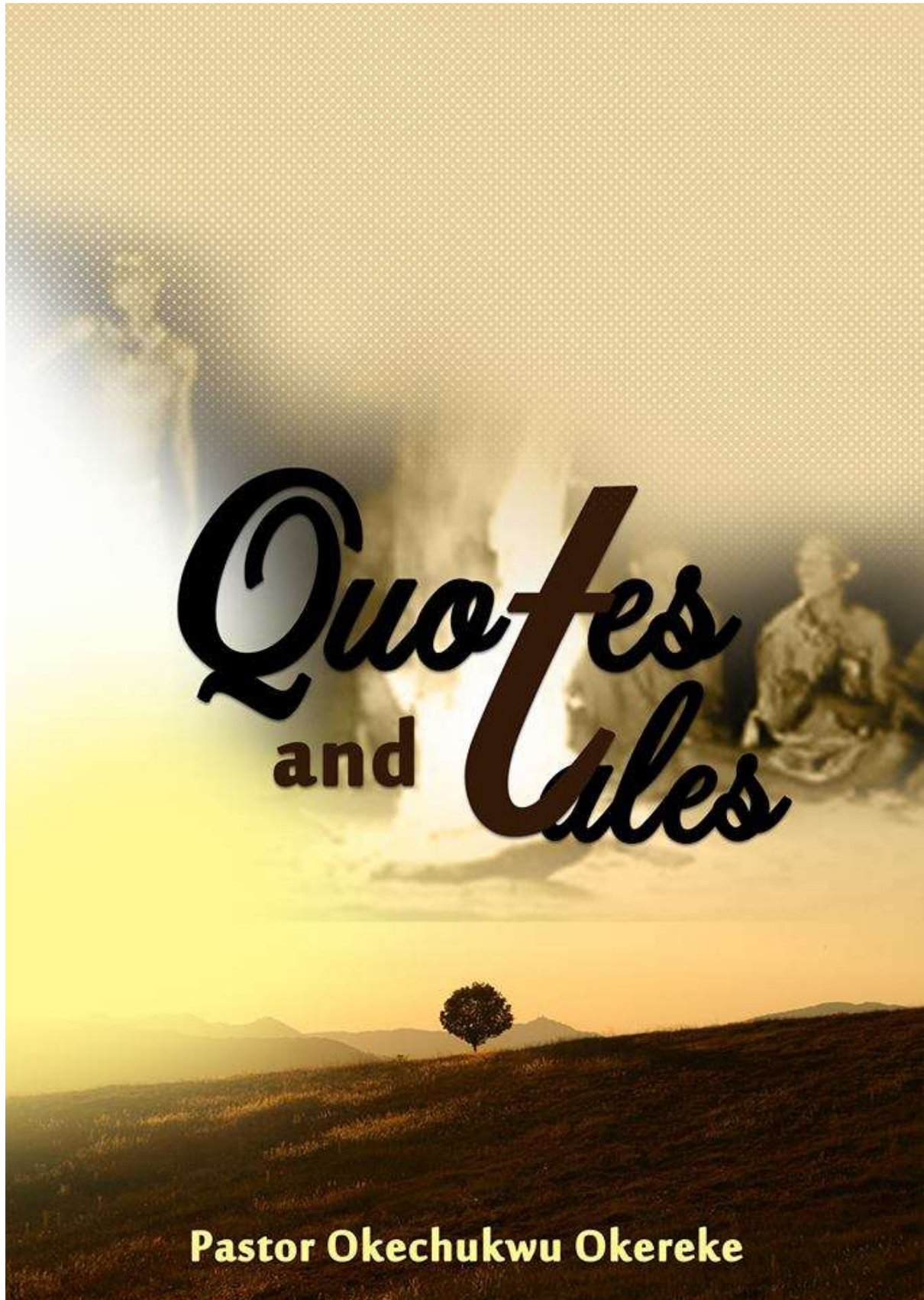


QUOTES AND TALES



Pastor Okechukwu Okereke

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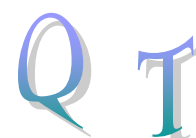
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QUOTE ONE

WHEN A MAN IS IN SYNC WITH
GOD, HE DOES NOT SINK AT THE
BRINK OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

“And he said, ‘Come’. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying Lord save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him...” MATT 14:29-31;

Very amazing miracle by Jesus, walking on the water. Well, some credit must also be accorded Peter for his bravery, trying to emulate Jesus' feat.

