Hebrews 3:5-6). The Old Testament was an alliance between God and the children of

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Israel and was mediated by Moses, a servant in God's home. It wasn't for us; it was for the Jews of the Old Covenant.

To this day, many Jews in Israel still live under the Old Covenant of the Pentateuch, under Moses' law, due to ignorance of the Scriptures and for not having recognized the time of his visitation. The law of Moses produced children for servitude: people who lived every day condemned in their minds by law and sin, trying to please God with rituals and daily sacrifices when Christ brought us peace and communion with God by grace.

The Holy Bible tells us that God blinded their understanding so that we, non-Jews (Gentiles), would be saved (Romans 11:10-12). Many scribes, rabbis, and Jews are still waiting for the promised Messiah in the Old Testament, while he has already come and is saving, healing, freeing, and blessing thousands of people in Africa, Europe, America, and Asia. Jesus Christ has already come, but Israel did not recognize the time of his visitation. The Christ they are still waiting for came and lives in us through the Holy Spirit and saved our souls by faith. Dear reader, receive the peace and love of Christ in your heart now. In this world full of crises and violence, you can now live a life of perfect peace, joy, health, and victory by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of all kings and Lord of all Lords.

For example, the Scripture states that we who believe in Jesus were grafted into the Jews, like an olive tree (Romans 11:17). He came for his own, but his own did not receive him (John 1:11). Who were yours initially? The Jews because Jesus was a Jew, born in the tribe of Judah, of the lineage of King David (Romans 1:2-3). They waited for a military liberator like Moses and the Judges: Samson, Jephthah, or Gideon. But he came as a spiritual deliverer not only from Israel but also the entire world. Even some of his disciples did

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not understand that, even after walking with him for three and half years.

When he was resurrected, they thought he would form a political party and an army where the disciples would be commanders and physically fight the Romans and the Roman Empire. Thus, freeing the Jews from Roman rule and forming a physical government where the disciples would govern the new kingdom. The mother of James and John, sons of Zebedee also thought like this. Furthermore, she asked Jesus to place her children in his kingdom, one by his right hand and the other one by the left of his throne (Matthew 20:20-21). However, they still had their eyes spiritually blinded. Because of this, the Jews rejected the savior, and they are still waiting for him to this day. As a result, many of them live under the law and diabolic oppression while Christ has brought us grace, the remission of sins, and the salvation of our souls in his blood and in his name. We now live in times of grace where salvation is available to all who believe in Jesus.

Dear reader, if you are yet to be saved: receive Christ in your heart now and accept him as your personal Lord and savior. He loves you.

One must realize that in the Old Testament, no one would dare call God of Father. You may ask: “But, why apostle?” because for Jews, God was extremely Holy, and you couldn’t pronounce his name. To this day, many of them do not call the name of God “Jehovah.” Calling him that way was considered Sacrilege, something profound and powerful to do, so much so that one of the ten commandments was not to use the Lord’s name in vain (Exodus 20:7). That is why they came up with this idea of replacing the name Jehovah with “*Hashem*,” which basically means “the name.” They even prefer to call him “Adonai,” which means Lord. For Jews who

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preserve the tradition of Moses would be sacrilege and blasphemy to call him by his sacred name “Jehovah.” In addition, they had to wash their hands and feet to enter the temple. But proper purification must be within our hearts. That is why the Scripture says that grace and truth came through Jesus (John 1:17). The truth is that the Old Testament was a shadow, preparation of the reality that would be lived in the New Testament. In the New Covenant, we have the greatest blessing of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus.

The water used in the Old Testament to wash the feet and hands from impurities before entering the sanctuary symbolized God’s word, which renews our minds and our hearts of the impurities of this world by the action of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:26). Therefore, the Old Testament was made between God and the sons of Israel with Moses as the mediator. This Covenant brought the consciousness of sin and death because whoever did not comply with the law should die without mercy. Instead, the law brought death and condemnation.

Now that the New Covenant was made between God and us through the blood of Jesus Christ, it’s time for us to live in glory and to reign in life over sin, the world, and the devil.

Both Testaments or Covenants were ratified by blood. The first is by the blood of animals (goats and sheep) and the ultimate by the immaculate blood of Jesus Christ. The text to the Hebrews 9:22 attests: “And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without shedding of blood is no remission.” In other words, the wages of sin is death that required blood. Why blood? Why did God demand blood?

Well, understand that as soon as Adam sinned, God killed a sheep and with its fur-covered their nudity (Genesis 3:21). He was

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teaching them what to do when someone sins. They tried to surround themselves with fig leaves, but this did not positively affect them.

This is how many people act these days: they think they can be saved by themselves, by their good works and charity, without accepting the offering, the terms, and conditions of the Holy God we serve. Dear reader, understand that your salvation is the work of Christ, a free gift that you have to accept and receive by faith in Jesus. It is up to you to repent of your sins, believe in Jesus, and trust him for your salvation. He is the ark of salvation in the flood of evil that plunges the world into darkness. Jesus Christ is God's remedy for man's illness: sin. He carried all of humanity's sins in his death and offers salvation and forgiveness to all who believe in him and confess to him as their Lord and Savior.

Many preachers and bible teachers have made a mistake that has lasted for many years over the interpretation of Genesis 4 when God rejected Cain's offering and accepted Abel's. They unanimously claim that given the fact that Cain was a farm man, he brought a rotten and useless harvest to God while Abel brought a fat and beautiful sheep. This interpretation is erroneous. Both Cain and Abel had probably been informed by their parents Adam and Eve, that they had to offer an animal sacrifice to God because when they both sinned, God covered them with sheep's skin. This is because animals have blood and legumes, or vegetables don't have it. I'm not referring to vitamins, but red blood. Therefore, when it came to offering sacrifice to God, Abel brought a sheep that contained blood, and it was precisely the blood that God required and not vegetables from the farm.

The sheep that Abel brought to God symbolized and figuratively represented the Lord Jesus, who would die like a

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scapegoat for humanity. They knew there was sin in the world, but they didn't realize that sin was in its semantic and pragmatic content. They couldn't point out that sin was this or that objectively and correctly. Remember what the text of Romans 5:13 says that evil existed in the world, but it wasn't considered without law. It was from Moses that people came to have a clear idea of what sin was and its painful consequences. For example, God said: "Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that *is* thy neighbor's" (Exodus 20:13-17 KJV).

So, they began to understand what sin was, good and right, and bad and wrong. Blood was necessary to cover and wash people's sins. Blood symbolizes life. Patriarch Abraham learned the meaning of blood when God gave him a lamb with horns stuck in the bushes in place of Isaac. In the book of Leviticus 17:11, we read that the life of the flesh is in the blood, which is why the scripture forbids the believer to consume blood.

Satan and demons know the importance of blood, and that is why they come through healers (witches and wizards) and say they are your ancestors, and they want masses to the ancestors and blood sacrifices of oxen, goats, sheep, or chickens. If you do that, you are opening your doors to the devil and permitting demons to come into your life and family and torment you.

Of course, they want blood. The blood of animals no longer calls God, but demons because Jesus has already shed his blood, and God has accepted the blood of Jesus as a price of ransom for the salvation of all mankind. Believe that.

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Therefore, eating blood is the same as eating the animal's life, which constitutes sin before God. Thus, even in the New Testament, you are not allowed to eat blood. In the apostolic conference of the early Church, the apostles and Elders of the Church's governing and deliberative body in Jerusalem wrote a letter to the Gentiles about the things to be observed. One of them was the prohibition of eating blood or strangled animals whose blood was not taken from them (Acts 16:20,29). This practice was already being forbidden to Jews in the Old Mosaic Covenant.

Blood has a significant meaning before God. However, we don't need to keep the commandments as the Israelites did in the New Covenant because we are in a different covenant from theirs.

Dear reader, it is necessary to understand that God deals with humanity through Testaments or Covenants. So, we are now in the New Covenant based on better promises. Glory to God! That is why the Scripture says that the blood of Jesus speaks better things than the blood of Abel (Hebrews 12:24). The blood of Jesus says that you are blessed, protected, healed, safe and prosperous. Glory to God! What an incredible covenant! That is why men of the Old Testament longed to see the New Testament days and live in them. In Matthew 13:16-17, Jesus stated: "But blessed are your eyes because they see; and your ears, because they hear. For truly I say to you that many prophets and righteous people longed to see what you see, and did not see *it*, and to hear what you hear, and did not hear *it*". This is an era of grace and dispensation of the Holy Spirit. A period in which God lives in us through his Spirit. Jesus came to change the conversation between God and man.

In the Old Testament, the conversation was law, sin, pity, sacrifice, and death. But in the New Testament, the dialogue is love, peace, grace, and eternal life. That is why the Scripture stated: "For

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God so loved the world, that He gave His only Son so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life” (John 3:16 KJV). Apostle Peter emphasized the same thing when he said God is longsuffering, not wanting anyone to be lost, but that everyone would come to repent and attain salvation (2 Peter 3:9b). Now, salvation is closer than in the Old Testament because we live in the time of God’s favor, time of grace, and divine acceptance. Thus, God became the justifier of those who accept Jesus’ sacrifice and receives salvation through his death and resurrection.

In short, so far we have come to understand that God deals with humanity through covenants and that there were two significant Covenants: the Old and New, and the New is greater than the old one because it was ratified through the blood of Jesus, the son of God and heir of the house and is based in better promises: reconciliation with God, salvation by grace, peace, love, eternal life and the heavenly kingdom. Moreover, the New Covenant has a mediator between God and men: Jesus Christ. Therefore, the Apostle Paul, writing to Timothy, said: “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5 KJV).

Speaking of Jesus, the text of Hebrews 8:6-7 says, “But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, to the extent that He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. For if that first Covenant had been free of fault, no circumstances would have been sought for a second”.

Yes, Jesus incarnated himself to be a legal substitute of man and offer the vicarious sacrifice in place of all men. He did it for all mankind when he died, and he saves those who accept this fact.

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Moses, the mediator of the Old Covenant, was a loyal servant in the house of God who are the children of Israel, but Jesus Christ is the son and heir of the house which is the Church, which is us, his body, and He is the head of the body. Therefore, the son has greater authority than a servant (Hebrews 3:4-6).

For instance, no one dared to call God “Father” in the Old Testament because it was considered blasphemy. Who would we be to call God of Father, even his most outstanding Servant Moses didn’t call him Father? Men of the Old Testament didn’t have the privilege we have today of calling God of Father. That is why the Apostle John said: “See how great a love the Father has given us, that we would be called children of God, and in fact we are” (1 John 3:1)

CHAPTER IV

Our relationship with God

Children of God through Faith in Jesus

Dear reader, understand that it is an enormous privilege to be called children of God. Even kings and prophets of the past, even figures like king David and patriarch Abraham, who was considered God's friend, dared not call God of Father, but "Lord." Now, in the New Testament, we were made children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. The text of John 1:12 attests that to those who received him, he gave them the power to be made children of God, that is, those who believe in his name.

And God, to confirm that we are his children, sent us the Holy Spirit to live within our hearts. Through the Holy Spirit, we have access to God the Father and communion with him. Now, we can live naturally in the supernatural by walking with the Holy Spirit. He is the seal of God in the heart of the believer. There are creatures of God who are all those living beings and inanimate beings he created on the face of the earth. But there are also children of God, who accepted Christ as their Lord and savior and consequently were born again and became new creatures.

Now, the creator of Heaven and earth, the owner of gold and silver, the King of glory, is our heavenly Father. No wonder when the disciples of Jesus asked him to teach them to pray, he said: "Pray,

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then, in this way: Our Father, who is in heaven..." (Matthew 6:9 NIV)

He wanted us to look at a touring relationship with God from a son to Father and Father to son perspective. Since we have biological parents, to clarify the meaning and identity of God as our Father, he used the term "heavenly Father."

That is why he exhorted his disciples not to worry about what they were going to eat or what they were going to wear, for "For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be provided to you" (Matthew 6:32-33). The kingdom of God must be your priority: live to please God, live according to the constitution of our country called Heaven, which is the Holy Bible.

Only those who received the seal of the Holy Spirit have been made children of God. Jesus Christ is the firstborn of God, and we are the result of his death on the cross. He supported the affront, the false accusations, and the whips because of the glory that had been proposed to him (Hebrews 12:2-3). What is that glory? It is us. We who believe in him and in him we are.

The text of Hebrews 2:10 NIV says: "For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the originator of their

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salvation through sufferings.” Can you see a crucial point here? When Jesus died, he brought many children to glory. This means that we are children of glory. You were not born to live cursed, ill, weak, and poor. Thousand times no! You are a son of glory and were born to dominate and live a life of light and blessings by the grace that lives in Christ Jesus. God the Father consecrated Jesus, the prince of our salvation with whips and nails, when he allowed himself to die for us on the cross of Calvary to bring us to glory.

Dear reader, receive now the grace to reign over all circumstances of this world. Jesus carried all our sins and consequences: death, illnesses, and curses. He became cursed for us when he died hanging from the cross. But he did it to make us children of glory. He washed us with His blood and made us a royal family, an elected generation, holy nation, and royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9)

We are now children of God because we are in Christ Jesus. Notice one thing: Jesus Christ did not bring religion on earth. He brought us the kingdom of Heaven. That is why he gave us the Holy Spirit so we can experience Heaven on earth.

When man sinned, he became corrupted in his character and programmed by sin to live in disobedience of God in his thoughts and actions. But Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit to reproduce in us the nature of God. The Holy Spirit not only confirms that we are

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children of God, but it also produces in us love, peace, longsuffering, kindness, meekness, and temperance, that is, self-control. He realigns our inner man every time we practice the word of God and when we let ourselves be shaped by it.

When you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit enlightens your inner man to be born again and dwell in you.

From then on, when you begin to be a person of love, peace, meek, patient, kind, good, and can control your emotions with temperance. He teaches you to know how to be and understand how to be before God and men. It is him who communicates God's will in our hearts and empowers us to do things above our human abilities.

The Scripture says: "But when the fullness of the time came, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons and daughter" (Galatians 4:4-5 NIV). This text from the Scripture attests to the fact that Christ came to make us children of God, God adopted us, that is, he accepted us as children thanks to his son Jesus. There are creatures of God, and there are children of God. Children are those who accepted Christ as their Lord and Savior. Therefore, when God looks at us now, He does not see sinners. He sees Jesus reproduced in us. It's as if God had planted Jesus on earth, by his death, so that in his resurrection,

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he would reap us as children and his first fruits. It is for this reason that Jesus said: “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6 NIV).

Jesus is our ark of salvation, the hope of humanity. He is the prototype of the ideal man; he is what we should have been if Adam hadn’t sinned. He is our champion. And now, you must use the name of Jesus to communicate with the heavenly Father in prayer and use him as a battle instrument against the forces of darkness and their influence.

