

# NORTHERN EUROPEAN PASTORS' CONFERENCE

NH Koningshof • 30 Jan – 1 Feb 2015

THEME: PREPARATION FOR COVENANTED POSSESSION



"Go ye..."

"Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you... There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life... Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I sware unto their fathers to give them" – Joshua 1:3,4,6.

## DAILY PROGRAMME

10:00-10:40: Breakfast; 14:00-16:00: Lunch & Rest; 20:00-21:45: Dinner & Networking

	07:15-08:00	08:00-09:30	09:30-10:00	10:45-11:45	11:50-12:50	12:55-13:55	15:45-17:45	17:45-18:30	18:30-20:00
	MINISTERIAL PRAYER	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP	BOOK REVIEW	PERSONAL FOCUS	CHURCH GROWTH	GROUP INTEGRATION	REVIEW & PLANNING	WARFARE PRAYER	STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP
FRI 30-01-15				Arrival, check-in and personal prayer		Opening prayer and briefing	2014 in hindsight	"We are well able"	Vision of an excited dreamer
SAT 31-01-15	"Alas... for it was borrowed"	Focus of a faithful servant	Developing the leader within you	The minister's inner ploughing	Opportunities for territorial possession	Planning for NEGC-2015			Talent of an anointed interpreter
SUN 01-02-15	"If the iron be blunt..."	Skillfulness of a wise administrator	Influence without authority	The minister's life management	Tenderness of a courageous builder	National meeting			

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## LIFE AT THE CONFERENCE

“... The Lord thy God walketh in the midst of thy CAMP, to *deliver thee...* *THEREFORE SHALL THY CAMP BE HOLY*: that He see no unclean thing in thee...” (Deuteronomy 23:14).

### Family Life:

1. Endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in LOVE (Ephesians 4:3,2).
2. Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing (Philippians 3:16).
3. He that saith he abideth in Christ ought himself also to walk, even as Christ walked. Whosoever *transgresseth*, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. Christ also ... leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps (I John 2:6; II John 9; I Peter 2:21).
4. Be thou an example of believers, in words, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in PURITY.  
Walk *worthy* unto all pleasing. Walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. Walk worthy of God (I Timothy 4:12; Colossians 1:10; Ephesians 4:1; I Thessalonians 2:21).
5. Let no filthiness, foolish talking nor jesting be once named among you, as becometh saints. *Walk worthy* (Eph. 5:2,3).
6. Men ought always to PRAY, and not to faint. Follow HIS STEPS (Luke 18:1; I Peter 2:21).
7. Let not thy nakedness be discovered. Thou shalt make them ... to *cover* their *nakedness*. The woman ought to cover her head because of the angels. Let the women adorn themselves in MODEST APPAREL with shamefacedness and sobriety, NOT with *broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array*. He that saith he abideth in Christ ought to walk EVEN as Christ walked (Exodus 20:26; 28:42; I Corinthians 11:4-10; I Timothy 2:9; I John 2:6).
8. Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:25).
9. Is any sick among you? Let him call for the elders ... and let them pray over him ... in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith shall save the sick (James 5:14,15).
10. Every word of God is pure: thou shalt not add thereunto, nor diminish from it. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not. Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye learn, AND AVOID THEM. He that biddeth such God speed is partaker of evil (Proverbs 30:5; Deuteronomy 12:32; II John 10; Romans 16:17; II John 11).

“IF YE KNOW THESE THINGS, HAPPY (BLESSED) ARE YE IF YE DO THEM.” (John 13:17).

# CONFERENCE SONGS

## JESUS ONLY IS OUR MESSAGE

1. Jesus only is our Message,  
Jesus all our theme shall be;  
We will lift up Jesus ever  
Jesus Only will we see.  
  
*Jesus only, Jesus ever,  
Jesus all in all we sing;  
Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer,  
Baptizer and coming King.*
2. Jesus only is our Saviour,  
All our guilt He bore away;  
All our righteousness He gives us,  
All our strength from day to day.
3. Jesus is our Sanctifier,  
Cleansing us from self and sin;  
And with all His Spirit's fulness,  
Filling all our hearts within.
4. Jesus only is our Healer,  
All our sicknesses He bare;  
And His risen life and fulness,  
All His members still may share.
5. Jesus only is our Power,  
His the gift of Pentecost;  
Jesus, breathe Thy power upon us,  
Fill us with the Holy Ghost.
6. And for Jesus we are waiting,  
Listening for the trumpet's sound;  
Then it will be us and Jesus,  
Living ever with our God.

## **I'VE PITCHED MY TENT IN BEULAH**

1. I long ago left Egypt for the promised land,  
I trusted in my Saviour and to His guiding hand,  
He led me out to vict'ry through the great Red sea,  
I sang a song of triumph, and shouted, "I am free."

