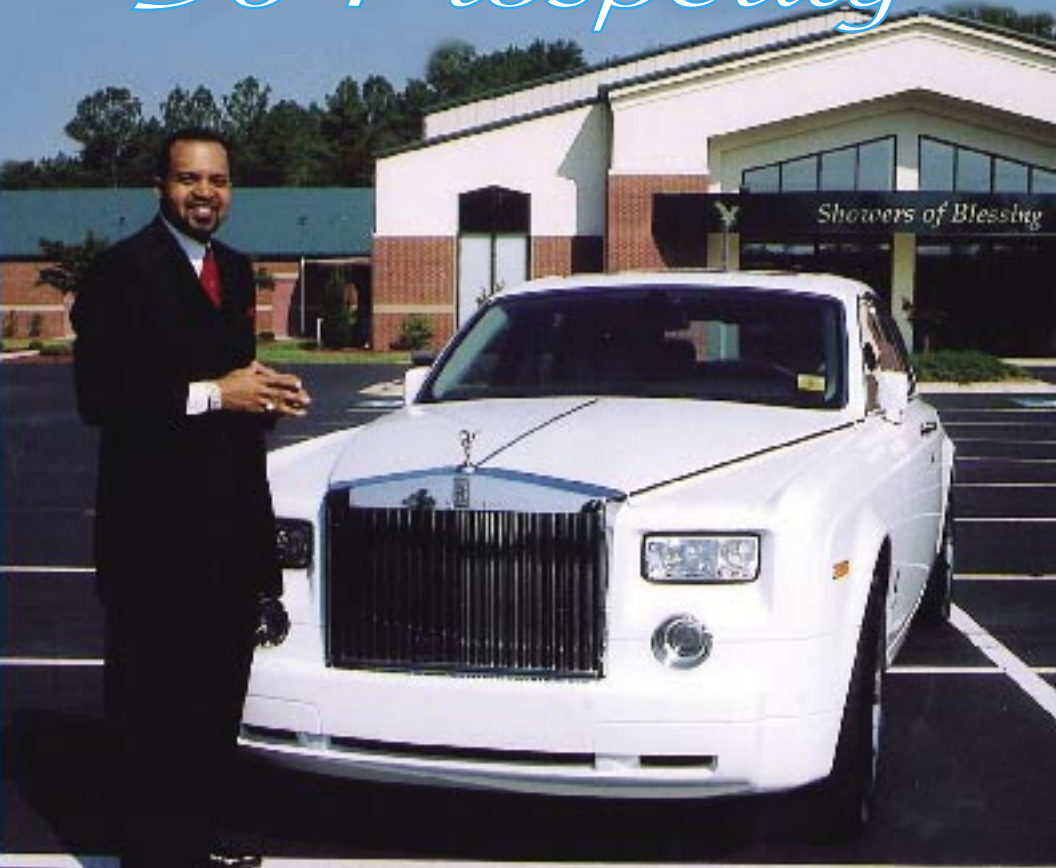


Roadblocks To Prosperity



Dr. Bernard Grant

Foreword by Michael E. Evans



ROADBLOCKS

TO

PROSPERITY

ROADBLOCKS
TO
PROSPERITY

DR. BERNARD GRANT



ARMOUR OF LIGHT
P U B L I S H I N G
Charleston, South Carolina

Copyright © 2006 by Dr. Bernard Grant

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopy, recording, or any information storage and retrieval system now known or to be invented, without written permission from the publisher, except in the case of brief quotations in critical articles and reviews.

Published in the United States of America by
Armour of Light Publishing
P.O. Box 21738
Charleston, South Carolina 29413

Visit us at: www.armouroflight.org

Design by Michael E. Evans
Cover Design by Dr. Bernard Grant

ISBN 0 - 9620604-9-6
Library of Congress Control Number 2006923321

First Edition

All scriptures quoted from the Authorized King James Version unless otherwise noted.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD		7
INTRODUCTION		11
CHAPTER 1	Three Financial Levels	17
CHAPTER 2	Ten Prosperity Facts	23
CHAPTER 3	No Confidence In Your Man Of God	41
CHAPTER 4	Unrepentant Sin & Disobedience	51
CHAPTER 5	An Unrenewed Mind	59
CHAPTER 6	An Unbridled Tongue	65
CHAPTER 7	It's Up To You	69
CHAPTER 8	Handle Your Business	75
APPENDIX		89
ABOUT THE AUTHOR		96

FOREWORD

Why a book on prosperity? Because every age is plagued by an issue, some might even say a spirit, that threatens to keep God's people from God's presence, God's protection, God's provision--God's love. People are crying "*not enough*," and the cries of God's people always prompt our heavenly Father to "*set a man over the congregation, which may go out before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the Lord be not as sheep which have no shepherd*" (Numbers 27:15-17).