However, you would discover from the preceding verses that the disciples were on a voyage and a great storm rose against them. The bible says that the tide was contrary, meaning the sea was opposing them. There are times in life when it seems like the elements of life are working against you; when it looks like everything around you is opposing your journey of vision and purpose, cheer up, the God who saw Peter and the disciples through, the same God will see you through.

They had a vision and a clearly defined purpose to cross to the other side of the sea. They also had the Master's instructions to do so. They were not on a frolic of their own; they were men on assignment. Yet the environment of the sea opposed their movement to achieving their goal. Are you in the same situation,

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where you find yourself opposed by the environment of your job, family, mind, past experience, nationality etc, here is a word for you; there is a God who is master over any environment – he is God Almighty and he will make you prevail today like the disciples did prevail, in Jesus name.

Also, note that the disciples did not sink nor did their ship before the Lord Jesus came to their rescue, because he instructed them to over to the other side. In the same vein, God has instructed you go on to live and not die, go on to progress and not regress, go on to prosper and not stagnate, go on to be blessed and not be cursed; and on the strength of God’s word, I decree that you will not sink neither will the ship of your life sink before your help arrives.

The bible says that while the disciples struggled with the storm, Jesus came walking on the same stormy water. He is Lord over all. The disciples were struggling with the storm but when he showed up, there was no struggling, but a triumphant walk over the boisterous sea. I pray that Jesus will show up in any area of life you may be experience a struggle. When he shows up, every toiling will cease.

Then Jesus shows up walking on the boisterous water; it was so sudden a sight to the disciples that they trembled and thought it was a ghost. However, Peter summoned courage and requested that if it be the Master he should tell him (Peter) to come. Jesus asked him to come. So, he stepped out, relying on the Word of the Lord, he walked on the water towards the Lord Jesus – what no man has ever done. Peter did not walk on the water because he was just courageous, but because he had faith in the Word from the Lord – ‘Come’. Reliance on God’s Word connects you to the Realities of God’s Ways.

Notice that Peter had a target which was to walk on the water, get to the Lord Jesus, and eventually return to the ship with him. So, he began his journey of purpose, walked on the water – making



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the impossible possible in his journey, he was quite successful already, completed the first phase of the journey, but when he was close to reaching the Lord Jesus the bible says:

“But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying Lord save me.” Matt. 14:31

Peter was close to completing his course, but he began to sink. He was at the brink of accomplishment and began to sink. What really happened?

Remember the disciples were experiencing a storm on the sea but when they saw the Lord walking on the water, that wonder took away their mind from the stormy sea that they worried no more about the sea waves but who it was that was walking on the sea. From the tone of the scriptures, that miracle made them forget that they were experiencing a storm, which was the reason the bible says, “But when he saw the wind...” The wind had always been there, it did not stop until the Lord Jesus got to the ship; but the miracle they saw made their problem look so elementary that they forgot it. There are miracles that God will bring your way and it will make the many years of the enemy’s torment look like they never existed. I pray that God will give you a Miracle that will swallow your Debacle, in Jesus name. So, the storm did not stop at any time, then started again, while Peter walked on the sea; rather, the wonder of a man walking on water swallowed their concern for the raging sea. Note, that as long as Peter was not distracted by the raging sea he was under no threat of sinking. Distraction Attracts Destruction. As long as Peter was focused on the wonders and possibilities of God he was on the water, walking on it. As long as his eyes could see only the Lord Jesus victorious over the sea, he was on the water, winning against the tide. As long as he was in sync with what God was doing (currently) before him, he was on the water never going to sink. As long as his connection to the Lord Jesus was unbroken, he was definitely going to get THERE –the ordained destination.