*You need not look for me, down in Egypt's sand,  
For I have pitched my tent far up in Beulah land;  
You need not look for me, down in Egypt's sand,  
For I have pitched my tent far up in Beulah land.*

2. I followed close beside Him and the land soon found,  
I did not halt or tremble, for Canaan I was bound,  
My Guide I fully trusted and He led me in,  
I shouted, "Hallelujah, my heart is free from sin."
3. I started for the highlands where the fruits abound,  
I pitched my tent near Hebron, there grapes of Eschol found,  
With milk and honey flowing and new wine so free,  
I have no love for Egypt, it has no charms for me.
4. My heart is so enraptured as I press along,  
Each day I find new blessings, which fill my heart with joy,  
I'm ever marching forward to that land on high,  
Someday I'll reach my mansion that's builded in the sky.

## **FORTH IN THY NAME, O LORD, I GO**

1. Forth in thy name, O Lord, I go,  
My daily labour to pursue,  
Thee, only thee, resolved to know,  
In all I think, or speak, or do.
2. The task thy wisdom hath assigned  
O let me cheerfully fulfil,  
In all my works thy presence find,  
And prove thy acceptable will!
3. Thee may I set at my right hand,  
Whose eyes my inmost substance see;

And labour on at thy command,  
And offer all my works to thee.

4. Give me to bear thy easy yoke,  
And every moment watch and pray,  
And still to things eternal look,  
And hasten to thy glorious day.
5. For thee delightfully employ  
Whate'er thy bounteous grace hath given;  
And run my course with even joy,  
And closely walk with thee to heaven.

### **HOLD TO GOD'S UNCHANGING HAND**

1. Time is filled with swift transition,  
Naught on earth unmoved can stand,  
Build your hopes on things eternal,  
Hold to God's unchanging hand!

*Hold to God's unchanging hand!*  
*Hold to God's unchanging hand!*  
*Build your hopes on things eternal,*  
*Hold to God's unchanging hand!*

2. Trust in Him who will not leave you,  
Whatsoever years may bring,  
If by earthly friends forsaken,  
Still more closely to Him cling!
3. Covet not this world's vain riches,  
That so rapidly decay,  
Seek to gain the heavenly treasures,  
They will never pass away!
4. When your journey is completed,  
If to God you have been true,  
Fair and bright the home in glory,  
Your enraptured soul will view.

## **WILL THERE BE ANY STARS?**

1. I am thinking today of that beautiful land  
I shall reach when the sun goeth down;  
When through wonderful grace by my Saviour I stand  
Will there be any stars in my crown?

*Will there be any stars, any stars in my crown,  
When at evening the sun goeth down?  
When I wake with the blest, in the mansions of rest,  
Will there be any stars in my crown?*

2. In the strength of the Lord let me labour and pray,  
Let me watch as a winner of souls;  
That bright stars may be mine in the glorious day,  
When His praise like the sea billows roll.
3. O what joy will it be when His face I behold,  
Living gems at His feet to lay down;  
It would sweeten my bliss in the city of gold,  
Should there be any stars in my crown!

## **ONLY REMEMBERED**

1. Fading away like the stars of the morning  
Losing their light in the glorious sun,  
Thus would we pass from the earth and its toiling,  
Only remembered by what we have done.

*Only remembered, only remembered,  
Only remembered by what we have done,  
Thus would we pass from the earth and its toiling,  
Only remembered by what we have done.*

2. Shall we be missed, tho' by others succeeded,  
Reaping the fields we in springtime have sown?  
Yes, but the sowers must pass from their labours,  
Ever remembered by what they have done.
3. Only the truth that in life we have spoken,  
Only the seed that on earth we have sown,



These shall pass onward when we are forgotten,  
Fruits of the harvest and what we have done.

4. Oh, when the Saviour shall make up His jewels,  
When the bright crowns of rejoicing are won,  
Then shall His weary and faithful disciples  
All be remembered by what they have done.

## WORDS OF WELCOME

Welcome to the Northern European Pastors' Conference 2015! It is commendable that you took the time and effort to be part of this meeting. As a leader in God's house, this is your wisest investment for this time.

This short meeting can transform your life and ministry significantly. The rain of heaven will be falling; you must bring out your vessel to receive of the divinely ordained shower. That is your personal responsibility.

Be serious, be diligent. This is a new day. Expect God to teach you something new, to take you beyond where you are, to add something definite to your ministerial artillery. He who keeps himself always open to learning keeps himself on the growth path. He will be **"like unto a man *that is* an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure *things new and old.*"** Let that be your attitude. Pay attention; open yourself to the Almighty.