Still, in the text to the Galatians 4:6, we read: “Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying out, “Abba! Father!”. Glory to God! Dear reader, can you notice a special thing here? When you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, God sent the Holy Spirit of Jesus to your heart. What is it? It is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit also is described as the Spirit of Jesus because it came in his place.

It is through his Spirit that we cry out “Abba.” Abba is an Aramaic expression meaning “Father or Genitor.” The Holy Spirit reproduces in us the voice of Jesus Christ. No one can call God of Father with spiritual property and kinship without it being through the intervention of the Holy Spirit. The presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer is God’s seal that we are saved and that we are children of God. Therefore, when we pray, our words carry

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power, and when we speak, they bring life to heal the brokenhearted because they are impregnated with the power of the Holy Spirit.

It is the Holy Spirit who gives us thirst and hunger for God's word and creates in us the desire to pray and communicate with our heavenly Father.

No demon, wizard, or curse can prevail against you because you carry the Spirit of Jesus in you. When we pray: "Father, in the name of Jesus," we are energized and activated in our Spirit because we created contact with the divine essence in us. When we pray to God and call him Father, we are filled with his love, presence, kindness, and life.

Repeat with me these words of prayer: "Father, in the name of the Lord Jesus, thank you for your grace, thank you for your love, for your kindness, and your mercies. Thank you for blessing and protecting me day and night. I love you, Father. I am not alone. For Father is with me".

So now we can call the highest God Father. That is why the Apostle John stated: "See how great a love the Father has given us, that we would be called children of God; and in fact we are. For this reason the world does not know us: because it did not know Him" (1 John 3:1 NIV). Now, we are children of God. Hallelujah! In the kingdom of God, there is no higher title than to be called: "son of

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God” and “citizen of the heavenly kingdom.” Our heavenly Father owns the entire universe. He is the owner of gold and silver. Therefore, we are heirs with Christ. In addition, the Lord Jesus Christ is also our older brother.

He is the firstborn of all creation, which means that Christ is also ours by inheritance. God planted Jesus so that we could be made children of God. We aren’t mere servants of God, but we are children serving in our heavenly Father’s business. We serve God with the hearts of obedient children.

Dear reader, we must understand what it means to be a son of God. It is a great privilege. This is not a religious act. How would you feel if you were the son of the president of the world’s most powerful country or if you were the son or daughter of the King of a superpowered nation? What would be your language and lifestyle, or even your way of hiking if you knew that the director or president of the World Bank was your Father? Of course, you would feel happy, cheerful, and not be miserable, a victim, or weak. See that being a son of God is a lot more than participating in masses at Church. It is a communion with the heavenly Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ “(1 John 1:3 NIV). The Spirit reveals and shows us our heritage in Christ.

We are not poor trying to be rich or sick trying to be healed, but we are rich finding our wealth in Christ Jesus, we are temples of

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the Holy Spirit refused to get sick and ill. How? Through faith in Jesus and the word of God. Say this with me: “I refuse to get sick because the greatest doctor in the world is my heavenly father, and he gave me his life.”

From what I explained in the previous chapter, it becomes clear that the New Testament is better than the old one. In fact, if the Old Testament were better or final, God would not have brought the New one to humanity. The New Testament complements the Old and consequently abolishes it. It must be understood that one Testament only becomes valid and functional; that is, it comes into force after the death of the one who made it.

For instance, if a family’s Father or a woman has properties or valuable goods and intends to distribute them to their children or spouse, for them to become heirs after their death, he writes a will and places it in the records and notary. The heirs of the estate have no authority over it while the owner is still alive. The will only comes into force; that is, it is opened and read only after the death of its subscriber.

Along the same vein, the Lord Jesus died in our place to ratify the New Testament based on his death and his blood. He died so that we could live. The Scripture states that God sent Jesus so that we may live through him (1 John 4:9).

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Dear reader, it must also be understood that both Testaments: the Old and New were ratified, that is, confirmed based on blood. Concerning the Old Testament, Moses had to sprinkle the blood of lambs and sheep upon people and the commandments. Moses did not give his own blood in the ratification of the Testament but that of immaculate animals. He was the intermediary, that is, the mediator of the Old Covenant. However, in the case of the New Testament, Jesus shed his own blood on the cross of the Calvary. He sealed the agreement with God and the Church. That is why in the text of John 20:17, after his rise from the dead, he told Mary Magdalene, “Stop clinging to Me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to My brothers and say to them, ‘I am ascending to My Father and your Father, and My God and your God.’”

In this context, Jesus had not yet gone to Heaven, that is, to the holiest place, to the eternal sanctuary to offer by the eternal Spirit his blood as ransom and payment for the sin of humanity. That is why he told Mary not to touch him. Jesus offered to the eternal sanctuary of the heavenly Father his own blood as a seal of the New Testament for the salvation and liberation of the entire world, that is, of all those who believe in him. Therefore, Mary couldn't stop him this time because he had to present the atoning sacrifice in the holy place of all saints in Heaven as a high priest. He did so through the Holy Spirit.

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Generally, the high priest offered an annual sacrifice of the atonement for the people's sins they had committed during that year. For annual sins, there was a yearly sacrifice that the high priest had the legitimacy to offer. This time, Jesus offered an eternal sacrifice to abolish the law and the remission of sins forever. From the spiritual point of view, Jesus died for all human beings that live on planet earth. From the spiritual point of view, he carried all our diseases, illnesses, pains, sins, and curses.

However, the results of his work, salvation, eternal life, health, prosperity, and victory over the devil and his demons, only became effective and physically manifest in the life of those that through faith, believe in Jesus Christ and take possession through the faith of his inheritance.

We read in the Holy Bible that Jesus later appeared to the other disciples in Thomas' absence who did not believe that Master had resurrected. To which Jesus told him to touch his hands and side and unwind his doubts about his resurrection.

Thomas recognized that Jesus had risen from the dead and had appeared in flesh and bone. He exclaimed: "My Lord, my God." Jesus warned him: "Blessed are those who believe without having seen me." Who are these people? It is us who accept him as our Lord. That is why Apostle Peter said: "and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, believe in

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Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining as the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls” (1 Peter 1:8-9)

The blood of Christ bought us. This was the price of humanity’s rescue to come out of sin for justice and holiness and out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of light, which is the kingdom of Heaven headed by Lord Jesus (Colossians 1:13).

Apostle Peter stressed: “you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ” (1 Peter 1:18-19 NIV)

It is important to note that after his resurrection, Jesus did not say: “A spirit does not have flesh and blood,” but “a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you plainly see that I have” (Luke 24:39 NIV). Why didn’t he mention blood as it is vital for the life of the flesh? Simple: because he had shed all his blood on the Cross. He no longer lived based on blood, even though he had a physical body, but glorified. He lived by the Spirit. Here is the revelation of a mystery: in the Old Testament, they could not keep the law in its entirety, nor please God according to his terms and conditions because they were in flesh and flesh is weak.

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Meanwhile, in the New Testament, we have the help of the Holy Spirit that came to live in us, and it teaches us God's will because it probes our hearts and reveals to us God's thoughts. Life is spiritual. He enlivens the Spirit of man. He can now cover up your body and remove all sickness and all pain. No one can please God by walking and living in the flesh. That is because the apparent senses and circumstances will control it. You will be afraid of storms and waves and will be scared of living in fear. But those who received the Holy Spirit will also walk and live guided by the Holy Spirit. How? Through faith in the word, that is, the word of God is a spiritual lantern. It shows us the path in the Spirit and makes us set foot on the firm rock of God.

The word of God is our spiritual GPS that shows us the path to victory and prosperity in the Spirit. We pass through faith in it where natural men don't die and win all physical and spiritual barriers. As we look at the word of God, we see our cure, prosperity, and the glory of Christ. It is our mirror from which we adjust any anomaly caused by sin and by the devil.

That is why we are unwavering because we do not walk out of sight, but we walk by faith. What faith? Faith comes by hearing God's word, both in the daily reading of the Holy Bible, in our devotions, and listening to Church preaching and teachings. You can grow in Spirit like natural growth. This way, you become a spiritual giant that puts the devil and his demons under your feet.

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Jesus shed his own blood for our redemption. Reading the book of Hebrews, we understand that Jesus Christ is our high priest, lawyer, and legal representative before God the Father.

Dear reader, record this: all animal sacrifices: sheep, lambs, goats, doves, pigeons, and steers have been permanently replaced by the vicarious sacrifice of Christ. If you offer these animal sacrifices, you will be opening doors to demons to torment you because God was satisfied with the blood of Jesus.

God no longer receives blood sacrifices nor burnt offerings. Instead, he gets the gift of the lips that confess his names. He receives praise and worship emanating from the hearts of the children. Just as in the Old Testament, priests would present themselves in the sanctuary of God with the blood of animals; in the New one, the believer presents himself to God through the blood of Jesus Christ. The blood of Christ washes and purifies us of sins and iniquities, and at the same time, it sanctifies us before God. The blood of Christ made us righteous before God. In fact, when we come to God, he receives us thanks to Jesus Christ.

He looks at us and sees his son Jesus in us. That is why when we pray or ask Father for something in the name of Jesus. It's as if Jesus himself was making the petition. And did you know something? God the Father never rejected a plea from his son. That

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is why Jesus oriented us to pray to Father and ask for anything in his name.

Listen to the words of the Master: “Until now you have for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full” (John 16:24 NIV). When you say: “In the name of Jesus,” you are basically positioning yourself in his place because he gave us the right of power of attorney to represent him here on earth. That is why the Apostle John said: “...because as He is, we also are in this world” (1 John 4:17 NIV).

Due to the lack of knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, a lot of believers still live the life of the Old Testament in the present time of the New Testament. That is why they have an awareness of sacrifices: a mentality of guilt and sin. They don’t understand that Christ has already paid the total redemption price for them on the cross with his own blood. You don’t have to sacrifice anything; Jesus has already paid for you before Father. Believe it, receive, and rest in Christ’s finished work on the cross. He died for you—grace to Reign.

CHAPTER V

Our position before God and men

You are a king and priest

The text of Revelation 1:5-6 NIV says: “To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by His blood, and He made us into a kingdom, priests to His God and Father, to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen”.

Dear reader, in the New Testament, we are kings and priests at the same time. In the era of the Old Testament, the offices of priests and kings were not occupied by the same person. There was an unction for each priest and an unction for kings. For instance, Samuel was a priest, but David was King of Israel. They did not occupy the same office. However, thanks to the Lord Jesus, we were made priests and kings in the New Covenant. Apostle Peter emphasized this New Testament reality when he said: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for god’s possession, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of the darkness into His marvelous light; for you once were not a people but now you are the people of God, you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy” (1 Peter 2:9-10 NIV). This is the description of our spiritual identity before God and men.

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The term “royal priesthood” means that we are priests of the royal house, the King’s house that is our God. That is, we are priest-kings. All Christians are covered with these two offices simultaneously. That is why the Holy Bible calls Jesus the King of all kinds. This is because we reign with him in this world. We reign over all the power of darkness. So Jesus said: “Behold, I have given you authority to walk on snakes and scorpions, and authority over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you” (Luke 10:19 NIV).

CHAPTER VI

Our priestly office

You are a Priest

Priests were men chosen by God to represent their brothers in matters about God. They had the mission of teaching people about God and intercede for the people. Samuel once went as far as to state before the Israelites: “Far be it from me that I would sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you” (1 Samuel 12:23 NIV). Although, on the one hand, he was a prophet, on the other, he understood his responsibility and priestly ministry. A priest doesn’t wear cassocks or long dresses with a long beard.

In the New Testament, the priest is identified spiritually. You are a priest in your Spirit, in your heart. A heart that feels compassion for the suffering of others and reaches out to help make a difference and put a smile on someone’s face and heart. A priest cannot be miser, ambitious, vain, or proud because he would have no love for his neighbor. Instead, a priest will be a loyal and compassionate intercessor before God for people God wants to deliver, bless, and save. Love for people and faithful obedience to God are some of the characteristics of priests.

As priests, we have a mission to offer sacrifices of praise which is the fruit of our lips that we wholeheartedly worship, praise, and show acts of grace to God through Jesus. Furthermore, as priests, we cover the breach in prayer and intercede for people before God. Intercession, prayer through the Holy Spirit constitute our ministry as priests.

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In the Old Testament, priests worked in the temple as mediators between God and men. However, in the New Covenant, we don't need a priest to mediate between God and us. You don't need to speak to God through someone, for Jesus gave us direct access to Father in his name. "Again, I say to you that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven," Jesus said in Matthew 18:19 NIV.

In the text of John 16:26-27 NIV, Jesus said: "On that day you will ask in My name, and I am not saying to you that I will request of the Father on your behalf; for the Father, Himself loves you because you have loved Me and have believed that I came forth from the Father." This text reveals that anyone who believes in Jesus has direct access to Father in the name of Jesus. So, whenever you pray, use the name of Jesus because this is the name that gives access to the throne of our heavenly Father. God the Father responds to prayers we make in the name of Jesus. You can call our heavenly Father directly through Jesus. In fact, you are in the presence of Father because Jesus said: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father except through me" (John 14:6 NIV). The day you gave your life to Jesus, you were brought into the presence of Father by the blood of Christ and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Remember what Paul said: "giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. For He rescued us from the command of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins" (Colossians 1:12-14 NIV).

By the blood of Jesus, we were washed and accepted by Father, and through the Holy Spirit, we were transported to Father's presence. We now live in Father spiritually. Some believers pray like this: "Father, I enter into your presence, or I come into your

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presence in the name of Jesus.” Although it sounds syntactically and phonologically nice, this model of prayer is wrong for the son of God. That is because we do not enter or leave the presence of God. It is the unbelievers and pagans who must say this prayer to enter the presence of the Father to achieve salvation. We are already spiritually in his presence at this very moment, in virtue of our communion with God and because he gave us his eternal deposit: the Holy Spirit.

Through our faith in Jesus, we were brought to the presence of the Father by the Holy Spirit. The Scripture states that both Jews and Gentiles have access to the Father through Jesus (Ephesians 2:18 NIV). So, there is no other mediator between men and God but Jesus Christ. You don’t need an intermediary or priest to be a mediator between you and God. Now, we are children of God and are in his presence. It is the Holy Spirit that communicates the presence of God in our hearts. It is our spiritual connection line to Heaven. That is why John said: “By this we know that we remain in Him and He in us because He has given to us of His spirit” (1 John 4:13 NIV).

Dear reader, can you see it now? It is the Holy Spirit who brings us to the presence of God. Therefore, you must always be aware of its presence with you to avoid worries or fright when facing challenges. Recognize the presence of Jesus with you and in you. As a priest, develop an intimate communion with God to make God intervene in the lives of people who pray so that they may receive God’s intervention and help. This way, God will heal and free them in response to their intercessory prayer. Don’t be indifferent when you see people suffering or when you hear about wars, accidents, misery, and violence being perpetrated by the devil against people around you.