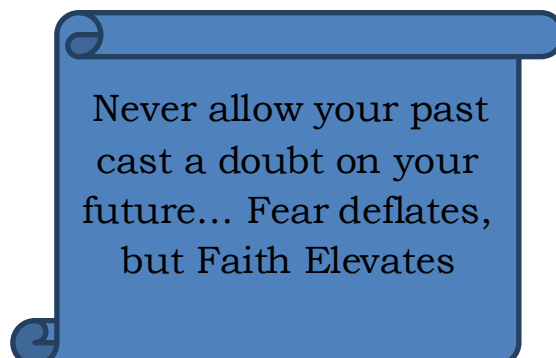
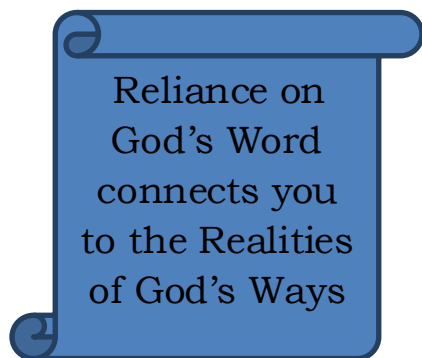


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Unfortunately, his mind raced back to the old problem – the storm, which by this time was their past experience for they had forgotten it. Thus, his past came to hunt his present progress. And once his past gained access to his mind, fear crept in, doubt sat down, and he began to sink. Never allow your past cast a doubt on your future; and beware, fear is satanic fiat that flattens a man's future. Fear deflates, but Faith Elevates. I pray in the name of Jesus that no undesirable past will hunt down your present progress and may every such past remain in the past, amen.

Peter could have completed his quest if he stayed tuned and in sync with God at his critical moment. However, thank God for the merciful Lord who stretch out to pick up Peter from the watery grave. And may God who is rich in mercy, by his out-stretched arm restore every sinking area of your life, spirituality, business, marriage, destiny, etc. in Jesus name, Amen!

FLASH BACK



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QUOTE TWO

TENACITY BREAKS DOWN
ADVERSITY; PERSISTENCE
WEARS OUT RESISTANCE.

“His father Isaac answered him, ‘Your dwelling will be far away from the earth’s richness, away from the dew of heaven above. You will live by the sword and you will serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you will throw his yoke from off your neck.’ 27:40 (NIV).

The story of Esau and Jacob, touching as well as intriguing. Before this time, Jacob had impersonated Esau, went to his Father with a requested meal and got the blessing reserved for Esau. Isaac had reserved a blessing for Esau; a blessing with Esau’s name tag, yet Jacob, by much subtlety and trickery, aided by his mother, took the blessing reserved for Esau. It was Esau’s entitlement but he never got the title conferred on him; it was his for the taking but he lost it. I declare today that what is meant for you shall not be given to another; and any blessing with your name on it shall arrive at your address, in Jesus name.

However, the bible does not patronize Esau about losing the blessing reserved for him, having earlier sold his qualification for the blessing- his birth-right – to Jacob. See Gen.25:31-33;

“And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birth-right. And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die: and what profit shall this birth-right do to me. And Jacob said, Swear to me this day; and he swore unto him: and he sold his birth-right unto Jacob.”

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By that seemingly simple conversation Esau sold out his future for all eternity. He had lost the blessing long before Isaac was ready to release the generational blessing of the house of Abraham. I pray that you will not make a mistake that will hurt your future; neither will you make a decision that will give the devil a lawful standing to oppose your future.

What Esau did created his adversity. Though it looked simple and intangible telling his brother to have his birth-right (not understanding that spiritual transactions are made by spoken words) because he needed food; that action triggered reactions in the spirit realm that culminated in the physical drama that made him lose the blessing of Abraham. He engineered his adversity, he forged his despair, he set the stage for his loss; the alliance of Jacob and Rebekah only made it manifest when the time was right. Adverse situations may arise as result of someone's mistakes of the past. Adverse conditions may also be the result of some spiritual or physical trickery and subtlety of another (the same way that Jacob obtained Esau's blessing by subtlety) otherwise understood as witchcraft or manipulation. Adversity may also arise as a result of the wicked alliance of other men against someone, just as Jacob and Rebekah conspired and took Esau's blessing. The good news, however is that whichever route that adversity took to enter someone's life there is always an exit door with God.