This meeting has three very important components: edification, training and planning. As a pastor, you need to be built up. Therefore listen to the messages and participate in the praying. Never miss a session and take time to ponder things in your heart. Training is crucial to your ministerial effectiveness; therefore, use this avenue to enlarge your scope. In the sessions, in the way things are done, in the content and in the implementation, everything is for your development. Moreover, participate actively in the planning. This is necessary to ensure our work builds God's Kingdom.

Lastly, knowing how short the conference is, do not set yourself up for distraction. Take necessary rest. Minimise extra activities. Be really present. Make this a time of personal retreat.

May the Almighty God make this period a truly transforming experience for you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Eindhoven, 30 January 2015

# MY PURPOSE, MY PASSION, MY PRAYER

Take a few minutes to complete this section before the conference starts. It will be your driving force throughout this meeting. And it can become the most important duty you ever did yourself!

1. What are the main reasons that brought you here?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
2. What do you think should be the main reason for you to be here?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Write down key blessings you must take back from this conference:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
4. What are the major distractions you can face in this meeting?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
5. What attitudes must you display to overcome them and get the best out of this meeting?
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Itemise your key prayer points in relation to point 5 above:
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Spend time to pray on these points.

# STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP

Leadership is crucial to any organisation as the helm is to a ship. The Church of God is a great enterprise. At every level of this great household, leadership determines the effective fulfilment of God's goals to a large extent. You are a leader in such a capacity. Your skills as a leader will help steer the unit under you aright; it will also enable that unit to integrate effectively into the greater whole and thereby fulfil God's mission for us in Northern Europe.

In this series of studies, we will examine the subject of strategic leadership. Our model will be Joseph. We will learn about vision development, how to maintain focus, identification of talent, development and maintenance of a broad set of skills, and the acquisition of courage and tenderness of heart that will make you an effective builder. After each session, you will spend some time to do 'Personal Integration' as outlined in the scheme after the outlines.

## THE VISION OF AN EXCITED DREAMER

**Genesis 37:1-36**

**"And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed."**

Joseph had a dream. It gave his life a perspective. He did not yet know the exact content but he knew there was something significant ahead. His life had a divine direction. Vision will set you apart from the rest. Vision is to a man what a compass is to a ship. In fact, that is where true leadership begins.

## THE DECISIONS OF A POTENTIAL LEADER **Genesis 37:1-4,12-17**

Joseph separated himself; he insulated his life from the conduct of his elder brothers. Rather than joining them, he **"brought unto his father their evil report."** Preparation for leadership begins with personal decision for a noble lifestyle. If you want God to entrust you with a significant role in His vineyard, you must treasure integrity with God above every other thing (Zechariah 3:1-7; I Timothy 1:19). The decision for righteousness is the queen of all decisions.

Joseph was also involved in the family trade. He fed the flock of his father. On the one hand, it is an instruction that leadership proceeds from gainful employment. Those who are not diligent in their own business cannot be trusted to be so in God's own (Proverbs 22:29; Romans 12:11). If a man is not diligent in his business, his leadership will not be credible. On the other hand, it is a message for leaders to be busy feeding the flock of God (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-3). How can one lead in a house for which he has no concern? Joseph's business was his father's business. And Jesus' also. Whose business is yours?

## **THE DREAMS OF PROFITABLE LEADERSHIP Genesis 37:5-11**

It was not only his father that loved him; God also loved Joseph and gave him a dream. If you stay close to God, He will give you a dream, something to live for (Psalm 25:14; Daniel 10:10-12,18-21; Matthew 13:16-18). As a leader, you will only excel when God's desires become yours and your vision coincides with His will (Philippians 1:20). To truly lead, your life must be engulfed with the vision to transform lives in righteousness and establish God's Kingdom on earth. Our pastoral duty is to make people ready for eternity (Acts 20:18-24; 26:19-23). Joseph's dream went beyond himself: it was a dream that would touch the world and establish God's promise to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, his fathers. It was a dream embedded in a larger covenant. Don't get carried away with a ministry which focuses on earthly needs and forgets salvation; a ministry that labours for the body and neglects the soul. Pastors who run for personal glory or to build an empire for themselves cannot be included in the list of God's leaders. Where does your vision come from – from God or from self?

## **THE DANGER OF PREMATURE LEAKAGE Genesis 37:4-8,18-28**

We can see Joseph's youthfulness in his manner of communication. There are some secrets we should not leak especially to some people. Some dreams are better kept inside, to be "pondered on" than to be shared with people who would not value them or whose envy would rather be fuelled thereby (Luke 2:19,51). Not everyone would be like Jacob who would observe the words of an exuberant youth. Joseph's brothers "**hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.**" Moses paid dearly for his premature demonstration, which landed him in exile for forty years and almost robbed him of every courage for the call when it eventually came (Exodus 2:11-15; 4:10-14; Acts 7:22-25). If you communicate your dreams immaturely, you might multiply enemies on the way or delay the fulfilment thereof.