Moses was God's "*set man*" in response to the cries of the children of Israel after four hundred years of hard bondage in Egypt where they were persecuted purely because of their prosperity. Moses reestablished their confidence in God's deliverance, and God prospered them even more on their way out.

The fifteenth and sixteenth centuries gave us Martin Luther who risked his life by hammering the word of truth onto the Papal partition to reconnect God's people with God's grace--God's presence.

The eighteen hundreds produced Evan Roberts, who challenged child labor laws and indentured servitude by preaching at the mouth of Welsh coal mines. Meanwhile, across the pond, Harriet Beecher Stowe was challenging the spirit of slavery with her pen, publishing the good news and causing President Abraham Lincoln to ask upon meeting her, "*are you the little lady that started this big war?*" Their answer to God's call gave more of God's people access to more of God's freedom--more of God's protection.

By the turn of the twentieth century, Charles Parham and William “Daddy” Seymour were seeking God for the infilling of the Holy Spirit, while John Alexander Dowie, John G. Lake, Smith Wigglesworth, and others like them were reestablishing the ministry of miracles and healing. Their leadership, in direct response to the cries of God’s people, gave us all a much needed dose of God’s supernatural power.

The nineteen twenties brought depression, prohibition, and gangsters like Al Capone. But the ardent cries of the people of God brought Evangelist Billy Sunday and his temperate contemporaries. They preached against the evils of alcohol and left many a county in this country dry for the next fifty years. They also left many a thirsty man and woman filled with the new wine of the Holy Ghost.

For too long, faith has been characterized as the ability to make the best out of dismal situations. God’s people have been praised for their ‘*optimism.*’ But many of us have spent our lives fighting pessimism in our powerlessness and poverty, ‘*faithfully*’ trying to convince ourselves that ‘*God is good*’ or ‘*the glass is half full.*’ We wouldn’t have to fight that battle if we would just learn that faith--*the God kind of faith*--fills the glass up--to overflowing.

We needed that overflowing outpouring of faith-filled Holy Ghost power to help us intercede for leaders like Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. as they preached and marched to change a very dismal situation so that believers could not only weep and worship, but work and wake up together. Dr. King begged us not to “*seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.*” Unfortunately, the cup of bitterness was the only full cup many people had ever seen.

Dr. King modeled his non-violent civil rights strategy after the message of Messiah and the methods of Mahatma Ghandi. Unfortunately, Dr. King was killed before he could follow through on the lesser heralded second leg of his dream. Ghandi was succeeded by Nehru who ushered in the current economic revolution in India with witty inventions like the Indian Institute of Technology. But after the death of Dr. King, the newly desegregated disenfranchised of America were left with no such champion to lead them to economic parity. Or were they?

Is it possible that we have not rightly recognized the voices of E.W. Kenyon, Oral Roberts, Kenneth Hagin, Sr., Dr. Frederick K. C. Price, Dr. Lester Summerall, Jim Bakker, and so many others who taught us to walk by faith, who established and managed mega-ministries that distributed multiplied millions of dollars to destitute people around the world, and who reminded us--

“What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe the ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24)?

Instead, our seemingly insatiable desire for things has burdened the average American family with an estimated twenty-five thousand dollars worth of credit card debt. Churches, missions organizations and charities continue to report fluctuating contributions, while corporations boast record earnings, issue reorganization strategies, enjoy government subsidies and find themselves in fiscal scandals. Wall Street and Fifth Avenue continue to woo us with the ¹*“New New Thing.”* And at least one Nobel Prize winning economist has suggested that the new definition of poverty may be ²*“when people lack the means to appear in public without shame.”*

Face it: We live in a nation that is trillions of dollars in debt, yet we loan billions to nations that will never pay us back. And you wonder why a book on prosperity?

Paul, the apostle said *“the love of money is the root of all evil”* (1 Timothy 6:10). Curiously, not having enough seems to make it much easier to be-uprooted. Hence the mantra of the prince of so-called *“prosperity preachers,”* Reverend “Ike” Eikerenkoeter-- *“The lack of money is the root of all evil.”*

How ever you say it, when our disappointed Lord wanted to insure that the fruitless fig tree of Matthew 21:18-22 would never deceive anyone else with the promise of sustenance again, he cursed (*addressed, spoke to, attacked*) it--at the root.