"For with God all things are possible" Mk. 10:27

Esau had lost it all. There was nothing, absolutely no blessing, remaining for him to be blessed with. He had been condemned to a life of servitude to his younger brother, but I love Esau's response to his adversity. Three times Isaac told Esau how hopeless and bereaved the situation really is:

"And Isaac trembled very exceedingly, and said, Who? Where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it me, and I have eaten of all



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before thou camest, and have blessed him? Yea, and he shall be blessed.” Gen 27:33.

“...Thy brother came with subtlety and hath taken away THY BLESSING.” Gen.27:35

“And Isaac answered and said unto Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, ... and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?” Gen.27:37

Isaac tried explaining the hopelessness to Esau, but Esau would have none of it; he would not that servitude and adversity become his eternal way of life. In response, three times he tenaciously insisted that something be done for him:

“And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry, and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, o my father.” Gen.27:34

“And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?” Gen. 27:36d

“And Esau said unto his father, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, o my father. And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.” Gen. 27:38.

I believe God must have seen Esau’s heart, knowing that if Esau continued with the dogged and resolute pursuit of what he wants but had lost, then he would eventually gain freedom from Jacob’s lordship over him. So God opened the mouth of Isaac once again to proclaim, not necessarily a blessing, but a key to breaking out from the bonds of Jacob. Not necessarily a blessing because Esau was furious at the words of his father, Jacob:

“And Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him with:” Gen. 27:41.

AND THE KEY:

Let us look at it from different translations of the bible -



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“And by the sword shalt thou live and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion, that thou shalt break the yoke from off thy neck.” Gen.27:40b (KJV)

“But when you decide to break free, you will shake his yoke from off your neck.” 27:40b (NLT)

“You will live by the sword and you will serve your brother. But when you grow restless, you will throw his yoke from off your neck.” 27:40 (NIV)

“You will live by the sword but you will serve your brother. When you grow restless, you will tear off his yoke from your neck.” 27:40 (NET)

“Isaac said to him, you’ll live far from Earth’s bounty, remote from Heaven’s dew. You’ll live by your sword, hand-to-mouth, and you’ll serve your brother. But when you can’t take it anymore you’ll break lose and run free.” 27:39-40 (MSG)

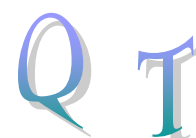
“By your sword you shall live and serve your brother. But (the time shall come) when you will grow restive and break loose, and you shall tear his yoke from off your neck.” Gen.27:40 (AMP)

“You will live by the power of your sword and be your brother’s slave. But when you decide to be free you will break lose.” Gen. 27:40 (CEV)

“You will live by your sword, But be your brother’s slave. Yet when you rebel, you will break away from his control.” Gen. 27:40 (GNT)

So, despite Esau creating his calamity, his tenacious importunity got him a key to breaking away from his adversity.

First, it is important to note that Esau was just a hunter, not a swordsman nor a soldier. There is no record, before now, of Esau’s bravery with the sword. But, by the words of his father, the grace and gift of a swordsman was bestowed on him – “You shall live by the sword...” I pray for you, that by the words that



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you are reading today may God release on you new gifts, ideas, wisdom that will open up doors before you, in Jesus name.

That means the sword will become for Esau a means of livelihood i.e he would make a living by using the sword. That has the implication that Esau was going to be a man who lived by force and gets things done forcefully. There was not going to be any gentle achievement in the life of Esau; he gets things done forcefully. This forceful disposition equals TENACITY which forcefulness is both of might and mind. Literally, Tenacity means diligence, determination, doggedness, firmness, inflexibility, perseverance, persistence, resoluteness, resolution, staunchness, strength of purpose, wilfulness, etc. In putting all that together we could really conclude that Tenacity is the forceful disposition of mind and might.