## **THE FOCUS OF A FAITHFUL SERVANT**

### **Genesis 39:1-23**

Leadership is a quality one can demonstrate regardless of his calling, situation or estate. It is a way of life. At home, in the Church, school, workplace or political arena, leadership is a universal phenomenon. It is needed at every sphere of life. A leader begins by managing the affairs of his own life. He has a vision and that vision is allowed to constrain everything he does. That is focus. To lose sight of one's reason for living is to rob oneself of life itself. He who is not led cannot lead. Joseph teaches us to focus on living no matter the circumstances.

### **THE PRIORITY OF LABOURING WITH GOD Genesis 39:1-6**

God controlled where Joseph eventually landed. His lot was not arbitrary. No matter the enmity you suffer, God will control things to fulfil His will in your life. Joseph chose to labour with God. Being sold as a slave could have traumatised him for life but he made the best use of his circumstances. Focus on God's purpose will give you victory over adversity. Like his father had laboured faithfully under an unfaithful master, Joseph worked hard in a lonely environment far away from home and parental comfort. Never excuse negligence on your circumstances: let all things work together for good for you (Romans 8:28). Joseph prospered. Working hard with God will bring prosperity in life and ministry (Genesis 26:1-5,12). His blessing spilled over to his master as that of Jacob had done earlier to Laban (Genesis 30:27). The secret was God's presence. With all your getting, get the presence of God (Psalm 1:1-3). You may not be able to control your circumstances but you can determine your attitude. Joseph was a slave, yet his attitude made him an overseer (I Samuel 2:6-9).

### **THE PURSUIT OF LIVING FOR GOD Genesis 39:7-12**

Joseph had a serious temptation: his master's wife cast her eyes upon him! Satan sent an adversary to quench the coal of this young man, to destroy this rising star; to make him an enemy of God and cripple his dream for life! Beware (Proverbs 7:24-27)! Many offers that come up as an opportunity are sinister plans wrapped in the shining leather of lethal packaging. An irresistible job. A promotion you cannot reject. A 'lifetime' offer. Joseph could have perished and his dream gone with him. Focus will bring you deliverance in the day of temptation. Joseph preferred to live for God. He said, "**How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?**" As pastor, people will come and make obeisance to you so you can forsake the godly way (II Chronicles 24:17,18). They will put you on the slippery stairs of treacherous elevation so they might destroy the pure and prayerful in the Church (Daniel 6:4-9). Regardless of the consequences, Joseph fled. Flee evil. Flee fornication. Flee lying. Flee pride. Flee compromise. Even if it would cost you your coat of many colours, no price is too high to pay to remain in God's custody (I Peter 3:13-17; 4:12-16,18).

### **THE PROFIT OF LEANING ON GOD Genesis 39:13-23**

Joseph got into real trouble. Things were just working for him as a slave but his integrity brought him into prison. What helped him there? Focus. He focused, not on the things that were going wrong but on what he could do in his circumstances. Leaning on God, he secured His presence (Isaiah 40:1,2). God gave him favour before the keeper of the prison. He became an overseer albeit in the

prison house. God will preserve you in the dungeon. Joseph was imprisoned but not his conscience. If God has a purpose for your life, no prison yard can limit you. God could have prevented his imprisonment. He could have prevented his being sold in the first place. But what God could prevent in His power, He often allows in His wisdom so His will could be perfected in the life of His chosen. That is the focus you need as man of God! See Romans 8:31-39.

## **THE TALENTS OF AN ANOINTED INTERPRETER**

**Genesis 40:1-23; 41:1-37**

To lead with confidence is to lead effectively. Leadership confidence proceeds from divine calling and the specific gift(s) or talent(s) He has endowed you with. That is what sets you apart. That is your added value to the ministry. It is around this talent that other necessary skills are developed or built. It is your gift or talent that will ultimately make room for you (Proverbs 18:16).

## **DEDICATION TO PERSONAL TOIL Genesis 40:1-4; 39:5,6**

Leaders have some general qualities regardless of their calling. Dedication to duty is one of them. Joseph learnt diligence from home as he fed the flock. He took this attitude to him as he was sold into Potiphar's house. And in the prison house he demonstrated the same quality. A dedicated pastor is seen in how he gives himself to the Lord in service. He takes the flock of God as his Father's enterprise. He puts the interest of the flock above his comfort (Genesis 31:38-40; Philippians 2:19-22,25-30). God's leader must be diligent in exemplary living and doctrine (I Timothy 4:11-16). He must be diligent to know the state of the flock and take the oversight thereof (Proverbs 27:23-27; I Peter 5:1-3). He must oversee the work and resources under his care so that the King will have no damage (Daniel 6:1,2). He must rule with diligence (Romans 12:8).