It is in that same spirit that we are committed to publishing a series of books on the subjects of wealth, money, and whole-life prosperity, giving voice to the visionaries that God has sovereignly set to lead his people.

Untold millions of rich, poor, and neither-rich-nor-poor people are crying “*not enough.*” Not enough healing. Not enough peace. Not enough housing. Not enough food. Not enough togetherness. Not enough joy. And yes, many are crying not enough money.

So God, true to his unchanging nature, is raising up leaders--leaders like Dr. Grant--so that no one and no thing can stand between God's people and God's presence, God's protection, God's provision--God's love.

Michael E. Evans, *Publisher*
2006 Shallotte, NC

¹The New New Thing by Michael Lewis • Penguin Books 2000

²Amartya Sen -- quoted in William Greider's The Soul of Capitalism pg. 17

INTRODUCTION

People who have never set foot in a church can tell you; *“the love of money is the root of all evil.”* It’s sad that so many of them misquote 1 Timothy 6:10 and just say *“money is the root of all evil.”* But the results are still the same. People have a real problem with money. And the problem seems to persist whether they have any money or not. Even gangster rapper Biggy Smalls told us, *“the more money we come across, the more problems we see.”*

So should we ‘seek’ financial prosperity? Those who know the scriptures may think, even preach, *“No! Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness.”* But what about the rest of that verse? The same Jesus said, *“and all these things shall be added unto you”* (Matthew 6:33).

As a matter of fact, Jesus said, *“your heavenly Father knoweth that you have need of all these things”* (Matthew 6:32 b).

We all have need of all these *things*. People work hard, every day, because they need *things*. People save and invest so that they can educate their children and thereby give them access to the finer *things* in life. People buy insurance policies so that if, God forbid, any thing should happen to their ability to work, their families won’t have to worry about any *thing*.

Things are important. And the goal of this book is to remove any hindrance--any roadblock--in your life that might keep the *things* you need from being added to you.

I just want to make sure that you understand that there are *things* you can do or not do to insure that you have full access to the *things* God has for you.

Paul quoted Isaiah to remind us that “*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.*” He also made us the encouraging promise that “*God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God*” (1 Corinthians 2:9,10 / Isaiah 64:4).

I believe God, by his Spirit, has given me a revelation about some *things* that are missing in your life--some *things* that belong to you.

God actually gave us a plan for financial success. He didn't leave us at the mercy of the world's system to fend for ourselves. Our heavenly Father never intended for us to spend all of our lives penny pinching--borrowing from “*Peter to pay Paul,*” struggling to make ends meet, hungry, destitute, so broke we can't pay attention, not to mention our bills. God never intended for us to be so sad and mad that we can't get glad.

In case you have forgotten, we are children of The Almighty God. His name is El Shaddai, not El Cheapo. Our God is described as the all-breasted one--Jehovah Jireh, the God who is more than enough, without whom “*was not any thing made that was made*” (John 1:1-3). It really bothers God when we doubt His willingness and ability to do anything. Don't believe it? Read Genesis 18:9-15, Numbers 11 (especially verses 21-23), 2 Kings 7:1 & 2, or Luke 1:1-20. Sarah, Moses, and Zacharias all learned, the hard way, that nothing is too hard for God.

We serve the God who created and owns everything. Our Heavenly Father is no different from any earthly father in the sense that He wants us to eat at His table, enjoy His riches, and have His goodness overtake and cover us. Ask yourself, does it glorify or insult God when we insist on living in poverty?

Before you answer, I would like to ask you to finish reading this book.

Paul used to beg people to do what he knew was best for them. “*I beseech you therefore, brethren,*” he begged the Romans, “*by the mercies of God.*” He begged the Corinthians, “*by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*” (1 Corinthians 1:10). And I'm begging you, *by the fullness of the glory of God,* not to

continue living a weak and beggarly life. Make a small investment of your time. It won't take long. I kept it short, intentionally, because I know your time is valuable.

Solomon, the wisest and wealthiest man of his day said, "*with all thy getting get understanding*" (Proverbs 4:7). I agree. Wise decisions depend heavily upon good information. So I want to give you verifiable, Bible-based information concerning financial prosperity and expose some of the roadblocks--*roadblocks you have erected*--that are keeping God's prosperity from getting to you.