Now, the big question is, Why live by the sword? Remember, Esau had no blessing reserved for him after Jacob had got every good word that his father had. Moreover, behind his back he had been proclaimed an eternal slave to Jacob. His situation was adverse enough that he had no business leading a gentle life. When faced with adverse conditions of life the one recognizable response is tenacity. So his father declared:

“...But when you can't take it anymore you'll break lose and run free.” 27:39-40 (MSG)

“...Yet when you rebel, you will break away from his control.” Gen. 27:40 (GNT)

“But when you decide to break free, you will shake his yoke from off your neck.” 27:40b (NLT)

That means Esau when you are tenacious enough you will break out from that unfriendly condition. In other words, when life pushes hard at you push harder back at it in faith. The only language a satanic stronghold will hear is FORCE:



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“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the Kingdom of God suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.” Matt. 11:12 (KJV)

That adverse situation will listen to the forceful voice of the weapons of our warfare – Prayer, the Word of God, faith, righteousness, truth, spiritual zeal, and your salvation. That is the power God has given the believer; and until you make up your mind to use it, that negative circumstance, that satanic burden, that niggling challenge may continue to hang their claws on your neck. But I pray that every stubborn challenge refusing to leave your life be crushed by fire, in Jesus name.

However, like Esau, make up your mind that you can't take it anymore. Rebel against that negative issue and you will break free; give adversity no chance, insist until it breaks, refuse until it is dumped. Victory must be yours!

FLASH BACK

Tenacity is the forceful disposition of mind and might.

Give adversity no chance, insist until it breaks, refuse until it is dumped. Victory must be yours!

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QUOTE THREE

A LEADER SHOULD BE A
LADDER FOR OTHERS TO CLIMB
HIGHER; NOT A DIGGER THAT
PREPARES THEIR GRAVES

“Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself, saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, fifty men to run before him...And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save King Solomon.” 1 kings 1:5,39

At some point in Israel, David the King became very weak because of age; he was no longer strong enough to personally pilot the affairs of the state of Israel. Adonijah, one of his sons, the 4th son of David and from his wife Haggith; rose up and self-proclaimed himself king of Israel. At the time, so many well-meaning Israelites rallied round him in support. Adonijah had the crowd but not the crown. He had the people's ovation but no revelation of God's plan for Israel's leadership. Adonijah had the aura of a leader who attracts support but had no oil on his head for the throne. Adonijah was a man who exalted himself above the knowledge of the word of God for Israel's kingship – God had promised David that Solomon will sit on the throne in his stead. Adonijah was a man who took advantage of the weakness on ground to further his selfish course. He was a man who put fun fare ahead of the people's welfare. He was the kind of man who would work against a system set by God to advance his personal

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course. Adonijah was a power usurper who reigned as king while David was still alive and knew nothing about his reign.

Alright, let us look again at those qualities of Adonijah as it shows us the kind of leader we must not follow:

CROWD BUT NOT THE CROWN

Adonijah had the crowd but not the crown; the Israelite men and women gathered around him during his campaign to become King, though there was no crown or the promise of a crown for his head. In the oriental times, kings were viewed as divinely sent to rule over the people, and the crown was a symbol of that divine authority to rule. Some kings like Caesar Augustus of Rome, Xerxes of Persia etc stretched the concept of the divine authority of the king by proclaiming themselves gods among men.

So it may have been such a feat for Adonijah to have gathered such a cream following that he had without a crown on his head or the promise of a crown for his head, but it ended in utter disappointment for him and all who followed him.

Simple lesson: Do not follow a leader on whose life you cannot sense or confirm DIVINE AUTHORITY. Divine authority is simply the support of God evidenced by godly results. This was the only thing that the Israelites asked of Joshua after Moses had commissioned him as the leader of Israel. Josh. 1:17,

“According as we hearkened unto Moses in all things, so will we hearken unto thee: ONLY LET THE LORD THY GOD BE WITH THEE, AS HE WAS WITH MOSES”

Notice the condition (in capital case) the Israelites gave Joshua for the obedience they were willing to give him.

OVATION WITH NO REVELATION

Adonijah had the ovation of the well meaning people of the time but he had no revelation of God’s plan for Israel’s throne.