## **DISCOVERY OF PERSONAL TALENT Genesis 40:5-22**

Beyond the general attitude of dedication, there is a gift God has put in you that will set you apart. As you dedicate yourself to duty, God will provide an avenue for that gift or talent to come forth. We see this in Joseph. The prison did not separate him from the love of God. God gave him favour. And soon his opportunity came. His skills in management were already being used. He had demonstrated that at his master's house and now he was doing it in the prison. But there was a spiritual gift he had: Joseph's family could interpret dreams (Genesis 37:6-10). God has given a gift to every believer (Ephesians 4:7). Many gifts are made manifest on the path of duty. While you are busy using what

you have, praying and developing yourself and making use of every opportunity, your spiritual gifts will surface (II Timothy 1:6,7). Joseph did his work so well as a prisoner that when Pharaoh's officers came in, they were committed to his charge (Matthew 25:23). And while the men were there, Joseph was observant enough to know when they had problems. Be faithful in little things. Opportunities will soon present themselves. Moreover, take the pains to analyse your particular strengths. So you will figure out what your talents are.

### **DEPENDENCE ON PROVIDENTIAL TIMING Genesis 40:23; 41:1-45**

Joseph did his part and left the rest in God's hands. He had served faithfully but he was forgotten. That did not send him into depression. Don't stop serving when men disappoint you. Don't slow down your spiritual growth because of human unfaithfulness. He who would ascend up must keep on climbing – even when the ascent becomes steep due to setbacks. This is where a leader makes a difference. He keeps sowing because he believes in reaping; he keeps ploughing because of the hope of harvest (I Corinthians 9:10; II Corinthians 12:15; Ecclesiastes 11:1-6). The butler forgot him when his relief came but God did not forget Joseph. Learn to wait on God; depend on His faithfulness and His timing and you will always renew your strength and move on (Isaiah 40:28-31).

In process of time, Joseph's divinely ordained opportunity came. Pharaoh dreamt. The butler remembered Joseph. The test of talent came. Joseph passed. And he was promoted. When you depend on God, your life will not perish in oblivion. No matter how long it takes, God will remember you at His time when it actually counts (Esther 6:1-14). The point is this: The path to prominence was neither accidental nor disconnected; God ordained it and Joseph used the time he had to prepare for it. Never presume on sudden rise to glory: God never promotes an unprepared man!

### **THE SKILFULNESS OF A WISE ADMINISTRATOR**

**Genesis 41:37-57; 42:6; 43:32; 47:13-26**

In the most important places in the arena of life, there is more want of personnel than of positions. In other words, competent leadership is a scarce commodity. Joseph's management of the crisis in Egypt teaches us the necessity to develop skills for leadership. One thing is to get promoted to a position, it is another thing to fulfil the demands of the function. **“And say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it”** (Colossians 4:17). Joseph did not only propose solutions to Egypt's problem, he was also entrusted with the responsibility to execute it.

## **ACTUATION OF A PRACTICAL PLAN Genesis 41:37-57**

Joseph secured a unique job in Egypt. The vacancy was there but there was no eligible candidate. None of the magicians and wise men of Egypt was up to the task. Joseph was the man for the hour. God has prepared a place for you: develop yourself to reach there and fulfil it. We learnt a lot about how Joseph set about his task. **One**, he was prompt to translate plans into actions (Proverbs 14:23). To lead effectively, your plans must not always end on paper; they must be translated into prompt actions. For Joseph, there was no time to waste because the issues were very urgent. **“... And Joseph went out from the presence of Pharaoh, and went throughout all the land of Egypt... And he gathered up all the food of the seven years, which were in the land of Egypt, and laid up the food in the cities: the food of the field, which was round about every city, laid he up in the same. And Joseph gathered corn as the sand of the sea, very much, until he left numbering; for it was without number”** (Genesis 41:46-49). He was demonstrated the virtue of a labourer (Proverbs 31:10-31).

**Two**, he had to deal with practical issues of storage and logistics. Storehouses must be built. Perishable crops must be well stored. And he decentralised the storage so distribution would be easier later. A leader must be practical. Preaching is important; enabling infrastructure to embed the people in grace is necessary too. And so is also accommodation, transportation, or regional programmes. **Three**, he needed to interface with farmers and traders all over the land. He was neither a farmer nor a trader. He had to depend on the services of others. He needed good human relations. Authority was not enough, he must be able to manage people. Failure to do this could undermine his authority and cause rebellion. A pastor must take account of personnel. Involve leaders under you in the decisions and make them part of the solution.