The fact that you are still reading is a pretty good indicator that you suspect that these roadblocks have been keeping you from experiencing God's best in your life. Well, those days are over. After you see what God has to say about the *things* he has "*prepared*" for you, nothing and no one will be able to stand between you and God's best.

Let's begin with a few working definitions--

The first word I want to demystify, as much as define, is rich. That's right, rich. Go on, say it out loud, "*RICH!*" You need to get used to using that word. God uses it--a lot.

Actually the word rich is found in the King James Bible 74 times--richer 1 time, riches 95 times and richly 2 times--for a grand total of 172 uses of rich and its derivatives. (*See Appendix, page 89, for references.*) Jesus made about 500 references to Heaven and another 500 references to Hell, but our Lord and saviour made over 2,000 references to issues dealing with money, wealth, and things. Why? Because Jesus knew and he wanted us to know that things are important.

The very first usage of the word rich tells us about Abraham, who was "*very rich in cattle, in silver, and in gold*" (Genesis 13:2). Samuel told us that "*The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich*" (1 Samuel 2:7).

Yes, there are warnings against wanting to get rich at any cost. Paul said people who "*will be rich,*" you might call them wannabes, "*fall into tempta-*

tion and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition.” He warned that because of the “love of money,” people have “erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows” (1 Timothy 6:10-17). In the same letter, Paul also gives very practical instruction to them that are rich. He told Timothy to “Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not high-minded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.”

Jesus told the disciples that it is hard for those who have riches “to enter the kingdom of God.” This so “astonished” the disciples that it caused them to ask, “Who then can be saved?” Their question leads one to believe they had money or at least knew some folk that had a little money. Jesus assured them that “with men it [being rich and a Christian] is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible” (Mark 10:23-27). Imagine that. It is actually possible, with God’s help, for you to have a little something and still make it to heaven. Which brings me to my definition of rich.

Rich - To be abundantly supplied to carry out God’s will for your life and to have surplus to help someone else.

Now nobody wants to be poor.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit:” people will tell you, “for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.” Members of the so-called middle class love to quote Matthew 5 and Jesus’ sermon on the mount. “Jesus said, ‘ye have the poor with you always,’” they remind us. What they seem to forget is that Jesus said that to remind the naysayers that they would have plenty of time and opportunities to take care of the poor using their own resources. One of those naysayers, incidentally, was a thief who wanted to sell the costly ointment that was being poured on the Lord’s head and steal the money. That thief, Judas Iscariot, ultimately betrayed the Lord of glory--for thirty pieces of silver.

“Didn’t Jesus tell the rich young ruler to sell all he had and give to the poor?” you ask. Yes. And had the young lawyer obeyed the Lord, three things would have surely happened.

First of all, the poor would have been--enriched. Secondly, God would have repaid him. *“He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again”* (Proverbs 19:7). The rich young ruler should have known that.

Finally, he would have wound up exponentially richer. It was Jesus who said, *“There is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel’s, But he shall receive an hundredfold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life”* (Mark 10:29, 30).

It pays to know what the scriptures say about money. God anointed Jesus to preach the gospel to the poor, and one of the great benefits of the gospel is that the poor don’t have to remain poor.

Poor, then, is defined as the exact opposite of rich, to be incapable of carrying out God’s will for your life, especially as it pertains to helping anyone else, due to lack of resources.

How much good would the Samaritan of Luke 10 have been if he hadn’t had money? Oil, wine, bandages, and full service hotel rooms cost money.

“So how much is enough,” you ask? **Enough**--like rich, poor, and too much--is a relative term. The peculiar distinction between enough and too much tends to be that we like to decide how much is enough for ourselves, but we consider it our divine obligation to decide when others have too much.

Proverbs gives us a much better description of enough. *“Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me: lest I be full, and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor, and steal, and take the name of my God in vain”* (Proverbs 30:7-9).

God decided how much is enough for us before the foundation of the world. *“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end”* (Jeremiah 29:11). That applies to everything, including money.

Man's challenge has always been agreeing with God. Moses, for example, considered the job of delivering the children of Israel beyond his limited abilities (Exodus 3:11). Jeremiah considered himself too young to speak for God (Jeremiah 1:6). Zecharias, on the other hand, felt as though he was too old to have a son (Luke 1:18). And his son, John the Baptist, didn't feel worthy to baptize Jesus (Matthew 3:13-15).