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You are a priest, so you must pray, but pray with faith. Prayer of faith has powerful effects and changes seemingly impossible situations for man. Abraham interceded through Sodom and Gomorrah, and God saved Lot and his daughters through the intercessory prayer of Abraham. Moses interceded for the people of Israel, and God's wrath calmed down, so he didn't completely destroy them. Esther interceded for the Jewish people in Babylon, and God rid the people of extermination and widespread genocide. Jesus interceded for his disciples and us so that God would deliver us from evil. Notice the Master's words of prayer: "I am not asking You to take them out of the world, just as I am not of the world" (John 17: 15-16 NIV).

You might think: "Ah, Jesus only prayed for eleven disciples, except for Judas who had betrayed him; he did not mention us in his priestly prayer!"

Not necessarily, the Scripture states that Jesus prayed for you and me and for all those who believe in him. Look closely to his words addressed to the heavenly Father: "I am not asking on behalf of these alone, but also for those who believe in Me through their word, that they may all be one; just as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me" (John 17:20-21 NIV).

What a glorious prayer of the Lord of the Church! Yes, Jesus loves you, and he prayed himself for you and me, for our protection and unity. Is it not a blessing knowing that Jesus prayed for you? Of course it is. This is a priestly prayer. You are not alone. The Lord is with you every single day until the end of the centuries. Repeat these words with me: "I refuse to live in fear. I live in victory and prosperity because the Lord is with me, day and night, he guides and protects me. Hallelujah!"

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Now, take up your priestly office and develop a life of prayer. Spend time praying for the well-being of others. If you do so, the Holy Spirit will touch other people for them to pray for you too, even if they don't know you personally. Create time daily for devotion, prayer, and meditation in the word of God. Offer him sacrifices of praise and acts of grace for the good things he has done for you. Raise your hands and praise him now. You can cancel plans for deaths, wars, accidents, and attacks orchestrated by demons and wizards in the spiritual arena with prayer. The ministry of intercession helps control the events in the spiritual arena bringing intervention of God in matters of the earth. Consequently, it protects, saves, stabilizes, alleviates, and heals men on earth.

The well-being of people in the physical world, the well-being in marriage, businesses, employment, school, health, and family depends on the safety and maintenance of their victory in the spiritual arena through prayer. Don't let your life of worship die. Ensure your blessing and protection spiritually through prayer.

CHAPTER VII

Our divine royalty

You are a king

In the previous chapter, we learned about our priestly ministry. First, it is necessary to understand that the office of a priest has to do with our relationship, that is, our communion with the heavenly arena, that is, with God. That is why it is necessary to develop a life of prayer and intimacy with God to strengthen and adequately exercise this ministry. Now, let's study a little about another aspect of the believer - our spiritual royalty: Jesus made us kings and priests.

The Holy Scripture states that all of God's children were created and called to reign. After God created the entire universe, he created man. The man was the last in the hierarchy of God's creation. This is because all that God created, he did it in order and with purpose. Man is the crown of God's creation; our God is planned and organized. The Scripture states, "Let Us make mankind in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the livestock and over all the earth, and over every crawling thing that crawls on the earth" (Genesis 1:26 NIV). The first thing God gave man was the kingdom. God did not create religion. The Holy Bible is not a religious book of rituals and dogmas; it is a constitution of a country called heaven given to earth to guide their way of living, of relating to the king and their neighbor. The Holy Bible is a book that deals with a king, a kingdom, two territories (heaven and earth), and their citizens. When Adam and Eve sinned against God, disobeying his word in the

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Garden of Eden, they did not lose a religion. But they lost two things:

1. Their communion with God, the king of heaven and earth,
2. The kingdom and command over the territory called earth.

God created man to rule the earth, that is, to administer earth in his place. The man was like a steward of God's goods. God's plan was to expand his domain and spiritual realm from the spiritual territory called Heaven to the physical territory called earth. First, however, man would be ruling earth in harmony with God's guidance.

That is why in the beginning, there was a communion between God and man. That communion brought life and peace to man. For instance, we never read in Genesis that Adam had bad luck, headache, HIV-AIDS, hunger, or demonic attacks. We don't read that Eve had a spiritual husband (husband of the night) or had fevers. These problems, all that pester humanity today, are a result of sin, of the fall of man. When man sinned, he was disconnected from God and consequently began to live under the curses of sin. It was from there where Satan, man's opponent, stole man's authority over the earth and installed his evil kingdom of darkness to torment and destroy the human race because he hated man. The Scripture states: "The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil" (1 John 3:8 NIV). Jesus Christ is God's love manifest to us, to save us and give us back the authority and kingdom lost in Adam.

Therefore, the believer must understand and retain in their mind one fact: you were created by God, placed on earth to reign in communion and obedience to the voice of God. True peace and joy

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are only possible for those who live in communion with God. If someone is not connected to Christ, they are automatically under the devil's influence, control, and mercy. Therefore, there are only two kingdoms: the kingdom of heaven also called the kingdom of light, joy, and peace in communion with the Holy Spirit, which has Jesus as its head. All those who repent their sins, accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and are washed with his blood, belong to this kingdom. On the other hand, we have the kingdom of darkness, the kingdom of torments and sufferings lead by the devil.

The Good News is that Jesus Christ eternally defeated the devil by death on the cross, and in his resurrection from the dead, he gave authority to all of us who believe in him. Authority for what? To reign with him over the world, over the devil, and over all circumstances of life. Inside the DNA, there is an eagerness TO REIGN. There is a burning desire to control day-to-day circumstances. The truth is that Jesus has come and installed his kingdom within us through the Spirit. We who believe in him and that through him we are born again. The Scripture states that we are a nation of kings and priests. You are not a beggar or a wanderer aimlessly roaming the highways of life; you are a king washed and purified by the blood of the lamb and empowered by the power of God to dominate through your faith in God and his infallible word.

Now, you must understand your true identity in Christ. For two millennia, religion had turned Jesus Christ into a distinctive religious figure like Mohammed, Buddha, and others. And then categorized Christianity as one of the most prominent religions practiced by men in the entire world. This perception is unreal and distorted from the true vision and plan that God had for mankind. Mohammed and Buddha died and were buried, and their bones remain in their respective tombs, as do all the other great religious leaders who

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segmented the world population into different religions in Europe, Africa, Asia, America, and the Middle East.

However, Lord Jesus Christ is not in the tomb now, for he has risen from the dead and is alive. In his name, there is remission of the sins and eternal salvation. Apostle Peter declared: “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among mankind by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12 NIV). Only the name of Jesus can save. God the Father, the creator of the universe, proved through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead that Christ is the only messenger truly sent to save humanity. And all those who accept him will be saved, blessed, protected, and delivered by his name. Jesus Christ is the king of all kings. Who are these other kings above whom he reigns? We, his disciples.

Dear reader, understand that God called you to reign in Christ. Now, as kings, we reign in the world, bringing influence and culture to the kingdom of God in this world, making the kingdoms of the world kingdoms of God. For this reason, we must preach the Gospel of the kingdom to people so that they may enter the kingdom. The Kingdom of God is the command and influence of God in men’s hearts through his word and his Spirit. That is why you need to develop communion with the Holy Spirit. Understand and note these truths: as priests, we develop intimacy with God, and as kings, we rule and influence this world for the glory of God.

Therefore, intimacy with God is the source of our life, of our strength, and our victory. Royalty is our identity, a distinctive mark of the purpose for which we were created. Thus, before God, we are his intimate children, that is, we have intimacy with him. Before the devil and his infernal squadrons, we are kings who do not tolerate his influence. That is why we cast out demons and step on all the

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evil force without any damage. In this sense, we serve the people of God and neighbor with the heart of a king. This is called humility. Humility is a mark of the citizens of the kingdom of God because God resists the haughty (proud) and gives more grace to the humble.

If you want to live under God's grace, see grace work in your life, and have more grace, have a humble heart dependent on God. That is why we pray. When we pray, we show God that we depend on him, and without him, we are nothing. Jesus said: "For apart from Me you can do nothing" (John 15:5 NIV). Our communion with God and our faith in him are the source of our greatest spiritual, sentimental, materialistic, financial treasure and the guarantee of our health. Jesus said: "Behold, I have given you authority to walk on snakes and scorpions, and authority over all the power of the enemy, and nothing will injure you" (Luke 10:19 NIV).

The Lord Jesus Christ made us kings and gave us authority. Authority is essential, for without it, you can't reign. The authority Christ gave us legitimizes before the devil and the kingdom of darkness that we are kings, and our words are coated with power. The Scripture in Ecclesiastes 8:4 (NIV) attests: "Since the word of the king is authoritative, who will say to him, 'What are you doing?'". This means that you have the power to speak and create things through words, to call something to existence. Glory to God! The power is in your mouth, and it emanates from your intimate communion with God developed in your heart.

So be wary of how you use your language. Don't speak words of fear or failure. Instead, speak of victory, life, and prosperity. Never say words like: "I'm miserable, I'm a victim and full of bad luck. My body is vulnerable to diseases, and illnesses and I feel like a carpet of the area and my work". If you say those things, that is what's going to happen to you. In the spiritual arena, you are not

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allowed to falter in language. That's because, according to Jesus, "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words, you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:37 NIV). See that we are kings and priests at the same time. The men of the Old Testament wished for this privilege, to live in the time of dispensation of grace in Christ Jesus.

Many believers are still attached to the ordinances and laws of the Old Testament, which were actually given to the Israelites of the Old Covenant and not to us, of the New Testament. Jesus Christ made a New Covenant with God in favor of humanity when he presented his blood in eternal Spirit before his father. Christ signed and ratified an agreement of love, grace, mercy, peace, and eternal life with his own blood. That is why every time we take communion, that is, the Lord's supper, we announce his death until he comes. We remember the Covenant he made for us in his death and resurrection. For instance, when you are sick or bankrupt, by having the supper, you are literally and figuratively saying: "Lord Jesus, according to the Covenant you made with father for me, this disease and poverty must be removed from me." In response, the Lord will remove them because they don't belong to the New Testament.

CHAPTER VIII

Our communion with the Holy Spirit and how to live by the spirit

The Spirit of man, the essential part of man before God

Many people have been discussing whether or not to keep the Sabbath because God rested on the seventh day. Well, in the New Testament, we are not required to love God only on the Sabbath because it's the seventh day. The apostles and the early church loved God every day, including the first day of the week, the day Jesus Christ resurrected and came out of the grave, which is Sunday. What matters to God is our communion with Him through the Lord Jesus and not one day or a particular place in specific. So Jesus said to the Samaritan woman: "But a time is coming, and even now has arrived when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers. God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth" (John 4:23-24 NIV).

Loving God in spirit is loving and serving him through our spirit, that is, our heart, the inner man. That's because God is a spiritual being, and man is also a spirit. Thus, God deals with us spiritually. He relates to men. The blessings and thanks to God are communicated and transmitted by the Holy Spirit to the spirit of man.

You are a spirit, and you have a soul that is part of your intellect, volition, and emotions and lives in your physical body. With your spirit, you relate to God in worship, prayer, meditation in his word,

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and praise. God, in turn, communicates and reveals himself to the spirit. In fact, it isn't the physical body that is born again, but it is the spirit, the inner man. That is why when you gave your life to Jesus and were born again, the color of your skin, your height, and your physical-human nationality didn't change. So then, what changed in you? The answer is simple: your spirit was born again; it was regenerated by the power of the Holy Spirit when you believed in the gospel of the kingdom of God.

As a result, your behavior, your way of living, speaking, and being completely changed. In other words, there was a tremendous change within you, in your personality. Now, you are a new creature, full of joy, peace, longsuffering, and already has its command.

This change within you now reflects on your exterior, your way of thinking, and your body. So this transformation is inside out and not the other way around.

You received the deposit of the Holy Spirit, and he brought the presence of God into your life. The life of God, your health, nature, and character are already implanted within your subconscious and heart, and you are now the light of the world. You no longer hold onto sorrows; you know how to forgive; you are patient and moderate and are full of love. You can even love those who hate you. Above all, you come to have a passion for Jesus and reverence for the word of God. This is because you were sanctified, that is, separated by God from the corruption of the world. You are a treasure that Jesus Christ found and gave his life for (Matthew 13:44). Now, you are a friend and son of God and live according to his word and are not controlled by the sinful desires and appetites of the flesh because the Holy Spirit helps you exercise self-control. Maybe, before being saved, you would break things and relationships when mad, or even left infights with your wife, husband, or people

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around you. However, you now know how to control yourself; you know how to tolerate and ignore offenses.

You are now practically a new creature. This is a work carried by the Holy Spirit when he comes to live in us. Suddenly, the life of God passes through your soul that is your inner man. It passes through your soul from your inner man and heals your mind erasing all sorrows and deceptions from the past. Then the same life penetrates your physical body and removes all diseases and illnesses, strengthening you and healing you from evil. You are now a sanctuary, a tabernacle of God that carries your presence. That is why apostle Paul said: “But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you” (Romans 8:11 NIV). The Holy Spirit can incubate your body by removing all diseases and paralysis. He represents the power of God in action. You must surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the person of the Holy Spirit. The Scripture says: “Therefore I urge you, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world” (Romans 12:1-2 NIV).

Your body is the temple of God. Live and walk in the Spirit and by the Spirit. Be guided by the Holy Scriptures, by the word of God revealed and written by his Spirit. Living by faith implies constantly depending on God and his word.

Now, religion is more concerned with the exterior, how you dress, and the etiquette and appearance, ignoring that God is focused on man's heart.

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Religious are not concerned with being born again, communion with God, and living a righteous and honest life before God. On the contrary, they want to do what pleases people living in masks daily: a mask for service, another at home and another in society, without a true spiritual identity, with no heavenly citizenship in the kingdom of God. This is what Pharisees did in the time of Jesus, like cemeteries embellished with beautiful flowers and bouquets, while inside, they were corrupted. So God said to Samuel, “God does not see as man sees, since man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (1 Samuel 16:7 NIV).

Dear reader, how is your heart before God? At the end of our journey on earth, we all will realize before God what we did while in the body (2 Corinthians 5:10). Live by the Spirit, and you will not fulfill the desires of the flesh.

The Holy Spirit empowers and guides us. The Scripture says: “Now in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know what to pray for as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words” (Romans 8:26 NIV). Praise God for sending us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit probes our hearts and communicates to us the thoughts and intentions of God. It reveals God’s plans for each of us and satisfies the soul of the children of God because everything we wish, dream, and project is consistent with God’s will for us expressed in the Holy Scriptures.