**Four**, he handled personnel management issues because the task was very labour intensive. His job included managing officers or executives all over the land (Genesis 41:34). In the seven years of plenty and seven years of scarcity, thousands of people were engaged in various tasks: gathering, transportation, storage, recording, distribution, accounting, etc. He had to oversee all this. **Five**, he must of necessity develop the skills of international trade to handle buyers from different countries and cultures. If you lead well, your scope will be ever enlarging (I Timothy 3:8-10,13). If you do not, your scope will shrink and you could lose your place (Luke 13:6-9)! And **six**, he had to balance between internal and external needs as people from other countries came to Egypt to buy food. The point is this: most of those skills were acquired by learning. Do not presume upon grace: learning is necessary to spiritual leadership!



### **ADAPTATIONS OF A PURPOSEFUL PIONEER Genesis 41:46,50-56; 47:15-26**

A leader goes before others; therefore in many areas he is a pioneer. In addition to conventional things, he will need to respond to new challenges and guide his people through uncharted courses. In your area of responsibility, you need the skill to quickly adapt to emerging problems or situations. What do we see in Joseph? **One**, he adapted immediately to his new function and political environment (Genesis 41:46-49; 43:31-32). He was no longer overseer in Potiphar's house or in the prison: he was now on (inter)national landscape. He was not crippled by this because he focused on duty. That is what you have to do regardless the scope of your leadership: focus on your duty. **Two**, he adapted to being a family man. He married. What a thought by Pharaoh! He did not only give Joseph a function but also a wife. That would make Joseph stable and responsible. A prominent leader attracts many romantic dreamers and that could be a serious distraction or problem to Joseph. Let us take care of our single prominent brethren! Joseph also had children and he adapted to that.

**Three**, he adapted from being a gatherer to a distributor. His role in famine changed drastically from his role in plenty. You can do this by thinking ahead to understand the key requirements of each phase of your leadership (Proverbs 22:3). **Four**, his brethren came to him after 22 years of separation. Meeting them could have thrown him off-balance but he thought ahead of a strategy to deal with this because he could foresee them coming anytime. You can do this by doing scenario thinking. Ask yourself: In this stage of my life or ministry, what are the most likely situations that could develop and how would I approach them. That way you are always mentally prepared.

And **five**, he needed to devise a creative scheme when money failed (Genesis 47:15-26). Many people are confused or crippled when they come before a broken bridge; they just stop moving. Joseph devised bartering schemes and kept the land running. As pastor you will come across situations that are not explicitly mentioned in the Bible. Issues will develop that are new or require unconventional solutions. A creative leader looks for solutions so the ministry is not crippled. The point is this: Many things a leader will face are not written on paper; he must be adaptable to unplanned events and figure out how to navigate around them. Prayer, thinking, consultation, counsel and learning: these are what you need to develop the skill of adaptation.

### **ACCOUNTABILITY OF A PRUDENT PRACTITIONER Genesis 41:39-41; 47:14**

Joseph was a great man in Egypt. He could do and undo (Psalm 105:17-22). But he was not Pharaoh. He was accountable. He had learnt that as a teenager. He

was accountable to his father (Genesis 37:2,13,14). He was accountable to Potiphar (Genesis 39:1,6). He was accountable in the prison house (Genesis 39:22,23). Moreover, he was accountable to God (Genesis 39:7-9). This helped him to give an account of his work. He gathered all the money and brought it unto Pharaoh. How faithful are you? Accountability will take you where talent cannot. You must recognise the bounds of your function and take it upon yourself to be accountable: your ministrations, your accomplishments, the finances, the policies, the members, the training, and so on (Titus 1:5). The point is this: if you are accountable to the leader above you, in all probability you are accountable to God too. But if you are not accountable to the leader above you, claiming accountability to God is highest-degree self-deception.

## **THE TENDERNESS OF A COURAGEOUS BUILDER**

**Genesis 40:5-8; 45:1-15; 50:15-21,24,25**

A leader is a builder. He builds lives, relationships and ministries. Joseph was an example of courageous building despite the things he suffered. If you want to be a successful leader, you must develop a large heart that focuses on opportunities rather than offences, influence rather than affluence, grace rather than gratification and enduring reward rather than embittered revenge. Put your focus on what you are called for; let offences, criticism, sabotage and every other human or satanic setback just glide over you. Take no evil to heart. Remain positive. Plan with purpose; execute with courage.

## **ENCOURAGING FORTITUDE OF A SENSITIVE COUNSELLOR Genesis 40:4-8**

Joseph had every reason to be bitter and inward-looking. Being sold by family members was great betrayal; being imprisoned for virtue was gross injustice. But the choice for greatness means you must put aside valid reasons for limited living. What separates the great from the common is response to adversity.

Joseph was sensitive to the needs of others. **“And Joseph came in unto them in the morning, and looked upon them, and, behold, they were sad. And he asked Pharaoh’s officers that were with him in the ward of his lord’s house, saying, Wherefore look ye so sadly to day?”** He was observant, he was sensitive. He built bridges; he reached out. Do the same (Philippians 2:4; 4:9).