Even Paul the apostle said that he was *"not meet to be called an apostle because [he] persecuted the church of God."* But unlike so many of us, Paul knew that he was less than qualified to be the judge of his ability. (See 1 Corinthians 4:3-5.) Paul knew that he was what he was (*and had what he had*), *"by the grace of God"* (1 Corinthians 15:8-10).

So how much is too much? One verse of scripture removes all the limits and lets me know that very few of us are in any danger of ever getting anywhere near there.

Paul said, *"Now unto that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us"* (Ephesians 3:20).

You may have your heart set on some things that are not yours. That would be covetousness. (See Exodus 20:17.) But covetousness is such an easy temptation to overcome. Once you get a look at what God has in store for you, other people's mess will lose a lot of its attraction. Even then, it will still be impossible to ask God for too much because God is, at all times, willing and able to do more than any human heart would dare think to ask. *"You have not because you ask not"* (James 4:1-3).

It is my sincere desire that this book will broaden your horizons and remove some roadblocks so that you will at least begin to ask for more than enough. More than enough to meet your needs. More than enough to be a blessing to others. More than enough to carry out God's will for your life.

THREE FINANCIAL LEVELS

chapter one

Rich, poor, enough, more than enough, even persecution for riches sake--the children of Israel ran the gambit of material existence up to and including being enslaved by the Egyptians whose intimidated new king said, *"Behold, the people of the children of Israel are more and mightier than we: Come on, let us deal wisely with them; lest they multiply, and it come to pass, that, when there falleth out any war, they join also unto our enemies, and fight against us, and so get them up out of the land"* (Exodus 1:9, 10).

The Jews were in Egypt because an attitude similar to the new king's caused their patriarch, Joseph, to be thrown into slavery as well--by his own brothers. Ironically, it was Joseph's dreams and interpretation of dreams that enraged his brothers and it was Joseph's dreams and interpretation of dreams that saved his brothers from the famine and found them favor in Egypt. But, alas, *"there arose a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph"* (Exodus 1:8). Ignorance and absence of relationship have always been great enemies of blessing.

The history of Israel is full of types, foreshadows, and examples of God's kingdom principles--principles that remain relevant and applicable to our current walk with Him. One such example is Israel's experience from the bondage in Egypt to freedom in Canaan, the land flowing with milk and honey. As we look at God's chosen people, we will be able to see how their experiences represent three important financial levels. You should be able to find yourself in one of these categories. I pray that you will endeavor to get to the third category.

Egypt - *The Land of Not Enough*

When the king who loved Joseph and Joseph's people died, a new king took the throne. This new king, the new Pharaoh, became afraid of the Hebrews because they were in the land by multitudes. His solution was to increase their work load, attack their male population, and place them into slavery.

All of their belongings were taken. Overnight, their rights ceased. And they became totally dependent on the mercy of a people who knew not God. This loss of favor made them poor and beggarly servants, instantly. Their dwelling places, their food, even their time management were given to and governed by a people who thought of them as dogs.

For four hundred years, God's people had nothing they could call their own. Even when it came to the work that they were made to do, they did not have enough to get the job accomplished. Exodus 5 tells the story of how Pharaoh, in his anger, demanded that the children of Israel find their own straw to make brick but expected the same level of daily production from them. They were definitely in the land of not enough.

Is your refrigerator empty? Is the cupboard bare? Do you have more month than money? Are the bill collectors calling? Are you surprised your vehicle makes it from point A to point B without running out of gas? Is your wife irritated with you? After all she did not marry you to live in impoverished bondage. When you look at your children, do they drop their eyes because once again they have to wear tattered clothes? Do you not have enough to live on? Don't give up, my brother. Keep reading. There is an answer for you.

The Wilderness - *The Land of Just Enough*

While in bondage in Egypt, the people of God cried out for help. God "*heard their groaning, and...remembered his covenant...and God had respect unto them*" (Exodus 2:23-25). Our heavenly Father's response to his impoverished people came in the form of a leader, a shepherd, a pastor--a "*set man*" of God.

God sent Moses to deliver his people from bondage. God sent Moses to lead his people out of the land of not enough. If you are going to come out of poverty, lack and not enough, you are going to need a leader, too.

People struggle with concepts of leadership and submission to authority because they confuse position with value. The devil did it. Eve did it. Miriam and Aaron did it. Korah did it. Chances are, you have done it, too.