Now, your soul, or mind, is the part that deals with the world of imagination, emotions, and volition. The body, however, is a simple box, a dwelling place where the Spirit of man lives. The body legitimizes and makes man's existence legal on earth because no spirit is permitted without a physical body. That is why even the Lord Jesus Christ had to obey the law of incarnation to make himself equal

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to men and die to save us. He would not have been killed in his spiritual form because there would be no blood to offer for our ransom before his father. The Holy Bible states: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us; and we saw His glory, glory as of the only *Son* from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:1,14 NIV). Who is the incarnated verb? Jesus Christ. The Greek term in this context is “Logos,” meaning “word” or even the expression of God’s thoughts. Jesus Christ is the manifestation of God’s thoughts for mankind; he is the will of God in action.

Everything he did and the way he lived reveal the will of God for us. He healed and libed because this was and still is the will of God for human beings. He loves us and gave us life because it is God’s will that we live. God truly loves us. Dear reader, take note of this: true Christianity is lived in the heart, in the spirit of man. It is not a cover to hide the darkness. It is the light of the world that dispels darkness and brings the glory of the resurrection of Jesus to the spotlight. We have to reflect on our speaking, living, walking; that is, our *modus vivendi* and *modus operandi* have to reflect the life of Christ, where our preaching, speeches, and words agree and reconcile theory and practice in our actions. Where our comments reflect and reveal our personality. Hence the importance of developing a habit of listening, hearing, studying, and meditate on the word of God.

Meditation is similar to the digestion of food by the physical body. But in this case, food is spiritual, that is, the word of God. Meditation works the spirit of man to absorb and appropriate the vitamins (of life, glory, nature, and grace of God) in his word. Consequently, you see yourself walking with command over the circumstances of this world, over sin, over the devil, and all evil.

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Glory to God! True Christianity is a combination of the surrendered heart to Jesus with the mouth that confesses: “Jesus Christ is my Lord. Lord of my life, my body, my finances and I live according to his word”.

When Jesus becomes your Lord, the devil stays frozen and trembling because you are from Jesus and live above demons and all spells. Therefore, live from your heart and guard your heart against all that is offense, unclean, and contaminating the spirit.

Your communion with God and your faith in him are the source and foundation of his wealth. So, you can say like David said: “The Lord is my shepherd, I will not be in need” (Psalm 23:1 NIV). Moreover, you can emphatically affirm like apostle Paul: “And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19NIV). The blessings you can receive in your spirit will become material when you confess them with faith by mouth. The heart believes and receives, and the mouth reveals and materializes. So, learn to profess God’s promises about your life, and you will live in their light.

Your heart: a place of worship to God

The Scripture says: “Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of life” (Proverbs 4:23 NIV).

Dear reader, it is necessary to understand that your heart represents your greatest asset before God. An asset is something of value, a good in which we want to invest. The greatest investment in man’s life should be in his heart, that is, in his spirit. Because he won’t take anything from this world at the end of his life, except

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what his spirit made, or carried, the way he lived, and the place Jesus Christ occupied in the rooms of his heart. The fruit of the soul is produced in the heart of man: Love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, kindness, faith (faithfulness), meekness, and temperance. Your heart is the paper on which the Holy Spirit clearly imprints the image and character of God, that is, the qualities and nature of Christ. That is why Jesus told his disciples: “You are the light of the world” (Matthew 5:14 NIV).

Dear reader, start from today to invest in your heart and the things of the spirit. In the things that strengthen the character and safeguard the values and culture of our country of origin: heaven. You are a heavenly citizen if your life is in communion with Christ. Paul said: “Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you” (Colossians 3:16 NIV). Christ dwells in our hearts by his word and by his spirit.

What matters most to God right now is our communion with him, not a specific day or place such as that hill in which that the Samaritan woman thought to be the place of worship of God. Love God anywhere from your heart because God is spirit. God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship him in spirit and truth. Adore him in communion with the Holy Spirit. He guides us down the streets of justice. God is more interested in the condition of your heart for him and your neighbor.

The New Testament or the New Covenant, by completing the Old Testament or Covenant, consequently abolished the law of Moses, and no one should overlay, accumulate the precepts of the law, the rituals of animal sacrifices, keep the Sabbath day. God wants to relate to you daily by his Spirit and by his word. It is the condition of your heart that interests God today.

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Jesus once said to the religious Jews, “The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27 NIV). God created the Sabbath (rest) so that man can have the notion of physical rest. Some people work Monday to Monday, even risking their communion with God and their family (wife, husband, children) who don’t have time to rest. God wants you to rest. The essence of the Sabbath is to rest, not the ritual of the seventh day of the week. What is it worth keeping the seventh day of the week while your heart is full of hatred, envy, and intrigue on the same day? This would be religion and not communion with God. God does not want his children to have a slave mentality, but rather a children mentality; we serve our father with children's hearts. Man is more important than the Sabbath, but to rescue the man that would have been lost because of sin. “For the Son of Man has to come to seek and to save that which was lost” (Luke 19:10 NIV). That is why the apostle Paul told us we shouldn’t judge because of the new moon, the feasts, or the days for these things were shadows of the real things that would come in the new covenant (Colossians 2:16-17 NIV). It should be remembered that according to the Scriptures, the law, ordinances, and rituals came with Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17 NIV).

Saved by grace through faith in Jesus

The New Testament reveals God’s grace given to humanity through Jesus. “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all,” says the word of God in 2 Corinthians 13:14.

As I wrote this book, I was thinking of the thousands of God’s children who are being tormented and disturbed by the question of

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keeping Moses' law that, in practice, Jesus fulfilled and abolished with his death on the cross. According to the Holy Bible, the law served as an aid to lead men to Jesus Christ, our savior, because no one could please God by themselves without help from the Holy Spirit. Only Jesus fulfilled the law for us and then scratched it on the cross. The Scripture says that he scratched the certificate of debt which was somewhat contrary to us in his ordinances (You will not do this, you will not do that), nailing it on the cross (Colossians 2:14).

The law has made the man understand that he is imperfect and needs a savior, Jesus Christ. Now that the Savior came and brought us grace, there is no need to remain under the law. The Holy Bible states that there is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh but by the Spirit (Romans 8:1). Did you know something? Men of the Old Testament couldn't keep the law in its entirety because they didn't have the Holy Spirit living in them in its fullness.

They tried in the flesh and failed, including Moses, the great servant of God. Now, in the New Testament, Jesus Christ fulfilled the law for us and gave us the pledge of the Holy Spirit so that we could please God. It is the testimony of the Holy Spirit that says and confirms to our spirit that we are children of God (Romans 8:16). In the Old Testament, they waited for this promise, that of the spillage of the Holy Spirit. It was for this reason that Joel prophesied, "It will come about after this that I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind, and your sons and your daughters will prophesy, your old men will have dreams, your young men will see visions. And even on the male and female servants, I will pour out My Spirit in those days" (Joel 2:28-29)

This is the result of the work of the Holy Spirit. Man cannot please God without the help of the Holy Spirit. In fact, without the

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Holy Spirit, it is impossible to please God, just as without faith, it is impossible to please him.

The children of Israel in the desert saw many miracles and liberations (releases): the red sea opened so they could pass on dry land; the manna that fell from heaven for them to eat, the water coming out of the rock for them to drink. Yet, they continued to doubt God and to murmur against him and his Servant Moses. They do not believe in God. Consequently, in his wrath, God swore they wouldn't enter in his rest (relaxation). To what rest was God referring to? Canaan, the promised land? No. Because Joshua did not give them Rest. They continued keeping the Sabbath yet still did not enter the rest. You may be questioning: "But why apostle Onório?". The answer is because God's rest is not in a day but in our hearts. God wanted them to trust him and rest on his word. They were an abstained population (rebellious, stubborn) and full of disbelief. They would believe for a few seconds to then continue to doubt and murmur.

They did not enter in God's rest because his rest was not Canaan. The text of Hebrews 4:3 attests: "For we who have believed enter that rest, just as He has said." It is our faith in Jesus Christ and in his work on the cross that brings us rest.

Jesus said: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28 NIV).

Dear reader, stop worrying and start resting on the word of God. It was Jesus who brought us rest. So, it isn't a question of the Sabbath or specific religious festivals that give us Rest, but faith in the word of God and intimate communion with him. The Holy Bible attests: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not a result of

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works, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9 NIV). Grace is an undeserved favor from God. We did not have to make any sacrifice to be saved. We only had to believe in Jesus as our Lord and Savior. We were born again by the intervention of the Holy Spirit’s power when with faith, we respond to the divine call in the Gospel of the kingdom of God. We are born again when we submit ourselves to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We came to God by grace. Raise your hands and say: “Thank you Jesus for your grace.” Yes, your grace is enough for us. If works obtained salvation, we would all boast (we would be proud of the deed), but it was, in fact, by the grace of Jesus Christ and not for the fulfillment of the law. When you are born again and receive the Holy Spirit, you live a life that pleases God with the help of the Holy Spirit. Don’t try to please God in the flesh; you will not succeed because flesh brings the consciousness of sin.

At his death, Jesus abolished the law and its ordinances and brought immortality and eternal life to all men. Now we are righteous before God because of the work of Christ on the Cross. The Holy Bible says, “He made Him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him” (2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV).

In his compassion and love for you, dear reader, Jesus died in your place and resurrected to justify to those who believe in him before heavenly father. The Scripture says: “for everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13 NIV). You and I were saved by grace. Faith in Jesus makes us beneficiaries of the blessings that grace has. That means that you didn’t work to deserve salvation, but God chose to justify by faith those who believed in his son Jesus. Now, when God looks at us, he sees his son Jesus because we have the mark of the promise; we have the Spirit of Christ living in us.

CHAPTER IX

Understanding the concept of sin

The Hebrew word generally translated as sin is “*Chatah*” or “*Hatah*,” which literally means “to fail the target” in the sense of not corresponding with God’s words, thoughts, will, and actions.

Sin can be natural or hereditary, as well as deliberate, that is, committed on purpose. The first (natural) denotes a situation in which the sinner is naturally found in sin, not on his own or willingly, but by others, like Adam who sinned, and all inherited his sin, so they were born sinners. The ultimate (deliberate) means that the sinner commits sin on purpose, that is, disobeys God’s word after knowing his will. Therefore, the Scripture says that whoever knows good and does not do it commits sin (James 4:17).

In both cases, the sinner misses the target and is consequently devoid of the glory of God by not corresponding with his righteous expectations of the Holy God.

Now, to define the concept of sin, we need to take a look at it from two perspectives: the Old and New Testaments.

As I mentioned in the previous chapters, in the Old Testament, they did not have a clear notion of what sin was until the law came with Moses with its ordinances: “You will not do this, you shall not do that.” When the law came, it brought sin into the spotlight. Now, in the New Testament, the concept of sin can be understood in a clearer and more synthetic way. Unfortunately, many people, including believers, had an erroneous notion of the concept of sin. For instance, if you ask someone what sin is, most answers will be smoking, drink, etc. Of course these things are unacceptable to the

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believer because they are naturally harmful. But those who do not smoke will think they have no sin while lying and stealing. So the question should be: why do people who drink, smoke, and commit certain atrocities?

Because of sin, obviously. Therefore, sin must be something more profound and rooted in the spirit, that is, in the man's character who produces manifestations of socially deviant conduct. If the Holy Bible says that all have sinned and fell short of the glory of God and at the same time says that there is no righteous, not one, how, then, can an innocent child have sinned if they don't drink nor smoke? Obviously, there is what we call original sin, which is the sin of Adam and Eve. But what does God consider sin in the New Testament?

Looking at the text of 1 John 3:9, we understand that sin is a corrupt nature. It is an innate seed inherited by all men who are born in this world. It's not just about what they do but with the corrupted and sinful nature in which they are born: in ignorance and disobedience to the word of God. All disobedience to God is a sin. The sinful nature makes man live in contradiction and contravention of the word of God. Notice the text of 1 John 3:9: "No one who has been born of God practices sin, because His seed remains in him; and he cannot sin continually, because he has been born of God." In the light of this verse, we can understand that justice is a seed of the Holy Spirit implanted freely by God in man's spirit due to his faith in Jesus. Sin is a nature inherited in virtue of being born in this world, initially as a descendent of Adam and Eve.

We inherited it from Adamic nature, and it is because of sin that death came and passed on to all men (Romans 5:12). This fallen and corrupt nature of the spirit of man makes him evil to his neighbor and drives the work of the flesh, namely: "sexual immorality, impurity, indecent behavior, idolatry, witchcraft,

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hostilities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21 NIV)

The world sees, with physical eyes, practice works of the flesh but cannot see their cause, the driving force that leads people to steal, bewitch, prostitute, envy, and hate. Sin is a nature behind these works, and they are the fruit of sin. Whoever lives in sin practically lives controlled by the desires of the flesh and cannot tame them because their spirit has not yet been regenerated.

That is why someone can be arrested and be put in jail for a crime, and right after getting out of jail, they commit the same crime or worse. They are controlled by demons and by the desires of the flesh, which are against God’s will expressed in his word. Adam sinned against God by disobeying his word: “But from the tree of knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for on the day that you eat from it you will certainly die” (Genesis 2:17 NIV). He disobeyed God by breaking his agreement with the Lord and sinned, and men became sinners because of the fall of Adam and continue to sin because of the sinful and corrupt nature in which they were born.

Sin is connected to the body, the flesh, and sin gives authority to the devil to afflict man. That is why sin is the mother of all problems that haunt (make humanity suffer) today. If Adam hadn’t sinned, the devil would have no authority over man to afflict him with diseases and miseries. Remember that Satan already existed before the creation of Man, and he was as bad as he is today after being kicked out of heaven for his rebellion and pride. However, although he hated man, he could do him no harm while he was in communion with God. Only by the fall of man has the devil

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succeeded in installing his kingdom of darkness on earth, which is responsible for the misfortunes and suffering of mankind.

When God created man, he breathed into his nostrils, and the man received the breath of life. The word “breath” derives from the same Hebrew word for spirit, used in Genesis 1:2, “*Ruach*,” which means spirit, breath, life and denotes the Holy Spirit. “And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.” Therefore, Adam came to life, thanks to that breath of God. So it is the Holy Spirit who gives life to man.

When God told Adam that he would certainly die on the day he ate the forbidden fruit, to what death was he referring to? When Adam ate the fruit, he didn’t fall to the ground and put himself in a coffin or grave, as many would think with the mentality of what happens in the current days. He remained alive and lived 930 years in total. So, God lied when he said Adam would die? Thousand times no. May God be true and all men liars. God is not a man to lie to or the son of man to repent (Numbers 23:19).