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Adonijah apparently did not know that the throne was destined for Solomon. Maybe he should have overheard the promise of the throne for Solomon while he was in the palace, but he did not hear. He presumed that the kingdom will be his after David his father. He said after his failed attempts to take over power:

"... Thou knewest that the kingdom was mine and that all Israel set their faces on me, that I should reign: howbeit the kingdom is turned about, and become my brother's for it was his from the Lord" I Kgs. 2:15

So, he had assumed that the kingdom was his after his father without a revelation of what had transpired before God about the throne of Israel. For David had sworn before the Lord that Solomon would be king: *"Even as I swear unto thee before the Lord saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me..." I kgs. 1:30.*

Adonijah knew nothing about the future of Israel's throne though he lived in the palace, how could he ever know the future of the common people of Israel whom he does not live with, and which he should lead as king. A leader without revelation will leave the people in trepidation for their future. When a leader lacks insight about his people's future, the people end up in fear and uncertainty about where they are headed. Besides, *"Where there is no revelation the people cast off restraint."* Prov. 29:18 (NIV). That means, where there is no revelation the people will give up on life, get tired of life because they are obviously unaware of which way to go from where they are. A leader without revelation is a time bomb.

Also note that Adonijah did not recognize that the kingdom had been given to Solomon until his efforts failed. In other words, Adonijah learned by HINDSIGHT who the true king of Israel should be. A leader with foresight and insight provides a safe harbor for his people's dreams and aspirations. A leader that learns by hindsight, on the other hand, is a calamity. And when



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you consider how everyone that followed Adonijah ended in fear, confusion and despair, you would agree that Adonijah was not the man to be followed.

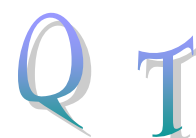
AURA AND NO OIL

Adonijah had the aura of a king but no oil on his head. Every king in Israel must first be anointed with oil by the Prophet or Priest as a sign of divine conferment of authority. By this process, the kingdom of Israel was both spiritual as well as political. Any king will have to satisfy both elements of the spiritual (by being anointed by a prophet) and the political (commanding the people's loyalty and followership) in order to be effective in the long run. Adonijah satisfied only one of the requirements and it was a matter of time before he was pushed aside. In the same vein, every leadership sphere has these two elements for maximizing effectiveness. Spiritual because you need divine acceptance to last on your seat and political because you need the people's cooperation and acceptance to avoid constant mutiny and being forcefully pushed out of authority. Discern to find favor on both ends. The bible says of Jesus: *"And Jesus increased in ... favour with God and man."* Lk 2:52c

ABOVE THE WORD

Adonijah was a man who exalted himself above the word of God for Israel's throne: David the King, had sworn an oath by the Lord, a gesture God viewed as binding in their time, to make Solomon king; yet Adonijah contrary to that word exalted himself to be king in place of David his father. Unfortunately for him, there is only one judgment for anything exalted above the word of God: it must come down.

"...casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God..." II Cor. 10:5



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Any man, woman, leader who exalts himself above the purpose and will of God is one person heading for a speedy sudden crash.

SELFISH ADVANCEMENT

Adonijah was a man who took advantage of the prevailing weakness on ground to advance his selfish course.

Aside going against the will of God for Israel's throne at the time, Adonijah was a selfish opportunist. David was sick and no longer strong enough to perform all his kingly duties, and the response of Adonijah to such political weakness was to promote himself as the next king of Israel. He had by his actions declared David unfit to rule the nation of Israel and projected himself as the worthy king of Israel. By his campaign he demoted the influence of David his father and promoted himself as the man of the moment. Note: any leader who buys credit for himself by demoting and demeaning others or their efforts is a glaring danger. Any man who preys on the weakness of others in order to make himself relevant is a bottled calamity.

FUN-FARE AHEAD OF WELFARE

Adonijah was a man who put fun fare ahead of the welfare of others. When you take a close look at the things that Adonijah did you would see how he exalted fun fare. When Adonijah discovered that David was too weak to rule, he did not take to helping the people of Israel, to make their lives better. Rather his first action was to prepare horses and chariots for himself and set 50 men to run ahead of him – Fun fare!

“Then Adonijah the son of Haggith exalted himself saying, I will be king: and he prepared him chariots and horsemen, and 50 men to run before him.” 1 Kgs.1:5

The second thing he did, to show his interest in the throne of Israel was to call a party, eating and making merry, even before he received the crown – Fun fare!



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