There are four possible postures concerning God's leaders. If you are called to lead--lead. If you are not called to lead--follow. If you don't lead or follow you are left either to despise and resist leading or following or, worse, to follow in the steps of Satan himself. You will surely resort to rebellion--conspiring to displace God's leadership.

James warned us to *"be not many masters, [teachers or leaders] knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation"* (James 3:1). And Paul said resistance is *"unprofitable for you"* (Hebrews 13:17). *"So who decides who gets to lead and who gets to follow?"* you ask. God, of course. Paul said, *"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him"* (I Corinthians 12:18). King David said, *"promotion cometh neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another"* (Psalm 75:5-7).

Asking who gets to lead is kind of like a husband and wife asking who gets to have the baby. The person who can, of course.

There is a leader for you. There is a set man who is supernaturally equipped to lead you to your wealthy place. His ability to lead is divinely designed to minister to you--spirit, soul, and body. His voice will resonate with your spirit (John 10:1-5). His mind will challenge and feed your soul (Luke 24:13-32). And he will be geographically set so that you can get to him with ease (1 Samuel 1:6).

If you live in North Carolina, it would be impractical if not impossible for you to follow the leadership of a pastor in Ghana, West Africa. And not every pastor in your home town has a supernatural word for you. That's why God gave *"some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and*

some, pastors and teachers” (Ephesians 4:11,12). He gave *some* so that each of us could have one--the one God set for us. Paul, the apostle, said the ministry gifts of God are ours. My pastor. My shepherd. My leader. Your leader is equipped to lead you to your promised land.

Well, Israel had a set place and a set man of God to lead them out of slavery. As they left Egypt and began to travel through the wilderness, they went through many experiences, some good--some bad. And during this entire journey, God provided them with just enough sustenance for survival. He gave them food on a daily basis--daily bread.

Each day they were to go out and gather the manna that God provided, but they were not allowed to stockpile it. There was enough to satisfy them for the day, but they were strictly forbidden to gather any surplus. Their clothes never wore out, and their shoes grew with their feet. They were guided by a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. They had just enough for survival.

You may find yourself wandering through the land of just enough. You are doing all right. You are living an average life. Your home has just enough room for your family. You can buy groceries on pay day. If you are careful and stay on your budget, you can pay all of your bills. But what if an emergency happens? What if your job closes down? What if you have to have a major repair on your vehicle? What if, in the middle of December, your heating unit breaks and has to be replaced? What if God wants you to help with a building project?

Yes, you have enough but just enough, if nothing else happens. This is not the will of God for us. He never intended for His children to stay at this level. When God took Israel through the wilderness, it was to purge them and prepare them for prosperous living in the Promised Land. Do not die in your land of just enough.

Let God prepare you. Let God purge you. Let the God of all creation get you out of Egypt, and then let Him get Egypt out of you. Above all else, let God finish his work and fulfill His will in you by taking you to the next level--the land of more than enough.

Canaan - *The Land of More than Enough*

Before Moses died, he sent spies over into Canaan to see if the land was all that God had said it would be. The spies came back and testified, “surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it” (Numbers 13:27). The spies witnessed the prosperity that awaited them in the Promised Land. Some were afraid of the fight that was required to “possess the land,” but the fact remained that the land belonged to them and it was a very rich land. Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, encouraged the children of Israel, saying, “Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” (Numbers 13:30). I say the same thing to you.

After the death of Moses, the leadership fell to Joshua, and he took the people into the promise of God. They had to be strong, they had to be courageous, they had to fight the enemy, but the end result of their being obedient to God was prosperity and good success. (See Joshua 1:8.)

Romans 2:11 says, “For there is no respect of persons with God.” If God would prosper and bring good success to Joshua for knowing His word and observing His word, surely he will cause you to prosper and have good success if you learn His word and observe to do His word, also.

There is a promised land of more than enough waiting for you to possess it. The same blessings that God promised Abraham are given to us also. If you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed and heirs “according to the promise” (Galatians 3:29).

Whatever God promised Abraham, you can say, “me, too!” More than enough is waiting for you. Please don’t get to heaven and look back on what you could have had and what you could have done while you were on this side of eternity. We don’t have to wait to get to heaven to have a mansion, silver, gold, jewels, or liquid currency. We don’t have to die to experience peace, joy, healing, and the end of frustration. Abundance and prosperity--the overflow has already been given to us. We just need to learn to remove our roadblocks and let God’s *presence, protection, and provision* overtake us.