God was right; Adam died on the spiritual level. It is called spiritual death. He remained alive but in the flesh, psyche and no longer guided by the Holy Spirit. So, he was dominated by flesh and its desires (concupiscences) and could no longer please God because he was disconnected from the source of life: the Holy Spirit. Consequently, all men born into this world inherited this sinful nature, that is, the original sin and this fallen of Adam because of sin, and are born with their backs turned to God. The man could no longer exercise his command, even against his unnatural appetites, because he was disconnected from the Spirit of life that empowered him. That is why the Holy Bible states that those who walk by the flesh cannot please God and are not children of God. God’s children

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are children of the Spirit and are guided by the Holy Spirit and by the word of God (Romans 8:8,14).

It's straightforward to understand this by observing the text of John 20:21-23 that narrates what Jesus said and did after his resurrection from the dead: "So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be to you; just as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained". Can you notice something in this text? After his resurrection from the dead, Jesus made his first disciples, who constituted the kingdom's first citizens, born spiritually in the New Testament era, after being baptized into the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost described in Acts 2. For them, Jesus did the same thing God the father had done when he breathed into Adam's nostrils and was made a living soul (Genesis 2:7).

With these men, Jesus marked a new era in the history of mankind: the era in which people could be born again in spirit and receive the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God would be installed in the hearts of those who believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. In which the church had authority and power over the devil and the world. In which we would no longer be controlled by the desires of the flesh but guided and strengthened by the Holy Spirit. In which the spirit of man would be enlightened and regenerated, that is, born again. God would remove corruption from the spirit and character in the believer's life, enabling him to live a life pleasing to Him.

In which the Holy Spirit would fill the church, mankind until the entire earth is filled with the knowledge of the glory of God. After we have received the Holy Spirit, we live guided by it, and we

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produce the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, longsuffering, meekness, kindness, faith, temperance, goodness. We would no longer be dominated by sin but are filled daily and guided by the Holy Spirit. We would no longer live under the law of Moses but the grace of Lord Jesus Christ. That is why Paul said to Titus: “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all people, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires” (Titus 2:11-12 NIV).

With Christ’s resurrection from the dead and the descent of the Holy Spirit, the earth became propitious to be inhabited by men who surrender to the Lordship of Jesus. Finally, however, there is a change in the spiritual paradigm: the spirit has priority over the flesh. Thus, all those who believe in Jesus Christ and His resurrection are empowered to walk with command and victory over sin and all forces of darkness.

When God created man, he breathed into his nostrils, and the man received the breath of life (Genesis 2:7). When man sins, he breaks this breath, this communion with God, and hides from God. Consequently, he is thrown out of paradise and begins to suffer, and finally dies. So Adam failed and got us in trouble. We inherited his carnal nature because we were born in this world with flesh and blood like Adam and Eve, the first human beings who were already raised big and had no childhood.

However, God decided to send us to Lord Jesus, also called the second Adam (1 Corinthians 15:45). Second Adam because he incarnated himself to be like us and save us from death and sin. He lived in a sinful but sinless world. His blood was divine because he was not the seed of man but of woman. Mary got pregnant with the Holy Spirit, and Jesus was physically born. Whereas we all had biological parents: father and mother, Jesus didn’t have a biological

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father because he is the only begotten of the heavenly father, the savior of mankind, the verb made in the flesh. He overcame sin, death, and the devil and gave us victory.

In the same way that God breathed the breath of life for Adam to live before he would sin, Jesus also breathed the breath of spiritual life to his disciples. He brought us back to communion with God the father. He gave us back what Adam had lost.

How to live above sin

Now, we can live by the Spirit and not lean on the pleasures of the flesh. This is because the inclination towards the Spirit is life and peace, but the tendency towards the flesh is death (Romans 8:6). Therefore, when the man is born again by the faith in Jesus and regeneration of the Holy Spirit, the seed of sin, that is, the sinful nature is removed, and God installs his new seed, which is the Holy Spirit living in us. It produces peace, joy, temperance, meekness, longsuffering, goodness, kindness, and love. That is why we cannot fail or get upset because we have the Holy Spirit living in us.

So, the concept of sin changed in the New Testament. Jesus said to his disciples: "I am giving you a new commandment, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, that you also love one another" (John 13:24 NIV). Thus, he gave us the law of love. Moreover, the Scripture says that the law summarizes itself in a single commandment: you will love your neighbor as you love yourself. Then it says, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength."

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Therefore, in the New Testament, sin is when this law is violated. The law of love. The law of faith that works for love. Sin in the New Testament is when you don't walk in faith that works for love. That is why John said that those who do not love do not know God because God is love (1 John 4:8). Moreover, whoever hates his brother who he sees, how can he love God who he does not see? Love for our neighbor is the proof and result of our love for God. Our neighbor is the exercise field where our love for God is tested. Do you love God? Yes. Do you love people? It should be yes as well. The Bible says whoever hates his brother is a murderer (1 John 3:15). A murderer is not only the one who kills with a knife or firearm; even the one who murders with words and actions is a murderer in the spiritual level of God.

Love is the summary of the law (Galatians 5:14). Even the ten commandments that God gave to Moses were divided into two parts: some were connected to our relationship with God, in the perspective that we should not have other gods outside of Lord God (Jehovah) and the way he was worshiped, by a monotheistic population, that is, who have the Lord (Jehovah) as the only God. And the others had to do with the human relationships and social interactions, in the perspective of how to deal with our neighbor and his properties. For instance, if you love your neighbor, you will not covet his wife or her husband. You won't want to insult him, envy him, or hate him. You won't want to kill him or steal from him. Why? Because you love him as you love yourself. You are not going to do someone else what you don't want them to do to you. Jesus said: do unto your neighbor as you would have them do unto you, for this is the summary of the law and the prophets.

The prophets came to rebuke people when they did not walk according to the law. Now, by the Holy Spirit, the love of God was installed in each of us. You would have love if you were born again.

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What is missing is exercising this love. It's like a newborn baby: he has legs, and arms like an adult has but doesn't walk or speak. As he grows, he has to exercise the limbs he had when he was born. The text of Romans 5:5 says, "and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has given to us." This is the unconditional love of God, with which you can ignore the offenses of your husband or wife and decide to forgive and love without demanding anything. Because the Scripture says: "but God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). It's time to exercise the love of God that is in you. One of the love tests is forgiveness, the one who loves forgives. This world is filled with hatred and envy, so this is your call, dear reader. Rise as the light of the world and show the love of God to others. Love is the greatest weapon with which we can conquer the world. Love perfects the believer.

Take note of this: when you believe in Jesus as your Lord and Savior with your heart and love and concretely love your neighbor, you already fulfilled the law. This is all that God wants from us: to believe in his son Jesus for our salvation and love our neighbor as we love ourselves. Love is the regulator of social interactions between the children of God, and faith is the connector between men and God, between the natural and supernatural world, allowing the supernatural to impact the natural by healing, liberating, and blessing humanity. Faith in God will make you love your neighbor. We don't fight to love or try to love; love is part of our DNA. It is part of the fruit of the Spirit, the initial package. Our love flows naturally because we have the Spirit of love living in us and to which we surrender.

As a son of God, you need to surrender yourself to the Holy Spirit and train your heart to love. First, you will have to ignore

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offenses as God did for us. He forgave our transgressions, washed us from our sins, and accepted us as his children. It is easier to keep your marriage if you have the love of God in you. Why? Because you won't be counting and collecting offenses. You will ignore violations and won't be carrying sorrows in your heart because God lives in your heart and because the nature of God has been implanted in your heart when you were born again.

Decide today that you will walk in God's love. You will live in love. The eyes of love allow you to see gold in the mud of your husband, your wife, and your neighbor. Love makes us patient and good. Love celebrates the success of others and doesn't slack with injustice; love doesn't seek its own interests but places the other in the spotlight. Love is good, longsuffering, and righteous. Love is not proud, nor does it behave with indecency. Love doesn't make envy nor hate. Instead, love seeks the common good and prays for others. Love is a spiritual force, a divine plan implanted in the believer's heart that gives him the will always to pray, have communion with God, study his word and do good for others. Love helps others without demanding anything in return. Love is precious in God's eyes. You don't worship God for fear but for love. You go to church for love. You sow in God's house for love. You help your neighbor for love and not to be seen or take pictures. Love serves.

Love is humble, and it is meek and kind. Love forgives. Even knowing it was offensive, it doesn't take offense. Love is powerful. Love helps activate the gifts of the Holy Spirit given to each of us for the common good. Love for our neighbor and God is the true path of practical peace on earth, between God and men and men among themselves. God's love: *ágape* love in Greek is unconditional love. It was with this love that God loved us.

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He loved us while we were still sinners. Christ didn't die for us when we were good, holy, and righteous, but he died when we were still dirty, in the mud of sin; he offered us and washed us with his blood. He invested in us. He has done and does for us because of his deep love and intimate compassion for us. The miracles are not just proof of God's power but proof of his love. Jesus implanted the same passion he has within our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Now, you need to put that love to work. You may say: "But, I hate that person because of what they did to me, it's wrong, and I can't forgive them." Thousand times no!

You can't and shouldn't hold a grudge against this person. The Holy Bible says that Christ has forgiven us even with nails in his hands and feet. He did not curse us but prayed for his detractors: "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34 NIV). We must have and display the same passion and love that was in Christ, for we have the same Spirit that made him the Christ. We can love like him. Man's nature is cruel. Man doesn't forgive easily; this kind of love of God can be displayed and lived by man if he surrenders to the Holy Spirit and the word of God. Thanks be given to God by the Holy Spirit.

The Bible states that God is love, and because he is love and our father, we are born of love. It is part of our divine essence, of our new configuration as new creatures in Christ. One of the more practical ways of showing this love is by practicing the art of praying for people who hate you. The more you pray for them, the greater your love will be. As a result, your heart will be clean, free of sorrows, hatred, and resentment, and consequently, all evil that is thrown against you will not prosper.

CHAPTER X

The Justice of God

Justified by faith in Jesus Christ

One of the concepts much less understood among Christians is the justice of God, that is, the justification derived from God. In almost every country of the world, states have a department of justice that deals with legal matters. This, in turn, legalizes or makes legal the actions, organizations, companies, or even certain institutions inside the country. It deals with constitutional matters of the country. Now, many believers have lived a life of psychological torment, that is, self-condemnation, for a very long time. Even having already been saved by grace in Christ, they didn't understand justice or God's justification in our country called heaven. The kingdom of heaven worked differently than the kingdom of men because God is not a man, and his word is law in itself.

The word of God reveals the character and nature of God; it can purify you and absolve you from sin. God does not want, for instance, that you live condemned and accused in your mind because that way, you will not be able to have peace and joy in your heart. Hence, it is essential to understand the way he justifies and absolves the sinner from his sins. If God were a human judge with no mercy, compassion, and love, all of mankind would be in prison or jail today. The Scripture says: "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our wrongdoings, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus"

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(Ephesians 2:4-6 NIV). In Christ is the place of justification, but far or outside of Christ is the place of condemnation. Apostle John argues, “We know that we are of God and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19 NIV). Christ offers salvation and justification to the sinner.

Many believers often find themselves in a state of limitation due to their awareness of sin. And the devil, understanding the power of the mind, accuses their minds, making them remember their past sins before they came to Christ. He will tell you, “Remember what you did in the past before being saved? You cannot be saved, God cannot forgive you, give up, kill yourself because you are a failure and a sinner”. And it starts to torment your mind making you live in the awareness of sin.

The awareness of sin is more dangerous than sin itself because the sinner may confess to their sin and be forgiven by God, but if they still maintain an awareness of sin, they will live in self-condemnation. It's like a baby crawling who falls each time they try to take another step. It doesn't mean he isn't human; he is, but he still needs to grow and develop the psychomotor faculties until he can stand by himself and for a long time and use his arms and hands to work, use his mouth to speak and his eyes to see clearly. One of the devil's weapons is condemnation. He likes to see you tormented with a feeling of guilt and insignificance. He wants you to live isolated and whining with a mind stuck with memories of your past filled with flaws, mistakes, and sins. That is why you need to understand the question of God's justification and develop an awareness of justice and not of evil.

How to Live Free from condemnation and awareness of sin

The Scripture states: “Therefore there is now no condemnation at all for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death. For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh” (Romans 8:1-3 NIV). Thus, the incarnation and death of Christ on the cross brought us redemption and salvation.

The word condemnation comes from the Greek term “*Katakrima*” and has to do with the results of a sentence; that is, it has to do with the resulting consequences of the judge’s decision. If the judge’s verdict says the defendant will be sentenced to a certain number of months or years in prison, the law and order services (the police in this case) take action making the judge’s sentence be served. Getting into jail and serving time would be the results of the conviction. However, the defendant may appeal the judge’s decision and challenge the judgment by paying bail to respond freely. Sometimes the judge may decide to acquit the defendant when he doesn’t find him guilty of conviction. Thus, the defendant is acquitted and is free from conviction and imprisonment. Your file is cleared in the prosecution file and the suspect you were subject to. This is how men’s courts work in many countries.

However, the judge’s judgment and sentencing are roughly done based on the country’s constitution and the laws and criminal codes in force. Suppose the judge conducts the trial and issues a sentence that does not reflect the country’s legal framework and criminal code. In that case, the punishment or penalty may be considered unconstitutional for not following the law in force. In many instances in which the judge is corrupt, the trial and sentencing

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may be flawed and thus conceal the spirit of the law and not practice justice. This explanation is fundamental because you need to understand how your country's constitution works. Likewise, when you enter the kingdom of God, you must know the constitution of the kingdom of heaven. The Holy Bible is not a mere religious book of religious rituals and ceremonies; it is the constitution of the kingdom of heaven.

God's will is expressed to us in the light, that is, under his word. Therefore, the word of God must be the standard of our lives. Jesus said, "Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4 NIV).

In a human court, the defendant is not acquitted of guilt because he cried or lamented because the judge should not be subjective or act based on emotion but in compliance with the laws in force in the country. Now, God loves the sinner, but he doesn't love sin. That is why he condemns sin because the wages of sin is death. Thus, loving the sinner, God allowed his son Jesus to die in the sinner's place, in our place, and God's punishment fell upon him. Thus, Jesus Christ carried the sentence that should be upon us because he carried our guilt.

The Scripture states: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written: "cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"— so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham would come to the Gentiles so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith" (Galatians 3:13-14 NIV).

Why did Jesus die in the sinner's place? For us to be absolved in God's court, that is, that we may be justified by faith in Christ

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Jesus, our champion who died for us and resurrected for our justification.

The Scripture attests: “All of us, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the Lord has caused the wrongdoing of us all to fall on Him. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet He did not open His mouth; like a lamb that is led to slaughter, and like a sheep that is silent before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth. By oppression and judgment, He was taken away; and as for His generation, who considered that He was cut off from the land of the living for the wrongdoing of my people, to whom the blow was due? But the Lord desired to crush Him, causing Him grief; if He renders Himself as a guilt offering, He will see His offspring, He will prolong His days, and the good pleasure of the Lord will prosper in His hand” (Isaiah 53:6-8,10 NIV).