Joseph also demonstrated courageous faith. Understanding the cause of their sadness, he rose to the occasion. **“And they said unto him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no interpreter of it. And Joseph said unto them, Do not interpretations belong to God? tell me them, I pray you”**. Let your words build

the courage and faith of others. Beyond ordinary curiosity, let God make you a solution to others' problems. Joseph could not change the destinies of these gentlemen but God used him to give them clarity. Let your ministry guide others. Let your life bring hope (Acts 27:21-25).

#### **EDIFYING FORGIVENESS OF A SEPARATED COMRADE Genesis 45:1-15**

Joseph's brethren were troubled at his presence when they realised who he was. He had a choice: to use his position for revenge or exercise his privilege to build. You will be confronted with such choices especially as a leader. What helped Joseph? He focused courageously on his calling (Philippians 1:15-18; II Timothy 4:16-18). Joseph saw beyond man's malice to God's purpose and plan. **"Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither: for God did send me before you to preserve life. For these two years hath the famine been in the land: and yet there are five years, in the which there shall neither be earing nor harvest. And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance"**. Do you have a divinely appointed purpose? To be effective, you must look beyond the immaturity, envy or malicious acts of men and just focus on that (II Corinthians 4:16-18).

#### **ENDURING FIRMNESS OF A STEADFAST COMPANION Genesis 50:15-21**

A true leader builds his life on timeless principles. He may have a mentor, yet he anchors his heart on God and His unchanging word, which helps him to keep his course even when the mentor has left. Some people hold on to godly principles when they have someone to encourage or supervise them. As soon as that control fades, their wall of principle collapses. **"Now after the death of Jehoiada came the princes of Judah, and made obeisance to the king. Then the king hearkened unto them. And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers, and served groves and idols: and wrath came upon Judah and Jerusalem for this their trespass"** (II Chronicles 24:17,18). Keep your course as Joseph did it after his father's death.

Moreover, Joseph left the arena of life with a word of faith for the coming generation. His words and charges were worth keeping. He had lived as a leader; therefore even after death, he commanded a following. If you demonstrate true leadership, your influence will live on even after you have left your post or passed on to glory. **"And Joseph said... I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. And Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence"**.

# PERSONAL INTEGRATION

This is the place to tie things up. You will be left alone to work, explore and take vital decisions. What have you learnt? What is going to change? What will you begin to do from now? How will you do it? Ask help if you need to.

## DEVELOPING VISION

Think prayerfully about your life as a whole. What do you think is the main driving purpose? Write it down as clearly as possible:

If your life would be truly fulfilling, what key decisions must you take? And what key elements must be present in your life? Write them down:

List below key people that could influence your dream positively:

Or negatively:

How will you manage each of these people?

List key actions to start taking on this from now:

## SHARPENING FOCUS

Think prayerfully about your life as a whole. What do you think are the greatest factors that favour you? Write them down as clearly as possible:

What do you think are the greatest factors that (could) set you back? Write it down as clearly as possible:

If your life would be truly fulfilling, how would you use the positive factors to eliminate the setbacks? Write them down:

Where do you need help and where will you go to find the help? Write these down in concrete ways – Needed help:

Potential helpers:

List key actions to start taking on this from now:

## IDENTIFYING YOUR TALENTS

How much effort do you put in the ministry? Quantify it honestly:

How do you think you can improve your personal effort? Itemise:

Think prayerfully about your life as a whole. What are the things you do most naturally? Think of when you were even younger than this. Write them down as clearly as possible:

What can you do to further develop and make impact with these talents?

List key actions to start taking on this from now:

## DEVELOPING SKILLS

List the significant stages of your ministry in the last 5 to 10 years:

How have the requirements for success evolved in these years?

Itemise the essential skills for your current role:

Go back and rate your competence on each skill on a scale of 1 to 5.

Which 2-3 skills do you need to improve in the coming months?

Which one or two skills must you develop from scratch?

List key actions to start taking on this from now:

## **BUILDING BRIDGES**

Itemise events that have marked your life since you can remember:

How have you responded to these, positive or negative? Describe:

Itemise the key attitudes you have to change, develop or uphold:

List key relationships you have to build, repair or reinforce from now:

How will you do this?