What posterity does the Scripture refer to? To us, me, you, and those who believe in Christ’s sacrifice and trust in him for their salvation. Yes, we are saved by the life of Christ, for he gave his life for us. He endured the painful cross for us, and on the cross, he carried all our diseases, illnesses, pain, sin, and misery, and by his bruises (wounds, scourges, pain, affliction), we are healed (cured spirit, soul (mind) and body). Praise the name of Jesus forever. He is the redeemer of mankind, the eternal Savior.

Dear reader, learn to love Jesus with all your heart. Keep the words of this song in your heart and confess them to the Lord:

“Lord, I love you, with all my heart and soul, I love you. Your praise will continually be on my lips, I love you. I will love you forever Jesus, I will love you forever, my Lord!”.

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The Scripture exhorts us: “Looking only at Jesus, the originator and perfecter of the faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:2 NIV)

God decided to absolve the sinners through their faith and surrender to Jesus Christ. There is no other way; only Jesus is the way to God the Father. There is no shortcut (cutoff) to God, for heaven is outside of Jesus. He is the connector between God and men. The Scripture says: “For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all, the testimony given at the proper time” (1 Timothy 2:5-6 NIV). And God’s testimony is: “God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. The one who has the Son has the life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have the life” (1 John 5:11-12 NIV).

To live free of condemnation and the awareness of sin, one must surrender to Christ to receive his forgiveness and rest in his work on the Cross. He will not die again for sinners. He already did once and forever. Confess your faults, repent and receive his forgiveness. Then, walk in the novelty of life, living free from condemnation.

How to develop an awareness of Justice

Many believers want to fight and sacrifice to serve God. They want to fight and try hard to please God and live in communion with him when all they had to do was believe and rest in him.

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Understand that God looked at you and saw that man cannot come to him and be saved or accepted only by his works. Man's good works aren't sufficient to be acceptable before God. Therefore, he chose to justify all those who come to him by faith in Jesus Christ. "Why?" – you may wonder because Jesus Christ was the only one who lived without sin in the whole history of mankind. He himself is the justice of God. Therefore, we need to hold on to his righteousness.

Imagine that you are on an island and knew that there was a flood that would cover the island with water and have two options:

First: swim with all your strength for a long time to keep floating on the waters and withstand the pressure of rain, waves, and cold.

Second: leave your pride aside and accept the creator of the universe's offer to climb on his ark (boat) where there is protection, safety, food, and salvation. But here, you will have to trust the word of the sailor/pilot and live according to his instructions.

What option would you choose? Of course you would choose the second one because it offers salvation. So too, God chose grace and not works so that no one would boast in himself, but in Christ who saved us from sin and death.

To receive God's justice and live in its awareness, you must do three things:

1. **You must repent of sins;**
2. **Believe in what Jesus Christ did for you on the cross;**
3. **Trust in Christ and cling to Him.**

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No one will be accepted by God for his works outside of communion with Christ. You cannot lie but slip in other offenses. Don't concentrate solely on your works but on Christ. When you focus on Christ, you will live life according to Christ, an entire, pleasing life in the eyes of God.

The Holy Bible says: "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21 NIV). Understand this: Jesus took your sins so you could be righteous before God. Therefore, we are the justice of God in Christ Jesus, based on the life of Christ and not on works. When you deal with God, he looks at you in place of Jesus Christ, his son. When the sinner repents and receives salvation, in his spiritual account where he had sinned, the justice of God is credited, and now, it's as if he had never sinned. Because it carries the righteousness of Christ, that is how you should think and live to please God. Just accept Christ's sacrifice in your heart. The Scripture says: "God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (1 Corinthians 1:9 NIV). Live in communion with Jesus. This is your highest level of life: to live in intimate communion with your Lord.

What is justice

You may ask: "But apostle Onório, what is justice?". Well, justice is man's righteousness before God, before his law. The purity of man's spirit before God results in a restoration of your relationship with God. Being straight and righteous is being in a good relationship with the sovereign authority, in this case, God. When man sinned, he fell from communion with God and lost his righteousness before him. Sin corrupted man's nature and spirit.

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That is why Adam hid behind God, trying to escape his presence. This is what the devil wants from you that you move away from God's presence, that is, the communion with him. Peace, joy, and happiness are in communion with God. When God justifies us, this justice produces peace within our hearts because we live knowing we are free from condemnation and punishment.

That is why the Scripture announces: "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1 NIV).

With his strength and human ability, man cannot achieve this position of righteousness before God due to his sinful nature. Therefore, in the Old Covenant, God accepted and granted forgiveness to those who kept the ten commandments or sacrificed animals: lambs, steers. Thus, an immaculate and innocent lamb replaced man, being offered in his place to cover his sins. Therefore, the man was forgiven for life by the blood and justice of the lamb, the sacrificed animal. They had to sacrifice animals multiple times. It was tough. But Jesus offered himself once to take away the sin of all mankind.

How to obtain justice

In the New Covenant, we don't need to fight to receive God's justice. That is because justice is a given gift from God. The Scripture in Romans 5:17 says: "For if by the offense of the one, death reigned through the one, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ."

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So, we see in this text from the Scripture that justice is not deserved or a wage of work made by man. It is the result of God's love for man. You may not understand the greatness of God's love until you recognize the fact that Christ left the splendor of heaven and his glory to come to earth to incarnate himself and die for man and to be resurrected to justify his sins. That is why in the cross Jesus cried out: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). Because he was in the place of man, carrying his sin and being punished for the guilt that didn't belong to him. This is God's offering as if he were saying, "Do you want to be saved? Accept my son as your Lord and Savior, and you shall receive my justice and Spirit".

An athlete that wins the marathon or a worker usually deserves his salary/wage. But justice is not earned or received as a salary or wage but as a free gift. God has already given the gift, with the man missing to receive it. Thus, in the New Testament, God deals with us through grace and not by works because all have sinned.

Justice as the spiritual status of the children of God

When you are born again, in spirit, you are born righteous before God. That is how things are in the spiritual realm. You don't grow with justice; that is, you won't be more honest than you were when you were born again by accepting Christ as Lord and Savior of your life. That's because justice is as if it were an official document of God's throne declaring that you have been accepted in God's family and absolved from your sins. This justice is transmitted and placed in man's spirit and results in a new creation of Christ. That is why Paul said: "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, this person is a new

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creation; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come” (2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV).

Now that you were born again, you must grow in grace and the knowledge of Lord Jesus. One must desire the word of God as a baby desires breast milk. The more you hunger and thirst for God, the more your spirit will receive revelations from God and will grow. That is why a life of prayer and study of the word of God is indispensable for the believer.

Benefits of justice

The justice of God brings peace to man’s spirit because we are reconciled with God. This, I will list some benefits derived from the righteousness of God:

1. Your prayers are heard and answered by God

The text of James 5:16 states: “...a prayer of a righteous person, when it is brought about, can accomplish much”. That is, the prayer of the righteous produces powerful results when done in faith. Moreover, the text of Psalms 34:15 says: “The eyes of the Lord are toward the righteous, and His ears are toward their cry for help (their prayer.”).

2. You gain authority over the devil, over his demons, and diseases as well as the circumstances of this world

The text of Ephesians 2:6 states: “and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” The Gospel of Saint Luke also attests: “Behold, I give you power to trample snakes and scorpions, and all the strength (skill and

ingenuity of the evil one to do you evil), and nothing will do you any harm (the darts of the enemy will not hurt you). You need to dress your armor of justice to refute the accusations of your opponent, the devil”.

3. In the eyes of God, it's as if you have never sinned

That's because you were washed away by the lamb's blood. The text of Revelation 1:5-6 confirms: “To Him who loves us and released us from our sins by his blood, and He made us into a kingdom, priests to His God and Father; to Him be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen”.

Your account and file are clean, and your spiritual account is credited with the justice of Christ, health, blessings, peace, joy, temperance.

When we talk about justice or justification, many people think of their leftovers and personal merit, which cannot qualify them before God. You must look at Jesus.

4. Peace and reconciliation with God

Yes, we have peace with God, and we talk with him without feeling guilty about anything. We surrender ourselves to him and love him. We praise him and worship him for his greatness, love, mercy, beauty, kindness, and faithfulness. We were filled with peace in mind and spirit because we were forgiven by the Lord and absolved by the court of Heaven.

Deep down, the criteria for being righteous before God is your faith in Jesus and a new life that reflects your new birth. You must trust in what Christ has done on the Cross and surrender to Him. When you surrender to the Lord, the Holy Spirit replaces your sinful

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nature with the nature of God in your spirit, that is, in your heart. Now, you must desire the things I listed above to please the Lord and live for Christ. When the word of God, which is your seed, and the Holy Spirit that carry your nature and character are in you, then sin will no longer have control over your life. Your spirit is revitalized and stays alive and active. It becomes sensitive to God's voice and the spirit world. You start to desire and hunger for the things of God. From there, God begins to exercise control over your mind and body. You are no longer guided by the carnal desires or sinful, selfish ambitions or by the concupiscence (lust) of the eyes, but by the word and Spirit of God. Your spirit is strengthened, and your words carry power.

Salvation by faith that produces works of justice or salvation by works?

Many believers and even preachers have found themselves at a crossroads when they read and contrast James 2:17/24 and Ephesians 2:8. For some, it looks like a puzzle, a paradox, and for others, a contradiction, a controversy. But it's not like that; the Scriptures are cohesive and coherent. However, it takes revelation to understand the intention of the Holy Spirit when he inspires his men to write the words of God to guide his people in green pastures and calm waters. James 2:27 says: "In the same way, faith also, if it has no works, is dead, being by itself," and verse 24 says: "you see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone."

What James meant is that you shouldn't just believe in Jesus and not change your life. Your faith must be followed by the works resulting from the new life you received in Christ. This is because his old inner man died and was crucified with Christ. Baptism in the

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water represents that symbolically and psychologically, that you died with Christ, you were buried with Christ and resurrected with him. Now that you have resurrected with him, you must live in the novelty of life and demonstrate in practice that you are a son of God by the works of love for your neighbor and by the example of life.

However, it is clear that: “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:8-10 NIV)

When one is born again, one receives new life and nature from God in man’s spirit. This new nature manifests itself by its new *modus vivendi* (way of living) and *modus operandi* (way of doing things), influenced by the word of God and by the Holy Spirit who lives in us. In short, salvation is by grace, by faith in Jesus. This faith manifests by the new life in which we walk. Why? Because faith requires an action to match what we believe in. Live for Christ and let your light shine so that people can see your good works, the results of your faith in Jesus, and glorify God. For instance, if your neighbor is hungry and thirsty, you should give him something to eat or drink (not alcoholic beverages). If your enemy offends you, you will forgive him and even bless him.

You already sow the advance of the kingdom of God financially and for the gospel to reach more people. You contribute with your resources to the growth of the church you attend. You love, pray, help, and forgive not as a way of receiving salvation and justice but as a result of being saved and justified by faith in Jesus. Faith produces works that please God.

CHAPTER XI

Understanding Grace to Reign

“For if by the trespass of the one man, death reigned through that one man, how much more will those who receive God’s abundant provision of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ!” thus declares the Scripture in the Book of Romans 5:7 NIV.

Through one Man, Adam, sin, and death came to all of mankind. But, thanks to God for his great love for us, he sent us a second Adam: Jesus Christ, to save and redeem humanity from sin and all its consequences: death, diseases, illnesses, poverty, misery, and demonic torments.

It must be understood that the first Adam was the very human being to be created by God, and we all descended from him. He didn’t have a childhood, for he was created a grown-up and made of the dust of the earth. Eve also had no childhood because she was formed already grown of one of Adam’s ribs. This first Adam brought sin and death. He marked the era where the existence of human beings on earth because we, Africans, Europeans, Americans, Asians, and Easterns, derive from it. When God created him, he also gave him dominion over all the earth and the animals that move on land. He received the kingdom of God so that in communion and obedience to God, he would be an administrator of the physical territory called earth. While he lived in intimate communion with God, his creator, he didn’t know what it was like to get sick, starve, have torments, or even be afflicted by demons. This is because he was the land administrator God had given him authority to subdue and rule.

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He was created perfect in everything, in thinking, speaking, and acting. The blessing God gave him was for us too, because we were all in Adam. However, sin came and passed on to all human beings on earth by his sin and transgression of God's word. By sin came the consequences, which include death and misery. Man needed to be saved, but he couldn't save himself. He needed a perfect substitute that wasn't an irrational animal (lamb, goat) nor bird (pigeon, chicken, etc.) but someone who resembled the man in all, to be the high priest of man before God.

To this end, God sent his only begotten son Jesus Christ as the second Adam. The expression (second Adam" is used by apostle Paul in the Scriptures about two situations:

First: in allusion to the humanity of Jesus Christ. That is, Jesus Christ incarnated himself and became equal to human beings to serve them as the perfect lamb and, with his blood, redeem us all from sins. Jesus often referred to himself as: "The son of man," alluding to how he inherited human nature. He is God and a hundred percent divine. But he emptied himself and took human form and became a servant. He was obedient to his death on the cross. God the Father exalted him and gave him a name which is above all names, so that the name of Jesus may bend all the knees of those who are in heaven (angels), of those who are on earth (men) and under the earth (demons and the dead). Jesus Christ is the Lord of the glory of God the father. God the father wanted to reconcile the world with you through Jesus Christ.

He was born by a woman's seed and not of a man's since he has a divine birth with a biological mother, Maria, but no biological father. God had already prophesied concerning the woman (Eve) that her seed would crush the serpent's head, that is, Satan (Genesis 3:15). Jesus had divine blood and was not a sinner, but a righteous

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one, dying for the unjust so that through him we would be justified, that is, absolved of the guilt of sins before God.

Second: because Jesus marked a new era of human history, the period of the new birth, the period of new creation. The Scripture says: “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!” (2 Corinthians 5:17 NIV). Through Jesus, we receive the new birth in our spirit and become children of God.

Through Christ, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit and walk guided by the Spirit of God. Dear reader, if you are in Christ now and were sick before reading this book, you can say these words with faith: “I am in Christ, I am a new creature; thus, malaria, diabetes, cancer, fibroids, H.I.V AIDS have passed, and I am healed. Glory to God!”. In Christ, you are healed and free. This is how things should be: from the spiritual point of view, that is, in the eternal plan of God. You have been healed and blessed two thousand years ago.

However, this healing and blessing only become effective when you accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior and take possession of your gifts by faith.

Faith in Christ makes it accessible to us what grace in Christ has. That is, faith helps us receive the blessings of salvation that came to us through the grace of Jesus Christ. That is, you don’t need to sacrifice anything; just receive everything through faith because it has already been paid freely by Christ on the cross. Receive your healing, your liberation, and peace now, in the name of Jesus. Dear reader, I see you healed and blessed right now, in the name of Jesus. You are free from all evil. Receive grace and live above all evil circumstances in the name of Jesus.

Understanding the meaning of the thorn in Paul's flesh

Once, apostle Paul prayed over the thorn in the flesh he had. He prayed three times to God to remove it. Many theologians and preachers for years have debated the meaning of the thorn in Paul's body. Some claim it was a disease, and others this and that. Meanwhile, this is the revelation: the thorn in Paul's flesh was the religious leaders of the Pharisees and Sadducees, as well as the detractors and persecutors who persecuted him because of the preaching of the gospel. In Paul's time, persecution was extreme and even brutal to bear. Nevertheless, Paul managed to bring the Gospel to the Gentiles many times after he had gone through chains and scourging.

Some of the epistles were written by him in jail. That is why he often referred to himself as "The Prisoner of Jesus Christ." Paul was the apostle with the most remarkable revelations for seeing Jesus glorified and having had the grace to go to the third heaven. He took the Gospel before the kings and governors in chains and was handcuffed. His own brothers in the church often betrayed him, whom he called "fake brothers." He took thirty-nine lashes, suffered a wreck, but persisted in fulfilling his mission. What motivated him? The grace of Lord Jesus Christ. That is why in some of his letters, he would write at the end: "The grace of Lord Jesus Christ be with you." As in the famous declaration to the Corinthians, which many priests call an apostolic blessing: "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Corinthians 13:14 NIV).

Faced with these persecutions, which were, in fact, a thorn in Paul's flesh because on the one hand he preached and on the other his flesh, that is, his body suffered for the sake of the Gospel. That's why he said his hands were stuck, but God's word wasn't.

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He wanted to fulfill the rest of the afflictions of Christ for the church. In the face of this circumstantial grip, Paul prayed three times, but God responded: “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9 NIV). Then Paul said: “For when I am weak, then I am strong.” The reason he called the thorn in the flesh the devil’s messenger is that the devil used all his detractors and enemies of the cross of Christ to prevent the advance of the kingdom of God. If, on the one hand, God used Paul: “God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured, and the evil spirits left them” (Acts 19:11-12); on the other, the devil sent certain people to persecute, mistreat and threaten those who served Christ.

For Paul’s contemporary Jews, the notion of the thorn in the flesh was not as ambiguous or controversial as it is today for non-Jews. For instance, in the Old Testament, in the book of Numbers 33:55, God warned the people of Israel that if they didn’t cast away the land’s inhabitants, they would possess by inheritance. Those allowed to stay will have thorns in their eyes and stings in their backs, and they would be squeezed.

Often, prophets, apostles, and even Lord Jesus spoke in metaphors, parables, and figurative language. It is the Holy Spirit who helps to decipher the truth. For example, thorns and stings in this context refer to people, that is, the populations around the people of Israel; this occurs even in today’s Israel with its enemies. This text doesn’t refer to literal thorns and stings. It is the same with the expression used by Paul when he referred to the thorn in his face as a devil’s messenger. Think about it: Why would the devil persecute Paul? Simple because of the gospel of Christ, which he preached and through which he delivered people from ignorance and the power of darkness (Acts 26:18).

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When you read or study the Holy Bible, one must keep in mind the study of the text and context in which biblical characters, that is, men and women inspired by God, lived and ministered. The text is the message they conveyed to people or individuals, and the context is the environment, scenery, that is, the place, time, the circumstances, and culture of the people at the time. This also includes the symbolic elements and instruments they used. Otherwise, the reader may risk interpreting the scriptures literally and staying out of context when they don't have the revelation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit inspired the writers of the Holy Bible and, at the same time, gave understanding to those who are hungry or thirsty, that is, with an open heart with meekness, they study, read, hear, and receive the word of God.

In fact, the thorn in the flesh was the price Paul had to pay for his calling. Jesus declared him that when he said: "This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the Gentiles and their kings and the people of Israel. I will show him how much he must suffer for my name" (Acts 9:15-16 NIV). That is why God didn't remove his thorn in the flesh, but on the contrary, he strengthened him by his grace. In short, the notion of the thorn refers to the persecutions, attacks, insults, scourges, and the flesh refers to the physical body, that is, the body of apostle Paul, who suffered many scourges for the cause of the Gospel. Thus, the thorn in the flesh was part of the whole package of Paul's ministry, and by the grace of God, he fought the good fight, ended its course, and kept his faith.

Fortify yourself in the grace of Lord Jesus

Dear reader, you need to receive and live in this grace. Grace empowers us. What you were humanly limited in, now you can do it

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by grace. Grace makes you endure and prevail against all the force of opposition, threats, and headwinds. So continue to march in that ministry, that business, that marriage, and in that course in the name of Jesus.

Paul understood the importance of grace to the point of encouraging his spiritual son Timothy on the need to value grace. Thus, we read: “You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus” (2 Timothy 2:1 NIV).

What Paul wanted to say to Timothy was: “Son, take advantage of grace, draw your strength, your power, your support in the grace of Lord Jesus.” There is grace available for you in Jesus Christ. Don’t give up or be discouraged. Don’t back down and stand there complaining and whining because of the devil, the demons, and the circumstances. Take advantage of the grace in Christ, and transcend all physical and circumstantial limitations. Grace has already qualified you so that your human faculties don’t limit you. Receive the grace to reign.

With this grace, you find yourself doing things and speaking of something you have never even learned in human schools. Grace makes you versatile, that is, an all-rounder in what God has called you to do. Each of us is given a certain measure of grace for what God has called us to do. For example, when I was a child, I was shy and didn’t like staying or speaking in places with many people. Even when there was a party at my house, my mom would have to leave my food in my room because I didn’t want to face people’s eyes. But when I received grace, the shame and shyness disappeared. Now, I can face a billion people without problems, for the grace of the Lord is working on me. Praise God for his grace.

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An educated man or scientifically scholarly cannot compete with a man who has grace working on him because the science of this world is limited. Still, the grace of the Lord gives us access to inexhaustible resources that heaven has at its disposal.

The Scripture in Colossians 2:3 states that all the treasures of wisdom and science are hidden in Christ. Christ is a university of infinite revelations. If you are in Christ, then you have the source of knowledge and science. You are superintelligent by the Grace of God. The Grace of God gives you an understanding of things that escape the human mind. It prepares you for a life of success and victory. That is why it's Grace to reign – reign means to have influence for the glory of God in the area of your calling and purpose for which you were created.

With this grace, you will never be needy, weak, or at a disadvantage. That is why Paul stated, “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19 NIV).

Grace enables your spirit to transcend the limitations of the physical body. Soon, you begin to see possibilities in God. Your faith grows, and more hills and obstacles you transpose and overcome by the power of God who works in you.

Did you know that Daniel and the three colleagues were ten times smarter than the others? Because of grace. You have an inexhaustible source of divine provision. So, Paul said, “And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19 NIV). The Holy Scripture says that “God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble” (James 4:6 NIV).

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Dear reader, know that it is possible to grow in grace. The Scripture confirms it: “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Peter 3:18 NIV).

For every mountain you face in life, God has already provided a measure of grace. All you have to say is: “Father, your grace is enough for me.” Grace will help you overcome all kinds of mountains or obstacles. But, first, you must grow in spiritual abilities. Jesus, in his humanity, as a child, was raised in grace and favor before God and before men.

Grace gives you wisdom and spiritual intelligence. Practically, it equips you and puts you on top of the circumstances of life. That is why it's grace to reign because it doesn't matter where you're placed, the sector or country; grace will still make you rule.

CHAPTER XII

Understanding the time of grace

Who brought grace?

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ,” states the scripture in John 1:17.

In previous chapters, we talked about the concept of grace and its dimensions. However, it is necessary to understand that we now live in a time of grace. Understanding this fact, you must surrender to Lord Jesus and rely on his grace. The scripture reveals: “For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in this present age. At the same time, we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good” (Titus 2:11-14 NIV).

This is the time of God’s saving grace where He extends his hand of compassion to save all those who believe in him and surrender to the lordship of his son Jesus Christ. People won’t go to hell because God doesn’t love them, but because they are not accepting and receiving the love God has for them. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever doesn’t believe will be condemned. So you need to believe in Christ.

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The Scripture clearly states that grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. The expression “truth” in his verse means “reality.” This is because the Old Testament was a shadow and temporary representation of the reality that was to live in the New Covenant. Jesus Christ fulfilled the law in its entirety and delivered us from it so that we might have a holy, righteous, honest, and God-behaving life.

Jesus Christ brought us grace so that through it, we can live. Those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of justice will reign in life through Jesus Christ. He gave us his name to reign and to live through it. You have been called to reign in life. When one says rule in life, one doesn’t refer only to Heaven.

It refers to life here on earth and after earth in the future. The word life used in the new covenant is “Zoe,” a Greek term for eternal life. It is God’s life. It is a life of peace, joy, and constant victories.

That is why when Paul and Silas were arrested and scourged and then imprisoned, as Luke narrates in Acts 16, they did not cry or complain. On the contrary, around midnight, they prayed and sang hymns to God. Suddenly, the foundations of the jail shuddered, and everyone’s jails were unleashed. The joy of the Lord is our strength. We have the life of God working in us. John said: “Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life” (1 John 5:12-13).

Therefore, we have communion with God, and we have the same life with him. This life produces joy, peace, and prosperity. It makes us rule. It makes us walk with command and influence, while

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grace makes us shine. Where would we be without the grace of God? Praise the Lord for his grace. Jesus said: "...I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

CHAPTER XIII

How to activate the grace of God?

When the grace of God is activated in man's spirit, it produces a victorious life. For this, you must believe and declare this every day upon yourself: "The life of God is in me. I refuse to be poor; I refuse to be sick for the grace of God is acting on me". The more we confess the truth of the Scriptures upon our lives, the more grace is activated, and the life of God stands out in us.

Repeat this with me: "The Lord is my shepherd; I will not lack anything. The money, victory, peace, and joy will not be lacking". While you confess these words, the Holy Spirit will materialize them in your life. The Scripture says: "If clouds are full of water, they pour rain on the earth. Whether a tree falls to the south or the north, in the place where it falls, there it will lie" (Ecclesiastes 11:3 NIV). You must create your clouds. How? By declaring and professing the word of God upon your life. Don't wait for a physical manifestation first. Just believe and continue confessing. Continue speaking the words of God. The law of faith requires you to believe and speak.

When you believe, you agree with God on your word. You recognize the reality of promises in the spiritual arena. However, if you don't profess or speak what God says, you don't see your materialization in the physical arena.

One must understand that God calls things that are not as if they were already. Therefore, continue sending words to the spiritual arena. Continue declaring words, "Thank you father; I received it." The more you confess, the faster your clouds will be formed, and suddenly, you will see rain falling upon you, full of blessings. In the

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Old Covenant, the rain was a symbol of blessings. Don't be distracted, and don't give up. One of the reasons why many believers abort their miracles is because they believe and, with faith, grab the blessing in the spirit first, but then don't confess. The Scripture says: "For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess your faith and are saved" (Romans 10:10). You must give voice to your faith.

Once the blessing is conceived in the heart, no one can tear it away, for it is within you, and it is part of you. You are pregnant with the word of God. Now, continue saying: "Thank you father, I am impregnated with your word. The life of God is in me".

I get my job, the grace to conceive, my home, and joy in the name of Jesus. My children are safe; my family is in Christ. Continue praising God and exalting his name. Someone may say: "You are crazy; you are speaking of things you don't have." You don't have to worry because faith sees a way out where there seems to be no way. It's necessary to know that the law of faith requires that you believe first and then confess the word of God. God spoke, and the universe was created when it was still chaos. The text of Job 22:28-29 NIV says: "What you decide on will be done, and light will shine on your ways." That is, you speak, and things happen. When they shot you down, you will say: "Let there be exaltation." Don't stand there complaining. While you speak, the Holy Spirit will lift you. Confess words such as: "I'm reigning in life, and the grace of God is working on me." Paul said: "But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere" (2 Corinthians 2:14). Praise Jesus for bringing us grace.

Dear reader, here is the secret to prosperity: life is in the words of God; anything you believe in, you already have. If you can believe

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it, then you can have it. You can achieve this through the grace of God. Have faith in God, who calls things that are not as if they were already. Jesus said to his disciples: “But take heart! I have overcome the world” (John 16:33 NIV). He has overcome the world for you, and for me, there is nothing in this world that can harm you if God doesn’t allow it. Anything is possible for the one who believes. The only limitation you can have is unbelief; what you don’t believe, God can’t do.

In the text of Mark 11:22, Jesus said to his disciples: “Have faith in God.” In other words, have faith in God. What faith? The faith of calling things that are not as if they were already (Romans 4:17). This faith requires you to believe, see in your spirit and speak.

Well, to strengthen your faith and walk in grace to reign, you must develop an awareness of the following truths:

1. You are now sitting with Christ, in heavenly places, at the right hand of God (at the right hand of majesty)

You have a position of dominion and authority above poverty, demons, and all evil systems of this world. Whatever you say from this arena will surely happen. Put this truth in your mind and be aware of it.

His words are impregnated of power just like the words of Christ because you are in his place each time you use his name. He gave us power of attorney to represent him and to use his name in prayer to his father and at the same time as an instrument against the forces of darkness. This name automatically transports you to arenas of power and glory. The name of Jesus is an instrument, a spiritual weapon. Be aware that your words have power because you are a king-priest.

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Talk waiting for something to happen. Jesus said, “Truly I tell you, if anyone says to this mountain, ‘Go throw yourself into the sea,’ and does not doubt in their heart but believes that what they say will happen, it will be done for them” (Mark 11:23 NIV). Conceive the thing you want from God that is consistent with his word and declare it. Faith often produces in us the awareness of the presence and power of God with whom we walk and whom we serve. When you go to your room to sleep, you don’t doubt the bed, if it will let you fall or not because you trust it. You go over there and throw yourself, waiting for it to hold you. Believe in God more than you believe in the bed where you sleep, talk waiting for something to happen. Jesus never doubted, “I don’t know if this man is healed or not. I will try, I don’t know if Father will listen to me or not, I will yell”. Thousand times no. Faith is a spiritual law, and when someone activates it, it works. Just believe it.

2. Live consciously of the presence of the Holy Spirit with you and in you.

You carry the power source. For instance, the King of a country is aware of his status as head of state or government. He doesn’t sleep and wakes up the next day asking himself, “Am I King or not? Does my word have power or not?” He doesn’t doubt his authority. He knows who he is and what he has. It’s a matter of mentality and identity, knowing who you are in Christ Jesus and what he conquered by you and for you on the cross.