List key actions to start taking on this from now:



# PERSONAL FOCUS

## THE MINISTER'S INNER PLOUGHING

Hosea 10:11-13

God wants us to be fruitful and successful, which 'corn' represents in the text, but as Judah and Jacob, we need to break the 'cords and plough'. We cannot be fruitful without sowing but we must plough before sowing. Spiritual Ploughing must start with our inner life. The life of David illustrates 'unploughed' inner life of 'once a successful minister'. David was a good shepherd, a gracious singer, a giving servant and a great soldier. However, he had problem when he stopped cultivating a deep personal and devotional inner life. The case of Bathsheba took place when David ought to be on the battle field. The Bible says, **"... at the time when kings go forth to battle, that David sent Joab, and his servants with him, and all Israel; and they destroyed the children of Ammon, and besieged Rabbah. But David tarried still at Jerusalem"** (2 Samuel 11:1). At that time in his life he did not apply Psalm 63:1-3; if he did, he would have received enough power to go to the battlefield. If he had spent enough time on Psalm 5, he would have overcome the temptation of the naked woman (Bathsheba). Instead, **"David .....walked upon the roof of the king's house: and from the roof he saw a woman washing herself..."** (2 Samuel 11:2). This is the reason why we need to cultivate (plough) deep inner life to succeed in life and for a fruitful ministry.

### THE PURGING LIFESTYLE OF A DISCIPLINED MINISTER

*Jeremiah 4:3, Matthew 13:7, Mark 4:7, Matthew 13:22, 1 Corinthians 5:7, 2 Timothy 2:19-21, 2 Corinthians 5:15-16, Luke 6:48, Hebrews 9:14.*

The first step in ploughing process is to remove the thorns... **"Sow not among thorns"** (Jeremiah 4:3). The thorns will choke the seeds in your life (Matthew 13:7) and hence one can become fruitless (Mark 4:7). As thorns reduce the quality of a land and seed, so also iniquities diminish the quality of an undisciplined minister. A holy man of God is terrific in the Kingdom of God and a terror to the kingdom of the devil. The devils know those that are pure (Act 19:15) and God recognises them too; therefore, let those name the name of the Lord depart from iniquities and impurities (2 Timothy 2: 19). The Lord wants to deliver and help us, hence, our camp and lives must be holy (Deuteronomy 23:14). We need to examine and purge ourselves daily (2 Corinthians 13:5; 1 Corinthians 5:7-8). We need to dig deep into the recesses of our heart (Luke 6:48) because the heart is deceitful (Jeremiah 17:9). We need to tell God to cleanse us from secret faults (Psalm 19: 12) and cry like David, **"Search me, O**

**God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts”** (Psalm 139:23). The Holy Spirit will help us. **“Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren...”** (1 Peter 1.22).

### **PRAYING LIFE OF A DEVOTED MINISTER**

*Jeremiah 14:4, 1 Corinthians 3:6, Genesis 15:11, Colossians 4:12, Job 38:12, Psalm 5:1-3, 63:1-3, 8, Mark 1:35, 2 Timothy 2:15, Psalm 119:97-99, Acts 3:1-5, Proverbs 8:17, Psalm 55:17, 109:4.*

Ploughing becomes difficult if the ground is not watered. Jeremiah said, **“Because the ground is chapt, for there was no rain in the earth, the plowmen were ashamed...”** (Jeremiah 14:4). This is the reason why prayer and the word of God are important in our ploughing efforts. We need the water of the word and prayer so that God can bring success to our ploughing (1 Corinthians 3:6). Prayer is also the best means of driving away predators on our ploughed field (Genesis 15:11). Why then do ministers of God need prayer and devotion? The answer is in Colossians 4:12: **“That ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God”**. Prayerlessness can turn the lover of God to become lover of strange things. We can get direction during the time of devotion. The best time to pray is in the morning (Job 38:12, Psalm 5:3, 63:1-2, 78:34). Jesus did it (Mark 1:35). The Patriarchs were early risers. We need to set time to study the word of God (2 Timothy 2:15), meditate on it (Psalm 119:97-99) and pray (Acts 3:1-5). It is the ministers that seek God early that shall find Him (Proverbs 8:17). In fact, the guiding principle of David before Bathsheba’s case is seen in Psalm 55:17: **“Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud: and he shall hear my voice.”** In summary, he gave himself to prayer (Psalm 109:4).

### **PLANTING LIFE OF A DEDICATED MINISTER**

*Isaiah 28:24, Hosea 10:12, 13, Job 4:8, Proverbs 21:4, 20:4, Luke 9:62, 1 Corinthians 9:10, Song 1:6, 1 Corinthians 9:10, 15:9-10, Psalm 144:12-14*

The reason for ploughing is for us to sow (Isaiah 28:24). Therefore, you must sow seeds of righteousness into our life and the lives of others (Hosea 10:12). We should not plant the seed of wickedness (Hosea 10:13, Job 4:8, Proverbs 21:4). We must be diligent in our ploughing and planting (Proverbs 20:4, 1 Corinthians 15:10). We should not give up on ploughing because of tiredness or old age (Luke 9:62). We need to plough in hope (1 Corinthians 9:10). **“But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me”** (1 Corinthians 15:10). I pray that God will give us grace to labour. It takes labour to cultivate deep devotional life and to plough our hearts to fulfil our respective callings (Psalm 144:12-14).



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