Now, it looks like many Christians have a syndrome of spiritual forgetfulness, where they sing and dance in church. Still, when they return home or go to their sectors of work, school, or businesses and face challenges, they forget their spiritual identity and the grace they carry. Many had faith in the past and enjoyed blessings of the grace of Lord Jesus and their faith in Jesus. Suddenly, they forget who they

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are and start doubting. Doubt creates a short circuit to the power of your faith, so faith works with disabilities and doesn't produce the desired effects. But true faith doesn't recognize any obstacle or barrier. If it worked once, then it will work again because it's a spiritual law.

Notice that for you to walk with authority, you need to do it as a king in place of Jesus. Therefore, learn to use his name with this awareness, of which you represent him. Use the name of Jesus for things that will bring glory to the Lord. However, to be a man with authority and reign as a king in life, you must be a priest as well. That is, you must spend time with God in prayer.

For instance, Lord Jesus had the habit of going to the mountain or to a desert by himself in the morning and night to pray. He knew how to spend time with his heavenly father. After prayer, he was already recharged for his mission. No demon or disease could withstand him. His words were imbued with authority and power. There is no way to reign without authority and power because it will be like driving a car without keys; although the car is yours, you can't drive it because you don't have the ignition keys to get it running. That is why you need to develop communion with God through prayer. Prayer produces intimacy with God. There's something that prayer does for us and in us. When we commune like this with God in prayer, we are recharged with a portion of his anointing. Remember Moses when he stood on the hill with God for forty days and nights, and as he came down, his face glowed such a radiant glory that no one could look at him. They had to wear a veil to cover his face. But we in the New Covenant, with our faces uncovered, reflect the glory of the Lord as a mirror.

The more time you spend meditating in the Scriptures and praying, your spirit is recharged, and grace is activated in you. The

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Holy Spirit lives in us because we have the Spirit without measures. Prayer produces power in man's spirit.

One of the reasons why many believers don't have power is because they try to confess the word of God or exercise his authority without prayer. They try to use authority without communion with Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the generator of spiritual energy, of divine power in our spirit, but it's necessary to spend time with it so that you can be strengthened and equipped for the work to which he calls you. Many believers try to operate like kings without bringing priests first; it doesn't work like that. You must be connected to the source of life and power: the Holy Spirit. You can activate grace by praying in languages or meditating in the Scriptures. Glory to God through Jesus Christ, who brought us grace!

CHAPTER XIV

Conclusion

Take possession of grace

Dear reader, if you have read all the previous chapters of this book, your spirit is certainly recharged with the glory of God and his revelations. Now, to walk in grace to reign in life and walk with command over this world's circumstances, you must be aware of the three following facts:

1. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ

The day you have your life to Christ and were born again in the kingdom of God, you received the grace of Lord Jesus. This grace was communicated, that is, transmitted to your spirit, your inner man. God injects his grace in man's spirit to equip him and empower him to do his will and live above the human circumstances and limitations. God enlightens the spirit of man and regenerates it so that he can be born again and enter communion with him. Each time you face a challenge or have a mission to do that is above human capacity, grace comes into action and makes you thrive in life. The Holy Spirit enlightens and influences the spirit of man by transmitting to him the life, nature, and character of God. Often, God empowers the spirit of man, and the life of God in his spirit passes into the mind and body of man. Therefore, it is vital to constantly depend on God in life, for God's grace is perfected in weakness.

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When the man is physically limited, then grace comes in and begins to operate. Your communion with Jesus Christ is indispensable for living and walking in the grace of God because it was Jesus who brought the saving grace to humanity.

2. Awareness of the love God has for you

You must be aware that God loves you. He loves you despite your past and your flaws because you are special to him. God's love is unconditional; it is the product of grace, that is, his undeserved favor. It is a protective, caring, careful, therapeutic, donor, and savior love. So never forget that God loves you. If you grew up in an environment where you have never felt loved, where the people you trusted most betrayed you or disappointed you, God's love is real, and it heals your heart and soul.

Can you imagine? You are loved by the Lord of Heaven and earth, the King of all kings, and the Lord of all lords. The God of the universe. The Scripture says: "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8 NIV). God doesn't look at your flaws because he knows you better than even your family or friends. Your parents and brothers know you since the day you were born and your neighbors since the day you started living in the same area as them. Your classmates or work colleagues know you since the day you started attending the same school or working in the same company as them. Your husband or wife met you from the day you started your engagement and then marriage. But God knew you long before you came into this physical world. As the Holy Scripture says in Psalm 139:1-3 NIV: "You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways". It is He who has the best explanation of who you

are and what your purpose is here on earth. He fills the emptiness you feel in your spirit, the void of worship and praise, the sense that you are not alone but accompanied by God.

Notice God's words to prophet Jeremiah: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart..." (Jeremiah 1:5 NIV). God knows you and loves you. Receive the love of God and live in the awareness of this love. He heals, delivers, and blesses because of his love. Miracles are not roughly to demonstrate God's power, for the universe attests that God is powerful and sovereign, but they prove his love for us. He is a father who does everything to see his children obedient to his word and live according to his will, full of peace and joy.

3. The awareness of communion with the Holy Spirit

Here is the master key, the biggest secret: communion with the Holy Spirit. Now, you already know God loves you and have already received grace from our Lord Jesus Christ. That is very good, but it's not all. Remember that we must grow in grace. You need more grace to face the giants and challenges ahead. For each giant and each stage of your life, God gives us his grace. That is why he says: "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God..." (Isaiah 41:10 NIV). God is with us and lives in us now through the Holy Spirit. That is why you need to have communion with the Holy Spirit and to speak with it. Surrender to him and present your body as a living and pleasant sacrifice, which is rational worship. It wants to speak with you. It came to help and guide you into all truth.

However, if you don't have a life of prayer and communion with God, you may not live in the light of the reality of this grace or blessings because you will lack power. He has given you grace and his authority to cast out demons, heal the sick, and call blessings.

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You can activate the power of God that is in you by developing a communion with the Holy Spirit. Paul said to Timothy: “For this reason, I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands” (2 Timothy 1:6). How? Through prayer and meditation and developing a communion with the Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit carries God’s presence to the life of the believer. Timothy had the power, the grace, but it wouldn’t work correctly without it being activated. When your spirit is not yet strengthened and activated in grace, you may lack courage, boldness, and audacity to give specific steps or make certain decisions. You may even struggle to execute particular orders or instructions from God because of fear. Grace removes fear because the Holy Spirit reproduces in us the character and nature of Christ. He places in us the same boldness and firmness that is in Christ. For fear, Peter had once denied knowing or being associated with Jesus. Therefore, how did he manage to face many Jews and preach for the salvation of three thousand souls? The answer is simple: he had received the virtue of the Holy Spirit and was aware of its presence and influence.

If you don’t activate the power of God that is in you in the face of obstacles or challenges, you will be intimidated and may flee. Yes, suddenly, you may freeze and be worried. However, the Scripture exhorts: “For the Spirit of God gave us does not make us timid (fear, cowardice), but gives us power (strength, power, firmness, and boldness), love and self-discipline (balance, sanity)” (2 Timothy 1:7 NIV).

Dear reader, understand that we live in times when the Gospel needs to be preached (proclaimed) with power and glory. It requires courage and determination in the heart to prevail in the face of intimidation, threats, and persecution. We need the Holy Spirit more

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than ever. The Gospel must be preached with evidence and power demonstrations of God's power. Our God is not dead, but lives and Jesus Christ the same, yesterday, today, and forever. Therefore, it is necessary to spend time with God in prayer.

Those who kneel before God stand before the challenges. Therefore, prayer is indispensable. Lord Jesus prayed, the apostles prayed, the early church, and we also need to pray. If we pray with faith and in communion with the Spirit of God as the men and women from the times of the Holy Bible prayed, we will have the same results they had. Therefore, Paul exhorted: "And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people" (Ephesians 6:8 NIV). Elsewhere he said: "Pray continually" (1 Thessalonians 5:17 NIV).

Prayer helps stimulate the Spirit and the desire for the things of God. That is why the Scripture exhorts, "Do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thessalonians 5:19 NIV). Quench means erase. You shouldn't let the fire of God go out in your Spirit (heart). For this, you must spend time with him in prayer. When you surrender to the Lordship of the Holy Spirit and the authority of the word of God, your flesh will be submitted, and thus, you won't have to satisfy the desires of the flesh. Instead, you will walk guided by the Holy Spirit and by the light in the word of God. The word of God will become a flashlight to help you see the path in the dark and see the glow and glory. Consequently, you will live free of fear and worries, live above this world's circumstances, and reign in life.

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Keep God's oil on your head

God doesn't want to see us flee because of a devil Jesus defeated on the cross. Understand that Jesus is the head of the Church, which is his body, and we are a member of his body, so we have his authority. There is no running from the devil. The question is: Are you aware of the fact that Jesus Christ is with you and in you through the Holy Spirit? If the answer is yes, do you believe and are united with the Spirit of the Lord?

Understand that the devil knows we have power and authority over him, but if you don't have this awareness of this reality, he may intimidate you. He is like a toothless lion that just roars but cannot bite those united to Lord Jesus. Satan is like a toothless dog that just barks but doesn't bite. Those who don't know he has no teeth may live frightened and run away when they hear him barking. Give yourself to prayer and recharge your spirit. Now, when you are full of anointing, you may go out to the service, church, school, or place of your business, knowing it's time to reign.

Like a soldier knows they have authority and a weapon and is on a mission of duty, you don't have to fear. If you are a pastor or minister of the Gospel, never walk up to the altar or pulpit without first activating the power of God that is in you. Put on the anointing and bless God's people. If not, people will sleep in church while you do a long and tiring monologue.

One of the mistakes that many children of God commit is they want to pray when facing a challenge, and because they don't have enough time to recharge and build themselves in faith, they begin to fear and doubt God. It is like a student who wants to study or read on exam day; that's not how it should be.

GRACE TO REIGN

A deep look at earthly ministry and the apostles' lives reveals that they often didn't pray before obstacles, in front of the sick or possessed. They only healed the sick and cast out demons. Jesus didn't cry before storms and waves, he rebuked them, and they calmed down.

Jesus had a habit of waking up early in the morning to pray and then go minister. So he has a prayer room – the desert or hill. So for you, dear reader, your room, that is, your secret place of prayer can be your room, living room, hill, Church, office, or anywhere where you can be quiet to minister to God in praise, worship, and prayer. God will, in turn, minister you.

Analyzing Peter's ministry to Dorcas (Tabitha), when she was dead, we noticed that he first prayed to God, "Turning toward the dead woman, he said, 'Tabitha, get up.' She opened her eyes and seeing Peter she sat up" (Acts 9:40 NIV).

On the island of Malta, Paul ministering to Publius' father, who was sick with fever and dysentery, first prayed to God and then turned to the sick and put his hand on him and healed him (Acts 28:8). Jesus did not say to pray for the sick but to heal the sick. He didn't say to close the children and pray in his name for the demons to leave, but he said: "And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name, they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues" (Mark 16:17 NIV). Do you see it? This is the legal authority granted to you and me as citizens of the kingdom. This authority results from the awareness of the communion we have with Jesus, the faith and spiritual recognition that the Lord Jesus Christ gave us power over the devil and demons. Therefore, you can tell the mountain you are facing now: "In the name of Jesus, you; mountain of poverty, sickness, and curses, I order you to leave now and never come back." That is how it will be for you.

GRACE TO REIGN

However, for this to happen, you must spend time with the Holy Spirit in prayer. It is the power that materializes the words we speak with faith. Therefore, the anointing must always be activated in your life. Do you see it? With this grace, you will reign in life for Christ Jesus.

That is why the Scripture says: “Always be clothed in white, and always anoint your head with oil” (Ecclesiastes 9:8 NIV). The garments represent justice and holiness resulting from daily communion with God. Oil symbolizes the anointing, God’s royal power over your life. Prayer carries your spirit and sanctifies you from the impurities of this world. This oil (anointing) produces favor and light in your life, and because of it, you win and prosper in the city and the countryside, and no evil arrow strikes you. This oil restricts, in other words, prevents the devil from touching you because you are protected.

Dear reader, having read and studied from the first page of his book and provided with this knowledge, it is time to make demons scream and wreak havoc in hell, destroying the works of the devil in your life and that of your family. Now that you have the grace of Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and communion with the Holy Spirit. Stand up and shine in the name of Jesus. Take on your role as a good soldier of Christ and fight the good fight of faith. You are not a victim; you are a winner. Are there demons destroying lives and stealing joy from your home, family, and surroundings? Cast them out in the name of Jesus. The life of God is in you now. I see you walking with victory and command in the glorious parade of Christ. Never forget this: intimacy with God is your source of life, royalty is your identity, and serving is your mission. Serve the people of God with a humble heart. Be humble and grateful to the Lord. Serve like Jesus, he served with the heart of a king and reigned with a heart of a servant.

GRACE TO REIGN

Now receive, recognize, and trust in God's grace. Live and work consciously and strengthened by grace. May the Grace of our Lord Jesus be in your spirit from now on. Raise your hands to heaven and thank God for the grace that is operating in your life now.

Repeat these words with me: "Thank you father, for your grace. God's grace is working in my life now. I am strengthened, equipped, and blessed in the name of Jesus. I can do all things in the one that strengthens me. I am more than a winner, for the biggest is in me. I am what I am, I have what I have, and I will come to my destiny successfully by the grace of Christ that strengthens me".

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Onório Cutane

He is an apostle, a teacher, and prophet, with an apostolic-prophetic calling. He is a humble servant of God with a dynamic ministry of teaching, healing, and deliverance, which has helped many people get rid of the kingdom of darkness into God's kingdom of light and love.

Thousands of people have been blessed by his ministry and have experienced a victorious life through his anointed biblical-based teachings. Furthermore, he is the founder and president of the Nations for Christ Ministerial Church Inc.

He has held massive evangelistic crusades called “Heavenly Atmosphere” that have carried the manifested presence of the Holy Spirit wherever he goes to minister. Apostle Onório’s mandate is to expand the Kingdom of Heaven on earth and prepare the Church for the second coming of Jesus Christ. He is the leader of a growing ministry with cells in Africa, the Americas, and Europe.

He is the author of the bestseller “God’s medicine: How to Receive and Maintain Divine Healing,” which has brought divine healing to many. In addition, apostle Onório was the pioneer of one of the first evangelical television stations in Mozambique called “KINGDOM TV.”

GRACE TO REIGN

DEDICATION

To my children Prince and Naomi Ester; may the grace of the Lord Jesus flow strongly upon your lives and may you grow to the praise of his glory;

To all the children of God in the whole world that need God's grace to live

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To my Lord Jesus Christ, for the call and grace of serving in his kingdom and;

To my teacher, the Holy Spirit, for the revelations and inspiration

OTHER BOOKS ALSO BY APOSTLE ONÓRIO CUTANE

1. **God's Medicine:** How to Receive and Maintain Divine Cure
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